

The Crown of Aragon

A Singular Mediterranean Empire

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Writers at the End of Middle Ages

Lola Badia

1 Catalan Culture in the Fifteenth Century. Latin Writers and *studia humanitatis*

Catalan literature from the fifteenth century offers a number of very high quality products in both verse and prose. All the leading writers were linked to the royal court because the lyrical poetry and chivalrous novel, the genres we nowadays recognise as literary, depended on the tradition of the Occitanian troubadours and the great French narrative cycles of *Lancelot* and *Tristan en prose*, whose origins were linked to the courts of kings and nobles. The cultural environment of the courts of the Castilian Trastámara dynasty, which acceded to the throne of the Crown of Aragon in 1412, was thus a fundamental reference point.¹ Ferdinand of Antequera (1412–1416), the first king of this dynasty, took on the cultural traditions of the Catalan-Aragonese monarchy, like holding the public festivities of the *Gaia Ciència* (Floral Games) poetry competition in 1413 with discourses by Felip de Malla and the intervention of Enrique de Villena.² This environment was the same during the early years of the reign of Alfonso the Magnanimous (1416–1458). Iñigo López de Mendoza, Marquis of Santillana, resided in Alfonso's first court and dealt, among others, with the most brilliant poet of the time, the Valencian knight, Jordi de Sant Jordi (1397–1424), for whom he wrote a funeral eulogy in Castilian verse.³ The establishment of close literary contacts with the Kingdom of Castile began in the early fifteenth century, although there had been translations from Catalan to Castilian and

1 Anton Espadaler, “La Catalogna dei re,” in *Lo spazio letterario del Medioevo. 2 Il Medioevo volgare*, eds. Pietro Boitani, Mario Mancini, Alberto Varvaro, 2 vols. (Rome, 2002), 1/2: 873–933; Jaume Torró, “Cort i literatura de Joan I a Ferran II el Catòlic;” “Els cançoners del segle,” in *Història de la Literatura Catalana. Literatura Medieval (II)*, ed. Lola Badia (Barcelona, 2014), pp. 260–79; Rafael Beltran, “El context social de la cavalleria,” in *Història de la Literatura Catalana. Literatura Medieval (III)*, ed. Lola Badia (Barcelona, 2015), pp. 15–30.

2 Jaume Torró, “Las cortes de Aragón y las líricas catalana y castellana del siglo XV,” in *La fractura historiográfica: las investigaciones de Edad Media y Renacimiento desde el Tercer Milenio*, eds. Javier San José Lera, Francisco Javier Burguillo López, Laura Mier Pérez (Salamanca, 2008), pp. 427–37.

3 Jaume Torró, “La cort literària d'Alfons el Magnànim,” in *La poesia d'Ausiàs March i el seu temps*, ed. Ricard Bellveser (Valencia, 2010), pp. 27–39.

vice-versa and Catalan adaptations of Latin works from Castile in previous centuries. The court of John of Navarre was a leading cultural centre during the absence of the Magnanimous (from 1432) and his son, Charles, Prince of Viana (1421–1461), born of a Navarrese princess, was educated in a cultured setting: he translated Aristotle's *Ethics* into Castilian and maintained a literary dialogue with Joan Roís de Corella.⁴ The Catalan Civil War (1462–1472), which devastated the country during the reign of John II (1458–1479), saw the start of a gradual cultural Castilianisation of the Crown of Aragon. The phenomenon temporarily benefited the Kingdom of Valencia, whose capital was active and cosmopolitan and concentrated the economic, cultural and literary life of the kingdom. The marriage of Ferdinand II (1479–1516) and Isabelle of Castile (1474–1504) led this context towards their political and cultural interests. The victory of the nobles in the Revolt of the Brotherhoods (1520–1523) finally put an end to this situation.⁵

By the fifteenth century, the scholastic and university knowledge that had been the cultural reference for the clergy and lay people in the Crown of Aragon in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries coexisted with the new proposals from the Italian humanists. In fact, during the fifteenth century, Petrarch's heirs, including Leonardo Bruni, Lorenzo Valla, Francesco Filelfo, Poggio Bracciolini, Guarino Guarini and Bartolomeo Fazio, spread an ideal of culture based on the philological study of the classics and the moral and political values that derived from these. Renaissance humanism, focussed on the *studia humanitatis* as an educational programme, penetrated the Low Countries with Erasmus and the Spain of the Catholic Monarchs with Nebrija at the start of the sixteenth century.⁶ The alliance between humanism and the printing press was decisive: the Italian presses placed practically all the Greek and Latin texts we know nowadays in circulation in the last third of the fifteenth century.

Some of the Catalans who wrote in Latin in the fifteenth century were conscious users of the cultural renovation proposed by the humanists.⁷

4 Georges Desdevizes, *Don Carlos de Aragón, príncipe de Viana: estudio sobre la España del norte en el siglo XV*, trans. Pascual Tamburri Barriain (Pamplona, 1999).

5 Jaume Vicens Vives, *Els Trastàmars (segle XV)* (Barcelona, 1956); Santiago Sobrequés, Jaume Sobrequés, *La guerra civil catalana del segle XV*, 2 vols. (Barcelona, 1973); Ernest Belenguer, *València en la crisi del segle XV* (Barcelona, 1976); Eulàlia Duran, *Les germanies als Països Catalans* (Barcelona, 1982).

6 Anthony Goodman, Angus MacKay, *The Impact of Humanism on Western Europe* (London, 1989); Francisco Rico, *El sueño del humanismo: de Petrarca a Erasmo* (Barcelona, 2002); Alejandro Coroleu, "Humanismo en España," in *Introducción al humanismo del Renacimiento*, ed. Jill Kraye (Madrid, 1998), pp. 295–330.

7 Mariàngela Vilallonga, *La literatura llatina a Catalunya al segle XV* (Barcelona, 1993). See: *Studia Humanitatis*, <http://www3.udg.edu/ilcc/Eiximenis/html_eiximenis/Studia_humanitatis.htm>.

The Barcelonan Jeroni Pau (c.1458–1497), a clergyman and jurist who obtained a canonry in his home city, had studied in France and Italy. From 1475 on, he lived in the court of Pope Alexander VI, Roderic Borja, while maintaining close epistolary contacts with Catalans (Pere Miquel Carbonell, Teseu Valentí, Joan Vilar, Bartomeu de Verí, Lluís Desplà) and Italians (Paolo Pompilio). His main work, the *Practica Cancellariae Apostolicae*, published in Rome in 1493, is a legal repertoire related to the administration of the curia. Pau wrote some twenty poems (panegyric, elegiac, amorous, religious), written with the most demanding technique of classical imitation, and around fifteen texts in prose about historical, geographical and literary questions. His booklet *Barcino* proposed a documentary and philological study of the origins, history and geography of the Barcelona, and the country that surrounded it, Catalonia.⁸

Joan Margarit i Pau (1421–1484), bishop of Elne and Girona, wrote works on political theory related to his active participation in the conflicts in the times of John II and Ferdinand the Catholic, to whom he was chancellor and ambassador. Towards the end of his life, he rose to be a cardinal. As can be seen from the inventory of his library, Margarit was interested in law, moral philosophy and history. In 1454, he gave a sermon in the Parliament or Courts in which he lamented the absence of Alfonso the Magnanimous and recalled the past glories of Catalonia. In his Latin booklets aimed at the last Trastámaras, he defended a strong monarchy and proposed a new Hispania from the eastern perspective of the Peninsula. Margarit's most erudite work was a work on pre-Christian Iberia, the *Paralipomenon Hispaniae*, a collection of geographic and ethnographic research, taking into account ancient inscriptions, and a selection of material from Latin historians describing the Punic Wars and the later Roman colonisation.⁹

Pere Miquel Carbonell (1434–1517) was a notary and archivist in Barcelona and a poet and historian. We have very rich documentation about Carbonell, the books in his library and the dense network of personal and epistolary relationships he had with his learned contemporaries (Joan Vilar, Jeroni Pau, Guillem Fuster, Lorenzo Lippio), many of whom appear in his *De uiris illustribus catalanis suae tempestatis libellus*. Politically, Carbonell was loyal to the Trastámaras and a supporter of the Biga party in Barcelona (the party of the urban patricians). As well as some works in verse, like a poem about Mary Magdalene or the *Dansa de la mort*, Carbonell was the author of historical works, notable among which is his *Genealogies dels comtes de Barcelona* and *Cròniques d'Espanya*, written from 1495 and printed in 1547. This is a national history of Catalonia, from its remotest origins to John II, which summarises

8 Jeroni Pau, *Obres*, ed. Mariàngela Vilallonga, 2 vols. (Barcelona, 1986).

9 Robert B. Tate, *Joan Margarit i Pau, cardenal i bisbe de Girona* (Barcelona, 1976).

and completes the task of the chroniclers from earlier centuries, written in fluent prose and with documentation, often rhetorical in nature.¹⁰

The Valencian, Joan Serra, who worked in the imperial chancellery towards the end of the fifteenth century, was a friend of Lorenzo Valla and wrote some epistles and rhetorical treatises.¹¹ Other Catalan humanists like Pere Badia, Bartomeu Mates, Pere Joan Matoses and Pere Joan Ferrer worked on grammar and Latin rhetoric. The latter, who had studied in Bologna, wrote *De pronomibus sui que natura*, a treatise that shows a great familiarity with the writings of his Italian colleagues.¹² The Valencian notary, Joan Esteve, published his *Liber elegantiarum* in Venice in 1489, in which he combines Catalan lexis with a repertoire of Latin sentences.¹³

2 The Poetry of the Fifteenth Century. Ausiàs March. Others. The Poetry of Contest

Ausiàs March (Valencia, 1400–1459), son and nephew of poets, inherited a fondness for books and lyric poetry, together with the family assets and the title of knight.¹⁴ Nearly 10,000 of his verses have survived, divided into 127 compositions written from 1424 on.¹⁵ The identification of Dona Teresa, the recipient

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- 10 Pere Miquel Carbonell, *Cròniques d'Espanya*, ed. Agustí Alcoberro, 2 vols. (Barcelona, 1997).
- 11 Evencio Beltran, ed., *Humanistes français du milieu du XV siècle* (Geneva, 1989), published some of his works, but was unaware of his Valencian origins and his training in Lleida established by: Jaume Torró, "Il Giovanni Serra dell'Epistola apologetica," in *Valla e Napoli. Il dibattito filologico in età umanistica (Ravello 2005)*, ed. Marco Santoro (Pisa, 2007), pp. 61–71.
- 12 Antoni Cobos, "Joan Ramon Ferrer i els humanistes italians," in *Literatura i cultura a la Corona d'Aragó (s. XIII–XV)*, eds. Lola Badia, Miriam Cabré, Sadurní Martí (Barcelona, 2002), pp. 259–69.
- 13 *The Liber elegantiarum* by: Joan Esteve, *A Catalan-Latin dictionary at the crossroads of fifteenth-century European culture*, ed. Lluís B. Polanco Roig (Turnhout, 2012).
- 14 The first critical edition of March's poetry was from 1912–1914: Amadeu Pagès, ed., *Les poesies d'Auzias March*, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (Valencia, 1995). Other editions: Ausiàs March, *Poesies*, ed. Pere Bohigas, 3rd ed. (Barcelona, 2005) and Ausiàs March, *Poesies*, ed. Robert Archer, 2 vols. (Barcelona, 1997). A didactic anthology: Ausiàs March, *Per haver d'amor vida. Antologia comentada*, ed. Francesc J. Gómez, Josep Pujol (Barcelona, 2008). An anthology with a castilian version: Ausiàs March, *Páginas del cancionero*, ed. Costanzo di Girolano, trans. José María Micó (Madrid, 2004).
- 15 Lluís Cabré, Marcel Ortín, "Ausiàs March," in *Història de la Literatura Catalana. Literatura Medieval (II)*, ed. Lola Badia (Barcelona, 2014), pp. 353–97.

of the courtly eulogy of poem 23, with the noble lady Teresa d'Híxar (died in 1442), has enabled the chronology of the initial cycles of March's poetry to be established.¹⁶ Indeed, Ausiàs March was well received in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and his work was translated into Castilian and Latin. Some courtly poets of the following generation adopted him as their master. These included Ramon Boter, Lluís de Vila-rasa, Bernat Hug de Rocabertí, Leonard de Sors and Romeu Lull among others. The imitation of the "dictat" of Ausiàs March even had theoreticians (in Catalan and Castilian), like Pere Torroella (1420–1492) or Pedro Ximénez d'Urrea, Teresa d'Híxar's son.¹⁷

Like other poets of his generation (for example Martí Garcia), Ausiàs March adopted Catalan as a language of poetry in the court of the Magnanimous. He spent long spells in Valencia before the king's departure to Naples in 1432.¹⁸ In contrast, Jordi de Sant Jordi (d. 1424), who had stood out as a poet at the beginning of Alfonso's reign, still rhymed in an Occitan hybridised with Catalan, like Ausiàs' father and uncle, poets in the second half of the fourteenth century.¹⁹

Ausiàs March produced an innovative poetic language, which, without totally sidelining the troubadouresque motifs and resources, created a new space for Catalan poetry. March's verse is rough and abrupt, built over a complex and obscure syntax. His lexical repertoire combined the common troubadour-esque themes (martyrdom of love, secret of love, mercy), the technicalities of the natural and moral philosophers (humours, qualities, power, accident, first movements) and the colloquial register of the mother tongue.

March dealt with love in a striking way. The troubadouresque formulae of the courtly tradition, valid from Cerverí (c.1258–1285) to Jordi de Sant Jordi (1397–1424), prescribe the vital and rhetorical cultivation of human love, sensual but idealised, that could be understood as an individual ethical

16 The *corpus* of Ausias March has reached us through miscellaneous manuscripts and monographs (the oldest date from around 1480) and also editions (the earliest is from 1539). Lluís Cabré, Jaume Turró, "Perché alcun ordine gli habbia ad esser necessario: la poesia 1 d'Ausiàs March i la tradició petrarquista," *Cultura Neolatina* 55 (1995), 117–36; Jaume Chiner Gimeno, *Ausiàs March i la València del segle XV (1400–1459)* (Valencia, 1997); Vicenç Beltran, *Poesia, escriptura i societat: els camins de March* (Castello de la Plana, 2006).

17 Pere Torroella, *Obra completa*, ed. Francisco Rodríguez Risquete, 2 vols. (Barcelona, 2011); Jaume Torró, "La poesia després d'Ausiàs March," in *Història de la Literatura Catalana. Literatura Medieval (II)*, ed. Lola Badia (Barcelona, 2014), pp. 398–435.

18 Lluís de Requesens, Bernat Miquel, Martí Garcia, Rodrigo Dies, Lluís de Vila-rasa, Francesc Sunyer, *Sis poetes del regnat d'Alfons el Magnànim*, ed. Jaume Torró (Barcelona, 2009).

19 Jordi de Sant Jordi, *Poesies*, ed. Aniello Fratta (Barcelona, 2005).

stimulus or as a courtly ornament. Ausiàs March committed himself to the growing intellectualisation of amorous affairs, a tendency that had already triumphed in the Tuscan poetic tradition from the end of the thirteenth century.

The partial access of some educated laymen in the Crown of Aragon to the knowledge of the clergy from the second half of the fourteenth century meant that they felt able to speak about human experiences through the explicative schemes of scholastic philosophy.²⁰ Thanks to the Aristotelian psychology divulged by the mendicant orders, March knew from the start that the love mentioned in the poetry of the troubadours was no more than a morbid accident of a psychophysical nature, that usually meant dangerous perturbations for both the moral integrity of the affected person and his or her physical health. Thus, giving in to the passion was to take a step towards moral chaos. March also took some classics as models. These included the Seneca of the *Tragedies*, accessible in Catalan since the fourteenth century: there we read the declamations of great sinners (Phaedra, Clytemnestra, Medea or Hercules), who summarised their own fall into crime in the first person and with philosophical precision. He recovered the physical and moral accidents linked to the metaphorical or idealised “love sickness” through the teaching of Ovid, who he had access to through the scholarly tradition.²¹

The great challenge for March’s poetry consisted of both the fact that the lyrical voice of the poetry produces the effects of passion in the person and also analyses and assesses the devastating power that overrides the moral freedom and unbalances the humours of the body, sometimes even to death. Ausiàs March, as he himself stated, is he who with “*cor d’acer, de carn e de fust*” (114, 87), impotently contemplates how he sinks into the quagmire of guilt. The capacity for suffering and power of analysis make him proclaim “*lo pus extrem amador*”.²²

March’s poems respond formally to two different models according to whether they belong to the first or second part of his lyrical collection that the Pagès edition and successive editions collect from the manuscript tradition. The earlier ones usually have five stanzas of eight decasyllables followed by a *tornada* or half final stanza, which includes the code name for a female recipient, the signal. The oldest poems are the courtly cycles of “*Plena de seny*”

20 Lluís Cabré, “Aristotle for the Layman: Sense Perception in the Poetry of Ausiàs March,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 59 (1996) 48–60.

21 Jaume Torró, “Pròleg al cançoner d’Ausiàs March: Ovidi exiliat,” in *Actes del 13è col·loqui internacional de l’Associació Internacional de Llengua i Literatura Catalanes (Girona, 2003)*, eds. Sadurní Martí, Miriam Cabré, 3 vols. (Barcelona, 2007), 3: 379–423.

22 “Heart of steel, flesh and wood”; “the most extreme lover”. Guides to reading: Robert Archer, *Aproximació a Ausiàs March* (Barcelona, 1996); Rafael Alemany, ed., *Ausiàs March: textos i contextos* (Valencia, 1997); Rafael Alemany, *Lectures d’Ausiàs March* (Valencia, 1998).

and “*Llir entre cards*”, the latter dedicated to Teresa d’Híxar. In later poems, the signal “*Mon darrer bé*” appears, as does a syntagma that identifies the poet, like “*O folla amor*” and “*Amor, amor*”. These five-stanza poems present disturbing imagery (storms, shipwrecks, illness, death sentences, etc.), aimed at awakening fear and shudders before the magnitude of the amorous experiences and the lyrical “I”. In contrast, those that come after number one hundred in the canonical series tend to be structured into more than ten stanzas of eight or ten decasyllables, apt for a dialectical display that brings the poems closer to the moral treatise in verse. These longer poems, written later, offer a greater number of philosophical keys, which makes them less obscure and enigmatic than the earlier ones, which are, in contrast, much more attractive. There has been speculation about the possibility that March wanted to write a book of poems, with an added global message, organised the same way some late troubadours and Italian poets had done with different schemes, especially after the spread of Petrarch’s *Canzoniere* as a lyrical paradigm. It is difficult to prove this, as the old editors organised the work of March in accordance with the prearranged sentimental story: poems of love, poems of repentance after the death of the beloved, religious poems.

Most the fifteenth-century poetry has survived in *chansonniers* that bring together courtly poetry, headed by the works of March and his followers.²³ The exception that confirms the rule is the production of Joan Berenguer de Masdovelles, transmitted in a private songbook, together with poems by other members of the family. There were also notary poets, like Antoni Vallmanya.²⁴ The frequent poetic events, often on Marian themes, organised by members of the urban bourgeoisie of Valencia and Barcelona, are notable. The first book printed in Catalan was a compilation of poems from the event: *Les trobes en llaor de la Verge Maria* (Valencia, 1474).²⁵

3 *Curial e Güelfa*: An Anonymous Chivalric Novel

Since its first edition in 1901, *Curial e Güelfa* has not ceased to reveal perplexities.²⁶ The characters of this novel are Italian, and the emperor of Germany and king

23 Vicenç Beltran, “La disfressa de l’amor cortès: Joan Berenguer de Masdovelles i el seu cançoner,” *Cancionero General* 1 (2003), 9–28.

24 Antoni Vallmanya, *Poesies*, ed. Jaume Auferil (Barcelona, 2007).

25 Antoni Ferrando, *Els certàmens poètics valencians del segle XIV al XX* (Valencia, 1983).

26 *Curial e Güelfa*, ed. Antoni Rubió i Lluch (Barcelona, 1901). The novel is conserved in manuscript 9,750 in the *Biblioteca Nacional de España* (Madrid), accessible at: <<http://www.luisvives.com>>.

of France have prominent roles, but the finest knights, the fairest rulers and the most honest merchants are Catalan or Aragonese; amorous passion is one of the central motifs of the work, but Güelfa controls the relation with her *protégé*, Curial, with extreme severity so that, when she educates him as a knight and courtesan, he maintains love within the strict limits of honesty, which is finally rewarded with marriage; the magnificent Catalan prose of the work vividly recalls motifs, phrases and allusions from the classical tradition, but Curial behaves, in general, like an errant knight from the thirteenth century. The first quire, the one that usually contains the name of the author, the date and the dedication is missing from the only manuscript of *Curial*.²⁷

Book I describes the arrival of the protagonist in the court at Montferrat and the beginning of his relation with Güelfa, who protects her secret love financially. During his stay in Germany to fight for the favours of the Duchess of Ostalritxe (Austria), falsely accused of adultery, Curial falls in love with her sister Laquesis. Güelfa is eaten up with jealousy and distrusts Curial although, back in Montferrat, he defeats her pretender, the Neapolitan Boca de Far, in combat.

Book II opens with Curial's adventures as an errant knight, travelling incognito to the tournament that the king of France has organised at Melun. The noble nature of some of the combatants, like the king of Aragon and his companions, stands out. It is they who, together with the protagonist, swept the board as knights. Fortuna tests Curial who, intoxicated with his success after defeating the knight, Sanglier de Vilair, commits errors that lead him to lose the protection of Güelfa, who swears she will not pardon him until the whole court of the Puig de Nostra Dona (Notre-Dame du Puy) together calls for pity on him.

Book III begins with a double pilgrimage to the Holy Land and Greece. However, a shipwreck forces the hero to spend seven years as a slave in Tunis. The Muslim maiden, Càmar, who falls in love with him, takes her own life. The treasure Càmar gives to Curial enables him to live comfortably when he returns to France. Nevertheless, it is not until after a revelation in a dream about the value of wisdom and study that the hero becomes mature enough to lead an army and achieve the final victory against the Turks. This earns him his pardon from Güelfa.

27 Annotated editions in ancient spelling and commentaries: *Curial e Güelfa*, ed. Ramon Aramon, 3 vols. (Barcelona, 1930–1933); *Curial e Güelfa*, ed. Ramon Miquel (Barcelona, 1932). Critical and commented edition: *Curial e Güelfa*, ed. Lola Badia, Jaume Torró (Barcelona, 2011); *Curial and Guelfa*, trans. Pamela Waley (London, 1982).

The sentimental plot of *Curial* is divided into two triangles that interfere in the relation between Curial and Güelfa: the one established with Laquesis in books I and II and the one with Càmar in book III. The intensity of the reactions of these four characters is explained by their youth. On the other hand, the anonymous author plays with the meaning of the names he gives them. Curial is the paradigm of the courtesan, skilful with arms and letters. Güelfa stands out for her rectitude, as befits a lady of the high nobility. Laquesis, Cloto's sister (and compared with Atropos), represents the myth of the Moirai (Parcae), instruments of Fortuna. Càmar is the Arab name of a maiden in Tunis, associated with the amorous fatalism of the Carthaginian, Dido. Melcior de Pando, the procurator of the female protagonist, Güelfa, lady of Milan, and mentor to the knight Curial, assumes the authorship of some significant parts in the plot; the prologues of the three books of *Curial* were written in the first person, and the third even contains a reference to the little education the author received.²⁸

Curial is a carefully planned work: the division into books, the reiteration of symbolic motifs and the internal chronology were calculated. Each of the parts of the *Curial* is headed by a prologue that indicates the thematic and moral scope of the fiction, with book I dealing with love, book II with chivalry and book III with moral science.²⁹ The anonymous author gradually interleaves the mythological register, with psychological, moral and natural values, as the story progresses.

All the place names in *Curial* can be placed on a map of Europe and the Near East. The action begins at Montferrat in the north of Italy and ends in Notre-Dame du Puy, in the department of Puy-en-Velay, and Paris. *Curial* is a historical novel, like Boccaccio's *Filocolo*. The date of the fiction is suggested by the episodes portraying King Peter the Great of Aragon (1276–1285), who acts as an errant knight, in line with the heroic fame that surrounds the figure of this king. At the end of the third book, the protagonist obtained the Principality of Orange for his success as commander of the imperial army, but the Turks

28 *Estudis lingüístics i culturals sobre "Curial e Güelfa"*, ed. Antoni Ferrando, 2 vols. (Amsterdam-Philadelphia, 2012). Among the attempts to document the anonymous author that hides behind Melcior de Pando, mention must be made of: Maria Teresa Ferrer, "Fou Lluís Sescases l'autor de 'Curial e Güelfa'? El nord d'Àfrica en la narrativa del segle XV," in *La novel·la de Martorell i l'Europa del segle XV*, ed. Ricardo Bellveser, 2 vols. (Valencia, 2011), 2: 59–142.

29 Jordi Rubió i Balaguer, *Història de la Literatura Catalana*, 3 vols. (Barcelona, 1984), 1: 413–17; Lola Badia, Jaume Torró, "Curial e Güelfa," in *Història de la Literatura Catalana. Literatura Medieval (III)*, eds. Lola Badia, Alex Broch (Barcelona, 2015), pp. 55–106.

are not presented as the tremendous threat they represented after the fall of Constantinople in May 1453: it is thus advisable to date the writing of the novel in the 1440s.

The plot of the novel derives from the *razo* that accompanies the *Cançó de l'orifany*, a poem by the troubadour Rigaut de Berbezilh (doc. 1141–1160), which the protagonist supposedly composes in Tunis. This *razo*, which explains the fall into disgrace of a lover and the pardon obtained in the court of the Notre-Dame du Puy, was included in *Il novellino*, the compilation of Italian stories that was the anonymous author's source. There are some clear affinities between *Curial* and the Catalan chronicles of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, especially in the plot of the first book, in which Curial saves the Duchess of Ostalritxe from a false accusation of adultery, just as the good count of Barcelona does in the *Llibre del rei Pere* by Desclot. Curial's attendance at the tournament in Melun in book II closely recalls the adventures of Lancelot and Tristan, who are mentioned explicitly. However, the cultural system of the anonymous author shifts its significant core from troubadouresque and chivalrous entertainment towards what he calls the “*reverenda lletradura*”, the work of “scientific” men, before whom the “poor in science” should remain silent and learn. These were Dante, Boccaccio and Petrarch. The prestige of King Peter the Great of Aragon in book I is justified with a quote from Dante's *Purgatory* (VII, 107–114), whose authority appears at other moments. In contrast, the anonymous author does not quote from either Boccaccio or Petrarch, but uses their texts from the prologue of book I, which is an amalgam of the proem of the *Filocolo* with an *Epistolae familiares* by Petrarch (IV.12.30). The plot, heraldic symbols, dreams and use of mythology from the *Filocolo* by Boccaccio (1336–1339) are present on many pages of the *Curial*.

The classical author with the greatest presence in the *Curial* is Virgil and the most notable episode of imitation and emulation is that of the unhappy infatuation of Càmar. The text from the *Aeneid*, translated “into mother tongue” and “well glossed and moralised”, that Joan-Curial and Càmar read recalls the glossed Castilian translation of the *Aeneid* by Enrique de Villena (1382/1384–1434), a Castilian writer of royal lineage with family roots in Gandia and linked to Ferdinand I of Aragon (1412–1416). Ovid is also mentioned, abridged in the speeches by Fortuna and the depiction of Envy. The portrayals of the classical gods like Juno and Neptune are from the *Aeneid* and Seneca's *Hercules furens*.

The *Curial* mentions Guido delle Colonne in amorous contexts, but uses his *Historia destructionis Troiae* in various other places, like the discourse on the sense of poetic fiction in the episode of the Parnassus in Book III, in which Curial has to choose between the historical truth of the chroniclers Dictys and

Dares, defender of Hector, and Homer's poetic story of the Trojan war, which exalted Achilles. The anonymous author shows that he also knew the controversy between poetic truth and historical truth by the commentator of Dante, Benvenuto da Imola, who justified the right to poetic fiction with the appearance of Virgil in Dante's *Inferno* (1, 73–75).

When the anonymous author uses the expression “common Catalan language” in the prologue of Book III to excuse himself before the reader for using the Latin and Italian term “*pica*” instead of “*garsa*”, he mentions the language he is using to write his poetised novel, a literary artefact conceived for the delight and instruction of an educated courtly public, familiar with the troubadoursque tradition, the chivalrous and sentimental novel and some classics and pseudo-classics, filtered by the literary recreations of Dante, Boccaccio and Petrarch. The text of *Curial e Güelfa* was deliberately written in common Catalan, in the sense of courtly language, supra-dialectal and apt for various literary registers (narration, exhibition, dialogue).³⁰

4 Joan Roís de Corella: Prose of Art and Tragedy

The most outstanding works by Joan Roís de Corella on profane themes were the adaptations of classical myths written in art prose, but he was also a lyrical poet, preacher, translator of the *Vita Christi* by Ludolph of Saxony and an author of lives of saints.³¹ Joan Roís de Corella was born in 1435 in Gandia, second son of a Valencian lesser noble related to the March family.³² A knight and heir to the family properties, he maintained literary relations with Charles of Viana (died in 1461).³³ His profane work dates from before 1471, the year when he obtained the title of master of theology. In the later years of his life, he became a writer of religious texts and a very prestigious preacher in the city

30 Germà Colón, M. Pilar Perea, Hiroto Ueda, “Lingüística quantitativa: Curial vs. Tirant,” *Vox Romanica* 71 (2012), 131–59; Badia, Lola, Torró, Jaume, “El Curial e Güelfa i el ‘comun llenguatge català,’” *Cultura Neolatina* 74 (2014), 203–45.

31 Ramon Miquel, *Obres de J. Roiç de Corella* (Barcelona, 1913); Josep Lluís Martos, *Les proses mitològiques de Joan Roís de Corella: edició crítica* (Alicante, 2001); Francesc J. Gómez, Josep Lluís Martos, “Joan Roís de Corella,” in *Història de la Literatura Catalana. Literatura Medieval (III)*, eds. Lola Badia, Alex Broch (Barcelona, 2015), pp. 210–50.

32 Jaume J. Chiner Gimeno, “Joan Roís de Corella, la seua vida i el seu entorn: noves dades per a la història de la cultura en la València del segle XV,” *Magnificat Cultura i Literatura Medievals* 1 (2014), 111–377.

33 Jaume Torró, “Una cort a Barcelona per a la literatura del segle xv,” *Revista de Catalunya* 163 (2001), 97–123.

of Valencia.³⁴ After Corella's death in 1497, his assets were inherited by Isabel Martínez de Vera, mother of his two children.

As a poet, Corella was a follower of Ausiàs March. This is confirmed, for example, by various fragments in verse and prose in his *Tragèdia de Caldesa* (1458), a brief story of sentimental fiction that describes in first person how the author, passionately enamoured, is betrayed by his loved one. The catastrophic end to this amorous affair explains the title and the presence of bitter lamentations provoked by the disappointment. Indeed, separated from its theatrical origins, the tragedy in the Late Middle Ages was understood as a narrative fiction with an unhappy ending, accompanied by the laments of hapless characters. Love is always a motif of crime and leads to disaster. The beloved is a fallen angel: this is the profile of Caldesa, target of Corella's loving lyrics.³⁵ His poetry consists of around twenty independent poems (only three are of a religious nature) and some fragments interleaved in texts in prose. Corella condemns love but also saves the honest woman—for example in the poem *La sepultura*—and, in the *Triumfo de les dones*, he proposes a form of feminism, according to which the meekness and humility of women make them superior to man, who is spontaneously violent and bellicose.³⁶

The mythological stories in a worked and tense style rhetorically illustrate the criminal impulses triggered by amorous passion. These writings by a young Corella were widely admired in the ephemeral court of Charles of Viana and used to enrich many passages of *Tirant lo Blanc* rhetorically.³⁷ The main sources for the mythological stories in Corella were *Metamorphoses* by Ovid, who was known as the “master of love” by the medieval people, and Seneca's *Tragedies*, which, translated into Catalan, were read accompanied by glosses with moral contents. Corella artistically presented the Ovidian amatory parables in the *Parlament en casa de Berenguer Mercader* (with the myths of Cephalus and Procris, Orpheus, Scylla, daughter of Nisus, Pasiphaë and Procne and Philomela), the *Lamentacions de Mirra e Narciso e Tisbe*, the *Lamentació de Biblis*, the *Història de Jason e Medea* and in the *Història de Leànder i Hero*, which is presented as a sentimental fiction with the inclusion of pieces in

34 Josep Lluís Martos, “La literatura perduda de Joan Roís de Corella: les fonts,” *Caplletra* 45 (2008), 93–120.

35 Jaume Torró, “El mite de Caldesa: Corella al ‘Jardinet d’orats,’” *Atalaya* 7 (1996), 103–16.

36 Eduard J. Verger, “‘La sepultura’ de Roís de Corella, amb una postil·la,” in *Estudis de literatura catalana en honor de Josep Romeu i Figueras*, eds. Lola Badia, Josep Massot, 2 vols. (Barcelona, 1986), 2: 357–65.

37 Annamaria Annicchiarico, *Varianti corelliane e “Plagi del Tirant”: Achille e Polissena* (Fasano di Brindisi, 1996).

verse. The *Parlament en casa de Berenguer Mercader* has a narrative framework that evokes a literary meeting of members of the Valencian nobility, the majority poets: Joan Escrivà, Guillem Ramon de Vila-rasa, Lluís de Castellví, Joan de Próixita and Corella himself. In the prologue, it explains that theology is the highest of the sciences, followed by Latin poetry, given its moral value, and in third place, there is art prose in Catalan: the “vulgar poetry”.

In *Lo jú de Paris*, Corella dialogues with Joan Escrivà about the meaning of the ancient fable and interprets the choice of the Trojan prince, which unleashed the famous war, as the consequence of illicit love. If *Lo raonament entre Telamó e Ulixes* and *Les lletres d'Aquil les e Polixena* are brief rhetorical and dialectical exercises, *Lo plant dolorós de la reina Hècuba* is a spectacular evocation of the end of Troy, inspired in Seneca's *Troades*, where the defeated queen becomes a pagan *mater dolorosa*. The *Debat epistolar* by Corella with Charles of Viana is a *joc partit* in the troubadouresque tradition about whether, in case of distress, to save the woman who loves you or the woman you love.

The rhetorical skill and professionalism in handling the classical sources that Corella acquired in his scholarly training were also applied to writing texts of circumstances and works on religious themes. A *Vida de Santa Anna*, a *Història de la Magdalena*, a *Història de Josef*, that combine biblical and legendary material have survived. Corella had his prose version of the *Psalteri* printed and ensured that the version of the four books of the *Vita Christi* by Ludolph of Saxony, the Carthusian was also printed.³⁸ His lyrical religious production is on Marian themes; one of his compositions appears in the first book printed in Catalan, the *Trobes en llaors de la Verge Maria* (1474).³⁹

5 Joanot Martorell and the Encyclopaedic Novel

The most famous novel in Catalan is *Tirant lo Blanc* by Joanot Martorell. It was printed in Valencia in 1490 and Barcelona in 1497, translated into Castilian and printed in Valladolid in 1511, translated into Italian and printed in Venice

38 Armand Puig, “Les traduccions catalanes medievals de la Bíblia,” in *El text: lectures i història* (Barcelona, 2001), pp. 107–231; Diego Romero, “La traducción valenciana de las *Meditationes Vitae Christi* del cartujano Ludolfo de Sajonia. Las primeras ediciones valencianas impresas,” *Quaderns de Filologia. Estudis Literaris* 8 (2003), 299–314.

39 Josep Lluís Martos, “El género popular de los ‘goigs’ y Joan Roís de Corella: *La vida de la sacratíssima verge Maria y la Oració*,” in *Lyra Minima Oral. Los géneros breves de la literatura tradicional*, eds. Carlos Alvar, Cristina Castillo, Mariana Masera, José Manuel Pedrosa (Alcala de Henares, 2001), pp. 85–97.

in 1538, and cited as a positive exception among the books of chivalry by Cervantes in *Don Quixote*.⁴⁰

Joanot Martorell (1410–1465) was born in Valencia into a family of lesser nobles. Together with his father and brothers, he served under Alfonso the Magnanimous during the campaigns of conquest in Italy. After 1435, the family had financial problems that prevented them from paying the dowries of the maidens (Isabel ended up marrying Ausiàs March) and forced them to sell their property. Some knightly challenges derived from this situation, for example by Joanot against Joan de Montpalau, who had dishonoured his sister Damiata, and Gonçalbo d'Híxar, commander of Muntalba, a much richer and more powerful noble than the Martorells. The challenges generated knightly correspondence, very elaborated *lletres de batalla* (letters to defiance), and a journey by the writer to England. There he discovered the sumptuous life of the court and *Guy of Warwick*, an Anglo-Norman origin romance of chivalry that he translated into Catalan and later reworked as the beginning of *Tirant lo Blanc*. In 1450, Martorell obtained a position in the Neapolitan court of King Alfonso. After the king's death in 1458, he went into the service of Charles of Viana and, when the Civil War broke out in 1462, he was on the side of the *Generalitat* against John II. Shortly before dying in 1465, he dedicated *Tirant* to Peter of Portugal, pretender to the throne of Aragon, but finally he shifted his allegiance to king John II.⁴¹ The original of this work, that the author himself claimed he started writing in 1460, remained in the hands of Martí Joan de Galba and was not given to the printers until 1490.⁴²

40 Joanot Martorell, *Tirant lo Blanch*, ed. Albert Hauf, 2 vols. (Valencia, 2004); Martí de Riquer, *Aproximació al Tirant lo Blanc* (Barcelona, 1990); Martí de Riquer, *Tirant lo Blanch, novela de historia y ficción* (Barcelona, 1993); *Actes del Symposium Tirant lo Blanc 1990* (Barcelona, 1993); Rafael Beltran, *Tirant lo Blanc de Joanot Martorell* (Madrid, 2006); Josep Pujol, "Tirant lo Blanc," in *Història de la Literatura Catalana. Literatura Medieval (III)*, eds. Lola Badia, Alex Broch (Barcelona, 2015), pp. 107–161; electronic journal about Tirant: <<http://parnaseo.uv.es/tirant.htm>>.

41 Jesús Villalmanzo, Jaume Chiner, *La pluma y la espada* (Valencia, 1992); Jaume Chiner, *El viure novel·lesc. Biografia de Joanot Martorell* (Alcoy, 1993); Jesús Villalmanzo, *Joanot Martorell. Biografia il·lustrada y diplomataria* (Valencia, 1995); Jaume Torró, "Joanot Martorell, escrivà de ració," *L'Avenç* 273 (2002), 12–18; Abel Soler, "Joanot Martorell, cavaller habitador de la ciutat València. Nous documents sobre els darrers anys de l'autor del 'Tirant lo Blanc,'" *eHumanista*, 5 (2014), 467–502; Rafael Beltran, "Joanot Martorell i la cavalleria," in *Història de la Literatura Catalana. Literatura Medieval (III)*, eds. Lola Badia, Alex Broch (Barcelona, 2015), pp. 30–37.

42 Jaume Torró, "La doble autoría de 'Tirant lo Blanc' o un colofón y la estilística," *Revista de Erudición y Crítica* 1 (2006), 75–82.

Tirant lo Blanc begins with the exemplary story of Guy of Warwick, the knight-hermit who saves England from a Muslim invasion and who sums up the values of the ideal chivalry: the crusading spirit and a lack of interest in power and wealth. The protagonist meets Guy of Warwick on his way to the English court to take part in the great feasts to celebrate the king's marriage. Tirant is knighted and defeats all challengers in combat, among whom is one Quirieleison de Muntalbà, a caricature of Martorell's enemy, Gonçalbo d'Híxar. He then embarks for the Mediterranean to fight the Moors who are besieging the island of Rhodes. After lifting the siege with skilful wiles, he gets Prince Philip of France, who is travelling with him, to marry Ricomana, the heiress to the throne of Sicily.

The central part of the work takes place in the Byzantine Empire. The old Greek emperor, who has lost a son in the war against the Muslim enemy, asks Tirant for help. In Constantinople, the protagonist falls in love with Carmesina, who shares his love but avoids erotic intimacy, in contrast to other couples, like Estefania and Diafebus, a maiden in the court of high lineage and Tirant's cousin, and that of the empress and the young Hippolytus (Hipòlit). The maiden Plaerdemavida, gifted with loquacity and wit, favours the amorous pretensions of Tirant. The attacks by the Turks give the protagonist the chance to display his skills as a strategist. The victory of the Christian forces is celebrated with sumptuous festivities in the court, but the enemy attacks again and the relations between Tirant and Carmesina reach a crisis because the Viuda Reposada, the princess' wetnurse, who is in love with the protagonist, makes him believe that she is cheating on him with a black slave.

Tirant goes off to the war in despair and his ship is wrecked on the north coast of Africa. The hero, taken prisoner, earns the trust of his lord and ends up commanding an army that forces the kingdoms on the southern shore of the Mediterranean to convert to Christianity. The novel then tells about the rescue of Constantinople from the Turks and the signing of a hundred-year truce. However, Tirant falls ill in the city of Adrianople and dies. The epilogue describes the death of the old emperor and the princess, who dies of grief beside Tirant's body after pronouncing sad lamentations. The tragic final of *Tirant*, full of borrowings from Corella's texts, rhetorically evokes the fall of Constantinople that put an end to the Byzantium Eastern Empire in 1453; in the fiction, the invincible hero's heirs are people of low moral stature; the adulterous empress and her lover.

Among the varied material that converges on the pages of *Tirant*, an outstanding position is filled by the chapters of the *Crònica* by Muntaner that narrate Roger de Flor's expedition to the Eastern Empire, not only because the figure of Tirant is partially inspired in Roger (both die in their prime in the city of Adrianople), but also because the model of writing in the chronicles imposes a characteristic spirit of authenticity in both *Tirant* and the *Curial*.

Tirant is also the vanquisher of Islam. The first chapters of the work borrow some pages from the narrative prologue of the *Llibre de l'orde de cavalleria* by Ramon Llull and later attribute the main character with the Christianisation of North Africa and the alliance with the rulers of Sicily, Rhodes, Fez, Tunis and Ethiopia that enables him to prevent the fall of Constantinople. Martorell projected the Lullian evangelising programmes and the adventures of Guy of Warwick, who travelled to the Holy Land in the times of the great Christian expeditions of the twelfth century, onto the reality of the failure of the crusade Alfonso the Magnanimous planned to launch against the Turks to save the Eastern Empire.

Martorell was highly skilled at integrating cultural and literary documents into his novel, which thus acquired the nature of an encyclopaedia of worldly wisdom. Within the context of the chivalry, for example, and with the excuse of courtly festivities, Martorell describes a courtly performance in which King Arthur responds to the questions of those present with sentences taken from the *Dotzè del Crestià* by Francesc Eiximenis. The speeches, sermons, letters and some dialogues also offer the occasion to extract varied material from the classics (Frontinus, Sallust, Ovid, Seneca), the Italians of the Trecento (Petrarch, Boccaccio), the *Historia destructiones Troiae* by Guido delle Colonne and authors linked to the courts of the Trastámaras, like Enrique de Villena, Ausiàs March and, especially, Joan Roís de Corella: Martorell interspersed phrases from their secular works throughout *Tirant*.⁴³

The characters in *Tirant* express their feelings, emotions and opinions in long discourses that contain doctrinal material about chivalry as well as amorous passion and the perverse inclinations of female nature. The most entertaining are those by the lady Plaerdemavida, who skilfully uses the colloquial and defends completely uninhibited positions on love.⁴⁴ The erotic activity of the couples of Estefania and Diafebus, and the Empress and Hipòlit, enrich the sensual repertoire of *Tirant*, which also describes all the nuances of love understood as the physical and spiritual illness that the moralists Ausiàs March and Corella talk about. Thus, while Plaerdemavida stirs the leading character to resolve the ills of passion through sex, the princess remains loyal to the values of honesty and purity, even after her secret marriage to Tirant. The final

43 Josep Pujol, *La memòria literària de Joanot Martorell. Models i escriptura en el "Tirant lo Blanc"* (Barcelona, 2002).

44 Xavier Renedo, "Raó i intuïció en Plaerdemavida," *Butlletí de la Reial Acadèmia de Bones Lletres de Barcelona* 45 (1996), 1–46; Xavier Renedo, "'Turpia feminarum incesta lascivarum'. The theatrical play in chapter 283 of 'Tirant lo Blanc,'" in *Formes teatrals de la tradició medieval. Actes del VII Col·loqui de la Societat Internacional per l'Estud del Théâtre Médiéval*, ed. Francesc Massip (Barcelona, 1996), pp. 209–16.

victory of Tirant before his sudden death is to deflower Carmesina, expressed with a military metaphor taken from Boccaccio. The variety of situations and abundance of reflections on love in the eyes of some, especially female, readers at the end of the fifteenth century converted the *Tirant* into a manual of eroticism.

6 Jaume Roig: Tetrasyllables and Comedy

Espill by Jaume Roig combines the novelesque narrative of the life of the main character with an extensive treatise on the perversions of the female gender. Its unique versified form was meant to take the resources of satire and comedy to the extreme.⁴⁵ Jaume Roig (c.1400–1478) was a very prestigious Valencian doctor from a family of urban patricians. He was an examiner of doctors and cared for the health of Mary of Castile, the wife of Alfonso the Magnanimous, and also attended King John II and various religious communities, like that of the preachers and the one in the convent of the Trinitat. His professional relations included various Valencian hospitals, like those of Clapers, Bou and the Innocents. He married Isabel Pellicer, and they had six children, some of whom went into the Church. He had notable assets and a well-stocked library.⁴⁶

Espill or *Llibre de les dones* consists of 16,000 four-syllable couplets, with a metre that reduces by half the general expressive form of the Romanesque narrative poetry of the twelfth century, which was the eight-syllable couplet. Cutting the verse every four syllables and making it consonant with the following imposes drastic limitations on the rhetoric, the syntax and even the grammar, as there is no room for articles, prepositions or conjunctions in four syllables. Thus, Roig's literary art cultivated the ellipsis, the accumulation of verbs and substantives and the simplification of the syntax. The "verse of Jaume Roig" implies a very well calculated literary project as the difficulties

45 Jaume Roig, *Spill*, ed. Ramon Miquel Planas, 3 vols. (Barcelona, 1929–1950); Jaume Roig, *Espill*, ed. Antònia Carré (Barcelona, 2006); Jaume Roig, *Spill*, ed. Anna Isabel Peirats (Valencia, 2010); Rosanna Cantavella, *Els cards i el llir: Una lectura de l'Espill de Jaume Roig* (Barcelona, 1992); Michael Solomon, *The Literature of Misogyny in Medieval Spain: the Arcipreste de Talavera and the Spill* (New York, 1997); Jaume Roig, *Espill*, ed. Antònia Carré (Barcelona, 2014); Antònia Carré, Jaume Torró, "L'Espill, de Jaume Roig," in *Història de la Literatura Catalana. Literatura Medieval (III)*, eds. Lola Badia, Alex Broch (Barcelona, 2015), pp. 251–304.

46 Antònia Carré, "La biblioteca del metge Jaume Roig," *Anuari de Filologia* 16/4 (1993), 23–36; Jaime Chiner, "Del testamento e inventario de bienes de Jaume Roig al autor del manuscrito del 'Spill'. Documentos y nuevas hipótesis," *Boletín de la Real Academia de Buenas Letras de Barcelona* 44 (1993–1994), 173–230.

of expression imposed by the formal choice are a constant challenge for both the author and the reader, and were at the opposite extreme from the Latinised art prose that Bernat Metge and Joan Roís de Corella were masters of. In contrast, renouncing love and contacts with women is a motif from the Christian asceticism shared by all three writers, as is the imitation and emulation of the classics. Roig does it with his own procedures, consistent with short and colloquial verse. Instead of a meeting of poets fond of books, he prefers the direct speech of the inhabitants of the Valencian countryside; instead of tragic situations, wrapped in magnificent rhetoric, he proposes a narrative form that is at the same time sententious and entertaining. The “verse of Jaume Roig” requires no refinements because it aspires to the condition of comedy, which, in the late-medieval period, corresponded to narrative fiction with a happy ending, where teaching coexisted with laughter.⁴⁷

Roig’s dedication to style is also revealed in the rigorous organisation of the *Espill*: four books, each divided into four parts, present the fictitious biography of an old man who claims to a centenarian in 1460 and who is identified with the author. The lineal narration incorporates a large number of anecdotes about perverse women who systematically harm their male congeners: thus the leading character’s mother and the wives of his protectors embitter his childhood and youth, while the four women he successively attempts to form a family with exhibit so many repugnant vices that his purpose is frustrated (among other things, they are incapable of accepting motherhood). There are many other women in the *Espill* who practice evil in all possible circumstances: one in charge of the hospital for the poor in Valencia steals what little they have, an innkeeper in Paris kills men and cooks their flesh, Sibila of Fortià, the last wife of Peter the Ceremonious, practices witchcraft, the nuns in the convents live a life of ease given over to sexual debauchery, the scales of the market vendors in Valencia are tampered with to falsify weights, etc.

Jaume Roig systemised all the bad aspects the misogyny of his times attributed to women in a book that is a negation and mockery of all the instruction manuals for women, like the *Llibre de les dones* by Francesc Eiximenis. The anti-feminine exaggeration of *Espill* is a comical trait that implies a powerful complicity with the readership; these readers were those who appreciated the

47 Antònia Carré, “‘The Mirror’ (1460) by Jaume Roig: Misogyny, Misogamy and Laughter,” *Studi Medievali*, 3rd series, 50/1 (2009), 203–29; Jaume Torró, “La Consulta i el prefaci quatipartit de l’*Espill* de Jaume Roig,” *Butlletí de la Reial Acadèmia de Bones Lletres de Barcelona* 52 (2009–2010), 51–69; Jaume Torró, “La respuesta literaria y retórica del *Espill* de Jaume Roig,” *Estudios de literatura medieval. 25 años de la Asociación Hispánica de Literatura Medieval*, eds. Antonia Martínez Pérez, Ana Luisa Baqueri Escudero (Murcia, 2012), pp. 117–28.

long digression in the third book (some 10,000 verses), where Roig resorted to revelations in dreams to give the word to King Solomon. The latter, who had seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines, all bad, completes the list of female evils with biblical and literary material that has no place in his pseudo-biographical story. The “Lliçó de Salomó” contains the essence of the ideological message of the *Espill*: Eve’s sin weighs heavily on the human female and the only path to happiness for men is to avoid her radically, although Redemption and the merits of the Mother of God theoretically mitigate the consequences of the initial fall.

This radical anti-female posture is applied literally by the protagonist of *Espill* in the fourth book, as he abandons all ideas of marriage and begins a strictly ascetic life, dedicated to works of charity: however, the beneficiaries of these are only men, as doing good for women “is not a merit”: the women should all be converted into pillars of salt, like Lot. Outbursts like these show that *Espill* has a comical thread that sparkles in innumerable jokes, ironies, play on words, grotesque confusions and even manipulated quotations: a long series of ambiguous readings from the misogynist repertoire that indirectly undermine the foundations of the forced exclusion of women. In *Espill*, Jaume Roig, in real life a married man, father of a nun, protector of convents and doctor to Queen Mary, claimed that his wife, Isabel Pellicer, together with the Mother of God, were free from this general perversity.

The list of literary references in *Espill* is indicative of the cultural training of medical professionals in the mid-fifteenth century when, to enter higher studies, they had to have followed a scholarly curriculum that taught Latin with texts by Ovid, Juvenal or Terence. The fact that Roig was a doctor explains the wealth of data about hospitals and diseases he offers in *Espill*. The details about private hygiene and food stand out, recurrent themes in the *Regiments de sanitat*, which would be equivalent to modern preventive medicine. The health advice in *Espill* is presented in the negative: thus, breastfeeding by the natural mother is defended through a description of the harmful effects of the change of wet nurses (Roig adds the model of the Virgin Mary nursing the infant Jesus). Medical practice, therefore, abutted religious doctrine. Roig shows a respectable biblical erudition and a certain theological subtlety, although he explicitly disowns the pedantic sermons and treatises of the great orators of the time.⁴⁸ His knowledge of the literature of classical and medieval tradition is varied and diverse: he as soon criticises the lies in the book in the “one hundred novels”, in other words the *Decameron*, as he laughs at the story of Saint Ursula and the eleven thousand virgins, or he finds that the Roman

48 Albert Hauf, “De l’*Speculum Humanae Salvatoris*’ a l’*Spill*’ de Jaume Roig: itinerari especular i figural,” *Estudis Romànics* 23 (2001), 173–219.

patrician, Lucretia, who took her life after being raped, did the right thing because she was “foolish”: a well-found rhyme breaks the discussions on this subject of Latin writers of reference like Valerius Maximus or Petrarch. Roig had an audience who applauded the facetious use of literary erudition and who were entertained by the deformed presentation of the misogynist discourse of satire and appreciated the games of intellectual and verbal wit gained from assiduous attendance at many readings.

7 Minor Sentimental Prose

Sentimental fiction is the common denominator of a set of brief texts written in prose in the second half of the fifteenth century in various formats: letters, dialogues, sermons and visions in dreams. The sentimental fiction severely condemns the passion of love with an extensive and varied repertoire of narrative, allegorical, dialectical and rhetorical resources and the progressively more secure and typified use of a scholastic doctrinal background that harmonised Aristotelian ethics with psychology and medicine.⁴⁹

The *Tragèdia de Caldesa* by Joan Roís de Corella was his only prose of sentimental fiction, although his Ovidian adaptations responded to the same literary taste for disappointment in love. The *Deseiximents contra Fals Amor*, by Pere Pou, is a contribution to the sentimental fiction in an epistolary form that collects writings by various authors and reworks some conventions of the *lletres de batalla*, knightly correspondence.⁵⁰ Pere Joan Ferrer wrote *Pensament*, a brief prose on a sentimental theme.⁵¹ The Valencian knight, Francesc Carròs Pardo de la Casta, also cultivated sentimental fiction with *regoneixença e moral consideració contra les persuasions, vicis e forces d'amor*.⁵²

Romeu Llull (1430/1439–1496) wrote lyrical poetry and some epistles, as well as *Despropriament d'amor*, a sentimental fiction which dramatises the change in the author's life when, having reached middle age and coming from Naples,

49 *Novel·letes sentimentals dels segles XIV i XV*, ed. Arsenio Pacheco (Barcelona, 1970); *Novel·les amoroses i morals*, ed. Arsenio Pacheco (Barcelona, 1982); Lola Badia, “La ficció sentimental,” in *Història de la Literatura Catalana. Literatura Medieval (III)*, eds. Lola Badia, Alex Broch (Barcelona, 2015), pp. 190–210.

50 Martí de Riquer, *Història de la Literatura Catalana. Part Antiga* (Barcelona, 1964), 3: 356–68.

51 Pacheco, *Novel·letes*, pp. 77–84.

52 “recognition and moral consideration against the persuasions, vices and forces of the love”. José Enrique Reyes-Tudela, ed., *Las obras de Francesca Carroç Pardo de la Casta* (Valencia, 1987).

he married and settled in Barcelona as the heir to one of the leading families in the urban aristocracy.⁵³

Francesc Alegre (1450/1455–1504/1511) was from the same origins as Romeu Lull. As well as translating the *Primera Guerra Púnica* by Leonardo Bruni and Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, with glosses, he also wrote lives of saints and the *Passió de Jesucrist*.⁵⁴ His *Sermó d'amor* is a homily that develops a theme from Cicero's *De officiis*.⁵⁵ The *Requesta d'amor* sets out the inevitable contradiction between the obsessive will of the enamoured and the vision of reason; the *Raonament fingit entre Francesc Alegre i Esperança* is a brief dialogue inserted into a minimal narrative framework; *Lo somni de Francesc Alegre* uses the resort to the dream of the narrator as a pretext to take the reader into the world of fiction: the court of love, where a trial is being held about the relations between Alegre and his unnamed lover.⁵⁶ The *Faula de Neptuno i Diana* is a poetical fiction drawn up from the *Metamorphoses* by Ovid and the model of Boccaccio. The fiction condemns a nun who gives herself to her lover for money. The mythological trappings transform the woman in question into Diana, the classical goddess of hunting and chastity. The gallant man who seduces her adopts the figure of the sea god, Neptune. The narrator follows the events through a magic mirror in the great hall of the palace of Venus. The final transformation of Diana into black stone is inspired in the episode of the Envy and Aglauros in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (II, 708–832), which Boccaccio had used in books III and V of his *Filocolo*.⁵⁷

8 Religious Literature. Felip de Malla. Sor Isabel de Villena

The Barcelonan canon Felip de Malla (1370/1380–1431) studied in Lleida and Paris and was an advisor to Martin I, Ferdinand I and Alfonso the Magnanimous. Felip de Malla usually preached in Latin and Catalan on the great liturgical and civil occasions; his sermons combined theological erudition with extreme rhetorical tension. His library included classical texts and books of

53 Romeu Lull, *Obra Completa*, ed. Jaume Torró (Barcelona, 1996).

54 Jaume Torró, "‘Officium poetae est fingere’: Francesc Alegre i la ‘Faula de Neptuno i Dyana,’” in *Intel·lectuals i escriptors a la baixa Edat Mitjana*, eds. Lola Badia, Albert Soler (Barcelona, 1994), pp. 221–41.

55 Pedro M. Cátedra, *Amor y pedagogía en al Edad Media* (Salamanca, 1989), pp. 205–11.

56 Pacheco, *Novel·letes*, pp. 89–103.

57 Torró, "‘Officium poetae,’” pp. 234–46; Francesc Alegre, *Obres sentimentals: Requesta, Raonament, Somni i Faula de Neptuno i Diana*, ed. Gemma Pellissa (Alessandria, 2016).

value.⁵⁸ Letters by Malla and the titles of lost Latin works have also reached us; his greatest contribution to Catalan literature is the *Memorial del pecador remut*, written in two parts from a 1419 sermon about the Passion.⁵⁹ The work is structured into successive visions and contemplations by the author, that lead to dialogues between fictional beings (a sibyl), allegories (death, sin, theology) or religious figures (Jesus, the Mother of God). This framework enables the complex dialectic to be deployed, with interventions by Malla, and even introduce themes from everyday life (reprobation of the customs of Barcelona, longing for a good cultural education). Although the central aim of the work is to speculate about the mysteries of redemption, Malla exhibits an encyclopaedic philosophical and literary erudition. The first part of the *Memorial* was printed in 1495.

Although they do not surpass the aesthetic ambition of Malla's prose, fifteenth-century religious writing in Catalan is rich and varied. One need only bear in mind the frequent poetry contests, often on Marian topics, or the translations of works on spirituality that Miquel Pérez or Joan Roís de Corella applied themselves to. It is worth highlighting the work of the Dominican friar, Pero Martines, a fervent supporter of the *Generalitat* in the Civil War, and who was a victim of the same conflict in 1463. Martines wrote poems about the Passion, Saint Dominic, Saint Catherine, Saint Thomas Aquinas and the signification of the Cross, some during imprisonment before his execution, when he attempted to plead for clemency. This was also the aim of his penitential work in prose, *Mirall dels divinals assots*, written with a highly-polished rhetorical technique and a small section of quotations.⁶⁰

Sister Isabel de Villena (1430–1490), daughter of the Castilian writer Enrique de Villena and abbess of the Poor Clare convent of the Trinitat in Valencia, wrote a *Vida de Jesucrist*, designed to educate her fellow nuns. It was printed in 1497 on request from Queen Isabelle the Catholic.⁶¹ It is a fictional biography of Jesus, with digressions and contemplative and theological interpolations;

58 Felip de Malla, *Correspondència política*, ed. Josep Perarnau (Barcelona, 1978); Josep Pujol, "Psallite sapienter: la gaia ciència en els sermons de Felip de Malla de 1413 (Estudi i edició)," *Cultura Neolatina* 56 (1996), 177–250; Josep Pujol, "Felip de Malla," in *Història de la Literatura Catalana. Literatura Medieval (III)*, eds. Lola Badia, Alex Broch (Barcelona, 2015), pp. 370–90.

59 Felip de Malla, *Memorial del pecador remut*, ed. Manuel Balasch, 3 vols. (Barcelona, 1981–1986).

60 Martín de Riquer, ed., *Obras de Pero Martínez* (Barcelona, 1946).

61 Isabel de Villena, *Llibre anomenat Vita Christi*, ed. Ramon Miquel Planas, 3 vols. (Barcelona, 1916); Albert Hauf, *D'Eiximenis a sor Isabel de Villena* (Valencia, 1990); Isabel de Villena, *Vita Christi*, ed. Albert Hauf (Barcelona, 1995); Rosanna Cantavella, "La 'Vita Christi' d'Isabel de Villena," in *Història de la Literatura Catalana. Literatura Medieval (III)*, eds. Lola Badia, Alex Broch (Barcelona, 2015), pp. 390–408.

Isabel incorporated apocryphal material, for example, about the life of the Virgin Mary and the infancy of the Saviour, and chose the episodes about the public life of Jesus she required from the Gospels. Thus, Mary Magdalene, about whom an extensive legend circulated in the Middle Ages, acquires exceptional importance. Sister Isabel's Magdalene is a great sinner, in the style of those of her time, who is converted by listening to a sermon by Jesus.

Sister Isabel's prose is elaborate and rich in learned resources (maxims from classical authors, Latinising syntax, rhythmic effects), but also creates an emotive climate reducing theological erudition to a minimum and recreating narratively intimate scenes, like the birth of Jesus. When the opportunity arises, the *Vida de Jesucrist* reaches dramatic heights, especially when explaining the Passion, or when it deploys the magnificence of the vision of the divine majesty.⁶²

9 Theatre and Spectacle

The rediscovery of the lost corpus of the comedies of Plautus and of critical scholia of Terence (with precise information about the ancient theatrical genres) in the fifteenth century led to the advent of modern theatre in the Renaissance; in the Middle Ages, the terms tragedy and comedy were indicators of literary register unconnected to dramatisation.⁶³ In the Crown of Aragon, the profane theatre was linked to the spectacles held in the courts of nobles and kings, especially the entry of the kings into cities and coronation ceremonies. There is abundant evidence of the holding of profane performances in the court during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, with complex scenography (games, farces and *entremesos*, "short farces"). The coronations of Martin I in 1399 and Ferdinand I in 1412 were especially lavish.⁶⁴

The information about these manifestations of medieval theatricality comes from the archive documentation, but an important part of the data comes from literary works. In chapters 39 and 40 of the *Dotzè*, Eiximenis praises the theatres of the ancient Roman cities. *Tirant lo Blanc* describes the festivities for the wedding of the king of England and, in chapters 189–211, the visit of Fata Morgana to the palace in Constantinople where she meets King Arthur: this

62 Rosanna Cantavella, "Sobre la prosa d'art en Isabel de Villena," *Studia Philologica Valentina* 13 (2011) 249–66.

63 Francesc Massip, *Història del teatre català. I Dels Orígens a 1800* (Tarragona, 2007); Lola Badia, "La 'teatralitat difusa' de l'edat mitjana," in *Història de la Literatura Catalana. Literatura Medieval (III)*, eds. Lola Badia, Alex Broch (Barcelona, 2015), pp. 409–36.

64 Francesc Massip, *A cos de rei: festa cívica i espectacle del poder reial a la Corona d'Aragó* (Valls, 2010).

is the setting of *La faula* by Guillem de Torroella, a Occitan-Catalan narrative poem from 1374. Chapter 283 describes a private theatre play, which uses a disguise from the festivities of the Corpus Christi.⁶⁵

The Latin and Catalan texts for the theatre that have survived are instructions for staging works devoid of literary ambitions: the *consuetes*, which could also include speeches by some characters. There is a predominance of *consuetes* of a religious nature, and the oldest date back to the eleventh century. These are liturgical dramas that were performed by clergymen in the monasteries and cathedrals.⁶⁶ This old religious theatre has persisted in Catalonia, Valencia and Majorca. The *Cant de la Sibil·la*, that forms part of the Christmas cycle, has survived down to the twenty-first century.⁶⁷ Primitive dramatisations of the cycle of the Passion are known through fragmentary texts (the *Visitació al sepulcre*, from Vic; the *Passió* in the Didot manuscript).⁶⁸ The *Misteri de Cervera*, from the sixteenth century, belongs to this same tradition, and has also been maintained with mutations. The dramatisations of the Assumption of Mary reached the same popularity: from some fourteenth-century Latin fragments, to the *consuetes* in popular language from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries (*Representació de l'Assumpció de Madona Santa Maria*, various versions with scenographic annotations), the *Misteri d'Elx*, still performed with words and music of medieval origin but rewritten in the seventeenth century.⁶⁹ There are also examples of biblical theatre and *consuetes* of the lives of saints, collected in sixteenth-century manuscripts. The popular celebration of Corpus Christi, which boomed in the fifteenth century, was usually linked to religious spectacles.⁷⁰

The Valencian genesis of the great Castilian theatre of the sixteenth century has medieval roots that can be related to some manifestations in Catalan from the beginning of that century (the *Farsa d'en Cornei*; *La vesita* by Joan Ferrandis d'Herèdia).⁷¹

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- 65 Rafael Beltran, "Comedy and Performance in "Tirant lo Blanc," in *Tirant lo Blanc. New Approaches*, ed. Arthur Terry (London, 1999), pp. 15–28.
- 66 Richard Donovan, *The Liturgical Drama in Mediaeval Spain* (Toronto, 1958); Eva Castro, ed., *Teatro medieval. I El drama litúrgico* (Barcelona, 1997).
- 67 Maricarmen Gómez Muntané, ed., *El canto de la Sibila II. Cataluña y Baleares* (Madrid, 1997).
- 68 Josep Romeu, *Teatre català antic*, ed. Francesc Massip, Pep Vila, 3 vols. (Barcelona, 1994–1995).
- 69 Francesc Massip, *La Festa d'Elx i els misteris medievals europeus* (Alicante-Elx, 1991).
- 70 *La processó de Corpus i els entremesos de Cervera, segles XIV–XIX*, ed. Ramon Miró (Barcelona, 1998).
- 71 *Teatre medieval i del Renaixement*, ed. Josep Massot (Barcelona, 1983); Josep Solervicens, "Teatre renaixentista," in *Història de la Literatura Catalana. Literatura Moderna. Renaixement, Barroc, Il·lustració*, eds. Alex Broch, Josep Solervicens (Barcelona, 2016), pp. 99–128.