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Catalan Review és la primera revista internacional dedicada a tots els aspectes de la cultura catalana. Per la cultura catalana s'entén totes les manifestacions de la vida intel·lectual i artística produïda en llengua catalana o en les zones geogràfiques on es parla català. Catalan Review es publica des de 1986.

Introduction: Albert Porqueras-Mayo (1930-2003) In Memoriam

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ALBERT PORQUERAS-MAYO (1930-2003)
IN MEMORIAM

The unexpected death of Professor Albert Porqueras-Mayo has left us all alone. His dedication and vision was not only instrumental in the foundation of NACS (North American Catalan Society) but essential in the continued presence and development of Catalan Studies throughout the United States of America, where he taught Catalan and Spanish Literatures at the University of Missouri (1960-1968) and at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (1969-2000). Before arriving to America, Albert Porqueras-Mayo also taught in Germany, at the University of Bonn (1954) and the University of Hamburg (1955-1958).

Albert Porqueras-Mayo was born in Lleida in the midst of a well to do family of noted physicians. He soon developed a taste for art and literature and followed it with studies in Barcelona and in Madrid, where he got his PH D in Romance Philology in 1954 while being mentored by intellectuals of the caliber of Dámaso Alonso. It was during his years in Barcelona that he frequented the literary circles surrounding the towering figure of Carles Riba, one of Catalonia's best contemporary poets whose translations of Greek and Latin classics into Catalan were to become true literary landmarks. The young "lletraferit" from Lleida found in Riba's extraordinary blending of academic erudition and creative capacity a lifelong model after whom he patterned his own career.

Like most hispanists of his generation, Albert Porqueras-Mayo devoted a considerable amount of his academic endeavors to the study of Spanish literature. This dedication encompassed three major areas. The first consisted in the study of literary prologues, which Porqueras-Mayo rescued from critical oblivion and treated as true literary genres. He published four important volumes on this topic: *El prólogo como género literario* (1967), *El prólogo en el Renacimiento español* (1965), *El prólogo en el Manierismo y Barroco españoles* (1968), and *Ensayo bibliográfico del prólogo en la liteartura* (1971). The second includes his scholarly and pedagogic dedication to the study and edition of texts from the Spanish Golden Age, which, in fact, became his academic specialty. These are some of the titles he published in this area: *Edition, Introduction, and Notes to Calderón, El Príncipe Constante* (1975), *The Spanish Golden Age* (1979), *Estudios bibliográficos de la Edad de Oro* (1984), and *Luis Alfonso de Carvallo, Cisne de Apolo* (1997). Some of these texts have been current coinage in many syllabi throughout the American academic system. The third large area

developed by Albert Porqueras-Mayo was his contribution to dramatic and poetic theory again with a textual emphasis on the Golden Age although with a scope that included most classic Spanish literary production. These are some of his most important publications in this context: *Preceptiva dramática española del Renacimiento y Barroco* (1965), *Filología y crítica hispánica* (1969), *Temas y formas de la literatura española* (1972), and the twin volumes *La teoría poética en el Renacimiento y Manierismo españoles* (1986) and *La teoría poética en el Manierismo y Barroco españoles* (1989).

Albert Porqueras-Mayo was one of the leading Golden Age scholars of his generation. A simple look at his curriculum vitae and at the number of invited lectures on the topic at universities spread over the five continents would suffice to illustrate that fact. And yet, despite his reputation and his commitment to that field of inquiry, the "Count of Les Rambles," as Albert used to sign in many of his letters to friends and colleagues during his last years while living in Barcelona, always found time and energy to undertake a parallel intellectual life, the one he devoted to the study of Catalan culture and, particularly, to its literature. It was on this capacity, as teacher of Catalan literature, that I first made his acquaintance in the year 1976-1977, in the context of his "Catalan 302: History of Catalan Literature," a course he was teaching at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign. The intensity, sensitivity and erudition displayed by Albert Porqueras-Mayo in that course had a tremendous impact in me and it changed for ever the way I understood not only Catalan literature but the way to study and teach any national literature. Our readings of Ramon Llull, Ausiàs March, Anselm Turmeda, Jacint Verdaguer, Joan Maragall, Angel Guimerà, Josep Vicenç Foix, Carles Riba, Salvador Espriu and Mercè Rodoreda were not only rereadings but rediscoveries of our authors in a truly international context. Ultimately, although he was only cross-curricularly related to the department of Comparative Literature, Albert Porqueras-Mayo was an expert comparatist, the first one to teach me my literature as an integral part of World Literature.

It was at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign that Albert Porqueras-Mayo's name became forever linked to the history of Catalan studies in North America. Indeed, the American midwest was to become the heart of these studies since the early years of Professor Joan Coromines' teaching at the prestigious University of Chicago. Joseph Gulsoy, one of Coromines' leading students, started teaching at the University of Toronto in 1958 and Josep Roca-Pons, a noted Catalan linguist, initiated the Catalan program at the neighbouring Indiana University, in Bloomington in 1960. These figures established the basic grounds for the emergence of the North American Catalan Society, which was founded in 1978 during the

celebration of the First Colloquium of Catalan Studies in North America. The organizing committee was presided by Professors Porqueras-Mayo and Roca-Pons; Carme Rei-Granger and Jaume Martí-Olivella acted as secretaries and Imma Minoves-Myers and Spurgeon Baldwin were the officers. Antoni M. Badia i Margarit, who was at the time the President of the University of Barcelona, was the Honorary President of that historic meeting. It was precisely doctor Badia i Margarit who read an official letter from Josep Tarradellas, President of the *Generalitat*, the Catalan autonomous government that had just been restored after Franco had forbidden it almost forty years before. This *Primer Col·loqui* had an attendance of about a hundred people. There were forty-three papers read and two book exhibits: the first one consisted of the 1000 volumes of Catalan literature and culture donated from the Generalitat to the library of the University of Illinois; and the second showed a series of important inncunnabla and rare editions of medieval Catalan texts, specially belonging to the figure of Ramon Llull. The North American Castalan Society was officially and successfully launched. None of this would have been possible without Albert Porqueras-Mayo's vision, energy and leadership. Having served as secretary of that First Colloquium, I find myself in the position of bearing witness to that remarkable capacity. NACS had been a dream for a long time. It was already a reality. Albert Porqueras-Mayo made sure that such a reality would keep growing not only through his constant teaching and scholarly work but also by devoting a lot of time to make sure that the University of Illinois would become the site of one of the first permanent "lectorats" of Catalan language in the United States.

Estudis de llengua, liteartura i cultura catalanes, (1979) was the title given to the Proceedings of the First Colloquium of Catalan Studies in North America. The volume was co-edited by Albert Porqueras-Mayo, Spurgeon Balwin and Jaume Martí-Olivella. It became the first in a series of volumes that housed the proceedings of the next Colloquiums: (Yale University, 1980; Toronto University, 1982; Catholic University of America, Washington DC, 1984; University of South Florida, Tampa-St Augustine, 1987; University of British Columbia, Vancouver, 1990; University of California at Berkeley, 1993; Indiana University, Bloomington, 1995; University of Barcelona, 1998 and Brown University, 2001).

Albert Porqueras-Mayo's work as an editor did not stop with his work in some of those proceedings. It also included numerous articles devoted to the study and edition or rare Lullian volumes, like those that formed part of the above mentioned book exhibit in the First Colloquium. He also wrote extensively on contemporary Catalan poetry, specially on Carles Riba. His study of transnational literary

themes often included Catalan references such as the mythic figure of *La ben plantada*, created by Eugeni d'Ors, one of Catalonia's foremost philosophers and writers, who was a leading force during the *Noucentisme* period. Last but certainly not least, Albert Porqueras-Mayo's scholarly work reached also the area of the most contemporary expressions of Catalan narrative.

This dedication was obvious during the Third Colloquium of NACS, held in 1982 in Toronto, one of whose highlights was a round table on "La literatura catalana dels 70," that he co-moderated with Josep Maria Castellet, arguably Catalonia's most noted critic at the time. This interest was ultimately reflected in the publication, together with Carme Rei-Granger and Jaume Martí-Olivella, of the volume *Antologia de la narrativa catalana dels 70* (1980). This volume was later published as an academic reader in America with the collaboration of Professor John Dagenais, one of Albert Porqueras-Mayo's most outstanding disciples. The new volume as titled: *New Catalan Short Story: An Anthology* (1983).

Albert Porqueras-Mayo was intensely alive, both as an academic scholar and in the two new passions he had encountered in his later years: Chinese culture and the love of trees. In my last visit to his apartment, nestled among the beautiful trees that line up the avenues surrounding the Olympic village area in Barcelona, Albert radiated energy and was telling me about his plans to go again to China, this time not only to attend a scholarly meeting on Cervantes but in order to explore a country and a people that had become a new fascination for him. While walking, Albert never ceased pointing to the different varieties of trees whose names and origins he explained to me. Barcelona, he said, contains one of the richest condensation of trees in all Southern Europe. Thus, for Albert Porqueras-Mayo, Barcelona and Catalonia had become a sort of newfound land, a core territory that, both literally and figuratively, allowed him to navigate the wide waters of the world. His intellectual expeditions and his human wisdom and warmth will be sorely missed.

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