

CULTURE TODAY

IN EXAMINING THE CULTURAL SITUATION IN TODAY'S ANDORRA, IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER THAT IN SPITE OF THE ATTEMPT TO RECOVER THE COUNTRY'S TRADITIONAL CULTURE NEW DEMANDS HAVE ARISEN AS A RESULT OF IMMIGRATION AND TOURISM.



CONCERT BY THE CLARET BROTHERS OF ANDORRA LA VELLA



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The situation of the cultural outlook in Andorra has to be considered on the basis of two conditioning factors: on one hand, the attempt to recover the country's traditional culture, and on the other, the new demands arising from external cultural influences as a result of the important phenomena of migration and tourism that the country has experienced over the last decades. Both factors must be taken into account as being inseparable from the Principality's economic growth. At the same time, though, there are other factors that must be remembered if we are to understand the developments of the last few years.

During the fifties, certain anxieties made themselves felt as a result of the cultural situation, crystallizing in the *Cursos Internacionals d'Andorra*, which increased the awareness of a large part of the population as regards the unknown or forgotten cultural reality and contributed to the sensibility of young people who at that time were starting to study in other countries and could therefore borrow from the cultural reality of the large centres abroad.

After some years of economic prosperity during the sixties, based chiefly on commerce, it was mainly after the beginning of the seventies that the cultural situation reached more satisfactory

levels. The growth in the population and its diversification, both in terms of origin and cultural level, led to more and more urgent needs and demanded increased attention to the cultural demand on the part of the political power. Since the constitution in 1982 of the first Andorran government as a separate institution from the legislative power, we can speak of a systematization of this demand. Some of the services of the Department of Culture had already been set up during the seventies, but it was really during the eighties that they were organised and properly developed. Today we can say that as regards the projection of culture we must bear in mind, as well as the co-ordinated action of the government, the growing interest shown by the local corporations, essentially the *Comuns*, or town halls. Recently there has been a very noticeable effort by these public entities to create the necessary cultural infrastructures. The construction of libraries, exhibition halls, cultural centres equipped for a range of activities, lecture halls and museums has been rewarded with the assignation of considerable funds. These developments have been timidly followed by private initiative, not only at the level of infrastructures but also on a commercial level. But in spite of the appearance of a few bookshops and art

galleries, one gets the impression that culture is not yet a profitable enterprise. As regards public initiative, amongst stable structures we can mention there is the Institut d'Estudis Musicals, where courses in music are available up to advanced levels, and the Institut d'Estudis Andorrans, an institution for research in the field of social sciences and anthropology.

Other initiatives we should remember and that take place regularly are the festivals of music: the Festival Internacional de Jazz d'Andorra, held during the first fortnight in July and now seven years old, and the Festival Internacional de Música Clàssica held in the Valley of Ordino and now in its ninth edition. There is also the Festival Internacional de Música i Dansa d'Andorra, whose second edition, in September of this year, inaugurated the Auditori Nacional.

It is also worth mentioning the Summer University, which for seven consecutive years has dealt with historical and current affairs subjects of great interest. To all this we can add the important traditional and popular festivals, and we should not forget that there are also important cycles of concerts, conferences, exhibitions, theatrical courses and literary events, which give us a general idea of the cultural life of Andorra today. ■