

## EUROPEAN MEDIUM-SIZED CITY TRANSFORMATION THROUGH THE MONASTIC TYPOLOGY. HERITAGE AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN ÉCIJA (SPAIN) AND AACHEN (GERMANY)

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ABB. MONASTERIES AND CONVENTS OF ÉCIJA (LEFT) AND AACHEN (RIGHT) IN THE 18TH CENTURY. SOURCE: AUTHOR

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## Research Questions

We can find monasteries and convents throughout Christian territory, Can it be considered a European urban phenomenon? Does the conventual heritage have a significant identity in the European medium-sized city?

Do convent cities configure a network and connections with other convent cities? How does it work in the territorial layer?

What is the impact of convent buildings on medium-sized cities? How do convents and monasteries influence urban development?

What has the development of these buildings in the city been?

Do monasteries and convents in southern and central European cities behave in the same way?

Monastic life had an important role in the past. Nowadays the number of religious people has decreased considerably. How do these buildings function in the city today?

In many cases, the urban convent heritage is very extensive. How can this heritage be managed in the city? What are other possibilities for the future?



ABB. OBEN: VIEW OF ÉCIJA IN 1567. SOURCE: GEORG HOEFNAGEL; UNTEN: VIEW OF AACHEN IN 1647. SOURCE: MATTHÄUS MERIAN

## Targeted Results

Understanding the importance of the convent system not only from the building point of view but also its repercussions at a territorial level on a European scale. Understanding why certain cities are more favorable than others to convents and how these have influenced their urban development. In the field of urban planning, it is hoped to deepen and better understand the urban development of medium-sized European cities and the impact of convents on them.

Due to the influence and heritage generated by urban monasteries, it is expected to deepen the urban and heritage protection of these buildings. The disappearance of many of these buildings and their poor conservation has led to their almost total disappearance. Therefore, the aim is to find the keys to contribute and help to the conservation of convent heritage in cities, preventing their disappearance as they are part of the city itself.

## Research Methods

The research methodology is divided into three phases: theoretical framework, analytical framework, and propositional framework. In the first phase, a general monastic framework and its context in Europe is studied. Research objectives and methodology are defined. A theoretical basis on which to base the research is constructed. Bibliography and sources on the urban conventual structure are consulted, as the subject is centred on urban planning and the city. Finally, a general recognition of conventuality in the territory and the city is carried out. The second phase starts with the development of the selected case studies. These are the cities of Ecija (Spain) and Aachen (Germany). Fieldwork is carried out to identify the buildings and the city. All the information generated is systematised using GIS. An evaluation of the existing convent heritage is carried out and the importance of convent buildings for society is recognised.

The third phase, being propositional, compares the urban models and the keys that have been necessary to understand them. Strategies for the conservation of convent heritage are selected. The keys to the conservation and protection of urban-conventual heritage are studied. The possibility of extrapolation to other similar case studies is studied.

Finally, research requires parallel publications in journals and conferences. In addition to international stays in order to study case studies and to raise doctoral research to a European and international scale.

