# PREHISTORY MUSEUM

of VALENCIA



Official guide English

# Prehistory Museum of Valencia Corona Street, 36 46003 Valencia

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Buses – EMT: 5, 28, 80, 81 and 95 Metro: Lines 1 and 2. Turia Station



# Opening hours:

**Tuesday to Friday:** from 10.00 to 20.00 Closed on Monday

# **Group visits:**

Tuesday to Friday: from 10.00 to 14.00 Tuesday and Thursday: from 16.00 to 18.00

### Library:

Monday, Wednesday and Friday: from 8:30 to 14:30

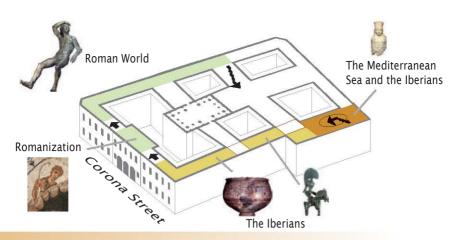
Tuesday and Thursday: from 8:30 to 18:30 June to September: from 8:30 to 14.00

# Ticket price:

. General: € 2

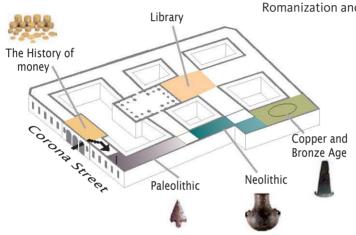
Reduced: € 1

Free admission: Saturday, Sunday and holidays. (More information on the museum website)



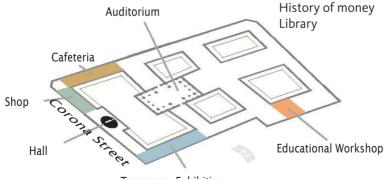
# SECOND FLOOR

The Mediterranean Sea
The Iberians
Romanization and Roman Word



# FIRST FLOOR

Paleolithic and Epipaleolithic Neolithic Calcolithic and Bronze Age History of money Library



Temporary Exhibition

# **GROUND FLOOR**

Temporary exhibitions Educational workshops Shop Cafeteria Auditorium

# **PREHISTORY** Museum of VALENCIA









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The Prehistory Museum of the Valencia Provincial Council occupies a prominent position among our cultural institutions. Since its origin in 1927, the Museum and its research center have been characterized by a continuous and rigorous work aiming at the conservation, study and dissemination of the archaeological heritage. Museums are places for learning and reflection about our past, places that always provide the aesthetic pleasure of contemplating the work of humankind. We are aware that the magnificent collection hosted at the Prehistory Museum cause, as always with archaeological collections, admiration among the visitors.

The Valencian Provincial Council presents this official guide of the Prehistory Museum showing, once again, the commitment of this institution to public the dissemination of its collections and the results of its research.

Alfonso Rus Terol
President of the Valencia Provincial Council

The pages of this guide invite you to a journey through our rooms of Prehistory, Iberian Culture, Roman World and History of the Money. The edition of the guide was a pending commitment of the Prehistory Museum to the public. We are confident that, thanks to it, the visitor will discover the most emblematic objects of the Museum and will be able to tour the Valencia region through its greatest archaeological sites. This guide adds to the information provided to the visitors of the Museum through its catalog, handouts, videos and information panels. Therefore, this booklet complements the educational activities of the Museum, it has been published to provide guidance to all those who approach the Museum with the aim to understand better our history.

The Culture Area of the Valencia Provincial Council hopes that these pages will help to make more comprehensible the Valencian prehistory and invite the visitor to make an attractive and educational tour of the Prehistory Museum.

María Jesús Puchalt Farinós

Deputy for the Cultural Area of the Valencia Provincial Council

# **Contents:**



### Page

# The first farmers and stock-breeders: The Neolithic

- 41 Changes in landscape
- 42 Lifestyle
- 45 Materials and tools
- 48 Art and beliefs



# The beginning of Metallurgy:

The Chalcolithic and the Bronze Age

- 56 Lifestyle
- 59 Materials and tools
- 62 Art and beliefs

### Page

# The Iberians

- 70 Lifestyle
- 79 Materials and tools
- 86 Art and beliefs
- 91 Route of the Iberians in Valencia

### Page

### 93 Romanization and the Roman World

- 97 Lifestyle: city and countryside
- 102 Materials and tools
- 104 Art and beliefs

### Page



### Page

# 117 Glossary and Bibliography

# The House of Charity:

From House of Charity to Museum.

The site where The old House of Charity is located has a long history, dating back to the foundation of an Augustine's convent in 1520. Later, the Franciscan order dedicated the building to the Crowning of Christ's with Thorns, thus becoming popularly known as The Crown convent, a name which was also given, from that moment onwards, to its adjacent street.

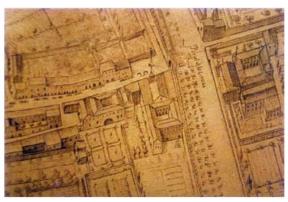
In the 19th century it was turned into a House of Charity, administered by the County Council and a series of renovations to adapt the space to its new needs begun.

The definitive intervention was carried out in 1876 by the architect Joaquín María Belda. The work was concluded in 1890 with the construction of a Neo-Byzantine style chapel appointed with an outstanding ornamental interior design, by Antonio Cortina.

With this project the building is enlarged and restructured, acquiring the typical aesthetics of a house of charity of the time: big-size buildings which consisted of a ground floor and two upper floors organized along



Interior of the chapel of La Beneficencia.



Location of the former Convent of La Corona, within the walled city, next to one of the gateways to the city. Map by Tomás Vicent Tosca (1703-1704).



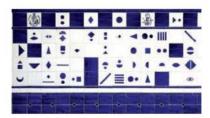
View of the main courtyard.

five courtyards, with a chapel in the central area. These institutions were prepared to house an important number of people and had various facilities such as trade workshops, toilets, laundries and nurseries.

In 1981, due to the diminishing number of people in foster care and the need of providing space to the local government, the County Council moves the Prehistory Museum from the premises of the Bailía Palace to The Old House of Charity. The Museum first opened to the

public in this new location in 1982.

At the beginning of the 90's, an ambitious integral restoration project of the architectural complex under the takes place supervision of Rafael Rivera and Mateo Signes, with the aim of providing the city of Valencia with a large Museum and cultural space. The new Prehistory Museum opened to the public in 1995.



Current decoration of the Interior courtyard skirting board, by Carmen Calvo (1995).



Tile from the former House of Charity containing the emblem of the institution.

# **The Prehistory Museum of Valencia:**

A trip through time

The Prehistory Museum preserves a large part of the material legacy of the people who occupied the Valencian territory. The recovery of this important patrimony has been possible due to the excavations that the Prehistoric Research Service (SIP) has carried out for more than 80 years.

The halls located on the first floor of the Museum allow a trip through Prehistory, from Paleolithic times to the Bronze Age. These halls display the oldest material remains of human occupation in the Valencia region, which date back to 300,000 years, as well as the appearance of art during the Upper Paleolithic period, the material evidence of the first farmers and stockbreeders and the development of villages during the Metal Age period. The visit on this floor finishes towards the year 1000 BC, with the arrival of new influences from central Europe and the Mediterranean area that will bring the Bronze Age period to an end.



First floor, Prehistoric Societies: Paleolithic Art.

On the second floor of the building, halls dedicated to the Iberian culture and the Roman world can be found. The itinerary begins around the 8th century BC, with the establishment of the first Phoenician colonies on the Iberian Peninsula.

This area covers the Iberian origin and evolution, their lifestyle and territorial organization.

The arrival of the Romans in the 2nd century BC, as well as relevant changes brought about by the Romanization can be followed through the material shown in different exhibition areas. The gradual transformation of the Roman society during the last centuries of the Empire and the Visigothic period indicate the end of the visit.

The room dedicated to the History of Money, which occupies an independent area on the first floor, shows



Second floor, Colonization.

the evolution and use of money through time, with a selection of pieces from the five continents.

The Museum is also involved in archaeological sites currently under excavation, such as the Iberian village of La Bastida de les Alcusses (Moixent). Moreover, the Route of the Iberians in Valencia is offered nowadays. including a visit to some of the more emblematic Iberian settlements



Computer graphics of La Bastida de les Alcusses (Arquitectura Virtual).



Second floor, Iberian Culture: Recreation of a house.



Second floor, Roman World: Recreation of the hold of a merchant ship.

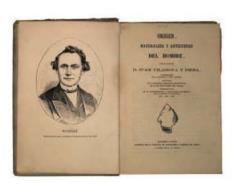


First floor, History of money.

# **Prehistoric Research Service (SIP)** and Valencian archaeology

Interest in classical antiquities has its origin in the Renaissance, a time when the first Valencian Departments of Antiques were created. However, studies on archaeology and prehistory as such begin with the foundation, in 1871, of the Valencian Archaeological Society and with the works of Juan Vilanova y Piera, introducer of the prehistory discipline in Spain.

A major boost to excavation, conservation and diffusion of the archaeological patrimony of Valencia was the creation,



Publication by Juan Vilanova y Piera: Origin, Nature and Antiquity of Man (1872).

in 1927, of the Prehistoric Research Service (SIP) and its Museum. Its creator. Isidro Ballester Tormo understood this institution as a research centre similar to those which already existed in Madrid and Barcelona.

The starting point was the collection of archaeological material from the Iberian

village of El Xarpolar de Margarida and from a village which belonged to the Bronze Age, Mas de Menente, in Alcoi. Nonetheless, it was through excavations of the SIP itself that important public collections were generated.



First excavation campaign in Bastida de les Alcusses (1928).

As in its origins, the SIP continues to be a scientific institution which, in order to develop its multiple functions, is structured around several sections: excavations, storage and inventory, publications, library and documentary archive, department of quaternary fauna, restoration laboratory and diffusion, teaching and exhibition unit.

**Excavations:** the Prehistoric Research Service (SIP) has an annual program of archaeological excavations, some of them in collaboration with the University of Valencia. Currently, research projects cover all phases of Valencian prehistory and antiquity, focusing on: the Cova del Bolomor (Tavernes de la Valldigna), the villages of the Bronze Age of

# The archaeological method and Patrimony Conservation

Archaeology is the science that studies the past of humankind from its material remains. The methodology used is the archaeological excavation, which allows the exact location and systematic recovery of vestiges. Archaeological research involves different disciplines to make the analysis of remains, such as fauna, carbons, seeds and pollen, among others, possible.

Once in the Museum, the material is registered and catalogued for its study and conservation. Its publication and exhibition allow the society as a whole to participate in archaeological research progress.

Excavation at Cova del Bolomor (Tavernes de la Valldigna).



Materials located at the excavation of Lloma de Betxí (Paterna).



La Lloma de Betxí (Paterna) and L'Altet de Palau (Font de la Figuera), the Iberian sites of La Bastida de les Alcusses (Moixent), the settlements around the ancient city of Kelin-Los Villares (Caudete de las Fuentes) and the Iberian-Roman city of La Carència (Torís).

Storage and inventory: access to information of all the materi-



als that make up the Museum's collections is available through a computerized storage system (150,000 entries) and through a Sample Catalogue (30,000 samples). Almost all samples come from the Prehistoric Research Service (SIP) excavations, some from

rescue excavations and, occasionally, from donations or purchases. The Museum samples that are catalogued but not exhibited in the Museum's rooms are kept in the Reservation Warehouse.



**Publications:** since the creation of the Prehistoric Research Service (SIP) in 1927, the institution has been concerned not only with the study and research of Prehistory and Archaeology in Valencia, but also with the dissemination of the results obtained. This aspect is embodied in various scientific and popular publications like the magazine *Archivo de Prehistoria Levantina*, the series of scientific papers *Trabajos Varios del SIP*, as well as exhibition catalogues, monographs, brochures, workbooks, CDs, etc.

**Library:** gathering some 61,000 volumes including monographs, pamphlets and a collection of 1400 journals of which 400 have an open subscription, the library covers topics on archaeology and prehistory, supporting through its funds the objectives of the Museum and offering the necessary support for research, teaching and dissemination of knowledge.

It is a specialized library of personalized attention to users which has also a Film Archive and a Child Section, with loans of films

Documentary Archive: the History of the SIP and its Museum is reflected in the extensive documentation collected in the Administrative Archive and the Documentary Archive since 1928. Among them we can find: the Photographic Archive, consisting of images in various formats: negatives, transparencies and slides, as well as digital photographs;



the Documentary Archive, made up by excavation diaries, inventories, notes, letters and a important graphic legacy; and finally, the Archaeological Archive, which has been collecting news about the archaeological findings of our land for decades.

The Department of Quaternary Fauna: created in 2001 with the acquisition of a paleontological collection of the



Quaternary fossil fauna of Valencia.

This is a material of great historical value and of great interest to the institution as it is a full sequence of Valencian fauna from Pliothe

Pleistocene to the Holocene. It has also a significant body of comparative material of present fauna. The department is in charge of the conservation, research and dissemination of fauna collections and excavations with a paleontological and zoo-archaeological approach.

Restoration Laboratory: closely related to the SIP excavations from the very beginning, the restoration workshop is responsi-

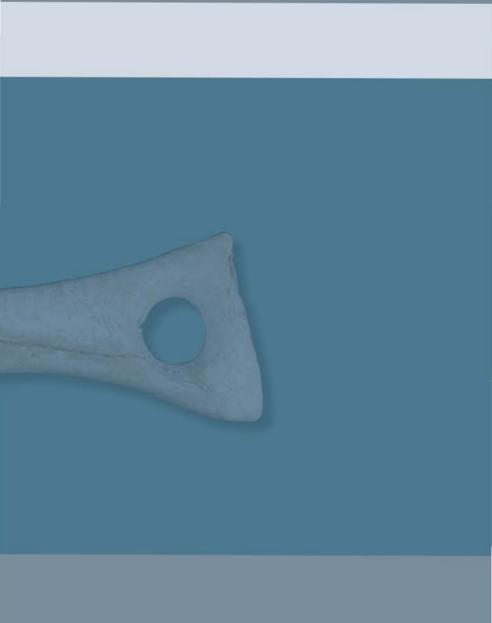


ble for the conservation and restoration archaeological materials that make up the Museum collection and it is involved in the removal and consolidation of materials and

structures from the excavations that require so. One of the main tasks of the laboratory is controlling the storage conditions of the materials that the Museum holds both in permanent and temporary exhibition rooms as well as in storage rooms.

**Diffusion, teaching and exhibitions unit:** this unit is responsible for the preparation, management and dissemination of temporary and travelling exhibitions of the Museum, which can be self-produced or externally produced. It also develops, organizes and sets up educational activities both at the Museum facilities and at archaeological sites. Its goal is to make of the Museum collection and the archaeological heritage the starting point for reflection, bringing them closer to different audiences. It organizes guided tours, workshops, contents for children and proposals specifically designed to host events like May 18th, the International Museum Day, the European Night of Museums and visits to archaeological.





Deer antler perforated baton. Cova del Volcán del Faro, Cullera (between 15,000 and 10,000 years BP).

# **Hunter-gatherer groups:**The Paleolithic and Epipaleolithic



# **Hunter-gatherer groups:**

The Paleolithic and Epipaleolithic

The Paleolithic is the longest period in human history. It is during this period, which in Africa begins 2,5 million years ago, that some of the most relevant changes in hominid evolution take place. These are physical, technological and social transformations that make up the heritage of the *Homo sapiens*, and from which three great periods have been established: Lower Paleolithic (which spans from 1.400,000 to 250,000 years BP), Middle Paleolithic (250,000 to 40,000/30,000 years BP) and Upper Paleolithic (40,000/30,000 to 12,000 years BP).

During this period, human groups organize themselves in small communities, living in caves and rocky



Cova del Parpalló entrance.

shelters on a seasonal basis. They base their survival on natural resources secured by hunting, fishing and gathering.

The greatest accomplishments of these first settlements are tool-making and fire control.

The development of abstract thought takes place a little later, during the Upper Paleolithic, with the introduction of art and general burial rituals. This implied a definitive turn in our specie's behaviour.

About 12.000 years ago, a period known as Epipaleolithic-Mesolithic begins in the Valencian territory. It is the time of the last hunter-gatherers, who interact with the first farmers societies of



Excavation at the Cova del Parpalló between 1929 and 1931.



Human Parietal of an "old Neanderthal" from the Cova del Bolomor (ca 130,000 years BP).

# Human Evolution

the Neolithic and who end up adopting their lifestyle.

The first European settlers arrived more than a million years ago, from the African continent. In Valencian land, the oldest testimonies of human occupation lay in the Cova del Bolomor (Tavernes de la Valldigna), belonging to the Lower Paleolithic and dating back to around 300,000 years ago.

It is during the Middle Paleolithic when the greatest amount of *Homo neanderthalensis* remains is documented. These humans lived in Europe between 250,000 and 40,000/30,000 years BP.



Human Parietal of Homo neanderthalensis from Cova Negra (between 150,000 and 90,000 years BP).

In the Cova Negra excavations (Xàtiva), bone fragments of at least 10 individuals from this species have been found, most of them of child age, as well as evidence of a young adult in the shelter of Salt (Alcoi).

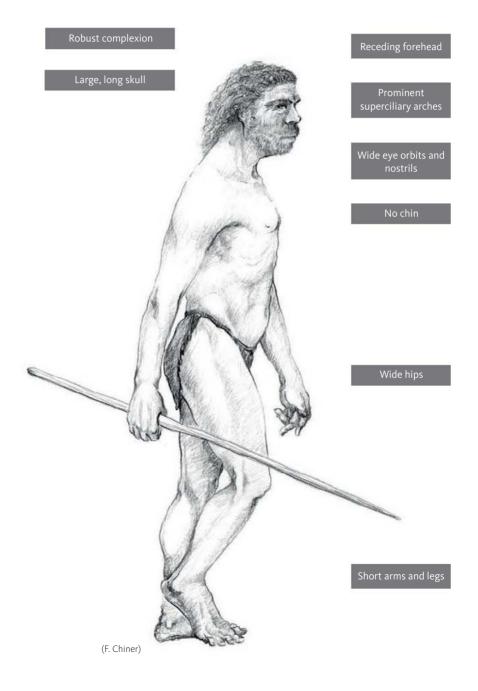
The Neanderthal extinction seems to coincide with the arrival of the *Homo sapiens* to the European continent, around 40,000 years ago, a date which sets the beginning of the Upper Paleolithic.

It is during this time that human remains are found in a vast number of sites; among which the Cova del Parpalló



Juvenile skull of *Homo sapiens* from Cova del Parpalló (ca 20,000 years BP).

# This is what NEANDERTHALS LOOKED LIKE...



2 m

1.8 m

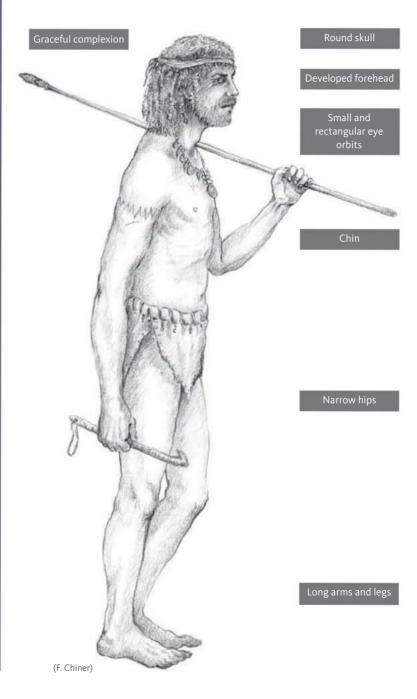
1,6 m

1,4 m

1,2 m

1 M

# This is what we, SAPIENS, LOOK LIKE...



o m

# Landscape change

(Gandia), Cova de Malladetes (Barx) and Cova del Barranc Blanc (Ròtova) stand out as the most relevant.

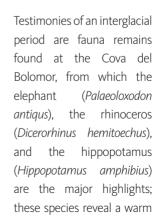
The Quaternary\* Age is the most recent period in the geological and biological history of Earth. It began more than two million years ago and it was throughout this time that glaciations intensified and the hominization process took place.

Glaciations are periods of ice-sheet growth over certain areas



Recreation of the Middle Paleolithic wildlife and landscape (F. Chiner).

of the Earth's crust, which provoke strong changes on river and sea levels and which coincide in time with an increase in rain in other regions. These cold phases alternate with less severe ones called Interglacial periods. They are longlasting climatic oscillations which leave their mark both on landscape modelling and on living creatures.





Recreation of the Upper Paleolithic wildlife and landscape (F. Chiner).



and humid climate and a landscape very different from the one we see today, with forests and lagoons.

The last glacial period began during the Middle Paleolithic, around 120,000 years ago, at a time in which Neanderthals spread throughout the European continent. The landscape became progressively more steppe-like due to the cold and dry climate conditions which featured the end of this period.

During the Upper Paleolithic, this cold environment remains, having its harshest conditions around 18,000 years ago. The sea level decreased about 130m, so the coastline was very different from present-day.

Around 10,000 years ago a new change in the climate took place with a progressive increase in our planet's temperature. This period, called Holocene, in which we still live today, brought about fundamental changes in landscape and fauna.

Human groups were not indifferent to these new circumstances. Adaptation to these changes influenced the

# Lifestyle

development of a different lifestyle from that which featured the Paleolithic

The lifestyle of the first human groups was based on the use and recollection of every resource offered by their natural surroundings. Their diet was supplemented by scavenging dead animals and opportunist hunting of big preys.

It is the Neanderthal who, in the Middle Paleolithic, begin to specialize in hunting, becoming increasingly more important.

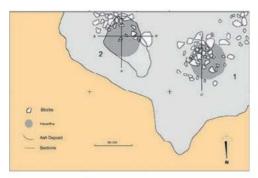
The presence of hearths in settlements of this period confirms the importance of fire use. The fireplace, apart from having a cooking, lighting, heating or defensive use,



Schematic representation of different occupation periods at Cova del Bolomor

becomes the centre of the social life, where the exchange of ideas and experiences is made possible.

With the arrival of the Homo sapiens. the occupation of the territory intensifies. An example of this is the various remains recovered from the Cova del Parpalló (Gandia). Cova de Malladetes (Barx). Cova del Volcán del Faro (Cullera), Abric

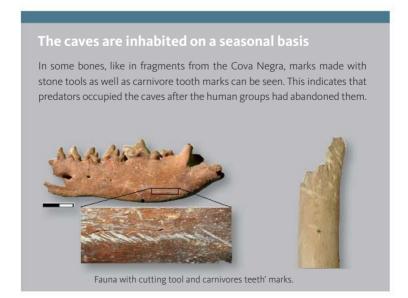




Hearths remains found at Level 13 of Cova del Bolomor (ca 150,000 years BP).

de Senda Vedada (Sumacàrcer), Cova del Barranc Blanc (Ròtova), Cova de les Cendres (Moraira-Teulada) and Abric de Ratlla del Bubo (Crevillent). Some of these settlements seem to be specialized in different tasks such as hunting, material supplying or art-related activities.

The lifestyle based on hunting and gathering is maintained throughout the Epipaleolithic, with due adaptations to the changing landscape and fauna taking place during this time. Evidences of these last hunters are found in sites



# Material and tools

like Cova de Malladetes (Barx), Cueva de la Cocina (Dos Aguas), Covacha de Llatas (Andilla) and El Collao (Oliva).

The capacity of tool making allowed the first hominids, around 2,6 million years ago, to overcome limitations and multiply their possibilities of action.

The oldest stone tools are chopping tools. These are simple, made on quartz, limestone or flint\* by a limited technique in order to obtain a cutting edge. These



Set of flint scrapers and denticulate flakes from the Middle Paleolithic, from Cova Negra.

instruments gave place to others of greater complexity made from flakes\*.

During the Mid-Paleolithic. dle the Neanderthals adopted new techniques by which obtained regular size flakes for different tools. Through these techniques, known

as levallois and discoid techniques\*, they made spear heads, scrapers\*, knives and chisels, which were tools mainly used for hunting, animal quarting, skin tanning and wood work.

Throughout the Upper Paleolithic, important technological advances take place. These help the Homo sapiens im-

### **Knapping**

Lithic technology is the term coined by specialists for the set of tools made in stone (*lithos*). Through its analysis we know what they looked like, what

they were used for and how they were used.

Moreover, technological studies help reveal, from archaeological remains and from experimentation, the techniques used for their manufacture.



Experimental flint knapping (M. Tiffagom)

prove their hunting methods and adapt to the severe climate conditions of the final stages of the last glaciation.

The blade technology\* became common during these times and implied a better use of flint and the obtention of much finer supports on which to elaborate a wide variety of specialized lithic instruments: different types of arrow heads, scrapers, chisels, burins and small cutting blades.

These stone tools are further combined with the first objects manufactured on bone and antlers: spear points, sewing needles and harpoons. The invention of spear throwers and other throwing-weapons made possible the bring-down of preys from greater distances which, in turn, lead to an improved quality of life for groups of the final Paleolithic.



Upper Paleolithic arrowhead with denticulate edge from Cova del Volcán del Faro.







Shouldered points and tanged and barbed arrowheads. Cova del Parpalló









Upper Paleolithic decorated bone arrowhead. Cova del Parpalló .



Epipaleolithic arrowheads with geometrical shapes. Cueva de la Cocina.

## **Art and beliefs**

It is during the next stage, the Epipaleolithic or Mesolithic, when the use of bows and arrows is strengthened.

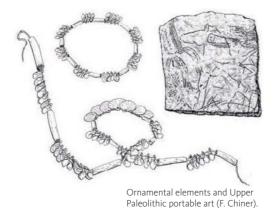
Although there is evidence in older times that suggests burial rituals and artistic expressions, it is during the Upper Paleolithic period that these practices are strengthened and further developed. The presence of tools along with funerary offerings, among which personal decoration is stressed, indicates certain concern for what happened after death

On the other hand, artistic expressions become a new way of showing the high degree of complexity that our species achieved.

The Museum holds one of the finest portable art\* collections for the study of European prehistoric art: the stone plaques from the Cova del Parpalló (Gandia). Excavations in this



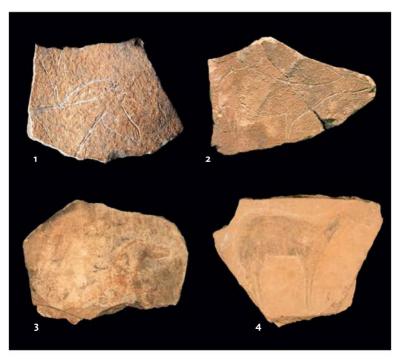
Ornamental elements of the Upper Paleolithic. Cova del Parpalló.



cave have located, along with other human occupation remains, over 5000 engraved and painted stone plaques which reveal the evolution of art and the characteristic issues of the Upper Paleolithic societies. Animals such as wild goats, deer, bovids or horses, among others, as well as



Engraved bone with a horse and a deer (highlighted in orange). Cova del Parpalló (between 21,000 and 12,000 years BP).



Portable art from Cova del Parpalló (between 21,000 and 12,000 years BP)

- 1 Plaque with engraving of a horse.
- **3** Plaque painted in ocher representing a horse's head.
- 2 Plaque engraved with representation of a doe.
- 4 Plaque with a doe painted in black and two engraved horses.

## Cova del Parpalló: an exceptional site

When Luis Pericot undertook the excavations at the Cova del Parpalló between 1929 and 1931 he never imagined the surprises it had in store.

In this settlement, occupied by different human groups for over 15,000 years, he found, along with several tools and animal bones, one of the finest art collections in Europe. Hence, Cova del Parpalló is considered a great Paleolithic sanctuary, a place of encounter and exchange of ideas where

its creators left, perhaps unknowingly, testimonies of their world in images.

Excavation notebook by L. Pericot in Cova del Parpalló (1929).



SIP Excavations in Cova del Parpalló around 1930.



various symbols, make up the formal repertoire of these first artists.

Unlike the Paleolithic art, during the Epipaleolithic or Mesolithic, the figurative style is abandoned and abstraction is imposed, where geometrical and lineal patterns of difficult interpretation predominate. Proofs of this artistic expression are the engraved stone plaques of the Cueva de la Cocina (Dos Aguas).



Plaque engraved with geometric motifs. Cueva de la Cocina (ca 7500 BC).



Pottery fragment with a impressed decoration of goat. Cova de l'Or. Beniarrés (ca 5000 BC).

# First farmers and stock-breeders:

The Neolithic



## First farmers and stock-breeders:

The Neolithic

Throughout the 10th and 9th millennium BC the first sedentary communities\* thrive in the Middle East, focusing their economy on agriculture and stockbreeding.

This period, known as the Neolithic, implies a fundamental change in the way of life, bringing favourable conditions for more numerous human groups, a more complex social structure and the appearance of new beliefs.



View of mountain Benicadell and the Serpis Valley from Cova de l'Or.

Important technological innovations also take place, like the manufacturing of pottery and polished stone objects, and the development of new types of tools in flint and bone.

In Valencian lands, the beginning of the Neolithic is located towards the middle of the 6th millennium BC. as a consequence of the arrival of the first farming and stockbreeder settlers after going through a rapid expansion, from east to west, through the Mediterranean basin. Contacts with the last hunter-gatherer groups allowed their integration into the new lifestyle.

## Landscape Change

The Neolithic brings a noticeable change in the relationships between humans and their environment. Agriculture and livestock require large spaces, obtained by the slash and burn method. Thus, the Neolithic communities become active agents of environmental degradation and begin to leave their mark in the territory they occupy and exploit.



Neolithic landscape recreation at Cova de l'Or (F. Chiner).

In mountain areas, with a more intense stockbreeding activity, the ancient Mediterranean forest of oaks and shrubs, with species such as the wild olive, mastic and arbutus, is progressively replaced by forests of pine and scrub. Only in uninhabited spaces and in territories along the plain, where the land is more fertile and fields are more stable, primary forests remain.

In short, the countryside begins to be modified and fields and pastures gain ground to the forest. This is the beginning of landscape anthropization, which will become more evident later.

# Lifestyle

Neolithic human groups base their survival on cultivation of cereals (wheat and barley) and legumes (beans, lentils and peas) and on breeding of various domestic animals (sheep, goats, cattle and pigs).



Scene of the Neolithic way of life in Cova de l'Or (A. Marin).

These tasks are supplemented by hunting, gathering and fishing, hence, installing in caves and villages with suitable locations for the development of these activities.



Mill and grinding mill from Cova de l'Or.

The caves chosen for dwelling are located below 600 meters of altitude, ensuring adequate temperatures and rainfall levels for crop growth. However, it is the livestock activity that, over time, gains more importance in these locations, as shown by evidences of housing located at sites such as Cova de l'Or

(Benjarrés) and Cova de les Cendres (Moraira-Teulada).

Villages are installed on plains near the upper course of rivers, where the best grazing and cultivating land is found. In these areas, large, rectangular houses with an apse end are built, lifted on wooden and mud poles. The inner space has subdivisions for different activities such as grinding, for the fireplace or for ovens.



Dairy product use (F. Chiner).

#### The first stews

The domestication of animals and the cultivation of plants involve major changes in the way of eating. There is a greater variety of products and new ways of cooking them. Along with the roasts from earlier times, early "stews" made from cereals and pulses appear. They included these ingredients to their diet as well as the meat from domestic animals. A part of their diet is also from the milk of sheep and goats that they obtain secondary

obtain secondary products.



Bone spoons. Cova de l'Or.

Pottery bowl with repairing perforations. Cova de l'Or (between 5500-5000 BC). These settlements multiply and spread along rivers giving way, at the end of the Neolithic, to the big villages characteristic of the beginning of the Metallurgy, such as Ereta del Pedregal (Navarrés) or Les Jovades (Cocentaina).

The collective effort needed to implement and maintain these facilities shows a complex social structure capable of managing surplus production and organizing work.



Geminate ceramic vessel with impressed cardial decoration. Cova de l'Or (between 5500-5000 BC).

## **Materials and Tools**

One of the most significant contributions of the Neolithic is the manufacture of ceramic vessels. The excellent quality of the first vessels found in Valencian sites reveal that pottery was a well-known technique when implanted in these lands. It is possibly women who produce them, preserving their cultural tradition and adding their personal taste, hence the care and variety of ornamental designs.

The big containers, bowls, pots, storage vessels, double-bowl vessels, barrel-shape vessels and small jars feature the beginning

of this period and are used, among other purposes, for storage, cooking and food consumption. These shapes give way to more shallow

ones as trays and dishes,
which are undecorated,
a common trend in pottery
production of the end of the
Neolithic and early Metallurgy.



Pottery vase with a narrow neck and impressed cardial decoration. Cova de l'Or.



Ceramic container with printed cardial decoration.

Cova de l'Or.

## When clay took shape

The Neolithic pottery production is handmade. Overlaying strips of mud give shape to clay vessels that, once smoothed by bone spatulas and soft mud, are decorated with different tools. Afterwards they are left to dry and they are finally fired until the right consistency is achieved in pits dug in the ground.

The most typical decoration of the early Neolithic is called Cardial decoration. due to the fact that it is obtained by the impression of shells of the species Cardium edule. Applied decoration, incisions with awls, bone or wood toothcomb stamping and painting with ochre were also used.





Experimental process of cooking in a pit.

Decoration impressed with Cardium (F. Chiner).

There are important innovations in stone tool development. To the flint knapping, which incorporates new objects such as drills or sickle blades, they added a technique based on polishing the surface of rocks as hard as diorite, basalt or porphyry. This new technique produced not only axes, adzes and chisels for cutting logs or for wood processing but also a number of decorative items like pendants, beads and bracelets. Other objects made of stone, like diggingstick counterweights and grinding stones were used in sowing and cereal processing.







Polished stone hoes. La Cova de la Sarsa (Bocairent) (between 5500-5000 BC).

The bone tool industry gains importance. Spoons, necessary to eat new types of food, tubes possibly used as musical instruments and spatulas or comb\* for modelling and decoration of pottery were made as well as chisels, needles, awls and ornaments such as rings, pendants, beads and pins.



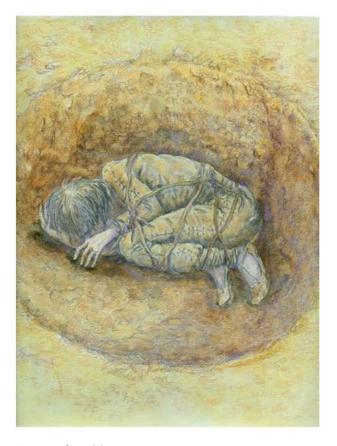
Bone ring from Cova de l'Or.



## **Art and beliefs**

The art and the Neolithic burial\* practices bring us closer to the world of myths and beliefs of the communities that lived during this period of prehistory.

Funeral rituals follow different patterns, with burials found both in caves and within villages. In Cova de la Sarsa (Bocairent) different individuals were buried together along with ceramic vessels and decorative elements.



Recreation of a Neolithic burial pit (F. Chiner).

Moreover, in recently excavated villages, as Costamar (Ribera de Cabanes) and Tossal de les Basses (Alacant), single or double burials have been found, sometimes with ritual deposits inside pits dug in the ground.

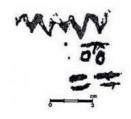
As for artistic representations, early farmers developed a type of art of symbolic nature characterized by its simplicity called Macroschematic Art and Schematic Art. Ceramic vessels and open-air spaces were the surfaces chosen; the latter generally being rock shelters that function as true sanctuaries. Unlike the Paleolithic, the human figure is the dominant theme in artistic expressions of this period:





Macro-schematic style praying figures. Abrigo de el Pla de Petracos (Castell de Castells).





Schematic style eyed idol. Abrigo de la Penya Escrita (Tarbena).



Pottery fragment with cardial impressed decoration depicting a praying figure. Cova de l'Or (between 5500-5000 BC).



Pottery fragment with incised decoration of schematic deer. Cova de l'Or.

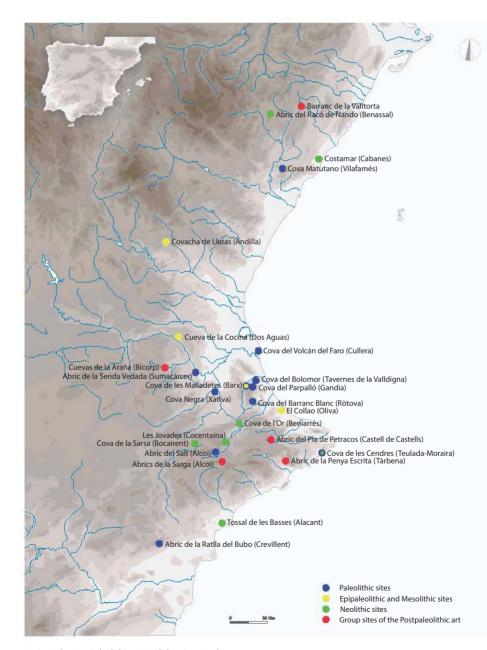
large figures with raised hands and arms, referred to as praying figures, and representations reduced to simple X- or Y- shaped lines. Animals, plant elements and signs were also depicted.

Once the Neolithic was well established, the Levantine art adopts a more figurative style where characters are shown in hunting, gathering, dancing or fighting scenes.

The rock art\* of the Mediterranean Basin on the Iberian Peninsula. one of the most genuine of our prehistory, was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1998.



Levantine style hunting scene. Abrigo del Racó de Nando (Benassal).



Major Valencian Paleolithic to Neolithic sites cited in text.



Copper axe. Mas de Menente, Alcoi (between 1800-1500 BC).

# The beginning of metallurgy:

The Chalcolithic and the Bronze Age



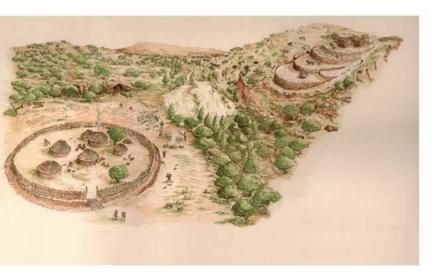
# The beginning of metallurgy:

The Chalcolithic and the Bronze Age

This recent Prehistory period is characterized by a growing social complexity, an intense land use and the presence of the first metal objects.

The initial stage, known as the Copper Age, Eneolithic or Chalcolithic goes back towards the beginning of the third millennium BC

The increasing social complexity reached at this time is evidenced through both the size and the organization of the villages as well as through the sophistication of the funeral rituals. Furthermore, the presence of decorative elements made from exotic materials is a good example of the exchange networks of prestige goods operating between quite distant territories. These objects, as well as the first metal pieces made of copper, are the manifestation of the power of emerging social elites.



Plain and highland settlements during the Copper and Bronze Age (F. Chiner).

Towards the end of the 3rd millennium or the beginning of the 2nd BC, a number of changes are observed once again affecting the structure and distribution of settlements as well as the social organization. It is the beginning of the so-called Valencian Bronze Culture, characterized by widespread small settlements located in high ground and the use of the first bronze\* objects towards the end of this period.

At the beginning of the 1st millennium BC, the Valencian lands are affected by a series of internal and external influences which will mark the end of this period.

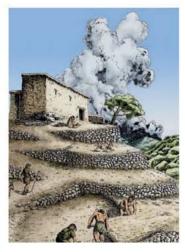
The new ways in which the territory is structured sets the basis on which Phoenician traders will operate in the peninsular coast.



Small village of La Lloma de Betxí (Paterna).

# Lifestyle

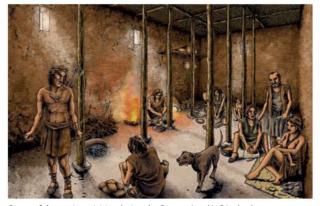
After the best land for grazing and crops were occupied in earlier periods, a gradual conquest of dry land through the use of the plough begins during the Eneolithic.



Interpretation of the constructive remains of Lloma de Betxí (A. Sánchez).

The large settlements of this period are distributed along major rivers, allowing its residents to have the necessary resources for their survival. The perimeter of some of these large villages is delimited by trenches dug for the protection of people and crops. Inside, cabins are built with a more or less rectangular, oval or apse-shape with a small stone base and walls made of poles and mud. Storage pits dug into the ground for keeping grain are also typical.

In plain areas and along with these settlements coexist others located in higher areas, which in time will become



Scene of domestic activities during the Bronze Age (A. Sánchez).

the most important ones. Good examples of this duality of sites are Ereta del Pedregal (Navarrés) and the Rambla Castellarda (Llíria).

During the Bronze Age, settlements in the highlands are the most common. Within these settlements, important stone structures such as terraces, access infrastructures, thick walls and cisterns are built. The distribution of housing along streets suggests an early town planning.

Houses are generally rectangular in shape and have their interiors organized in different activity areas where ovens, fireplaces, looms and benches for vessels can be found. Houses are built with perfectly plastered stone and mud walls and are covered with beams supporting a vegetal framework protected with mud.

Livestock gains importance and it is used for meat consumption, as draft animals and to obtain wool, milk and manure. From the nearby forests, those which survive the pressure of crops and grazing,



Ceramic cheese strainer. Lloma de Betxí (between 1800-1500 BC).



Globular pottery container. Muntanya Assolada (between 1800-1400 BC).



Large ceramic vessel decorated with applied cords. Ereta de Castellar (ca 1500 BC).

they extract firewood, food and the raw materials needed for construction and tools. Hunting and gathering wild fruit such as acorns and olives are a good supplement to their diet.

Other important activities are those related to metallurgy and product exchange.

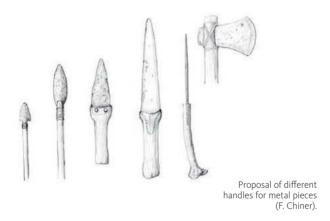
The villages that belong to this period are, among others, Mas de Menente and the Mola Alta de Serelles (Alcoi), La Muntanyeta de Cabrera (Torrent), which are pioneer excavations undertaken in the early 20th century, as well as Ereta Castellar (Vilafranca), the Muntanya Assolada (Alzira), La Lloma de Betxí (Paterna) or L'Arbocer-Altet de Palau (la Font de la Figuera).



Wood sickle and denticulate sickle blades. Mas de Menente (ca 1800 BC).

## **Materials and tools**

The greatest innovation of this stage is the use of the first metal objects, much more resistant than those made with other materials. Furthermore, this technological innovation allows the manufacture of tools in series and their recycling.





Set of metal objects. L' Arbocer-Altet de Palau (ca 1500 BC).



Process of casting and production of metal pieces (F. Chiner).

Despite the lack of minerals in the Valencia region, the metallurgical activity is revealed by the presence of a variety of instruments, first made of copper and later made of bronze, including axes, chisels, awls, arrowheads and knives, as well as for evidences of the work process itself. In this sense, slag, wastes of metallurgical furnaces, mining hammers, moulds and foundry crucibles, stand out.



Mould and flat bronze ax. Mola Alta de Serelles (ca 1500 BC).



Flint arrowheads. La Ereta del Pedregal (ca 3300-2200 BC).



However, the household items of these human groups are still composed of a variety of tools made of stone, wood and bone. Archer bracelets, polished stone axes and hammers, grinding stones, flint sickles and bone awls are some of the most common. Some other materials used for making ornaments are gold, ivory, amber and variscite.



Ceramic Set of the Bronze Age. Lloma de Betxí.



The pottery production focuses on the development of rarely decorated handmade containers. Typical objects of this period are jars, cheese strainers, pots, bowls and geminate vessels, covering the basic purposes of storage, processing, cooking and consumption of food. Some objects are also clay-made and are used for the tasks of spinning and weaving of plant fibres as whorls and loom weights.

## Art and beliefs

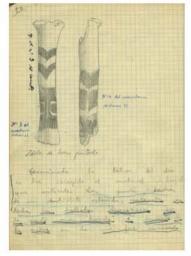
The funerary rituals documented in the initial stages of metallurgy suggest the level of complexity that these societies have reached.

Funeral remains are found both in villages and in caves next to them, but it is in the latter where the so-called multiple burials were carried out. In these necropolises\* a large number of people were deposited following a complex ritual that includes the offering of objects and food. Excavations at the Cova de la Pastora (Alcoi) found many idols made of bone similar to the one found in Ereta del Pedregal (Navarrés). These large-eyed representations are known as eyed idols and are interpreted as important deities to these communities from the beginning of metallurgy.



Eyed-idol on deer antler. La Ereta del Pedregal (ca 2800 BC).

The presence of daggers, awls and copper spear tips as well as various decorative elements in burial offerings show the perpetuation of the status of their owners.



Excavation notebook by Vicente Pascual in the Cova de la Pastora (1945).



Anthropomorphic flat-shaped idols made in bone. Cova de la Pastora.

#### Containers for the afterlife

Bell-beaker vessels are the main feature of the final Eneolithic. This pottery, richly decorated, is named after the shape adopted by some containers. In Valencian sites such as the Cova de les Aranyes and the Cova dels Gats (Alzira) and Sima de la Pedrera (Benicull) such vessels were found as part of the grave-goods intended to contain food or fermented beverages such as beer.



Bell-beakers pottery from a funerary offering. Cova dels Gats (ca 2400 BC).



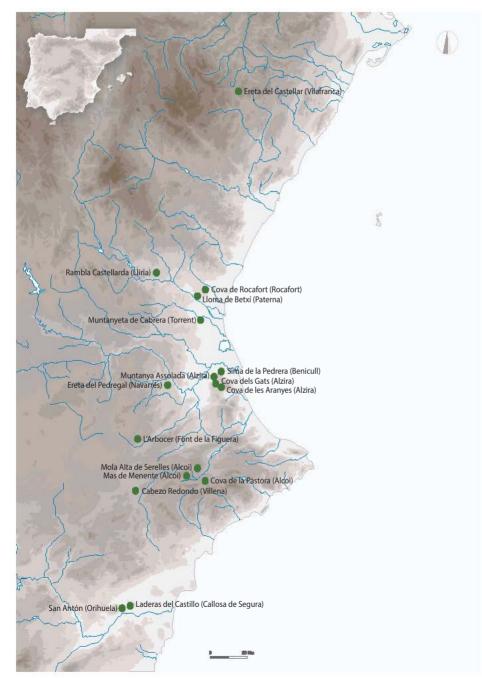
Recreation of a burial ritual in a cave (F. Chiner).

During the Bronze Age the variety of funerary rituals remains, performing burials both in caves near settlements and in pits located within the villages. However, there is a shift towards

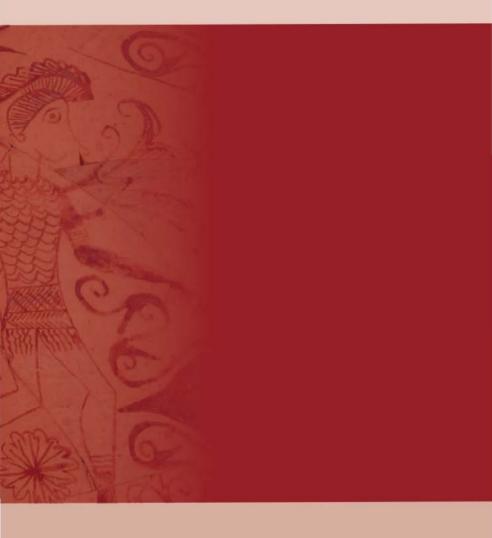


Bead necklace from a funerary offering. Cova de Rocafort.

single burials with no personal items. Perhaps this new trend reflects changes in the social organization and beliefs of these groups.



Major Valencian Copper and Bronze Age sites cited in text.



Detail of the vessel of the warriors. Edeta, Llíria (3rd-early 2nd centuries BC).

THE IBERIANS 6

# The Iberians



### The Iberians

The Mediterranean Sea has been since prehistoric times a space of contact for all the people who have inhabited its shores. These relationships intensified from the 8th century BC onwards when Phoenician sailors, and a little later the Greeks, direct their interests towards the West in search of metals, and to a lesser extent, of agricultural products and other commodities.

The settlement of Phoenicians and Greeks on the Mediterranean coast of the peninsula, between 700 and 600 BC, not only facilitates the exchange of products but also the exchange of knowledge and customs with indigenous people. This cultural and social interaction enriches the emerging local society, which from the 6th century BC onwards, is known as the Iberian Culture

As an introduction to the rooms of the Iberian World at the Museum, pieces of the colonial settlements of Ibiza and Ampurias are exhibited. The island of Ibiza, strategically located on the silver route between the East and Tartessos\*, is occupied by the Phoenicians around 650 BC. Among the numerous settlements excavated, the rock shelter shrine of the Cova des Cuieram and the necropolis of Puig des Molins, which have provided hundreds of terracotta and very rich funerary offerings, are among the most relevant. On the Catalan coast, the Greek colony of Ampurias (Girona), founded by the Phoceans around 600 BC, became the gateway to the peninsula for people, ideas and products from the Hellenic world.



Red-figures Greek vase. Ampurias.



Punic glass juglet. Puig des Molins.

Iberians is the term Greek and Roman geographers and historians used to refer to the various people that occupied, between the 6th and 1st centuries, a wide strip of the Mediterranean coast, between the Hérault River in France and the Guadalquivir River in Andalusia. The Iberians who inhabited the north and south of Valencia were the Ilercavones, the Edetans and the Contestans



Iberian towns and main sites in Valencian lands.

# Lifestyle

The Iberians, like the Greeks, Etruscans and Celts, do not form a political unit. They are organized in separate territories around cities ruled by aristocratic groups that control the political and economic activities, including as well as the long-distance trade.



The Castellet de Bernabé: a fortified hamlet

Within the territory of each city, the settlement is structured in oppida or fortified towns, villages, forts and farmhouses, as well as places of worship and necropolises. Some Classical sources refer to monarchies between the Iberians and territories ruled by kinglets, as is the

case of Edecon, chief of the Edetans, supported by his retinue of advisors, warriors and priests.



Set of weapons falcata sword, spearpoints and javelin-from Bastida de les Alcusses. 4th century BC.

The Iberians do not have professionally organized armies but warriors are an important group in the Iberian society. Owning a horse is a status symbol because it is a noble animal that only elite groups

THE IBERIANS 71

can have. Ancient texts also mention the existence of Iberians enlisted as mercenaries in Greek, Carthaginian and Roman armies.

The power of women is evidenced by statues and tombs with representations of women as the Dama d'Elx or the young ladies of the necropolis of Corral de Saus (Moixent). Merchants, craftsmen and farmers, as well as servants, live together in the settlements along with the ruling classes.

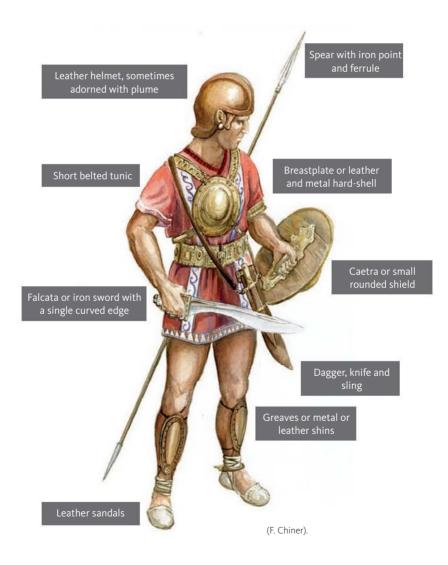


Weaving scene on a pottery fragment. Edeta. 3rd–early 2nd centuries BC.

The oppidum, or fortified village, represents the political and ideological centre that articulates the territory and, therefore, the socio-economic relationships. These sites are usually situated at the top of mountains, as the Bastida de les Alcusses (Moixent), Covalta (Albaida), Castellar de Meca (Ayora) or El Molón (Camporrobles). They are surrounded by a wall with defensive and surveillance towers and have a structured, more or less regular planning, with streets and blocks of houses.

# WARRIOR. 5th and 4th centuries BC

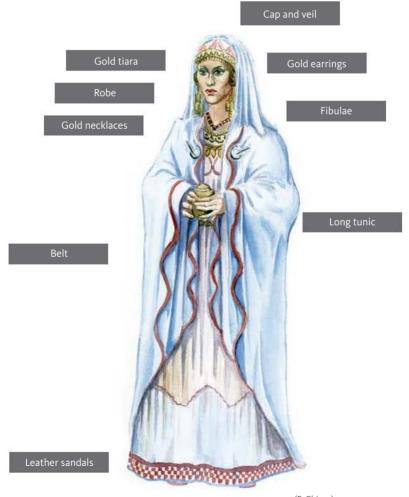
Warriors were an elite group in the Iberian society. Their panoply consists of offensive and defensive iron weapons.



THE IBERIANS :

# LADY. 5th and 4th centuries BC

The Iberian women play a prominent role in all spheres of society: She administers the home and performs the tasks of food preparation, cooking, knitting and family care and maintenance. The great ladies were disseminators of lineage and participated in social life.



(F. Chiner).

#### **The Warrior of Moixent**

The Bastida de les Alcusses is a walled settlement founded in the 5th century BC and abandoned in the course of three or four generations. Among the rich findings discovered in this Contestan city, it is worth mentioning the iron tools, local as well as foreign pottery, personal ornaments, weapons and two bronze figurines depicting an ox with a yoke and an armed horseman known as the "Guerrer de Moixent".

This bronze figurine, discovered on July 21, 1931, is 7.3 cm in height and represents a high-status individual on horseback. The rider is naked and armed with a falcata, a shield and a helmet surmounted by a large plume. The piece was originally part of a banner and it was removed to become a votive offering.



Excavation notebook from 1931 where the finding of the little warrior is drawn.



75





Puntal dels Llops fort (A. Sánchez).

Puntal dels Llops street (A. Sánchez).

In contrast, other *oppida*, such the one of the Tossal de Sant Miquel (Llíria) stretch down the slopes of the mountains, with streets and buildings adapted to the land topography by modifying the slope into terraces and building two-story houses. This town, identified as Edeta mentioned in Classical texts, exerts, since the end of the 5th century BC, political and economic control over a vast territory with villages and hamlets dedicated to the exploitation of agricultural and livestock resources, such as La Monravana and El Castellet de Bernabé (Llíria) or La Seña (Villar del Arzobispo). This area is delimited by a defensive network of forts located in the Calderona Mountain Range like El Puntal dels Llops (Olocau), maintaining visual contact among themselves and with the city.



South slope of the city of Edeta.



Graphic reconstruction of Edeta (Arquitectura Virtual).

#### The Iberian house

Defined as a work of architecture without architects, the Iberian construction is basically made of soil. The stone is only used at the base of walls, doorways and stairs, while walls and partitions are built with sundried mudbricks. The roofs are supported with beams and a vegetal framework and everything is then coated with a layer of mud. The wooden doors have locking systems for which wooden keys and, occasionally, iron keys are used.

As for the internal equipment, almost all houses have a fireplace, and a few have a domestic oven, grinding, weaving and storage areas.



Iron keys. El Xarpolar and Puntal dels Llops.



THE IBERIANS 77



Scene of agricultural activities in the fields next to Bastida de les Alcusses (F. Chiner).

Daily life in these settlements takes place between home and the fields for a vast groups of people. The house is the space where the family gets together and carries out household, craft and cultural activities. Houses vary in size and shape according to the towns or the social status of the household but they all share similar architectural features.

Agriculture, livestock and gathering of wild plants and fruits make up the basis of the Iberian economy. Iron instruments offer information about everyday work in the fields and charred seeds recovered in excavations make possible to reconstruct the agricultural landscape and people's diet. The farm implements recovered from the Bastida de les Alcusses -plowshares, picks, hoes, small pickaxes, sickles, pruners, forks, spades- reveal the importance of a dry-land crop production dominated by cereals. Vines and olives, pulses -lentils, peas and beans- and fruit growing trees complete the farm product list.



Bronze figurine reprsenting of a yoked ox. Bastida de les Alcusses. 4th century BC

Animal studies show that the Iberians had domestic animals of different species as a dietary and economic supplement, along with hunting and fishing activities. Sheep and goats provided mainly meat and milk but also skin and wool. Pork and beef meat were also consumed but oxen were primarily used for farming. Beekeeping and bee farming was practiced in all villages in the area of Valencia. Honey was a product of multiple uses and of high nutritional value that was exported outside the Iberian territory in a type of vessel called kalathos\*.

Other iron tools such as saws, chisels, augers, trowels and needles testify the existence of craftwork related to stone carving, carpentry or leathercraft.

#### **Materials and tools**

Among the most important technological advances that take place during the Iberian period we can find: the potter's wheel and the dual-chamber furnace, the development of iron metallurgy, the adoption of writing and the minting of coins.

Until the 6th century BC, pottery is performed manually, at home, since it is produced to meet family needs. From this century onwards, by using the potter's wheel, pottery production becomes standardized and is carried out in workshops. At this time, the dual-chamber furnace is also introduced and



Reconstruction of a dual chamber kiln (F. Chiner).



Pottery from Kelin: cooking pots, brazier and bowls. 3rd and 2nd centuries BC.

together with the potter's wheel, exceptional pieces with thinner walls and more homogeneous finish are produced. Vessels are painted using brushes and compasses before being fired.

The earliest local pottery made with a potter's wheel come from Los Villares (Caudete de las Fuentes), the ancient city of Kelin, La Solivella (Alcala de Xivert) or the Cova del Cavall (Llíria). The decorative techniques consist of simple geometrical elements. From the 3rd century BC onwards, plant, animal and human motifs are added, appearing, in Valencian lands, two workshops or art circles: the narrative style of Llíria reflects aristocratic representations with processions and battles, dancing and hunting scenes, whereas the symbolic style of Elx-Archena, represents winged goddesses and mythological beings.



Vessel of the warriors from Edeta. 3rd-early 2nd centurie BC.

The repertoire is widely varied in shapes, including pantry, transportation and kitchen vessels- amphorae, pots, flasks and pans-, and tableware-plates, cups, jugs, bottles. Some items are specific for rituals-clepsidra\*, perfume burners or craters- or for personal use as ointments and microvessels.

The metal work, and especially the manufacture of iron weapons, is praised in classical sources for its quality and hardness. The mining and mineral reduction takes place outside the villages while houses feature furnaces for bronze metallurgy and cupellation\* of silver for ornaments and jewellery, and also of wrought iron for the manufacture of weapons and agricultural instruments. The presence of slag from furnaces and forges in the Castellet of Bernabé and the findings of tuyeres, mallets, grinders, chisels, crucibles and tongs in villages like Kelin and La Bastida de les Alcusses, testify this metalwork.



Kalathos decorated with scene of dancers and musicians from Edeta. 3rd-early 2nd century BC.

THE IBERIANS



Small jar with geometric and floral decoration from Edeta. 3rd-early 2nd centuries BC.

The Iberian artisans create jewellery in gold and silver using innovations like the filigree\*, the gold plating, the damascene\* and progresses in welding. This way, they were able to create jewellery with great personality and beauty characterized by its visual effectiveness, making possible to produce large pieces with light weight. Most are made from sheets embossed or decorated by welding on them various kinds of twisted yarns and gold granules. Other ornaments such as glass-paste necklaces and earrings come from the Punic trade.



Gold earring from Penya Roja. Embossing and stippling techniques.



Glasshead representing a barbed man. Covalta.



Twisted gold threaded pin for the hair. Bastida de les Alcusses. 4th century BC



Detail of the vessel of warriors from Edeta.

Writing is one of the distinctive cultural elements of the Iberians. Although the earliest records date back to the 6th century BC, in Valencian lands it becomes evident since the 4th century BC. The progressive Romanization and Latinization of the territory will make the Iberian language and writing gradually disappear towards the turn of the era.

The Iberian language is a Paleohispanic\* one; isolated and unrelated to any other known, their texts can be phonetically represented but cannot be translated, although it has been possible to identify names of people and places, verbs and numerals, in commercial, funerary, religious or narrative inscriptions. Writing was probably used only by a ruling minority.

There are three known writing systems: Eastern writing, extending along the coast to the Xúquer River, Meridian writing used in Contestan lands, and Ionic writing, limited to the region of Alcoi and a part of the coast of Alacant. The first two derive from the Phoenician language and are adapted to



Ivory comb decorated with two opposing carnivores. Kelin.

the phonetic Iberian rules, forming mixed writings, alphabetic and syllabic ones. The third one comes from adopting the Greek alphabet for writing the Iberian language.

The usual surface for writing are sheets of lead, such as those located in the Bastida de les Alcusses. Kelin or Pico de los Ajos (Yátova) but many texts written in other materials such as painted signs on pottery from Llíria and engravings on bone, stone, bronze or iron have also been found.



Lead sheet with Iberian oriental writing. Pico de los Ajos.

Another great innovation of the Iberian world is the minting of coins. Between the 5th and 3rd centuries BC, the Iberians occasionally adopted Greek coins for



Naval scene with Iberian text. Edeta. 3rd-early 2nd centuries BC.

their transactions, pieces that were probably appreciated as exotic objects as well. Most exchanges take place through barter or metal weight payment as indicated by findings of ingots and cut out silver fragments from La Bastida de les Alcusses, La Carència (Torís), Arse (Sagunt) or the little treasure of Kelin

In the 4th century BC, the first Iberian money emission is produced in Arse. However, the use of money as payment does not become a common practice until the Second Punic War (218-201 BC). Emissions of the mint\* of Saitabi (Xàtiva) began during this war, the only silver-coining workshop

together with Arse at the time. In the mid-2nd century BC, a modest production of bronze coin production in the cities of Kelin and Kili began.





Bronze coin from Saiti. 2nd century BC.



Funerary stela from Sinarcas. 1st century BC.

### Art and beliefs

The Iberians had myths and gods, protectors of life and death in its most varied aspects, although their representations are scarce. Rituals and funerary goods found in the necropolises and shrines, sculptures, votive



Bronze figurine representing an adult woman from Peal del Becerro shrine (Jaén).

offerings and scenes painted on pottery show a naturalistic religion of a polytheistic nature, similar to contemporary Mediterranean cultures (Punic, Greek and Etruscan).

The spiritual life of the Iberians is developed in places of worship, both outdoors and in sanctuaries, but also at home showing the complexity of religious manifestations. In shrinecaves, they deposited lamps, dishes and small containers linked to rituals and libations\* traditionally associated with telluric beliefs\* about nature, such as those found in the Cueva del Puntal del Horno Ciego (Villargordo del Cabriel). Shrines. located in relevant places of the territory are places of pilgrimage where the worshipers deposit their votive offerings aimed to strengthen tribal identity. These offerings represent human figures in an offering position) or animals such as the bronze figurines from Despeñaperros or Peal del Becerro (Jaén). In Edeta, many of the best-known decorated vessels like







Terracotta votive heads and incense burner featuring a female head. Puntal dels Llops. 3rd-early 2nd centuries BC.

the warrior's vessel, the kalathos of the dance, the fish dish, etc., as well as other offerings and terracotta appeared in the votive well of a temple. These unique and customized vessels, some with dedicated texts, represent ceremonies, rites and heroic scenes which reflect the imagination of the dominant classes of the city. Rites are also practiced at home, where perfume-burners, terracotta, votive



Reconstruction of a cremation scene on a funerary pyre (F. Chiner).

offerings and liturgical objects show the existence of cults to ancestors and ceremonies within the family, like in El Puntal dels Llops and Castellet de Bernabé.

As for the burials, the Iberians cremated their dead on a pyre and after the cremation, burnt bones and ashes were deposited in an urn. Next to the remains of the deceased, buried offerings from family and friends, who would take part in funeral rituals and banquets, can be found. These include abundant cereals, grapes, figs, pomegranates and bones of birds, pigs and lambs. In addition to these offerings, personal items of the deceased, which reflect their status or gender, such as weapons, tools, fibulas, pins or beads, were added. At the Museum, you can see a selection of weapons and furnishings found in the necropolises of Las Peñas (Zarra) and Casa del Monte (Valdeganga, Albacete).

The types of burials vary from simple pits dug into the ground to pillar-wake-shaped graves or tower-shaped monuments, clear examples of the tombs of the elites.



Funerary incinerations urns and offerings. Las Peñas. 6th century BC.



Female head from a funerary monument. Corral de Saus. 5th century BC.



«Damita» which is part of a funerary monument of the necropolis of Corral de Saus. 5th century BC.

Sculptural elements representing warriors, queens or fantastic creatures are added to these constructions. Good examples are the magnificent sculptures of the necropolis of Corral de Saus or the Estela de Ares del Maestre. From the 1st century BC they started using identified tombstones with inscriptions related to the deceased, as found in Sinarcas

Child burials found beneath the floor of houses related to domestic rituals are of particular interest. The cremation funerary ritual does not apply to newborns and they are set aside from adult burial areas since they are neither incinerated nor buried in the necropolises but buried beneath the houses. This difference in treatment raises the suspicion of rites of passage depending on age, although some evidence also point to foundational sacrifices.



Child burial urn found under a room floor. Castellet de Bernabé.

#### Route of the Iberians in Valencia

The outreach of the Prehistory Museum of Valencia is not limited to the material culture on display in the rooms but it also extends to the most emblematic Iberian valencian sites: Bastida de les Alcusses (Moixent), Kelin (Caudete de las Fuentes), Tossal de Sant Miquel/Edeta (Llíria), Castellet de Bernabé (Llíria), Puntal dels Llops (Olocau), La Seña (Villar del Arzobispo), El Molón (Camporrobles), Castellar de Meca

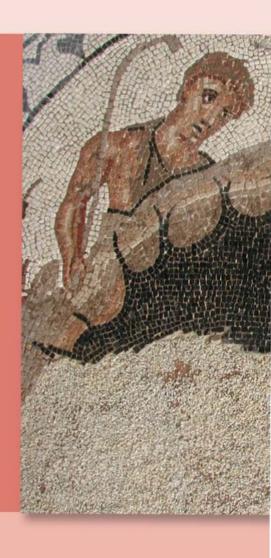
(Ayora) and Tos Pelat (Moncada). They are all part route of the Iberians of Valencia, which offers the possibility of getting to know the world of the Iberians through the visit of some of the most important sites located in areas of great natural and scenic value.

In some of them, as is the case of Bastida de les Alcusses, the Museum organizes workshops for schools and visiting days. In addition, the Museum participates in the Open Day in Kelin and Puntal dels Llops, and



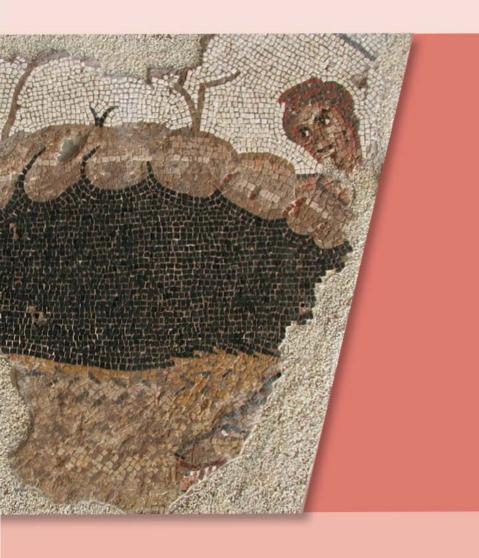


in any other initiative proposed by City Councils concerning the Iberian heritage.



Detail of mosaic Font de Mussa, Benifaió (1st-2nd centuries).

# **Romanization and the Roman World**



## Romanization and the Roman World

The History of Rome, as known through both written sources and archaeological remains, spans over a millennium, from the mythical founding of Rome in 753 BC until the end of the Western Roman Empire in the year 476 (although in the East it lasts until the year 1453, as the Byzantine Empire). From the city of Rome the Italian peninsula is unified and an empire that gradually establishes throughout the Mediterranean is built, ranging from Britain to the Sahara Desert and from the Iberian Peninsula to the Euphrates River.

During this period, the basis of law, art, literature, architecture and language of the West were established. Techno-



Household ware from the Roman Republic period. Diverse origin.

logical innovations took place allowing advances in engineering and architecture. The development of navigation and construction of large merchant ships turned the Mediterranean Sea into a vast network of communication along which, both products and knowledge, circulated.

The occupation Iberia is marked by the Punic Wars (264-146 BC) between Rome and Carthage, by which thev distribute their territories of influence and divide them into provinces. Valencian inhabited lands, the Iberians, had



Household ware from the Imperial period. Pla de l'Arc.



relevant role in the Second Punic War (218-201 BC) with the occupation of Arse (Sagunt) by Hannibal. This conflict between Romans and Carthaginians ends with the triumph of the first and the progressive inclusion of the Iberian peninsula into their territories. Thus, a long process begins, known as Romanization, which is slowly introduced in Valencian lands over the second and first centuries BC, with situations of resistance, coexistence, assimilation and interaction with the Iberian culture. It will be during the reign of Augustus when the Iberians fully integrate into the Roman world.

Romanization implies a series of changes in the territorial organization and in the judiciary, administrative and tax systems. These changes affect areas such as the right of citizenship, language and writing, the worship of new divinities, the introduction and expansion of new monetary and measurement systems.

This new political, economic and social order spreads, essentially through colonies or newly founded cities. The most important are the ones established along the main communication route linking Rome with southern Spain, the Via Augusta, which also allows the transport of products obtained in the new farms or villas. In the Valencia region, the main colonies and indigenous cities that become



Visigothic capital of Byzantine tradition. Pla de Nadal.

districts or Roman stipendiary cities\* are: Lesera (Moleta dels Frares. el Forcall. Castellón). Arse / Saguntum (Sagunt), Edeta (Llíria), Valentia (Valencia) Saitabi (Xàtiva) Dianium (Dénia), Lucentum (Tossal of Manises, Alicante), Ilici (Elx) and Allon (la Vila Joiosa).

Titus Livius, in the History of Rome, 28.1, describes in the 1st century that « ... the seacoast and most part of Eastern Hispania are under the control of Scipio

and the Romans». This vast territory, difficult to control, eventually broke up at the end of the 4th century A.D. Germanic or Barbarian Invasions in the Iberian Peninsula. starting on the 5th century, hasten the end of the Western Roman Empire causing the breakdown of the political and administrative organization. The Visigoths, heirs of the material and architectural culture of the Roman world. rearranged the territory into bishoprics and places of Christian worship.

# Lifestyle: city and countryside

In Roman society, living and working conditions vary according to the social class to which one belongs and to where one lives, either the city or rural areas. Slavery is one of the pillars of its economy both for public jobs and household chores.

Urban areas are the centres of government and trade with public buildings, private houses, workshops and shops for the production and sale of products. Within them, skilled trades arise, specialized in construction, the manufacture of fabrics, shoes, jewellery or pottery, and other professions such as doctors, bankers, traders and teachers.



Leaf-shaped gold sheet. Valencia. 2nd-1st centuries BC.



Gold earring from the Imperial period. Valencia.



Gold ring from the Imperial period. Llíria.

These activities and the sophisticated Roman daily life are evidenced in the many objects, images of mural paintings, reliefs and epigraphic texts found in excavations.

Leisure time includes involvement in public performances, games, parties and attendance to baths or spas which are places to relax and establish social relationships. Examples of these complex facilities in Valencia are the baths excavated in the Pla de l'Arc (Llíria) and the ones that can be visited at l'Almoina (Valencia).

The foundation of a Roman city is determined by an Etruscan ritual where the priest seeks advice from the gods concerning the layout and limits of the urban area or *pomerium*, walled by towers and fortified gates.

The urban layout is designed following a regular and planned model called Hippodamus. It consists in dividing the space into four areas by

orthogonal two axes that make up the two main streets of the city, the cardo maximus running from north to south and the decumanus maximus from east to west.

At the junction of the two roads lies the forum or public square around which the



Urban miniature layout of a Roman city.

main public buildings as the curia\*, the basilica\*, temples and warehouses are allocated. The private households are organized into blocks of houses or insulae. The main entertainment and recreation buildings are the theatre, the amphitheatre, the circus and the baths.

Roman houses or domus are built around a small patio or open court whose function is ventilation and lighting of the house while allowing the collection and storage of rainwater in a cistern. The rooms are distributed around it, leaving the garden at the back. The rooms facing the street are often used as shops or tabernae.

The land is divided into plots of land of 20 actus (50 hectares), *centuriatio*, where the main Roman economic activity, agriculture, is developed. This activity is organized around agricultural private properties, *villae rusticae*, with large areas for farming and production facilities and a luxury home for resting. In one of these villas, the magnificent mosaic of Font de Mussa (Benifaió), whose central medallion shows an allegory of the myth of the founding of Rome, was recovered.

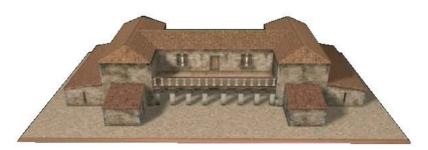


Recreation of the Roman Cornelius villa of l'Ènova (F. Chiner).

The main crops are cereals, grapes, olives, vegetables, pulses, tubers and fruits. The buildings have facilities for the elaboration of wine and oil, which are stored in large jars or dolias. Other activities are stockbreeding, pottery, basketry, metalwork, carpentry, tanning and spinning as studied in the Villa of Cornelius, next to Saetabis (Xàtiva), which was involved in farming and the processing of flax. The coastal villages also produce salted fish and fish sauces such as garum.



The Visigothic villa of Pla del Nadal (Riba-roja de Túria).



The Visigothic villa of Pla del Nadal.

#### Trade

Trade is a key activity for the Romans. In fact, one of the reasons for their presence in Spain is their interest in obtaining products and resources in order to include them in their commercial networks. The cities, besides being political, administrative, economic and religious

centres are responsible for trade and its redistribution. A wide variety of products make up the Roman commerce: spices, salt, textiles, metals, grain, wine, oil, salted fish and even marble and other materials for construction and decoration. The currency minted by Rome and some of its provincial cities became the main object for transactions and it spread like never before. Transport is carried out in large boats arriving to the main coastal ports and, from products are distributed to the cities along a vast network of roads.



Bronze scale from Vélez Blanco (Almería).



Amphorae cargo in a Roman ship hold.

### **Materials and Tools**

In Roman times a wealth of technological innovations appeared and they had great impact in the society up to the present day.



Dog-shaped terracotta gargoyle from the Imperial period. Rome.





Bottle and glass bowl from the Imperial period. Tisneres

In architecture and engineering new machinery is developed, as well as construction techniques as the arches with keystones, the vault and the dome. These new techniques. along with bricks and lime mortar, can create great buildings of considerable height, strength and creativity, as recounted by Vitruvius in the 1st century. Architectural elements such as wall coatings and marble paving, mosaics, stucco, wall paintings and sculptures complete the decoration of buildings and homes.

The aqueduct, a cutting edge supply and distribution system, brings water from springs and reservoirs to the cities where, through ceramic or lead pipes, it is channelled to the various public and private buildings.

Other contributions of the Romans are the invention of brass, an alloy of copper and zinc, and the discovery of glass-blowing, a technique that artisans used to perform delicate

everyday objects such as ointments, tableware and glasses for windows in replacement of plaster or lapis specularis.

Pottery production also experienced significant advances. Large workshops, especially in rural villages, supply their pieces to dealers who distribute them throughout the Empire. In Republican times, and following the Attic tradition, black-glaze pottery from Campania reached the Iberian Peninsula. In Imperial times, these productions were replaced by redglaze pottery known as terra siqillata for having the potter's hallmark (sigilla) printed at the bottom. There were relevant Sigillata-producing centres at the Italian Peninsula, Gaul,

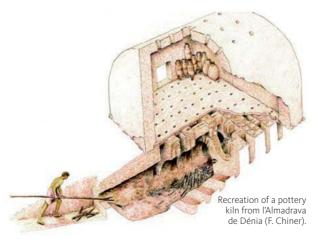


Ceramic mould featuring a hare and a bunch of grapes. Guadassèquies.



Terra sigillata pottery decorated with the figure of Mercury. Ampurias. 1st century.

Hispania (Rioja, Teruel and Andújar), North Africa and the Middle East. This large-scale production was possible due to the introduction of skilled workers using moulds on which they made different shapes and decorations. Each workshop had its own decorative repertoire which makes possible to identify the source of the pottery recovered.



#### **Art and Beliefs**

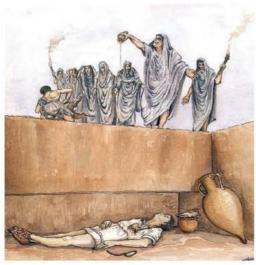
The term religio was understood as the set of relationships established between men and gods. Roman religion worshiped many gods and goddesses and believed in life after death. Although many Greek deities were adopted



Lucerna or oil lamps. Ampurias.

for the construction of the Roman pantheon, they continued to worship their ancient gods. It was also common to worship the domestic gods Lares\*, Manes and Penate, as well as the Eastern and imperial cults, reflecting the close relationship between religion and state.

A priesthood system was established and rituals relied heavily on offerings and sacrifices performed in temples, shrines, necropolises or in homes.



Reconstruction of a funeral ritual in burial pit (F. Chiner).

Rituals around the main stages of life and social cycle of individuals (birth, marriage and death) were common. In the last case, vigils are held over several days with funeral processions, banquets, music and dancing. The deceased are

usually buried with grave goods and offerings, frequently including ceramic or glass objects filled with food and ointments, oil-lamps or lucerna and personal ornaments, as well as a coin in the mouth as payment for the passage to the realm of Hades\*.

Romans practiced both cremations placed in urns as

well as burials placed in pits covered with tiles, in vessels or in wooden, stone or lead sarcophagi. They also built individual or familiar funeral buildings that may have inscriptions regarding the deceased. Examples of these practices are the remains recovered in the city of Valentia or the offerings from the necropolis of Tisneres (Alzira).

Their cemeteries must be located, according to the Law of the XII Tables, outside the cities, preferably next to access roads, thus, acting as a reminder to the living, who must honour the memory of the dead through offerings and libations.

The rise of Christianity, finally accepted as the official religion of the Empire in 380 AC, ends the



Christian inscription with Chrismon symbol from the year 395.



Funerary inscription. Pedralba.



traditional classical pantheon and brings a crucial change in Roman world beliefs

Some Christian places of worship located in the Valencia region, dating between the end of the ancient world and the beginning of the Middle Ages, are the monastery of the Punta de l'Illa (Cullera) and the courtly villa of Pla de Nadal (Riba-roja de Túria).

Liturgical cross from the monastic complex of Punta de l'Illa. 6th century.

### **Gods and cults**

Some of the Roman deities are: Jupiter, god of heaven; Juno, protector of marriage and births; Neptune, god of sea; Pluto, god of the underworld or darkness, understood

as the hereafter; Minerva, goddess of wisdom and weapons; Venus, goddess of love; Mars, god of war; Mercury, messenger of the gods; Bacchus, related to wine, orgiastic dances and worship of the dead; Diana, goddess of hunting and wildlife; Apollo, related to virtue, healing, purification and arts; Victoria, associated with military victory. Most of them were worshiped in Valencian lands.

Cultural influences from the East brought the mystery cults to Roman beliefs. These were widely accepted by providing a different view of the world as a mere transit and preparation to another life. The initiation rites were understood as training to obtain the Divine favour. The most widely spread deities were Isis and Mithra as evidenced by the inscription found in the Valencian town of la Font de Mussa (Benifaió).



Female marble sculpture. València La Vella (Riba-roja de Túria). 2nd and 3rd centuries.

## The Apollo from Pinedo: from the deep sea to the Museum

On December 8th, 1963, a group of divers found a unique bronze sculpture in the waters of Pinedo (Valencia), which was taken to the Prehistory Museum

According to classical mythology, Apollo is the son of Zeus and is one of the twelve gods who live in Olympus. He is responsible for driving the solar chariot and has the knowledge of future. The Greeks called him Apollo and the Romans, Phoebus. As god of arts, he takes the form of a floating-haired young man carrying a laurel wreath on his head and a lyre in his hand. Indeed, this seems to be the more accurate interpretation of the statue found in Pinedo.

The Apollo from Pinedo is a copy made in the 1st century of Greek and Hellenistic models. It specifically seems to be a copy of the original made by Demetrius of Miletus in the late 2nd century BC representing Apollo Delphinios.

The sculpture was probably part of the cargo of a merchant vessel whose destination might well have been the home of an important Roman ruling-class







# The history of money



# The history of money



English manila for the African trade. 18th-19th centuries.



Kuba fabric. Democratic Republic of Congo. 20th century.



Gambling token. Thailand. 19th-20th centuries.

A wide variety of objects display the different formats of money spent on the five continents at different times in history. They have all served as means of payment or as a measure of value and have proven useful for storing wealth: notes and coins but also bracelets, weapons, tools, glass-paste beads, knives, axes. hoes, porcelain tiles. bamboo sticks, textiles, bronze or silver ingots, lead coins, salt, tea, cocoa or quartzite stones.

The tour of the room does not show only forms of money, but includes a wide variety of pieces that have been associated with their management, use or social perception, such as piggy banks, wallets, invoices, legislation, engravings, scales, weights or calculators.

The coin as we know it today appeared in the late century BC on the Greek coast of Asia Minor and has been the most widespread form of money throughout Coins dominated the economic networks until the introduction

of banknotes in the 17th century and credit cards in the 20th century.

The artisanal manufacturing of coins was one of the most important processes of antiquity. The hammered coinage lasted



Scales to weigh gold coins. 1760.

until the 17th century, becoming a specialized technique by which the coins of most of the history of mankind were produced. The introduction of machinery for coin production goes back to the 16th century.

## Minting

designs on both sides

A mint is where coins are made. The minting hammer first appeared in the 7th century BC and lasted until the 17th century, when the mechanization process became widespread. The use of machinery allows obtaining larger and more homogeneous pieces while the productivity increases and Recreation of the minting so does the difficulty of forgery. process. F. Chiner The minting process begins with the preparation of the blanks. En general, during antiquity, they were melted into molds, while in the Middle Ages and Modern times the practice of cutting them from plates extended. The blank is placed between the two dies, one for the obverse, fixed on the anvil, and another one for the reverse, held by the operator. The strength of the mallet marks on the metal the



Bolskan. 2nd century BC.





Ducado of the Catholic Monarchs. 1479-1516.

The various exhibition areas provide a broad overview of the history of money. The visit begins by introducing unique monetary treasures from Valencia: the coin set from Llíria, consisting of about 6,000 Roman denarii; the extraordinary Islamic treasure of Santa Elena Street (Valencia) composed of 1,940 pieces of gold which go back to the end of the 11th century; and the one from Requena, formed by 223 Spanish gold pieces from the 18th and 19th centuries. A selection of four exceptional coins allows the visitor to contemplate the best of the Valencian monetary art through an Iberian drachma from Arse, a Roman as of Valentia, a timbre of Alfons el Magnànim and a ducat of the Catholic Kings minted in the mint of Valencia.

The origin of coins is explained and the most representative emissions of Greek and Roman times are displayed. From this point, the chronological order is abandoned to adopt a thematic discourse where coins and banknotes are analyzed from different perspectives such as manufacturing, metrology, values and formats, monetary policy, authorities and designs or the phenomenon of forgery.

In both public and private buildings, safes are used to store money and important documents. Models with triple lock make necessary the presence of three different people simultaneously in order to open them, thus achieving a more controlled access to its content.

Safe made in Marseille. 18th-19th centuries.

The visit is assisted by the recreation of a 17th century mint as a teaching resource for understanding the hammered coinage, a traditional process that was applied for about 2,500 years.

Setting coins and notes aside, another area of the exhibition



One yuan Ming banknote. Ca 1375.

focuses on introducing other types of currencies from different periods and cultures. Displayed in a large showcase are objects used money organized groups according the material which they were manufactured with. In this context. tokens and vouchers. and unique formats used as money by preindustrial societies of Africa and Oceania are shown



One peseta banknote with the Lady of Elx design. 1948.



Recreation of a mint from the late 17th century.

The unavoidable topic of the custody and saving money is also approached. In this part of the visit one can see a bigsize safe used by the County Council of València in the 19th century, a scene that recreates a bank from the early 20th century and a cash register from 1911.

Finally, different related issues are addressed, such as medals, accounting, the numismatic tradition and even the use of money with a different purpose from

the economic one through materials of different periods and backgrounds.



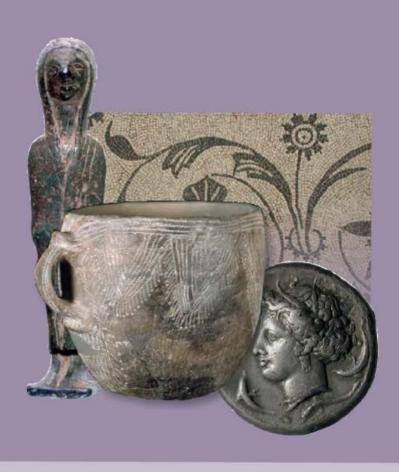
Medal of the SIP commemorating the 50th anniversary. 1977.



Indian-shaped piggy bank. Domund. Mid- 20th century.



# Glossary and bibliography



# **Glossary**

#### R

**Basilica:** public building used in Roman times as meeting place and venue of courts. It was located near the forum.

Blade technology: common technique since the Upper Palaeolithic. It consists in preparing the flint core to extract long and thin blades. This technique leads to a better use of the stone core.

**Bronze:** metal alloy consisting primarily of copper, usually with tin as the main additive but sometimes with the addition of zinc or some other element.

**Burial:** disposal of the corpse in a grave or burial structure.

#### C

Comb: small bone toothed spatula employed to make impressions on pottery.

Courtly Villa: palatial residence.

**Cupellation:** metallurgical operation consisting in melting minerals or metals separating its impurities through a crucible.

Curia: public building where the judges of the Senate met. It was located near the forum.

#### D

**Damascene:** artisan work made by inlaying silver threads into slots or openings on iron or bronze pieces.

Filigree: jewellery metalwork made of thin gold sheets, gold threads and beads attached by welding.

Flake: fragment that emerges from the core of a stone after hitting it. It is generally wider than longer. It can be used as a cutting tool or for other purposes by changing its edges.

**Flint:** sedimentary rock composed mainly of silica used in the manufacture of tools during prehistory.

#### н

**Hades:** name given in Greek mythology to the world of the dead

#### K

**Kalathos:** cylindrical ceramic container with flat edges characteristic of the Iberian world. Also known as "top hat".

#### ı

**Lares, manes and penates gods:** roman religion worshiped these household gods identified with spirits of ancestors who protected the family and home.

**Levallois and discoid technology:** knapping techniques used since the Paleolithic consisting in preparing the rock core for obtaining flakes, blades and points.

**Libation:** ritual or religious ceremony that consists in pouring wine or other alcoholic beverage to honour the gods.

#### M

Mint: place where coins are made.

## Ν

**Necropolis:** cemetery or space devoted to the dead.

#### P

**Paleohispanic or pre-Roman Languages:** languages spoken in the Iberian peninsula before the arrival of the Romans.

**Portable Art:** set of artistic expressions that can be transported. Usually made on bones, stone plates or mud.

## 0

Quaternary: last of the geologic eras characterized by the appearance of humans and the alternation of glacial and interglacial periods.

#### R

**Rock art:** set of artistic expressions made on the walls or ceilings of caves, shelters or rock formations.

#### S

**Sedentary communities:** societies, such as the Neolithic ones, characterized by living in permanent settlements.

Stipendiary Cities: cities under the rule of the Governor of the Province, which were obliged to pay tribute and to contribute to the Roman army.

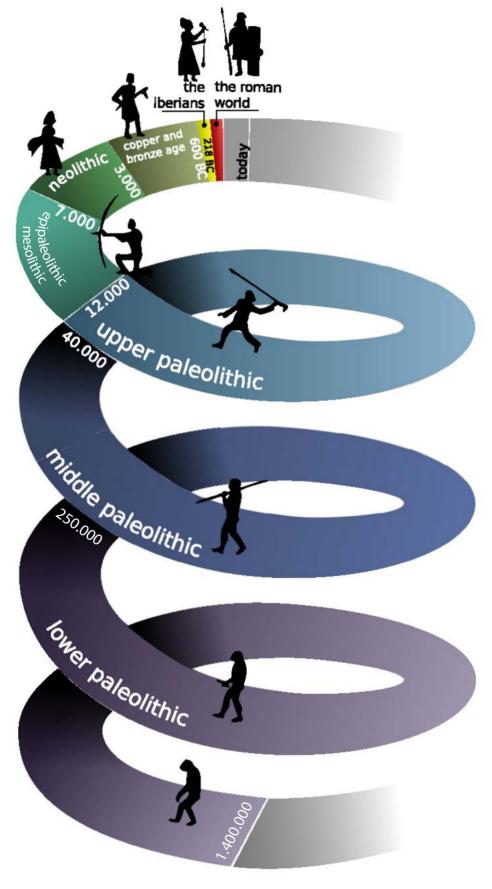
**Tartessos:** culture that developed during the end of the Bronze and Iron Age on the southwest coast of the Iberian Peninsula (modern Huelva, Seville and Cadiz).

Telluric Beliefs: beliefs based on the strength of the natural elements.

Votive offering: figurines, usually of small size, made in bronze, clay or stone, which are offered to deities as a form of gratitude. Usually found in sanctuaries.

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