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Víctor Català (Caterina Albert)



Víctor Català

(Nou diccionari 62 de la literatura catalana)

Caterina Albert was a writer of great artistic sensitivity. Her novel *Solitude* is now over a hundred years old but its relevance remains undiminished. Written under a masculine pseudonym ('Víctor Català') for obvious reasons of the time, this work undoubtedly constitutes the starting-point in modern Catalan literature of the exploration of the female identity by a female writer.

Víctor Català was the pseudonym of the novelist and short-story writer, Caterina Albert (L'Escala, 1869-1966), who also wrote poetry and monologues for the stage. She was the eldest of the four children of the lawyer, politician and rural landowner Lluís Albert and his wife Dolors Paradís. Caterina Albert lived off the rent that came in from the family properties in the town of her birth and, after the deaths of her father and maternal grandmother, she looked after her mother and administered the family estate. She travelled around Europe and lived at different times in Barcelona where, after 1904, she owned a flat. Apart from going to the local primary school and spending one year in a Girona boarding school where she began to study French, she was educated and instructed at home. As for her ideological affinities, the political activities of her father as a Republican politician who had to go into exile for a time after participating in the 1869 federalist uprising of the Empordà region, constitute the basis of her Catalan nationalism, her identification with the Catalan language and her affinity with the doctrines of the nationalist politician Enric Prat de la Riba. Her cultural education and the fulfilment of her artistic leanings were seen to by the family with private classes in drawing, painting and sculpture, activities that she combined with literary creation until the beginning of the twentieth century. It was also within the family that she found an environment that was conducive to her literary "self-learning", for her mother wrote poetry and her grandmother was a great wellspring of knowledge on folklore and popular culture. A further factor that enabled her to write was having her own study where she could enjoy the privacy she needed for working, and she was also a great reader who bought books and reviews every week.

Although she always wanted to appear as an "amateur", defending her creative independence outside of any dogmas and schools, and revealing a certain resistance to appearing in public, she established relationships with the great writers of her time, for example [Joan Maragall](#) and [Narcís Oller](#), both close friends whom she deeply admired. She also wrote for a number of periodical publications like *Juventut*, *La Il·lustració Catalana* and *Feminal*. She presided over the 1917 Barcelona literary competition, the [Jocs Florals](#), where she made a speech on *De civisme i civilitat* (On Civic-mindedness and Civility) and was nominated a member of the Reial Acadèmia de Bones Lletres de Barcelona in 1923, where her inaugural speech was entitled *Sensacions d'Empúries* (Sensations of Empúries).

Apart from her early literary attempts represented by a number of pieces under the pseudonym of "Virgili Alacseal" that were published in *L'Esquella de la Torratxa*, Caterina Albert's public literary life began in 1898 when she received prizes in the Olot Jocs Florals for a poem called, "Lo llibre nou" (The New Book) and a monologue for the stage entitled *La infanticida* (The Child Killer), which, since

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it was written by a woman, caused a scandal that led her to take refuge thenceforth under the pseudonym of Víctor Català.

Her oeuvre may be grouped into three stages in keeping with the chronology of her publications. The first coincides with the years of [Modernism](#) and is the most important period, both for the number of works she wrote and the variety of genres. She published two volumes of poetry *El cant dels mesos* (Song of the Months, 1901) and *Llibre Blanc-Policromi-Tríptic* (White-Polychrome-Triptych Book, 1905), a play *Quatre monòlegs* (Four Monologues, 1901), three collections of short stories, *Drames rurals* (Rural Dramas, 1902), *Ombrívoles* (Shades, 1904) and *Caires Vius* (Sharp Edges, 1907), and a novel, [Solitud](#) (Solitude, 1905), which made her famous and was read beyond the borders of Catalonia.

It was in these years that the characteristics of Víctor Català's work took shape and, except for a few variations, these would remain constant throughout her productive life with regard to genres and the thematic and formal aspects. First, her choice of writing fiction is to be highlighted. Within this genre she generally wrote tragic stories of the rural world that she approaches from a fatalistic and pessimistic standpoint and with a particular sensibility for the aesthetics of black and chiaroscuro. This vision, which is also found in the work of other Modernist artists, focuses on the struggle of the individual against hostile elements that make it impossible to fulfil his or her dreams. The author also reveals her interest in the inner worlds of people, in particular women, from a twofold perspective. First is her psychological investigation of the character, which she achieves brilliantly with Mila in [Solitud](#), and then she highlights the duality between external appearances and the personality within. Apart from the predominance of rural settings and her interest in human conflicts, also notable are her condensed narrative style and the linguistic richness of her work, especially with regard to its registers, vocabulary and stylistic devices, and her suggestive, expressive and vivid style that is, in short, dramatic.

After 1907, there was a hiatus in the publication of her books when she withdrew after the urban-focused [noucentista](#) enthusiasts began to attack rural-based fiction. The short-story collections *La Mare-Balena* (Mother-Whale, 1920) and *Contrallums* (Against the Light, 1930), the novel *Un film 3.000 metres* (A Film of 3,000 Metres, 1926) and the anthology *Marines* (Seascapes, 1928), form the second stage, which was interrupted by the Civil War and the early years of the Franco dictatorship. The stories in these volumes exhibit the same features as the earlier ones. With the novel, however, Víctor Català attempts, first, to adapt her writing to modernity by introducing elements from the domain of cinema and, second, to demonstrate her ability to write a novel expressing civic concerns with a non-bourgeois setting. After the war, she would publish a volume of stories in Spanish, *Retablo* (Tableau, 1944), a book of non-fiction literary prose pieces, *Mosaic* (1946), and two collections of short stories, *Vida mòlta* (Life Worn Out, 1950) and *Jubileu*

(Jubilee, 1951), all of them works that continue to demonstrate Víctor Català's great narrative talent.

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WEB: Català a EPdLP

Nota biogràfica en castellà amb un text a El Poder de la Palabra.
<http://www.epdlp.com/escritor.php?id=1562>

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Bio-bibliography

Biography



WEB: A la Hiperenciclopèdia

http://www.enciclopedia.cat/fitxa_v2.jsp?NDCHEC=0001810



WEB: A la Viquipèdia

Biografia, obra i enllaços sobre l'autora al web de l'enciclopèdia lliure.

http://ca.wikipedia.org/wiki/Víctor_Català



WEB: Noms: Caterina Albert

Documental biogràfic sobre l'autora a la Televisió de Catalunya.

<http://www.tv3.cat/noms/victorcatala/home.htm>



VIDEO: Víctor Català a Edu3.cat

Documental biogràfic de 17 minuts destinat a alumnes d'ESO i batxillerat i produït per la Generalitat de Catalunya.

http://www.edu3.cat/Edu3tv/Fitxa?p_id=18129&p_ex=V%EDctor%20Catal%E0&p_num=3/



VIDEO: "Caterina Albert/Víctor Català, el jo contra l'entorn"

Capítol de 65 minuts de la col·lecció "Viure i escriure. Els grans noms de la literatura catalana" a Edu3.cat amb producció de la Fundació Videoteca dels Països Catalans.

http://www.edu3.cat/Edu3tv/Fitxa?p_id=26800



WEB: The author in the Catalan Encyclopaedia

<http://www.grec.cat/cgibin/hecangcl2.pgm?&USUARI=&SESSIO=&NDCHEC=0001810&PGMORI=E>

Bibliography



WEB: Què hi ha a la Biblioteca de Catalunya

http://cataleg.bnc.cat/search*cat/?searchtype=a&searcharg=Catal%C3%A0+V%C3%ADctor&sortdropdown=-&searchscope=13&searchscope2=13&SORT=D



WEB: Què hi ha a les biblioteques universitàries catalanes (CCUC)

http://ccuc.cbuc.cat/search*cat/a?SEARCH=Catal%C3%A0+V%C3%ADctor&sortdropdown=-&searchscope=23



WEB: Què hi ha a les biblioteques públiques

<http://argus.biblioteques.gencat.cat/iii/encore/search/C|SCatal%C3%A0+V%C3%ADctor|Orightresult|U1?lang=cat&suite=pearl>



WEB: Per comprar-ne llibres

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<http://www.llibres.cat/ca/detall-autor/catala-victor>



WEB: Articles de l'autora (Traces)

<http://traces.uab.cat/search?f=author&p=Catal%20V%ADctor&sc=1&ln=ca>



WEB: Articles sobre l'autora (Traces)

http://traces.uab.cat/search?ln=ca&p=Catal%20C+V%ADctor&f=keyword&action_search=Cerca&c=Traces+%3A+base+de+dades+de+llengua+i+literatura+catalanes&sf=&so=d&rm=&rg=10&sc=0&of=hb



WEB: Works in the Biblioteca de Catalunya

http://cataleg.bnc.cat/search*eng/?searchtype=a&searcharg=Catal%20V%ADctor&sortdrardown=-&searchscope=13&searchscope2=13&SORT=D



WEB: The author in The European Library

<http://search.theeuropeanlibrary.org/portal/en/search/%28%22creator%22+all+%22catal%20V%ADctor%22%29.query>



WEB: The author in the Congress Library (US)

<http://catalog.loc.gov/cgi-bin/Pwebrecon.cgi?DB=local&PAGE=First>



WEB: The author in the COPAC Catalogue (UK)

<http://copac.ac.uk/search?&au=V%ADctor+Catal%20A0>



WEB: The author in the Gutenberg Project

<http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/14816>

Comments on the author

Criticism



WEB: Sobre Solitud

Pàgina de lletra sobre aquesta obra de l'autor.
<http://lletra.uoc.edu/ca/obra/solitud-de-victor-catala/>



WEB: Sobre la prosa modernista

Pàgina de lletra dedicada a aquest gènere literari.
<http://lletra.uoc.edu/ca/genere/la-prosa-modernista/>



WEB: Un dels "Dotze mestres"

Pàgina de lletra sobre aquesta obra de Maurici Serrahima.
<http://lletra.uoc.edu/ca/obra/dotze-mestres-1972/>



WEB: Víctor Català a l'AELC

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Inclou biografia, obra, premis, transcripció d'articles, fragments de la seva obra i enllaços.
<http://www.escriptors.cat/autors/albertc/>



WEB: L'autora al Corpus Literari Ciutat de Barcelona

Biografia, enllaços i selecció d'articles sobre l'autora.

http://www.ducros.biz/corpus/index.php?command=show_news&news_id=3061



WEB: Cent anys de "Solitud"

Carme Arnau aprofundeix en "Solitud", en l'autora, el context i els personatges.

http://www.escriptors.cat/autors/albertc/pagina.php?id_text=1059



WEB: Víctor Català en format vídeo

Vida i obra de l'escriptora a la Videoteca Digital del Departament d'Ensenyament de la Generalitat de Catalunya.

http://www.edu3.cat/Edu3tv/Fitxa?p_id=18129



PDF: Estudi de La infanticida

Article de G. Nichols on analitza, entre altres obres, "La infanticida". En castellà.

http://ies.berkeley.edu/pubs/workingpapers/OP-11-Cuatro_Denuncias.pdf



WEB: Víctor Català on the Lletra website in Catalan

Including more resources and reading suggestions.

<http://www.uoc.edu/lletra/noms/vcatala/index.html>



WEB: On *Solitud* [Solitude]

lletra page devoted to the novel by Víctor Català.

<http://lletra.uoc.edu/ca/obra/solitud-de-victor-catala/>



WEB: On Modernist prose

lletra page on this literary genre.

<http://lletra.uoc.edu/ca/genere/la-prosa-modernista/>



WEB: One of the "Dotze mestres" [Twelve masters]

lletra page on this work by Maurici Serrahima.

<http://lletra.uoc.edu/ca/obra/dotze-mestres-1972/>



WEB: Víctor Català in AELC (Association of Catalan Language Writers)

Includes biography, works, prizes, interviews, fragments of some of his works and links.

http://www.escriptors.cat/autors/albertc/pagina.php?id_sec=636



WEB: Víctor Català in the City of Barcelona Literary Corpus

Biography, links and transcription of articles on this author.

http://www.ducros.biz/corpus/index.php?command=show_news&news_id=3061

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Miscellaneous



WEB: "El jo contra l'entorn" (video)

Information about, and how to obtain on-line, the video *Caterina Albert/Víctor Català, el jo contra l'entorn* (Caterina Albert/Víctor Català, the Ego Against the Milieu) produced by the Fundació Videoteca dels Països Catalans.

<http://www.ictisp.com/~ge382930/Catala.HTML>



WEB: "L'auca de Caterina Albert"

Auca escrita per Joan Vilamala i il·lustrada per Carles Roman i els alumnes de l'IES Pius Font i Quer, de Manresa, al web La paret de les auques. Amb suggeriments de treball.

<http://www.auques.cat/tot.php?auca=victorc>



WEB: Aspectes inèdits de Caterina Albert

Actes de la 1es Jornades sobre la vida i obra de Caterina Albert.

http://books.google.es/books?id=cvPGuUjxx0C&pg=PA47&lpg=PA47&dq=Aspectes+inèdits+de+Caterina+Albert+&source=bl&ots=5FTI6U8pPh&sig=A6orx83LME4Qf-TL1xnPYnOR6rE&hl=es&ei=I9ubSuCqCZLe-QaP-JyPBA&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=1#v=onepage&q=%22Aspecte%20in%20C3%A8dits%20de%20Caterina%20Albert%20%22&f=false



PDF: Caterina Albert, arqueòloga

Text d'Àngels Anglada sobre l'interès de Caterina Albert per la arqueologia i la relació amb la seva obra.

<http://www.raco.cat/index.php/AnnalsEmpordanesos/article/view/93213/166677>



WEB: El jo contra l'entorn (vídeo)

Informació del vídeo *Caterina Albert/Víctor Català, el jo contra l'entorn*, editat per la Fundació Videoteca dels Països Catalans. També hi ha el full de comanda.

<http://www.ictisp.com/~ge382930/Catala.HTML>



WEB: Caterina Albert, enamorada de Girona

Article del periodista Emili Casademont que descriu la relació de Caterina Albert amb Girona.

<http://emilicasademont.blogspot.com/2009/08/caterina-albert-era-una-enamorada-de.html>



WEB: Solitud

Guia interactiva de lectura del departament d'Educació.

<http://www.edu365.cat/batxillerat/lectures/catalana/solitud/index.htm>



PDF: Solitud a El gust per la lectura

Guia didàctica elaborada per Carme Vilà amb biografia i contextualització de l'autora, una anàlisi detallada de la novel·la i activitats de comprensió lectora.

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<http://lletra.uoc.edu>

http://www.xtec.cat/lic/centre/professorat/dossiersgust/gust_2008_09/gust_secundaria/solituddossier.pdf
