

1808  
1809

Los Sitios  
de Zaragoza

## Magdalena square

This square was the maximum point of the French advance during the second Siege of which Zaragoza suffered in the War of Independence in 1809. Next to the street called Calle Doctor Palomar and the San Agustín convent, there were the three main objectives which ended up undermining the Zaragoza defence in this city zone.

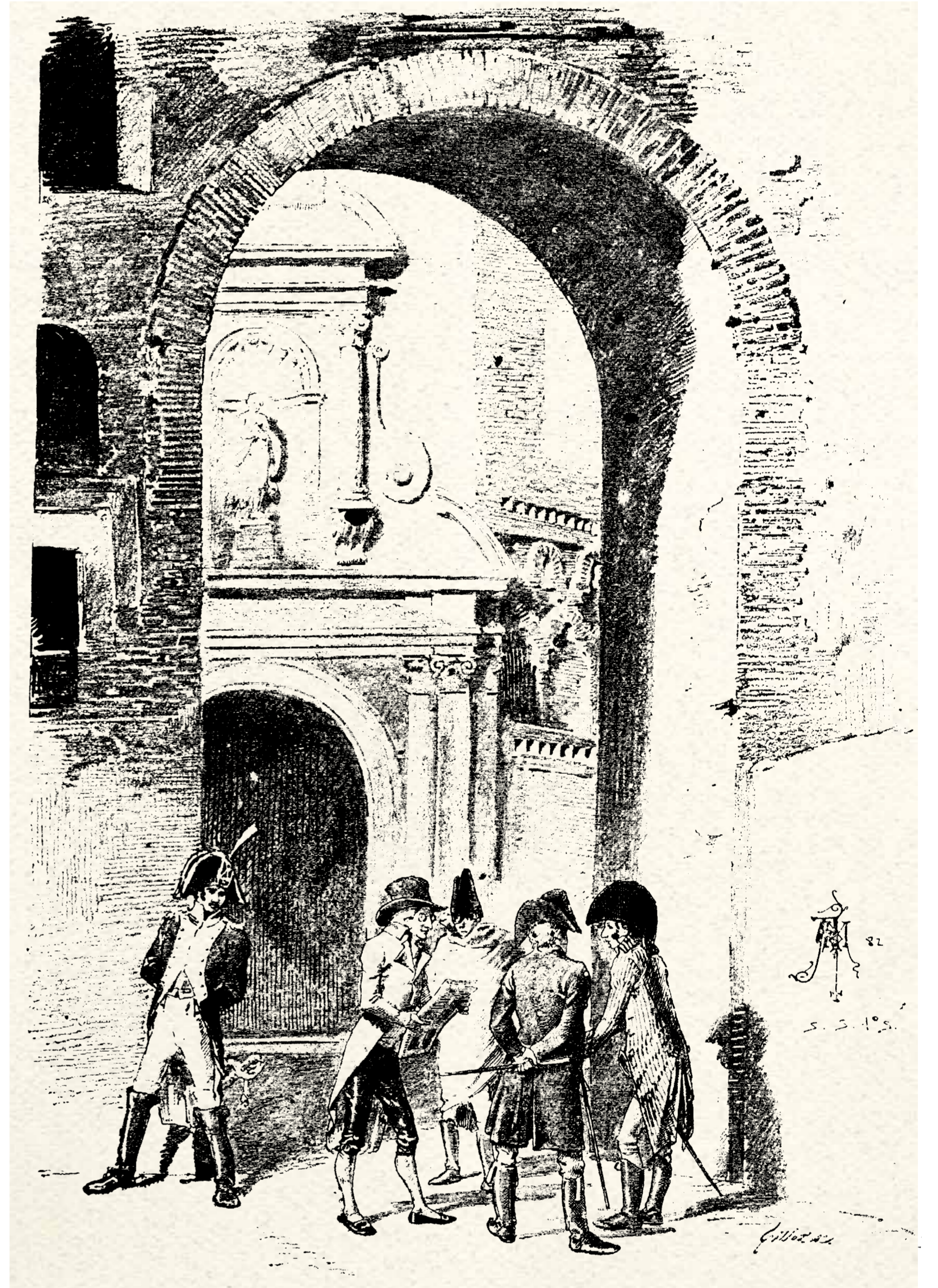


Plaza de la Magdalena con Iglesia y Universidad. Fototipia Castañeira y Álvarez. Archivo Municipal de Zaragoza, 4-1\_0224.

## THE VALENCIA ARCH

After occupying San Agustín, the French troops advanced towards Calle Coso and the Magdalena square, receiving Aragon gunfire from the church tower and the Arch called Arco de Valencia, one of the city gates which enclosed the square in its exit towards Calle Coso. Such was the Aragon resistance, that in order to conquer the few meters which separate the San Agustín Convent, the Calle Coso and this square, it took the French ten days, where they had to occupy it house by house.

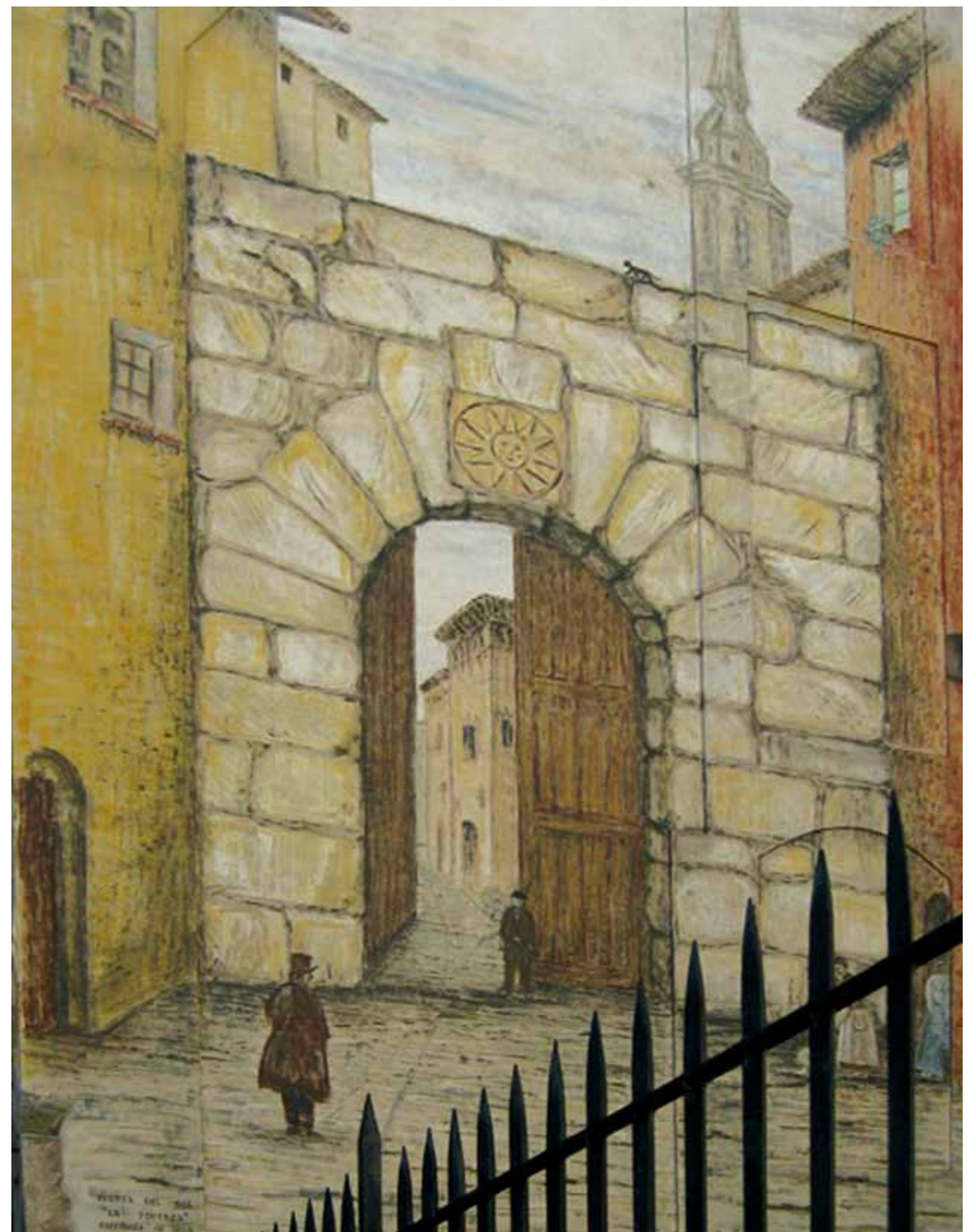
When the city surrendered on 21 February 1809, the French were detained in the Plaza de la Magdalena, surrounded by fires caused by the defenders.



Zaragoza citizen advocates before the Valencia Arch, in front of the parish church of Magdalena, on 24 May 1808 (Lithograph by Mérida, 1882).

## THE SUN GATE

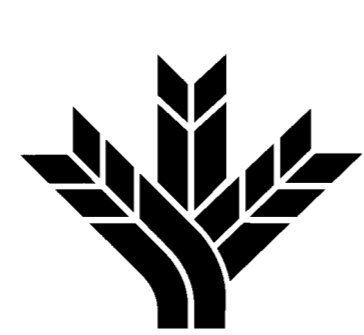
In addition to the Valencia gate, other gates were opened in the wall which surrounded the city, which were important points in Zaragoza's defence. Very near the square, there is the Puerta del Sol (The Sun Gate), which left Las Tenerías neighbourhood outside the walls and in the nearby San Miguel neighbourhood, there was the Puerta Quemada (Burned Gate), which was then named the Puerta Heroísmo (Heroism Gate) after the Sieges due to the tough resistance shown by its residents.



Pintura mural representando la Puerta del Sol.



English  
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CAJA RURAL  
DE ARAGÓN



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AYUNTAMIENTO

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The beautiful building of the former University of Zaragoza was located in the plot of this square which today is occupied by a Secondary Education Institute. Several plaques on its fence illustrate what it was like in the period of the Sieges.



Universidad de Zaragoza. Archivo Municipal de Zaragoza, 4-1\_01239.

## IGNACIO JORDÁN DE ASSO

The Square called Plaza de Asso, located just behind the Magdalena square, is named after Ignacio Jordán de Asso (Zaragoza, 1742-1814), an important Aragon jurist and scientist. He had a PhD in Law; he knew Greek, Latin, Arabic, French and German; he was a University professor, a lawyer in service of the Crown and a professional consul who served in Dunkirk, Amsterdam and Bordeaux. His work, *Historia de la Economía Política de Aragón* (*History of the Political Economy of Aragón*) is well known.

During the two Sieges of Zaragoza, he was an advisor of General Palafox and he wrote the *Gaceta Extraordinaria de Zaragoza* (*Extraordinary Gazette of Zaragoza*), where his reports helped to warn the popular resistance. The Asso Palace, the childhood home where this illustrious Aragon celebrity lived is conserved in this square.



Dibujo de Ignacio Jordán de Asso. Archivo Municipal de Zaragoza, G4174.



Palacio de Ignacio Jordán de Asso. Plaza de Ignacio Jordán de Asso. Años 70, siglo XX. Archivo Municipal de Zaragoza, 4-1\_0143307.



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