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Foreword (Volume 1, 1997), Galician Review

Galician Review is the fruit of a joint venture by the two independent centres for Galician studies recently established in the United Kingdom at The Queen's College, Oxford and the University of Birmingham.

Since their inception, the two centres have collaborated closely to promote intellectual interest in Galicia, its history and its culture, not just within the United Kingdom but internationally as well. The I UK Symposium on Galician Studies was held at the University of Oxford in April 1991, and has been followed by other thematically orientated conferences at the University of Birmingham and at the Institute for Romance Studies, University of London, on, respectively, Pilgrimage (October 1992) and Literature and Exile (May 1994). Each of these has seen a stimulating and fruitful exchange of ideas between those of us working in British universities and our colleagues from various parts of Galicia. Aside of these headline events, the centres have organised or participated in translation workshops, day conferences, research seminars and lectures, and, it goes without saying, have been actively involved in the creation and development of specifically Galician undergraduate courses at their respective universities.

The idea of an English-language academic journal aimed not just at specialist *galeguistas* but at all those who profess an interest in or commitment to the cultural heritage of Galicia, was first mooted in Oxford several years ago. As the project drew nearer to becoming a reality, those of us directly involved in its planning took the collective decision that literary articles in *Galician Review* would not be limited to the work of writers publishing in *galego* but would encompass also the output of authors born in Galicia but writing principally in Castilian Spanish. It seemed inappropriate to exclude, for example, a figure like Valle-Inclán, so much of whose creative work is anchored in his Galician origins, or Emilia Pardo Bazán, intimately concerned with the social reality of her native region, or Torrente Ballester, or indeed many more. If we were to limit the literary remit of the journal to work written in Galician, what, after all, were we to do with the Castilian output of Rosalía de Castro, or of various members of the Xeración *Nós*? A more inclusive focus seemed to offer greater potential for evaluating the cultural contribution of Galicia in its entirety, despite the necessary centrality of the Galician language to so many of our own endeavours.

This initial volume of *Galician Review*, which is intended to be an annual publication, thus covers a multiplicity of disciplines – including linguistic study, the theory and practice of literary translation, and creative writing and many centuries of history, from the Galician-Portuguese writings of Alfonso the Wise in the thirteenth century to the marketing of Galician literature today. Its contents reveal the presence of a Galician dimension outside the borders of the modern autonomous region, within the Iberian Peninsula and within broader European culture. David Mackenzie's expansive overview, which appears here in an edited form and which sets the scene for the more detailed pieces that follow, was the inaugural lecture marking the creation of the first Chair in Galician Studies to be held at a British university.

Of the many factors that have made this journal possible, it might be appropriate to mention just two. The vitality of an independent Galician culture in modern times owes much, historically speaking, to the ground-breaking theories of cultural nationhood formulated by the Romantics; their defence of a diversity of collective imaginative expression in the face of the prescriptive and centralising uniformity of Enlightenment aesthetics should be a timely reminder to us at an historical moment when the cultural independence of nations, regions and peoples across the continent of Europe is increasingly subject to the encroaches of an imaginatively bankrupt unelected bureaucracy seeking to pronounce by diktat. Secondly, and much more recently, the Dirección Xeral de Política Lingüística of the Xunta de Galicia, under the wise and generous stewardship of our friend and colleague D. Manuel Regueiro Tenreiro, has provided the essential material resources and intellectual support without which the expansion of Galician studies in the United Kingdom and elsewhere would not have been possible.

Thanks are extended to the original members of the Editorial Board, whose collaboration was first sought several years ago now, for their patience and forbearance; most if not all must have secretly thought at one time or another that the plan of publishing this journal was to be in vain. Finally, and most importantly, if *Galician Review* is to prosper then it must depend upon the collaboration and support of its contributors. Apart from the section devoted to creative work, which we hope will prove a regular feature, the language of the journal will continue to be English: this is a policy deliberately chosen to maximise the target audience. At the same time, however, accepted contributions received in *galego* will be published in English translation subject to the agreement of their authors. The wider community of *galeguistas* is therefore warmly invited to participate in any way possible to ensure the continuity and success of *Galician Review*.

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