

IN MEMORIAM

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**PERE-ENRIC BARREDA EDO (BENASSAL, 1964 - BARCELONA, 2014). *In memoriam***

Not many people would point out passion as one of the main features of Pere-Enric. When I first met him, soon after finishing his undergraduate studies, I had the impression of a serious man of few words, but the coexistence with him at the Latin Department of the University of Barcelona, revealed other aspects of his personality, such as his commitment to work, to which he dedicated body and soul, with accuracy and thoroughness spiced with a good-natured sense of humor that sometimes came from the bottom of his soul.

However, now, I would like to highlight the discovery of the feeling to which I referred at the beginning. In fact, I think Pere-Enric had two great passions: first, the world of study and scholarship, in his case in the field of Latin philology, and on the other hand, his land, specifically his hometown, Benassal, where he was renovating a house that overlooked a charming and gentle landscape.

In fact, I was able to see all this thanks to our time together, first, as department colleagues. There, since the very beginning, Pere-Enric displayed his tireless commitment, as evidenced by his research on the Latin poet Statius, on which he focused his doctoral thesis, and delved into



even afterwards. This work crystallized in the publication of a translation of the *Achilleid* and a fragment of the *De Bello Germanico* by this illustrious Latin poet. He never neglected either his work as a teacher, and therefore he participated in several teaching innovation projects.

But our ties strengthened further when we took on a particular task outside our department. In the academic year 1994-95, the syllabus previous to Bologna was introduced, and the Faculty of Geography and History, then in Pedralbes, created several subjects related to Latin. The lectures were assumed by professors of our department. Thus, a young Pere-Enric, another professor of the department, now retired, and myself, took care of the task. We remain assigned to the Department of Medieval History, specifically to the section of Palaeography and Diplomatic.

I must say that Pere-Enric integrated perfectly into the environment and the studies characteristic of the section, as his publications on the records of the chancery of Jaume I, the Latin of royal charters, and medieval notaries, show. Anecdotally, I remember how excited he was, at the beginning of our stay at the Faculty of History, when we made an excursion to the old Herder library (now Alibri) in order to buy books for the Department of Latin Palaeography, funded by a grant of the University of Barcelona. With which enthusiasm he cleared the shelves of the library and filled our shopping cart of books, a dream for any of us, which, unfortunately, rarely becomes true!

In addition, he participated in international research projects, in collaboration with medievalists, Latinists and professors of ancient history; among them, one of the most important was devoted to the study of the Christian prosopography of the Lower Empire, and the so-called *Research Group of Late Antiquity*. When the *Institute for Research on Medieval Cultures* was created in 2008, he was one of the first researchers who joined it.

Palaeographic and diplomatic studies provided Pere-Enric with a fundamental tool that would allow him to delve into the study of the documentation of the archives of Benassal and its region, a means to deepen the study of the history of his beloved hometown.

And this was, precisely, his second great passion. He carefully determined the roots of the history of his homeland and wrote numerous works to make it known. That is how various commentaries and editions of the settlement charters of the region were born, or the study on the path of Jaume I through the county and the chronicle of Benassal in the 14th century. At the same time he participated in all kinds of events and activities related to the area. Thus he was named official chronicler of Benassal in 1998 and of Ares del Maestre in 2003.

I would also like to mention two endeavours that were special for him, and around which he worked tirelessly: first, the figure and the work of Carles Salvador (1916-1934), a teacher, an

intellectual and a poet, as well as a supporter of the arts, the culture and the national rights of Valencia; second, the *Aula de Gramàtica Llatina*. Both of them related to Benassal.

His admiration for the first crystallized not only in several studies and an exhibition of the work of the intellectual at the faculty of Philology of the University of Barcelona in October 20013, but also in the creation, promoted by Pere-Enric, of the Carles Salvador Foundation, to whose board of trustees he belonged. When he left us, he was preparing the release of the unpublished poems of the poet and teacher of Benassal, *Veles i Gavines*. Furthermore, he studied and rescued the work of Salvador's daughter, Sofia, also a poetess, of whom he was a personal friend.

The *Aula de Gramàtica Llatina* of Benassal, the other major object of his careful work was the subject of Pere-Enric's first book, written in 1987, which, according to his peers in the Latin Department, is filled with personal connotations. Indeed, to show us that about which he talked so much, he organized a day trip in June 1992, narrated with great affection by Pere-Enric himself on his own blog, where, incidentally, he explained with great vividness his experiences, publications and research on the issues that made him so happy. Now, reading the story of that day, I can but admire the enthusiasm with which he recalled even the smallest details of that trip during which we visited not only the *Aula* but also Benassal and the beautiful landscapes that surround it. At the end, his mother had the charming detail of presenting each of us with a bag of candies she had patiently filled and tied with a bow.

But if he loved his land, his land loved him back, grateful. Not only in life but also at the last moment. The crowd of friends and acquaintances that accompanied him in his last trip was astonishing; the street of Benassal in front of his house, the church and the cemetery itself were overcrowded with distressed people, who came not only from his town, but also from all over the region and elsewhere. We all wanted to give the last farewell to our friend and colleague and to demonstrate, with our presence, what we felt for him and his work, while we gave our support to his grieving family.

These were, then, the two great loves of Pere-Enric. And the admiration for his professional work and our friendship and our respect for the person he was, are the legacy he left us all.

GLORIA TORRES

Departament de Filologia Llatina de la Universitat de Barcelona