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**JESÚS PERIS LLORCA**

Universitat de València

# **Festive literature in Catalan as a space of cultural resistance: The Valencian magazine *Pensat i Fet* (1912–72) during the Spanish post-war period**

## **ABSTRACT**

*The magazine Pensat i Fet (1912–72), which was published every year before the Fallas festival and included a wide range of texts and pictures related to it, had been an important element in the dissemination of literature and culture in Catalan and the agenda of valencianism among wide sectors of Valencian society. Until 1936 – especially during the years of the Second Spanish Republic – the magazine explicitly opted for valencianism, for example, advocating for the agreement that would make the statute of autonomy possible. However, from 1940 onwards it became a true bastion of cultural resistance. So, the magazine maintained a literary use of Catalan language in diverse registers, strongly satirized the Castillianization of society, was able to express a valencianist spirit in a variety of ways, incorporated elements of*

## **KEYWORDS**

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*Pensat i Fet*  
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Francoism  
valencianism  
fallas

*social criticism through popular satire and accommodated very diverse authors from the Valencian literary field and from other Catalan-speaking regions. In this article, attention will be paid to the way in which the magazine manages to articulate these gestures, albeit not without trouble with censorship, throughout the first decade of Franco's Regime, that is, between 1939 and 1950.*

## PALABRAS CLAVE

revistas en catalán  
*Pensat i Fet*  
 postguerra  
 literatura popular  
 franquismo  
 valencianismo  
 fallas

## RESUMEN

*La revista Pensat i Fet (1912–72), que se editaba todos los años antes de la fiesta de las Fallas e incluía un amplio abanico de textos e imágenes relacionadas con ella, fue un elemento importante en la difusión entre amplios sectores de la sociedad valenciana de la literatura y la cultura en catalán y de la agenda del valencianismo. Si hasta 1936 – especialmente durante los años de la Segunda República – la revista apostó explícitamente por el valencianismo, por ejemplo abogando por el acuerdo que hiciera posible el estatuto de autonomía, a partir de 1940 se convirtió en un verdadero bastión de resistencia cultural: manteniendo un uso literario del catalán en diversos registros, satirizando fuertemente la castellanización de la sociedad, siendo capaz de expresar el espíritu valencianista de diversas formas, incorporando elementos de crítica social a través de la sátira popular y acogiendo a muy diversos autores del ámbito literario valenciano y de otras regiones de habla catalana. En este artículo se prestará atención a la forma en que la revista logra articular estos gestos, no sin problemas con la censura, a lo largo de la primera década del franquismo, es decir, entre 1939 y 1950.*

1. On this subject, the online catalogue of the exhibition *Prensa satírica i cultura popular valenciana*, organized by the Valencian Library and curated by Enric Nogués Pastor is useful and accessible. <https://premsatiricaiculturapv.wordpress.com/>. Accessed 23 July 2021.

## PENSAT I FET MAGAZINE

The *Pensat i Fet* magazine was born in 1912 under the initiative of a group of young people headed by the journalist and writer Josep Esteve i Victòria, the illustrator Ramil and the editor and poet Ricard Sanmartín. The approach was very simple: every year, the first days of March, it would publish sketches of the ‘fallas’ (the satirical monuments that were going to be the centre of the festival and that would burn on Saint Joseph eve) several weeks before the festival and would be written entirely in Catalan. Along with the sketches, readers could find a wide variety of content: articles about folk traditions, reflections on the festival, interviews, news, lyrical and satirical poems, and illustrations. The initiative was highly successful and became a profitable publishing project reaching a print run of 50,000 during the 1930s (Cortés 1992: 251).

This magazine shows how the Fallas festival was converted not only into an element of urban identity but also into a mass cultural product, with its own star system and its associated cultural field. In addition, *Pensat i Fet* responded to a very clear and conscious objective: to become a meeting place in a double sense. On the one hand, following the tradition of Valencian illustrated satirical magazines, such as *El Mole* and *La Traca*,<sup>1</sup> texts in Catalan were brought to a wide audience. On the other hand, its pages contained all the literary registers of the language: satirical, neopopular, folk and lyrical, prose and verse, in addition to incorporating writers from all over the Catalan-speaking territory. In this sense, the fact that the first text of the first issue was an article by Santiago Rusiñol, entitled ‘Les falles’ (1912: 9), was already a complete declaration of intentions (ADEF 2011).

In other words, the magazine was born inside the field of the modern valencianism, the valencian political and cultural regionalism, that was labouriously articulated during the first decades of the twentieth century and that had the clear purpose of expanding its social base and central elements of this emerging valencianist agenda. It sought to reach a wide audience to create readers of Valencian literature and a sense of Valencian citizenship. As such, political valencianism held an important position in its pages ('Els regidors valencianistes i les falles' ['Valencian councillors and the Fallas'], 1932: 18) and two central elements of its editorial line during the years of the Second Spanish Republic (1931–36) were the need to adopt the Castelló orthographic standards, approved in 1932, in all registers of Catalan and the demand for the Statute of Autonomy for the Valencian Country. All of this was published in an editorial product of impeccable modernity both in its layout and in the graphic material (Peris Llorca 2017).

Francoism would mean a serious setback for political and cultural valencianism and for the magazine. However, as we will see, *Pensat i Fet* reinvented itself, and the expansive phase that it saw during the 1930s gave way to a firm work of cultural resistance. From the first issue after the Civil War, it would find a way to be published entirely in Catalan, unlike other magazines with a similar approach (i.e. annual periodicity, the publication of the sketches of the fallas), such as *El Turista Fallero*, born in 1942 and published mainly in Spanish. This refusal to publish texts in Spanish would be the reason for its prohibition by the censorship in 1946.

Of course, *Pensat i Fet* was not Ricard Sanmartí's only valencianist activity during these years: it was a part of a wider project. He also created the publishing house Lletres Valencianes, which published 24 volumes between 1948 and 1956. The surplus generated by the magazine was often invested in launching these books and other cultural activism activities:

Santmartí, propietari del *Pensat i Fet*, va dedicar els guanys de l'any passat al llibre de versos [de Xavier Casp], perquè Santmartí és, senzillament, un patriota. Es va editar el llibre; calia donar a conèixer Casp a Barcelona [...] i Santmartí va pagar les despeses dels quatre.

(Letter from Francesc Soriano Bueso to Josep Maria Casacuberta in 1944, quoted by Ripoll 2010: 142)

('Santmartí, owner of *Pensat i Fet*, dedicated last year's surplus to the book of verses [by Xavier Casp], because Santmartí is simply a patriot. The book was edited; it was necessary to make Casp known in Barcelona [...] and Santmartí paid for the expenses of all four'.)

In addition, although he had been expelled from Lo Rat Penat<sup>2</sup> accused as being a 'separatist' by the board of directors imposed by the Francoist authorities (Ballester 2006: 140), he would return in 1948 with Carles Salvador, during the presidency of Manuel González Martí, and would take part in organizing Valencian language courses taught by Salvador, taking advantage of the coverage the conservative organization received from the regime. These classes were, in these years, the only place to learn the grammar and spelling of Valencian in the city of Valencia, as Santmartí himself recalled in an interview in the magazine *Sicania* (Viator 1959: 16).

In this article we will examine the texts published in the ten issues of the magazine *Pensat i Fet* during the first post-war period (1940–50) in order

2. Lo Rat Penat, defined as 'Societat d'aymadors de les glòries valencianes' ('Valencian glories lovers society'), is a cultural institution founded in 1878 that led the Valencian literary *Renaixença* in nineteenth century and that had gradually become an association linked to upper class of the city of Valencia, ideologically conservative and culturally folkloric.

3. Concerning the group of so-called 'old valencianists' and their strategy during these years, see Ripoll (2010: 73-86).

to address some of the strategies used to push the limits of what could be published in those years, to introduce social criticism into the register of popular literature, and to keep alive not only the language but a Valencian identity differentiated from the homogeneous and monolingual Spain.

### THE *PENSAT / FET* ISSUE FOR 1940

During the 1940s the magazine would become a core element in the strategy of the so-called 'old valencianists' led by the poet and grammarian Carles Salvador to make traditionalist literature accessible to a wider audience. They felt that it was the way to support a small cultural field in Valencian that would find readers in such a hostile context. It was a survival strategy for the language.<sup>3</sup> One need only take a look at the issues corresponding to 1936 and 1940 to see the enormous distance that separates them, for example, in layout and graphic design. The pen drawing of General Franco that presides its pages, together with the article 'En aquest renàixer d'Espanya' ('In this rebirth of Spain') (1940: 8), becomes a portico for this new phase. However, editors of the magazine tried to make these declarations of loyalty to the self-proclaimed leader compatible with the use of Catalan: they would even call him 'cabdill', in Catalan, instead of 'Caudillo', the official appellative in Spanish.

From 1939 to 1942, *Pensat i Fet* would be the only publication (magazine or book) in the Catalan-speaking area entirely in Catalan. It was not until 1943 that the first two books in Catalan would appear in Valencia, while in Catalonia the prohibition was total (Gallofré 1991). Undoubtedly, the folkloric character of the magazine and its link to a festival in the process of being redefined by the Franco regime, as Hernández (1996) has studied in detail, facilitated this exception 'a desgrat de les reticències inicials de les autoritats censors franquistes' ('despite the initial reluctance of the Francoist censorship authorities') (Carbó and Simbor 1993: 25). Ricard Sanmartín would make strategic use of that space.

In fact, in this self-defence strategy (Cortés 1992: 254), the magazine had compelling reasons to present itself as non-troubling to the regime. One of its founders, the satirical poet and militant of the Catholic working-class movements Josep Maria Esteve i Victòria, had been assassinated by anarchist militiamen in August 1936. The pages dedicated to his tribute would make this very clear, although they took the opportunity to suggest the need to put into practice the working-class rhetoric of Spanish fascism. For example, Josep Zacarés Chisvert (1940: 10), his colleague in 'l'antiga Caixa de Previsió Social del Regne de València' ('the former Social Security Savings Bank of the Kingdom of Valencia'), wrote:

L'horda roja, en segar la seua vida, li negà el consol de poder mirar com l'espassa victoriosa de Franco conquistava el cor dels obrers, i com ens farà arribar en un termini potser no molt llunyà, al segur integral anhelat per Esteve.

(The red horde, in reaping his life, denied him the consolation of being able to watch as Franco's victorious sword conquered the hearts of the workers, and how it will bring us, perhaps in the not too distant future, the comprehensive insurance longed for by Esteve.)

Meanwhile, however, Esteve's valencianism and his commitment to the Catalan language were emphasized. One of the signatories, Josep Sanç Moya,

did so as 'Conseller d'Acció Valencianista' ('Valencianist Action Counselor'), heir association of the valencianist and conservative political party of an almost identical name during the years of Second Spanish Republic ('Acció Nacionalista Valenciana' ['Valencian Nationalist Action']).

Ricard Sanmartín was a member of this association where he had met with younger figures who would become prominent during the 1940s: Xavier Casp and Miquel Adlert. It is as if the magazine chose to put into practice a hypothetical return to the pre-war cultural situation that the facts soon revealed impossible. In March 1940, Acció Valencianista would be banned and dissolved by the Francoist authorities (Ripoll 2010: 25). Nonetheless, it is significant that, still in 1942, Miquel Adlert considered the magazine a project of Acció Valencianista.<sup>4</sup>

In this sense, it is worth noting in the article by Eduard López-Chávarri the return to the discourse of Teodor Llorente, the patriarch of poetry in Valencia during the second half of nineteenth century and former conservative political leader, that is, the idea that Valencian identity and the use of Catalan is legitimate because it does not entail a danger for Spanish unity. So, he stated that

*Pensat i Fet* retorna a viure aquells bons dies de Llorente, de Rosinyol, d'artistes que sentien i pensaven només que en això, en art, sense que les particularitats d'uns llenguatges significaren, ni remotament, res que estiguera fora d'Espanya.

(López Chávarri 1940: 26)

(*Pensat i Fet* lives again those good days of Llorente, of Rosinyol, of artists who felt and thought only about this, art, without implying that the particularities of some languages meant, not even remotely, anything that was outside Spain'.)

In other words, he attempted to untie language and culture from any 'separatist' fickleness. However, in doing so, he was using a conception of Spain which included cultural and national diversity within it. It is, in fact, the same rhetoric that Teodor Llorente used in the nineteenth century to try to appease the misgivings that his cultural regionalism implied while trying to counteract Madrid's all-encompassing centralism and offer an alternative to Spanish nationalism with a Castilian matrix. Rafael Roca (2002) has studied this discursive strategy in depth. Therefore, this gesture seems to be the option of the magazine in the new context. The word 'Espanya' appears often, like never before, but it does not mean the same as in Franco's nationalism.

Furthermore, it is possible to find in a couple of texts the will to establish links with the common Catalan tradition. 'Les fogueres' ('The bonfires'), by the Catalan ethnologist Joan Amades (1940: 29), for example, places the different festivals that have fire as a common element on the calendar, thus indicating the continuities with Catalan festivals. The Fallas are located in the festive calendar as the first spring bonfires, followed by those of Saint Mark (25 April) and Saint Isidore (15 May).

The poem 'València de Sant Josep' ('Valencia of Saint Joseph'), by Jesús Morante Borrás (1940: 24), can also be read as a timid but clear claim to identity: '¡València de Sant Josep! .../¿Quin valencià no et recorda?/Jo, que sóc un valencià,/però valencià de soca/m'emocione en eixos dies ...' ('Valencia of Saint Joseph! .../What Valencian doesn't remember you?/I, who am a Valencian,/but a Valencian from the root,/get excited in those days ...'). It contrasts this sacred

4. 'Adlert li escríu una carta [a Josep Maria de Casacuberta] el 25 de març de 1942 en la qual li anuncia que "pel mateix correu m'és grat trametre-vos un exemplar de *Pensat i Fet*, que com tots els anys hem publicat els amics d'Acció"' ('Adlert wrote a letter [to Josep Maria de Casacuberta] on March 25, 1942, in which he announced that "by the same mail I am pleased to send you a copy of *Pensat i Fet*, which, as every year, we, the friends of Acció, have published"') (Ripoll 2010: 231).

5. Torre, led by Miquel Adlert and Xavier Casp, had become the main publishing group in Catalan in València and they were disputing hegemony in the valencianist cultural field with the 'old valencianist'.

but ingrained name with the depersonalizing and castilizing *Valencia del Cid* used and imposed by the Franco regime and that can even be found in some advertisement of this issue of the magazine (1940: 34).

### THE 'LITERARY VALENCIAN THAT PREVAILS'

The aforementioned gesture of cultural resistance is already clear on this issue, but it will become more evident in the following. If its folkloric character is the safe-conduct that will allow the publication entirely in Valencian, one may appreciate the will of Ricard Sanmartín – now the executive director of the magazine – to include a great variety of registers, but with a predominant presence of high literature, the 'valencià literari que en elles prevaleix' ('literary Valencian that prevails in them') to which Josep Maria Bugella refers in 1949. Without leaving the 1940s, Carles Salvador, for example, but also Sanmartín himself, or Xavier Casp, Prudenci Alcón or Enric Duran and Tortajada would publish frequently in the magazine. In other words, Sanmartín tried to integrate the entire Valencian cultural field into the magazine and succeeded until the rupture between the 'old valencianists' and the Torre publishing group<sup>5</sup> that occurred at the end of the decade. When this happened, he would ally with Carles Salvador and, although other members of the group would continue to publish, such as Jaume Bru, for example, Casp and Adlert would disappear from the magazine.

Joan Fuster himself, in 1948, in his years of closeness with the Torre Editorial group, published the following sonnet:

Des del cor de la nit, la primavera/certa ja sobre el ròssec d'un perfum,/  
salta, i s'esmuny, i es corba, i s'adelera/per fer-se clara entre una flor i el  
fum.//Joià endintre, destria fugissera/la gràcia rabent del seu costum:/  
tot s'hi sent breu, o fàcil; i s'advera/el món més gerd sota un festeig de  
llum.//Ah, la cendra que cau com un rou tímida,/que reposa sabent-se  
encís del límit,/que còpia el record tan dolçament!//Secret de vol i joc,  
la flama alçada/estrafà el guspireig de l'estelada/i ens carrega l'esguard  
d'enyorament.

(1948: 6)

(‘From the heart of the night, spring/already certain on the trail of  
perfume,/jumps, and slips, and curves, and hurries/to become clear  
between a flower and the smoke.//Joy inside, elusively discerning/the  
raging grace of its custom:/everything is felt as brief, or easy, and it turns  
out/the most tender world under a courtship of light//Oh, the ashes that  
fall like a timid dew,/that rests knowing itself enchantment of the limit,/  
that copies the memory so sweetly!//Secret of flight and play, the high  
flame/imitates the sparking of the starry sky/and charges our glance  
with longing.’)

But texts written in prose would also be common: quasi-philosophical articles by Miquel Adlert, the scholarly ones by the senior Benet Morales i Sanmartín and the young Enric Soler i Godes (‘Sorolla y Benlliure en una falla de 1904’ [‘Sorolla and Benlliure in a *falla* in 1904’], 1948: 30) or ‘Les primeres falles infantils’ [‘The first children’s fallas’], 1949: 27), the linguistic reflections by Carles Salvador, such as the interesting ‘Focs, fogueres i falles’ (‘Fires, bonfires and *fallas*’) (1942: 8), which reviews several examples of different uses of these



words in Catalonia and the Valencian Country, or the traditional stories by Manuel González Martí ('Dos Valències' ['Two Valencias'], 1949: 8 or 'Llamp de novel·la' ['Lightning of a novel'], 1950: 10). It also contains interviews (with the musician José Iturbi, for example, 1950: 4), obituaries of prominent figures such as Josep Serrano, with an included reference to the 'Himne regional' ('Regional anthem') (1941: 31), Maximilià Thous (author of the lyrics 'd'un himne a València que es va fer molt popular' ['of an anthem for Valencia that became very popular'])<sup>6</sup> (1948a:9), Mariano Benlliure (1948b:9) or Benet Morales i Sanmartín (1947: 27) himself. There were also some reviews of published books ('El Pensat i Fet en la història de les falles' ['Pensat i Fet magazine in fallas history'], the anonymous review of *Las fallas*, by Almela i Vives, 1950: 31, or a very negative one about *Valencia*, by Azorín, signed by Miquel Adlert, 1942: 12). In this way, from the world surrounding the Fallas festival, and taking advantage of any possible room for it, *Pensat i Fet* sought to become a cultural magazine published entirely in Catalan.

6. It refers to the hymn composed for the Regional Exhibition of 1909 by Josep Serrano with lyrics by Maximilià Thous, which soon became the unofficial hymn of the Valencian Country, especially at the city of Valencia, and since 1982 has been the official hymn of the Valencian Community according to its Statute of Autonomy.

### THE SIGNIFICANCE OF BERNAT MORALES I SANMARTÍN'S PRESENCE

Benet Morales i Sanmartín's presence in the pages of the magazine is no coincidence. He was a regular collaborator with *Pensat i Fet* from its foundation, a naturalist writer, an epigone of Vicente Blasco Ibáñez, and related to the director of the magazine. He had become a celebrity in the city of Valencia before the war thanks to novels such as *La rulla* ('The curly hair girl') (1905), theatre plays such as *La borda* ('The bastard') (1911), novellas such as *Cadireta d'or* ('Small gold chair') (1908) or for having been the promoter with Vicent Carceller of the magazine *El conte valencià*. He was, in fact, a benchmark for local republicanism. Before the Civil War, Morales i Sanmartín had been the editor of *El Mercantil Valenciano*, where he signed with the nom de plume of Fidelio, and in the post-war period he was reduced to ostracism and marginality, while most copies of his novels were destroyed. As Miralles states, 'En acabar la Guerra Civil, només el fet d'haver estat redactor d'aquest diari va ser motiu més que suficient per a patir la repressió més cruenta, aquella que silencia la persona' ('At the end of the Civil War, the mere fact of having been the editor of this newspaper was a reason more than enough to suffer the bloodiest repression, that which silences the person') (1993: 29).

His presence in the pages of *Pensat i Fet* continued in the post-war period until his death: in 1941 the historical article 'La falla del Micalet' ('The *falla* of *Micalet* belltower') (1941: 12); in 1942 the opinion piece 'Les falles', in which he presented himself as concerned about the loss of satirical inventiveness in the *fallas*, contravening 'la xicoteta filosofia de la història' ('the small philosophy of history') (1942: 9); in 1943 the scholarly article 'La falla de Cervantes' ('The *falla* by Cervantes') published on page 7, immediately after the editorial and in which, invoking Cervantes (and the priest in *Don Quijote*), he insists that 'en les falles sols ha de cremar-se allò ridícul, lleig, immoral i inútil' ('in *fallas* only the ridiculous, the ugly, the immoral and the useless things must be burned'); in 1944 he insisted again on the subject in another opinion piece, 'La falla popular i la falla artística' ('Popular *falla* and art *falla*') (1944: 13); until the posthumous article, 'Sant Josep, les falles i el cotó' ('Saint Joseph, *fallas* and cotton'), published in 1947, but which should have appeared in the unpublished issue of 1946, and in which he continues to note that 'no tot ha de ser

articles i versets improductius i sense fonament útil i de ninguna valenciana' ('not everything has to be unproductive articles and verses without a useful foundation and no Valencian spirit') (1947: 27).

This constant presence of the marginalized intellectual, and the terms in which his work and his figure are vindicated, are significant and courageous, very revealing of Ricard Sanmartín's attitude, as can be seen in his obituary:

En valencià escriví diverses narracions, entre les que destaca el preciós idil·li *Cadireta d'or*. En la seua producció en castellà [...] descollen les obres de tema valencià: *La alcaldesa*, *La Rulla*, *Tierra Levantina* i *Camino de Pasión*, alguna d'elles traduïda al francès [...]. Fon professor del Conservatori de València; era Acadèmic corresponent de l'Espanyola, i entre els seus triomfs literaris hom compta l'obtingut en 1916 en guanyar amb *Olor de santidad*, el premi únic oferit pel Círcul de Belles Arts, de Madrid, al millor conte espanyol.

(1947: 27)

(In Valencian he wrote several stories, among which the beautiful idyll *Cadireta d'or* ["Small gold chair"] stands out. In his production in Spanish the works with a Valencian theme stand out: *La alcaldesa* ["The mayoress"], *La Rulla* ["The curly hair girl"], *Tierra Levantina* ["Eastern Spain land"] and *Camino de Pasión* ["Path of passion"], some of them translated into French [...]. He was a professor at the Conservatory of Valencia; he was corresponding Academic of the Spanish Academy, and, between his literary triumphs, it is the one obtained in 1916 when winning with *Olor de santidad* ["Smell of holiness"] the only prize offered by the Circle of Beaux Arts of Madrid to the best Spanish story.)

And still in 1964, on the occasion of the centenary of his birth, the pedagogue and writer Enric Soler i Godes would draw a new semblance of his figure, which begins, in an enigmatic but understandable way, with the following words:

Hi ha escriptor que mor abans que la seua fama es consolide i siga reconeguda fins pels enemics: pero morta la persona, l'enveja s'afluixa i com l'obra queda, si és bona, no hi ha manera de matar-la ni amb el silenci.

(1964: 10)

(There is a writer who dies before his fame is consolidated and is recognized even by enemies: but when the person is dead, envy loosens and since the work remains, if it is good, there is no way to kill it even with silence.)

## **VERSES AGAINST CENSORSHIP**

The 1945 issue is especially interesting for its ingenious mockery of censorship. Faced with the imposition of publishing texts written in prose in Spanish, the magazine appeared entirely written in verse, even the editorial, which can be read as a statement of intents:



En la festa i per la festa/més bellament popular/on l'ingeni es manifesta/  
tan gloriósament preclar,/torna com en anys hui a alçar/el seu crit, patri  
ressó/d'optimisme i tradició,/oferint en este dia/una novella il·lusió,/com  
bocinet d'alegria.

(1945: 5)

(At the festival and for the festival/most beautifully popular/where inven-  
tiveness manifests itself/so gloriously illustrious,/it returns today to raise  
as in past years/its call, patriotic resonance/of optimism and tradition,  
offering on this day/a new illusion,/like a small piece of joy'.)

But there are also narrative texts written in verse, such as 'La fallera fallida'  
(The failed *fallera*'), by Bernat Artola ('La fadrina més festera/del barri de "La  
Tisora",/per massa festejadora/l'anomenaren "fallera" [...]') (1945: 6), or 'Chopetí és un críticó'  
(Chopetí is a fault-finding'), by Vicent Sastre ('En la banda del seu poble/vingué a falles  
*Xopetí*,/el més famós cornetí/que es coneix per aquell rogle [...]') (With his  
village band/*Xopetí* came to Fallas,/the most famous cornet player/that is  
known in those surroundings [...]) (1945: 9), and even a 'Carta al nostre direc-  
tor' (Letter to our editor) also written in verse, anonymously forwarded from  
Buenos Aires ('Des de Buenos Aires a/revista *Pensat i Fet*./En este dia gloriós/  
de festes de Sant Josep/del nou-cents quaranta cinc/vinc a escriure-li a vosté  
[...]') (From Buenos Aires to/*Pensat i Fet* magazine./On this glorious day/of St.  
Joseph Festivals/of nine hundred and forty-five/I come to write to you [...])  
(1945: 30).

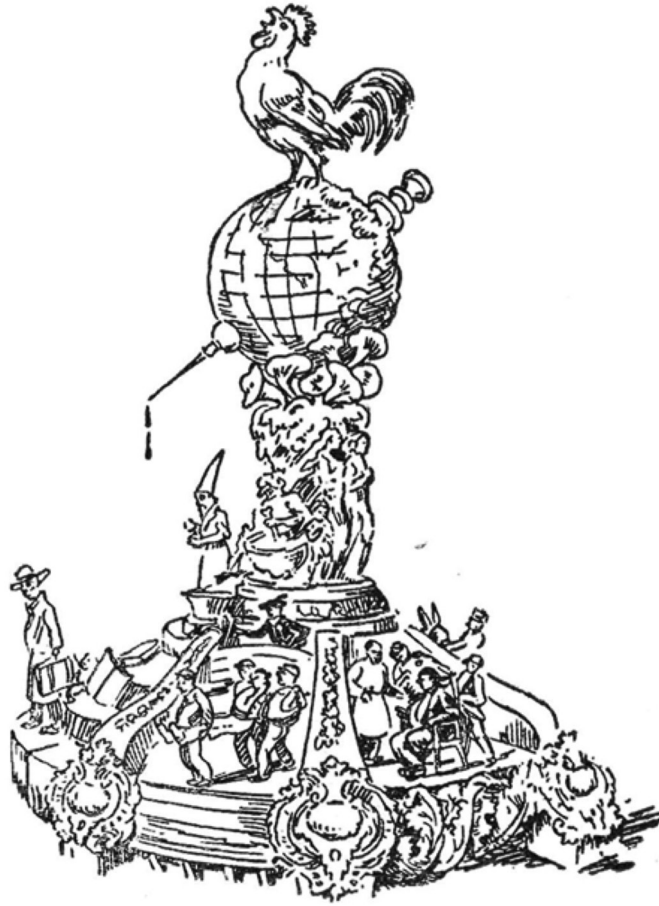
Scattered in the magazine we also find very interesting references such  
as the profile of the *Renaixença* writer and politician Constantí Llobart  
(1848–93) in a poem by the contemporary poet Josep Sanmartín i Aguirre,  
which ends with the following verses, very resonant in its new publication: 'En  
regalar, lliberal/en diversions un xaval/en escriure molt claret;/en son tracte un  
senyoret/i en política "ilegal"' (When giving, liberal/in amusements, a kid/in  
writing, very clear;/in his manner, a gentleman/and in politics, "illegal") (1945:  
10). Also, among the explanations in verse of the *fallas*, written by Ricard  
Sanmartín himself (Figure 1), the following verses can be read for the *falla*  
Pintor Sorolla – Universitat: 'Tant als perills vui ú se fia/que a d'això que es  
diu morir/és quasi una tonteria' (Today one is in so much danger/that what is  
called dying/is almost a trifle') (1945: 11).

In 1946, as a consequence of all this, *Pensat i Fet* was banned. It reappeared  
in 1947, headed by an editorial also written in verse, which turned joy into a  
challenging identity (Figure 2):

Hui com ahir, *Pensat i Fet* pren vida/reviscolat per Març que tot ho mou/i  
travessant l'espai com forta eixida/ofrena sa alegria de bell nou.//I ahir  
com hui, exempt de tot desmai,/com coet volador intermitent,/ruixim de  
foc enfila per l'espai/i quan sembla que es perd, ix novament.//I s'obri en  
l'horitzó com gaia flor/per a escampar ses fulles grana i or.

(1947: 3)

(Today as yesterday, *Pensat i Fet* comes to life/revived by March that  
moves everything/and crossing space as strong fireworks/it offers  
its joy again.//And yesterday as today, exempt from all fainting,/like



P. SOROLLA-UNIVERSITAT-SALVA

Tant als perills vui ú se fia  
que a d'aixó que es diu morir  
és quasi una tonteria.

Figure 1: Sketch and verses of explanation for the falla Pintor Sorolla - Universitat written by Ricard Sanmartín (Pensat i Fet, 1945: 11).

intermittent flying fireworks,/drizzle of fire rises through space/and when it seems to be lost, it comes up again.//And it opens up on the horizon like a gay flower/to spread its red and gold leaves'.

### THE AFFIRMATION OF VALENCIAN IDENTITY

This affirmation of Valencian identity adopts various forms in the following issues. In the first place, through references to 'valencianía' ('Valencian spirit') or 'patria' ('homeland'), which are constant. References to the four bars of the Valencian flag will also be quite frequent: '[...] vore com a estranya falla/creixent



Vui com ahir, PENSAT I FET pren vida.  
reviscolat per Març que tot ho mou  
i travessant l'espai com forta eixida  
ofrena s'alegria de bell nou.

I ahir com vui, exempt de tot desmai,  
com coet volador intermitent,  
ruixim de foc enfilat per l'espai  
i quan sembla que es perd, ix novament.

I s'obri en l'horitzó com gaia flor  
per a escampar ses fulles grana i or.

Figure 2: Editorial page of the 1947 issue of *Pensat i Fet*.

d'entre el cel i el mar/quatre gegants flames roges/sobre un fons pel sol daurat' ([...] seeing as a strange *falla*/growing between the sky and the sea/four giant red flames/on a background gilded by the sun') (Ricard Sanmartín 1948: 26) or 'el vol de les primeres flamerades/canten victòria, roges i daurades,/amb vitols que onejant referma el vent' ('the flight of the first flames,/red and golden, declares victory/with cheers that the wind waving reinforces') (Signes i Ruic 1949: 29), they serve as examples for the following issues.

The use of Catalan will be vindicated against the Castilianization imposed by the Francoist authorities. On the one hand, the magazine will not miss an opportunity to satirize those who leave the language for accommodative

7. 'Pensat i fet', the slogan that gives the publication its title, and which is quoted here in its literal sense, refers to an alleged characteristic quality of Valencians, which is expressed in the fallas in an exemplary way: the capacity for improvisation, the speed in moving from ideas to facts.
8. The *falla* 'llibret' was a booklet that was sold around the *falla* and that completed in verse the explanation of the scenes represented on it. Over time, it would become a yearbook of every Fallas committee and, in recent years, even an ambitious monographic work. On the history of the llibret de falla, see Marín (2014).

purposes or social gain: 'com vols ser tan elegant/ens parles d'una manera/que dins, fora i allà on vas/te prenen per forastera' ('since you want to be so elegant/you speak to us in a way/that inside, outside and wherever you go/they take you for a stranger') ('Bunyols quadrats' ['Square fritters'], 1942: 35). The labelling of *fallas* in Spanish will be condemned: in the narrative romance 'Anar per llana [...] ('Going for wool [...]') a Valencian person gets sick from finding *fallas* verses in Spanish because 'la gràcia del pensat i fet nostre [...] sols d'una manera se pot escriure, en el sabor de la nostra llengua' ('The grace of our "thought and done" [...] can only be written in one way, in the flavour of our language') (Sanmartín Peris 1948: 6). To give another example, those who abandon their language will be condemned with forceful verses: 'No vols comprar el llibret/puix dius que no el saps llegir./¿Eres valencià? Deuries [...] deuries pegar-te un tir' ('You don't want to buy the booklet<sup>8</sup>/because you say you can't read it./Are you Valencian? You should [...] you should shoot yourself') (1947: 26). Additionally, that the presidents of the *fallas* committees speak Catalan would be presented as essential (Hernández Casajuana 1950: 6). The social use of Catalan would be defended in any context: 'Per què si te diuen xurra/te poses tota enfada?/El remei el tens molt fàcil;/parla sempre en valencià' ('Why if they call you *xurra* [Valencian Spanish-speaking person who do not speaks Catalan]/do you get very angry?/The remedy is very easy;/always speaks in Valencian') ('Qualsevol' ['Anybody'] 1949: 32). And the need for grammatical correction would also be pointed out in the areas where the written use of Catalan was possible: 'Si vols ton Llibret premiat,/escriu-lo en molta alegria/i ben ortografiat' ('If you want your booklet to be awarded,/write it with great joy/and well spelled'), stated the verses published under the pseudonym Pepet i Pepot (1947: 28).

On the other hand, some articles, particularly those written by Carles Salvador, would try to improve the linguistic competence of the authors of the *falla* booklets: in 'Falla i els seus consonants' ('*Falla* and its consonants') (1943: 34), Salvador observes that 'fins l'any darrer els poetes havien usat en el *Pensat i Fet* 49 consonants de falla' ('Until last year poets had used in the *Pensat i Fet* 49 consonants of *falla*'). From this fact he draws following conclusions: 'A nosaltres no ens pareix excessiu el número de consonants de falla, que han usat els poetes, puix que la mitat d'ells solsment apareixen escrits una o dos vegades, mentres que atres, en comparació, apareixen massa' ('The number of consonants for *falla* used by poets does not seem excessive to us, since half of them appear only once or twice, while others, in comparison, appear too much'). In fact 'calla' ('shut up') had appeared 32 times, while the record is held by 'rialla' ('laugh'), which had appeared 34 times. This, to the grammarian and poet Carles Salvador, denotes undeniable linguistic poverty, so he sets out to provide a solution: 'Per tal d'aportar un poc de material a estos poetes fallers, ací va un vocabulari de consonants de falla' ('To provide some material to these *fallas* poets, here is a vocabulary of consonants for the word "*falla*"). This is subsequently followed by a list of a hundred different words that rhyme with it.

Furthermore, from 1947, the magazine includes advertisements for the Lletres Valencianes publishing house, also promoted by Sanmartín and, in general, offered free publicity for books published in Catalan in Valencia. That year, for example, an advertisement recommended purchasing a list of works by Carles Salvador, Xavier Casp, Enric Durán i Tortajada, Bernat Artola Tomás, and an 'Antologia vicentina' (Anthology of texts devoted to Saint Vincent'). From 1954 it would go one step further and the magazine would include a

regular section, 'Flames cordials' ('Hearty flames'), consisting of a brief review of the cultural activity in Catalan in Valencia during the year.

The unity of the Catalan language and the upholding of a linguistic community consciousness, especially with Catalonia, would also be constant concerns. We have already seen a couple of examples, but the references are numerous: in 1944 Ricard Sanmartín himself remembers when Santiago Rusiñol was asked for an article for the first issue of the magazine and narrates the affectionate reception he gave to 'una joventut [...] que enfila la seua primera volada pel conreu de les coses pròpies enlairant-les en son propi mig d'expressió com és l'harmoniosa llengua de la terra' ('young people who take their first flight through cultivating their own issues and taking them off in their own means of expression such as the harmonious language of the land') (1944: 10). In 1947 he publishes the poem 'A València en festa' ('To Valencia in its festival') by Joan Maragall, with verses as expressive as the following: 'escolta de la part de Catalunya/i sentiràs una gran veu que et crida/amb la parla que és ta mateixa parla,/més eixuta, però més amorosida' ('Listen to the part of Catalonia/and you will hear a great voice that calls you/with the speech that is your same speech,/drier, but more amorous') (1947: 5).

The insistence on looking for possible spaces for the expression of Valencian identity is also meaningful. Two articles from the forties would point out the potential of soccer. As early as 1941 the sports journalist Fix talks about 'la tornada al regionalisme esportiu' ('the return to sports regionalism') and claims that most of the players of the Valencia C. F. and the Levante needed to be Valencian, because 'són precisament els jugadors fets en València aquells que, sense perdre llur caràcter de professionals, senten l'amor al club, animen en els moments atziacs de les competicions esportives, els que entrañen l'alegria manifestada en les hores de triomf' ('they are precisely the players made in Valencia who, without losing their professional character, feel love for the club, encourage it in the fateful moments of sporting competitions, who entail the joy manifested in the hours of triumph'). In this way, moreover, 'quan es parle del València, podem qualificar amb exactitud als seus titulars de valencians, i llur joc de futbol valencià' ('when talking about Valencia, we can accurately describe its regular first-team players as Valencian, and their style of playing as Valencian football') (Fix 1941: 26). Miquel Adlert, using the nom de plume of Donyet, goes even further when he claims that the coach should also be Valencian (1943: 36).

## PRESENCE OF WOMEN WRITERS AND VALENCIAN EXILES

Another aspect that seems remarkable is the presence of women writers. This had been very noticeable in the issues before the Civil War and would remain an important feature after it. Already in the 1940 issue, we find the section entitled 'Parlen elles' ('Women speak') with reflections by Desemparats Sarthou and M<sup>a</sup> Herminia, who, incidentally, quotes a complete stanza from a surprising Catalan translation of an Amado Nervo poem that I could not find: 'Ama, i així seràs deu de fulgors/en tota obscuritat, en tot horror [...] ('Love, and so you will be a god of brightness/in every darkness, in every horror [...]') (1940: 22). During this decade the poems of María Ibars and Sofía Salvador would be frequent. And they would not be the only ones. It is possible to find collaborations written in verse and prose signed by Pilar Monzó, Amparito Tort, María Colmenero or Carme Martínez-Aloy; and, in the following decade, the excellent poems by María Beneyto or the articles by Carmelina Sánchez-Cutillas,

who testifies in one of them to Sanmartín's interest in counting on their collaboration: 'Sanmartí, que coneix la dificultat que representa la nostra petita col·laboració en el *Pensat i Fet*, cascuna vegada ens la demana més prompte' ('Sanmartí, who knows the difficulty of our small collaboration in *Pensat i Fet*, asks us to do so sooner and sooner') (1968: 10).

Additionally, the way the magazine finds a way to refer to Valencian exiles, among whom are several collaborators from the early days, is remarkable. We have already seen the letter to the Editor written in verse from Buenos Aires in 1945. The editorial of the 1943 issue is very clear when it assigns the magazine

[...] una atra missió: volar arreu del mon i dur una poca de satisfacció i un poc de goig íntim a tots aquells valencians que per designis de la vida roden per eixos mons, i que el nostre present faça redolar per ses galtes més d'una llagrimeta que, en caure sobre la revista, siguen de l'absent el més gran homenatge a València.

(1943: 7)

([...] another mission: to fly around the world and bring a little satisfaction and a little intimate joy to all those Valencian people who, by designs of life, roll around the world, and that our present shall make more than one tear roll down their cheeks, which, when falling on the magazine, is the greatest tribute from the absent person to Valencia'.)

In the 1948 issue, Ricard Sanmartín will be more explicit in a poem titled 'Lluny de la terra' ('Far from the land'), dedicated to one of them, 'al bon amic Gaspar Codonyer' ('to the good friend Gaspar Codonyer'), who, on the other side of the sea 'es troba/cada dia més estrany/entre aquelles vàries gents/de tants diferents parlars/ell sols pensa en la placeta/recollida i solejà/d'aquell barri tan castís/de l'atra part de la mar' ('feels/stranger every day/among those various peoples/with so many different languages./He only thinks about the little square/peaceful and sunny/in that so genuine neighborhood/of the other part of the sea'). In the end, he imagines him wondering: 'Sant Josep, falles, València! [...] /Tornaré a vore't? Qui sap!' ('Saint Joseph, *fallas*, Valencia! [...] /I'll see you again? Who knows!'), while 'un núvol de records/l'atormenten' ('a cloud of memories/torments him') (1948: 26).

## EXPRESSIVE POSSIBILITIES OF SATIRICAL VERSES

As we have already seen in previous examples, thanks to the satirical poems and particularly to the popular stanzas that accompany the sketches of the *fallas*, usually written by Ricard Sanmartín, the magazine incorporates references to current issues that are unusual in the post-war context. References to the black market are common in explanations of *fallas* and all kinds of satirical texts: 'En estrapèrlic descaró/pretenen certs usurers/el fer-nos passar per l'aro' ('With black market insolence/certain usurers intend/to make us jump through hoops') are, to give an example, the verses that explain the *falla* of Dr Collado Square in 1943 (1943: 16).

One of the *aucas* (popular compositions consisting in popular rhyme stanzas illustrated by vignettes that tell a short story) particularly stands out. It is entitled 'Una, que en l'orgull de ser, secrets negocis baralla, i en descobrir-se l'afer me la planten en la falla' ('One, who with pride of being, considers secret business, and when the affair is discovered she is placed in the *falla*')



published in 1942 with drawings by Antón and verses by Ric (one of Ricard Sanmartín's noms de plume) (Figure 3). It tells the story of l'evacuada Leonor, de les que tant mal parlà' (the evacuated woman Leonor, one of who spoke so bad'), who is, probably a woman from Madrid who arrived in Valencia during the Civil War. She, apparently, despite have spoken badly of her new city 'diu que d'ací no se'n va, /i és més, que un lloc d'honor/en manyes conseguirà' (she says that she won't leave here, /and, what is more, that a place of honor/she will get with tricks'). Indeed, soon she gets some 'topolins' ('wedge-heeled shoes') and she is seen walking in a certain opulence. However, an accident will reveal the source of her wealth: 'Mes per un gos malait/una moto me l'espenta, /els 'topolins' li rebenta/i allà va oli ..., embutit .../de clandestina reventa' ('But for a damned dog/a motorbike pushes her, /it made the wedge-heeled shoes blow up /and there goes oil, sausages/of clandestine resale').

Dibuixos  
d'ANTON

**Una, que en l'orgull de ser, - secrets negocis baralla  
i en descobrir-se l'afer - me la planten en la falla**

Versos  
de RIC



L'evacuada Leonor,  
de les que tant mal parlà,  
diu que d'ací no se'n va,  
i és més, que un lloc d'honor  
en manyes conseguirà.



Varen ser els primers passos  
per conseguir els seus fins,  
comprar, per suposat a "plazos",  
uns magnífics "topolins"  
sens por a trencar-se els nasos.



L'èxit per tot el carrer  
a la vista de tots resa,  
ja que el veinat sancer  
se'n fa creus de com pot ser  
l'anar amunt tant a presa.



Tant, que fins el més sensato  
se diu: "No entenc este bail;  
ja se'n riu del moniato  
anant sols amunt i avall  
fent l'acaminar de pato."



Mes per un gos malait  
una moto me l'espenta,  
els "topolins" li rebenta  
i allà va oli..., embutit...  
de clandestina reventa.



I el veinat, satisfet  
al descobrir el secret  
d'esta Leonor tan lista,  
"honors" de falla li ha fet,  
plantant a l'"estraperlista".

Figure 3: 'Una, que en l'orgull de ser, secrets negocis baralla, i en descobrir-se l'afer me la planten en la falla' ('One, who with pride of being, considers secret business, and when the affair is discovered she is placed in the falla'), the auca by Antón and Ric (Ricard Sanmartín) (1942).



The result will be the popular and *fallas* scorn: 'I el veinat, satisfet/al descobrir el secret/d'esta Leonor tan lista,/"honors" de falla li han fet/plantant a l'estraperlista' ('And the neighborhood, satisfied/for having discovered the secret/of this clever Leonor,/they gave her "honors" of *fallas*/placing the black marketeer in it') (1942: 32).

In others verses that explain *fallas* sketches, there are references to the misery of wide social sectors, which often take the form of references to the extremely high cost of living ('Van per causes de la guerra/als núvols les subsistències/i el pa, com la fam, per terra' ('Because of the war/Subsistence goes to the clouds/and bread, like hunger, to the ground')) are the verses for the sketch of Valencia Street in Benimaçlet *falla*, 1948: 22) or to the scarcity of everyday life and the perception of material backwardness ('Com la llum està de dol/la gent vui viatja en carro/i s'allumena en cressol' ['Since electricity is in mourning/people today travel by cart/and light up with oil lamps'], for the Cádiz and Cura Femenía Streets *falla*, 1945: 16). The verses can be very explicit: 'Baix del pont viu molta gent/perquè a més que és molt barat/te bon sol i aigua corrent' ('Many people live under the bridge/because it's very cheap/and has good sun and running water'), for the Ermita and Jerusalem Streets *falla* (1943: 18). Frequent power outages ('Tant d'avans i qui ho diria/que en ple segle de les llums/les tals llums són de bujia' ['So much development and who would say/that in the middle of the century of lights/such lights are candles'], Mercado Square *falla*, 1945: 11) and rationing ('Com l'amic millor un llibre/diuen que és – la culta gent –/jo d'ells crec que la cartilla/però del racionament' ['The best of friends a book/so they say – educated people –/but I think the best of them is/the ration book'], one of the anonymous quatrains, 'Bunyols quadrats' ['Square fritters'], 1947: 29) are other common topics.

The verses also speak about corruption ('Pareix que diu que el progrés/és sol hui en fer un negoci/i el lema és diners, diners' ['He seems to say that progress/is only today doing business/and the slogan is money, money']) for the Dalt and Fos Street *falla*, 1943: 26), and particularly corruption having to do with food adulteration ('Sense aigua l'home esta net;/i és per lo que molts la posen/tant en el vi com la llet' ['Without water man is cleaned out;/and that is why many people put it/in both wine and milk']), for the Camino de Barcelona and Travesía de Moncada Streets *falla*, 1949: 21), and with ambitious and aggressive urban plans, such as the projected expansion of Oeste Avenue, demolishing entire popular downtown neighbourhoods: 'Sense consciència ninguna/vui es derriba per negoci/i el pobre a viure en la lluna' ('Without any conscience/today there is who demolishes for business/and the poor people to go live on the moon') for the Barraca – Mediterráneo Streets *falla* (1944: 17).

Censorship appears implicit on more than one occasion, highlighting the existence of gaps in discourse and the need to read between the lines: 'Si arracones, de la falla,/la ironia en l'argument,/lo que se pensa i se calla,/te quedarà un "tres en ralla"/insípid en "cent per cent"' ('If in the *falla* you put away/the irony in the plot,/what is thought and what is silenced,/you will be left with a "three in a row"/"one hundred percent" insipid'), it is proclaimed by anonymous verses (1943: 13). And more concisely: 'La substància de la falla/s'encontra en allò que calla' ('The substance of the *falla*/is found in what is silenced') (Sanmartín i Peris 1950: 28). Incidentally, the author of these verses is the son of Ricard Sanmartín.

## CONCLUSIONS

Although in these pages we have only referred to the period 1940–50, it is evident that, under the direction of Ricard Sanmartín, the *Pensat i Fet* magazine, protected by its festive and folkloric purpose, went much further and tried to be a cultural and literary magazine written entirely in Catalan in the hardest years of the hard post-war period. Thus it became a space of cultural – and ideological – resistance during the Franco regime, a bastion of normality, a meeting place for literary groups and registers, in a space of freedom, ingeniously and with tenacity defended, where popular satire allowed for the exploring of the limits of sayable and publishable.

The trajectory of the magazine after 1950 would be the subject of another article. Here suffice it to say that Ricard Sanmartín held the magazine as long as his strength allowed him. The last issue came out in 1972. The only magazine about Fallas festival published entirely in Catalan disappeared with its founder. Sanmartín died in 1974, at the age of 85. By then, the Fallas festival, its cultural space, and its associative network in the city of Valencia had been largely intervened completely and reinvented by Francoism and put at the service of its late Franco – and later post-Franco – agenda. It would take decades to start reversing that process. For this reason, it is urgent to reclaim and remember figures such as Ricard Sanmartín and his magazine *Pensat i Fet* and how he thought about the place of Fallas and popular culture in Valencian identity during such difficult times for diversity in Spain.

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## CONTRIBUTOR DETAILS

Jesús Peris Llorca holds a Ph.D. of hispanic philology at the Universitat de València and is associate professor in the Department of Spanish Philology at the Universitat de València. He is the author of the books *La construcción de un imaginario nacional* (Tirant lo Blanch, 1997) and *Gauchos en el mundo del ochenta* (Publicacions de la Universitat de València, 2003) and one of the coordinators of the collective volume *Literatura e imaginarios sociales* (Universidad Cardenal Herrera-CEU, 2004). He also published *El vuelo de Altazor: Lecturas latinoamericanas contemporánea* (Publicacions de la Universitat de València, 2013), a handbook aimed for international students of Latin American literature. His original research area was the role of literature in the configuration and dissemination in a society of an image of the countryside and the national tradition as an emblem of nationality in Argentina (1880–1930). His current lines of research include popular and traditional literature and theatre in Valencia, the ideological and identity role of literature and the emergence of new author figures in mass literature.

Contact: Facultat de Filologia, Traducció i Comunicació, Departament de Filologia Espanyola, Universitat de València, 32 Blasco Ibáñez Avenue, 46010 Valencia, Spain.

E-mail: [jesus.peris@uv.es](mailto:jesus.peris@uv.es)

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1376-3229>

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