

In Memoriam

Josep Maria Font i Rius (Barcelona 1915-2018)*



Josep Maria Font i Rius, who passed away in Barcelona on the 5th of April 2018, was successively a full professor at the universities of Laguna, Murcia, Valencia and Barcelona. At the Universitat de Barcelona, he taught as a chair from 1954 until his retirement in 1985. As Tomàs de Montagut wrote, “many cohorts of Catalan jurists have gone through his

classroom, and we recall him for his wisdom, but more importantly for his passion for the history of law and institutions and for his teaching, which always sought to develop a critical spirit in his first-year students, whom he wanted to inculcate with a legal culture that could serve us our entire lives as people and as future law professionals.”

This teacher, devoted to his job and attentive to the needs of his disciples, was also a great researcher into the origins of the municipal system and rights and the local institutions in mediaeval Catalonia. His studies in this field have been and still today are a required reference for all mediaevalists. His masterpiece is *Las cartas de población y franquicia de Cataluña*, three voluminous tomes (1969-1983) where he published the charters granted to Catalan towns in order to stimulate their population and development and organise their collective life. This publication was accompanied by a monographic study on each town and a legal study of the regulations developed in these population charters.

In 1985, upon Josep Maria Font i Rius' retirement from academia, the Universitat de Barcelona published a compilation of his far-reaching studies at the request of the Faculty of Law. Dr Jesús Lalinde, who admits to being his disciple, was in charge of choosing the studies, and he wrote a valuable human and scholarly biographical note as the introduction. The compilation is a book almost 800 pages long entitled *Estudis sobre drets i institucions locals en la Catalunya medieval* (1985), and it reissues 24 studies, all of them still highly relevant, including: *La recon-*

quista de Lleida y su proyección en el orden jurídico; La comarca de Tortosa a raíz de la Reconquista cristiana; Entorn de la restauració cristiana de Tarragona. Esquema de la seva ordenació jurídica inicial; Jaume I i la municipalitat de Barcelona; La universitat de prohombres de la Ribera de Barcelona y sus ordenanzas marítimas; and most importantly, Orígenes del régimen municipal de Cataluña, a 500-page study from 1940 which is still a required reference today.

Despite his modesty, which led him to shun all kinds of honours, professor Font i Rius did not lack in recognition of his merits as both a citizen and a scholar. He was a member of the Institut d'Estudis Catalans as well as the Reial Acadèmia de Bones Lletres de Barcelona and the Acadèmia de Jurisprudència i Legislació de Catalunya, and he was awarded a doctor *honoris causa* from the universities of Bordeaux and Montpellier. He also earned the Monturiol Medal, the Creu de Sant Jordi and the City of Barcelona Gold Medal for Scientific Merit. He was the president, and later the honorary president until his death, of the technical committee for the publication of the volumes in the “Textos Jurídics Catalans” collection, which depended on the Department of Justice of the Generalitat de Catalunya. The purpose of this collection is to share the sources of the Catalan legal, common-law and jurisprudential tradition, which are the outcome of extraordinarily fertile legal experience and must be restored from the past so we can better understand and evaluate the present. Precisely the publication of the *Constitucions de Catalunya* (1988) within this collection is an invaluable study by Dr Font on these fundamental rules of Catalan law.

Equally important is his contribution to *Catalunya carolíngia*. Back in the early 1950s, Ramon d'Abadal, who foresaw that he would be unable to finish this project by himself, enlisted different colleagues to help, including Dr Font, whom he put in charge of the publication and the study of documents from the countship of Barcelona. With this purpose in mind, he gave Font the materials he had collected on this countship, in addition to notes and texts which were to be used to write volume I on the general history of the period. Years later, after Abadal had passed away, the History-Archaeology Section of the IEC, disturbed by the difficulties that the execution of the project had come upon, especially financial problems and the dispersion of contributors, took it over and appointed Josep Maria Font i Rius and Anscari Manuel Mundó as the project directors. Under their joint leadership, volume IV was published, which focused on the countships of Osona

* Text prepared by JOSEP M. SALRACH (Universitat Pompeu Fabra and Institut d'Estudis Catalans). Photograph: Photographic Archive Collection of the Institut d'Estudis Catalans.

and Manresa (1999); volume V, on the countships of Girona, Besalú, Empúries and Peralada (2003); and volume VI, on the countships of Rosselló, Conflent, Vallespir and Fenollet (2006). They both also oversaw volume VII on the countship of Barcelona, assisted lately by Gaspar Feliu and Josep Maria Salrach. Despite being almost 100 years old, Dr Font participated in the *Catalunya carolíngia* meetings, and he never ceased contributing his invaluable knowledge when needed. Focusing on another assignment that Ramon d'Abadal had given him, Dr Font and

Manuel Riu worked together to write volume VII** of the *Historia de España Menéndez Pidal* on the Pyrenean nuclei between AD 718 and 1035, a project which Xavier Barral, Gaspar Feliu and Josep Maria Salrach joined.

Josep Maria Font i Rius viewed teaching and research as a single strand where culture is created and transmitted, and as a way to develop a critical spirit. He thought that the history of law could be used to study and show the way people in the past had used law to resolve their conflicts and try to build a better world.

Joaquim Garriga i Riera (1945-2018)*



Joaquim Garriga attended the last meeting of the History-Archaeology Section on the 7th of June, as was his wont. One week later, he was still living his life as usual, although already suffering from symptoms of his illness, and just one month later he had departed this world. It was a very sudden blow from which we are still reeling.

I shall try to briefly explain why Dr Joaquim Garriga and his work as an art historian deserve singular recognition, since it is a key link in the renovation and consolidation of our historiography of art.

We should first recall that Dr Garriga stood out for having unusual and solid training in the humanities and classical languages, thanks to his stay at the Seminary of Girona since his adolescence, where he was touched by the intellectual personality and later the friendship of several of his instructors, including the philologist and language historian Modest Prats. He furthered his classical training in Rome with a diploma in Christian archaeology from the *Pontificio Istituto di Archeologia Cristiana* in 1969, and with a Bachelor's degree in Theology from the *Pontificia Università Gregoriana* in 1970. That sojourn in Rome definitively consolidated his interest in studying the arts, which led him to earn a Bachelor's in Art History from the Universitat de Barcelona (UB) in 1975 and later a doctorate from the same university in 1990, both with an Extraordinary Prize. He became an associate professor at the UAB in 1992 and a chair at the Universitat de Girona (UG) in 1996. He was a professor at the UB for twenty years, from 1976 until 1996, and for another twenty-some years at the UG. As an emeritus professor since he retired in 2015, he signed the last qualification reports

this July from the hospital. He had been a member of the Institut d'Estudis Catalans since 2002.

Dr Garriga has been *the* art historian of Catalonia, of his generation and of subsequent generations, the person with the most exhaustive knowledge of Italian art, and particularly the art of the Renaissance. This, along with Greco-Roman art, is unquestionably the historical period of the arts that has been the subject of the most international studies and therefore has a vast trove of literature. He was enamoured of these topics and a true connoisseur of them.

I wish to highlight two of his early works. The first is the volume *Renacimiento en Europa* from the *Fuentes y Documentos para la Historia del Arte* collection published by Gustau Gili in 1983. Even though the book and the collection seem to be products written for a mass audience, as an annotated anthology with theoretical and practical treatises on the arts and other document sources, this book had a major influence on the profession at the time it was issued, since it served to reveal the complexity of the discipline itself while also providing a new didactic for art history. With this material, which was easily available in Spanish for the first time, it became clear that a proper analysis of past works of art necessitated familiarity with the rich literature in diverse formats which art has generated throughout history.

His second major early work was also part of a broader project, the famous *Història de l'art català* by Edicions 62, and specifically his volume *L'època del Renaixement*, which was published in 1986, in conjunction with Marià Carbonell for the decorative arts. This history of Catalan art, which was widely disseminated and was a huge publishing success, signalled the enshrinement of a new generation of historians, including Dalmases, Pitarch, Garriga, Triadó, Fontbona and Miralles, who offered a deferred, critical synthesis of our artistic past for the first time. The volume by Garriga was one of the most successful, and perhaps the one that was the most difficult to write because of the limitations and dispersion of previous works; after all, while the mediaeval periods, the 19th and 20th centuries, and even the Baroque era with the figure of the architect Cèsar Martinell had been the subjects of curiosity, the 16th century lacked a characterisation as a whole,

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