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26

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Nation-Building  
in  
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MEDIEVAL HERITAGE IN THE BEGINNINGS OF  
MODERN CATALAN LITERATURE, 1780-1841

Magí Sunyer

*Abstract*

In the period 1780-1840 there were very few reimpresions of medieval Catalan texts and there was considerable confusion about the value of the literary past. However, at the end of the eighteenth century, a modern process of publishing medieval documentation was instigated, largely thanks to Antoni de Capmany, that was to have an extraordinary impact on the activity of men of letters, historians and scholars in the following century. The introduction of Romanticism by the review *El Europeo* (1823-24) prompted an interest in medieval Catalan history in all sorts of literary and historical genres. In the 1830s philological projects were undertaken such as the dictionary of writers by Josep Torres Amat and some collections of texts by ancient writers, and the first steps were taken towards the accurate editing of medieval texts. By the end of this period, Joaquim Rubió i Ors, imbued with this spirit, was advocating the use of the Catalan language for cultured literature.

Joaquim Rubió i Ors decided to bring the poetical campaign that had been printed in the *Diario de Barcelona* in 1839 and 1840 to its culmination by publishing *Lo Gayter del Llobregat* ("The Piper of the Llobregat"). In explaining his decision, he repeatedly stated, modestly, that he did not deserve to be considered a troubadour, merely a piper; and among other patriotic arguments he wrote:

seria molt convenient traure ses glòries passades a la memòria del poble que treballa i s'afanya per sa glòria venidera, i que alguns records de lo que fórem podrien contribuir no poc a lo que tal vegada havem de ser.

To transmit these memories,

ha conegut que no devia fer sinó obrir lo llibre de nostra història en ses pàgines més brillants i poètiques; i sentar-se en les verdoses i venerables ruïnes de l'antic monument que presencià los heroics fets que en aquella se descriuen.

He then specified the historical and literary glories to which he referred and demanded that they be retrieved in Catalan and not in Spanish:

¿No tenim una col·lecció de cròniques tan abundant i variada com la que puga posseir qualsevol altre poble, i una galeria immensa de trobadors, pares de la poesia vulgar moderna?<sup>1</sup>

The author of this key text in twentieth-century Catalan literary history, Rubió i Ors, was a member of the group of intellectuals around the scholarly authority of Manuel Milà i Fontanals; more than his friends, he had confidence in the potential of the Catalan language. In this same prologue, he somewhat prematurely stated that he believed his poetry campaign to have been a failure because of its lack of followers. However, it did inspire younger writers such as Antoni de Bofarull and Marian Aguiló to take up the pen, albeit for the moment only to write poetry. Subsequently they played decisive roles in the re-publication and popularisation of medieval literary and historical Catalan texts. His concern for language was by no means fortuitous. The Catalan Countries were still largely monolingual<sup>2</sup> but, after centuries of extremely limited use of Catalan as a means of cultured expression, the first wave of liberal modernity had the effect of reducing Catalan to the category of a *patois* and of restricting its ambit to colloquial situations. At the beginning of the period under consideration here, a modern intellectual who played a fundamental role in the evaluation of the medieval past, Antoni de Cap-

<sup>1</sup> Joaquim Rubió i Ors, prologue to *Lo gaiter del Llobregat*, in Miracle 1960, 278-80: '[the piper believes] that past glories should be transmitted to the memory of the people who work and strive for future glories, and that the reminiscence of what we once were may contribute to no small extent to what perhaps we should be.' 'one need do no more than open our history book at its most brilliant pages; and sit among the green and venerable ruins of the ancient monument that witnessed the heroic deeds described therein.' 'Do we not have as abundant and varied a collection of chronicles as any other people, and an immense gallery of troubadours, fathers to modern vulgar poetry?'

<sup>2</sup> Anguera 1997 provides considerable data about the generalized, practically exclusive, use of Catalan as the colloquial language.

many, exhumed a speech by king Martin the Humane and decided to translate it into Spanish. To justify this decision, he wrote a death certificate of the Catalan language, stating that it could no longer be used for cultural functions.

Therefore, recognising medieval texts as 'classics' of Catalan literature and history had a twofold meaning. First, these texts established the notion that Catalonia had a tradition of its own; second, this tradition showed that the Catalan language could be used in all registers; that is to say, like metropolitan languages, with (unlike Catalan) an active state apparatus behind them for support and propagation.

#### 1780-1833

It should not be forgotten that Neoclassicism had little impact on the part of the Catalan language domain subjugated by the Spanish crown at the beginning of the eighteenth century, after the defeat in the War of Succession. Northern Catalonia, under French government, and Minorca, a British colony throughout much of the century, were unaffected; it was in these territories that the Greek and Latin classics were reflected in tragedies like Joan Ramis's *Lurècia*, set in Roman antiquity, and the 1808 translation of Virgil's *Bucolics* by Antoni Febrer i Cardona. However, as Joan Fuster (1976, 150-1) points out with regard to Valencia, we must take into account the fascination that some eighteenth-century intellectuals felt for medieval authors. There, several works from ancient Catalan literature were salvaged by Gregori Maians; also, Jaume Roig's *Espill* (Mirror) was published by Carles Ros in 1735, and a project was conceived to publish a series of classics (not exclusively Valencian) by Lluís Galiana in 1763. Throughout the eighteenth century, it was quite common for language apologias (for instance, those by Agustí Eura and by Josep Ullastre) to refer to better times when both country and language had full expression (cf. Feliu et al. 1992).

Josep Fontana points out that 1780 was the year in which the Board of Trade and two historians, Jaume Caresmar and Antoni de Capmany, established an economic, historic and philological programme that presented Catalonia's specific needs to the State. Their approach focused on Catalan history and literature as manifestations of a separate individuality, which was also expressed in economic issues. The programme also involved renouncing the Catalan language:

Allò que els interessava no era la literatura catalana per ella mateixa, sinó com a testimoni d'una cultura pròpia, la sola existència de la qual donava suport a la imatge diferenciada de Catalunya que pretenien exposar.<sup>3</sup>

Integral parts of the programme were *Memorias históricas sobre la marina, comercio y artes de la antigua ciudad de Barcelona*, published in 1779 by Antoni de Capmany,<sup>4</sup> and the plan to publish a dictionary of Catalan writers, initiated by Jaume Caresmar and completed by Fèlix Torres Amat decades later. Jordi Rubió i Balaguer (1986, 3: 82) points out that Jaume Caresmar and his followers are fundamental to the process that was to lead from the antiquarian study of history to archival and diplomatic research, because it was based on a movement that was active throughout Europe. Jordi Rubió himself stressed the importance of these initiatives:

Suggestions llançades per primer cop pels historiadors donaren estructura a ideologies i programes de restauració que tingueren després vigència en la Renaixença, la qual s'ha d'estudiar en funció del segle XVIII.<sup>5</sup>

Even so, let me stress once again that this movement rejected what was to become the distinguishing feature par excellence of the Catalans: their language.

The effect of these Enlightenment activities was twofold. On the one hand, they drew attention to Catalan history and encouraged ancient documents of historical and literary interest to be exhumed; on the other, with the prestige of modernity, they pushed culturally ambitious discourse towards the use of Spanish. The later process that we know as *Renaixença*, which depends precisely on pride in former glories, played a vital role in the progress of scholarly investigation while striving to recuperate Catalan as a language appropriate for all uses. This process was

<sup>3</sup> Fontana 1993, 120-1: 'What they were interested in was not Catalan literature in itself, but Catalan literature as proof of a culture, the mere existence of which gave support to the image of a distinct Catalonia that they were trying to present.'

<sup>4</sup> Fontana 1993, 119, considers this to be the greatest work of eighteenth-century Catalan culture. Previously, Capmany had published *Antiguos tratados de paces y alianzas entre algunos reyes de Aragon y diferentes principes infieles de Asia y Africa, desde el siglo XII al XVI*; his penchant for Spanish (over against Catalan) literature is manifested in his *Teatro histórico crítico de la elocuencia española*, an anthology of Spanish literature from the early romances to the present, published in 1786.

<sup>5</sup> Rubió 1986, 83: 'Suggestions first made by historians gave structure to ideologies and restoration programmes that were subsequently to be valid during the *Renaixença*, which has to be studied in the context of the eighteenth century.'

eventually to merge with political Catalanism. As Jordi Rubió puts it: 'Catalunya tanmateix va saber llegir i entendre la lliçó i l'Il·luminadora del seu passat que es desprenia dels documents publicats en les *Memorias*.'<sup>6</sup>

If we focus on the publication of medieval documents, we must again mention, first and foremost, Antoni de Capmany. In 1879 he published, as part of the aforementioned *Memorias*, a 'diplomatic collection of the instruments that justify the present memoirs' presenting 488 documents – not, to be sure, literary texts, but privileges, letters, regulations, decrees, treaties, sentences, concessions, etc. These texts testified to the brilliance of Catalonia's medieval past and at the same time (although this was not the editor's intention) to the splendour of the Catalan language. Two years later Capmany published a document that was fundamental in raising the awareness of the importance of medieval Catalonia: the 'Book of the Consulate of the Sea or Code of maritime customs in Barcelona', generally known as the 'Book of the Consulate'. This medieval Catalan code of maritime customs was to prove highly influential in the following century.

By the end of the eighteenth century various re-editions of Catalan classics had appeared, such as Jaume Febrer's *Trobes*, which were then thought to be medieval. They were first published in the periodical *Diario de Valencia* between 1791 and 1795, and then in book form in 1796. There were also some learned controversies about the classics, which required knowledge and study,<sup>7</sup> and MS catalogues or projects for cataloguing Catalan writers.<sup>8</sup> But the fact remains that one hundred years later, in 1893, Alfred Morel Fatio still deplored the difficulty of writing a true history of Catalan letters since the texts were unknown or unavailable (Aramon i Serra 1997, 435). If this was the situation at the end of the nineteenth century (when considerable trouble had been taken to make up for the shortcomings), things were even worse in the century's

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 95: 'Catalonia, however, knew how to read and understand the Enlightenment lesson of her past revealed in the documents published in the *Memorias*.'

<sup>7</sup> One of these was between Josep Villarroya (*Colección de cartas histórico-críticas en que se convence que el Rey D. Jayme I de Aragon no fue el verdadero autor de la Crónica ó comentarios que corren a su nombre*, 1800) and a rejoinder 'Sobre la Crónica del Rey Don Jayme I de Aragon' (published in *Variedades de Ciencias, Literatura y Artes*). Cf. Marcet & Solà 1998.

<sup>8</sup> It was at this time that the dictionaries by Just Pastor Fuster and Fèlix Torres Amat were planned; in June 1795 Antoni Elies i Robert read to the Barcelona Royal Academy of Arts on a 'Catálogo de las obras que se han escrito en lengua catalana desde el reinado de Dn. Jayme el Conquistador'; cf. Marcet & Solà 1998.

early decades. Of course, there were the constant re-editions of Anselm Turmeda's *Llibre de bons amonestaments* ('The book of good admonitions'), but its usage was restricted to primary schools as an entry-level text book, and had no connection with any rediscovery or revival of the medieval classics.

Between 1780-1833, and with the few exceptions I have mentioned, readers interested in the medieval classics had to go to libraries that preserved old editions and manuscripts, or to bookshops specialising in rarities.<sup>9</sup> Or they had to make do with a few short anthologies, which offered little more than samples. The catalogue of works written in Catalan, published as an appendix to the second edition of Josep Pau Ballot's *Gramàtica i apologia de la llengua catalana* ('Grammar and apologia of the Catalan language'), is extremely short and reproduces very few fragments. In 1824, Jaubert de Paçà's *Recherches sur la langue catalane* (published in Paris) contained a selection of texts that, according to Lola Badia,

fa la impressió que s'alimenta fonamentalment de la tradició que treballa-  
ment ha sobreviscut al llarg de l'anomenada Decadència; en seria una prova  
el paper destacadíssim que assigna a Francesc Vicenç Garcia.<sup>10</sup>

A prevailing lack of historical knowledge is evinced in such symptomatic slips as the belief that Ausiàs Marc predated Petrarch; also, the *Biblioteca valenciana* ('Valencian Library', the dictionary of authors compiled by Just Pastor Fuster mentioned in note 9, and published in two volumes in 1827 and 1830) opens with Vicent Ximeno, an eighteenth-century author. The choice of texts or fragments is haphazard: the volumes contain entire compositions from minor writers but, despite all the praise lavished on him, only two of Ausiàs Marc's verses.

The mythification of the medieval past had literary repercussions; witness some fragments of an unfinished but well-known poem by Antoni Puigblanch, usually known as *Les comunitats de Castella* ('The communities of Castile'). Puigblanch lived in exile in London during the tyrannical periods when Fernando VII reigned (1814-20, 1823-33); his

<sup>9</sup> Simbor 1980, 84-85 reproduces an advertisement by the bookseller Just Pastor Fuster (who was subsequently to publish a dictionary of Valencian authors) in the *Diario de Valencia* offering 'por raros' Jaume Roig's *Llibre de les dones*, and the poems later known as the *Cançoner Satíric Valencià* ('The satirical Valencian anthology').

<sup>10</sup> Badia 1994, 10: 'is apparently based on the tradition that survived (...) throughout the so-called Decadence; proof of this is the leading role given to Francesc Vicenç Garcia'.

poem is a radical diatribe against the monarch and an exaltation of liberty. He develops the theme of the excellence of the language, and also vindicates it. He refers to Catalan (or, as it was often called at the time, 'Limousin') in the following terms:

Llenguatge és tal, aquest, que del mateix usaren,  
del francès Carlo Magno los cortesans complots,  
i els destres catalans amb ell se gloriaren  
que del Jònic solcant, i de l'Egeu, los flots,  
duenyos foren d'Atenes

[...]

En ell també escrigueren los gaios trobadors  
amb noble pensament i amb més noble porfia.<sup>11</sup>

Regardless of obvious historical and philological errors (e.g. the mistaken assumption that Charlemagne spoke Catalan, or the prevalent conflation between Catalan and Limousin) the poem interestingly invokes, precisely, medieval and historicist claims to prestige: the expedition to Greece and the troubadours. The first of these is the most constant and uninterrupted mythical trope used by Catalans into the nineteenth century. We should not be surprised that Puigblanch resorts to it, particularly if we remember that both Antoni de Capmany in his 'Memoirs' and the Book of the Consulate of the Sea had revived interest in the subject.

The troubadour reference is of a different nature. Between 1816 and 1821, François Raynouard had published in Paris the six volumes of the *Choix des poésies originales des troubadours*.<sup>12</sup> As a philologist, Puigblanch may have been familiar with the work. In any case, the element of troubadourism was to become a decisive factor in romantic Catalan medievalism and influenced Catalan literature throughout the nineteenth century, and even (with some ups and downs) right up to the present day.<sup>13</sup> These elements make Puigblanch's poetry more significant than it might seem for an unfinished poem that remained unpublished for years. In fact, one party among the *Renaixença* revivalists would later claim that Puigblanch's poem, rather than Aribau's 'La Pàtria', was the movement's

<sup>11</sup> Quoted from Molas 1968, 108-9: 'Such a noble language, spoken by/ Charlemagne's conspiring courtiers/ And the able Catalans / Who sailed the Ionian and Aegean Seas / To become the masters of Athens. [...] It was also the language spoken by the troubadours / To show noble thoughts and even nobler tenacity.'

<sup>12</sup> Cf. also Philippe Martel's contribution to the present volume.

<sup>13</sup> See Rubió 1986, 407-17. For Catalan-Occitanian political links after this period, see Martel 1992.

true precursor. Still, the appearance of 'La Pàtria' in the newspaper *El Vapor*, 1833, marks a caesura.

*1833-1841: 'Taking Down From the Sacred Wall the Forefathers' Lyre'*

Romanticism entered Catalonia by means of the journal *El Europeo* ('The European', 1823-24), which was directed by Bonaventura Carles Aribau and Ramon López Soler, and really took off after 1833, the year of the death of Fernando VII and the return of the anti-absolutist exiles. Aribau and López Soler showed no interest in promoting medieval Catalan classics; significantly, the Library of Spanish Authors which Aribau directed from 1846 did not publish a single Catalan author either in the original or in translation. The literary and philological orientation of these authors was Spanish. López Soler made just one exception to this (he wrote a single verse in Catalan); but among Aribau's several minor texts, one that was to prove to be fundamental to the history of Catalan letters, 'La Pàtria'.

It has been said that some passages from Aribau's poem are indebted to Puigblanch. However, it was of much greater literary quality and managed to synthesize the main features of what would become dominant in the re-emergence of Catalan literature. In his praise of the language, which he also calls 'Limousin', the link with childhood and sentiment plays a major role; but Aribau also refers to past medieval glory, not as explicitly as Puigblanch, but leaving no room for doubt:

Plau-me encara parlar la llengua d'aquells savis,  
que ompliren l'univers de llurs costums e lleis,  
la llengua d'aquells forts que acataren los reis,  
defengueren llurs drets, venjaren llurs agravis.<sup>14</sup>

He mentions warriors and wise men (i.e., writers), using, in short, the same characterization as Puigblanch, without making it clear to which heroic deed or which wise men he is referring. Even so, he relates the language to 'the song of the troubadour', and a little later appear the lines that I quote by way of motto to this section of my article: 'ní cull del mur sagrat la lira dels seus avis'. Thus, like Puigblanch, Aribau uses the well-known references to seafaring expansion and the troubadours.

<sup>14</sup> Molas 1974, 19-20: 'It still pleases me to speak the language of those wise men, / who filled the universe with their customs and laws, / the language of the strong who obeyed the kings, / defended their rights and avenged their wrongs.'

Though Aribau was not interested in the advancement of Catalan as a cultural vehicle, his poetry was to mark Catalan cultural history like no other.

Manuel Jorba has stated that the importance of Romanticism lies in the publishing of medieval texts:

Gràcies principalment a l'ambició romàntica de presentar la individualitat nacional en la fase de la seva presa de consciència o en la seva culminació, a les aportacions del comparatisme i, en alguns casos, a procediments positivistes, fou possible el descobriment i progressiva assumpció dels propis clàssics i el projecte d'edició i l'estudi del fons literari, especialment del popular i el medieval.<sup>15</sup>

In 1835, a scheme was launched to publish in installments a 'Treasury of the Catalan Language', running to a total of 2560 pages and including editions of Catalan classics (Anguera 2000, 134n). In 1836 two works were published that were to have an important effect on nineteenth-century historiography and literature. The first was *Los condes de Barcelona vindicados* ('The revenge of the Counts of Barcelona') by Prósper de Bofarull, the first modern history of medieval Catalonia based on the new archiving research approach. The second was *Memorias para ayudar a formar un diccionario crítico de los escritores catalanes y dar alguna idea de la antigua y moderna literatura de Cataluña* ('Notes to help draw up a critical dictionary of Catalan writers and give some idea of the ancient and modern literature of Catalonia'), by Fèlix Torres i Amat. In 1847, Prósper de Bofarull was to begin publishing his *Colección de documentos inéditos del Archivo General de la Corona de Aragón* ('Collection of unpublished documents from the General Archive of the Aragon Crown'). These documents were essential to understanding Catalan history and contained some literary texts. They had a decisive influence on the editor's nephew Antoni de Bofarull, a historian, man of letters and main proponent of the historicist *Renaixença*. Torres i Amat's *Memorias*, the realization of a project that had begun at the end of the previous century, provided a basis for understanding Catalan literature.

<sup>15</sup> Manuel Jorba, 'La Renaixença', in Molas 1986, 7: 17: 'Largely owing to the romantic ambition of presenting national individuality in its awareness-raising stage or in its culmination, to the contributions of comparative linguistics and, in some cases, to positivist procedures, did it become possible to discover and appropriate our own classics and the project of publishing and studying our literary resources, particularly the popular and medieval ones.'

Sometime between Aribau's generation and the next, medievalism became a veritable romantic fever. Ramon López Soler (Aribau's colleague in the Philosophical Society and in *El Europeo*, and the man responsible for publishing 'La Pàtria' in *El Vapor*) had already used medieval Catalonia as the setting set much of the action of the first romantic historical novel in Spanish, *El caballero del cisne* ('The Knight of the Swan', 1830). But the novelist who is generally considered to have tipped the Walter Scott-type historical novel towards Catalan themes, even though he wrote in Spanish, was Joan Cortada with *La heredera de Sangumí* ('The heiress of Sangumí', 1835), followed by *El rapto de doña Almodis* ('The abduction of Lady Almodis', 1836), *Lorenzo* (1837), *El bastardo de Entenza* ('The bastard from Entenza', 1838) and *El templario y la vilana* ('The Templar and the peasant woman', 1840). It will suffice here to draw attention, in passing, to the troubadourism of *Lorenzo* and to the tradition of historical prose which would lead from Cortada to Antoni de Bofarull and Víctor Balaguer. Those authors would exploit crucial moments in Catalan history, first medieval and then from other periods. This process culminated in 1862 when Antoni de Bofarull published the first modern novel in Catalan, *L'orfeneta de Menargues o Catalunya agonitzant* ('The orphan girl from Menargues or the death throes of Catalonia'), set in a crucial juncture at the beginning of the fifteenth century.

These historical novels with medieval themes often contained scholarly information which, bearing in mind the difficulty of consulting old texts, aimed to make up for the evident shortcomings in readers' knowledge of Catalan history. Jordi Rubió (1986, 410) has stated that nobody before Cortada had thought of annotating their novels with real facts and documents; but the habit was taken up, among others, by Antoni de Bofarull and Víctor Balaguer and, subsequently, by Maria de Bell-lloc. In 1840, Joan Illas i Vidal anonymously published *Enrique y Mercedes. Novela histórica del sitio de Barcelona. Contiene algunos documentos auténticos pertenecientes a la Guerra de Sucesión*, with a highly unusual and controversial setting: the War of the Spanish Succession. In the prologue, the author expressed regret at not having written in Catalan, because he would only have been able to do so if he had had the soul and the language of the troubadours. This novel also provided an appendix with documentation from the period.

Likewise, Jaume Tió i Noè, who had written his first play about an episode in Spanish history, followed Cortada's novelistic development in

that he catalanized the theatrical themes from *Generosos a qual més* ('Nobody more generous', 1840) along the same lines as he was to do later with *Alfonso el Liberal o leyes de amor i honor* ('Alfonso the Magnanimous or laws of love and honour', 1843) and *El espejo de las venganzas* ('The mirror of revenge', 1844). Tió also edited two popular historical texts which were to inspire and inform a great deal of historicist literature: *Expedición de los catalanes y aragoneses contra turcos y griegos* ('The Catalan and Aragonese expedition against the Turks and Greeks') by Francesc de Montcada (which was based on Ramon Muntaner's Chronicle, and which generated a great amount of literature on the medieval Catalan *almogàver*-soldiers), and *Historia de los movimientos de separación y guerra de Cataluña en tiempos de Felipe IV* ('History of separatist movements and war in Catalonia in the times of Philip IV') by Francisco Manuel de Melo, a reference text about the mid-seventeenth-century Reapers' War.

In 1839, Pau Piferrer published the first volume of *Cataluña* in the series *Recuerdos y bellezas de España* ('Memories and sights of Spain'). Both his contemporaries and latter-day historians consider this work to be the cornerstone of Catalan historicist romanticism. Piferrer does not hesitate to include documents, in their entirety or in excerpt, about a history and a literature which he knows to be unfamiliar and poorly publicized. The quotations are usually of a scholarly nature, but there is no shortage of literary passages inserted on the least likely of pretexts. Thus the chapter on Sant Cugat del Vallès begins with a beautiful capital letter S which draws with it the following footnote:

Esta S es copia de la que encabeza la segunda de las cinco baladas del trovador Luis de Vilarasa, caballero catalán que floreció a principios del siglo XV, y uno de los que forman el cancionero de París. Como poseemos uno de los facsímiles que trajo a Barcelona el anticuario francés M. Tastu, creemos no será inoportuno continuar la mencionada balada, que no traduciremos del catalán por no concentrirlo su estremada sencillez y gracia de la frase, prendas que desaparecerían si se virtiese en cualquier otro idioma<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Piferrer 1839, 190-191: 'This S is a copy of the one to be found at the beginning of the second of the five ballads by the troubadour Luis de Vilarasa, a Catalan knight from the beginning of the fifteenth century, whose work is part of the Paris anthology. As we have one of the copies that the French antiquarian M. Tastu brought to Barcelona, we believe that it would not be inopportune to continue this ballad, which we shall not translate into Catalan so as not to spoil the extreme simplicity and grace of its phrases, which cannot be rendered in any other language.'



– and he then goes on to reproduce the poem. With procedures like these fragments of medieval classics or poems were made known. As Josep Fontana (1993, 542) notes, the new historiography began with Piferrer. We should not be surprised that those responsible for popularizing Catalan history, Víctor Balaguer and Antoni de Bofarull, followed him also in this respect.

In 1840, the journal that introduced romanticism to the Balearics, *La Palma*, was published in Majorca. The instigators, in particular Josep Maria Quadrado and Tomàs Aguiló, focused not only on original literature about medieval themes but also on ancient literature, in such articles as 'Majorcan poets' by Quadrado (who was later to undertake the task of editing ancient texts). In the same year, in Barcelona, a project that was impregnated with the *Renaixença* spirit (Badia 1994, 11) was started by Josep Maria de Grau and Joaquim Rubió i Ors: the *Col·lecció d'Antigues Obres Catalanes* ('Collection of ancient Catalan works'). The only works to be published were the poems of Francesc Vicent Garcia (Rector of Vallfogona), and those of Pere Serafi, both in 1840. That the Collection should begin with Garcia and Serafi should be no surprise. Garcia enjoyed considerable popularity, as was shown by the number of re-editions of his poems throughout the nineteenth century, and there was a widespread misconception that the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were the golden age of Catalan literature (analogously to the Spanish *Siglo de Oro*). For the same reason, it was planned to publish Francesc Fontanella alongside medieval authors such as Ausiàs Marc (Aramon 1997).

Let us finish where we began. In 1839, Joaquim Rubió i Ors began the publication of the poems in Catalan entitled 'Lo Gaiter del Llobregat', in the *Diario de Barcelona* – the first poetic campaign of the *Renaixença*. Two years later he published them all in one volume with a prologue that was steeped in medievalism. This was considered to be the *Renaixença's* first manifesto. By that time, medievalism and troubadourism were fully established in the literature written by Catalans. Rubió was the first to call for the revival of the *Jocs Florals* ('Floral Games'), first imported to Barcelona by John I:

Catalunya fou per espai de dos segles la mestra en lletres dels demés pobles; ¿per què, no pot restablir sos jocs florals i sa acadèmia del gai saber, i tornar

a sorprendre al món amb ses tensesos, sos cants d'amor, sos sirventesos i ses albaides?<sup>17</sup>

That did not actually take place until 1859; but in 1841, as a sort of rehearsal, the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Barcelona organized a competition with two prizes. One was for a historical piece of work on the Parliament of Casp, the prize for which consisted of copies of Bofarull's *Los condes de Barcelona vindicados*, and Capmany's *Memorias*. The other was for an epic poem, more than 600 lines long, about the Catalan expedition to the East, which was awarded to Joaquim Rubió i Ors. Significantly, the bibliography for this latter topic mentioned the popular narrative history by Francesc de Montcada rather than the original chronicle by Ramon Muntaner.

#### Conclusions

On balance, the period between 1780 and 1840 was a lean time for the publication of Catalan medieval literature. Very few editions were published, and the ones that were often showed a considerable lack of editorial sense of purpose. At the end of the eighteenth century, and largely thanks to the initiative of Antoni de Capmany, documentation of fundamental historical interest with a modern approach began to be published. At the same time a project got under way to write a dictionary of Catalan writers, and in 1836 Torres i Amat published his *Memorias*. Despite the difficulty of finding medieval texts, a medievalizing influence can be felt in Antoni Puigblanch's poem, in the references to Catalan expansion in the East, in the popularization of troubadourism and, above all, in the advent of romanticism. In fact it is already noticeable in Arribau's 'La Pàtria' and in historical novels and drama written in Spanish on Catalan themes (Cortada, Tió i Noè). In Majorca, the journal *La Palma* was moving in the same direction. The most influential work at the end of this period, *Recuerdos y bellezas de España: Cataluña* by Piferrer, laid down the guidelines for assessing the past and medieval literature. Joaquim Rubió i Ors started a new cycle with the campaign for catalanizing the language of poetry and wrote the first manifesto of the *Renaixença*, including a proposal for reviving the medieval-troubadouric Floral Games. Together

<sup>17</sup> Joaquim Rubió i Ors, in Miracle 1960, 283: 'For two centuries, Catalonia taught literature to other nations. Why can we not revive the Floral Games and the academy of poetry, and once again astonish the world with our love songs, sirventes and albaides?'

with Josep Maria de Grau, he was also responsible for the publication of a *Col·lecció d'Antigues Obres Catalanes*, which did not however go beyond two volumes (neither of which contained medieval authors).

It was only in the following decades that the great medieval writers, from the chroniclers to Ausiàs Marc, were published. Initially, because of an inherent mistrust of the Catalan language, they were translated into Spanish; only subsequently were they published in the original. In a letter to Rubió i Ors, Manuel Milà i Fontanals revealed that he was planning to publish the great medieval classics, but this was not to be. In the course of the nineteenth century, the assessment of Catalan writers was gradually refined. In this process, considerable influence was exerted by the guidelines and publishing activity of Antoni de Bofarull, Constantí Llombart, Josep Maria Quadrado, Gabriel Llabrés, Francesc Pelai Briz and, above all, Manuel Milà i Fontanals and Marian Aguiló. According to Lola Badia (1994, 13), Antoni de Bofarull's 1858 vision of medieval Catalan literature was similar to the one we have now, and she considers that it was between 1860 and 1889 that the work was done to provide Catalan literary history with a clearer profile.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> This article is part of the research carried out by the research group in National and Gender Identity in Catalan Literature of the Rovira i Virgili University and project HUM 2006-13121/FILO of the Ministry of Education and Science.

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