

“The Monument Erected in Barcelona in 1954 in Honor of Archer Milton Huntington, the Founder of The Hispanic Society of America, and His Wife, Anna Hyatt Huntington, the Eminent Sculptress.”

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It was in 1954 that Barcelona became the first city to pay tribute to Archer Milton Huntington (New York, 1870 - Bathel, Connecticut, 1955),¹ by erecting a monument to the memory of this outstanding collector and Hispanist, and to his wife, Anna Vaughn Hyatt Huntington (Cambridge, 1876 - California, 1973).² An excellent sculptor, Anna Hyatt Huntington was also unstinting in her support of her husband’s Hispanic interest. The monument was Barcelona’s way of recognizing and paying tribute to this greatly respected American collector and philanthropist. Huntington played a major role in refuting “Prescott’s Paradigm”, named after the historian whose work on Spain did much to further the Black Legend.³ Moreover, Huntington occupied an important place in American

¹ There is an extensive bibliography on Archer M. Huntington and the Hispanic Society. Among others, the most outstanding titles are published since 2000 include: “The Hispanic Society of America”. *Tesoros*. New York: The Hispanic Society of America, 2000; Mitchell M. Coddington, “Archer Milton Huntington: Champion of Spain in the United States.” In *Spain in America: The Origins of Hispanism in the United States*, edited by Richard Kagan. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000; Mitchell Coddington, “A Legacy of Spanish Art for America: Archer M. Huntington and the Hispanic Society of America.” In Gary Tinterow and Geneviève Lacambre, *Manet/Velázquez: The Taste for Spanish Painting*. Exhibition catalogue. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. New Haven and London: Yale University Press 2003.

I should like to thank Jonathan Brown, professor at the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, Robert W. Hoge, Curator of North American coins and Currency at the American Numismatic Society, Constancio del Alamo, head of the Sculpture, Archaeology and Textiles Department of the Hispanic Society of America, and, finally, Francesc Fontbona, head of the Graphic Unit at the Library of Catalonia.

² The books devoted specifically to Anna’s personality and work include: Cerinda W. Evans, *Anna Hyatt Huntington*, The Mariners Museum, Newport News, Virginia, 1965. Glenn B. Opitz, Editor, *Mantle Fielding’s Dictionary of American Painters, Sculptors & Engravers*, Apollo Book, Poughkeepsie, New York, 1986. Charlotte Streifer Rubenstein, *American Women Sculptors*, G.K. Hall & Co., Boston, 1990. Joseph Leary, Joseph, *A Shared Landscape: A Guide & History of Connecticut’s State Parks & Forests*, Friends of Connecticut State Parks Inc., Hartford, CT, 2004. Mary Mitchell & Albert Goodrich, *The Remarkable Huntingtons. Chronicle of a Marriage*. Newtown, Connecticut: Budd Drive Press, 2004.

³ Prescott’s Paradigm is named after the American historian William H. Prescott (1796-1859, whose works include, amongst others: *Historia del reinado de los Reyes Católicos, D. Fernando y D. Isabel*. Madrid: Imprenta de Gaspar y Roig, 1855. *La Historia de la conquista del Perú* [Madrid]: Editora de los Amigos del Círculo del Bibliófilo, 1983. Isidro Sánchez Sánchez, “Contra el “Paradima Prescott”, in *Viaje de ida y vuelta: fotografías de Castilla la Mancha en*

Hispanic Studies, along with such other outstanding names as George Ticknor (Boston, 1791 - 1871), Washington Irving (New York, 1783 - 1859) and Henry Longfellow (1807 - 1882).⁴

Unlike other prominent figures in the Gilded Age of American Collecting, such as John Pierpont Morgan (1837-1913), Henry Clay Frick (1849-1919) and Isabella Stewart Gardner (1840-1924), Archer M. Huntington was most reluctant to embrace the pomp and glitter of social life, and was unwilling for any of the numerous institutions he founded and promoted to be named after him. It may, therefore, seem surprising that this monument should have been erected in Barcelona whilst Huntington was still alive, although his will greatly weakened by the degenerative osteoarthritis and paralysis that were slowly devouring him.

Moreover, it is notable that Barcelona is one of very few cities in Spain (if not the only one) that have paid public tribute to the Huntingtons. This is particularly surprising in view of the countless instances of their generosity and passion for Spain to be found all over the Peninsula.⁵

Nonetheless, streets have been named after Archer Milton Huntington in such cities as La Coruña and Valencia. Moreover, a project to erect a sculpture in his honor in Madrid was launched as early as 1962. Juan de Avalos (1911-2006),⁶ who was commissioned to carry out the project, planned to create a monument of vast proportions to be installed on the campus at the University Complutense in Madrid, possibly quite close to the site where a sculpture donated in 1955 by Anna Hyatt, *The Torch Bearers*, stands. Although the model for this monument dedicated to the illustrious American magnate was unveiled during the same

The Hispanic Society of America. Toledo: Empresa pública don Quijote de la Mancha, 2007, p.53.

⁴ José María Millás Vallicrosa, *Breve semblanza de Mr. Archer M. Huntington*. Barcelona: Barcelona City Council, 1954.

⁵ Beatrice Gilman Proske, *Archer Milton Huntington*. New York: The Hispanic Society of America, 1965, p. 30, in which a few lines are dedicated to the Barcelona Memorial.

⁶ The sculptor Juan de Ávalos García Taborda produced many important works and was considered a highly significant artist, particularly for his sculpture in the *Valle de los Caídos* (Valley of the Fallen, Madrid).

event at which José García Mazas, a fervent admirer of the Huntingtons, presented his book on them, the project itself never came to fruition.⁷

Regarding the Barcelona Memorial, we should first mention various factors that explain how it came to be installed in Barcelona's Pedralbes neighborhood. The first and most evident, of course, is that it pays tribute to Archer Milton Huntington's extraordinary merits as a collector and Hispanic scholar, as well as the special relationship Huntington had with Catalonia. The second factor has to do with the political agreement reached between America and Spain in 1953.⁸ Such events strongly marked the cultural and political climate at the time when preparations began to pave the way for the erection and solemn inauguration of the Memorial on 10 March 1954.

One thing at a time, though. Obviously, the main purpose of the monument was to pay tribute to Archer Milton Huntington as the founder in 1904 of the Hispanic Society of America, an institution destined to become a hugely important point of reference for Hispanic culture. However, the undertaking also provided indirect recognition for Archer M. Huntington's long-standing links with Catalonia. Huntington's precocious fascination with the country is made clear in his travel notes,⁹ written in 1892, when he was just 22 years old. These "Rough Notes" contain the author's observations of such places as the Pyrenees, Ripoll, Vic, Barcelona, Manresa, Montserrat, Vilafranca del Penedès, Tarragona, Tortosa, the Balearic Islands, and so on. Furthermore, it is fascinating to see how young Huntington used his fine tip pencil to sketch fragments from the landscapes and architecture in the different areas he visited as he jotted down

⁷ Among those attending the ceremony at which the model for the monument was presented by Juan de Avalos included José García Mazas, who presented his book: *El poeta y la escultora. La España que Huntington conoció*. Preface by Pedro Lain Entralgo. Madrid, Revista de Occidente, 1962.

More information about this event can be found in the Catalan newspaper *La Vanguardia de Barcelona*, 15 September 1962, and also in ABC, including a reproduction of Avalos's model for the sculpture, 15 September 1962.

⁸ Ángel Viñas Martín, "La negociación y renegociación de los acuerdos hispano-norteamericanos, 1953-1988: una visión estructural", *Cuadernos de Historia Contemporánea*, 25, 2003.

⁹ The Hispanic Society of America. "Rough Notes" 1892. Diaries, Archer M. Huntington Archives.

his lyrical and empathic impressions of the people and their customs as if seeking to fix them indelibly in his memory.

Moreover, we should also note that, throughout his long and active life, Huntington maintained close contacts with different bodies and institutions, such as the Institute of Catalan Studies and Montserrat Abbey, whilst also striking up friendships with a variety of outstanding personalities, including the distinguished bibliophile Isidro Bonsoms (1849-1922), painters such as Hermenegildo Anglada Camarasa (1871-1959), Lluís Graner Arrufi (1863-1929) and Miquel Viladrich Vila (1887- 1956), musicians like Pau Casals (1876-1973), art historians such as Josep Pijoan (1880-1963), and many others, with whom he kept up a rich and very interesting correspondence.¹⁰

As mentioned previously, the second important factor we should take into account is the political situation during the period that concerns us. In 1953, a treaty was signed between Spain and the United States of America which marked the end of Spain's diplomatic isolation, the establishment on the Peninsula of international organizations and the revival of trade and military relations between the two countries. Besides the political and economic consequences of this treaty, American institutions in Spain also acquired a notable prominence in civil society. All this enabled the American Institute of Studies¹¹ to announce an American Cultural Week in Barcelona in March 1954 whose opening event was the inauguration of the Memorial to the Huntingtons in Pedralbes, an event that brought together many leading figures from Spanish and US politics and culture in the Catalan capital.

Moreover, other initiatives were also launched with a view to giving the Huntingtons the recognition they so richly merited. The very next year, 1954, Anna Hyatt Huntington was named as a Corresponding Academician by the

¹⁰ In Archer Huntington's personal file at the *Hispanic Society*, many interesting letters are kept, waiting to be brought to light and published. Regarding these letters, see the book written by Immaculada Socias, *La correspondència entre Isidre Bonsoms Sicart (1849- 1922) y Archer Milton Huntington (1870-1955). El coleccionismo de libros antiguos*, Barcelona, 2009.

¹¹ "La Vanguardia de Barcelona", 23 March 1954

“Reial Acadèmia Catalana de Belles Arts de Sant Jordi” of Barcelona.¹² In 1960, the North American Institute of Barcelona staged a bibliographic exhibit about the Hispanic Society of America. This event was organized by Josep Porter, prestigious bookseller and head of the library of the afore-mentioned American Institute.¹³

As a result of all this, in 1953, three of the most significant cultural corporations in the city came together to call on Barcelona City Council to erect a monument in Huntington’s honor. To this end, Miguel Mateu Pla (1898-1972), president of the Sant Jordi “Reial Acadèmia de Belles Arts Sant Jordi” of Barcelona and a friend of the Huntingtons, Carlos Sanllehy y Girona, Marquis of Caldes de Montbuy (1882 - 1973), president of the “Reial Acadèmia de Bones Lletres”, and Juan Sedó Peris-Mencheta, president of the Institute of Hispanic Studies, addressed the following text to the Mayor of Barcelona: *“That, having obtained the support for the proposal put forward by the undersigned that will no doubt be forthcoming from the Directorate-General for Cultural Relations of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, you should sponsor and bring into effect the initiative by which the City of Barcelona shall testify to the recognition that all Spain owes to Mr. and Mrs. Huntington for the incomparable work of exalting and disseminating Hispanic culture that they have developed and continue to develop in the United States of America, erecting in one of the city’s public gardens, preferably around the Monastery of Pedralbes, a monument in their honor”*.¹⁴

On 20 January 1954, Barcelona City Council approved this petition, granting *“authorization for the installation, in a site before the great wall around the Monastery of Pedralbes, at the end of Avenida de la Victoria, of a small monument with the bust of Mister Huntington, and that this installation and assembly may be carried out by the Municipal Buildings Department”*.¹⁵ When

¹² *La Vanguardia*, Barcelona, 27, may, 1954.

¹³ *Diario de Barcelona*, 29 June 1960.

¹⁴ Barcelona. Archive of Real Acadèmia de Bones Lletres de Barcelona. “Expedientes de los Académicos Correspondientes”.

¹⁵ Municipal Administrative Archive. Barcelona City Council. Minutes Book of the Sessions of the Municipal Permanent Commission. Year 1953-1954. Vol. 627, Tome VI, 20 January 1954, folio 88

Huntington learned of the steps being taken by the aforementioned institutions to honor him in this way, he wrote a letter to the city council to express his acceptance and gratitude.¹⁶

Thus, the proposal found support in Barcelona, and the monument dedicated to Archer Milton Huntington and his wife was inaugurated at five in the afternoon on 22 March 1954, one year before Huntington's death. Sadly, the couple were unable to attend the event, due to the delicate health of the eminent Hispanist.¹⁷

The Memorial at Pedralbes

The memorial is situated in one of the most exclusive and genteel areas of Barcelona, before the medieval walls of the Royal Monastery of Santa María. The site is also close to the American Consulate, on which the Huntingtons rest their gaze (Fig. 1).

¹⁶ Municipal Administrative Archive. Barcelona City Council. Minutes Book of the Sessions of the Municipal Permanent Commission. Year 1954. Tome VII, Vol. 628, 1954.

¹⁷ Syracuse University (US) holds an important collection of papers pertaining to the Huntingtons, including the correspondence between Enric Monjo and Anna Huntington in 1954-1957.



Fig. 1 The Memorial of Barcelona to Huntingtons

The work was carried out by the architect Pere Benavent de Barbera y Abelló, (1899-1974),¹⁸ who was also secretary to the “Reial Acadèmia Catalana de Belles Arts Sant Jordi”, and the sculptor Enric Monjo Garriga (1896-1976).¹⁹ Benavent designed a rectangular monolith formed by granite with a slight projection at the base to break the monotony of the volume, whilst Monjo Garriga adorned this monolith with a circular bronze relief.

Of the two, the figure that most interests us here is, no doubt, Enric Monjo, due to the relationship that he later established with Archer M. Huntington. The sculptor was born in Vilassar de Mar (Barcelona), and studied at the Barcelona School of Arts and Trades before going on to work with Eusebio Arnau and Josep Llimona.

Monjo remained faithful to this style, developed in Catalonia, from his beginnings to the 1930s. However, in the 1940s his art began to take a very different direction, without doubt unique in modern Catalan sculpture, as he brought a modern viewpoint to his explorations of the Spanish Gothic and Renaissance sculptural styles.²⁰ We should further note that Enric Monjo also produced many life-like, portraits, works full of energy, but that he was known, above all, for his great religious sculptures, installed, amongst other places, in Terrassa (Barcelona), Montserrat and Washington Cathedral.

Due to a series of circumstances, the year 1954 was a key period in this sculptor's career, and one of the works that most marked his future development was precisely the relief he produced for the memorial in Pedralbes. Monjo's involvement in this work brought him into contact with the Huntingtons, who not only made him a member of the Hispanic Society in

¹⁸ “Archer Milton Huntington el hombre que ama a España”. *Destino*, A.M.H. Barcelona, March, 1954. Pere Benavent was an architect and writer. He built the crypt of the Pompeya Church and the monastery of the Sarrià Capuchins. His most famous work is “*Com he de construir*” (1934, republished later). There is also a monograph on this architect, *Pere Benavent de Barberà, arquitecte, poeta i humanista*. Barcelona: [Torrell de Reus], 1973.

¹⁹ In 1971, the Enric Monjo Museum was opened in Vilassar de Mar (Barcelona), the sculptor's home town.

²⁰ Mercè Doñate, *Enric Monjo, escultor, 1895-1976*. Palau Moja. Barcelona: Government of Catalonia, 1996, p.7.

February 1955,²¹ but also opened the door to him to receive many future international commissions.

Two months after the Barcelona inauguration, Enric Monjo wrote to Huntington to tell them that he was really pleased with the reception his exhibition had received in Paris, but went on to mention that *“my project for a show in the United States is still in the air and it is difficult, among other reasons, to find the right venue for it. I will think about this issue. I might accept a forthcoming invitation from the Cleveland Museum! I hope you have already received the small memento of the ‘Barcelona to Huntington’ memorial through Mr. Claparols. I hope you will accept it as personal testimony of the esteem in which I regard you”*.²²

This letter is interesting in that it clearly shows the friendship that had sprung up between Huntington and Monjo. Moreover, it also refers to Manuel Claparols, an important figure who was not only willing to organize an exhibition of Enric Monjo’s work in Cleveland, where he himself lived, but was also the person who financed the Memorial to the Huntingtons in Barcelona. We also note in the letter the sculptor’s insistence to Huntington of his wish to stage a show in New York or Washington, an ambition he finally fulfilled in 1956, thanks to the Spanish Embassy and to the support provided by Huntington, who had always maintained excellent relations with the Spanish diplomatic legation.²³

With the doors now fully open to him, Enric Monjo began to come into contact with various American collectors. These included George S. Moore, a banker with a good understanding of Hispanic culture, who helped the sculptor to widen his artistic horizons in the United States²⁴. As a result, Monjo was commissioned to produce the portal of the south transept in Washington

²¹ *The Hispanic Society of America*. Members Files. Enric Monjo, February 1955.

²² *The Hispanic Society of America*. Members Files. Archives. Enrique Monjo Garriga, letter of 28 May 1954.

²³ *Architectural League of New York, Monjo Exhibition. 40 Years of Sculpture, presented by the City of Barcelona with the support of the Spanish Embassy in the US and of the US Embassy in Spain, 1956*.

²⁴ Vicenç Llorca, *Enric Monjo: la realitat de la figura*. Terrassa: Caixa Terrassa/ Barcelona: Lunwerg, 2006, p. 57.

Cathedral, whilst in New York he decorated the First National City Bank, as well as working extensively in Mexico and Puerto Rico.

But let us retrace our steps a little, returning to the enigmatic figure of Manuel Claparols (Barcelona, 1894 - Ohio, 1957), about whom we find few biographical references²⁵. It seems that Claparols was an engineer who had long lived in Cleveland (Ohio). He was certainly a good friend of Monjo's, as well as a fervent admirer of Archer Huntington's work. It is this deep feeling that led him to anonymously finance the Barcelona Memorial, along with Monjo's bust of Archer Huntington.²⁶

On one of his visits to New York, possibly through the mediation of Manuel Claparols, the sculptor was received by Huntington in his home. There, he was to draw a few sketches, perhaps having already in mind the Barcelona monument. Tomás Hernández describes this meeting: *"Enrique Monjo told me that in September last year (1953), during a visit to New York, he was commissioned by an American citizen of Spanish origin to produce a sculptural portrait of Huntington, with the idea of offering it to Barcelona as the base for a monument in the city devoted to this distinguished figure..."*²⁷

We should also remember that, when Enric Monjo was commissioned to produce the Barcelona Memorial, Huntington was already very ill, stricken by terrible arthritis. José García Mazas provides a dramatic description of the eminent Hispanist and collector's health: *"The weight of the years had already weakened him to the point where his poetic star had abandoned him. He could no longer concentrate as before, and those ingrates the muses had left him. He*

²⁵ We consulted the magnificent Ancestry Genealogy archives at the Public Library of New York and found Manuel Claparols's file. He lived at 1131, Quimby Ave, Wooster, in Cleveland (Ohio) and was married to Helen Claparols, with whom he had three children, Helen, Joseph, Mary. According to this file he was working for a firm called Dame. We wonder if this was not, in fact, Dana, Javier Serra's company. Javier Serra was an eminent figure who financed the donation of the relief to the Hispanic Society in February 1956.

²⁶ "Archer Milton Huntington el hombre que ama a España", *Destino*, signed, A.M.H., Barcelona, May 1954.

²⁷ "Barcelona to A. and A. Milton Huntington distinguished Hispanists", *Diario de Barcelona*, 18 February 1954.

*felt befuddled, in pain, paralyzed, losing his sight, and the ravings he suffered at night made him fear for his mental faculties.*²⁸

Needless to say, these circumstances were far from appropriate for Huntington to pose for the sculptor, but despite this difficulty, Enric Monjo managed to make a bust, a copy of which he gave to the American embassy in Spain in 1956,²⁹ whilst the original remained in his personal collection³⁰ (Fig. 2).



Fig.2 Bust of Archer Milton Huntington by Enric Monjo.
Bronze, 41 x 33 x 18 cm.

Although the original intention was to use this bust in the Barcelona Memorial, it was finally decided to adopt a radically different solution. Probably following the advice of Archer or Anna, Enric Monjo finally opted for a bronze relief with the figures seen from the side, as in a medallion. Apart from anything else, this approach sits well with one of the passions the American collector had felt since his youth, and his bond with American Numismatic Society.³¹ Through this circular design, then, Monjo perfectly captured an essential, synthetic image of the Huntingtons whilst simultaneously reflecting the interest both shared for numismatics (Fig. 3).

²⁸ José García Mazas, *Ibidem*, p. 489.

²⁹ ABC, 16 May 1956.

³⁰ Enric Monjo Museum. Vilassar de Mar (Barcelona).

³¹ The American Numismatic Society, has now left the Audobon Park site to take up magnificent premises at 75, Varick St (Manhattan) in New York.



Fig. 3 The Memorial of Barcelona. Archer M. Huntington and Anna Hyatt Huntington.

One might go as far to suggest, moreover, that many years later, in 1973, Monjo's bronze relief served as a source or reference for another medallion devoted to these renowned Hispanists, created by the sculptor Carl Paul Jennewein³² (1890-1978) the very same year that Anna Hyatt Huntington died. This was probably a commemorative medallion for one of the events organized in Brookgreen (South Caroline), the property the Huntingtons bought in 1930 and adapted to exhibit figurative sculptures (we should remember that Anna was a well-known sculptor) as well as to help preserve the flora and fauna of the country³³.

However, although the two medallions are similar in structure, the Brookgreen version shows the Huntingtons clearly much younger, with Archer is placed in the background, their heads framed by a border inscribed with their names and the Latin motto: "*Amici Humani Generis*" (Fig.4).

³² Carl Paul Jennewein, *Symbols*. New York, 1973.

³³ Beatrice Gilman Proske, *Brookgreen Gardens Sculpture*, Brookgreen Gardens, South Carolina, 1968. Other works by the same author include: *Archer Milton Huntington*. New York: The Hispanic Society of America, 1965, p.27.



Fig. 4 Carl Paul Jennewein. Archer M. Huntington and Anna Hyatt Huntington.

Let us go back to 1953, when Enric Monjo began to work on the bronze relief, probably with a photograph of Archer and Anna Huntington before him. The picture he had of Huntington can be considered the official portrait of the magnate's last years, the one circulated in newspapers and which also featured in his obituary (Fig. 5). The artist Paul Julien Meylan (1882 - 1962)³⁴ also made use of this picture for a portrait he painted of Huntington (Fig. 6). A parallel can clearly be drawn between this photograph of Archer Huntington and the Barcelona sculpture in terms of compositional structure, facial expression, skin folds and even the attire the distinguished American collector is seen wearing in both.

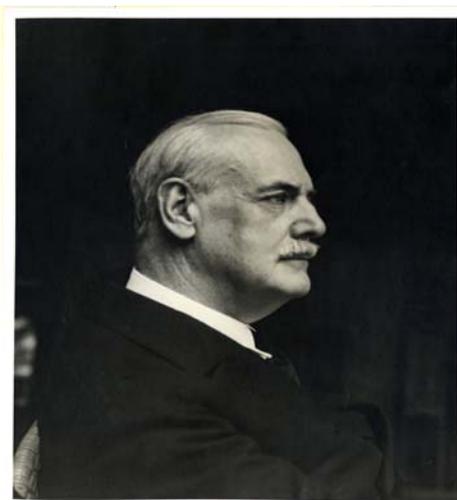


Fig. 5. Photograph of Archer M. Huntington.

³⁴ Paul Julien Meylan, an American artist and draftsman who produced drawings from the photographs taken by Archer M. Huntington at the Itálica excavations. See: Constançio del Alamo, "Las excavaciones de Archer M. Huntington en Itálica", *El tesoro arqueológico de la Hispanic Society of America*. Alcalá de Henares: Museo Arqueológico Regional, 2008. Photograph reference: The Hispanic Society of America, GRF 10755.

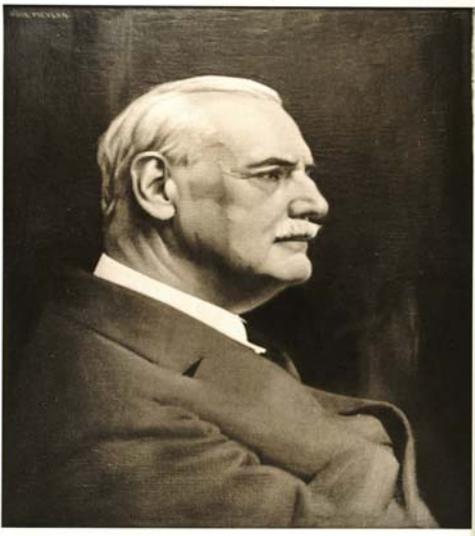


Fig. 6 Portrait by Paul Julien Meylan. Archer M. Huntington

As for the portrait of Anna, the sources used are neither so eloquent nor so precisely known. We also have a photograph reproducing a painting in which Anna Huntington is sculpting. The picture, which was taken by Hubert Bonhert³⁵ (Fig. 7), could possibly have been one of the references Enric Monjo used in his work. In the Barcelona Memorial, Anna is placed in the background, slightly blurred and contrasted with the more energetic and resolute image of Huntington (Fig. 3).



Fig. 7 Portrait of Anna Hyatt Huntington by Hubert Bonhert.

³⁵ Hubert Bonhert. Photograph reference: The Hispanic Society of America, GRF 155180. Logos.

The forceful nature of the round bronze medallion, with Monjo's signature on the right finds a wisely-placed contrast in the rectangular bas-relief, beneath which is the ethereal, stylized feminine figure (Fig. 8).

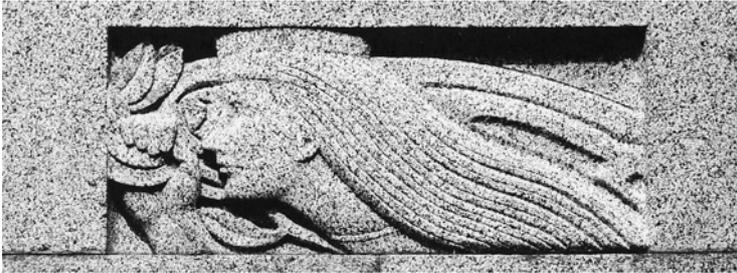


Fig. 8. Allegory of Barcelona in the Memorial

This representation can be interpreted as an allegory of Barcelona, holding in her hands an industrial mechanism whilst crowning the Huntingtons with the laurels of victory. This allegorical figure offers many similarities with the terra cotta sculpture above, and which bears the following legend: "Tribute to the Huntingtons. Barcelona" (Fig. 9). Featured below is a representation of the Monastery of Santa María in Pedralbes. This relief, kept in the museum devoted to the sculptor,³⁶ was also conceived as a tribute to the Huntingtons, although apparently it was never completed.

³⁶ Medallion in terracotta. Enric Monjo Museum, Vilassar de Mar (Barcelona)



Fig. 9. Medallion in terracotta, by Enric Monjo, 18 x 2.5 cms.

In the lower part of the monolith, which stands like a menhir planted in the ground, we can read:

BARCELONA TO ANNA AND ARCHER MILTON HUNTINGTON
DISTINGUISHED HISPANISTS
MARCH MCMLIV

The donation of the replica to the Hispanic Society

Not long after the memorial inauguration in Barcelona, a replica of the bronze sculpture was presented to the Hispanic Society (Fig. 10). Several factors combined to determine this donation. Firstly, the recognition of the Hispanic Society as a beacon of light, helping to disseminate the Hispanic legacy. Secondly, in all probability, the melancholy of all those who bore the heavy load of living far from their homes, circumstances shared by the likes of Manuel Claparols, Javier Serra and Joaquín Maurín, all them involved in this donation to the Hispanic Society.

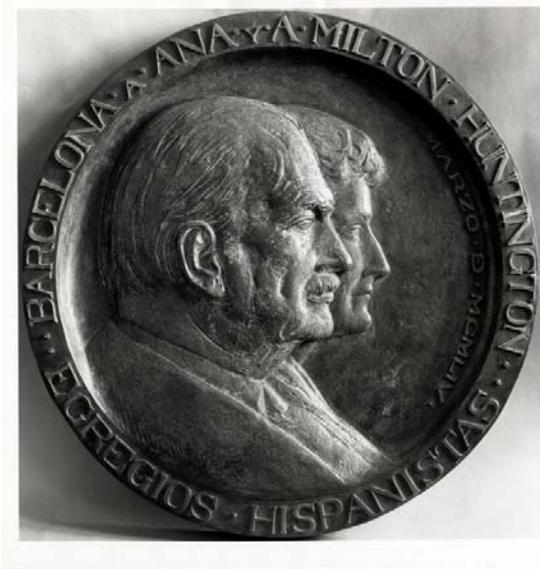


Fig. 10. Replica of the bronze sculpture of Barcelona to The Hispanic Society of America.

Javier Serra was a wealthy businessman who had founded a successful enterprise, Perfumes Dana, which was established in Europe and America and was thriving on both sides of the Atlantic. As for the engineer Manuel Claparols, his promotion and funding of the Barcelona Memorial has already been mentioned. Both Claparols and Serra became involved in Archer M. Huntington's Hispanic activities, as well as giving financial and political support to their compatriots who came to the United States as exiles from the shipwreck that was the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939), such as, precisely, Joaquín Maurín Julià³⁷ (1896-1973).

Joaquín Maurín was a very peculiar figure, practically the antithesis of Archer Milton Huntington. With Andreu Nin (1882-1937), Maurín founded the POUM (Workers' Party of Marxist Unification) in 1935, just one year before the Spanish Civil war started. When Maurín went into exile in New York in 1946, he endured several hard years until he set up a press agency, ALA (American Literary

³⁷ The Joaquín Maurín and ALA archives are kept at the Hoover Institution, University of Stanford and at the Richter Library at the University of Miami.

Those interested in bibliography on Maurín should see: Anabel Bonsón, Joaquín Maurín. *El impulso moral de hacer política*. Huesca, 1995, Luis Rourera Farré; Joaquín Maurín y su tiempo. Barcelona: Editorial Claret, 1992. Francisco Caudet, *Correspondencia Ramon J. Sender-Joaquín Maurín (1952-1973)*. Madrid: Ediciones de la Torre, 1995; Ramón J. Sender, *Crónica del alba*. Madrid: Alianza editorial, 1971. Victor Alba, *Dos revolucionarios: Andreu Nin y Joaquín Maurín*. Seminarios y Ediciones SA., 1975. I should like to thank Pelai Pages, professor of Contemporary History at the University of Barcelona for his suggestions for bibliographical reference to the life and work of Joaquín Maurín.

Agency), which became a mouthpiece for the ideology of Hispanic intellectuals and politicians in America.

It was probably this activity which brought Maurin into contact with Archer Milton Huntington and the Hispanic Society, a place that offered a refuge to soften the melancholy of the exiled Hispanics whilst also giving him the chance to admire the works of Miquel Viladrich (1887- 1956)³⁸, one of his favorite painters, as Maurin himself mentions in his memoirs: *“When I was released from prison in 1946, I asked for Viladrich, and was told he was in Buenos Aires with his wife and children. I felt really pleased to learn he had survived the catastrophe. ‘And his paintings of Fraga?’ I asked. Do you think “ Las Aguadoras”, “Tres Muchachas Fragatinas”, “Las Hilanderas” and so on have also been saved?’ When I came to New York in autumn 1947, Fernando de los Ríos told me that most of Viladrich’s works were in New York, at the Hispanic Society of America. The Hispanic Society of America, created by the multi-millionaire and philanthropist Archer Milton Huntington, is clearly the best Spanish museum outside Spain. It is situated in the upper part of Manhattan, between the 155-156 streets and Broadway. In the centre of the square, between two buildings, stands the equestrian sculpture of El Cid. On the front of the building on the right are two bas-reliefs depicting the Moorish king Boabdil leaving Granada, and Don Quijote riding on Rocinante, on the way to the Puerto Lápice after his adventure with the windmills. The more important building of the two, the one on the left, contains a room devoted to Spain, seen by Sorolla, rather stereotyped these days, the folklore Spain of Carmen and flamenco. Presiding over the small but excellent library is a portrait of King Alfonso XIII and Queen Victoria Eugenia. There is also a bust of Count Romanones... It is an old Spain, really old, almost a caricature. The smaller pavilion on the right is dedicated to Viladrich: 34 pictures. His painting career is divided into different stages: the early period, when this rebellious autodidact was trying to find himself; the Fraga period; and the one which followed it, when Viladrich worked more as a portrait artist. The Fraga period is an artistic wonder. His paintings representing*

³⁸ Miquel Viladrich Vila was also a favorite painter of Archer M. Huntington, who bought more than thirty of his works and made him a member of the Hispanic Society. The Hispanic Society's Members Files contain interesting correspondence by the Catalan painter from 1917 to 1959. *Viladrich in the Collection of HSA*. New York: Printed by order of the Trustees, 1930.

villagers and country people are truly authentic bucolic poems sung by the painter's palette.

Well, this wonderful bouquet of flowers from the gardens on the banks of the Cinca is in New York. At times, in this bustling and asphyxiating city, when the homesickness takes hold of me, I visit the Hispanic Society museum. I leave behind the Spain of Sorolla and Count Romanones, and go to the pavilion where Viladrich's works hang. Then I feel rejuvenated, as if I were twenty again, and I am in the Castle of Urganda la Desconocida, in the company of Viladrich, Baroja, Felipe Alaíz, Salvador Goñi and Sánchez Ventura".³⁹

Joaquín Maurín was in charge of administering the donation of the replica of the relief to the Hispanic Society. In November 1954, he sent a letter to the institution to the effect that, whilst Manuel Claparols had financed the medallion in Barcelona, another Spaniard, Javier Serra, now wished to finance the creation of replica and donate it to the Hispanic Society.⁴⁰ The Hispanic Society replied to this heart-felt offer with delighted acceptance.⁴¹

There are several differences between this medallion and the one in Barcelona. Firstly, the faces are not so precise and delicately rendered. Other variations can also be seen, such as the inscription around the relief ("Barcelona to Anna and Archer Milton Huntington, distinguished Hispanists"), which is inscribed into the stone in the original medallion in Barcelona, along with the date in Roman figures (March MCMLIV), near Monjo's signature.

There is little doubt that Archer Milton Huntington's illness and subsequent death of Archer Milton Huntington delayed the donation of this relief until 9 February 1956, when it was delivered by Joaquin Maurín and Javier Serra to Hyatt Mayor, then director of the Hispanic Society, Hyatt Mayor, who made

³⁹ Víctor Alba: *Dos revolucionarios: Andreu Nin y Joaquín Maurín*, (Seminarios y Ediciones S.A., 1975)

⁴⁰ Hoover Institution Archives. Letter from Joaquin Maurin to the Hispanic Society, 1 November 1954.

⁴¹ The Hispanic Society of America. Members File 12 November 1954. Acceptance of the medallion.

clear that the bronze medallion would occupy a pre-eminent place in the museum, and indeed it is still there today, hanging on the wall (Fig.11).



Fig. 11. The replica of the bronze in The Hispanic Society of America.

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