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JOURNAL OF CONTEMPORARY CULTURE // 2008

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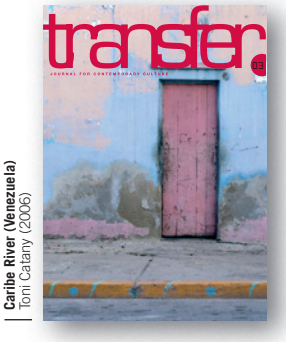

Caribe River (Venezuela)
Toni Catany (2006)

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Carles Torner

A tribute to storytellers and translators

In his essay *The Storyteller*, Walter Benjamin describes the loss of storytelling skills as an irreparable loss of memory. "Every morning brings us the news of the globe, and yet we are poor in noteworthy stories". Poor in collective memories. Benjamin situates the revelation of the crisis around what came back with the First World War —the comeback of the trenches— when, "A generation that had gone to school on a horse-drawn tram now stood under the open sky in a countryside in which nothing remained unchanged but the clouds, and beneath these clouds, in a force field of destructive torrents and explosions, was the tiny, fragile human body". Then, what had been experienced became evident. "Was it not noticeable at the end of the war that men returned from the battlefield grown silent —not richer, but poorer in communicable experience?"

Since the crisis of storytelling has been described as a crisis of the possibility of sharing experiences, the ethical challenge that wars and the great crimes of the 20th century have raised for us would, at first sight, seem insurmountable. This is because the ethical implication does not arise from the subject material of the story but from the possibility of sharing it. These and other debates have been forcefully raised with the different challenges that have emerged from the collective memory of the Spanish Civil War, the crimes of the Franco regime and even the collective amnesia about those crimes that was part and parcel of the transition to democracy. This monographic issue of **Transfer** addresses, from several points of view, the vicissitudes of history and collective memory in a country that has had to wait until thirty years after the dictator's death to start opening up the mass graves of the murders he committed.

How is it possible to construct memory when the traces of the crime are absent? How can personal history become visible when the references for telling it have been erased from collective stories? These are questions that have been addressed by many Catalan writers and artists in recent decades. On 13th March 2008, an anthological exhibition of the work of one of the pioneers in this terrain, Francesc Abad, was opened in Berlin. Over the past four decades this artist has been guided

[1] Translated into English by David H. Rosenthal and published by the American Institute for Catalan Studies, Houston, 2002.
[2] Translated into English by Anthony Bonner in *Selected Works of Ramon Llull* (1232-1316), Princeton University Press, 1985.

in his artistic production by Walter Benjamin's theses. "It has always been one of the most essential functions of art to engender a demand for which the hour of full satisfaction is yet to come". True to this avowal of Walter Benjamin, the work of Francesc Abad appears as a singular phenomenon in the Catalan and Spanish art scene because it is an incitement to new questions. His aesthetic investigations create an art form in memory of the victims of Franco's repression.

In 2007 the work of the best fiction writers who have given shape to the story of the Civil War and the crimes of the Franco regime were translated and attentively read by the toughest foreign critics. These works included both the classics of the 20th century (with the translation of Mercè Rodoreda's *Quanta, quanta guerra* [So Much War…] into German and of Joan Sales' *Incerta Glòria* [Uncertain Glory],[1] into French) and books by today's writers (with the striking success in Germany, both critical and in terms of sales, of Maria Barbal's *Pedra de tartera* [Mountain Scree] and Jaume Cabré's *Les veus del Pamano* [Voices from the River]). The year 2007 also saw the publication of an extraordinary book called *Carrers de frontera* (Frontier Streets). This volume of almost five hundred pages written by a hundred specialists reflects upon two centuries of exchange between Catalan and German letters. Since these literary traditions are so closely intertwined, Catalan writers cannot be understood without thinking about them in a general context that links, for example, Maragall and Goethe, Riba and Hölderin, Vinyoli and Rilke, and Ferrater and Kafka. These are classics of Catalan literature but they are also classics of the art of translation.

Following in their wake, Catalan culture was guest of honour at the Frankfurt Book Fair 2007, which became a festival of translation. The best account of the Catalan presence in Germany is condensed in the string of titles of Catalan literature translated into German in 2007: Ramon Llull's *Llibre de les meravelles* (*Book of Wonders*),[2] the three volumes of *Tirant lo Blanc* (*Tirant lo Blanc*),[3] the three volumes of Salvador Espriu's complete poetic works, Víctor Català's *Solitud* (*Solitude*),[4] Josep Pla's *El quadern gris* (*The Grey Notebook*)… through to Quim Monzó's *100 contes* (*100 Stories*), Albert Sánchez Piñol's *Pandora al Congo* (*Pandora in the Congo*),[5] the anthologies of poetry by Pere Gimferrer and Joan Margarit… and up to fifty-three titles. Many Germans have now discovered a European literature that many of them were perhaps unaware of, but the most important thing is that they have discovered it not only through news about the books or discussions in the press but also as readers. Once again, **Transfer** can only open its pages by paying tribute to the task of the translator II

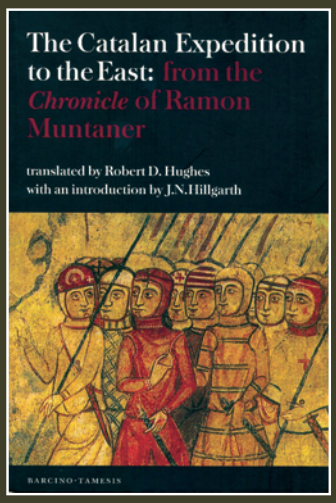
[3] Translated into English with the same title by David H. Rosenthal, MacMillan, 1984.
[4] Translated into English by David H. Rosenthal, Hishion House, 1992.
[5] Translated into English by Mara Faye Lethem, Canongate Books, 2008.

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



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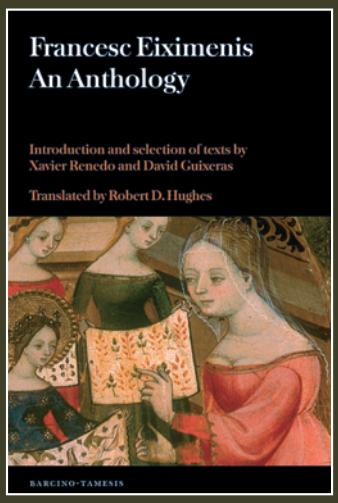

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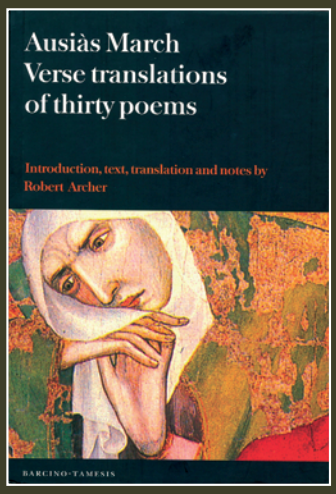

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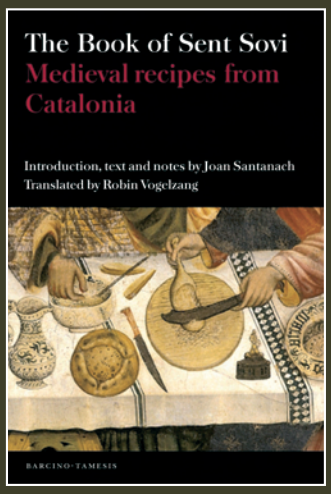

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essays

Victòria Camps

Forming a Republican citizenry

Man is forced to be a good citizen even if not a morally good person.
I. Kant, *Perpetual Peace*

This conception of citizenry is characteristic of liberalism, which has it that citizens are individuals who enjoy freedom to devote themselves to their business and pursue their interests, and nothing but respect for current legality should be demanded. When Adam Smith, Kant's peer, formulated the famous theory of the "invisible hand", what he was expressing is an idea very similar to Kant's: one should not preach morality to persons nor expect them to behave according to maxims, since an invisible hand turns private egoism into public benefit.

The fact is that the liberal conception of the state and of the person today involves a number of shortcomings which have an adverse effect on the operation of democracy and of the welfare state. This is made clear by theories such as communitarianism and republicanism, which are comparable only to the extent that they criticise the liberal conception of the subject understood as a rootless abstract individual, with no identity other than the one conferred by his autonomy. As MacIntyre, one of the theorists of communitarianism, affirmed, the modernist stance means we do not or cannot have a unitary conception of the person enabling us to determine what qualities or virtues he or she should acquire. The idea of an excellence intrinsic to human nature, proper to Aristotelian ethics or medieval Christian thought, disappears with modernity. There is no excellence other than the sort that seeks the fulfilment of individual freedom, guaranteed by fundamental rights, though indeed with one limitation: that one's freedoms should be compatible with others'. This is what positive law attempts to achieve. As Kant said, an "action is right if it can co-exist with everyone's freedom".

One of the results of the liberal political model is the difficulty entailed in forming citizenries by liberal societies. If we exaggerate this a little, we could say that we have a democracy without citizens, or with citizens who are such more in a fundamental, legal sense than through any real commitment to society's general interests which they take on. The "liberty of the moderns" is quite unlike the "liberty of the ancients", as Benjamin Constant pointed out over two centuries ago. The free citizens of ancient times, who were not at all so free, as we must admit, understood that their freedom was a privilege which they enjoyed to be able to devote themselves to the service of the common good and the republic. Today's citizens, who conceive freedom as a universal right, understand that this right enables them to be independent in order to devote themselves to their private interests and to choose the lifestyle most appropriate to their own particular preferences. The ancients were not individualists and modern thought is based on the centrality of the individual as a singular being. The problems of public life are something to be solved by the political class. This is a division of labour, quite probably inevitable, which results in the simultaneous existence of two types of citizenry: active citizens, who are the sort who devote themselves professionally to politics, and passive citizens, all the others who, in the best of cases, vote every four years, pay their taxes and, beyond these obligations, wash their hands of politics.

Citizens' apathy is nothing new. Sociologists such as Max Weber denounced this way back at the beginning of the last century. Citizens' passivity is not a new phenomenon either, but it is definitely one that has been heightening. Nowadays abstention is growing in each new election and hostility and distrust for politics increase day by day. It is true that this style of politics based on party confrontation is not the best way to arouse people's enthusiasm, because it only helps to generate distrust and aversion, but there must surely be more absolute reasons explaining citizens' indifference towards public affairs. One of the explanations put forward for the abstention phenomenon is precisely the welfare enjoyed by the inhabitants of welfare states. What need do such people have to vote if they have plenty of everything that they need to survive?

Apart from this, politics wastes more time on futile questions than it devotes to solving any real issues. This means that it ultimately makes no difference whether one *lot* or the other are in power. Now the ideologies which marked clear differences between the left and right have disappeared, if politics is only management, why not consider this as a profession like any other, and understand politics as something that only has to do with political professionals?

It is not only the party structure which distances politics from the general public as a whole. Another aspect which has helped to mark the separation between both types of citizens is the model of protective social states which, whilst having brought considerable advantages as regards people's well-being and the redistribution of basic goods, has had an unwanted effect consisting in over-dependence on public administrations by citizens, who consider that these bodies are there to solve all their problems. The obligations stemming from recognition of social rights, protection of health, education, accommodation thus become the public authorities' obligations. Citizens are only the receivers of services which the state has the duty to guarantee. One of the neoliberal criticisms of the welfare state is that it discourages the unemployed to such an extent that they prefer to live from benefits rather than seek work. If it is true, as some say, that the greater the employment protection, the higher the


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unemployment rate, we should ask ourselves why this is the case. The conception of the citizen as a subject of rights should be corrected some way, adding that —though it is true that citizens are above all subjects of rights— this does not release them from certain obligations and duties, the ones vital for both democracy and the welfare state to progress.

Although citizens' passivity is a longstanding problem, there is another difficulty very closely connected with this, which seems newer —I am referring to people's lack of a public spirit, a contradiction in terms, as the basic attribute of a public citizen should precisely be public-mindedness. For a few years now cities have been showing signs of unrest through the constant manifestations of lack of public spirit, people's lack of sensitivity for coexistence, mutual respect, care for the public sphere. More than one city has been involved in campaigns and programmes intended to inculcate civic attitudes in people. The Spanish parliament has similarly just passed a new education law which enforces the introduction of a new subject with the name of "Education for citizenship" into the curriculum, an idea not invented by us but which stems from a European Union proposal already established in different countries in this part of the world. This endeavour sets out to tackle the shortcoming that I mentioned above: that democracies are incapable of creating citizens. To put this another way, the inhabitants of today's democracies do not appear to succeed in acquiring the moral sensitivity vital to coexist in plural and diverse societies. Civility —the public spirit— would be none other than the minimum ethics essential to live in these societies.

THE NEED FOR A PUBLIC ETHICS

Both apathy and indifference to politics and the lack of public spiritedness vouch for people's scanty commitment to society or the city. This is an aspect on which both the aforementioned

Harar (Ethiopia), Toni Catany (2007)

communitarianism and republicanism particularly insist, with certain major differences. Communitarianist philosophers concentrate more on the need to recover the community sense in order to achieve social cohesion and people's commitment to the community. The defenders of republicanism, on the other hand, rely on the idea of educating people in the "civic virtues", that is, inculcating the minimum but universal morals that any democratic society requires. I must confess that my own sympathies are closer to the republican thinkers than to communitarianism. I am an advocate of open societies, of the *res publica*, rather than communities seeking the foundation of the possible virtues that people should cultivate precisely in the communitarian identity. I do not agree with this. I do not think that national, religious or local bonds are valid to justify civic virtues. These are simply deduced from the belief in the value of democracy and the welfare state. Neither one nor the other can work without the people who enjoy their benefits getting involved in both values and cooperating to help implement these smoothly through their attitudes and way of being. One of the republican ideals is expressed in the formula *libertas est civitas*. Binding liberty with civil coexistence does not require any more specific identities than the one conferred by democratic citizenship, that is, the conviction that being a good citizen is knowing how to practice freedom in everyone's benefit.

Binding liberty with civil coexistence does not require any more specific identities than the one conferred by democratic citizenship

However, practising freedom in everyone's benefit does not involve only not impinging on other people's liberty but also having to contribute more positively to the common good by making use of individual freedom. This is the idea that leads me to finding something lacking in the Kantian thought quoted at the beginning of this article. If we want there to be good citizens, we cannot avoid cultivating public ethics or civic virtues. Legal coercion is unfortunately necessary, but not sufficient.

I thus reject MacIntyre's thesis as given in *After Virtue*, an excellent book nevertheless, because I do not believe that the age we are living in is unable to inculcate any kind of virtue that is not rooted in a particular and specific identity. I like the Aristotelian concept of "virtue" (even with all the word's anachronistic connotations) because it expresses very well how personal virtue should be understood. In the Aristotelian definition, the virtuous person is one who is willing to behave in patterns that are consistent with the one that democracy needs. Even while it is true, as MacIntyre says, that we cannot have a unitary conception of the person bearing in mind the plurality of our world, we can indeed require everyone to live according to democratic ideals and human rights. Laws for improving and overcoming everyday discriminations and lack of public-mindedness will be little use if people do not develop habits and attitudes of non-discrimination, of solidarity, of respect, of understanding for different ways of being.

To give stronger support to the idea I am putting forward, it would be useful to bear in mind a phenomenon proper to liberal societies —the growing deregulation, not only as

regards economy, but as regards other spheres such as ethics. Freedom recognised as a fundamental right requires setting a limit to legal prohibitions. Many of what were offences in more repressive times than now, the crime of opinion, for example, have ceased to be such. One of the recognised traits of liberalism is that the criminal code is abridged and the punishments for behaviour are restricted to really scandalous and intolerable cases. This does not however imply that only what is legally forbidden is incorrect. There is a whole world of things that we can do better or worse, but which are not explicitly regulated, nor should they be indeed. One particularly characteristic field in which this can be seen is communication. It is very hard and highly dangerous to regulate the freedom of expression and there are very few limitations to this freedom, which does not mean that communication cannot be more or less democratic, more or less consistent with constitutional values and with the recognition of fundamental rights, more or less compatible with the purposes of education.

Jürgen Habermas could be seen as one of the philosophers committed to the recovery of republicanism, above all when he bemoans present-day societies' loss of what he calls "a major normative intuition". Habermas said that we tend to take for granted the creation of a solidaristic rational will in people, this will furthermore be vital to coexist in peace, but nevertheless something that cannot be legally demanded. This will is thus taken for granted but is not real. To put this another way, the social state, which is finding it so hard to remain sustainable, cannot rely on the solidaristic and cooperative will of the people who are beneficiaries of this, nor does democracy have the citizens' participation that it needs to offset its fragility. These shortcomings make one more ready to think of a new republicanism—a republicanism which takes us back to Cicero and Machiavelli, who develop the ideal of the "good man" as the cornerstone of the republic. This reference to the virtuous man does not mean we are seeking to introduce any stifling and retrograde moralism, but simply expressing the need to foster citizens' virtuous behaviour.
What is being demanded is that citizens should act *as such.* According to Machiavelli, only behaviour according to virtue will enable a *vivere civile e libero* in which there is no place for corruption, because corruption, in all its facets, comes about when public interest disappears from people's vital viewpoint and when they pursue only private or corporative interests. In this case they display a lack of self-control that prevents them from considering anything other than their own private interests. With these people, however, it is not possible to form or sustain a genuine republic, which requires people who are free, but at the same time who cooperate in the cause of the common good. This is furthermore a form of practising freedom which is not learned automatically, but which has to be taught.

What the new republicanism finds lacking is a citizenry that assumes its civic duties —a citizenry, not merely a set of subjects depending on public subsidies or dominated by clientelism stemming from a model of social state that has been distorted. The malfunctions seen in our democracies do not stem only from structural deficiencies, but also ethical or moral shortcomings. If the horizon of a "well-ordered society" as John Rawls said, is marked by a feeling of justice, one should clearly understand what we wish to understand by justice. As far as I am concerned, I have not found any better definition than "from each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs" —a definition which relies on everyone's contributions, those of both institutions and citizens II

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Joan Prats

Taking populisms seriously

A debate that took place in Washington at the headquarters of the International Monetary Fund on the presentation of Javier Santiso's new book, Pragmatism: Latin America's New "Ism"?, makes me feel that perhaps we ought not to think little of things simply because they fail to move us very much. Moises Naim was one of those talking there and he said something like "Javier, this is a fine book; one of the aspects you bring out is Chile's experience as the great Latin American success story, but the day when you can explain to us why president Bachelet moves so few people outside the country and why presidents Chávez or Castro stir up so many inside their countries and abroad, we will have grasped deeper processes than the new pragmatism in the economy". Naim was quite clearly referring to populisms.

Latin American populisms are the bogey bandied around both inside and above all outside Latin America as the cause or threat of all present and future ills. Today, after the defeats of Ollanta Humala in Peru and López Obrador in Mexico, the "international community" seems a little less worked up about this, but there is nevertheless a long period of concern lying ahead of it. It may be time to take populisms seriously, first of all by attempting to understand them. We prefer to talk of *populisms* in the plural to express, on one hand, the heterogeneity of the phenomenon: there are right-wing populists —Uribe—, and left-wing ones —Morales, Castro or López Obrador; there are populists who have declared that they are neither right nor left-wing —Humala— and there are some who feel uncomfortable with these classifications imported from the French Revolution —Chávez; and there are presidents who sometimes consider themselves populists and sometimes left-wing reformists —Kirchner.

Harar (Ethiopia), Toni Catany (2007)

Apart from this, some of today's populists and some from a not very distant yesterday —Latin America from 1930 to 1960— are still very much present in the collective imagination of a good deal of Latin American people.

Populism is a phenomenon that is very resistant to definitions. Bonilla and Páez, two worthy scholars in this field, have characterised this as a "longstanding political tradition seeking the people's support, breaking up the conventionalisms of the establishment, which has the ability to use multiple ideologies, which may possibly mobilise the masses and which generally is organised behind the charisma of a leader". This is fairly useful as a rough idea, but still rather cold; it does not convey the reason why populisms revive so easily and with such passion in Latin America; it does not tell us why populisms, even though undeniably having roots and even present expressions in Russia, Europe and the United States, have found the most fertile soil in Latin America. In fact, populism is the sort of phenomenon which will let itself be described but not defined, and to describe it a look at its history may be required.

> The rhetoric of populisms was anti-oligarchic and anti-imperialist, but was not in general anti-capitalist

We can recommend Alberto Methol Ferré's work, written outside transnational intellectual circuits, but stemming from the historical heart of the region —*América del Sur. De los estados-ciudad al Estado Continental Industrial.* Starting from Perón's well-known phrase "the 21st century will find us either united or dominated", Methol discusses the generation of Latin Americans who started to rethink continental unity in the early 20th century. Uruguay's Rodó, who in 1900 published *Ariel,* was the first great exponent of Latin America's moral and intellectual unity, materialising this in the proposal for "a nation of confederated republics" thus going back to the historical project that had gone wrong for Bolivar in 1826. In 1910 the Argentinean Manuel Urgarte provided the first historical and political synthesis of Latin America in *El Porvenir de la América española.* In 1911 *La evolución política y social de Hispanoamérica,* by the Venezuelan Rufino Blanco Fombona, came out and 1912 saw the publication of *Las democracias latinas de América,* by the Peruvian Francisco García Calderón. The group of university students provided the great dynamic thrust to these new ideals of union. Through their revolts, mobilisations and congresses, students became the first exponents of Latin Americanism and also the origin of the great populist national wave.

The first occasion on which these intellectual endeavours and mobilisations were turned into a political project involved Victor Raúl Haya de la Torre, the founder and father of Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana (APRA). His populism was a first attempt to build or develop the State and the nation of Peru. His was the first political theorisation on the "oligarchic polis" which is what lay beneath the tag of the Latin American "nations". They were indeed former City-States which controlled farming, mining and fishing areas now of immense export value. "They were anachronistic countries at their roots, enormously rich, but whose wealth had no potential, because the inventions were made by others. We could not export anything with sufficient added value. With a huge

farming or mining income we bought the objects of modernity, ours was a mimicry of modernism, no more" (Methol).

Then a new generation of Latin Americans was born that set out to convert the mimicry into reality. They were all populist nationals. But even then populism was considered inferior, though it is when all is said and done "the only political thought that came out of Latin America in its own right, and gave rise to Haya de la Torre in Peru, Vargas in Brazil, Perón in Argentina, Ibáñez in Chile, Lázaro Cárdenas in Mexico, Rómulo Betancourt in Venezuela (Methol), Velasco Ibarra in Ecuador, Gaitán in Columbia and Victor Paz Estensoro in Bolivia. Vargas in Brazil and Perón in Argentina were authoritarian; the others had limited conceptions and ambiguous relations with democracy. But all of them sought the involvement of the masses, the people, in national construction and political practice, implicating the old and new sectors that had been kept out of participation in the former oligarchic republics whose social, economic and political crises led to the emergence of populist leaders and policies.

As they produced growth in their countries the exporting oligarchic Latin American republics gradually generated masses of proletarians and workers in their large port cities —craftsmen, small traders, skilled workmen and professionals who joined the masses who had historically been abandoned to the country or the mines, all those who had been left out of the mechanisms of political and oligarchic representation. In Europe, socialist and social-democratic parties and unions had integrated these masses through universal suffrage, the progressive conquest of the welfare state and the corresponding transformation of the State and the liberal economy into a *democratic and social constitutional State* and into a *social market economy.* This in short brought about a process of creating new agents, struggles and agreements, which led to new institutions. Hence, in Europe a universal citizenship was gradually won, based on civil, political, economic and social rights and firmly anchored on a sound institutionality.

In Latin America circumstances worked out quite differently. The emigrating masses, especially those from southern Europe, clearly tried to form themselves into the political instruments of their home countries —with a high degree of anarchism and revolutionary socialism— but with no success, because these were two very different realities.
The European states had a long history as complete institutional systems and had already gone through the Industrial Revolution. European social and political movements gradually relinquished their revolutionary ideals in exchange for a thorough renovation of the rusty institutionality of their states. In contrast to this, Latin American states and nations were actually not states and nations. They hardly managed to control their own territory and left the large masses outside the national identity, political representation and social inclusion. The institutionality of the oligarchic republics was frail and mainly informal. Industrialisation was still something to come. In these conditions, popular mobilisation could not be implemented from ideologies, but only from the political project of a new fatherland, the promise of a nation and a State which would include the multitudes, which would give them an identity and which would need their mobilising force. This is what was done by Latin American national populism in its diverse variants. Its leaders were above all "nation builders" although these were nations and states that had very little in common with European ones. Their rhetoric was anti-oligarchic and anti-imperialist, but was not in general anti-capitalist.

Let us look at Perón's case. From 1945 to 1955 Argentina had around seventeen million inhabitants. The first command of Peronism was industrialisation, to give work and occupation to the masses. This meant putting the income from exporting human resources to use for industrialisation and generating a business infrastructure that was able to replace imports. But even so, the national market proved too small and to extend this, economies needed to be integrated. To this end, in 1951, Perón sought an alliance between Argentina and Brazil as the basic core of agglutination, the driving force of growth towards the "bigger fatherland", towards the necessary unity of South America. "Either united or dominated". But it did not work, and there are two very clear reasons for this.

The first is that, through its very essence, Peronist populism helped to build a nation, but on very weak institutional foundations. The autocratic leader undeniably brought in a distributive and social policy, but based on clientelism, that is, on the distribution of social benefits in exchange for votes —Evita's hand so sincerely stretched out towards her *descamisado* supporters did not produce citizens with social rights guaranteed by the State's institutions. In the same way, the internal market was protected by national businessmen largely in accordance with criteria of political loyalty, and for this reason institutions and policies were needed to encourage productivity and export orientation.

The second reason is less obvious: it involves grasping the impossibility of generating effective economic integration between countries with a very weak institutionality. When states seeking economic integration have not been able to build the institutions of a genuine market economy inside their own frontiers it proves almost impossible for them to build a supranational market space governed by rules that prevent arbitrary manipulation by the member states or their most prominent business or social groups. This is the main reason why Latin American regional integration processes have never managed to come up to the expectations that they had created. Populisms generate a rhetoric of integration, but find it very hard to generate efficient economic integration, precisely because their political viability is incompatible with strengthening the economic and legal institutionality required by efficient markets. Aware of this, they have for a long time set trade between peoples —controlled discretionarily by governments— against free trade, even though this might be free trade under the rules fixed by governments, but which these cannot nevertheless change at their whim.

One characteristic of the populisms of this first stage is the one known as *economic populism,* exemplified by the often-quoted letter that Perón sent to Ibáñez in 1953: "Dear Friend, give the people, particularly the workers, all you can. When it seems that you have already given them too much, give them more. Everyone will try to scare you with the nightmare of economic collapse. But that is all lies. There is nothing more elastic than the economy, and people are afraid of it because they fail to understand it". This economic populism reached the governments in power at the start of the democratisation process, like that of Alfonsín in Argentina, Alan García in Peru and José Sarney in Chile. They practised what Alejandro Foxley has called the "populist cycle": a first year of tax expansion to generate more purchasing power: a second year in which the cost for this is paid with inflation and tax deficit; a third year with an economic crisis turned into a social crisis through mobilisations, and a fourth year of open political crisis. Salvador Allende also implemented economic populism, as well as the Sandinistas

in Nicaragua. Some have pointed out that Hugo Chávez has been able to escape the tax deficit thanks to the increase in the price of petrol.

The populist national states, which became widespread in Latin America from the nineteen-forties to the nineteen-sixties until the late sixties and early seventies, went into a crisis of economic growth —industrialisation for replacing imports was not able to exceed the consumer goods stage, nor increase productivity and open up to wider markets— then into a social crisis —distributive policies ran out of resources and had not managed to significantly reduce the chronic inequality of most Latin American countries— and into a political crisis —corruption, lobbies and arbitrarity would always be around. After great social tensions and different revolutionary attempts, as this was a time of great ideologisation, they went on to brutal military dictatorships which for the first time tried out a model of development in the hands of a new type of State: the bureaucratic-authoritarian system.

But before going on with the story, it may be a good idea to go over the conditions that make the emergence of these populisms possible, as well as some of their outstanding characteristics and consequences. Later on these will be of use for contrasting with the conditions and characteristics of present-day populisms.

The first Latin American populisms arose through a combination of circumstances which are worth restating: an economic, social and political crisis of the oligarchic republics partly caused by the deterioration in the value of exports, partly by the governments' incapacity to give an identity to the popular masses and socially include these, and partly by the crisis of political representation and social discrediting of oligarchic governments: incomplete states and nations, which were not able to control and link up their vast territories nor to include or give a national identity to their growing populations: very frail political and economic institutionality, unable to adapt to and integrate the new social agents and to generate new, more inclusive and efficient rules of the game.

In these conditions, both then and now, national populism has appealed to and mobilised the people against the oligarchy and imperialism, seen as being hand in hand and as enemies of the people, not to further any socialist revolution (populism is not anti-capitalist), but instead to re-establish the State and build the nation of the people, by the people and for the people. The people and social movements in which it expresses itself become the new political icon. This is not a matter of universalising a new legal status of citizenship. The rights that they are seeking to conquer and guarantee are not the individual ones, which are considered liberal and bourgeois, but the collective rights of the people. The political system perceived does not wish to represent citizens, since it considers itself to be "the people's political self-representation through social movements". All this leads to diverse characteristics.

One of the first of these is the emphasis of all the symbolic, communicational, emotive aspects, and indeed, the spectacle. This is designed to express dramatically that there has been a break with the traitorous oligarchy and with imperialism, both declared permanent enemies and which are never utterly vanquished. As opposed to the corruption of which the previous political regime is accused, a show is now made of austerity and honesty, though the lack of institutions means that these virtues do not tend to endure for very long. The pre-existing racism and classism are questioned, while not necessarily being

surmounted. Society is polarised and kept tense by propagating images of struggle between the people and oligarchy, between *us* and *them*, and things are led to a level of civil division. This all becomes more dramatically spectacular through the *media spin* of today's societies.

A second trait of classic populisms is the pre-eminence given to social movements over the more formal structures of parties and trade unions. Populist systems are sustained on the articulation of distributive coalitions made up a very wide range of social agents, who consider themselves to be a direct expression of the people: very diverse social movements, trade unions aligned with the populist regime, business groups accompanying the process, new civil servants who take over public offices, leaders and workers of the nationalised or protected companies, diverse subsidised guilds, peasants who have obtained lands from the land reform or who hope to do so. Populism attempts to develop a system of corporatisms linking and bonding the entire social structure. In fact the populist system does not conceive the person as a citizen with rights, but as a member of a movement or corporation, without belonging or subordinating to which the conditions for personal development cannot be created.

Populisms maintain an ambiguous relationship with representative democracy

In this state of affairs, populisms tend to use political clientelism as a method of political action. Of course not all clientelists are populists, but populists are always clientelists. Their service to the people consists in distributing goods and services discretionarily and selectively, mainly through social organisations which prop up the regime, the directors of which end up being co-opted and subordinated to the populist political power. The higher echelons of the political movements in which they say that the people express themselves always end up being recruited and exploited by clientelism. The myth of the populist government as the people's political self-representation attempts to close the circle of legitimation. Obviously this can only occur with very low levels of political culture, but in Latin America we have plenty of cultural minima and it is these, to which the poorest and most excluded tend to belong, on which populism tries to feed.

One new characteristic of populisms, consistent with everything said so far, is their ambiguous relationship with representative democracy and the highly personal and discretionary nature of their leadership. Populists have never believed that the people express themselves either exclusively or mainly through elections, nor that popular power is only wielded through institutions. Populists use a very conscious ambiguity about representative democracy. It is not a matter of completing this with participative democracy, which would be a demand of the reformist left. Populists reserve the right to invoke the people as ultimate holders of national sovereignty every time that the institutions of formal democracy threaten to stray from the "genuine" popular will. If things go well for the populist government, this will keep the social movements supplied through clientelism and mobilised only for symbolic acts. When things go wrong, the people will return to the streets, squares and lanes to redress the deviations of the political institutions circumstantially captured by the enemies of the people or in danger of doing so. When everything deteriorates it will become clear that there are few

words like *fatherland* and *people* that have managed to become the alibi and refuge of so many scoundrels. A quote from Stalin himself may be enough, when on 4th May 1935, addressing the future officials of the Red Army, he said: "Of all the valuable capitals that there are in the world, the most valuable and decisive is the people".

Populisms cannot survive without a highly personal and discretionary leader. This is due to the fact that their formal political institutions are extraordinarily weakened by having to coexist with social organisations and movements which lie outside their logic. Here the conflicts between the agents of the coalition which sustains populism are not mediated nor solved institutionally, but through the personal and discretionary leadership of the populist president, who will tend not to create any institutions which assign power and solve conflicts between agents so as not to become dispensable. The populist is quite the opposite of Machiavelli's prince, who was advised to become dispensable by creating institutions. He will not have the greatness of Napoleon, who asserted: "Men cannot fix history, only institutions can" and dedicated himself to creating them, some still surviving today. Latin American populist leaders have only taken this path in a very incomplete and imperfect way.

Are present-day populists different? Some think that populists of today are only new through being so old. But this is not true. Nothing happens in vain. First of all, Latin America has reached levels of democracy and democratic culture which, whilst being very incomplete, are difficult to head back from. Latin America is satisfied not only with democracy as such, but with the specific democracy that it has. The Latin American crisis is not something about democracy, but takes place within this. Present-day populists doubtlessly maintain all the ambiguity of the old populisms as regards representative democracy, but they need to legitimate themselves electorally and respect a minimum political pluralism. When hard times come, they will endanger the minima of democratic institutionality, but have to reckon with a civil resistance which was unthinkable in times of the first populism.

Secondly, present-day populists seem to have abandoned what Sebastián Edwards and others have called "populist macroeconomy". They now control inflation and the deficit and attempt to gain international respectability, maintaining the autonomy of the Central Bank. But this goes against the populist logic of political instrumentalisation of all institutionality, including the economic side. Hence, at times they cannot resist the temptation to replace the independence of institutions with a mimicry of autonomy which fails to convince anyone, and which of course does not withstand a seriously unfavourable economic situation. Today's populisms do not seem capable of initiating the development of new productive capacities based on the multiplication of new highly productive entrepreneurs and workers. To succeed in this they would have to create the institutional conditions and appropriate and fitting economic policies which involve granting autonomy and proper rules of the game, that is, generating an institutionality which does not appear to sympathise with the demands for long term survival of populis II

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Julià Guillamon

On the trail of exile

I had been at my brother's place for two years when we received a phone call from Mestres, the owner of the workshop a floor beneath the apartment rented by our mother. Some immigrants had broken into the apartment and made themselves at home. Mestres had called the police. For months my brother had been emptying out our mother's apartment. However, I had been unable to go to gather my things from there. In the final years of her life, our mother had put time and money into maintaining an apartment that did not warrant its upkeep. Now the doors were broken in and the walls were covered in mould. There was no electricity. The immigrants had installed a stove in the middle of the dining room. In the middle bedroom, where my things had been pushed, I found a wooden chest with toys in it from when I was kid, a bag of books, and some folders. In one of these folders was a series of interviews I had done with various Catalan writers, which I had published in the daily newspaper Avui between December 1984 and April 1986, just after I had completed university. Four of these writers were exiles: Pere Calders, Avel·lí Artís, Xavier Benguerel and Josep Ferrater Mora.

The oldest of these interviews is with Avel·lí Artís-Gener, or Tísner, who appears on the cover of *Avui* at home in a housecoat, smoking a pipe. In this interview, Tísner says things I had forgotten he had said at the time. He explains that in 1961, when he had started writing the novel *Les dues funcions del circ* (The Two Functions of the Circus), he had returned to Martinique, where he had been brought after the Spanish Civil War when the ship bringing him to Mexico and to exile had broken down in the middle of the Atlantic. The novel recreates the sojourn of two brothers at Fort-de-France while they await repairs on their boat, just as Avel·lí Artís had awaited repairs on his boat in the summer of 1939. Tísner and I spoke about the trips he had made to Martinique in search of locations for his novel, about the hours he had spent observing the islanders, listening to their manner of speaking, copying advertisements he found on the streets. Descriptions of the beach and the airport in the novel come from precise observations. We also spoke about Mexico, about the writer Roure-Torrent and the mother-in-law of Tísner's brother Arcadi, the mother of painter Francesc Espriu, whose voices Tísner had used for the narrator of *Paraules d'Opòton el Vell* (Words of the Elder Opoton). Opoton, the narrator, is a Mexican warrior who links ideas from a common point of reference. Opoton's narration traces his mental flights, reconstructing a literary pre-Columbian chronicle of events, until Opoton loses his train of thinking and the novel ends. I interviewed Xavier Benguerel at his home on Francesc Carbonell Street in Pedralbes. In the interview's published photos of him, Benguerel appears in a dark dress shirt, on the terrace of his apartment in front of antique bas-reliefs of figures with patterns around them. We speak about *Icària, Icària* and his translations of *La Fontaine*. Towards the end of our time, I ask Benguerel about Chile and he talks about the moment he returned from exile and about the adventures of the Club dels Novel·listes, but not Chile. In neither of these interviews with Tísner and Benguerel do we speak about exile.

My interviews with Tísner and Benguerel were in-depth interviews, with background and history, with connections to books and experiences, but exile was always left out of the discussion. I published articles and I contributed prefaces to books. Tísner and Maria Lluïsa Mercadet welcomed me often to their home. I returned many times to the apartment on Francesc Carbonell Street, alone, or with my friend Joan Tarrida. Benguerel used to invite us for lunch at a small restaurant frequented exclusively by neighbours. At this time, I had just discovered the novels of Francesc Trabal and I spoke to Benguerel about them with great enthusiasm. But he was surprised by my interest and I did not understand why. I learned why later. Benguerel's reluctance to reciprocate my enthusiasm was connected to Trabal's generosity, the profound disagreements the Catalan exiles in Chile had had, the tough decisions they had faced at the hour of their return, and then the final drama of the life of Trabal, dead at 58 years of age after great disillusionment with the world —which had all been epitomized by the continuation of Franco at the end of the Second World War.

Avel·lí Artís-Gener and Xavier Benguerel did not talk about exile because exile was not a positive experience for them. For these writers, exile meant stigmatisation and it was a source of shame. This can be seen clearly in their memoirs. Benguerel's erratic *Memòria d'un exili. Xile 1940-1952* (Memoirs of an Exile: Chile 1940-1952) side-steps the fundamental aspects of his life in Santiago. Instead, the memoir reproduces sections of articles from the journal *Germanor*, in which Benguerel discusses a rather inconsequential trip with his family to Corcovado, Puerto Aysén, and the San Rafael Lagoon in the south of Chile. A large part of the memoir is dedicated to showing the craftiness he employed

to make it possible to open and run a pharmaceutical laboratory in Chile. Tísner's *Viure i veure* (To Live and See) also has a bit of the picaresque about it, with its descriptions of Tísner's adventures in cinema and television. Tísner's cars are like the dogs and cats of Benguerel: they are objects of emotional transfer, which speak of a familiar world, placidly accommodated and stable, a place that perhaps never existed. When Tísner reconstructs his return to Catalonia, there is neither pain nor conflict.

Talking to the writer Quim Monzó, the journalist Ramon Barnils describes the sadness he felt at seeing Tísner, a pillar of the magazines *La Rambla*, *L'Esquella de la Torratxa* (The Torratxa Cowbell) and *El Be Negre* (The Black Lamb), reduced to working in the editorial offices of *tele*/*eXpress*, in an obscure and a subordinate role. In Chile, Benguerel had made money, but he was like one of the characters of his own short stories —rootless, erased, divided between two irreconcilable realities, like his erudite erotomaniac who keeps his passions a secret and does not understand his son. Tísner returned to Catalonia without a penny. He lived poorly in a boarding house in Barcelona and wound up accepting work at the newspaper of old friends, who had complied with Franco. Benguerel kept a low profile, maintaining personal commitments to only Rafael Borràs and the Lara family. I do not know if he had any friends. Tísner eventually prevailed over his demeaning circumstances and became a public figure, a candidate for elections to the Nacionalistes d'Esquerra, who appeared on TV3 in his final years of life. Tísner and Benguerel were very different, but in my memories of them, both figures are blurred into one.

What should I have asked Tísner and Benguerel about exile? What did I know, really? What should I have said to make them open up and remember, without reservations or embellishments, an intimate part of their lives in Toulouse and Roissy, in Mexico and in Chile? In my time as a student at the University of Barcelona, students of Catalan literature took courses in the history of the Catalan language, its phonetics, morphology, syntax and dialectology, because Catalan had to be the foundation of Catalonia's renewal. We studied very little about literature itself, and hardly anyone spoke about the literature of the 1930s. The books that should have helped us discover the intellectual climate of the 1930s did not exist. We got used to seeing the Spanish Civil War through the deformed mirror of anti-Francoism. I had some copies of *Visions de la guerra i la rereguarda* (Visions of the War and the Rearguard), with its design by Salvador Saura and Ramon Torrente, who played with the colours of the republican flag. The only pre-war newspapers I ever saw were those reproduced in that anthology. The post-Franco transition discredited politics so that a profound silence hung over anyone and anything associated with the Barcelona of the Republic. It was not until much later that I began making important connections about things. Joan M. Minguet i Batllori salvaged the books and articles of Sebastià Gasch, while Valentí Soler published Just Cabot's *Indagacions i proposicions* (Enquiries and proposals). From reading the articles of these writers and through their exchange of opinions, for example, on Dalí, "a world that was true" began to emerge for me. I remember a detail that impressed me. To speak about some brown shoes, Gasch said "some spectator shoes". These "spectator shoes" symbolized the dream world that Gasch carried with him.

I spoke about my feelings to Josep Palau i Fabre. In 1946, Palau i Fabre had voluntarily exiled himself in Paris. He was tired of the atmosphere in Barcelona and of his relationship with his parents, who had become supporters of Franco. I met him shortly after he had returned to Bruc Street in Barcelona. In cabinets and drawers of his home

on Bruc Street, Palau i Fabre found autographs, books with dedications and magazines on modern design that his father had owned. In the foyer of his home, among paintings by Gausachs and Bosch-Roger, there was a cabinet with trinkets and objects of art like those that were advertised in *D'Ací i d'Allà* (From Here and There). Bit by bit, Palau i Fabre sold everything he found to pay for the Ektachrome transparencies of the books he wrote about Picasso. In a drawer of the childhood bedroom of his upper-class family, Palau i Fabre had saved dozens of clippings from the magazine *Mirador*. Every Thursday, a day-boarder classmate of his would bring the magazine to the school's boarding house, where Palau i Fabre stayed. Homesick in the first years of the post-war, Palau i Fabre cut out and arranged clippings of the magazine and assembled them into a kind of encyclopaedia, which he read over and over again. In my interviews with him, he could confirm that he still knew many of these clippings by heart.

> In exile the Catalan novel became an instrument for rethinking the position of men in the contemporary world

Palau i Fabre preserved a clear image of the world before the Spanish Civil War, a worldview 16 or 17 years old, which he kept deep inside of him. Palau i Fabre could speak as easily about the first talking picture, *The Love Parade*, as the jokes of Otto and Fritz, which had been in fashion 60 years before. Despite his iconoclastic stature, Palau i Fabre was witness to the civilized customs of an illustrious bourgeoisie who went to the Teatre Grec to see Margarida Xirgu's *Medea* or to the Liceu to see the Russian Ballets, in top hats or trilbys and black-and-white spectator shoes. To understand the world of Palau i Fabre better, I set up at the Library of Catalonia to read old copies of *Mirador*, and I wound up spending more than a year there.

It was at the Library of Catalonia that, in a great torrent, all the questions I was not able to ask Tísner and Benguerel when they were alive and were my friends began to emerge. When I was at *Avui*, I used to come across the journalist Josep Maria Lladó, with a big cigar in his mouth, completing the writing of articles at the bar La Llave, as if La Llave were the bar of the Ateneu. In those days I thought of Lladó as a solitary and anachronistic old man. But now I think of him at the editor's desk of *Última Hora*, and in Nice in 1945, publishing *Per Catalunya* (For Catalonia) with its covers by Fontseré, Clavé and Martí Bas. It was while at the Library of Catalonia reading *Mirador* —and *La Publicitat*, *La Rambla*, *L'Instant* and *Última Hora* as well— that I began to understand the sheer scale of the defeat in 1939 and the consequences this had on my life directly.

The generation of Joan Oliver, Francesc Trabal, Vicenç Riera Llorca, Armand Obiols, Anna Murià, Xavier Benguerel, Mercè Rodoreda, Agustí Bartra, Lluís Ferran de Pol, Avel·lí Artís-Gener, and Pere Calders was the first to access a modern culture which crowned a continuous line reaching back to the Catalan Renaissance, a culture with a normalised Catalan language that made it possible to write in any genre, with a first-order journalism, with columnists who were open to all manner and hue of irony, with stories that offered readers of Catalan a Catalan vision of the world. The writers of this generation published popular collections, they translated the classics, they commented on the latest news in the

European and North American novel. Poetry experienced a golden period, with a return to the 1800s and an adherence to the weighty demands of symbolist and pure poetry. The old masters, Joaquim Ruyra and Josep Carner, were still active and a new generation of Catalan writers in their twenties who spoke about the troubles of youth had sprung up. And then suddenly, this world disappeared.

First, the Civil War forced this generation of writers to channel their energies into the service of politics. Then, after defeat to Franco, the generation's best were pushed across the border into poorhouses and shelters, where they were locked out of Catalonia and kept at bay in faraway countries, living in precarious circumstances, with painful memories and a poor digestion of their injuries. Some of these writers stayed in these faraway countries forever. Others, like Tísner, were away for 25 years. When they returned to Catalonia, they found a place that was nothing like what they had imagined in Chile or Mexico. In *El Poble Català* (The Catalan People), Tísner imagined dozens of Catalan exiles in sombreros and tourist boats returning to Barcelona, while in an apocryphal edition of *La Rambla* published in May 1945 when Tísner was only at the start of his exile, he published norms for applying for subsidies from the Spanish Refugee Evacuation Service (SERE) and the Spanish Republican Assistance Council (JARE), two organisations that helped to repatriate exiles, in the expectation of being back home soon. Nobody ended up in prison in Spain after returning from exile, but each exile lived a climate of constant intimidation and threat. When Catalonia began to revive and when all of the returned exiles should have been dedicating themselves full tilt to the reconstruction effort, they were not always well received. Their ideas, it turned out, did not always correspond to reality.

In 1966, Amadeu Cuito tried to revive his grandfather's magazine. This is how the Perpignan edition of *Mirador*, "the magazine that will be read in Catalonia", was born, which Eugeni Xammar dreamed of as the alternative to Carles Sentís and Ignasi Agustí's *Tele-estel*. In 1966, it was important to look forward, without thinking back to what had been lost. Nevertheless, like the return of what had been repressed, this sense of loss trickled down and made its way into the titles of the exiles' books: *Abans de l'alba* (Before the Dawn), *Homes i coses de la Barcelona d'abans* (Men and Things of Old Barcelona), *Abans d'ara* (Before Now). Before.

Avui was first published in 1976. I was a loyal reader of the newspaper. In those days, I spent the summers at my mother's boarding house, and I was bored. In the afternoons, I would lock myself in a bedroom of the boarding house's first floor and cut out articles about the Freedom March, which had just passed through the town of Arbúcies. *Avui* often published information on the exile experience. The newspaper wanted to transmit a vision of continuity through news of returned exiles as well as deaths of exiles abroad, deaths which occurred in steady drips, from the remotest days magazines on exile were first distributed in Havana and Santiago, in Mexico and Paris. There was news of the death of Alexandre Plana, of Pere Corominas, of Alfons Maseras, of Joaquim Xirau. Those deaths stand out against a glorious image of Pere Quart, at the Price Festival of Poets in 1970, reciting verses of *Corrandes de l'exili* (Folksongs of Exile), which in 1940 had caused Mercè Rodoreda to explode into laughter and nearly burst at the seams. Those deaths stand out against the image of Oliver, joining in with the people, challenging them in crying: "Liberty! Liberty!" As a journalist, I attended Oliver's extremely sad burial. Even before dying, in 1986, Oliver was a star whose light had dimmed. He was a forgotten and cranky writer who published acidic, disillusioned articles in a marginal magazine called

El Llamp (The Lightning). Since those days, Oliver's light has not stopped dimming until almost total darkness. Images of the glorious return of Agustí Bartra to El Prat Airport have disappeared while a much bleaker image of customs and the police in leather three-cornered hats has remained.

After Jaume Subirana's book on Josep Carner in Belgium, Carner's return in 1970 and Carner's uninspiring day-to-day life in Barcelona, Carner's return takes on an even more opaque and contorted significance. Carner's return is situated against a backdrop of rehabilitated and triumphal poets and intellectuals, of a happy reparation of exile's legendary brain drain and of the lost men whose lives were torn asunder. There is Armand Obiols, disillusioned by politics, distanced from his exiled compatriots, writing to his friend Rafael Tasis from Bordeaux, or accompanied by unknown women in Vienna and Geneva, with sadness clinging to his face like a mask. There is Francesc Trabal, busy working on a utopian project to build schools in the Americas so as not to lose the Catalans there, the same Francesc Trabal who, though anxious to return in January 1945, was the first to be lost. Trabal's articles in *Germanor* (Brotherhood) give goose bumps: the writer had lost his way and had resigned himself to a life of silent mourning and shrivelling away. We are far from the days of expecting the honour and compensation that some thought exiles deserved in the mid-1970s, when on the eve of the first elections, politicians aimed to profit from the fidelity and prestige of the exiles. We were not always told by the exiles the encouraging and flattering words we wanted to hear regarding the reality of the exile, a reality which is difficult to nail down. Were it possible to get together again with my old friends, the meeting would be marked by a sense of loss and an experience of grief.

At the same time, such a meeting would also be marked by a joy at seeing my friends again and discovering that their books were still alive

and could serve as examples and stimuli for many readers. Catalan literature matured in exile. Catalan poets sought out possibilities for redemption in the midst of adversity. They declared the birth of a new man. In exile, the Catalan novel eventually overcame the interwar crisis and became an instrument for rethinking the position of men in the contemporary world. The letters, diaries, and memoirs of the exiles are an extraordinary testimony to humanity, full of heart-rending experiences but also the antics of everyday life. Although this material is mainly a record of personal visions, it can be read as a grand saga with collective meaning, beginning with the flight from Barcelona, continuing with the building of temporary settlements in France and the experience of concentration camps in France and Germany, and ending with the creation of intellectual refuges and safe havens. In this grand saga, the nightmares of Toulouse are included, in their rarefied climate of frictions and discrepancies. So too is the life of the student at Montpellier, youth, and the discovery of love. There are the opportunities for symbolic rebirth in the forests of Bierville and Roissy-en-Brie. And starting in 1940, there is the great adventure in the Americas, which left in parenthesis the ideals of reconstruction of more than a century. The exiles could not publish, had lost their audience and had witnessed the abolition of their language.

A line connects Antoni Rovira i Virgili's *Els darrers dies de la Catalunya republicana* (The Last Years of Republican Catalonia) to Xavier Benguerel's *Els Vençuts* (The Defeated), to Mercè Rodoreda's short stories "Cop de lluna" (Moon Shadow), "Orleans, 3 quilòmetres" (Orleans, 3 Kilometres), and "Paràlisi" (Paralysis), to Vicenç Riera Llorca's *Tots tres surten per l'Ozama* (All Three Come from Ozama), to Pere Calders's *L'ombra de l'atzavara* (The Shadow of the Agave).

Harar (Ethiopia), Toni Catany (2007)

Rife are the sense of loss and the promise of another world to come, a world that will be swindled tragically. There is the constant question of survival in clandestine conditions, conflict with an incomprehensible reality, which forced the exiles to reconsider their identities, and fear of being abducted by the Other. More concretely, there is the loss of the things the exiles believed to be certain before the war, replaced in turn by uncertainty and pain. There is anxiety, and the experience of being uprooted. Mercè Rodoreda forges the path of these Catalan writings in exile when, in March 1940, she writes to Carles Pi i Sunyer from Roissy explaining that the world will never be fixed, that the homeland will never be saved, but that if from her store of human knowledge, if from bitterness and cruelty, the work she desired to write ever arose, she would have nothing more to demand of life.

One of the more extraordinary of the exiled Catalan writers, and at the same time one of the more paradigmatic, is Joaquim Amat-Piniella. In 1933, when he was still young, he had published a book of hyperrealist portraits of friends from the city of Manresa called *Ombres al calidoscopi* (Shadows in the Kaleidoscope). At the Library of Catalonia, one copy of this book, with a dedication to J.V. Foix, is preserved. The unravelling of the war brought Amat-Piniella to the Saint-Cyprien concentration camp, and later, when the 109 Compagnie de Travailleurs Espagnols was intercepted by the Germans at Delle, he was taken to Mauthausen, from which he was released at the end of the war and, like some sort of chrysalis, transformed into the great novelist of *K.L. Reich.*

Images of exile have been conveyed to us through photographs which, thanks to repetition, have become common visual places: the lines of people marching to the French border, images of concentration camps, the beach, lorries loaded with bread, spahis. We should start at another end of this historical recreation. We should read the texts of the exiles, paying special attention to details. We need to seek out the revelatory details and the contrasting points that illuminate them, in order to access a space that has been protected. We need to understand the connections between what is present and what is absent, between history and fiction, always looking for keys that will open the captive world of exile imagery. Travel has permitted an alternative reading of exile literature, a reading from a new and fresh perspective. In ways similar to the way Avel·lí Artís went to Martinique to reconstruct the memory of his texts, I have gone to Prats de Molló, Argeles-sur-Mer, Roissy-en-Brie, Mexico and Santiago, Chile, accompanying the film director Joaquim Jordà and his film crew. As a starting point for this historical reconstruction, I brought alone the memoirs, short stories and novels of the exiles, with the goal of finding that world that had been locked up in its own memory, a world that has disappeared but that through research has come together again and solidified in marvellous ways.

One of the most impressive articles Trabal published in *Germanor* was "Les Claus, variacions sobre un tema inútil" (Keys: Variations on a Useless Theme). The article describes an afternoon at the Plaza Brasil in Santiago, Chile. Alone in the late afternoon, Trabal dreams of being in Barcelona again and hearing the streetcar push uphill towards the Gràcia neighbourhood, he dreams about the Southern Cross constellation no longer being the Southern Cross, until his wife's voice interrupts him, caressingly: "Listen... these keys?" In Santiago, Trabal's niece, Anna Maria Prat, had kept a clipping of an article her uncle had written for *Germanor*, in which he talks about useless objects and false memories: a box of cigars, a dented trophy. He also talks about a bunch of keys: the family's Barcelona keys, the keys to their cottage at Castelldefels, the keys to the Institution of Catalan Letters.

Those same keys Francesc Trabal still carried with him, in his pocket, in April 1941. A similar story would reoccur in Cèsar-August Jordana's *El món de Joan Ferrer* (The World of Joan Ferrer). In one of this book's first chapters, Jordana speaks about an alarm clock that he carried with him when he was a student, doing his military service, and when he was an exile, which now had a loose hand. How could he throw it away? This alarm clock had been with him on Vecinal Street, in the Las Condes neighbourhood, in the house of his son Joan. In a recent article, Mònica Zgustova evokes a poignant image of the Croatian writer Dubravka Ugrešic in the novel *The Museum of Unconditional Surrender*. At the Berlin zoo, close to a refugee shelter, Ugrešic describes a mysterious collage of items: a child's shoe, a pipe, a car key, four other random keys —unconnected objects discovered in the stomach of a dead walrus. For Ugrešic, these objects symbolized the experience of exile.

> It is still necessary to bring the exile experience closer to a sensibility of our times

In Chile, Joaquim Jordà, his film crew, and I travelled as far as the village of Los Andes. We visited Mapocho train station in Santiago, on the tracks of the old route of the Catalan Andean group of exiles. It had been a long time since villages in this part of Chile had a rail line connecting them. In Mexico, we went to the Buenavista Station, where the train from Veracruz once arrived. Now that station is a giant empty space on the point of demolition. We visited the Casa del Agrarista, which welcomed hundreds of Spanish refugees. We walked through the Hipódromo neighbourhood, where apartments and servant quarters are still visible as they appeared in Vicenç Riera Llorca's novels *Amb permís de l'enterramorts* (With the Gravedigger's Permission) and *Joc de xocs* (Game of Conflict). We went to the French Cemetery to find the tomb of dramatist and publisher Avel·lí Artís i Balaguer, the father of Tísner. In the cemetery's great avenue, many of the mausoleums, with their doors half-open, are like apartments, and it is not hard to picture the writer Pere Calders imagining with a laugh the inhabitants of shanty towns making homes for themselves there. In the course that brought us to the French Cemetery, we unravelled the piece of world that Calders had portrayed in "La Verge de les vies" (The Virgin of the Railway): the disused rail crossing of the railway leading to Cuernavaca, the switchman's attendant booth and, on the other side of the road, the chapel and a McDonald's advertisement. We travelled to Chalma Sanctuary, retracing the pilgrimage of Professor Enguiano and his pupils in Lluís Ferran de Pol's *Érem quatre* (We Were Four): the arrival in the sanctuary surrounded by rock-strewn mountains, the descent through alleyways full of street stalls where the multitudes had gathered, the wreaths of flowers that had symbolized sacrifice, the ritual bath, the sudden sickness in the car on the return trip, and the period of recovery amidst visions and deliriums.

It is not a question of revealing spaces that have been preserved but of showing the intangible, for instance, looking again at Domènec Guansé's distorted image in *Laberint* (Labyrinth) of Barcelona, city of the bourgeois novel, of white telephones, a city distorted by insuperable distance. It is a question of looking again at Xavier Benguerel's phantasmagorical Poblenou in the short story "The Disappeared," with the man who leaves in search of his runaway brother. It is about the vicissitudes of the protagonist of

Benguerel's "The Binocular Man," who in the standing room of the theatre invents a life for a woman he sees in the orchestra seating. The Municipal Theatre of Santiago, Chile in many ways resembles the Liceu of Barcelona. Through this very deliberate ambiguity, Benguerel transforms himself into the character of the onlooker, who contemplates living a reality he can not live from afar.

The opposite of these desolate fantasies is the idealised Catalonia of Josep Carner in "Retorn a Catalunya" (Return to Catalonia): the fiery sierra, the golden fields, the world ordered harmoniously in the environs of the farmhouse. This world is the beaches of the Cap de Creus, which in the poetry of Ramon Xirau becomes a place of rediscovery and memory thanks to a language Xirau recuperated from childhood. This idealised world is the dream story of *El món de Joan Ferrer* (The World of Joan Ferrer) by C. A. Jordana, a counterbalance to the disenchantment, solitude, and sickness of the other exiles (an appropriate metaphor for this writing would be the draining of bile). This world is the passage of characters in Francesc Trabal's *Temperatura* (Temperature) towards a fabulous world, through lakes and volcanoes placed scenographically to reflect an impossible rebirth. Disturbingly alien is Mercè Rodoreda's story *La plaça del Diamant* (The Time of the Doves), which situates itself in a city disfigured by the blue light of anti-aircraft, or Rodereda's *Incerta glòria* (Uncertain Glory), in which the author revisits 14th April when Trini Milmany and Soleràs climb the roof of the University of Barcelona with a Republican flag made of remnants and handmade paper stars, in a naïve dream that was to be destroyed on the Aragon front. This phantasmagorical world, this lost world, is one of the most powerful creations of Catalan literature in the twentieth century.

The exile trail has nearly disappeared, but the exile experience is still, in many ways, a world in need of exploration. Lately, oral histories have been collected and published, studies and monographs on important exiled authors have been offered up for study, and synthesising works that situate the Catalan literary exile in the societies and cultures of their countries of exile have begun to appear. Each year there appear wonderful writings, collections of letters, memoirs, diaries written at the moment of Barcelona's fall to Franco's troops, stories of crossing the French border, descriptions of the sojourn in the Americas. This writing generates an alluring counterbalance to the novels and biographies that describe those same events, but from many years'distance.
The writing makes possible multiple readings of the same historical events, it complements and enriches second-person accounts, and it opens new perspectives to interpretation from a human, cultural, political and historical point of view. But it is still necessary to tackle and consider the exile experience as a collective Catalan experience, through a discourse that situates and brings the experience closer to a sensibility of our times, far from the stereotypes of anti-Francoist resistance and the political transition, as has occurred in other countries with other historical pasts and other exiles. It is still necessary, that is, to come to terms with what exile has represented for us Catalan speakers because, although we believe we have healed, we have never known much about the exile experience II

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focus

“Facing a troubled past: history and memory”

Albert Balcells

Memory, history and politics

By memory I mean not the unfeasible sum total of individual memories, but the referred imagery of the collective past that gives shared identity. By history I mean the literature generated by professional and amateur historians in both monographs and works of synthesis.

In the first place it is necessary to point out that both memory and history are selective. The past is irrevocably dead and when we remember it with a book or a monument, both the historian researching in the archives and the authority or the group that decides to erect a statue choose from a whole host of events those they consider important for the present.

While the historical memory wishes to commemorate in order to thus draw a lesson with regard to present behaviour, history seeks scientific credibility in a disinterested knowledge, which subjects every phenomenon and every movement from the past to contextualisation, comparison and relativisation. History does not seek applied knowledge. When it does so, it becomes political propaganda. However, the historian does not write history for history's sake but from the present and for the present. All history, it has rightly been said, even the most ancient and furthest back in time, is contemporary history. It speaks always of human problems that, despite the great differences in thinking and culture, speak to us as human beings. The results of written history are open from the point of view of values, which does not mean that the historian's task is amoral, it means that he is not trying to edify, and of course crude history is not usually so at all, it rather tends to scandalize those seeking examples in the past. History also fights against oblivion, as memory wishes to. It also wishes to recover consciously the past that conditions us, but not from the point of view of political, religious or ideological discourse.

Between history and memory there is as much complementarity as opposition, as there is between the socio-political sciences and political action. There is no scientific historical

memory just as there can be no politics that is scientific. We should begin to tremble when a political line of action is presented to us as scientific as this means that it is intended to be unquestionable and that the desire is to impose it on us without recognising the risk and the more or less free —and, therefore, arguable— option that all politics entails. However, in the same way that sociologists cannot pretend to take the place of politicians, historians cannot pretend to substitute the historical memory with written history, as if they did not also need, as citizens, to be part of a historical memory that nourishes identity. We cannot deny the right of a popular historical memory to exist in the name of science, because at the same time the awareness of the high degree of conditioning of the collective present by the past would be destroyed although the past never repeats itself, and this is more important than it may seem. There are no social relationships without rituals and without ceremonies, and rites are associated with myths. Contempt for the historical memory due to the tendency to create myths often contained in it is an intellectualist distortion. Just as the artist is wrong to consider that art and craftsmanship are absolutely opposed and not to admit the mutual ties within their obvious difference, the historian who dismisses the historical memory as a political fraud is doing, either involuntarily or voluntarily, the best service to the politics of collective amnesia and uprooting in order to facilitate the manipulation of the masses by the powers that be. Thus the academic historians who devote themselves to mytho-phobia are usually the ones most given to facilitating the manipulation of the past by the established powers, above all by the power that is above the subordinate ones, easier to criticise without risk.

History and memory have to recognise mutually their respective legitimacy and independence, without the subordination of one to the other or hierarchical superiorities. Obviously, historians have to combat the falsification of events at any level and in any case. Historical reality and truth cannot be sacrificed even in the name of the noblest causes, even those with which historians identify themselves. Contributing to a reasonable and unbiased historical memory is a responsibility that the historian cannot avoid. It should be added that the responsibility for preventing the fuelling of prejudice, resentment and hatred is the duty of any responsible citizen and not only of the historian. This does not mean trying to deny conflict in the past to guarantee peace in the present on the basis of ignoring historical struggles and confrontations. Neither memory nor history should do that. Forgiving and forgetting are not the same thing, although colloquial language regards the two verbs as having the same meaning.

We cannot hope to replace feelings, identifications and emotions with reason or science. And the historical memory is emotive, which does not mean that it is spontaneous or that it emanates from a mysterious popular wisdom. There is a politics of the memory and a struggle between groups to decide what has to be commemorated and what not, which events and figures deserve a monument or a television documentary and which do not, and what hierarchy of importance has to be given to all the events and figures that make up the historical memory, which is plural and moves within a regime of debating majorities and minorities and with changes in the correlation of forces, at least when there is no dictatorship able to impose its censored version of the memory by force, with the aim of having the last and definitive word.

Pluralism does not entail each party or trade union being able to set up its stall of retrospective propaganda in a public museum, devoted to the historical memory.

Memory should not exclude contradictions and has to assume the dialectic between the different forces down through the ages. That the historical memory is not erudite does not mean that it has to rule out the critical dimension. It is regrettable that historical self-criticism is very often conspicuous by its absence in the retrospective exhibitions and pamphlets of parties, unions and religious denominations.

Only the historical memory agreed by consensus is destined to endure in the face of the fragmentary, in which each group mounts its own exhibition, holds its own commemoration, has its own museum, preserves its own sanctuary. Every age has shared values within which the historical memory has to move. Yet political power, local, regional or national, is never absent from it even when the monuments are erected by popular subscription, which has never been enough to achieve the proposed objective.

Nevertheless, monuments, which reflect the values of their times, may in another age be reduced to simple historical patrimony, bereft of the symbolism that was once attributed to them, and they are lucky if they are not simply removed as a leftover from the political propaganda of a period, unwanted by the great majority of citizens in a democratic society.

Just as a building, a place or a sanctuary can become a place of memory through the deliberate wishes of an influential circle, they can later be "stripped of memory". One example may be Ripoll Abbey. Reconstructed by Catholic Catalanism —*vigatanisme*— as the "cradle of Catalonia" in 1893, on the initiative of Josep Morgades, the Bishop of Vic, today it is a place of memory without memory.

In the politics of memory historians can act as historical advisors, but not as guarantors of the scientific nature of the options chosen by the representative political institutions. If they do so, they immediately become functionaries of a particular politics of memory, which tends to de-contextualize the events.

A field, on the other hand, in which historians can carry out their research work independently is the history of the politics of memory down though the years and in different countries, beginning with their own. There is a very broad and exciting field for research if we study how a place becomes a place of memory, how and why an old monument is restored or rebuilt, how a place of memory takes on different significances or loses its initial one. It may be worthwhile to research the process, often full of arguments and disagreements, whereby a song becomes a country's national anthem or the date of the national holiday is decided or a commemorative ritual is created and gradually changes. In the case of a nation without its own state, like for example Catalonia, initiatives have often sprung from below and have taken time to be adopted officially. The arguments prior to the erection of a monument and the reasons why sometimes it never gets set up are revealing, or why its symbolism and its site are changed, or how the monument and the name of the square it is eventually erected in or moved to do not match. It may also be productive to study the subjects of historical painting, so rich in the nineteenth century, with its almost operatic rhetoric, without forgetting that this kind of language also overlaps into the twentieth century, especially in times of change, for example, that which was intended to illustrate the socialist realism of Soviet propaganda in the former USSR.

This very broad field has already begun to be explored, as has the study and interpretation of legends. From contempt for legend, considered the antithesis of history,

there was a swing to an appreciation of legend, also considered a subject for historical study. In similar fashion, the history of the historical memory has to be incorporated and is beginning to be incorporated into the subject matter of historical studies.

Perhaps this coincides with the crisis in the politics of memory, its place taken by the politics of oblivion, under the pretext of combating historicism in order to lead to a post-modern sense of the present. When the places of memory begin to be studied, not to make an exegesis and a justification of them, i.e. to take part in the rite, but to study them as facts of history, it is because they have almost certainly lost much of their symbolic force and their obviousness, as they are losing their potential to mobilize and evoke, because with their official status they have become routine and have lost their emotiveness.

> History and memory have to recognize mutually their respective legitimacy and independence, without hierarchical superiorities

The nineteenth-century monument told a story. Alongside the symbols and allegories of neoclassical roots, there were the allusive scenes, rather theatrical and at times dressed in rather anachronistic clothes, often classicist, but also, at times, thoroughly of the moment as is the case also with nineteenth-century historicist painting. The twentieth-century monument is much more difficult to decipher, with a female figure representing the fatherland or humankind or freedom, and just a medallion in relief or a bust with the portrait, more or less faithful, of the figure remembered. But the predominance of abstraction in the commemorative monument of the most recent period demands a tombstone or an inscription in bronze to explain in greater or lesser detail what is being commemorated.

In any case a minimum knowledge of the facts and their significance has always been necessary. The distracted passer-by does not understand what the monument represents, however figurative it may be. Commemorative ceremonies are needed to make the monument talk. Thus, explanation has always been necessary, in the past and now, so historical knowledge is essential, however basic it may be. The monument is no substitute for the teaching of history and this is found in the printed word, in schoolbooks and in newspapers and books for adults. Teaching today has the aid of television, although it is not used very frequently in the case of the history of Catalonia, in contrast to the television channels of other countries with their own history.

At times, in today's books and magazines and even on the posters announcing history conferences, there is no option but to resort to the old historical painting, so discredited in the eyes of historians, to breathe life into the dead pages of the past, repeating what, as the only recourse, the schoolbooks on Spanish history of the forties and fifties did, when they used copies drawn in pen and ink, and not colour photography, of oil paintings, rather more suggestive, as they now appear in better published history books and magazines.

Exhibitions, museums and, above all, television documentaries fuel the historical memory in a far better way than monuments and the names of streets and squares do today.

Needless to say, the historical memory has also been fuelled by historical novels and films on a historical theme, which differ from history documentaries by presenting exclusively fictional scenes with actors or introducing more or less plausible and representative fictional characters alongside the historical ones.

However, the names of urban places, even though their significance may be unknown, are efficient in that they are a constant presence, they penetrate the repertory of public names that the people know and herein lies their advantage over a more direct and explicit but incidental, minority message such as the visit to an exhibition or a newspaper article. The names of public places prepare for and facilitate receptiveness towards more explicit messages when the citizens discover that such a well-known street name corresponds to a figure or a historical event hitherto unknown to them, when the street or square has

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previously had no added value for them. Well-preserved evocative ruins, suitably restored, are also a sign of identity that is incorporated into the urban landscape with a function similarly commemorative and of the historical memory behind their purely archaeological appearance. When an outstanding old building is the headquarters of a representative institution it becomes a place of memory or an identifying monument.

Maximum commemorative efficiency is achieved when the name of the place, for example a square or gardens, and the figure or event remembered on the monument set there coincide. When for whatever reason this is not the case (because it has been moved or for another reason), the most appropriate thing would have been to change the name of the place and make it match the new or reinstalled monument there. The impersonal monotony of the urban landscape is brightened up by the monuments that become

landmarks, references or points to guide ourselves by. It is therefore a mistake if the name of a crossroads does not coincide with that of the figure or the event on the monument erected in the same place. When this occurs it means that the country's history has been very unstable or that the city has had to change a great deal. Several examples of this anomaly can be found in Barcelona.

The historical memory has been associated with the idea of culture as something sacred, a characteristic accentuated in countries where the distinguishing collective identity is denied in an authoritarian way or, at least, is fragile or threatened. The change from a sacred idea of culture to a managerial one, for example of Catalan culture after 1980, besides being the sign of an ongoing process of normalisation, may entail a lack of models and ideas on the subject of cultural and memorial policy. Efficiency should not result in banality. With an insufficient degree of political autonomy, acting with a lack of concern that would not be advisable even with proper self-government can only be interpreted as a renunciation. The idea of monuments in terms of tourism and recreation, as theme

parks, is only valid and legitimate if at the same time one does not try to do away with the cultural nature of commemorative monuments. This is an age of disbelief with regard to both traditional religion and the political doctrines that were hoping to replace it as doctrines of earthly salvation. And, notwithstanding this, a building's original usefulness, even though it may have gone way beyond the limits of that purpose, continues to fuel underlying hostilities as if those beliefs could reappear in their old form or benefit from a public re-emergence thanks to the new scenario offered them. For example, Gaudí's Sagrada Família temple in Barcelona continues to be the subject of underlying love and hatred whose origins are evident.

> The memory has to be constructed on a pluralist basis, but also of shared constructive values

I have tried to outline the relationships between memory and history without hiding the fact that both constitute fields of conflict and argument and at the same time areas of consensus in search of the support of majority public opinion. The relationships between the two can only bear fruit if they acknowledge their respective autonomy, if they are aware that they are acting in different areas. Both refer to the past but with different criteria and aims.

The problems generated by the political manipulation of history are not going to disappear. The ancient Romans considered that history was part of rhetoric. Machiavelli said that history is the maidservant of politics. Historical research today needs subsidies and these are easier to get if they are in line with official commemorations. History will continue to fight for its political independence, the basis of its scientific credibility. Human society is still going to need, in order to lay the foundations of its collective identity (national, local and group), a historical memory and this will have to be nourished in the most diverse ways: with monuments, street names, annual commemorations, history documentaries, films, general or monographic museums, and radio or television programmes on the subject of history.

The memory has to be constructed on basis of the acknowledgement of pluralism and diversity, but also of shared constructive values, which neither glorify nor excuse imposition, oppression or discrimination. Therefore, while past injustices that may be repeated or perpetuated should often be remembered or denounced, it is necessary to create a collective imagery essential for avoiding anomie and the depersonalisation of today's world. Historical science can and must help memory, but never take its place. Moreover, historical science should not be subordinated to memory. The fact that they share common ground and that the moral reasons may be similar must not lead them to be confused and to confuse us II

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Llibert Tarragó

History and memory

an interview with Borja de Riquer

Paul Ricoeur says of memory that it is defined "by the presence in the spirit of something from the past and by the search for such a presence". We have been struck by the intensity of that presence and that search since the year 2000. What do you think of this very strong surge of memory?

I think that we have to make a clear distinction between memory and history. Spanish historians have been studying the many facets of the Spanish Civil War and the Francoist repression that followed for many years. For example, everything that has to do with the courts martial, the people who were shot, the prisoners, the different forms of prohibition and repression, anti-Francoism... Unfortunately, the only people who know about these works are the experts who go to colloquies and congresses. This is a sensitive point I am touching on, and I would emphasise that public opinion, and especially the media, have so far taken little notice of all these historical studies.

At present we are witnessing a positive phenomenon. The new generation of young people in their twenties, mainly young historians, reckon that no-one has sufficiently pointed out the importance of these investigations, their significance, to society. Moreover, this feeling is largely shared by young people interested in history and politics. They think that many things from the past have been hidden from them, mainly about the Civil War and Francoism. It is a clear consequence of what I call "excessive silences". Likewise there is a kind of divorce between what young historians in particular reckon should be done now and what the previous generation of historians did. An elementary problem arises: how to guarantee that the many pieces of work that have been done will be handed on?

It is not true that there has been a sort of oblivion, at least on the part of historians. If some people may have forgotten, it is the politicians, which places the problem on a different level.

The government waited until 2006, in the dead of night, to remove the equestrian statue of Franco in Madrid. The one in the enclave of Melilla, which was moved for works, has been put back. These two events raise the question of the state's memory policy.

It is true that there has not been an official democratic memory policy. In Spain over the last thirty years there have been many historical commemorations: in 1992 the discovery of the Americas; in 1998 the disastrous end of the colonial empire; in 2000 the birth of Charles V, which takes us back to 1500, but nothing closer.

For the historian it is interesting to analyse how the different anniversaries of the Civil War in 1936 and the installation of the Franco regime in 1939 have been commemorated. In 1976, when the Transition was in full swing, almost nobody talked about the Civil War. In 1979, when democracy was taking its first steps, no-one recalled the beginning of the Franco regime. The first initiative to mark those two events was in 1986, the second in 1989. They came from the university world and remained confined to it.

In favour of those two anniversaries, under a Socialist government, there were signs of a will to establish a certain comparison between the outbreak of the Civil War and the process of the Transition. At the same time, the work done by certain historians consisted in showing how the Republic in 1931 had done things badly and how the Transition was doing them well. In short, the point for them was to present the Republic as a collective failure and the Transition as a collective success. It was a simplistic vision which clearly had a political intention.

Ten years later, in 1996 and 1999, under the rightwing Partido Popular government, the comparison was made again, but in more radical terms. 'Revisionist' historians emerged, taking up the theses of the Francoist historians who attribute to the leftwing and nationalist groups of the 1930s the role of instigators of the Civil War.

In 2006 under the Socialist government the debate focused on the subject of the Republic. People wondered how to retrieve its values, to what extent they should be promoted, how to take an experience from the 1930s and integrate it into the present. Those issues have sharply divided opinion. The conservative sectors regard the Republic as a total failure and invite everyone to forget it, while the more progressive sectors consider that the present democratic system in Spain is based on values which are very close to the Republican experience.

Apart from that, it is obvious that the symbolic presence of Francoism is still very strong. We have studies done by historians about that persistence. It is quite surprising. Statues, squares, streets still bear names inherited directly from the Franco regime, and that presence is visible in small villages and regional capitals, where you can still read the names of Franco, José Antonio Primo de Rivera and General Mola. That is why the debate between Francoist symbolism and Republican democratic memory has also become a political debate.

Your historian colleague Manel Risques told me recently: "The democratic Transition and democracy have administered oblivion. If the Republic of 1931 and the anti-Franco struggle are not integrated into the recovery of the historic memory, it cannot stick".

That thought very much follows on from what I have just said. Those who do not want us to talk about those two events are following the same line of thought as the Francoists in 1939: to forget the experience of a democratic regime, admittedly marked by a host of contradictions and problems, but which was a response to the will of the people.

The people on the right, that is, those who have neither a democratic past nor a democratic tradition, are the ones most interested in seeing that neither the Republican memory nor the memory of the anti-Franco struggle are recovered. Indeed, to do so would be to expose the fact that historically the Spanish right wing has never been democratic. What is more, the right wing today is formed by the heirs of political and sociological Francoism. Being reminded of that does not suit them at all.

That does not mean that we need to make an apology for the Republic, but it would be politically unfair and historically false to claim that the whole democratic struggle against the Franco regime, which sprang to a large extent from the Republican tradition of the 1930s, has nothing to do with the democracy we have today.

Another colleague of yours says: "The victory of Francoism is silence".

In 1939 the Francoists set out to do away with all the historical and social traditions which had made the Republican regime possible. They presented them as defeated and dangerous ideologies. In fact, liberal democratic thought, working class thought,

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nationalist thought, free thinking, all that was ousted and replaced by an ideological arsenal based on traditionalism, ultracatholicism, anti-liberalism and conservatism operating as a hierarchy. Suddenly democracy had to redouble its efforts to bring to light the values inherited from different kinds of democracy.

Let me tell you about some ideas put forward by the writer Martí Rosselló: "Amnesia was agreed at the moment of the democratic transition. Thinking to avoid greater evils, we mortgaged our future. After Franco died we thought about that future! But after the attempted military coup on 23rd February 1981 we agreed to renounce it. For young people the Civil War is prehistory and Franco is the Catholic Monarchs". How is that period of history taught?

When you read school text books you notice that the Civil War and the Franco regime are mentioned clearly and relatively correctly. The problem does not arise from the school text books or what history teachers say, because they talk about it a good deal and very well. In secondary schools we can see that the free projects chosen by the pupils mostly concern the Civil War and the Franco regime, Republican exile, the deportation of Republicans to the Nazi camps. Inside the school, then, there is a clear interest in these issues and it is satisfied. The problem is to be found outside the school. Newspapers, magazines and television need to recall these events in a relevant way. They do so, but quite differently according to the part of the country. Catalan television has been a pioneer in dealing with these issues. It has done so with programmes of fairly good quality based on documentaries, eyewitness accounts, historical reconstruction debates. On the other hand, Spanish television has given them a weak, sometimes frivolous treatment, regarding History as a simple series of events, as if they were talking about some faraway country, as if they were issues that had not affected this country. That changed somewhat in 2006, but only a little.

How do you see the question of impunity in a society where one of the most widespread expressions in the political vocabulary is "no winners or losers"?

That phrase is not appropriate. Francoism meant that there were losers for forty years. During the political process of the Transition, the amnesty law placed the victims on the same level as the executioners. The anti-Francoists were given an amnesty, but so were the military, the police and the civil servants of the regime who had tortured, killed or sent them to prison. Historically and ethically that was unfair. Another matter is that politically we may see that as convenient or necessary. All that explains this feeling of the moral and political impunity of the Francoists and their regime.

Francoism, fascism, what link can you make between those terms?

We can say that Francoism is Spanish fascism with particular characteristics, different from other forms of fascism. Let us consider first that the Civil War brought about a total break in Spanish society, which made it difficult for the discourse of national unity which fascism has always preached to sink in. Moreover, the Falange was a very small party which did not take power as in Germany and Italy. Power was built up by the military, with Franco at the head, and he used the small fascist party according to his

own interests. Likewise, the state and the government subordinated the party. That is the opposite of what happened in Germany and Italy. Franco's power was infinitely greater than Mussolini's. Institutionally, Franco could not be dismissed by the party, whereas Mussolini could, and indeed was. So Franco's personal and military power was always far superior to the power of the Falange. The dictatorial regime that was prepared during the Civil War and constructed over its forty years of existence had Franco as its sole, central figure. Until 1945 he defined himself as a fascist. Then, when the situation in Europe changed, he played down the fascist ideological aspects while changing nothing of the content. Francoism used the characteristic elements of fascism according to the moment. That explains why it lasted so long.

Marc Bloch has written: "Behind the tangible features of the landscape, the tools or the machines, behind the writings that appear the iciest and the institutions that appear the most completely detached from the people who established them, it is men that history tries to grasp. Anyone who does not manage to do so will only ever be, at best, a tactician of learning. A good historian is like the ogre of legend. When he scents human flesh, he knows his game is there". Do you have an example of that "scent of human flesh"?

I reckon that personal, individual experiences are extremely useful when we are doing history with pupils and the general public. They serve to bring historical problems to life and allow us to explain specifically what the Franco regime was, for example.

For me, an example of the "human flesh" Marc Bloch talks about is Eulàlia Berenguer, whose case we recalled on Catalan television as part of the series "Deadly Sins", recollecting everyday life under Franco. Eulàlia was fifteen when the Civil War broke out in 1936. She joined the Young Communists, the JSU, carried out missions to assist the republican soldiers; in 1939 she went into exile with her father, who was a peasant and not very politicised, with her brothers and sisters, she discovered the French concentration camps. Then she was expelled by the French authorities, sent back by train from Hendaye to Barcelona. The journey took four days with nothing to eat, nothing to drink, treated like an animal just like the Jews setting off for the camps, she was sent to jail and, although no specific crime could be proved against her, she stayed locked up until 1943.

> The debate between Francoist symbolism and Republican democratic memory has become a political debate

For those three years, the mayor of her village, Sant Feliu de Codines near Barcelona, did everything possible to have her sentenced and kept in jail. Nevertheless she was released, but she was forced to return to Sant Feliu. There she was sent to Coventry by the Falangists and the town hall, people were forbidden to speak to her, they made her life impossible until the corporal of the Guardia Civil intervened and forced the fascists to leave her alone. That woman, who lived in isolation for a very long time, ended up marrying the leader of the libertarian youth movement who was being given the same treatment. For a communist and a libertarian to come together in that way to fight the fascists seems to me to cock a lovely snook at agreed History! Eulàlia resumed her political

> The amnesty law of 1997 placed the victims on the same level as the executioners, historically and ethically that was unfair

activity within the PSUC, the Catalan communist party, she was even arrested in 1974 and sent back to jail. In the first democratic elections she was elected first deputy mayor and then became mayor of her village at the head of a list composed mostly of women, which is an exceptional event. The documents dealing with this affair exist, notably the mayor's injunctions at the behest of the authorities of the time, but the descendants of the people involved in that harassment do all they can to prevent anything getting out.

That is a beautiful lesson. A humble woman, an outcast, a symbol of the "Red Evil", with democracy she became a woman chosen by her fellow citizens to represent them.

The return to Catalonia of the public and private Catalan archives collected in Salamanca after Franco's troops had regarded them as spoils of war took place in 2006. It was an event, but it fired a debate which made us realise that memory was still raw and deeply political. Do you consider that event as essentially symbolic?

The return of the archives goes beyond symbolism. It is an act of democratic and historical justice. The looting in 1939 was done for political reasons. It is natural for the archives to return to their owners: government, parties, trade unions, associations, private individuals.

They were spoils of war. A principle of UNESCO establishes the return of stolen archives. The committee of experts who declared in favour of the return of the "Salamanca papers" was also chaired by Federico Mayor Zaragoza, former director general of UNESCO. The Zapatero government understood that it was a political matter: an affair with a political origin needs a political solution.

Moreover, the archivistic argument used against the return, to wit the breaking up of the unity of the Spanish Civil War archives, does not hold water. The principle of the thematic archive does not exist anywhere. In France there are no First World War archives, for example. It should also be known that these Catalan archives were kept in total disorder in a depot, mixed up with archives from the 19th century. The Partido Popular made it an issue of local pride in Salamanca and something for the right to get their teeth into.

To compare, imagine that the Germans had seized official archives and private documents when they arrived in Marseille in 1942 and transferred them to Besançon! Well, the people of Marseille would have claimed their dues. This affair is quite simple, even if is has been difficult for the Catalans to achieve their ends.

Let us change period. The Middle Ages, in short those were the "golden days" of Catalonia. But how has that celebration managed to cross time and make itself felt so strongly in these modern times?

In the Middle Ages there were Catalan institutions, a mediaeval parliamentary system similar to those of England and the Netherlands. They lasted until 1714. Then they

disappeared and a centralised Spanish system was imposed. The Bourbon dynasty installed a system dominated by the military: the Captain General, always Spanish, became the leading authority in Catalonia. And that was the end of the Catalan nation. That defeat has stayed in the collective memory in the same way as the defeat in 1870 in France. That event feeds the imagination for ever because a trauma of that magnitude is unforgettable. That is normal.

Regarding 11th September 1714, the date of the "great defeat" of Catalonia, and paradoxically the day of the national holiday, a large part of Barcelona was razed to the ground. The remains have reappeared in the course of public works and the Catalans have decided to make a place of memory in the heart of their capital...

From now on the ruins of the Born district will be an important place of political memory, but also of the social memory of the 18th century. They will enable us to see how a city of that time was constituted. We know the names of the streets, the squares, the inhabitants, the trades house by house thanks to the archives. And so we can reconstruct a life space dating from the 18th century.

On that 11th September, a quarter of the city was destroyed by Philip V's troops. Twenty-five thousand people were made homeless, they had to leave the city. There were also thousands of deaths. Those remarkable ruins will help to raise awareness of the violence of the punishment and the political dimension of our 11th September.

If we consider the memories we have talked about, they are essentially "painful memories".

Not all the memories we have are painful. The memory of 1931, the time of the Republic, is the memory of a great popular festival, the result of the will of the majority. At this time we are analysing, comparing the different statutes of autonomy of Catalonia: 1932, 1979 and 2006. It is very interesting from a historical point of view because it allows us to study the behaviour of the leaders and the people, in different contexts, faced with a single question: how does Catalonia want to organise itself and what kind of relations does it want to have with Spain? II

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Andreu Mayayo

Restoring collective memory or making moral reparations to the victims?

Spain's transition to democracy in the mid 70s put the country's Civil War (1936-39) in the limelight. The debate permeated both public and private spheres. This was because the Franco dictatorship had imposed its own version of events and forced the vanquished to remain silent.

After Franco's death there was a great deal of public interest in discovering what had really happened —a thirst for knowledge that went beyond purely political and ideological reasons. Many politically committed students at the time —of whom I was one— chose history for its role in establishing the truth of events. One can say that History was perceived as the handmaiden of democracy. Indeed, some saw the discipline as a political weapon. The eagerness to "restore collective memory" went beyond academic circles. Clio, the muse of history, had never had so many ardent admirers nor had historians enjoyed such social status. Indeed, the scholars seemed like latter-day heroes as they wrested control of archives from the regime's cronies in order to give the vanquished a new vision of the recent past. A whole host of capstone projects and theses were begun in those years on the history of the Republic and the Spanish Civil War. Josep M. Solé Sabaté and Joan Villarroya pioneered research into Fascist repression.

In 1976, two publishing houses, *La Gaia Ciencia* and *Edicions 62*, published an ambitious project directed by Anna Sallés and also animated by Rosa Regàs. The project was titled *Recuperem la nostra història* [Recovering Our History] and consisted of a large format

work in twelve issues that covered the period from the proclamation of the Republic, inspired by the president of the Generalitat in exile Josep Tarradellas, up to the military occupation. This one, written by Josep Benet, a leading figure in the struggle against the Franco dictatorship. The sponsors clearly stated the purpose of the collection in the following terms: "It is not nostalgia that drives us to recover our history but rather the firm conviction that it is necessary if we are to understand the present. Recovering our history is a way of shaping the present and thus our future [...] It involves recovering people's memory and going back to the sources. As Raimon says: *He who forgets his origins loses his identity*".

The final quotation was from a song by Raimon, whose iconic lyrics —*Jo vinc d'un silenci* [The Silence From Whence I Come]— are taken from a poem by Salvador Espriu. The same quotation was used by the magazine *Jovent*, the mouthpiece of *Joventut Comunista de Catalunya*, the youth wing of the PSUC [*Partit Socialista Unificat de Catalunya* - Unified Socialist Party of Catalonia] in an issue published in 1977 that ran to some 10,000 copies. The publication helped fill a glaring gap in the country's history. Long before Benito Bermejo in his book, and Llorenç Soler in a documentary put Francesc Boix in the spotlight, Emili Peydró (first Director of *Juliol*, a youth magazine published by the JSUC movement in 1936) told readers of *Jovent* just who the Catalan photographer accusing the Nazis at the Nuremberg Trial was.

Arreu magazine came out in October 1976 under the aegis of the PSUC, a party that was still illegal at the time. The magazine had a regular section titled *Memòria Popular* [The People's Memory]. Jesús Maria Rodés, who was in charge of the section, adopted the name to stress that it served the people's interests and defended Catalan and working-class identity. The first issue consisted of 80,000 free copies. In it, Josep Benet wrote a long article on the arrest, trial, and execution of President Lluís Companys, a subject on which Benet is now an authority.

It is worth mentioning some articles from the Franco era. The historians Enric Ucelay Da Cal and Borja de Riquer referred to the Catalans that helped Franco; Leandre Colomer to the trial of Joan Comorera; and Fèlix Fanés to the 1951 tram strike. Other themes were: the mass round-up of PSUC members in 1946, which ended in the execution by firing squad of four "ringleaders" in 1949; the Free University Assembly of 1957; the sit-in at the Capuchin Friary in Barcelona in 1966; the execution of Salvador Puig Antich. The Catalan language arm of RTVE [Spanish State Broadcasting Corporation] also broadcast a programme titled *Memòria Popular*, presented by Salvador Aslius and with the historian Joan B. Culla acting in an advisory capacity.

Prof. Santos Juliá reminded us that these were the golden years of history magazines with new publications springing up like mushrooms (*Historia 16, Tiempo de Historia*), and with thousands of copies sold. *L'Avenç* was founded in Catalonia —the flagship of what some have termed "popular front history". Labels aside, *L'Avenç* met social demand with a product that was written with intellectual rigour but that adopted a journalistic style. Among the first issues of the magazine, directed by Ferran Mascarell among others, there is an article by Josep M. Solé Sabaté on the repression of the *maquis*.

Other publishers —both old and new— helped slake the public's thirst for information on the country's recent history. Jaume Sobrequés (holder of the Chair of Catalan History,

erstwhile senator of the *Entesa dels Catalans* coalition, and Director of the Catalan History Museum) set up the Undàrius publishing house. The first book, *L'Onze de Setembre a Catalunya* [11th September in Catalonia[1]] coincided with the massive demonstration in Sant Boí on 11th September 1976. The book sold a record 20,000 copies in the first few weeks. The book *Els catalans als camps nazis* [Catalans in The Nazi Concentration Camps] was published on Saint George's Day 1977[2]. Written by the journalist Montserrat Roig, it spoke frankly of life and death in the Third Reich's concentration camps. Josep Benet was instrumental in the book's publication. The work was inspired by Joaquim Amat-Piniella's novel *K.L. Reich*[3] (1963), which spoke of the Catalans, Spanish Republicans and other groups who shared the fate of Jews in Nazi Germany's concentration camps.

Monsterrat Roig's book was a best-seller and had an enormous social impact. The presentation of the book was often preceded by documentaries on the concentration camps, narrated by Joan Pagès and other survivors of Mauthausen. Republican combatants and freedom fighters began to speak out in the various political associations that sprang up at the time. Suddenly, trade unions and other groups were filled with the elderly who now had the opportunity to relate their political activities in the 1930s after decades of silence. The 4th PSUC Congress, held in October 1977, agreed to set up a Historical Archive covering all kinds of documents relating to the party and its social movements. The PSUC also paid homage to its members who lost their lives in the fight for freedom. The event was held in Barcelona's Congress Hall on 24th May 1980. The conference speeches were later published as the book *U no és ningú* [You Are Nobody], with a poem by Joan Brossa and a cover illustration by Antoni Tàpies. The PSUC (and now ICV) gathered each year to lay wreaths at the *Fossar de la Pedrera* —the quarry where the last PSUC members were shot by the regime in February 1949.

AMNESTY DOES NOT MEAN AMNESIA

The end of hostilities in 1939 marked the beginning of a long period of brutal repression which only deepened the division between the victors and the vanquished. This split lasted right the way through the dictatorship and was a fundamental trait of the Franco regime. The quest for amnesty thus became a key demand in anti-Francoist political culture, spurring solidarity and social mobilisation. Hence the importance of the manifesto drawn up in 1956, which was embraced by the offspring of those on both sides in the Spanish Civil War. The policy of National Reconciliation was adopted by the Spanish Communist Party. As Gregorio López Raimundo stated in his homage to fallen PSUC members: "The policy of National Reconciliation was adopted in 1956, when the Catholic Church was still sitting on the fence. The policy was decisive in opening up new avenues in the struggle against the regime and reorganising the Party [...] Here, I would like to emphasise that this policy means that our homage to comrades fallen in the

[1] Translator's note: 11th September commemorates the fall of Barcelona in 1714 during the War of Spanish Succession. The event marked the end of Catalonia's independence.
[2] Translator's note: Saint George is the Patron Saint of Catalonia. The day is celebrated by the giving of books and roses.
[3] Translator's note: The title derives from the labelling of objects in Nazi concentration camps. "K.L." stands for *Konzentrationslager*.

fight against the dictatorship should in no way be construed as blood-lust or a desire to wreak vengeance".

The Amnesty Act passed by the Spanish Congress on 14th October 1977 was a watershed. It gave immunity to those who had committed human rights violations during almost four decades of dictatorship. It was interpreted as explicit consent to sweep the past under the carpet. However, the amnesty was the product of the results of the elections of 15th June 1977 —the first following Franco's death— and was proposed by democrats and the left. The 1939 Amnesty Decree solely benefited the regime's supporters and covered pardons, rehabilitation, and other measures. From the legal point of view, the 1977 Amnesty Act covers people whether or not they had been accused, convicted, or punished. Moreover —and this is important— it considered that the deeds committed were not punishable. Put another way, there was no pardon because no crime had been committed. Thus, beneficiaries of the amnesty could demand rehabilitation and even damages. This allowed many teachers to be rehabilitated and, in some cases, readmitted to the profession.

However, the Amnesty Act had two glaring exceptions: military personnel who were members of the Democratic Military Union and those accused of assisting in an abortion. In 1977, both the Army and the Church were powers to be reckoned with and were able to impose their own views on the rest of society.

The amnesty ended the 40-year division between victors and vanquished. Unlike other countries that waged dirty wars on dissenters, in Spain the repression was carried out in accordance with the Law. While in Argentina it was the regime's death squads who gave away the children of those they had slain, in Spain the process of "adoption" and ideological indoctrination of infants was regulated by legislation. The 1977 amnesty was fundamentally democratic in nature, providing a framework for social harmony. By contrast, the 1939 legislation benefited one segment of society.

Today, there are those who criticise the 1977 Amnesty Act and who argue Spain needs a kind of Nuremberg Trial to set things to rights. However, it is all too easy to notice the timidity of the de-nazification programme that followed the trial. For example, in Italy the very same judge who implemented the racial laws in 1938 had reached the summit of the Italian judicature in the early 1950s. One can therefore ask what a realistic alternative to the 1977 legislation would have been. In any case, no political party at the time considered drawing up legislation to bring human rights abusers to justice or, for that matter, drawing up a General Indictment with retroactive effect to 1936. Indeed, few party manifestos in 1977 even made reference to the need to purge the police and armed forces of Fascists.

Another interpretation of the transition is that the politicians at the time had no idea of what they were voting for or were unaware of the consequences of letting the regime's torturers off the hook. Put baldly, this reading considers the politicians as not merely naive but as stupid to boot. The Communist Congressman, Josep Solé Barberà, who had defended people detained under the regime's Public Order Act, noted that he often had to make lawyers and political prisoners see the need for an Amnesty Act (in the same line expressed by Gregorio López Raimundo). Senator Josep Benet, spokesman for *Entesa dels Catalans*, defended the Amnesty Bill by arguing that those who had suffered would


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pardon those who had wronged them and would desire a new society capable of embracing everyone. This was not a moral issue but rather a basic political one. Overcoming the deep divide in Spanish society was the only way of burying General Franco's legacy.

Josep Benet, in a speech given on 30th May 1978 in the Spanish Senate, argued the need to set up a single Association for the War Wounded: "There will be no democracy in this country until there is true reconciliation, which must be based on a sincere desire to live in peace with those we once fought." Soon, those who had formed part of the under-age levies[4] on the Republican side threw open their association to their opposite numbers who had fought for the Fascist cause.

MORAL REPARATIONS TO VICTIMS

The problem does not lie in the Amnesty Act, in what might be termed collective amnesia, but in the failure to make moral reparations to the victims. The issue goes beyond the judicial sphere and concerns the attitude taken by the powers that be. Neither the CIU or PSOE governments (from 1980 and 1982, respectively) did anything to recognise and make reparations to the Republican victims of the Spanish Civil War and the subsequent repression. The general attitude taken by politicians at the time was to "let sleeping dogs lie". Politicians' intention may have been good ones but the festering wounds of the dictatorship only kindled resentment and a desire for revenge. The governments of Jordi Pujol and Felipe González took the easy way

[4] Translator's note: These levies were called to the colours in 1938, even though they were not due for call-up until 1940 or '41 when the recruits would have been 21 years of age. The measure was a desperate one and taken to halt the rapid deterioration in the Republic's military position.

Axum (Ethiopia), Toni Catany (2007)

out, repeating the same discourse used by the Franco regime, namely, that the Civil War had been a national tragedy in which every one had been equally to blame. Hence the strategy of consigning the country's recent history to oblivion and positively encouraging collective amnesia. This is what the journalist Gregorio Morán called many years ago "the price of the transition". It has proved a high price, undermining Spain's fledgling democracy.

The presentation of my first book —the fruit of my capstone project— coincided with the 50th anniversary of the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War. It was 1986 and the book was titled *La Conca de Barberà 1890-1939: de la crisi agrària a la guerra civil* [La Conca de Barberà 1890-1939: From Agricultural Slump to the Spanish Civil War]. The Conca de Barberà Institute of Studies, which published the book, used the presentation of the work to pay homage to the county's Republican soldiers. The event included the award of certificates to former soldiers accrediting their service in the People's Army.

The Truth Commissions established in various countries have helped grapple with the traumatic legacy left by dictatorships and the systematic violation of human rights

Hundreds of people packed the Montblanc theatre, which was decked out for the occasion with Republican flags. Many people, with tears in their eyes, asked for a certificate for a missing family member. The whole town took on a festive air. The CIU party[5] governed most of the councils in the county and held the largest number of seats by a long chalk. Even so, the CIU initially refused to take part in the homage on the grounds that the wounds of the Civil War were still too fresh (remember, this was 50 years after the event!). In any case, the ceremony did not pay homage to the victims or justify political violence: it merely provided the first formal recognition of those who had served in the Republican Army, whether as volunteers or as unwilling conscripts. To put this in a broader context, no one in the United States bridles at the display of Confederate flags in shops or even on army bases. The CIU finally don't took part in an event that showed how many people felt about the past.

Another valuable lesson can be learnt from Solivella —another municipality in the same county. Solivella has the dubious distinction of being the Catalan municipality with the highest percentage of political killings by both sides in the Civil War. During the transition, memory of the Civil War was a running sore. As the years went by, the Council thought it would be a good idea to replace the standard Fascist inscription on the war memorial ("Fallen for God and Spain") for a more inclusive one ("To all those who fell between 1936 and 1939"). It was well meant but the vanquished bridled at the inscription since many of their number had actually been shot after the end of hostilities.

The first task that needs to be performed is therefore to identity the victims. On 17th September 2005, the Roses Town Council erected a memorial to the victims of Franco's

repression. The same day, Josep M. Fradera wrote an article in *El Punt* newspaper. In it, he complained that those who were killed in the wake of the failed coup d'etat had been forgotten. Thirty years after the dictator's death and almost seventy years after the beginning of the Civil War, it is now the "Franco" side's turn to complain about being left off a municipal memorial. Fradera argued that the Roses Council had missed the opportunity of reconciling the victims of both Fascist and Republican terror. Personal reasons aside (the murder of a great grandfather, and grandfather in the summer of 1936), the historian's proposals are similar to those put forward by Pasqual Maragall, President of Catalonia[6]. Maragall argued that the mass grave in the Montjuïc quarry should be made into a memorial to the dead on both sides.

We can agree with Fradera and Maragall that the victims of political terror in the Republican zone should not be forgotten. Thus, all victims of the violence should be respected and sympathy shown for their families and friends. However, not all victims of the Civil War have been treated the same or died for the same cause. Fradera admits the dictatorship went out of its way to glorify "its own" dead and bury the story of those who died on the other side. He therefore naively argues that we should not fall into the trap of making the same mistake from a Republican standpoint.

While morally irreproachable, the proposal is unacceptable. The grief of all those bereaved should be publicly respected. However, a democracy requires that the reasons behind each victim's death or suffering be a matter of public record. In this respect, one cannot accord the same status to killings committed by lawless bands and to systematic killing and repression by the organs of State. The graves of the dead may lay side by side but that is no reason to erect a common monument to the victims. I do not believe that Fradera would argue that the Valle de los Caídos[7] should be converted into a memorial to all the Civil War dead. This kind of tokenism would be nothing new —the late Franco regime itself practiced it when it opened a cemetery for the losing side at the monument. The corpses had been discreetly dug up and transferred from the mass graves in which the Fascists had thrown their victims after shooting them out of hand. With regard to Valle de los Caídos, there are two options. The first is to bulldoze the monument and the second is to use if for educational ends in much the same way as Auschwitz and other concentration camps are used to explain the horrors of the holocaust. It is therefore a bad idea to mix victims at such sites, from whatever period they come. For example, at the Fossar de les Moreres[8]: not all of the Catalans who died in the Siege of Barcelona are buried there.

If we were to accept Fradera's argument, what should we make of the Church's beatification of priests and nuns killed during the Civil War?[9] Should we take the Church's obsession with martyrdom as a barrier to national reconciliation? As I see it, the Catholic Church has as much right as say Barcelona FC to commemorate its members who died in the Civil War and discover the identity and the motives of those who killed them.

[5] Translator's note: *Convergència i Unio* [Convergence and Union, the party presided by Jordi Pujol].
[6] Translator's note: now former president.
[7] An enormous monumental complex built by the Fascists to their war dead and the site of Franco's mausoleum.
[8] The site where many of those fallen in the heroic defence of Barcelona were buried during the siege of 1714.
[9] Translator's note: The Catholic Church eagerly embraced Franco's "crusade" and was thus a target of Republican ire.

The impunity enjoyed by the killers is an affront to the victims and to the principles that should govern society. The Truth Commissions established in various countries have helped grapple with the traumatic legacy left by dictatorships and the systematic violation of human rights. The aim of these commissions is to help people pardon the killers, not by sweeping the crimes under the carpet but by getting those responsible to recognise and repent for their sins. Many killers and those who actively collaborated with the dictatorship still live among us and have not had the decency to ask their victims to pardon them.

THE VICTORS' IMPIETY

I share Lluís Quintana's view that forgetting the victims of human rights abuses is a bigger problem than the impunity of those who committed them. Quintana uses Homer's *Illiad* to demand compassion for the vanquished. In this context, one of the things that has spurred demands for setting the historical record straight has been the opening of mass graves. Any kind of reconciliation must be based on allowing the vanquished to bury their dead. In the last book of the *The Illiad,* the Trojans despair not because of Hector's death but because his corpse cannot be recovered and given the proper funeral rites. Zeus takes pity on Priam, King of Troy and Hector's father. Through Iris, a messenger of the Gods, Zeus suggests that Priam go alone to Achilles' camp to demand the corpse of his son. Quintana notes that Iris tells the Trojan King that Achilles will show compassion[10] and allow Priam to take Hector's corpse.

Returning to *The Illiad,* Quintana notes the dilemma facing Achilles and how he should treat Priam's entreaty. The King of the Archeans is furious at the death of his friend, Patroclus, at Hector's hands. Achilles swore to kill Hector, desecrate his body, and deny him a decent funeral. Priam abases himself before Achilles, kissing the Archean sovereign's hands. Achilles, seeing that Priam's grief is as great as his own, agrees to the Trojan king's request. Quintana sees this episode not as decrying war and violence but rather as a criticism of the victors' harshness towards the vanquished: "compassion and humility should always guide the dealings of men".

One cannot say whether Manuel Azaña made the same reading of this book in *The Illiad* but he certainly took a similar line in his famous speech at Barcelona Council. His address marked the second year of the Civil War and was titled: "Peace, Compassion and Pardon". The President of the Spanish Republic abased himself but Franco did not respond in kind. For all their outward show of religious fervour, Franco's army, the rebel authorities and the Church all showed a chilling lack of compassion for their victims.

After the impact of the Nazi death camps and Argentine atrocities on international public opinion, what possible excuse is there for the hurdles to exhuming Civil War victims from Spain's mass graves? Surely, identifying the corpses and letting their families give them a decent burial is the very least one can expect. While many of the survivors have long

[10] Translator's note: the author notes Quintana's use of *pietós* (originally "pious", and in its more modern sense, "compassionate") and goes on to contrast the moral of Homer's epic with the regime's unholy lack of compassion towards the vanquished.

since given up their loved ones for dead, doubts and questions have haunted them for decades. Resolving this matter is not only an issue of common decency and justice, it is also a Matter of State if Spain is to heal the wounds of the Civil War.

That is why we should hearken to the victims, help them form part of the common weal, and ensure their grief finds public expression. Only thus can the individual and collective trauma be overcome and a boost be given to Spain's feeble democracy. Sadly, the time has passed for a Truth Commission given that many of the victims of the war and its aftermath are no longer with us or have lost faculties. History, however, can do much to give many victims a voice again. Instead of wasting time reviewing the sentences handed down by courts martial or opening up mass graves all over the country, we need to discover more about our past so that the ghost of the Civil War can finally be exorcised. Finally, we should heed Josep Benet's proposal to establish an international tribunal of historians to document the mass murder committed by the Franco dictatorship II

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More reading

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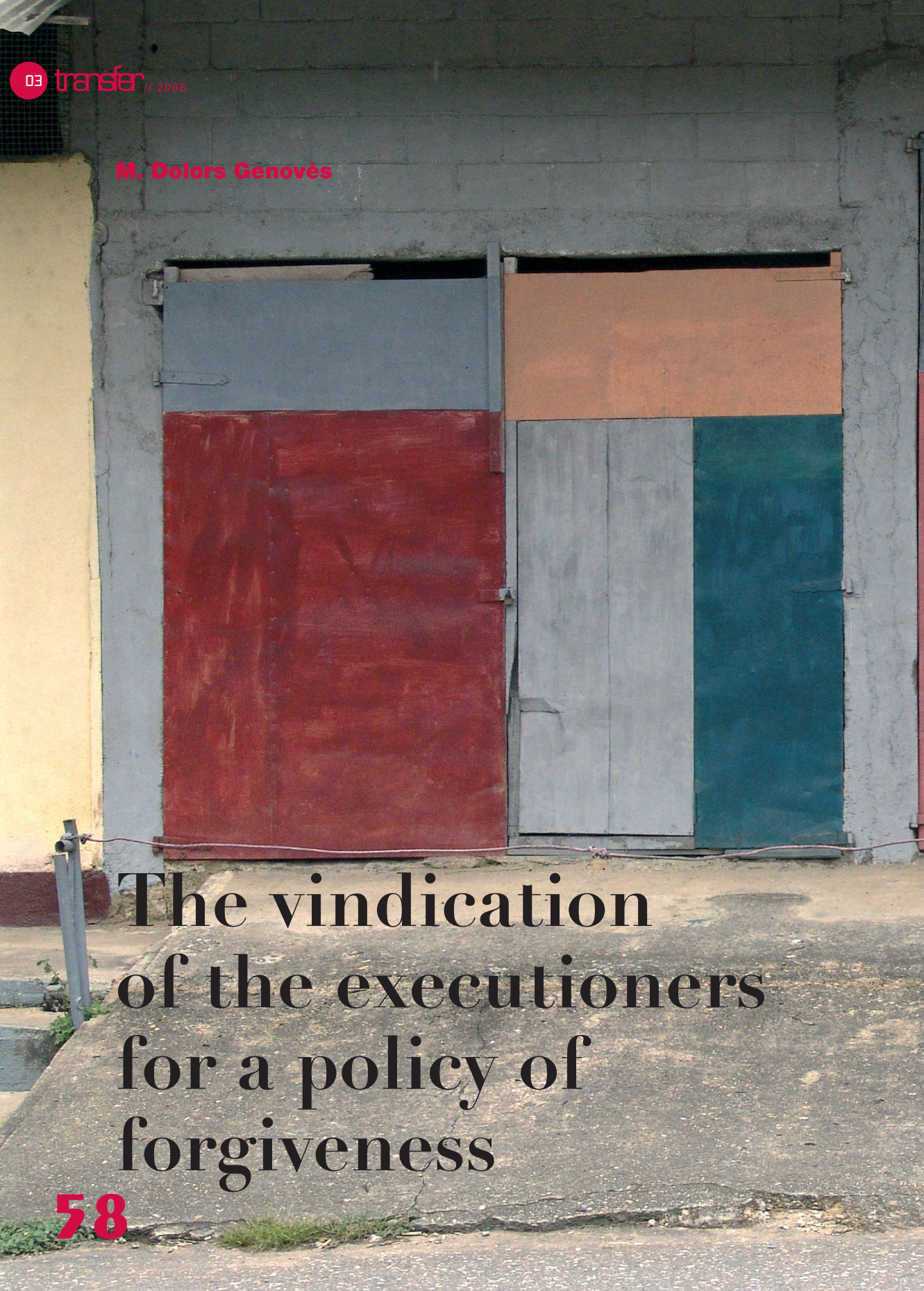

The vindication of the executioners for a policy of forgiveness

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly on 10th December 1948, in the Palais Chaillot in Paris, with 48 votes for, 8 abstentions and none against. Its beginnings were not easy.

Numerous intellectuals and non-governmental organisations took part in the preliminary work and several philosophers were even called upon to outline the ethical principles of Human Rights. The pressure exerted by governments, still in a state of shock over the end of a war that will always have the idea of "Evil" associated with it and the realisation of a polarized world, made the Declaration an "imperfect" text, not for what it says but for what it does not say.

However, despite everything, despite the criticisms of its entrenched liberalism and the lack of explicit references to the right to strike or collective rights (to be included in later agreements), its great virtue is that everyone can identify themselves with it. The 30 articles, preceded by a very short preamble of intentions, are clearly set down as a didactic Decalogue. Put simply: it may be recited in schools as the contract that human beings sign to preserve their existence and their very nature. And this happens in spite of the etymological complexity and the polysemy that the different languages and cultures of the world may have with regard to key concepts like dignity, humiliation, recognition, freedom, equality.[1]

[1] Osset Hernández, Miguel, "Podem parlar dels drets humans?", *Revista del Col·legi Oficial de Doctors i Llicenciats en Filosofia i Lletres i en Ciències de Catalunya.* No. 124, July 2005, pp. 25-31.

Tunapuy (Venezuela), Toni Catany (2006)

Most countries' political constitutions make explicit references to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The 1978 Spanish Constitution does too.

> "The laws relating to the fundamental rights and freedoms that the Constitution recognises will be interpreted in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the international treaties and agreements concerning these issues ratified by Spain"[2].

Thus, the text of the Constitution subordinates any interpretation of people's fundamental rights to the dictates of the document that the United Nations General Assembly adopted in 1948 and the international agreements that derive from it.

If we try to make an assessment of the violation of human rights in Spain between 1936 and 1975 (still provisional as there are no partial and comprehensive studies to establish the scope of repression during the military dictatorship), we realise that each and every one of 30 articles were broken with premeditation and precision, continuity and absolute cruelty.

THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND INSTITUTIONALISED VIOLENCE

During and after the Civil War the military dictatorship infringed the "right to life"; "the right to freedom"; the right not to be subjected to "torture", "enslavement", "servitude", or "cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment"; the right to be tried before an "independent and impartial court"; the right to keep "private life, family, home, correspondence" free from arbitrary interference; the "right to own property, individually and collectively"; the rights of "freedom of thought, conscience, religion, opinion, expression and union membership"; the right not to be deprived of one's nationality and the right to take part in the task of government directly or through representatives elected by universal suffrage. The totalitarian regime (the term that best defines the characteristics of complete control of society, despite the ongoing theoretical debate) that was established from 1939 onwards corresponded to a political will, publicised and agreed: to eliminate the adversary in the name of the State.

Between 1936 and 1939 400,000 people were killed in combat and 155,000 were murdered behind the lines: 100,000 on the fascist side and 55,000 victims of political violence in the republican-controlled zone. The Francoist repression continued killing in the post-war period with 50,000 further victims[3]. These figures do not include the deaths from hunger and disease in the concentration camps, in the prisons, in the punishment gangs, or the thousands of people who were condemned to die from lack of food, overwork, typhoid, diphtheria, diarrhoea, tuberculosis or meningitis. In 1939 the infant mortality rate was 40% higher than in 1935. And, in Catalonia, the number of young widows (under 30 years of age) had risen five-fold in relation to 1930[4]. One fact to help us to understand the nature of the dictatorship: Mussolini executed 27 people between 1922 and 1940[5]; Franco, 150,000 between 1936 and 1950.

[2] First title: Concerning Fundamental Rights and Responsibilities.

[3] Juliá S., Casanova J., Sole i Sabaté J. M., Villarroya J., Moreno F., *Víctimas de la guerra civil*, Temas de Hoy, Madrid, 1999, p. 411.

[4] de Riquer, Borja and Culla, Joan B. in Pierre Vilar, ed., *Història de Catalunya*. Vol. VII, Edicions 62, Barcelona, 1989, p. 25.

[5] Malefakis, Edward "La dictadura de Franco en una perspectiva comparada" in J. P. Fusi, J.L. García

In 1952, the Ministry of Justice, faced with the demands of the inspectors of the Commission Internationale contre le Régime Concentrationnaire (CICRC), handed over a statistic of the Spanish prison population: the official figures gave a population behind bars of 270,719 people in 1940[6] (the population census, always incomplete, for that same year was 25,768,556[7]). This monstrous figure did not include either the penal detachments or the military penal colonies or the prisoners working for private companies like, for example, the one run by businessman José Banús, who years later was to build his property empire in Marbella. Another figure to compare: on average, between 1931 and 1941, the concentration camps of the Third Reich held 20,000 people annually[8].

Torture, enslavement, humiliation, cruelty and also "ethnic cleansing" were the daily bread of the Francoist prisons. Major Antonio Vallejo Nágera, head of the Army's psychiatric services, experimented on ways of improving the Spanish "race" with female prisoners of war. Nor did children escape the prison system: the order of 30th March 1940 on the keeping of children in prisons "legitimized" the path of "total segregation" that promoted the separation of imprisoned Republican mothers from their children. The aim was to keep the boys and girls in centres run by the State —mainly religious schools— in order to re-educate these children according to the *New Spanish State* and, in many cases, these children were given in adoption to families supporting the regime, obviously without the knowledge and consent of their parents. In one word: it was kidnapping legalised through the *Boletín Oficial del Estado*. Between 1944 and 1954, some 30,960 children, above all girls, were in the charge of the State[9].

As the mayor of Villarta de los Montes said, shortly before executing 23 people without going through any prior legal channels: "we had the balls to win the war and now we'll have them to cleanse the population"[10]. The ultimate responsibility for the "cleansing" fell to the army, the highest authority of the entire repressive machinery, while the application or not of the death penalty depended on the Captains General.

The purging zeal trapped thousands of citizens who had never been noted for their public outbursts against the regime. These men and women had the bad luck to cross the path of a Falangist, a priest, a terrified or grudge-bearing neighbour, a property owner, and all of them could set in motion, by denunciation or betrayal, the mechanisms of the "justice" of the New Order.

From May 1939 the legal farce of the courts martial became commonplace. They were almost always collective and no effort was made beforehand to discover the truth. The reports to the authorities and the mandatory reports (Town Hall, Falange, Guardia Civil) were unquestionable. It was justice the other way round: the defendant had to demonstrate his innocence as he was guilty to begin with. The entire mockery was

Delgado, S. Juliá, E. Malefakis, S.G. Payne, *Franquismo. El juicio de la historia*, Temas de Hoy. Madrid, 2005, p. 47.

[6] Vinyes, Ricard, "El universo penitenciario durante el franquismo", in C. Molinero, M. Sala and J. Sobrequés, eds., *Una inmensa prisión. Los campos de concentración y los prisiones durante la guerra civil y el franquismo*, Crítica, Barcelona, 2003, p. 160.

[7] Tuñón de Lara, M., ed., *Historia de España*, Labor, Barcelona, 1980. Vol. 10, p. 25.

[8] Op. cit., *Franquismo. El juicio de la historia*, p. 47.

[9] Vinyes, R., Armengol, M., Belis, R., *Els nens perduts del franquisme*, Proa, Barcelona, 2002 and Ángela Cenarro, "La institucionalización del universo penitenciario franquista", in *Una inmensa prisión...* pp. 133-154.

[10] Moreno Gómez, Francisco, in J. Casanova, ed., *Morir, matar, sobrevivir*, Crítica, Barcelona, 2002, p. 200.

prepared in order not to get to the bottom of things but to prove the defendant's guilt. At the present time, we have no trustworthy calculation of the total number of courts martial held all over Spain. But the very recent access, as in the case of Catalonia —where the courts martial are being counted and studied— will make it possible to establish the number of trials, identify the victims and name the people responsible for this barbarous assault on democracy.

Besides political repression there was financial repression by way of the Law of Political Responsibilities of February 1939, which subsumed previous partial laws and, above all, gave an appearance of "legitimacy" to the practice of uncontrolled and arbitrary pillage that ensued from the earliest days of the military uprising. In short: the law was a safe conduct for the financial despoiling of the defeated, individually and collectively. The people on the losing side's right to own property lost all meaning and the State and any Falangist believed they had the right to help themselves to other people's possessions. By October 1941, 125,286 people had been prosecuted in Spain[11]. The assets of Republican combatants imprisoned or executed were confiscated and later auctioned off at rock-bottom prices: it could just as easily be a donkey as a building in the Passeig de Gràcia in Barcelona. This was also the origin of many personal fortunes after 1939.

> Despite the efforts to impose *obligatory oblivion*, international law considers that "war crimes" and "crimes against humanity" never expire

Crimes against morality and proper behaviour began to be dealt with by ordinary courts especially after 1944, by which time the regime had laid the foundations of political persecution and financial punishments, and they were in the ascendant until the mid-1960s[12]. Abortion, suicide, homosexuality, prostitution and public indecency were some of the crimes in this category. But it is through the analysis of these trials that we can see the degree of control that the police, the single trade union, the single party, the confessional, the pulpit, the place of work, the town hall, the district, the school, the neighbour or the family exerted over the individual. Correspondence was also read and censored. In short, it was a society under surveillance and guarded.

Jobs were also spoils of war. Those in public service were taken by the winners: ex-combatants, ex-prisoners, *camisas viejas*, orphans, disabled servicemen, while private companies had to employ preferably those expressing support for the regime. Everyone had to present a sworn statement of their activities before, during and after the war and an *unswerving* adherence to the regime. Only from the perspective of reward and punishment can the purging, for example, of the tramcar and railway workers be understood. Political and ideological cleansing affected the entire staff of the civil service and also the professional societies: doctors, lawyers, journalists and even football referees. Teachers and university lecturers were conscientiously purged. Another example: in 1939, 135 lecturers at the University of Barcelona were expelled (half the teaching staff of 1936[13]) and 25%

of Catalan schoolteachers were removed from the classrooms. Those who remained were forced to swear loyalty to the regime. The poet and Falangist José M. Pemán was in no doubt as to how the indoctrination had to be done: "The Catechism or proverbs, which speak with assertions, are believed more than Philosophy lecturers, who speak with arguments"[14].

The persecution of national, cultural and linguistic minorities; of freemasons and homosexuals; and the social and legal discrimination of women also unequivocally violated article 2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights when it states that "All the rights and freedoms proclaimed in this Declaration belong to everyone, without distinction of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or any other kind of opinion, national or social origins, fortune, birth or other condition".

In 1940 there were 2,890,974 people living in Catalonia, according to the figures of the incomplete official census; in 1978 there were almost 6 million. For four decades, millions of Catalans were unable to exercise a fundamental right in public: to speak their own language. A situation that also affected, and this is often forgotten, citizens expressing themselves in Castilian, whose right of linguistic choice was restricted. The degree of stupidity was so great that, for example, in 1937 at the height of the war, the Francoist authorities prohibited the numerous Catalan community staying in San Sebastián from using Catalan in public. That is, there were Catalan Francoists, but there was no *collaborationism* in Catalan. The Catalan national minority, and also the other nations within the state saw how the regime reduced their symbols to unbearable levels of banality and banished into secrecy the cultural initiatives struggling to keep pace with modernity.

Half the Spanish population, i.e. the women, simply ceased to have any rights. The emphatic and offensive phrase "wives or whores" illustrates to perfection the condition that the regime granted the female sex. Before 1961, women could not apply to be a notary, a registrar, a State attorney, a secretary at the town hall or in any administrative body. To be able to gain access to the judiciary, they had to wait even longer (and this is the reason why there are now so few women on the General Council of Judicial Power)[15]. Their husband's permission was necessary to open a current account or get a job (Catalan civil law exempted women from this prerequisite but civil servants or bank clerks very often ignored it). To travel, their father or husband's permission was necessary. Women were guarded and watched over by all public and private authorities. Freemasons and homosexuals were sent straight to prison.

To the brutal internal repression we have to add the 440,000 people —according to the French authorities' figures— who crossed the border between 28th January and 12th February 1939, 170,000 of whom were women and children[16]. Franco could perfectly well have closed the frontier but he preferred to keep it open in order to complete his policy

[11] Op. cit., *Víctimas de la guerra civil*, p. 347.
[12] Mir, Conxita, *Vivir es sobrevivir. Justicia, orden y marginación en la Cataluña rural de posguerra*, Editorial Milenio, Lleida, 2000.
[13] Santacana, C., "La desaparición de un modelo de intervención. Intelectuales, profesionales y científicos en la posguerra: el caso catalán", in J. Chaves Palacios, coord., *Política científica y exilio en la España de Franco*, Universidad de Extremadura-Diputación de Badajoz, Badajoz, 2002, pp. 113-128.
[14] Quoted by Morente Valero, Francisco, "La depuración franquista del magisterio público. Un estado de la cuestión", in *Hispania*, LXI/2, 208 (2001), pp. 661-688.
[15] Remembered by the lawyer Montserrat Serrallonga on the back page of *La Vanguardia*, 28th August 2006.
[16] Op. cit., *Història de Catalunya*. Vol. VII, p. 24.


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of "clearing out" the enemy. By September 1939, half of these displaced persons had returned to Spain simply because they had nowhere else to go and many thought that the new regime had no "objective" evidence against them. They were wrong —what it did not have it invented.

The term "exile" has become the official way of referring to the many thousands of republicans displaced by force, first to the refugee camps —inhuman and degrading— installed in France and later dispersed according to the goodwill of the receiving countries. Yet the term "exile" does not identify the legal situation to which they were condemned because according to the international clauses they were "stateless", "de-nationalised" by the victorious State. This politically originated mass migration was a relatively new phenomenon in modern Europe. The figure of the stateless person begins to be important politically after the Great War and the peace treaties of 1919. In chronological order, the Soviet regime was the first to repudiate a million and a half citizens, the Greek government did so with 45,000 Armenians and hundreds of thousands of German Jews and non-Jews had their nationality withdrawn after 1934 by the Third Reich. Soon afterwards, there came the definitive Diaspora of about 250,000 Republicans, who could not return as they would be risking their lives. None of these people had a valid current passport, if they had one at all, as it had been issued by the Republican State and this no longer existed. Therefore, 1% of the population of Spain (25,768,556 in 1940) found itself deprived for almost 40 years of the legal protection their own government should have afforded them. About 70,000[17] of these stateless people were Catalans, i.e., 2.5% of the Catalan population in 1939.

THERE ARE NO VICTIMS WITHOUT EXECUTIONERS

This is in general terms, broadly speaking, the balance of the military dictatorship between 1936 and 1975. The aim of this brief review is to make clear the scope and the nature of the military repression in wartime and in the time of Francoist *peace*. To do so, I have used the precise terms used in international law when speaking of "war crimes" and "crimes against humanity". Behind it, obviously, there is an intention: to break the public, constant and relentless account that has been constructed about the war and Francoism in order to achieve the *obligatory* aim of the reconciliation between the *two Spains*, which since 1978 has materialized in a formulation that is an offence to common sense and history: "everyone was a victim". The affirmation of the opposite would be: "no-one was guilty". So, the forty years of military dictatorship have been dispatched with a lapidary: "no victims, no crimes, no-one was guilty".

Another example of the biased use of words: during the almost three years the war lasted, the Republicans announced to the world that they were making "war on fascism", and so thousands of *brigadistas* came to fight in Spain against the wishes of their countries' governments, terrified by the force of this popular international solidarity.

[17] Idem.

Harar (Ethiopia) | Addis Abeba (Ethiopia)
Toni Catany (2007)

Well, if at first the war was considered a preamble to the Second World War, now it is a "fratricidal war", or "civil war", i.e., it has lost the international dimension.

This liturgy of the word, placed at the service of minimising the *collateral effects* of the war and the military dictatorship, has its legal point of reference in the Amnesty Law of 15th October 1977. Law 46/1977 granted the leaders, organisers, collaborators and accomplices of the Francoist regime impunity.

However, despite the efforts of the democratic State to impose *obligatory oblivion*, international law considers that "war crimes" and "crimes against humanity" never expire. The categorization of these crimes rests on two basic conditions: a State that practises an exclusive ideological hegemony and the existence of a concerted and systematic plan to eliminate the political enemy or against individuals for belonging to racial, cultural or religious minorities.

Thirty years after Franco's death, the victims are still waiting for a formal recognition of the crimes committed against them

It was the Charter of the International Military Tribunal in Nuremberg, dated 8th August 1945, that distinguished for the first time between "crimes against peace", "war crimes" and "crimes against humanity". According to the definition given by the Nuremberg Charter, crimes against humanity were: murder, extermination, enslavement, deportation and other inhuman acts committed against the civilian population, and persecutions carried out for political, racial or religious reasons. The tribunal specified that the "leaders, organisers, instigators or accomplices who take part in the formulation or carrying out of a general plan to commit these crimes are responsible, whoever the final executor may be". In other words, there is no exemption from responsibility for anyone taking part in the chain of repression. Later resolutions adopted by the United Nations General Assembly confirmed the classification and definition of the crimes specified at Nuremberg. Moreover, in 1966 the violation of economic rights and apartheid were incorporated as serious crimes against humanity and two years later the General Assembly ratified the Convention on the non-expiration of "war crimes and crimes against humanity". That is, none of these crimes is limited in any way in time and all are subject to international law beyond the internal decisions of UN member States. Put simply, this is the legal *corpus* used by Judge Baltasar Garzón to take Pinochet to court in London.

Therefore, it is neither anachronistic nor gratuitous to refer to the Nuremberg International Military Tribunal when we speak of "war crimes" and "crimes against humanity" committed by the army and supporting organisations between 1936 and 1975 in Spain. But beyond the limited legal and criminal responsibilities that this kind of tribunal can clarify per se (in the case of Nuremberg, 24 members of the Nazi party and 8 organizations were tried: the SS, the Nazi party, the Gestapo, the SD), Nuremberg acted as a general catharsis. There were crimes, victims and guilty parties.

The Amnesty Law (considered in terms of utility and not of reparation) imposed institutional oblivion and raised to the category of ethics and aesthetics the maxim of not remembering (under the threat of being branded as vengeful or of initiating a "Causa General" but the other way round). The philosopher Paul Ricoeur says it with admirable concretion: "The more than phonetic, even semantic, proximity between amnesty and amnesia points to the existence of a secret pact with the denial of memory that truly distances it from forgiveness after proposing its simulation"[18].

The Amnesty Law and the official policies of reconciliation have wished to impose pardon by decree —and this is impossible. All religious, humanistic, philosophical and historical tradition knows that one cannot rid private and collective memory of its traumatic content. Without forgiveness and sorrow it is impossible to legitimately achieve "a happy memory" —as Ricoeur would say— that is obliged not to cover up evil, but to express it in a calm and peaceful way.

The first condition to be able to forgive is that someone should acknowledge the offence and ask to be forgiven. The offenders can do it, like the writer Günter Grass, aged 78, who has never denied his portion of blame as a fervent Nazi —despite the controversy now stirred up by his recent and late confession of belonging to the elite corps of the SS— or representatives of the institutions that, as though in a sort of space-time continuum, can legitimately acknowledge a historical guilt, even though they were not alive at the time. This was the case of the German chancellor Willy Brandt, a fighter against Nazism who was stripped of his nationality by the Third Reich in 1934, when he was just 19, and was a member of the International Brigades. Brandt made an official visit to Poland in 1970 and in front of the walls of the Jewish ghetto in Warsaw he knelt, wept and apologised on behalf of his compatriots.

More recently, a country that has emerged from the barbarity of apartheid has sought imaginative and fairer ways of being able to reconcile policies of acknowledging blame and policies of forgiveness. I am referring to South Africa. In 1994, after the election won by Nelson Mandela, a lively public and political debate got under way that culminated in the creation of the "Truth and Reconciliation" commission presided over by Nobel Peace Prize-winner Desmond Tutu. The commission was formed by 29 people from religious, political and civic groups, and divided into three committees: the Human Rights violations group, with the task of establishing the nature, the cause and the scope of the abuses committed between 1964 and 1994 (given wide-ranging powers to investigate and bring to trial); the reparation and compensations committee, with the aim of identifying the victims and studying their denunciations; and the amnesty committee, given the job of examining the requests for pardons on the condition that those responsible for political crimes should go before the commission and make a complete confession. Of the 7,000 requests for pardons presented, only 10% were able to resort to this new form of individual and conditional amnesty (which shows that a thorough job was done). However, in fact, the public exposition of the offences has been the main sentence for those responsible for apartheid and the best acknowledgement for the victims[19]. South Africa has explored a new path: pardoning those who have admitted their crimes.

[18] Ricoeur, Paul, *La memoria, la historia, el olvido,* Editorial Trotta, Madrid, 2003, p. 588.
[19] Pons, Sophie, *Apartheid, L'avenue et le pardon,* Bayard, Paris, 2000, pp. 13-18.

FORGETTING BY LAW

The bill for the "Recognition and extension of rights of the victims of the Civil War and the Dictatorship", better known as the Law of Historical Memory, which the Spanish government has presented last summer, insists on creating a nice family portrait featuring victims and executioners. From a distance, it seems to be inspired on the South African model, when it talks of "Declaration" and the formation of an independent panel of experts that will judge each case in turn. But unlike the South African way, the five Spanish experts have to pronounce on the suitability of the victims. To sum up: it is the victims (or their close relatives) who have to demonstrate their condition. In return they will receive a "certificate" of good conduct.

The Spanish government is trying to impose a certain "official memory", although it denies this when it claims:

> "As an expression of the right of all citizens to the reparation of their personal and family memory, the unlawful nature is recognised and declared of the sentences, sanctions and any other form of personal violence that took place, for political or ideological reasons, during the Civil War, on both sides or in the zone where those who suffered it were, as well as those suffered for the same reasons during the dictatorship that lasted until 1975". (Art. 2, 1).

In other words, the executions by firing squad of General Domènec Batet —head of the Sixth Military Division, loyal to the Republican constitution and shot in Burgos in 1937— and of President Lluís Companys are the same as the shooting of General Manuel Goded, who took part in the coup, sentenced to death for military rebellion, in August 1936, according to the military code in force during the 2nd Republic.

Therefore, the direct descendents of Companys, Batet or Goded can request before the commission a "declaration of personal reparation and recognition" (Art.3). And the five experts will certify with their signatures that the rebel general Goded was unlawfully executed. Obviously, the Republican constitution will be placed on the same level as Franco's *justice*. Of course, under no circumstances will the Declaration make public the identities of the people who took part in the courts martial: "The Declaration will leave out any reference to the identity of the people who may have taken part in the events or in the legal actions that gave rise to the sanctions or sentences" (Art. 7, 3).

Article 17, on public symbols and monuments, states that "(...) the appropriate steps will be taken to remove coats of arms, insignia, plaques and other commemorative mentions of the Civil War when they extol only one of the two sides (...)". Put another way, in the cemetery of Montjuïc castle, beneath the name of Lluís Companys —according to the government text— the name of General Goded, also shot by firing squad at Montjuïc, will have to be inscribed. This is what the law and the criterion that has to guide the action of the five "good men" states literally (to be honest, they have a real job on their hands).

The bill's preamble denies —it says— any intention to introduce "a specific 'historical memory', as it is not the task of the legislator to construct or reconstruct a supposed 'collective memory'. But it *is* a duty of the legislator (...) to establish and protect, with the maximum legal vigour, the right to personal and family memory as an expression of full democratic citizenship. This is the commitment the legal text undertakes".
It should be said that the only way states have to "establish" and "protect" the right to

Harar (Ethiopia), Toni Catany (2007)

"personal memory" is to provide the means necessary. And the Spanish state denies this when it is the associations or the relatives of the disappeared who will have to pay the compensation that the private landowners can ask for during the work digging up the common graves. Moreover, it is the relatives who will have to pay the removal and burial costs of their relatives. The State, through its repressive bodies, the organisations and the single party, was responsible for this violence.

Yet it is not true that the bill is not imposing a particular "collective memory"; it does so when repeatedly throughout the document it refers to the 1978 Constitution as the founding text of the State itself. In other words, it is a State without a past. Therefore, it does wish to construct a single memory and this is why it insists on the official account of the "reconciliation" during the Transition. But the discourse of consensus has not been able to impose oblivion, and the proof is the drawing up of this bill for a Law of Historical Memory 29 years after the pre-constitutional Amnesty Law. Memories (in the plural) are

stubborn and the victims are still waiting for a formal and solemn recognition of the crimes that the generals of the coup and Francoism committed against them. On the other hand, the democratic State, its head bowed, gives them sticking plasters when what is needed first is to disinfect the wound.

Historians and the media have also created a polysemic account of the repression during the war and the military dictatorship. According to the treatment they give the issue of the repression, we may divide historians into five categories: those that give a victim count; those who offer a "sweetened" view and assign the repression a minor role; those who see the repression as a cornerstone of the dictatorship; the equidistant view: sharing out responsibilities equally on both sides; and finally, the interpretation that points out the political function and the classist nature of the repression[20]. While the view of terror as a political tool of the first order has been confined to academic circles, the equidistant theses and the *recommended* ones have triumphed in the main in both the public and private media. But what is even more serious is the fact that an evident unease over naming those responsible for the brutality has installed itself in the teaching and scientific worlds. Apparently, it would seem, Franco did it all on his own.

Historians are also citizens subjected to the bombardment of an official univocal construction of the account under the threat of contravening the founding myth of the Transition. And if historiographic tradition eliminates praise and apologetics, it now seems it is also trying to eliminate disapproval. And let it be said, although it is obvious, that disapproval is not at odds with thorough and careful work on the history of Francoism and its organisations. But the negative image of the military dictatorship cannot be the subject of any revision: we cannot excuse the crimes committed by the State against a part of the population to which it owed protection and security. The most straightforward result of this political desire to obscure or gloss over the crimes has been that no-one has felt any moral concern and, therefore, they have never felt ashamed of it. Günter Grass has confessed that it has taken him fifty years to refer to his joining the Waffen SS out of "shame"[21]. Here nobody has demanded responsibilities, either political or moral, and, therefore, no-one has had the opportunity to say they are sorry.

One example, from first-hand experience. A few years ago the father of a friend of mine died. The father had been an important councillor on Barcelona City Council and a devout Francoist through action and omission. During the mourning, my childhood friend showed me the death notice that had been published in *La Vanguardia* and asked me: "Do you think it's all right?" In reply to the question I could only say: "Your father would have liked it". The death notice included all his titles: ex-combatant, *camisa vieja*, and posts, medals, crosses and awards from so many years of loyalty to Francoism. While he was alive, he never once expressed a single word of doubt or shame. The family has every right to honour their father's memory as they wish; however, neither the State nor society can give him a "victim's certificate" for having been shut up in the Model prison during the war at the behest of the Generalitat.

[20] This classification can be found in Conxita Mir, Fabià Corretgé, Judit Farré and Joan Sagués, *Repressió econòmica i franquisme: l'actuació del Tribunal de Responsabilitats Polítiques a la província de Lleida*, Publicacions Abadia de Montserrat, Barcelona, 1997, pp. 31-36.

[21] *La Vanguardia*, 17th August 2006, p. 27.

[22] Jaspers, Karl, *Die Schuldfrage* (1946), *La Culpabilité allemande*, Minuit, Paris, 1990.

A JUST MEMORY

Biology has already taken care of blocking the route of the international courts to condemn "war criminals" and "criminals against humanity" during the war and the Franco regime. However, let us remember that the crimes never expire. I have already mentioned that the most important thing about these trials —like Pinochet's— is the public monitoring that can be made of them and the cathartic effect they generate in the victims. What I am suggesting is that the State and its spokespeople in the media should abandon the pretence of passing a *consensus* on memories. It is the social agents who will construct the story of the past: historians, associations, those who have survived the tragedy, their families, etc., without the threat or the seduction of a canonical discourse that brooks no argument.

Democratic states with a traumatic past do three things: ask for forgiveness, place the administration at the service of the victims and regularize the means of compensation. No more, no less. We are, then, looking at three different types of action: symbolic, administrative and financial reparation.

The Spanish State has granted itself a right it does not have: pardoning itself. This is the opposite of what the Canadian government has done. It has just apologised to the citizens of Asian origin that were enslaved during the building of the railway in the late 19th century. In the case of Spain, the line of continuity is even more consistent and unbroken when the Head of State is someone appointed by General Franco himself. States have no conscience; therefore, it is their representatives who have to take responsibility for the offence: to apologise, not to pardon.

To change the official linguistic register and keep always a fair distance between victims and those guilty. A year after the Second World War, Karl Jaspers[22] distinguished between criminal guilt, political guilt and moral guilt with regard to the Third Reich. According to Jaspers, the members and organisations involved in the policies of the State have political responsibility, regardless of their individual and collective actions and the degree of consent, because, moreover, they benefited from the favours introduced by the regime. Moral responsibility falls on those individual acts, great or small, that contributed through action or omission to the criminal policies. The same distinction is useful for ruling out any attempt at equidistance between the victims and the executioners.

There are other questions that have to be dealt with thoroughly, imaginatively, generously and fairly: making the administration work to guarantee unrestricted access to the archives and documentary sources that may shed new light on the repression; seeking legal ways of making it possible to annul the courts martial and all the sentences passed by Franco's judges for political, moral, sexual, religious, etc. crimes. Paying for the location, exhumation and burial of the 30,000 people who disappeared that for 70 years have been awaiting a worthy mourning ceremony.

And as a first step to really going in depth into a "just memory", the Spanish government should withdraw this mockery of a bill on the "historical memory" or change it radically during its passage through parliament. Thirty years after the death of the dictator, the millions of victims of the military dictatorship are still waiting for someone to make an apology. And it is for the victims to decide if they accept it, or not II

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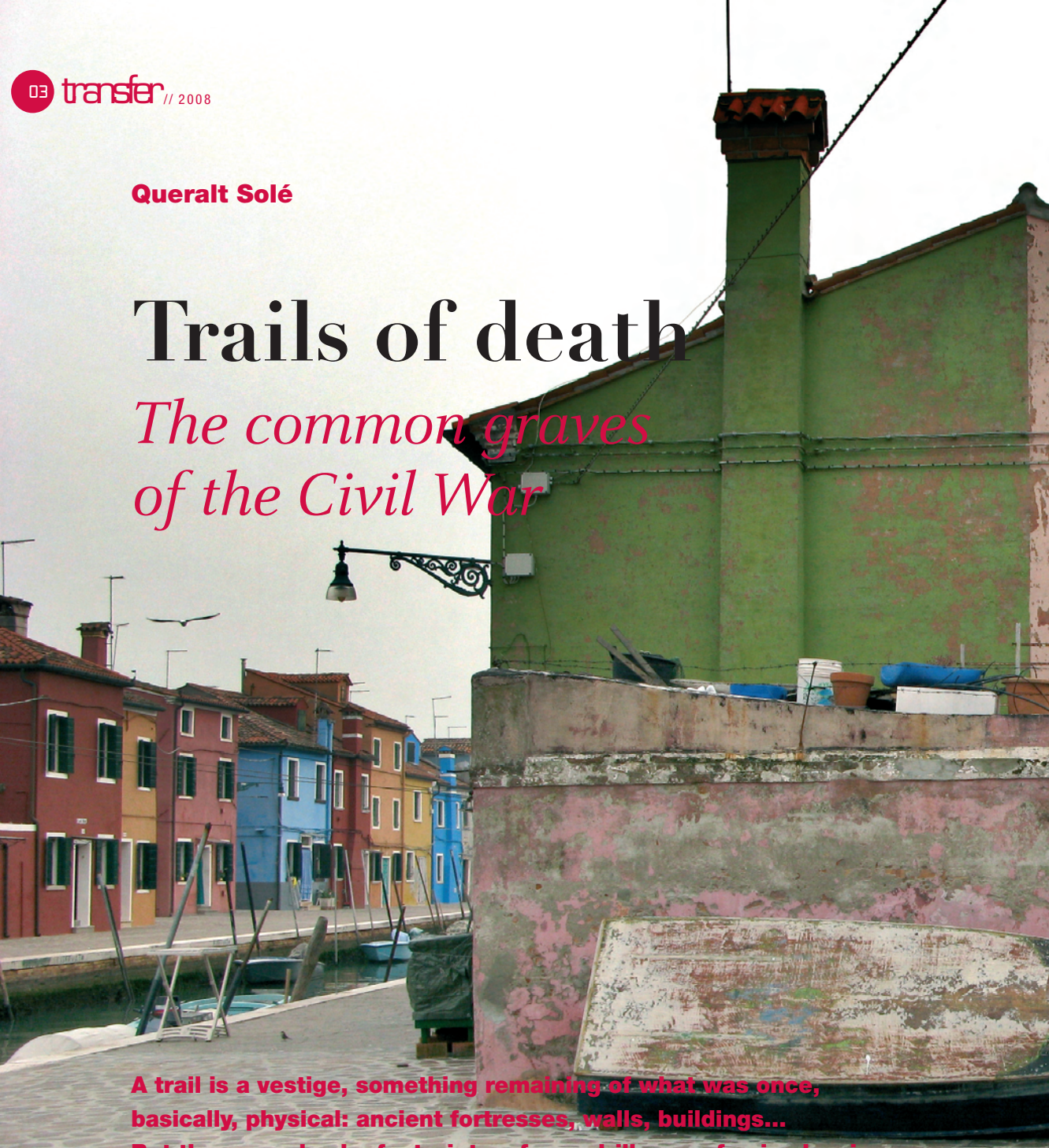
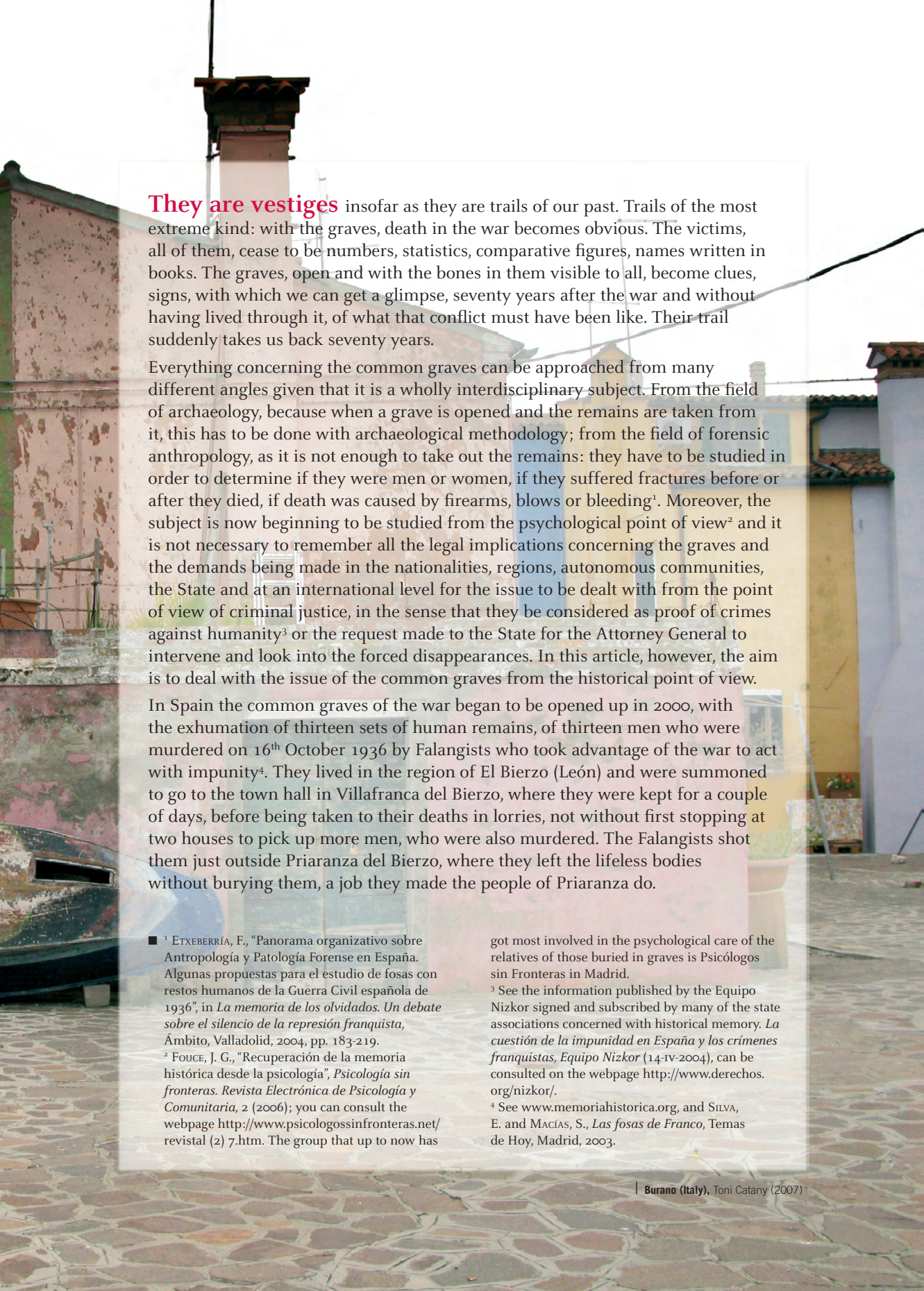
Queralt Solé

Trails of death

The common graves of the Civil War



A trail is a vestige, something remaining of what was once, basically, physical: ancient fortresses, walls, buildings... But they can also be footprints, of espadrilles or of animals, signs that continually become clues, marks to follow, trails that may not lead anywhere, may be lost or may lead to the desired place. With the common graves of the Civil War, strangely, the two meanings converge: they are trails due to the fact that they are vestiges, and at the same time they are trails due to the fact that they are signs.



They are vestiges insofar as they are trails of our past. Trails of the most extreme kind: with the graves, death in the war becomes obvious. The victims, all of them, cease to be numbers, statistics, comparative figures, names written in books. The graves, open and with the bones in them visible to all, become clues, signs, with which we can get a glimpse, seventy years after the war and without having lived through it, of what that conflict must have been like. Their trail suddenly takes us back seventy years.

Everything concerning the common graves can be approached from many different angles given that it is a wholly interdisciplinary subject. From the field of archaeology, because when a grave is opened and the remains are taken from it, this has to be done with archaeological methodology; from the field of forensic anthropology, as it is not enough to take out the remains: they have to be studied in order to determine if they were men or women, if they suffered fractures before or after they died, if death was caused by firearms, blows or bleeding[1]. Moreover, the subject is now beginning to be studied from the psychological point of view[2] and it is not necessary to remember all the legal implications concerning the graves and the demands being made in the nationalities, regions, autonomous communities, the State and at an international level for the issue to be dealt with from the point of view of criminal justice, in the sense that they be considered as proof of crimes against humanity[3] or the request made to the State for the Attorney General to intervene and look into the forced disappearances. In this article, however, the aim is to deal with the issue of the common graves from the historical point of view.

In Spain the common graves of the war began to be opened up in 2000, with the exhumation of thirteen sets of human remains, of thirteen men who were murdered on 16th October 1936 by Falangists who took advantage of the war to act with impunity[4]. They lived in the region of El Bierzo (León) and were summoned to go to the town hall in Villafranca del Bierzo, where they were kept for a couple of days, before being taken to their deaths in lorries, not without first stopping at two houses to pick up more men, who were also murdered. The Falangists shot them just outside Priaranza del Bierzo, where they left the lifeless bodies without burying them, a job they made the people of Priaranza do.

[1] Etxeberría, F., "Panorama organizativo sobre Antropología y Patología Forense en España. Algunas propuestas para el estudio de fosas con restos humanos de la Guerra Civil española de 1936", in *La memoria de los olvidados. Un debate sobre el silencio de la represión franquista*, Ámbito, Valladolid, 2004, pp. 183-219.

[2] Fouce, J. G., "Recuperación de la memoria histórica desde la psicología", *Psicología sin fronteras. Revista Electrónica de Psicología y Comunitaria*, 2 (2006); you can consult the webpage http://www.psicologossinfronteras.net/revistal (2) 7.htm. The group that up to now has got most involved in the psychological care of the relatives of those buried in graves is Psicólogos sin Fronteras in Madrid.

[3] See the information published by the Equipo Nizkor signed and subscribed by many of the state associations concerned with historical memory. *La cuestión de la impunidad en España y los crímenes franquistas, Equipo Nizkor* (14-IV-2004), can be consulted on the webpage http://www.derechos.org/nizkor/.

[4] See www.memoriahistorica.org, and Silva, E. and Macías, S., *Las fosas de Franco*, Temas de Hoy, Madrid, 2003.

Burano (Italy), Toni Catany (2007)

This is the situation, with slight differences, that arose on the whole in the parts of Spain where the coup d'état succeeded right from the start or after a few months, and also in the territory the troops took control of as the war progressed, although courts martial, with no legal guarantees of any kind, and shootings by firing squad soon began to be imposed, without, a priori, the secret murders and burials being necessary.

These graves are what most people think of and imagine when the issue of common graves crops up. And it is with regard to these graves that the movement to recover the historical memory has come into being or emerged: the grandson of one of the victims buried in the common grave of Priaranza del Bierzo was the person behind digging it up, the exhumation, the anthropological and genetic analyses of the remains, and he was the creator of the Asociación para la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica (ARMH).

After the opening up of this grave and the creation of the association, people all over the country began to come out as witnesses to the existence of a common grave or claiming that one of their relatives was buried in a common grave. It was not the first time that graves had been dug up in Spain: during the years of the Transition graves had been opened and remains taken out that relatives took to the cemeteries, above all in the area of La Rioja [5], but these actions were brought to a sudden halt by the attempted coup d'état of 23rd February 1981. Between then and the year 2000, the fact of the existence of common graves did not re-emerge into the public domain, and when it did it was with the support of a most important tool of unforeseeable scope: the Internet.

After the news appeared in the press hundreds of families got in touch with the ARMH, especially via the Internet, given that it had set up a web page, asking for help with digging up a grave or locating a relative. On 19th March 2003 the ARMH gave the number of 35,000 people buried in graves all over Spain[6]. Between then and 2006 a hundred and four were opened, from which a total of nine hundred and five sets of human remains were taken[7]. Of these 104 graves, two were found in Catalonia, one in the old cemetery of Olesa de Montserrat (El Baix Llobregat), where the remains of the people they were looking for were not found[8], and another in Prats de Lluçanès (Osona), an exhumation carried out by the Generalitat de Catalunya, where seven sets of remains were dug up, six republican soldiers and a civilian[9]. For the moment, in the rest of the Catalan Countries no other graves have been opened up.

However, with regard to this entire movement in Spain (the news of the opening of the grave in Priaranza del Bierzo, the emergence of the movement for the recovery of the historical memory, the common graves of civilians who were victims of reprisals by Falangists, the Guardia Civil or the Francoist army, their location and opening up), the intention has been to extrapolate the whole situation to the Catalan Countries, when

[5] Ibid, p. 122.
[6] "Agujeros en el silencio", *La Vanguardia* (19-III-2003), p. 48.
[7] Information provided by Francisco Etxeberría Gabilondo, titular lecturer of Legal and Forensic Medicine at the University of the Basque Country, who has taken part in many of these studies on graves.
[8] Gassiot, E., Oltra, J. and Sintes, E., *Recuperació de la memòria dels afusellaments de febrer de 1939 a Olesa de Montserrat. Informe preliminar de la intervenció al Cementiri Vell (novembre 2004)*, Departament de Prehistòria de la UAB/Associació per la memòria històrica de Catalunya (ARMHC), Bellaterra, 2005; you can consult http://www.memoriacatalunya.org/reportatges.htm.
[9] You can consult information on the opening of this grave on the webpage http://www.osona.com/arxiuspdf/FossaDossier.pdf.

the situation here was quite different: neither in Catalonia nor in Valencia did the coup d'état of 18th July succeed, while the situation in the Balearic Isles was also idiosyncratic. Nor could the void denounced by the associations that from 2000 were being created all over Spain in relation to the historical memory be extrapolated: the fact that the war, Francoism and the repression had not been studied; the fact that there was a deliberate information vacuum, because the Transition had meant the victory of oblivion.

Yet this is not quite the situation. In Spain and especially in the Catalan Countries this period has been studied for years and books have been published that analyse the violence during the war and the post-war period although, truth be told, these studies have not reached the public domain. The books were written, the specialists knew about them, but not the people. A lack of interest? The inability of the historians to reach the people? Perhaps the time was not right and it was necessary to wait for the grandchildren to mobilise? Because what we have seen with the passage of time, since 2000, is that it is the grandchildren of those who lived through the war who have mobilised, who are leading the tributes to their grandparents, leading the movement to "recover the memory" and the actions being carried out in the different sectors concerning this "memory". In Spain, since the 1980s there have been notable books studying the war and analysing the repression[10], and also in the Catalan Countries, where the studies by Josep Maria Solé i Sabaté and Joan Villarroya[11] stand out in Catalonia, Josep Massot[12] and Llorenç Capellà[13] in Majorca and Vicent Gavarda[14] in the Valencian Country, studies made in depth, thoroughly, free of political apriorisms.

The movement concerning the historical memory has been very positive for many reasons, above all for bringing history to the people: there is no longer a fear of this knowledge (of the contemporary age) and many people are daring to gather oral testimonies, to go through archives, to carry out very diverse studies to make documentaries. The initial criticism in the universities over the lack of investigations has stopped and has been transferred to the institutions. Slowly the work of historians over the years is coming to light, even though it was not excessively well known outside academic circles, and the criticism is transferred to the different governments, from the municipalities to the State, in a situation that is becoming paradoxical: the "memorialist

[10] Without wishing to exhaust the subject, see, from the 1980s, Nadal, A., *La guerra civil en Málaga*, Arguval, Málaga, 1984; Moreno Gómez, F., *La guerra civil en Córdoba (1936-1939)*, Alpuerto, Madrid, 1985; and id.: *Córdoba en la posguerra (la represión y la guerrilla, 1939-1950)*, Francsico Baena, ed., Córdoba, 1987; Hernández García, A., *La represión en La Rioja durante la guerra civil*, ed., by author, Logroño, 1984; Herrero Balsa, G. and Hernández García, A., *La represión en Soria durante la guerra civil*, ed. by the authors, Almazán, 1982; and Cabrera Acosta, M. Á.,*La represión en Hierro (1936-1944)*, Tagoron, Santa Cruz de Tenerife, 1985. Studies of the war and the repression continued to be made in the 1990s and are still being made.

[11] Among others, Solé i Sabaté, J. M., *La repressió franquista a Catalunya 1938-1953*, Edicions 62, Barcelona, 1985; Solé i Sabaté, J. M. and Villarroya i Font, J., *La repressió a la guerra i a la postguerra a la comarca del Maresme (1936-1945)*, Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat (PAM), Barcelona. 1983; and Solé i Sabaté, J. M. and Villarroya i Font, J., *La repressió a la reraguarda de Catalunya. 1936-1939*, PAM, Barcelona, 1989.

[12] Massot i Muntaner, J., *Guerra civil i repressió a Mallorca*, PAM, Barcelona, 1979; and id.: *Vida i miracles del "Conde Rossi". Mallorca, agost-setembre 1936. Málaga, gener-febrer 1937*, PAM, Barcelona, 1988.

[13] Capellà, L., *Diccionari vermell*, Moll, Mallorca, 1989.

[14] Gabarda Cebellán, V., *Els afusellaments al País Valencià (1938-1956)*, Alfons el Magnànim, Valencia, 1993 (2nd ed. Publicacions de la Universitat de València, Valencia, 2007), and id.: *La represión en la retaguardia republicana: País Valenciano, 1936-1939*, Alfons el Magnànim, Valencia, 1996.

groups" are demanding more and more from the institutions. Yet at the same time these groups concerned with the historical memory are never satisfied and, what is more, as time goes by, the differences within them are increasingly accentuated and the disagreements are leading to open confrontation. Reaching agreement on the treatment that everything making up the "memory"[15] should be given, such as the archives, the data in them, the statues, the symbolic monuments like El Valle de los Caídos, the street names, the victims of the war, of Francoist repression, everything to do with the representation of the events of the war and Francoism seventy years later, in this situation, seems rather unlikely.

> What we have seen since 2000 is that it is the grandchildren who are leading the tributes to their grandparents, leading the movement to "recover the memory"

As I was saying, almost certainly due to ignorance of the work of historians on the period of the war and Francoism, at least in Catalonia, the extrapolation that I mentioned of the situation existing in Spain with regard to the common graves occurred. And not only was it extrapolated from Spain, but the situations of people who had disappeared and were secretly buried in Argentina, Chile and Guatemala were also taken as examples. When, in 2003, the subject came to light, in Catalonia only the murders and the covering up of crimes perpetrated by people supporting the regime through secret interment in graves by Francoist troops, the Guardia Civil and Falangists were mentioned. These graves of course do exist in Catalonia, the territory we will be looking at here, but it must be pointed out that they are not the majority and that there has often been a certain degree of demagogy when talking about those who disappeared, meaning people from the Republican side who the soldiers went looking for in their homes, kidnapped, murdered and wanted to cover up the crime, as happened in other parts of Spain or in many South American dictatorships. In Catalonia, and quite possibly the situation varies little from what happened in the Valencian Country, the graves are mainly of soldiers. In fact, the graves in Catalonia can be divided into seven types according to the reason why they came about, which at the same time coincides in good measure with the development of the war and Franco's subsequent dictatorship.

The first type is the product of the revolutionary situation that overwhelmed the authorities of the Generalitat between July and December 1938. They are the graves that were created due to the need to bury, in secret, the victims of the so-called "uncontrolled elements", people who, due to a revolution wrongly understood, who were mostly members of the CNT-FAI but also of the other parties and trade unions of the time, perpetrated murders with impunity all over Catalonia, in which the chief victims were religious people, wealthy people, churchgoers, or those considered to be against the revolution[16]. The bodies of their victims met various fates: abandoned on the spot where they were killed (there are many places in Catalonia known for this), cremated or buried

inside or outside cemeteries, in common graves. However, there are not many of these graves left now seeing as almost all of them were dug up or dignified by the Francoist authorities once the war had finished and the new dictatorial regime had been installed. They were also dug up and the people who had been responsible for the killings were prosecuted by the Republican authorities in order to incriminate them. On 21st-22nd April 1937 the special court for the investigation of the excesses of the first months of the war was set up and three special judges were appointed to carry out this task, with the wholehearted support of Josep Andreu i Abelló, president of the Audiència de Barcelona and the Tribunal de Cassació de Catalunya[17]: Josep Bertran de Quintana, Josep Vidal Letche and Fernández Ros. They were charged with making the necessary enquiries in order to discover where these graves, known as secret cemeteries, were dig them up them and identify the victims. Legal proceedings were instituted for each of the secret cemeteries discovered and dug up, and the circumstances of the deaths were investigated: possible killers, dates of death and the arrest of those accused. On 18th November 1937 a summary of the actions carried out in Catalonia was made: it produced 2,073 victims, 175 defendants, 32 absentees, 128 prisoners and 15 people freed on bail. From this summary we know the towns where action was taken and the exhumations carried out: in Molins de Llobregat (de Rei) 18 exhumations; Montcada about 1,600; Les Corts 120; El Prat de Llobregat 2; Terrassa 183; Sitges 56; Figueres 6; Boadella 1; in the garage of Carrer Casanova, 29, in Barcelona, 4; Calonge 14; Olot 9; Balenyà 1; Farners de la Selva (Santa Coloma de Farners) 8; Palau-solità 3; Vallirana and Cervelló 32; Pobla de Lillet 6, and Vilafranca del Penedès 10[18].

As has been said already, despite these exhumations and those carried out by the Francoist authorities, graves still remain of people who suffered reprisals in the rearguard, and therefore many people do not know where their relative or close friend is, who one day went out of the house and did not return, or was arrested at home and taken away even in his underwear to one of the many places all over Catalonia where killings and secret burials were carried out. There are not many of these graves and, most importantly: with all the work done on them, by both the Republican and Francoist authorities, if they were not located then, it will be very difficult to do so now.

[15] Juliá,S., "Bajo el imperio de la Memoria", *Revista de Occidente*, 302-303 (2006), pp. 7-19, describes the situation concerning memory and the use made of it: "For some years, not just in Spain, we have been living under the sign of memory. In the past, about thirty years ago, we were interested in what had happened during the Republic and the Civil War: establishing the facts, interpreting the texts, analysing the situations. Today, when a new generation of historians, scholars, cultural critics born around the time of the Transition has come to the fore, what actually happened does not interest as much as the memory of it; not the facts but their representations, which take on a sort of autonomous existence, independent of the facts represented".

[16] See principally the books mentioned above by Josep Maria Solé i Sabaté and Joan Villarroya. Since these works appeared other studies of the repression in both the Republican and Francoist rearguards have appeared, basically at a local level, which have complemented or qualified the data, but always from the basis of these studies.

[17] To study in depth the administration of justice in Catalonia during this period, see Balcells, A., *Justícia i presons després de maig de 1937 a Catalunya. Intents regularitzadors del conseller Bosch Gimpera*, Rafael Dalmau, Barcelona, 1989, and Vázquez Osuna, F., *La rebel·lió dels tribunals. L'administració de justícia a Catalunya (1931-1953). La judicatura i el ministeri fiscal*, Afers, Catarroja-Barcelona, 2005.

[18] Solé i Sabaté, J. M., and Villarroya i Font, J., *La repressió a la reraguarda..., op. cit.*, p. 227.

The graves of the next type came into being from 1937 onwards, with the establishment by the Servicio de Investigación Militar (SIM) of the work camps in Catalonia[19]. On 28th December 1936, Reus-born Joan Garcia Oliver, an important member of the FAI and minister of Justice in the Republican government, created them by decree under the direction and administration of the Servicio de Investigación Militar (SIM). Initially the people going to the camps were those accused of acting against the revolution or the Republic: priests, traders, shopkeepers, men known for their support of the Falange or the military coup, people who had joined the fifth column to erode the republican rearguard from within, students or ordinary men sympathizing with the Lliga. After the Events of May, ironically for the man who had created them, anarchists or POUM militants or sympathisers also ended up there.

All of them had been arrested, most of them tried or awaiting trial, and moved to these camps with the aim of using them as a workforce. They were put to work building above all fortifications: trenches and machine gun nests, the defensive lines that would have to halt the Francoist troops if they ever penetrated Catalonia. In Catalonia they were created after April 1938, once Lleida had fallen (on the 3rd). They were sited in the Poble Espanyol of Barcelona, on Montjuïc (camp no. 1); at Vandellós and L'Hospitalet de l'Infant (El Baix Camp) with an accessory in Tivissa (La Ribera d'Ebre) (camp no. 2); at Omells de Na Gaia (L'Urgell, camp no. 3), which was later moved to Vila-sana (El Pla d'Urgell) and Cabó (L'Alt Urgell); at Concabella (Segarra, camp no. 4), later moved to Barbens (El Pla d'Urgell); at Ogern de Bassellà (L'Alt Urgell), moved later to Anglesola (L'Urgell, camp no. 5); and camp no. 6, the last one, which initially was in Falset (El Priorat) and which had accessory camps in the same *comarca* at Cabassers, Gratallops, La Figuera and Porrera, and was eventually moved to Arbeca (Les Garrigues) and subsequently annexed to camp no. 3, where most of the prisoners were finally moved.

All the witnesses who were in the work camps tell of mistreatment by the guards, men who instead of being at the front with the conscripted soldiers who were laying down their lives, preferred to be in the rearguard, guarding defenceless prisoners and (some of them) at times physically mistreating them until they died. Several graves arose from these camps, especially from work camp nº 3, in Omells de Na Gaia (L'Urgell), where the locals still remember how the whole village was turned into a work camp and how a lot of prisoners were killed and buried round about. Many of the graves arising from the work camps of the SIM were also dug up and the remains moved to cemeteries, but others are still in the same place they were dug and the bodies interred in 1938.

The third type of graves are those that resulted from the repression carried out by the rebel troops when they occupied new territory. In Catalonia, the most paradigmatic case, well known and studied, are the graves of El Pallars Sobirà, studied and documented by Manuel Gimeno[20]. They are graves that arose from the killing by the Francoist troops of the 62nd Division, commanded by General Sagardía Ramos, of old people, women and children who suffered the reprisals instead of their parents, husbands or sons. The troops, upon going to search the respective houses of their victims and not finding them, took the closest relatives, who before they reached Tremp were already dead and in the ground. The troops went in search of the incriminated men in their houses but the soldiers did not know the people of the area. They must have been given these names by local people in the *comarca*, one of the largest and most sparsely populated in Catalonia:

"It was people from the villages that suffered reprisals who handed over the victims to their military executioners. Why did they do it? For reasons of political rivalry? Not necessarily. As revenge for the wrong done them during the revolutionary period? Not likely either, as in El Pallars Sobirà there had not been as much violence or as many right-wing people imprisoned as in other parts. No; the most immediate causes of the tragic betrayals were envy and financial interests. This is the reason for so much moral wretchedness and so many denunciations"[21].

What triggered off the deaths were above all reprisals for the military infiltrations, between April and December 1938, by the republicans in the *comarca*, trying to block the road that crosses it, and cut off communications between the Valleys of Àneu and Sort. Between 15th April and 5th November sixty-nine men and women from the *comarca* were killed, most of them buried secretly outside the cemeteries. Some of these graves were dug up during the dictatorship; others, however, are still there where the Francoist troops had them dug and buried their victims.

> Graves still remain of people who suffered reprisals in the rearguard, and therefore many people do not know where their relative or close friend is

Those of El Pallars are known thanks to the studies done by Manuel Gimeno, but between April and December 1938 there were other parts of Catalonia occupied by the Francoist troops in which they were able to act with absolute impunity: the Francoist rearguard in the Vall d'Aran, L'Alta Ribagorça, El Pallars Jussà, La Noguera, El Segrià, El Montsià and El Baix Ebre are likely to have witnessed events just as tragic as those in El Pallars Sobirà.

The graves of soldiers, the fourth type, are, as I have already said, the majority in Catalonia. Within this type there are different sorts: at the front, at the Ebro and in the retreat. In Catalonia the front was more or less fixed for nine months along the rivers flowing from north to south in the west of the Principality —the Noguera Pallaresa, the Segre and the Ebro. These were months of constant fighting, although the Republican offensives of May and November stand out, above all around the bridgeheads that the Francoist army managed to establish at Tremp, La Baronia de Sant Oïsme, Balaguer and Seròs and which resulted in great loss of life, soldiers who were buried in big graves near the front itself and, therefore, outside the cemeteries. Some of these graves were moved to the basilica of El Valle de los Caídos at the end of the 1950s, where Franco and his

[19] Badia, F., *Els camps de treball a Catalunya durant la guerra civil (1936-1939)*, pam, Barcelona, 2001.
[20] Gimeno, M., *Revolució, guerra i repressió al Pallars (1936-1939)*, pam, Barcelona, 1987.
[21] Gimeno, M., "La repressió durant l'ocupació franquista del Pallars", in Solé i Sabaté, J. M. and Villarroya i Font, J. (eds.), *La guerra civil a Catalunya. Vol. 3: Catalunya, centre neuràlgic de la guerra*, Edicions 62, Barcelona, 2004, pp. 152-154.

government wanted the remains of soldiers and "martyrs" killed all over Spain to be laid to rest. Initially designed only for soldiers from the rebel army, in the end Republican soldiers were also taken there[22].

In the south of Catalonia it was also a river that marked the line between the two armies. In this case, from the confluence in Mequinensa of the rivers Segre and Ebro to where the latter flows into the sea, the river divided the Catalonia occupied by the Francoist army from still-Republican Catalonia. On this occasion, however, unlike the rivers Segre and Noguera Pallaresa, there was no point anywhere in the four *comarques* the river flows through (La Terra Alta, La Ribera d'Ebre, El Baix Ebre and El Montsià) at which Franco's army could cross the river and set up a bridgehead on the other side. In April 1938, then, the frontline in the south of the country was the river Ebro, and it stayed this way until July, when the Republican army launched a major offensive: on 25th July the Republican troops crossed the Ebro at various places, beginning the great battle of the Spanish Civil War: the Battle of the Ebro[23].

A great many died in the battle —it is impossible to give an exact figure[24]— and just a few days after it began it became a battle of trenches, of attrition, of holding positions won in the first few days and retreating very slowly. Logically, these dead were buried, almost always in large common graves, if not cremated for reasons basically of health. On the rebel side they were moved to graves prepared mostly in cemeteries in the villages just behind the lines (Gandesa, Bot, Batea, Horta de Sant Joan); very seldom was the Republican army able to pick up and bury its soldiers, seeing as basically in the first few days it held the territory it had won and until November 1938 it only retreated, without being able to recover the bodies of comrades left lying in enemy territory. Apart from the large graves mentioned, there may also have been some around Corbera d'Ebre or Vilalba dels Arcs, where heavy fighting took place. Most of these graves, however, were moved to El Valle de los Caídos[25]. The thousands of soldiers who died in the Pàndols or Cavalls mountains were not moved and were buried, out of necessity, in bomb craters or trenches.

[22] Sueiro, D., *El Valle de los Caídos. Los secretos de la cripta franquista*, Argos Vergara, Barcelona, 1983; and Solé, Queralt: "Banys, hospital i cementiri", *Cadí-Pedraforca*, 1 (2006).

[23] One of the latest publications about the Battle of the Ebro is the book by Sánchez Cervelló, J. and Clua, P., *La Batalla de l'Ebre: un riu de sang*, Espais de la Batalla de l'Ebre, Gandesa, 2005. There are many works, however, focusing on this important episode; see, for example, Blanco, C., *La incompetencia militar de Franco*, Alianza, Madrid, 2000, Cardona, G. and Losada, J. C., *Aunque me tires del puente*, Aguilar, Madrid, 2004, Dd. Aa.: *La Batalla de l'Ebre, Història, paisatge i patrimoni*, Pòrtic, Barcelona, 1999, Galí, R., *L'Ebre i la caiguda de Catalunya*, Barcelonesa d'Edicions, Barcelona, 1996, Martínez Bande, J. M., *La batalla del Ebro*, Servicio Histórico Militar/Editorial San Martín, Madrid, 1978, Mezquida, L. M., *La batalla del Ebro. Asedio de Tortosa y combates de Amposta*, Diputació de Tarragona, Tarragona, 2001, idem: *La batalla del Ebro. Asedio y defensa de Gandesa*, Diputació de Tarragona, Tarragona, 1977, and idem.: *La batalla del Ebro. Asedio y defensa de Villalba de los Arcos*, Diputació de Tarragona, Tarragona, 1974, P. Pagès: *La guerra civil espanyola a Catalunya (1936-1939)*, Llibres de la frontera, Barcelona, 1997, and Torres, E., *La Batalla de l'Ebre i la caiguda de Barcelona*, Pagès, Lleida, 1999.

[24] The various existing studies speak of between 100,000 and 130,000 losses by both armies, including dead, wounded, prisoners and deserters. Ramón Salas Larrazábal considers that the losses were shared equally and that they numbered 50,000 on each side; see Salas Larrazábal, R., *Historia del Ejército Popular de la República*, Editora Nacional, Madrid, 1973, vol. II; to be precise, he considers the material and human losses in the battle on pages 2,019-2,022. Whereas Martínez Bande considers that the Republicans lost more men and raises the figure to 70,000 Republicans and 60,000 from the rebel army lost; Martínez Bande, J. M., *La Batalla del Ebro*, "Monografías de la Guerra de España/3", San Martín, Madrid, 1978, p. 303.

[25] As remembered by the local people in the area.

Of these burials, there may be thousands that have withstood the passage of time, in a place where the landscape has not undergone building development, although they are now difficult to locate and find.

The graves of the retreat were created between December 1938, when the rebel army began its final offensive to occupy Catalonia, and 10th February 1939, when it reached the French border. All over the country, and above all coinciding with the defensive lines set up by General Vicente Rojo, we can find graves of Republican soldiers who, one, two or three days after the occupation of the village by the rebels, the people of the village went to look for with carts and moved the remains to the cemetery, where a grave was dug and the soldiers killed in combat were placed. In the great majority of cases they have no documentation of any kind, or any personal effects, as the enemies had already stripped them of anything of any value they may have been carrying. In many other cases, especially if the places where the soldiers had died were difficult to reach, the locals buried the bodies on the very spot where they found the remains, grouping together a few soldiers, as the nearest cemetery was still too far away to move the bodies. There are a lot of these graves because, although for years Francoist propaganda told the story that the occupation of Catalonia had been a stroll, the graves dotted all over the country show that, despite being an army of young men and fathers aware of their defeat (of the *lleves del biberó* and *del sac* respectively), it fought to the last. One example is the grave dug up by the Generalitat de Catalunya at Puigvistós farm, in Prats de Lluçanès (Osona). On 2nd February 1939, seventy kilometres from the frontier, which they would have reached in no more than seven days, they created a holding line in front of the village that stopped the Francoist troops for two days, a stoppage that entailed the deaths of many men who if they had carried on walking to France would have been saved, but which at the same time probably meant that a lot of other people, on their way into exile, *were* able to reach the border.

> The thousands of soldiers who died in the Pàndols or Cavalls mountains were not moved and were buried, out of necessity, in bomb craters or trenches

However, this retreating army, especially its more politicised units, like those commanded by Líster (5th Army Corps), frustrated by the imminence of defeat, also committed abuses in the villages they passed through, abducting men and youths who were taken and in some cases later killed, like those in the woods that they encountered on their way to the border. It is another type of grave, the fifth, that, although few in number, also have to be taken into account when making a classification of them.

The sixth type are those that arose from the need to bury the soldiers who died in the field or military hospitals. Throughout the war, all over Catalonia a large number of hospitals were fitted out for the purpose of looking after those wounded at the front. These included the ones just behind the army lines, providing immediate attention,

and those far more stabilised set up in large buildings like spas or schools. Unfortunately, in many cases the number of dead was high, and often the mortal remains of the soldiers who had not recovered from their injuries were buried in common graves, inside and outside the cemeteries. Although while the Republic and the Generalitat lasted the families received the official notification of the soldier's death in a particular hospital, by late 1938 and early 1939 it became very difficult to send these notifications, and in most cases they stopped being sent.

The whole movement to recover the historical memory has lead to many families resuming or initiating the search for a relative who disappeared

The whole movement to recover the historical memory, the desire to know, the fact that lately the war and the post-war period have been discussed continually in the media, has led to many families resuming or initiating the search for a relative who disappeared. And this quest, all too often fruitless, has resulted in the appearance on the Internet of a host of web pages publishing the names of the people, soldiers and also the victims of reprisals by Francoism, who died in military hospitals or succumbed in the post-war period. At the present time, the most important are the web pages of the Fòrum per la Memòria del País Valencià, which includes the names of all those buried in the common graves in Valencia cemetery[26]; in Majorca, the web page of the Associació per la Recuperació de la Memòria Històrica de Mallorca[27]; and in Catalonia the web page of the cemetery in Manresa[28], done by the historian Quim Aloy and pioneering in Catalonia, which brought to light the soldiers who died in Manresa and were buried in the cemetery; also in Catalonia, that of the hospitals and the concentration camp in Cervera[29] (done by the historian Jordi Oliva), that of the cemetery in Alpicat[30], the hospital in Cambrils[31] and, including in this case those shot by the regime, the page of the Centre d'Estudis d'Investigació Històrica Baix Maestrat/Montsià[32]. There are also many of these graves all over the country and, unlike the others, at times documents have been conserved

[26] http://www.nodo50.org/forumperlamemoria/spip.php?sommaire.
[27] http://www.memoriadelesilles.org/.
[28] http://guiamanresa.com/fossa/.
[29] http://mailxxi.com/guerracivil/index.htm.
[30] http://www.alpicat.cat/historiaguerracivil/.
[31] http://cambrils.org/nivell3.php?id_cont_area=942&id_area=3&id_sub_area=60.
[32] http://www.ceibm.org/fechas002.htm.
[33] The State has also published many lists of names of people who disappeared or were buried in common graves. Among others, there are pages such as: http://www.nodo50.org/despage/ (of exiles); http://www.todoslosnombres.es/ and http://www.fosacomun.com/ (Asturias); http://www.todoslosnombres.org/ (Andalusia); and http://www.terra.es/personal/suarxm/ (Galicia).
[34] Montserrat Fosalba i Domènech, *La guerra civil a Abrera*, Ajuntament d'Abrera, Abrera, 2001.
[35] Dueñas, O., *La violència dels uns i dels altres. La repressió de guerra i postguerra 1936-1945: el cas d'Olesa de Montserrat*, pam, Barcelona (at press).
[36] Fàbrega, A., *Mort a les cunetes (1939)*, Angle, Barcelona, 2005.
[37] Lardín, A. and Corbalán Gil, J., "La repressió franquista al Baix Llobregat: el cas de Collbató", in *Actes de les Jornades sobre la fi de la Guerra Civil*, Patronat d'Estudis Històrics d'Olot i comarca, Olot, 2001.

referring to the people buried in them, which, as we have seen, are increasingly being made public via the Internet[33].

Lastly, the seventh type are the graves resulting from the burials of civilian victims who suffered reprisals by the Francoist forces, people killed and buried without having being tried or court-martialled. These events resulted in graves being created like those in Abrera[34], Olesa de Montserrat[35] and Can Maçana, in El Bruc[36], where nine residents of Súria and Valls de Torroella were buried. The other secret grave in Catalonia of premeditated killings and burials without any previous trial is the one of villagers of Collbató[37], killed and buried in Castellbell i el Vilar. They were nine people killed in circumstances similar to the residents of Olesa de Montserrat and Súria; the soldiers went to look for them in their houses or they were summoned to the town hall, they were kept under arrest for a few days and, when everything indicated that they would be taken to prison, the lorry they were being transported in stopped, and the men were ordered out and shot. This grave, however, was dug up years later and the remains were taken to the cemetery in their village, Collbató.

These are the secret graves, unknown graves that were intended to conceal crimes by the Francoist army or the Guardia Civil. And these are the graves most numerous in Spain and which the people generally think about when the subject of graves and people who disappeared crops up. But as we have seen, they are not in the majority in Catalonia. In this respect, there has been a lot of demagogy in Catalonia, with regard to the common graves in existence and the debate surrounding them and whether to dig them up or not. One may argue about the study, the exhumation, the dignifying, but the idea of common graves resulting from murders by the Francoist troops or sympathetic groups cannot be spread around in an incorrect, poorly documented or ignorant manner when there are so few of them, shameful though they may be II

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Francesc-Marc Álvaro

One 15th August in Mauthausen

(Notes against disfiguration)

Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, about midday. We are standing in front of the Nazi camp of Mauthausen, near Linz, Austria. We go inside. We've come a long way to get here. We'll be here for more than three hours. I'd like to write that I don't know what we're looking for. I'll know when I come out. Perhaps.

1. This is something less than a theme park and much more than archaeological ruins. The problem is one of imagination. Only part of the original camp is here and one has to fill in the gaps. Doing this isn't as easy as it seems when one is making the preparations to come here. We're seeking traces. It's disappointing to be in a place that's devoted to memory which, paradoxically, isn't well explained. The account recorded in cassettes doesn't work, takes us away from the fact and diminishes everything by wanting to signify it in each adjective. We look for the vestiges in silence, then. My uncle died in Mauthausen, according to the Red Cross, on 1st January 1942. He was one of the many Republicans who went into exile and who, later, joined the Compagnies de Travailleurs Étrangers. Still with the rank of lieutenant, he joined the 115ème Compagnie to go and reinforce the Maginot Line. In May 1940, Hitler's troops easily broke through the French defences, and my uncle was captured by the Germans on 21st June. After passing through the Strasbourg prisoner-of-war camp, he was sent to the Mauthausen camp and, finally, to the sub-camp in Gusen, which he would not leave. He was 29 when he died.

2. Terminological confusion is moral confusion. Are we to call it concentration camp or extermination camp? It's evident that Mauthausen was both, and it's evident that it never achieved the heights of productivity of the most destructive camp of them all, Auschwitz. In sum, for the Soviet soldiers and the Jews who ended up here, this was only an extermination camp. For our Republicans, it was both and more than 6,000 of them died in this place. In the end, it was a matter of dying more or less quickly. In comparison with the big camp located in Poland, what remains of the installations in Mauthausen looks too inoffensive today. Banally inoffensive, offensively inoffensive. The large quarry, for example, where every day prisoners died of exhaustion, or because the guards obliged them to throw themselves over the edge of the cliff, is camouflaged now with the grass that has sprung up, and it offers a falsely mild image, almost bucolic. A quarry where you can't see the stone. The 186 steps the prisoners climbed several times a day, their backs laden with rocks, are regular and comfortable today, totally practicable for children and the aged too. The whole thing is disturbing and it puts historical truth out of focus. The modified materiality of the camp changes our experience of pain we have not suffered. The risk of disfiguration is huge.

3. Should we take photos inside the gas chambers disguised as showers? Where does tourism begin and where does the right to memory end? Where does the souvenir begin and history end? Can I contemplate the site of the most abominable crime like somebody who is contemplating some relic of the Greeks or the Romans? Within these walls, prosaically, the final ceremony of radical evil took place and I don't know how to observe this space that weighs on one, that offers a density of death that has no equivalent outside of here.

The gas chambers didn't go into operation in Mauthausen until April 1942. I work it out. My uncle must have died in some other way, not because of the gas: hung from gallows, frozen to death, from exhaustion, or a shot. One of the spaces that the visitor finds near the gas chambers is the "neck shot corner" where prisoners were shot in the neck. Here, the guards told the prisoner to stand, back against the wall, so they could take measurements; then, through a slot in the headboard, they fired a shot into the nape of the victim's neck. A rudimentary but efficient system, although too slow for Nazi standards. An SS member, one of the ones who went back to leading a quiet civilian life after the war without answering for any crime, might say it was a compassionate method: the prisoner didn't know anything and didn't suffer. The surprise of the shot in the neck coincided with the explosion of the bullet in the brain. Light and dark, a fleeting fraction of time. A privilege in a place where suffering could be very prolonged.

4. An adolescent comes out crying from one of the areas that has a crematorium oven. He's accompanied by people who seem to be his parents. Where does education for learning about and preventing radical evil begin and end? This is the fundamental question of our times, that which has marked the world since 1945. Will I ever bring my children to such place? When is the time to do it? What will I say to them before the artefacts of crime on such a great scale? There are some young children visiting the camp. A little boy is running around, dashing through the place where prisoners died, as if he was in a garden. Life that is ignorant of horror and agony fills the vacuum. The children touch all the objects of the crime. The adults don't dare to.

5. The pavilion with the flags of the victims' countries is highly instructive. In the space allocated to the Spanish Republicans, there is the flag of the Second Republic and no other. I'm not surprised. It's the only non-official flag in this place. It's the only flag of a country that doesn't exist, of a defeated cause, of people who could have been saved but weren't. This flag denounces all the political and moral wretchedness of Franco, who preferred that Hitler should finish off the dirtiest work for him. This anachronistic flag, all by itself, is a gauge of the measure of the falsity of the label of "reconciliation" that the fathers of the transition stuck on their pacts. This flag, perhaps, might be exchanged for the constitutional flag of Spain the day when, for example, without making any excuses, the Spanish right condemns the Franco regime, which was an accomplice of the Third Reich, and which allowed the country's Republicans to be exterminated in its camps. Until that happens, the official flag of Spain has no place here. Out of respect, out of dignity, out of justice. In other parts of the camp, next to

Margarite Island (Venezuela), Toni Catany (2006)

photographs of some of the victims, there are also Catalan flags or sometimes just a small ribbon with the colours, next to a name. Here, the vanquished country lost, twice. It lost the right, for instance, of having tombs with names. Tombs where you can go to cry.

6. I am beset by one idea: my uncle, when he came in here, didn't know where he was going. I mean he didn't know that the Nazi camps were Nazi camps and nor did he know that radical evil would be fully consummated here, with the most precise modern technology. He didn't know that he was coming in here to die, that his body would disappear and that we'd never find it. "I am a prisoner of war", must have been his first consideration. Today, we know much more than my uncle ever knew about the machinery that murdered him. What we shall never know is the texture of the pain, that which binds fear to despair and suffering to dreaming. What did the deportees dream about in these wooden bunks in the barracks? A few of the bunks are on display so that the visitor can get an idea of how the prisoners lived. But can we get an idea of it? No, even trying to is a ridiculous pretension, an absurd intention. Did the prisoners have nightmares? What did they do when they discovered that existence was worse than the nightmare? And over every moment hung the cold of the Austrian winter, there to break their skin, their breath, and their last efforts.

I am beset by one idea: my uncle, when he came in here, didn't know where he was going, he didn't know that the Nazi camps were Nazi camps

7. From the camp you can see houses and farms. It's a perfect postcard picture, a milk chocolate ad. The little village of Mauthausen is only six kilometres away. After leaving the camp, shattered, we stop for something to eat in the centre of the village. Among the adults we can see, there must be people who were children in 1941. Some of them are dressed up in local costume because Austria is a Catholic country and today, here too, they celebrate the feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. I look at them and try to divine what it would be like living your whole life next to an extermination camp. And I'd also like to know what you think when you've been part, perhaps only passively, of a criminal system, the evidence of which could be seen, felt and smelt from your house while you put your child to bed, or got dinner, telling jokes while doing so. I remember now some documentary films of the allied troops who, in 1945, when they liberated the Nazi camps, obliged the local authorities in the surrounding towns to bury the piled-up, half-burnt bodies, which the SS hadn't had time to dispose of before fleeing. The faces of those German and Austrian civilians didn't express anything: not surprise, not fear, not fright, not affliction. If anything, something like disgust. I confess it and feel bad about it: I only see disgust and indifference in the visages and eyes of the older people who are having a beer at the neighbouring table, today, 15th August 2006, in Mauthausen.

8. The Austrian government has set up an exhibition inside the camp to demonstrate that there was also internal resistance against the Nazis and that not everyone was prepared to collaborate with the huge-scale crime. You can see the official effort to present an image to compensate for the collective shame. Beyond this part, in the Gusen sub-camp, almost nothing of the installations remains. Housing zones have been constructed and nobody would relate these high-income-family surroundings with the last gaze of many Catalan and Spanish republicans who were reduced to skin and bone. The ghosts of the deportees are not like the spirits of a profaned Indian cemetery who go around frightening the residents. The ghosts of the prisoners are us, the tourists in the camp, who are on the trail of death to find out something about the last days of uncles and grandparents and parents and cousins whom we are not resigned to forgetting. We go to where death still grunts, to listen to the echo of life. We go to death to bring them back, a little, to life.

9. On 12th October 2004, it occurred to the then Spanish Minister of Defence, José Bono, to get an old Republican combatant of the Leclerc Division and a former Falangist volunteer of Franco's Blue Division to march side by side in the military parade on what is known as Hispanic Day, Spain's national holiday. The Blue Division troops fought alongside Hitler's troops against the Russians. In the summer of 1941, some 45,000 Spanish volunteers joined the campaign to invade Russia, which turned out to be so disastrous for Nazi plans. While the Spanish victors of the Civil War were looking for a new victorious crusade, my uncle spent the last months of his life in Mauthausen, with the vanquished. The future of Europe and the world was at stake then. On 5th May 1945, American troops under the command of Lt. Col. Milton W. Keach liberated the camp of Mauthausen. The Blue Division had to return to Spain at the beginning of 1944 after losing approximately half its men. My uncle won the Second World War but died without knowing it.

10. Jorge Semprún, who was a prisoner in the Nazi camp of Buchenwald and was saved because, as he has written, he passed through death, has reminded us that in ten years' time, there will be no living witness to that infamy. Not my uncle, nor any other man. In ten years' time, we won't have voices or gestures to fill the enormous spaces and then the struggle against the last death, against the last erasure, against the siege of dust, will really begin. We shall go back to Mauthausen when they can no longer return and we shall go back as many times as necessary. And we shall tell our children to come too. To remember the horror and the darkness. To celebrate freedom and life II

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notes & comments

Carme Puche

A century of science in Catalan

The Institute of Catalan Studies a hundred years ago

To enter the Institut d'Estudis Catalans (Institute of Catalan Studies - IEC), speak with its members, attend the activities they organise, roam around the Biblioteca de Catalunya (Library of Catalonia), discover the quantity of publications it generates... is an incitement to knowledge. One wants to ask questions, do research, read, learn and reflect upon any of the thematic areas for which they are responsible, which is to say all those that might impinge on Catalan culture.

To be precise, if there is any suitable definition for this academy of academies, it is that of inciter of knowledge because in the Institute research is done, publications are produced, and studies in all the different thematic areas —many of which would probably not find space in any other institution— are circulated. However, its members have also come to terms with the fact that the Institute is very little known for, since it tends to be associated with the Catalan language, the scientific endeavour that has characterised it since its beginnings has not always been recognised.

Organised into five independent sections, in the style of the French Institute, the Institute is a federation that brings together 26 affiliated societies with some 8,500 members. In the words of Antoni Riera, IEC vice-president and president of the commission organising the centenary that the Institute will be celebrating in the coming months, it represents "an extraordinary human patrimony, with roots that spread in a very well-balanced way through all the Països Catalans (Catalan language territories)". Since it was founded by Enric Prat de la Riba in 1907, a hundred years of innovation,

resistance and subsequent modernisation have gone by in an Institute that has come down to our times with a desire to "open up its doors and windows", an expression repeated by its members as a maxim clearly indicating that this commemoration is not just to remind us of its history —which is, in part, the history of us all— but also that it aims to open up a process of reflection in order to keep abreast of scientific changes and not to lose ground in the internationalisation of Catalan culture, which is one of the main goals the Institute has made possible from its earliest days.

Academy of academies

The early years of the twentieth century saw the beginnings of a revolutionary project that would represent the Catalan scientific community as distinct and particular *vis-à-vis* the academies of other countries. It drew together prior efforts such as that initiated with the First International Congress of the Catalan Language (1906) and found background support with the resulting electoral victory of Solidaritat Catalana. However, on 18th June 1907, the Catalan government officially founded, for the first time, an advisory body that was also an autonomous centre of studies with systematic and well-planned functions. With a strategy delineated by Enric Prat de la Riba, the newly-elected president of the Diputació (Provincial Council) of Barcelona, the Institut d'Estudis Catalans made its appearance with a first section, the Historical-Archaeological Section, because studies in this field were the most advanced at the time and it was therefore a way of ensuring a good start for a truly innovative project. A hundred years later, the IEC has five sections: the original Historical-Archaeological Section and the subsequently established Philosophy and Social Science, Science and Technology, Biological Sciences, and Philological sections. Each of these sections is simultaneously extended into specialised affiliated societies —the first of which was the Societat Catalana de Biologia (Catalan Biology Society— 1913) —and these are spread throughout the Països Catalans. It was a complex structure with a complex task: producing science in Catalan and disseminating internationally recognised, high-quality culture, "without much economic support and, in many cases, having to deal with hostility from the government of the day", as Riera says. Indeed, the history of the IEC is inscribed through two dictatorships and two world wars that have thwarted the internationalisation that defines it but that has, at the same time, protected it against some forms of aggression. In Riera's formulation, "In 1922, the Institute was accepted by the International Union of Academics (UAI). Under the Franco regime, the UAI never withdrew recognition and we always participated in it. Even though they confiscated all our property, there was still a certain respect for us thanks to these relations". And these relations are alive and well today. To go no further, in July 2006, the UAI entrusted the IEC with the coordination of a research project on human dignity, in which researchers from different countries are participating.

The support of the UAI was not the only help the Institute received in difficult times. With the coming of each dictatorship, when the IEC was left without a headquarters and funding, some sector of the Catalan bourgeoisie came to the rescue. "Since we are a minority sector", Riera explains, "ours is not a story like that of the Royal Academy

of History in Madrid, which began in the 18th century without any kind of problem whatsoever, and without ever having been in opposition. It has been complicated for us but also enriching. There have been errors, contradictions, internal tensions... but our activity has never been interrupted". This continuity can be demonstrated with dozens of examples, but perhaps the most significant moment came in 1942, with the harsh Franco regime in power, and all the uncertainties of the Second World War. "There are members who have had to go into exile for political reasons and some have become Franco supporters. Those who are left behind in 1942 are talking about reconstituting the Institute and covering the vacancies. But, of course, our headquarters have been closed and they've taken all the publications and a lot of them have been sold as used paper!" Such was the lament of Albert Balcells, president of the Historical-Archaeological Section and author of *Història de l'Institut d'Estudis Catalans* (History of the Institute of Catalan Studies) of which Volume One was published in 2002, with Volume Two scheduled for the end of 2007. "They did two very significant things", Balcells continues, "for they never stopped publishing in Catalan, even though publishing scientific essays in Catalan was prohibited, and they never cancelled the membership of people who went into exile. The more persecuted, shrunken and limited Catalan culture was under Franco, the more important was the Institute. It is not that less work was done in the 1950s and 1960s, but the setting was not so oppressive. The Institute acted as a springboard between a language and a culture that, at the time, were dead for the coming generation".

From a culture of resistance to modernisation

With a catalogue of publications consisting of over a thousand entries and agreements signed as to the Institute's participation in research programmes of the universities of the Països Catalans and with the Spanish National Research Council, as well as daily activities concerned with making knowledge available, the IEC is fully recognised in institutional and international terms although it is still far from receiving the popular recognition it deserves in Catalan society. As Riera notes, "in times when it is not working in opposition to the government and when it has economic resources, it is a very innovative and creative institution, while when it has to engage in resistance resisting is evidently the main concern and then, if the resistance has to continue for a long period, as happened under the Franco regime, staff renewal becomes very difficult. Forty years of surviving generates a distrustful, rather susceptible and highly personalised way of thinking. With the coming of democracy in the 1970s", Riera continues, "we found we had an Institute without any personality or legacy. In 1976 came the royal decree that once again recognised it and gave it scientific authority in all the Catalan-speaking territories, but without any economic support". Despite everything, a process of modernisation was carried out, including breathing new life into the staff, which was almost doubled. "The transition was a tough time for the Institute", remarks Balcells, "and at the end of 1977 a new statute was being considered. Unplanned growth was occurring and the Science Section was pressuring more than anyone to regulate the situation as this is the one with most

people. At the end of the 1980s, this was all recast and reform of the statutes was undertaken. The Science Section had grown so much that it was split into Biological and Technological Sciences. The reforms were completed in 1988 after ten years of insecurity in which things did not function smoothly enough, so it was a very long transition".

This process of reconstruction went hand in hand with the promise to produce an IEC dictionary, which did not appear until 1995, at a time when the Institute's publications were multiplying at an extraordinary rate. Modernisation has borne fruit. "When I came to work here, the computers were not interconnected", Riera exclaims. "We had computers from the times of Quixote. They were huge! We had to install a fibre-optic system and nowadays we are on the cutting edge of computer systems in general". Now revitalized and totally organised, the Institute's aim this century is to make itself known. "Our doors and windows are open to everyone. We want people to come here and to see that their lives are affected by the Institute. Here, decisions are made on a daily basis about such important things as the language! We want people to see the Institute as their country's academy, and we want them to ask for things: scientific reports, opinions, debates... If you require an opinion about any matter, in this house you can have the views of fourteen different scientists. In ten minutes you can be in touch with a physicist, a philologist, a mathematician... and this is extraordinarily enriching!" says Riera.

A critical celebration

"We thought long and hard about who we wanted to open the centenary celebrations. We believed it should have great symbolic impact and, out of all the Catalans, we had to choose one person. We wanted someone who could show that Catalonia produces first-rate scientists who, even though they may be based in the United States, still feel Catalan. And, also very importantly, we wanted to demonstrate that we are not only concerned with philology and the humanities but that we are also working with the experimental sciences, health problems, doing cancer research... things that are of concern to society at large. We are not only the academy of the language, though we are very happy to be that, but we are many other things as well." With these words, Riera explains why they have asked the biochemist Joan Massagué to make the inaugural speech for the centenary celebrations. "And there is yet another reason", he adds. "In choosing a top-ranking scientist, we are opening the centenary with the very latest that Catalan science has to offer right now, without nostalgia or looking back to the past, but with our eyes are turned to the future". This latter reason is why a cycle of conferences on the experimental sciences and technology in 20th century Catalonia is being held (from 6th February to 11th May) as one of the activities of this centenary celebration, with a view to achieving two objectives. First is analysing the process of the country's scientific modernisation over a hundred years and, second, to discover challenges that are worth confronting in the future. As Riera puts it, "We shall hold a first cycle of lectures so as to see what our roots are and what our successes and our errors have been. This does not mean an examination of history as a teacher of life, but rather to obtain some perspective from the more scientific point of view. On the basis of this, there will be a

complementary second cycle of lectures in order to make medium- and long-term predictions and to analyse the present in order to see what might happen with the bottleneck that can be caused by uncontrolled development".

The centenary commemoration also includes activities in the spheres of language (a commemoration of the First International Congress of the Catalan Language, and an International Symposium on Catalan in the 20th Century: a Balance of the Present Situation and Future Prospects), history (Symposium on the Catalan-language Territories and Europe over the Last Century) and key 20th century personalities (a course of advanced studies on Catalan culture, power and society). For Riera, it is very important to emphasise that the IEC does not neglect art and, in this domain, the programme also includes an anthological programme of Catalan music over the last hundred years, featuring the premiere of a work exclusively created for the centenary celebrations by the composer and conductor Joan Albert Amargós. In the publishing field, the celebration will also make its presence felt with a series of specific publications that will include novelties such as the first catalogue of IEC publications since its very beginnings and the exhibition "Cent anys de l'Institut d'Estudis Catalans" (A Hundred Years of the Institute of Catalan Studies), supervised by the historian Francesc Fontbona with the assistance of Josep Maria Camarasa. This will be open to the public in Barcelona from 2nd November to 31st December and, in Valencia, in March and April, as well as in other Spanish cities on dates that are still to be determined.

In this country, achieving a hundred years in operation has been a complicated task for any entity promoting Catalan culture but, in the case of the IEC, there are the additional factors of its structural complexity and the scientific goals described above. Yet, despite all this, the centenary celebrations have not been planned as some expression of complacency by the Institute's members, but rather with a view to offering a critical celebration of the past, present and future of a "house", as its members call it, whose work has constant repercussions in Catalan society. "We have to criticise ourselves", says Riera. This is why the lecture cycles are not confined to conference halls but are produced as written material in documents and, once the centenary celebrations are over, the IEC will embark on a period of reflection, section by section, so as to assimilate this material and open up a period for offering proposals in order to bring about the changes that will see the Institute and Catalan culture through the 21st century II

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Pilar Vélez

Santiago Rusiñol
The modern artist and Modernist Barcelona

Rusiñol was born in 1861, in Carrer de la Princesa number 37, into a family of industrialists with a cotton factory in Manlleu, the office of which was on the mezzanine floor of the building where they lived. He died in 1931 in Aranjuez, while painting what was to be his last garden. In other words, he lived seventy years that coincided with one of the most agitated stages of the socio-political, economic and cultural life of Barcelona.

He was a leading figure in the transformations the city underwent, lived through them and, more important, contributed notably towards them, especially during one particular stage of his life.

In 1861, Barcelona had some 240,000 inhabitants and, with the centralist political system that prevailed in Spain at the time, it had been relegated to the status of provincial city. By 1931 it had reached the figure of a million inhabitants and had consolidated as a modern city. To be brief, this transformation was characterised above all by sweeping and radical social change which was generalised throughout Europe and very far-reaching in Barcelona. The birth of the proletariat led to major tensions and very bitter conflict. This was the time, too, of the beginnings of democratisation, with the rise of the liberal professions and new figures like the intellectual and the artist. It was also when the phenomenon of the progressive construction of the Catalan national identity appeared, along with the need to confront Spain, a decrepit, broken-backed, ruined Spanish state that had lost its last American colonies, and was cut off from Europe.

A single-minded artist's vocation

From his childhood, Rusiñol had wanted to be a painter and defined himself as a painter. Nonetheless, his grandfather, the industrialist Jaume Rusiñol Bosch, had decided he would go into the family business. He did indeed work there but he also went to the Llotja Art School. He was mad about art, passionate about art

and it went very deep, so deep that in a letter written in June 1886 during his honeymoon in Paris and addressed to his great friend Enric Clarasó, the sculptor with whom he shared a studio in the neighbourhood of l'Eixample, he said, "The only thing that interests me is the demon of art"! It is more than somewhat significant that a young man of twenty-five, in the midst of all the excitement of getting married, should make such a statement which, on the other hand, was more than sincere, as he would demonstrate not long afterwards and throughout the rest of his life.

Hence, his grandfather's death in 1887 represented his liberation, enabling him to leave the business, in agreement with his brother Albert with whom he had always had a warm and close relationship and, shortly thereafter, to leave his family behind as well and head off to Paris to become an artist, which was his highest aspiration. In other words, he forsook the materialist world of business, economy and industry, supplanting it with a world of paintbrushes, aesthetics and the pen.

The young Rusiñol was well aware of the reality of his country because he too had been immersed in the greyness of the years of the Bourbon Restoration, with its narrow-minded, restrictive conservatism. The group around the review *L'Avenç*, which first appeared in 1881, embodied the introduction of Catalan nationalist and progressive ideas by the young intellectuals of his generation (heirs of Valentí Almirall) who proposed cultural reflection as a way of overcoming the stagnation of the times.

Until this point, artists had gone to Rome for their training. But the Rome of Fortuny was gradually replaced by the Paris of Rusiñol. His teacher, the painter Tomàs Moragas, was still in favour of Rome but his pupil did not go there with a grant from the Academy, which he hastily eschewed, but sped off to Paris because regeneration, as they called it, was going to come from the north, which is to say from Europe. Rusiñol wasted no time, then, in pigeonholing himself as anti-academic and swimming against the tide of official art teaching. In 1927, in his booklet *Màximes i mals pensaments* (Maxims and Bad Thoughts), he affirmed that art academies were "good for teaching but not for learning".

Rusiñol left for Paris in the autumn of 1889, borne by his desire to be an artist and leaving everything behind: his family, his wife and a very small daughter. One might speak of the metamorphosis of the Rusiñol of business who became the Rusiñol of art as if his aim was to demonstrate the dignity of the figure of the artist, to vindicate the artist as an autonomous social element with an influential role to play in society.

In Paris he discovered new ways of painting: Impressionism, post-Impressionism and also James Whistler, with the possibility of painting everything, any corner, any theme, going well beyond the virtuous and nicely-framed picture of the "subject" that had thitherto been presented by Barcelona painters in the Sala Parés gallery. His Montmartre cityscapes —of the neighbourhood in which he first lived— in other words of the marginal city of Paris, given a special atmosphere with the grey light of the north, were the first result of putting sensibility before anything else. Sensibility was a synonym of sincerity or truth, a concept that was not yet explicit in the Catalan artistic framework, apart from some exceptions that were admired and upheld by Rusiñol, for example

Joaquim Vayreda who, he said, was able to paint the "essence" of a landscape.

Freedom was also everything that Rusiñol wanted for the modern artist. Anything could be painted. The texts he wrote from Paris —still in Spanish— *Desde el Molino* (From the *Moulin*), *Desde otra isla* (From Another Isle) and *Impresiones de Arte* (Impressions of Art) also sustain this change, this reorientation of the paths of art that was now being wrought by the artists from Barcelona who had gone to live in Paris (Rusiñol, Casas, Canudes, Utrillo ...). Thus begins the myth of the bohemian artist, the artist that, in short, he wished to incarnate.

The first exhibition of the Rusiñol-Casas-Clarasó triumvirate, held in the Sala Parés in 1890, presented in Barcelona works of a kind that had never been seen before, the paintings of Montmartre, suburban corners, grey light, characters, often couples and generally with no feeling of communication between them (in which some commentators have wished to see a reflection of Rusiñol's being cut off from his family). There is no doubt that these works made a great impression on the Barcelona public. In January 1889, Raimon Casellas, then a critic for *L'Avenç*, embarked on a project, with the review as his base, of extolling these works and these painters as well as the novelty of their work and their artistic stance. Casellas[1] was thus to become the great defender of modernity in painting and he discovered in Rusiñol, with whom he formed a close friendship, the ideal figure of the modern Catalan artist. He was, in fact, one of the clearest and most influential voices in speaking out for a new aesthetics and in reflecting on the roles of art and the artist in society. In the number of *L'Avenç* dated 30th November 1891, he discussed an exhibition of Rusiñol and Casas in Sala Parés, highlighting in their paintings the love of truth, sincerity, emotion and ingenuity that contrasted with the conventionalism, the love of virtuosity and affectation that characterised Barcelona painting at the time. He saw in their work a rupture, a new path to follow, and everything that was not what Rusiñol and Casas were producing was, according to him, "museum painting"[2].

His defence coincided with the review's discourse in opposition to the Spain of the Restoration which, to put it in artistic terms, meant its rejection of the "Valencian artists", or those —many of them coming from the sister-land— who longed to triumph in exhibitions in Madrid with large-format works of historic themes. Countering this "restoration" was the "regeneration" blowing in from the north. Even at the 1892 National Exhibition of the Arts, the Madrid jury heaped scorn on the work of the Catalan artists, "Modernist art" as it was already being called by Casellas, who was there as a correspondent, now with *La Vanguardia* as his platform. This fact, which had quite an impact and set rivers of ink a-running, meant, from the critic's standpoint, the definitive rupture with official, antiquated and outdated Spanish art.

Naturally all of this gave off a whiff of the political backdrop and the reaffirmation of a nationalism that was united with the

[1] Casellas' role has been exhaustively analysed by Castellanos, J. in *Raimon Casellas i modernisme I-II* (Raimon Casellas and Modernism I-II), Barcelona, Curial Edicions Catalanes i Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat, 1983.

[2] Casellas, R., "Exposició de pintures. Rusiñol-Casas" (Exhibition of Paintings. Rusiñol-Casas), *L'Avenç*, 2nd period, year II, Nº 11, 30th November 1891, p. 334.

conviction that "art is the nation". This is another reason why Casellas praised Rusiñol and his pleasure in collecting old iron objects in his quest for roots. Rusiñol and Casas were already Modernists, as far as the critic was concerned, by 1891. Casas' *Plein air* (In the Open Air) and Rusiñol's *El laboratori de la Galette* (The Laboratory of la Gallete) were Modernist, "the very latest in modernist painting"[3] or, in other words, works that were at last modern.

One should also recall that, meanwhile, Barcelona had hosted the 1888 World Fair, a first step in the city's opening up to Europe. Josep Yxart, a key name at the time, recorded the transformation the city was undergoing in a series of articles where the word "modern" was now frequently appearing as a way of describing the changes that were occurring in Barcelona. Rusiñol had taken part in the World Fair, not only by showing three paintings but also loaning a considerable number of objects, especially some of his pieces of Gothic ironwork for the Archaeological Section.

This fact draws attention to another crucial aspect of this way to modernity: the aforementioned predilection for old ironwork. Rusiñol was a great heritage defender, as a true heir of the Romantic tradition that had opened his eyes and awakened his interest in heritage, whether it was monumental, artistic or literary. It was a gaze directed back to the past in order to project the future, a close bond between old and new, or between tradition and modernity. The modern artist was, thus, also a collector. Art for art's sake, the religion of art and beauty, are the objectives of the modern artist who dreams of a different, a new world, an artist who strives to be an intellectual as well, and to contribute towards making the world a better place. This also explains the fact that, in an excursion to Sitges in 1891, Rusiñol should fall in love with the town and that in 1892 he should buy some fishermen's houses which, with the help of the architect Francesc Rogent, he turned into Cau Ferrat, which was somewhere between a house and an artists' refuge, a roof for his collections, a meeting point and a base for his group from which he would propagate the philosophy and aesthetics of "his" Modernism. It was a haven of freedom, a long way from Barcelona and the home of his family from whom he still kept a distance in his comings and goings to Paris.

The contact with Sitges transformed the feeling of his paintings when the Paris mists were replaced by Mediterranean luminosity. The courtyards of Sitges began to appear in his canvasses and (later) in his writings. Blue courtyards, pink courtyards, which he exhibited in the Sala Parés in 1893. This is the first time he gazes at the garden, when it is still a simple courtyard, a household exit with an order and a pulse that were to become the seeds of Rusiñol's eventual exultant enthusiasm for gardens.

Meanwhile, the premiere of the Catalan version of Maeterlinck's *L'intruse* (The Intruder) introduced what was then a prototype of modern literature in Europe, as opposed to the 19th century realism and naturalism that had been so highly prized until then. Maeterlinck was, in fact, the modern artist incarnate, a model for Rusiñol.

[3] Casellas, R., "Exposició General de Bellas-Arts de Barcelona" (The General Fine Arts Exhibition in Barcelona), in *L'Avenç*, 2nd period, 1891, p. 175.

The social tensions in Barcelona were rising by the day, reaching such a point that, on 7th November 1893, there was a bombing attack on the Liceu Opera House, the work of an anarchist, Santiago Salvador, which killed twenty people. It took Barcelona some time to recover from this blow. Sitges was then a refuge, perhaps?

Now well-established in Blanca Subur (the Latin name for Sitges), Cau Ferrat was to become the hub of a group of artists, musicians and intellectuals who, coming from Barcelona and in the milieu of Rusiñol their leader, would consolidate a path of new modern and Modernist guidelines. This was in great part because Rusiñol organised a series of encounters that he explicitly called Modernist festivals where he would impart the new philosophy of art of which he became the leader and guide of the "regeneration".

In 1894, the Third Modernist Festival was held in Cau Ferrat. A literary contest was held —in which the participants included Casellas, Maragall, Narcís Oller and Puig i Cadafalch— opened by a speech made by Rusiñol in which he said, "We come here fleeing from the city, to get together and to sing together what comes from the depths of feeling, to rid ourselves of the chill that runs in everyone's veins, taking refuge under the banner of art". And he continued, "... the religions of all hearts have died, the old and the new, and now they want to kill ours, the holy and noble religion of art and poetry". He called for a renaissance, referring to Cau Ferrat (literally: Iron-clad Den) as a "refuge giving shelter to those who feel the cold in their hearts" and solemnly concluded, "that we prefer to be symbolists, unbalanced and even mad and decadent rather than drooping and tame; that common sense is throttling us; that there is too much prudence in this land; that it doesn't matter if one goes around being Don Quixote where there are so many Sancho-Panzas feeding off the land, or if one reads books of wonders where nobody reads books at all."

Rusiñol's position is perfectly clear. He officiates in the priesthood of art and plainly emphasises the validity of symbolism, decadentism and the validity of art for art's sake. He distances himself, therefore, from the style of the Paris paintings, conceived as spontaneous expressions, at any time and in any place, and begins to move —evermore manifestly— towards symbolism, with Italian, but also French, Belgian and pre-Raphaelite influences. His art and literary work would take a turn in this direction at the apogee of his influence as a leader of the Modernist movement. The three soffits in the ogival arches of Cau Ferrat dating from 1895 and devoted to Painting, Poetry, and Music, are the best pictorial witness to this and they constitute a clear symbol of total art, the sum of the arts, an idea that was increasingly widespread in the European cultural milieu.

In 1894, Rusiñol had travelled with the painter Ignacio Zuloaga to Pisa and Florence, where he discovered, and where his admiration was born for the Italian primitive painters, as he describes in *Impresiones de Arte*, and as the aforementioned triptych reveals. *La morfina* (Morphine), painted in Paris the same year, is an oil painting produced under the influence of the decadent and Symbolist sensibility, while also being a symbol and product of his growing addiction to the drug, which he was taking to ease severe pain resulting from a fall. It caused a huge uproar when he showed it in the Sala Parés. (In 1905, he


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Burano (Italy), Toni Catany (2007)

would write *El morfiníac* (The Morphine Addict), an even more terrible and more tremendously autobiographical story.) However, by then, Rusiñol was beyond good and evil.

Thenceforth, until 1897-1898, Rusiñol is the reference point of modern-Modernist art in Barcelona, although this modern spirit is increasingly a stance rather than action taken by a particular group of artists and intellectuals. And the Symbolist model began progressively to wane. Nonetheless, in spite of everything, 1897 was a crucial year for Rusiñol, for the Catalan cultural movement and for Barcelona in general.

A paramount year

In 1897 —the year that Barcelona absorbed six surrounding municipalities— the tavern Els Quatre Gats was opened. This venue, founded by Ramon Casas and Pere Romeu, brought together many artists of the time, with great names such as Casas and Rusiñol and young men like Nonell, Mir and Picasso, who breathed new life into art in the concluding years of the 19th century and the dawning ones of the 20th. To some extent it might be stated that the Cau Ferrat gang had opened up the way for the gang of Els Quatre Gats, which was located in the heart of Barcelona in a neo-Gothic building by Puig i Cadafalch.

In 1897, too, Rusiñol published his literary work that was most representative of the new Symbolist airs: *Oracions* (Orations), the first book of prose-poems ever to be published in Spain. It consisted of texts by Rusiñol "with musical illustrations" by Enric Morera and drawings by his friend Miquel Utrillo. It was a book-object in which all the ingredients were perfectly selected: the linen paper, the inks, the typography, the asymmetrical composition of the cover, the photomechanical reproduction of the 32 drawings, the binding in pink cloth... Published by *L'Avenç*, a leading light in publishing renewal, this is a complete work of art, the Modernist book *par excellence.*

Oracions was well received by almost all the cultural factions of the day even though it

expressed ideas founded in a pantheist conception of Nature. In fact, it outlined a kind of homage to Nature in a collection of brief texts devoted to rain, the dawn, mist, and so on, and also to neglected gardens as symbols of forgotten culture. It was written in homage to gardens because, for Rusiñol, "they are landscape turned into verse". He had discovered them two years earlier, on a trip to Granada that was unquestionably decisive in Rusiñol's taking this new direction.

At the start of the book, Rusiñol addresses the reader, saying, "most of what are known as the conquests of progress do not seduce me and nor do I like them". We can understand this as a reaction against the materialism of industry and the much-vaunted progress of the times. The artist contrasts it with Nature or, rather, an exaltation of Nature in literature, interpreting it in aesthetic terms. Rusiñol reveals himself as longing to achieve a new society and the way to it, for him, is art. Yet this is an intimate, personal path, not a group project, or a programmed manifesto but, as the title suggests, fervent prayers. Could we surmise that Rusiñol is starting to go into his shell, into his inner world, his abandoned garden? Does his morphine addiction *in crescendo* play a part here? Is he bestowing on morphine some special creative status?

In 1897 there were other notable cultural events, beginning with the premiere, as part of the Fourth Modernist Festival of Sitges, of *La fada* (The Fairy), a symbolist opera with music by Enric Morera and lyrics by Jaume Massó i Torrents, which represented both a Catalan-spirited endeavour and a musical revolution under the aegis of Richard Wagner and his idea of total art. Also appearing that year was the review *Luz* (Light), of highly significant name since it represented the quest for the light that was still needed for the regeneration of society, especially Spanish society. In October 1898, this publication reappeared after a short absence stating, "We wondered for a while whether we should publish Luz in Madrid or Barcelona but since the latter is the true artistic capital, in both the modern and universal senses of the word, we have reappeared in the capital of Catalonia, which we regard, in artistic terms, as the true capital of Spain."[4]

To return to Rusiñol, one year after *Oracions* appeared, he published *Fulls de la vida* (Pages of Life), with photo-engraving illustrations by Ramon Pitxot, another utterly Modernist or, in other words, Symbolist and decadent book where Rusiñol brought together a great number of his memories. As in the previous book, he presents himself as a modern writer, a man of his times, and a leading light of a modernity that recognises emotion as the basic path for gaining access to a work of art. Rusiñol was an autonomous, solitary artist, both as a man of letters and as a painter, since he was by now involved with the theme of gardens, with which he was moving away from the nascent artistic vanguard, which is close to Expressionism, to remain until the end of his days losing himself along the pathways of gardens, abandoned or perhaps not, but always surrounded by trees, fountains and statues. It is now that Casellas, who had defended his status as a modern artist, distances himself from his friend's work and their relationship cools.

[4] DE BARAN, A. L., "Arte Joven" (Young Art), *Luz*, second week of October, 1898, p. 2.

However, Rusiñol's personal situation had to change soon because his ill-health brought on by morphine abuse had reached the point when it was a matter of life and death. The Spanish state, too, was hovering between life and death as the key player in the final bangs and crackles of an absurd and debilitating war.

In 1899, now *in extremis*, Rusiñol underwent treatment for his morphine addiction in a sanatorium in Boulogne-sur-Seine, and also went back to his wife and daughter. These steps were decisive for him and also for his career. I would go so far as to say that Rusiñol would no longer be modern or Modernist, but would be Rusiñol and his myth. Some ten years after he had left for Paris wanting to be an artist, a rebel and a critic of society and family ties, when he had established himself as such, demonstrating to the world and to himself that the artist did have a role to play in social life, he would now consolidate his fame but henceforth it would always be personally and individually, in both painting and literary domains.

Nonetheless, this did not prevent him from exhibiting that year in Samuel Bing's Parisian gallery L'Art Nouveau —the mythical venue that gave its name to the international turn-of-the century style— a series entitled *Jardins d'Espanya* (Gardens of Spain), which was highly successful while, in Barcelona, he published *El jardí abandonat* (The Abandoned Garden). Another clear sign of this change is the reaction of Casellas, who was not at all impressed with *Jardins d'Espanya*, perhaps because he now believed that the longed-for regeneration of culture and art was no longer possible if left to Rusiñol.

In brief, between 1889 and 1899, Rusiñol made the leap from the Montmartre paintings to the abandoned garden, which is to say from his quest, from renovation, and from his desire for regeneration to consolidating a kind of aesthetics and a range of forms that, initially Symbolist or decadentist, aimed above all to be poetic and sincere. In the end, what was demanded of the modern artist was sincerity. Let artists produce what they feel, but with sincerity.

In 1900, Art Nouveau "officially" triumphed with the Great World' Fair in Paris, the last word in the compendium of decorative arts in the style that was such anathema to the critic Casellas, who condemned its "little snippets and snails"[5]. Rusiñol himself, in his *L'Auca del senyor Esteve* (The Life of Senyor Esteve, 1907), also lampooned the appearance of shops "that were Modernist in name, with windows aslant and doors set askew".

In 1900, Rusiñol exhibited his *Jardins* in the Sala Parés, where he would return in 1903 with *Jardins de Mallorca* (Gardens of Mallorca). But his contributions to the Catalan pictorial arts were now on another completely different track, one that was leading a long way from bourgeois tastes.

Modernism or modernity?

If we survey the history of Modernism in Barcelona, we see that the years around 1900 are crucial. In what sense? Is there some discrepancy between Rusiñol the modern artist, a synonym for the Modernist movement in the late 1880s and early 1890s, and the Modernist Barcelona of the great architectural projects of the Eixample district? What

[5] *La Veu de Catalunya*, Barcelona, 2 July, 1900.

happens in Barcelona when Rusiñol stops being "Modernist"? When the modern Rusiñol comes to an end, does Modernism "officially" begin?

It is true that, today, all the writers who have given this some attention, from both literary and artistic perspectives, are in agreement that the word "Modernism" is such a wide-ranging and ambiguous concept that, above all and before anything else, it means a new attitude. Modernism is an attitude, as we have seen written more than once. And, in fact, this new, modern attitude was seeking a new path, new ways —diverse, to be sure— to make society better. The way to do it was to be modern.

Hence, if we wish to describe formal features that might help us to identify this standpoint in both letters and art, we find that we are up against an infinite array of possibilities and forms and even contradictions, sometimes in one single author, which lets us corroborate what we have seen when speaking of Rusiñol and his milieu: this something new, this something modern, was a synonym for what was true, sincere and free. And these concepts that are so wraithlike cannot be bound to any norm or scheme because then they would not be free and sincere. In other words, one thing is an intellectual and aesthetic movement that is born from the literary world, the press and art criticism —Rusiñol's world at the end of the 80s and the 90s— and quite another is the Modernism that imbibes at the fonts of Art Nouveau.

Just as artists and intellectuals headed off to Paris in the period we might call pre-Modernist, to steep themselves in the latest trends and bring them back home, the artists (and architects and industrialists) of the following generation would continue to go there and to import new ideas and forms. The most outstanding fact, however, or at least the most visible, is the significance of Art Nouveau, which is quintessentially decorative and, without a doubt, a long way from the regenerationist spirit of *L'Avenç*. It was a tardy importation in relation with the first manifestations of change, but it joins the thrust of the early Modernist movement, which began in the 1880s and was given impetus with the World' Fair of 1888. Under the aegis of what were doubtless romantic roots, which meant that our artists and architects recovered the spirit of medieval artisans and began to produce works that were historicist in tone, the exuberant, floral and sinuous decorativism of Art Nouveau progressively joined the flow.

In other words, Modernism and hence modernist Barcelona is a whole in which local roots are mingled with forms imported from the north. This was modernity but without forsaking the positive elements of tradition because the symbiosis was seen as the way to achieve a new role as a society and as a European city. From the first regenerationism to art for art's sake and then back again to a certain regenerationism, all this toing and froing reflects the vicissitudes of a society that, in one way or another, is striving to transform itself. Towards the end of this process, with society now sensitised by the social crisis and the repercussions of the loss of the Spanish colonies, Catalanism began to consolidate as opposition to Spain. Modernist Barcelona, therefore, contains a good dose of national identity and hence the great architects —Gaudí, Domènech i Montaner and Puig i Cadafalch— coincide with their counterparts of the European Art Nouveau but without ever

Harar (Ethiopia), Toni Catany (2007)

renouncing their own tradition: as a result, they use materials and techniques of medieval origin that they recover and adapt to the new technical formulas of their time, and that they have also been upholding through their penmanship since as early as the 80s and 90s. For them, it is perfectly clear that working in architectural creation means working at creating a country or, better said perhaps, constructing a country. This is why, in Barcelona and Catalonia today, we speak of Modernism and not of Art Nouveau, which is the name given to this wide-ranging and heterogeneous movement beyond our frontiers.

Art Nouveau iconography and style were not firmly established, however, until 1900 after the World' Fair had been held in Paris as the culmination and thus the beginning of the decline of the style. The decorative and applied arts in architecture, along with the graphic arts, were then the great propagators of the supple and symbolist forms of a style that was little more than a decorative fashion, although one that was wildly successful, to be sure. Rusiñol, who was never an Art Nouveau artist, remarked on it in 1907 in his *L'Auca del senyor Esteve*, referring to the transformation of houses and shops in Barcelona's new Eixample neighbourhood: "workers were unceasingly sticking on adornments and stone flowers and eye-catching calligraphy wherever there was a patch

of wall; blacksmiths everywhere were forging pieces of ironwork with dragons, eagles, fabulous beasts, symbolist flowering lettuces and aesthetic broccoli leaves and, wherever they saw railings, they encumbered them with more adornment [...]".

Regeneration through art, seen from the intellectual standpoint, was perhaps impossible. In other words, as a few people noted at the time, it was a bourgeois position that was as bourgeois as the materialism of the bourgeoisie they opposed, or an ingenuous utopia, like that of socially-directed art that educates and ennobles spirits and peoples through awakening their sensibility, which were widespread ideas in Europe some decades ago. Yet, for all that, it is true that those whom we today call Modernist wanted to make Catalan society and the city of Barcelona better, transforming them through culture. This involved a process of cultural renovation that was not just artistic or literary.

In fact, in 1900 and the first years of the 20th century, Barcelona had taken the leap and was now a vibrant and vigorous city, a modern city. However, as Margarida Casacuberta sagely observed[6], by the end of 1898 it was practically only the satirical press (which lasted for quite a while at the cost of bohemian and modernist artists) and some more traditionalist sectors that talked about Rusiñol-style Modernism.

This makes one think: the Barcelona of the dawning years of the 20th century, which we call modernist today, is "Modernist" but is it perhaps not totally modern because the modern school was that of the *Noucentistes*[7] who followed in their wake? Would they be the ones to "finish off" a programme of action that was born in Romanticism?

Nevertheless it is true that great architectural works were still being produced throughout the first decade of the 20th century, even while "Xènius"[8] was upholding other postulates. Of course, it is easier to pick up a pen and put one's ideas on paper than it is to paint a canvas, produce a sculptured work and, still more, construct a building. Each art has a very different tempo and that of architecture is naturally more exigent than all the rest.

In brief, the term "Modernism" —originally a synonym of regeneration or the desire to be modern— was often adopted simply as being synonymous with the reiteration of graceful alien forms, those of Art Nouveau, which were particularly visible in the decorative arts, the graphic arts and architecture. In this regard, the comment made by the painter and critic Sebastià Junyent in 1901 is very significant: "Let us find a substitute for the word Modernist [by which he meant modern] because here, where everything is adulterated, they have prostituted it by using it to baptise the worthless plagiarism of foreign decorative art

[6] *Santiago Rusiñol: vida, literatura i mite* (Santiago Rusiñol: Life, Literature and Myth), Barcelona, Curial Edicions Catalanes i Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat, 1997, p. 250.

[7] An urban-based, classicist-tending Catalan cultural movement in reaction to Modernism but with some common features, glorifying order and the spirit of the 20th century with an idealist expectation of change [translator's note].

[8] The *nom de plume* of Eugeni d'Ors, one of the leading proponents of Noucentism who coined the term after the Italian style of naming movements by centuries (e.g. *Cinquecento*) and playing with the double sense of the Catalan *nou* (nine and new) [translator's note].

[Art Nouveau], most of which offends the eyes and good taste"[9]. Again, Josep M. Jordà, reviewing the evolution of aesthetic taste in 1900, noted, "This Modernist business was becoming fashionable [...] And it was then that they began to have solo exhibitions of Casas and Rusiñol, which coincided with the invasion of over-elaborate Modernism. A few English advertisements, three or four French and German decorative art magazines [...] brought about the miracle [...] and what a harvest of blue lilies, of drawn-out purplish leaves, and of ladies of perfected profiles and turbulent hair! The public dived into it, headfirst into the curlicues [...]. And the good Barcelona bourgeoisie also erred! The poor bourgeois is a pitiable wretch when it comes to art!"[10].

However, as Jordà himself recalled, it is in this latter phase when the acceptance by the bourgeoisie of European fashion and the need of this bourgeoisie to demonstrate its power, not by brute force but by the power of the arts, are most evident. And this is the meeting point between artist and bourgeois citizen. The former has lowered his sights while the latter has at last accepted a form of modernity, even if only of a formal order. There emerges, then, a reciprocal need between art and industry, artist and bourgeois citizen. This was the view of the always-critical Sebastià Junyent: "Between the bourgeois who pays and the artist who abdicates, the guiltier party is the artist because he knows all too well that this is the true way of seeing and doing [meaning painting without being a slave of Nature or of any argument] yet he does not devote his efforts to this but instead kneels down before the money that buys him"[11].

There is no doubt that Rusiñol has portrayed this alliance or put it into writing better than anyone else in his autobiographical novel, *L'Auca*, which was published in 1907 in personal and socio-political circumstances that are very different from those of ten years earlier. This is the year of the electoral triumph of Solidaritat Catalana, a great electoral alliance of most of the country's political forces that would bring about sweeping changes in Catalan politics *vis-à-vis* the Spanish state. The tensions that were generated between artist and bourgeois, the opposition of the former to the order of the latter (Rusiñol's own struggle with his family) that was present in his work thitherto, now definitively disappears in the utterances of his characters, Ramonet and his father (representations of Rusiñol and his grandfather): Ramonet will be a sculptor or, in other words, an artist, because his bourgeois parent pays for the marble.

Finally, the pact, the understanding occurs. If we start out from this fact, we can understand the Barcelona of the great patrons of the arts, the Barcelona of the Eixample, the bourgeois Barcelona that needs to ennoble its image with new architecture that will turn the city into a showcase of decorative feats

[9] Junyent, S., "L'art y la moda (Ampliació)" (Art and Fashion (Expansion)), *Joventut*, Barcelona, 21 February 1901, p. 140. Included in J. L. Marfany, *Aspectes del Modernisme* (Aspects of Modernism), Barcelona, 1978, p. 57.

[10] "Jardins d'Espanya""per S. Rusiñol. Comentaris y Recorts. 1" ("Gardens of Spain" by S. Rusiñol. Comments and Cuttings 1), *Joventut*, Barcelona, 8 November 1900, pp. 611-614.

[11] "La honradesa de l'art pictorich" (The Honour of Pictorial Art), *Joventut*, Barcelona, 8th November 1900, pp. 614-615 (jointly signed with Hermen Anglada).

(or "blunders", according to Junyent), that straddle tradition and modernity.

After 1900, Rusiñol (following "a certain personal and professional pact-making") devoted himself to his gardens, while he continued producing a literary opus that was increasingly removed from the symbolist and decadent world. Gaudí, too, focused his efforts on the Sagrada Família in the last third of his life. These were inner paths they had taken and Rusiñol's cannot be deemed modern because it was sincere, because "it was sincere with his gardens", as Jordà recognised, considering that he was now more an artist that he had been, even though the public no longer understood him as a painter while applauding him when he wrote[12].

While the "neutral class" of *L'Auca*, grey, anti-progress and dull, upholders of order —"order in eating, order in loving one's wife and offspring, order in living and in dying and even order in the afterlife"— the man of moderation —"everything in moderation and small doses"— the archetypal symbol of the *aurea mediocritas*, personified by Senyor Esteve, had become the Modernist bourgeoisie (yet never so resolute as the Parisian bourgeoisie, Rusiñol lamented). Whatever the case, the change had been wrought.

Nonetheless, the man who was now starting to be the mythical Rusiñol, a highly popular Barcelona personality, was still responding mockingly in *Joventut* (the Catalan "nationalist-leaning" magazine, let us recall) when they asked about the crisis of the textile industry: "Today, there are only two ways to dominate the market, either by brute force or artistic force. The first we've lost and the second we haven't yet found". And when the journalist said that people work hard in Catalonia and that is why everyone calls us "labouring Catalonia", Rusiñol replied, "It will take us a long time to shake off this label of labouring and it won't be until they call us the intellectual Catalonia. And everyone knows that from labouring to intellectual there is the same distance as there is between a bricklayer's mate and a bricklayer. We work so as not to work so hard and to think more because thinking doesn't take up space and working only overfills the warehouses. We are being bricklayers and not bricklayers' mates"[13].

Rusiñol still has a lot more for us to plumb, analyse, evaluate and that will surprise us. He is one of those characters one never gets to the bottom of... II

This text is a shortened version of the lecture of the same title given on 15th June 2007 in the Casa Llotja de Mar, as the closing event of the programme of activities in celebration of the Rusiñol Year, Barcelona 2007, which was an initiative of the Barcelona Institute of Culture.

[12] Jordà, J. M., ""Jardins d'Espanya" by S. Rusiñol. Comentaris i Records 1" ("Gardens of Spain" by S. Rusiñol. Comments and Cuttings 1), p. 613.
[13] "La crisis industrial. Declaracions de Don Santiago Rusiñol" (The Industrial Crisis. Declarations of Don Santiago Rusiñol), *Joventut*, Barcelona, 11th October 1900, pp. 552-553.

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Xavier Pla

Joan Sales and *Incerta glòria*

The polyphonies of a roman-fleuve

In the wake of the Spanish Civil War, contemporary Catalan literature in general and the novel in particular broke radically with the existing narrative tradition. Then came an inevitable step back, which led writers to reappropriate mainly the realist and comedy of manners currents of the second half of the 19th century.

Over the long, slow and limited return to the novel, the subject of the Spanish Civil War was one of the last to be tackled by creators. A perfectly understandable silence about the conflict as a whole reigned: first of all, it could only be spoken of from the winners' point of view, and when they began to do so their novels were written in Spanish. And so, at least for the first fifteen years of the Franco dictatorship, death, the fighting on the front or in the trenches, the resistance, the jails, the concentration camps or the executions of the losers made very rare appearances in the novels published in Catalonia. The situation of the novelists in exile was different: they could reflect a world which had no voice inside Catalonia, a world which consequently could hardly be recognised, recreated and thus reappropriated and reinterpreted by Catalan society.

In 1956 the publication of the novel *Incerta glòria* (Uncertain Glory) by Joan Sales marked the beginning of the end of that long silence. It is now almost a commonplace to say that *Incerta glòria* is the first Catalan novel which presents the Civil War from the losers' point of view and, moreover, tries to convey to the reader the deep, inherent complexity of the suffering inflicted on its characters by three years of war. It is undoubtedly a novel about the Civil War which has high ambitions and is controversial at the same time. Sales describes the war in its full complexity, avoids any simplistic division into good and bad, all from a Catalan nationalist, Republican but also catholic perspective, and denounces both fascism and anarchism, both *blacks* and *reds*, with virulence.

That is no doubt why, when the novel was first published in Catalonia the

indifference or silent indignation of some and the rancour or open hostility of others met a decidedly awkward work with respectful silence.

When we examine the different options available to Catalan writers and intellectuals during the Civil War, we often forget to mention the delicate position the people who were both Republicans and Catalan nationalists must have found themselves in when they had to stand firm against Franco's troops. Not only that: while remaining catholics, they found themselves at the heart of a moral conflict of the greatest importance to their own personal, ideological and even aesthetic evolution.

We can only count a small number of active participants in the war who managed to extract a work, a definitive novel, from it immediately after it was over. That may have been because of the excessive closeness of their tragic experiences or their literary immaturity or, naturally, their radical and sometimes dogmatic party spirit.

The same does not hold for the foreign novelists "devoted to the last great cause". Most of them published their most important works during the war or shortly afterwards, mostly novels supporting the republican side: we may recall Georges Bernanos' *Les grands cimetières sous la lune*, which appeared in 1937, André Malraux's *L'Espoir* and George Orwell's *Homage to Catalonia* in 1938, or Ernest Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls* in 1940.

However it turns out, a civil war leaves a wound which is so deep, so lacerating, that it certainly prevents those involved in it, at least for a time, from facing the difficulties inherent to any fictional or novelistic reaction. That is what the critic and novelist Rafael Tasis stated so rightly in July 1938:

"A novel has to be thought and constructed with time and rest. The best novels about war, like the most sensational ones published about the 1914-1918 war, were written a few years later, once the embers of the combat had burned out. It was then that experience and maturity brought their magnificent harvest. It was then that we could have a true war literature".

The enormous symbolic potential

Incerta glòria is a catholic novel, although it has often been quoted as one of the ways Existentialism was introduced into contemporary Catalan literature. Through the lives of four characters (a Republican soldier on the Aragón front, a Barcelona anarchist converted to catholicism, a young priest obviously influenced by Sartre, and Juli Soleràs, eccentric and wild, one of the most fascinating characters in contemporary Catalan literature), the four parts (including *El vent de la nit*, The Night Wind) of this novel provide an exceptional testimony.

That testimony is endowed with enormous symbolic potential about the war and the moral evolution of the characters who, sunk in a deep moral crisis, face youth, loneliness and their destiny with tenacity. Moreover, the different threads of the narrative make up a great classical novel about love and war, with three men in love with the same woman, about youth and maturity, about war and revolution. Not forgetting one of the most intense *memento mori* in Catalan literature about the death of President Lluís Companys, arrested by the Gestapo in France, deported to Spain and executed by Franco's army at Montjuïc Castle in Barcelona.

The author, Joan Sales i Vallès, who was born in Barcelona in 1912 and died in

1983, belonged to one of the generations that lived the years of the Spanish Republic, and most of all the outbreak and progress of the Civil War, most intensely. He took an active part because of his age and ended up devoting his entire youth to it. Moreover, as a member of the losing side, like other authors of that generation he had to be constantly justifying himself to History.

Sales, who had a degree in law but never practised, started work at the age of 15 as editor of the newspaper *La Nau*. After working sporadically as corrector and typesetter he was one of the first Catalan teachers for the Republican Catalan government. While he was still very young, under the Primo de Rivera dictatorship, he was a member of the first and clandestine Catalan Communist Party, founded in 1928 by Jordi Arquer, which tried to combine communism and nationalism. After the outbreak of the war he ended up turning towards catholicism and quickly and definitively distanced himself from the communist and anarchist world.

We can place Sales' evolution parallel to, though distant from, that of the young intellectuals who were close to the catholic and independent Catalan newspaper *El Matí*, founded in 1929 by a group led by Josep M. Capedevila, who tried to confirm Christian positions in Catalonia intellectually. Incidentally, he never met them or worked with them. That group of writers, among whom we might mention Pau Romeva, Maurici Serrahima or Ramon Esquerra, much influenced by French catholicism, called into question the values of Christianity amid the ideological tensions of European society between the wars, and tried to find a framework for its members' concerns about the metaphysical dimensions of existence.

Joan Sales was above all an independent man, an outsider of Catalan literature, certainly less self-taught than he pretended, a creator who never "married" anyone and whom we might define as an action writer who, since his youth, had manufactured his own image as an intellectual we might call a "militant". The militant writer, the soldier writer, placed himself at the service of a cause; he was the "combatant".

A militant of Catalan nationalism, Republicanism and catholicism, Sales always felt a need to explain everything, to explain himself and justify himself ceaselessly, whether in prologues, epilogues or footnotes, as if he wanted to preserve his long life experience from oblivion or confusion. A friend and editor of Màrius Torres[1], an associate of Joan Coromines[2], publisher of Llorenç Villalonga and Mercè Rodoreda, director of the publishing house El Club dels Novel·listes, Sales was first and foremost a great reader. He was first excited by Stendhal's work, and then definitively by the novels of Dostoyevsky (he translated *The Brothers Karamazov*), and the literature of the great French catholic writers and philosophers such as François Mauriac (he translated *Thérèse Desqueyroux*), Georges Bernanos, Emmanuel Mounier, Gabriel Marcel or Teilhard de Chardin.

[1] Màrius Torres (1910-1942), poet.
[2] Joan Coromines (1905-1997), philologist, author of the dictionary known as the *Coromines*.

The fraught history of a novel

At the outbreak of the Civil War, Sales entered the Catalan government War School to acquire the necessary military training to take part in the fighting as an officer. At the end of 1936 he joined the Durruti column in Madrid and it was in Xàtiva where he continued his military training (April 1937). Later, he was on the Aragón front (May 1937-March 1938) and lastly on the Catalan front, in the Macià-Companys columns (April-June 1938). When the war ended, he was commander of the Republican army. He left Catalonia, defeated, via Coll d'Ares. A year later he stated:

"For me the war was the greatest experience of my life, the most interesting thing, what excited me most. I think a writer must become a witness to the truth."

Between January and December 1939 he lived in exile in Paris until, after a trip to Haiti, he finally settled in Mexico, where he clung to hopes for an allied victory to drive Franco from power. Back in Barcelona in 1948, he had to earn a living. He was a corrector and typesetter and worked for publishing companies. His first publication, *Viatge d'un moribund* (*Journey of a Dying Man*, Barcelona, Ariel, 1952) is an impressive collection of poems clearly influenced by Baudelaire, which gives proof of a sound language training and an extraordinary mastery of form and metre.

In 1948 he began to write what would be his only published novel, *Incerta glòria*. He probably embarked on it in his last years in exile in Mexico. The title was naturally chosen in memory of that far-off 14th April 1931, the date of the proclamation of the Republic, "the happiest day of my life", in his own words. He never ceased to repeat that, while concealing the source: the title is taken from some verses at the end of Act I Scene 3 of Shakespeare's *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, which he had found quoted in chapter XVII of *Le rouge et le noir* by Stendhal:

"O, how this spring of love resembleth
The uncertain glory of an April day,
Which now shows all the beauty of the sun,
And by and by a cloud takes all away!"

Incerta glòria was published in 1956, despite difficulties of every kind and the suppressions inflicted by Franco's censors, who accused the novel of "religious immorality". It was finally to appear after eight years of reflections and additions, of experiences and of disappointments. Sales even had to appeal to the archbishop of Barcelona to obtain the *nihil obstat* which was indispensable for publication. Indeed, it seems that he appealed to Abbot Escarré, who had his personal secretary, Father Maur Boix, brother of Josep M. Boix i Selva, read the novel. Although little taken with it, he found nothing contrary to dogma or morality. By way of an epitaph it had the phrase 'Mentre che'l danno e la vergogna dura', from a terrifying poem by Michelangelo referring to the power of the Medicis and which also closed his collection of poetry *Viatge d'un moribund*.

Owing to a fortuitous circumstance, Maison Gallimard showed an interest in a translation, which appeared in 1962 in the prestigious Du monde entier collection. Since 1956 Juan Goytisolo had been living in Paris and working as reader of originals at Gallimard thanks to the American hispanicist John B. Rust. Goytisolo's presence favoured the translation of most of the best Spanish

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novels of the post-war (Ana María Matute, Camilo José Cela, Rafael Sánchez Ferlosio, Jesús Fernández Santos) and, on the rebound, some novels in Catalan, beginning with *Incerta glòria* and *La Plaça del Diamant* by Mercè Rodoreda.

The publication date for the novel was set for March 1958. Four years were to pass before it finally appeared. There was a great delay in the process, attributed to a delay by the translator due essentially to Sales' incessant rewritings and other important extraliterary reasons.

For example, Sales asked Michel Mohrt, director of Éditions Gallimard, for the company to intervene with the archbishop of Paris to obtain the *nihil obstat* in order to show up the existence of Spanish censorship. His request, completely out of order in the French publishing context, was received with stupefaction by the directors. Sales suffered agonies over the idea of possible political repercussions in Spain and most of all feared police reprisals. And so on 30th June 1960 he insisted and wrote to Gallimard, once again demanding religious consent for his book:

"For me it is a matter of self-esteem, if you like, but nevertheless rather humiliating, and that is why I insist. Gross insults have been heaped on me, 'heretic and immoral' is the least of the things said, and they even told the publisher when he insisted on publishing my novel that 'the author should think himself lucky he hasn't been shot"'.

Finally, and in the face of Sales' insistence, Michel Mohrt passed on his demand to François Amiot, secretary of the Imprimatur and teacher at the Saint-Sulpice seminary in Paris. Nevertheless, and most surprisingly, not only was the archbishop's answer negative, but also the response was unexpected. And so *Incerta glòria*, which in 1956 had obtained the *nihil obstat* from the Francoist church, had the same permission refused by the French church.

In a bitter letter dated 15th November 1960, François Amiot wrote:

"It did not seem to the examiner that this work could be in any way sanctioned by the religious authority. It contains far too much indecency and too many scabrous scenes concerning the Spanish Civil War; some men of the church and the Spanish bishopric are judged in a manner that is not even-handed. It is the work of a partisan; the author obviously has the right to express his opinions, but it is for him and him alone to bear the responsibility. The examiner wonders whether the *imprimatur* has really been given by a Spanish bishop, given the tenor of the book and the atmosphere in Spain. I do nor consider it useful to submit this work to another examiner, the result would be the same...

PS I would be grateful if you would send the usual fee to the censor, Canon Grimard..."

Moreover, thanks to the correspondence between Sales and Bernard Lesfargues, the translator, we can have access to a large amount of information about the genesis of the original edition and the work in progress. We must first point out that the first French translation does not correspond to the full or complete edition of the Catalan original, that is, to the addition of the censored parts of the book: in fact it is a new, far longer, novel which Sales must have rewritten somewhere between 1957 and 1959. The translator's great concern was to be able to calculate the final number of pages. The writer's only reply was to send new chapters.

Sales explains, for example, in a letter dated 8th July 1957, the first one he sent to his translator, that the censors have kept the first part of the novel almost intact and that the second and third parts are the ones that have been cut, so much so

that they have become incomprehensible to the reader.

And so the writer's work from the outset consisted of retrieving the censored parts to *rebuild* the story according to some narrative cohesion. But very soon, thanks to his correspondence, we discover that the novelist, excited by his tale, driven by the need to tell all, to forget nothing, has in fact begun to rewrite from beginning to end. And so Sales began to write fragments he had never thought of including in the first edition, making excess one of the cornerstones of his creative poetics.

Moreover, his fears were not in vain: after the appearance of the French translation of *Incerta glòria* the Spanish police confiscated his passport for a time and refused to allow him to leave Spain.

The volume contained four hundred pages. In May of the same year *Incerta glòria* and its author Joan Sales appeared with Juan Goytisolo, Camilo José Cela and Ana María Matute in the *Cahiers des librairies*, a free publication of the French booksellers' association. The reception by the French critics was, from the beginning, spectacular. Apart from the negative review in the catholic journal *Libre Belgique*, they were all positive, even enthusiastic in *La Croix*, *Le Monde*, *Combat*, the magazines *Esprit* and *La Nouvelle Critique*, linked to the French Communist Party.

A deliberate realism

There is no doubt that *Incerta glòria* is an excessive novel, but what is also true is that any good novel, any novel with pretensions to representing a whole world, is inevitably excessive. Sales constructs a kind of *roman-fleuve* which spreads out on every side. The textual scope is overwhelming. The work is long, fluid and slow, but at the same time very fast and as intense as the current of water in an enormous river, powerful and sure of itself.

It is a novel overflowing with life, energy and talent. The quantity indeed turns out to be one of the qualities of Sales' novel insofar as this aspect allows him to give space to the dimension of time. The ambition to include time, historical duration, allows him to incorporate the post-war into the narrative flow. He even went so far as to add a second, shorter novel, *El vent de la nit*, which became an integral part of the work.

Incerta glòria is a polyphonic novel that interweaves a host of narrative voices in a deliberate realism with great symbolic potential. Sales conceived the novel as a dialectical game, made up of contradictions and shifting perspectives, with a will to exorcise and conjure his own ghosts, 'metaphysical ghosts' according to Joan Fuster, to paint a great historical fresco characterised by constant straying from the narrative, interruptions and digressions, anecdotes and different thematic threads. The polyphony and the variety of points of view produce a picture that offers a plural and realistic vision of a tale that would grow as time passed, parallel to its creator's own biography. The fifth version, published in June 1981, was the definitive edition.

The perpetual conflict the characters are in allows them to reach the ethical or moral dimensions of their own consciences and, most of all, allows the reader to reconstruct mentally the central messages of the novel. Each character is a subjective interpreter of the world around him and is not just a witness or observer of reality, since all of them fill the world with their personalities. And so Sales' skill prevents the ideological discourse lent by the narrator to his characters

from imprisoning the whole discourse of the novel; quite the opposite, it favours an unfinished, constantly interrupted discourse. But Sales rejects the exemplary novel or the thesis novel because he is well aware that the aesthetic quality of a novel ceases to be seen as such when it reads like a sermon. In a letter of 25th September 1975 to Bernard Lesfargues, for example, Sales cautioned:

"That is indeed the subject of my book. I wanted to lead it in such a way that the reader, without ever having the annoying feeling of a 'thesis' or, even worse, a 'sermon', would come of his own accord to the following conclusion: the thirst for glory is congenital to all men and yet it cannot be quenched by anything in the world; there is a mystery which can only be explained by another world, an essentially glorious one. But one must avoid philosophy in a novel, and there is my great difficulty. This thought must emerge as if it sprang from the reader, barely hinted at by the author."

A novel that is at once unique and multiple, the novel of a generation who lived through the war in the flower of their youth with love and desire, *Incerta glòria* is an open work, no doubt owing to Sales' excited reading of *Tirant lo Blanc*, the work of Cervantes and, most of all, the novels of Dostoyevsky. Thus four almost independent accounts follow on one another: that of Lluís de Broca, a bourgeois anarchist with a complex idealistic and egotistical personality, whose diary forms the first part of the novel; the letters sent by Trini Malmany, first mistress and then wife of Lluís de Broca, to Juli Soleràs, which make up the second part; and lastly the twofold autobiographical account of Cruells, a soldier in the Republican ranks and a definitely heterodox priest from the diocese of Barcelona in the post-war years.

By using traditional narrative forms like the diary, the epistolary novel and the autobiographical account, thus three different narrators, Sales manages to avoid the monotony of a single point of view. But in that way he resolves the creation of the characters who, far from being flat, are in full relief, endowed with a broad, complex spirit, a real moral density, with brio and a history of their own. They are involved in a war which is sometimes a simple backdrop, others a full element of their lives. Thanks to a perfect match between narrative form and content, Sales, with literary learning, uses three different narrative techniques which he does not mix, though he manages to make each of them fulfil its function in the development of the story. With the aim of conveying to the reader the full complexity of the war, he uses Lluís's diary. The role of his wife's letters from Barcelona is to portray the rearguard, from where the combatants receive sparse news. And when the novelist decides to make the war seem over and distant, he uses the memoirs, which enable him to stretch time in a duration that includes a view of the post-war in Barcelona twenty years later.

Sales built the novel around the enigmatic, eccentric and original figure of Juli Soleràs, who serves as a link. However, Juli Soleràs (note that the initials of his name and surname coincide with the novelist's and also with those of Julien Sorel, the famous central character of *Le rouge et le noir*) is never in fact the hero of the novel, but rather the anti-hero.

An intelligent, highly cultured, egocentric boy, particularly drawn by the forbidden and the unknown, he is one of the guiding threads of the story. By his sudden appearances and disappearances he creates an effect of surprise in the other characters, and the reader ends up having a global idea of what he is like

through the news, the experiences and the feelings he arouses in others.

When he is absent the other characters are sorry. Whoever has to do with him feels drawn to him, though he may also inspire repulsion. Sunk in permanent doubt, he is interested in sexual perversions and, for shock effect, he answers rudely. He has a quite particular taste for failure and a spirit of contradiction, which he practises with everyone; we feel him thirsty for glory and moved by his singular search for the absolute. Half philosopher, half cynic, locked in a struggle with himself, he is ceaselessly quoting Baudelaire, Nietzsche, Schopenhauer, Kierkegaard and Sartre.

Lively and contradictory, eccentric, a tireless traveller, he is a character who feels the absurd. His concern with nothingness consumes him. He is obsessed with "the obscene and the macabre". A wild man, in search of an absolute destiny whose meaning he himself seems not to know, he wanders alone through the novel in a setting laden with symbolic intensity, the Aragón front. Suddenly he disappears without explanation until the moment when he abandons the Republican trenches and crosses over to his adversaries. At the end of the novel we learn that he had gone over to the other side but, realising that the Francoists had won, he returned to the Republicans and was killed. Soleràs is the only character in the novel to die young, and he could only die a loser, perhaps because the only glory seems to be the glory of youth. His end is dramatic, he renounces becoming a victor. His great lesson is to accept defeat and failure as essential components of human life.

There is an evident connection between Joan Sales and the work of great French catholic writers and intellectuals such as Charles Péguy, François Mauriac or Georges Bernanos. Sales was a convert, or a "returnee", to catholicism, a man who went through a long ideological and moral evolution which recalls the words he himself applied to the Kazantzakis he admired so much: a man who sought justice above all, who defended his sense of truth at every moment of his life with incorrigible spontaneity.

It is easy, though not very satisfactory, to include Sales' work in what is called the *catholic novel* because, as is the case with every label, it forces us to establish an impoverishing reductionism. The catholic novel is not a coherent and uniform ideological, aesthetic or formal current, but it is true that it was a meeting point for the literary and religious interests of some authors who, mainly after the Second World War, on a collective quest for new human values, called Christianity into question, and for whom the novel proved to be an instrument that enabled them to have an influence on the moral conscience of contemporary society.

Joan Sales' literature, with its vigorous style, is laden with metaphysical resonances and puts forward a global vision of the human adventure, so that the reader is plunged into thrilling world, charged with physical and intellectual energy. The authors of the epigraphs that introduce some of the chapters of *Incerta glòria* prove it: Pascal, Baudelaire, Bergson, Chesterton, Kierkegaard, Simone Weil, Albert Camus and a remarkable Dostoyevsky, who had already become a sometimes controversial reference point for the novel between the wars. Sales presented him as the finest example of a model of literature that penetrated deep into the human condition, with characters whose psychology cannot

be reduced to the rules of reason or conventional psychology.

However, what characterises the novel the most and most surprises the reader is its very particular realism, a realism that belongs to the spiritual meaning of existence, a realism impregnated with signs and dreams that melt into the very essence of things. It is the realism of transfiguration, of the revelatory power of a writing that may start from reality but which nevertheless feeds on faith and spirituality.

Sales is thus in tune with the defence of an individualism we might conceive of as the first step towards giving man the necessary instruments for the resolution of that very individualism. According to Sales, the evolution of society pushes man towards a common, collective destiny which may be either utopian or tragic. The novel then becomes an appeal to personal conscience and sacrifice. Christians must take part in a spiritual community in full evolution instead of devoting themselves to personal flowering for individual salvation.

And so Sales cleaves to a clear *personalism*, as reader and follower of the thought of both Emmanuel Mounier and Gabriel Marcel, with whom he kept up a correspondence for some time after the publication of the French translation.

Gabriel Marcel himself wrote to Bernard Lesfargues on 14th March 1962:

"Dear Sir. How grateful we must be to you for having revealed *Gloire incertaine*, which I am now reading. I find it altogether remarkable, and the translation is first class. If you have another Catalan novel of just comparable quality to suggest, do not hesitate."

It is in that sense, the presentation of a tense moral conflict, that we must include Joan Sales among the novelists of the "torn conscience" and a subject matter of salvation, in other words the resolution of the inner conflict thanks to a growing awareness. From there too come the essentially subjective qualities of the novel. Its lyricism breaks the objective development of the story and the metaphysical perspective nourishes the subject of evil and its reasons (distress, hatred, violence, suicide) and the subject of salvation (grace, love, inner and outer combats).

"My youth was no more than a dark storm": Joan Sales often repeated that line by Baudelaire (in 'L'ennemi', poem X of *Spleen et Idéal*), words that seem to confirm that the only glory is found in the time of being young, understood as being the only period of life shot through with love and death in the constant quest for the absolute. Shunning Manichaeism of any kind, with a grave and deep solemnity, endowed with supreme lucidity, the pages of *Incerta glòria* are a very human spiritual monologue that makes the novel a genuine lesson in tolerance in life and in literature II

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dialogues

MERCÈ RIUS AND DANIEL GAMPER

Conversation with the philosopher Xavier Rubert de Ventós

XAVIER RUBERT DE VENTÓS Born in Barcelona on 25th August 1939. Degree in Law (1961) and doctorate in Philosophy (1964). Santayana Fellow at Harvard University in 1972. Professor of Aesthetics at the School of Architecture (Technical University of Catalonia) in 1970. Member for Barcelona in the Spanish Parliament from 1984 to 1986. Member of the European Parliament from 1986 to 1994. Resumed university teaching in 1995. Received the Creu de Sant Jordi (Saint George Cross) from the Generalitat (Government) of Catalonia in 1999.

MERCÈ RIUS and **DANIEL GAMPER** are lecturers in Philosophy at the Autonomous University of Barcelona.

We've heard that you started your university studies in the Faculty of Medicine but you soon left it to study Philosophy, although you first obtained a degree in Law. One of your best-known books, recently translated into German, is called *Per què filosofia?* (Why Philosophy?, 1983). So, why not philosophy from the start?

When I told my father, who was a lawyer, that I was thinking of studying philosophy, he responded with an ironic, "Now, that's really something. I see you're not going to be happy with any kind of work that isn't in direct connection with the truth". I was discomfited by his observation. He knew what he was talking about. Since his student days at the republican Autonomous University in the nineteen-thirties, my father had had philosopher friends, in particular Josep Maria Calsamiglia and Jordi Maragall Noble, but also Joaquim Xirau, Eduard Nicol, Josep Ferrater Mora... and these were men who suffered during the Franco dictatorship, everything from academic ostracism through to exile. In any case, my father was right. I did want to be, as Ors had said at the beginning of the century, "a specialist in general ideas".

Caribe River (Venezuela), Toni Catany (2004)

Then again, there was my enthusiasm for football. I played in the Barça boys' team ("more than a club", in those years of anti-Franco resistance). When you're fifteen and they tell you you're good, you're dazzled. The one who really rattled me, though, was my uncle, the philosopher Joan Teixidor, who said, "Think that by the time you're thirty you can be an old footballer or a young philosopher". He convinced me, nonetheless, and I enrolled for Medicine. The thing is, the phenomenon of life captivates me, affects me, moves me. I can't come to grips with the idea of being a bit of mindlessly accelerated nature. But medical practice wasn't for me. Then again, the question about everything that can't be stopped without it starting to stink is still, even now, the one that thrusts me into philosophical reflection. I confess that thinking puts me on edge and that I only do it if there's no alternative —when something, good or bad, amazes me, when it disturbs me, wrongfoots me... Then, yes, I do try to understand it... Either that or I watch telly, *tertium non datur*. In fact, a good part of *Per què filosofia?* comes from weekly sessions prepared for a television programme.

No, philosophy wasn't my first academic option and neither should I like to spend my old age as a "practising intellectual". I've seen more than one person of international renown (to be concise, Roland Barthes, to give one example) being completely taken aback by observations of some young person, for example my own, when I must have been about thirty. I recall that the only thing that seemed to matter to that gentleman, whom I admired, was not whether my questions or objections represented any clear understanding of his thought. In fact my aim in formulating them was little more than to "put matters on the table". And the only thing that seemed to concern him was whether I was for or against his ideas... I came to the conclusion that dying as an intellectual meant dying in a very vulnerable state. So, I don't know, maybe I'll end up being a rural landowner or something like that.

And how did it happen that, when you started with philosophy, you went off to Madrid, to study under José Luis López Aranguren? Professor Aranguren worked mainly in the field of ethics, while your first writings just after you had obtained your degree were about aesthetics. We refer to your end-of-course thesis (*El arte ensimismado*, Art Engrossed, 1963) and your doctoral thesis (*Teoria de la sensibilitat*, Theory of Sensibility, 1969). Then came other works such as *La estética y sus herejías*, which was translated into English with the title *Heresies of Modern Art*.

In fact, my first published writing was a letter to the editor of *La Vanguardia*, against NATO's decision to consider the Soviet invasion of Hungry as "an internal affair" so that they could shelve it. But my first theoretical article dealt with what I have later seen is called "the dissonance principle", which might be summarised thus: If you don't do what you believe in, you'll end up believing in what you do. It had nothing to do with aesthetics. My preferences even then were the same as now, the critique of knowledge and morality. However, my uncle's library gave me access to the classics of artistic modernity and, in particular, vanguard art, which was one of those things that irritated me and that provoked me to a theoretical response. I didn't share the smugness of the sixties and, of all the manifestations of the period, its aesthetic discourse was the most flimsy and the easiest to submit to criticism while, at the same time, this was my

initiation into academic work. Moreover, since, unlike matters of morality, aesthetics didn't impinge on me much, I was able to abide by the classical model of "disinterested knowledge". Later, for political reasons that are not relevant here, I didn't get the Chair in the Faculty of Philosophy but in the School of Architecture. There, as happened with my subsequent political experience, I really did come into contact with reality. In philosophy there is no possible application, while the politician is a man who makes decisions. Now, though architecture and politics had this advantage, the drawback was the impossibility of any dialogue that wasn't restricted to short-term interests. When I began to reflect on everything that is problematic, that resists our efforts to think about it, and I mean in strictly philosophical terms, I saw that people who listened to me weren't following me. And I knew I couldn't go on.

Just as I couldn't stand the rhetoric of the vanguard people, neither could I bear the ideological discourse of the different strands of Marxism at the time. I preferred to act and not argue about Marxist scholasticism. Hence, in the early sixties I ended up in the police station more than once. In Madrid they nabbed me in a demonstration with forty-two women when I was studying philosophy there. Aranguren represented the progressive standpoint. Above all, he was a great teacher. My apprenticeship with him was intense. And I discovered Eugeni d'Ors... I got the idea of going to study with Aranguren when I read his book *Catolicismo y protestantismo como formas de existencia* (Catholicism and Protestantism as Forms of Existence), which was published in the nineteen-fifties. It was after a stay in England where I had converted to Protestantism, if one may put it like that.

Are you speaking figuratively about this question of conversion?

Well, it was a "conversion" —both mental and affective— that only lasted five months. I'd just read Rudolf Otto's *The Idea of the Holy*. And I'd been struck by his radical disposition, which resembled what I'd later find in Kierkegaard, one of the writers to whom I have felt and still feel closest. It was a matter of the fear and trembling inspired by the *ganz anders* (Wholly Other). So I thought if there was a god, if such a boundless thing existed, at least it would be a good idea to have a direct, unmediated relationship, like the Protestants do. I went to some lectures on Protestantism... and ended up sipping tea after the religious service with the ladies of the parish and the reverend. Of course, our priests were quite tame as well except for the issue of celibacy because this was opportune in its eccentricity, which creates distance, in my view. Yet, in these social gatherings, the Anglican Church turned out to be even worse than the Catholic Church. So I unconverted.

You just mentioned Eugeni d'Ors, saying you discovered him thanks to Professor Aranguren. Wasn't there something a bit roundabout in going to Madrid to find out about the work of a Catalan thinker?

Of course there was! Aranguren had written a book on Eugeni d'Ors' philosophy in his youth. Again, Ors' *Glosari* (Glossary), which had been brought out by the old publishing house Selecta also came into my hands. So there you have it, in the midst

of the generalised redundancy, Ors turned one's head and opened one's eyes. I was delighted. More than his theses, I was seduced by his twist on matters. He made me see things that I hadn't realised could be seen like that. Ors was impertinence personified in a straitjacketed country. If you'll permit a "nifty" turn of phrase, we are such a common-sense country that our madmen merely become artists. It's very difficult to generate enthusiasms here. Even so, I still got enthusiastic later on over another of our thinkers who had died very young: Joan Crexells. He taught me that nothing could be "absolved" from its determining factors —psychological, sociological, historical, et cetera— nor really "resolved" either, to give an *ad hoc* synthesis. For me, the gravest sin of all, now and always, is to postulate that man needs to believe in order to remain consistent. Hence my moral aversion to the application of principles and this formulation of "I never... ". The morality I stand for doesn't include this "never".

In the early seventies you were teaching at the universities of Harvard and Berkeley. Could you tell us what the atmosphere was like there?

Yes, they appointed me Santayana Fellow at Harvard University. This is a position conceded each year to a young philosopher. The title of "Professor" is bestowed and the incumbent can use it thenceforth. The selection ceremony —a lunch-interrogation with the president of the university at the head of the table (and there the president has a very high institutional standing)— was the most solemn I've ever experienced. I'd been officially introduced by the poet Jorge Guillén, after my stay at Berkeley. So I went there having immersed myself in counterculture at the Californian university, where my classes were received with "Beautiful!" and where I enjoyed subversive performances by groups of hippies and feminists. (In Barcelona, the home-grown version of sexual liberation —more token than anything else, one must say— had its headquarters in the night club Boccaccio.) The contrast with Harvard in the year when I had to meet the teaching obligations of my new status was huge. I felt I was faced with voracious students who were ready to squeeze me dry and dredge all my knowledge. I had to work like a navvy preparing the classes they'd asked me to give on Unamuno and Ortega y Gasset, two writers with that touch of Spanish dramatics that I didn't share.

As is well known, in American eyes, a *hispano* can or must be interesting but not intelligent. For example, Harvey Cox was kind enough to write a prologue (he could read Spanish) for the English edition of my book on moral philosophy *Self-defeated Man*, and it was full of cliché folklore references and "Spanish anarchism". Cox, who was professor of Theology at Harvard, was a good example of the Christian progressive trend at the time: I also met Nozick, Quine, Rawls, MacIntyre... Nelson Goodman was on sabbatical and they installed me in his office.

What was your impression of Rawls' political thought? Did he influence your own liberalism?

I didn't draw any theoretical conclusions about Rawls while I was at Harvard because I read his *A Theory of Justice* on the plane on my way back home. Moreover, we didn't

see each other much. I only had lunch with him a couple of times, once in the company of Norbert Wiener, who did indeed impress me deeply. Among the moral philosophers, the one I liked most was MacIntyre, who didn't teach at Harvard but at Boston University. As for the liberals, the great names, as far as I'm concerned, are John Stuart Mill and Isaiah Berlin. In Rawls' work I find social-democratic goodwill *à la recherche* of a credible-pragmatic formulation. But I know where he's trying to go. With Rawls, the effect was exactly the opposite of what I've told you about with regard to Ors. I accept his theses on political liberalism but the path he describes doesn't "fertilise" me.

But you've always said you were a Kantian. So aren't you attracted by Rawls' very well grounded normative apparatus?

In Kant, I'm not so much attracted by the normative aspects of his work as by his constant awareness of our own limits and, along with that, all the questions we can't answer though we can't stop asking them either. I am a lawyer —at least I have a degree in Law— who is allergic to the law. For years, I suffered the distress of moving around the world without papers because the Franco authorities had confiscated them. (On one journey to England I had serious problems because of not having a passport.) Even today, I feel absurd gratitude towards the policeman who asks for my driving licence and then lets me go without penalty. I'm sure my allergy to the law comes from this, even though I've always enjoyed the optimum social conditions for appreciating it. I mean the rich try to be above it and the poor try to manage beneath it. The law doesn't mean the same thing for everyone. In short, it doesn't make me feel as soothed as it should, so in this regard I don't see myself as a liberal. I don't deny, to return to Rawls, that normativism constitutes the most appealing aspect of his work, although for me it is totally alien. Whereas I like reading some fascist writers such as Céline, Drieu La Rochelle and there's another one whose name escapes me right now...

Ernst Jünger, perhaps?

No, no way! In his *Paris Diaries*, he describes how he kept the last letters of people who were condemned to death by the Nazis during the war and, with icy elegance, justifies the convenient circumstance that they never reached their destinies. In contrast, Drieu La Rochelle and Céline accept their human condition without making excuses. I too am a man and don't like being one either. I feel strange about it, bad, uncomfortable, hung-up, perplexed. If my philosophy has been of any "use" to me, it's been to situate my monstrous condition within an order of general discourse. I feel affinities with Céline, Drieu and more and more with Marx. I'm more radical ideologically. Once I was surprised by people who became radical when they got old. But it's happening to me too. I think that if, to cap it all, someone's created man, if there's a God that lets a mother see her child die in her arms in a bombing attack, I don't want to know him.

In *Dios entre otros inconvenientes* (God among Other Stumbling Blocks, 2000) I focused on the theme of religion, the "myth", as a crystallisation of atavisms that

reconstructs —on the symbolic level— instinctive solidarity that has been undermined by the development of "logos" (and Bergson has bequeathed us a magnificent description of the process). Hence, for example, goose pimples associated with physical defencelessness took on a very different slant when they were linked with religious emotion: atavism was transformed into a sense of the sublime. Nonetheless, given present-day circumstances, tragic religions might very well be needed so we can keep going. Or mysticism or fanaticism. A moral socialised God no longer responds.

Could you tell us now, please, about the Barcelona-New York Chair of which you were one of the founders?

This was an exciting experience. First of all, I had to learn to negotiate with the Americans. We got the Chair started in 1979 in the midst of a lot of difficulties since we only had the small amount of money from the grant that Pasqual Maragall was able to give us as Lord Mayor of Barcelona. And we had to get people interested in New York, where you can choose from among an infinite number of cultural events every day. But the adventure lasted seven years. The idea of learning our language was very well received there. I remember that we spoke Catalan with Ambler Moss, Carter's ambassador to Panama and signatory to the only progressive treaty pertaining to the area. If I'm not mistaken, he'd been a consul in Barcelona. As far as I'm concerned, I was lucky with the people I met: Susan Sontag, Richard Sennet, David Stella or, in other words, the New York intellectual circle. All sorts of people came from Catalonia to participate in conferences and congresses, from politicians like Jordi Pujol through to singers like Raimon, and our plastic artists as well, of course. In brief, the experience was a good preparation for my stage in politics, which I embarked upon after the first three years of the Chair's being operative, first as a member of the Spanish parliament and then in the European parliament. Thanks to the good offices of Monsignor Hickey, archbishop of Washington, I managed to organise the presence of Monsignor Rivera, archbishop of San Salvador, at a congress I organised in Washington so that Felipe González could negotiate with Ronald Reagan the terms of Spain's entry into NATO.

We'd like to deal in some detail with the different facets of your work, which embraces a range of different philosophical perspectives (ethics, aesthetics, epistemology), passing through political reflection with books like *Europe y otros ensayos* (Europe and Other Essays, 1986), *El laberinto de la hispanidad* (The Hispanic Labyrinth: Tradition and Modernity in the Colonization of the Americas, 1987) and *Nacionalismos* (Nationalisms, 1994), through to some incursions into the threshold territory between philosophy and literature with *Ofici de Setmana Santa* (Holy Week Office, 1978), *El cortesà i el seu fantasma* (The Courtier and His Ghost, 1991), *Manies i afrodismes* (Crazes and Aphrodisms, 1993)... But, since we don't have enough time for that, we'll ask you to tell us what your own preferences are.

I'm not interested in mysticism or physics, but only in what lets me intervene while still having its own logic, like organic tissue for example. I'm interested in phenomena that, although they are not boundless or incomprehensible, are beyond me in that they

are not amenable to reduction by any analysis I might engage in. In this sense, my belonging to a lineage perplexes me more than the things that come out of me, by which I mean whatever I might have as my own or something original. Everything that is beyond me because I am a result of it rather than a generator —milieus that I do not know and shall not know: beliefs, routines, convictions, inertias— all of this amazes me, surprises me, disconcerts me. This is why I've sought the lesser clauses of the ego. In *De la modernidad* (On Modernity, 1980), which I believe is my best book, I called it a "non-Fichtean ego". But I took my first steps in this direction with the book with which I feel most personally identified, *Moral y nueva cultura* (Self-defeated Man. Personal Identity and Beyond, 1971). I gave it that title in Spanish because, at that time, description was assigned to "ethics" and prescription to "morality". Now I'd say it was an attempt to counter the inertias of our species instead of being limited to merely describing them. I start out from the assumption that these inertias occur at both natural and cultural levels without there being, on the other hand, any clear distinction between them. Nature and culture increasingly overlap in psychological time and not just in historical time. The latter is what happened before, when what was thought to be natural was revealed as cultural. And then we have the contrary, because much of what we believe to be cultural has ended up showing us its socio-biological roots... This would be one of the two essays I'm thinking of writing: one on the transfers between nature and culture and the other on the "principle of incompetence".

In *Moral y nueva cultura* I took the part, against the "man of principles", of the person who knows how to make a game of circumstances. The different spheres for which we opt throughout our lives involve the sacrifice of many others. Hence, in opposition to the tendency to universalise one's own situation, we have the duty not to forget that we are walking over the remains of all the other abandoned options. For example, in spite of the traditional sermons on the socialising power of the family, or recent appeals to demographic decline and the need to "make a country" (as we say in Catalonia), the fact is that having children is the most antisocial thing in the world. When you have them, you want them to live out their lives in better conditions than other people have. It's no problem if that goes against your fundamental ideas. You hope that what you preach with all your heart will not come about and, moreover, you feel justified in it. Thus, in order not to cause more harm than the inevitable, one has to be very aware of the partiality of one's choices. One has to know how to participate in the game rather than taking shelter behind principles. Now, the game I'm speaking of has nothing "playful" about it. Before playing, one has to discover the degree of attention and inattention that each person or each thing —morally— requires. If I press too hard on the bird I've picked up I'll end up with just the corpse of the bird in my hands. Yet, from the position of the one who "is played" instead of being the player, I'll know how to understand even the options that conflict most with my own. Another example: I want independence for Catalonia precisely because I understand the standpoint of the Spanish state, and it is everything that is legitimate, and nothing more nor less than that, about that perspective that riles my fellow citizens because the interests of both parties do not coincide or even complement each other as once happened.

Does this understanding vis-à-vis the options of the other foster tolerance?

I'd say it does. But note that I haven't referred to tolerance but rather have raised the moral question in epistemological terms. Basically, it's a matter of maintaining the precise distance that knowledge requires. This distance regarding the world that surrounds one can be attained in different ways. One that has always interested me is that which is characteristic of the reactionary (and I referred to this earlier when I was talking about some fascist writers). Another is that of the person in love. The erotic dimension gives you absolute distance with regard to the world in general. Just as Sartre said of *la nausée*. Humanised, "gestaltized"... objects suddenly cease to be so. In my case, my own face has only seemed strange when I've been immersed in an amorous mess.

What are your views on the phenomenon that's now being referred to as "loss of values"?

As if values were something that might exist or not! The "values" of a period or of a person are, if anything, the precipitate of the rhythms of transformation that period or person has undergone. In this sense, not very long ago, history was still happening slowly but, all of a sudden, there were events occurring that were very real even if we hadn't dared to imagine them. This is precisely the kind of experience that I have a burning desire to think about. This is, I repeat, the occurrence in psychological time of what used to be protracted over historical time. Who was able to foresee the fall of the Berlin Wall? And what about human parthenogenesis, or cloning? We never even dreamed it could happen! But now destiny can be designed in such a way that design becomes our destiny. And to the extent that spheres that are defined as natural fall outside of this definition because they can be manipulated, one of the disturbing questions is who then controls them? The autonomous individual, multinationals, or American imperialism?

I'm imagining a son who has his own family visiting his elderly mother in hospital where she lies in an irreversible coma and the doctor asks if he'd prefer them to pull out the plugs before or after the holidays. Here, the traditional response of "we'll abide by the judgement of science" doesn't hold. We are the ones who have to make the decision. If somebody has to kill her it must be us, the people who love her most. Here we have a huge limitation to our enlightened mentality. This was a great ideal but just as we are not able to come to grips with the challenges we have brought about in our social life, neither is the enlightened response able to deal with our fears. Hence, you have to take on board the fact that you live in a world where you can decide a lot of things that you'd prefer not to be able to decide —going against your reiterated appeal to freedom.

In these circumstances, speaking judgementally of the crisis or loss of values means being ignorant of the narrative structure in which the transformation takes place. This is why I think the most sensible standpoint is the critical one. One must describe the evaluations themselves to the extent that, conversely, there are no pure facts that are independent of values. This is why I like to speak "naturalistically" of values...

Forgive the interruption. Don't you think it's counterproductive to defend the independence of Catalonia with this kind of argument? At least for strategic reasons. Doesn't it risk leading to more opposition than support? Furthermore,

how do you imagine your possible readers will take your socio-biological digressions, not to mention your female readers with a certain feminist sensibility?

Maybe. I'm sorry about that. But I have to speak from the place where I am, and the most I can do is to try and explain it. Strictly speaking, it's the only thing I can explain. I was referring to this with the "non-Fichtean ego". When you try to gain a little understanding of everything that's beyond you, the only way of approaching it consists in taking yourself as a symptom. I don't go looking for theoretical sutures and neither do I think I should go looking for them, as I have said. I settle for explaining the reaction I have to each thing because I understand that only my reactions are able to bring out —objectively— what the world that impinges on me is like. I am nothing but this repercussion. Again, if there is any chance of being effective or of conveying something worthwhile, it comes through this attempt. The religious person calls it "testification", and I prefer to call it "symptomatic". Again, what the hell! I'm staying with the lines of Calderón de la Barca: "If I don't say what I think, what's the point of being mad?".

One last question: is it possible to capture a particular character of Catalan philosophy that would distinguish it from Spanish philosophy, in spite of the ruptures that our tradition has suffered because of political causes? We believe you've given us to understand that this is what you think. We'd propose, then, characterising it through its pronounced leaning towards aesthetics —which is even evident in our thinkers who are lovers of theology— but also towards a certain positivism —not always exempt of romanticism— with a clear preference for biology. Would you agree with this?

No question about it. This is so much the case that I feel like the problematic compatibility between romanticism and the bidet. Neither angel nor beast, I represent the modest lifelong attempt to take everything at once, with a bit of sense, with dignity or at least knowing what shame is. I work or, better said, I am a version of this character-type you've just described —living uncomfortably in this skin, in these circumstances of ours.

One last footnote: do you think philosophy can help people to be happy?

Not me. It just helps me to survive. To survive. That yes II

■ Books in translation

Self-Defeated Man. Personal Identity and Beyond, New York, Harper&Row, 1975 [original title: *Moral y nueva cultura*]; *Heresies in Modern Art*, Columbia University Press, 1980 [original title: *La estética y sus herejías*]; *The Hispanic Labyrinth: Tradition and Modernity in the Colonization of the Americas*, New Brunswick, Rutgers 1991 [original title: *El laberinto de la hispanidad*]; *Philosophie ohne Eigenschaften*, Aachen, Ein-Fach-Verlag, 1999 [original title: *Per què filosofia*].

MANEL OLLÉ

"Is there that much difference between Starbucks and the Guggenheim?"

AN INTERVIEW WITH QUIM MONZÓ

Do you keep track of the country's literary novelties?

Not much, to tell the truth. If I had to keep track of everything that comes out each year, I wouldn't have enough time, even if years had a thousand days.

Do you buy more books in bookshops or by the Internet?

I buy a lot in British and American virtual bookshops.

What genres do you read most?

Basically fiction, especially short stories. I really like short stories. I also read the press a lot. Too much, maybe, but I can't kick the habit.

You've always been interested in literature from the United States. What does it bring you and what do you see in it?

I have a reactive way of being. I can't stand the herd. For many years, over all the decades when being progressive was the order of the day, people had an irrational hatred for anything coming out of the United States. This sort of inanity is not unusual among a lot of people who, in principle, would seem to be perfectly normal and informed. All these clichés going round about whether the Americans are very basic, or innocent, and that they don't have any history... You can be more or less accepting of the government of a particular country, but believing that all the people in the country are imbeciles is a barefaced demonstration of xenophobia. Nobody would dare to say this about the inhabitants of any country of the world, except Americans.

Caribe River (Venezuela), Toni Catany (2006)

With the Americans, no holds are barred and you can hold forth with as much twaddle as you want. I went to New York in 1982 with a scholarship to study contemporary American literature. I chose to study that literature because, at the time, the Americans were so bad, so depraved (those were the days when everyone was still a Trotskyite or a Maoist) that people were claiming with total impunity that they couldn't produce good literature. A few things were being translated, but the passion with which people were reading Latin American literature, for example, was lacking. These were the good guys: poor, exploited third-world countries. The Americans, however, couldn't possibly produce good literature if they were bad people. But you only have to read it without prejudice to see that, naturally, there was some really good stuff there. This is the kind of comment that you still find, even today, not only at the bar of a pub (or the sofa in a chill-out) but also in blogs and opinion pieces. Anything the Americans do can be shat upon even though, not many years later, they're doing the same thing here. Nobody remembers any more that the people who take a certain position mocked the same position a few years earlier, saying that such a thing would never happen here. Look what's happened with smoking. Remember when they used to look on here and say, "These Americans! They've got restaurants where they won't let you smoke".

***Benzina* (Benzine) is, among other things, a European novel about the United States.**

New York is the equivalent of what Paris must have been at the beginning of the 20th century. In New York, in the 80s, there were heaps of artists from half the planet and such an effervescence of art galleries that I thought it would make the ideal setting for my novel.

To what extent does your reading end up influencing your work?

Every writer makes his or her genealogy. You do it from the moment you find writers that you love reading. The ones I was reading when I was fourteen or fifteen were Julio Cortázar and García Márquez ... García Márquez's a case in point. Now it's very fashionable to badmouth him, and people who've never read him or who've only read the cover blurbs are doing it. Yet, thirty years ago, it was trendy to sing his praises, even if they hadn't read him or if they'd only read the cover blurbs. Shortly after he got the Nobel Prize, more or less, it didn't look cool to be reading him. That's how it goes... Anyway, as an adolescent, I was reading these authors, and Adolfo Bioy Casares, and Juan José Arreola, and Augusto Monterroso... I'd read Kafka when I was fourteen, in Gabriel Ferrater's translation of *The Trial*, and the version of *The Metamorphosis* that Alianza Editorial published. I discovered Robert Coover in the early 1980s. I fell in love with him because the kind of stories he wrote opened up new forms of narration. *The Magic Poker* is a key book of the 20th century. I was also bowled over by Donald Barthelme, not so much the early books as the later ones. *Amateurs*, for example, I think is splendid. I translated some of his stories for *Els marges*. It was also in the 1980s, but in the latter years, that I discovered Giorgio Manganelli in a book that Anagrama published, *Centuria: 100 Ouroboric Novels*. They are a hundred novels of only one page. It's a literary miracle. I can give you more of my favourites: Dino Buzzati, Italo Calvino, Manuel Puig, Samuel Beckett, Raymond Queneau, Boris Vian... Not one of these writers is without an altar.

Which of Italo Calvino's *Six Memos for the Next Millennium* would you choose?

If I had to choose any, I'd say quickness, lightness and exactitude. Above all exactitude: too much fancy footwork doesn't get you anywhere. Fancy footwork kills you. Getting caught up in the fancy footwork only lets you talk about fancy footwork, at the very best. A lot of convolution is only good for talking about convolution and the pretension it masks, and that's all. It's a way of announcing that what's being written in that story must be deemed "very important", and it is "very important" because it's been written in such a convoluted way. Bring on the trumpets.

Visibility would also seem to be a characteristic of your books. Even though there's always a lot of play in the narrator's voice. Do you think your books lend themselves to film adaptations?

I write to explain myself to myself without getting too caught up in it

When you're going to make a film out of a book, you've got to ransack it and drag the film out of it in order to turn it into images. It won't work if you only reproduce what it literally says. I think that *Davant el Rei de Suècia* (Before the King of Sweden) could well be made into a film but, if you wanted to get it on to the screen, you'd have to think hard about how to do it because it all happens in the head of the main character. The challenge is always trying to make sure that the film is not just a slavish adaptation of the novel, which is what often happens.

Some people have written that both you and some of the writers you admire produce meta-fiction, stories that, even while they're talking about the world, are also rubbing up against other fictions and projections of the contemporary collective imaginary...

I wouldn't know. All this theory is beyond me. What I try to do is write stories and that's all "I just paint and that's it", isn't that what someone once said?

Do you theorise about what you do as a writer? Do you know where you're going to end up when you start writing something?

If I theorised I couldn't write fiction. If I knew the mechanisms I'd lose the beat. I don't want to theorise. I don't have the means or desire to. If I went to a psychologist and ended up knowing too much about myself, it'd be terrible. I try to know just enough about myself to keep going without heart attacks (at least for the time being). I'm not driven by any need to explain myself to myself, or to understand my mental mechanisms. If I did, what would I talk about then in my stories, in my articles and in my novels? I write to explain myself to myself without getting too caught up in it.

Do you subscribe to the assertion that literature is a merciless way of saying and knowing things that can only be formulated through literature?

Totally. The ambiguity of literature —which is only a word— there's NOTHING to equal it.

Some people say that there's not much of that in your literature, that it's well-crafted and diverting but there's no real moral or intellectual substance. Others read you as an ingenious, amusing writer, but essentially banal.

There are some readers (or recipients) who can get what's evident and that's all: just the first layer. It happens with literature, journalism, the cinema, television and so on. If this first layer is very simple, they decide the whole thing is simple. But they can't see beyond that; they can't see layers, two, three, four, and so on. So it's their problem, not the book's, or the article's, or the film's... These are typical best-seller readers. They need the first layer —the obvious, evident one— to be loaded with pretension, with a certain kind of historical resourcefulness, and *prêt-à-porter* high culture. These readers or reviewers who get to layer one and go no further get a big thrill when they find all this packaging (which really is utterly banal) and they think what they've got is *haute literature*.

If this is the case, wouldn't it turn out in the end that this cultural conceit of wanting to stuff literature with ideas, data and intellectual weightiness is very close to the basic mechanisms of the best-seller that you're describing?

Of course! We can talk about a kind of best-seller that's a bit more pretentious, maybe, and more adroit. It's the kind of book that seems to be telling you lots of things, for example about Christianity in the 14th century. It's real spoon-fed pap because the reader finds everything there at face value and doesn't have to start a single neurone bouncing around the head. There was a time (in the 60s and 70s) when it was obligatory to produce literature that talked about class struggle, the national question, women's struggle, and the like. If the novel fulfilled all these requirements, it was thought to be a great book, even if it was utterly mediocre. That's all gone now —the mandarins are no longer the Marxists but conservatives or mythomaniacs— but new requisites have appeared. It's always a matter of turning out novels according to a recipe.

Do you see yourself writing a historical novel?

No, I don't. I don't know what I see myself doing. Well, doing a great parody of a historical novel would be really fun. Actually, I can see Robert Coover doing a "historical novel", coming at it from this standpoint of parody...

What is it about writers that interests people?

It makes me sick, this mystification of the literary life. So Miquel Bauçà dies, and he dies in the way he dies, and a lot of people who never took the trouble to read him when he was alive, suddenly glorify him and turn him into *the great writer*. Miquel Bauçà was a truly great writer when he was still alive, before he died in the way that he died. How he died has nothing to do with the quality of his literature. But you have to be pretty cretinous to go looking in literature for the nimbus that cloaks the writer and little more than that. In other words, the tubercular writer, in some attic in Paris, spitting blood... Oh, what a great writer he is! And if he kills himself, so much the better. Or at least let him get caught up in a civil war in Fuentevaqueros and get put up against a wall and shot by a firing squad. There are very few people who are interested

in literature *per se*, without all the ideological and mythologising trappings. What people are mainly interested in is all that stuff: the aura it's wrapped in.

Where would you situate literary fiction *vis-à-vis* other kinds of fiction?

There's no doubt any more that literature has been shunted off to the fringes of fiction. It was really clear twenty years ago and now it's even more so. Television is offering extraordinarily powerful works of fiction today. There was one very important point (in the early nineties?) when David Lynch did *Twin Peaks*. That series (and what that audacity signified) broke with everything television had been doing until then. And this led to the appearance of fifty thousand ground-breaking, well-differentiated models. Television's at a high point. I take my hat off to some of the American series, from *House* to *The Sopranos* to *Lost*. Every day I see how my son is downloading from the Internet chapters they've shown a couple of days earlier in the United States. Since I don't have time to watch television every day, what I do is to buy packs from time to time and get right into it: five seasons of *The Sopranos* in two weeks. We're talking about Fiction with a capital F. It makes you laugh to see the buffs still telling you that the 19th century novels are the examples to follow. The Balzacs and Stendhals of today are the people who are turning out this great fiction for television, American or otherwise. In literature, those of us who write stories (be they long or short) are at the periphery of all this centrality that isn't even in the hands of the cinema any more. Now it's television, and television (as we understand it today) won't be at the centre either before long because it'll all be done on the Internet. And we won't be able to see that they're two different things, and that will open up hitherto unsuspected paths. For the moment, it's a huge pleasure to keep writing, all by myself, at the fringe of all this hullabaloo, without having to answer to anything or anybody.

Do you use resources from audiovisual language to set up or frame your stories?

Before I had a computer, I often worked with a set-up that consisted in cutting the paragraphs of the first draft I'd written directly on to the page and then relocating them in a different order, as if it was a film montage. It's evident that storytelling by means of the word has changed since the cinema came along. Huxley's way of assembling a novel and, later, Vargas Llosa in some of his books, happened because of the existence of the cinema. And people who began to write having grown up with television work differently again. Ads and videoclips have their influence: it's speed versus five hundred pages. Sometimes there are novels of seven hundred pages when five hundred would have been plenty. Cutting is a first-rate literary exercise. When I'd written *Davant del Rei de Suècia*, I decided to cut out everything that wasn't strictly essential and it went from a hundred and eighty pages down to a hundred. That was exciting.

Are you planning to write more novels?

I never have plans. What would I know about what I'm going to do tomorrow? I've written three novels —apart from *L'udol del griso al caire de les clavegueres* (The Howl of the Cop on the Brink of the Sewers), which I've never had republished— and these are *Benzina*, *La magnitude de la tragèdia* (The Magnitude of the Tragedy) and *Davant del Rei*

de Suècia. Now I write a lot for the press. I like this business of putting a twist on a bit of news and giving the structure of a story to an article. Or the opposite: writing stories with elements of an article. In my current folder of stories I've written there are lots of things that come from the press. Write a novel? Maybe, yes. I don't know. The pace of life has to be different. When I wrote *Benzina* I didn't have a phone at home and I lived out of town. That's why I had the draft done in a matter of two weeks. But the more things that interest you in life, the more complicated the situation gets. What's clear is that, once I've decided to publish these stories, the other idea I'm working on looks as if it's going to end up being something longer, a kind of non-fiction story with fiction, if that makes any sense.

There isn't a single political party that isn't putting on a show to please people who are supposed to keep voting for them

The weekly commitment of the article isn't too compatible with the extreme and prolonged concentration required by a novel...

If you put your mind to article writing and you try not to engage in simple digression on politics, the time you give to it is time you don't devote to fiction writing. But if they put a gun at my head and forced me to choose between writing articles and writing fiction, I wouldn't know what to do. Fortunately no one's got a gun at my head and I can go between one thing and the other without any hurry.

Is this intense journalistic activity a question of vocation or about earning a living?

I started writing articles in *Tele/eXprés*, chronicles of a trip to Vietnam during the war. Then I wrote columns for *Ajoblanco*. I've always written articles and fiction. I was in love with Joan de Sagarra's articles in *Tele/eXprés*, and the reports of Tom Wolfe, and the articles of Vázquez Montalbán (also in *Tele/eXprés*) when they wouldn't let him write about politics and he had to write about the Costa Brava. I loved the articles of Juan Marsé in *Por favour*. Even today Sagarra's articles make my Sunday. Espinàs is also a great columnist. And I like Xavier Montanyà a lot. Now I read him on Vilaweb or in the *Cultura/s* supplement of *La Vanguardia*. He's really good. I've kept some articles of his from the time when he was writing for *El Noticiero Universal*. After reading Joan de Sagarra when I was a young lad, I then got interested in reading his father... And I was astonished. What language! Now, there's one fellow I like who's writing in *The Independent*, Miles Kingston, and there's another one who writes for *The Guardian* called Guy Browning. He's got a book of articles translated into Catalan. He's good, really good. And a long time ago, it was a great discovery to find that there was a columnist called Manganelli who was writing articles in the 1960s of terrific quality and totally politically incorrect. And now that I'm talking about Italy, there are also Fruttero & Lucentini. I should say "were" because one of them died. When Umberto Bossi was saying that he wanted to proclaim the independence of Padania, Fruttero & Lucentini went off there to write dispatches as if it really was a war of independence.

Would you like to write your articles in Catalan?

Bilingualism is a punishment. Josep Pla said so, or something very like it.

Do you think the social, institutional and political milieu acts as a brake that makes sure that Catalan literature isn't visible?

Baltasar Porcel has talked about this a lot in his articles. You go into a bookshop and the percentage of books in Catalan is ridiculously low. So you tell me.

What would make this milieu a little less unwelcoming and a little more habitable for Catalan literature?

To tell you the truth, I don't see any solution. When we were innocent, in the early 1980s, when Franco wasn't long dead, we thought that we just had to open out the base and get away from elitism: we needed humour magazines, disco songs, gossip magazines and pornography in Catalan... the whole thing of the pyramid of high culture and low culture. *Madame se meurt*, wrote Gabriel Ferrater. In her latest book, Patricia Gabancho says that the bottom layer, popular culture (really popular and not cliché stuff) didn't exist in Catalan. And that's death. That leads to fossilisation, to turning Catalan culture into something residual, minority, Occitanised, Irelandised... It's the ultimate disconnection.

In some of your articles you've talked about a hologram of a country, a diorama of symbols, fancy dress and cardboard cut-outs as substitutes for the country in which we live and suffer...

We are living a pure farce. There isn't a single political party that isn't putting on a show to please people who are supposed to keep voting for them. The Catalan language is given symbolic significance (less and less, take note), but the politicians (from all the parties without exception) disown it whenever it suits them. It's an old flag that they have to hide from time to time because a growing part of the population hates it and, when votes are at stake, it's better to keep your mouth shut.

Do you talk much about these issues in your works of fiction?

You could say that *Davant del Rei de Suècia* is an allegory of present-day Catalonia, an allegory of defeat. The building's filled up with people you don't know and it's you who has to adapt to their standards and their way of doing things, not them.

Bernado Atxaga has recently become a member of the Euskaltzaindia, the Royal Academy of the Basque Language. Shouldn't some of today's well-known writers be in the Philological Section of the Institute of Catalan Studies, or the Royal Academy of Letters of Barcelona?

In the Basque Country and in Spain, things are as you say. Here, these institutions are so out of touch with what's happening on the street that I don't know what they are or how they function. It's more than a decade since they brought out the first edition of the dictionary. Hallelujah! And now they've just brought out the second. Lovely.

Once I went to the Institute with Empar Moliner to do a radio programme. I'd never been there before. We poked around the nooks and crannies and, among several other things, we lifted the covers of the Institute's switchboard. The labelled instructions were all done —on Dymo tape, if I remember correctly— in Spanish. Not even inside the bubble is the dream possible.

Are you tempted by the possibility of going back to work in television?

I was only working in television for a year, in *Persones humanes* (Human People) with Miquel Calçada. It was fifty-two weeks and that was all. I enjoyed it because the idea was right. Then, for years I was complaining that there was no real corrosive humour but I can't say that any more because now there's this whole gang of Toni Soler and company who are doing *Polònia* (Poland) on TV3 and *Minoria absoluta* (Absolute Minority) on Rac1. I take my hat off to them. In a domain that seems to be as dicey as political and social parody they're making splendid programmes. *Minoria absoluta* is addictive. They're really good.

Some people say you don't try to reflect the country in your work, and that you don't give specific settings in a lot of your stories.

That's true. I've always had a phobia for this kind of twee decoration of local details. When I translated Hemingway (the book that's called *The Sun Also Rises*) I was shocked at all the overdone picturesque touches of Pamplona that he threw in, and the expressions in bad Spanish that he placed in the mouths of the people from Pamplona, just to satisfy his longing for a bestseller and that of his readers for *faux* high culture. I feel the same about a lot of French writers who fill their mouths (or whose mouths were filled) with references to the Rambla or the Barri Xino[1] to throw in a touch of exotic colour. I don't see why I should say that the action's happening in carrer Jovellanos, or in carrer Rocafort if there's no need to give this information. I tend to eliminate anything I think is non-essential. However, if I had to write articles about Barcelona as if I was here for seven days as a tourist in my own city, then I'd give all the details. But in stories, if they're not needed, why give them?

Do you write stories starting out from a plot or the characters?

More from the characters than from a plot or situation.

In your literature one always sees a certain degree of autobiographical projection. Have you ever thought about doing something purely along the lines of memoirs?

I think that, whatever I write, it will always go through the sieve of fiction. The stories I'm writing now take off from specific details in my life but hasn't it always been thus? The stories I've got in a folder waiting for me to decide to publish them, have come out of these last fifteen years, when I've gone through the final decline of my parents and

[1] Chinatown: a name given in the 1920s to the old-city neighbourhood (which had no Chinese connections) by a local journalist after seeing a film about vice in San Francisco's Chinatown [translator's note].

there's no doubt that they're full of references I couldn't have published fifteen years ago. Fifteen years ago I wouldn't have been able to tell you much about the Hospital Clínic, or the Vall d'Hebron hospital... Now I can tell you about a lot of Barcelona hospitals, with all the details you care to have, because I've spent eight years in them.

Some of your stories have appeared with illustrations by Robert Llimós, Perico Pastor or Ramon Enrich, who are mainly figurative painters. You've also talked about art in *Benzina* and in a number of articles. Are you interested in the world of art nowadays?

I don't follow it with as much devotion as I used to. I go to exhibitions but not with the regularity of some decades ago. I studied at the Massana School of Art. And there's one detail of modern art that particularly interests me. After Impressionism, when reality started to be disfigured (or served up without the previous fidelity), the more art advances, the more it moves away from being mere realistic reproduction and the greater need the painter has to justify what he or she is doing. It amuses me mightily, this need to justify. If they didn't do it, a lot of people would be left only with what we were talking about before, the façade or the first layer. And we've reached the point where a lot of painters have had to write books to defend themselves and to explain why they paint the way they paint, and why their paintings are so good. This is an aberration: the public will decide if they are so good! There's a great book by Tom Wolfe —from the time when he still wasn't writing novels— called *The Painted Word*. He talks in this about a future in which what will be hanging in the museums will be the theoretical texts of the critics. And next to them, in miniature, will be a reproduction of the work in question so that we know what the great creator is referring to, the great creator being the one who's able to explain the sense of the whole thing. When the book was published, people thought it was reactionary. Where do you see criticism of the dogmas of progressive art? But now we've seen that the whole thing is a more or less intelligent business. Art and sausages, ecology and culture consumption. Is there that much difference between Starbucks and the Guggenheim? Both of them keep opening up franchises so that cosmopolitan folk can have clean ghettos where they can go and have a coffee (in the former case) or see art that interests them (in the latter case).

Both Starbucks and the Guggenheim keep opening up franchises so that cosmopolitan folk can have clean ghettos to go to for coffee or art that interests them

Does your training and experience as a graphic designer have any influence in your writing?

In my early books there's a lot of obsession with describing and detailing colours. I could almost have written, "The sun was rising in a Pantone 635 C sky". Something else that clearly comes from that background in art is my tendency to write advancing

rapidly without polishing anything and only starting to work on the nuances and polishing when the whole thing has come together. I write as it comes, without worrying too much about commas and accents until the story is well defined. I see a lot of similarity with the process of drawing. First you've got to bring together properly what you're drawing, whether it's a sofa or a face because, if you start finishing little detail after little detail, when you get to the other side of the sofa or the face, you might find that it's gone outside the picture, or that you haven't managed to establish the right relations among all the parts and, in short, it's all over the place.

What part has translating played in your work?

In the early 1980s I began to translate because I needed money. But publishers only pay a pittance. Literary translation is worse paid than technical translation. If literary translators are so badly paid, so much the worse for translation because the good ones will go and do something else. When I started to have the kind of income I needed from other kinds of work, I decided to translate only the writers I liked, such as Truman Capote. Recently I've been translating theatre —because friends have asked me to do it more than anything else. Besides, theatre is dialogue and I really enjoy translating dialogues and making people speak Catalan that is neither imposed nor putrid.

Has the model of literary Catalan changed much over the last decades?

Yes, especially after the 1980s when the mass media in Catalan appeared: radio, television and newspapers.

Have you ever thought about getting involved with the theatre again, with the kind of things you were doing in the mid-1980s like *El Tango de Don Joan* (Don Juan's Tango), which you wrote with Jérôme Savary?

To work with other people, in a team, you've got to have a really tough character, you've got to be something of a despot and not listen too much to others. If you're not, you end up giving ground and taking part in things in which you don't recognise yourself.

Do they still say you're the father of each new young short-story writer who publishes a book in Catalan?

In the 1980s and 1990s they said that almost all the young writers that appeared were my children. It was as if there were not a thousand writers in the world who were capable of influencing the hundred thousand writers there must be in this country II

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reviews

Reviews

Poetry in a postmodern society

Jordi Rourera

Jordi Julià, 2005, *Modernitat del món fungible*
(Modernity of the Perishable World) Barcelona, Angle editorial, 165 pp.

This is a tempting book. It is tempting because, first of all, if there is anything we lack, it is thoroughgoing studies of our present-day literature and, in particular, overview analyses that explain trends, classify authors and evaluate their works. In brief, studies that offer some order. And the aim of *Modernitat del món fungible* is to obtain a picture of some of today's poetry (non-existent evaluation aside). It is tempting, too, because it offers an all-embracing account of some twenty poets who now constitute the most consolidated "young generation". The temptation of a brilliant project that is capably presented should not, however, prevent us from seeing some of the more debatable —in the true sense of the term— aspects of this essay.

The poet, critic and lecturer in Literary Theory, Jordi Julià (1972), sets out to analyse and classify the poetry of writers of his generation (those born in the 60s and 70s) in the light of studies of postmodern society. Julià's thesis is that political and sociological changes in the world over the last twenty-five years mark this generation that grew up under another paradigm (a "world of yesteryear") and that, as a result, produce poetry that he calls *reflexive realism*, in particular the poetry they have produced in the 21st century. These are third-millennium poets, the "Fall of the Wall Generation", and this historic event is taken as a symbol of the collapse of the world in which they were raised.

To begin with, Jordi Julià situates the reader in postmodern society. He then reveals the evolution of poetic tendencies from the 1980s through to the present and proposes an updated classification. Finally, he describes how reflexive realism is a poetic response to the historical and social circumstances of this generation, situating it in his schema as a synthesis of poetry of experience and metaphysical poetry while also indicating its main formal features: alienation, digression and condensation.

Julià's account of the contributions of the most outstanding thinkers of postmodernity (Taylor, Lipovetsky, Bauman, Virilio, Lacroix and Rosset) is in itself an excellent summary article, in which he moves from the metaphor of the liquid (changing and uncertain) world through the extreme individualism that gives pride of place to instrumental reasoning and leads to the cult of immediate emotion to the detriment of feelings, and the notion of the perishable world in which, in the absence of stability, everything is susceptible to being consumed. Julià tight-weaves his account by introducing numerous quotes from the aforementioned theoreticians and some illustrative poems, and his exposition is rigorous, clear and comprehensible.

The third section, on the other hand, is the one that gives rise to the most methodological and general doubts. It is possible that the examples of the poems that Julià cites reflect what he wants (and, moreover, the interpretation can be judged as biased in some) but it is obvious that the work of several poets (Manel Forcano and Susanna Rafart, for example) is taking totally different paths. In other words, the examples he offers constitute the exception but not the rule. Once again, the features of reflexive realism do not characterise the bulk of these poets and, furthermore, they are sufficiently vague to be found in writers of other generations. The procedure tends to make one think that, starting out from a preconceived idea —the influence of the perishable world on the poets being studied— Julià has sought to corroborate it, come hell or high water.

Again, some of his premises for distinguishing the poets he has analysed from others are contentious, for example the idea that this generation should have felt the "collapse of the world of yesteryear" more than the previous generation or that, although they were producing work since the 90s, they did not practise reflexive realism until the turn of the millennium with the 9/11 attacks as catalyst. Then again, is it liquid postmodern society (which would not affect them exclusively) that marks them or the change of historic paradigm?

To deny the influence of society on poetry is as wrong-headed as to imagine that society alone *significantly* explains it. Sociological approximations to literature are useful, in particular, for seeing how literature is, in some respects, a reflection of society (and they explain the society more than what lies in the strictly literary domain). In this regard, Jordi Julià's work is correct. One cannot deny the close link between what he describes in the first part of his book and works such as Hèctor Bofill's *Les genives cremades* (Burnt Gums) or Sebastià Alzamora's *Benestar* (Well-being), but neither his own poetry nor that of anyone else is explained as reflexive realism alone, nor is this exclusive to the poets under consideration. The problem appears when Julià tries to use historical and social facts to account for an entire generation of quite widely differing poets, as if their work were merely a mirror of the past twenty years. Literature also consists of literature and of very diverse personal experience that goes beyond the common coordinates that the epoch assigns to these facts.

This mechanical relationship between the literary work and society seems to be something out of other times, pertaining less to Julià's reflexive realism than to social (or, as we would call it here, historical) realism. It makes one think of the questionnaire that the review *Poemes* sent out to a number of poets in 1963, the sixteenth question in the order of the survey being, "Have you been influenced by historic events?" There was no lack of respondents who spoke of superstructures. Gabriel Ferrater, more ironic and mocking, answered, "Yes, very much. And members of my family even more" II

A place where people and books lived

Simona Škrabec

Arnau Pons, 2006, *Celan, lector de Freud* (Celan, Reader of Freud), Lleonard Muntaner, Palma, 117 pp.

There is a deep-rooted conviction that a poem, especially if it is hermetic, conceals several readings. Whatever the case may be, every text bears within itself a different face for each reader. Arnau Pons, author of the book *Celan, lector de Freud*, is more than compelling in showing the harmful effects of such haziness. The quest for the *meaning* of the poem is adapted from the outset to the expectations of the reader. The text is not seen as a text that some other person has written but becomes instead nothing more than some kind of reflection of the reader. Hence, it is not possible to establish any bridge to the otherness that the text represents.

In the case of Paul Celan, a reading that overlooks the artist and his historic position perpetuates even more "disrespect and dubious cultural celebration". In countering these effects, Pons' brief book is a study in critical hermeneutics. The most important feature of this methodology is that it recovers the notion of subject. A poem cannot be stripped of its chronology and neither can the particular experience of the poet be overlooked.

With his attentive reading of this one writer, Pons manages to fashion a tool for reflection that is highly appropriate for the times in which we live. For Celan's readers in general it is difficult, not to say impossible, to take in the seriousness of the poet's caveat that one must understand the texts, the rhetoric and the seduction of the words.

Celan accuses us. He accuses us because the inability of, let us say, Europeans to decipher the seduction of the discourse of power led to genocide, systematically perpetrated by the Nazis. He wants us to learn how to read so that we can steer clear of the siren song. But we still haven't learned much, not much at all.

In Bukovina, said Celan, when he received the City of Bremen Prize, there used to live people and books. The name of the region is closely linked with books. *Bukva* in Russian means "letter" and *buk* is beech, just as the German noun *Buche* (beech) takes us to *Buch* (book), on the assumption that soft beechwood blocks were once used in printmaking. Who then, as Arnau Pons asks, can forget that the people and books of Bukovina were burned by the Nazis?

How is it possible to overcome the dense silence of oblivion? How can the advance of this invasive forest be avoided? In his poem "Stretto", Paul Celan describes the landscape of afterwards in just two words: "*Gras, auseinandergeschrieben*" (Grass, written asunder). He describes the grass, letter by letter. The setting is still a landscape, but a written landscape. The reader is deported into the text.

This crystallisation of memory —the tear never shed but changed into a sharp-edged stone that endures, in a poem— is his great difference *vis-à-vis* the method in which Freud trusted. The inventor of psychoanalysis sought to borrow *catharsis* from Greek

tragedy. He thought that one only needed —I am simplifying things!— to express the trauma through language, and the painful memories could be overcome.

Celan breaks down the Freudian conviction with an aphorism of Kafka, who also exclaimed at the fact that it seemed that all explanations could be found in psychology. Celan's irony about the curative power of the word is sharp, and it hurts. Celan knew that both Kafka and Freud died of occlusion of the larynx, of throat cancer and tuberculosis respectively, which made it impossible to swallow food in the final stages ("A Hunger Artist"), or to speak ("Josephine the Singer").

The shadow of aphasia over someone whose language is being broken down and the physical illness that makes it impossible to articulate anything but guttural sounds project a palpable threat because then we see the fragility of language, Paul Celan's "breath-crystal". Pon's reflections on these dense verses help us a great deal to discover, to perceive, little by little, their sound, their *sense* II

II Robert Graves and his world

Joan Carles Simó

Maria Rosa Llabrés, 2006, *Robert Graves i el món clàssic* (Robert Graves and the Classical World), Lleonard Muntaner, Palma, 376 pp.

M. Rosa Llabrés, head of a secondary school Greek department and well known for her contributions on the classical world in different spheres (lectures, translations and publications), has also published a major collection of lyrical poetry of Ancient Greece translated by herself. This book demonstrates her enormous ability in working with material that is of great use for anyone who is interested in the different aspects of the classical tradition.

Those of us who know about M. Rosa's fascination with the work of Robert Graves, and who have heard her speaking about it more than once, were waiting for this definitive work on the dimension that the classical world acquires in the work of the Deià dweller. It rarely happens that an essay can be described as indispensable but this one is precisely that in being both something long-anticipated and also comprehensive. In fact, all the Graves scholars and devotees of the classical world have been waiting for this book on the relationship between Graves' work and the classical tradition. We all know that the work of the writer from Wimbledon who went to live in Deià has been the starting point for many a passion for the classical world. It is as if the love-hate relationship that Graves professed for all that the Greco-Roman world entailed stimulated his readers to approach the classics in the same personal way that Graves aimed at and achieved. However, this matter of awakening interest in, and passion for, the classical world (and who has not admired his novel *I, Claudius* even if only because of the television series?)

was hitherto bereft of any study on the use that Graves made of the classical world and of the sources of classical culture in general, and on the very special links between Graves and Greco-Latin culture. M. Rosa Llabrés' book has now filled this void, correctly situating Graves' work and person but without any kind of adulation or, on the contrary, hint of condescension about the fact that his writing is not only creative but also for popular consumption.

I have also noted that Llabrés' book is well-rounded and it is so because it engages in a minutely-detailed, unhurried, and serious survey of each and every one of Graves' works that contain references to the classical world, while sources are analysed passage by passage and their use evaluated with all the professional aplomb and rigour that comes from the author's profound knowledge of both the classical tradition and the relevant elements of Robert Graves' life, all of which led Graves to offer, through his work, a personal interpretation of the classics that was also much more of a serious endeavour than some critics have wished to recognise.

It is of no little importance to highlight, in this regard, that Graves' enlistment in the army in the First World War was a virtual departure for Troy, a *fatum* that governs events, like the *fatum* of the emperor Claudius that sets out for a remote posterity to be resuscitated by Graves as a literary ploy. As M. Rosa Llabrés points out, this character who will mark Graves' future contains in his misunderstood personality that, while not fitting in anywhere, is also deeply human, traits that are sufficiently clear to offer glimpses of a certain autobiographical component.

This personal use of historical data will represent the take-off point for modern historical narrative: the presentation of events in dramatic form, along with the personalised, highly-detailed nature of the way he tells history in the style of Suetonius and the historiography of the imperial era, are characteristics that belong to 20th century historical narrative, and these are due, in great part, to the contributions of Robert Graves.

Again, Llabrés' study explores Graves' psychological dimension, just as he too was interested in the new psychological trends of his times. In fact, his psychological treatment of Claudius but, in particular, the significance he gives to the female figure that is omnipresent in his novel about the emperor, and in Graves' own life as well, is a constant in his work. *The White Goddess* and *Homer's Daughter* are two clear exponents of this female presence in Graves' subsequent work.

Nonetheless, perhaps Graves' Claudius, as Llabrés makes clear, is no more than the first stone in the impressive edifice constructed around his theories on the fact of mythology and of poetry in general. It is a first stone that is by no means light and this is worth remarking on because this book contains novelistic elements that situate it among other works in the genre that have marked the tendencies of later periods. The point is that Graves produces a version of the events and the characters that nobody had previously been able to manage. This is an account of an almost unknown emperor, with a complex and difficult personality, who uses cunning and adulation to save himself and to survive, seasoned with a great profusion of details that satisfies the reader's curiosity.

M. Rosa Llabrés rightly locates Graves' huge mythological opus (*The Golden Fleece*, *The White Goddess*, and *The Greek Myths*) in the context of his reflections on poetic creation and the universality of the mythological fact. Even though this leaves room for doubts as

to whether his work might be considered as scientific, it is no less true that Graves, with his "historical grammar of poetic myth", stimulates any reader who is interested in the mythological fact to start asking questions, while also pointing out new paths to explore without failing to appreciate the poetry his books exhale.

Whatever criticisms have come from the academic world, the popular success of his opus cannot be ignored, and it is this fact that M. Rosa Llabrés book situates in its rightful place. His use of classical language in an innovative way, above all in personal and demythologising senses, along with his more intimate and profound treatment of the classical tradition, and the fact that his poetic vision is the expression of an ancient and unique subject matter have meant, without a doubt, that Graves' work has brought on an addiction to classical themes in many people, while fleeing possible "dizzying, tiring or rigidly scientific" standpoints.

Not to be ignored, either, is the account that M. Rosa Llabrés offers in her essay of Graves' brief works: short stories, articles, poems and translations, all penned with boundless fantasy and always true to his poetic-mythological theses. In these short pieces one sees Graves' immense intellectual baggage, especially with regard to his knowledge of the classical world.

In brief, this is a splendid work that offers a great deal of information about the creation of Graves' particular mythological world and the importance of the presence of the classical world in his *oeuvre*. This is a Robert Graves who, once installed in Deià, incorporated ideas into his work that cannot be detached from his own way of living and feeling life, and that are closely bound up with theses such as those he upheld about living in harmony with the natural world, ideas that make him a true precursor of new social currents appearing in Europe after the 1960s: ecological movements, alternative therapies, new religious or musical forms... And all of this through the massive prism of the classical tradition and universal mythology that give both coherence and form to the thought of Robert Graves as a whole II

A major contribution to Catalan philology

Brauli Montoya

Antoni Ferrando Francés and Miquel Nicolás Amorós, 2005, *Història de la llengua catalana* (History of the Catalan Language), UOC/Pòrtic, Barcelona, 540 pp.

This is a voluminous work comprising 539 densely packed pages. It builds on *Panorama d'història de la llengua* (Historical Panorama of the Catalan Language-Tàndem, Valencia: 1993), another work of the same authors, but is longer, more than double the number of pages, and has a thesis. More importantly, includes considerably more developed and expanded material. The book is divided into 12 chapters and, except for chapter 1, each one traces the chronology of the history of Catalan from its origins (chapter 2) to the year of the book's publication in 2005 (chapter 12). Chapter 1 deals with the theory on which the rest of the book is built. It is the only chapter that strays from the work's chronological organisation. The book begins with a prologue by the authors, Ferrando and Nicolás (herein F and N), and is followed by a general bibliography. Each chapter in turn contains a more specific bibliography so that, in total, there are 20 pages of bibliographic reference material.

Without a doubt, *Història de la llengua catalana* fills a gap in the history of the Catalan language, which until now had not been conveyed in as complete and as rigorous a manner. From now on it is possible to say that those university professors who are required to teach the history of the Catalan language will have an extremely helpful tool at their disposal, while their students will equally reap the benefits of a good analytical guide to Catalan's linguistic history. With F and N, professionals in the field of linguistics, both professors and students are in good hands. Ferrando has made many contributions to studies of crucial episodes in the history of the Catalan language, studies on, for example, the linguistic origin and identity of Valencians; on Bernat Fenollar and Jeroni Pau's medieval text *Regles d'esquivar vocables* (Rules for Avoiding Certain Words), etc. in A. Ferrando, *Consciència idiomàtica i nacional dels valencians* (The National and Linguistic Awareness of Valencians), Institute of Valencian Philology, University of Valencia: 1980; and "On the Authorship of the *Regles d'esquivar vocables*, again", *El Marges*, 70, 2002, pp. 67-98. Meanwhile, Nicolás is quite well known for his incisive, critical examination of the history of Catalan language in M. Nicolás, *Història de la llengua catalana: la construcció d'un discurs* (History of the Catalan Language: Construction of a Discourse), Publications of Abadia de Montserrat, Interuniversity Institute of Valencian Philology, Barcelona-Valencia: 1998.).

In order to evaluate the core content of *Història de la llengua catalana*, we must begin with the prologue, F and N's veritable declaration of principles (and intentions). In the prologue, the authors affirm an "emphasis on sociolinguistic factors and on ideological representations" (p. 15) and an aim "to problematise received interpretations" (p. 18). But this sociolinguistic emphasis and problematisation of received interpretations depends a lot on the scientific specialisation readers bring to bear on the text. That is to say, if this

book is read by sociolinguists, they will find it lacking in emphasis on important social and political events in the history of the Catalan language, while other specialists in Catalan's linguistic evolution will find it lacking in other pertinent aspects.

Yet this could just be the book's principal virtue. Everybody will find something they are looking for, but nobody will find everything. For a history of the Catalan language which espouses, quite wisely, a wholistic approach to methodology, with serious attention given to themes that are important to historians of the Catalan language, it could be no other way. After all, F and N's book can be used as a university textbook on a course on the history of the Catalan language. The authors communicate this clearly with the formal structure they have chosen for the book. The distribution of chapters is didactic in the sense that theory comes first and applied knowledge second. So that it meets the historicist needs of the history field, it is also chronological. Meanwhile, in many instances, explanations are accompanied by texts and illustrations from the historical moments to which they pertain. Then, in chapters dealing with applied components, there are well-detailed diagrams such as "chronological tables", which contain complementary extensions to the material. Finally, there is a bibliography organised according to the book's various themes, appearing at the end. The final, overall result is a book which is ideal for pedagogical purposes.

Nevertheless, details of the work and its material are certainly open to debate. In naming Spanish and Catalan kings, F and N adopt the numbering system of the dynasty of the House of Barcelona, instead of the Castilian system of designation. This could cause problems for readers wishing to identify kings from the sixteenth century onwards, after the Catalan court was transferred to Castile and people began to understand the monarchy according to its Castilian numbering (in this scheme of things, "Philip II," famous for his line about his territorial possessions being so vast the sun never set on them, becomes for F and N "Philip I"). As for the book's contribution of documentary material, although this material is well conceived, it leaves us in desire of more. The same for the book's illustrations, which, in black and white and small in dimension, hinder a full appreciation of the historical moments described in them. Finally, there is the question of the bibliographies. Their disaggregated arrangement may slow some readers down when consulting citations.

But for all these criticisms, F and N are well intentioned. In the case of the numerical designation of Catalan and Spanish kings, F and N wish to pay homage to the sovereignty of the old territories of the Aragonese Crown, as far as the Nova Planta decrees. Furthermore, in the designation of kings according to their royal nicknames rather than their official numbering, which is consistent with established Catalan tradition, the authors wish to avoid certain confusion. Finally, with respect to the sometimes difficult deciphering of illustrations, this is due partly to the book's formal design and style, its use of poor-quality paper, its absence of colour, its small letter size, its small overall size relative to its number of pages, etc. These are decisions of the publisher and not the authors.

Although F and N maintain their emphasis is on sociolinguistic factors, the truth is a variety of eclectic selections govern the book's material and direction. In the condensed conceptual and terminological definitions of the field of linguistics, which appear in chapter 1, the authors put forward a nomenclature for and delimitation which is

somewhere between a social history and a sociolinguistic history of Catalan (p. 38), even though they insist on a "cleanly social perspective" (p. 39). The authors also accept, however, the more traditional disciplinary orientation, as represented by, for example, Rafael Lapesa's classic *Historia de la lengua española* (The History of the Spanish Language) (Gredos, Madrid: 1980). It is no coincidence that purely historical events, and in some cases even purely social events, are separated out from the linguistic events pertinent to the development of Catalan. Starting in chapter 2, these linguistic events are usually placed in a section of their own at the end of the chapter. Figure 1.2 (p. 40) is typical of this. In this figure, the authors have organised the various disciplines and sub-disciplines that comprise Catalan-language studies into a neat, clearly synthesised chart, but they have left out sociolinguistic history which they had just finished discussing two pages before.

F and N's chronological explanation begins in chapter 2 and carries on throughout the rest of the book. Each subsequent chapter corresponds to a concrete epoch or era in the history of Catalan, delimited by key dates marking the history of the language. One problem with this formulation is that F and N do not allot equal proportionality to each historical period. We are struck by the quantity of pages dedicated to the contemporary era, in all, 215 pages covering the 19th and 20th centuries. Meanwhile, the ten previous centuries, divided into seven chapters, occupy just 252 pages. Of course, there is in general much more information on the 19th and 20th centuries than on the centuries before these. Still, it is questionable whether F and N can write such a lopsided mass of contemporary history with a sufficient sense of perspective for such recent times as the last couple of decades, let alone the last couple of years all the way up to the publication of *Història de la llengua catalana*, as they indeed do.

But in spite of everything, F and N's contribution is greatly welcomed. Other histories of the Catalan language are less thorough. In one case, they focus on more distant rather than recent epochs. Two distinguished works that fall into this category, which cover the history of Catalan only as far as the 15th century, are Sanchis Guarner's *Aproximació a la història de la llengua catalana* (Approaches to the History of the Catalan Language-Salvat, Barcelona: 1980) and J. Nadal and M. Prats's *Història de la llengua catalana* (History of the Catalan Language-Edicions 62, Barcelona: 1982-1996). Both these histories were designed as works in progress, with the intention they would one day be continued for the contemporary era. In the other case, Catalan histories tend to centre on the 16th century and onwards, in an often fragmented manner. With F and N, however, we have our first complete history of Catalan from antiquity to the present in one volume.

Each chronological chapter begins with an historical introduction, or an "historical frameworks" as F and N call it, and ends with "chronological tables" that include the political and social events of the period side by side with the purely linguistic events (or in some cases, the sociolinguistic events). Naturally, each chapter's body covers the events that properly mark the history of Catalan. In this breakdown, F and N could have shortened and simplified each chapter's introduction and expanded each body section to include, say, more exemplifying text or illustration. They could also have chosen a more readable font, particularly in view of the small size of font that was chosen. But F and N do provide explanations and source texts that clearly match their purposes, as in chapter 2 (pp. 61-62), where they present a sequence of fragments which give a good sense

of the detail involved in the evolution of Catalan from Latin. In this same chapter, F and N make a significant contribution to correcting the misnomer "Mozarabic", the traditional designation of that language inherited by the Christians of Al-Andalus from Latin, to "Romance" or "Romanic Andalusian".

Most of the chapters do not limit themselves to mere descriptions of vicissitudes in the history of the Catalan language from the time of its establishment in the territories of Catalonia until today. Rather, critical examinations, sprinkled throughout with largely unexplored observations on the societal uses of Catalan, predominate. An example of this is when F and N speak about the differences in the use of Catalan between the genders: "After 1500," they argue, "there were indications that noble and cultivated women, secular and religious, were more recalcitrant about the Castilianisation of Catalan than men" (p. 160). Another example is when F and N give details on a generational discontinuance of Catalan amidst the Valencian nobility: "Many nobles and also court servants of the new monarchy contracted the services of Castilian tutors for their children, for the purposes of coaching them in the command of Castilian" (p. 199).

A third example is when F and N mention the town of Montsó, "an Aragonese village, but Catalan speaking" (p. 189). We would like to know more about this village in those times. Similarly, it would be nice to know about the "*twelve* populations in the western region of the Kingdom of Valencia whose dominant tongue was Castilian-Aragonese" (p. 199, the reviewer's italics).

On the topic of changes to the Catalan linguistic frontier over time, the material is divided up between the different chapters of the book. There is some description of this in maps (figures 3.1 and 6.2), but it is not examined in great detail. Instead, F and N spend a lot of time in investigating the representations of Catalan by writers, intellectuals, and chroniclers, starting in the 16th century (see chapters 5, 6, and 7). Among other figures of the period, the authors cite Cervantes and Valdés, and natives thinkers such as Ponç d'Icard and Pujades. F and N discover a general interest in Catalan in these persons, for a period in which the prestige of Catalan was in decline all over. However, these authors also seem to be compensating for Catalan's disuse by Catalan authors in any erudite sense. Another theme F and N tackle are the linguistic shifts that split the more unified Catalan of the era prior to the 15th century. The emergence of "apitxat," the dialect of Catalan spoken in the city of Valencia, or differences in the pronunciation of the letter "r" at the end of words, are examples of these linguistic shifts (chapter 4, p. 175 and chapter 5, p. 218).

F and N divide the institutionalized repression that Catalan has suffered in the last two centuries (chapters 6 and 7) into two separate periods, and to mark this divide they choose the year 1759. This was the year that the reign of Charles III commenced and the application of a clear despotism began. Although always helpful to readers, perhaps the book's chronological organisation is too strict for a more cohesive treatment of the themes F and N undertake, particularly those themes extending well beyond centuries in the history of Catalan. On the other hand, by the time we arrive at the end of the book, the different themes become more condensed in time and we can appreciate them better, partly because F and N have written more for this period than for previous periods.

The final chapters include a study of the Catalan traditional oral model, maintained all the way up until 20th century, and an analysis of contemporary anti-Catalanism in the region of Valencia. But this discussion is limited by insufficient depth and analysis. The phenomenon of the "vertical linguistic substitution in the principal cities" (Barcelona, Valencia, and Perpignan), occurring in the 19th century (chapter 8, pp. 304, 322), requires more extensive treatment, and had this treatment been given it would have permitted a better understanding of Catalan's current sociolinguistic situation. The linguistic choice of Castilian by Valencian writers in the first few decades of the 20th century, a point which the authors touch on in chapter 9 (pp. 376-377) but only very superficially, similarly requires greater detail and analysis (B. Montoya: "La respresentació del conflicte lingüístic en la literatura valenciana contemporània [amb un esguard especial a la narrativa valoriana]"-"The representation of linguistic conflict in contemporary Valencian literature [with special consideration given to Enric Valor's narrative work]", *Llengua & Literatura*, 13 [2002], pp. 59-92).

In the end, however, the selection, focus, and level of detail given to the different themes appearing in any one work will always reflect the authors' personal criteria and biases, as products of certain scientific tendencies. Thus, as a kind of counterbalance to the criticisms that have been offered here, the final evaluation of F and N's work and their version of the history of Catalan could not be anything but positive. With this book, we are in the presence of a major contribution to Catalan philology ||

Burano (Italy), Toni Catany (2007)

Toni Catany, the poet of photography

Toni Catany (Llucmajor, Mallorca, 1942) is everything that he portrays, everything that he sets in the cage of his images, everything that attracts him and that he desires —gestures, gazes, features, tones, colours, shadows, states of stillness— and that he possesses when he takes his photographs. The art of his gaze has led him to capture images of his Mediterranean, of the naked dancer, the still life, landscapes and moments portraying his travels. Treated with a very particular sensibility and highly personal aesthetics, the bodies or objects that become the protagonists of his photographs are truly like the words of a poem: essential, revealing, indispensable, deep and echoing. Hence, we can say that, in his lyricism and undisputable mastery of light, Toni Catany is a poet of photography.

Toni Catany expresses himself through his photographs. His work, photo by photo, like the pages of a calendar, is autobiographical: it shows the fortuitousness of the days, the events, the journeys of his life, and he goes out in quest of images for ideas or music that, also fortuitously, seize his imagination and then come to constitute the backbone of his projects. Toni Catany sees and experiences the world, and from the everyday impact of routine events and of flavours, nights, melancholic moments and joys, he finds expression in the language of images for what he feels and what his eyes see. It all passes through him. As he very aptly says, "I transform what I see and try to make the photos flow from within me".

A self-taught photographer, Toni Catany began to exhibit in 1972, after which his work has appeared in more than a hundred individual and collective shows around the world. His images, suspended in an unreal time, floating between past and present and swaddled in an artistic ambience of melancholy, have captivated viewers everywhere, and part of his work is presently scattered in many collections worldwide, both private and public. He began to experiment with the old technique of calotype and black-and-white photography and ended up combining this with more modern methods (Polaroid prints transposed in colour, and now digital photography). Since the calotype process required long exposure times, he needed objects that did not move at all, which is why he turned to still-life compositions, even though this subject material did not interest anyone at the time. Beyond fashions or trends, Toni Catany set out on this adventure and, when all is said and done, the still life is one of the great themes of his photographic *oeuvre*, bringing him well-deserved repute and international renown. His still-life photographs show flowers, figures, fabrics, embroidery, rotting fruit, old toys, shells, and so on, as his book *Natures mortes* (Still Life, 1987) reveals. Toni Catany selects the objects he photographs with precise intent and expresses his feelings through them. "I was putting a lot of myself in those objects and people understood that, and then everyone went about interpreting the image in their own way".

Another prominent theme in his photography is that of naked bodies in movement from which detail is subsequently chosen (*Somniar déus*-Dreaming Gods, 1993). His photographs of male nudes are nothing less than horrifyimg because the models look more like sculptures than human bodies. Again, in *Obscura memòria* (Obscure Memory, 1994), Toni Catany set about photographing classical sculptures of ancient Rome in Italy, Greece and Egypt and managed to

make the naked marble sculptures from the classical period throb with life and look like humans.

Augustine, Bishop of Hipona, said, "The world is a book and people who do not travel only read one page of it". Toni Catany is a good reader of the world: his photographs reveal to us how many chapters of the world have passed before his eyes: the landscapes of Mallorca before anything else, immediately followed by the tegument of the Mediterranean and its ruins —"homes of the gods", as he calls them— from the Balearic Islands through to the Italian marbles, the old Libyan cities, the Greek islands, the colonnades of Syria, cafes of Morocco, minarets of Istanbul, medinas of Tunisia, temples of Sicily, the eternal vestiges of the countries of the Nile, cut-outs from the past viewed with eyes of the present, all of which were brought together in the much-lauded and prize-winning *La meva Mediterrània* (My Mediterranean, 1991). Other landscapes such as the thick, slow oil-water of the Venice lagoon (*Venessia*, 2006), the Caribbean of faces, bodies, fruits, forests and multi-hued cities, or the pastel-toned Africa of the tropics also attract Toni Catany and we have here, by way of a sample, some snippets of the beauty with which he is presently working.

In January 2007 I had the privilege of accompanying Toni Catany to the Ethiopian highlands. The route through rock-hewn churches, the palaces and obelisks of the Queen of Sheba, palaces of Gondar, the source of the Blue Nile, the green waters of Lake Tana, the Coptic Timket festival celebrating the Epiphany in Lalibela with its procession of multi-coloured umbrellas and crosses sparkling in the sun offered him many fine occasions to capture images. But Toni Catany had come to Ethiopia to find "an Ethiopian king", because at the time he was working with the poet Josep Piera on *Visions de Tirant lo Blanc* (Visions of Tirant lo Blanc, 2007) and he needed this character from Joanot Martorell's marvellous novel. On seeing a face that seemed to be one that could appropriately be crowned king, Toni Catany, sought permission, asking —almost always without much success— his subject not to smile, and then took the photograph. One day, in a vacant lot not far from our hotel in Lalibela, a lanky lad dressed in a track suit covered in dust finally managed to be the king of Ethiopia. In the course of this journey we also visited the ancient city of Harar, a mythical enclave of Muslim Ethiopia, a holy city of Islam with what seemed to be a thousand mosques, its population of Somali origins dressed in totally African style with a multitude of hues, headscarves and turbans, and houses and streets painted in pastel shades. Toni Catany's camera didn't stop, as it sought walls of encrusted colours, the combinations of pinks, blues and greens, the tints of the people's robes in this mosaic of time-aged paintings in colours that were once bright. The morsels that appear in this volume of *Transfer* are from there, from those days in which Toni Catany was accumulating colours inside his camera once he had borne off therein his king of Ethiopia. Some of the other photos in this issue of *Transfer* are from Venice, of its water-alleys, also painted in combinations of shades in an interesting interplay that compares the pulchritude and conservation of the coloured facades of the much-revered Venice with the decrepitude of the colours consumed by the sun and the monsoon rains of holy Harar.

Toni Catany's photographs are strangers to the passage of time and this is why they are universal. The exquisitely beautiful mystery that shrouds them makes them extraordinarily suggestive to their viewers. People everywhere like them. A lot. It is no accident that *Life* magazine named him one of the hundred best photographers in the world. The best thing of all, though, is that one perceives that Toni Catany has enjoyed taking them. And he's enjoying even more the project he's working on now (portraits in colour, a book on the Caribbean, digital still lifes in black and white…). We hope to have them soon. As Tirant lo Blanc hoped for his king of Ethiopia. As Harar hopes for the warm monsoon rains. As *Venessia* hopes that its lagoon will not sink it. As we hope that beauty will save us II

Manuel Forcano

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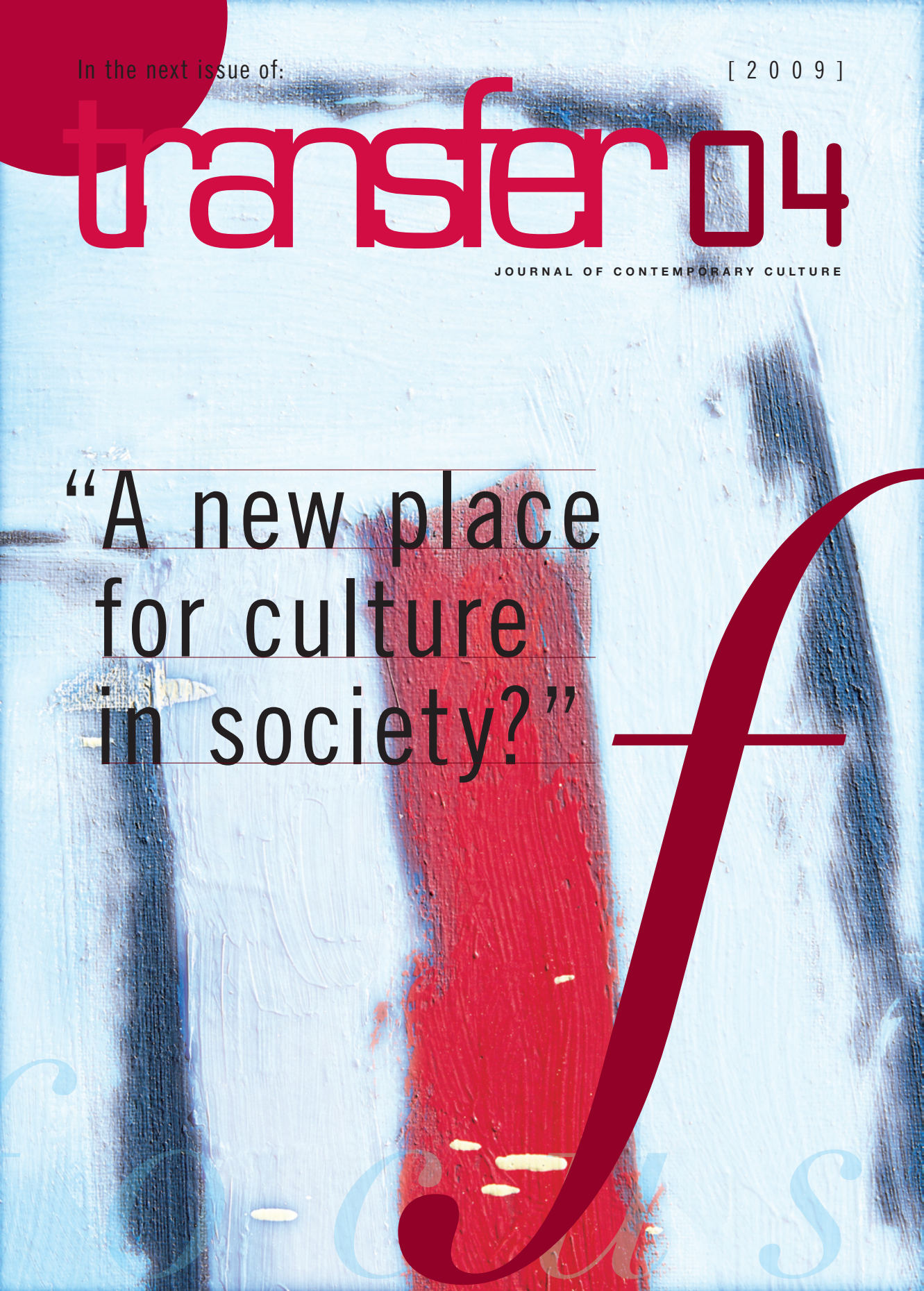

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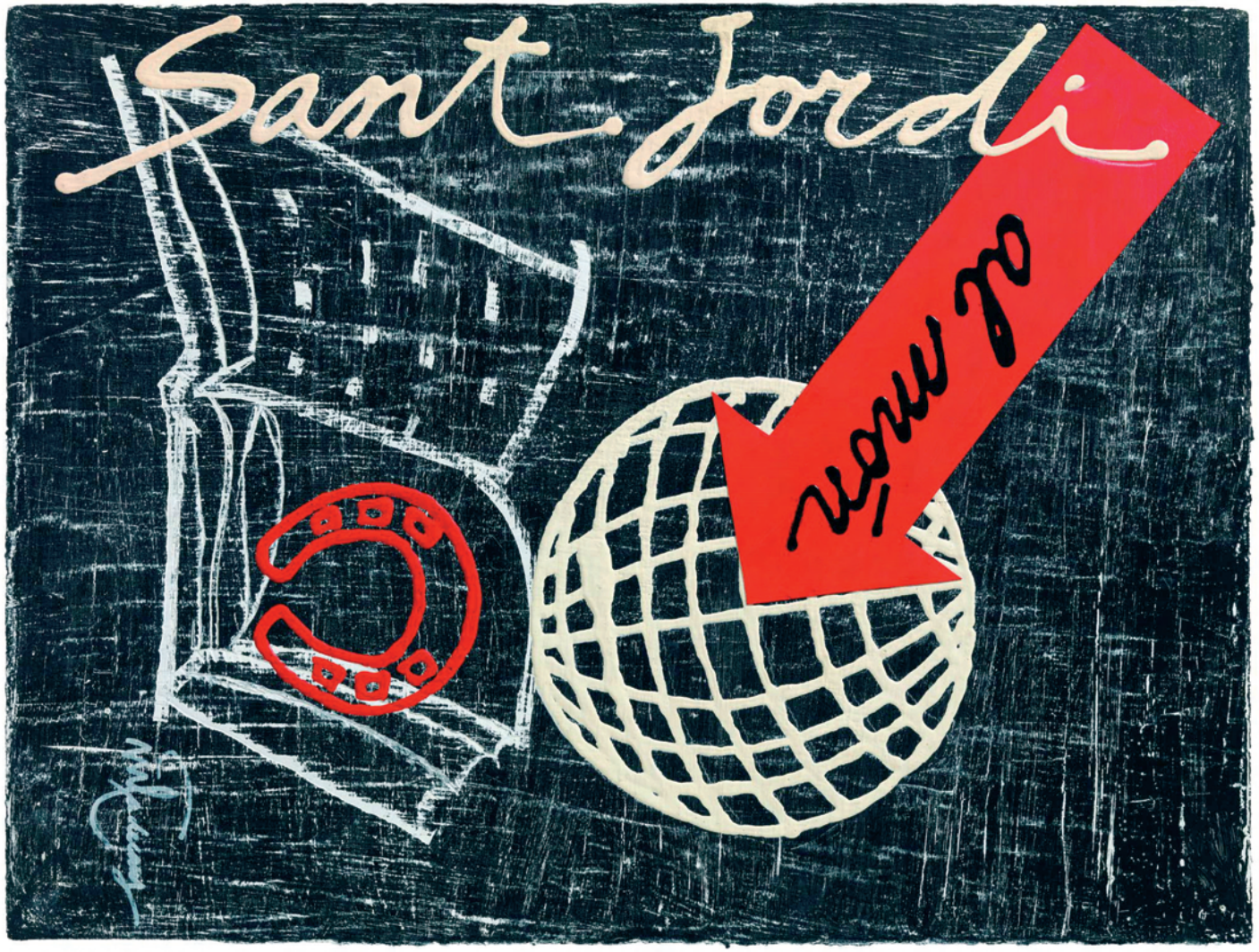

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