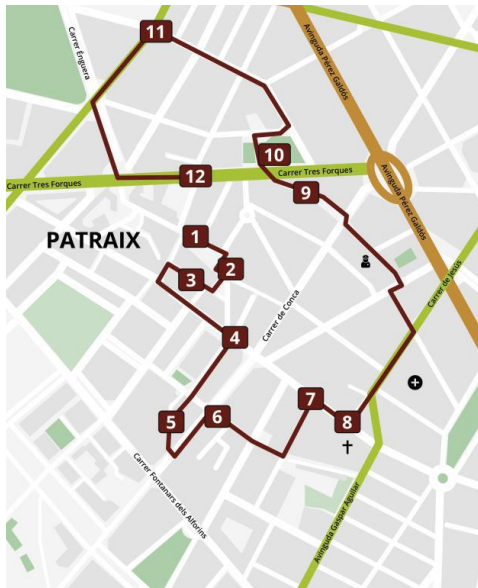


5. “Battifora” Factory



The silk spinning mill, popularly known as “La Batifora” was built at the end of the XVIII century in the Patraix crop growing area, next to the Favara waterway, by Giovanni Battista Battifora, Consul in Genova and Professor of Canon Law at the University of València. However, following a lawsuit, Santiago Dupuy de Lôme (from Madrid but originally from a French family) acquired the factory in 1831.

The Dupuy de Lôme family came from Quérézieux and Montbrison in the Loire Valley and belonged to a noble french family who, after the revoltuion of 1789, settled in Spain.

Santiago Luis Dupuy de Lôme settled definitely in València, after marrying Isidra Paulín de la Peña, from Cullera, with whom he started a saga of Valencian diplomats, politicians and businessmen.

Dupuy modernised the factory installing in 1836 the first high pressure steam engine, from the French company Tarcot, that had sixteen horsepower; which was a novelty in the incipient process of industrialisation.

The machine was powered by the flow of the Favara waterway, which also supplied water to cook the silkworm cocoons. This industrial innovation earned him a gold medal and the title of Member of Merit of the Royal Economic Society of Friends of the Country.

The magnificent building features a sequential design of the windows on the façade in order to take advantage of natural light throughout the working day.

Also noteworthy are its stone doors, the miramar tower, the mobila beams and the cast-iron columns.

There were around 300 employees working in this factory, most of them women from Picanya and Paiporta, and over fifty from Segorbe. With the help of the Earl of Ripalda, Dupuy tried to improve the cultivation of mulberry trees and worms, as well as yarn and dyes in the spinning mills. Despite the french and italian competitors and the commercial agreements with Great Britain and India, the changes made by Dupuy reactivated Valencian silk and provided great benefits.

However, from 1854 onwards an epidemic of the silkworm, the pebrine worm, caused drastic changes in the Valencian silk industry.

The “Velluters” (velvet manufacturers), which were so important for the prosperity of medieval and modern València, almost disappeared; and most of the surviving looms were concentrated in factories.

At the same time, mulberry trees experienced a radical decline in the Valencian crop growing area, and other crops, such as citrus, began their expansion in the area.

The silk weaving industry specialising in high quality luxury fabrics survived into the XX century, and some companies still exist today, especially linked to traditional Valencian clothing.

In 1999, the city council of València acquired the building and rehabilitated it, establishing a sports and cultural complex.

The Battifora factory is one of the most important surviving landmarks of the formerly extensive huerta of Patraix (crop growing area). Further away, continuing the Azagador de las Monjas road, the General Cemetery could be reached.

A place that was not pleasant to visit, reason why the locals of Patraix, to say figuratively that someone had passed away, said it had gone to “donar la volta del nou” (turn around like tram number 9), because tram number 9 finished its route where the cemetery entrance was and turned around in that location to return to the centre of the city.

General information

Address: Assagador de les Monges Street 10.

Opening times:

Monday to Friday: from 7:30 to 22:00

Saturday: 8:00 to 14:00

Sunday: 9:00 to 14:00

Accessibility

Access: Access to the Street with lowered pavement. Access to the site by ramp.

Mobility inside: Two-storey building with operational lifts with visual information and Braille-reading buttons.

Toilets: adapted toilets are available on both floors.

Parking: Parking spaces reserved for persons with reduced mobility at the junction of Manuel Simó Street and Assagador de les Monjes and at Pius XI 13 Street.