

## “Volent escriure a vostra consolació e plaer”: Metge, Corella and other 14th and 15th century masters of Catalan prose

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### ABSTRACT

This article examines literary prose from the leading 14th and 15th century authors who turned care for their style into the centrepiece of their efforts as writers at a time when Catalan *scripta* had reached maturity, after having become consolidated in the latter part of the 13th century. Bernat Metge and Joan Roís de Corella are the most masterful of these writers, both of them trained in imitating Petrarch, the classics (Ovid, Cicero, Virgil and Seneca) and especially in Boccaccio's writing in the vernacular. We shall also examine the contributions from Antoni Casals, the anonymous author of *Curial e Güelfa*, Joanot Martorell, Felip de Malla and Francesc Alegre.

**KEY WORDS:** artful prose, reception of Boccaccio and Petrarch, imitation of the classics, rhetoric, history of Catalan literature

Catalan literary prose appeared in the late 13th century in such extensive volumes as Desclot's *Crònica* (Chronicle) and the early works in the vernacular tongue by Ramon Llull: the *Llibre de contemplació en Déu* (Book of Contemplation on God), the *Llibre d'Evast e Blaquerna* (Book of Evast and Blanquerna) and *Fèlix* or the *Llibre de Meravelles* (Book of Wonders). In the ensuing century, they were joined by other historical texts, such as Muntaner's *Crònica* (Chronicle) and the ones written on the orders of Peter the Ceremonious, as well as several translations of narrative and educational works and the prolific output of friar Francesc Eiximenis, author of *Lo crestià*, an encyclopaedia for the education of lay persons, the *Llibre de les dones* (Book of Women), the *Llibre dels àngels* (Book of Angels) and the *Vida de Crist* (Life of Christ). Therefore, at the turn from the 14th to 15th centuries, Catalan had a powerful textual support that not only covered the genres of the literary culture of the day, mainly coming from France and Occitania, but also was present in the realm of science and technology.<sup>2</sup> In this article, we shall examine some of the authors who at that time, marked by the maturity of the Catalan literary *scripta*, made attention to style the core of their trade as writers, men trained as both lawyers and clerics and religious men who elevated Catalan to the level of the most elaborate Romance model of

the day, that of Giovanni Boccaccio, the instigator of the complex period of Latinising structure who invented artful prose in the vernacular tongue and popular literature with a high rhetorical and intellectual content.<sup>3</sup> The fact that the model was Boccaccio, whose *The Elegy of Lady Fiammetta*, *Corbaccio* and *Decameron* were translated into Catalan, does not mean that there was not also a direct stimulus from Cicero, Sallustius, Livy and the moral Seneca, authors who were also the subject of translations and adaptations. The cultivators of artful mediaeval Catalan prose learned how to write by mimicking the Italian masters, Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio, and the Latin classics. The familiarity with poets like Virgil, Ovid, Statius, Lucan and the Seneca of the *Tragedies*, the subject of translation and compendiums or of small collections of opinions, enriched the set of rhetorical resources in the Catalan language.<sup>4</sup>

In the Catalan writings we are concerned with in this article, which are somewhere between interpolated translation, creative gloss and newly-minted texts, attention to style is indissociable from the choice of historical and moral subjects with classical roots, subjects that earned their prestige precisely through texts such as Dante's *Comedy*, Petrarch's epistles and *Africa* and Boccaccio's works of fiction and scholarly compilations. The spread of this kind of text began under the reign of Peter the Ceremonious (1337-1386) but did not reach its full expression until the times of John I and Yolande de Bar (1387-1396), who came from the French royal house, which was highly sensitive to Italian cultural innovations. The recep-

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tion of the classics via Petrarch and Boccaccio was expanded during the reign of Martin I (1396-1410) and consolidated in the 15th century with the Italian policy of Alphonse the Magnanimous (1416-1458), who was King of Naples as of 1442.

The profile of friar Antoni Canals (ca. 1352-1419) is representative of the introduction of the new Italian and classical products to the cultured elites; he was a Dominican who was a professor of theology at the University of Valencia, who was linked to the Inquisition and had dealings with the royalty. Apart from devout works such as *Scala de contemplació* (Ladder of Contemplation) and *Tractat de confessió* (Treatise on Confession), written for the purpose of educating laymen eager to edify themselves, Canals also translated a brief excerpt from Petrarch's *Africa* into Catalan, entitled *Escipió i Aníbal* (Scipio and Hannibal), Valerius Maximus' *Fets i dits memorables* (Memorable Doings and Sayings) and Seneca's *De providentia* (On Providence). Canals believed that a carefully chosen subject matter based on safe doctrinal positions should guide the readings of the nobility and bourgeoisie, fleeing from the morally pernicious fables of Lancelot and Tristan, from the Reynard the fox's escapades and especially from Ovid's erotic writings.<sup>5</sup>

Canals' Catalan prose fits within the structure of his Latin models in their syntax and lexis because translation for moral and educational purposes was where one learnt to construct artful prose in the vernacular. This is partly the case of Bernat Metge (1346-1413), the best Catalan stylist of all times, the creator of a porous, rich, cultivated prose yet one devoid of hyperbolic excesses. Metge was also the author of texts that were as brief and pleasant to read as they were incisive and intelligent.<sup>6</sup> Metge, a Barcelona notary educated in the court of Peter the Ceremonious and Eleanor of Sicily, was the personal secretary to King John I and Queen Yolande de Bar between 1387 and 1396, and starting in 1402 he likewise served Martin I until his death in 1410. The royal letters that Metge wrote in Catalan, Latin and Aragonese are remarkable for their quality, yet his masterpiece is *Lo somni* (The Dream, 1399). This work contains a dialogue with a narrative framework divided into four books, in which the writer's alter ego, who also bears his name, talks with three deceased personages: King John I of Aragon, who was recently deceased, and the ghosts of the poet Orpheus and the soothsayer Tiresias, who accompanies the deceased man in the hereafter, reminding him of his sins, which are an excessive love for the hunt, music and the divining arts.

Poc temps ha passat que estant en la presó, no per demèrits que mos perseguidors e envejosos sabessen contra mi (segons que després clarament a llur vergonya s'és demostrat), mas per sola iniquitat que m'havien, o per ventura per algun secret juí de Déu, un divendres, entorn mija nit, estudiant en la cambra on jo havia acostumat estar, la qual és testimoni de les mies cogita-

cions, me vénc fort gran desig de dormir, e llevant-me en peus passegé un poc per la dita cambra; mas sobtat de molta son, covenc-me gitar sobre lo llit, e sobtosa-ment, sens despullar, adormí'm, no pas en la forma acostumada, mas en aquella que malalts o famejants solen dormir.<sup>7</sup>

The first book of *Lo somni* deals with the immortality of the soul. The character Bernat poses some serious "Epicurean"-style doubts<sup>8</sup> which end up being resolved through the very presence of the deceased monarch and the authority of philosophical arguments with Platonic and Christian roots extracted from quality sources (Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations*, *The Dialogues of Saint Gregory the Great*, Cassiodorus' *On the Soul*, some of Petrarch's letters and his *Secretum*, among others). Here Metge, at the start of the process of persuading a sceptical Bernat of the survival of the human soul after death, combines his sources to produce a conversational exchange brimming with originality and boasting judiciously calculated naturalness. The main character's interlocutor is King John:

–Dignes –respòs ell–: abans que vingesses en lo món, què eres?

–Ço que seré après la mort –diguí jo.

–E què seràs?

–No res.

–Doncs, no res eres abans que fosses engenrat?

–Així ho crec –diguí jo.

–E per què ho creus?

–Per tal com cascun jorn veig que la dona, per l'ajustament de l'hom, se fa prenys, e d'abans no ho era; e puis pareix alguna creatura, la qual de no ésser ve a ésser.

–Hoc, mas –dix ell– ço que tu has vist en altres no ho has vist en tu mateix. Emperò, digues-me si et recorda què eres abans que fosses engenrat.

–A mi –diguí jo– no em recorda ni són cert què era, car no ho viu; mas ben crec que no era res, car hom són així com los altres e cové que seguezca llurs petjades.

–Doncs –dix ell–, tu creus ço que no has vist.<sup>9</sup>

The second book debates timely issues related to Bernat's imprisonment, which was due, he claims, to the malevolence of his political enemies, and to the fate of the king's soul after death. Thanks to his faith in the Immaculate Conception of Mary, he hopes to enter paradise when the schism in the Church is resolved.

The first-person story of the lives of Orpheus and Tiresias is a lovely exercise in prose imitating its classical counterpart which is enriched in the third and fourth books by an adaptation of Boccaccio's *Corbaccio*, placed in the mouth of the Theban soothsayer, who sets out to release Bernat from his affection for the female gender, according to Antoni Canals' views on love. Here is Or-

pheus' prayer to the infernal judges to achieve the restitution of his wife Eurydice, who died from a viper's fang:

Si a la vostra gran potència no expon en la manera que deig ço per què m'ha covengut venir ací, suplic que em sia perdonat, car fora són de mon seny per lo sobtós e inopinat infortuni que sobre lo meu dolorós cap és caigut. No són vengut ací per mirar les tenebres infernals, a les quals necessàriament tota cosa mortal ha a davallar, ne a encadenar lo coll de Cèrber, així com alguns han fet; sola causa de la mia venguda és ma muller, la qual, estant en la flor del seu jovent, una serpent ha morta ab son verí. Assajat he, mas no he pogut, que pacientment ho soferís: l'amor d'aquella m'ha vençut. Si la fama antiga és vera, tots sóts estats amorosos així com jo; plàcia-us, doncs, que la dita muller mia vullats a mi restituir. Totes coses vos són degudes; o tard o breu ací devem generalment venir; a perir ha tot lo món: aquesta és la nostra darrera casa. Vosaltres posseïts los perpetuats regnes de l'humana llinatge. Quan la dita muller mia serà a vellesa pervenguda, aitambé serà vostra: solament la us deman a mon ús. No em donets repulsa, car si ho féts, sapiats que no me'n tornaré, e llavors alegrarets-vos de la mort d'ambdósos.<sup>10</sup>

Orpheus then explains the status of mythological beings within the Christian universe, seeing them, in accordance with the 12th century commentators and Dante in his *Divine Comedy*, as figures symbolising human behaviour with an educational dimension.<sup>11</sup> Metge has a precise control over the different registers, adapting them to the different subjects he examines, from the philosophical solemnity of the first book to the manneristic lightness when he allows himself a point-by-point rebuttal of the misogynistic repertoire that Boccaccio had compiled based on ancient and mediaeval sources. Not only do all the threads remain perfectly linked, rather the character of Bernat allows himself ironies, driven home by the voice of the narrator who underscores the laughter of the interlocutors. The very nature of the dialogue structure enhances the contrast between clashing opinions, and Metge is a master at taking advantage of this dialectal instrument in fiction to conduct the reader towards myriad interpretations induced by their own prejudices. In effect, *Lo somni* can be understood as a palinody of a heretic discredited by the “sect of Epicurus” who, warned by the apparition of King John, puts his visionary experience into writing in a consolatory work in an effort to rectify his wayward peers. Yet it can also be interpreted as the nightmare of a layman alienated from his faith and an enemy of the Church's sexual mores who is required to accept against his will the official truth on the survival of the soul after death with the consequence of eternal life in damnation or glory.<sup>12</sup> If we examine the literal text, Bernat retracts his incredulity and accepts the enduring life of the soul (with some vacillations), but he refuses to give up women in general, although he has to admit that his amo-

rous relations do not make him an example of virtue. *Lo somni* achieves a literary fullness that is reminiscent of Geoffrey Chaucer, another great 14th century writer who worked based on the classics filtered through the lenses of Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio.

In the course of his reply to Tiresias about the vices of women, Bernat denies that it is wrong to enjoy dances and songs because

[...] natural cosa és prendre delit en música, e especialment que sia mesclada ab retòrica e poesia, que concorren sovent en les danses e cançons dictades per bons trobadors. Poc s'adeliten los hòmens en oir semblants coses, les quals deuriem saber per fugir ociositat e per poder dir bé lo concebiment de sa pensa. Mas delitense molt en oir trufadors, escarnidors, ralladors, mals parlars, cridadors, avoloradors, jutjadors e mijancers de bacalleries e viltats.<sup>13</sup>

Rhetoric and poetry are two cultural, aesthetic and moral assets which, according to a doctrine by Petrarch set forth by Boccaccio in the 14th book of the *Genealogia deorum*, are the cornerstone of the spiritual elevation of cultivated, wise men who are capable of filling their idle time with exercises consisting of such a subtle, committed endeavour as “dir bé lo concebiment de sa pensa” [saying what they think artfully]. The majority of men prefer the crass vulgarity of crude entertainment. Yet whoever has literary awareness also has moral awareness, regardless of whether they are male or female. The commitment to the humanities of the lead character of *Lo somni* finds its parallel in a brief literary work by Metge, who is also the author of the *Llibre de Fortuna i Prudència* (Book of Fortune and Prudence) in paired eight-syllable lines, of the *Sermó* (Sermon) and of *Medicina* (Medicine), minor satirical works also written in verse, of *Ovidi enamorat* (Ovid in Love), a translation excerpted from the pseudo-Ovidian Latin poem *De vetula*, of Petrarch's version of *Griselidis* (1387) and of the start of an *Apologia*, which is presented as a dialogue without *verba dicendi*.

The *Llibre de Fortuna i Prudència*, explicitly dated by the author from 1381, is a consolatory text that imitates Guillem de Torroella's *La faula* (The Fable, 1374), a fantastical narration written by a Majorcan squire in which the main character is kidnapped by a magical whale off the coast of Sóller and led asea to an enchanted isle where King Arthur and the sorceress Morgan le Fey live.<sup>14</sup> The pretext behind the abduction of the main character is to make him the bearer of a disenchanting message about the decline of the knighthood. The mythical king of the great 13th century prose narrative, translated into Catalan and well known within the Crown of Aragon, converses in French with Torroella, who responds in turn in Occitan, about the “Breton hope” based on the story from the French 13th century novel *Mort Artu* and painfully shows his disappointment in the decline in values from the standpoint of a strong, just, Christian monarch. In his

unique retelling, Metge replaces the whale from Sóller with a boat with neither sails nor oars, and the enchanted isle from the Mediterranean Arthurian folklore with the Isle of Fortune described by Alan of Lille in his *Anticlaudianu*. Instead of Morgan le Fey and Arthur, Bernat finds there a capricious, arbitrary goddess who insults him and assaults him, leading him to believe that she is the mistress of his misfortune, presented with borrowings from the *Elegia* by Arrigo da Settimello, another 12th century Latin writer like Alan of Lille. The arrival of Prudence with her seven Liberal Arts releases the main character from his distress through a doctrinal dialogue during which Bernat learns that fortune is not an omnipotent goddess rather a vain fantasy, and that cultivating virtue is the sole key to man's destiny.

Bernat receives a consolation constructed on sources that hark back to several works written in the vernacular, to the *Roman de la Rose* and to Dante's *Comedy*.<sup>15</sup> It is revealing that twenty years before *Lo somni*, Metge would devise a consolatory work, replacing the chivalric sources of his model with 12th century Latin writers that were accessible for a man with legal and courtly training, and with a tentative first step towards the new Romantic literature with its lofty intellectual ambitions, as is the case of Jean de Meung and Dante. There is surprising thematic continuity between *Llibre de Fortuna i Prudència* and *Lo somni*, in the sense that in the latter the doctrine on fortune is already considered resolved and the discussion on man's destiny opens up to more committed themes with Platonic philosophical echoes, such as the immortality of the soul. Yet contrariwise, the stylistic change could hardly be more striking. The lyrical Occitan verse and the brief Catalan narrative give way to the mature, precise prose of someone who has made a perfectly conscious cultural choice, probably stimulated by access to Petrarchesque materials on the immortal nature of the soul which fell into Metge's hands during the journey he took to the papal city of Avignon in 1395 as the ambassador of the King of Aragon.<sup>16</sup> Avignon had been Petrarch's residence, and in Metge's day it was still a prime hub of cultural exchanges between the upper clergy of Italy and France, with an intense circulation of manuscripts and ideas.

However, *Lo somni* is not Metge's first foray into artful prose. In 1387 he had translated the last tale in the *Decameron* based on the Latin version that Petrarch had written to ennoble the vernacular work of his friend Boccaccio in the language of erudition. The *Story of Walter and Griselda* was preceded by an epistle to a lady from Barcelona high society which exalts the virtues of marital fidelity and proclaims Metge's affection for Petrarch. It should be noted that, despite the fact that his model of prose follows that of Boccaccio, who wrote in a Romance language, Metge never mentions him, while he wholeheartedly engages in this declaration of Petrarchism. Latin literature was highly prestigious among cultivated circles in the closing decades of the 14th century, and for this reason Metge does not say that when he translated the *Griselidis*

he bore in mind both Petrarch's version and Boccaccio's original.<sup>17</sup>

The brief fragment of Metge's *Apologia* (just one page) is a failed attempt of enormous literary interest. Besides stating that he will follow the conversational model of Plato's *Timaeus*, Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations* and Petrarch's *De remediis*, the character Bernat visits his neighbour Ramon to entrust his house to him during his imminent absence prompted by an outbreak of the plague. There is no documentary proof, but it is likely that the *Apologia* is a trial run prior to *Lo somni*, a work, though written in dialogue, which some explanations in prose that feed an articulated narrative fiction which makes it stand apart from the pure model of Platonic dialogue and brings it into closer alignment with the tastes of the Court audience to which it was targeted. Indeed, there is proof that one of the first readers of *Lo somni* was King Martin; however, the history of the manuscript tradition teaches us that Metge's 15th century masterpiece was read by people from very different sectors of society and that it was copied alongside religious works and tales of apparitions, an unequivocal sign that some readers considered it an edifying text.<sup>18</sup>

In contrast, the opinion expressed by Ferran Valentí diverges substantially. Valentí was a Majorcan merchant from the first half of the 15th century who had studied Latin in Florence with Leonardo Bruni. He mentions Metge in the prologue to his version of Cicero's *Paradox*. In the justification of his translation of the classical legacy, Valentí embarks on a sweeping survey of its precedents, which is actually the first draft of a history of Catalan literature until 1450. The prominent position he assigns to Metge comes from his skill in translation, because Valentí claims that *Lo somni* makes the *Tusculan Disputations* and Boccaccio speak in Catalan.<sup>19</sup>

The prestige of Bernat Metge's *Lo somni* reaches as far as Joanot Martorell's *Tirant lo Blanc*, which includes it among its manifold sources that critics have been capable of discerning in his writing.<sup>20</sup> The decline in the quality and quantity of Catalan literary output in the 16th and 17th centuries respected the memory of very few mediaeval works, *Lo somni* not among them, as it slept the sleep of the just until the 19th century, when the leading figures in the Renaixença, or Catalan Renaissance, once again revealed an interest in the Catalan Middle Ages. The 1889 editions of the text published in Paris and Barcelona, based on two manuscripts conserved in situ, were like the rebirth of the phoenix. Metge's magnificent prose coupled with his subtlety and his skill in handling the classical and Italian sources fascinated scholars. Antoni Rubió i Lluch assigned him a prominent role in the history of Catalan belles-lettres, bestowing upon Metge the title of humanist in the broad sense of a cultivator of the classics, of a lover of belles-lettres and secular moral philosophy.

In a historical reconstruction with nationalistic inspirations, the precocity of the humanism attributed to Metge transformed him into a patriotic symbol that dif-



ferred greatly from the classicist militancy of the *Noucentista* intellectuals from the early 20th century. For this reason, when the patron Francesc Cambó founded the great collection of translations of works by Greek and Latin authors in Catalan that is still active today, he chose to call it by Bernat Metge's name, following the French model of the Guillaume Budé collection. In turn, when Josep Maria de Casacuberta started the collection of mediaeval Catalan classics in the "Els Nostres Clàssics" (Our Classics) series with the Barcino publishing house (which had also reached the 21st century), he wanted to launch it with an edition that would place *Lo somni* in the hands of all Catalans so that they could be edified by reading one of the most valuable assets within their own tradition. Bernat Metge's humanism, equivocal in its polysemy, is a historiographic category that responds to an ideology of the beginning of the XXth Century and that should be borne in mind when properly reading a given critical bibliography.<sup>21</sup> In accordance with the international conventions, as Jordi Rubió i Balaguer pointed out over 50 years ago, it is worthwhile to reserve the term 'humanism' to refer to the activity of some Catalan scholars and intellectuals who expressed themselves in Latin in the 15th century

and who, since they did not use the Catalan language, have traditionally not been properly studied or valued. They include Joan Margarit, Jeroni Pau, Pere Joan Ferrer, Joan Serra and many other philologists, historians and poets who have been recently exhumed and who deserve examination in another article in this journal.<sup>22</sup>

At the polar opposite to Bernat Metge's success after the first few decades of the 20th century, another great Catalan mediaeval prosaist, Joan Roís de Corella (1435-1497), inspired by the classics and by Boccaccio, was not fully appreciated by the founders of the Catalan critical tradition, and even in 1964 Martí de Riquer had to defend him in his *Història de la literatura* (History of Literature) from the accusations of poor taste that had been hurled at it.<sup>23</sup> If Bernat Metge had wrongly been seen as a standard-bearer of classical studies and a promoter of the updating of modern times, the Baroque prose of Joan Roís de Corella was also unfairly associated with the "decline" of Catalan letters in the 16th century and thereafter, another historiographic category that sprang from the ideology of the time which is currently marginalised in the critical bibliography. The 1973 popular edition of Corella's profane works put this author's great rhetorical prose within the reach of the average reader.<sup>24</sup>

The full restoration of Corella's literary merits in the 1990s was linked to the revitalisation in studies on the biography of Joanot Martorell (1410-1465) and the rhetorical underpinnings of his *Tirant lo Blanc* conducted on the occasion of the fifth centennial of the publication of the first edition of this work (Valencia, 1490).<sup>25</sup> It has been demonstrated that *Tirant*, one of the handful of mediaeval Catalan works that was remembered beyond the 16th century because it was translated into Spanish in 1511 and Cervantes cited it with praise in his *Quixote*, wholly and repeatedly presents passages excerpted from Corella's profane prose.<sup>26</sup> An understanding of the purpose of these borrowings from Corella in *Tirant* has furnished a more comprehensive image of the intended style of Joanot Martorell, a member of the Valencian petty bourgeoisie at the service of King Alphonse the Magnanimous (1416-1458) and of Charles of Viana, the heir to King John II who never rose to the throne.<sup>27</sup> *Tirant* is a chivalrous novel written between 1460 and 1464, subjected to a classicising writing style as is the anonymous *Curial e Güelfa*, which was probably written in around the 1440s.<sup>28</sup> Joan Roís de Corella, who maintained literary correspondence with Charles of Viana and was highly esteemed in the Aragonese royal courts in the mid-15th century, became Joanot Martorell's teacher of artful prose.<sup>29</sup>

The rhetorical overabundance of Corella's prose, which imitates the most hyperbolic resources of the styles of Boccaccio, Ovid and Seneca in his *Tragedies*, was fashionable in the Aragonese courts in the mid-15th century, and yet it was deeply disliked among the Catalan literary critics in the early 20th century, for whom the Catalan language was naturally austere and fled from the Baroque

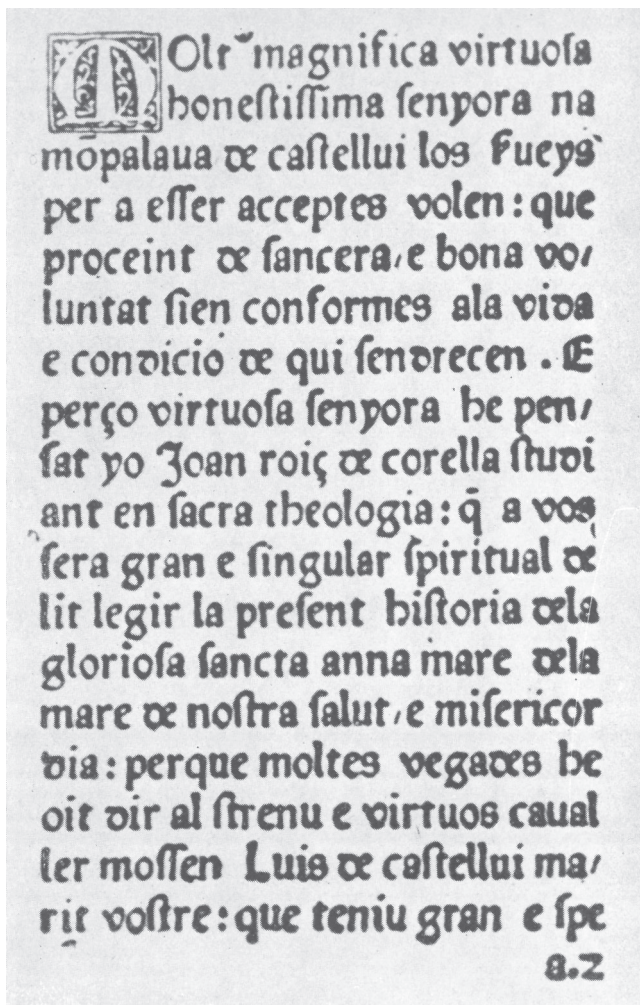


Figure 1. Dedicatory of the edition of the *Life of the Glorious St. Anna* by Joan Roís de Corella (Valencia, 1485?)

style, which was viewed as an influence from Spanish. Now that this prejudice has been overcome with the aid of documents that have allowed us to sketch a biographical profile of Corella,<sup>30</sup> we should explore the poetics of an author who was highly esteemed in his day and who wrote in a style which tends to be called “Valencian prose”.<sup>31</sup> Some of the most characteristic features of Valencian prose are the vast richness in its uses of the gerund and the conjugated present participle; amplification, or the presence of periphrasis, especially of verbs, redundancies and combinations of adjectives, nouns, verbs and adverbs; litotes, that is, negative instead of affirmative constructions; and hyperbaton, or an alternation in the natural order of discourse, especially by systematically placing the verb at the end of the sentence. Here is a sample of this:

Per la celsitud transcendent de la senyora de les ciències, sacra Teologia, davallant, ab delitós estudi, en los florits e verds camps d’afable poesia, llevant les àncores de pereós oci, lleixats los prats de reposat silenci, estendré les càndides veles, ab plaent exercici, en les baixes antenes de vulgar poesia. A la tempestuosa mar de Venus la proa de ma escriptura endreçant, descriuré naufragis d’aquells qui, en ella follament navegant, dolorosa e miserable fi prenen. Mas, perquè el meu despoblat entendre, a descriure ensem e trobar, per nova invenció, no basta, sols recitaré un parlament que, pocs dies

passats, entre alguns hòmens d’estat esdevenç; los noms dels quals recitant l’alt e gentil estil de tan ben raonades proses, seria a la sua ínclita fama haver enveja e a verdadera amistat girar les espatles.<sup>32</sup>

This preface to the *Parlament en casa de Berenguer Mercader* (Discussion in the House of Berenguer Mercader) establishes a rigorous hierarchy of the intellectual disciplines. Theology is the highest science, in touch with the revealed truth; “affable poetry” is the literary fiction of the Latin models, especially Ovid in his *Metamorphosis* and his *Heroides*; and the “lowly antennae of vulgar poetry” refers to Boccaccio and Corella’s imitative prose in Romance languages. Joan Roís de Corella, who was a master of theology and man of the Church, is given the licence to speak about love, that is, about the “tempestuous sea of Venus”, to reveal its perils, namely the “shipwrecks” of those who practise it insensibly, “sailing foolishly through its waters”. The literary exercise, then, consists of using artful prose for dissuasive purposes to breathe life into examples of star-crossed or even criminal loves. Making use of false modesty, Corella also claims that he is not trying to invent anything new, rather he only aims to painstakingly reproduce already known stories. They include five Ovidian myths (Cephalus and Procris, Orpheus, Scylla, Pasiphaë, Prognés and Philomela) that he re-creates as a “chronicler”, after having heard them told for collective pleasure and consolation by a group of historically docu-

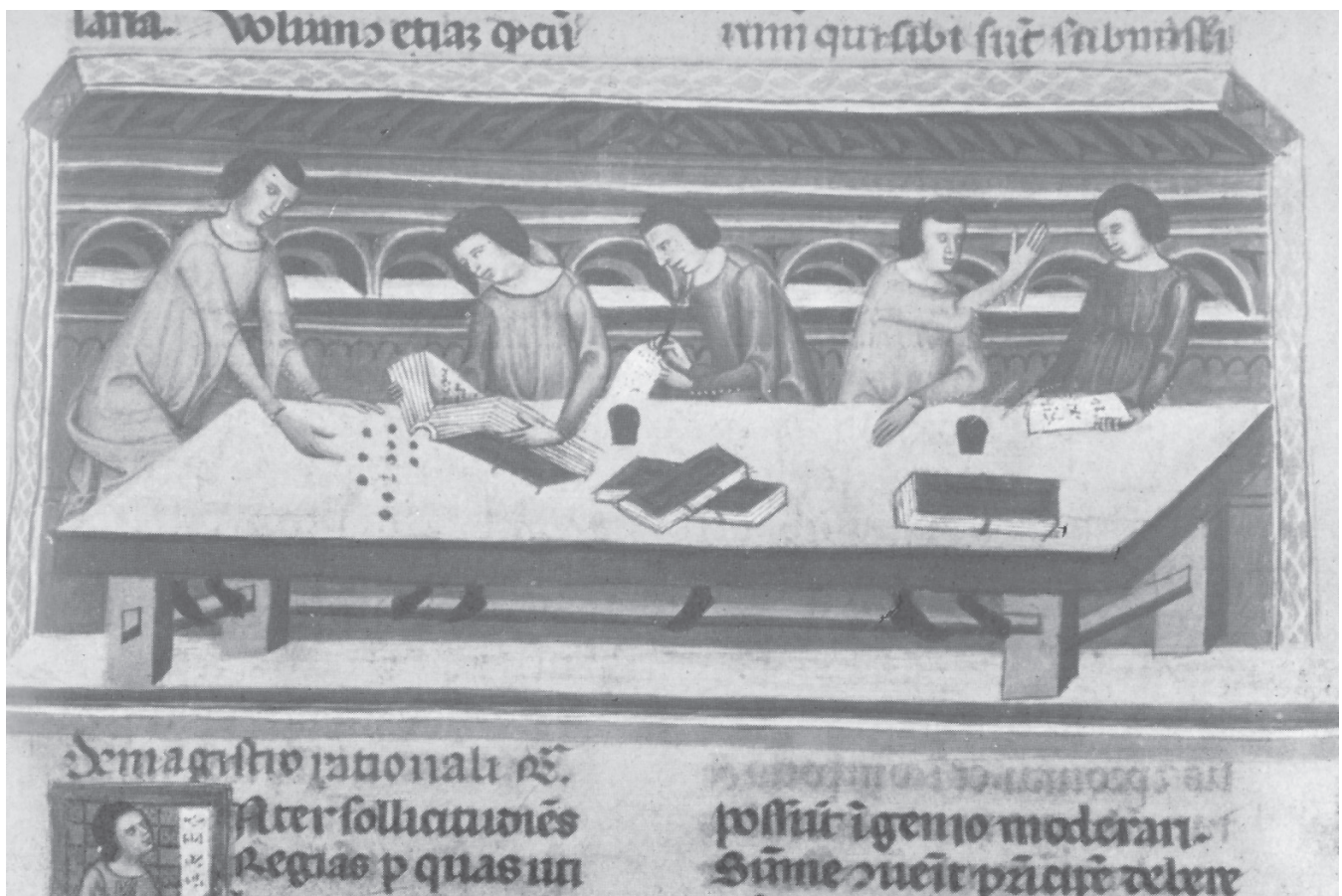


Figure 2. Thumbnail of the *Leges Palatinae* of the the royal court of the Kingdom of Majorca, manuscript in 1337 (Royal Library of Brussels)



mented prominent Valencians gathered together to spend an evening in the home of Berenguer Mercader. The artful rhetoric rescues Ovid's erotic literature from the condemnation expressed by the Dominican Antoni Canals, partly justifying Bernat Metge's reluctance to allow the misogynistic invectives from *Corbaccio* reported by Tiresias in *Lo somni*. Both Metge and Corella take pleasure in the tale of Orpheus' life, the man who, thanks to the "*celsitud transcendent*" [transcendent loftiness] of his poetry, managed to briefly rescue his dead wife from the underworld. The art of "saying what they think artfully" and the significant power of the ancient myths are the core purpose of literature.

As the second son of a family from Valencia's petty nobility, Joan Roís de Corella studied theology, and in his adulthood he became famous as a holy preacher. His works include the lives of the saints, Marian poetry and translations of pious works: the *Psalms* and the four volumes of the Carthusian Ludolph of Saxony's *Life of Christ*. Corella is the first important Catalan author to disseminate works in the vernacular during his lifetime through the printing press: the first book printed in Catalan, the *Trobes en llaor de la Verge Maria* (Poems in Praise of the Virgin Mary, 1474), contains one of his compositions and his *Cartoixa* (Carthusian) has reached us today in incunabula.

Corella's profane works include amorous poems focusing on the subject of disappointment (*La sepultura* [The Burial], *Balada de la garsa i de l'esmerla* [Ballad of the Magpie and the Merlin], poems to Caldesa), works about circumstances with remarkable formal skill (*Sepultura de mossèn Francí Aguilar* [Burial of Sir Francí Aguilar]) and remakes of mythological subjects such as the ones mentioned above. His only narrative "invention" or original output is the *Tragèdia de Caldesa* (Tragedy of Caldesa), which can be dated from 1458, a highly dramatic, first-person rendering of amorous betrayal by a beloved young lady with promiscuous habits. Martorell turned it into a private play in chapter 283 of *Tirant*.<sup>33</sup> Given the fact that *Tirant* was finished in 1464, all of its borrowings from Corella must date from before then, which confirms that the profane poetry and mythological prose are works from this author's youth, probably written during his grammar studies before he went on to study theology. The mediaeval scholarly tradition always taught Latin through readings of the classics, and the repertoire available in Valencia in the mid-15th century must have been rich enough to stimulate the desire to imitate the style. The religious studies then refined the purpose of moral emulation of the licentious contents in Ovid, Seneca and Virgil.

Another work from Corella's youth is his bilingual epistolary exchange with Charles of Viana, who died in 1461 and whose titles included Duke of Gandia, Corella's hometown. Charles of Viana translated Aristotle's *Ethics* into Spanish, but the subject of his debate with Corella is a question of love in the chivalric tradition, to wit: in an ex-

treme situation in which two ladies must be saved from a certain death, who would a sincere lover choose: the one he loves in vain or the one who is hopelessly in love with him? Discussing a dilemma like this one, and carefully arguing the psychological and moral implications of the decisions, perfectly illustrates Corella's tastes and those of his courtly audience: extreme sentimentalism, a tragic vision of amorous relations, fatalism linked to the passion of love, invincible pessimism.

The elaborate prose of his mythological tales convey this conflict and this anxiety, which are also present in Ausiàs March's lyricism (1400-1459), with its Baroque adjectives which implacably herald catastrophes and the systematic use of hyperbole and hypallage.<sup>34</sup> After the five myths in the *Parlament en casa de Berenguer Mercader*, Corella wrote *Lamentacions de Mirra, Narcís i Tisbe* (Lamentations of Myrrha, Narcissus and Thisbe), set in the author's descent into a private inferno where enamoured couples display their misfortunes. The amorous repertoire is rounded out by the *Història de Biblis que s'enamorà de Cauno* (Story of Byblis who Fell in Love with Caunus) and *Leandre i Hero* (Leander and Hero), a narrative retelling from the *Heroides* that exchanges the two main characters from Ovid's work. Just as in *Tragèdia de Caldesa*, in it Corella alternates prose with decasyllabic lines which he uses to emblematically frame the most dramatic moments or to construct emotional epitaphs. Here, we can see how love drives Leander to his



Figure 3. John I. Thumbnail in a capital letter of the *Privilegis de la Vall de Crist* (National Library of Catalonia)

end, drowned when he tries to swim the strait separating him from his beloved:

I, estant de peus en la banyada arena, dreçant los ulls a la llum que, encesa en la torre d'Hero, lo seu cor encenia, tornà altra vegada llançar lo cos a la mar fonda, dient amb veu per amor esforçada:

–Lo foc que veig encès alt en la torre,  
crema dins mi la por de la mar fonda:  
o pendré port en la illa de Cestos,  
o beuré prest de la mort lo trist càlzer;  
i ab vostres mans donant-me sepultura,  
vós, per qui muir, tancar-me heu dins la tomba,  
llavant lo cos, de llàgremes ab l'aigua.  
No us espanteu besar ma boca freda.

O escura ceguedat d'aquells qui desordenadament amen! E ab quin ànimo, ab quina sol·licitud e diligència treballen ensems l'ànima ab la vida perdre! O animosa por d'aquells qui, recelant, temen los perills de viciós morir e viure, e, ab invincible e discret ànimo, per lo regne del cel la vida abandonen!<sup>35</sup>

Corella's other mythological works belong to the Trojan series and are yet another example of the extraordinary success in the 14th and 15th centuries of the *Històries troianes* (Trojan Stories), which Guido delle Colonne, widely admired by Boccaccio, Martorell and the anonymous author of *Curial e Güelfa*, wrote in Latin in the 13th century by compiling French narrative sources from the 12th century.<sup>36</sup> In accordance with this tradition, which includes the Argonauts' journey among the forerunners of the conflict in Troy, Corella produced a remake of the story of *Jasó i Medea* (Jason and Medea) told from the vantage point of the heroine, who condemns Jason's betrayal and the little faith that men have in general using words learnt in texts by Ovid and Seneca. The *Juí de Paris* (Judgement of Paris), which develops one of the most famous classical episodes in the Middle Ages, is presented as a collective work in which the poet Joan Escrivà recounts the myth of how the three goddesses with their charms appeared before the young shepherd from Ida. Corella added to this a moral exegesis or tropology, common to the clerical culture of a theology master.

The brief *Lletra d'Aquil·les a Políxena*<sup>37</sup> (Letter from Achilles to Polyxena) was inspired by *Històries troianes* and by the epistolary style of Seneca to once again explore a tragic sentimental motif, and the *Raonament de Telamó i Ulisses* (Reasoning of Telamon and Ulysses) re-elaborates the verses that Ovid devoted to the debate on Achilles' weapons in the *Metamorphosis*. Corella's most successful mythological prose was the *Plany dolorós de la reina Hècuba* (Dolorous Complaint of Queen Hecuba), inspired by Seneca's *Trojans*, by Guido's compendium on Troy and by the *Metamorphosis*.<sup>38</sup> Hecuba is conferred the dignity of a *mater dolorosa* after the horror of the

deaths of her children, husband and grandson, victims of the fury of the implacable Greek victors. Exclamations, invocations and apostrophes intertwine with cries for the reader's attention so that they get involved in the tragic events:

O cosa raonable, si la gravitat d'aquelles dolors que les altres totes passa, ab esparç e apartat llenguatge als oïns se parlava, e veus llagrimants, doloroses, nostra mísera destrucció representassen, trasportant los oïnts entrestits en la presència de nostra gran pèrdua: no consentissen sinó ab gemecs, tristor, sospirs e sanglots ésser oïdes!

Aquestes son dolors de mare i estèril reina, e cativa d'aquells que, ella mirant, en la sua pròpia ciutat han donat cruel e dolorosa mort a sos fills, tolent a Príam en un dia ensems la vida e los regnes! O invariables, inics e implacables fats, qui la varietat dels actes humans infal·liblement ordenau! Per què forçau la mia trista ànima ésser present a fatigat cors per dies e treballs, així dèbil, envellit e caigut que, deixant-me de tan dolorós viure, altre no serà en color e magrea, sinó tal com era com falç nom de viu tenia?

Vixca, doncs, Hècuba puix la mort sola de misèria la pot traure. O mare, semblant a ovella que fecunda has parit los fills per ser trossejats, partits en diverses parts, rossegats a l'entorn de la tua ciutat, com arades fent solcs de gran profunditat en la sangonosa terra!

O febrida espasa d'Aquil·les, gasta e oscada sovint tallant real carn en lo meu miserable ventre criada, i així mussa e envellida en trossejar los ossos e carn dels fills, que envides ha pogut tallar lo dèbil coll del pare! Fir sens tarda, esquinça e talla les nostres carns femenils e molles per què les animes prestament fugen d'habitació derruïda; que sens comparació més cruel te mostres cessant de ferir en nosaltres, que matant aquells per la mort dels quals en tant extrem avorrim la miserable vida. O defunct e no sobrat ni vençut, fill meu Hèctor, oges dels profundes inferns la mia dolorosa veu, digna de moure los cruels infernats deus a misericòrdia! O, si la ous, per què venir tardes? Qui pot resistir a la tua animosa força? Encara en los escurs regnes Aquil·les te contrasta? Deixa lo cors en lo sepulcre: devore'l la insaciable terra. Vine, desijada, lleugera ombra, que sola tu bastes vençre los covards grecs que, de tu viu fugint, de tes victòries son romasos; porta Tròiol en ta companyia, que ensems principi feu a la honor e fi a la vida.<sup>39</sup>

Corella displays his very finest by combining two favourite themes from his repertoire: the repulsion for violence, which leads him to even reject the chivalric values so esteemed by his contemporary authors, and mercy for the vanquished, especially misfortunate women who, like Caldesa or the evil Medea herself, deserve understanding and commiseration. The pleasure and consolation that readers find in *Plany d'Hècuba* couple sentimental expansiveness with a Christian-inspired pacifist stance.



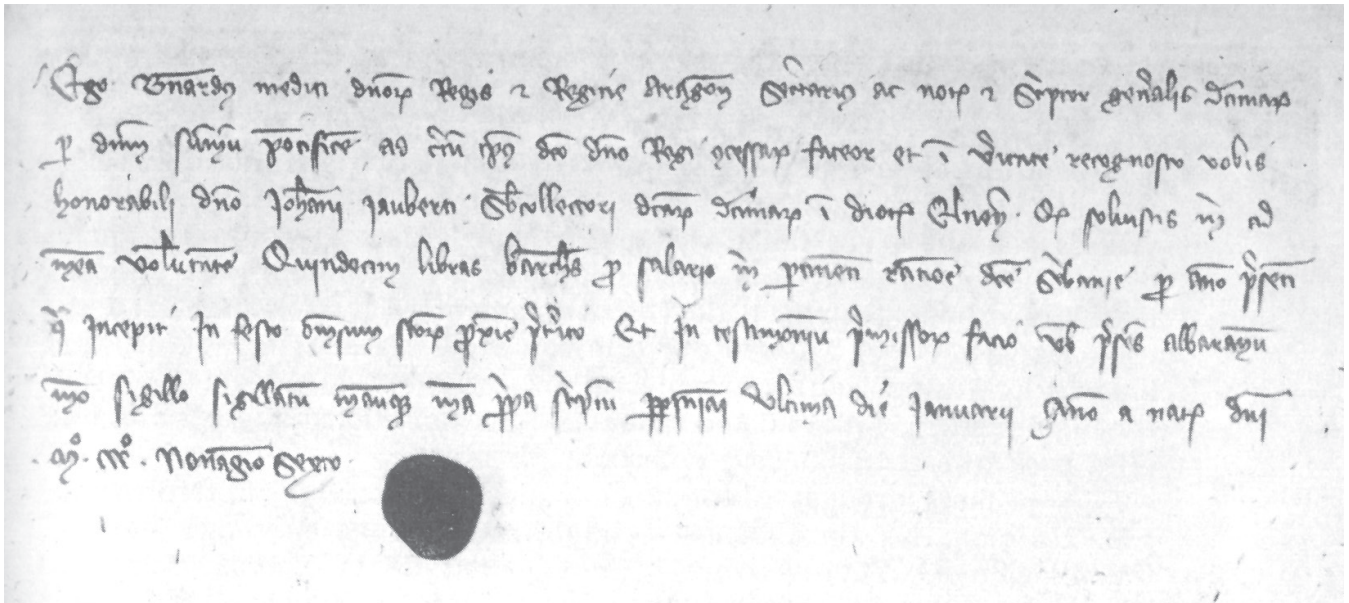


Figure 4. Autograph of Bernat Metge. Perpignan, 31st January 1396 (National Library of Catalonia)

This is not the place to embark on a thorough inventory of all the mediaeval Catalan writers who practised artful prose or Valencian prose, especially the ones who dealt with theological or devout topics, because this would require another article; they include Pero Martines, Sister Isabel de Villena and many others. However, we should spotlight the figure of the Barcelona Canon Felip de Malla (1370-1431), the author of an ascetic and allegorical treatise written with a high degree of rhetorical discernment and peppered with classical references translated into Catalan: the *Memorial del peccador remut* (Memoir of the Redeemed Sinner). Malla, trained at the universities of Lleida and Paris, was a theologian and a political man who was highly active during the change in dynasty (1410-1412) and in the reigns of Ferdinand I and Alphonse the Magnanimous. He stood out among the representatives of the Crown of Aragon and the Council of Constance, and his library was one of the richest in classical authors in the Barcelona of his day. Felip de Malla, who delivered the speeches at the Gaia Ciència festival in 1413, believed that poetry and artful prose should be devoted to theological, moral and political subjects, so his affection for Latin letters departs from the didactic line of Antoni Canals as well as from the Boccaccian poetry of Metge and Corella.

In contrast, we cannot ignore Francesc Alegre, who in addition to being a translator of Latin works also cultivated classically inspired fiction.<sup>41</sup> His status as a citizen of Barcelona has enabled us to identify him as the figure who served as the Consul to Palermo starting in 1482 and who died between 1504 and 1511. We can thus distinguish him from his father, the merchant by the same name who lived between 1433 and 1495 and had commercial interests in Sicily and links to the court of King John II.<sup>42</sup> The writer Francesc Alegre frequented the school of Iacopo della Mirabella, a Greek teacher in Pal-

ermo who had been in contact with Charles de Viana. His versions of Leonardo Bruni's *Primera guerra púnica* (First Punic War), dating from 1472, no doubt derive from this connection with a humanistic circle and from Ovid's *Metamorphosis*. This version has the added value of glosses taken from Boccaccio's *Genealogia deorum*, and it is conserved in an incunabulum dating from 1494, published in Barcelona by Pere Miquel and dedicated to Joanna the Mad of Aragon. The translation of Alegre's *Metamorphosis* was rediscovered by 19th century scholars, who published excerpts with admiring comments on the quality of the prose. In the prologue, Alegre defends the full version of classical texts over the excerpts and summaries of his predecessors in the enterprise, as well as the function of explanatory glosses, both evermerist or historical and naturalistic. Here is a sample of the maturity and professionalism of Alegre's style as he adapts the last few verses of book XV from the Latin poem into prose:

Iamque opus exegi, quod nec Iovis ira nec ignis  
nec poterit ferrum nec edax abolere vetustas.  
cum volet, illa dies, quae nil nisi corporis huius  
ius habet, incerti spatium mihi finiat aevi:  
parte tamen meliore mei super alta perennis  
astra ferar, nomenque erit indelebile nostrum,  
quaque patet domitis Romana potentia terris,  
ore legar populi, perque omnia saecula fama,  
siquid habent veri vatum praesagia, vivam.

Conclusió de la obra present

Ja és venguda a la fi desijada la mia present obra, la qual no poran destruir lo ferro ne lo foc, ni l'antiguitat devoradora no la porà consumir. Quant vendrà aquell dia esperat ab espant, no tenint algun dret si no sobre lo cors, fenesca a son plaer l'espai de ma vida, que ab la



Figure 5. Stamp of Maria de Luna, wife of Martin I.

millor part de mi serà portat sobre lo cel lo meu nom indelible e seré llegit per boca dels pobles en totes les províncies sotmeses al poder dels romans, vivint en tots los segles eternalment ma fama, si res de veritat ha en lo dir dels poetes.<sup>43</sup>

The *Faula de les amors de Neptuno i Diana* (Fable on the Loves of Neptune and Diana) is an exercise in creative imitation of Ovid and Boccaccio which explains a transformation attributed to the poet Claudianus, presumably



Figure 6. Martin I. Thumbnail of the *Privilegis de la Vall de Crist* (National Library of Catalonia)

translated into Catalan, but that corresponds to no known model. Contemporary personalities are allegorically concealed behind the names of the ancient gods, perhaps a merchant (Neptune) and perhaps a nun (Diana), the characters in misfortunate loves marked by dishonesty. Diana's transformation into stone from Venus' ire is taken verbatim from several verses from the *Metamorfosis*.

It would be improper to end this brief survey of 14th and 15th century artful prose in Catalan without exposing the writers' vacillations and doubts about imitating the Italian and classical writers. Beyond the cliché of the translator's false modesty and the inferiority of the vernacular language compared to Latin, which are present in the prologues of many of the romantic versions of classical works, there is a hint of insecurity that views the use of certain literary motifs and rhetorical amplification deployed in its fullness as a challenge that is difficult to overcome. However, we notice that underlying the doubts and vacillations is a strong confidence in the legitimacy of artful literature in the vernacular language, especially if it comes with a moralising pretext, as we have seen in the works of Antoni Canals and Ferran Valentí.<sup>44</sup> The anonymous author of *Curial e Güelfa*, about whom we unfortunately lack any documentation, expresses it with utter accuracy.<sup>45</sup> Because of his level of cultivation, we know that he was a courtier in the Aragonese Courts in the mid-15th century. His chivalric novel upholds military and courtly values and faithfulness in love, with a clear militancy against the renunciation of the honest pleasures set forth by Tiresias in *Lo somni*. His prose is contained and wise, closer to Metge's balance and intelligence than to Corella's exuberance. The anonymous author, who cites Dante's *Comedy* several times, uses declarations from Petrarch and repeatedly re-elaborates suggestions from Boccaccio's *Filocolo*,<sup>46</sup> believes that it is illicit to invoke the muses in the prologue of a work like his, which contains poetic elements but is a far cry from the *Aeneid* and the *Comedy*, which fully belong to what he calls the "reverenda lletradura" (revered literature).

E si serà lícit a mi usar de ço que los altres qui escriveren usaren o han usat, ço és, invocar les Muses, certes jo crec que no. Abans entenc que seria cosa supèrflua, car elles no apareixerien ne es mostrarien a mi per molt que jo les apellàs en subsidi e favor mia, car no han cura sinó d'hòmens de gran ciència e aquells segueixen, encara que no sien demanades, e mi e mos pars així com ignorants han en estrany avorrimt; per ço que jo, així en aquesta obra com en totes les coses que parlo, són imitador de les míseres e garrules filles de Píerus, enemigues capitals d'aquelles nou egrègies sorelles habitadores de mont Parnàs. D'altra part, que elles se tenen per menyspreades si són meses en obres ínfimes e baixes, car no solen seguir sinó los molt alts e sublimes estils, escrits per solemnes e molt grans poetes e oradors.<sup>47</sup>



However, in the course of the vision of the main character's dreams in the temple of Apollo, we discover that a Christian knight like Curial, outstanding in wielding weapons and educated in the noble arts of music, poetry and oratory, deserves such high consideration as that of the main characters of the great tales by Homer and Virgil. The anonymous author does not dare invoke the muses, but Calliope, in the dream, chooses Curial to serve as a judge in a high profile literary trial. The knight is obviously awed by this:

Oh, egrègia senyora! E quals fades me fadaren que jo tanta honor reebés, que nou germanes, filles del major dels déus mortals, venguessen a mi e visitassen aquest sepulcre d'ignorància? Cert és a mi que vosaltres fes companyia a Homer, Virgili, Horaci, Ovidi e a Lucà e a molts altres, los quals, per no ésser llong, lleixaré de recitar. Mes a mi, quina raó havets haüda de venir? Jo no són home de ciència, ne meresquí ne meresc per donzelles de tanta excel·lència ésser visitat. Lleixats Aristòtil e Plató e venits a mi?<sup>48</sup>

The answer to Curial's question is quite simple and highly representative of the literary consciousness of the 15th century Catalan prosists, who discovered an indisputably fine "disposition" for literature in the excellence of their writings:

–No et meravells d'açò –dix Cal·líope–, car nosaltres totstemps seguim aquells que ens volen, e encara que estigam de present ab tu, no ens partim dels altres, ans totstemps estam ab ells e per virtut de Déu som fetes tals, que en tot lloc que ens volem som. E per ventura a vegades acompanyam, totes o alguna o algunes de nós, alguns hòmens que ells no s'ho cuiden, e els ajudam a fer e dir ço que fan e dien, a uns més, a altres menys, segons la disposició que en ells trobam.<sup>49</sup>

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- [7] Bernat METGE. *Lo somni*, edited by Lola Badia. Quaderns Crema, Barcelona 1999, p. 53. Translator's note (TN): "Not too long ago, when I was in prison, through no faults that my envious persecutors could condemn – as was clearly demonstrated later by their shame – rather solely out of jealousy or some secret design of God, one Friday at around midday when I was studying in my chamber, which is the witness to my reflections, I became sleepy and I got up to walk around the room a little, but I so wanted to sleep that I lay down on the bed without taking off my clothes and fell asleep, not in the usual way but in the way that the ill and hungry tend to sleep."
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- [9] Bernat METGE. *Lo somni*, op. cit., pp. 56-57. TN: "'Tell me:' he responds, 'before you came into the world, what were you?' 'What I will be after death,' I said. 'And what will you be?' 'Nothing'. 'So you were nothing before you were engendered?' 'That is what I believe,' I said. 'And why do you believe that?' 'Because every day after having coupled with a man, women become pregnant when they were not before and then a child is born, which moves from non-being to being.' 'But that which you have seen in others, you have not seen in yourself. Tell



me whether you recall what you were before you were engendered.' "I don't recall anything, because I am the same as the others and I should follow in their footsteps.' 'Fine,' he says, 'you believe in what you haven't seen.'"

- [10] Idem, p. 110. TN: "If I do not set forth as I should the reason why I have come, I ask you to pardon me for the great misfortune I have suffered. I have not come here to look at the infernal depths, to which every mortal must arrive, nor to enchain Cerberus's neck, as some have done before me. The only reason for my coming is my wife, who has died from a serpent when she was in the prime of her life. I have tried to bear it patiently, but I have not succeeded. My love for her has vanquished me. Everyone has loved like me. Accept, then, that my wife be brought back to me. Everyone must die, and this is our last home. You possess perpetual kingdoms of the human species. When my wife reaches old age, she shall also be yours, but until then let me have her. Do not deny me, because if you do, I will not leave and then you will rejoice in the death of both of us."
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- [13] Bernat METGE. *Lo somni*, *op. cit.*, pp. 173. TN: "It is natural to enjoy music, and especially if it is accompanied by rhetoric and poetry, as in the dances and songs of the fine troubadours. Men should not have to renounce such things and know precisely how they should think. Instead, they like to listen to gossips and slanderers as they mock others and recount vile deeds."
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- [23] Martí de RIQUER. *Història...*, *op. cit.*, vol. III, pp. 254-320. Lola BADIA. *De Bernat Metge...*, *op. cit.*, pp. 145-180.
- [24] Joan Roís de Corella. *Obres completes*, vol. I, *Obra profana*, edited by Jordi Carbonell. Tres i Quatre, Valencia 1973. In the past it was necessary to refer to the outstanding bibliophile edition: Joan Roís de Corella. *Obres*, edited by Ramon Miquel i Planas. Biblioteca Catalana, Barcelona 1913.
- [25] *Actes del Symposium 'Tirant lo Blanc' (Barcelona 1990)*. Quaderns Crema, Barcelona 1993.
- [26] Josep PUJOL. *La memòria...*, *op. cit.* For a comprehensive annotation of the borrowings from Corella, see: Joanot MARTORELL. *Tirant lo Blanch* (Valencia 1490) and *Tirante el Blanco* (Valladolid 1511), 2 vol., edited by Albert Hauf and Vicent Escartín. Tirant lo Blanch, Valencia 2004. See also Jaume TORRÓ. "La doble autoría de *Tirant lo Blanc* o un colofón y la estilística". *Revista de Erudición y Crítica* (Madrid, Castalia), no. 1 (2006), pp. 75-82.
- [27] Jesús VILLALMANZO. *Joanot Martorell. Biografía ilustrada y diplomático*. Valencia Town Hall, Valencia 1995. Jaume TORRÓ. "Joanot Martorell, escrivà de ració". *L'Avenç*, no. 273 (October 2002), pp. 12-18.
- [28] See the last few paragraphs of the article.
- [29] Jaume TORRÓ. "Una cort a Barcelona per a la literatura del segle XV". *Revista de Catalunya* (June 2001), pp. 97-123. Stefano M. CINGOLANI. *Joan Roís de Corella. La importància de dir-se honest*. Tres i Quatre, Valencia 1998.
- [30] Jaume CHINER. "Aportació a la biografia de Joan

- Roís de Corella”. *Caplletra*, no. 15 (1993), pp. 49-61.
- [31] Josep Maria NADAL and Modest PRAT. *Història de la llengua catalana*. Edicions 62, Barcelona 1996, vol. II, pp. 472-512.
- [32] Josep Lluís MARTOS. *Les proses mitològiques de Joan Roís de Corella*. Institut Interuniversitari de Filologia Valenciana, Publicacions de l’Abadia de Montserrat, Valencia, Barcelona 2001, p. 237. TN: “Through the transcendent loftiness of the lady of the sciences, sacred Theology, I have descended upon verdant, blossoming fields of affable poetry and I have left the meadows of restful silence to hoist with pleasant exertion the white sails against the lowly antennae of vulgar poetry. I aim the prow of my writing towards the tempestuous sea of Venus and I shall describe shipwrecks of those who have come to a miserable end. Yet since I know nothing else, I shall only recite utterances that I have heard recently from some men, whose names, when reciting such well-reasoned prose, inspire envy because of their fame.”
- [33] Xavier RENEDO. “*Turpia feminarum incesta lascivarum*. El joc teatral al cap. 283 del *Tirant lo Blanc*”, in *Formes teatrals de la tradició medieval*. Proceedings of the 7th Colloquium of the Société Internationale pour l’Étude du Théâtre Médiéval (Girona 1992), edited by Francesc Massip. Institut del Teatre, Barcelona 1996, pp. 209-216.
- [34] Josep Lluís MARTOS. *Fons i seqüència cronològica de les proses mitològiques de Joan Roís de Corella*. Universidad de Alicante, Department of Catalan Language and Literature, Alicante 2001.
- [35] Josep Lluís MARTOS. *Les proses mitològiques...*, *op. cit.*, pp. 162-163. TN: “And as he shifted his eyes from the beach to the light that lit up Hero’s tower, his heart caught fire, he once again threw his body into the deep sea, saying with a voice driven by love: ‘The fire that I see ablaze in the tower burns my fear of the deep sea: either I will reach the island of Cestos or I will drink from the chalice of death; and when I am buried with your hands, you, for whom I die, must close me in the tomb, cleansing my body with your tears. Do not be afraid to kiss my cold mouth.’ O dark blindness, that of those who love heedlessly! And how diligently you work until losing the soul with life! O courageous fear of those who cower at the dangers of the vile life and with a discreet, invincible soul abandon life for the kingdom of heaven.”
- [36] Guido delle COLONNE. *Les històries troianes*, edited by Ramon Miquel i Planas. Biblioteca Catalana, Barcelona 1916. Joan M. PERUJO MELGAR. “Difusió de motius de la llegenda de Troia: traducció i reinterpretació”, in ‘*Vestigia fabularum...*’, *op. cit.*, pp. 13-30.
- [37] Annamaria ANNICCHIARICO. *Varianti corelliane e ‘plagi’ del Tirant: ‘Achille e Polissena’*. Schena, Fasano di Brindisi 1996.
- [38] Lola BADIA. “El *Plany dolorós de la reina Hècuba* de Joan Roís de Corella. Restauracions i contextos”, in *Homenatge Joan Fuster*, edited by Antoni Ferrando and Albert Hauf. Publicacions de l’Abadia de Montserrat, Barcelona 1991, vol. III, pp. 195-223.
- [39] Josep Lluís MARTOS. *Les proses mitològiques...*, *op. cit.*, pp. 142-144. TN.: “Oh reasonable thing if the gravity of those agonies for our great loss consent to nothing more than moans and sobs! These are the woes of a mother and sterile queen, captive in her own city by those who have killed her children and have taken the life of Priam and the kingdoms the same day! Oh implacable fates that infallibly order human acts. Why have you obligated me to witness all of this with my body now aged? Live, then, Hecuba, as only death can remove you from your misery. Oh mother resembling a sheep that has born her offspring just for them to be dismembered and dragged around your city like ploughs carving furrows in the bloody land. Oh weak sword of Achilles, spent carving royal flesh raised in my womb, and thus dulled and aged from chopping the bone and flesh of the children, only then has it slashed the feeble neck of the father! Do not delay, carve and cut our soft female flesh so the souls can quickly escape from the ruined room. You shall reveal yourself to be more cruel if you do not harm us than murdering those whose death make us despair of life. Oh Hector, my son, dead but not vanquished, listen to my dolorous voice from the infernal depths, worthy of earning the mercy of the cruel infernal gods! If you hear it, why do you delay in coming? Leave your body in the grave and let the insatiable earth devour it. Come, ethereal and desired shadow, only you can vanquish the Greek cowards who flee from you when recalling your victories; bring Troilus by your side who gave in principle to the honour and end of life.”
- [40] Martí de RIQUER. *Història...*, *op. cit.*, vol. III, pp. 387-425. Evangelista VILANOVA. *Història de la teologia cristiana*. Faculty of Theology, Herder, Barcelona 1984, vol. I, pp. 684-686. Josep PUJOL. “*Psallite sapienter*: la gaia ciència en els sermons de Felip de Malla de 1413 (Study and editing)”, *Cultura Neolatina*, no. 56 (1996), pp. 177-250.
- [41] Martí de RIQUER. *Història...*, *op. cit.*, vol. III, pp. 249-253.
- [42] Jaume TORRÓ. “*Officium poetae est fingere*: Francesc Alegre i la *Faula de Neptuno i Diana*”, in *Intellectuals i escriptors...*, *op. cit.*, pp. 221-241.
- [43] Francesc ALEGRE. *Transformacions*. Pere Miquel, Barcelona 1494, r[6]<sup>r</sup>. TN: “Conclusion of the present work. I have reached the end of this work, which neither iron nor fire nor time may destroy. When the day comes that we fearfully await and I have no more right over my body, may my life end while my indelible name will be taken to heaven

and will be linked to this name in all the provinces subjected to the power of the Romans. My fame will live eternally if what the poets say is true.”

[44] See Lola BADIA. “La legitimació...”, *op. cit.*

[45] Martí de RIQUER. *Història...*, *op. cit.*, vol. II, pp. 602-630. Pere BOHIGAS. “Curial e Güelfa”, in *Aportació a l'estudi de la literatura catalana*. Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat, Barcelona 1982, pp. 277-294. Lola BADIA. “De la reverenda letradura en el Curial e Güelfa”, in *De Bernat Metge...*, *op. cit.*, pp. 121-144.

[46] Jaume TORRÓ. “El manuscrit, els pròlegs i el Filocolo”, in *Encontres sobre el “Curial e Güelfa”*. *Aspectes lingüístics i culturals*. Castalia Madrid (at press). Lola BADIA and Jaume TORRÓ. “Curial entre Tristán y Orlando”, in *Actas Segundo Congreso de la Semyr (San Millán de la Cogolla 2008)* (at press).

[47] *Curial e Güelfa*. Barcino, Barcelona 1930-1933, vol. III, pp. 12. TN: “I believe that it would not be licit of me to invoke the muses as others do. To the contrary, I believe that it would be superfluous because they would not show themselves unless I invoked them in my own favour, as they only help men of great learning and pursue them even though not beckoned, while they ignore me and my peers. For this reason, in this work, as in everything I write, I

am an imitator of the miserly and chattering daughters of Pieride, enemies of those nine sisters that inhabit Mount Parnassus. They consider themselves deprecated if they are placed in fleeting, lowly works, as they do not tend to follow anything but the lofty, sublime styles used by the great poets and orators.”

[48] Ibid, p. 78. TN: “Oh, egregious lady! What fairies could predict that when you received such an honour, nine sisters, daughters of the greatest of the mortal gods, would come to see me and visit this grave of ignorance? It is proper that you keep Homer, Virgin, Horace, Ovid, Lucan and many others too long to cite company. But what reason might you have to come see me? I am not a learned man nor am I worthy of a visit by such excellent maidens. You leave Aristotle and Plato to come to me?”

[49] Ibid, p. 79. TN: ““Do not wonder about that,” said Calliope, ‘because we will always follow those that we love and, even though we may be with you, we will not abandon the others because through God’s will we can be everywhere we want to be at once. And sometimes we accompany men who do not realize it and we help them to do and say what they do and say, some more and others less, according to the disposition we find in them.”

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

With a degree in Hispanic Language and Literature from the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (1973), Lola Badia earned her doctorate in Romance Languages and Literatures in 1977 under the supervision of de Martí de Riquer. In 1983 she was appointed professor of Catalan literature. She has taught ancient Catalan literature at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, the Universitat de Girona and the Universitat de Barcelona. She has coordinated a research seminar in the Department of Catalan Language and Literature at the University of Barcelona since academic year 1987-1988. She is the head of the Consolidated Research Group on Mediaeval Catalan Literature and Culture, which has repeatedly been funded by the Generalitat de Catalunya, and she has directed and continues to direct research projects for the Spanish Ministry of Education, currently CODITECAM II. She has mainly published on the troubadour tradition, the literary culture of the 14th and 15th century Catalan writers, Raymond Lull’s vernacular works and the mediaeval scientific heritage in the vernacular. For an extended CV, <<http://www.narpan.net/>>. She directs the CDRL, Ramon Lull Research Centre, at the Universitat de Barcelona and coordinates the Ramon Lull Database, devised by Anthony Bonner, in conjunction with Albert Soler <<http://orbita.bib.ub.es/llull/>>.