

# transfer.



02

JOURNAL OF CONTEMPORARY CULTURE // 2007

06

*Intelligent design and  
the assault on science*

Juli Peretó

18

*The psychology of terrorism*

Adolf Tobeña

29

*Empire and freedom*

Josep M. Colomer

37

*Labeling modernity*

Jordi Sales

45

*The Holocaust and literature*

Rosa Planas

53

*"Immigration and social change,  
the Catalan experience"*

Aitana Guia, Jordi Sánchez,  
Salvador Cardús, Isidor Marí,  
Laila Karrouch, Julià Guillamon

focus

118

*The end of science*

Pere Ruigdomènech

**TRANSFER, Journal of contemporary culture. Number 2, 2007**

Transfer is an annual journal on contemporary Catalan thought and  
is a project of the Institut Ramon Llull (IRL)

Director: Carles Torner (IRL) || Editors: Gustau Muñoz (PUV), Marc Dueñas (IRL)

**Editorial Board ||**

Neus Campillo, Salvador Cardús, Àngel Castiñeira,  
Martí Domínguez, Isidor Marí, Josep M. Muñoz, Dolors Oller,  
Vicent Olmos, Damià Pons, Margalida Pons, Mercè Rius

**Translations ||**

Andrew Gray, Julie Wark, Andrew Spence, A. Thomas Stacey,  
Ivano Stocco, Sarah Yandell. General revision by Elizabeth Power

**|| Administration offices:**

Institut Ramon Llull.  
Diputació 279, planta baixa  
08007 Barcelona  
Tel. +34 93 467 80 00  
[www.llull.cat](http://www.llull.cat)

**|| Editorial coordination:**

Publicacions de la Universitat de València.  
Universitat de València  
Arts Gràfiques 13 46010 València  
Tel. +34 96 386 41 15  
[www.uv.es](http://www.uv.es)

Graphics, design and printer:  
Martín Impresores, S.L.  
[martinimpresores.com](http://martinimpresores.com)

© 2007 by Artur Heras for the images  
[www.arturheras.com](http://www.arturheras.com)

Diposit Number: V-1491-2006  
ISSN: 1886-2349

Camí-pintura (Painting Road), Artur Heras (2004)  
acrylic and oil on canvas, 159 x 120 cm  
(private collection, Perpignan)



# transfer

JOURNAL OF CONTEMPORARY CULTURE // 2007

02

## Contents

### *editorial address*

*Catalan Culture: Frankfurt, New York and beyond* Carles Torner 2 ●

### *essays*

*Intelligent design and the assault on science* Juli Peretó 6 ●

*The psychology of terrorism* Adolf Tobeña 18 ●

*Empire and freedom* Josep M. Colomer 29 ●

*Labeling modernity* Jordi Sales 37 ●

*The Holocaust and literature* Rosa Planas 45 ●

### *focus*

#### **“Immigration and social change, the Catalan experience”**

*Globalisation of borders: International migration in the Twenty-First century* Aitana Guà 54 ●

*Immigration in Catalonia* Jordi Sánchez 67 ●

*Questions of identity* Salvador Cardús 80 ●

*An intercultural project for all to share* Isidor Mari 88 ●

*We are all citizens of the world* Laila Karrouch 98 ●

*The Catalan immigration novel* Julià Guillamon 108 ●

### *notes & comments*

*The end of science* Pere Puigdomènech 118 ●

*The Catalan canon* Jordi Llovet 121 ●

*Is war just images?* Sandra Balsells 124 ●

*Al Qaida, a modern creature* Miquel Barceló 130 ●

### *dialogues*

*A century of German-Catalan philological relations.*

Dialogue between Antoni M. Badia i Margarit and Tilberg D. Stegmann 134 ●

*The “Elephant” and Catalan literature, a round table*

Jordi Cerdà, Jordi Sarsanedas, Julià de Jòdar, Mercè Ibarz and Josep Pedrals 143 ●

*reviews* 154 *about artur heras* Josep Salvador 172

*about the authors* 174 *journals* 175

**Carles Torner**

# *Catalan Culture: Frankfurt, New York and beyond*

**This year, 2007, is a significant one in terms of international recognition of Catalan literature and art, for two important reasons: in October 2007 Catalan culture will be the guest of honour at the Frankfurt Book Fair and from March 7<sup>th</sup> to June 3<sup>rd</sup>, New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art is holding an exhibition—the biggest of its kind ever held outside Catalonia—titled *Barcelona and Modernity*, and covering Catalan art between 1868 and 1939.**

Both of these events fortuitously coincide with the centenary celebration of the founding of the Institut d'Estudis Catalans [IEC] on June 18, 1907. The Institute, established as an Academy of Sciences, was the fruit of the First International Congress for the Catalan Language in Barcelona, which had taken place eight months earlier and put forth the idea of creating an institution capable of overseeing and organizing cultural affairs throughout all Catalan-speaking territories. The IEC's Philological Department has acted as an unofficial Academy of the Catalan Language for the past century (IEC's Catalan language dictionary can be accessed at <http://pdl.iec.cat/entrada/diec.asp>). In 1922, the IEC was admitted to the International Union of Academies. This was only fitting, given that the 1907 Congress was itself universal in focus and the result of collaboration between Catalan researchers and their European colleagues.

In this second issue of **Transfer**, we have published a dialogue between the eminent Catalan philologist, Antoni M. Badia i Margarit, and Tilbert D. Stegmann, professor at the University of Frankfurt and director of the *Estudi d'Investigació de Catalanística* at the same institution. They look back over a century of close collaboration between Catalan and German researchers in the fields of Catalan literature and language.

The 2007 edition of the Frankfurt Book Fair is, therefore, a grand opportunity to show Catalan literature in all its richness. Catalan is spoken today in a wide arc extending from Perpignan in the North to Alacant in the South and from the Western strip of Aragon to Alguer (Sardinia) in the East. Though split between four countries, the whole area shares a common body of literature. The wealth of dialects and registers enrich the writings of Catalan authors—a literary tradition that began over eight centuries ago with the works of Ramon Llull.

# editorial address transfer // SPRING 2007

The first issue of **Transfer** was very well received around the world. The publication modestly aims, among other things, to be a voice expressing the pluralism of Catalan culture. The journals from which the articles are drawn —based in Valencia, Palma, Lleida and Barcelona— reflect a broad range of viewpoints on current issues. The editorial board believes that this wide selection of writers and points of view is one of the main strengths of **Transfer**'s monographic issues, which take articles published in Catalan cultural journals (located in different cities) and translate them into English for a wider audience. This is what the Institut Ramon Llull (IRL) strives to achieve in its efforts to project Catalan culture abroad: namely, to reflect the output of the Catalan-speaking community as a whole, weaving together a diverse cultural network, rather than just focusing on a single capital city or allowing for political and administrative divisions to weaken its voice. **Transfer** is a clear expression of this aim and an important means of promoting this multi-centred vision of Catalonia to foreign audiences.

As the title of the Metropolitan Museum of Art's exhibition suggests, Catalan cultural identity is inextricably linked to modernity. Indeed, IEC's President, the sociologist Salvador Giner, speaks of a culture rooted in a "tradition of modernity". Under the gaze of Gaudí, Picasso, Miró or Dalí, turning their eyes to us from New York, this year we will see a rich selection of current translations of Catalan authors.

The writers are drawn from throughout the Catalan-speaking territories and their works either have been, or are about to be, published in various foreign languages. To mention several examples, the translations into the German language include Ramon Llull's *Llibre de les meravelles*; Mercè Rodoreda's *Quanta, quanta guerra!*; Josep Pla's *Quadern Gris*; Llorenç Villalonga's

*Bearn*; a complete collection of Salvador Espriu's poetry; Jaume Cabré's *Les veus del Pamano*; Joan Margarit's *Joana i altres poemes*. Into French: the definitive edition of Joan Sales' *Incerta Glòria* with a foreword by Juan Goytisolo; Maria Barbal's *Pedra de tartera*; Ferran Torrent's *La vida en l'abisme*; Mercè Ibarz' *A la ciutat en obres*; and Joan-Lluís Lluís' *El dia de l'ós*; Narcís Comadira's *En quarantena*. Into Rumanian: Baltasar Porcel's *Cavalls cap a la fosca*. Into Greek: Emili Teixidor's *Pa negre*. Into Russian: Pere Calders' *Aquí descansa Nevares*. In English, there is a superb translation by Arthur Terry of *Les dones i els dies* (Women and days), a complete collection of Gabriel Ferrater's poetry, with a foreword by the Nobel Prize-winner Seamus Heaney; *Dins el darrer blau*, by Carme Riera; and *La magnitud de la tragèdia* (*The enormity of the tragedy*) by Quim Monzó.

The translation of some of these literary works has been funded by the IRL, which is also now beginning to provide support for the translation of Catalan essays and non-fiction into other languages.

This year, 2007, in New York, Frankfurt and beyond, we invite you to learn more about Catalan culture through the unique and, at once, universal work of its artists and writers **||**

**Carles Torner**, a writer and poet, is head of the Humanities and Science Department of the Institut Ramon Llull.

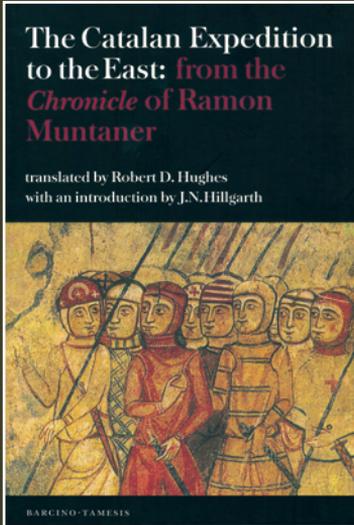


TAMESIS



Editorial  
Barcino

# Medieval Catalan classics in English



## The Catalan Expedition to the East: from the *Chronicle* of Ramon Muntaner

Translated by Robert D. Hughes  
With an introduction by J.N. Hillgarth

Ramon Muntaner's account of the bloody adventures of the Almogaver army under Roger of Flor in the eastern Mediterranean in the early fourteenth century, one of the most spellbinding narratives of medieval European literature.

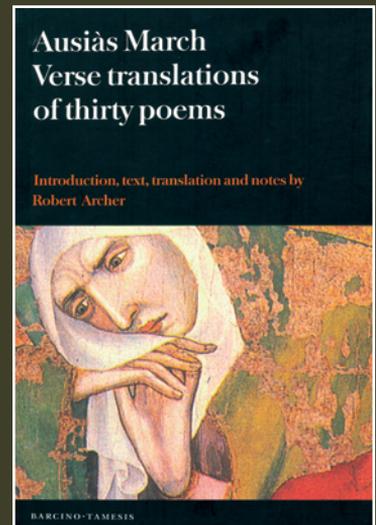
DR ROBERT D. HUGHES is a translator and researcher with particular expertise in the fields of fine art, the history of ideas and Catalan culture.

## Ausiàs March. Verse translations of thirty poems

Introduction, text, translation and notes  
by Robert Archer

Verse translations of selected works by Ausiàs March, the great fifteenth-century Valencian poet.

ROBERT ARCHER holds the Cervantes Chair of Spanish at King's College London.



FORTHCOMING BOOKS Barcino - Tamesis

## Book of Sent Soví

Medieval recipes from Catalonia  
**Anthology**  
Francesc Eiximenis

TAMESIS CATALAN LITERATURE TITLES

- The Poetry of Salvador Espriu: to Save the Words**  
D. Gareth Walters
- The Problem of Woman in Late-Medieval Hispanic Literature**  
Robert Archer
- A Companion to Catalan Literature**  
Arthur Terry

Tamesis is an imprint of **Boydell & Brewer Ltd**  
Whitwell House, St Audry's Park Road,  
Melton, Woodbridge, Suffolk IP12 1SY, UK  
[www.tamesisbooks.com](http://www.tamesisbooks.com)  
[www.boydell.co.uk](http://www.boydell.co.uk)

**Editorial Barcino**  
Carrer Acàcies, 15  
08027 Barcelona  
[www.editorialbarcino.cat](http://www.editorialbarcino.cat)  
[www.fundaciolluiscarulla.cat](http://www.fundaciolluiscarulla.cat)

*essays*

transfer<sup>02</sup>

JOURNAL OF CONTEMPORARY CULTURE // 2007

**Juli Peretó**

# Intelligent design and the assault on science<sup>1</sup>

**Without evolutionary theory, contemporary biology would totally collapse. What is a coherent and fascinating vision of nature in which cruelty and crudeness are transformed into a marvel of countless forms and behaviours, a glorious view of life connected with the cosmos, Earth and all the rest of the natural phenomena, would lose all its sense and elegance without the evolutionary framework.**

The only new theory that present-day science could admit would be one that encompasses and perfects the Darwinian view of the natural world, as a step forward that would illuminate the many details of the origins of life that still remain to be discovered or that resist our ability to understand the world. There is no way that substituting scientific scrutiny with obscurantism because of lack of data and observations, abandoning confidence in reason and recognising the failure of intelligence, can ever advance knowledge. Why should we accept that there is an impenetrable barrier to reason in the most intimate interstices of cellular structures and the most basic biochemical processes? Creationism and its most recent form, the so-called “theory of intelligent design” is inadmissible as an alternative explanation to the theory of evolution because it involves the surrender of reason. If we dare to think in evolutionary terms, we advance in our understanding of nature. We have the tools for understanding the marvels of

■ <sup>1</sup> I should like to express my thanks to Jesús Català, historian of science at the Cardinal Herrera University-CEU, for his constant support and valuable comments.

Part of this study has been financed by the project BHA2003-04414-Co3-02/FEDER and a grant from the Vice-Rectorship of Research at the University of Valencia.

biodiversity or for bringing reason to bear on the threats of pathogens. Moreover, if we allow that an inscrutable wall shuts away natural phenomena from scientific explanation, we abandon forever the realm of reason and fall into the embrace of blind faith and fanaticism. The mind is annihilated with the tyranny of intimate truths over universal truths. Anything positive achieved by intellectual history would be lost.

## TEACH THE CONTROVERSY

President George W. Bush says that school children have the right to learn about all opinions, all the versions that purport to explain the world. Hence it is legitimate to teach creationism in biology classes. One does not have to be very smart to divine the manipulation and fallacy that lie behind this assertion. First, we have the erroneous use of words like “theory” that can have other meanings in other linguistic registers. It is evident that we do not have a theory of universal gravitation along the same lines and of the same import as a theory we might have as to who assassinated President Kennedy. Everybody can have a different conspiratorial version. Talking about universal truths and private truths as if they were equal is cheating.

Again, the public is being given the false idea that evolutionary theory is monolithic and dogmatic. There is nothing further from the truth. Evolutionary theory is richly nuanced, overflowing with controversies, with abundant explanatory power but it also has its encouraging lacunae, problems that stimulate the intellects of thousands of people all around the world. There is no doubt whatsoever about the educative value of familiarising students with the controversies, reflecting on the arguments, taking up positions in debates and of becoming aware of the intrinsic provisionality and vulnerability of universal scientific truths and, finally, of reaching conclusions and readily accepting that a particular standpoint is mistaken if this is demonstrated by appropriate proofs.

In brief, this is not about two opposing sides, despite the efforts of the Discovery Institute, bastion of intelligent design, to present it as a scientific alternative to neo-Darwinism<sup>2</sup>. What does exist is a political strategy, represented by the slogan “Teach the Controversy” that is causing a furore in the United States. On closer consideration, there is no controversy to be taught because the two sides of the dispute are not on the same plane. There is not, and neither can there ever be, because of epistemological impossibility, any debate between evolutionism and creationism. It is totally false that they can be put into opposition on equal terms because they represent intellectual positions that move on parallel planes with no chance of intersection. An experimental science like biology is based on the universality of its truths, which are contrastable and verifiable by anyone anywhere, independently of their religious or ideological affiliations so long as the investigation is carried out rigorously and honestly. Creationist truths, however, are not universal. They are heavily dependent on culture and education. Not all religions are

■ <sup>2</sup> For further information in this regard, see E. C. Scott and G. Branch (2003) “Evolution: What’s Wrong with ‘Teaching the Controversy’”, *Trends Ecol. Evol.* 18:499-502; T. A. Langen (2004) “What is Right with ‘Teaching the Controversy?’”. *Trends Ecol. Evol.* 19:114-115; S. C.

Meyer (2004) “Teaching about Scientific Dissent from Neo-Darwinism”. *Trends Ecol. Evol.* 19:115-116; E. C. Scott and G. Branch (2003) “Teaching the Controversy: Response to Langen and to Meyer”. *Trends Ecol. Evol.* 19:116-117.

creationist in the same way, or inspired by the same principles, or governed by the same dogmatic obligations. Not all religions call for belief in a single, personal divinity. They do not all offer the same account of how it all began and neither do they have the same concept of the origins of everything that exists. There are even beliefs that are totally lacking in creation myths or that have a cyclical notion of time, which has no beginning and no end. Faith in any supernatural force and miracles is excluded by definition from the realm of science. Moreover, the provisionality and vulnerability that are part and parcel of scientific knowledge are not inherent to theology.

Disagreement over “teaching the controversy” is a hot issue in the United States today and it has generated a considerable number of public discussions and institutional and academic declarations<sup>3</sup>. The outcome of the Dover Area School Board case is highly relevant as the sentence of the Federal Judge, John E. Jones III, was an impeccable and exemplary summary of the issues<sup>4</sup>. There are 139 pages of testimonies and reasoning that radically unmask the so-called “theory of intelligent design”, denying its supposed scientific character and revealing the real intentions of its proponents: to sneak religious teaching into public schools, which violates the constitutional principle of separation of church and state. For Judge Jones, it was perfectly demonstrated that intelligent design is a fallacy, and nothing other than the same old creationism now dressed up as scientific theory. It is therefore unconstitutional to teach it in public schools.

At the end of 2004, the Dover School board decided that the biology teachers at the school should read a warning to the students before starting to teach the subject of evolution. The note<sup>5</sup> stated what is as well known as it is false, that evolution is “only” a theory, while playing with a concept of “theory”, which it actually abhors. Students were warned that evolutionary theory is full of gaps and difficulties and that it has not been demonstrated. So that they could learn about “other scientific theories” (in other words, the famous and handy slogan of “teach the controversy”) students would be provided with the book *Of Pandas and People* (with which the board generously stocked the school library). This is a classic of creationist gobbledegook, and it turned out to be a determining factor in the trial, as we shall see below. When the teaching staff refused to read the note, the school’s administrative staff was obliged to do so.

■ <sup>3</sup> The dispute has gone to all levels, from the National Academy of Science to the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB), which have made solemn declarations against intelligent design. Many scientific journals have devoted space to the issue (see the reports in *Nature* “Who has Designs on your Students’ Minds?” [28 April 2005], and *Science*, “Darwin’s Place on Campus is Secure —but not Supreme” [10 February 2006]). One may also find extensive documentation in R. T. Pennock (2003) “Creationism and Intelligent Design”, *Annu. Rev. Genomics Hum. Genet.* 4:143-163.

<sup>4</sup> See [www.pamd.uscourts.gov/kitzmiller/kitzmiller\\_342.pdf](http://www.pamd.uscourts.gov/kitzmiller/kitzmiller_342.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> The statement read, “The Pennsylvania Academic Standards require students to learn about Darwin’s theory of evolution and eventually to take a

standardized test of which evolution is a part. Because Darwin’s Theory is a theory, it is still being tested as new evidence is discovered. The Theory is not a fact. Gaps in the Theory exist for which there is no evidence. A theory is defined as a well-tested explanation that unifies a broad range of observations.

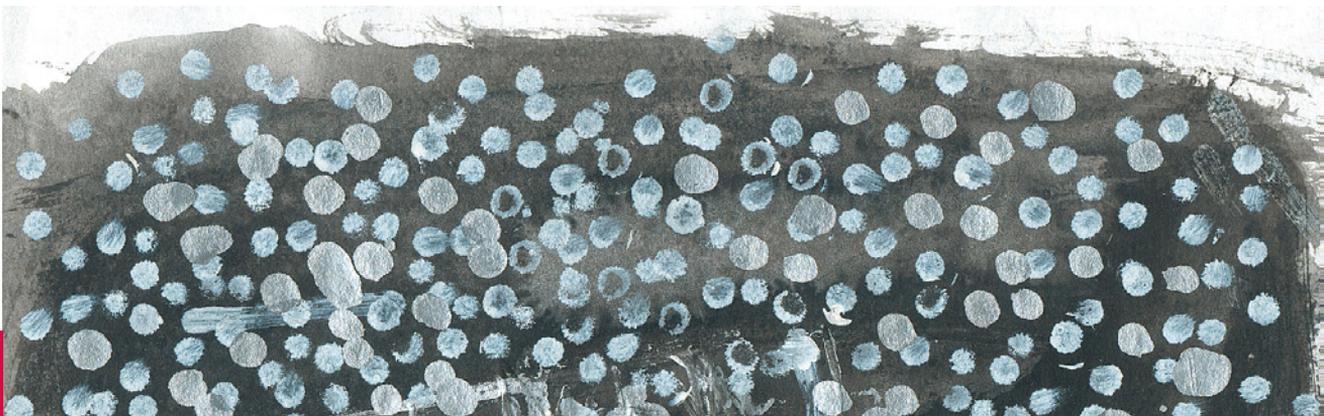
Intelligent design is an explanation of the origin of life that differs from Darwin’s view. The reference book, *Of Pandas and People*, is available for students to see if they would like to explore this view in an effort to gain an understanding of what intelligent design actually involves. As is true with any theory, students are encouraged to keep an open mind. The school leaves the discussion of the origins of life to individual students and their families. As a standards-driven district, class instruction focuses upon preparing students to achieve proficiency on standards-based assessments.”

In one sub-heading of his findings, the judge ironically concluded that even creationism evolves: “An Objective Observer Would Know that ID and Teaching About ‘Gaps’ and ‘Problems’ in Evolutionary Theory are Creationist, Religious Strategies that Evolved from Earlier Forms of Creationism” (page 18, 2.1.1.). The decisive evidence was provided by the historian of science, Barbara Forrest who demonstrated that “creationism” had been systematically replaced by “intelligent design” some 150 times in versions of the aforementioned book following the Decision of the Constitutional Tribunal in 1987 that declared it illegal to teach creationism in public schools.

Jones hopes to have unmasked the fraud of intelligent design and thus to avoid further loss of time and money, although the citizens of Dover were a jump ahead: in the elections of November 2005, not one of the school board members was returned. However, defenders of neocreationism continue to hatch new tactics. Not only do they subscribe to the ideas upheld by some scientists, for example the anthropic principle—the silly idea that some physicists have that basic constants must be fine-tuned in order for life to appear in the universe—to acquire a certain respectable gloss, but now they are also aiming to infiltrate philosophy classes, as they attempted to do some months ago in a California high school. Their influence has extended to some government circles (for example Australia where the Minister of Education would love to introduce teaching of intelligent design) that make ridiculous decisions in scientific policy (as in the recent case of the Canadian researcher whose research project on the penetration of creationist ideas into his country was turned down because he had not sufficiently demonstrated that the alternative, evolution, was the correct version!). The recent tour of the United Kingdom by a prominent advocate of intelligent design and the fact that some British private schools are already teaching it has prompted a solemn declaration by the Royal Society in defence of evolution (the text of this document is appended as an Annex)<sup>6</sup>. It is undeniable that this is a remarkable and unwonted occurrence in the country where Darwin was born, though it gives an idea of the extent of the problem and raises our guard against complacency.

■ <sup>6</sup> The National Centre for Science Education website (<http://www.natcensci.ed.org/>) offers an excellent way to keep up to date with all the news on the diffusion of the creationist phenomenon. There are numerous links to papers, essays, book reviews and educational

resources. The main aim of the NCSE is to foster the teaching of evolution in public schools. Its executive director, Eugenie C. Scott, is the author of one of the best books about creationism, *Evolution vs. Creationism* (California University Press, Berkeley, 2004).



**IRREDUCIBLE COMPLEXITY**

*Darwin's Black Box: the Biochemical Challenge to Evolution* (1996)<sup>7</sup>, written by the biochemist Michael J. Behe, is, without exaggerating, the book that has had the greatest influence in recent debates on creationism, a veritable founding treatise of neocreationism that has created an uproar of tremendous proportions in all the arguments for and against<sup>8</sup>. Better said, it has been an injection of vitality into a moribund movement like the biblical creationism of the beginning of the 1990s. Behe is Associate Professor of Biochemistry at Lehigh University (Bethlehem, Pennsylvania) although his department has officially distanced itself from his ideas<sup>9</sup>.

The central argument of Behe's book is that Darwin failed on the molecular scale. Behe occupies himself with the interior of the cells where, according to him, there is a myriad of structures of extraordinary complexity, based on the interaction of smaller pieces that fit together perfectly and make no sense in isolation. Neither would a system that lacked any of its pieces make any functional sense. This is what Behe calls *irreducible complexity*<sup>10</sup>: the validation of highly improbable molecular structures whose functions we cannot conceive of in incomplete systems. Behe's favourite examples are the bacterial flagellum the means of bacterial locomotion the process of blood coagulation and the immune system. Detailed examination of these and other molecular systems and comparative analysis with similar systems in many organisms from the whole phylogenetic scale clearly demonstrate that the irreducible complexity of the bacterial flagellum, for example, is not real but only apparent. There are examples of bacteria that contain only parts of this mechanism. The problem with the theory is that parts of the system can function differently from the whole, may or may not represent ancestral states and, furthermore, our capacity for observation and imagination is limited. Natural systems do not follow our logical schemes. It is we ourselves who must deduce, on the basis of molecular documentation that is as fragmentary as it is cryptic, by what paths, and by what processes such complex organisations have been structured over evolutionary history<sup>11</sup>.

■ <sup>7</sup> Published by the Free Press (New York). There is a Spanish version of the book (Andrés Bello, April, 2000). It should be remarked that the factual information on biochemistry offered by the book is essentially correct and painstakingly presented.

<sup>8</sup> If one types in "Michael Behe" on Google 435,000 pages appear (last accessed 30 July 2006)! If we use the Scholar version (<http://scholar.google.com/>) on the same search engine, there are 1,250 (last accessed 30 July 2006) references. If we look for scientific articles published by Behe in peer-revised journals (<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?db=PubMed>), there are 36 references, all publications by Behe on different aspects of biochemistry and molecular biology, but none of them directly related with the question of "irreducible complexity" or intelligent design. Behe has published some texts specifically dealing with intelligent design. It is worth reading his response to critics of his book (Behe, Michael, 2001 "Reply to my Critics: a Response to Reviews of *Darwin's Black Box: the Biochemical Challenge to Evolution*" *Biol. Phil.* 16:685-709).

<sup>9</sup> See <http://www.lehigh.edu/~inbios/news/evolution.htm>: "Department Position on Evolution and "Intelligent Design".

The faculty in the Department of Biological Sciences is committed to the highest standards of scientific integrity and academic function. This commitment carries with it unwavering support for academic freedom and the free exchange of ideas. It also demands the utmost respect for the scientific method, integrity in the conduct of research, and recognition that the validity of any scientific model comes only as a result of rational hypothesis testing, sound experimentation, and findings that can be replicated by others.

The department faculty, then, are unequivocal in their support of evolutionary theory, which has its roots in the seminal work of Charles Darwin and has been supported by findings accumulated over 140 years. The sole dissenter from this position, Prof. Michael Behe, is a well-known proponent of «intelligent design.» While we respect Prof. Behe's right to express his views, they are his alone and are in no way endorsed by the

Paradoxically, Behe raises a problem that was resolved a century and a half ago by Darwin himself when he analysed the difficulties of evolutionary theory in his work on the origin of the species<sup>12</sup>. And it was very well resolved. One evident case for Darwin was the existence of organs of extreme complexity and perfection, such as animal eyes, and how to explain their origins by natural selection. Given the impossibility of analysing each and every one of all the intermediate stages in the evolutionary formation of an eye because these stages are extinct, imagination and comparative method come to our aid. There is no doubt that some closely related species might have retained simpler structures, representing previous stages, which are useful for them in their habitat and lifestyle, and we need to be capable of recognising them. Because a half-completed eye could be better and more useful than not having any and living in total darkness, we find species that only have light-detecting systems, others than cannot generate well-defined images, right through to others with sight organs that manifest states of sheer perfection, like the eye of vertebrates, which is able to focus and correct optical aberrations. On the molecular scale, and this is where Behe resorts to trickery, we can also employ the comparative method and seek simpler molecular structures —like an eye that is unable to form sharp images but that can function usefully for the survival of the organism that possesses it. This form of functionality, as the crude and unpredictable process of evolution prescribes, will not be exactly the same in the final product<sup>13</sup>.

“The problem with the theory is that parts of the system can function differently from the whole”

Behe also introduces epistemological sleight of hand into his argument. He seeks an example of complex molecular structure. He wonders if scientists have inquired into each and every intermediate step in its evolutionary history. If the answer is negative, this supposedly demonstrates that it has been designed by a supernatural power. In other words, his only criterion for recognising an irreducibly complex structure is that we

department. It is our collective position that intelligent design has no basis in science, has not been tested experimentally and should not be regarded as scientific.”

<sup>12</sup> The literal definition in the book is, “By irreducibly complex I mean a single system which is composed of several well-matched, interacting parts that contribute to the basic function, and where the removal of any one of the parts causes the system to effectively cease functioning” (Behe 1996:39). The example used to explain the idea is that of a mousetrap. The author, recognising its ambiguity on several occasions, has changed and nuanced his definition of irreducible complexity, for example by adding the word “necessarily” so that it reads “...a single system which is necessarily composed of several well-matched ...” (See Behe, 2001, p. 694).

<sup>13</sup> Extensive discussions of each of the systems favoured by Behe may be found along with explanations why, contrary to what Behe states, they are perfectly “reducible”. See in particular Niall Shanks (2004) *God, the Devil, and Darwin* (OUP, Oxford); Matt Young and

Taner Edis, eds. (2005) *Why Intelligent Design Fails. A Scientific Critique of the New Creationism* (Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick).

<sup>12</sup> Charles Darwin (1859) *On the Origin of Species* (John Murray, London), published in Catalan by Edicions 62, Clàssics del pensament modern 1, Barcelona, 1982. Chapter 6 is devoted to the “difficulties of the theory” with a section specifically concerned with analysing the natural origins of animal eyes (1982, 179 ff.).

Richard Dawkins offers a magnificent exposition of the evolution of eyes by natural selection in his *Climbing Mount Improbable*, Penguin, London (the Spanish version was published by Tusquets, Barcelona, in 1998).

<sup>13</sup> François Jacob introduced the felicitous notion of evolutionary bricolage to refer precisely to the non-designed character of evolution. See, for example, his *Le jeu des possibles*, Fayard, Paris, 1982. The Spanish version was published by Grijalbo, Barcelona, 1997, while the English version is entitled *The Possible and the Actual* (Pantheon Books, 1982).

cannot postulate any evolutionary explanation. If next week, or next month, or next year, or some century, somebody finds it, what then? In the cases where we are able to propose logical evolutionary schemes, Behe accepts evolution. For the rest, he confines himself to partial quotes out of context. In other words, his conclusions are frequently based on elimination of context and the partial information he supplies in his book. The theory of intelligent design is shameless acceptance of ignorance and shameful abdication of the possibility of abandoning it.

We also find quite an interesting parallel between Behe's intellectual position and that adopted a century ago by Catholic neovitalists with regard to the enigmas of the origins of life. The impossibility of spontaneous generation was elegantly established with experimental persuasiveness by Louis Pasteur and John Tyndall in the latter half of the nineteenth century. From the strictly scientific point of view, coherent acceptance of Darwin's theory required imagining that the original primordial beings came about through natural phenomena. Only those who wished to defend continuity between inanimate and living matter, like the German naturalist Ernst Haeckel, were able to suggest an origin of life without miracles. Again, Pasteur's experiments were at the basis of arguments by different Catholic scientists, who, although they accepted that species were transformed by natural mechanisms, saw an insurmountable barrier between chemistry and the most primitive forms of life. For them, only a miracle could explain the origins of life. The German evolutionary entomologist and Jesuit, Erich Wasmann declared that, "we see acceptance of a personal Creator as a true 'scientific postulate'"<sup>14</sup>. The Catholic biochemist Behe asserts that there is no a priori reason for imagining that these basic developments (the origin of the universe and the development of life) should be explained in the same fashion as other physical occurrences<sup>15</sup>. In brief, the champions of intelligent design are asking science to incorporate *other non-physical explanations* of the world.

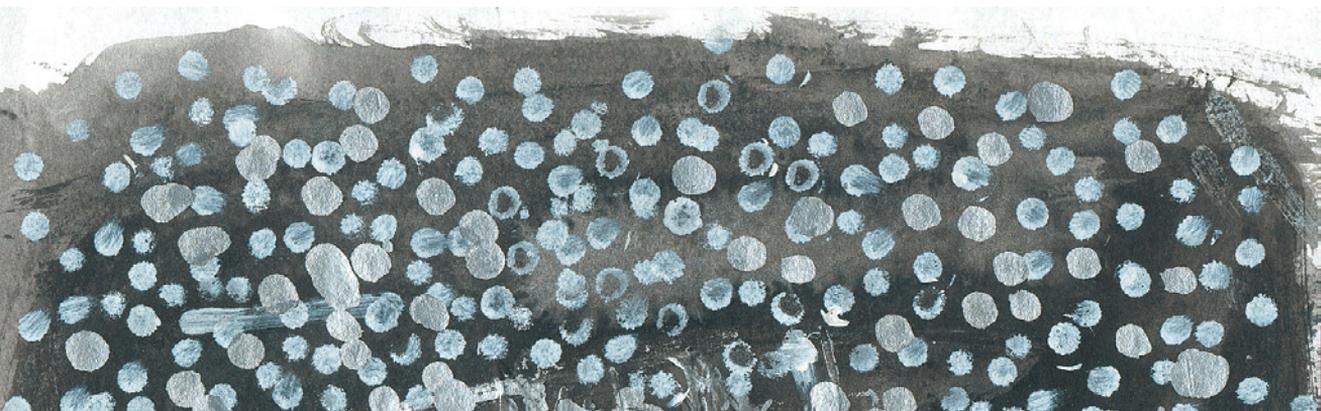
■ <sup>14</sup> E. Wasmann, S. J. (1910), *Modern Biology and the Theory of Evolution*, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., London (translation of the third German edition by A. M. Buchanan, p.206). Wasmann had scientist members of religious orders among his followers, for example Agostino Gemelli, Jean Maumus and Jaume Pujiula. In all cases their criticism of the materialism of the evolutionists (especially Haeckel) was implacable and their option was theist, creationist evolution, in the context of neovitalism.

<sup>15</sup> Behe (1999), op. cit., p.300.

<sup>16</sup> D. J. Futuyma, 1997, "Miracles and Molecules", *Boston Review* (February-March).

<sup>17</sup> Kevin Phillips, a well-known ideologue and former Republican politician, has just published *American Theocracy: the Peril and Politics of Radical Religion, Oil and Borrowed Money in the 21st Century* (Viking, New York, 2006), where he offers quite a complete analysis of the influence of Christian fundamentalism (especially in the Protestant churches in the South of the USA) in recent American history. For Phillips, the religious excesses and anti-scientific censorship of the present Bush government (for example, with regard to health and the environment), vast oil-based ambitions and public and private debt have set the United States on the road to disaster.

<sup>18</sup> See <http://www.alternet.org/story/30335/>.



## THE GOSPEL OF DEMOLISHED INTELLIGENCE

From the standpoint of the theory of intelligent design there is, moreover, an asymmetry in its explicative requirement vis-à-vis evolutionary theory that has no precedent in other scientific disciplines. Nobody wants to know, centimetre by centimetre, how the Alps were formed over the last 200 million years. Nobody questions the theory of plaque tectonics because we do not have —we cannot have!— such detailed narrative. However, Behe denies the validity of evolutionary theory because we do not have a step-by-step explanation of the origins of complex structures contained within the cell. In conclusion, implicitly admitting the defeat of reason, he wants to force us to take an a-scientific path: we cannot explain it because everything is the result of the whim of an inscrutable mind. As Douglas Futuyma has remarked<sup>16</sup>, instead of advancing and honing scientific knowledge, Behe advises us to abandon all hope of understanding! The theory of intelligent design cannot be rated as scientific by any of the usual criteria of classification. Judge Jones provided a meticulous analysis of this in his Dover case sentence. However, to put it briefly, we might say that the theory of intelligent design, by definition, is not vulnerable, or provisional or universal. It is a case of general evolutionary incredulity. The level of detail required in its explanations is absurd. It is based on an absence of explanation and is thus at best the product of scientific impatience, when not of ignorance. Perhaps it is the proposal of idle scientists who wish to introduce supernatural, untenable and unnecessary explanations into the description of nature, which is to say it is an assault on science by religious fundamentalism. In this regard, the disturbing fervour with which this idea of intelligent design has spread to different countries and creeds from the United States, where it receives considerable government support, is illustrative<sup>17</sup>.

Although the United States is the stronghold of creationism, antievolutionism is exporting its propaganda everywhere. The evangelists are using creationist texts in different languages, apart from English, for example Afrikaans, Albanian, Chinese, French German, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese and Spanish. In Russia, evangelist texts tend to be used for teaching English. Again, the labours of a Turkish “Foundation for Scientific Research” to push creationist texts are remarkable. The display of methods on its website is fabulous with free on-line books and videos translated into many languages and with quite a lot of references from the Koran. Texts by Harun Yahya (pseudonym of the most popular Islamic creationist, Adnan Oktar) are rehashes of texts on intelligent design from the American Discovery Institute. There are some small disparities that betray the lack of universality of these explanations: references to the Flood are eliminated because this “geological phenomenon” is not part of the Koranic tradition! Again, last January, Moshe Tendler, an orthodox rabbi and biology lecturer at the Yeshiva University proclaimed before a large audience of Jewish scientists and intellectuals at an international congress on “Torah and Science”<sup>18</sup> that, «It is our task to inform the world [about intelligent design]... Or the child growing up will grow up with unintelligent design[.] Unintelligent

“...we might say that the theory of intelligent design, by definition, is not vulnerable, or provisional or universal”

design is our ignorance, our stupidity». I think that the problem is not so much these differences but exactly the reverse. Religious fundamentalists can reach agreement at least in their radical opposition to scientific explanations of nature.

### THE SCHÖNBORN AFFAIR

Texts that are critical of creationism and intelligent design generally highlight and offer in contrast the stance of the Catholic Church when confronting the radicalism of certain protestant groups, followers of biblical literalism. The key quote is the speech of Pope John Paul II on 22 October 1996 to the Pontifical Academy of Sciences in which he recognised that evolution is “more than a hypothesis” and noted its scientific nature. However, the Dominican cardinal, Christoph Schönborn, Archbishop of Vienna, then published a brief but significant text in response that has had unexpected reverberation. What is worst about his “Finding Design in Nature” (*The New York Times*, 7 July, 2005<sup>19</sup>) is not that its prominent author, an eminent theologian and editor of the Universal Catechism, should side with intelligent design because this is legitimate as pure personal opinion. In this article, he describes the speech of John Paul II as “rather vague and unimportant”, explicitly attempting to discredit all those who refer to it in order to illustrate the compatibility of Church teachings with the scientific theory of evolution. He does this Wasmann-style, with the appropriate exceptions because the Pope’s declaration also touched on what Emila Pardo Bazán once called the “rock of the Darwinist scandal”, the question of the origin of man as being reserved for divine intervention. It is about the ontological leap from matter to spirit, the discontinuity that is so cherished by the bearers of doctrine and still upheld in the last vitalist redoubt that has holed up in the neurosciences. In any case, there is nothing to make one think that the Archbishop of Vienna is a sharpshooter. The hullabaloo that followed the article in *The New York Times*, which surprised the author himself, might make one wonder about a change of strategy by the Catholic hierarchy.

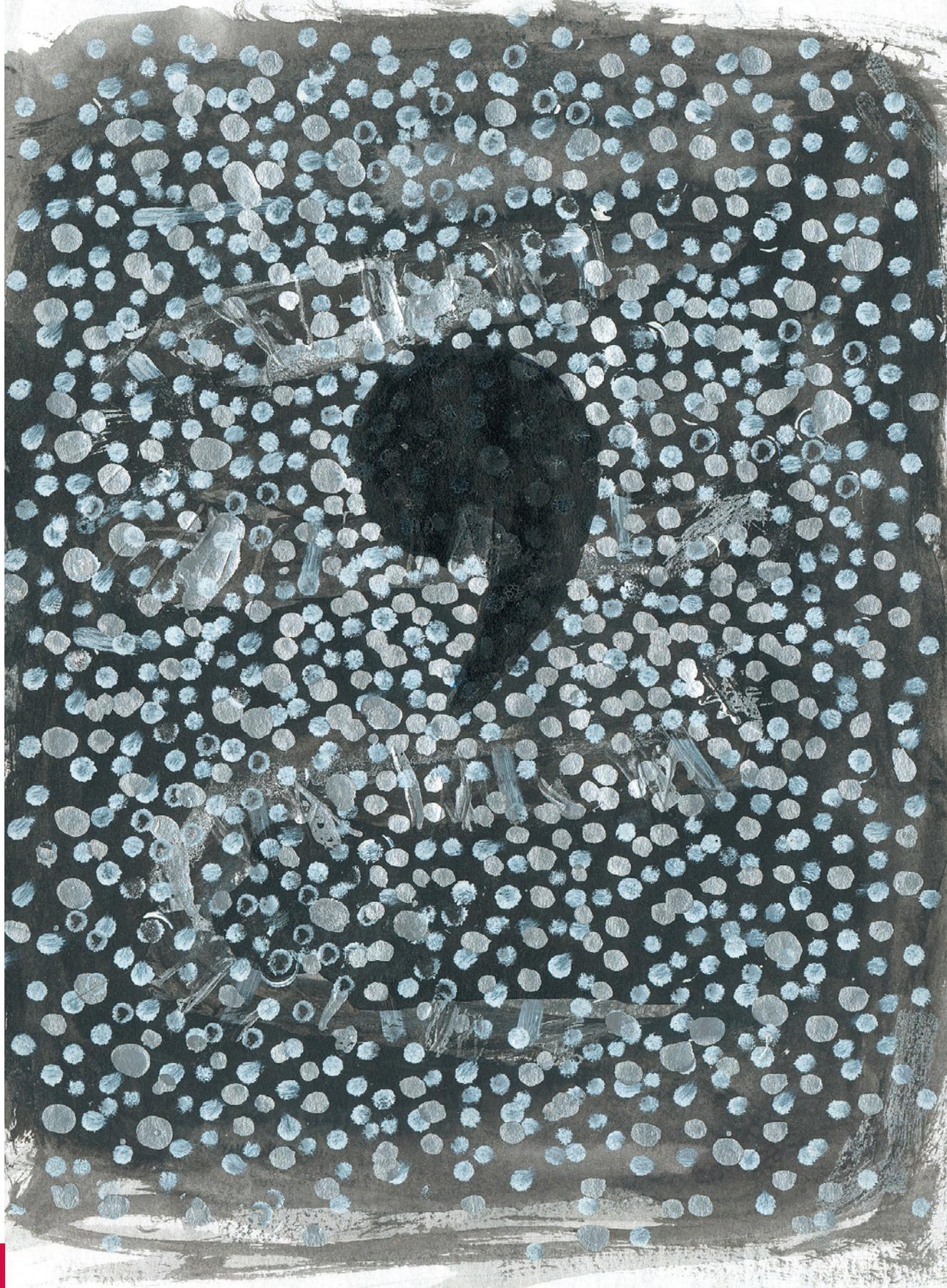
Weeks after the article appeared, an open letter to Pope Benedict XVI was published, signed by the theoretical physicist Lawrence Krauss and the biologists Kenneth Miller and Francisco Ayala, requesting him to clarify the Church’s position<sup>20</sup>. Even though some distinguished voices, like that of the Jesuit George Coyne<sup>21</sup>, director of the Vatican Observatory, have rebutted Schönborn’s views, the latter has recognised that he has the support of the present pontiff and has continued working on his arguments in writings and lectures. It is revealing that the subject he has chosen this year for his catechism teaching at Saint Stephen’s Cathedral in Vienna should be Creation.

■ <sup>19</sup> See <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/07/07/opinion/07schonborn.html>.

This text, along with other contributions and views of Christoph Schönborn, may be found at [http://www.cardinalrating.com/cardinal\\_97.htm](http://www.cardinalrating.com/cardinal_97.htm).

<sup>20</sup> See <http://genesis1.phys.cvru.edu/~krauss/papallettxt.htm>. See also, L. Krauss (2005) “The Pope and I”. *The Skeptical Inquirer*, November, pp. 46-47.

<sup>21</sup> See, for example, C. Holden (2005) “Vatican Astronomer Rebuts Cardinal’s Attack on Darwinism”. *Science* 309, pp. 996-997; or the text of a recent lecture by Coyne entitled “Science does not need God. Or does it? A Catholic Scientist Looks at Evolution”



It is well-known that certain radical Catholic groups in the United States—who are involved, for example, in the anti-abortion struggle—have been giving their support to the neocreationist movement of intelligent design, but the entry on to the scene of top members of the Church hierarchy is an unexpected and disturbing development.

Pope Benedict XVI used his weekly public audience of 9 November 2005 before the Austrian Episcopal Conference, of which Schönborn is the president, to refer to the “intelligent project of the cosmos”. This terminology, which is very close to that of neocreationism, although it has different theological roots, might not, in principle, be incompatible with the evolutionary view of the universe and of life<sup>22</sup>. However, this reference in the papal discourse was ad hoc and the Vatican’s official press note to *L’osservatore romano* made no reference to it, and it all happened precisely the day after Cardinal Poupard, who is the equivalent of the Vatican Minister of Culture, had made some explicit anti-creationist declarations.

In recent months Schönborn has conceded interviews and published texts (apart from his monthly catechism teaching in Vienna) and has attempted to refine his ideas with the aim of distinguishing between the scientific study of biological evolution, which he accepts as such and “Darwinist explanations”—or Neo-Darwinism—which he describes as ideological excess. Whatever the case, future changes in the Curia and the line of discussion opened up by Schönborn might be keys to understanding and clarifying the true position of the Church vis-à-vis evolution. Perhaps the Church wishes to distance itself clearly from the anti-scientific radicalism that is so obscenely paraded around by evangelists, Islamic fundamentalists and orthodox Jews. Or maybe not... II

■ <sup>22</sup> Thus it seems to Fiorenzo Facchini, an anthropologist and professor of Evolutionary Biology at the University of Bologna, in his article “Evoluzione e creazione”, *L’Osservatore romano*, 17<sup>th</sup> January 2006 where he applauds Judge Jones’s sentence in the case against intelligent design and vehemently refutes this “theory”.

<sup>23</sup> See <http://www.royalsoc.ac.uk/news.asp?id=4298>.

**Juli Peretó** is associate professor in Biochemistry and member of the Cavanilles Institute for Biodiversity and Evolutionary Biology at the University of Valencia. He is presently Secretary of ISSOL, The International Astrobiology Society.

## Annex

### A STATEMENT BY THE ROYAL SOCIETY ON EVOLUTION, CREATIONISM AND INTELLIGENT DESIGN<sup>23</sup>

*April 2006*

The Royal Society was founded in 1660 by a group of scholars whose desire was to promote an understanding of ourselves and the universe through experiment and observation. This approach to the acquisition of knowledge forms the basis of the scientific method, which involves the testing of theories against observational evidence. It has led to major advances of understanding over more than 300 years. Although there is still much left to be discovered, we now have a broad knowledge of how the universe developed after the Big Bang and of how humans and other species appeared on Earth.

One of the most important advances in our knowledge has been the development of the theory of evolution by natural selection. Since being proposed by Charles Darwin nearly 150 years ago, the theory of evolution has been supported by a mounting body of scientific evidence. Today it is recognised as the best explanation for the development of life on Earth from its beginnings and for the diversity of species. Evolution is rightly taught as an essential part of biology and science courses in schools, colleges and universities across the world.

The process of evolution can be seen in action today, for example in the development of resistance to antibiotics in disease-causing bacteria, of resistance to pesticides by insect pests, and the rapid evolution of viruses that are responsible for influenza and AIDS. Darwin's theory of evolution helps us to understand these problems and to find solutions to them.

Many other explanations, some of them based on religious belief, have been offered for the development of life on Earth, and the existence of a "creator" is fundamental to many religions. Many people both believe in a creator and accept the scientific evidence for how the universe, and life on Earth, developed. Creationism is a belief that may be taught as part of religious education in schools, colleges and universities. Creationism may also be taught in some science classes to demonstrate the difference between theories, such as evolution, that are based on scientific evidence, and beliefs, such as creationism, that are based on faith.

However, some versions of creationism are incompatible with the scientific evidence. For instance, a belief that all species on Earth have always existed in their present form is not consistent with the wealth of evidence for evolution, such as the fossil record. Similarly, a belief that the Earth was formed in 4004 BC is not consistent with the evidence from geology, astronomy and physics that the solar system, including Earth, formed about 4600 million years ago.

Some proponents of an alternative explanation for the diversity of life on Earth now claim that their theories are based on scientific evidence. One such view is presented as the theory of intelligent design. This proposes that some species are too complex to have evolved through natural selection and that therefore life on Earth must be the product of a "designer". Its supporters make only selective reference to the overwhelming scientific evidence that supports evolution, and treat gaps in current knowledge which, as in all areas of science, certainly exist —as if they were evidence for a "designer". In this respect, intelligent design has far more in common with a religious belief in creationism than it has with science, which is based on evidence acquired through experiment and observation. The theory of evolution is supported by the weight of scientific evidence; the theory of intelligent design is not.

Science has proved enormously successful in advancing our understanding of the world, and young people are entitled to learn about scientific knowledge, including evolution. They also have a right to learn how science advances, and that there are, of course, many things that science cannot yet explain. Some may wish to explore the compatibility, or otherwise, of science with various religious beliefs, and they should be encouraged to do so. However, young people are poorly served by deliberate attempts to withhold, distort or misrepresent scientific knowledge and understanding in order to promote particular religious beliefs.

**Adolf Tobeña**

# The psychology of terrorism

*A New York chronicle*

**On the last Monday in May North-Americans celebrate Memorial Day, a holiday dedicated to those who have fallen for the fatherland in the wars fought by this country that has led the world for the last half century. Tradition demands meaningful observance of their memory and placing floral tributes on the soldiers' tombs but falling in late Spring means that this occasion becomes an ideal weekend to take pleasure in a taste of the bettering weather and enjoy walks and lavish barbecues.**

The community of psychologists and neuroscientists called to meet by the Association for Psychological Science (APS) tends to take advantage of this long weekend at the end of May to celebrate its annual convention. This year, in 2006, the meeting was arranged in New York, shut away in a huge hotel right in the middle of Times Square, within earshot of the festive murmur of a city receiving thousands of seamen, all dressed up and extremely polite, joining the general hubbub. Meanwhile the papers were informing about cover-ups of slaughters in which their companions from the infantry had taken part in the Sunnite wasp's nest of Mesopotamia. Taking advantage of its visit to New York, the APS had decided to devote one part of the convention, almost a whole day, to the subject of the "psychology of terrorism". This was an initiative that everyone thought was very brave through coming from such a demanding group, highly encapsulated in subtle studies and as a general rule not very inclined to tread in spheres of social disciplines more proper to the pitfalls of politics. The programme, however, promised a lot because some of the great names of psychology and cognitive neuroscience of the USA were there for an in-depth discussion of the aggressive modality which made the Manhattan skyscrapers an indelible emblem after the attacks of 11<sup>th</sup> September 2001.

## EXTREME APPREHENSION

It could not, nevertheless, have had a more disappointing start, limp and conventional indeed. The day was got under way by Daniel Kahneman, Nobel Economy Prize 2002, indeed the first Nobel prize-winner to have emerged from psychology (for his studies on the biases in judgements and human decision-making) presenting Paul Slovic's work on the challenges for rational decisions implied by the threat of terrorism. Slovic, a former colleague of Kahneman and highly respected expert in the perception of risks, was not very incisive at all. Impeccable comparisons between the perception of risk from long-known dangers (illnesses, cataclysms, environmental toxics...) in respect of newer and more uncertain dangers (energy crisis, nuclear waste, climatic change...) to end up stating that the apprehension generated by terrorism in US society lies at maximum levels; such an extreme aversion that it does not for example allow distinctions between the alarm about bacteriological attacks like anthrax or explosions through self-immolations in busy areas. Neither does it distinguish any obvious differences in lethality caused by the overstated peaks in a society little accustomed to punishment by its enemies.

All these matters were finely fashioned but with an utter lack of daring to tackle the underlying psychological background of the matter: what is there in the terrorists' minds and how do they succeed in persuading themselves to make their singular decisions? It all started to look like one of the aseptic sessions where academics go off at a tangent, burrowing away in details in order to avoid the core of the problem: does psychology have anything substantial to say about terrorists' motivations and objectives, and more specifically about the suicide attacks that shook the imperial power of the USA, or does it not?

It was thus very fortunate that Arie Kruglanski (College Park, University of Maryland), director of an excellence research centre set up to study precisely that, found his way back to the right path.

## THE MOTIVATIONS OF SUICIDE TERRORISTS: ADAPTIVE IMMOLATIONS?

Kruglanski saved the day by bringing up the vast ignorance about the crucial motivational vectors of the terrorists and how important research is in order to establish these. In the most customary interpretations the motivational sources lying at the base of terrorism tend to be assigned to two preferential domains: 1) ideological reasons such as the struggle against oppression, attempts to ensure the supremacy of a religious or political creed, resistance to occupation-humiliation, finding a way out of desperation-marginalisation situations... 2) the personal responses of the members of a belligerent and highly cohesive group such as: brotherhood of arms, loyalty between companions, ambition to gain high status, delirium of worldly or unworldly grandeur... Several of these motivational elements combined in a particular way are likely to have coincided in the drift towards terrorism, but one should remember that the first, the ideological ones, are above all used to legitimate the lethal actions which they carry out, with an elaborate and consistent narrative. The latter, on the other hand, are what nurture each person's background as this is accumulated in the itinerary of a combat cell.

The inciting hierarchy, the weight and the sequence of the different driving forces behind the diverse forms of terrorist action have still not been established, however. In any event, one should bear very much in mind that the notion of “terrorist predisposition” as a “syndrome” (a psychological profile of easily characterisable traits on an individual or group scale) has not to date ever received any empirical support. On the other hand, the consideration of terrorism as a “tool”, as a “strategic procedure” in the course of inter-group conflicts, has proved more fruitful and provides more workable possibilities for thinking out and designing counter-terrorist measures.

Clark McCauley (Bryn Mawr College, University of Pennsylvania) stresses this “terrorism as a means” approach and takes this to the core of the inter-group combat strategies. He states that what is usually known as “kamikaze terrorism”, to accentuate its rarity and implausibility, is actually a strictly rational option when a restricted and weak group faces a fight with a very powerful force (a military power, for example) in an attempt to sway this or win it. It is thus not the desperate conduct of a gang of individuals, but an extreme option gaining publicity for a firm victory ambition by the combat group. From a psychological standpoint the damage inflicted in the attacks does not matter so much as the immolations’ intimidatory value for the powerful target that takes the punishment, at the same time as this encourages and strengthens the support base of the terrorist group. Dying for a cause is an extremely powerful argument for mobilisation and informative impregnation of the narrative preached (“the ideal” pursued) in the recruiting intra-group. How one can doubt the intentions and persuasions of a martyrs like that? Dying for a cause also gets automatic comparison mechanisms under way in the intra-group to which the people sacrificed belong. How can one continue to be passive while there are others who give everything for the communal victory? Social comparison processes nudge the more enthusiastic sympathisers into emulation. In fact, the inspiring and imitation-arousing impact of martyrdom is not something new: it has been cultivated by religious, political and military leaders of all kinds and conditions, in all ages, when the outcome of the combat still hangs in the balance. Consider for example the quote taken by McCauley from what is possibly the best-known speech in North-American history, Abraham Lincoln’s tribute to the fallen at Gettysburg, in 1863, when the civil war had still not been won:

*From these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion —that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain.*

What is more, the exaltation of sacrifice sets off increasing internal competition in order to go further in the lethality and frequency of martyrdom; not all the Palestinian groups cultivated self-immolation but during the worst years of the second Intifada there was a real escalation of suicide action by Hamas, Jihad, Martyrs of Al-Aqsa, Fatah, so as not to lose any weight in the (propaganda) race of the atrocities. Apart from this, these extreme actions seek the demolishing, hyperexaggerated response of the giant that they wish to topple, in order to heighten the injuries and thus exemplify the victimary bases for recruitment and retaliatory enthusiasm of the new recruits.

There is thus a set of processes clearly defined by psychology enabling an approach to the empirical description of the seeds of suicide terrorism, starting from the basis that this is an adaptive and absolutely rational group strategy in highly unequal combat

circumstances. McCauley has started to work on samples of young North-Americans and Ukrainians to study the activism and radicalisation processes which can lead to the threshold of pro-group sacrifice from appraising attitudes based on these concepts.

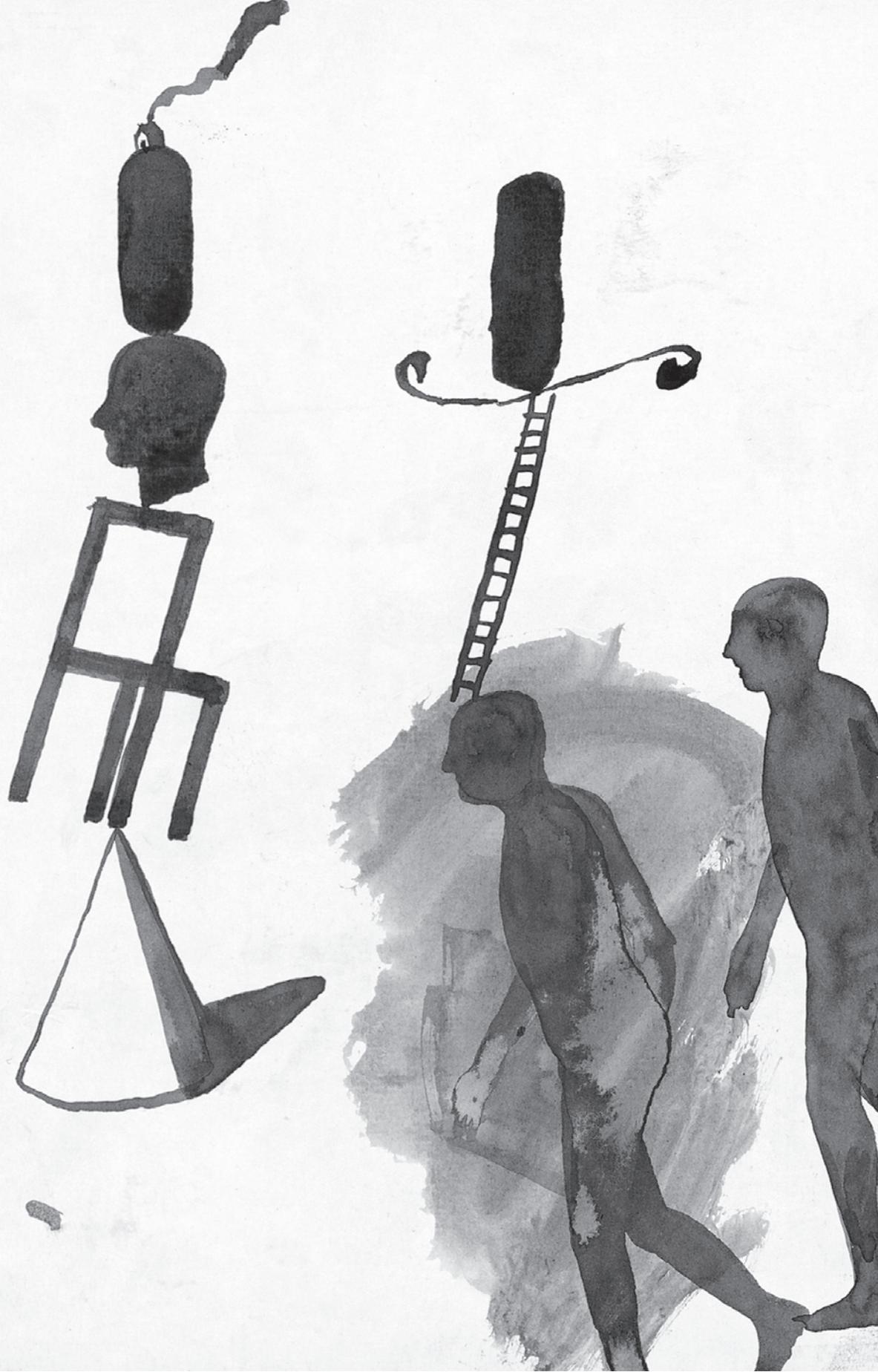
### **SYMPATHISERS OF SUICIDE SOLDIERS: NEUROENDOCRINOLOGY “ON-SITE” IN GAZA**

Ultimately, however, being a sympathiser of the suicide fighter cells is quite a different thing from being an active member or culminating the final steps of the immolation commitment. Since the two latter conditions are difficult to study (through a presumable lack of candidates), neurologist Jeff Victoroff (University of Southern California) set out to obtain data about the former, the sympathisers. He recruited a working team to investigate adolescents from the Gaza strip with the aid of Robert Sapolsky, the best-known researcher in the field of the impact of social struggles on stress hormones, from studies on troops of African baboons living in freedom. Victoroff presents data from 52 Palestinian boys of fourteen years of age on average, 22 of whom could tell stories of direct relatives imprisoned, wounded or killed by Israeli troops. Apart from using conventional questionnaires about psychological malaise (anxiety, depression, concerns, self-esteem, etc.), he built a specific scale for measuring feelings of political-social oppression (distinguishing between perceived and attributed oppression) and also measurements of religiosity, interest in politics and sympathy with terrorist activities. He had to give up certain questions (for example: “do you think that willingness for martyrdom is a compulsory commandment of Islam?”) because the whole sample replied that it was and this was no use for distinguishing anything. He took samples of saliva once a week over four weeks in order to obtain determinations of cortisol and testosterone in a replication of Sapolsky’s studies with baboons, in a traumatic environment of confrontation

between human troops (one should remember that previous Palestinian studies had established that 86% of the boys of this age had been involved in hostilities —throwing stones or incendiary devices— against the Israeli patrols. The results showed first and foremost that the boys in Gaza had high rates of anxiety and depression,

verging on psychopathology. On the other hand, they did not display any particular aggressiveness: the figures lay within the normal ranges for western populations. This constitutes a good example of the limitations and advantages of this sort of psychometrical measurements; particularly precarious living conditions, with intense daily worries and few future prospects in a refugee camp, in a chronic armed conflict situation, are reflected in an anxious/depressive dysphoria that the measurements show up, although the scales of aggressiveness do not manage to reflect any of the combative activity regularly practised by most of the boys. The depression marks were predictive of the sympathy

**“The exaltation of sacrifice sets off increasing internal competition in order to go further in the lethality and frequency of martyrdom”**





Quadern de dibuix (Drawing Notebook),  
Artur Heras (2006)  
ink on paper  
23 x 35 cm

for suicide terrorism, in such a way that the greater the demoralisation/despair seen, the greater the support for this form of struggle. The measurements of aggressiveness, on the other hand, predicted the oppression perceived, in such a way that the greater the aggressiveness, the more feelings of oppression. The cortisol levels, however, were not associated with depression (in a paradoxical result, which contradicts hundreds of previous well-established studies), while they do indeed positively predict the level of anxiety and negatively the aggressiveness, as is fitting. This makes one doubt the correctness of the “depression” measurements or the characterisation of such dysphoria/unease/irritation/despair as “depression”. The results with the testosterone figures may explain this: they were not associated with aggressiveness, nor with sympathies for terrorism, nor with the perceived oppression for the whole sample, but when the eight boys with the highest testosterone levels were separated in respect of the eight with the lowest figures, the results became very different indeed, obtaining maximum expressions of sympathy for anti-Israeli suicide terrorism and the maximum oppression perceived in the boys with the most masculine hormone circulating. The conclusion is, as one might have expected, that a struggle for dominance and combat status is involved in the groups of adolescents sympathising with Palestinian terrorist movements, in such a way that those with more marked activation of male hormones are seen as the most belligerent, regardless of their living conditions. Social despair therefore counts in the attitudes of adolescent sympathisers of terrorism, but so does their initial hormonal combativeness. All of this, we should repeat, is valid only for a sample (valuable, but restricted) of sympathisers in a particular place. It says nothing, or very little, about the vectors leading to the direct implication in the execution of self-immolation attacks. For it must again be stressed that being a sympathiser and cooperating with groups that practice suicide terrorism is one thing, but lending oneself to be the human bomb is quite another.

In any event, this kind of data is highly valuable. Victoroff explains that a bibliographic research of the scientific literature devoted to terrorism in the last fifteen years gives 1808 entries: only 48 of them give any empirical data (most of it economic and socio-epidemiological) and only ten refer to direct information coming from individuals who had been involved in suicide cells. There is thus a pressing need to obtain data and the direction taken at the APS convention in New York will be of use to blaze the trail. At the poster sessions associated with the symposium there was a promising crop of data connected in more than one case with a consortium of U.S. research groups which has been created for empirical studies of the psychology of terrorism and counter-terrorism. Most however refer to questions of social perception or of biases in racial attitudes connected with the terrorist impact. The persistence of traumatic memories was also a preferential subject but here the works of doctor Elisabeth Phelps are particularly worthy of mention in this regard.

### **NEW YORKERS’ “FAILING MEMORIES” OF 11<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER**

Liz Phelps leads a highly active group in New York University that had already done studies on neuroimages with fMRI (functional magnetic resonance imaging) on the disappearance of the traces of traumatic memories. The “Phelps Lab” is just by Washington Square, in Greenwich Village, not far at all from the financial district of

Manhattan, and they went through 11<sup>th</sup> September tragedy like close neighbours. A week after they got an ambitious study on the memory of these events under way, taking advantage of the momentum of a broad research consortium expressly created (9-11 Memory Consortium Research Program). On 17<sup>th</sup> September 2001 the interviews started with a sample of 546 residents in New York and citizens of many other places in the USA, coming to a total number of 1495 subjects. A year later, in August 2004, they did it again. The 11<sup>th</sup> September gave an ideal opportunity to analyse the evolution of “failing memories” (memories of public events) because the impact was of such a scale that it has become a milestone to define a stage in the life of all those who lived through it either directly or as a second-hand experience (it has in fact taken over in the North-Americans’ imaginations from the standard question “where were you and what were you doing the day they assassinated President Kennedy?”).

When the results of New Yorkers’ answers were compared with others from the USA, no overall differences appeared in the consistency of the memory, neither a week later, nor a year, nor three years later. There is a similar reliability when detailing how they lived through the tragedy, what they

were doing and where they were, who was accompanying them, how they reacted, where they went, what feelings they had, etc. In some details, however, there were substantial differences in New Yorkers’ favour as regards the precision of the memory: they could more accurately remember the specificity of the attacks (number of aircraft taking part, times and temporal sequence of the attacks, lapse and order in which the towers collapsed, where president Bush was

and what he was doing meanwhile, etc.). Living through these cataclysmic raids as a citizen thus increased the memory’s attention to detail and above all the confidence and vividness of the memories. Since the sample of New Yorkers included people who had lived through the collapse of the Twin Towers very closely as eyewitnesses while others experienced it from places far away from Manhattan, two different groups were set up in order to compare the respective memories and ask them to bring to mind particular sequences in an fMRI system, while they were given brain scans as the traumatic event was recalled. The group of eyewitnesses had to have experienced the tragedy downtown, with the NYU campus as the farthest point away (two miles from the World Trade Center), while the second group had to have gone through this at least from midtown (four and a half miles from the World Trade Center) and further out. Clear differences were seen, with an increase in the intensity, the vividness, the sensation of threat and the peculiar sensorial experiences (qualities of the smell of the air, for example), in the group of close eyewitnesses. Many of the New Yorkers further away from the catastrophe point said that they had not actually seen anything live, that when they heard the news they had followed it on the Internet or television. The witnesses close to the area attacked,

“Living through these cataclysmic raids as a citizen thus increased the memory’s attention to detail and above all the confidence and vividness of the memories”

who were even able to describe olfactory subtleties about the day, revealed relationships between the vividness/threat of the memory and the activation of the left cerebellar tonsil as well as some parts of the hippocampus. The quality of the “failing memories” thus varies, depending on the proximity to the disturbing event. Only the closer witnesses retain criteria of detailed vivid memories, with a strong tendency to forgetfulness. The other citizens who lived through the shock use the event as a milestone in their lives and retain marker elements, but the concern and vividness of the memory are lower and with little cerebral impact when the experience is recalled. These are events which confirm diverse studies which had already found fissures in the supposed strength of the “failing memories”.

### ABU GHRAIB: THE “BANALITY” OF TORTURE AND THE “LUCIFER EFFECT”

Philip Zimbardo packed the room where he was to talk on the “Lucifer effect”. He was welcomed with “bravos” and enthusiastic acclaim by an audience consisting mainly of young post-graduates. Zimbardo is a legend in North-American psychology, a Bronx boy brought up in Manhattan, where he had earned his first income selling sweets at Broadway shows, who rose to leading a weighty Social Psychology Department in California and succeeded in making its manuals the most widely used in the USA and also in many places in Europe (his *Psychology and life* series on video/DVD have been seen in thousands of homes in Catalonia, Valencia and the Balearic Islands, with an introduction by television personality Dr. Joan Corbella). Zimbardo positively oozes actor’s resources through all his pores. As a professor emeritus of Stanford and (retired) president of APS he still enjoys giving massively attended courses, continues to foster research and is devoted to an impassioned anti-Bush activism, which no doubt rejuvenates him and gives him notoriety (you only have to see his powerful web site, [www.zimbardo.com](http://www.zimbardo.com), to get a sample of his many widely publicised initiatives. Zimbardo has taken on special relief over the last few years as a popular personality, through his well-known defence of one of the soldiers found guilty of tortures and humiliations of Iraqi prisoners committed in Abu Ghraib prison —specifically, sergeant Ivan “Chip” Frederick, from all accounts a characteristic example of the normal American boy, balanced, a good scout and a good Christian, liked in his community, married, a loyal and loving adoptive father, but in Abu Ghraib the one who let the dogs pull right up to the prisoners’ faces (on photos which went right around the world) and took an active part in the simulation of electrical tortures and in the sexual humiliations immortalised in photos taken by the soldiers themselves. This dishonourable conduct led the army and administration of the USA, after the due disciplinary research, to opt for the explanation of the “rotten apples” in a mainly exemplary barrel. The soldiers participating were indeed demoted and thrown out of the army, with the responsibility also extending to high prison officials in demotions which reached the rank of general. Zimbardo, on the other hand, maintained that the conducts observed and filmed in Abu Ghraib are quite expectable in conditions like the ones found there and that one cannot demand responsibility from the boys and girls because it is not a problem of a few rotten apples, but of a whole rotten barrel. In his words “you cannot be a sweet cucumber in a vinegar barrel.”

Zimbardo’s position stems not only from the objective analysis of the situation in Abu Ghraib (through revenge for the recent loss of companions, overcrowding with prisoners, work

overload, instructions from the authorities to put pressure on the prisoners interrogated, etc.) that the official investigations have already recognised. It stems above all from decades of sound research into social psychology which show that the “majority” of human beings go beyond the bounds of contention and join in the humiliation, degradation and torture of victims when the “contextual conditions” propitiate this. The experiments backing this assertion are to be found in all psychology text books and show that ordinary human beings, perfectly normal men and women, with no kind of deviation or psychopathology, set off obedience mechanisms which can lead to the physical torture of innocent persons, when they form part of a respected authority structure (“Milgram” experiments in the fifties, repeated on thousands of subjects and in highly varying conditions); when they have to watch over prisoners or detainees in conditions favourable for dehumanisation and deindividuation, such as numerical identification, belittling uniforms, handcuffs, fetters, bags on the head etc. (“Stanford prison experiment” 1971, led by Zimbardo himself) lead to all the conducts that were recorded in Abu Ghraib (even the sexual humiliation and the “trophy photos” to remember the “festive banality” of the events). Zimbardo embellishes his presentation, showing videos of the Abu Ghraib events that have never been shown in full on television, recalling the gestation of those classic experiments illustrating the power of repetitions and the refinements that have been brought into them later on. He ends up by showing some intimate moments in the extremely normal life of sergeant “Chip” Frederick, whose friend he has become since taking part in his legal defence. The whole talk was in fact devoted to publicising his next book *The Lucifer effect, understanding how good people turn evil*, which, as he said, he had handed over to his publishers the day before, taking advantage of his visit to New York. The excitement aroused led him to take much longer than the hour’s talk allotted by the Congress and the enthusiastic auditorium allowed him to give an extra half-hour’s speech devoted in the final stages to slamming the Bush administration “the most incompetent in the history of the USA, which has dedicated itself to setting up “rotten barrels” in its unfocussed war against terror at the same time as damaging the prestige of the North-American people all over the world”).

The main problem with these “contextual/situational” approaches so well loved by social psychology is that it can lead to not blaming anyone (except for the latest Bush/Lucifer of course). Zimbardo stresses the role of the “heroes” that in the aforementioned experiments and in real life (there were internal denunciations of Abu Ghraib by North-American soldiers) rebel against the contextual pressure, however strong this may be, and refuse to discriminate, humiliate or torture victims. But it seems to me that it is not enough to stress the role of the exception-heroes, almost always present to a greater or lesser extent, to solve the problem of the gradation of implications and guilt. I feel that there should be some fine psychological analysis to provide a hierarchy of individual responsibilities in criminal conduct committed in the framework of a group pressure. This was understood by the judge of the Frederick case, quashing Zimbardo’s arguments, when he gave this soldier a severe sentence because he understood that there is almost always a margin of freedom in each person’s actions, and that a necessary assumption of responsibilities stems from this principle. After all, not all the people who worked in the Abu Ghraib prison acted in the same way. Among the participants themselves in that macabre torture episode there were also different degrees of involvement. This rule, so simple and wise, which prudent jurists have attempted to apply for thousands of years, often tends to be forgotten by the social scientists of our age (from the stronghold of a few absolutely pertinent but partial experiments and the facts behind them) ||

■ **Bibliography**

ATLAN, S. (2003): "Genesis of suicide terrorism", *Science*, 299 (5612), pp. 1534-1539.

FISKE, S.T. HARRIS, C. T.; CUDDY, A.J.C. (2004): "Why ordinary people torture enemy prisoners", *Science*, 306, pp. 1482-3.

GAMBETTA, D. (editor) (2005): *Making Sense of Suicide Missions*, New York, Oxford University Press.

PAPE, R. A. (2005): *Dying to Win: the Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism*, New York, Random House.

SAGEMAN, M. (2004): *Understanding Terror Networks*. Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press.

TOBEÑA, A. (2004): *Màrtirs mortífers: biologia de l'altruisme letal*, Valencia, Bromera/PUV.

**Adolf Tobeña** is professor of Medical Psychology and Psychiatry at the Autonomous University of Barcelona and has been visiting professor at the universities of London, Venice, Gröningen and Tel Aviv.

JOURNAL OF  
CONTEMPORARY  
CULTURE

transfer 01

**"Globalisation and changing cultural identities"**

**Manuel Castells, Yolanda Aixelà, Isidor Marí, Gil-M. Hernández i Martí, M. Carme Junyent**

And also: A history of Europe: Cultures, languages, nations **Jean F. Mira**; Europe, history and identity **Josep Fontana**; The palisade of Auschwitz **Josep M. Lluoró**; Humanisation process and language **Sebastià Serrano**; Controversial Dalí **Enric Pujol**; Alone in the city **Margarida Casacuberta, ...**

**Josep M. Colomer**

# Empire and freedom

**The demand for a New Statute for Catalonia does not come solely from the political class and is not a transitory matter, but something that has come about through the concurrence of several long-term processes. The most decisive of these is in my opinion forming part of Europe, which has drastically reduced the central government capacity for economic and territorial coordination.**

Continental-scale prospects and trans-frontier cooperation have opened up new opportunities for peripheral communities, which no longer have to depend so much on the governments of States. There is in fact a marked tendency towards increasing decentralisation in the bigger European States.

On the Iberian peninsula, the projects for state construction and national construction, the culmination of which had traditionally been associated with the consolidation of democracy, have been affected right down to their roots by the realities and expectations involved in joining Europe. The thinning out of basic elements of States' sovereignty, the diffusing of frontiers, the opportunities created for public assets and communication networks of European scope, as well as the rediscovery of the democratic advantages of small communities come up against views more rooted in processes and expectations of the past. These notes attempt to point out only some of the underlying themes behind the initiative and discussion on the Statute project.

## **1. CONFUSION BETWEEN STATE, NATION AND DEMOCRACY**

Spanish liberalism has displayed a tendency towards identifying State, nation and democracy. The basic idea has been that a solid Spanish State should be constructed because a consistent Spanish nation could be built from this basis and only the Spanish

national State would give democracy any sovereign significance. As a recent and relevant example of this conception, one can quote the words of the leader of the Popular Party, Mariano Rajoy, precisely in the debate in the lower house of Parliament for acceptance for processing of the Catalan Statute bill. Rajoy said:

In Spain there is only one sovereign power. A power that is over and above the crown, over the government, over the judges, over this institution, over the autonomous communities and over the councils. A power that does not admit parcelling out, that cannot be divided, that is not shared. This power is practised only by the Spanish people formed as a nation. This is what national sovereignty consists of. Nobody can talk to this on equal terms.

This concept does not tally with reality. State, nation and democracy are three different concepts which do not always go together. It is a well-known fact that there are sound and firmly established States that have not built a nation, but which are multinational States. Similarly, democracy existed before and exists outside the framework of the national State. The European Parliament, for example, is a democratic institution, but is not based on a State. Apart from this, the Catalan parliament, like the assemblies of other autonomous communities, the German *Länder* and those of several dozens of regions and nations in Europe, as well as thousands of councils and many other institutions, are also democratic, but not States.

## 2. FAILURES IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NATIONAL STATE

In Europe, Spain is probably the clearest case of a failure to build a national State. The Castilian nucleus was historically too small and relatively weak to build a Spanish national State under its own linguistic and cultural pattern, able to assimilate the different peoples in the territory. The degree of territorial unification of Spain lies very far from the typical case, the French State, but also from the assimilation achieved by other great States in Europe.

For a long time the relationship between Catalonia and Spain was one of “empire and freedom”, as historian Jaume Vicens-Vives called it. That is, “empire” in the joint endeavours in Europe and across the Atlantic, and “freedom” in the internal assumptions, governed in Catalonia by its own representative institutions organised around the Parliament and the Generalitat. The diffusion of the Castilian language, for example, created a new lingua franca for written communication, as Latin had previously been, but did not replace Catalan nor the other languages spoken in the diverse traditional communities.

The attempt to build a Spanish State started above all from the 18<sup>th</sup> century. After the Westphalia treaty had hallowed the sovereignty of the great States in Europe, the new Bourbon monarchy attempted to copy the centralised model of the French State on the Iberian peninsula. In Catalonia the forced military recruitments intensified as well as the imposition of the Castilian language (to the extent of suppressing practically all the universities). But the Catalans, in spite of being deprived of self-government, were able to gain easier access to more extensive markets through the suppression of the customs between the former kingdoms in the peninsula and the establishment of a unified

external duty, as well as the guarantees stemming from the new civil, criminal and mercantile codes, the defence of property, the adoption of the decimal metric system and the creation of the peseta.

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century the Catalans took an active part in the economic and political construction of Spain. The most prominent milestones were first of all the unitary liberal project that was designed at the Cadiz Parliament in view of the French invasion by Napoleon, in which Catalan economist Antoni de Capmany had a considerable influence, amongst others. Second, the attempt to establish in Spain the Savoy dynasty organised by general Joan Prim, following the model of the Italian unification from Piedmont, which was like Catalonia the historical kingdom of the north closest to the centre of Europe and most economically prosperous. Third, the proclamation from Catalonia of the federal Spanish Republic, which would have been organised in fifteen “free and autonomous peoples” according to Francesc Pi i Margall’s design.

All these projects and attempts sought to build a prosperous and modern Spanish nation or “nationality”, based on an efficient Spanish State and an imperial ambition. But they did not entail any cultural standardisation. The Catalans continued to see the Castilian language as a lingua franca and imperial tongue which enabled them to communicate with the Spanish and also with the colonies, but not as a single, national and exclusive language.

The basic fact was that Catalonia, in spite of being a minority in Spain seen as a whole, was a relatively large and sufficiently modern community to act as a driving force in what some have called “sorting out Spain” or “Catalanising Spain” in the economic, political and social domains. In spite of this, the successive failures of the diverse Catalan political projects led many to conclude that there was a “coercive impotence of Catalonia” over Spain, to put it in the words of Vicens-Vives again. Catalonia was a frustrated Piedmont.

The decisive crisis was precisely the dismantling of the Spanish empire in 1898, with the independence of Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines. The importance of this episode does not stem so much from the importance of the lost colonies, since many others had been long lost in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but above all from the sensation that, with this loss, Spain was swimming against the current and would be isolated from the rest of the world, where Great Britain’s dominance was started to be challenged by the United States, the new emerging power.

“State, nation and democracy are three different concepts which do not always go together”

In Catalonia, the disappearance of the Spanish empire led to dropping the projects to build a Spanish State and a Spanish nationality, which ceased to offer any sufficient appeal. For enterprising Catalans who had wanted to govern Spain, this was also a defeat, for which they wished to console themselves with a movement of internal reaffirmation. Cultural Catalanism glorified the medieval past and half-forgotten traditions. Enric Prat de la Riba proposed a “Catalan nationality” alternative to the “Spanish nationality” still being put forward by Catalan federalists a few years before. Soon Francesc Macià was proclaiming a “Catalan State” alternative to the Spanish state, as well as a “Catalan

republic” as a “State” within an Iberian federation —hypothetical, since the other potential members did not join this movement.

If Catalonia had been a frustrated Piedmont or Prussia in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, in the 20<sup>th</sup> it was also a frustrated Hungary or Ireland. None of the aforementioned Catalan projects —national, state or imperial, interventionist or separatist, could be consolidated. If the attempt to build a Spanish national State made during over two hundred years may be considered an irreversible failure, the project to build a Catalan national State, which is already over one hundred years old, may also be considered a failure with no future. Our present reality and the expectable future developments do not make the construction of new national sovereign states feasible in Europe.

### 3. DEMOCRACY HAS NOT GENERATED THE CONSTRUCTION OF A SPANISH NATION

Possibly one of the culminating points in the construction of a Spanish national State arose in the transition period (1976-1980). Diverse processes coincided in Spain over these years:

- A fairly high level of linguistic and cultural uniformity as regards Castilian Spanish as a result of the prohibitions and persecutions of a long period of dictatorship.
- A reinforcement of the central State apparatus, through the expansion of public expenditure and the number of civil servants in the administration, which went on during the nineteen-eighties.
- A new democratic legitimisation of the State, crystallised in the 1978 constitution.
- Great international isolation, accumulated from long before, except for NATO and the European Community, which favoured introspection.

These processes have however changed substantially in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century. The Spanish army, part of NATO since 1981, is today a small and ineffective body. Military expenditure, which had exceeded 2% of the GDP in 1990, the culmination of the Cold War, has dropped to under 1.1 %. Compulsory military service, which had been a traumatic experience for millions of young Spaniards since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, had its length cut down from the end of the 1982, but an avalanche of conscientious objectors and desertions forced an acceleration in the plans to suppress this completely. It was then intended that the number of military personnel, which was 375,000 when NATO was joined, would be reduced to 120,000 professionals, but in fact, through a lack of volunteers, it has dropped to under 70,000 persons, only 7,000 of whom are permanent. Nearly 10% of the soldiers and sailors have been recruited abroad.

The Spanish State has ceased to be sovereign in monetary and commercial policy through the adoption of the euro and the European common market, and is subject to considerable restrictions in budgetary and tax policy by the stability plans of the European Union. Foreign trade has soared to nearly 60% of the Spanish gross domestic product, three quarters of which represents trade with Union countries.

Public expenditure has indeed risen extraordinarily during the present democratic period. In 1975, the end of the dictatorship, the State spent a little over 20% of the GDP, while later on this percentage has soared to over double. Given that the product in real terms

(deducting inflation) has also doubled in these thirty years, it proves that public expense in real terms has multiplied by four. But whilst in 1975 the central administration spent 90% of the whole public expenditure (and only 10% was left in the municipalities' power) at present central expenditure comes to just over 50% of the total (and most of this is devoted to social security and payment of interest). As regards the proportion of GDP, the expenditure of central State administration is thus today practically the same or even lower than it was thirty years ago, while the main novelty is that a new and extensive administration of autonomous communities has been set up.

As regards the proportion of civil servants, decentralisation is still greater, since the autonomous communities have competencies in the service activities employing most staff, particularly education and health. The proportion of civil servants in the central administration as compared with the whole of the working Spanish population is today lower than it was thirty years ago.

The cultural and linguistic standardisation of Spain has not only failed to culminate in a national State of the French type, but has dropped in the last decades. Around a quarter of the Spanish people mainly use a language other than Castilian in family and private relations, and 40% live in the six autonomous communities in which there are two official languages.

The feeling of forming part of a Spanish nation is also weaker. Under a quarter of the citizens of the State consider themselves only or mostly Spanish (rather than members of their autonomous community). Hardly 10% wish to return to a unitary State, whilst the rest, almost half, consider the present degree of decentralisation of the autonomous communities State to be insufficient. All this has boosted the significance of the nationalist dimension in relations between citizens of different territories in the State. In short, the Spanish State has not only lost its capacity to guarantee defence of the territory and provide a currency and protected markets to the European Union, NATO and other organisations and networks of great imperial spheres, but has also gradually lost part of its capacity to collect taxes, keep order and guarantee citizens' safety, make public works and organise basic services such as teaching and health, as well as the monopoly of television and the management of linguistic and cultural diversity, to the autonomous communities, private initiative and transnational networks. The Spanish State is now not in fact a sovereign state, but has signed over or lost most of the exclusive competencies for providing public goods in which justification for the monopoly of legitimate violence has traditionally been claimed. The most widespread opinion is that Spain is also a "multinational" ensemble.

These processes have shown how unfeasible it is, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, to build a Spanish national State, in the sense of a political organisation based on effective sovereignty, the monopoly of power and the homogenisation of the population inside an extensive

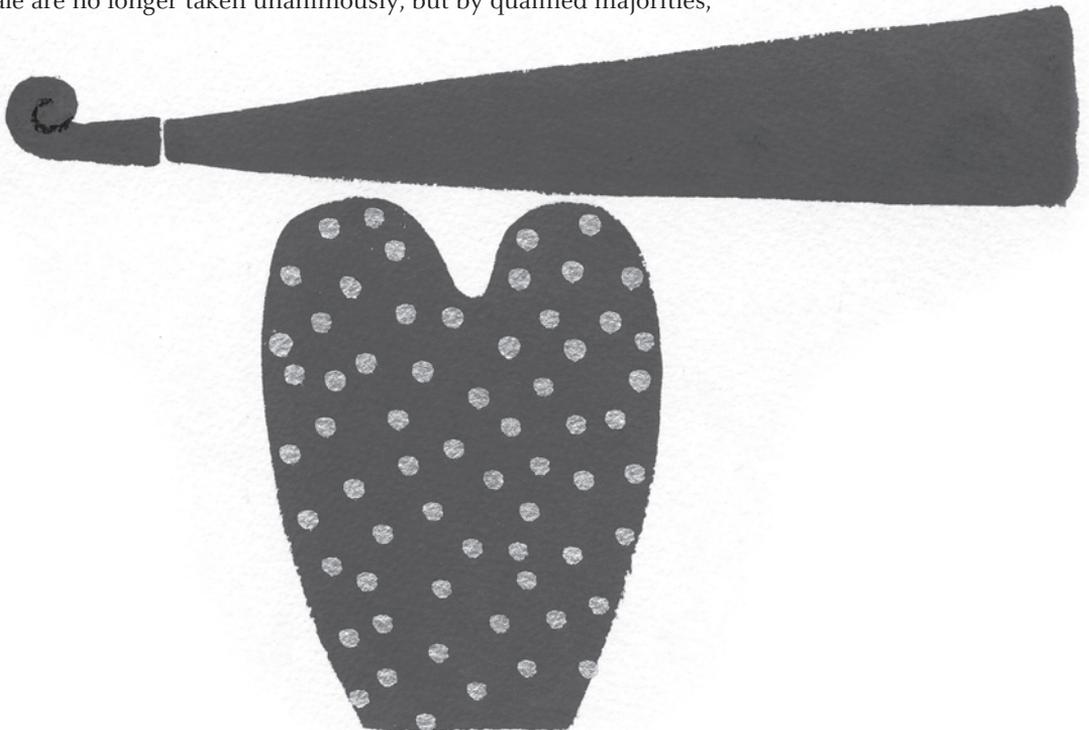
“The cultural and linguistic standardisation of Spain has not only failed to culminate in a national State of the French type, but has dropped in the last decades”

territory with well-defined frontiers. The Spanish State is no longer what it was, nor what it could have been and did not become: a uniform and sovereign national State based on the Westphalian and French pattern. The establishment of democracy in Spain, instead of helping to form a great national State, has fostered integration in a vast empire and development of small nations.

#### 4. A MULTI-LEVEL DEMOCRACY

What currently exists in Europe is a democracy on multiple levels in which the powers are divided and shared and none of them has any real and effective sovereignty. The different levels act and often overlap: the European Union, which is a democracy of “imperial” scale; the States, like the Spanish one, which is in fact multinational and whose organisation tends to take a federal pattern; and the self-government of nations, like Catalonia and so many others. Today there is thus no single source of effective sovereignty enabling a linear hierarchy of powers to be established, but a diversity of jurisdictions. In this framework, the principle of subsidiarity established by the European Union gives priority to the levels of government closest to the people, that is to those of smaller size.

On the European level, the institutional mesh has become increasingly operative thanks partly to the construction of European scale political parties with a high degree of internal discipline. The European Parliament has shown itself capable of becoming an active member of the inter-institutional process and creating federalising bonds with the other institutions, in spite of the project for formalising these inter-institutional relations in a constitutional text at present paralysed. Most of the decisions on a European scale are no longer taken unanimously, but by qualified majorities,



“Today there is no single source of effective sovereignty enabling a linear hierarchy of powers to be established, but a diversity of jurisdictions”



**Cap (Head)**, Artur Heras (2003)  
gouache on paper  
22 x 30 cm

though these are nevertheless binding for the member States, which can only exercise their sovereignty otherwise by unilaterally leaving the Union.

On the level of the big European States, there is a continuing tendency towards decentralisation and federalisation, which does not entail uniformity but quite the opposite —greater territorial diversity. Among the small political unities there is a considerable variety of institutional and political formulae. Cooperation between regions is also developed, not only within the big States but also across frontiers, to the extent of forming Euroregions and leagues of non-neighbouring regions. These processes also eliminate a crucial element of States' sovereignty and help to create a diversity of political structures and forms of self-government in the Union as a whole.

In this perspective of a democracy on multiple levels, Catalonia may like any other community develop an increasingly wider range of multilateral relations, not only with the central government of the Spanish State, but with the other autonomous communities, as well as with the central European Union institutions in Brussels, and, in a Europe with no frontiers, also with other Union States and regions. But in order for this multilaterality to be able to thrive, it requires some institutional mechanisms that are at present weak or non-existent. Multilateralism would be the very scenario of self-government in Catalonia if the division of competence powers and of financial resources were based on clear and automatic criteria, if there were a Spanish Senate representing the autonomous communities, as well as a regular conference of autonomous community presidents and effective sectorial conferences, if the autonomous communities participated formally in the designation of the members of the Constitutional Court, the Supreme Court, the General Council of the Judiciary, as well as of the boards of the Bank of Spain and Spanish Radio and Television, if the autonomous communities regularly took part in the Council of Ministers of the European Union (as they have started to do so far in a rather haphazard way) and if the Committee of Regions had to be consulted by the European Commission in decisions affecting the territorial distribution of power. This is the direction in which the project for reform of Catalonia's Autonomy Statute is pointing. Further steps ought to be taken along this way in coming years II

**Jordi Sales**

# Labeling modernity

**The terms *modernity* and *liberalism* are taking on an increasingly symbolic meaning in diagnosing the present state of advanced societies. We do not usually begin with definitions and clarification. Rather, debates on ideas tend to be spontaneous in nature. While it is true that spontaneity is part of life, so too are misunderstandings. The latter will become all too apparent in this diagnosis of modernity in contemporary society.**

The statement that *modernity* frees mankind commands general agreement. We may be unsure what it means but we all nod in sage agreement—especially if we find ourselves in “progressive” circles (curiously, everyone is automatically assumed to be “progressive” unless they say otherwise). We therefore do not know what modernity is, the period it describes, or how it may be determined—we simply believe that everything was worse in the past. In addition, we do not know why things were worse or in what respects mankind is better off now. The notion of *the people* as opposed to *the aristocracy* might serve here if we want to stress the idea of a democratic society. Alternatively, we might choose to stress the idea of mankind’s liberation from the shackles of religious belief and its achievement of secular freedoms. Whatever choice we make, philosophy’s first duty is to define terms. Rhetoric involves creating a framework for communication which serves to construct *the people* as actor and involves basic procedures for relating terms to one another. The first thing that needs to be done is to relate what meanings have been given to each function—hence the need to define *modernity*.

Unravelling the mystery of *modernity* might start with examining the philosophical rupture of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. The choice of this point in time and the term *rupture* is in keeping with what English-speaking scholars term *early modernity* and they link it to Machiavelli, Galileo, Descartes, Hobbes, Spinoza, and Locke. The key question is, what ideas were disseminated? The question makes sense because rhetoric places great emphasis on marking the beginning of the argument. Hence the stress on precision and enumeration. But what of issues like the rule of law, freedom of conscience, a new world model, science without metaphysics, technological mastery, possessive egotism,

the dignity of citizens? Here, we need to analyse what this philosophical heritage means in terms of the problems faced by contemporary advanced societies. However, dealing with contemporary issues means entering a tangled web of passions, sympathies and antipathies whether of a general or a specific nature and which fall within the field of specialised philosophical studies.

We shall now discuss what the current situation is regarding this intellectual heritage. In doing so, we shall reveal both ambiguities and misunderstandings, some of which arise from unsatisfactory ways of debating the issues, others from the murky meanings attributed to the heritage of early modernity. Here, **it is worth differentiating between the ambiguity that may arise from evaluations, and from determinations.** We are interested in ambiguities arising from determinations because they are more difficult to grasp. If modernity embodies  $x, y, z$ , it is natural that it be valued with regard to attitudes to  $x, y, z$ . It is always worth: (1) discussing whether  $x, y, z$  are correct, incorrect, beneficial or prejudicial from the standpoint of the proposed evaluation scale, and (2) whether modernity is really  $x, y, z$  when it could be  $a, b, c$ . The distinction between ambiguities in evaluation and determination given the confusion between modernity, post-modernity, and hyper-modernity threatens to become chronic, and fill most current essays with subtle, slippery distinctions and contradictions.

**Let us give an example of the need for making distinctions** in the case of post-modernity. Lyotard (1979) argued that post-modernity is “l’incrédulité à l’égard des métarécits” incredulity regarding meta-narratives. The discussion on post-modernity is doomed to ambiguities with regard to evaluation if we merely focus on the polarity between *incrédulité/credulité* without indicating what they and the great narratives are in each case. The question that has to be answered is: what modernity do we mean when we postulate a post-modernity? *La condition postmoderne* is a report on university studies; according to Lyotard, the scientific nature of knowledge arises from a philosophy which legitimises it within a discourse he terms *métarécit* meta-narrative. In reality, Lyotard’s text only refers to two meta-narratives: the speculative one and the emancipatory one. The first places philosophy in relation to other bodies of knowledge, such as that which gave rise to the foundation of Berlin University by the Prussian Government (1807-1810), which Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767-1835) based on a scheme by Fichte (1807), the university’s first rector, and another scheme by Schleiermacher (1808). Schelling and Hegel also contributed to the debate. An example of the emancipatory narrative is the school policy drawn up by the French Republic under Article 9 of the Constitution of 1848 and the positions expressed in *Manuel républicain de l’homme et du citoyen* (1848), written by Charles Renouvier and commissioned by Hyppolite Carnot, Minister of Education and Religion and the older brother of the physicist who created the theory of thermodynamics. The republication of Renouvier’s work in 2000 and studies by Laurent Fedi (1999) and Marie-Claude Blais (2000) have re-awoken interest in the man and his oeuvre.

This example of “ambiguity of determination” is intended to show how a proposal is received differently depending whether or not one provides a reference point. One of the most ingenuous and insufferable aspects of post-modernity is the way people are made to think that they have invented *incrédulité*, ignoring that scepticism abounds in the history of philosophy. An approach that limits modernity to the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the justification for public education, whether it be in France or Prussia, and a handful of other examples

is what makes Lyotard's scheme possible. However, it is highly questionable to say that the whole discourse of modern philosophy is based on an alien narrative. If we note how Lyotard narrates the obsolescence of this dual model, we might be surprised at his silence on the period between 1848 and 1948. Are we really to believe that there were no tensions in French and German societies for a whole century and that the Franco-Prussian War (1870-71), popular thirst for culture, the first and second world wars, and the international labour movement counted for nothing? This unnatural silence on the upheavals in Europe between 1848 and 1948 has a bearing on the resulting analysis, from which many contemporary essays draw their inspiration. This is another case of false innocence —rather like Heidegger's relationship with "Americanism". In any case, in Lyotard's analysis, technique falls between the two stools of modernity based on speculations and one based on emancipation.

**Post-modernity is the response to the idea of obsolescent modernity**, and hyper-modernity is the reaction to post-modernity. Modernity, post-modernity, and hyper-modernity succeed each other in most of the current literature dealing with ideas, proposals and diagnoses. There has been talk of a **new modernity** (Alain Touraine), **radicalised modernity** (Anthony Giddens), a **second modernity** (Ulrich Beck), **reflective modernity** (Scot Lash), **neo-modernity** (architecture, Christopher Alexandre), **ultra-modernity** (J.A. Marina), **hyper-modernity** (Gilles Lipovetsky), **tardo-modernity** (Rodríguez Magda), **super-modernity**, **excessive modernity**, **post-modernity** and maybe a few others besides. Of course, there is also **anti-modernity**, which is another kettle of fish altogether but is a hidden source of many post-modern hang-ups.

Alain Touraine is a French socialist sociologist who speaks of a **new modernity** and he must bear the responsibility of shifting the focus of sociological research from a study of the social order to the *genealogy of modernity*. In an article written in 1981, he argued that the issue facing industrial societies was not how the social order worked but rather *how we had invented modernity*, how Western Europe became the cradle of progress, the industrial revolution, and had led Man's conquest of Nature. Touraine has written many books but the ones that interest us here were published between 1997 and 2001, beginning with *Critique de la modernité* (1997) and ending with *Comment sortir du libéralisme* (2001). The semantics surrounding these diagnoses are peppered with terms covering the loss of various qualities: **demodernisation**, **de-institutionalisation**, **desocialisation**, **depoliticisation**.

- Demodernisation is the individual's will to assume the quest for individual identity.
- De-institutionalisation is the waning of the importance of institutions and the waxing of individual autonomy.
- Desocialisation is characterised by the fact that society —which used to be regulated by its institutions and the roles they played— is increasingly run by market forces and other players.
- Depoliticisation is a consequence of the foregoing phenomena. Society becomes depoliticised given that the State no longer plays the institutional role it once did.

**What quality is lost in these processes? Is there an analysis that breaks them down into their component parts?** "La société (nationale) perd sa belle unité structurelle", he tells us.

However, it is worth asking what this synthesis consists of, how applicable it was, and the real extent of this *beauty* and *stability*. It is also worth examining the much-vaunted attributes of *La République Française* and their real impact on French life —a much more complex matter than might appear. To what extent does the *République* express an *ideal* unity of citizens? *La République Française* is an odd problem that distorts the universality of analyses covering European societies as a whole. It is worth identifying *exactly what* the sociologists are measuring and identifying given their pathological tendency to over-abstractation and pigeonholing. One needs to identify real people and the duration of the processes so labelled. Once the *République Française* has been identified, one needs to establish *chronologies* for the upheavals that racked the country between 1848 and 1948, and on which Lyotard is silent. This is important because both Lyotard's diagnosis and Touraine's sociological analysis of modernity rest on the end of social strife (and with it, the end of modernity) and the beginning of the consumer age characterised —we are told— by consumerism and boredom. Touraine's ideas, along with the rest of recent French Socialism, is just another form of Jacobinism. The new modernity is simply the transformation of Jacobinism into the cultural management of boredom. The diagnostics of Marc Fumaroli on the Cultural State seem to indicate this.

Anthony Giddens is a theorist on the renewal of the British Labour Party and an ideological proponent of the so-called “Third Way” between Capitalism and Socialism. He is “Blair's sociologist” and speaks of **radicalised modernity**. He is currently Director of *The London School of Economics and Political Science*. His book *Sociology* is an important reference book in the field. We can get a quick overview of Giddens and his work by consulting the FAQs (frequently asked questions) he answers on his web site: globalisation; the third way; the risk society; modernity; reflection and reflective modernisation; structural and sociological theory. One of his most important books is *The Consequences of Modernity* (1990). The argument of this book, in which Giddens sets forth a first approximation to the notion of “modernity”, begins with a reference to the social lifestyles that emerged in Europe *from around the 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards* and which have become more or less worldwide. Modernity is thus linked to a period of time and an initial geographical location but he then goes on to state that he will leave the most important characteristics of modernity “in a black box” for the time being.

**The black box metaphor reveals** the nature of Giddens' discourse, which is never between equal citizens but rather of an expert talking down to laymen who lack the magic key to make sense of the world around them. Some laymen may have observed the accident, as it were, but only Giddens and his ilk can determine its causes by examining the contents of the “black box” (or, extending the metaphor, the flight recorder). Giddens is a sociologist and thus for him everything begins with the trinity of Marx-Durkheim-Weber as the founders of sociology. He repeatedly limits himself to what “sociology literature” has to say about love, friendship, time, the calendar, money, science, and so forth —as is sociologists' wont. Giddens constantly throws this in with an insistent claim that sociology is uniquely placed to deal with modernity in whatever form it may take. This insistence, found in bald statements such as: “modernity is deeply and intrinsically

ARA  
LA NIT  
TIRA SOBR  
E MI UNA  
MIRADA D  
E LLÀSTI  
MA COM

UN PINYO  
L DE CIRERA.  
VOLDRIA SER  
PINTOR PER A  
CANVIAR AQUE  
ST A NEGROR  
DE TINTA ROJ  
A PER UN TA  
RONJA CLAR  
I APLASTAR A  
QUESTA TELA  
GROSSA DEL  
CEL SOBRE UN T

ROS DE FUS  
TA. ÉS L'H  
ORA CORRE  
CTA PER A  
ESCRIURE  
UN POEMA.  
PERÒ LES  
NITS EM  
CANVIEN  
EN UN JO  
MÉS FOSC  
QUE EM  
RECORRE LES  
VENES. AIXÍ EL PO  
EMA DAVALLÀ UNA ESCALA  
I CONVERTÍ EL MEU  
COR EN FUSTA.

sociological in nature” and “the impact of social sciences and sociological concepts and findings are part and parcel of modernity” are perplexing to say the least. The preceding declarations and others like them reveal his jealousy of the natural sciences —evidenced by his harping on the same theme: “the social sciences are more deeply involved in modernity than are the natural sciences because they are rooted in a review of social practices and based upon knowledge regarding those practices and hence form part of the fabric of modern institutions”. Is the impact of sociological theories really so great? Where does this impact lie? Once again, we are left in the dark. Moreover, it is surprising after endless Marxist debate on infrastructure and superstructure that some people still believe that sociological explanations exercise so much influence on the real world.

Giddens’ 1990 thesis was put forward as a way of correcting a poor characterisation of the supposed transition to post-modernity. His concept of a **radicalised modernity** was

“An essential feature of modernity for Giddens is that basic trust is no longer vested in family and neighbours”

an attempt to determine what actually happened in this transition. “Instead of entering a post-modernist age”, writes Giddens, “we are moving into a period in which the consequences of modernity are becoming more radical and universal than ever”. Once again, questions abound: What exactly is a period here? When do we enter a new period? Who moves into the new period? How do we determine whether the transition to a

given period is still in progress or has been completed, or whether the transition is of a post-modernist nature or is an instance of radicalised modernity? An essential feature of modernity for Giddens is that basic trust is no longer vested in family and neighbours. We can say that trust based on relations and neighbours represents situation x, and when this is no longer the case, we have situation y. The problem is, what does this have to do with the periods? Giddens’ book rests on two great contrasts: “reliability and risk settings” in pre-modern and modern cultures; and the “concepts” found in post-modernity and radicalised modernity. The concept of de-linkage is of key importance in Giddens’ analysis. Zygmunt Bauman ironically notes that the rich are de-linked while the poor are de-localised (*Modernity and Ambivalence*, 1991). The contrast between post-modernity and radicalised modernity proves problematic. Giddens argues that post-modernity is where the individual’s identity is dissolved or broken up by the fragmentary nature of experience, whereas in the case of radicalised modernity, that identity is seen as more than merely the result of the confluence of forces because *modernity makes active processes of reflection and self-identification possible*.

What is never made clear is whether post-modernity is simply a diagnostic evil (i.e. not based on real events) or whether its shortcomings were corrected in a subsequent stage. This is often the impression one gets when one hears a succession of sociological explanations. One is never sure whether one is being told about different diagnoses or about different maladies. It makes one recall Julio Caro Baroja’s *Las brujas y su mundo* The World of Witches in which the prudent inquisitor states, “There were no witches until people began to talk about them”. Similarly, there is no post-modernity and radical modernity until everyone begins chattering about them.

Ulrich Beck is a brilliant German scholar who is currently full professor of Sociology at Munich's Universität Ludwig-Maximilian, where he directs a research centre on modernisation. He is also a lecturer at the London School of Economics. Modesty is not one of his failings when it comes to him describing his work in Sociology. In a discussion with Johannes Willms, he stated that the consequences of his *Cosmopolitan Sociology* are as revolutionary as Einstein's theory of relativity for Newtonian physics. As we saw with Giddens' black box, such metaphor speaks volumes about the fantasies that the diagnosers of modernity and its derivatives have about the role they play.

Beck thinks that he is sociology's answer to Einstein. He coins phrases like "Risk Society", "Cosmopolitanism", and "The Second Enlightenment" as he announces the death of "Newtonian" sociology, the Nation State, and the first modernity. Beck also plays at being the new Marx. In 1998, he published his *Cosmopolitan Manifesto* in *The New Statesman*. Its theoretical basis is that five interrelated processes have swept away the reference points characterising the first modernity: communal standards, progress, full employment, and exploitation of Nature. Beck argues the five processes characterising the second modernity are: globalisation, individualisation, revolution of the sexes, junk employment, and global risks such as an environmental crisis or a crash in world financial markets. His manifesto ends with an emotional war cry with Marxist overtones: "Citizens of the World Unite".

**So, Ulrich Beck wants to be both Sociology's Einstein** and a new Marx leading social movements. Everyone is entitled to their pet projects to improve an imperfect world. Dissatisfaction with the state of things justifies the need to come up with ideas to make the world a better place. However, what makes this project *viable*? In the conversation with Johannes Willms, Beck said that he felt it was very important to recognise that the second modernity "is an arena in which we can deploy ideas in an intellectually sensitive fashion". In Europe, there is a cosmopolitan project: "the conservative, hide-bound project of a Europe locked into nation states in which each country defends its sovereignty tooth and claw, or a Christian Europe that excludes other religions should be contrasted with a project for a cosmopolitan Europe. A key element in this second modernity is the civil religion of human rights that are not tied to the nation state, national identity, and which are opposed to national and ethnic reflexes". Beck draws up an indictment of Europe, pleading the case for his answer to the continent's real or imagined woes. Yet if we are to talk of special pleading, we must consider the way in which both Lyotard and Touraine hide European violence between 1848 and 1948. We can more easily appreciate Beck's game if we formally construct his argument in rhetorical fashion and contrast it with *the political innocence* of nation states or the *spiritual innocence* of historical Christianity. Varying the terms, one could speak of a political project for fostering mature juridical citizenship in the face of 19<sup>th</sup> century conflicts between religious fundamentalism and laicism. One could also speak of the Christian project of universal love in the face of dyed-in-the-wool nationalisms, and sterile ideological calls for international fraternity. It all boils down to labelling the ideas ranged on the opposing side with unflattering adjectives and outmoded "isms" to highlight the merits of one's definition of modernity. The straw men set up in the argument are denounced as outmoded, old, dead, obsolete before being artfully bowled over. However, if "cosmopolitan" liberation can only be defined in these barren confrontational terms, the second enlightenment stands every chance of sharing the

fate of the first one. Treating Europeans as mature citizens means talking about the conflict between projects rather than simply trying to enlist support by praising the virtues of modernism and reviling the vices of whatever is thrown into the other side of the balance. The questions that sociologists need to ask with regard to modernity—in particular with regard to reflective modernity (Giddens, Beck, Lash, 1994) if they are to make a real theoretical contribution to the emancipation narrative (1848)—are: (1) What was the real historic factor that modified “industrial society structured in classes and national groups”? (2) What was Marxism’s role as a “critical weapon” (Lash) (3) What was the impact of the international workers’ movement and what were the real changes to working conditions as a result of workers’ struggles? (4) What contribution was made by technology and social legislation? The questions are decisive ones because the literature of the writers discussed here rests more on a succession of academic fads of the kind slated by Braudillard than constituting a serious attempt to grapple with social reality. We all too often confuse historic agents with brilliant commentators. Lash argues that candidates to succeed Marxism might be the ethics of communal rationality of Jurgen Habermas or the persuasive analysis of Michel Foucault. Since Lash considers that neither of them are worthy of the crown, he proposes reflective modernity as a candidate. Yet why should we even bother looking for a successor to Marxism? Perhaps it is because professors are expected to pull a rabbit out of the hat every now and then or maybe it is because a new light needs to be shed on the real world. Few would disagree that the current state of advanced societies merits criticism. However, such criticism should pay more attention to the patient’s condition than to swelling the host of variations on previous diagnoses ||

Rosa Planas

# The Holocaust and literature

True literature deals with the contact with the enigmas of fate and the secrets of the soul; in other words: the metaphysical sphere

AARON APPELFELD

1. HOW TO CONTEXTUALISE TWO OPPOSING REALITIES:  
history and fiction. And how fiction is used as an amplifier of history.

**In its origins literature experiences the overlap with history. We have to go back to the time of Homer, to the epic poems that emerged from the memory of the terrible wars between Trojans and Greeks. Between the religious and the profane, literature was conceived to conserve the memory of extraordinary events. This was, initially, its chief function.**

The motivation did not imply, however, that an elevated formula shying away from the common language, in an attempt to achieve refined and sublime expression, was not sought. With this, the desire was to delve into memories, intensifying the view of memory through the use of a specific instrument, the word, which, over the centuries, was to become the essence of the literary art.

After their annihilation the Trojans ceased to be a people and also ceased to be part of living history, yet they began a new existence in literature of which they were the protagonists and they became literary entities that future generations would recognise and go back to again and again. The symbol was to make their memory and the dramatic end they suffered indelible. From then on, war between peoples would take on religious, social and economic connotations, but, above all else, it would go on to be literary material, a sophisticated form of awareness of destruction. It would forever focus more

on the manner of being heroic as opposed to the manner of being dehumanised, i.e., leaving no record, the same as no literary register.

The Holocaust or Shoa is one of the most tragic events known to history, both for its cost in human life and for its symbolism, which does not lose sight of a high epic and religious content. Another fact that gives the Holocaust a sense of impact is its closeness in time. Before, to find situations of such evident brutality it was necessary to go back to Antiquity, and especially pagan times (let us remember for a moment the context of the Trojan War), but no governmental activity that so despised the human condition could ever have been conceived in a modern civilization, especially after almost two millennia of Christianity.

The elevation of an entire people to the condition of victim is virtually unprecedented, but the way it was done (through legislation and extermination camps) is, without doubt, unique and special. Throughout history, genocide has been carried out, more or less intensely, after the wars of conquest, colonisation or, in a more disguised way, in the periodic but recurring forays against unarmed and defenceless peoples. We only have to think of the massacres of Indians in America, the colonisation of Africa and Australia, the ethnic cleansing in the former Yugoslavia, the programmed belligerence against the Kurds, the war in Chechnya, and so many other covetous and xenophobic aggressions, which have brandished ideological reasons such as race and religion in order to commit crimes against humanity.

If we have commenced our pilgrimage with Homer's epic it is because the literature of the Holocaust also tells the story of an epic event: the resistance of the individual in conditions impossible for survival and also the wish of a people, which is being constructed, to escape a tragic fate. Through reading these pages we become privileged witnesses to a unique situation, where, paradoxically, deindividualisation causes humanisation and where the human being becomes more human as a consequence of a calculated policy of depersonalisation, the ideological twin of the concentration camps programme.

To the trick question as to whether or not one can produce literature about the Shoa, the reply seems obvious. There has been a lot of it and very good it is too; it has been written and will continue to be written as long as the memory of the events does not fade. This literature, as in the case of Homer's epic, serves interests that go beyond the wish of the writer. The author-witness senses the strength of his role, his public usefulness and the nature of *example* that his work achieves. He knows himself to be the bearer of a message that, on the other hand, is the only one that can reconcile him with the past. In this way, he can and does perform a service to the community and, at the same time, to himself.

## 2. The genres of memory

The abundance of writing on the Holocaust has led to the birth of an encyclopaedia edited by David Patterson, Alan L. Berger and Sarita Cargas, printed in the USA and published in 2002. Included in this panoramic work are all the authors and texts that refer to the events taking place between the years 1939 and 1945. Within this mountain of material, the first thing to point out is the incredible number of testimonial works, most of which are written by Jewish authors from Central Europe who suffered the circumstances of extermination at first hand. This encyclopaedia is an attempt to rationalise the literature produced based on the experience of the Holocaust, and the quest for a classification, at times arguable, of the genres that prevail in it as a whole.

Taken in its entirety, the literature about the Holocaust is characterised above all for being literature of the self, of an almost notarial testimony, where the intention to describe all aspects of the tragedy prevails over any artistic consideration. The emotional impact it has on the reader is provided by a condition, applicable only to this type of literature, in which each of the testimonies written on the page is personal, unique and unrepeatable. A world that withdraws into itself, where one author's experience cannot explain another's. Moreover, we have to insist on the fact that the majority of these writers shy away from banal sentimentality and insistent morbidity. The best descriptions of the extermination camps of Auschwitz (by, in my opinion, Primo Levi and Imre Kertész) do not give in to the temptation of the easy judgement or the all-round condemnation of the aggressors. In no part of the narrative discourse do we hear a generalised clamour against anybody's ethnic group nor do we fall into the ideological trap of following racist reasoning. Rather, the discourse rises above the moral judgement which, in these circumstances, would have been obvious, and, with bricks of reflection and intellectual perplexity a reproach addressed to the whole of humankind is constructed, to the insensitivity of modern man that permitted the installation of barbarity in a world supposedly civilised and Christianised, but which was seen to be, among many other shortcomings, not Judaeo-Christian enough. Some interpreted the exceptional situation in the Europe of 1939 to 1945 as a revival of neo-paganism, deeply rooted in Europe, and which demanded, for reasons of racial superiority, the return to the implacable human sacrifices.

Genres that affect the literature of the Holocaust are principally those of a markedly existential nature, of which personal diaries and chronicles would be the clearest example. The most famous, without doubt, is Anne Frank's diary (*Das Tagebuch der Anne Frank*), written in a secret hideout in Amsterdam between June 12<sup>th</sup> 1942 and August 1<sup>st</sup> 1944. Anne's death, at the age of fifteen, in the Bergen-Belsen camp and all the circumstances that surrounded her short and extraordinary life (betrayals, hunger, the death of her sister) turned this work into a paradigm of the suffering of the Holocaust. It is one of the most translated works of literature in the world, and it is such a phenomenon that it has gone beyond the strictly literary level to become a phenomenon of meta-literature.

Although the diary of Anne Frank is the most famous, there are others, like *The Warsaw Diary of Chaim A. Kaplan* (1973), in which the genre is recurrent and the narrative structure is based on the description of the self and the situations surrounding it.

Other genres are poetry, with Paul Celan among the best-known authors, but which includes authors as diverse as Primo Levi: *Shema. A Collection of Poems* (1976); drama, with representatives like Arthur Miller, *Broken Glass* (1944), or Elie Wiesel, Nobel Peace Prize-winner, with *The Trial of God* (1974); and, lastly, anthologies, of either poetry or short stories. By way of example, let us mention the book by Yaffa Eliach: *Hasidic Tales of the Holocaust* (1982).

So far, we have not mentioned the genre which, for being in the majority and multi-faceted, is most representative: the novel. By its very nature, the novel includes everything: fiction, speculation, humour, simple historical detail, the construction of parallel worlds, the multiplicity of messages, etc. But the production of novels in the literature of the Holocaust suffers certain limitations, the most important of them being the impossibility of creating fiction, at least as it has been understood up to now. Fiction

in these parameters is seen as a falsification, as a negative element that detracts from the authenticity that one supposes is to be found in this literature.

### 3. The selective memory

Aaron Appelfeld introduces his book *The Story of a Life* with the following reflection:

Memory, like dreams, takes from the dense train of events certain details and, at times, small unimportant things; it stores them in order to, at a given moment, make them re-emerge. Just like a dream, memory also tries to give these events a certain significance.

Starting from this reflection we realise that it is very difficult to free memory from imagination. If the one is based on experience, the other feeds upon what this experience has produced in the inner soul of man, in his most intimate part. Nor do we know how far imagination is possible without a memory to nourish it. Material experienced, unlike material acquired, forms an underlying mass from which will stem the great constructions of the imagination. Without this baggage no-one is capable of creating parallel realities that concentrate what, in one way or another, has been experienced.

The process of how the memory selects certain experiences and erases others is incomprehensible enough for it to be claimed that this selection is arbitrary, at least from the logical point of view. At times, memories are centred upon the most everyday and banal, avoiding the solemn events that, for their gravity or importance, ought to have made a deep impression on the subconscious. The memory opts for the small detail, a forced renunciation or some happening that went unnoticed for the majority of the people who saw it. This choice is indivisible from the individuals who make it, and forms part of their identity. The human memory is personal and untransferable, unique and irreplaceable, one of the reasons why the concentration camp experience is so enriching from the point of view of the selective memory. Each and every one of the authors affected recount the same events, relive the same frustrations, moral tortures, physical and psychological pain, but the individual adds power, intensity, to the collective story, which, breaking the chain of mnemonic repetition, becomes a novelty and an unfixed message. What makes them want to write is the personal, the unrepeatable, which in each work becomes, in short, the "literature" that each writer is capable of achieving.<sup>1</sup>

Life in the *Lager* was lived very differently by each of the prisoners making up the great concentrated masses. None of them experienced the same thing, although on the outside it may seem that way. So many people, so many experiences. So many songs, so many singers...

Memory is not just a psychic thing, it often becomes a biological fact. The body recalls the hunger, the pain, the suffering. Appelfeld states: "Everything that took place was etched on the cells of my body and not in my memory". In fact, the trauma makes the victim of torture suffer many times over. Jean Améry, the pseudonym of the writer

■ <sup>1</sup> "About the Second World War the principal writings were testimonies, considered an authentic form of expression. On the other hand, the literature was perceived as an invention. I did not even have witnesses. I could not remember the names of people or places, just darkness, murmurings and movements.

Only later did I understand that this raw material was the vital stuff of literature and that from it an inner story could be created. I say 'inner' because at that time it was believed that the chronicle was the repository of truth. Inner expression had not yet been born." (Appelfeld, Aaron: *The Story of a Life*, p. 100).

Hans Mayer, confirms this experience by reliving the pain of his dislocated arms. It is often at bedtime that this biological memory awakens and calls out for attention. The ex-prisoners of the *Lagers* revisit the huts and relive the punishments. This psychic persecution continues once they are free, and it is impossible to rid themselves of it. The wound that the memory has suffered is so great that it cannot be healed either by forgetting or by the safety achieved; the prolongation of the suffering is part of this arbitrary choice that rides out in the tormented nights of the prisoners, even though they have been free for years. The tumefaction of the memory leads many to extenuation and suicide.

In children, memory is not static, but changing and turbulent. The yet to be defined personality chooses smells, presences, bits of reality that, as in a game, build spaces and situations. The child's memory is neither chronological nor orderly, it brims over with imprecision, overwhelming gaps that cannot be filled. If man is mud, the child is wet clay, where the water has more consistency than the material. For this reason, Appelfeld senses that "in children memory is a bottomless pit, which is renewed and clears over the years".

#### 4. The exterminated languages

Aaron Appelfeld has said: "Without a mother tongue the human being is an invalid". This statement, made from the depths of the consciousness, brings us face to face with the linguistic reality of Auschwitz, the loss of language resulting in the loss of identity. Without speech the word is unpronounceable, pure abstraction that wanders in the limbo of vagueness. Many of the men and women held in the camps found themselves in this situation, without voice or speech, without name or word to suit the immediate reality. Not only were they divested of clothes and material goods, but also of their abstract possessions: nation and language slipped away beneath their feet.

The theme of language and the loss of voice is recurrent in the most important authors of the Holocaust literature. Primo Levi, Jean Améry and Aaron Appelfeld speak of it. A considerable number of prisoners belonged to the German linguistic area, and not only did they belong to it, but they also felt adhered to it with the force of tradition and with the unconditional admiration that they felt for the forgers of the language. Goethe, Rilke, Schiller, Nietzsche, these are just some of the authors that appeal to the selective memory of the dispossessed. But the wound gets deeper when they do not recognise in the mouth of the executioner the language of their parents, their grandparents, their ancestors. Appelfeld recalls that his mother loved the German language —his mother tongue, he would say— and that Yiddish was a distant reference, an anecdotal sound, almost non-existent, that was evoked like plum jam or the smells of the perfumes of the house. But the language of his mother killed his mother, and this situation made the writer —the writers— reject the language that enslaves and orders extermination. Yet for the survivors it will never be easy to separate themselves from it, because speaking German will be for many like talking to one's dead mother, an umbilical cord impossible to break. It is necessary to arrive at the tragedy of having to hate the language with which they learned to think, to feel and to create the galaxy of feelings that had to be carefully shown, because in Auschwitz one could lose much more than life, including the certainty of ever having been born in a nation that inexplicably denied their existence, and of having learned a language that was also snatched from them without

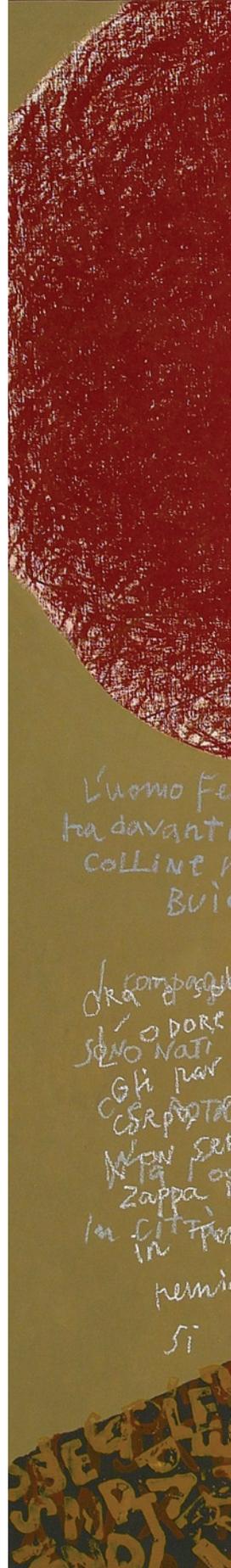
hesitation. Fixed forever in our memory will be the experience that Améry recounts in reference to an important Jewish philologist and Germanic scholar. When his interrogator asked him for his professional speciality, before sending him to his work place in the camp, he replied: “Germanic scholar”, which sent the jailer into a terrible rage. Without a word, he shot and killed him there and then. As Hannah Arendt constantly recalled in her books, the most hated Jew was the assimilated Jew, and, even more than this, the Germanised Jew.

Once they had been freed, the survivors had to learn Hebrew, for many a strange unknown language, to stifle the German with which they had grown up. Appelfeld even mixed up mother and language: “My mother’s language and my mother became one”. For him the obligation to relinquish German was like seeing his mother die again, and a dull pain took control of his consciousness, leading him to voluntary dumbness. A long silence from which he could only escape in dreams. Learning Hebrew was to be a long penitence, a constant avoidance of the lost identity, each letter became a break in the biological chain, an existential confusion that made clear how important it is for people to conserve the language of childhood: “without my language I feel like a stone”.

This chaotic linguistic situation made many of the first-generation Israeli writers painfully bilingual. Despite the tragedy, many did not want—or were unable—to uproot the old mother tongue and lived mounted on the languages as if they were colts that had to be broken in with willingness and patience.

On the other hand, in Auschwitz knowing German “was life”, as all those who knew the language could understand the orders and manage to get their bearings in the chaos. On the contrary, all those who did not know the language were forced to obey through blows and violence. This is the sad fate—Levi would say—of the Italians and other Europeans who could not understand what was being said to them. At least, the German of the *Lager* “was a language apart” that had nothing to do with the poetry or the philosophical refinement achieved by the great Germanic authors. A variety unknown, animalised, made for the exclusive use of the jailers and forced to be recognised as a language of obedience. The German Jewish philologist Klemperer—as Levi says—had named it the *Lingua Tertii Imperii*, or language of the Third Reich. It would seem that this form was no more than a mixture, a militarist hybrid that took the semantics of the old Prussian barracks and which reinvented negative words, making them positive. The *Lagerjargon*, as Levi would say, was no more than that, slang, a sub-language created for sub-men, similar to that used to train dogs, without a trace of poetry.

**Penitent (Repentant)**, Artur Heras (2006)  
acrylic and oil on canvas, 150 x 120 cm  
(private collection, Valencia)





### 5. The annihilation of memory

And then... for the survivors the construction of a national state became the only alternative. But this state had to be based on the motto "Construct and re-construct ourselves", which implied an individual reconstruction of each of the future citizens of the country. For many of the intellectuals, there was no other possibility than the annihilation of memory, all that they had experienced and been in the past.

The individual deconstruction went hand in hand with national construction. Those who wished to start afresh were obliged to separate themselves from their memory. It was not easy for anyone; for many it was impossible. Some, like Jean Améry, fell by the wayside, as they could not belong to the nationality that had rejected them, but neither did they feel identified with a country that they considered artificial, born out of imposition.

Without a real homeland the European Jew was trapped in an ambiguous territory, halfway between nostalgia, hatred and desperation. Memory, impossible to eradicate, became a new homeland, in which memories became the only safe ground.

This situation ended the lives of many. Suicide was the refuge of existential contradiction.

The majority of those who went to live in Palestine did not want to remember, and therefore they did not tell their children of the sufferings of the war. A sort of dark silence separated the generations; memory had gone on to be, in part, a patrimony of literature, museums and monuments, but not a living activity capable of enriching the future with the experience accumulated. Perhaps this is one of the important reproaches that the writers of the Holocaust have made in their new country, and also in the rest of the world. Memory ought not to be a marginal land but a living space, which may be revisited.

Appelfeld talks to his son of the Carpathians "where our fathers and our fathers' fathers lived for many generations, the land of Baal Shem Tov", with all the nostalgia and love that he can possibly evoke. The national socialist brutality could not manage to detach the survivors from the distant homelands, where the ancestors rested and rest, which made possible a European Jewish culture that can never be exterminated ||

transfer<sup>02</sup>

JOURNAL OF CONTEMPORARY CULTURE // 2007

*focus*

“Immigration and social change, the Catalan experience”

Aitana Guia

# Globalisation of borders:

## *International migration in the Twenty-First century*

The goal of this **article is to analyse migration from a global perspective in the new political, economic, social, and cultural context that emerged at the end of the Cold War in 1989 and the start of the First Gulf War in 1990, and has taken clearer shape following the September 11, 2001 attack on New York. I will examine the cumulative effects that changes to migration policy and the concept of citizenship have had on immigrants and their countries of origin and reception, and weigh possibilities for future trends. Since the reflections I put forward are provisional in nature, I will describe them by way of short hypotheses corresponding to the various sections of the article.**

### A LARGE-SCALE MIGRATION PHASE

The world has entered a phase of large-scale migration tending towards prosperous centres, wealthy regions, and developed states. This movement will continue rather than slow or stop due to the accentuation of political, economic, and demographic disparities between sending and receiving states. At the same time, migration between impoverished states is expected to grow due to the tremendous instability and insecurity of underdeveloped regions.



According to a 1999 estimation of the United Nations, 3% of the world's population lives in a country other than that of its birth. Therefore, if the global population according to the latest tally is 6.4 billion, the world's migrant population today is approximately 193 million. Migration in this crowded world of globalisation is characterised by a rise in the number of receiver and sending states and the appearance of a curious category known as transit states. If it is more than a century now since the large European migrations to the Americas occurred, roughly from the years 1840 to 1914, from a handful of European countries (principally Great Britain, Ireland, the Scandinavian countries, the German and Austro-Hungarian Empires, Italy, and Spain) to a handful of American ones (above all the United States, Canada, Brazil, and Argentina), today sending states are dispersed throughout Latin America, Africa, and Asia, and receptor states can be found as much in North America, Europe, and Australasia as the Persian Gulf and the developed areas of Asia. In the number of sender states, receptor states, transit states, and those that are a hybrid of these, and in terms of the intricate routes migrants have laid and the experiences they have borne, migration has become highly complex. The result, Joaquín Arango affirms, "is a multi-polar and global system" (2005:23).

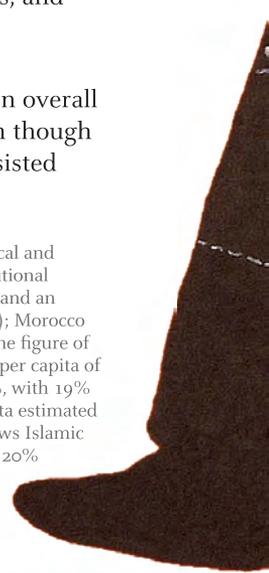
What has changed is that whereas in decades past migrants were actively sought by receiving states today the majority of migrants are neither sponsored nor welcomed, but migrate in spite of borders and barriers. According to Arango, "freedom of mobility is the exception, regulation and restriction is the norm" (2005:23). This lack of free movement has made it so that a number of notable pre-First World War phenomena are no longer observable, for example, the seasonal labour migrations of Italians between Europe and the New World, the famous *golondrini* (swallows) (Nugent, 1989). Even countries with developed economies and low demographic indices who have continued to accept annual quotas of immigrants following long traditions, such as Canada, the United States, and Australia, have toughened entry requirements and defended a fierce policy of immigrant "selection" since the 1973 Oil Crisis.<sup>1</sup>

Yet in spite of borders, migration has become a reality in today's world. Growth in overall demographic disequilibrium between developed and underdeveloped states, even though birth rates have reduced in certain senders such as Morocco and Turkey, has persisted or even widened. Socio-economic and political differences have also grown.<sup>2</sup>

■ <sup>1</sup> In 2004, Canada scheduled to accept between 220,000 and 245,000 permanent new residents (between immigrants and refugees) and accepted 235,824 (<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/pub/facts2004/overview/index.html>); in 2004-05, Australia planned to accept between 105,000 and 120,000 immigrants and 13,000 refugees (<http://www.immi.gov.au/facts/20planning.htm>); in 2004, the United States accepted 10,613 refugees and naturalised 536,174 persons (<http://uscis.gov/graphics/shared/aboutus/statistics/msrsepo4/natz.htm>).

<sup>2</sup> For example, the 2005 birth rate for Spain is 1.28, while for Morocco it is 2.73, and for Mauritania 5.94. Source: *The World Factbook* (<http://cia.gov>

<http://cia.gov/publications/factbook/>). Regarding political and economic disequilibrium, Spain is a constitutional monarchy with a GDP per capita of \$23,300 and an unemployment rate of 10.4% (data for 2004); Morocco is also a constitutional monarchy in which the figure of the king is more than symbolic, with a GDP per capita of \$4,200, and an unemployment rate of 12.1%, with 19% of the population below the poverty line (data estimated for 2004); Mauritania is a republic that follows Islamic Sharia law, with a GDP per capita of \$1,800, 20% unemployment, and 40% below the poverty line (data estimated for 2004). Source: *The World Factbook* (<http://cia.gov/cia/>



Moreover, after more than 30 years of International Monetary Fund Structural Adjustment Policies, inability of the World Bank to reduce or eradicate foreign debts of developing countries, recurrence of epidemics of curable diseases in Africa, and ongoing deficit of food security brought about by crises in subsistence farming and barriers to the access of food in environmentally volatile lands, we must conclude that mainstream development models not only encourage migration but are bankrupt as viable solutions. The 1999 dollarisation of Ecuador's economy and the 2001 Argentine crisis prove that economic ups and downs can trigger the removal of hundreds of thousands of persons, after they watch their work, savings, security, and possibility to educate their children vanish. And when the trigger is not economic, conflict for political, religious, or social reasons seems to achieve the same ends of population displacement, as has occurred in the Horn of Africa, the triad of Sierra Leone, Liberia, and the Ivory Coast, in southern Sudan, and is in play at the moment in the Darfur region. Thus, the failure of development, economic crisis and political instability, armed conflict and repeated violation of human rights, which show no signs of abating in the twenty-first century, are the predominant driving factors behind millions of migrations.

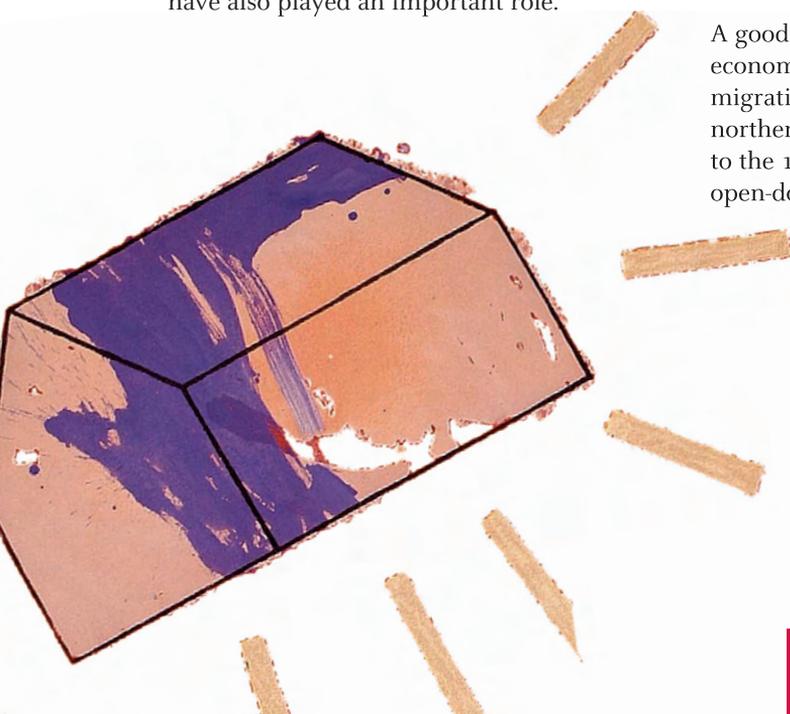
### THE FAILURE OF MIGRATION POLICIES

*Erosion of the distinctions between different types of migration, together with the sheer size of the global phenomenon, promotes failure in the migration policy of receiving states.*

Since the Second World War, western states have organised migration policies around national interest as defined by the parties of elected governments and an international consensus that gives some consideration to forced migration.<sup>3</sup> Economic factors seem to be the main determinants of this policy, but cultural and historical factors such as preference with regard to migrants' ethnic origins and states' relations to former colonies, have also played an important role.

A good example of the way in which economic factors have conditioned migration policies is the way in which northern European countries reacted to the 1973 Oil Crisis. From a general open-doors policy in which immigrants from the south, including from Spain, Italy, Greece, and Portugal as well as

■ <sup>3</sup> The appearance of the status of refugee in 1951 at the Rome Convention and the approval of the 1967 Protocol are the most relevant factors in defining the international consensus.



Morocco, Algeria, and Turkey, among others, were welcomed as workers (*Gastarbeiter*), with the understanding they would return once infrastructure and key industries were rebuilt in the north, northern European countries introduced a policy of zero or no immigration. This occurred once immigrants' work had been made redundant by economic crisis. However, in the years 1945 to 1973 these immigrant workers had adapted to their new societies. They had brought their families, learned a new language, and made a living for themselves; so much so, that although they had gone from invitees to unwelcome residents, they refused to leave. Similarly, cultural factors explain why in countries like Germany, where Turks have resided for decades, or in France, where Algerians have done the same, governments and a large portion of the population have refused to accept that immigrants have arrived to stay. And as a result, they have done little to integrate immigrants in the school system and social services, to consider them in urban planning, etc.

“Zero immigration policy has had disastrous consequences on social cohesion”

The policy of zero immigration has had disastrous consequences on social cohesion because governments have planned with the assumption that immigrants are not going to arrive forever in a steady stream. This has left a very vulnerable segment of society in paralegal limbo in those northern countries. Also, it has blurred the line separating the different categories of immigrant. Since economic migration to Europe has been made virtually impossible, the only way in is to apply for refugee status (political asylum), to apply through family reunification, or to attempt entry in an illegal manner.

First, with regard to the line separating categories of immigrants, the number of economic migrants that solicit refugee status has increased notably. This has promoted deception in the system of refugee protection and has had the secondary effect of reducing the percentage of accepted refugees and denying protection to numerous others (Harvey, 2000; Richmond, 2001).<sup>4</sup> Second, in addition to the already existing confusion between economic migrants and refugees, the same antiquated concept of refugee has been maintained due to a lack of will amongst receptor states that do not want international responsibilities to force them into accepting a greater number of refugees. Also, the United Nations has been unable to expand the definition of refugee because of pressure from countries like Australia, who refuse to accept the notion of “environmental refugee”<sup>5</sup>. Third, the stereotype of the immigrant as a lone male in search of work

■ <sup>4</sup> The international consensus accepts that people only merit refugee status if they have a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of political opinion, race, nationality, religion, or belonging to a particular social group. See the 1951 Rome Convention at [http://www.unhcr.ch/html/menu3/b/o\\_c\\_ref.htm](http://www.unhcr.ch/html/menu3/b/o_c_ref.htm) and the 1967 Protocol at [http://www.unhcr.ch/html/menu3/b/o\\_p\\_ref.htm](http://www.unhcr.ch/html/menu3/b/o_p_ref.htm).

<sup>5</sup> See Humphrey M., “Refugees: An Endangered Species?”, *Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 39, No. 1, (March,

2003): 31-43 for Australia’s policies towards refugees, Bates, D.C., “Environmental Refugees? Classifying Human Migrations Caused by Environmental Change”, *Population and Environment*, Vol. 23, No. 5, (May, 2002): 465-477 for the concept of environmental refugee and Kelley, N., “The Convention Refugee Definition and Gender-Based Persecution: A Decade’s Progress”, *International Journal of Refugee Law*, Vol. 13, No. 4, (2001): 559-568 for how the Convention’s definition of refugee has changed to include sexual persecution.

has changed to incorporate other images. Today, women are the majority of emigrants in some countries, such as the Philippines, while unaccompanied minors are growing in numbers elsewhere<sup>6</sup>.

The problem is the plurality and confusion of categories does not fit the tight policies of receptor countries, who either continue to pretend that zero immigration is feasible or accept that there is economic necessity for cheap labour in certain sectors such as agriculture, domestic services, and tourism. In the latter scenario, receptor countries either tend to opt for a selective immigration policy or continue to fool themselves into thinking that temporary immigration *à la Gastarbeiter* is workable. However, due to the impossibility of fully defending land borders, such as the massive 3,141-kilometre border between the United States and Mexico, as well as sea borders, such as the treacherous stretches between Tunisia and Italy, Morocco and Spain, and even Australia and Asia, it is likely that developed states will increasingly adopt selective immigration policies complemented by infrequent amnesties and regularisations. And the better the selective policy works, the more the political class and other sectors of the population will resist the granting of amnesties to irregular immigrants. This is occurring at the moment in the United States and Canada, where notwithstanding reluctance members of the population, the governments are contemplating partial amnesties. In the case of Canada, the government is deliberating on an amnesty for construction workers alone.<sup>7</sup>

### THE DEVELOPMENT SOLUTION?

Developed states see development of sending states as an important solution to migration. But they want immigrants to do this development for them. Otherwise, underdeveloped neighbouring states can deal with the problem by absorbing and preventing migrants in an earliest possible stage of transit.

Most developed states, and in Europe in particular, agree to two things: one, the development of sending states will reduce emigrant numbers; and two, this development will be very expensive and therefore it would be better left to others. Mechanisms created by the United Nations after decolonisation have not achieved their intended goals. Hypocritical attitudes of developed countries who have affirmed a desire to aid poor nations while simultaneously promoting their underdevelopment through unilateral trade mechanisms are to blame for the lack of real development. Nevertheless, the rhetoric and institutionalisation of development continue unabated as though reality told a different story, through agencies like the United Nations Development Programme and the otherwise very legitimate and noble idea that development for the poor is necessary and achievable.

Needless to say, the context today is not what it was in the 1960s and 1970s. Developed states are cutting rather than increasing funds they once allotted to development and

■ <sup>6</sup> See Bell, M., "Integration: Refugee Children in Britain and Europe" *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, Vol. 24, No. 4, (2005): 105-108.

<sup>7</sup> See "Ottawa pledges to target backlog of 700,000", *The Globe and Mail*, October 31, 2005, <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/story/rtgam.20051031.wximmigrants1031/bnstory/national> and Sammon, B., "Bush revives bid to legalize illegal aliens", *The Washington Times*, November 10, 2004, <http://www.washtimes.com/national/20041110-123424-5467r.htm>

[theglobeandmail.com/servlet/story/rtgam.20051031.wximmigrants1031/bnstory/national](http://www.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/story/rtgam.20051031.wximmigrants1031/bnstory/national) and Sammon, B., "Bush revives bid to legalize illegal aliens", *The Washington Times*, November 10, 2004, <http://www.washtimes.com/national/20041110-123424-5467r.htm>

they are unwilling to forgive the crushing foreign debts of countries in meaningful ways that are more than symbolic.<sup>8</sup> These cuts, combined with millions of emigrants resident and working in wealthy countries who send remittances to their families abroad, are generating a new neoliberal ideology of development. In this model, developed states may legitimately reduce funds earmarked for development because immigrants already send copious amounts abroad.<sup>9</sup> That is, no more is required for development than the proper channelling and utilisation of immigrants' private wealth. And sending states can achieve that with a measure like the imposition of a tax on remittances sent from abroad. Accordingly, development has become a private affair in which developed states not only play a passive role but see themselves as paying a fair share just by allowing immigrants to send money to their countries of origin.

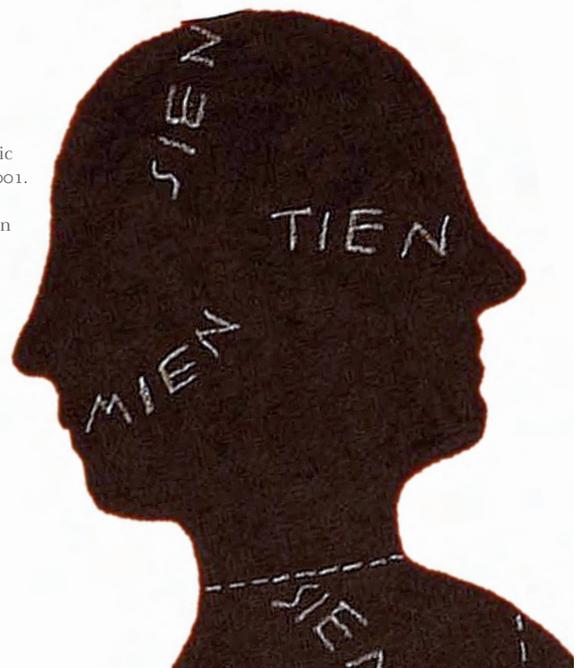
“Plurality and confusion of categories does not fit the tight policies of receptor countries”

And as this model takes more definitive shape, receptor states are beginning to pressure sending states and their neighbours to absorb migrants and nip the problem in the bud. In exchange for this policing, developed states offer trade incentives and foreign aid. An example is the agreement between the United States and Mexico to prevent Central American migrants from reaching the United States via Mexico, which have turned the already corrupt Mexican police into the chief obstacle to overcome in order to realise a share of the “American Dream”. Another example is the agreement between Morocco and the European Union, which accomplishes the same prophylactic ends by encouraging Moroccan authorities to police the Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla and exits to the Straights of Gibraltar and Canary Islands, at a price of great human-rights violations. Sub-Saharan migrants en route to Europe have been left stranded in the middle of the Sahara by Moroccan authorities as a result of this very serious game.<sup>10</sup>

■ <sup>8</sup> See Cooper, M.H., “Reassessing foreign aid: should the U.S. keep cutting back on aid?”, *CQ Researcher*, Vol. 6 (September 27 1996): 843-863 and Roodman, D.M., “Still waiting for the Jubilee: pragmatic solutions for the Third World debt crisis”, Worldwatch Institute, 2001.

<sup>9</sup> See Libercier, M.H. and Schneider, H. “Migrants: partners in development co-operation,” Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, 1996 and Settimo, R., “Workers’ remittance to Mediterranean countries: a potentially important tool for economic development”, *Economia Internazionale/International Economics*, Vol. 58, No. 1, (February 2005): 51-77.

<sup>10</sup> See, for instance, the report of Amnesty International “Spain and Morocco. Failure to protect the rights of migrants, Ceuta and Melilla one year on” (<http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGEUR410092006>) and the report of Human Rights Watch “United States, Crossing the Line. Human Rights Abuses Along the U. S. Border with Mexico Persist Amid Climate of Impunity” (<http://www.hrw.org/reports/1995/Us1.htm>)



## IMMIGRATION AS A SECURITY MATTER

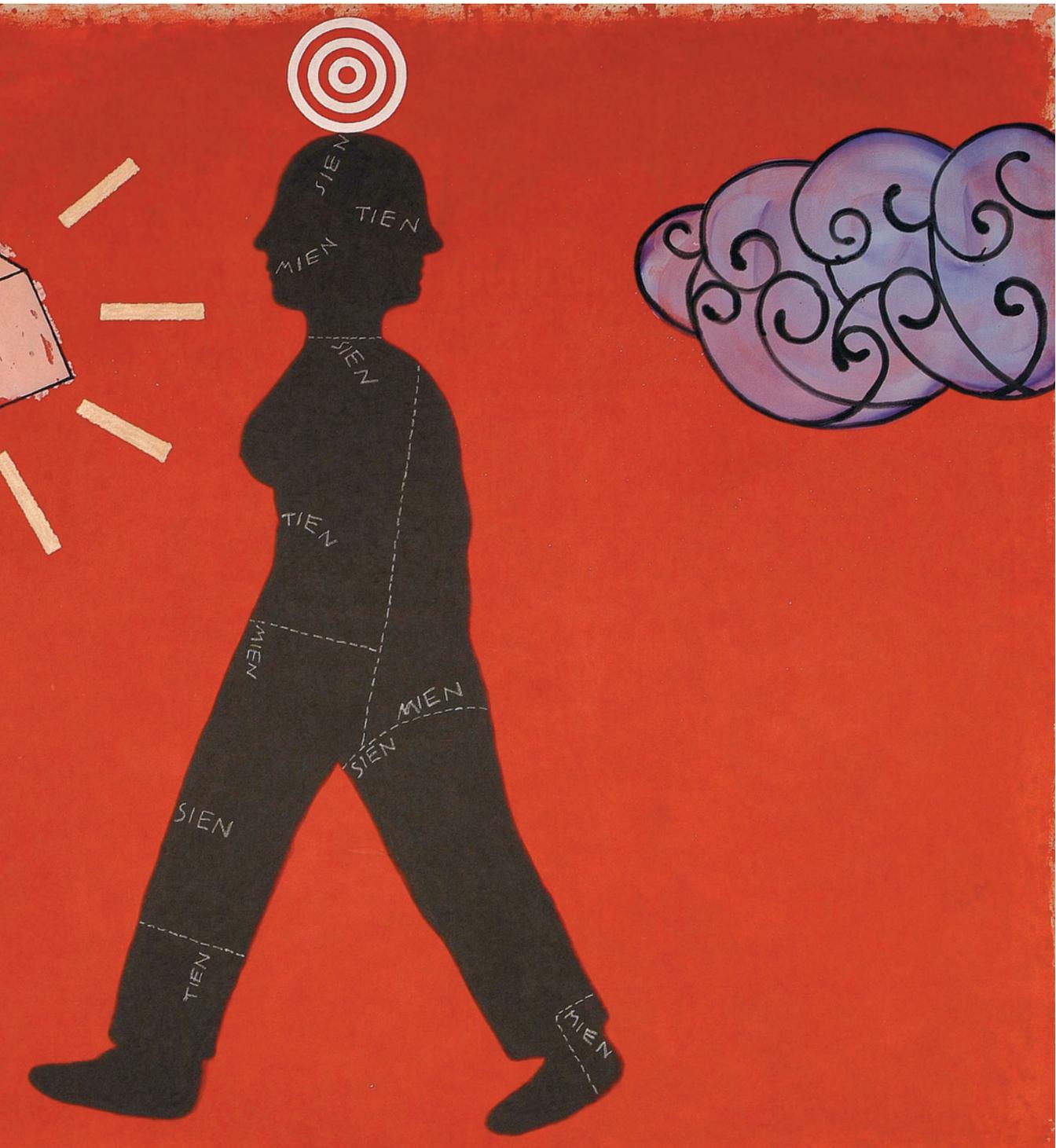
The growing view that immigration is a security problem jeopardises the human rights of immigrants and the legal guarantees of democratic societies. It also lowers states' compliance to their international responsibilities and obligations.

Europe has become a fortress defended by the *Mare Nostrum*. However, each day, more and more, territories close to or within Africa such as Ceuta and Melilla, the Canary Islands, Lampedusa Island, etc., cannot be protected from the human deluge stemming from more populous and impoverished surrounding territory. The United States is a sieve that strains thousands of immigrants through the Rio Grande, and Australia, in theory the most sheltered land mass, requires a vast coastguard system to divert refugee vessels on an ongoing basis. Obsession with stopping human movement originates in the inability or unwillingness of international organizations and the most powerful states to distribute global resources in an equitable fashion, as well as in a refusal to receive humans fleeing from situations of provoked misery.

Since 9/11 and subsequent attacks on Indonesia, Madrid, and London, Islamic terrorism has become the official nemesis of the twenty-first century. It has replaced the communist menace of previous decades. Initially, as a result of the attacks on New York and Madrid, the stereotype of the terrorist was one of an Arab immigrant, in one case from Saudi Arabia and in the other case from Morocco. In the West, the perception of the delinquent immigrant has changed to become that of the terrorist immigrant, or more precisely the potentially terrorist Muslim immigrant, a much more dangerous epithet. This perception has been fuelled by the politics of George W. Bush,

Couple, Artur Heras (2005)  
acrylic on canvas  
230 x 280 cm





Tony Blair, and former Spanish president José María Aznar, as well as by an “embedded” and uncritical press. But the equation changed with the London attack. The terrorists were British nationals, children of immigrants of old colonies, not immigrants born abroad. Parallels were drawn more starkly between the old communists and the new Islamic terrorists, both Fifth Columns in the service of foreign powers pretending to achieve the total destruction of western civilization and democracy.

The new “crusade” has a foreign and domestic component. In the eyes of wealthy states, the solution to the foreign component is to control and filter migration flows, particularly those utilising irregular channels. Designed to protect populations targeted by terrorists,

“In the eyes of wealthy states, the solution to the foreign component is to control and filter migration flows, particularly those utilising irregular channels”

measures to control irregular flows have provoked a lack of protection for legitimate refugees who utilise the same channels. But refugees use these irregular channels because they have no choice; in order to request asylum, they have to be in the territory of the state in which they ask for the asylum (Whitacker, 1998). Meanwhile, these measures have not succeeded in avoiding

the traffic of persons, forced prostitution, sweatshop work, mafias, and the risk of further terrorist attack. The solution to the domestic component is not as clear. Collective internment of peoples deemed “enemy aliens”, “Fifth Columnists”, or “sleeper cells” has not yet been proposed as during the First and Second World Wars in England, Canada, and the United States, but measures to facilitate the internment of suspect individuals have been instituted. Extraordinary measures have been implemented to undermine the rights of individuals, including representation of a lawyer, to know the charges of an accusation, to receive visitors, to be free from cruel and unusual punishment, etc. These measures have also weakened the rule of law through use of secret trials, extra-territorial imprisonment, detention without charge for indefinite amounts of time, and so on. And they have enfeebled international legislation on human rights and international humanitarian law enshrined in the Geneva Conventions and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.<sup>11</sup>

Subterfuges the United States and Great Britain have found to jump domestic and international legislation on human rights have been extremely creative. “Extraordinary rendition”, a good example, is the deportation of terrorist suspects to select countries, sometimes their countries of origin, where they are interrogated in ways that amount to torture, which would be unacceptable in western states.<sup>12</sup>

■ <sup>11</sup> See, for example, the 2001 USA PATRIOT LAW and the 2005 USA PATRIOT ACT IMPROVEMENT AND REAUTHORIZATION ACT at US Department of Justice’s website (<http://www.lifeandliberty.gov/index.html>).

<sup>12</sup> One of the most flagrant examples is the case of Maher Arar, a Syrian-born Canadian who was sent to

a Syrian prison while on transit through the United States, where from September 2002 to October 2003 he was tortured. In 2006, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Commissioner apologised for the misdeed. See <http://www.maherarar.ca>.

## MODELS IN CRISIS AND ALTERNATIVES

British multiculturalism, the American melting pot, and French assimilation are under scrutiny, while alternatives in other countries are not readily found. Meanwhile, racial discrimination in wealthy countries due to ideological and identity factors, as well as socioeconomic change, is on the rise. A change of mentality following the “Alliance of Civilizations” and a modified social contract are needed to maintain a sense of cooperation based on respect and equality.

If anyone doubted French and British models of cultural integration were in crisis, the June 2005 attack on London and the November 2005 riots in France changed their minds. But are there alternatives? Of the existing models, those of Great Britain, Australia, Holland, France, and the United States have been most strongly discredited by analysts for the geographical segregation and social discrimination they seem to generate. Canada has succeeded so far to maintain a certain social cohesion. This is due to the positive attitude of the Canadian political class, society-wide awareness of being a country formed by immigration, and widespread provision of economic means to facilitate the integration of immigrants. But for many European countries, Canada cannot be an example of exportable policy. According to many Europeans, the experience of a new country of immigration is not the same as the experience of a country that has been formed by centuries of history without immigration, as is the case with most European countries. At the same time, we need to ask ourselves: has Europe really been immigration-free in the last two centuries? Even in earlier centuries? Has it not been mixed up and renewed by past fluxes of people? And today, is there a single European country that does not have immigrants and thus cannot be called a country of immigration?

The reality is that there is no magic potion to deal with cultural diversity. Only a clear awareness of the question and a desire on the part of administrations and organizations to work as they were intended, according to their principles, including the media, can create a new model of interculturalism rather than multiculturalism, in which interrelation rather than segregation is valued and both receiving societies and newly arrived persons can work to create new and dynamic spaces. However, changes of this scale require consensus that does not seem to exist in the majority of receiving states where immigration has become a political weapon in the hands of conservative and extreme-right parties. Through the use of deep-seated fears such as loss of economic and social privilege, loss of security and even of life itself, in the way Bush, Blair, Chirac, Howard, Berlusconi, and others have done, means have been constructed to shift the balance of liberty and security in favour of security, in detriment to the democratic guarantees and wellbeing of minority groups.

Still, the domestic cultural diversity of developed states is not going to go away, even though immigrants feel increasingly uneasy about changing policy and social perceptions. For example, two-thirds of British immigrants of Southeast Asian descent stated they would consider leaving the United Kingdom due to Islamophobia after the London attack.<sup>13</sup> The presence of new cultural minorities in developed states —called diasporas or transnational communities— is an irreversible phenomenon that many regard as a destructive questioning of traditional national identity, including the identities of

national minorities. An improved social contract that takes into consideration the initiative of current Spanish president José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero and Turkish prime minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the Alliance of Civilisations, might reap positive rewards. Debate as to the characteristics of this strengthened contract remain to be seen, but the hope is that we will extend and entrench our rights and freedoms with this discussion.

## EROSION OF CITIZENSHIP

Citizenship continues to be the foundation upon which rights and responsibilities are attributed to residents. However, the distinction between citizen and non-citizen is being eroded by the appearance of new intermediate figures, such as the non-citizen that enjoys limited political rights, the citizen that is socially discriminated, and the resident non-citizen that has no rights whatsoever.

Currently, states classify inhabitants according to their status —or lack thereof— as citizens. Citizenship is the main institution that grants and guarantees individual rights to members of a country, whether democratic or authoritarian. This state of affairs has not arisen overnight but developed in conjunction with the fight for equality between men of differing social standing and property ownership, between men of differing races and ethnicities, between men and women, and so on. The existence of differing degrees of citizenship has been the norm for most of the history of the institution of citizenship. Equality of citizens' rights and responsibilities is a recent and incomplete phenomenon. The right to same-sex marriage, for instance, continues to be questioned. Equal citizenship is an ideal to which democratic societies aspire, and foreigners represent a challenge to the institution because they rupture the dichotomy of citizen/non-citizen.

The idea that all residents are citizens and enjoy every right and share every responsibility excludes non-citizens. In a world in which borders are shut and therefore limited possibilities exist for legal migration, the reality is most immigrants arrive and remain illegally. In other words, they have no rights and no responsibilities. Immigrants and refugees in states which accept an annual quota arrive with the legal right to reside and work, but not to citizenship. In states that do not accept immigrants legally, many immigrants in irregular situations could achieve legal residence and employment by an amnesty or regularisation, which is the most common mechanism for states of the northern Mediterranean. A significant percentage of the population in most western states resides legally but does not have citizenship, which entails different implications depending on the particular state in question. In Canada, for example, the difference between "citizen" and "resident" is entirely a political issue: non-citizens do not have the right to vote nor to present themselves as candidates for election, but naturalisation in turn is very accessible. The country requires three years of residency and basic linguistic and political knowledge. In other countries, residency is not permanent. It has to be renewed every year or every five years, while access to citizenship is much longer and

■ <sup>13</sup> See *The Guardian*, "Muslims Poll," July 2005, <http://www.icmresearch.co.uk/reviews/2005/Guardian%20-%20muslims%20july05/Guardian%20Muslims%20julo5.asp>

<sup>14</sup> See October 8 Law 36/2002, which modifies the Civil Code regarding nationality, and the Spanish Civil Code, which requires 10 years of residency for most foreigners in order to acquire citizenship.

complicated.<sup>14</sup> But whether by personal choice or lack of it —because dual nationality is not accepted or because persons become *denizens* when nationality is based on *ius sanguini* and they cannot access it (Hammar, 1992)— a good part of the population and a growing segment is resident without citizenship. This population is disconnected from the political realm yet suffers the electoral choices of its citizens. Something is wrong when an Italian citizen through family connections but Canadian by birth and resident in Canada can exercise more political influence in Italy than Tunisian or French citizens resident there, where they work and educate their family.

In addition to the growing number of legal residents without political rights, an increasing percentage of naturalised citizens are categorised as second-class for religious, ethnic, cultural, linguistic, or racial differences. When for historic or political reasons, a democratic state gives preference to one religion over another, or when public administrations are powerless (or do not exercise their power for electoral reasons) to guarantee normalcy for everyone in the practice of religion, especially to those of the Islamic faith, social rights and responsibilities are not the same even though we cannot in a technical and legal sense speak of second-class citizenship. Further, in cases where there is not religious discrimination, there may be socio-economic discrimination, which may be why French citizens of Maghrebi origin have been relegated to suburban ghettos for decades but not excluded from a secular schooling system and civil bureaucracy.

Because of security concerns, democratic states such as Canada and England —where it is only permanent residents that are obliged to carry identification documents— have begun to withdraw the status of permanent from residents with alleged connections to terrorism and deport them to their countries of origin, although they have not reached the point of legislating reversible naturalisation for these persons. The introduction of security in the debate over citizenship, permanent residency without citizenship, and non-citizenship status, has returned talk to the old dichotomy of citizen/non-citizen, which leaves persons in intermediate situations in legal limbo. At the same time, alternatives are not easily found. Numerous voices propose to link citizenship to stable residence in municipalities, a concept known as “citizenship as neighbourhood” (De Lucas, 2005). This new idea would allow persons to root themselves in their more immediate contexts and to facilitate the enjoyment of rights and the sharing of responsibilities.

The landscape this article presents is hardly optimistic, but it would be erroneous to transmit a vision of helplessness. After all, as the poet Miquel Martí i Pol states in a poem called *Ara mateix* (Right Now), “everything thing needs to be done, everything is possible” ||

■ References

ARANGO, J. (2005): "Las migraciones internacionales a comienzos del siglo XXI", *Atlas de la inmigración marroquí en España*, Madrid, Autonomous University of Madrid, pp. 22-24.

DE LUCAS, J. (2005): "De inmigrantes a ciudadanos. ¿Un proyecto imposible?", *Atlas de la inmigración marroquí en España*, Madrid, Autonomous University of Madrid, pp. 391-395.

HAMMAR, T. (1992): *Democracy and the Nation-State: Aliens, Denizens and Citizens in a World of International Migration*, Avesbury, Aldershot.

HARVEY C. J.: "Dissident Voices: Refugees, Human Rights and Asylum in Europe", *Social & Legal Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 3, (Sept, 2000): 367-396.

MARTÍ I POL, M., (1981): *L'àmbit de tots els àmbits*, Edicions 62, Empúries.

NUGENT, W. (1992): *Crossings: The Great Transatlantic Migrations, 1870-1914*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press.

RICHMOND, A. H.: "Global Apartheid: A Postscript", *Refuge: Canada's Periodical on Refugees*, 2001, Vol. 19, No. 4, (Feb, 2001): 8-13.

RODRÍGUEZ ZAPATERO, J. L.: "Por una alianza de civilizaciones", *La Factoria*, No. 27 (May-August 2005).

UNITED NATIONS [Population Division] (2000): *Replacement Migration: Is it a Solution to Declining and Ageing Population?*, New York: <http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/migration/migration.htm>

WHITAKER, R.: "Refugees: The Security Dimension", *Citizenship Studies*, 2, 3, (Nov, 1998): 413-434.

**Jordi Sànchez**

# Immigration in Catalonia

## *An Overview*

**Immigration is not a new phenomenon in Catalonia. Ours is a country that has taken in immigrants from a number of different origins and incorporated them among its assets as a nation. In view of its historical proximity and numerical significance we cannot help but recall the wave of immigration, mostly from the south of Spain, between the 1960s and mid-1970s. Although they are not so well known, also worthy of note are a number of internal migratory movements that, over the years, have led to the depopulation of some regions of the country, in the Pyrenees, for example, bestowing life and activity in others that became the receiving areas.**

**It is evident**, then, that Catalonia has experience and vivid memories of all the aspects of the phenomena of migration. Telling evidence of this is the fact that Catalonia's particular model of integration has been recognised as such, to the extent that it is known as the "Catalan model". It is notable for the melting-pot vocation of Catalan territories and the different processes of fusion that have taken place. Often, however, this relatively successful past is used to give the impression that this experience is sufficient as a response to the new wave of immigration that Catalonia hesitantly began to experience in the early 1980s and that has now taken on very major proportions as we advance further into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**Intense Growth in Very Few Years.** Nobody would deny that the population of foreigners in Catalonia has grown spectacularly in a particularly short period of time. Nonetheless, it is not so evident that we have managed to grasp the true dimensions of such an abrupt change, which has almost certainly taken us by surprise. In order to capture how our expectations about the evolution of immigration fell well short of the mark, it might be highly illuminating to look again at the demographic forecasts made at the end of the 1990s. In one chapter that appeared in 1998 in a collective work on Catalan society (and published by the Statistical Institute of Catalonia<sup>1</sup>), to give only one example of what was written at the time, the forecast for the coming years of the net figure for immigration of foreigners was below an upper limit of 10,000 people per year.

The reality of the immediately succeeding years demonstrated how wrong we were in all our estimates<sup>2</sup>. In 2002, the net balance of immigrants came to 215,000 men and women. In 2003, the figure rose to 230,000. In only three years, from 2001 to 2004, the number of foreign immigrants to Catalonia trebled. And even now, in 2004, we have the same ascendant curve that only five or six years ago we failed even to intuit.

What has happened with immigration in Catalonia these last few years cannot be extricated from a generalised process in a much wider context. Hence we need to be aware of the fact that the number of people around the planet who have been displaced for a period of over twelve months<sup>3</sup> from their homes or countries they have adopted (by citizenship) has grown by over 40 million in the last decade. If in 1990 the figures showed that some 120 million people around the world were migrants, the number had risen to 160 million by the year 2000, a growth of more than four million people per year. This means that the world's migrant population today (2004) is, in all probability, greater than 190 million people.

Understanding the scope of these migrations, and trying to make them understood, also requires taking into account these abovementioned facts and assuming, too that, in the coming decades, migratory movements are very likely to keep on growing. To the extent that, on the planetary scale, all forecasts point to the probability that demographic and economic differences between rich or developed regions and poor or underdeveloped regions will only continue to grow throughout the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we are not very well-equipped to argue that economically-induced migration —the greater part— is going to disappear.

The unequal distribution of wealth is of such a magnitude that a mere glance at a few figures is sufficient to understand the origins of some of this migratory thrust. The 30 countries with the highest GDP have a per capita income that is 22 times higher than that of the 170 countries with the lowest GDP. There is nothing to indicate that this unequal

■ <sup>1</sup> Blanes, A. (1998) "El futur de la població catalana" in Giner S. (ed.) *La societat catalana*, Barcelona, Institut d'Estadística de Catalunya. Generalitat de Catalunya (169-183).

<sup>2</sup> Although we know that formulating predictions in the social sciences has always been a high-risk exercise, it is evident that the gap between the predictions and the reality of what has happened is simply gigantic, spectacular. As a political scientist who is an

enthusiast of predictions about electoral behaviour, I am hardly the one to be so bold as to point the finger at my colleagues, who, in the domain of forecasts, have a legitimacy that is far superior to that of political scientists. I have simply used this example to illustrate the distance between the expected scenarios and the social reality.

<sup>3</sup> This is the minimum period set by the United Nations for defining a person as a migrant.

distribution will be corrected in the near future. It is hence not difficult to envisage that migratory movements will continue to grow in future and that this increase will also be aided by the fact that, in general, it is now easier for the planet's population to communicate and move about.

## MANAGING THE NEW IMMIGRATION

**Diversity as a Characteristic of the New Immigration.** To return to Catalonia, one must recognise that, with regard to the past, there is a new factor in the more recent immigration that might potentially give rise to a response in Catalan society that is rather different from previous responses. Without wishing to be an alarmist, I believe that this response could, at times, take the form of shock. The new element lies in the high degree of difference between the immigrant and autochthonous populations, with the clear understanding that this diversity is also an intrinsic feature within the collective that we generically identify as immigrant.

To speak of immigration today in Catalonia is to speak of complexity. It is a complexity deriving from a multiplicity of factors —cultural, religious, economic, urban settlement patterns, social, legal, etc.— which means that the challenges posed to us by this latter-day immigration has no direct parallels with previous migratory processes.

A quick look at Table I should be sufficient to obtain a rapid idea of the figures for members of foreign populations registered on 1 January 2004 and classified by zones of origin, with mention, too, of the main countries of origin.

**Irregularity: an Expression of Policy Failure.** The table gives an idea of the highly plural origins of today's immigrants and also the dimensions of one of the central issues, which is the number of foreigners whose status has not been regularised. Today, in the autumn of 2004, this is probably the burning question among all those that arise in discussion of the issue of immigration. It is evident that the question of irregularity will be positively resolved in general terms quite soon. However, it must be noted that, until it is resolved, any other debate will be affected or conditioned by this factor. Irregularity is the main problem raised today by the arrival of people from other countries, not only because of the numbers involved but also all the explicit and implicit social, economic, political, not to mention moral issues that derive from irregularity.

Again, it should be said, with regard to this matter, that the distance in statistical terms between the two groups of legal and illegal immigrants has continued to grow, year after year. In other words, the growth of the non-regularised foreign population has progressively increased to reach, in Catalonia, a figure of almost 300,000 people. This inevitably brings us to remark the failure of government actions aimed at dealing with both migratory flows and the stay in our country of people whose situation is irregular, administratively speaking.

This failure is still more resounding if we take as our starting point the fact that, in recent years, political action with regard to immigration has basically been focused on containing the entry of immigrants. In accordance with the law, foreigners in an administratively irregular situation have been detected and expelled and, finally,

Census-listed Foreign Population, Regularised Residents and the Difference in Catalonia 2003

	CENSUS		MINISTRY		DIFFERENCE CENSUS/MINISTRY		
<b>Total Population</b>	6,892,497		6,704,146		188,351	% census	% Ministry
<b>Foreign population</b>	689,349		383,938		305,411	44.3	79.5
<b>EUROPE</b>	<b>156,964</b>	<b>22.8</b>	<b>88,440</b>	<b>23.0</b>	<b>68,524</b>	<b>43.7</b>	<b>77.5</b>
<b>European Union</b>	93,080	13.5	62,366	16.2	30,714	33.0	49.2
<b>Rest Europe</b>	63,884	9.3	26,074	6.8	37,810	59.2	145.0
<b>Romania</b>	24,359	3.5	8,040	2.1	16,319	67.0	203.0
<b>Russia</b>	8,396	1.2	3,142	0.8	5,254	62.6	167.2
<b>Ukraine</b>	9,374	1.4	4,634	1.2	4,740	50.6	102.3
<b>AFRICA</b>	<b>198,561</b>	<b>28.8</b>	<b>151,860</b>	<b>39.6</b>	<b>46,701</b>	<b>23.5</b>	<b>30.8</b>
<b>Maghreb</b>	161,146	23.4	122,592	31.9	38,554	23.9	31.4
<b>Algeria</b>	6,484	0.9	4,572	1.2	1,912	29.5	41.8
<b>Morocco</b>	153,305	22.2	117,752	30.7	35,553	23.2	30.2
<b>Rest Africa</b>	37,415	5.4	29,268	7.6	8,147	21.8	27.8
<b>AMERICA</b>	<b>270,665</b>	<b>39.3</b>	<b>102,332</b>	<b>26.7</b>	<b>168,333</b>	<b>62.2</b>	<b>164.5</b>
<b>South and Central</b>	265,399	38.5	99,619	25.9	165,780	62.5	166.4
<b>Argentina</b>	32,182	4.7	9,724	2.5	22,458	69.8	231.0
<b>Bolivia</b>	13,130	1.9	1,493	0.4	11,637	88.6	779.4
<b>Colombia</b>	39,796	5.8	15,501	4.0	24,295	61.0	156.7
<b>Ecuador</b>	87,571	12.7	25,114	6.5	62,457	71.3	248.7
<b>Dominican Rep.</b>	13,697	2.0	10,372	2.7	3,325	24.3	32.1
<b>Peru</b>	22,944	3.3	18,083	4.7	4,861	21.2	26.9
<b>ASIA</b>	<b>62,367</b>	<b>9.0</b>	<b>45,509</b>	<b>11.9</b>	<b>16,858</b>	<b>27.0</b>	<b>37.0</b>
<b>China</b>	21,326	3.1	17,667	4.6	3,659	17.2	20.7
<b>Philippines</b>	6,932	1.0	6,031	1.6	901	13.0	14.9
<b>India</b>	6,434	0.9	3,880	1.0	2,554	39.7	65.8
<b>Pakistan</b>	15,840	2.3	11,720	3.1	4,120	26.0	35.2

Source: Aja, E. and Nadal M. (2004) La immigració a Catalunya avui, Yearbook 2003, Ed. Mediterrània (p. 144)

steps for channelling the new demands of immigration in the direction of regularisation have been considered. The results, if we attend to the data we have available, are discouraging. The great efforts to reinforce policing facilities and improve new measures of vigilance and control at the entry points do not seem to have achieved the results announced by the previous Spanish (Popular Party) Government. On the contrary, what became manifest were the insufficiency and inefficiency that bedevilled the ways in which immigrants could enter the country with their documents in order, or in which illegal immigrants who, for different reasons, were already in the country could regularise their situation.

It should be remarked at this point that the causes of irregularity are very diverse and in no case can they be exclusively or even mainly reduced to the illegal entry of the so-called boat people. Irregularities occur, in many cases, as the result of unforeseen circumstances, for example a period of unemployment coinciding with the time for renewal of permits. In other cases, people have entered the country perfectly legally, for example as tourists, and have not returned to their countries of origin, remaining without taking the requisite legal steps. Whatever the case, it is clear that the regulations for channelling residence

permits or requests for them are totally restricted hence thrusting the majority of foreigners into a situation of irregularity.

As for the mechanisms for channelling migratory flows, the main mechanism the central government has chosen to adopt is that known as contingencies. Needless to say, this method has proved to be inadequate, probably because of the bias it has incorporated (basically favouring workers destined for the agricultural sector and mostly coming from Eastern Europe) and especially because of the low numbers (even considerably below those authorised) of people who have been accepted in recent years.

Migration policy has been guided by principles appropriate to a Ministry of the Interior, neglecting other aspects that must be taken into account for successfully embarking upon political action aimed at dealing with the phenomenon of migration. When political action fails (and the statistics confirm this failure) with the result that hundreds of thousands of people —the so-called irregular immigrants— are left in a situation of invisibility, it becomes much more difficult to influence the resulting situation. The State itself —at least in formal terms— closes the doors to any possible intervention except expulsion. At this point, one should note that, as was all too predictable, the use of this measure has been shown to be unfeasible in global terms.

Without underestimating other considerations that pertain more to the moral or ethical domains, it must be stressed that any migration-focused response that is based strictly on policing and the so-called border politics is unworkable, as events have lamentably borne out in recent years.

The problem of so many people who are trying to exist without the requisite documents can only be overcome through radical change in the political foundations that determine Spanish legislation, or by guaranteeing greater efficiency in observing political guidelines or the legislation in force. In other words, either these highly restrictive principles should be modified, and moves made towards smoothing the way to legality for all those people who live and work in our country, or there should be brought to bear a real capacity to stop the flow of immigrants, to seal off borders and expel all those without the requisite papers. Otherwise the problem will only continue to grow. My logical inclination is for the kind of solutions that will apparently go into effect at the end of this year —though they are neither as satisfactory nor as generous as one might have hoped— with new immigration regulations that favour the progressive and permanent regularisation of people who are able to demonstrate that they are working in the country.

**Self-government and Immigration Policy.** It is essential to approach the phenomenon of immigration from the point of view of institutional management. First, it should be noted that there are several kinds of determining factors that greatly obstruct immigration management. One of these is the insufficiency of state laws in the face of a worldwide predicament. Today's model of the nation-state is totally inadequate for managing immigration policy. It is insufficient for managing a phenomenon on a worldwide scale and neither is it effective when it comes to producing policies of proximity without which social cohesion is difficult to maintain. Both these questions are directly related with immigration.

In Catalonia, moreover, we suffer from a second determining factor because our governmental institutions are clearly limited in their ability to intervene in this domain. I do not wish to state that greater jurisdiction for the Generalitat (the autonomous Government of Catalonia) in the area of immigration would be the solution to the problems we are faced with today. It is evident that part of the solution to nation-state ineffectiveness would only be found in reinforcing the European Union. However, this is not to contradict the assertion that what is needed is a normative development that confers on institutions like the Generalitat and municipal councils clear jurisdiction in developing immigration policies that are worthy of the name. The complexity of the reality of migration requires proximity, and the central government does not guarantee this. The different branches of the Catalan administration, the Generalitat and local administration, need to apply immigrant reception policies but lack the basic powers

**“In any process of social integration, the language of the country of reception is a basic factor”**

to establish content, with regard to both the number and profile of immigrants, and having any active role in determining this content in concert with the State as a whole.

In our case, there is also a need for institutional intervention in order to ensure that the presence of new immigration does not have a negative impact on the processes of national consolidation and linguistic normalisation. Such measures must not, in any case, resort to alarmism and neither should

they be implemented as if there is some kind of threat to Catalan identity. Immigration represents no threat today, yet it is clear that the sensibility that needs to be conveyed to the new arrivals in order to favour the most rapid and complete possible incorporation into the country is unlikely to come from institutions like the central government, which has not been known to show much sensitivity in this regard.

In any process of social integration, the language of the country of reception is a basic factor. In our case, one observes obvious shortcomings in the ways in which the immigrant is offered an approximation to the Catalan language. The fact that there are two official languages might mean that, because of lack of knowledge, immigrants opt to learn one of them, in particular Spanish, thereby relegating Catalan to a second—or third—rate position of inferiority for the majority of the immigrant population. Initiatives like those of the *Consorti per a la Normalització Lingüística* (Consortium for Linguistic Normalisation - CNL) to give immigrants the opportunity to learn Catalan, and to set up easy-to-join and open-to-all Catalan courses with this aim are kinds of measures that are essential.

The idea is not so much that people should be able to speak Catalan as their everyday language but rather that people who speak other languages should accept in a totally natural fashion that the language spoken in Catalonia is Catalan.

For these and other reasons the Catalan Government needs to play a more prominent role in the determination of these policies. The Generalitat should participate with the central Government in a predetermined and permanent space with the aim of defining the most



relevant aspects of immigration policy. Notable among the issues at stake are questions referring to content (number and profile of immigrants) and the possibility of taking the lead with regard to measures that can affect Catalonia, for example the procedures for contracting workers in their countries of origin and also different kinds of intervention on control of the residence and work permits of this population.

**The Solitude of the Local World.** In another institutional sphere, the municipalities—and hence the local councils—are daily required to respond to the impact of immigration with some or other kind of intervention. On most occasions, the policies that need to be implemented in the municipalities require greater powers than the councils have. This situation should be understood if bridges of collaboration and inter-institutional coordination are to be established. It is probably necessary to determine criteria so that local regulations in this terrain are not an isolated and voluntary product of the councils. Local action with respect to immigration is exposed to the contradiction of obligatorily having to include in the census people to whom the central government does not concede a residence permit and yet, in many cases, also having to offer these people certain public services as a result.

Small municipalities with little economic and administrative capacity are faced with even more difficulties than the larger ones. In general, however, the resources available to the municipalities to cope with needs deriving from immigration are noticeably scarce. Great advances have manifestly been made in the domain of concepts but resources and agility of procedures have remained the same. There has been no compensation in terms of special resources for the overload that immigration has so often represented for local government, with all the tensions that this creates in a financial situation—the local government one—that was already inadequate. Supra-municipal planning at the regional and sub-regional levels could help to resolve some of the difficulties by improving the efficiency of available resources. Activities of this type can save councils from being faced with a double dilemma: not knowing what to do, and not knowing what resources to use, assuming they do know what to do.

One of the most common errors of the different administrations has been to leave immigration policy in the hands of the social services. Immigration has brought out the weak points of the welfare state in Catalonia. In any case, the activities of social policy need to focus not only on foreign immigrants but on the citizens as a whole. Social service policy should be accompanied by a universalisation of immigrant rights. Otherwise we would be cultivating a policy that is more appropriate to the nineteenth century than to the twenty-first. In fact, it ought to be kept in mind that any response from the public sector vis-à-vis immigration runs the risk of stigmatising the immigrant. There is a general tendency in society to blame immigration for too many things and this should be rectified in order to avoid future conflicts. One of the most frequent complaints is that immigrants use up the resources of the welfare state.

At this point, it should be remarked that immigration exposes the social deficiencies that were already inherent in our welfare and social protection system. Immigration sometimes acts as a mirror that magnifies some of the worst aspects of the system, thereby making them more visible. In the case of social policy—especially economic transfers—what appears is an increase in demand that is not accompanied by any

increase in available assistance. In the social sphere, this means that what some people have defined as the soup-kitchen syndrome—which is to say a certain kind of struggle for a scarce resource and a sense of grievance, and thence blaming of the immigrant for monopolising this resource— could take root and extend.

Political action with regard to immigration should have both medium- and long-term perspectives, which in any case should look beyond the date of the next elections. Fortunately many *immigration plans* have been drafted with a longer-term view than that of council electoral cycles, and neither are they restricted to the area of personal services. When they have been drawn up with the participation of all political forces, even those that are not represented in the town hall, and including NGOs, associations and other entities in recognition of the co-responsibility of civil society in the task of managing diversity, the results have been much more positive.

In any reflection on these aspects of the matter, some remarks

need to be made on the associative network. To begin with, there is clearly excessive fragmentation among many social agents and, in general, there is little coordination. The non-governmental network has frequently been obliged to take responsibility for the processes of receiving immigrants, especially in cases of those whose situation has not been regularised. This is a subsidiary function of the administration, although its different branches, either at national or local level or, in other words, the Generalitat or municipal councils, do not give the matter sufficient attention. In recent years these tasks have multiplied exponentially. The fact that it is estimated that there are tens of thousands of people in Catalonia without residence or work permits has given rise to this growth in services and assistance activities in the non-governmental sphere.

**The Limits of Liberalism.** The constraints, however, will not be overcome by means of institutional or jurisdictional revamping, or with policy design and drafting. There are more general deficits, of a political nature, that will need to be reviewed in order to make any advances in creating new conditions favourable to a political model in which diversity does not constitute an obstacle for social and political cohesion.

The inability of liberalism to deal reasonably with the cultural pluralism presented by immigration is a serious problem. It is not possible, from the standpoint of the classical, predominant liberal paradigm, to respond adequately to a situation that is as plural as that presented by present-day social reality, when there are people who still persist in claiming that the only rights that exist are individual and social and that there is no such thing as collective rights (of all kinds of minority groups, stateless nations, etc.). Political liberalism is still too timorous in its advance towards recognising this new generation of rights, despite the efforts that some people have made in recent years to bring collective rights into some harmony with liberal doctrine and incorporate them therein.

Respectful and effective dealing with diversity and plurality is a very complicated matter for any branch of the administration if the foundations of political integration

“Immigration exposes the social deficiencies already inherent to our welfare and social protection system”

have not been already established. It is impossible if foreigners have not previously been permitted to join a shared public sphere. It would be difficult to administer diversity in any responsible and effective manner unless a prior principle of basic equality had been introduced, this being based on citizen rights.

Particularly relevant is the fact that it is impossible for the immigrant population to exercise voting rights under any circumstances. In practice, this fact becomes an obstacle involving nothing less than community-based exclusion of immigrants, thereby making their full integration unworkable. The right of suffrage is one of the greatest instruments of integration of the liberal democracies since it is an expression of the principle of equality. Its extension to the immigrant

**“The legal dimension of integration alone is not sufficient to guarantee social cohesion, but it is absolutely necessary”**

collective must mean that immigrants can leave behind their condition of being an immigrant to become yet another citizen of the country.

Only comparable rights and duties for the population as a whole in a country can guarantee the idea of integration. Logically, the legal dimension of integration alone is not sufficient to guarantee social cohesion, but it is absolutely necessary.

Unless the present bases of political liberalism as applied to immigration are overturned, there is a risk that immigration policies will end up reducing the immigrant to a category that is subject to the needs of the job market rather than to the authority of a democratic principle. In terms of incontrovertible political and social cohesion, Europe successfully overcame the excesses of human commodification at the end of the nineteenth century, thanks to an intelligent combination of universally applied political democracy and social rights.

## CLOSING REMARKS

Catalan society and its institutions need to have a model or project for receiving and incorporating the immigrant population. Political actions should be guided and determined by such a project. This shared model is what can guarantee the coherence and efficiency of the different branches of the administration, while designing and implementing their policies. It is evident that it should take into account Catalonia's previous experience of immigration. The very clear component of the fusion that resulted from former migratory processes is solid enough for an attempt to be made to repeat it today. The management of diversity in our country does not have to copy what is happening in other countries. The cultural and national characteristics specific to Catalonia enable us to think about the opportunity of advancing with our own home-grown model.

It is also clear that the debate that would lead to the definition of this model should take place within the framework of institutions pertaining to the Generalitat, in other words, the Catalan Parliament and Government, without this working in detriment of additional spaces of participation so that the possibility of contributing is guaranteed to other actors in the institutional and civic spheres.

This model would only be possible if the project were based on wide-ranging political and social consensus. Such a consensus would not work against the essential leadership the Government would have to provide in order to give the indispensable momentum and coherence to each and every initiative in the public sphere in response to the issues of immigration. Naturally, in every sphere of activity, the leaders would need to respond to the reality that exists today.

Finally, I shall list a number of ideas that may be useful in opening up the debate about the direction in which we should be moving in our policies of adaptation.

**1 Any policy of adaptation requires some kind of monitoring of migratory flows.**

It is not possible to design policies, envisage the resources needed, assign services, and so on, without some real-world estimates of the number of inflowing immigrants. I am not proposing that borders should be closed. There is room for many more people in Catalonia than we have today but, however true this may be, in Catalonia, as in any other country, reception capacity is not unlimited. Only if we accept this reasoning and what derives from it, can we be in a position to avoid the kind of collapse we now have with the present policies of adaptation, and to circumvent the instrumental use of fear that we find in the more conservative sectors with regard to immigration.

It is not possible to consider any policy of integration if this is based on a model that envisages immigrant presence in the country as a temporary phenomenon, and that therefore does not take sufficiently into account the desire to stay on permanently. It is not reasonable to think about effective policies of integration if the adjudication and renovation of residence permits is essentially subject to periodical labour requirements. The dignity of any human being should be seen as being superior to any other criteria, especially those that belong to the economic or labour spheres.

As long as a major part of the immigrant population remains in a situation of irregularity, we shall need to envisage a complicated, an extremely complicated period in which adaptation might occur. The simple fact of the existence of non-legal immigrants automatically makes any immigrant suspect. This suspicion then invites police checks, neighbours' doubts and many other factors that make coexistence difficult.

**2 From a different perspective, there is a need for considering change in the basic elements of political culture vis-à-vis the foreigner.** We need to accept as a collective that the opportunity to dignify one's own existence and to prosper, even if this means leaving one's own country and seeking acceptance in another, is a right that can be denied to no one. It makes no sense that we should accept the free circulation of capital and goods but not of people.

Again, we must reject attitudes of tolerant paternalism towards immigrants because they are poor. We need to construct a plural recognition of our society, in the awareness that this is precisely the kind of social pluralism that liberalism has been unable to create to date. This is not a matter of blind acceptance of coexistence between different groups merely as a lesser evil. It is a question of understanding that our society has changed in some aspects that were once seen as immutable.

Western societies have probably never before known such a degree of cultural heterogeneity as what we are now experiencing. We need to learn to live in diversity among different collectives, a diversity that evidently must not serve as an excuse for social or political inequalities. This is a very far-reaching cultural change and difficult to accept for some members of the population. Probably years will have to go by before we achieve a social mass that would be sufficiently solid to enable us to state that diversity is one of the characteristics of our society.

**3 It is reasonable to think that acceptance of this diversity should not be constructed on the basis of segmentation and spatial and social differentiation** among the diverse collectives. Should this occur in a generalised fashion, it will be the germ that will prevent cohesion in the future. Yet, one should also warn that the natural tendency of any migratory process is to generate such differentiation. A tour through our cities and towns clearly confirms this. Far from leading to resignation, corroboration of this fact should move us to draw up new policies that aim to avoid chronic repetition of segmentation within the collective. Our model cannot be that of the United States, with the exacerbating factor that other assumptions or models, too (the Dutch one, for example), still run the risk of ending up with results that are in no way more satisfactory than those of the American model.

The aim is to find out how to foster social mobility and break up social inherency. It is therefore essential to recognise the social and working rights, as well as short-term political rights, of any person residing in Catalonia.

**4 Immigration does not debilitate the welfare state but it does, in the worst of cases, expose pre-existing shortcomings.** On the other hand, it is also necessary to appreciate—which is all too infrequently the case—the contribution made by the immigrant community to our country's generation of wealth. I do not refer to the coffers of social security alone, but also to the non-regularised population working in the black economy, generating wealth in both production and consumption terms.

**5 Such measures need to be taken with the conviction that regularisation must not involve any kind of stigmatisation.** We began to make the great social leap forward in Europe when some social policies—at the end of the nineteenth century—left the realm of the specific and took on the dimension of universality or, in other words, when they finally left behind the poor laws, which had functioned as a mere sop towards poverty, in order to bring society into the welfare state.

**6 Public administration must act in a transversal sense, in an effective and indisputable direction.** Leadership is essential to guarantee such a transversal line of action. However, this idea is not sufficient if we take into account the many and serious difficulties that lie behind any action that is supposed to be transversal. Transversality is only possible from a working and organisational culture that is different from what we have today in most areas of administration.

**7 In recent months we have moved forward in the sense of not presenting immigration as a problem in the public arena.** Now, perhaps, is the time to accept that discussion needs to be politicised, but also making sure it does not lapse into mere party politics.

**8 There are still institutions that fear having to produce a plan that deals with these issues.** It is impossible to have a viable plan—at either municipal or national level— unless two conditions are observed: first, a clear set of priorities in terms of objectives and, second, appropriate economic resources. A plan does not mean compiling in a document a narrative and a list of good intentions about extant policies and services.

**9 Needless to say, political leadership is required at national level to give momentum to any measures that are taken.** Parliament and the Government need to be involved, and guidelines must be clearly stated. Also needed among the institutions is understanding, not just passive but patently active, something that has been conspicuous by its absence in Catalonia in recent years.

To conclude with a final statement, it is essential to achieve political and social acceptance of the migratory phenomenon that is presently being experienced in Catalonia. This acceptance has to begin with the idea that what the newcomers want is simply to be recognised as citizens so that they can live in the present and future with a dignity that in many cases has hitherto been denied them. Social coherence will depend on the capacity we have for constructing a universe of values, attitudes and perceptions that is shared by autochthonous and new inhabitants alike. It will depend on factors that we find existing in any society, and that we can identify as the basic elements upon which we construct our present and future. Defining these elements and knowing how to agree upon them within our society is the next step we shall have to take. If we manage to do this, we will be able to hold at bay the immigration-derived fears and phantoms that circulate among us today with regard to our social and national future **II**

Salvador Cardús

# Questions of identity

**In this article, I shall look further into a number of ideas I discussed in an earlier work, “Els equívocs de la multiculturalitat” (The Errors of Multiculturalism-Institut d’Estudis Ilerdencs [Institute of Lleida Studies], 2003), as well as several articles for the press in which my aim was to offer a critique of what might be called “multiculturalist ingenuity”. The ingenuity lies in the fact that this notion is used on the assumption that cultures form a homogenous whole, that they can be maintained and developed apart from the social structures that have created them, and that they can interrelate by means of “dialogue” and “mutual recognition among equals” in some kind of No Man’s Land.**

I am in no doubt that this kind of discourse is ideologically very well intentioned, but it is devoid of any analytical credibility. While cultures are open processes, they are determined by economic, political and social structures that declare their conditions of existence. And when “cultures” meet —by way of individual and group encounters— this also occurs within certain political frameworks of relationship. I am not referring, of course, to differences in the formal dignity of cultures but to the social conditions wherein individuals express themselves as the bearers, whether they are aware of it or not, of different cultural features, with different degrees of commitment to the culture to which it is supposed they belong. In my abovementioned paper, I argued for the idea of citizenship as a vehicle of coexistence and integration in a historically and territorially determined community, a concept I thought should replace the chimerical notion of an impossible —as a sociological impossible, let us say— “multicultural society”. In such

a case, citizenship should be understood as the acceptance of certain duties towards the community to which one belongs in exchange for which one receives recognition of individual rights. Since that paper was published —and in the wake of events in the United Kingdom, Holland, France and, indeed, throughout Europe— the debate in Catalonia has advanced considerably along these lines, while criticism of the multicultural model has become more generalised, making way for the notion of citizenship as the focus of all discussion.

## 1. IDENTITY WITHOUT ESSENTIALISM

Nevertheless, in this discussion of 2003, there were still a lot of loose ends. One of the issues I was not able to deal with then, and it seems an appropriate time to do it now, is that of identity. This is a basic factor in the constitution of any political community, the existence of which is essential if we are to be able to speak of citizenship in the strict sense of the word. It is true that one may talk about identity, and what it is in the sense of a community or a people (nation) in essentialist terms, referring to supposed innate “natures” and immemorial “features of national character”. This, however, is not my perspective. From the standpoint of sociology we can only approach reality from historical and contingent categories. Essentialist positions, in contrast, inevitably cling to culturally static and socially pre-modern societies.

Yet there is another way to talk about *identity* that departs from the idea that, whatever we are as a community, or a people or a nation, we might have been otherwise if the historical, political, economic or social conditions had been different. It is evident that, depending on the nature of these conditions, at present or in the future, not only *can* we substantially change our identity, but it will *necessarily* change and we shall cease to be what we are at present. This point of view is therefore concerned with the processes that end up defining an identity and, very especially, the forms of social and political recognition without which no identity can survive as such. In other words, the question of identity obliges us to ask ourselves a number of questions. What has made us be the way we are and the way we feel about ourselves? What is the margin of “identity” choice, and with what are we obliged to identify ourselves? What are the mechanisms that make possible the creation, maintenance and transformation of identities? When we speak of identity, are we thinking of relational social processes or precise cultural contents? These are questions about the objective and subjective dimensions of identity, about power relations, about mechanisms and about different kinds of social logic. As for the answers, they will certainly have to take into account the fact that, at the moment, we are the way we are because of what we have inevitably been in the past, that we are several contradictory things at once, that we are what has happened to us, like it or not, that we are what others recognise we can be and, naturally, we are what we are able to be, and able to want to be.

We Catalans, like any other political community in general, are what we are but we can stop being that and become something else. We can even be what we would like to be in different ways. Nobody has ever said, for example, that each and every Catalan has to be Catalan in exactly the same way. In this sense, it is as well to recall that identity

is primarily a matter of recognition. Each one of us is not exactly what we would like to be but, rather, what we are recognised as being. It is what Jean-Paul Sartre expressed in his famous words, “*L’homme est ce qu’il fait de ce qu’on a fait de lui*” —we are what we make of what others have made of us. Of course, identity is a question of power too: of what we are permitted to be. We Catalans have a great deal to say about that. Again, identity, rather than constituting a well-defined and systematic content made up of values, attitudes and social practices, is a container, a façade, a mask that “simulates” the existence of a specific and differentiated content. In other words, we could say that the advantage of having a recognised identity is more one of being able to spare oneself the question about who one is than of managing to specify what one is.

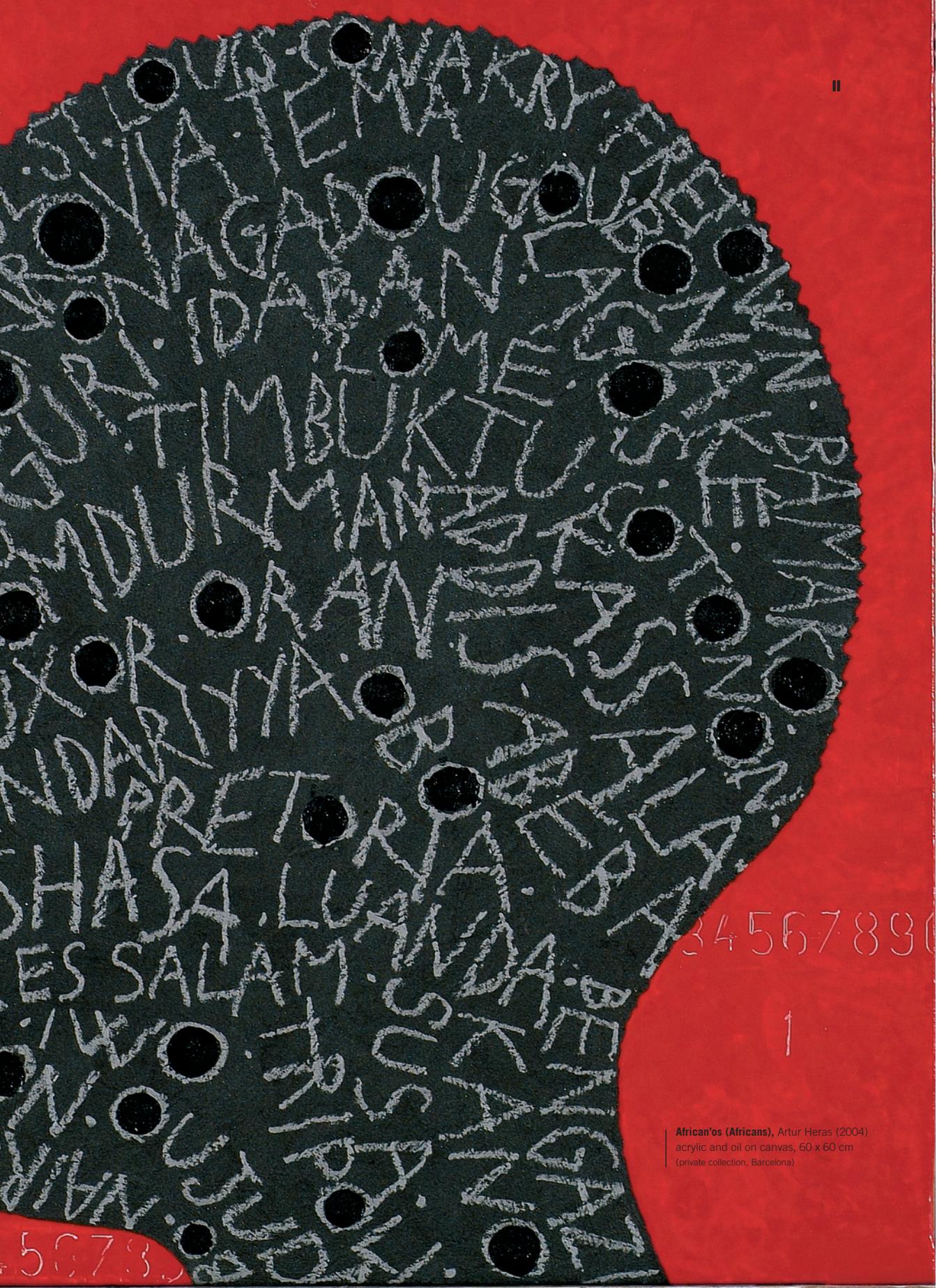
## 2. IDENTITY AND CITIZENSHIP

What I find interesting in this reflection on identity is the possibility of linking it with the notion of citizenship. As we know, it tends to be politically correct nowadays to say we should be citizens of the world. But the truth is that, historically and politically, one is not a citizen of the world but a citizen of a particular community. The “world” does not recognise that we have rights, and neither does it lay down obligations for us, from the juridical point of view, the social point of view or the historical point of view, because the “world” is not a political entity. We are not citizens of the world, of a world in general, but heirs of a very specific history that is frequently markedly distinct from that of the neighbouring town or of the people who live nearby. We are citizens because there are certain political institutions that recognise and guarantee our rights, and we are citizens because we have citizenship of one or another country, without which we would be “illegal” and “undocumented”.<sup>1</sup> Hence the rights of citizenship, as everyone knows, are not guaranteed to us in general, but they are specific, in a political here-and-now, in a national framework, and they are conditional upon loyalty to that community.

From the cultural point of view we are also prone to say that ours is, or should be, a universal culture, and that we have to get on well with all the other cultures in the world. Nonetheless, it is not true that a society or a culture, either Catalan or any other, is by definition or desire a catalogue of universal signs. The productions that result from a cultural process may certainly achieve universal recognition and they often aspire to such recognition. However, they stem from,

■ <sup>1</sup> In Catalan, the adjectives *il-legals* and *sense papers* are frequently used without a noun —such as “people” or “immigrants”— so that they refer to “nobody”, and this lack of a substantive dimension highlights the absence of rights for the people concerned [translator].





**African'os (Africans)**, Artur Heras (2004)  
acrylic and oil on canvas, 60 x 60 cm  
(private collection, Barcelona)

and have their first expression and their early development in a particular social and historical framework. They are not universal from the outset, so to say, but become so later, and only if somebody recognises them as such. In brief, ideas of citizenship and national identity are not in opposition but, in social terms, one is the condition of the other.

What happens is that the tracks taken in the definition and maintenance of identities have evolved in a highly accelerated fashion over the last half century, to such an extent that the very concept of identity has substantially changed. I mean that the concept of identity, which literally means the equality of something with itself, is a term that was used at a time when the rhythms of change in society were much slower paced. It was a

“The concept of identity is a term that was used at a time when the rhythms of change in society were much slower paced”

word that went with a much more closed and stable society that could still recognise itself even as the generations moved on. Hence it was a concept used to describe a society in which a certain way of being was carefully maintained, where the successive generations resembled those that came before them, where place-names were conserved, with lifestyles that only changed with

the introduction of some or other technological innovation that partially revolutionised them, where fathers passed on old crafts and trades to their sons, where the oral tradition was handed down, and even old feelings and hatreds were passed down through the generations, and so forth. In this kind of society, which we can only vaguely imagine now, the term identity, in the sense of sameness, might have made sense.

Now we have a completely different society in which changes are occurring at a spectacular rate. Let us consider the example of education. We still tend to speak of a “before” when we say that our parents, one generation ago, brought us up in such and such a fashion. The fact is that the changes are now so rapid that they condition the educational styles for different children in the same household. The first child grows up at a time when people usually don’t have a computer at home, the second child has a computer while the third, at the same age, is using a mobile phone as well. Everyone knows to what extent the computer and the mobile phone, to stay with this example, can modify the forms of personal and family relations, access to worlds beyond the home, styles of knowledge about reality, organisation and concepts of space and time, etcetera. Each child will therefore have to be brought up differently, with different tools, introducing new ways of doing things. In brief, living in a society that moves at such an accelerated pace as ours, a society that is so open from the point of view of cultural influences and lifestyles and, it is also worth mentioning, a society that is so heterogeneous, obliges us to reconsider the very notion of identity. We need a conception of identity that can also respond to the tensions that arise between all the diversity and changes I have mentioned and the powerful homogenising processes that are linked to new forms of cultural dependence pertaining to the leisure industries and the mass media, especially in the audiovisual domain.

The question is, then, in such a changing, such an extraordinarily heterogeneous society, what does identity consist of? And how is identity constructed? We must ask this because it is clear that if one wished to continue to be what one was, keeping the same identity in the face of all the changes, it could only be done by remaining apart from society. The way I see it, the concept of identity as it is used in the social sciences is clearly not adequate for describing the mechanisms of identification with the society to which one belongs, or those that foster loyalty to our national or local communities.

Perhaps a more apposite concept in these circumstances would be what is suggested by the word *identification*. Rather than *national identity*, we could speak of *national identifications*, which would seem to denote a process that is constantly adaptable to what there is, whatever it might be. Recognition, then, would not be obtained from the condition of being the same as something from the past, but from the fact of identifying oneself with what there is now. Even so, this concept does not completely satisfy me because there is something acquiescent about it, and because it seems to lose the thread of continuity, loyalty or fidelity to the community that originally afforded the idea of identity. I believe that the conceptual change must be more daring than this. Neither identity nor identification is useful if we keep thinking in terms of what they contain or what they identify. Identity needs to be rethought in its relational function rather than in terms of what it supposedly contains.

In any case, if we wish to keep talking about identity, what becomes clear is that we can no longer imagine it as it must have been in the last century. We must think about it in its new circumstances. In fact, it is relatively easy to observe what the new instruments of creation and maintenance of national identity are. To cite the most evident case, for example, one need go no further than the mass media. It is undeniable that, recently, the television reality-show-cum-talent-contest *Operación Triunfo* (Operation Triumph) has done more for the Spanish national identity than all the history lessons about Spain that the incumbent minister of Education might have wished schoolchildren to learn. Unlike what was true for the past, history teaching nowadays is an almost irrelevant instrument in the creation of national identity. In contrast, the mechanisms of national identification and territorial structuring offered by *Operación Triunfo* do create a Spanish national identity and they do so radically and potently.

It is not only the mechanisms of national attachment that are changing. Our way of thinking about ourselves is also changing. Has anyone realised that almost everybody who is over about forty or even thirty years of age is an immigrant in his or her own city or country, without having needed to move? The city where I was born and where I grew up no longer exists, for little of it remains today. Its population was 70,000 inhabitants, while now it is over 200,000. The school where I spent so many years, the railway station where I took the train to go to the university, the textile industries that filled the place with their noise, fumes and smells... do not exist any more. I would now be a veritable stranger in my city if I had remained trapped in that Terrassan identity from the days when Terrassa was full of looms. In fact, how many present-day inhabitants of Terrassa have known that city of which we all feel we are heirs? Who are more Terrassans, the people who come from the now non-existent Terrassa or those who, coming from outside, have settled in the city that they have contributed towards shaping with their presence? Hence, rather than saying that we are all immigrants in the strict sense, what I sustain is

that we all experience the condition of immigrant because we all know what it is to live in a society that has nothing to do with the one we knew years ago even though we have never moved away from home.

In this regard, it is interesting to take up the idea of the French historian Pierre Nora when he refers to *places of memory*. These are real or imaginary places on the basis of which national identities have been constituted. They are landscapes, myths, historic events, oral stories, heroes, and fictional characters, literary or popular, and so on. Nowadays, they might even be pop singers or dated junk telly programmes! In any case, this is an “invented” and permanently reinvented memory, and not precise memory. It is not an accurate memory but one that is negotiated, agreed upon by social consensus, made up from the sum of memories and forgettings that are required for the whole community to recognise itself at each particular historic moment.

### 3. IDENTITY AND IMMIGRATION: THE CASE OF CATALONIA

We Catalans have some unfinished business, and the appropriate solution to a number of our most recent identity challenges depends on this. I refer to the incorporation of immigration as a national “place of memory”. The fact is that, in Catalonia, immigration was the most significant phenomenon of the twentieth century. It is what made the Catalans of the twentieth century. Everyone, those who came during the course of the century, and those who were already there, has been moulded by it, some against the grain, others perforce, and others without even realising it. Immigration has always been a major factor in Catalonia—in the seventeenth century with the French, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century with the flow from country to city... However, it is one thing to say that it has always been thus, but quite another matter is the sheer volume of twentieth-century immigration with its almost unprecedented dimensions of which we are scarcely aware. Permit me to return to the case of my home town. Terrassa went, in one century, from 15,000 to 180,000 inhabitants or, in other words, its population increased sixteenfold. Nonetheless, we still keep speaking of it as if we are lifelong Terrassans. This is the result of being able to create our own identity, in this case, a local identity, but it does not detract from the idea that with only 15,000 Terrassans, as there were in 1900, we would not have constructed the city we know today. By this I mean to say that those of us who are the heirs of those 15,000 are not all a direct product.

As for Catalonia in more general terms, our population increased from 1,900,000 at the start of the twentieth century to 6,200,000 when it ended, to become 3.25 times greater. This is a spectacular increase that, from any point of view, has meant radical modification of Catalan society. The result is that three out of every four Catalans living in Catalonia at the recent turn of the century were descended from immigrants. Furthermore, three million newcomers arrived in Catalonia during the twentieth century. The demographers have estimated that if there had not been any immigration over the twentieth century, the population of Catalonia today would be at most 2,400,000 people. Can you imagine a Catalonia of only 2,400,000 inhabitants at the end of the twentieth century? It is no exaggeration to say that, in these circumstances, Catalonia would be an economically decadent reality, a culturally irrelevant country and, in political terms, we would be non-existent. In other words, there would be no Generalitat (Catalan Government), no Catalan television, or any kind of relevant economic potential.

## CONCLUSIONS

To sum up, there are two paradoxes that need to be discussed. First, at some point, we Catalans will have to wake up to the fact that immigration has not only not been an obstacle to our national identity but, rather, the necessary condition for the survival of the country as an autochthonous cultural, political and social project. Far from being an obstacle, immigration has given us the impetus that has saved us. The balance of the twentieth century, then, is that immigration has not been a threat but an opportunity that we have been able to use to our advantage.

The second paradox that I believe is interesting to raise should have the effect that, if we recognised ourselves as a country of immigrants, no one should feel that he or she is an immigrant in particular. This would mean that if, instead of masking this condition of our Catalan existence, as has happened for different reasons, we were able to turn it into a “place of memory” in the sense I have mentioned earlier, old and new resistances between people would be surmounted more quickly. It is understandable that, in order to guarantee our survival during the dictatorship, we concealed our condition as immigrants. But now, the most intelligent approach would be to break radically with the old notion of identity that disguised our historic reality: the reality that, in order to go on being the same people, we have changed profoundly. In any case, one of the conditions that have made us more specifically Catalan is our great ability to incorporate new population into the country, in a tradition that has understood that what is new revitalises what has become old.

I am convinced that the day we discover ourselves as a country of immigrants, the great value of what joins us together as a community will be fully recognised. And the day that we are able to see that maintaining our identity is not mostly about defending what we have been, but the struggle for what we want to be, that is the day when we shall have the strength to guarantee full recognition of our national community. Whatever the identity we exhibit at that point II

Isidor Marí

# An intercultural project for all to share

**As the process of globalisation advances, cultural diversity has made its presence felt all over the world, although it acquires particular characteristics that are specific to every different place. The consequence of this is obvious: almost everywhere it has become indispensable to manage diversity, both on the local scale and in successively wider spheres – provincial, insular, regional, national, supranational and even worldwide. The present debate in UNESCO about the protection of cultural diversity in the world market is good evidence<sup>1</sup> of the scope of this new universal dimension of multicultural contacts.**

Encalador de números  
(Number Whitewasher),  
Artur Heras (2006)  
acrylic on canvas, 150 x 120 cm

**With worldwide communication flows**—especially with the big media groups, Internet and digital technology— the cultural diversity of all the world is present everywhere but, above all, it is the large-scale movements of population—migration and temporary displacement of professionals, students, tourists, sportspeople, *inter alia*— that have brought about nothing less than an explosion in multilingual communication because they have given rise to frequent and direct occasions of personal interaction.<sup>2</sup>

This new context obliges us not only to adapt our behaviour and to find the appropriate forms of everyday coexistence, but also to readjust political and administrative activities and—even though we may not be fully aware of them—to redefine our ideas, our principles of social relations and our public discourse about diversity.

In fact, whether we are aware of it or not, we need to construct our own approach to diversity and our own shared language about integration and social cohesion in a multicultural context. This is crucial if we, not to be at the mercy of populist demagoguery, that can so easily manipulate the tensions that logically arise from such swiftly-occurring and pervasive social change. It is not sufficient to respond to immigration in its immediate practical and material aspects but we must also manage interpretations and collective representations of this new reality. There are studies<sup>3</sup> that show that problems of coexistence do not arise only as a result of social and political inequalities, but also that the conflicts between immigrant groups and receiver societies tend to be essentially cultural in origin. Besides combating inequalities, the best remedy against demagoguery and social conflicts is broad-based social consensus around the principles of coexistence in diversity.

### THINK GLOBAL AND ACT LOCAL?

What might be the reference points for constructing a socially-shared interpretation of our cultural diversity? On the one hand, the universal dimension of multiculturalism permits us to turn to theoretical principles and political experiences that have given the best results in similar cultural contexts. I have always thought that the work of Will Kymlicka has been particularly helpful in this

■ <sup>1</sup> Two web pages make it possible to follow the controversy: the UNESCO portal—[http://portal.unesco.org/culture/es/ev.php-URL\\_ID=2450&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/culture/es/ev.php-URL_ID=2450&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)— and the Government of Quebec page—<http://www.mcc.gouv.qc.ca/international/diversite-culturelle/index.html> (last accessed by the author in June 2005 [and October 2006 by the translator. English version available]).

<sup>2</sup> According to figures made available by Pere A. Salvà, the population of Catalonia, the Valencia Region and the Balearic Islands on 1 January 2005 was 12.63 million people (28.73% of the total population of Spain) with 6.94 million, 4.67 million and 0.98 million in each territory respectively. The

absolute population growth between 1996 and 2004 was 1.45 million inhabitants, 94.34% of whom are migrants (60% of these from other countries). On 1 January 2005, 1.52 million foreigners were living in these three territories, representing 41.26% of all the foreigners living in Spain.

<sup>3</sup> See R. Zapata-Barrero, *Estudi de les polítiques d'integració dels immigrants a partir del disseny dels plans comarcals* (Study of Immigrant Integration Policies on the Basis of the Design of Regional Plans, Pompeu Fabra University, 2003). The study may be consulted on-line at [http://www.upf.edu/dcpis/griip/doc/griip\\_informe\\_benestar.pdf](http://www.upf.edu/dcpis/griip/doc/griip_informe_benestar.pdf) (last accessed by the author in July 2005 [and by the translator in October 2006. The report is in Catalan]).

sense, and also that of Joseph Carens and Rainer Bäubock, along with the examples of multicultural policies that have been formulated in Australia, Sweden and, in particular, Quebec and Canada.<sup>4</sup> However we cannot just mechanically adopt or mimic the approaches to, or discourses about, cultural diversity in other countries. Neither can we remain on the fringes of international debates and interpretations of cultural diversity. On the contrary, we must participate actively and make our points of view known. But we shall always have to be critical and selective in adapting to our own reality the approaches and policies that are established for other places. Nobody can spare us our responsibility in constructing a model for interpreting and managing the diversity that we have in our own particular situation. And in the gradual construction of our home-grown approach, we shall need to seek the maximum degree of social involvement and dialogue between

“Nobody can spare us our responsibility in constructing a model for interpreting and managing the diversity”

the different academic, political, media, educational, NGO and other sectors.

Furthermore, we cannot afford to forget that experience of diversity is no stranger to the history of the Països Catalans (Catalan-speaking territories).

Immigration has been intense in recent periods in Catalonia and we can use this experience, with all its successes and errors, instead of having to start from scratch.

Whatever the case, it is incontrovertible that our multicultural context is specific and that we have to begin by identifying and making explicit the characteristics of our own diversity if we do not wish to interpret it wrongly from the outset.

The first and most important characteristic is that, in our case, two main kinds of diversity come together: the diversity of migration is superimposed on a prior plurinational diversity that has not been fully recognised. Unlike receiver societies that are relatively homogenous in linguistic, cultural and national terms, Catalan society is constituted by a linguistic, cultural and national community that is distinct within the framework of the Spanish state. And this plurinational diversity in our case does not enjoy equitable institutional recognition, as happens in Belgium, Switzerland or Canada, for example. We therefore live in a context of dual diversity — plurinational and migratory— each of which requires its own forms of recognition.

Second, within the migratory diversity, there is great diversity —and the tautology is worth stating. There are some sectors of the population that have come from elsewhere

■ <sup>4</sup> I referred to these in my paper *Una política intercultural per a les Balears?* (An Intercultural Policy for the Balearic Islands? Palma, 2002). See also the portal for the Europa Diversa Project – <http://www.europadiversa.org/eng/index.html> [last accessed by the translator in October 2006. The page is in English] —which offers a great deal of information on various issues. The GRIIP project of the Pompeu Fabra University has also produced good work in the field.

See, for example, the study by R. Zapata-Barrero, *La immigració en estats plurinacionals: el cas de Catalunya en perspectiva* (Immigration in Plurinational States: the Case of Catalonia in Perspective, Pompeu Fabra University, March 2005). The study may be consulted on-line at <http://www.upf.edu/dcpis/griip/estudis/triasfargas.html> (last accessed by the author in July 2005 [and by the translator in October 2006. The study is in Catalan]).

in the Spanish State and the European Community —among which we can distinguish between active professionals and, frequently, retired residents— and then there are migrants from the other continents with their different cultures, religions and languages, and we can make even further distinctions with regard to the percentages and characteristics that each of these greater immigrant groups represents in local terms.<sup>5</sup> One only has to look at the differences in immigration figures between the Ripollès and Alt Empordà areas, or between the islands of Menorca and Formentera, to understand that the quantitative data reveal local demands of rather different intensities. If we compare populations where the foreigners come as agricultural labourers (as in Sa Pobla and Guissona) with towns in which residents or professionals in the service sector predominate (for example Santa Eulàlia des Riu and Altea) we find that the ways of managing cultural diversity have to be specific to each place even though the phenomenon is universal in scope.

In any case, however, the coincidence of migratory diversity and the prior plurinational diversity gives rise to several initial requirements that we should never overlook. Ricard Zapata-Barrero (2005) states them clearly:

- 1 Immigrants need to know that they are going to join a different society.
- 2 The national project must incorporate the views of immigrants if it is to be transgenerational.
- 3 A common public culture, including multiculturalism, must be shared.
- 4 Federal plurinational states need to adopt a concept of citizenship that is based on belonging and not identity.

We shall return to these principles below after having given an account, too, of precedents from our historic experience of coexistence in diversity that can help us today. As I have noted above, in earlier times and, in particular in Catalonia, some relatively extensive and socially accepted principles of coexistence were established. Let us not forget the slogan that prevailed over the relationship between immigrants from elsewhere in the peninsula and Catalan society at the end of the Franco dictatorship and the democratic transition: *És català (si vol) tot aquell que viu i treballa a Catalunya* (Anyone who lives and works in Catalonia is Catalan [if so desired]).<sup>6</sup> This statement reflects what we could call the paradigm of coexistence that characterised the transition period: an open idea of citizenship based on an equitable integration of all newcomers, with the same political and social rights as other citizens. Let us also recall the importance that was attributed to the Catalan language in this conception of coexistence in diversity. Learning Catalan and gradually coming to use the language have been visible external signs of the newcomers' identification with the receiver society and their incorporation within the

■ <sup>5</sup> In fact, it is also significant that many of them do not regard themselves —and neither are they considered— as immigrants. Everybody aspires to lose the condition, recognition and label of immigrant as soon as possible. This is why it would probably be better to refer to migrants generically as *recently incorporated* citizens or population.

<sup>6</sup> This can be expanded, if we wish, to fit any other place: *Anyone who lives and works in our society belongs to it (if so desired)*. We can find a representative sample of approaches to, and public speeches concerning immigration during this period in the book *Immigració i reconstrucció nacional a Catalunya* (Immigration and National Reconstruction in Catalonia, Barcelona. 1980).

community, without any pressures of assimilation that might have led them to abandon the use of their own languages. Again, integration was understood in the overall sense. There was no point in thinking about linguistic integration unless simultaneous advances were also being made in political, social and workplace integration.

It is also worth recalling these precedents today, when some people have a unilateral notion of integration (with the idea that the newcomers have to make the effort to integrate themselves, overlooking the fact that this is a process of mutual adaptation), or think about linguistic and cultural integration as a process that is independent from the political, workplace, and social conditions of integration, which are also requisites of equitable participation in the well-being of the receiver society.

We must recognise that, even in Catalonia, where its presence was most notable, the transition paradigm is now in crisis. In part, this is a reflection of a general change in the concepts of integration. All too often the term “integration” is used as a euphemism for a concealed project of assimilation. Moreover, as Ralph Grillo has stressed, the forms of pluralism have changed substantially in today’s post-industrial societies so that, at present, people aspire to maintain their language and culture of origin and they have opportunities to do so that are incomparably superior, and unimaginable vis-à-vis what was possible a hundred years ago in all societies that took in immigrants.

Even at the heart of Catalan nationalism, it might be said that the role of the language as a sign of identification with the country is in crisis. We frequently hear people saying, “You don’t have to know Catalan to be Catalan” or, “We have to move beyond the cultural concept of Catalanism that is focused on language and culture”. There may be many nuances here, naturally, and knowledge of Catalan should never become a prior condition for identifying with our society or the Catalan national project. But full identification with the receiver society cannot overlook the linguistic and cultural elements that have historically contributed so decisively in shaping our collective identity, without running the evident risk of diluting it.

In brief, despite the apparent crisis of what we shall call the transition paradigm, I think it would be an error to discard it and not to bear in mind its positive results in coexistence and cohesion, and in safeguarding the continuity of the linguistic and cultural Catalan identity. Of course, we shall need to update its concepts, and bring them into line with today’s multicultural reality. However, it will always be more advantageous to adopt them as a starting point than to throw them overboard and start again from zero.

### **SOME PRINCIPLES OF OUR NEW INTERCULTURAL MODEL**

In the construction of our new model of coexistence in cultural diversity there are elements of the worldwide debate on these issues that can be useful and illuminating. Let us not forget that a good theoretical approach to the problem takes us well on the way to its solution.

First, we should adopt a standpoint of **interculturality**, because the other ways of understanding multiculturalism, in which it might be interpreted as a simple juxtaposition or indiscriminate fusion (the melting pot), are not all equally desirable. We do not want a mosaic of mutually isolated cultures, or a melting pot that comes

about through heavier assimilation. Let us not forget that the much-vaunted melting pot (which might be valid in some settings such as creation) is a concept that takes us back to colonial societies and that, while it perhaps goes beyond segregation, the price paid is the breakdown of the colonised societies. It is in our interests to adopt a concept of interculturality understood as a commitment to mutual recognition and active and participative relations between the different cultural groups that are present in our society. Only thus can we aspire to jointly constructing a sustainable framework of coexistence and a shared project for the future.

**Sustainability** is the second basic criterion of our intercultural model. This does not mean thinking about static or ad hoc solutions but shaping a flexible and sustainable intercultural framework in which

the language and culture of the receiver society act as a template.

This is a principle that seems to be taking shape on a worldwide scale as the basis of equitable coexistence between cultural communities. It is necessary to guarantee the continuity of each culture, accepting as an obvious and positive fact that all cultures change with intercultural relations, but without jeopardising their territorial

or trans-generational continuity. The primacy of each culture in its historic space is the condition of equitable diversity. However, this does not simply mean guaranteeing the survival of each cultural “species” (if we wish to stay with the reference to ecological sustainability of languages and cultures) but establishing an even-handed intercultural framework that guarantees its sustainability (a sustainable “ecosystem” for cultural diversity). On the individual scale, as Will Kymlicka has very aptly observed, this primacy of each culture in its own space should never invalidate the free cultural option of each person within it, whether he or she wishes to embrace the majority culture, or prefers to maintain his or her own culture (while assimilationism and the idea of the prison-culture wherein divergent options are stigmatised must be equally rejected).

A third element of our model is an open concept of **citizenship**. The new context of diversity obliges us to modify our ideas about citizenship and identity, to open ourselves up to the idea of an “us” in which there is room for everyone and that will smooth the way to integration and the development of new senses of belonging in the receiver society. Starting from the earliest incorporation into our society, we need to enable a primary identification with the civic rights and duties that are recognised by all the citizens (belonging to a prior, all-embracing “us”). This can give rise to positive identification with the values of the framework of intercultural coexistence (an equitable pluralism that favours everyone). It would be in this context that gradually increasing identification with shared cultural references and symbols, redefined on the basis of one’s own language and culture, could take place. Only in this way will it be possible to take the step from a

“It is necessary to guarantee the continuity of each culture, accepting as an obvious and positive fact that all cultures change with intercultural relations”

feeling of multiple belonging (that will make the culture of origin compatible with the instrumental adoption of the language and some behavioural patterns of the receiver society) towards a new, freely-accepted identity, now fully in harmony with the country of adoption. Nonetheless, the Spanish concept of citizenship constitutes a major obstacle for this positive evolution of identifications. We live in what Ricard Zapata-Barrero has graphically called “the dogma of the trinity”<sup>7</sup>, which attempts to enforce the view that citizenship means a totalised and uniform cultural and national option. No Belgian, Swiss, Canadian citizen, or any citizen from elsewhere in the European Community, is required to make a single cultural or national choice on the grounds that this is somehow inherent to citizenship. Furthermore, freedom of cultural and national choice is the foundation and the condition for the unity of the citizenry as a whole. If anyone can be labelled as a bad Belgian, Canadian, Swiss or European citizen, it is never the person who defends freedom of cultural and national choices, but rather the person who tries to impose the majority cultural and national choice on all the rest. In plural and democratic Spain, the reverse is true, and maybe it is time for this retrograde concept of citizenship to be challenged, revised and rectified as a notion that is totally antithetical to coexistence in diversity.

The fourth component of our intercultural proposal is of a more practical order: going ahead with a **reasonable adaptation of our public spaces to diversity** of languages, religions and customs. The experiences of Australia or Canada can illustrate for us the criteria of reciprocity and proportionality we should bear in mind in this process.

Reciprocity is required because the adjustment of the receiver society to diversity requires that all newcomers accept the role of the language of the society as a common tongue and the democratic framework of the territory’s institutions. Proportionality is necessary because properly balanced recognition must be given to the characteristics, dimensions and historicity of each cultural group present, without concessions being made to falsely equitable identical symmetries.<sup>8</sup>

This means, finally, **integrating two processes of recognition** (which must not, under any circumstances, be viewed as divergent or opposite) or, as Joseph Carens says, jointly overcoming the two collective disadvantages. This obliges us to redefine our project of self-government in such a way that is open to interculturality and attractive to the newcomers. Both original inhabitants and new arrivals need to understand that recognition of cultural diversity and sovereignty are

■ <sup>7</sup> I would round this out by calling it the *dogma of the utterly false trinity*.

<sup>8</sup> In the case of the linguistic dimension, the approach of Albert Bastardas —a combination of the criteria of territoriality, personality, subsidiarity and functionality— constitutes a sound basis for a worldwide approach to equitable multilingualism.



processes that can be mutually reinforced. This is particularly the case when, as Will Kymlicka remarks, wide-ranging jurisdiction in self-government permits more effective reception policies and avoids outbreaks of xenophobia (arising from a sense of threat within the receiver group).

## THE FIRST SHARED PROJECT

With all the foregoing observations, it is clear that there are possibilities —although putting them into practice will not be a simple matter— for finding shared goals between the receiver society and the newcomers, and these may constitute the starting point for constructing a project that can be widely shared.

The most evident point of departure is, without doubt, a joint claim for the political and financial conditions that would permit the creation of a good intercultural policy —of immigration, reception and coexistence— and proper management of diversity.

This is even more evident in the case of the Balearic Islands, which is the autonomously-governed community with the highest figures for foreign residents in all of Spain. And we should not forget that, as I have said, Catalonia, the Valencia Region and the Balearic Islands account for 41.26% of foreign population in Spain as a whole.

Thus, if the celebrated inter-territorial solidarity is something more than lip service in the interests of ultra-conservative demagoguery, it should be recognised that the immigration statistics give us quite reasonable grounds for claiming financial resources and political jurisdiction so as to be able to manage immigration, reception and interculturality.

The coincidence in timing of today's immigration and the reform of the statutes of autonomy constitutes quite an interesting historical opportunity, which we should let pass. It would be lamentable, for example, if we were to agree to a temporary financial injection to help with immigrant reception without achieving a satisfactory jurisdictional framework.

A good model, and one that is worthy of consideration, is the agreement over shared powers in this field between the federal Canadian Government and the Government of Quebec,<sup>9</sup> which recognises that linguistic integration of immigrants is the condition for the continuity of the French culture and language of Quebec and, as a result, grants the Quebec Government wide-ranging powers for establishing quotas, screening of places of origin and policies of immigrant reception. The achievement of such a framework is doubtless a first objective that can be shared by both receiver society and newcomers as the starting point for a more thoroughgoing common project aiming at major agreement on intercultural coexistence.

## AN EXPLICIT INTERCULTURAL COMMITMENT

In all the countries with a relatively successful policy on diversity —one usually thinks of Canada, Australia and Sweden— the basis of intercultural coexistence has been making explicit the reciprocal commitment involved for both receiver society and newcomers,

■ <sup>9</sup> This can be consulted on-line at [http://www.mrci.gouv.qc.ca/publications/pdf/Accord\\_canada\\_quebec\\_immigration\\_francais.pdf](http://www.mrci.gouv.qc.ca/publications/pdf/Accord_canada_quebec_immigration_francais.pdf) (last accessed by the author in July 2005 [and by the translator in October 2006. The Agreement is in French]).

this being accompanied —and it is worth stressing this— by political agreement between government and opposition forces in the understanding that this is a matter of general interest in which irresponsible party-based demagoguery has no part.

In the case of Catalonia, voices are starting to be heard calling for a pact on rights and duties (though it might be better to talk about shared responsibilities) in the new multicultural context.

In my opinion, the terms of this reciprocal commitment might be summarised as follows:

- A** The receiver society will proceed with its adaptation to diversity by means of specific activities. For example:
  - a** Offering equitable political, workplace and social conditions to the newcomers.
  - b** Giving their languages public recognition appropriate to the characteristics and historicity of each group (as has been done with the Spanish language in Catalonia).
  - c** Achieving further reasonable accommodation to diversity in public spaces —while favouring the private sphere.
  - d** Promoting intercultural programmes in the sectors that are most conducive to the process of recognition —education, leisure, the different areas of communication, culture...
- B** The newcomers will reciprocally accept an explicit commitment to the society that receives them and to the democratic goals that have been jointly fixed:
  - a** Loyally recognising the institutions and democratic organisation of self-government.
  - b** Gradually progressing in knowledge of the language and culture of the receiver society so that they can become, at least instrumentally, shared elements of understanding and coexistence.
  - c** Accepting the aim of making Catalan the common language of communication in the public sphere, while respecting the private use of all languages.

## SOME FINAL WORDS ON LINGUISTIC INTEGRATION

In a context of having two official languages, as we do, I think it is essential to clarify some points of the linguistic dimension of integration, an aspect that is inseparable, as I have already stated, from the process of integration as a whole. It is worth bearing particularly in mind the fact that, in our society, there can be no authentic linguistic integration if new citizens do not acquire the ability to use both official languages indiscriminately, in any form of communication in the public sphere.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, in our case, we can state from experience that the only guarantee of achieving a satisfactory command of both official languages is through identification with, and prior learning of Catalan.

■ <sup>10</sup> A similar definition of linguistic integration is offered in the work of Nicole Vincent, *L'intégration linguistique au Québec. Recension des écrits*, Québec, Conseil Superior de la Langue Française, 2004.

<sup>11</sup> In Denmark, significantly, it is the companies

themselves that have called for training in Danish to be carried out in the workplace itself because it has been shown that this is a guarantee of good training that is immediately applicable to the product or service.

I believe that it is very important to note that the success of linguistic integration resides in a sound initial approach in the linguistic strategies for the reception period. Though it may be elementary and commonsensical, we should recall that the ideal time and place for linguistic reception are the ordinary moments and places of the initial reception. It makes no sense for the Catalan language to be absent from the places and times of initial reception —at state or local level— or that the newcomers should be sent off to another place and another time where and when it is supposed that they can embark upon their linguistic reception in some kind of superimposed fashion.

Since there can be no reception without a language, it is essential that the official language of the county should be present to some extent from the moment that the reception process begins, and that the newcomers should not be taken into a different and dissociated system of linguistic reception. In our circumstances, we can no longer allow or consent to reception systems that lack a well-established linguistic strategy, at least in all reception points that are funded by public money. A reception policy that overlooks the public objective of promoting Catalan as a common language can only work against its own mission and generate linguistic, cultural and social segregation. The keys to sound linguistic integration —and the future cohesion of our society— are evident enough:

- 1 Achieving powers and resources for creating our own policy of immigration, reception and interculturality.
- 2 Offering a proper linguistic reception from the start.
- 3 Involving the whole educational community and its milieu in a project of intercultural education.
- 4 Extending to the entire receiver society responsibility for intercultural coexistence, by means of conversation pairs, educational plans dealing with the immigrants' new surroundings, intercultural leisure programmes, intercultural spaces in the mass media...
- 5 Giving a paramount role to workplace settings in the adoption of the country's language and a respectful intercultural relationship. The FORCEM (Foundation for In-Company Continuing Education) funds should permit occupational training in Catalan, both before and after a job is found.<sup>11</sup>

These, I believe, would be the foundations that would enable the construction of a future intercultural project that could be widely shared by everyone —newcomers and receiver society— one that has a clear commitment to the future of our linguistic community and that respects the freedoms recognised in the framework of a liberal, democratic world ■

**Laila Karrouch**

# We are all citizens of the world

**I close my large dark eyes and attempt to bring back images of Morocco, the country where I was born. It isn't very hard to do at all. In my own mind everything reruns like some nineteen-eighties' film; I can quite clearly recall images, remarks, smells, sensations and even perfumes. I was born in the city of Nador, but lived with my large family in a village about ten kilometres from the city. We used to live in a very big farmhouse where we had a little land. I remember people talking about Europe as if it were the perfect place to make and remake their lives.**

Crossing the Mediterranean sea had become a dream that everyone wanted to come true one day, except for the elderly, who laughingly used to say that it was too late for them and that they wanted to die in the same country that they had been born in, under the same sky, and among the same scents. But we didn't think about all that, perhaps because it all seemed so far off, so far away. We younger ones, who already wanted to be grown up, managed to hear these things too.

The people in my village created their own image of Europe, one that in many cases did not coincide with reality. I too built my own Europe. With the scanty information that I had obtained by hearsay, perhaps unconsciously, I decorated and dressed up the reality to build a different country, the country of glory itself. I also made my own image of the people: I thought that they had a really peaceful lifestyle, with no stress or headaches since they lived in such a rich place and so must surely all be on easy street. I thought that hardly any women worked outside the house and that they had plenty of spare time for themselves, to devote to keeping pretty, and do other things with their time. Right from the first day I could see that this was not the case. I fell into the trap, a trap that life itself has ready and waiting for us, a trap into which many continue to fall. It is no good for those of us who now know this to warn others, because our words are blown away

in the wind. Here there is the example of the people coming over on the *patera* dinghies. Have we ever stopped to think if all those people, most of them young, know what they are going to find when they arrive at their destination, if they ever do arrive? It breaks my heart just to think of it. Sometimes I think that they *do* know what is waiting for them, but they must reckon that anything is better than their present situation. They must also think of the possibility that things might turn out all right. I sometimes try to imagine myself in the shoes of these people's parents. It must be very hard when you think that your son is out with his friends or at some relatives' house; you wait for him until late and get angry because you had told him not to come home late as it makes you worry, and you get tired of waiting, and your heart tries to say something to you, but you don't know what. You rush here and there, from one bedroom to another, wish so hard for him to come in through the door and say, "hello mum, I'm sorry, I was talking to some friends...and, you know... once you get talking" —you would run up to him, hug him and tell him not to do it again, that it's all right. But you're wrong, because it doesn't turn out that way at all. The next day you hear on the television that so many immigrants who have attempted to cross the sea in boats have lost their lives, and you think, "No, good grief, no!" What you suspected is confirmed: they call at your house to tell you that they are bringing you your son, your son's body. Now I am a mother I think of it and don't wish to believe that this really happens, and think that it is all the fruit of my imagination, but don't let's be taken in, I can't deceive myself. I suppose that for them, this is like throwing a coin up, it can be either heads or tails. All right, it's a very common comparison, but it is real, all too real. What need do they have to put their lives at stake if it is not to feed their families and feed themselves?

**In the village everyone greets and admires** those who go on holidays to spend some time with their families. Everyone pays attention to the way they dress, fix their hair, take care of themselves, the way they express themselves, the European model. The kids all want to get in their "supercar" to have a drive around the village so everyone can see them and wave. People do not want to listen to the words of those who wish to tell the real story because they live there and not here, in this country where it is so hard to find an opportunity to earn one's living. I just can't say to what extent people are aware of the reality and to what extent they aren't. I can only assure you that people often fall into wishful thinking because we all want to aspire to a world with some hope in it.

People normally don't consider flying from their own nests just like that. It used to be men who were the first to go to seek work and accommodation and thus build an invisible road that would later on be taken by the rest of the family when the economic situation allowed this. Now it is not the husband who takes this step, but whoever is first to get the chance, whether it is the man or the woman. I also know cases in which it has not been like that: Mohammed managed to get a visa to finish his studies in Spain. He assured me that he did not intend to stay here at any point, but while he was studying, he worked to pay for his studies and when he completed them he decided to stay here to live. Mohammed had the chance to choose, but the immense majority of people don't. One of these was my father. He was the first one to come over here when I had not yet been born. A little later he was thrown out because his papers weren't in order. He never gave in at any time, but the despair that he felt inside, the need to keep going for the family's sake, made him try again a second time. This time he managed not to

be deported again, but even if he had been, he would have kept on trying. It took him eight years to find a job, accommodation, enough money for air tickets for his wife and children and papers. I have never seen so many papers in my whole life! If documents were bank notes we would have enough to feed a whole country for years; anyway half of them were not good for anything. They made me immigrate and leave my country at eight years of age, without knowing what all the fuss was about. I did not understand it, because I always had something to eat on the table. The economic problems of the family were unknown to me or I could not see them, what did I know about it, poor me, just a kid! From then on I became just another immigrant, like thousands and thousands of people all over the world. And now I ask myself, just what is immigration? How do we all understand this word and above all, how should we live through this immigration? I think that we all know more or less what it is, but for many people the conflict lies in how we should live through it. It is not so easy to answer this last question as it is the first. I am nobody to say how we should live, but I think that, whatever the case, there should be a very important basis, mutual respect, in the decision which any of us makes. And emigrating —what does emigrating mean? For many people it means leaving their own country to go and live in another. But this might also sometimes mean leaving your village to go to another, another city, another district. You don't need to make a long journey to emigrate.

After the decision to emigrate has been made and the opportunity has arisen, there is no way back. You just have to close your eyes, brace yourself and say goodbye to your friends and family the best way you can. This is not the time to think of anything else. Your heart beats harder and harder. You have to try and control your feelings, which is not easy for anyone. Your eyes are bound first to get damp, and then shed one tear after another, which eventually meet at your chin. You cannot conceal how exhausted you are from the nights that you have not been able to sleep because you are trying to build an imaginary future, without your own loved ones by your side. You will miss them before even leaving them, you will automatically remember the remarks that all the neighbours made to you, one by one. You will cry for those who have loved you for so long. You will say goodbye to that neighbour who you were angry with and hug them as if they were a close friend, pass on your sadness to them and make them cry, for you and with you. Who knows when you will be back?

**I can clearly remember that day**, the day when I said goodbye to my people. I have it engraved in my head. I cried out and sobbed in silence. Suddenly each little corner, each moment had its importance and value, great value, for me. It seemed that the birds stopped flying to listen to our murmurs, that the plants did not give off any odour so as not to get mixed up with our perfumes. At times like these a sort of improvised atmosphere is created, an atmosphere full of tenderness coming from those who are around you and those who aren't. When I got into the car I had the feeling of coming back from a journey that I had made to another planet when really I was not coming back at all, but leaving for another world. When I think it all over I feel lucky because I had my parents and my brothers beside me, but what about those who don't? Many couples have to live their loves remotely, over the telephone and by letters, others have to give up this love, others miss their children's childhood and when they go back the little ones have grown a few centimetres and a few years. They feel the sadness of not being able to

accompany them to bed to sing them off to sleep, or not being able to tell them off when they do something wrong, but they have the consolation of thinking that all they are doing is first and foremost for them. For those who stay behind the fortunate ones are the ones who leave. They wish us luck and believe that we have got it all sorted out.

Some people have relatives or acquaintances who advise them where to go. They might offer them their homes for a while

for them to stay until they find somewhere else. My father came to Catalonia because he had an uncle here. He told him that he could stay with him for a few days and that he would help him, but for how long? He didn't know. He had no other choice. My father intended to stay in Catalonia and if he didn't find anything he would have to ask his uncle to lend him some money to go to some other country to try

his luck. When he found something he would pay him back. He was lucky, considering that many people don't have anyone they know when they arrive and end up wherever destiny drops them. They look around for someone the same colour as them, someone who speaks the same language, and they ask for help. This whole process is obviously more painful for the grown-ups, as the younger ones have their own concerns.

Once you have found your destination you think that it is all going to be plain sailing, that your troubles are over and that the next episodes in your life are going to be the easiest to get through, but this is not the case. When you go out into the street you realise that people are talking to you and it doesn't make the least sense, just an odd word that rings a bell but you don't know what it means. You don't know if that person who is trying to communicate with you is being kind or just telling you to get lost —how can you know if you only just landed! You notice that the looks you get are not the same as you used to get, that the gestures are different and you feel strange— or might it be the other person who is speaking to you who is the strange one? You don't know either, neither you nor the person with you! The first days are the hardest to cope with and the ones that you remember most distinctly, but I am unable to remember a great many things about last year, for example. A few days after arriving I started to go to school. Seeing seventeen children in the class who all know each other and talk to each other and you... are an outsider for all of them because your skin is darker, you don't speak the same language and you have just arrived from a very poor world. The sensations and the feelings were all mixed up together and it came to a point when I didn't know what I really felt, whether I was afraid, if it was excitement, I just didn't know. I didn't understand their words, and they didn't grasp mine, but I understood, when they took my hand and gave me the ball, that it meant they wanted me to play with them. Thank heaven for sign language! Young children are able to understand each other in a matter of days; they make themselves understood because they want to play and have a good time. When they look at you their eyes don't see races or cultures, they don't see higher

**“You are an outsider for all of them because your skin is darker, you don't speak the same language and you have just arrived from a very poor world”**





| L'última discussió de D. Rivera i Trotski (The Last Argument between D. Rivera and Trotsky) Artur Heras (2005) acrylic on canvas 200 x 360 cm

or lower classes of people, they can't see any of that until the grown-ups decide to complicate things for them sometimes. In fact you go to school to learn, amongst other things, language, which is a weapon to defend your self against everything. It is much harder for adults because they don't have such learning facilities and are not sponges who soak everything up like children. My father often told me things about his first contacts with the new society; the first bar in Vic when they let Moroccans in, or the first person who rented them a flat or simply the first supermarket when they could buy stuff without being turned out. He can remember that boy who showed him where a street was and that man who helped him with his shopping bags. I also remember a lot of people who became important for me, people for whom I perhaps meant something too.

You are surprised when you find out that finding a job is not quite as easy as you had thought. You go to all kinds of places

**“The situation of illegal immigrants is desperate. They don't have any way out either one side or the other”**

and get a categorical *no!* for a reply. You have to take the first one you find, do the work that nobody else wants to do and do it at whatever price they pay, if you actually manage to find it, of course. The feeling of inferiority will remain in your heart. It is then that you begin to blame yourself for having been born where you were and you do so even though you know that

it was not your decision, nor anyone else's. I did not really have any major problems at school, but looking for work was when I started to get in touch with reality. When I discovered that I was speaking two languages at the same time, Catalan and Castilian, and not one, I thought that they were both important because I wanted to be ready for the working world. I wanted to master the language like the locals so that they would not look down on me. I too was turned down in many places, knowing that they still had the poster saying “staff needed” hanging on the entrance door. After roving around all over I realised that not everyone is equal, that —just as the local people judge us by the colour of our skin and by the way we dress— we, the newcomers, also judge them unfairly. I finally managed to get a job of work. Somebody looked in my eyes without establishing any difference, without any sort of unnecessary obstacle in the way. Many other people like me tell similar stories. The problem doesn't end here, in the least. When you eventually find that job you discover that they ask you for a number of papers that you haven't got, even though you are legally in the country. You make trip after trip to the Government Immigration Office, lawyers, administration agents, births and deaths register or police station because you want to be a citizen with the same rights and duties as everyone else. The situation of illegal immigrants is desperate. They don't have any way out either one side or the other. They find out that they cannot go forward nor move back. Businessmen cannot have people working without papers, but to get one the worker has to have a residence permit, and to have a residence permit you have to have an employment contract, and round and round it goes. Some get in touch with their relatives who are in other European countries to find out what the situation is like there and if there is any chance for them. Most often they reply that things are even worse,

that it is one obstacle after another. Others opt, in the last resort, for asking their parents and neighbours for help... The worst off are the people who have a family to support. The days become much too long for them, and everything looks black, too black. When there was that earthquake in Morocco I learned a lot, as well as finding out about the situation of these illegal immigrants. Many of them tried to contact their families to find out how they were, if there were any injured, if they were all alive. Some couldn't get in touch with anyone, some found out that they had lost a member of their families. Their desolate faces could be seen in the streets. "Now what on earth do I do, leave or stay? If I go I shan't be able to come back and if I stay I shan't be able to go and bury my loved ones." This was the question they were asking themselves. I too despaired because I felt impotent, and couldn't do anything to help them.

When you leave your country you take a lot of things with you; the memories of the family, your festive occasions, your dancing... a lot of things which you can never throw overboard, however much you might want. This is something that takes people a lot to understand, above all the matter of the headscarf. It seems that people give a lot of importance to a person's exterior —how they are dressed, whether they are wearing a long or short skirt...

**A lot of people cannot understand why I wear my headscarf** if I am in another country, if I do not have to wear it, if I am not forced to. Under the headscarves there are normal girls, happy, fun-loving girls, girls with qualifications and a great will to live and who wear the headscarf just like some people dye their hair different colours. What is wrong with that? It all boils down to our needing to be aware that life goes by and never stops at any time. We all have to be our own owners and take the road which we believe we should take, on condition that we do no harm to anyone, of course. This is what took my mother so much to get over. She was born in Algeria and wore a scarf on her head from a very early age. Years later on she emigrated to Morocco. She didn't notice any difference or feel any different from the rest of the community because everyone dressed in the same way. This is what happens to coloured people who arrive from different places. They are more readily accepted because a lot are Christians and do not cover themselves up so much. If they didn't have dark skin they wouldn't have any kind of trouble.

The year we arrived we only found two families of Moroccans in Vic, a very pretty town in the county of Osona. We were the third. We were fairly far apart and so didn't have very close relations. The neighbours were all Catalans and Castilians. When my mother went down the street everyone looked at her, perhaps through curiosity, or because they weren't used to seeing a lady so covered up. I don't know why, but in all events she used to say that it was a very uncomfortable situation and she could not go on that way. I suppose that it can't be much fun to have so many stares following you down the street. At home they considered two possible solutions: staying at home and not going out, which would mean no-one would be able to stare at her, or taking off the scarf so as not to be looked at by everyone. She went for the first option. It worked for a few days until our economic situation worsened. Things got so bad that my father decided we would go back to Morocco. In Catalonia you have more chances to find work, but the standard of living is much higher and things are too expensive and even more so when you have five children. My mother then decided to take the second option. She took off her scarf, bought some new clothes and went out to look for work. People stopped looking at her

as an oddity, then. Many people she knew approached her in a different way and accepted her better. They even told her that she was a lot prettier like that and that the scarf made her look a lot bigger than she really was. They talked to my mother *without* a scarf about my earlier mother *with* a scarf as if they were two different people. You could say that the problem had been solved as regards other people, but there was another underlying question which those people did not know about. For my mother the scarf was very important, it was another piece of clothing, like shoes or trousers, that she needed to feel fully clad. Going out into the street without a scarf was like going out undressed. She had a lot of mental conflicts. People asked her to adapt —a word that she never fully understood and that ended up bringing her down. But she pulled herself together precisely because she wanted to pull herself out of it. She started wearing her scarf again. People continued to look at her as before. Less and less all the time because they were starting to get used to it. As they got to know what she was like, the scarf ceased to be what mattered. But apart from all this, there are things which immigrants find hard to understand, too. We are quick to attribute any particular comments or requirements at work to racism. For example, if you work in a place where they handle foodstuffs, there are rules that we all have to obey, both locals and newcomers. We cannot be so rigid about customs and traditions. I think that we have to learn to coexist in line with the times. Everything changes, even people's way of thinking.

Many immigrants come up against another problem when we go back to our home country to spend our holidays there for the first time: we are foreigners too, we are immigrants, not the same people as we were before leaving. How should one react then?

**When you live in a specific place for a particular time** I think that it is highly important to try and learn things from your surroundings and let people know things about yours too. We cannot shut ourselves in on ourselves, nor go on reliving that painful experience that we had with someone in particular. It is not fair to put everyone in the same bag because they do not deserve it. Everyone knows the reasons why we have “come” here. Immigrants come from poor countries where they find no other way out for themselves or their children. It is hard for everyone to accept the reality that we live through. We, as citizens of the world, don't have the answer up our sleeves and I think we never will have it, at least as regards the matter of legalisation. We do indeed have other solutions which are very important, such as coexistence. If people do not make an effort, the ones in power never will do. In my case, I have learned to value my surroundings, to understand the way my new neighbours think, and even think like them, but I also think like those who arrive. People say that I am very lucky because I live between two cultures, and I would say that, rather than two cultures, I live between three: Moroccan culture, Catalan culture and my own culture, which consists in taking the things which I like most from each of these, as well as from Castilian culture. I think that they all have their appeal and their magic. I am not forced to choose, I am free to live this way. I know that for many people I will never be a Catalan because the colour of my skin reveals that I am from abroad. It also seems to me that right now that is what bothers me least. I like looking the future more fully in the face because my daughter will go to school with a lot of kids from different parts of the world and we adults have to help to make things easier for them. Immigration is not what it used to be, we all know that. Now people are coming from all kinds of places. The local people are working on this and attempting to help the

newcomers, and those of us who have been here for a time also want things for them. There are volunteer language partners, all kinds of festivities, magazines, talks for parents... Indeed I think that parents, above all Moroccans, have to get it into our minds that our children's education system works in a different way than in our home countries, which is why we should try and cooperate more in our children's activities outside school, and I also feel that all of this will take at least one generation. It is not a matter of modifying the lifestyle that we have led up to now, but just of adapting a little more. For me adapting does not mean leaving your culture behind, it means keeping it and adding on another, adopting it, understanding it and —why not indeed?— loving it. It is like when parents adopt a child, they love it just the same even though it is not their biological child. I would also invite local people to become immigrants in their minds, and travel around other countries in the world imagining their situation by closing their eyes, like I do sometimes when I need to go to Morocco and can't make it because of my work. On a trip to Holland to visit my uncle and aunt, we met a Spanish family, and when they told me their story it seemed that they were telling my own. They said they will never forget Spain and that when they retire they will come back here to end their life's journey in the same place as it started. That is exactly what I think that many of us immigrants here will do or would like to do in the future II

**Laila Karrouch** (Morocco, 1977) works as nurse assistant at the Hospital General de Vic (Catalonia). She has narrated her experience as immigrant in the book **De Nador a Vic** (2004).

**Julià Guillamon**

# The Catalan immigration novel

**Following the publication in the magazine “Mirador” of a series of reports by Carles Sentís entitled “Múrcia, exportadora d’homes” (Murcia, Exporter of Men, October 1932-January 1933), the Barcelona press opened up a debate on the pros and cons of regulating the arrival of new immigrants. Carles Soldevila referred to the debate in an article in “La Rambla”, “L’indígena i el foraster” (The Native and the Foreigner, 6 March 1933), in which he offered an imaginary dialogue between a Catalan and an immigrant. The immigrant defended his right to work and residence.**

The Catalan demanded that energetic measures be taken to put an end to hunger, dirt and poverty. “What do we have to gain from seeing the civilising nucleus of our land, its artistic instinct, its love of hygiene, its spiritual concerns, and even its feeling for refinement being submerged by a seeing expansion of ignorance, unbridled nonconformity and blinding trachoma?”.

On 10 August 1933, Josep Maria de Sagarra returned to the issue raised in the *Mirador* article with a piece entitled “Poesia murciana” (Murcian Poetry). That year, in the literary competition the Jocs Florals of Badalona, a writer from Murcia had presented a poem. “We have now seen how complicated the question of immigration has become, how there are neighbourhoods in Barcelona that are completely Murcian or Almerian, from head to toe, and how they refer to the poor natives who live there as “*los catalanes*” in the same tone of contempt as that used by an American when he points at a Negro”. Sagarra sarcastically asks if the Murcians are going to take over the Jocs Florals as well. He finishes the piece with a provocative and derisive twist: “The day the Murcians become *mestres en Gai Saber*<sup>1</sup>, sing *Els segadors*<sup>2</sup>, dance sardanas, kill turkeys and take

up kite flying, we shall have no alternative but to start producing explosives and eating nice fresh humble pie on Sundays”.

For Sagarra, immigration represented much more than a key demographic and social problem. It was a threat to the work of cultural reconstruction that had been initiated with the *Renaixença*<sup>3</sup>. When this menace began to move into literary circles, the Jocs Florals became the focus of a debate that pitted the generation of the founders against that of younger poets, and that was finally settled with a compromise solution. Would it be necessary to come to the same kind of pact with the Murcians? The matter was closed with a final absurdity, a conundrum rather like the camel and the eye of the needle: the day the Murcians become Catalans, the Catalans will become FAI anarchists.

The views of Carles Soldevila and Josep Maria de Sagarra put paid to any possible Catalan immigration novel. If the conflict between locals and foreigners had reached this point of mutual rejection, it was most unlikely that they could share the space of a novel. In his studies on low-life literature, Jordi Castellanos has noted the anomaly of a Barcelona exposed to a persistent double cliché —the “beautiful ivory city” confronted with the “other” belligerent city of low-born culture. In *Fanny* (1929) and *Eva* (1931), Carles Soldevila never moves from these two worlds: the fine house in the good neighbourhood of Sarrià and the Equestrian Circle, and the Casa de Caritat poorhouse or the Catalanised Paral·lel Avenue with all its music halls where, in a strange act of expiation a girl from a good family can end up as a chorus girl. In *Vida privada* (Private Life, 1932), Josep Maria de Sagarra depicts the mixture of new money and rancid aristocracy, Catalanism and the Castilianised bourgeoisie that plays along with the Primo de Rivera dictatorship. One of the central and most burlesque episodes is the outing of Hortènsia Portell and her friends to District Five. Sagarra takes them through the Cid Street and Perecamps Street, conveying something between real terror, indifference and the reminiscence of reading Dostoyevsky. The Murcian territories of la Torrassa, el Ninot, Poble-sec, el Camp de Galvany and Pubilla Casas that appear in his column “L’aperitiu” will have no place in novels until much later.

## A COMMON SPACE?

When Francesc Candel published his *Els altres catalans* (The Other Catalans) in 1964, this feeling of mutual rejection was still very much alive. Candel recalls the poster that appeared in la Torassa during the Civil War “Cataluña termina aquí. Aquí comienza Murcia” (Catalonia ends here. Here begins Murcia). The whole book is an attempt to break through the frontier and to present a common space in which the Catalan world and the world of the immigrant can coexist. But Candel’s literary work —with the exception of some stories in *Trenta mil pessetes per un home* (Thirty Thousand Pesetas for a Man)— contradicts his own theory. In *Donde la ciudad cambia su nombre* (Where the City Changes its Name), the Casas Baratas housing project is described as a closed world in which the only Catalan presence is that of the priest, monsignor Lloveras.

■ <sup>1</sup> Translator’s note: an honorary title bestowed in the Jocs Florals.

<sup>2</sup> Translator’s note: “The Reapers”, the national hymn of Catalonia.

<sup>3</sup> Translator’s note: the 19<sup>th</sup> century “Renaissance” movement to restore Catalan language and culture.

In contrast are the Catalan writers who tend to describe the world of artisans in which locals predominate. This is the feeling of the Poblenou workshops described by Xavier Benguerel in *Gorra de plat* (Peaked Cap, 1967), of the smugglers and truck drivers in Josep Maria Espinàs' *Com ganivets o flames* (Like Knives or Flames, 1954) and his *Combat de nit* (Combat at Night, 1959). The few times that the immigrant milieu appears, as in the case of *El carrer de les Camèlies* (Camellia Street) by Mercè Rodoreda, it is presented as a dead end.

In Spanish-language literature written in Barcelona, the fascination for the “other” city of Jaime Gil de Biedma endures in the novels of the Goytisolo brothers, and the works of Eduardo Mendoza and Félix de Azua that were published at the end of the 1970s. “Barcelona is Good No More, or my Solitary Stroll in Spring”, the poem by Gil

“The immigrants appear as part of a network of complex and shifting relations”

de Biedma (included in the collection *Moralidades* [Moralities, 1966]) is the clearest example of this. The poet evokes the bourgeois world of his childhood, contrasting this with the life of the kids in the street and Murcian immigrants. He goes up to the shacks on Montjuïc, in the Miramar gardens, where his parents had been photographed in 1929 with a

yellow Chrysler. He walks around the now unfashionable places where statues in artificial stone have lipstick marks and where people go to make furtive love. “Feeling oneself being watched”, he says, meaning that he feels strange vis-à-vis the others and estranged from his own awareness. His pleasure in seeing the world of his parents destroyed has him attacking factory bosses and shop assistants who represent the Catalan identity. *Contra la nit d'Oboixangó* (Against the Night of Oboixangó, 1953) by Jordi Sarsanedas is somehow the reverse. His hero travels to the imaginary archipelago of the Tago-Fago islands in order to get to have a closer acquaintance with black people. To gain entry into their world, he turns to the typical ways in which “young gentlemen” relate with members of the lower orders: going out on the tiles, and the maid. One night, he crosses the demarcation line and enters the forbidden city, which Sarsanedas describes as a slum neighbourhood with ragged children, where people live in constructions made from planks and lit with oil lamps. When the revolt breaks out some days later, he forgets his passion for black people and takes the side of the provincial and bourgeois Fort-à-Pantin colony.

Among Barcelona's Spanish-language writers, Juan Marsé occupies a position similar to that of Candel among the *Serra d'Or* Catalan nationalists. His description of the neighbourhood of Carmel in *Últimas tardes con Teresa* (Last Afternoons with Teresa, 1965) reveals a new sensibility towards the suburb. Carmel is not the amphitheatre of bourgeois nostalgia, as in Gil de Biedma's poem, but an island on the top of a bare mountain, besieged by the burgeoning waves of the city's growth. Marsé presents it alternately as a place of childlike happiness, with kites and streets that seem to be something out of Toyland, and as a huge, painful and suppurating carbuncle. Pijoaparte's fascination for the wrought iron fence of the house where Cardenal has established his business of stolen motorbikes, his discovery in the bed of Maruja, the Serrat's maid, of

a fine sensibility (like a whetting stone in Marsé's words), bring out, from under the indolent crust the dream that his parents had brought with them from Murcia, and this takes hold of him, driving him down the mountain. On the other side of the imaginary fence, Teresa Serrat projects onto the local boy the penchant for adventure of the members of her class, a vague social ideology and the underlying stratum of a Catholic upbringing. The love story comes to nought because of Teresa's frivolity and fickleness, but also because of the intolerant response of Cardenal and his niece "la Jeringa", who do not want Pijoaparte to leave Carmel.

Another positive reading appears in the early post-war years, on the pages of the journal *Quaderns de l'exili*, and crystallises in the novel *Miralls tèrbols* (Murky Mirrors, 1966) by Lluís Ferran de Pol. In September 1946, *Quaderns de l'exili* devoted its editorial note to the presence of Castilian-speakers in Catalonia. It reconstructs the story of the immigration, from the displacement of Murcian workers for the construction of big public works projects through to people who were uprooted by the Civil War and the first waves of immigration under the Franco dictatorship. This immigration is not a phenomenon that can be cast aside or ignored. Beyond the "humbug" of universal fraternity, which has been demolished by war and exile, it will help to define where competition and conflicts of interests lie, and stimulate the Catalan identity in reaction.

*Miralls tèrbols* is the story of a parvenu family (the grandfather was a road worker and street sweeper) that moves into construction. The new port of Mareny brings all the social agents into play, from the opportunistic politician, the obtuse bureaucrat, constructors, quarry owners and Murcian workers. The immigrants appear as part of a network of complex and shifting relations. The novel describes the conflicts that occur after an accident in the quarry causing the death of one of the immigrant workers, while depicting Murcian circles with a realism that is the offspring of 1930s reporting. Ferran de Pol portrays the politically-aware worker Hemeterio, contrasting him with the Catalan worker, Camps. He describes the formation of two gangs and the appearance of gunmen, the relationship between the bosses and the Civil Guard, and that between the immigrants and Senyora Pasqual, who has taken refuge in Mareny because of her husband's addiction to gambling, and who visits the farm where the Murcian workers live, showering them with gifts. In the midst of all the tensions that progressively situate the story of Mareny in the context of the Catalonia of the Primo de Rivera dictatorship, Enric, the constructor's son, comes of age. He has seduced the Galician nurse and has gone to live at the rubbish tip, nostalgic for ways of life and social relations that have been destroyed by the modern world. The adventure will return him to take up his place at his father's side.

## THE END OF THE TABOO

If we compare the novels that came in the period after the Civil War and those that have dealt with the subject of immigration since the mid-1990s, we might say that *Miralls tèrbols* set the precedent for the novels of Julià de Jòdar, that *Trenta mil pessetes per un home* influenced Maria Barbal's *Carrer Bolívia* (Bolivia Street) and that *Contra la nit d'Oboixangó* anticipates some aspects of Quim Monzó's story, "Davant del rei de Suècia" (Before the King of Sweden). Also noteworthy is the fact that one of Marsé's direct heirs,





**Puny (Fist)**, Artur Heras (2003)  
pencil, ink and collage on paper  
23 x 35 cm

Francisco Casavella, should describe in his *El Día del Watusi* (Watusi's Day, 2002-2003) a Barcelona without Catalans.

*L'àngel de la segona mort* (The Angel of the Second Death, 1998) and *El trànsit de les fades* (The Movement of Fairies, 2001), the first two novels of the trilogy *L'atzar i les ombres* (Chance and Shadows), describe the upbringing of a boy in an immigrant neighbourhood

“The conflict is not presented as one between Catalan and Spanish speakers but as one of two ways of understanding the social question”

in the 1950s. The author, Julià de Jòdar, is the offspring of those Badalona Murcians who tried to wreck the Jocs Florals. Jòdar works the plot of his novels around two bloody events that stir up the oblivion and renunciations of the post-war period, bringing to light the mutual mistrust between the true-blue Catalans and the Murcian community, between those who have held fast to the memory of old ideals and those who embrace the privileges that are held out by collaboration with the Franco regime. Far from the clichés of “literature of the suburbs”, and steering clear of the flattest realism (the

plot includes dreams, visions and apparitions), Jòdar constructs his trilogy within the framework of ritualised space and time, transforming the neighbourhood into a stage in a theatre where several different performances are occurring at the same time. In contrast with the abstract fears and desires of the generation that had lived through the war, the younger characters cling to any chance they can get to keep afloat, live their lives and get out of the neighbourhood. The characters are developed throughout the story in a cycle of love affairs, betrayals, fantasies and revenge. One of the most innovative elements of the trilogy is the protagonist himself, “the lad who took over from Aunt Eulogia”, as Jòdar calls him more than once. He is a boy, the of immigrants from Murcia, who interprets the world of his parents in Catalan. The choice of this character represents a landmark in Catalan immigration literature. Catalan has ceased to be the expression of a way of understanding the world that is naturally linked to a territory, to become a construction of culture. From this new awareness, Jòdar offers a highly critical account of post-Olympic Catalonia.

Maria Barbal's *Carrer Bolívia* (1999) links the world of *Els altres catalans* with modern audiovisual fictions that use history to create “identifying” images that, in Marc Augé's words, have become a substitute for former “edifying” images. Lina Vilches arrives in Catalonia from Jaén with a positive view of Catalans because she had been friendly with a family from Valls in Linares. She speaks Catalan with her neighbour Sierrita. “She'd understood that the people who lived in that fortunate land where there was work and where you could live your life weren't indifferent if you spoke Catalan”. The conflict is not presented as one between Catalan and Spanish speakers but as one of two ways of understanding the social question. While Lina becomes involved in literacy campaigns in the Social Centre, her husband, Néstor Gentil reads *Capital*, gets involved in clandestine political activity and ends up in exile in France. This duality leads to the break-up of the

family and will bring out a second focus of the conflict that contrasts the public image of a heroic leader with the poverty of his personal relations. Integration is inevitable. “Now, in the train to Barcelona, she misses Linares but she was sure that her home was there, where she was returning, in Bolivia Street. Lina Vilches had just discovered that space between two worlds that makes you a stranger in the land where you are born and possessor of where you live, and vice-versa. She would never again be from one place alone.” Through the ritual device of the novel, Maria Barbal tries to identify a collective, establish a particular image of it, make a myth of it and set it into history. It is with the same aim that TV3 has produced the series *La Mari*.

The metaphorical device that Sarsanedas used in his novel *Contra la nit d'Oboixangó* has a direct echo in the work of Quim Monzó, “Davant del rei de Suècia”, a novella that was published as part of the short-story collection *El millor dels mons* (The Best of All Worlds, 2001). In the guise of an extravagant fable about a poet who is a would-be Nobel Prize winner, Monzó tells a story of many readings. The poet Amargós has to move house because he can't afford to go on living where he is. His new neighbours, who are called Gómez, admonish him because he wants to change the height of the sinks. This is the first step in an indefatigable and disturbing quest. Amargós passes out after a party and finds on coming to that he is thirty-four centimetres shorter. The confirmed fact that Monzó was thinking of calling this story “Catalunya”, along with the surname he has given the neighbours (Gómez is also the surname of Monzó's mother) make it possible to read the text as an allegory of the relationships between the Catalans and people who have come from elsewhere in Spain. It is worth recalling, in relation with the matter of surnames, an article that Monzó published in *El dia del senyor* (The Lord's Day, 1984), called “Xarnegos” (They Speak Spanish). Monzó complained about people like Felipe González and Joan Manuel Serrat who went around saying “Jo també sóc xarnego” (I'm a Spanish speaker too). And he lists names such as Francesc Bellmunt i Moreno, Francesc Parcerisas i Vázquez, Max Cahner i Garcia. “Finally the veil has dropped from my eyes”, Monzó wrote. “All those years I've been living like just one more Catalan and now I find I've been a traitor for having adapted to this country. Because, the way things are, being normal means living *in saecula saeculorum* estranged from the place where you live, being a troublemaker and a whiner, and throwing around accusations of oppression. Maybe it's true that it's the natives who have to adapt to the wiles and ways of the newcomers.” Twenty-five years later, these people with names like Gómez, Moreno, Vázquez and Garcia are still the symbol of the defeat of Catalan and of the imposition of the mentality and ways of life of people from other places.

The main lines of the story finish here. In recent years, immigration and the relations between Spanish and Catalan speakers have ceased to be taboo subjects in Catalan literature. However, the diversity of readings that is fruit of different perceptions of the transition to democracy, of the process of integration of the immigrants who came in the 1960s, and doubts about the present and future of new waves of immigration, make one think that we need to open up a painstaking debate that, besides economic, social and political factors, should also take into account the history of culture ■

## The promotion of Catalan literature, non-fiction and scholarly works: grants and services

**TRANSLATION GRANTS** are available for publishing companies that intend to publish in translation literary works, non-fiction and scholarly works originally written in Catalan, and have scheduled the translation during the award-year concerned. The grant is intended solely to cover, or partially cover, the translation costs. For further information contact Maria Jesús Alonso (mjalonso@llull.cat)

### GRANTS FOR INITIATIVES AIMING AT THE EXTERNAL PROMOTION AND DISSEMINATION OF CATALAN LITERATURE AND SCHOLARLY WORKS

**ORIGINALLY WRITTEN IN CATALAN.** Publishing companies, literary agencies, private non-profit organisations and literary and/or cultural magazines may request grants for activities to promote Catalan literature that are organised outside the Catalan-speaking regions: participation in festivals, dissemination of new titles in translation, articles in magazines, etc. For further information contact Maria Jesús Alonso (mjalonso@llull.cat)

### TRAVEL GRANTS FOR CATALAN-LANGUAGE AUTHORS.

Writers of Catalan literature who are invited to take part in literary activities outside the Catalan-speaking regions may request assistance to cover travel expenses. For further information contact Rosa Crespi (rcrespi@llull.cat)

The IRL also provides **INFORMATION** about Catalan literature: if you would like to know which works of Catalan literature have been translated into other languages you are welcome to visit our database (TRAC) in our website [www.llull.cat](http://www.llull.cat); if you need to know who handles the rights to the work you wish to publish; or if you need to contact Catalan publishers or literary agents, please do not hesitate to contact us.

The IRL is present at the following **BOOK FAIRS**: Frankfurt, London, Paris, Leipzig, Bologna, Thessalonica and Prague, where information about its services is also available.

For more information please visit our website [www.llull.cat](http://www.llull.cat), where you can also download the grants application forms.

**llull** institut  
ramon llull

## Catalan language and culture

Carrer Diputació 279, planta baixa · E 08007 Barcelona  
Tel. +34 934 67 80 00 · Fax +34 934 67 80 06  
[www.llull.cat](http://www.llull.cat) · [info@llull.cat](mailto:info@llull.cat)

*notes*  
&  
*comments*  
**transfer**

JOURNAL OF CONTEMPORARY CULTURE // 2007 02

**Pere Puigdomènech**

# The end of science

One day, science will end. Probably, none of the human beings alive today on the surface of the Earth will see it, but it can be argued or even predicted that one day scientific activity will diminish until it disappears or turns into something else. Ten years ago, a book by an American journalist, John Hogan, proclaimed this with arguments that have been hotly debated, but, even if it is only to remember whether he was right or wrong, we may reconsider the question.

To begin with, we might think that one day we will know everything there is to know about any subject and there will be no need to investigate any further, something that has happened before in the history of science. For example, one of the questions that thinkers of all ages asked themselves was what things are made of, and the elemental substances that matter is made of were gradually discovered. In the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, a start was made identifying the elements that matter is composed of. Mendeleev classified them and now we have them all. We may create a new one, but it is little more than a curiosity. It is a fact: the list of the elements of matter is complete. One day we set ourselves the task of having the complete sequence of the genome of a bacterium. Now we have dozens of them, and we have the genome of animals and plants and the human one. We have not finished them completely nor do we wholly

understand them, but we have got them almost complete. Soon we will have the structures of proteins classified. Some day we will know all the species of mammals on the Earth and the birds and reptiles, etc. Some disciplines are coming to an end. We are a long way from finishing the enormous programme of science, but some of the pages of the programme are full. We won't see it ourselves, but it is feasible to argue that one day we will complete the programme as a whole.

History teaches us, however, that this idea that there is nothing left to investigate has already been formulated in the past. By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century it had also been said that after two glorious centuries of discovery, science was finished. As Boltzmann said, the only job scientists still had to do was to achieve another decimal in the measurements that were being taken. Nowadays it is not that we need to have more precise measurements

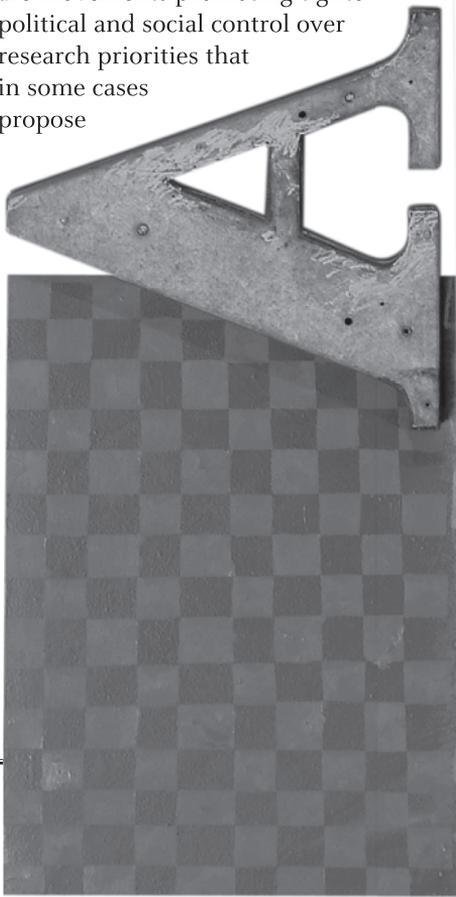
of anything. The thing is that in our activity questions are constantly appearing to do with health, food, the environment and so on, and in order to try and answer them we need knowledge. Our economy is increasingly based on knowledge and it is difficult to see this demand ceasing. The knowledge generated from this type of demand may not be basic knowledge, but it is useful knowledge. And in any case, it often requires new ideas that only come from basic research. We may think of a society with zero or negative economic growth, but even in this case a lot of creativity will be needed in order not to lose quality of life in our society.

We may also decide not to research a subject any further because we do not wish to pay the price to know it. This is a more topical attitude and has more problematic aspects. The government of the United States decided not to continue constructing the particle accelerator that was planned in Texas. The knowledge of basic physics it would have provided did not outweigh the cost of the instrument. There are also people who think that no experiment is worth the suffering that animal experimentation involves. Or people who believe that we do not need to do any more research into agriculture because what we should be doing is traditional agriculture and all new knowledge will be, per se, dangerous. And there are those who do not want to research into embryonic stem cells. Therefore, for economic or ideological reasons, science (or part of it) may one day end.

**Personatge amb A (Character with A)**, Artur Heras (2004)  
mixed media on canvas, 260 x 130 cm  
(private collection, Barcelona)



Because we must remember that even the knowledge used to resolve matters of immediate interest may be the subject of debate. It may be so, for example, for those who have specific interests that this knowledge threatens. Think of the effects that research into lung cancer has had on the tobacco cultivation industry. It may be also for those who see their ideological ideas threatened or because they see a threat to values on which their ideas of society are based. It is difficult for any society to balance the scales between the values championed by different groups. In this situation caution is often demanded or the very research is questioned that may generate data that cause the ideological or social balances of certain groups to be reconsidered. The conclusion may be that we do not want to know any more about a scientific discipline. At the present time there are movements promoting tighter political and social control over research priorities that in some cases propose



to eliminate certain scientific subjects. This might be a rather inglorious end for science, but much worse for the society that sustains it.

Many if us who work in science do so not for financial reasons (which would have been a mistake) but for the beauty of the work or because we have found who knows what in it, but also because we think that science is a factor essential for the workings of a democratic society. We are therefore worried (leaving aside the possible professional consequences) by these discussions about the end of science. It is worrying that decisions are made in our societies not based on the scientific analysis of the available data but on prejudices and subjective ideas. And it is worrying that some may feel that some of their values are being attacked by scientific discoveries. In this we scientists almost certainly ought to listen more to society and avoid conflicts. Because none of us can even begin to imagine what a world with nothing to explore would be like, with no interest in learning anything new. At least, if this happens, let it be because we have at our disposal the complexity of the knowledge of the world within reach, but not out of fear of knowledge that questions specific concepts or interests ||

**Pere Puigdomènech** is a biologist and a physicist and researcher in molecular biology. He is director of the Vegetal Molecular Genetics Laboratory, CSIC-IRTA (Barcelona).

**Jordi Llovet**

# The Catalan canon

All the world's experts who have devoted their time to establishing the canon of a particular literature, and literatures as a whole, have based themselves on three suppositions, which are seldom disputed. A list of canonical titles must be drawn up: a) on a historical basis, that is, by considering the tradition of the entire scope of this literature, from its origins to the present day; b) on an aesthetic basis, that is, by considering the formal and intrinsic values of literary works, and c) by looking at the correlations that can be established between texts from a literature in a specific language and the texts written in other languages which, nearly always as a result of their translations, are able to influence the way in which major works of literature in the country in question are shaped.

A well-constructed canon —such as the different ones established by critics from the English-speaking world in particular, from William Covell's *Polimanteia* (1595), to Harold Bloom's *The Western Canon* (1994)— has no value whatsoever if the author who has defined it has not taken into account this threefold dimension.

As far as the first and second of these questions are concerned a priori, Catalan literature is, unfortunately, in a situation which is far from comparable to the one encountered in England since Chaucer, in Italy since the Duocento, or France since Chrétien de Troyes. In these three cases —to which we can add German literature from the period of the Enlightenment

and *Frühromantik* onwards—, national literature, or literature in its own, different language, has developed as a continuum of causes and effects which can be perfectly defined and analysed, an interplay of reliefs and contrasts, and even major revolutions (such as the one signified by the appearance of Petrarch in Italian literature, Goethe in German literature and Baudelaire in French literature), but always forming a sequence in which the precursors explain their descendants. Aesthetics which were already considered outmoded, such as French neo-classicism, have even re-emerged alongside the boldest modern forms, as is the case when we compare the French *poètes maudits* with the Parnassians.

There may be clashes, sharp contrasts and conflicts between the “ancients” and “moderns” —the famous *Querelle* has not yet faded away— however, the body of these literatures can be presented with a perfectly clear logic, and, more importantly, uninterruptedly.

The case of Catalan literature is very different. It has an undisputed founder, the true father of the literary tradition, Ramon Llull. However, as the centuries have gone by, this tradition has suffered a number of setbacks and interruptions of such enormity that, even today, we can hardly talk about Catalan literature as a literature of continuous goals, which send forth their own reflections and voice. Catalan literature is full of interruptions, and it could not be otherwise if we bear in mind the vicissitudes of history which have preceded all the forms of our cultural and political lives since the end of the Middle Ages or the end of humanism at the latest. The union between the Kingdom of Aragon and the Kingdom of Castile could have been very productive —as was the friendship between the Catalan Jordi de Sant Jordi and the Castilian Marquis of Santillana, in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, who were friends at the court of Alfonso the Magnanimous— but our literary output after this alliance (between two political powers but by no means between two languages) brought Catalan literature to a period which was not completely unproductive, but not comparable with the literature produced in modern times in the other cultured nations around us. We only have to add the persecution of the Catalan language as the result of our defeat during the War of the Spanish Succession and Philip V seizing power, to understand that the political context of Catalonia and the situation of its language was bound to lead us to a situation of enormous disadvantage and great adversity.

The Nova Planta decrees implemented in the Catalan-speaking regions between 1707 and 1716 sidelined our language and, as a result, the literature produced from then onwards (as had been happening to a great extent since the Castilian-Aragonese alliance, a fact referred to earlier) became purely symbolic and had scant aesthetic quality: it is a literature which cannot claim to be part of our literary canon, and if this has ever happened, in a gesture of laudable patriotism, it has done so more as a show of benevolence rather than a result of a serious consideration of our literary output.

This void which in fact spans part of the 17<sup>th</sup>, the entire 18<sup>th</sup> and much of the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, gave rise to the enormous problems experienced by our literature when attempting to put together a continuous canon, a sequence, as we said previously, of causes and effects. Catalonia had to wait for the phenomenon of the *Renaixença* to occur, associated with the rise of nationalist movements throughout Europe, to regain its position among first-rate literature, which was perfectly comparable with the other literatures on the continent, although a series of dysfunctions are perfectly visible if we begin to make comparisons: when France and England were experiencing the dawn of a literature which was urban, modern and separated by its own volition from the tradition of Romanticism, Catalonia (precisely as a result of the connection between nationalist politics and the romantic spirit) still seemed trapped by an aesthetic which had already become outmoded elsewhere.

This brings us to the third aprioristic question which we mentioned at the beginning: it is difficult to establish a correlation between our literary output during the last 150 years and that

of the independent countries in our geographical area; the lack of political autonomy and the absence of a solid literary tradition during the centuries of the Modern Age and the scant contact between our literature —one of those which Kafka would have considered “minor”— and the greatest literatures in our neighbouring countries made it difficult for Catalan literature to measure up to the vast body of Western literature. In order to remedy this situation, it was necessary for our writers to look northwards (as the generation of Catalan art-nouveau artists, or *modernistes*, did at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century) or, aesthetically speaking, turn towards something which never fails: classical references. In fact, the endeavours of the so-called *noucentista* generation (from the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century) played a major role in this, and Catalonia has not yet shown its gratitude or restored them to their rightful place. In view of our interrupted tradition and lack of solid influences, the *noucentistes* made the works of Shakespeare, Goethe, Ibsen, Dickens, Dostoyevsky, Milton, Hölderlin and Tolstoy their own through translation, not to mention, of course, the classics in the strict sense of the word, which were almost non-existent in Catalan until The Bible, Homer, Virgil, Sophocles, Seneca, Plato and Aristotle were translated, in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

We could, therefore, say that no factors worked in favour of the expansion of our literature following the major episode during the Middle Ages in our region;

but that many efforts, a great deal of determination and many theoretical, political and economic initiatives as splendid as those of Prat de la Riba, Eugeni d’Ors and Francesc Cambó helped us palliate the effects of a tradition which has always encountered stumbling blocks: this is how the great pleiad of *noucentista* poets emerged. If their works had been widely translated into the languages of European culture, the Catalan literature of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century would today rank among the greatest on the continent.

After getting over the last stumbling block and one of the many interruptions the country had undergone —the Spanish Civil War— Catalonia now faced a triple challenge: to recover a tradition that was partly lost —forgotten due to its remoteness in time—, to redouble the efforts of critical bodies (journalists, magazines, universities, etc.) in order to guarantee quality literature and stand decisively alongside the neighbouring countries in order to learn the lesson we seem to have ignored due to the changing fortunes of history. As happened on other occasions, the current uncertainty surrounding our literature —an uncertainty which nowadays affects many other literatures— can quite easily become a literature of such quality as the one dating from more propitious and glorious times, providing we take the above factors into account. There is no shortage of symptoms in this regard, quite the contrary in fact **||**

**Sandra Balsells**

# Is war just images?

I am worried by the level of opaqueness that clouds the world of images, especially that of war photography. Censorship, self-censorship, prohibitions, restrictions, manipulations, conformity, servility and passiveness, are all practices and attitudes increasingly frequent in the world of the media, a world saturated with images that paradoxically do not manage to reflect the complexity of what is happening around us.

I am outraged by the paternalism with which important sectors of the well-off societies criticise the diffusion of tough, hard-hitting images, hiding behind arguments halfway between cynical and hypocritical —such as not offending the sensibility of public opinion— but forgetting that reality, in war situations, is infinitely more horrifying than anything an image can show.

We can discuss what space this type of images should occupy —it is obvious that it is not the same to publish them on the front page of a newspaper as inside, just as it is not the same to show them in colour as in black and white— but I sincerely believe that questioning their diffusion is a symptom of a worrying moral weakness that prefers to close its eyes to the intolerable degree of injustice prevailing in the world.

In 1981, the American writer Susan Sontag stated in her book *On Photography*: “A society that imposes

as a rule the aspiration never to experience deprivation, failure, anguish, pain or panic and where death is seen not as something natural but as a cruel undeserved calamity, creates a tremendous curiosity about these events and photography partially satisfies this curiosity”. Today, 25 years later, I have the feeling that this curiosity has turned into rejection, discomfort. We prefer not to see because, in reality, we prefer not to know.

In her last book, *Regarding the Pain of Others*, Sontag went a bit further and said: “If a person is perennially surprised by the existence of depravation it means they have reached neither moral nor psychological maturity”. There can be no doubt that war represents one of the highest degrees of human wickedness. We ought, therefore, to rebel against this depravation and stop criticising the diffusion of images that show this harsh reality.

We too often make the mistake of believing that we know what war is because we know of its existence through images. We may believe that we understand it because we see images of the battlefields every day. But have we never thought that war may be—in fact it is—infinitely more brutal and pitiless than any photograph or television image can show? Probably not. We fall into the trap of believing that war is just images.

We should point out that the image, like any other language, is limited, restricted and only allows a small part of reality to be transmitted; a reality reinterpreted, subjective, fragmented, and by no means complete.

For example, in photographic images there is no sound or movement; in television or film images there are no smells. But, most importantly, missing also from any kind of image are the instants before and after those we see, the key moments for correctly understanding and interpreting the culminating instant or sequence that any image shows.

And we ought to add yet another limitation: the image is not just a fraction of time, but also of space. Any image is the result of a decision made by an informer who has opted to frame one scene and not another and it is obvious that framing means choosing a piece of reality and, therefore, excluding others from it.

These fractions of reality captured by the informer will later come up against new restrictions: those imposed by editors who—far from the field of battle—will decide what is suitable to show to their readers and what is not.

### The Acceptance of Censorship

If to the limitations typical of the photographic and audiovisual language we add habitual practices like censorship, we obtain as a result a really worrying degree of distorted reality. And this is unfortunately the scenario that we find these days.

We have to remember that photographic censorship is a practice that was imposed shortly after the birth of photography. The photograph quite soon became a powerful medium of propaganda and manipulation.

In 1855 the English photographer Roger Fenton, considered the first war reporter in history, was sent by the British government to the front during the Crimean War with the idea that, when he returned home, his images would manage to raise British morale and strengthen their commitment to that faraway conflict. As Gisèle Freund noted in her book *Photography and Society*, “Fenton’s expedition was financed on condition that he should never photograph the horrors of war in order not to upset the soldiers’ families”.

Fenton spent three months in the Crimea and returned to London with 360 glass plates from the war. Fenton’s images, censored from the start, give, in the words of Gisèle Freund, “a view of war as if it were a country outing”. His images, despite their great historical and documentary value, were restricted to giving a false idea of the war as they only show soldiers dug well in behind the line of fire. In these photographs there is no suffering, no wounds, no fear, no death.

It does not cease to be paradoxical that 150 years later, at the height of the Iraq war, the most powerful governments in the world continue to enforce similar

restrictions in order to give a distorted and censored view of war. I wonder, then, what progress we have made during this century and a half of war imagery.

Fortunately, there have been exceptions. At certain moments in history, photography has shown its enormous potential for stirring up the conscience of public opinion and mobilising society. Photographs like the one obtained by the Vietnamese photographer Nick Ut at Trang Bang (South Vietnam) on June 8<sup>th</sup> 1972, in which little Kim Phuc, a girl of nine, appears running naked, desperately, along a road after the Americans had bombed her town with napalm, contributed decisively to putting an end to that war. To a large extent, the power of the image overcame the destructive capability of the war machine. In this case the photograph showed its full potential to create remorse in American public opinion and contributed to turning the tide against the politicians responsible for it.

Precisely for this reason governments took note: from then on it was decided to limit the informers' freedom of movement and make access to the epicentre of wars difficult for them.

As Ignacio Ramonet points out in his book *La tiranía de la comunicación* (The Tyranny of Communication): "The turning point was, without a shadow of a doubt, the end of the Vietnam War. From that moment onwards, and not only in the United States, war images would be the subject of strict control.

Of some wars there are simply no pictures". And he gives a recent example: "From the beginning of the Gulf War" —he is referring to the one in 1991— "television viewers were highly dissatisfied with regard to the images of the war broadcast by the television

stations. A fundamental thing was missing: the war, paradoxically, had become invisible". Chechnya, the Congo and Sudan are other good examples of invisible conflicts.

With regard to this situation, the British journalist Robert Fisk advocates challenging authority. He said so quite clearly a few weeks ago when, talking about the case of the United States, he claimed: "The media in the USA doesn't need to be manipulated: the relationship between journalists and the government is a parasitic one. They feed off one another. Challenging the authorities, especially in time of war, would be seen as unpatriotic [...]. We must not let presidents, generals and journalists set the pattern of history. We should always defy authority".

Along the same lines, Ramonet introduces a new element: "In an overly mediatized universe, wars are also huge operations of political promotion, which could not go ahead outside the imperatives of public relations. Limpid images have to be produced that correspond to criteria of the advertising discourse". And this is a job too serious to leave in the hands of reporters.

### **Image Manipulation: the Sacrifice of Reality**

The photographer Edward Weston reminded us very often that, "only with effort can the camera be forced to lie". It is beyond question that the photograph or television image can fake reality —indeed, it does so very often— but it has to be made quite clear that this faking will depend on the fraudulent wishes of the reporter or the media and not on the nature of the camera. As Weston said, "the camera, basically, is an honest medium".

According to Ramonet, the politicians' concern about hiding the reality of war coincides with that of the people running the media and, more precisely, with that of the television bosses: "They increasingly mistrust reality, its dirty, difficult, savage side: they don't find it photogenic enough and seem convinced that what is authentic is difficult to film, that only what is false is aesthetic and lends itself well to being shown".

Just two years ago we experienced a case of manipulation that clearly shows this tendency and which marked an important turning point. It took place at the height of the commotion over the attacks of March 11<sup>th</sup> 2004 in Madrid. One of the most illustrative photos, and at the same time visually respectful, of that tragedy was the one by Pablo Torres Guerrero. It was a general shot of Atocha station full of terrified people lying on the rails next to one of the bombed trains. That desolate scene was on front pages of newspapers all over the world. However, hardly any of these newspapers showed the picture just as the photographer had taken it, but they reframed it, retouched it or, directly, manipulated it. Many editors thought Pablo Torres' original photograph would offend their readers. The "problem" with that image was the presence of human remains —probably a bit of leg— that appear in the bottom left of the photo, virtually imperceptible.

Many foreign newspapers, among them, some of the most prestigious in the world, considered those remains too unpleasant for their readers and opted to change them. The British newspaper *The Times*, for example, erased that piece of flesh with Photoshop and replaced it with some small stones like those on the tracks. For its part, *The International Herald Tribune*, using Photoshop, reduced

the size of the remains in order to make the scene more digestible. *The Guardian* changed its colour, turning the member that originally had a reddish hue grey. One of the people in charge of that newspaper declared that the change of colour "was by no means a perfect option", but it was the best solution.

Until then, in the world of journalism, it had been clear that if a reporter manipulated an image or forged a report this would mean their immediate dismissal and a black mark against their name. Since March 11<sup>th</sup>, certain papers have not only manipulated photographs intentionally, but, what is worse, they justify this manipulation.

This is the world we live in. When something offends or upsets us we just go ahead and alter it. In this infantilized and often dumbed down first world, where banal content prevails and where information is treated as a mere spectacle, what is uncomfortable is not the image, it is reality.

### When a False Deontological Code is Imposed

When all this is happening in our media, particularly outrageous is the analysis that certain institutions make, from time to time, of the photographic coverage of wars, hiding behind false deontological arguments.

I shall mention just one example. In May 2003, the Consell de la Informació de Catalunya (CIC) unanimously passed a declaration in which the written and television media were accused of serious deontological transgressions by the use of photographs that, according to this institution, were no more than a "mere exploitation of grief". I have chosen this example because I think that it reflects

quite well what much of our society stands for.

The CIC was referring to two photographs taken during the war in Iraq where children appeared. In one of the photographs we see a wounded girl in the arms of an adult, after a bombing raid had blown her feet off. In the other, little Ali, a 12-year-old boy, appears in hospital after losing his arms and suffering terrible burns over much of his body as a result of the impact of a missile.

Both photographs are terrible, that is beyond doubt, not for what they show but above all for what they will never be able to show: the after-effects that the war will leave forever on these two young victims; the loss of several family members in the case of the girl and virtually his entire family in the case of Ali; the destruction of their houses; the loss of their childhood. That really is terrible. Yet we shall probably never know.

From the sofa in our living room, far from the horror of the battlefield, we will close the newspaper or switch off the television and we will continue to say, outraged, that the diffusion of those photographs is just "the mere exploitation of grief". And we will go to bed as if nothing had happened, convinced that it would be better to silence these tragedies, tragedies that sometimes we ourselves help to cause or too often tolerate.

Therefore, hiding behind the "respect for the victims, their nearest and dearest, deontology and good taste", the CIC severely rebukes the publication of these two photos. Is it not paradoxical to appeal to good taste when we are talking of trying to show what is going on in a war, namely, an event that, by definition, is in repugnant taste?

But that's not all. This document adds: "The horrors of war are well enough known and do not need to be dug up again now". Do the members of the Consell de la Informació de Catalunya really think that the horrors of war are well enough known? Known by whom? By them? By us, the TV viewers of the well-off societies of the first world? Fortunately, the great majority of people that saw those pictures and other similar ones have never suffered a war. Therefore, what do we know of the horror of war? It is obvious very little, if not virtually nothing. We know nothing of the physical pain caused by a bullet or a mine, nor of the traumas generated by mutilation with a knife, nor of forced deportations, nor of the fear of the sound of the bombs, nor of losing a father, a mother or a child while they queue for water or food.

It would take thousands of images, thousands of hair-raising screams and unbearable stench, to give us some idea of what it means to experience a war. Perhaps then we would begin to hate it and to rid the world of it.

As Susan Sontag said: "we have to allow the terrible images to follow us". Because it is obvious that the horrors of war are not familiar enough for those who have not experienced war. We can only get a small idea of the human cruelty that a war engenders through the images coming from those places. And what they eventually show, hard though it may be, will never be comparable to the suffering felt by the victims.

Unfortunately, though, our society has reached such a state of insensitivity towards the suffering of others that, in large measure, it has generated the degree of passiveness we are immersed in. Perhaps we have reached the point of

“emotional fatigue” that Jimmy Fox, the former graphic editor of the Magnum agency, often talks of. I think we have even gone a little further and have fallen into a pit of “emotional apathy” that is shameful. Virtually nothing moves us; if by chance we are upset, we choose to look the other way.

As Susan Sontag rightly says: “what determines the possibility of being

morally upset by photographs is the existence of an important political awareness. Without politics, the photographs of the slaughterhouse of history will merely be seen, in all probability, as unreal or as demoralising emotional blows”.

In the current context, what use is it to try to show if, in reality, we do not want to see? II

**Sandra Balsells** is a photojournalist and lecturer at the Blanquerna Communication Faculty in Barcelona.



**Horitzó (Horizon)**, Artur Heras (2004)  
ink and pencil on paper, 23 x 35 cm

**Miquel Barceló**

# Al-Quaida, a modern creature

After the March 11<sup>th</sup> attack in Madrid, it may be interesting, if it is confirmed that al-Quaida is behind it, to briefly point out some aspects that may characterise this organization.

Normally, in the Western media, al-Quaida (*al-qa'idah*) is translated as “the base”. The translation is correct as long as it is made clear that this base is not immobile, nor a refuge to which one may return from time to time. Indeed, “the base” is nowhere. It is a foundation, a thick line on which something is built. It refers, then, to the provision of foundations for a building, but gives no clues as to its nature or to the precise axes that what is built has to have. The root *Q'D* produces, occasionally, terms of seasonality, of ripening. It also means “to sit”. Indeed, the name of the eleventh month in the Islamic calendar (*du al-qi'dah*) derives from this root. It could be said, then, that the perception the intelligence specialists have of the dissipated nature of the organization and its eccentric workings matches the name. There is no way, on the other hand, and despite the many efforts of analysis and exegesis of the foundational text of the Koran, of establishing clear connections between the type of discourse emerging from al-Quaida —especially the one

coming from Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri— and any of the varied canons of the Islamic discourse. In fact, even the very notion of *djihad* is, in the Koran, ambiguous, episodic and inconsistent. Its formalisation as part of a religious project is slow and certainly not at all univocal in meaning. It is arguable that the religious language of al-Quaida may come from *wahhabism*, a reformist movement (founded by the jurist 'Abd al-Wahhab, who died in 1791) which sets out to re-establish a strict religious observance, old-fashioned and now distorted, compatible, however, with selected elements crucial to modern life. This is the well-known case of the dynastic state of Saudi Arabia. Even so, this provenance or link does not satisfactorily explain either the disseminated character of al-Quaida or its actions or, more exactly, the choice of its targets. It is pertinent, I believe, to insist on the fact that despite the probable formal relationship of its religious discourse with *wahhabism*, it does not seem feasible that al-Quaida should try to

reactivate an early Islamic religious order, lost in a time before the 18<sup>th</sup> century. This is no resurrection device. Nor is there anything, moreover, in the most prominent Muslim discourses that calls for permanent regeneration —or, at least, not in any way singularly different from the more generic religious discourse. Nor does its inclusion in the “Islamist” movements, blurred at the edges, add intelligibility. Far, then, in my opinion, from al-Quaida being a thing, evidently terrifying, that comes from the past or a living monster trapped incomprehensibly in a fault-line in the modern world, it is better understood, in fairness, as a creature of modern times.

To understand it thus we have to bear in mind, on one hand, that there has never been a hierarchical centralisation issuing a single Islamic discourse and, on the other, that the religious variations were formed in a strongly local and regional way, generating their own cultures. Obviously there were principles and bases, above all the legal ones, recognised as common. However, until at least the middle of the last century, it was difficult to imagine the emergence of a, shall we say, “cosmopolitan Islam”, the bearer of a historical vindication. It is true that the argument about the evil of the West appears textually at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century from Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani (died 1897) and which represents, also, laying the foundations of pan-Islamism according to which the Muslim has no nation, nor can the religious community be divided for reasons of birth, language or government. In fact, the exodus of Muslims to the West, unimaginable for those early pan-Islamists, has also produced effects then unforeseen. The de-contextualisation of the Muslims in the continual break-up of their regional

religious cultures has made possible, for the first time, the codification of a simplified Islamic discourse, free of discreet local references. It also happens that modern life in the cities and regions of Europe, where the Muslims have gone to live, allows a juxtaposition of human groups and factions with different rules that does not seem to affect, for now, the ordinary workings of society. It also has to be said that in these places there is an extraordinarily dense concentration of technology, within reach of many, which facilitates the generation and growth of communications. The contrast between the image of the chiefs or spokesmen of al-Quaida —Bin Laden and al-Zawahiri— walking with an old man’s difficulty over a mountain covered in stones and scrub with that of the young agents of destruction, masters of complicated logistics, may be disturbing and opaque for a European, but is a message understandable for a Muslim, precisely because it establishes no operative functional connection between the two groups of people. It is known that those who spread death are not in the mountains but among the Europeans. Al-Quaida’s establishment of targets produces enormous perplexity among those who measure the capacity for destruction merely in terms of an organisation of decisions and hierarchical training. If there are no targets distinguishable by a traditional military characterisation it is, most surely, because al-Quaida has dared to ask a terrible question, and what is even more terrifying, to answer it. It is this: can one discern differences between political evil, the unfair state and the societies whence they emerge? The answer, it says, is no. Others, in the not too distant past, also asked it and came up with, albeit briefly,

the same answer. The mass bombing of German cities, ordered by the Royal Air Force high command in summer 1943, and which caused 600,000 deaths, took it for granted that the evil of the Nazi state was shared by German society. Naturally, most readers and this writer consider the question inadmissible, but perhaps there are bolder readers. In any case, the contours of political evil are difficult to define precisely. The case of al-Quaida is a discouraging example. What are its contours? And where are they? The answer to these two questions will determine the military strategy that has to be followed by Europeans and Americans.

Al-Quaida's religious discourse clearly conceals a historical discourse of greater importance to the intellectual mind. It is a simple discourse organised around the metaphor of "the Crusades", the permanent European military intervention, incomprehensible, outrageous. The old question of the "material" backwardness of Muslim societies, the colonial distortion, Israel, all, at once, exposed, synthesized, very simple, transmissible in a conventional religious language, provable in the Koran, the recitation of God. The lack of immediately political objectives for

the attacks that seek death, mutilation and disability, may be called, vainly, nihilism or what you will. Those who carry them out, who live among Europeans —who "love life as much as they love death"— would surely describe their acts as "retribution" that has to perform to be personalised.

The acts are even more terrifying insofar as they are inexorably described in an ancient and elusive language and as forming part of a horror story dictated a long time ago. It is all, therefore, the subject of viciously opposing perceptions that hinder analysis. Good examples of this are the discovery of a "rich man's terrorism" in al-Quaida or a "historical madness", that of Islam, which has finally left on the beaches of Europe some cold ferocious children capable of spinning, slowly and silently, complex webs of death.

The war scenario drawn geographically by one identifiable and conventionally fixed adversary —the United States army and its allies— and the other, dissipated and invisible with countless targets, is colossal. It is better to say it and not to speak too soon of defeats or victories —among other reasons because it still has not been possible to imagine exactly how al-Quaida should be defeated ||

*dialogues*

transfer

JOURNAL OF CONTEMPORARY CULTURE // 2007 02

ANTONI M. BADIA I MARGARIT / TILBERT DÍDAC STEGMANN

# 1907-2007: A century of German-Catalan philological relations

2007 marks two important events for Catalan culture: the centenary of the foundation of the Institut d'Estudis Catalans (IEC) (Institute for Catalan Studies), an academic body institution establishing the norms of Catalan; and the presentation of Catalan culture as the guest of honour at the Frankfurt Book Fair.

The IEC was founded in 1907, shortly after the First International Congress on the Catalan Language (1906), which enjoyed broad public support as a vehicle for fostering modern Catalan culture and international recognition.

From then on, relations between German Romance philologists and Catalan philologists were particularly intense. Accordingly, the Editorial Board of *Transfer* considered it only fitting to chart this long and fruitful relationship in a conversation between two of the leading scholars in these fields.

We should like to thank both Dr. Badia and Dr. Stegmann for agreeing to hold this conversation on the past and future of Germanic Catalan Studies and shed new light on the nature of Catalan culture abroad.

Isidor Mari

**DR. ANTONI M. BADIA I MARGARIT** (Barcelona, 1920), "B" in the transcript below, is an eminent Catalan philologist and is one of the best known abroad. He was full professor and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Barcelona and President of the IEC's Philological Section. Among other distinctions, he received the Catalan Literature Award of Honour (2003). He currently directs the IEC's journal *Estudis Romànics* [Romance Studies].

**DR. TILBERT DÍDAC STEGMANN** (Barcelona, 1941), "S" in the transcript below, is currently most active Germanic Catalan philologist. He was full professor at Berlin University and is now professor at Frankfurt University. He fostered the creation of the *Deutsch-Katalanische Gesellschaft* [German-Catalan Society] (1983) and his long track record of disseminating Catalan culture earned him the Ramon Llull International Prize in 2006.

**- B:** While Catalan has not been the language of a sovereign State, it has long been of interest to philologists. Friedrich Diez is traditionally identified as the founder of “*romanische Philologie*”, given that in the 2nd edition of his *Grammatik der Romanischen Sprachen*, published in 1856, he stated that Catalan could be considered a **languages**. It was almost by chance some years ago that I discovered Friedrich Diez’s change of heart regarding Catalan from an article titled “Das Katalanische in den Werken von Friedrich Diez”. The article was by Eva Seifert and published in *Miscel·lània Rubió i Lluch* (Barcelona, 1936). I felt indebted to both Diez and Seifert for their work and I was fortunate enough to meet Seifert at a congress in Salamanca in 1955.

**- S:** The 5<sup>th</sup> edition (1882) contains exactly the same text but presented as a separate chapter, as was the case for other languages. This put Catalan on an equal footing with French, Italian, or Spanish. It is a pity that Meyer-Lübke subsequently abandoned this approach.

**- B:** The first German Romanists (of which W. Meyer-Lübke is a prime example) adopted a State-based approach and hence only considered Portuguese, Spanish, French, and Romanian to be fully-fledged Romance languages. A concession was made to Provençal (given that it was the language of the troubadours) and this helped Catalan to become better known. On the other hand, it also prejudiced Catalan because it was lumped together with Provençal as a dialect.

**- S:** You are right when you say that there is an almost Stalinist view of tongues as either languages or dialects. One should remember that it was only when Catalonia and Aragon formed a kingdom that it was treated as part of the European concert of nations. Hence the publication of that wonderful little dictionary — *Vocabulari català-alemany*— published by a German, Johann Rosenbach, in Perpignan in 1502. Everyone accepted that Catalan and German were both **languages**. The German troubadour Oswald von Wolkenstein, in his famous song of 1415, claimed he could speak ten languages including “*franzoisch, mörisch* (the old name for Arabic), *katlonisch und kastilian*”. Subsequent changes to State boundaries blinded linguists to Catalan’s true status. Consulting *Grundriß einer Geschichte der menschlichen Sprache nach allen bekannten Mund- und Schriftarten* (Sketch of the History of Mankind’s Language Based on Known Tongues and Writings) by J. C. C. Rüdiger, published in Leipzig in 1782 —a relatively little-known work— one reads: “*Von den Provincial-Mundarten weicht die aragonische wenig, die valencische etwas mehr, die catalonische aber am meisten ab*” (Of the provincial dialects, Aragonese differs least from standard speech, Valencian somewhat more, and Catalan the most); Rüdiger —70 years before Diez— noted that it was hard to place Catalan as a “dialect”.

**- B:** By contrast, the collaborators of *Gröbers Grundriss* of 1888 and of 1904-06 (2<sup>nd</sup> edition) were more realistic. While it is true that they distinguished between **languages** (*Die spanische Sprache*) and those they did not dare to term such (*Das Catalanische*), they gave exactly the same entry status to both (font, article structure, etc.). I have always thought that the comments on languages in *Gröbers Grundriss* are a paragon of finesse, for which we are all grateful.

- **S:** The designation used —“*Das Katalanische*”— did not mean that Catalan was not accorded the status of a language. This is shown two pages further on in an article on Catalan in the section titled “*Entwicklung der catalanischen Sprache*”. Furthermore, the following article clearly states that the “Catalan provinces” are not part of Castilian-speaking Spain.

- **B:** Catalan was fortunate in having a champion in Bernhard Schädel of Halle an der Saale University. As with other *Privatdozenten* (untenured lecturers), he had travelled to Italy and thence to Majorca and then perhaps on to Castile and Portugal. But he fell in love with Majorca and got on well with Father Alcover, a vitriolic clergyman. He took to the Majorcan temperament and landscape and—who knows?— maybe he even thought he could pick up some kind of work there. He was popular with Catalans even before the 1906 Congress due to the work he and Alcover had carried out on dialects throughout the Catalan Pyrenees some weeks before (from 31<sup>st</sup> July to 13<sup>th</sup> September 1906). A new edition of Alcover’s quirky diary (full of both anecdotic and scholarly notes) written during the trip had just been published. As far as the Congress itself was concerned (1<sup>st</sup> International Congress on the Catalan Language, held in October 1906), Schädel presented a fairly run-of-the-mill paper but he greatly encouraged people and institutions to shoulder their responsibilities and work harder in the field. Moreover, since he was German, Catalans took the message very much to heart.

- **S:** Yes, Schädel’s influence made itself felt through Alcover —of whom he was a loyal follower. It was apparent in the *Bolletí del Diccionari de la Llengua Catalana* (Catalan Dictionary Bulletin) even though he was unable to read his paper (“*Über die Zukunft der katalanischen Sprachstudien*” [On the Future of Catalan Philological Studies]) because he had to return to Germany for family reasons. Schädel had begun to publish useful work in the field of Catalan language and literature in 1903 in his *Kritischer Jahresbericht über die Fortschritte der romanischen Philologie* (Critical Annual Report on the Progress of Romance Philology), which he continued until 1908. Then disagreements with Catalan Philology scholarship



students whom he had persuaded to come to Halle made him lose interest in Catalan studies. However, he still found time to publish a long article titled “*Die katalanischen Pyrenäendialekte*” [The Dialects of the Catalan Pyrenees] in his new journal *Revue de Dialectologie Romane*, in 1909, however there is only a single entry in the Eberhard Vogel’s Catalan-Germany dictionary of 1911, published by Langenscheidt. There is a big gap until 1921, when Alcover republished a proposal for organising the dictionary entries in the *Bulletin*. By the way, Eberhard Vogel was another very active specialist on Catalan at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and apart from producing the dictionary, also translated various novels of the period into German. We should also recall Hugo Schuchardt, who published an article titled “*Zur Verbreitung des Katalanischen*” (The Spread of the Catalan Language) in 1906 in the *Zeitschrift für Romanische Philologie*.

-  Schädel founded the Société de Dialectologie Romane, in which he gave Alcover an important role. The “Société” did not last long because of the outbreak of the First World War. After the war, Adolphe Terracher and Oscar Bloch founded the Société de Linguistique Romane (1924). Although the name was different, it was similar in nature to Schädel’s association, which existed between 1909 and 1914. Moreover, it followed the trail blazed by Bernhard Schädel.

**“Schädel presented a fairly run-of-the-mill paper but he greatly encouraged people and institutions to shoulder their responsibilities and work harder in the field”**

**DR. ANTONI M. BADIA I MARGARIT**

- S: As I said, Schädel faded into the background in the Catalan scene from 1911, when he was appointed Professor at Hamburg's Colonial Institute which, after the First World War, formed part of the new Hamburg University. In the Latin American Institute, Schädel had to cover the whole of Spain and Latin America. But you are right in saying that his co-workers, Fritz Krüger, Rudolf Grossmann, and Wilhelm Giese (the last two of whom I studied with) also followed the line of Catalan studies and made valuable contributions in the field. But the Hamburg line of studies came to an end after the Second World War. When I studied in the 1960s, there was only one Spanish lecturer, the Valencian Josep Maria Navarro, who gave me a small push in the direction of Catalan studies when he suggested I take part in the Colloquium on Catalan Language and Culture in Amsterdam in 1970, which is where I met you.

- B: I would like to pick up the thread again regarding W. Meyer-Lübke. If I can return to him for a moment, he was a great Romanist and remained true to his broad conception of Romance studies. Although he focused mainly on French and Italian, he did not ignore other Romance languages, for example Catalan, even though he continued to consider it a dialect of Provençal. He published the act consecrating the Urgell Cathedral (dating from 860), which includes the names of hundreds of parishes that reveal the pronunciation of Catalan in the 9<sup>th</sup> Century. Meyer-Lübke wrote an excellent article, which was published in *Butlletí de Dialectologia Catalana* (Bulletin of Catalan Dialect Studies, 1923). With hindsight, it foreshadowed the great change in the Romanist's work. Meyer-Lübke and his family stayed in Alforja (Baix Camp) in 1923 —the year of the German hyperinflation. He documented and wrote the book *Das Katalanische* (*The Catalan Language*, published in Heidelberg in 1925). As we know, Meyer-Lübke recognised Catalan as a Romance language in its own right even though it shared Gallo-Roman roots. He became a leading light in the field.

- **S:** We can say that 1925 finally put Catalan on the same footing as other Romance languages. German Romanists treated it as such up until the Second World War, when the output of published articles dropped off in the field, and that included Catalan.

- **B:** You are absolutely right there. Meyer-Lübke's publication of *Das Katalanische* overcame the discrimination against Catalan in the Romance languages camp. Odd though it may seem, the decade 1920-1930 marked the beginning of a fruitful, tranquil relationship between our two cultures, which seems to be reflected in two parallel activities: (1) on the German side, the monograph on the language spoken in Alguer, Sardinia, which was actually an excellent historical grammar of Catalan, written by Heinrich Kuen (Erlangen); and (2) on the Catalan side, the Catalan Supplement by Francesc de B. Moll in Meyer-Lübke's *Romanisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch*, the third edition of which appeared in the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of the *REW*, published in 1935. It is curious that both works were published in the same journal (*Anuari de l'Oficina Romànica de Lingüística i Literatura*) in Barcelona and more or less in the same years in the 1920s and 30s. This temporal coincidence between Kuen and Moll has often struck me.

**“Fritz Krüger, Rudolf Grossmann, and Wilhelm Giese [...] also followed the line of Catalan studies and made valuable contributions in the field”**

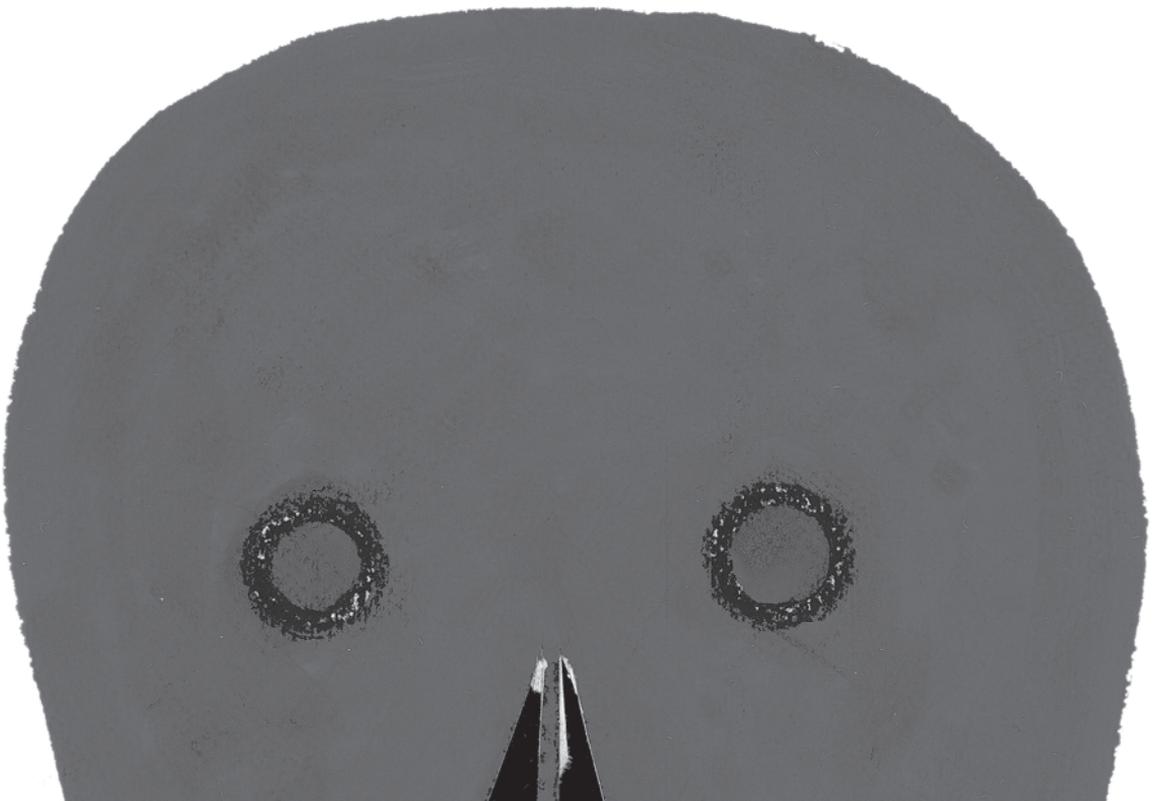
**DR. TILBERT DÍDAC STEGMANN**

- **S:** I am glad you mentioned Heinrich Kuen, who treated me very well when I arrived as an assistant lecturer at Erlangen-Nürnberg University and who appointed me President of Honour when the Deutsch-Katalanische Gesellschaft was founded. But that was a long time ago. What was your impression of the German contribution to Catalan language and culture during the long years of repression under the Franco dictatorship?

- **B:** The impression I got from contacts with German friends and colleagues is that they were very worried in the 1940s and 50s about the repression of Catalan culture and language. It made them feel powerless. Let me tell you what happened to me. Hans Rheinfelder (of Munich) asked me about my difficulties in Spain. He was so shocked at what I told him that he arranged for me to be appointed as Guest Lecturer at Munich University for three semesters between 1959 and 1960. He did so because the situation in Spain was unbearable. Despite working under such adverse circumstances, the period was a fruitful one from the academic point of view. That is borne out by the minutes of the Romanist Congresses and the bibliography of the time. It was also a period in which the bonds of friendship were strengthened. From 1968 onwards (the year of the Catalan Colloquium in Strasbourg), the International Association for Catalan Language and Literature and similar associations in other countries made great strides. Germany played a key role in this work.

**- S:** The most active new lines of German research on Catalan are being undertaken in Tübingen, where the lecturer Antoni Pous made many disciples of Catalan (Hösle, Schlieben-Lange, Jens Lüdtkke, etc.), and in Freiburg through the Raimundus-Lullus-Institut. Georg Kremnitz is full professor at Vienna University and a large number of students have graduated after majoring in Catalan. As I mentioned, I myself started at Erlangen-Nürnberg and then went on to Berlin, where I organised Catalan Weeks with a Colloquium on Catalan Socio-linguistics. In 1983, I organised Catalan Weeks in Karlsruhe in which you took part, and jointly founded the “Deutsch-Katalanische Gesellschaft” in 1983 with Ramon Aramon i Serra. The “Deutscher Katalanistenverband” is now an association that brings together German and Catalan scholars. I myself did everything I could from Frankfurt, and worked closely with the Biblioteca Catalana (Catalan Library Foundation) and the *Zeitschrift für Katalanistik* [Catalan Studies Journal] from 1981 to the present. This has borne fruit because in 2007 Catalan culture will be the Guest of Honour at the Frankfurt Book Fair. One can therefore say that the “German contribution” a hundred years after the 1906 International Congress on the Catalan Language Relations is thriving.

**- B:** That is an excellent point. We both work in the field of Catalan language and culture and thus recognise the importance of both the 1906 International Congress on the Catalan Language and the impending 2007 Frankfurt Book Fair, at which Catalan culture is the guest of honour. The 2007 Fair is of great importance for anyone interested in Catalan, particularly so for Catalan and German specialists. Moreover, it is all the more remarkable that the 1906 Congress should receive decisive contributions and guidance from a German philologist, while the 2007 Book Fair will be held in the German city of Frankfurt.



German Catalan studies are currently enjoying one of the brightest periods ever, and embrace teaching, research, and dissemination of the importance of Catalan. This year's commemoration of the 1906 Congress promises to have a much wider impact than we could ever have imagined. Today, relations between German and Catalan Romanists could not be better, thanks to university exchange programmes, colloquia, congresses, and a wealth of publications. This holds out excellent prospects for Catalan studies in both our countries.

Then there is the challenge of the Frankfurt Book Fair. We trust the German organisers will be as efficient as usual in preparing the event. With regard to the organisation in Catalonia, things are a little up in

the air at the moment. The current political situation is unstable, with changes of government, recent elections, lack of planning, and empty posts while we wait for the necessary appointments to be made. With regard to more specific aspects of the Fair, we are still waiting for a decision as to whether "Catalan culture" means "expressed in Catalan" (or whether it includes works in Spanish written by Catalan authors). A decision also needs to be made on whether publishers should be given more weight than authors. Those in charge (but who still have to be appointed) have made enigmatic statements to the effect that "works in Catalan will receive due attention". Whatever the outcome, Catalonia hopes to write a glorious page in the history of Catalan literature at the Frankfurt Book Fair. Some day we shall speak of it again and I sincerely hope we will have cause for self-congratulation.

Before bringing this pleasant conversation to an end, I should like to recall that exactly 17 years ago to the day on 7<sup>th</sup> November 1990, we and our friend Til received the 1990 CIEMEN awards (CIEMEN-International Centre for Ethnic and National Minorities). You were introduced by Max Cahner and the prize was awarded by Aureli Argemí, CIEMEN's Secretary-General. Enric Casassas introduced me and the prize was awarded by Jaume Farriol, CIEMEN's President. May we continue to fight shoulder to shoulder for Catalan culture and the strengthening of the bonds between our two countries!||

**“Today, relations between German and Catalan Romanists could not be better, thanks to university exchange programmes, colloquia, congresses, and a wealth of publications”**

**DR. ANTONI M. BADIA I MARGARIT**



**p** ERIO  
LAGI

**C** ONVICCIÓ  
CONVICTIÓ

**p** ENNE DÉMENT  
ENSAMENT

**O** RDRE  
ORDRE  
**h** OME  
HUMILIACIÓ

**d** INERS  
EFECTE

**b** ELLESA  
ESTICA

**f** ER LAGER

**S** ILENCI  
EXE

**S** ENY  
VERRA A



JORDI CERDÀ / JORDI SARSANEDAS / JULIÀ DE JÒDAR / MERCÈ IBARZ / JOSEP PEDRALS

# The “Elephant”<sup>1</sup> and Catalan literature

The round table arose from an editorial address published in *L’Avenç* magazine. It stated that Catalan society had become used to the ills and poor prospects of Catalan literature. In particular, the magazine argued that three main factors were to blame: (1) a ceiling on the number of Catalan readers; (2) failure by the media to foster Catalan literature; and (3) Catalan publishers are small in size and are increasingly small offshoots of large firms publishing in Spanish. As a result, Catalan literature has not attained its rightful status and has not lived up to the high expectations of a quarter century ago. One should also note that culture was next to last on the restored Catalan government’s list of priorities. To discuss these issues in greater depth, *L’Avenç* invited four established writers from four generations. The round table was chaired by Jordi Cerdà, Professor of Philology at the Autonomous University, and was held at the Ateneu Barcelonès at the end of October 2005.

**JORDI SARSANEDAS** (Barcelona 1924-2006), poet and novelist. He was chief editor of *Serra d’Or* (literary magazine) for over 30 years. Honour Prize, *Lletres Catalanes* (Catalan literary award). His latest publication is a volume of short stories, *Una discreta venjança* (Discrete Revenge) (pub. Edicions 62).

**JULIÀ DE JÒDAR** (Badalona, 1942) has studied history and done publishing work. From 1997 onwards he began to publish his trilogy *L’atzar i les ombres*.

**MERCÈ IBARZ** (Saidi, 1954) is a writer and journalist. She is a lecturer at Pompeu Fabra University (UPF) and collaborates with *La Vanguardia* newspaper. Ibarz has written essays on Rodoreda and Buñuel and just published a volume of stories, *Febre de carrer* (Street Fever) (pub. Quaderns Crema).

**JOSEP PEDRALS** (Barcelona 1979) is a poet and recites works. He ran a bookshop for a while and since 1997 has promoted spoken poetry, organising courses and recitals all over the country. Pedrals has just published his photo-poem *Eclisions* (pub. Labreu edicions).

■ <sup>1</sup> Translator’s note: The “Elephant” here refers to Spanish. The simile is explained further on in the text.

- **Jordi Cerdà:** Before beginning the debate, I should like to present the authors and ask each of them a question bearing on the current state of Catalan. We shall begin in order of seniority. Jordi Sarsanedas published *Mites* (Myths) in 1954, just over fifty years ago. It became an icon for later writers in Catalan. Were you ever tempted to change the literary language used in this work?

- **Jordi Sarsanedas:** No, I have never been tempted to revise a text. I wrote *Mites* as a young man and would have been happy to put my name to works by contemporary authors. By the same token, I would still publish what I wrote then. I believe in continuity. What I wrote then and the language I used have continuity in the present. The important thing for a writer is to be true to himself. I recognise the texts I wrote

**“We’ve lived with bilingualism for centuries now. But for Catalan to survive, we need to get Spanish speakers to show a profound and almost tender tolerance for our language”**

**JORDI SARSANEDAS**

I have grown with —the language and I have aged together. I know there are writers, for whom I have the greatest respect, who decide to change the tenses of all the verbs in a novel. But I really do not see the need for that. To be frank, I am pretty sceptical of the notion of writing in “today’s language” —spoken by whom?

then just as I recognise those I write now. They serve to both confirm what I wrote in the past and what I currently write. A book and the words it uses belong to a moment in one’s life and hence both reflect a point in time and the language in vogue. I know Catalan is not the same now —or more precisely, is not exactly the same. Even so, the language used in *Mites* was sincere and in keeping with the times. I am much older now and I write with the language

- **J. Cerdà:** At the end of the 1990s, the beginning of the trilogy *L’atzar i les ombres* (Chance and the Shadows) by Julià de Jòdar made a splash. Immigration has had a big impact on Spain but it has received comparatively little attention in Catalan literature. What made you tackle this theme?

- **Julià de Jòdar:** Catalonia has yet to fully re-establish Catalan. Proof of this is that we have to ask this question with regard to immigration. No one asks Juan Marsé why the youngsters in Gràcia speak Spanish. But is considered normal for goodness knows what reason to ask why one can’t use Catalan to speak of certain subjects. If this has become a habit, it means something is wrong. I have no idea whether it stems from ideological factors or social distance but the fact is that something impedes one from writing about such subjects in Catalan. In my case, I have discovered that people in central Badalona are simply not interested in this subject —they live in a world that is totally alien. Proof of this is the way Badalona’s traditional industries have vanished and along with them the Catalan working classes who guaranteed the continuation

of the language. It has happened in a place that once boasted the greatest range of industry of any city in Spain.

I say this because I am the child of incomers and my mother tongue was Spanish. I was taught until the age of 20 in Spanish —like everyone else in my generation. That forced me to craft a literary style— one which I wanted to be less refined and artificial. The problem is that when you use another language for literary ends it is never as fluent as your mother tongue. When the first part of my trilogy was published, a critic said that the ordinary people in the story spoke too poshly. There was something in that because my style was based on what I had read. My cultural education took place through reading Catalan literature —in particular Espriu and, with regard to theatre, Adrià Gual.

The critic's comment raised an interesting issue, namely whether the working classes should speak poshly in literature. This touches on the author's purpose. For example, if one wants to write like Paco Candel —who tries to reflect a working class that does not express itself in a literary fashion— that is fine. Here, it is as if those speaking in the novel are witnesses and there is no intermediary between them and the reader. However, that was not my purpose. What interested me was the vanished world of my childhood —the crushed world of Badalona. I wanted to capture the images that haunted me— the people who had died in the Spanish Civil War, the exiles, Camp de la Bota<sup>2</sup>. As a writer, I was not interested that the trilogy concerned an immigrant district. That is because while there were immigrants, there were also Catalans who had lived there their whole lives —like the shopkeepers in my neighbourhood. These people refused to renounce either their language or history. Though I was too young to understand that at the time, I drew upon the experience later on. You might say that I was imbued by the literary and historical spirit of a bygone age. That is what created my style and it was based on an earlier body of literature. That is because when I was growing up, Spanish literature had no real impact beyond the Nadal awards —which were simply an invention of *Destino* magazine. Entry to the cultural world of the time was in Catalan, not Spanish. That has changed greatly over the last few years.

**- J. Cerdà:** Mercè Ibarz, you were born in Saidí, in the Franja de Ponent and opened up new literary territory and Francesc Serés followed in your footsteps. Have you managed to find a language that is sufficiently flexible to reach all Catalan-speaking areas?

**- Mercè Ibarz:** The language I learnt is an unwritten one —it is only spoken but is a very rich one nonetheless. I began my career as a journalist writing in Catalan. That means my language is strongly rooted in rural Catalan and I had the chance to use it intensively from a young age. So I don't really see the problem in reaching all Catalans given that I have the whole language at my disposal. I should say in passing that it was considered modern to write Catalan back in the 1970s —unlike today, when it is often labelled provincial.

■ <sup>2</sup> Translator's note: Camp de la Bota used to be an artillery base. Political prisoners were executed there both during and after the Spanish Civil War (1936-39). A small memorial to the 1619 people shot as part

of the post-war Fascist repression stood on the site until 2004. The plaque (which bore part of a poem by Màrius Torres) was bulldozed during building work for Barcelona's Universal Forum of Cultures.

In 1992, after two books of essays, I decided to set myself a literary challenge. I wanted my work to be read so I decided to write about my village and the changes it had been through. One way of getting people to read your work is to write about your would-be readers. It's that simple. The fact is, people found it difficult to understand what I had written. Schoolchildren proved the key —they had learnt better than their elders and read my books out loud to their parents<sup>3</sup>.

I hate to criticise schools because they get enough flak but the fact is they have not done enough to turn out new generations of readers.

I have written two books in which I tackled the issue of writing in dialect because I wanted to reflect the language I had grown up with and spoken. In *La terra retirada* it was pretty straightforward. That was also more or less true of my next novel —*La palmera de blat*. Maybe I would now write them differently but as Sarsanedes said, it was a historic moment. I read a lot of Pavese at the time and that proved a great help —I intentionally adapted the dialect for literary purposes. I think it worked because the translator had no difficulty in rendering the work in French. From then, I ditched dialect —neither *A la ciutat en obres* or *Febre de carrer* contain it.

**- J. Cerdà:** Josep Pedrals, you are the youngest author here. You were born in a Catalonia that had theoretically restored the position of Catalan. Is writing in Catalan still a problem for those of your generation?<sup>4</sup>

**- Josep Pedrals:** That is something of a trick question because it is generally accepted that Catalan has been restored to its rightful place. Unfortunately, nothing could be further from the truth - there are Catalan philology students who make spelling mistakes. I owe my mastery of Catalan to my father, who was highly educated. At home, we had a magnificent library. He used to recite Verdaguer to me when I was still in the cradle and that gave me a mental literary language. The school I went to in Gràcia also helped —Catalan classes always involved learning poems by heart each week.

Writing in Catalan is the same as writing in any other language —as I see it, there is no real problem. In fact, it's pretty silly to see it as a problem at all. We are often given the idea that writing in Catalan is a political act. The first reason I write in Catalan is because I was brought up in the language. The second is because I can easily show literary creativity in Catalan. The third is because I can make it sound in a way that I cannot equal in any other language. Basically, writing in Catalan makes aesthetic sense to me and I can take full advantage of its dialect variants. That is what literature boils down to. “The Catalan spoken today” is a phrase often used but just where and by whom is it spoken? In any case, language is a living thing and changes over time. Foix dressed Catalan in “an old smock”, a Mediaeval touch if you will, but wonderful nonetheless.<sup>5</sup>

■ <sup>3</sup> Translator's note: reading comprehension among adults in Spain (and to a lesser extent in Catalonia) is generally below the European average.

<sup>4</sup> Translator's note: Under almost four decades of Franco dictatorship, Catalan was either forbidden or actively discouraged by the regime. Restoring Catalan to its former glory is proving a difficult task.

<sup>5</sup> The phrase comes from a poem by J.V. Foix (1894-1987), *Sol i de dol*. The term used is “vetusta gonella”.

<sup>6</sup> Translator's note: Paul Henderson Scott, *Still in Bed with an Elephant* (pub. The Saltire Society). The book concerns Scotland's political union with England and makes a case for Scottish independence. England represents the “elephant” here.

**- J. Cerdà:** Let us focus on one of the main planks in the debate. What do you think of the work done to restore Catalan to its former glory and what role does literature play? Do you think literature can help restore Catalan's position or is it a fringe activity?

**- J. Pedrals:** It can help restore the language insofar as it makes people aware that Catalan literature exists. A couple of years ago, I went with Albert Roig to a secondary school to give sessions on teaching poetry and you could see the kids really enjoyed literature. Unfortunately, that tends to be the exception.

**- J. de Jòdar:** I don't think Catalan has regained its place. A country that has its own history, language and culture needs to be sovereign if it is to protect its heritage. In modern times and as things currently stand, it is the State that sets the pace in the language through education, public broadcasting, legislation, and terminology. If we accept that the State plays a key cultural and educational role—as is the case in France and many other places—it is clear that the prospects for a language are poor without one's own State. However, literature is not the only instrument for restoring the language. All of us should learn to write in Catalan. Nevertheless, when a State plays the roles I just mentioned, literature provides continuity and a kind of lab in which to link reality and imagination.

I doubt whether English kings spoke as they did in Shakespeare but it is important that the country's modern monarchs learn to speak English by reading him. Literature also plays a role in ensuring continuity in the collective imagination. While it helps a language play its proper role in society, it is first and foremost a factor in creating the national imagination.

At the moment, market forces are robbing Catalan of this role. Everything that is published is branded as literature. This is why Catalan is losing readers. There is a feeling that our literature may not be up to the challenges posed by a complex society that has undergone big changes. The lack of cultural policies only compounds the problem.

**- J. Sarsanedas:** The truth of the matter is that we are not only uncertain whether we have restored the role of Catalan but also unclear about what such restoration consists of. I would like to hear someone define it. In any case, we have lived in a bilingual society for a long time now. We are now used to the contact—and possibly the clash—between two languages. It is a common situation because the consolidation of nation states in Europe has created many cases of bilingualism. What is the situation here

**“It is patently untrue that modern Spanish literature is better than ours.**

**I would like to stress that to assume this lie is a sure way of dooming our literature to provincialism”**

**JULIÀ DE JÒDAR**

in Catalonia? A bilingual system is shifting and unstable by its very nature and may quickly sweep away the weaker of the two tongues. Even so, we have had a bilingual system for the last few centuries and Catalan has avoided succumbing to Spanish so far. That is something we can be proud of.

As a young man, I was struck by the story of a woman living at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century who was the last speaker of Cornish. How many times have we heard that anecdote? However, I also think of a book by a friend of mine —Paul Scott— titled *Still in Bed with an Elephant*<sup>6</sup>. Obviously both Scots and Catalans share an “elephant” problem even if the beastie is different in each case.

I believe that all languages are worth conserving and provide different ways of both perceiving and shaping the world. Indeed, I would happily argue that the

**“We suffer from lack of conviction [...] That has led to the most awful provincialism in contemporary Catalan culture”**

**MERCÈ IBARZ**

proliferation of languages enriches our exploration of the world and the realms of what is possible. I would also argue the need to disseminate knowledge through the world’s great languages (English, Russian, Chinese, and Spanish). But it is important that bilingualism does not lead to the extinction of the weaker of the two tongues.

What should be done? I think the only way is to convince the elephant to be gentle in his ways. The stronger party must be infinitely tolerant towards the other and accept the latter’s right to exist. There is no point in taking on three hundred million Spanish speakers. We need to get them to show a deep, almost tender tolerance towards Catalan.

**- J. Pedrals:** The problem is the elephant is often unaware there is anyone in the bed with it. Many Spaniards are unaware that we write in Catalan.

**- M. Ibarz:** I would like to go back thirty five years or so. I disagree with Vázquez Montalbán’s comment that “we lived better when we were fighting Franco”. However, back then we were more generous when it came to linguistic issues. I read Galician, Basque in translation, and a great deal in Spanish. Whether Spanish writers did the same is another question. Unfortunately, that kind of generosity is past and we suffer from lack of conviction or even, as Joan Fuster put it, from self-loathing. That has led to the most awful provincialism in contemporary Catalan culture.

**- J. Pedrals:** When I give readings abroad, people often ask me why they are in Catalan. But in Belgium and Portugal they find it the most natural thing in the world.

**- M. Ibarz:** The trouble, is we lack the strength of our convictions.

**- J. de Jòdar:** The question is why we have not learnt how to hunt elephants. When the dictatorship came to an end, in theory we had a golden opportunity to spread Catalan. Forty years ago, you could go to Madrid and see theatre in Catalan

and get an invitation at the Residencia de Estudiantes to recite Espriu. You would see Gabriel Celaya there in solidarity with the Catalan contingent. That is no longer true. The “elephant” has not learned wisdom —it has just got bigger. Frustration has taken hold of Catalonia given that all the resistance that built up in the struggle against Franco has not translated into real political power. That is why good people resign and turn their backs on public life. When politics loses any connection with the real world, culture becomes dependent on official favour. That explains the rampant provincialism in contemporary Catalan culture. The problem stems not from self-hate but from frustration. We’ve hidden our heads in the sand for thirty years now and that carries a high price. Culture needs to tap people’s energy. That means creating links and drawing on Catalonia’s core beliefs and driving forces. Beyond that, culture is merely ornamental.

**- M. Ibarz:** As far as artists are concerned, the political use made of culture is inexcusable.

**- J. de Jòdar:** You cannot separate culture and politics. After all, you write for a given society and if it chooses to ignore reality, writers end up in an ivory tower where they build their own little worlds. The problem is that we are like little islands, cut off from the rest of society.

**- M. Ibarz:** The market has its own rules. Let’s not fool ourselves —we operate in a market like everyone else. The changes that are happening in Catalan literature can be found everywhere. They say books have lost importance yet ever more are published. Many things have changed and we need to face the fact. Lastly, why should one write in Catalan? I will give you two reasons taken from different points in time. The first is Mercè Rodoreda, who got a letter from her publisher in the 1960s saying that she could count on a readership of 2,500 families (and that is still more or less the case). Rodoreda replied that writing in Catalan is also an act of revolt. Thirty years later, in 1997, Maria Mercè Marçal, said shortly before she died, that if she recovered from her illness she would become a Slovene. The fact is, Slovene authors are doing very well. It is not only that some of the best Slovene authors happen to be in the government, they are also writing good books ranging from literature to philosophy.

**- J. de Jòdar:** The problem with the “elephant” is that it would have us believe that it doesn’t snore, that it has a velvety skin, brings us breakfast in bed, and that all the beasts in the jungle strew flowers in its path. We are told that modern Spanish literature is better than ours —something that is patently untrue. When we make comparisons of the literature written in Catalonia, Ruiz Zafón is not in Monzó’s league, nor Palol up to the standard of Porcel or Valentí Puig. The elephant may or may not write good literature but it is anything but beautiful. I would like to stress that kidding ourselves that the elephant is beautiful is a sure way of dooming our literature to provincialism. The fact is the elephant is taking up the whole bed and is a fat, ugly heffalump. We have tried our best to nimbly avoid being crushed by the elephant. We could be likened to an animal that is half humming bird, half ostrich. An elephant is an elephant whatever lies we are told about it having a soft skin and not snoring in

bed. We suffer from a provincial complex that is fostered by the media and —worse still— by our institutions.

- **M. Ibarz:** Rodoreda also said that no one here is willing to say the emperor has no clothes.

- **J. Cerdà:** Isn't there a tendency to idealise Catalonia? Couldn't that be the source of the frustration you mentioned?

- **J. de Jòdar:** The last national poet, Espriu, was not complacent about Catalonia —quite the contrary. The same went for Pere Quart, let alone Pla.

- **M. Ibarz:** Our books are not complacent either. However, I fear that on the whole, Catalan literature at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century has shown little ability to tap the imaginary world that Julià spoke of. I think we idealise things.

- **J. de Jòdar:** But Monzó does not idealise things —quite the reverse. His portrait of urban life in the 1980s is a searing indictment. Its sheer pessimism leaves no chink of hope.

- **M. Ibarz:** That is also a kind of distortion —the studied grotesqueness of it all can also be considered a kind of idealisation.

- **J. de Jòdar:** I am not sure whether literature has lost its role in the modern world of binding individual imaginations within a greater whole. TV3<sup>7</sup> does much more to shape this imaginary world, albeit in ways that many dislike. *El cor de la ciutat*<sup>8</sup> does not exactly help one think of Catalonia as a country. The ways in which knowledge is passed on have probably changed. Young people today have many more tools —such as Internet— at their disposal and this has led to a greater fragmentation of knowledge that is far removed from a Humanities-based approach. If our knowledge becomes fragmented, so too does our view of the world. Literature now seems to reflect the functional nature of things rather than —as in the past— providing the basis of a general education. In the past, reading was all we had.

- **J. Pedrals:** Oral literature, poetry recitals and drama are all forms of literature and I think may help us. There is currently a lot going on in the poetry recital scene and the audiences are very young.

- **J. Sarsanedas:** We deserve a pat on the back, not brickbats. After all, we're still here despite all the odds.

- **M. Ibarz:** Anna Murià said that there had never been so much written in Catalan as now. We idealise the 1930s but, if we look at the present, more people than ever write in Catalan and, what is more, in many different registers.

■ 7 Translator's note: A mass TV station forming part of Catalonia's public broadcasting corporation.

8 Translator's note: An interminable TV3 soap opera set in Barcelona's down-at-heel *Sant Andreu* district.

- **J. de Jòdar:** That's true.

- **J. Cerdà:** You have all talked about providing continuity when our age focuses on the fleeting moment. The relationship with tradition has changed and with it the points of reference. Is that true of Catalan literature? In other words, ought one speak so much of continuity and remaining faithful to a literary tradition?

- **J. Sarsanedas:** Almost certainly not but our own circumstances make us feel that way. The important thing is to tackle the issue calmly.

- **M. Ibarz:** I must say it again —we're not provincial. The other day, an English writer —Martin Amis— was asking why no one read the poet Philip Larkin any more. Is this not also a matter of continuity? The obsession with the here and now is a hallmark of our age. It isn't just a problem in Catalonia. In other words, our reference points are neither solely Catalan nor wholly literary.

- **J. Pedrals:** Video games are a reference point for me, daft though it may sound. I have writer friends in Madrid who currently churn out scripts for video games because it pays better.

- **M. Ibarz:** There's the rub. The question is whether you can earn a living writing in Catalan and the simple answer is "no".

- **J. Cerdà:** Let's go back to the beginning of the debate —what does it mean to write in Catalan today?

- **M. Ibarz:** Are we talking about money?

- **J. Sarsanedas:** Well, there's not much money to be had and that's a fact. As far as I am concerned, I have always written in a way that suits me. Maybe it isn't the best way to go about earning a packet but it just happens to be the right thing to do. We may be a pretty odd bunch for sticking at writing but I don't think there is any good reason for giving it up. Josep M. Benet recently brought out a new play, *Salamandra*, in which he reflected on decline and death. There are those who say Catalan is doomed to disappear. The pessimism is almost metaphysical.

- **M. Ibarz:** I think that is going to far. Catalan is very useful in expressing suffering and heroic resistance to fortune's slings and arrows.

- **J. Sarsanedas:** I suppose he didn't mean that, he spoke of death pure and simple. Authors in any language always write with the fleeting nature of existence in mind.

**“Writing in Catalan is the same as writing in any other language —as I see it, there is no real problem. In fact, it's pretty silly to see it as a problem at all”**

**JOSEP PEDRALS**

- **J. de Jòdar:** Catalonia has good cause to feel badly treated by History —that much is clear. However, there are lots of reasons for believing in Catalonia. I believe I write in Catalan as an act of gratitude. But if you ask me what I write, that is another matter. I write because I feel out of kilter with the world. Why do I write in Catalan? Well, maybe it is both a burden we bear and our salvation. I just happen to have been born Catalan and that is it.

- **M. Ibarz:** In my case as an act of revolt and because I doubt whether I could learn Slovene.

- **J. Pedrals:** To round off, I’d like to give you the following quartet:

La importància de l’artista  
és si té força i valor  
per ficar-se a l’autopista  
anant amb ciclomotor<sup>9</sup> II

■ <sup>9</sup> A rough translation conserving the humorous intent and approximate rhyme scheme of the original might be:

The artist’s worth resides  
In braving Fortune fickle  
And daring on highway ride  
On a clapped out motorcycle

This dialogue appeared in the journal **L’Avenç 308** (December 2005). Translation by Andrew Spence.

*reviews*



transfer<sup>02</sup>

JOURNAL OF CONTEMPORARY CULTURE // 2007

# Reviews

## || The tragedy of a land Adrià Chavarria

Joan B. Culla, 2004, *Israel, el somni i la tragèdia. Del sionisme al conflicte de Palestina* (Israel, the Dream and the Tragedy. From Zionism to the Conflict over Palestine), Barcelona, Edicions La Campana, 624 pp.

The relations between Israel and Palestine —between two peoples that share one geographic country— always look thorny if one wishes to inquire objectively into this conflict of territorial, social and political dimensions. Moreover, the discord is fuelled by all the international press, which analyses the situation in a biased fashion depending on the personal inclinations of the journalist or the media mouthpiece in question. Here in Catalonia, from the late 1970s onwards, the issue has taken a controversial slant. The Israelis are murderous tyrants and the Palestinians victims of a powerful army. To offer this view is to oversimplify matters. The historian Joan B. Culla has attempted in his book, the result of long research, to take this partiality into account and analyse the situation from the Israeli standpoint.

Culla recounts in journalistic style the story of Israel, from its birth with the early-twentieth-century immigration —*aliyah*— through to the month of August 2004, by which time the Likud party had become bogged down in its own policy of “separation” by means of the wall, and the opposition of orthodox groups to the West Bank withdrawal plan and the subsequent dismantling of a number of Jewish settlements.

The book discusses the different wars in which the state of Israel has been involved since its very beginnings. Everyone forgets that in 1947 the UN proposed the creation of two states in Palestinian territory, but the Resolution was rejected by the Palestinians and neighbouring Arab states, although it was supported by the Jews who had come with the *aliyah* and were now established in Israel. The conflict has been the cause of bloodshed ever since as the Israelis have defended themselves against their Arab neighbours and the Palestinians have tried to stop the illegal appropriation of part of their territory, not to mention the problems of refugees, bad distribution of water resources, all of this accompanied by a corrupt Palestinian administration.

Culla analyses the emergence of the Zionist idea since the 1880s. The Zionist project is the child of post-Enlightenment Europe, in the sense that its theorists were influenced by Enlightenment thinkers and then, as a spin-off, by the ideas of the emancipatory, socialist-leaning nationalist movements that, from the mid-nineteenth century onwards, were a powerful presence in some European countries. The question became clear. The Jewish people, who had been persecuted in the secular domain, still maintained very enduring traditions thanks to their religious practices, but they had no land to call their home. The wish expressed in the Jewish *tephila* (prayer) had to be granted. The Jews must return to Eretz Israel and re-establish a homeland there for the Diaspora Jews.

This was easier said than done since the British colonial interests and those of the surrounding Islamic populations did not lend themselves to the project. Nonetheless, the Jews began to arrive in small *aliyot* (the word in Hebrew means ascent to the Land of Israel). Among these early immigrant groups, four can be singled out as being particularly influential in the period before the State of Israel was created and they would eventually come to constitute the country's affluent class. They bought land, worked the land, became established and even founded cities like Tel Aviv. When it became possible for them to recover land they began to found a small state within the British colony, whose members began to fear, along with the Palestinian-Jordanian population, that they were starting to lose control of those territories.

The main *aliyah* thrust came after the Second World War when a third of Europe's Jewish population had been murdered by Germany's Nazi regime. It was then that some of the Jewish survivors and other members of the Sephardic Jewish world —the Jewish population of Arab states— decided to immigrate to Israel and begin life anew. Things were not easy for them either because conflict immediately arose between the Ashkenazi immigrants from Europe and the new arrivals from the Islamic Arab countries.

Israel's "courtship" with the United States (the country with the highest numbers of Jews after Israel, most of them immigrants after the pogroms of the 1870s and 1880s), which would bend over backwards with economic and military aid to the small state, was immediately frowned upon by members of the European left who, as the conflict became more intractable, began to speak out on behalf of Palestinian interests (which, on the other hand, were a necessary part of the equation). This went hand in hand with the birth of anti-Zionist politics, full of new anti-Semitic eruptions, especially in France, a country that has encouraged the biased propaganda against Israel.

Culla's study examines the fifty years of life of the State of Israel and suggests that the solution to its problems can be found only in dialogue and political concessions being made on both sides. What he does try to do, however, is to avoid being partisan in his consideration of this conflict where the good guys are seen as being on one side and the bad guys on the other. There are Amaleks on both sides and it is they who will have to disappear from the future political stage. Only the new generations will perhaps be able to resolve the problem they have inherited, some day in the future. The present does not look good for either side, not for Israel because it is being isolated internationally, or for the Palestinians because their future is slipping away through their fingers II

II **The geographies of  
*Mittleuropa***  
Manel Ollé

Simona Skrabec, 2005, *L'atzar de la lluita* (Of Chance and Strife), Catarroja, Afers, 272 pp.

«Central Europe» was just one of the curious notions to emerge from the continent's power struggles. The idea of *Mittleuropa* may seem a harmless and even quaint concept to us —especially in our post Berlin Wall world. However, the term *Mittleuropa*

(Central Europe) was used to embrace all kinds of territorial claims and serve a wide range of ideologies, political ambitions, and literary schools. Decades before the Third Reich, it was used to delimit Germany's territorial ambitions at a time when the country's opportunities for colonial expansion were frustrated by the other Great Powers.

The British saw Central Europe as a *cordon sanitaire* or strategic buffer zone for keeping Germany in check. Later, the term *Mittleuropa* was used to express a mythical, idyllic version of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. In the 1980s, the notion of Central Europe was resurrected as a desirable alternative to Cold War division of the continent.

The Slovene writer and essayist Simona Skrabec, in her essay *L'atzar de la lluita*—written in Catalan—analyses the various notions of Central Europe that arose throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. In addition to political theorists on Central Europe, noteworthy writers on *Mittleuropa* have included Joseph Roth, Claudio Magris, Peter Handke, Franz Kafka, Danilo Kis, and Milan Kundera. Once she has identified the successive definitions of Central Europe and the paradoxes they enshrine, Skrabec puts forward the concept of *Mittleuropa* as a diverse, complex literary and cultural space. Though she does not deny the validity of the Nation State as a political and literary sphere, her notion of *Mittleuropa* opens up regional opportunities and perspectives for dialogue in a field that spans national and universal ambits.

The book discusses the various concepts of Central Europe, the political and national use made of literature, regional literary ambits, and the way in which certain works of fiction embrace all these issues. This is what makes Skrabec's book important to a wider circle that goes beyond specialists in German and Balkan cultures, comparative linguists, historians, and theorists of the Nation State. These kind of reflections are particularly relevant in Catalonia, where they raise new key issues.

### Solitary Souls

One should not have to say it but there are still those who see short stories as nothing more than a trivial form of artifice and an exercise in marketing. Simona Skrabec published a superb essay on a par with *L'atzar de la lluita*. The essay is *L'estirp de la solitud* (Solitary Souls, Barcelona: Institut d'Estudis Catalans, 2002), and again was written directly in Catalan. It provides new arguments for those who believe that short stories are a fertile genre for capturing the spirit of our age.

Ricardo Piglia, in one of his famous ten theses on short stories, spoke of the way the genre conducts a mysterious dialogue with hidden opposites. Simona Skrabec reveals short stories' ability to convey tragic sentiments without resorting to flowery eloquence, highlighting commonplace things that border on the absurd. Short stories reveal the slipperiness of things and words and the latent conflicts underlying our every deed and utterance. It is this unsettling quality that makes the genre worthwhile.

Skrabec's *L'estirp de la solitud* draws on four short stories by Central European authors (Arthur Schnitzler, Italo Svevo, Thomas Bernhard, and Drago Jankar). One of the merits of her essay is that she avoids the long-winded pedantic reasoning all too often adopted when discussing these authors and themes. A further strength is Skrabec's ability to shed light on the works through her comparisons, using narrative analysis and resorting to philosophers where necessary. In doing so, she takes the threads of highly specific cases

to weave a rich tapestry. Her arguments are both stimulating and weighty, full of delightful details, and advance in several directions at once.

With just these four short stories as a pretext, Simona Skrabec evokes the defining characteristics of a literary sphere covering lands that were once part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. She clearly portrays protagonists who share a yen for solitude and revindicates a self-sufficient form of literary fiction capable of bridging modern divides. Simona Skrabec deservedly won the 2002 Josep Carner Literary Theory Award for *L'estirp de la solitud*. Writers seldom tend to grapple with such themes, a further feather in Skrabec's cap, particularly given that she writes in a language that lends itself better to academic monographs than to literary essays.

### The Slovene Savannah

One of the four stories analysed by Skrabec in *L'estirp de la solitud* is included in the volume *La mirada de l'àngel* by Drago Jankar (Manresa: Angle, 2003), which she translated. It concerns a story that rewrites the adventures of the protagonist of Bulgakov's *The White Guard*, and of Somerset Maugham's *The Appointment in Samarra*, the latter relating how someone flees Death in Baghdad only to meet The Grim Reaper in Samarra. In Jankar's story, a White Russian flees from his past for decades only to find himself in the same place but back where his odyssey began —at the end of the Second World War.

Drago Jankar is the young Slovene author whose works are most translated abroad. His narrative work forms part of the most serious and abrasive post-modernist writings, which Jorge Luis Borges took as a landmark in modern Slovene literature. However, Jankar is not a weaver of sophisticated, well-polished tales but rather a narrator capable of confronting the Sphinx and its riddles. One of his stories is of a group of soldiers lost in the Slovene forests in 1945. They come across a village that epitomises the horror and madness of war. The houses have been burnt to the ground and all the villagers have had their throats slit. The story contains a distant echo of a passage from Heliodorus of Emesus' *Aethiopica*. The superimposition of ancient and new horrors is an aesthetic delight, perfectly intertwining story and time to convey the kind of foreboding and fear awakened by a recurring nightmare.

In *La mirada de l'àngel* (The Look of an Angel / Pogled angela), everything happens in an instant. A mother looks into the eyes of a sewer rat about to bite her child. Two species and two life stories are caught up in this fleeting moment. A man on a ship threatens to jump overboard as his wife lazes on a chaise longue on deck. The couple's hellish domestic life is evoked as she encourages her husband to jump. Meanwhile, an attractive coloured European businesswoman is reading on the underground, oblivious of the danger lying in wait for her. The sense of lingering threat pervades the whole tale.

With the odd exception of a couple of tales that resort to Mediaeval or urban legends (for example, a silly story of a ghostly highway in which car rear seats suddenly vanish), the book's stories are memorable in their own right. The narrators are actors in the tales rather than mere dispassionate observers. Take, for instance, the story of a girl travelling through deepest Slovenia on a coach. As she draws pictures of the savannah in her sketch book, she imagines how she saves herself from two lions looking for a mate. In doing so, she exhibits the effortless agility and naturalness of a gazelle leaping to escape a predator. These highly literary stories exhibit the same effortless grace and sense of brooding threat ■



## II Literatures

Susanna Rafart

Vicent Alonso, 2005, *Trajecte circular*  
(Round Trip), Alzira, Bromera, 344 pp.

After *Les paraules i els dies* (Of Words and Days, 2002), a compilation of newspaper articles, Vicent Alonso has presented a diary that could be introduced with the quotation Feliu Formosa used to preface his latest poetry anthology: “Observe? Remember? Find a point someone in between”. Writing involves a succession of moments that bring emotional and intellectual experiences into focus. It lies between annotation and lyrical text and renders words part of the real world. Without renouncing historical coincidence, political views, and cultural considerations, the work accepts that life is an endless circle and makes reflections for every season of the year. The book does not end in Summer but instead begins again with Winter in a journey without end. After all, a diary involves placing oneself before circumstances and accepting what happens. Writing poetry requires the same intermediate point. That is why it is interesting for readers to read the two books that Alonso wrote in parallel, the diary and his volume of prose poems: *Del clam de Jasó* (Jason’s Complaint). This approach sheds valuable light on the creative process. It is also interesting to note that texts such as *Un petit plaer* (A Trifling Pleasure) are to be found on a diary page and not in the anthology. Perhaps it is an attempt to establish a distance between the poet’s voice, self-confidence, language, and the text itself. For a poet, variation or versions of the same theme are not insubstantial repetitions but rather approaches to recall and hence facets that provide a broader understanding of the world, enriching the reading experience.

The subsequent pages follow this circular trajectory, creating a dialogue with both our daily worries and those of greater concern. Life’s cares make us forget these acts, gestures, and readings but the writer tries to salvage them in an attempt to stretch time and kindle desire. From another perspective, understanding reality requires time. However, this is hard because each event needs to be deconstructed to grasp its true nature. A diary allows this process. Vicent Alonso proposes some terms in his pages that are often discarded only to be taken up later in another context. Recalling Montaigne’s “*Je le prens en ce point, comme il est, en l’instant que je m’amuse à luy*” (I take it as it is at the instant I consider of it), the voice of *Trajecte circular* interposes itself between events and their representation without resorting to dissimulation. The writer allows the reader to see his imperfections and moods as he tries to surmount hurdles. In so doing, we are given an insight into the human condition: “When all is said and done, you are yourself to the extent that others give signs of life,” writes Alonso. Observation of the world leads us to the highest poetic experience, encompassing reflection on the usefulness of literature or being privy to the comings and goings of a poet who takes delight in the reek of wood smoke from the chimneys of his native village. They are subtle touches that grab the reader’s attention throughout the book. Some of the pages are master classes in the writer’s art: *Turons com elefants blancs*

(Hills Like White Elephants); *Els trucs de la intimitat* (Intimacy's Tricks) and *Efectes col·laterals* (Collateral Damage). Others reveal various shades of scepticism, whilst others are more personal. The thematic variation is linked to the whole. The fragmentation is intentional but very carefully crafted in order to measure each slight change in the broader themes: art as the route to knowledge; acceptance of the human soul for what it is; the value of reading. The pages defend everything from syllabic schemes to landscape because they serve to conceal the shortness of man's span. One of the texts that makes the greatest impact is *Vida i opinions de Tristram Shandy* (Tristram Shandy's Life and Views) because only digression based on memory and observation helps free us from the shackles of our own lives ||

## || State nationalisms Pau Viciano

Josep Fontana, 2005, *La construcció de la identitat. Reflexions sobre el passat i sobre el present* (The Construction of Identity. Reflections on Past and Present), Base, Barcelona, 142 pp.

Despite the author's reservations, republishing miscellaneous texts is far from being a pointless exercise. It may require justification in the case of academic articles, where the specialist has to determine the target audience precisely. However, this is not so with essays, even when they contain footnotes. In this case, much of the material stems from spoken public contributions that would otherwise not come to the notice of academics and a wider public. In this respect, Fontana's latest book will be appreciated by disciples and critics alike.

The role of history (namely, the production, interpretation, and dissemination of knowledge of the past) and the building of national identities have been recurrent themes over the last few years in all public spheres, ranging from academic research to essays and press articles. Fontana's first chapter questions the complacency of scholars and intellectuals who identify with the Nation State and who shamelessly accuse peripheral minority nationalists of falsifying the past. From Spain to Israel, all State nationalisms have hijacked history to build a national identity, which is all too often based on crude notions of ethnic or racial unity. The author notes that the search for one's own national identity is often a defensive reaction to the State's Blob-like urge to swallow up everyone who crosses its path. Here, the historian's task is not to lend support to alternative myths but rather to champion reason in the face of belief and prejudice. The following chapter tackles the links between the organisation of power and social progress, questioning the partisan identification of a centralist State with modernity, a vice nations often indulge in when commemorating historical events. Fontana notes the role played by society in modernisation and in demanding political representation. This trait can be traced back to the reform of Mediaeval institutions, which set bounds to the power of kings. This is a suggestive issue in the context of Catalan territories history and sheds light on the current political debate regarding the territorial organisation of the Spanish State.

The next three chapters concern the impact of globalisation at various levels. Here, Fontana ranges from an overview of the links between globalisation and development (or underdevelopment) to a defence of the Catalan peasantry (whose survival is threatened by international markets) and immigrants as victims of integration processes and economic conquest. The remarkable thing about Fontana's critical ideas is that most of them —unlike the visions dished up by sociologists and political scientists— are greatly enhanced by historical insight. Comparing immigration from the Third World with European emigration to America and Australia in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries puts the issue in a new light, as does the revelation that the biggest population movements are now within Asia and Africa. He looks at things with a historian's eagle eye. Thus he sets the foundation of a farmers union against the background of modern city-dwellers' almost Mediaeval contempt of countryfolk. Fontana puts such issues in the context of the root-and-branch liberalisation of world markets and questions both the benefits of globalisation and the need to ditch Europe's farm subsidies. This message is obviously not to the liking of liberal economists advocating the US brand of capitalism and who have even suggested that Catalan peasants would be better off seeking clerical work. Fontana's message will also displease patriots who want to build national myths in which King Jaume I and his bloodthirsty Arab mercenaries are given the kind of propaganda gloss one sees in Hollywood films of pioneers valiantly battling against Red Indians. Neither will the historian's message be to the taste of those who think but will not say that the West triumphed simply because it deserved to. Those who disagree with Fontana may quibble over the data and counter his arguments with their own. Unfortunately, the chances are that many will simply dismiss his ideas out of hand with the same kind of diatribe heard during the Cold War. Be that as it may, dwelling on the depressingly long list of those for whom Fontana's ideas are anathema may serve to uphold the role of history yet fail to do this book justice ||

## || Of women and literature

### Antònia Carré

Marta Pessarrodona, 2006, *Donasses. Protagonistes de la Catalunya moderna* (Great Women. Protagonists of the modern Catalonia), Barcelona, Destino, 296 pp.

No one can deny the merit of Marta Pessarrodona's long track record as a poet, translator, and a feminist. She missed out on the first wave of feminist writing when it was still a sub-culture (in the sense of being repressed as opposed to being second-rate). This was the wave labelled in 1977 by Elaine Showalter as "feminine" literature. Two of its traits were the copying of male literary models and the liberal use of virile pseudonyms. The second was the "feminist" stage, involving the development of self-awareness and a vindication of the rights of women and other groups, the stage during which Passarrodona joined the fray, taking an active part with other women in the struggle against the Franco dictatorship. This culminated in the 1<sup>st</sup> Workshops for Catalan Women in 1976.

The third stage, which Showalter labels “female”, covers the present state of affairs in which women write without hangups from a feminist perspective. In a 2005 essay published by the Lluís Carulla Foundation, Pessarrodona explained Showalter’s critical theory in greater detail, and made references to Northrop Frye.

So *Donasses* did not appear out of thin air. Behind the book is the idea of presenting twenty two women who helped shape late-19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century Catalonia. The idea is to provide valid models for present and future generations of women. The translation and constant study of Virginia Woolf’s works, the various texts on women produced by the Catalan Institute for Women (illustrated with photos by Pilar Aymerich), and more recently, *Mercè Rodoreda i el seu temps* (pub. Rosa dels Vents, 2005), reveal Marta Pessarrodona’s gift for writing the biographies of women —artists, writers, ministers— as does the work reviewed here.

Another aspect of *Donasses* is a desire to tell the story of Catalonia by following the path first trodden by the first woman portrayed in the book —Dolors Monserdà (1845-1919). Monserdà is defined as the first novelist writing in Catalan and the first woman to publicly advocate feminist views. The book ends with Montserrat Roig (1946-1991), who played a key role at the time as both a novelist and feminist.

Since *Donasses* belongs to the “female” stage of women’s literature in Showalter’s scheme, the authoress does not shrink from taking her lead from a great male author —in this case, Josep Pla. In her brief preface, Marta Pessarrodona alludes to Pla’s *Homenots* (Great Men), although she states that she has no intention of imitating him. Even so, both *Homenots* and *Donasses* have at least two things in common. The first is that they seek to portray the people who shaped Catalonia over the last two centuries. The second is the moral authority with which both authors depict events and their subjects in the light of their own experience. Dante Alighieri’s words at the beginning of *Convivio* (I, II) can be applied to both *Donasses* and *Homenots* to the effect that there are only two reasons for talking about oneself. The first is to defend oneself from a grave accusation, which is evidently not the case here. The second is to extract some important lesson by so doing, or as Dante put it a “*grandissima utilidade ne segue altrui per via di dottrina*”.

Marta Pessarrodona knows how to condense the personalities and works of each of her subjects into a few pages whilst capturing their natures and often contradictory traits. She is a poet rather than a novelist and this may explain her eloquent succinctness. Paulina Pi de la Serra, for example, emerges as a “delicate, smiling presence”, the phrase is lifted from one of Carner’s verses, which heads the chapter. Maria Aurelia Company’s blend of strongly voiced opinions and vulnerability clearly emerges. Hermínia Grau Aymà stands out for her intelligence and discrete seductiveness. By contrast, the authoress highlights Aurora Bertrana’s adventurous spirit.

The chief merit of *Donasses* is that the authoress’ very subjectiveness elicits a mental image of the women whose biographies appear in the book. Clearly, subjectiveness is debatable and a question of taste, however, awareness of one’s own “voice” is essential if one is to make the subjects interesting to readers. Marta Pessarrodona’s approach is vindicated by the numerous reprints of the book.

One can ask why *Donasses* portrays twenty two women and why these particular ones were chosen. Josep Pla in his preface to the second part of *Homenots*, fielding the same kind of question, said it was because the candle is short and the procession is long (an elegant and memorable allusion to the religious processions popular in his time).

*Donasses* also merits a sequel ■

## II Are good manners important?

Damià Pons

Salvador Cardús, 2003, *Ben educats. Una defensa útil de les convencions, el civisme i l'autoritat* (Good Manners. A Useful Defence of Conventions, Civil Responsibility and Authority), Barcelona, Edicions La Campana, 235 pp.

The sociologist Salvador Cardús (Terrassa, 1954) has once again shown a great sense of timing when it comes to choosing the issue that is to be the subject of his reflection. To put it another way, he knows how to intuit which issues generate the most doubt and uncertainty in society, or at least in a large part of it, at any given time. Thus, in the year 2000 his work *El desconcert de l'educació* (The Uncertainty of Education) was published, a lucid and unconventional discourse on education which, without doubt, encouraged consideration of the subject without resorting to platitudes or doctrinaire positions. It also avoided any kind of submission to what could be seen as political correctness. The fact that more than thirty thousand copies have been sold is the best proof that the work offered, in both its content and its uninhibited and lucid treatment of the issue, a formalisation of many of those ideas that a great number of people needed to feel, or even in certain cases already knew intuitively, or had just begun to piece together in their minds.

Now, Cardús has got it right once again. Over the last few years, in our Western world, which is both object and setting of a drastic break with tradition, of the implementation of social welfare, of the immersion of individuals in a lively media reality, of the social generalisation of the beginning of permissiveness and so on, there is a feeling that the reaction, however necessary, against both authoritarianism (the Franco years, the patriarchal society and *nacionalcatolicisme*<sup>1</sup> in our case) and excessively rigid inherited customs and practices, has produced a series of collateral effects which, at this moment in time, complicate co-existence and do not facilitate social cohesion.

According to Cardús, a few decades ago, from the 1960s and 70s onwards, the aim was to reject conventions and replace them with convictions. In my view, this was mainly due to countercultural and anti-system-based ideologies and attitudes of the youth of that period. Thirty years later, it can be said with hindsight that, although the reaction of the time was logical and justifiable overall, leading to multiple new situations that have doubtless helped to dignify the human condition, it also introduced the rejection or lack of consideration of specific behaviour which socially and personally is now, in another turnaround, seen to be rather positive (self-control, will power, the acceptance of a well-exercised authority, discipline as a framework for living together, etc.). As a result of this recent history, so dynamic and so changeable, in today's society we can perceive a lack of good manners, understood as an inability to co-exist successfully. "We are experiencing a crisis in ways of doing things, in practical conventions and, as a consequence, it is harder to live together," writes Cardús. The author faces up to this situation in the first part of his book, entitled *Elogi de les convencions* (In Praise of Conventions). In this

■ <sup>1</sup> Term given to the politico-religious situation under Franco, used to identify the condition of being Spanish and Catholic.

section we can read about a proposal for the reintroduction of an agreed set of practical social conventions in the interests of a well-organized co-existence. This would be a sense of civic responsibility, claimed to be useful in itself, beyond the fact of a possible link to specific convictions or moral qualities. Conventions, understood as useful criteria that have been established as a mutual agreement for living together, would become an essential instrument for the smooth running of society. “All social life is made possible thanks to the existence of conventions”. The second part of the book entitled *Siguem formals* (Let us Be Formal), starts off by demystifying the notion of spontaneity from a sociological point of view, to the point of actually denying its existence. He says, “Spontaneity, in the strictest sense of the word —behaviour that comes from an internal impulse without the intervention of an external stimulus— does not exist”. With this statement he is quite conscious that he has attacked a concept that, since a few decades ago, has had very positive connotations socially speaking; it is almost presented as a compulsory virtue, as a paradigm of fully exercised freedom. Despite all this, and with no safety net, Cardús dares to assert, “If true spontaneity did exist on a social level, it would lead to disorder and confusion”. His point of view is that, “social life is founded on order and sense, and its organization is based on routines which have a meaning which both those who practise and those who interpret them must be able to understand”. Faced with an apparent virginal spontaneity, he states that what actually happens is that there are multiple mechanisms that, in reality, lead us to the adoption of supposedly spontaneous behaviour. Young people are the principal victims of this. Fashion is based on a strategy that converts youngsters into passive consumers of what the all-powerful consumer industry is continually offering them, whilst making them believe that their decision is based on a freely made choice. Cardús goes so far as to assert that young people who have been taught, by parents and teachers, to employ motivation and seduction strategies, thus neglecting to prioritize the development of willpower, are weaker in the face of the blandishments of the consumer society. This is due to the fact that the latter is especially good at the mastery of the art of deceptive seduction. Thus, Cardús extols the existence of discipline —he tells us that “it is not a value in itself: it is simply a working condition that enables the discovery of necessary values such as dialogue”— and of transparent authority, which lets itself be seen and which is exercised without authoritarianism but also without complexes. Both discipline and authority are totally essential to well-organised co-existence in society. In *Ben educats* we can also find very lucid writing on multiculturalism, the welfare society, the prevailing moral uncertainty, the inability to communicate suffered by a good number of people, on the educational establishment, structural and institutional incivility and so on. Throughout the book, and always with an unquestionably progressive ideology, with a complex-free point of view untainted by any type of politically correct apriorism, the reader is given the opportunity to see the great capacity of the author to extract reflections from our daily reality that result in a quasi philosophical-moral thesis. A timely and intelligent book, dense and well-written. And very useful, especially for families and teachers ■

## II Dialectics of irony

Enric Sòria

Guillem Calaforra, 2006, *Dialèctica de la ironia. La crisi de la modernitat en l'assaig de Joan Fuster* (The Dialectics of Irony. The Crisis of Modernity and Joan Fuster's Essays), Valencia, Publicacions de la Universitat de València, 306 pp.

Reading *Dialèctica de la ironia. La crisi de la modernitat en l'assaig de Joan Fuster*, by Guillem Calaforra, one is immediately struck by its free expression, new ideas, rigour, tenacity, and the depth and quality of its analysis —features that are all too seldom found in Catalan publishing. It is no exaggeration to say that this book on the writer Joan Fuster sets a standard that future authors should aspire to. One of its main virtues lies in its analysis of Fuster's texts and the themes and contradictions of his work in order to throw light on a much wider panorama of ideas and dilemmas in modern thought.

The book is both an important and interesting work, which engages in a dialogue with the reader and gives scope for both agreement and dissent. It also provides fertile ground for fostering new ideas based upon those presented in the work.

The book seeks to discuss and enlighten. What then makes this tome so interesting? The author —with somewhat excessive modesty— admits in the foreword that the book's scope was originally much more limited. Calaforra's initial aim was to write about Joan Fuster's reading of Nietzsche. However, the author quickly realised that discussing Fuster's work required a broader canvas —in this case the quest for inner enlightenment based on reason and self-examination.

The author also says that while he found Fuster's writing aesthetically pleasing, he found it lacking from a philosophical standpoint. Calaforra suspected that Fuster was holding back on the sources of his intellectual inspiration and his judgement on them (a good polemicist, Fuster often showed little gratitude towards the writers who most interested him). This, and the way in which many writers generally defend Fuster's work while failing to shed new light on it, is what spurred Calaforra to write *Dialèctica de la ironia*.

In passing, it is worth noting the book's criticism of Fuster (not all of it justified) makes the work unusual. Many writings on Fuster border on hagiography and tend to harp on the same themes. However, the author himself recognises that there have been several valuable and novel contributions to literary criticism of Fuster's work over the last few years. These include books and essays by Joaquim Espinós, Ferran Archilés, Justo Serna, and Encarna Garcia Monerris. Calaforra also acknowledges his indebtedness to observations by Antoni Riera, Vicent Salvador, Enric Balaguer, and Josep Ballester, among others. Furthermore, one should not underestimate the educational value and pioneering nature of Josep Iborra's book *Fuster portàtil*, which pioneered many of the themes that were later taken up by others. Iborra's book also gives both a good overview and a lot of useful detail on Fuster's literary output. One should also note orthodox yet scholarly papers by Francesc Pérez Moragon, penetrating critiques by Vicent Raga, Manuel Ardit's somewhat over-interpretative approach, and Antoni Riera's work (which not only placed Fuster in the context of contemporary thought but also provided a useful reading guide, as does the book reviewed here).

To sum up, *Dialèctica de la ironia* creates a debate embracing Fuster's work, various leading thinkers ranging from the Enlightenment to today, and some of the key problems of modern thought. The first aim here is to clarify the links between Fuster's works and the whole current of thought "that examines the Enlightenment with the same cold scepticism that Fuster approached the world - in other words, the ideas that undermined the certainties of 17<sup>th</sup> century rationality but to which in several ways they remained faithful". The second aim is to discover how internally consistent and radical Fuster's thought was —that is to say, which questions he dared to ask and what answers he came up with.

In undertaking this task, Calaforra obviously had to choose which themes and (in particular) which authors to examine. Among the authors inspiring Fuster, he chose: Sade as a heterodox, radical representative of the Enlightenment; Nietzsche as the great philosophic questioner of enlightened reason, and some of his heirs (Max Weber, Michel Foucault, Emil Cioran, the members of The Frankfurt School and the so-called post-modern philosophers, Lyotard, Derrida, Vattimo, etc.). Calaforra also notes that he had to exclude some modern thinkers with whom Fuster can clearly be related. Thus, we do not find Gramsci or Russell, Hegel (a source of inspiration hidden by Fuster) or Marx. The reader will also find Freud absent. Fuster's works —which were often more open-ended than they seemed— also contained passing references to Heidegger's militantly anti-modern speculations. Above all, the reader will miss mention of Sartre. However, it is not Calaforra's intention to close the subject, it is simply that he has his work cut out just to explore the paths he has chosen. These he explores with great thoroughness and in doing so sets a challenge for those following in his footsteps. Calaforra's book is both thought-provoking and an intellectual delight. Anyone taking the paths not followed by the author will find Calaforra's book a hard act to follow.

Calaforra's exploration initially adopts a philological approach and, later, a philosophical one. The aim here is to discover which of the foregoing authors were read by Fuster and what lessons he learnt from them. The next step is to interpret the consequences of this reading, i.e. "what the essayist's response is to the challenges set by the critics of modernity". Lastly, there is the synthesis, dealing with the problems and ambiguities produced by this reading and the new questions to which they gave rise. I consider this is the most valuable part of the book because it is this section that makes readers think hardest.

*Dialèctica de la ironia* is not simply the fruit of the authors dissatisfaction with an aspect of Fuster's work but it also faces a seemingly insurmountable hurdle. The book's theme is inevitably philosophical yet Fuster was no philosopher. Indeed, Fuster could be brutally scathing on the subject: "*la filosofia és l'art d'agafar la vaca pels collons*" Philosophy is the art of grabbing a cow by the balls. Even so, Fuster allowed himself the pleasure of posturing as a philosopher and being read as such. Rather than a philosopher, Fuster was a thinker in the sense posited by Gadamer (for all men think). From the professional standpoint, Fuster was a writer, an essayist, and what is generally termed an intellectual. In his works, Fuster was a writer with ideas about ideas and made very few concessions to either narrative or mere description. Such a writer has to be aware of the ideas being discussed at the time, what they consisted of, and what put them in question. Fuster



undoubtedly showed this awareness. However, one might suspect that his disdainful comments concerning philosophy or his frequent calls for country commonsense were often simply an exasperating invitation to avoid deeper study when the going got tough. In other words, they were little more than ruses to hide the insecurity of an amateur dealing with a discipline that is very much a closed world. Even so, Fuster needed a certain familiarisation with philosophical ideas if he was to write in an incisive, convincing manner. This is precisely why a philosophical approach to Fuster's work is so revealing.

On the other hand, an essayist like Fuster is someone who makes his living by writing on current political, social, and cultural events where specific occasions provide the pretext for debating ideas. An essayist is someone who thinks about what he writes rather than someone who writes what he thinks. When it comes to thought, Fuster's works are thus necessarily fragmentary, wide-ranging, and often contradictor, making interpretation hard. However, Calaforra bears this in mind in his hunt for his elusive quarry. Calaforra's success in this quest can be attributed to the fact that he is both a philologist and a highly competent reader. *Dialèctica de la ironia* not only reveals significant parts of Fuster's thought, it also sheds light on the authors with whom he is compared (and who are anything but easy to read) and tells us something about what he thinks. The result is a plethora of ideas and a precise summary of several of the intellectual and moral dilemmas surrounding modern thought and its contradictions.

The philological section of the book is splendid. The core, as one might expect, is the imprint Nietzsche's thought left on Fuster. Although the Catalan author only referred to Nietzsche from time to time (and then with studied off-handedness), it is clear he grappled with the German philosopher's writings for decades. Fuster's radical criticism of language as the cage of thought is lifted from Nietzsche's famous observation: "Ich fürchte, wir werden Gott nicht los, weil wir noch an die Grammatik glauben" [I am afraid we are not rid of God because we still have faith in grammar.] Fuster's notion of "truth" also echoes Nietzsche, and his ironic remarks on the Cartesian *cogito ergo sum* are virtually a literal paraphrase of a well-known passage (Number 16) in the beginning of Nietzsche's *Jenseits von Gut und Böse* (Beyond Good and Evil). Apart from these quotations, there are also a large number of other similarities: perspectivism, the assumption of utility for life as a criterion underpinning values, an interest in strategies for wielding power, resentment, a taste for fragmentation, systematic suspicion, and so on.

However, these similarities clearly have limits. Fuster is not as radical as Nietzsche, does not renounce positivism, and does not follow him in questioning the scientific approach. He is also immune to one of the main forces driving Nietzsche's thought—the quest for power and the German philosopher's almost Dionysian vitality (which drives Nietzsche beyond mere nihilism and brings him to joyously celebrate life). Fuster eschews extremes; he is not a mountaineer, he is seldom excited and ecstasy is beyond him. Even so, I agree with Guillem Calaforra that Fuster has more in common with Nietzsche than with any other philosopher, despite Fuster's dislike for the German's grand rhetoric. "It would not be the first time that a leading intellectual ostentatiously distanced himself from those with whom he shares great affinities", writes Calaforra.

I think Calaforra also brilliantly identifies why Fuster found Sade fascinating. Fuster's interest lay not in Sade's libertine imagination but in his first and most radical formulations of enlightened materialism. Fuster was attracted by Sade's unwavering desire

to sweep away myths even though this meant undermining morality and confronting the sometimes brutal implications of logic. For Fuster, Sade's simple, brutal immorality stemmed from the Enlightenment's reason and represented a darker side of human nature.

Calaforra also dedicates several pages to authors whom he knows well, such as Weber and Foucault (the book sheds penetrating light on power relations—a key point of the latter's work—and provides an excellent introduction to this thinker). With regard to the Frankfurt School, Calaforra notes that the ideas and research subjects of this circle of philosophers would greatly have interested Fuster but that he only skimmed their work (if we exclude Marcuse, then the most published but also one of the least interesting members of the group). Clearly, Fuster's self-taught approach to philosophy had its drawbacks, while his lack of dialogue with the so-called post-modernist philosophers meant that many of Fuster's ideas were not developed and remained as little more than intuitions. As a youngster, Fuster avidly read *Revista de Occidente* and eagerly devoured anything bearing on the literary world. However, he never systematically read scholarly papers that attempted to raise and answer the questions that most interested him. His essays suffered as a result.

Within this group of authors of whom Fuster either read little or nothing, Calaforra's comparison of his subject with Cioran is particularly incisive. Fuster never cited Cioran and it is possible that he simply knew nothing about him. However, the styles of both writers are surprisingly similar. Cioran's aphorisms are denser and deeper than Fuster's and also more emphatic, and reveal an exhibitionist virtuosity in evoking utter desolation. Fuster, less histrionic and more down to earth than Cioran, has a more agile, biting wit. However, there is little to choose between them when it comes to conveying disenchantment and nihilism.

Calaforra argues that Fuster's most nihilist side is to be found in his caustic aphorisms. He considers that Fuster's writings are also tinged with disappointment, bitterness, and anxiety (a nuance that Justo Serna and Encarna Garcia have also perspicaciously noted in some of Fuster's verses). I believe this general disenchantment can be ascribed to Fuster's existentialism and his firm belief that man is doomed to die without any hope of a life hereafter. This existentialist insight left a deep mark on Fuster. However, he did not go along with Sartre's argument that existentialism is a philosophy of freedom and action, in which man gives meaning to his own life and the world through the exercise of free will. As with Nietzsche, we find that Fuster is highly susceptible to the negative, debunking message of his masters but is largely impervious to the positive side. This is something else that Fuster shares with Cioran.

*Dialèctica de la ironia* revolves around a series of major themes: reflection on knowledge, truth, and science; irony and scepticism as forms of distrust; the contradictions of a moral and ideological universe lacking foundations; the aspirations of an intellectual wishing to make an impact through reticence; and the discoveries and limitations of the dialogue between the essayist and the *maîtres à penser* of his age. Calaforra uses these strands to analyse Fuster from various points of view and to highlight the sheer range of the writer's discourse. This spiral argument makes certain passages in the book too repetitive, especially in the second half. On the other hand, it does justice to the diverse implications of the ideas debated and their expression in Fuster's writings. After all, Fuster was a multi-faceted thinker who did not lay down hard-and-fast moral rules. It is likely that we

can only get to grips with him by examining his texts from myriad perspectives, given that his reasons for writing them were similarly diverse.

This kaleidoscopic approach is the one adopted by Calaforra in his analysis of Fuster's work and serves to highlight the paradoxical nature of the essayist's thought. For example, it has been said that Fuster predated post-modern ideas. It is a statement that needs to be carefully qualified and that is what Calaforra does with great skill. In addition, Fuster criticised all ideologies (and some great narratives) at one time or another. He questioned language, morality (as always serving certain interests), the notion of truth. Fuster was doggedly distrustful and ironic and his similes were usually denigrating (a trick he might have picked up from Nietzsche); there is little to choose between Fuster's definition of Unamuno as the Conchita Bautista of philosophy, and Nietzsche's characterisation of Seneca as one who took virtue by the horns. Fuster's thought is generally negative: it aims to unmask, debunk and immunise. Yet we find a Fuster who is an acolyte of the pure sciences and a believer in historic and biological materialism of such an elementary nature it is almost mechanical in conception. He was also clearly fascinated by strongly systematic schools of thought such as Marxism and Positivism. In contrast, there is Fuster the civic intellectual, the amiable humanist and advocate of dialogue, common sense, imbued with an almost Emile Coué optimism regarding progress, and civilisation. Put baldly, these facets are incongruent yet such was the man. It is hardly surprising then that the writer who lauded Erasmus' and Thomas Mann's humanism in the 1950s is the very same one who denounced the quasi-religious orthodoxy of the Soviet system. It was also Fuster who wrathfully lambasted heretics in a famous article written in *Serra d'Or* in 1968 to mark the end of the Prague Spring.

Calaforra portrays a Fuster who was the most orthodox kind of rationalist (positivist, materialist, etc.), a writer who was permanently tempted to unleash his devastating scepticism and exhibit the worst kind of nihilism. Although he occasionally succumbed to this temptation, he never went the whole hog. Perhaps this is because, as an intellectual, he felt that it was unfitting to wholly succumb to a comfortably schematic doctrine offering salvation at the price of banishing the least shadow of doubt. Furthermore, Fuster's increasingly anti-dogmatic stance from the 1960s onward helped deafen him to such siren songs.

In any event, the contradictions in his thought were often cruelly apparent. For example, in the field of knowledge, Fuster defended the pure sciences and dismissed the social ones as "pseudo-scientific tall-tales" and so much hot air. What is one to think then of Fuster's essays? How can such a writer argue that rhetoric, literature and the non-scientific disciplines are so much hokum? Likewise, how can one expose falsehoods and yet deny the existence of truths? How can one proposed humanism and civilisation yet cling to a purely biological explanation of life that reduces psychology to mere bio-chemistry and culture to a clash of interests? Fuster asked himself these questions but carefully avoided answering them.

A good example of Fuster's slipperiness concerns ethics. Fuster rejected any kind of religious or doctrinal basis for moral judgements yet he proposed no alternative. He removed any kind of foundation even though he was aware of the need for one: "If we do not base our indictments on ethics, on what shall we base them?" Fuster was unable to answer this question because he considered it inadmissible. For him, all ethics were based on a previously formulated political position and he considered that political convictions were merely the product of material interests. Ethics for Fuster were thus

no more than weapons in the struggle for social domination. Indeed, on one occasion Fuster argued that Man must aspire to Justice, Morality, and Good if life is to have any value but he then went on to say that such notions are lies and traps used by the powers that be to coerce us and to hide the truth. Culture and language, Fuster maintained, were simply tools serving the same evil ends. Yet he was also aware of the cruel paradox that such an argument produced. Hence the temptation to descend into nihilist or doctrinaire simplification, to throw caution to the winds and hide behind the smokescreen of pragmatic utility (for whom?). Since Fuster was not a philosopher, he could simply wash his hands of the mess made by taking his ideas to their logical conclusion. Instead, he concentrated on writing some of the best prose ever written in Catalan.

Reading Fuster in a philosophically disciplined way —or if you will “grabbing the cow by the balls”— which is what Guillem Calaforra dares to do, reveals both the penetration of Fuster’s essays but also the mass of contradictions they contain. I once wrote that Fuster “is a moralist who questions all ethics, a polemicist who asks what truth is, a preacher without a gospel, a teacher without a lesson”. These contradictions are unavoidable and they are precisely what Fuster debates with extraordinary energy and insight. Though Fuster delights the literary palate, he fails to sate the reader’s appetite for sound theory —which is why Calaforra decided to write this excellent book. On the one hand, the cumulative paradoxes in Fuster’s essays open up endless possibilities for the writer to twist and turn as he likes and deploy his caustic wit and rhetorical persuasion to best effect. On the other hand, the paths opened up as result lead only to perplexity. That is because Fuster’s works are essays, nothing more. As Guillem Calaforra reminds us, trying to turn them into something else is to change their nature.

At the end of the book, Calaforra dedicates several pages to analysing Fuster’s irony (which was both a character trait and a strategy) and also comments on his nationalism. A particularly incisive observation is that Fuster’s unusual collective projection of an existentialist concept of the individual led him to stress uniqueness and the right to be different. In this respect, the key for Fuster was authenticity: “We must be what we are”, proclaimed Fuster, a battle cry with almost Heideggerian overtones. Calaforra suggests that Fuster’s embrace of a Catalan identity was a way of offsetting his nihilism and an attempt to construct a community of meaning with others. It was a kind of nationalist response to Sartre. Fuster was entitled to his opinion here, regardless of what others may think. However, Calaforra is probably right in identifying its roots.

I think Calaforra’s concluding comments also show great insight. He reminds us that we are talking of a writer: “From my point of view, Fuster’s answers to certain issues regarding the “crisis of modernity” fall short. However, the strength of his essays does not lie in his ideas, which are often highly debatable, but rather in the perfect combination of language and intuition. [...] We should leave his reputation as a brilliant author intact yet exercise our right to read his works critically”. These precepts underlie Calaforra’s outstanding book. A great critic like Fuster could have asked for no greater homage II



## Artur Heras' Serene yet Vibrant Art

Josep Salvador

Artur Heras is one of the most remarkable European artists of the last few decades. His contribution to modernising Valencian arts and crafts has been based on his constant dialogue with the history of art and his links to the international art scene. His work underwent a formal renewal in the 1960s, as did that of other leaders in the Valencian arts and crafts scene forming part of the *Crònica de la realitat* movement. In doing so, he helped open a window on a wider, more heterodox world beyond the narrow mental confines of Franco's Spain.

Since then, Heras has audaciously pursued many paths in his own personal exploration of art. As befitting an artistic genius, he touches on the myriad facets of human experience. Moreover, his career provides the key to understanding the trends in Valencian art over the last few decades. Heras played the role of cultural agitator during his spell as Art Director of the Sala Parpalló art centre and at other spaces in the city of Valencia during Spain's transition to democracy. He created a fine, incisive iconography which has brought various

aspects of Valencian culture and history up to date. Together with Manuel Boix and Rafael Armengol, he blazed his own trail in Valencia in the 1960s, with his original proposals forming part of his *Estampa Popular*, *Equipo Crònica* and *Equipo Realidad* cycles.

He has retained his individual style, in which the figurative languages are enriched with textures and material elements. Heras' unique approach to Pop Art incorporated neo-Dadaist objects and graphic elements which, once decontextualised, took on a new meaning and power to evoke an ever-changing reality. The semantic possibilities of the chosen objects — paintings, the canvas itself, envelopes, numbers and letters — were underscored by irony and a critical representation of the fiction that forms an inextricable part of artistic creation. Heras' artistic universe draws on knowledge of the impact of advertising images through 3-D *trompe l'oeil* effects. This line of experiment was complemented by Heras' sculptural side, in which the artist shows remarkable powers of expression.



In this field, there is a subtle recreation of the metaphoric power of certain signs and elements of popular culture that are stripped of their anecdotic features to stress other more quintessential and formal features.

Heras' work has since moved on to other themes, leading the artist to review some of the schools and figures that shaped contemporary Western Culture (Cubism, the Bauhaus, Soviet Art - Tatlin, and the literature of Hemingway, Kafka, and Pavese). In the process, it has provided a rich source of inspiration with which to analyse contemporary symbols with intellectual rigour and irony. The elegance of his forms, artistic treatment, and mastery of colour all stem from the artist's deep knowledge of Pop Art, Surrealism, and Realism, giving rise to a uniquely personal synthesis. Heras' painting and sculpture and his work as an illustrator and graphic artist have always been pure, direct, and spontaneous, the result of a careful treatment of themes and concepts that take us into a mysterious, complex universe. Heras' exhibitions of

his work has picked up of late (*Despulses*, Fundació Bancaixa de València, 2000; *Hotel Ambos Mundos*, Universidad Pública de Navarra, Pamplona, 2001; *[A-C]* galeria Àmbit, Barcelona 2004; *L'evidence éternelle*, Perpignan Centre of Contemporary Art, 2005; *L'éternel combat*, Galerie S. Laurent, Paris; *Passatges - De la torre de Tatlin a Lavorare stanca de Pavese*, Galeria pazYcomedias, Valencia 2006), charting the artist's work since the 1970s up until the present day and capturing the vibrant yet serene nature of Heras' oeuvre.

The work in this second edition of **Transfer** magazine is a sample of Heras' most recent output ||

# authors

*origin of the articles, translators*

**Juli Peretó** is associate professor in Biochemistry and member of the Cavanilles Institute for Biodiversity and Evolutionary Biology at the University of Valencia. His article appeared in *L'Espill* 22. Translation by Julie Wark II

**Adolf Tobeña** is professor of Medical Psychology and Psychiatry at the Autonomous University of Barcelona. His article appeared in *Mètode* 50. Translation by Andrew Gray II

**Josep M. Colomer** is professor of Political Science at the University Pompeu Fabra in Barcelona, a researcher at the CSIC and a member of the European Academy. His article appeared in *Via* 1. Translation by Andrew Gray II

**Jordi Sales** is professor of Philosophy at the University of Barcelona and former president of the Societat Catalana de Filosofia, IEC. His article appeared in *Transversal* 28. Translation by Andrew Spence II

**Rosa Planas** is a writer and literary critic (Mallorca). Her article appeared in *Lluc* 848. Translation by Andrew Stacey II

**Aitana Guia** has studied Political Science and History in Valencia. She is currently a teaching assistant in History at York University, Toronto, Canada. Her article appeared in *L'Espill* 21. Translation by Ivano Stocco II

**Jordi Sànchez** teaches Political Science at the University of Barcelona and is director of the Jaume Bofill Foundation. His article appeared in *Idees* 22. Translation by Julie Wark II

**Salvador Cardús** is associate professor in Sociology at the Autonomous University of Barcelona and a journalist. An earlier version of his article appeared in *Transversal* 24. Translation by Julie Wark II

**Isidor Marí** is a sociolinguist and teaches Humanities and Philology at the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (Barcelona), and is a member of the IEC. First printing of this essay. Translation by Julie Wark II

**Laila Karrouch** (Morocco, 1977) works as an assistant nurse at the Hospital General de Vic. Her article appeared in *Transversal* 24. Translation by Andrew Gray II

**Julia Guillamon** is a writer and literary critic (Barcelona). His article appeared in *L'Avenç* 298. Translation by Julie Wark II

**Pere Puigdomènech** is a biologist and a physicist and researcher in molecular biology. His article appeared in *Mètode* 50. Translation by Andrew Stacey II

**Jordi Llovet** is professor of Comparative Literature at the University of Barcelona. This article appeared as introduction to *Harold Bloom's Ramon Llull and Catalan tradition* (Institut Ramon Llull, 2006). Translation by Discobole II

**Sandra Balsells** is a photojournalist and lecturer at the Blanquerna Communication Faculty in Barcelona. Her article appeared in *Transversal* 28. Translation by Andrew Stacey II

**Miquel Barceló** is professor of Medieval History at the Autonomous University of Barcelona. His article appeared in *L'Espill* 22. Translation by Andrew Stacey II

**Adrià Chavarria** is a philosopher and literary critic (Tortosa). His review appeared in *Transversal* 25. Translation by Julie Wark II

**Manel Ollé** is a lecturer in Catalan Literature at the Pompeu Fabra University (Barcelona). His review appeared in *L'Avenç* 307. Translation by Andrew Spence II

**Susanna Rafart** is a writer and literary critic (Barcelona). Her review appeared in *Avui* (20 May 2004). Translation by Andrew Spence II

**Pau Viciano** is a historian and writer (Valencia). His review appeared in *Caràcters* 36. Translation by Andrew Spence II

**Antònia Carrè** is a historian of the Catalan Literature and lecturer at the UOC (Barcelona). Her review appeared in *Caràcters* 37. Translation by Andrew Spence II

**Damià Pons** is writer and professor of Catalan Literature at the Universitat de les Illes Balears. His review appeared in *Ultima Hora* (3 April 2004). Translated by Sarah Yandell II

**Enric Sòria** is a writer and lecturer at the Blanquerna Communication Faculty in Barcelona. His review appeared in *L'Espill* 22. Translation by Andrew Spence II

**Josep Salvador** works as a curator at the IVAM (Valencian Institute of Modern Art). Recently he was in charge of the exhibition *Artur Heras Despules* at Bancaixa Foundation in Valencia II

*This issue of **TRANSFER** includes articles from the following Catalan-language cultural journals. They can be reached at the addresses below.*

### **Caràcters**

Director: Juli Capilla  
Publicacions de la Universitat de València  
Arts Gràfiques 13  
46010 València  
Tel. 96 386 41 15  
Fax 96 386 40 67  
[caracters@uv.es](mailto:caracters@uv.es)  
[www.uv.es/caracters](http://www.uv.es/caracters)

### **Idees**

Director: Jaume Renyer  
Editor: Marc Leprêtre  
Centre d'Estudis de Temes Contemporanis  
Marquès de Barberà 33  
08001 Barcelona  
Tel. 93 553 90 13  
[mlepretre@gencat.net](mailto:mlepretre@gencat.net)  
[www.idees.net](http://www.idees.net)

### **L'Avenç**

Director: Josep Maria Muñoz  
Editor: Isabel Muntané  
L'Avenç S.L.  
Passeig de Sant Joan 26, 2n, 1a  
08010 Barcelona  
Tel. 93 245 79 21  
Fax 93 265 44 16  
[lavenc@lavenc.cat](mailto:lavenc@lavenc.cat)  
[www.lavenc.cat](http://www.lavenc.cat)

### **L'Espill**

Director: Antoni Furió  
Editor: Gustau Muñoz  
Universitat de València and Edicions 3 i 4  
Arts Gràfiques 13  
46010 València  
Tel. 96 386 41 15  
Fax 96 386 40 67  
[lespill@uv.es](mailto:lespill@uv.es)  
[www.uv.es/lespill](http://www.uv.es/lespill)

### **Lluc**

Director: Damià Pons  
Editor: Pere Fullana  
L'Espurna Edicions, s.l.  
Joan Bauçà 33, 1r  
07007 Palma de Mallorca  
Tel. 971 25 64 05  
Fax 971 25 61 39  
[direcciolluc@yahoo.es](mailto:direcciolluc@yahoo.es)

### **Mètode**

Director: Martí Domínguez  
Universitat de València  
Jardí Botànic  
Quart 80  
46008 València  
Tel.: 96 315 68 28  
[marti.dominguez@uv.es](mailto:marti.dominguez@uv.es)  
[www.uv.es/metode](http://www.uv.es/metode)

### **Transversal**

Editor: Lluís Sanmartín  
Ajuntament de Lleida  
Carrer Major 31  
25007 Lleida  
tel. 973 700 394  
fax 973 700 432  
[transversal@paeria.es](mailto:transversal@paeria.es)  
[www.revistatransversal.com](http://www.revistatransversal.com)

### **Via**

Director: Miquel Calsina  
Centre d'Estudis Jordi Pujol  
Passeig de Gràcia 8-10, 2n, 1a A  
08007 Barcelona  
[via@jordipujol.cat](mailto:via@jordipujol.cat)  
[www.jordipujol.cat](http://www.jordipujol.cat)

transfer

03

JOURNAL OF CONTEMPORARY CULTURE

*In the next issue of TRANSFER (2008):*

**“A troubled past:  
History and  
memory”**

*focus*

# CULTURA CATALANA SINGULAR i UNIVERSAL

KATALANISCHE KULTUR - EHRENGAST DER FRANKFURTER BUCHMESSE 2007  
CATALAN CULTURE - GUEST OF HONOUR AT THE FRANKFURT BOOK FAIR 2007



**LLLL** institut  
ramon llull  
Catalan Language and Culture

**PUV**  
PUBLICATIONS  
UNIVERSITAT  
DE VALÈNCIA

ISSN 1886-2349



9 771886 234001