



JOAN MIRÓ FOUNDATION IN BARCELONA

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EDITORIAL

Catalan towns and cities have often appeared in literary works in different languages. First of all, there are the works of Spanish authors living in the Catalan-language area. These are works that do not belong to Catalan literature, but to Castilian, or, as it is known internationally, Spanish literature. This literature forms part of Catalan cultural life. In this writing, as in writing by Catalan-language authors, there are frequent references to Catalan towns and cities and to Catalonia. Allusions to the countries of Catalan culture are fewer in the case of Spanish or Latin-American authors who do not live in the Catalan area. But we must remember that Barcelona, with its thriving publishing industry, has made a decisive contribution to the spread of Latin-American literature and that many writers who express themselves in Spanish visit Barcelona to resolve professional matters with publishers, literary agents or cultural circles.

References to Catalonia, the Balearic Isles and Valencia also appear in writing in other languages and especially in books by French, English, Italian and German authors. The Catalan area has fascinated many visitors who have discovered the delights of the Mediterranean, the sensuality built up over a long cultural history, a liberating modernity and an open attitude to different ideas, symbols and beliefs. The Països Catalans have successfully combined a love for their own identity with a spirit of tolerance and the acceptance of diversity. The present Catalan population is the result of a mixture of human groups from different places, of heavy immigration and of cultural influences ranging from Islam to the European philosophies of modernity and postmodernity. The texts we are presenting tell of the presence of Catalan towns and cities and of our countryside in books by well-known authors and in important works of literature.

Today, the countries of Catalan culture are receiving large contingents of immigrants from North Africa and sub-Saharan Africa. Dialogue between their cultures and Catalan culture does not seem as troublesome as it is in other European countries. Although we need to find better solutions to certain legal problems and problems in housing, health attendance and education for the new immigrants, the great majority of the population is quite prepared to welcome and share. This new cultural dialogue will also produce literary works with references to the country, the traditions and the future prospects of the Catalan area.

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