

# LITERATURE OF THE MODERN AGE

Under the umbrella term Catalan literature of the Modern Age, we can group the different aesthetic currents that until recently had usually been classified under the now-obsolete name of the *Decadència* ('Decline'). Compared to the latter, the former at least has the advantage of being more objective and lacking in *a priori* negative connotations. The new term literature of the Modern Age presents a merely chronological scope which encompasses works created in Catalan produced from the last Mediaeval classics until the early Romantic works (between approximately 1500 and 1830), and includes different aesthetic schools or currents that are more clearly defined and more comparable with the other western literatures, such as: Mediaeval epigones, Renaissance, Mannerism, Baroque, Rococo, Neoclassicism, Pre-Romanticism, Sentimentalism and so forth. Nevertheless, it should be acknowledged that the period in question coincided not only with the Catalan becoming increasingly secondary in status and breaking off into dialects, but also with a decline in the quality and quantity of literary output.

On the other hand, as is widely known, the appearance and dissemination of the printing press ran parallel to the historical beginnings of the Modern Age and was precisely one of the factors that culturally drove it. Still, despite hopeful beginnings, the literary production that was actually printed in Catalan was somewhat scant compared to what has reached us as manuscripts and, more generally speaking, compared to other neighbouring literatures. Indeed, the "literature" printed in Catalan that was most widespread during the Modern Age entailed religious or popular works. With regard to the aesthetic level and intentions of this output, there is no doubt that overall it can be regarded as on a lower order; their importance lies more in the fact that they were books that enjoyed greater circulation amongst the common people, and that from the 16<sup>th</sup> century until the 'resurgence' in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, publications in Catalan are distinguished by not having ceased at any time – with the consequence that reading in Catalan never ceased either.

First we shall survey the literary creations with certain ambitions that were *printed* in Catalan during the Modern Age. In poetry, what first must be mentioned are the books from the local Renaissance, especially the *Dos llibres de Pedro Serafín de poesia vulgar en llengua catalana* (Barcelona 1565: *Two Books by Pedro Serafín of Popular Poetry in the Catalan Language*) by the Catalan Pere Serafí (c. 1505-1567?) and the poems in Catalan (although there are also some in Spanish) from the collection of lyrical poems *Flor de enamorados* (*Sweethearts' Flower*) compiled by the Valencian Joan Timoneda (1518/20-1583) but published in Barcelona (1573; a publishing success: it was reissued seven different times by 1681). From the Baroque period we have the publication (Barcelona 1703, 1712, 1820) of the poems by the priest Vicent Garcia (1578/79-1623), a highly popular author at the time in Catalonia writing under the pseudonym of the 'Rector de Vallfogona' (*rector* here means parish priest), which make up the most significant corpus of Catalan poetry from the Modern Age.

The scant amount of cultured theatre printed in Catalan during these centuries is virtually limited to one religious comedy by the same Garcia and several dramatic works published in French Catalonia during the 18<sup>th</sup> century, also on religious topics and in a style somewhere between early Baroque (of Spanish inspiration) and Classicism (of French inspiration), as well as a translation of Racine (*Esther*).

In terms of prose, what most stands out is the publication of the mystical, allegorical novel *Espill de la vida religiosa* (Barcelona 1515, second edition: Valencia 1529; *Mirror to Religious Life*), attributed to the monk Miquel Comalada, a veritable best-seller in its Spanish version under the title of *El Deseoso* and which was also translated into other languages (German, English [*Desiderius*, 1604, 1971], French, Italian and others). Also worthy of mention are certain historiographic printed works such as: *Cròniques d'Espanya* by Pere-Miquel Carbonell (Barcelona 1547; *Chronicles of Spain*), the *Primera part de la història de València* by Pere-Antoni Beuter (Valencia 1538; *First Part of the History of Valencia*; the second part was – tellingly – published in Spanish in 1550), the *Crònica universal del Principat de Catalunya* by Jeroni Pujades (Barcelona 1609; *Universal Chronicle of the Principality of Catalonia*) and the *Sumari dels títols d'honor de Catalunya, Rosselló i Cerdanya* by Andreu Bosch (Perpignan 1628; *Summary of the Titles of Honour of Catalonia, Roussillon and Cerdagne*). Other lesser works of fiction are also worth highlighting, such as the popular and reissued *Rondalla de rondalles* (Valencia 1769; *Tale of Tales*), attributed to the Valencian Lluís Galiana, a novella based on proverbs and sayings in imitation of the *Cuento de cuentos* (1626) by Francisco de Quevedo, which reflects the richness of the colloquial Valencian Catalan of the day. And although it is not exactly a new creation, but is a sample of the uninterrupted tradition of translations into Catalan since the 12<sup>th</sup> century, we must also mention the version of the New Testament by Josep-Melcior Prat published in its first edition in 1832 in London at the expense of

the British and Foreign Bible Society, one year prior to the chronological limit we have set for this period (this translation was reissued once again in London in 1835, in Barcelona in 1836 and in Madrid in 1888).

However, as mentioned above, writers in Catalan in the Modern Age rarely saw their works printed during their lifetimes. This means, especially in certain cases, that there exists a rich tradition of *manuscripts*, proportional to the popularity of those authors or of their works, such as is the case, for example, of the satirical, scatological and obscene poems by the aforementioned Rector de Vallfogona. Given the fact that Catalan literature during this period was not consistently recovered (and practically rediscovered) until the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, many of the texts from the Modern Age were not published and studied for the first time until relatively recently.

Thus, it was not until the 19<sup>th</sup> century that, for example, *Los col·loquis de la insigne ciutat de Tortosa* (*The Colloquia of the Distinguished City of Tortosa*) were published, a work by the Tortosan writer Cristòfor Despuig (1510-1574), the most interesting prose work in Catalan during the Renaissance; nor was there publication of certain parts of the poetry and plays written by the Barcelona playwright Francesc Fontanella (1622-1681/85). In fact, the majority, or all, of the oeuvre by Fontanella himself did not appear until the 20<sup>th</sup> century, nor did the three plays and poetry by the Minorcan Joan Ramis (1746-1819), or the sweeping memorialistic prose of the *Calaix de sastre* (*Tailor's Box*) by his Barcelona contemporary Rafael d'Amat, Baron of Maldà (1746-1819). More specifically, noteworthy works in Catalan literature from the Modern Age include the two ambitious Baroque plays by Fontanella: *Lo desenyan* (*The Deception*) and *Tragicomèdia d'amor, firmesa and porfia* (*Tragicomedy of Love, Steadfastness and Obstinacy*), as well as the literary – and especially dramatic – output written in British Minorca during the 18<sup>th</sup> century and in French Roussillon (since 1659). Namely, between the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century in French Catalonia there was a plentiful output of plays on religious themes in the Baroque style, following the Spanish tradition; and on the island of Minorca what most stands out is the figure of Joan Ramis, mentioned above, and his plays, especially his Neoclassical tragedy *Lucrecia o Roma lliure* (*Lucretia or Free Rome*), the masterpiece in 18<sup>th</sup> century Catalan literature influenced by the author's readings of Corneille and Racine. With more cultural (scriptural, theological, linguistic) than literary importance, mention must be made of the *Evangelis d'Oxford* (c. 1725; *Gospels of Oxford*) translated into the Catalan of Valencia for use by the British Minorcans by a former Roman Catholic priest who had converted to the Church of England.

Finally, one special case is the theatre and musical play called *Festa or Misteri d'Elx* (*Festival or Mystery of Elche*, proclaimed by UNESCO as a "Masterpiece of the Human Oral and Immaterial Heritage" in the first edition of this distinction in May of 2001). Profoundly reworked during the 16<sup>th</sup> century based on prior texts, this sacred, extremely popular opera, which currently generates a great amount of tourism, is

based on the subject of the death and ascension to heaven of the Virgin Mary and has been put on for centuries now every 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of August in the city of Elx (in the south of the Land of Valencia).

# THE SHIFT FROM THE 18<sup>TH</sup> TO THE 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

**A**t the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, the spread of some expressions of the Enlightenment (the cosmopolitanism of the elites) and the emerging liberal ideology (uniformity within a nation) resulted in a lack of sympathy for minority languages among the intellectual and political classes. Even amongst the ruling echelons of Catalan-speaking societies, with few exceptions, a broad consensus considered Catalan to be a merely “provincial” language, as was said then, on the verge of becoming a declining, irrecoverable patois. Thus, the advisability of replacing the Catalan language with another more prestigious and “useful” one, such as Spanish – and French in Northern Catalonia – was openly preached.

In light of this scenario, stances opposing these trends, such as those upheld by the Spanish politician and writer Gaspar-Melchor de Jovellanos (1744-1811) were clearly in the minority and exceptional for the time, not only because of their rarity but also because of their lack of prejudices. Autors’ confinement in Majorca between 1801 and 1808 enabled him to find out the sociolinguistic situation on the island firsthand, which led him to claim that insular Catalan had to be granted “greater importance than what we have given it until now”. He also openly recommended cultivating it in all spheres of life, including teaching it at schools “since that way,” he wrote in his *Memoria sobre educación pública (Memorandum on Public Education)*, “we will open the doors of the Enlightenment to the masses of Majorcans whose fate is bound to their ignorance”. However, the reaction to the French Revolution in 1789 and to progressive proposals such as those of this enlightened reformer and his companions, far too advanced for the spirit of the day – not to say even against it – brought the Spanish Enlightenment to the brink of collapse and were ignored. (Indeed, if they had been heeded and spread through around the Catalan Linguistic Domain as a whole, they would have rendered groundless certain current radical arguments as to

a supposed “historical” supremacy of Spanish, according to which maintaining Catalan would have meant leaving broad echelons of Catalan-speaking society illiterate during the Contemporary Age.)

In the passage of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, then, Catalan seemed to have reached its death throes as a language of culture. And yet, despite the weakened state in which it was found itself, it is precisely after the first few decades of this latter century when Catalan language and literature began an upward swing of recovery which would gradually be defined and spread at differing rates throughout all the Catalan-speaking territories as the century went by. This trend would crystallise with special force especially during the second half of the century in Catalonia, and ultimately, it could be claimed that this resurgence has not ceased since then. This process was also noteworthy because it was at the foundation of the emergence, at least in this latter region within the Catalan Linguistic Domain, of a political manifestation (Catalanism) and of an untarnished particularist awareness, and with time a national awareness.

Yet how can such significant changes in the course of just a few decades be explained? The motive for this change has been traditionally put down to the broad movement known by the name of the *Renaixença* (‘rebirth’ or ‘resurgence’; literally ‘renaissance’). It has often been claimed, not inaccurately, that the foundations of the *Renaixença* are intimately tied to the spread of Romanticism, yet we clearly cannot ignore two other components which are undoubtedly more important than they have traditionally be considered. The first is the vitality of the popular Catalan language, which as we have mentioned survived, for centuries and in a natural way, without great difficulty throughout the entire linguistic domain; and secondly the “regionalist” seeds that were planted during the Enlightenment.<sup>17</sup>

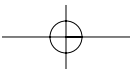
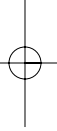
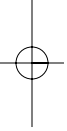
On this last factor, Ernest Lluch, the aforementioned scholar, accurately pointed out that “the language continued as a logical conclusion of a process launched by men [i.e., enlightened Catalan-speakers] who did not much believe in the viable future of Catalan, but as they set into motion a Catalan project, they laid the foundations for ensuring that future”. For example, starting in the last third of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, one can also detect in the bibliography an increasing predisposition to deal with specific issues of the country. Furthermore, although those intellectuals from the Enlightenment did indeed show an ambiguous interest in the Catalan language,

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<sup>17</sup> A third element, which is often cited, is the official use of Catalan – along with French, and at the expense of Spanish – in Catalonia when it was annexed to Napoleon’s France by the occupying authorities during the Peninsular War (1808-1814), in an attempt to attract Catalans towards the French Empire. This would have indirectly acted as a catalyst as it recalled the past, prestigious uses of the language, in addition to awakening awareness of the “new” possibilities of Catalan.

which was oftentimes practically archaeological in nature, and although the language used in their publications was almost invariably Spanish, it is also true that they were the ones who contributed to strengthening the foundations of a certain regionalism, as well as of a certain recovery of interest in Catalan based on its rich ancient literature.

In the pre-*Renaixença*, then, we can already find a significant and varied publishing output, such as erudite works in the realm of Catalonia, the Land of Valencia, the Balearic Islands and even Aragon (on history, literature and philology, law, natural sciences); publications on language (apologies, dictionaries, the first printed grammar of Catalan [1813]), and literature in Catalan of widely differing tones and genres (cultured and popular; poetry, theatre, translations). Popular press written in Catalan even makes its first appearance. Forcing the categories a little, since many of the forerunners of the *Renaixença* cultivated many different genres at the same time, among scholars of the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and first few decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> we can highlight Antoni de Capmany, Fèlix Torres Amat and Pròsper de Bofarull (Catalans from the Principality of Catalonia); Gregori Mayans, Marc-Antoni Orellana and Antoni-J. Cabanilles (Valencians); Joan Ramis (Minorcan); Jaubert de Paça and Josep Tastú (Catalans from Northern Catalonia); and Braulio Foz (Aragonese). In terms of those who showed a special concern for the language, we should also mention Baldiri Reixach, Fèlix Amat and Josep-Pau Ballot (Catalans from the Principality of Catalonia); Carles Ros and Manuel Sanelo (Valencians); and Antoni Febrer and Joan-Josep Amengual (from the islands of Minorca and Majorca, respectively). Finally, amongst those authors who cultivated literature in Catalan, we should point out the aforementioned Joan Ramis and Antoni Febrer (Minorcans); the so-called drama group from Tuïr (in French, *Thuir*; Catalans from Northern Catalonia); Antoni Puigblanch and the anonymous author of the pre-Romantic poem *Lo Temple de la Glòria* (*The Temple of Glory*; Catalans from the Principality of Catalonia); Joan-Baptista Escorihuela, Lluís Galiana and Tomàs Villarroya (Valencians), the Count of Aiamans (Josep de Togores) and Guillem Roca i Seguí (Majorcans) and even Bartomeu Simon (from Alghero).





# THE *RENAIXENÇA* OR “RENAISSANCE” IN CATALONIA (19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY)

Viewed in retrospect, the 19<sup>th</sup> century in the Catalan-speaking territories, with the consolidation of the unitary liberal state and the parallel development of what was called the *Renaixença*, are key to understanding the subsequent relations between language and society during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, which to a great extent continue down to today. More than with the Ancient Regime, which was more concerned with other types of unity, such as the religious homogeneity of the subjects (“one king, one religion”), the new liberal regime was seriously concerned with *national* unity and for this reason attempted to linguistically unify and equalise its citizens (“one nation, one language”). The desire to impose official or at least majority languages thus took place not without conflicts, precisely coinciding with the resurgence of minority languages and cultures all across Europe in the heat of the Romantic movement, a re-birth that in certain cases would end up coming hand-in-hand with a corresponding political correlate (at times no less national in nature).

Romanticism was a broad movement that was not just literary, which during the 19<sup>th</sup> century also unleashed a true passion for languages. Whether great or small, or with a greater or lesser literary tradition, at that time they came to be regarded as the representatives *par excellence* of what was called the “spirit of the nations” (in German, *Volksgeist*). Many European cultures and languages, which for centuries had gone more or less unperceived, claimed their place under the sun from that time on; this was the case not only of Catalan but also of many other languages on the Old Continent, such as the Baltic and Celtic languages, the different Scandinavian languages including Finnish and Icelandic; the Slavic languages, such as Bulgarian, Czech, Slovak, Polish and Serbo-Croatian; Greek; Hungarian; the Dutch spoken in Flanders, Belgium; and Romance languages such as Galician, Occitan and Romanian, amongst others.

This overall Romantic movement was closely intertwined, within the Catalan-speaking lands, with another particular movement – the *Renaixença* or “Renaissance”. With the latter, the process of recovering Catalan as a community language of prestige is considered to have begun, starting with its literary uses. This movement is conventionally thought to have begun in 1833 upon the publication of the ode *La Pàtria* (*The Fatherland*) by Bonaventura-Carles Aribau, an author from Barcelona (but who spent most of his life in Madrid). Throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century, increasing awareness, especially literary and linguistic, gradually blossomed, but starting in the middle of the century it also became political and regional-national awareness amongst writers and intellectuals in Catalonia, and to a much lesser extent amongst natives of the Land of Valencia, the Balearics and Northern Catalonia. This heightened awareness, as has been claimed, generated a veritable cultural renaissance. The emulation of the mediaeval models first enabled poetry to be reborn from its ashes, to later be followed by other literary and journalistic genres, and even the beginnings of a certain scientific prose.

The restoration in Barcelona of the so-called *Jocs Florals* (‘Floral Games’) contributed notably to the scope and penetration of the *Renaixença* movement. This was an annual literary event that rewarded the best poetry works in Catalan. These “games” were extraordinarily popular and sociolinguistically and even civically important, widely popular since their first edition in 1859. They ended up becoming a formidable means for consolidating and expanding the new social and literary prestige of the Catalan language.

Additionally, the *Renaixença* came to reveal and spread a mediaeval history and literature that were little or poorly known, and the splendid language of a rediscovered and independent past began to be viewed with new eyes by the bourgeoisie in Catalonia, who ceased to regard it as an unimportant language. One of the main themes of the *Renaixença* was, precisely, its aim to revive the past glories of Catalan literature. The scientific quality of the first projects in the editing of ancient texts was somewhat wanting, but there is no doubt that they contributed to the diffusion of authors and works that until then had been little and insufficiently known, and that they served to lay the foundations of the more serious and methodical practices and publications to emerge during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This interest in Catalan, on the other hand, led the followers of the movement, called *renaixencistes*, to also study the history of the language and its geographical varieties, to propose various models for the written language, and to study the local literary tradition and publish the first monographs on classical authors and works in Catalan. Impelled by the Romantic spirit, the *renaixencistes* also soon showed a lively interest in the history, geography and nature of the country, in its exclusive law, in the arts and in all types of folkloric expression, such as popular songs and dances, customs and so forth.

Despite all this, and despite what has been mentioned about the constant rise in the consideration and esteem of Catalan, the weight of tradition in linguistic practices

should not be left unmentioned. Thus, it should come as no surprise that until well into the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the very authors who wrote literature in Catalan (which mainly consisted of poetry) continued to preferentially use Spanish (and French in Northern Catalonia) for the remaining written functions of language. This held true in everything from the most formal uses (which included scholarly subjects on the Catalan language and literature themselves) to their own private correspondence. (In terms of the latter, it is well known, for example, the phenomenal commotion caused by the dramatist Àngel Guimerà – in as late a date as 1895 – when he delivered his presidential speech entirely in Catalan, inaugurating the academic year in the most reputable club in Barcelona, the Ateneu Barcelonès – a “daring act” that had never taken place before.) On the other hand, we should also consider the relative paradox represented in the fact that at the same time that the revival of Catalan was taking place and claims for its use were growing, especially in Catalonia, there was also a clear advance in familiarisation with Spanish, and even a certain regular use of this language amongst certain echelons of society, thanks mainly to the spread of schooling, to the businesses and interests of the bourgeoisie in the rest of Spain, America and the Philippines, and to the emergence of an incipient immigration of Spanish-speakers. (For males, the compulsory military service also played an important sociolinguistic role, both in France and in Spain, and it has been defined – with a humorous edge yet not inaccurately either – as “one of the first language immersion courses, free of charge and obligatory”). A typical characteristic of the 19<sup>th</sup> century is the diglossic division of the functions of the languages: within the Catalan-speaking lands in Spain the language used orally was usually Catalan, while – with the exception of the most committed writers and intellectuals – the written language *par excellence* was Spanish, at least until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, or French in the part of the linguistic domain under French rule.<sup>18</sup>

But there was even more. While the paralysed and ineffective monarchies of the Ancient Regime, concerned about other types of unity (such as religious unity) and with their complex class-based society and chronic lack of financial resources, offered their *subjects* multiple loopholes to allow them to avoid strictly complying with the laws (including the provisions on language policy), the reinvigorated and more

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<sup>18</sup> On this point, it should be especially borne in mind that during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and even in vast rural areas until well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, without the current communication media and with relatively low levels of schooling and high levels of illiteracy, the probability of children, and even adults, throughout the entire Catalan Linguistic Domain being able to learn and practise or simply just *hear* Spanish, French or Italian was frankly minuscule. More specifically, in the rural setting, which is where most of the population lived then, people who mastered these languages in the villages were often a mere handful of individuals: the schoolmaster, the priest or civil servants from elsewhere such as the municipal clerk, agents of the law (the Guardia Civil), or certain educated freelance professionals, such as the notary, the lawyer, the doctor, the chemist or the veterinarian.

### *Gobierno superior político de las Baleares.*

**C**ONSIDERANDO que el ejercicio de las lenguas científicas es el primer instrumento para adquirir las ciencias y transmitir las, que la castellana, además de ser la nacional, está mandada observarse en las escuelas y establecimientos públicos, y que por haberse descuidado esta parte de instrucción en las islas viven oscuros muchos talentos que pudieran ilustrar no solamente á su país sino á la nación entera; deseando que no queden estériles tan felices disposiciones; y considerando finalmente que sería tan dificultoso el corregir este descuido en las personas adultas como será fácil enmendarle en las generaciones que nos sucedan, he creído conveniente con la aprobación de la Esma. Diputación provincial, que en todos los establecimientos de enseñanza pública de ambos sexos en esta provincia se observe el sencillo método que á continuación se expresa y se halla adoptado en otras con mucho fruto.

Cada maestro ó maestra tendrá una sortija de metal, que el lunes entregará á uno de sus discípulos, advirtiéndole á los demás que dentro del umbral de la escuela ninguno hable palabra que no sea en castellano, so pena de que oyéndola aquel que tiene la sortija, se la entregará en el momento, y el culpable no podrá negarse á recibirla; pero con el bien entendido de que en oyendo este en el mismo local que otro condiscípulo incurre en la misma falta, tendrá acción á pasarle el anillo, y este á otro en caso igual, y así sucesivamente durante la semana hasta la tarde del sábado, en que á la hora señalada aquel en cuyo poder se encuentre el anillo sufra la pena, que en los primeros ensayos será muy leve; pero que se irá aumentando así como se irá ampliando el local de la prohibición, á proporcion de la mayor facilidad que los alumnos vayan adquiriendo de espesarse en castellano, y para conseguirlo mas pronto convendrá tambien señalar á los mas adelantados algun privilegio, tal como el de no recibir la sortija los lunes, ó ser juez en los pleitos que naturalmente se suscitarán sobre la identidad ó dialecto de la palabra en disputa.

De esta manera, insensiblemente, sin trabajo alguno de parte de los maestros, y siendo los castigos incomparablemente menores que las faltas, se conseguirá no solamente que al cabo de algun tiempo de constancia llegue á familiarizarse la juventud mallorquina con la lengua en que están escritas las doctrinas y conocimientos que aprende, y á espresarlos con facilidad y soltura, sino tambien el que se guarde mas silencio en las escuelas por el temor que cada uno tendrá de incurrir inadvertidamente en la pena del anillo y esponerse al castigo, ó á lo ménos á las zozobras que siempre le precederán.

El zelo mejor entendido de los maestros en plantear y sostener esta medida tan sencilla y el adelantamiento de sus discípulos, será un mérito particular para unos y otros y un objeto especial de examen en la visita anual que pasará á todas las escuelas de la provincia; y para perpetuo recuerdo y observancia de esta disposición se conservará fijo en el interior de las escuelas el presente edicto.

Dado en la ciudad de Palma á 22 de febrero de 1837.

Provision issued by the governor of the Balearic Islands (1837) prohibiting the use of Catalan in schools and instituting the system of "the ring". This humiliating method of punishment, broadly known throughout the entire Catalan-speaking territories, consisted of making an article of proof (the ring) circulate around the student body marking the students who were caught speaking Catalan; the last student to have the ring in his or her possession at the end of the day was punished.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>19</sup> The provision reads as follows: "*High Political Government of the Balearic Islands // Given that the exercise of the scientific languages is the first instrument for acquiring and conveying the sciences; that Spanish, in addition to being the national language, is required to be observed in schools and public establishments; and that having ignored this part of instruction many talents who could enlighten not only their country but the entire nation now live in obscurity; wishing that such felicitous provisions not remain ineffective; and finally given that it would be as difficult to correct this negligence in adults as it would be easy to emend it in the ensuing generations, may it be observed in all public schools for both sexes in this province the simple method that is described below and that has been adopted in other provinces with great success [!]. Every teacher will have a metal ring that he or she will turn over to one of his or her disciples on Monday, warning the others that once they have crossed the threshold of the school none may speak a single word that is not Spanish, under the punishment that if whomever has the ring hears them he or she will pass it on at that moment, and the guilty party may not refuse it; but with the understanding that in the same venue if the guilty part hears another classmate committing the same mistake, he will pass*

rational administrative apparatus of the liberal state would more effectively affect the lives of the new *citizens*. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the measures for linguistic assimilation in favour of the dominant languages in each country would not only have a much more refined ideological load than before, as we shall see, rather — more importantly — these provisions would lead them to be enforced more effectively than in the preceding century. It is worth noting that the emergence of numerous and repeated regulations on specific language uses (prohibitions from using Catalan) during the 19<sup>th</sup> century show, on the contrary, that Catalan continued enjoying a certain “normal” life despite the linguistic diktats unleashed since Philip V. That is to say, if Catalan had not been used with a certain degree of normality until then, these prohibitions would have been entirely unnecessary.

Thus, in Spain by the 1820s criminal procedures before the courts could only take place in Spanish, and the 1881 Law on Civil Procedure only accepted the use of the Spanish language in civil trials. In 1862, the Law on Notaries also established Spanish as the sole language authorised to be used for public deeds, while it also prohibited contracts in any other language. Eight years later, the Civil Register Law also required the use of Spanish in official registrations (only Spanish names were allowed, leading many Catalan surnames to be adapted to Spanish, thus changing their spelling). In schools, in turn, any language other than Spanish was banned, and the use and cultivation of Spanish became compulsory (the Quintana Plan of 1821, the Bravo Murillo Regulation of 1849, and most importantly the Moyano’s Law on Public Instruction of 1857). Despite the fact that in the 20<sup>th</sup> century (specifically in 1902), the Spanish government had already gone as far as promulgating a decree

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on the ring, and this student to another in the same case, and so on during the week until Saturday afternoon, when at the chosen time whosoever bears the ring will suffer the punishment, which in the first trials will be quite light; but which will gradually increase just as the venue of prohibition will also enlarge in order to make it easier for students to gradually learn to express themselves in Spanish, and in order to achieve this soon it would also be wise to give the more advanced students some type of reward, such as not being given the ring on Mondays, or being the judge in the complaints that will naturally arise on the identity of dialect of the word being disputed. // In this way, unconsciously, without any work on the part of the teachers, and with the punishments being incomparably lighter than the mistakes, not only we will achieve that within a certain time of constancy the Majorcan youth will come to be familiar with the Spanish language in which the doctrines and knowledge they are learning are written, and to express themselves easily and fluently in it, but students will also be more quiet in the school for fear that each will have to inadvertently suffer the punishment of the ring and expose themselves to punishment or at least to the anxiety that would precede it. // The conscientious efforts of the teachers in implementing and sustaining this simple measure and the advancement of their students will be an individual merit for many and a special subject of examination in the annual visit which I will make to all the schools in the province; and as an ongoing reminder and observance of this provision, the present edict is therefore to be posted in a fixed place inside the schools. // Issued in the City of Palma [Island of Majorca], on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1837”.

requiring the Roman Catholic catechism to be taught in Spanish (a measure which was repeatedly attempted, which pursued a far-reaching goal, given the fact that for many children catechism was their only chance at becoming literate, albeit barely so). Some of the government provisions, however, may even seem shocking seen from today, such as the Royal Order of 1867, which picking up on the previous provisions from 1799 and 1807, clearly forbade plays written exclusively “in dialects from the provinces of Spain”, or the Regulation on Telephones dating from 1896 that startlingly prohibited telephone conversations that were not in Spanish. Finally, some measures were particularly unfortunate, such as the Royal Edict of 1837, which imposed shameful punishments on children who did not speak Spanish at school. Provisions such as this served as a legal foundation for the humiliating yet effective system of the ring, the stone or the *plaquette*, documented throughout the entire Catalan Linguistic Domain yet unimaginable in monolingual countries, which has been described as follows for a school in French Catalonia: “When the teacher in the morning surprised a student who was speaking Catalan with a classmate in the classroom or on the playground, he passed him a little ring. From then on, the student had to use his wits to find a peer who had committed the same sin, in order to pass the ring on. Whichever student had the object at the end of the day was punished”.<sup>20</sup>

Nevertheless, it should be added that not all these restrictions on the free use of Catalan were always impositions by the central government, rather that there were also some cases of limiting its use that were driven by the local authorities themselves. One example of this was the Barcelona City Council’s 1833 agreement, reached after deliberation, stating that municipal treasury forms had to be filled out in Spanish; or the decision by the Palma de Majorca City Council in 1863 to change the language of street signs from Catalan to Spanish.

As can be seen, however, the provisions with the greatest scope and significance, were often laws issued from a central political power with a new conception of state, the 19<sup>th</sup> century version of the liberal state. This state was more obsessed by its citizens’ legal and theoretical “equality” of opportunities, which would include homogenising them linguistically even at the expense of infringing upon or legally curtailing one of the fundamental rights of individuals – freedom of expression.

Profoundly convinced of the goodness and progress brought about by their egalitarian and unifying (or more accurately, homogenising) solutions, the liberal state of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was concerned about spreading the concept of unified nation-state,

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<sup>20</sup> Apparently obsolete and anachronic, this “pedagogical” method still reappeared in our times. Thus, in early 2001 the press exposed a lawsuit against a school in Villaviciosa (Asturias, Spain) that fined its students 25 pesetas (0.15€) for each word in Asturian they uttered (*La Nueva España* [Oviedo], 15-1- 2001).

which was in fact more founded on an ideal notion of the *sovereignty of the nation* than in the true *sovereignty of the people*. Thus, the nation-state would propose achieving citizen equality based on promoting the suppression of the particularities that were developed and that coexisted during the Ancient Regime, without any exceptions among social, legislative, geo-historical, cultural or linguistic particularities. In this extreme egalitarian agenda, which implicitly entailed the formation and spread of the corresponding national mythology (frequently idealised and based exclusively on the hegemonic culture), a major focus was the veneration of the features regarded as common (which it would be much more accurate to regard as those of the majority), with the correlating frequent disparagement or hiding of the particular or minority features. In the case of Spain, the promotion of a newly-minted national mythology included, for example, the creation or spread of national heroes such as the mediaeval Cid Campeador, Don Pelayo and Santiago Matamoros (Saint James the Moor Slayer) or the 16<sup>th</sup> century conquistadores of Mexico and Peru, as well as the observance of national holidays such as the Discovery of America (coinciding with the day of the *Virgen del Pilar* [Our Lady of El Pilar], the patron saint of Spain). These were quite often the particular cultural patrimony of the Crown of Castile, but thanks to such a “national program” as this, they were confirmed as the cohesive nucleus of the state. This agenda also included the reinforcement of everything that was considered to have to be shared by Spaniards as a whole (often with debateable foundations, which were more ideological than scientifically provable), such as the unity of Spain since the Catholic Kings, if not since the time of the Visigoths or even since the far-distant times of the Pre-Roman Celtiberians – both Celtiberians and Visigoths being thus historically manipulated in the search for the first “Spaniards”.

In short, within the prevailing logic of the time, the zealous unifier itch could in no way avoid promoting and spreading the language of the state institutions and the literature expressed in this language (Spanish), regarded as *the literature tout court* of Spain. In this way, Spanish language and literature were definitively wielded as instruments basic to the cohesion of the *nation* and as signs of adherence to it – this, if need be, at the expense of different, equally current, linguistic and literary traditions. (On this point, it is symptomatic that it was precisely during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, especially through schools, when the name “Spanish”, referring to the majority language of the country, spread and became popular, at least in a good part of monolingual Spain and even in America, thus marking a significant retreat in the use of the historical and traditional term “Castilian”).

However, it should be stressed that since the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century the nationalism supported on the majority language and culture, and promoted and fed by the machinery of the state (*the [majority, hard] nationalism of the state*), coincided and collided with – as was foreseeable – other nationalisms that were also gestating

around the same time (*the stateless [minority, soft] nationalisms*). The latter, such as that of Catalonia or the Basque Country, were largely linked to the languages, histories, cultures, civil laws and traditions that, unlike the ideal language of the state, were not only hindered from enjoying and sharing the protection and power of the state structure (which since the Spanish Habsburg dynasty had tended to identify itself exclusively with the majority language and culture, Castilian in essence), but that also came upon the de-legitimisation by the state, if not with its direct opposition despite being an integral part of it — or even, in the majority of its early manifestations, despite its desire to form bodies *within* the shared state. Deep down, to a great extent a conflict was unleashed then between two conceptions of Spain (“unified nation” versus “diverse nation of nations”), which, with greater or lesser vigour in terms of Catalonia’s political *fit* within Spain, spanned the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and even today still endures.

More specifically, in terms of relationships between language and society during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the state deemed that the Spanish language (or French in France) would be the sole language worthy of being known, recognised and fully used (*in* and *by* the law, the schools, the political magistracies, the courts, the army, the administration in general, the press and serious literature). That is, *the language par excellence* would be the language of the official state institutions and it would thus be the only one regarded as official — even if not officially proclaimed. In contrast, the country’s other languages would be viewed as slightly disarrayed, not to say “incomplete” entities, and in the best of cases as a fragmentary mosaic, hardly or not at all worthy of high culture and modernity, and thus relegated to the realm of folklore, ethnology or local colour.

This hegemonic — not to say official — linguistic ideology, enforced through legally restrictive measures (language policy) and school instruction, spanned the 19<sup>th</sup> century and continued during the 20<sup>th</sup>, especially in France, but also in Spain, although in the latter it has been tempered over the years, especially since the entry into force of the 1978 democratic constitution. (It should be stressed that in both countries, this ideology has left in its wake a heavy mark on society, especially the monolingual society, both amongst the lesser educated classes but also amongst the educated, as well as amongst political classes of all leanings). If to all this we add the fact that in certain cases (such as Catalonia) claims in favour of the local language were often closely bound to political claims, these languages ended up often being perceived as a threat to the territorial integrity of the state (and undoubtedly on some occasions this was indeed the aim), such that the unitary state’s reaction could be none other than what was predictable by the logic of the time. On the one hand, it was believed that the most rational course entailed simplifying the linguistic scene of the country and spreading amongst citizens *a single* language that would not only strengthen the ties amongst the different members of the nation (or even, perhaps, forcing these ties to



be created), rather that this would also help to equalise them for the sake of equal opportunity, at least in theory. Naturally, this sole language could be none other than the “useful” *national* language, that is, within the Catalan Linguistic Domain, or Catalan-speaking territories, the French or Spanish languages – which, in turn, were thus consolidated as predominant and encouraged to play such a role. Indeed, for the ruling echelons in Spain, usually with Castilian roots and the extremely strong imperial tradition of Castile, it was simply unthinkable that the country could allow for several languages, in spite of the most benign contemporary models such as Switzerland, the Austro-Hungarian Empire and Canada.

Likewise, the country’s unofficial languages would be regarded by the liberal state as ballast inherited from the Ancient Regime, which thus had to be combated and overcome. In the extreme case, *linguicide* was precisely, as we have seen, one of the strong ideas of the extreme homogenisation advocated by the French Jacobins, whose most illustrious proponent was the aforementioned *abbé* Henri Grégoire. The liberal state characteristic of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, in Europe and Latin America based largely on Jacobin tradition that reigned victorious during the French Revolution, thus adopted whatever tactics it deemed opportune in order to remove this irritating “obstacle” inherited and put into crisis the secular loyalty of the “different” citizens that maintained other languages when speaking. These tactics included planting the seeds of linguistic insecurity and low self-esteem as differentiated communities.

Thus, the state not only refrained from protecting (not to mention promoting) these languages and put up repeated obstacles for their normal use, as we have seen in this chapter and shall also see in the following for Northern Catalonia, rather it spread linguistic ideas that strove to lower the dignity and reality of the minority languages, which simultaneously served to ennoble, in contrast, the official language. The tactics employed, even if they did not come from explicit instructions, were broadly inspired by the hegemonic linguistic ideology (which can be summarised in the phrase: “one nation, one language”), and were largely – though not solely – linked through the moral authority of the schools. The citizens thus educated (which accounted for relatively few in Spain, albeit more in France, which had a more highly developed educational system), additionally, went on to reproduce this ideology around them and helped to popularise it in turn amongst their uneducated countryside.

One of the most widely used systems, particularly from the classroom setting, was leaving the unofficial languages bereft of a serious and unique name that accurately reflected their linguistic and geo-historical reality, and thus differentiated them clearly for their own speakers and from those of other languages – first and foremost from the official language. (The relative lack of development of the incipient Romance philology in the 19<sup>th</sup> century – in turn influenced by the liberal ideology rooted in France – as well as that of certain scientific concepts such as ‘language’ or ‘dialect’,

contributed in no small way to this lack of an appropriate nomenclature.) Often, these minority languages were purposely confused with each other, and all of them (at times, along with other varieties of the *national* language itself) were clustered together under ambiguous and pejorative labels such as *patois* (in France) and ‘dialect’ (in Spain). Andalusian, *panocho* from Murcia, Canaries Spanish, Catalan, Valencian, Majorcan, Minorcan, and Ibizan (Catalan), Basque, Galician, Aragonese, Asturian/Leonese: they were all designated in general with the indistinct, disparaging name of *dialectos*, and this gained even greater resonance in the case of France with the clearly contemptuous name of *patois*, the use of which, especially in schools, has meant that it still comes down to us as such, even today.<sup>21</sup>

As was predictable, another procedure also used – and still used today – was the application of the classical maxim of “divide and conquer”. Bolstering themselves on local traditions, at times secular (such as in the case of the Catalan spoken in the Land of Valencia), and on the dearth of accuracy provided by the Romance philology of the day, the state did nothing to recognise the unity of many of these *dialects*. Thus, the demographic, historical or even political potential that might come from the existence of a single language such as Catalan was undermined and fragmented into an indeterminate number of “minor languages”, or “dialects”, such as “Catalan” (exclusively spoken in Catalonia), “Valencian”, “*alacantí*” (spoken in Alicante), “Majorcan”, “Minorcan” and “Ibizan”. There were even other more local options such as, for example, within Catalonia itself, “*tortosí*” (from the region of Tortosa) and “*lleidatà*” (from the region of Lérida).<sup>22</sup>

<sup>21</sup> One of the most vivid ways of putting this method into practice was by calling some of the languages or their geographical variants (normally the most vulnerable due to their extreme peripheral situation or their scant demographic and political-social weight) with names even more negative than the semi-scholarly term *dialect*, such as *patués* (taken from the French name *patois*) to refer to certain Aragonese speech forms, or *chapurreado* to refer to the Catalan spoken in Aragon, though also used for the Galician spoken in the provinces of León and Zamora and for the archaic Galician spoken in the Valle de Ellas in the province of Cáceres, both near Portugal. The inappropriateness of these terms could simply be gathered at first glance by their undifferentiated use to refer to languages so distinct and distant from each other. The consequence of this was that names like these, repeated consistently by the authorities and schools, and with the dearth of other more appropriate and well-defined names, ended up being popularly, and even naturally, accepted (and interiorised) by the respective community itself, once awareness of the disparaging origins had been erased.

<sup>22</sup> An extreme case, especially widely used in the Aragon Strip, or eastern Aragon bordering Catalonia, which has traditionally hampered a clear overall vision of the community of Catalan speakers in this zone (yet which helped to confirm the hegemony of Spanish as the *high* language, which has endured until today) was not only to call its local version of Catalan “*chapurreado*”, as we have seen, but alternatively to sustain, in a display of parochial localism, the existence of improbable municipal languages, such as *fragatí* (of Fraga), *maellà* (of Maella), and *mequinensà* (of Mequinensa [in Spanish, *Mequinenza*]), and so on.

Finally, yet another variant on the aforementioned strategy was to insidiously categorise the languages other than Spanish between some that *might* reach this category of “language” (typically, Basque, because of its ancestral nature and its total lack of resemblance to Spanish), and others that could not aspire to this recognition rather could only achieve vague recognition as “dialects” (Catalan, Galician). It should be pointed out that this erroneous classification was assimilated and used mimetically at the same time in some of these languages (more precisely, by some of their elites), such as was the case of Catalan itself. Thus, the Catalan of *Catalonia* might aspire to being regarded as a “language”, while the Catalan of the Land of Valencia and the Balearic Islands had to be content with the lesser category of “dialect”. (Ultimately, this would be akin to claiming that the Spanish of Spain, and only that version, can be a true language, while the Spanish spoken in Mexico, Cuba and Argentina, for example, would simply be dialects.)

In short, then, it can be said that wherever the *Renaixença* did not take root or succeed (such as – to varying degrees – the Land of Valencia, the Balearics, the Catalan-speaking part of Aragon and Northern Catalonia, unlike what is commonly known as Catalonia), the ultimate outcome of the language policy of the 19<sup>th</sup> century liberal state (especially so in France) was an overall severe debilitation of the languages other than the official ones through the gradual collapse, as mentioned above, of the feelings of self-esteem and the linguistic loyalty of their speakers. Finally, it should be added that this agenda of linguistic homogenisation powerfully influenced the ideology of the succeeding Spanish and French states in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, both democratic and dictatorial.

With the Industrial Revolution, which left a profound mark in 19<sup>th</sup> century Spanish Catalonia, there appeared the working and bourgeois classes. This historical process, which was spearheaded in Catalonia primarily by the textile sector, barely spread, however, through the rest of Spain with the exception of the Basque Country (heavy metallurgy). As yet another important political and economic difference, it should be mentioned that the Catalan bourgeoisie professed a lively protectionist stance, contrary to the prevailing free trade position in Spain, and for this reason, to a large extent, the Catalans ended up gaining, or strengthening, their awareness of belonging to a differentiated group within the Spanish socio-political system. Although this social class shared the growing regionalist-nationalist feelings, and especially the middle and petty bourgeoisie played a key role in safeguarding and claiming the rights of the Catalan language, the working class, the other social class to emerge from industrialisation and, more generally, the popular classes as a whole, played a no less important role in maintaining loyalty to the language. Thus, while the latter decisively helped to conserve the *massive* use of Catalan throughout the entire linguistic domain (as can be witnessed, for example, in the resounding success of Catalan popular theatre and the great circulation achieved by news-

papers in colloquial Catalan), during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the petty and middle bourgeoisie, unlike the meagre high bourgeoisie, which was often broadly diglossic or Spanish-speaking, decided to recover for Catalan its ancient prestige and confer on it the normality that other more or less neighbouring contemporary languages enjoyed.

This is when the theorising began on the relationship between the Catalan language and the Catalan nation, between the independent linguistic-literary tradition and Catalan nationalism. The bourgeoisie in Catalonia wasted no time in generating its own political groups, both Catalanist and branches of the major Spanish parties, unlike their counterparts in the Valencian Country and Majorca, which were very loosely organised on territorially-related community issues. Although the latter accepted the options offered to them by the Spanish bourgeoisie (the alternating conservative and liberal parties of the day, during the Restoration: 1874-1931), the Catalan bourgeoisie felt uncomfortable in the centralist and oligarchic Spanish system. For this reason, taking advantage of the tremendous spiritual and political crisis in the aftermath of the 1898 disaster (loss of the last Spanish colonies: Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines) and the sudden disappearance of four centuries of Spanish empire, it rallied around a new political party that existed solely within Catalonia: the Regionalist League (*Lliga Regionalista*). This league, which was socially conservative, was the predominant party in Catalonia until the advent of the Second Spanish Republic in 1931, and upon its creation in 1901, it unabashedly dismembered the political system of the prevailing *caciquismo* in Catalonia,<sup>23</sup> which was characterised by its corrupt and petty local leaders and would endure around Spain as a whole until the end of the Restoration. It is also towards the turn of the century when the term *nationalism*, which one way or another views Catalonia first and then Spain, began to be widely used, referring more consciously to political Catalanism, largely replacing the previous term *regionalism*.

However, political Catalanism was increasingly popular and went beyond its conservative current, something that became crystal clear as of the proclamation of the Second Spanish Republic on 14<sup>th</sup> April 1931, when the Republican Left Party of Catalonia (*Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya*) became the hegemonic political party in Catalonia until the dramatic end of the republican period in 1939. Thus, in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Catalanism encompassed a wide variety of trends and nuances, many of which would lay down their roots in the beginnings of this political movement half a century later. In addition to the regionalists (today, in Spain, perhaps, they should be called autonomists because of the present-day political system of the 'autonomous

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<sup>23</sup> Translator's Note: *caciquismo* (from the Taino language of the Dominican Republic *cacique* 'tribal, small king'): a kind of local despotism, clientelism.

communities or lands'), and the nationalists (the most radical of whom demanded independence), there were also federalists, many of them republicans and even the extreme-right Carlists or legitimist branch of the Spanish Bourbons. As proof of this, the unitary candidacy of Catalan Solidarity (*Solidaritat Catalana*), which included this broad spectrum with the exception of the two traditional Spanish pro-monarchy parties – the liberals and conservatives – and the populist republicans of Alejandro Lerroux, became a *Catalanist* wave that swept the general elections of 1907 and gained 41 of the 44 seats at stake for Catalonia. Since then and up to the present times, the map of the political forces in Catalonia throughout the various democratic periods has always, constantly and significantly, been different from that of Spain, and is one of Catalonia's most notable particularities.

In a parallel fashion, throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century the Catholic Church in Catalonia had gradually forged close relations with Catalanism, in addition to ideologically influencing it (as did, for example, the Bishop of Vic, Josep Torras i Bages), and also supported many of their causes, such as the conservation of Catalan civil law and the recovery of the Catalan language. In addition to the clergy who studied the language (Antoni M. Alcover, from Majorca) or cultivated the literature (Jacint Verdaguer, from Catalonia proper), in the shift from the 19<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> century we can witness the activities of bishops who stood openly in defence of the Catalan language as a language of preaching and catechism, both before the Spanish government and before the Vatican itself.

Nonetheless, despite the widespread popularity that Catalanism enjoyed at the dawning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the influence of the working class should not be forgotten, as it was often resistant to regionalist-nationalist causes. Thus, the anarcho-sindicalist movement, very influential in Catalonia in the first few decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, would in general scorn the Catalanist projects in favour of more or less utopian self-sufficient communes, proletarian internationalism and the disappearance of states, while some radical politician, such as the aforementioned Lerroux, would attempt to fashion himself as the champion of a demagogic Spanish nationalism and use the Catalanist ideology with the aim of dividing and even opposing Catalans by birth and by adoption.

In summary, we can claim that it was in Catalonia where the movement of the *Renaixença* reached its full potential. Not only did it increase the literary cultivation of Catalan, but also the social and public use of the language ended up becoming an external sign of prestige and began to spread throughout all areas of life, with the exception of the official spheres. This realm continued to be reserved exclusively for Spanish until the second decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when the so-called Commonwealth of Catalonia (*Mancomunitat de Catalunya*: 1914-1925) was formed, an association of the four Catalan provincial councils (in Spanish, *Diputaciones Provinciales*) which would become the first test run at political autonomy in contemporary Catalo-

nia. Starting with the *Renaixença*, then, Catalan and the culture it encompassed would be viewed afresh, and this movement, originally literary in nature, would manage to have a significant translation into the political realm and was accepted not only by the ruling bourgeoisie of Catalonia but also by very broad sectors of the popular classes.

# THE *RENAIXENÇA* IN THE LAND OF VALENCIA, THE BALEARICS, NORTHERN CATALONIA AND ALGHERO (19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY)

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THE CATALAN LANGUAGE

As discussed in the previous chapter, the *renaixencistes*' programme did not spread equally around all Catalan-speaking lands. Thus, while it is not difficult to discover the profound mark that the *Renaixença* left on many of the cultural and political changes that took place in Catalonia between the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (and which in some ways endure until today), on the Balearic Islands and especially in the Land of Valencia, and Northern Catalonia this movement had considerably fewer consequences because of far less solid ideological and popular ground.

Interestingly, the first halting steps of the *Renaixença* in the Land of Valencia were consolidated thanks to the efforts of a Majorcan, Marià Aguiló, who, taking advantage of his stay in the city of Valencia as director of the provincial library, organised *Jocs Florals* or Floral Games in 1859, the same year in which they were restored in Barcelona, which led the *renaixencistes* from the three main Catalan-speaking regions to converge for the first time. On this occasion, the Catalan Víctor Balaguer was awarded, along with the young Valencian poets Teodor Llorente and Vicent W. Querol. Nevertheless, as of 1865, Llorente, who would come to be viewed as the patriarch of the Valencian *Renaixença*, began to clearly distance himself from the attempts of some Catalan activists, such as the aforementioned Balaguer, to channel the literary renaissance into a possible political resurgence. Thereafter, relations between the Valencian *Renaixença* on the one hand and the Catalan and Majorcan *Renaixença* on the other hand would cool, while in a parallel fashion the coinciding ideologies of the Valencian *Renaixença* and the Provençal *Félibrige*, headed by Frédéric Mistral (1830-1914), who envisioned the literary cultivation of the language more as a pleasant aesthetic and practically private entertainment, would be enhanced. This attitude, however, led these two Valencian poets of bourgeois extraction, despite their prestige, to be regarded locally as elitist snobs, and