

## Catalan fiction in the 15th century

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### ABSTRACT

Catalan fiction in the 15th century is framed within the context of the expansion of the Crown of Aragon around the Mediterranean, the emergence of Valencia as the cultural capital of the Crown, the crisis in the prevailing mediaeval values, the consolidation of a monetary economy, and fertile contacts between Catalan culture and Castile, France, Burgundy and especially Italy. This is perfectly illustrated by the five most important fictional pieces from that era: *Història de Jacob Xalabín*, which refers to the Ottoman Empire; *Curial e Güelfa*, which is set in Italy, France, the German Empire, the eastern Mediterranean and North Africa; *Tirant lo Blanc*, by Joanot Martorell, which focuses on England, the eastern Mediterranean and North Africa; *Espill*, by Jaume Roig, whose main character travels around Catalonia, France, Castile and Galicia; and *Vita Christi*, by Mother Isabel de Villena, which sets Jesus' life in a courtly milieu.

**KEYWORDS:** *Història de Jacob Xalabín* (anonymous), *Curial e Güelfa* (most likely Enyego d'Àvalos), *Tirant lo Blanc* (Joanot Martorell), *Espill* (Jaume Roig), *Vita Christi* (Isabel de Villena)

### A VARIED FICTIONAL OUTPUT IN A COMPLEX POLITICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT

At least for readers who are unfamiliar with the history of the Catalan-speaking lands, a presentation of 15th-century Catalan fiction requires a brief historical contextualisation. And there is yet another compelling reason to justify this introduction: in the 15th century, Western Europe had two main "states" that no longer exist: the Crown of Aragon and the Duchy of Burgundy. Both were composite, multilingual monarchies with little territorial cohesion that were experiencing their political and cultural peak during that century. This situation is largely unknown today, since the two powers later became appendages to two more powerful monarchies, Castile and France, and never managed to consolidate their power as nation-states in the 16th century. We cannot pretend to understand 15th-century Catalan culture without bearing this situation in mind. Fiction is not history, but it often provides us with insights into the cultural reality at a given point in historical time that are sometimes more useful than strictly historical documentation. Burgundy's contributions to 15th-century European chivalric literature were quite important, while in the Catalan-speaking lands

the chivalric romances *Curial e Güelfa* and *Tirant lo Blanc* are impressive *tableaux vivants* of the society that generated them.

The geopolitical changes in 16th-century Europe still have consequences today: the Crown of Aragon and the Duchy of Burgundy are invisible in Europe today, and modern-day Spain and France tend to impose monolingualising policies that conceal the linguistic and national plurality of their states. Within this context, literatures other than Castilian and French can barely eke out the international attention and recognition they deserve, and the major writers, like Joanot Martorell, are rarely considered "classic" writers in their respective states. Yet Catalan literature was one of the most important in 15th-century Europe and today is the most important in the world among those with no state behind them (except Andorra).

In this article, we shall try to provide an overview of 15th-century Catalan fiction, and specifically the five works that are considered to be of the most literary interest: the anonymous *Història de Jacob Xalabín*; *Curial e Güelfa*, attributed to Enyego d'Àvalos; *Tirant lo Blanc*, by the aforementioned Martorell; *Espill*, by Jaume Roig; and *Vita Christi*, by Mother Isabel de Villena. All of these works boast not only high literary quality but also extraordinary historical and cultural interest.

In the 15th century, the Crown of Aragon, whose main language was Catalan, had a complex territorial and ethnic structure: its kings were known as Kings of Aragon

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and their subjects in general as Aragonese people; the inhabitants of each of the kingdoms that comprised it – six by mid-century: Catalonia, Aragon, Valencia, Sicily, Sardinia and Naples (and in some ways Mallorca) – preferred to use their own demonyms, and Catalan might also be called Valencian or Mallorcan in their lands, or even generic names. Thus, Martorell presents *Tirant* as a work in the “vernacular Valencian [language]”; the author of *Curial*, who must have written it at the Neapolitan court of Alphonse the Magnanimous, mentioned translations in the “Catalan language”; Roig chose “plain” language, although in 1531, when *Espill* was published, the editor used the name “Limousin”; and finally, Mother Isabel de Villena chose “Romance”. This mediaeval onomastic diversity, widespread since the last third of the 15th century, and especially the persistence of the political subordination of the Catalan-speaking lands to Castile, have not helped the unitary perception of Catalan literature within our own linguistic community or the efficacy of its projection abroad.<sup>1</sup> This must be pointed out primarily to foreign readers who may be unfamiliar with Catalan cultural history and literature.

These five stories are a priceless reflection of the cultural and political situation of the Crown of Aragon in the 15th century. The enthronement of the Castilian Trastámaras (1412-1516) did not alter the dominant status of the Catalan language or halt the development of its literature. Quite the contrary, the 15th century was the golden age of Catalan literature, and fiction lay at the heart of it. The Crown of Aragon’s political expansion to Italy had a positive effect on Catalan language and literature; Catalan became not only the courtly language on the other shore of the western Mediterranean but also a kind of lingua franca in realms like trade, the university and the Church. It is not irrelevant to recall here that in the 15th century, Benedict XIII was an Aragonese pope and Callixtus III and Alexander VI were Valencians: all three spoke Catalan fluently, and the latter two always used it as their habitual language. It would be impossible to explain *Curial* without knowing that Catalan was present in Italy. And without the presence of the Castilian Trastámaras on the throne of the Crown of Aragon, it would be hard to understand some of the Castilian footprints in both *Tirant* and *Curial*. The status of Catalan as the language of the court and high culture only started its decline with the consolidation of the Spanish monarchy of the Catholic Kings (1479-1516), whose court was headquartered in Castile with predominantly Castilian leanings.

We should note that the political and commercial projection of the Crown of Aragon in the Mediterranean in the 15th century, inherited from the previous centuries, did not stop at Italy but also extended as far as the Balkan lands. Catalan fiction also reflected this. The setting of the *Història de Jacob Xalabín* is, in fact, Ottoman Turkey. The settings of *Curial* and *Tirant* are European and Mediterranean, mainly centred in Italy in *Curial* and in Constantinople in *Tirant*, and both with episodes in

North Africa. The main character in *Espill*, by Jaume Roig, travels to Catalonia, France, Castile and Galicia. In her *Vita Christi*, Mother Isabel de Villena necessarily had to set the action in the Holy Land, but it should be noted that when recounting the Gospel story of Jesus’ temptations in the desert, she puts not the lands of Judea but Western Europe in the mouth of the devil: “You see: in that part is Castile, in the other is France, here is Aragon, and over there is Portugal and many other lands” (Ch. CVIII). Therefore, all five stories, likely the most interesting for non-Catalan readers today, have a clear international reach.

The social and economic changes in the 15th century confirm the ascent of the ‘bourgeoisie’. The court and the nobility had to share cultural protagonism with the urban patricians and the bourgeoisie in the large cities, and a monetary economy was imposed. These socioeconomic changes also affected perceptions of the world. And naturally this can be seen not only in the five stories chosen but also in the biographical histories of their known authors. We do not know who wrote *Història de Jacob Xalabín*, although it may have been a Catalan in the service of the Ottomans. Even though he received some support from King John II, Joanot Martorell was a destitute Valencian knight who was disenchanted with the materialistic world that derided the ideals of knighthood. In contrast, the biography of the hypothetical author of *Curial* seems to match the social and economic ascent of the main character of the romance. Mother Isabel de Villena, actually Elionor d’Aragó, the daughter of Henry of Aragon (or of Villena), the great-granddaughter of the kings of Aragon and Castile, was raised in the Valencian court of her aunt, Queen Mary of Castile, and was able to disguise her bastardy by serving as the abbess of the Trinity royal monastery in Valencia for almost three decades, but in her *Vita Christi* she nonetheless expressed the ideological values of the nobility from which she hailed. Jaume Roig was a physician who was well connected to the bourgeoisie of the city of Valencia, who also assisted Queen Mary. Of the known authors, Roig must have been the only member of the bourgeoisie, but an economically and socially well-situated member. If we examine the social situation carefully, there must not have been complete separation between the nobility with scant economic resources who aspired to secure more, especially through marital strategies, and the wealthy bourgeoisie who aspired to nobility: the economic expansion favoured interrelation. It is known that bourgeois women in the city of Valencia alternated books of devotion with readings or recitations of *Tirant* and the “poems of monsignor Corella”.

If we compare the two chronological ends of the 15th century from a literary perspective, we can find a quite noticeable difference. In the early 15th century, such notable writers as Francesc Eiximenis, Anselm Turmeda and Bernat Metge, who excelled in the field of fiction and didactic literature, were still alive. In contrast, the great storytellers

of the 15th century did not live beyond 1500: the younger ones, Mother Isabel de Villena and Joan Roís de Corella, died in 1490 and 1497 respectively. Unlike the early 15th century, when the literary world from the previous century still survived, at the end of that century and in the early 16th century there was a major cultural and linguistic breach: the nobility adopted the new courtly language, Spanish, as a literary tool, and some amateur writers from the bourgeoisie also tried it out, albeit essentially in imitations of *cancionero* poetry. This breach affected not only poetry but also, more importantly, fiction, to such an extent that a bestseller like *Tirant* was not issued in Catalan again after 1497. Before 1500, there was still a situation of cultural normality. The discovery of America and the Castilian alliance with the Netherlands were too recent. A nobleman like Joan Roís de Corella (1435-1497), an exquisite poet but primarily an aesthetically peerless storyteller, did not let himself be swayed by the fashions of the Castilian court. The few exceptions in this sociolinguistic scene, such as Pere Torroella, with his bilingual Spanish-Catalan works, and Benet Garret *Il Cariteo*, who only wrote in Italian, or the anonymous Catalan author of the *Triste deleitació* (ca. 1465-1470), who wrote in Spanish, are isolated cases which can usually be explained by their ties with the courts of Zaragoza, Pamplona and Naples, which were presided over by Spanish-speaking kings.

The starkness of the linguistic change in the literary output at the end of the century, largely caused by the choice of the new courtly literary codes, can quite clearly be seen, for example, in the change in attitude of Serafi de Centelles (1460-1536), Count of Oliva, a wealthy nobleman and patron of Catalan literature in the late 15th century who, among other initiatives, commissioned Bernadí Vallmanya to translate two extremely successful Castilian texts into “Valencian prose”: the first was *Lo càrrec d’amor* (1493), the famous sentimental story by Diego de San Pedro, and the other was *La revelació del benaventurat apòstol sanct Pau* (1495), a story of miracles attributed to Saint Paul. Yet after the early 16th century, Serafi de Centelles made an abrupt break with this past to become the main patron in Valencia of the publication of works in Spanish, including the *Cancionero general* by Hernando del Castillo (1511). One of the best examples of this cultural and sociolinguistic change comes in the transmission of *Tirant*. This work, the most famous Catalan-language romance of all times, was published anonymously in Spanish (1511) and Italian (1538) with a title adapted to the languages of its respective recipients (*Tirante* in both cases), with no dedicatory, with no indications of its provenance and without specifying its original language. This is how Miguel de Cervantes learned about it and how he referred to it in *Don Quixote*. Certainly, Martorell’s name had started to circulate again as the author of *Tirant* in the 20th century, but the perception of it comes more from the vision of it disseminated in Cervantes. Without Cervantes’ claim that *Tirant* “is the best book in the world”, it would have unlikely aroused the

attention of anyone like Dámaso Alonso, Mario Vargas Llosa or Alejo Carpentier.

### BACKDROP OF CATALAN FICTION IN THE 15TH CENTURY

It is obvious that Catalan fiction written between 1401 and 1500 does not fall within a uniform period in terms of genres, tastes and themes but instead a purely conventional chronological period. Thus, the first story we have chosen, the *Història de Jacob Xalabín*, from the early years of the century, has little to do with Isabel de Villena’s *Vita Christi*, which was completed in 1490 and published in 1497. And these two works have little to do with the three others we have chosen, all three from mid-century. Even though *Curial* (ca. 1443-1449) and *Tirant* (1460-1464) were gestated just 15 years apart and were both “chivalric romances” –that is, highly realistic stories quite different to the fantastical “romances of chivalry”–, they differ in tone, style and conception. On the other hand, *Espill* (ca. 1460) is a characteristic product of bourgeois Valencia, a harbinger of the notable satirical-humorous output of Valencian poets from the last third of the 15th century. The variety of historical-literary contexts seen throughout the century and the many different language models cultivated are vast. To confirm this, just compare the language of the *Història de Jacob Xalabín*, which is morphologically and lexically not so different from that of Francesc Eiximenis, with the *Història de les amors de París e Viana* (1495), which was clearly affected by the tendency towards an increasingly Spanish lexicon. Therefore, Catalan fiction in the 15th century is quite far from being a more or less homogeneous product.<sup>2</sup>

The criterion we shall use in this backdrop will be purely chronological. We shall only consider texts produced in the 15th century and omit works whose authors, though they lived in that century, wrote the majority of their output either before or after it. And regarding anonymous works, we shall strive to limit ourselves to those that are or seem to be from this century.

It is not easy to date many of the anonymous works from the late Middle Ages if they do not contain specific information that allows us to do so. Many of the stories copied or documented from the 15th century are actually older. Some of them survive only as manuscripts. Other may have benefitted from the printing press, which was introduced in the Catalan-speaking lands only after 1473. Finally, some of them have been lost, such as *Lo Arderic*, which we are only aware of through its Spanish edition. In the case of Catalan short fiction, the losses were probably more significant than in the neighbouring languages, since the impact of Spanish after the 16th century must have influenced the perception of the Catalan versions of these works as antiquated and led to their disappearance.

Catalan fictional literature from the 15th century, which is expressed in both prose and verse, can be placed

into different categories. Prose narrative includes: *a*) exemplary novellas, *b*) historical fiction, *c*) stories of the afterlife, *d*) religious legends, *e*) chivalric romances, and *f*) allegorical-sentimental fiction. With labels like these, we run the risk of oversimplifying, but they can provide greater expositive clarity in a necessarily brief article. Hybridism is consubstantial to many of these products. The materials compiled in the *Recull d'eximplis e miracles, gestes, faules e altres lligendes ordenades per ABC*, a mid-15th century translation of a text by Arnauld de Liège, clearly encompass the different kinds of fiction that were circulating in the Catalan-speaking lands. In fact, many of these works are translations or adaptations of fiction from abroad which were circulating widely around Western Europe, especially in France and Italy. One of the most successful translations was of the *Decameron* (1429) – based on the manuscript that Alphonse the Magnanimous had brought to Valencia from Florence in 1427. The anonymous translator managed to quite skilfully recreate the original and adapt it to the Catalan listening or reading audience by replacing the ballad that closes each day's journey in the Italian text with a local one. Another of the most widespread translations was the *Història de les amors de París e Viana*, probably based on an Italian version via another Spanish version, three editions of which came out in the last decade of the 15th century.

Fictional literature in prose was quite widespread in the 15th century. However, in the case of short stories, the brevity, anonymity in many cases, and difficulties transmitting them hindered their visibility and the appreciation of many of their manifestations. We cannot lose sight of the fact that not only fiction in verse but also the kind transmitted in prose were designed to be retold or recited. We can see this, for example, in the initial rubric of the *Història de Jacob Xalabín*: “Here begins the *Story of Jacob Xalabín*, son of Amorat, lord of Turkey, which contains the adventures that befell him [...], as you shall hear”. We shall now examine only the most famous fictional prose in each of these categories.

Exemplary novellas are short stories which tend to be based on traditional themes that were widespread in Europe and often transmitted orally. They get their name from Ramon Aramon's proposal, because their main purpose is to indoctrinate readers in a given virtue through a series of adventures. The increase in educational instruction contributed to their being put down in writing. One which can be dated from the 15th century is *La filla del rei Contastí*, which shows fine narrative taste when addressing the theme of the virtuous maiden who prefers to cut off her hands before committing incest, but who miraculously gets them back. This is the same theme as in *La filla del rei d'Hongria*, from which it seems to have drawn inspiration.

The most famous historical fiction, which seeks to match the story and the onomastic referents to real historical deeds, is the *Història de Jacob Xalabín*, which we shall examine further on. There are also many stories

which describe Saint Patrick's fantastical journeys to purgatory. In the 15th century, stories of the afterlife survived in works like the Italian *Aparició de l'esperit de Guido de Corvo, ciutadà de Bolunya*.

Religious legends are stories that recreate the lives of the saints, recount miracles and comment on either canonical or apocryphal pages from the Gospels with a strong emphasis on narrative development and a heavy dose of fabulous elements. The *Vida i miracles de sant Jordi* and the *Lives* of Saint Margaret and Saint Catherine of Alexandria were quite popular examples of this type. One of the most successful legends was *La destrucció de Jerusalem*, which tells us how after Jesus Christ cured him of a serious illness, the Emperor Vespasian destroyed Jerusalem in vengeance for Jesus' crucifixion and death.

Religious legends cannot be confused with hagiographies. The latter, which are generally anonymous and have imprecise chronologies, are limited to a mere exposition of the life and miracles of saints and are therefore of little literary interest. Yet it is not easy to typologically separate the two. Many mediaeval hagiographies were filled with fabulous legends. Towards the end of the 15th century, Joan Roís de Corella and his son-in-law Miquel Peres, both of them prime representatives of an artistic style which is known as “Valencian prose”, excelled in writing several hagiographies, such as the *Vida de santa Anna* and the *Vida de Josep, fill de Jacob* by Corella, and the *Vida de la sacratíssima verge Maria* (1495) and the *Vida de santa Caterina de Sena* (1499) by Peres, which harmoniously merge hagiography and artful prose. Two of the best literary expressions of hagiography and devout literature in the 15th century are the *Vita Christi* (1495-1500) by Joan Roís de Corella, a free, expanded translation of the work of the same name by Ludolph of Saxony but in the “Valencian prose style”, and the *Vita Christi* (1490) by Mother Isabel de Villena, both of which we shall examine later.<sup>3</sup>

The scarcity of chivalric romances in Catalan and the extraordinary exceptions of *Curial* and *Tirant* are surprising. We know that Joanot Martorell is also the author of *Guillem de Varoïc* (ca. 1450) and possibly of *Flor de cavalleria*. Pages from an incunable from 1496 reproducing the *Tragèdia de mossèn Gras* (ca. 1450) still survive. In this work, which was addressed to Joan de Torrelles, Count of Ischia, the author, monsignor Lluís Gras, managed to transform the French Arthurian legend *La mort le roi Artu* into a refined, sentimental story. The fragment that still survives describes episodes associated with Queen Guinevere's jealousy in an effort to spotlight the evil that jealousy spawns in amorous relationships. Under careful examination, monsignor Gras' story foregrounds the sentimental component over the chivalric action, just as in *Curial* and the aforementioned translated adaptation of the *Història de les amors de París e Viana*. In the latter, a sentimental adventure which unfolds via amorous letters and speeches is layered over the chivalric backdrop. Having said this, we should note that in the 15th century some hagiographies

which operated like chivalric romances were in circulation. One example is *Vida de sant Honorat* (Valencia 1495), a linguistic modernisation of an ancient Catalan story deriving from an Occitanian one in which the hero, a monk, serves as a knight who wins battles against his enemies. The scant samples of Catalan chivalric literature are more than offset by the extraordinary quality of *Curial and Tirant*, which are, as Martí de Riquer described them, veritable gems of Catalan fiction.

Allegorical-sentimental fiction encompasses very short stories that describe a specific sentimental situation, generally inspired by classical themes, but also referring to contemporary characters and to personal circumstances of their authors, either real or feigned. These stories mainly spotlight the expression of feelings, and they use a kind of language that imitates Latin syntax and boasts a proliferation of lexical Latinisms. The outcome is highly rhetorical prose which was probably read by noblewomen and ladies from the wealthy bourgeoisie. Its most interesting expressions include the *Tragèdia de Caldesa* (ca. 1458) by Joan Roís de Corella; the *Faula de les amors de Neptuno i Diana feta per Claudiano, poeta, i transladada en vulgar de catalana llengua* (1472-1486), probably by Francesc Alegre; and the *Regoneixença i moral consideració contra les persuasions, vicis i forces d'amor* (1496) by Francesc Carròs Pardo de la Casta. In *Tragèdia de Caldesa*, Corella uses beautiful prose and peerless verses, coupled with bloody, violent imagery, to describe a case of infidelity which has traditionally been cast as autobiographical. The stylistic mastery and dramatic recreation of the affair turn its "tragedy" into a gem of a short story. Unlike Corella, who forgives the sinning lover in the *Tragèdia*, in *Faula*, Alegre condemns the lady who denied him her favours to instead bestow them upon a lover wealthier than him. The brief work by Pardo de la Casta seems like a personal confession on disappointment in love expressed in elegant, contained prose in which the stylistic resources are subordinated to the moral message. Among Corella's mythological stories, his beautiful *Història de Leànder i Hero*, in prose and verse, and his *Parlament en casa de Berenguer Mercader* stand out, in which each of the participants in the conversation fictitiously congregated at his house tell an Ovidian tale.

Narrative poetry in verse is primarily found in *noves rimades*, a metric form which consists in paired isosyllabic verses, and in *codolades*, a variation of the former in which the paired verses alternate one verse with four syllables and one with eight. In *noves rimades*, a satirical component often predominated, while in *codolades*, a burlesque and insolent tone did. *Noves rimades* were a very prolific genre in the 14th century, which remained quite vital in the ensuing century as well. *Codolades* lasted until at least the 18th century. The metre and rhyme contributed to their listeners' ability to memorise and transmit them. These stories in verse, which were quite popular, are usually anonymous works which manifest enormous freedom of thought and, by using quite vivid

language, reflect the predominant attitudes among the bourgeoisie. They have usually survived only in fragments.

The *Llibre de fra Bernat* and the *Testament de Bernat Serradell de Vic* date from the first half of the 15th century. The amusing *Llibre de fra Bernat*, a *codolada* with more than 2,000 verses by Francesc de la Via (ca. 1403-1423), is a shameless satire of women based on the experiences of Father Bernat and the author on their visits to a convent. The *Testament de Bernat Serradell de Vic* (1419), a *codolada* with more than 1,600 verses attributed to an unknown Father Bernat de Vinclera, recounts the illness, will and death of the main character, who after death visits heaven and hell and manages to return to the world of the living to recount his experiences. The author goes a bit far describing the torments suffered by the evil kings and evil priests in hell.

In the second half of the 15th century, writers from or imitating the bourgeoisie who liked to cultivate satirical and burlesque stories in verse, often in collaboration with one another, proliferated in Valencia. One of the most prominent was Jaume Roig. As we shall see further on, his *Espill*, in *noves rimades*, is much more than a simple misogynistic satire: it is a true novel that quite skilfully describes the most grotesque aspects of the society of his day. The great Valencian master of the *codolada* was Jaume Gassull, the author of *Lo somni de Joan Joan*, in which he describes the gossip in a gathering of women with incredible metric skill and impressive realism. The work seems like a kind of conclusion to *Lo procés de les olives* (1497), in which not only Gassull but also Bernat Fenollar, Joan Moreno, Narcís Vinyoles, Baltasar Portell and the anonymous Síndic del Comú dels Pescadors participated. No less ingenious is the *Brama dels llauradors de l'Horta de València contra lo venerable mossèn Bernat Fenollar* (ca. 1475), in which Gassull describes a fictitious peasant protest against Fenollar's idiomatic rigorousness. Along with Bernat Fenollar, Gassull is the best representative of the group of realistic poets from Valencia in the late decades of the 15th century who cultivated extraordinarily natural narrative poetry, both satirical-burlesque and religious-themed. What stands out among the latter is *Lo passi en cobles* by Bernat Fenollar, a versified story of the passion of Jesus according to the Gospel of Saint John, in *art major* couplets with a Castilian influence. The optimistic tone of this Valencian product is the reflection of a bourgeoisie which was profiting from a time of economic expansion and relative social stability.

## THE WORKS

HISTÒRIA DE JACOB XALABÍN  
(*History of Yakub Çelebi*) (Anonymous)

This is a historical romance based on real events which occurred in the Ottoman Empire between 1387 and 1389,

during the times of Murat I (1360-1389). It is specifically about “the adventures that Jacob Xalabín had in his life, and how and in what way he ended his days at the hands of Beseit Bei, his bastard brother, who also murdered their father”. This anonymous book in Catalan, dated from the early 15th century and published for the first time in 1906, has drawn attention because it covers political events which occurred wholly outside the Catalan-speaking lands. Recently, the *Història de Jacob Xalabín* has been associated with the dramatic situation which the Catalan-Byzantine Countship of Salona in central Greece experienced in light of the Ottoman invasion (1394).<sup>4</sup>

The story contains three parts. The first part (chapter I-III) contains the loves of Issà Xalabina, wife of Elbai Murat (Murat I), with her stepson Jacob (Yakub) Xalabín, who rejects her, which leads to the sultana’s illness. The Jewish physician who tends to her, a “native of Constantinople, who was called in Greek Quir Mossè”, suggested that Murat donate his or Jacob’s liver as a remedy to cure her of her love sickness. Murat decided to sacrifice his son. Aware of this plan, Jacob flees from Brusa (today Bursa) in the company of his friend Alí Paixà. The second part (chapters IV-XIV) tells how Jacob and Alí become famous knights in the domain of Palàcia (the former Greek city of Milet), which had welcomed them. Jacob falls in love with Nerguis, the daughter of the Lord of Palàcia, but she has to travel to Satalia (today Antalya) to marry its prince, Hocman Bei (bei, ‘lord’). The retinue includes Jacob and Ali. Jacob manages to rendezvous with Nerguis in a funeral “tower”. To avoid being discovered by the Lord of Satalia, Alí takes her place by dressing in Nerguis’ robes, and he thus finds himself lying with the sister of Hocman Bei. Both pairs of lovers return to the court of Bursa, where with Issà dead they are warmly welcomed and their respective weddings held. The third part (chapters XV-XVII) recounts the Turkish victory in Kosovo and how Elbai Murat is seriously injured and murdered by his son Beseit Bei (Bayezid I) and how the latter then murders his brother Jacob, the legitimate heir to the Ottoman Empire, in order to proclaim himself sultan.

The author may have been a Catalan who was very familiar with the Turkish culture – probably living among the Turks in Anatolia – and had heard this story there, since not only are the historical deeds and names quite accurate, but so are the geographic and ethnic descriptions. Thus, Xalabín corresponds to the Turkish *çelebi*, which is the title used for the young members of the imperial family, more or less equivalent to ‘prince’; the Jewish physician is called by the Greek “quir”, ‘mister’; Issà’s illness diagnosed by the Jewish physician was called “xamxa”, which, as Espadaler<sup>5</sup> noted, may derive from the Judeo-Aramaic “*shamsha*” and express a feverish state caused by fervent, unfulfilled desire; and Bursa was, indeed, the historical capital of the Ottoman Empire. If the author of the original text was a Turk, it is hard to explain why the Christians were treated with neutrality at a time of serious conflict between Christians and Ottomans, or why he cites a passage



FIGURE 1. Presumed portrait of Jem Sultan, son of Mehmet II, which illustrates Europe’s fascination with the Oriental exoticism of the Turks, as found in the *Història de Jacob Xalabín*. Close-up from “The Disputation of Saint Catherine of Alexandria” by Pinturicchio (Vatican City, Borgia Apartment, ca. 1494)

from the Gospel of Saint Matthew, or why he is unfamiliar with the Quran, or why he uses characteristic expressions from troubadour poetry such as “*fina amor*” and “*amor coral*”, or why he refers to the concept of “bastard” to refer to Jacob’s stepbrother, since that concept does not exist in Quranic law. However, the vision that it offers of Turkish culture is also unexpected from a Christian. There are no value judgements on the Turks’ beliefs or customs, as if the author may have been a renegade mercenary at the service of the Turks. This is a hypothesis which cannot be ignored. We know that there were Spanish soldiers-of-fortune among the Turkish soldiers fighting in Kosovo. As Espadaler noted,<sup>6</sup> the friendship between Jacob and Alí is expressed in terms which would not be found in any European writer with European characters. There is no minimally prominent Christian character in the romance. These are its most noticeable hallmarks.

It has been suggested that the romance may be a reworking of materials from a Turkish text. The original text would be a historical chronicle, especially in the first and third parts, in which the focal point was to recount how Bayezid (1360-1403) rose to the Ottoman throne. From this vantage point, it may resemble a political pamphlet. The additions would primarily correspond to the central chapters, which recount the chivalric and sentimental adventures of Jacob and Alí. In these matters, “love is presented as a sensual passion with a terrible, irresistible up-setting force, almost like a disease of the senses, as is

common in European fiction from the 14th and 15th centuries".<sup>7</sup> The hypothetical additions have some points in common with the *Història de la filla de l'emperador Constantí*: the most important one is that both works start with the proposition of incestuous love. In fact, both of them survive today copied in the same manuscript, which is the only one that has brought us *Història de Jacob Xalabín*; it belonged to Fernando Colón, the son of Christopher Columbus, the "discoverer" of the Americas. The episode of the two lovers hidden in the funeral tower and the episode of Alí Paixà dressed as a woman reclining with the sister of the Lord of Satalia evoke two stories from *One Thousand and One Nights: The Tale of Kamar al-Zaman, Son of King Shahrman* and *The Tale of Almalik Baibars and His Captains of Police*. However, there is no need to search for direct Eastern sources, as *One Thousand and One Nights* was well-known in the West. On the other hand, the author of this original literary artefact – a mix of chronicle and fiction, Eastern setting and Western tradition – must have had Western readers in mind. There is no other explanation for the fact that the author begins the story by setting it "in the Year of Our Lord 1387, in the Eastern regions, that is, where the great Troy was built, which is now called Turkey", or that he makes observations on Turkish customs, such as when he recalls: "aware that in that land this was the custom, that all women cover their faces, that no man may see or know them".

The precision with which the author of the romance evokes the deeds, historical figures and most minute details of the landscape and of everyday life points to the fact that the work must have been written a few years after the events recounted, as Riquer, Compagna, Redondo and Espadaler have suggested. Specifically, Espadaler<sup>8</sup> claimed that the level of information in the romance on the battle of Kosovo and the viziers of Çandarlı (Alí Paixà, father and son) would be unthinkable from the best Western historians from the late 15th century. The morphology and lexis confirm that the work seems to date from the first few decades of the 15th century. The phonetic features gleaned from the copy that has reached us (*veura*, *gordar*, *udà*, etc.) are Eastern Catalan. The Venetian touches – Venice is the only European city mentioned – in words like *grip* 'light Venetian boat' and *batle dels venecians* as a calque of *bailo* 'consul', not only demonstrate the author's familiarity with the Venetians, as Espadaler<sup>9</sup> shows, but also confirms the author's in-depth knowledge of the geographic region of the Turkish Aegean, where the Venetians had a very strong presence. The work shares realism and verisimilitude in all the situations described with *Curial* and *Tirant*, but unlike these two works it always does so using direct, plain language quite similar to the register of a chronicler. The syntax, almost always based on coordinate and juxtaposed sentences, generally with *e* (and) and *sí* (if), repeatedly fits the author's goal of oral dissemination of the text.

CURIAL E GÜELFA

**(*Curial and Guelfa*) (most likely Enyego d'Àvalos)**

According to the only manuscript which has survived, today in the Biblioteca Nacional de España, this is an anonymous work, without a title, cover, dedicatory or any further information, which was wholly unknown until the Catalan Romanist Manuel Milà i Fontanals briefly reported on it in *Revue des Langues Romanes* in 1876. The absence of this information has harmed it in the estimation of critics and literary historians compared to *Tirant lo Blanc*. Jaume Riera and Rosa Navarro have even considered it a falsification perpetrated by Milà i Fontanals. However, this position is not shared by any other palaeographer, philologist or mediaevalist. It was published for the first time in 1901, in an edition overseen by Antoni Rubió i Lluch, who gave it the factitious title of *Curial e Güelfa*.

Judging from information intrinsic to the romance and the linguistic data it reveals, it can be dated from around the mid-15th century, chronologically coinciding with the early years of the reign of Alphonse the Magnanimous in Naples (1442-1458). The names, geographic setting and sources are primarily Italian. *Curial* is unquestionably the most remarkable literary legacy from the presence of the Crown of Aragon and the Catalan language in Italy. This chivalric 15th-century romance stands out for the predominance of the sentimental component, a certain psychological complexity, a notable presence of erudite elements drawn from classical Greco-Latin culture, Christian patristics and the great 14th-century Italian writers, and a remarkable stylistic elegance.

Numerous hypotheses on the authorship of *Curial* have been put forth. The most plausible is the one formulated in 2016 by Abel Soler. The author would be Enyego d'Àvalos (ca. 1414-1484), born in Toledo but trained in the Valencian court of Alphonse the Magnanimous after 1422. After participating in the battle of Ponça (1435), he went to the Milanese court of Filippo Maria Visconti and to the Neapolitan court of Alphonse, where he held important posts and diplomatic missions. Here he must have written the romance between approximately 1443 and 1449.<sup>10</sup> The *makulatur* from the manuscript, with notary documentation on Fuensalida (Toledo), suggests that it was conserved in Toledo and from there it ended up in the Biblioteca Nacional de Madrid, perhaps with the disentanglement of 1835 or shortly before then.<sup>11</sup>

Even though the main characters of the romance, Curial and Güelfa, are Italian, just as the erotic-sentimental plot of much of the story also hails from the Italian tradition, the geographic setting where Curial's deeds take place, and the provenance of the majority of secondary characters in the romance, span not only Italy but also Germany, Hungary, the Holy Land, Egypt, Greece, Tunisia and especially France. In fact, most of Curial's chivalric deeds take place in France. The romance reserves a special place for the figure of Peter the Great, sovereign of the Crown of Aragon



FIGURE 2. Italian knight, which illustrates the Renaissance tone of *Curial e Güelfa*. Close-up from “Apparition of the Virgin to Saints Anthony Abbot and George” by Pisanello (Naples or Ferrara (?), 1445).

(1276-1285) and, because of his marriage to Constance of Hohenstaufen, King of Sicily as well (1282-1285).

*Curial* is a work built upon a laborious play of symmetries and contrasts in plot and language, which is painstakingly organised into three books. In the initial prologue, the author announces that he is setting out to “relate what cost a gentle knight and a noble lady to love each other, and how, with great trials and sufferings, and afflicted by many misfortunes, after a long while they

achieved the reward of their endeavours”. Therefore, it tells of the vicissitudes which the main character, Curial, had to go through in order to marry Güelfa. This prologue, which serves as a general introduction to the work, thus announces the moral lesson that the story of the love between Curial and Güelfa seeks to be.

In the first book, Curial, a Lombard adolescent born to “a lowly house”, enters the service of the Marquis of Montferrat. There he has the good fortune of securing the protection of Güelfa, the Marquis’ sister and widow of the Duke of Milan, who assigns Melcior de Pandó as her tutor and the administrator of her assets. The sentimental relationship between the young Curial and Güelfa unleashes the slander of two envious older men in the court of the Marquis of Montferrat, so the Marquis is forced to remove Curial from his court. Aware that the Duchess of Austria has been falsely accused of adultery, Curial goes there accompanied by Jacob de Cleves and manages to vanquish the two accusers in a legal battle. In gratitude, the Duke of Bavaria offers him the hand of Làquesis, which Curial declines because of his affection for Güelfa. Back in Montferrat, Curial, assisted by three Catalan knights, beats the Neapolitan Boca de Far in a competition held by the Marquis. The book concludes with a passionate eulogy for the King of Aragon, “Don Pedro”. Therefore, the action is set in the 13th century, although names like Melcior de Pandó, Jacob de Cleves and Boca de Far suggest historical figures from the first half of the 15th century.

In the second book, Curial goes to Melú to participate in a famous competition called by the King of France. On his way there, he has the chance to perform numerous chivalric feats, to meet up with four Aragonese knights and to be the recipient of a splendid reception in a famous permissive French convent. In Melú, Curial participates on the side of the knights from Burgundy and Aragon, who are competing against the French and Breton knights. King Peter also takes part, incognito. With the assistance of Curial, King Peter and his knights beat the Duke of Orleans and his knights. In Paris, Curial achieves new chivalric feats, but he is the victim of the slander of the two envious old men because of his fickle loves: he falls into the disfavour not only of the King of France but also of Güelfa. Curial returns to Montferrat, but Güelfa swears never to favour him unless the court of Puig de Nostra Dona asks for mercy for him.

In the third book, Curial undergoes the penance which could redeem him from his state of disgrace. After a journey to the Holy Land and Parnassus, he heads home, but his ship sinks off the coast of Tunisia and he is sold as a slave and spends six years in captivity. Back in Montferrat, Güelfa has yet to forgive him. Discouraged, he goes to the court of the King of France, who regales him with wealth, but he falls into lascivious behaviour. However, he attains widespread fame by saving Christianity from the Turks. The emperor gives Curial licence to present himself at the court of Puig de Nostra Dona. In the competition held there, Curial is the absolute winner, and then



the Kings of France along with the court gathered there ask Güelfa for the mercy he had begged of her. She considers her oath fulfilled and the King of France presides over the wedding between the two main characters.

Detecting the literary sources of *Curial* allows us to form a precise idea of the cultural context in which the romance was written and the ideological and aesthetic premises under which it was conceived. It is not easy to trace them because the author profoundly recast them and rendered a highly creative hybrid of different cultural traditions. The Latin sources encompass both some of the most famous Roman writers, like Virgil, Ovid and Julius Caesar, and a large number of mediaeval authors. The works of the latter which are mined the most include Boccaccio's *Genealogiae deorum gentilium* and *Metamorfosi*, Guido delle Colonne's *Historia destructionis Troiae*, and Pietro Alighieri's and Benvenuto da Imola's *Commenti* on Dante's *Divine Comedy*. The author is deeply familiar with 14th-century Italian literature. The most oft-cited source of authority, often in Italian, is Dante's *Divine Comedy*, but Boccaccio – especially his *Decameron*, *Fiammetta* and *Filocolo* – provides him with the most material. The main sources for the plot of *Curial* are the *Vides* (Lives) of the troubadours Raimbaut de Vaqueiras and Rigaut de Berbezilh, whose basic features the author takes from *Il Novellino*. The French literary sources found everywhere in *Curial* can be seen in the use of episodes, descriptions and names of literature from the Breton circle – especially *Lancelot* and *Prose Tristan* – and from the stories on chivalric themes in prose or verse. Despite being literary, the influence of French culture in *Curial* is important. So is the Castilian influence, as the footprints of Henry of Villena, Juan Rodríguez del Padrón, the *Crónica de Alfonso X* and perhaps the Marquis of Santillana can all be noted.<sup>12</sup>

*Curial* is a *tableau vivant* of mid-15th-century Italian culture, and specifically of the convergence of literary stimuli in the court of Alphonse the Magnanimous: it harmoniously combines essentially mediaeval traditions with values more characteristic of humanism, such as culturalist irony, the foregrounding of the classic Greco-Latin legacy and a kind of hedonism. The historical and realistic names from *Curial* and the contrast between King Peter of Aragon, the top representative of the Ghibellines, and Charles of Anjou, the papacy's candidate for the crown of Sicily and Naples and the main defender of the Guelphs, seem to obey the author's purpose of sending an ideological message to his audience or potential readers: defence of the position of the Crown of Aragon in the game of regional political balances in mid-15th-century Italy. And as we shall see below, *Curial* is quite different to *Tirant*. Their authors are separated by distinct literary sensibilities, ideological attitudes, cultural training and cultural and political environments.

Likewise, *Curial* is a true gem of European fiction. In it, the author reveals not only his extensive literary cultivation but also a refined, profound philological sensibility.

The resulting product is an extraordinary work of literature constructed on a very carefully worked *elaboratio*, an intricate linguistic filigree which has drawn the attention of many commentators and can only be explained by the author's multilingualism. The author easily alternates varying linguistic forms, which were far from the ideals of standardisation of the Chancery language and from the Latinising ideals of the Renaissance. He uses diatopic variation, in this case with a clear preference for Valencian lexical terms, and diaphasic variation, from the "lower" register to the more "elaborate" one, all to offer us a model of courtly language inspired by the *volgare illustre*, which his much-admired Dante theorised, and by the literary practice of the skilfully and always creatively exploited – and always silenced – Boccaccio.<sup>13</sup>

#### TIRANT LO BLANC

#### *(Tirant the White Knight)* (Joanot Martorell)

When *Tirant lo Blanc* was published for the first time (1490), its authorship was attributed to Joanot Martorell and Martí Joan de Galba (the latter was assigned one-fourth of it). However, a document exhumed in 1991 made it clear that Martorell was the author of the romance – he wrote it between January 1460 and early 1464 at the latest – and that Galba had retained the book since early 1464 as a pledge for one of the writer's loans.

The work was dedicated to Prince Ferdinand of Portugal, described as the "expectant king", the first cousin of Peter the Constable, King of the Catalans (1463-1466), and presented as a translation of a text written in Portuguese – which was, in turn, a version of an English text – "into Valencian vernacular, that my native land may receive joy and instruction from the many worthy deeds recounted". The dedicatory tells us that the author's purpose is to recount Tirant's "many illustrious deeds of chivalry" and how "he bravely subdued many kingdoms and provinces, offering them to others and desiring only the simple honour of his victories, and later he conquered the entire Greek empire, winning it back from the Turks who had brought the Christians under their yoke" so that "they may extract the kernels of wisdom hidden therein [...] upholding the common good for which the knightly order was founded". It also tells us about the personal situation of the author, specifically of the "adversities of Fortune that give my thought no rest".

A total of 715 copies were made of the 1490 edition, only three of which remain. Of the 1497 edition, only one copy remains. The anonymous Castilian version from 1511 came to replace the Catalan version, which was not published again until 1870. Thanks to the Castilian version (1511) and the Italian version (1538), *Tirant* is the Catalan-language fiction that has become the most famous abroad.<sup>14</sup>

The work contains 487 chapters of widely varying length. In the first section (chapters 1-97), Martorell



FIGURE 3. Cover of the first Castilian version of *Tirant lo Blanc* (Tipografía de Diego de Gumiel, Valladolid, 1511), without either the author's name or the original language. Cervantes drew inspiration from this version.

mines materials from *Guillem de Varoïc*, a chivalric tale based on the Anglo-Norman *Guy de Warwyck*, which was inspired in turn by Ramon Llull's *Llibre de l'orde de cavalleria*. It recounts the story of a knight, Guillem de Varoïc, who retires to a hermitage, from whom Tirant learns the principles of knighthood. Diafebus, Tirant's friend, tells Guillem de Varoïc about the festivities organised by the King of England over his marriage, and how Tirant was dubbed a knight after several unique combats. The second section of the romance (chapters 98-115) starts when Tirant and his friends travel to Brittany and France. Prince Philip decides to accompany Tirant on his siege of Rhodes with the assistance of the King of Sicily to release it from the Turkish peril. Back in Sicily, Philip's marriage with Princess Ricomana is celebrated. Tirant conquers Tunisia, assisted by the kings of Sicily and France.

Tirant goes on to Constantinople at the behest of the Greek emperor, who had requested his assistance against the Turkish threat. Our hero is named Captain General of the Greek army and achieves numerous victories against the Turks, assisted by several Italian knights, but he has to deal with the traps that the Duke of Macedonia lays for him, although the latter ultimately dies at the hands of the King of Africa. Tirant's military episodes show parallels

with his amorous affairs with the Princess Carmesina, daughter of the emperor, as well as with Diafebus' affair with Estefania and Hippolytus' with Pleasure-of-My-Life, Carmesina's loyal maidservant. Meantime, Philip and Ricomana become the king and queen of Sicily. The Placid Widow, another of Carmesina's maidservants, tries to win Tirant's love, and the empress falls in love with Hippolytus. The slander against Carmesina causes melancholy in Tirant, but Hippolytus rallies to show him the evilness of the Placid Widow (chapters 116-296).

Tirant's ship sinks off the Barbary coasts, but he secures the favour of the King of Tlemcen and convinces his daughter Maragdina, who had fallen in love with him, to marry her fiancé, Escariano, King of Greater Ethiopia. Their conversion to Christianity inspires thousands of Muslims to do the same. Pleasure-of-My-Life, who was also shipwrecked off the Barbary coasts, manages to become queen in another Christianised kingdom, Fez. Aware of Tirant's presence in North Africa, and having witnessed his empire reduced to little more than the city of Constantinople, the emperor requests Tirant's urgent assistance, and he goes there with the military reinforcements of the new King of Sicily, Philip (chapters 297-407).

Pleasure-of-My-Life also goes to Constantinople to help the emperor after she secretly accompanies Tirant to Carmesina's room. They consummate their marriage proposition. Tirant manages to get the Turks to accept the peace treaty that the emperor offers them. As a reward for his efforts, the emperor grants Tirant Carmesina's hand in matrimony, which turns him into the heir of the Empire. Immediately thereafter, the Turks wrest many of his conquests away from him, but while in Adrianople he becomes seriously ill, makes out his will in favour of Hippolytus, writes a letter to Carmesina and dies (chapter 408-471).

Carmesina weeps over Tirant's corpse in Hagia Sofia, in a heartfelt lamentation. Feeling close to death herself, she makes out her will in favour of the empress, so once the old emperor dies as well, a council of eminences makes Hippolytus and the former empress marry and recognises them as the new sovereigns of the empire. When the empress dies three years later, Hippolytus marries a daughter of the King of England (chapters 472-487).

We cannot rule out the hypothesis that Martorell, who spent some time in Naples, was aware of *Curial* – there are several coincidences in their geographic settings and the names of some characters –, but a comparison reveals that the differences in substance and tone are enormous, with the exception of the realism of the everyday situations described. A few examples shall suffice to confirm that the themes, the mindsets and the explicit purposes of the two romances clearly do not reflect the same stimuli, the same contexts and the same intentions. The action in *Tirant* takes place between approximately 1450 and 1462. A kingdom of Sicily separate from the Crown of Aragon and ruled by a French prince named Philip was an unthinkable circumstance at the time. Many of the names in

the Byzantine parts of *Tirant* are Germanic and Latin, which was totally implausible in that court: thus the emperor was named Frederick, although at times he has been called Henry, and he is considered the son of Albert and the grandson of the emperor Constantine the Great. In contrast, the action in *Curial* approximately dovetails with the reigns of Conrad, Charles of Anjou and Peter the Great, that is, 1266 to 1285, and the names are rigorously historical. The sources of *Tirant* are essentially Catalan, while the sources of *Curial* are essentially Italian. Most of *Tirant* must have been written in the city of Valencia, just a few metres from the house of Joan Roís de Corella, the author of several primarily mythological works that Martorell plagiarised considerably. In contrast, *Curial* must have been written in Naples. *Tirant* was dedicated to a beloved prince, Ferdinand of Portugal, the “expectant king”, who, like Tirant, stood out for his actions in North Africa. Some commentators explain “expectant king” as an allusion to his status as the likely successor of Peter the Constable. However, this does not match Martorell’s political leanings. We do not have the name of the recipient of the dedicatory of *Curial*, but the romance seems like a mirror for princes. *Tirant* has a pessimistic ending in line with Martorell’s biography, as he was the victim of “injurious Fortune”, a life situation which was not alleviated by his great protector, John II, who must have given him safe-conduct in 1464 so he could move freely around the Kingdom of Valencia without justice taking action against him. According to the documentation and his own personal confession, the author lived and died poor, constantly besieged by lawsuits. Quite tellingly, Martorell replaced the “fickle Fortune” of his source *Los dotze treballs d’Hèrcules*, by Henry of Villena, with “injurious Fortune”. According to the unanimous opinion of competent mediaevalists,<sup>15</sup> the writer and knight Joanot Martorell has nothing to do with the wealthy master rational of the Prince of Viana of the same name, who was a Valencian citizen, nor can we identify him as the wealthy knight of the same name, Lord of Beniarbeig, solicitor of the Count of Dénia, Rojas Sandoval, cousin of the writer, known exclusively as “Joan” Martorell.<sup>16</sup> In contrast, *Curial*, the work of a wealthy knight, oozes optimism and has a happy ending.

Despite its moral purpose in favour of the traditional values of knighthood, Martorell managed to create a rollicking literary work, the outcome of an exceptional mastery of narrative resources and an extraordinary ability to observe and imagine. In his recreation of courtly scenes, Martorell draws not only from his own experiences (especially in London, Lisbon, Valencia and Naples) but also from information furnished by friends, relatives and acquaintances such as Jaume de Vilaragut (life in the ducal court of Gandia, the military expedition to Rhodes, etc.). Unlike the author of *Curial*, who chose to carefully recast his sources, Martorell prefers *imitatio*, since he reproduced and linguistically modernised his sources without excessive concern with distancing his text from them; in-

deed, in *Tirant* we can read many sentences borrowed almost verbatim from Joan Roís de Corella. The tone of *Tirant* is also considerably different to that of *Curial*: Martorell’s obscenity and stabs at parody contrast with the measure and refined irony of the author of *Curial*.

With his distortions of contemporary history and names, Martorell sought to do more than just remind readers that his story was fiction. An iconoclast and provocateur, he also wanted to express his threefold disenchantment: with personal adversities – loss of his realm, family conflicts, constant lawsuits; with the crisis in values in his social class, which he so skilfully rendered in the early pages of *Tirant* by presenting himself as a “knight, not merchant”; and with Western Christianity’s failure to effectively win back Constantinople – the praise of Ferdinand of Portugal, who was famous for his campaigns in North Africa, along with the tragic yet parodic ending of the romance, could not mean anything else.

The book, which is an engrossing read despite the rhetorical heft of certain fragments, is not only a veritable tableau of the society of his day and more specifically Valencian society; it is also a sample of the different kinds of writing and different literary registers of the time. Even though he drew significantly from the early works of his kinsman Corella, there is no solid reason for doubting his words in the dedicatory: “lest others be blamed if any fault be found, I, Joanot Martorell, knight, assume all the responsibility and wish to share it with no one.”

#### ESPILL (*Mirror*) (Jaume Roig)

Jaume Roig (ca. 1400-1478) composed the 16,249 verses of *Espill* probably between 1459 and 1461. It is a story told in the first person in which the main character tells his nephew about his unfortunate experiences with women in order to demonstrate their vile baseness and to advise men to avoid them. The text has survived in a single manuscript, which can be dated from the late 15th century, and in the three editions from the 16th century, which were published under the title of *Llibre de consells* or *Llibre de les dones*. Despite the syntactic intricacy of the work, along with its expressive and stylistic limitations, which entailed systematically fitting the plot into paired tetrasyllables, and the multisecular marginalisation of mediaeval Catalan literature, Roig’s verses have always been popular. This is proven by the fact that Llorenç Matheu i Sanç rendered a version of them in the midst of the Golden Age of Castilian literature, albeit in Spanish (1665), that Carles Ros prioritised its publication within a project to revive the mediaeval classics in their original language (1735), and that Francesc Pelai Briz published it during the early stages of the Renaixença (1866).

The *Espill* consists in a “Query” (v. 1-46) addressed to Joan Fabra in which Jaume Roig expresses the moral purpose which guided him when he composed the work; a

“Preface” (v. 47-792) addressed to his nephew Baltasar Bou, in which the author confesses that his advice to young and old is the outcome of his negative experiences with women and he describes the style and organisation of his story; and four books in which he recounts in first person the adventures that the main character – who should not be confused with Jaume Roig – experienced in the four stages into which his autobiography is divided. The work is presented as a “rewriting” or response from the physician Jaume Roig to Joan Fabra, a lovesick knight. Therefore, it is a kind of book of remedies. Since the main character is presented as 100 years old, this allows him to allude to historical events from the era of Peter the Ceremonious.

In the first book, “De sa joventut” (On His Youth), the main character, whose father has died, tells how he is kicked out of his house and required to live in En Clapers hospital (which Roig administered). He then tells how he travels to Catalonia on foot to seek his fortune. A bandit

knight adopts him as a page, but his wife’s threats force him to return to Valencia, where he is taken in by his godfather, who is a merchant, thanks to whom he is able to travel to Paris to search for new opportunities. He even has the chance to participate in, and fill his coffers from, the Hundred Years’ War. His experiences in the French capital are quite juicy, always in relation to the behaviour of the women he meets. He finally returns to Valencia with his earnings from Paris.

In the second book, “De quan fon casat” (On When He Was Married), the main character tells about his marital experiences with four women. The first is a relatively cultivated maiden – she discusses Dante, Boccaccio, Poggio, Plato, Cicero et al. with her friends – who brings him to ruin, but he is able to get out of it because she was already married. The second is a Beguine whom he wishes to marry after a pilgrimage to Santiago in Galicia, but she ends up being vicious and hypocritical and he leaves her. The third is a widow who ends up being barren, but she fakes pregnancy and tricks the main character with the newborn baby of another woman, who commits suicide after discovering the ploy. The fourth is a novice who gives him a son she does not want to nurse to avoid losing her bodily beauty; the child dies at the hands of wet nurses, and she kills herself when she becomes pregnant again. On these pages, Roig avidly condemns the vices of the convents.

In the third book, “De la lliçó de Salamó” (On Solomon’s Lesson), the narrator tells how once, when he was half-asleep, he heard Solomon’s voice recommend not to marry given the misdeeds of his own 700 wives, and he recalls the great men who were deceived by women (like Samson, Hippocrates, Socrates, etc.) and the lasciviousness of some famous women, such as Marie of Montpellier. Roig takes advantage of the occasion to take up the immaculate conception of Mary (which additions in the 1531 book explain more strikingly), a subject of theological debate at that time.

In the fourth book, “D’enviudat” (On Widowhood), the main character justifies his decision not to marry and recounts how after a pilgrimage through some of the most famous monasteries in Catalan lands (Poblet, Santes Creus, Vallbona, Montserrat, Benifassà, Valldecris, etc.), he decides to live a pious life at home, without contact with women, whom he considers perverse, except one, in allusion to Isabel Pellisser, Jaume Roig’s wife. He closes the story with an invocation to the Virgin Mary.

Roig had sound training in medicine and theology, and especially rich experience as a physician, the outcome of his contacts with different hospitals in the city. *Espill* faithfully attests to this.<sup>17</sup> However, he also had notable literary culture – he was quite familiar with *Les lamentacions de Matheolus*, for example – along with a fine ability to write verse and an outstanding mastery of “the Alge-mia and speech of Paterna, Torrent, Soterna”, that is, of the colloquial language of L’Horta de València. Roig describes his “*noves rimades*” (stories in verse), “*al pla teixides*” (“woven plain” or written in the vernacular), as “co-

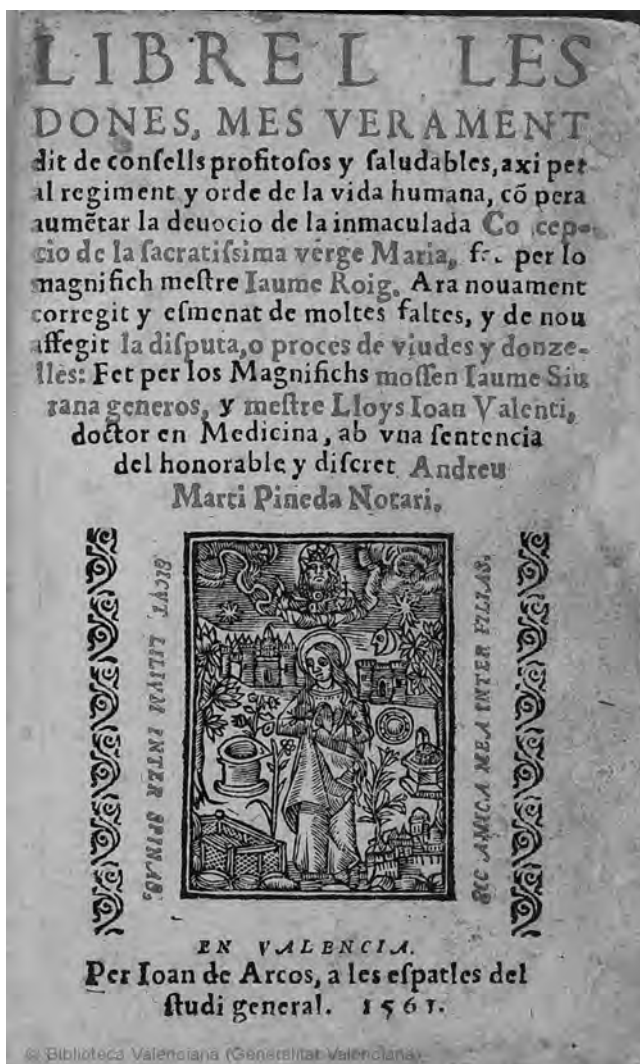


FIGURE 4. Cover of the edition of *L'Espill* by Jaume Roig, which was published in Valencia in 1561 by Joan d'Arcos with a new title, *Libre de les dones*, and additions referring to the Immaculate Conception.

*mediades, amforismals, facecials*” (comical descriptions usually related to amorous experiences, sententious adages and jest), yet he also conceived his work as a “*doctrinal, memorial [que] haurà nom Espill*” (moral instruction). The author manages to concentrate practically all the clichés of mediaeval misogyny in the book and to weave them into a highly original story. Even though his recourse to paired tetrasyllabic verses has traditionally been seen as a flaw for such a vivid story, his contemporaries must not have shared this assessment as this metre was easy to memorise and made the text easy to pass on orally. The literary genre and the tone of the story lead to the blossoming of a morphology, a lexical layering and a plain style which is the antithesis to Corella’s artful prose.

The work has traditionally been presented as an expression of the author’s profound misogyny, which must have been “contested” by pro-female works like Corella’s *Triümf de les dones* and Mother Isabel de Villena’s *Vita Christi*.<sup>18</sup> This is a stance which was certainly not alien to the author’s education and convictions, nor possibly to his direct or indirect knowledge of certain real situations, but the descriptions of the different kinds of women are so caricatured that we have to wonder if the text is also not a pretext for a spirited social satire along the lines of the rich burlesque poetry in Valencia from the last few decades of the 15th century. However, it stands apart from them for its clear moralising tone, which starkly contrasts with the amorality of the anonymous *Colloqui de dames*, one of the best expressions of erotic language by that group of burlesque poets.

*Espill* is mere fiction, but it is full of autobiographical elements and, despite the deformations imposed by the literary genre, it especially offers a very realistic picture of Valencian society in the 15th century and specifically of the city of Valencia. Roig describes very precise aspects of the trades and customs of the era and evokes real events which he knew about first-hand. He also furnishes priceless details on the knowledge and profession of medicine. In any event, as Antònia Carré accurately states,<sup>19</sup> “the satirical deformations and comical inversions of *Espill* should be understood within the context” of Galenic medicine.

#### VITA CHRISTI (*Life of Christ*) (Isabel de Villena)

One could question the inclusion of *Vita Christi* by Mother Isabel de Villena – a work that sought to inspire piety in its readers, the nuns of the Trinity in the abbess’s mind – in an overview of fiction. The work is unabashedly profoundly devout, even theological, in nature: the author not only aims to induce spiritual commingling with Jesus Christ – especially through Mary, Mary Magdalene and the other female characters in the Gospels, such as the Canaanite woman and the Samaritan woman – but also seeks to educate its readers in the Christian faith. However, Mother Isabel de Villena also approaches the life of Jesus Christ as a story which is capable of attracting atten-

tion through the entertainment techniques common to the romance. This approach is more than justified if we consider her *Vita Christi* as a fictional text. What is more, it is an outstanding fictional text in the way it recreates the life of Jesus, and highly original because of its feminist orientation. We obviously have to understand this feminist orientation in the sense of a woman’s perspective, albeit always within the prevailing ideological parameters of the period. The way she brings the female characters in the life of Jesus Christ to the fore makes the work a plea in favour of the affective superiority of women and their visibility in Jesus’ milieu.

As Albert Hauf has noted,<sup>20</sup> Mother Isabel, a Franciscan nun, bases the plot of her *Vita Christi* on the vernacular *Vida de Jesucrist* of her fellow Franciscan Francesc Eiximenis or on a source common to both of them, and, of course, on the Gospels, both canonical and apocryphal. Many of the citations and theological annotations are also based on the *Vita Christi* in Latin by Ludolph of Saxony, on liturgical and para-liturgical texts and on the most famous works by the fathers of the Church. Most of the imaginative resources were drawn from the *Meditationes vitae Christi*, which were widely circulating at the time. Hauf himself has shown that the book is an expansion, in terms of Jesus’ life, of an anonymous *Tractat de la passió* which, given its almost exact similarity to the corresponding chapters of the *Vita Christi*, must be attributed to Mother Isabel as well. A comparison of this *Tractat* with the graphic habits of Mother Isabel, which can be seen in her autographed *Llibre de censals*, confirms this authorship.<sup>21</sup>

Mother Isabel’s *Vita Christi*, written in “Romance”, or at least much of it, predates Joan Roís de Corella’s *Vita Christi*, in “Valencian prose”, better known as *Lo Car-toixà*. In any case, her book is immune to the stylistic influence of the artful prose of Corella and his imitators. Since it was published in 1497, seven years before Mother Isabel’s death, the new abbess, Mother Aldonça de Montsoriu, seems to have asked Miquel Peres to write the dedicatory of the work to Queen Isabel the Catholic, and perhaps to prepare the text for printing as well.<sup>22</sup> If Mother Isabel’s *Vita* contains several neologisms which match Corella’s *Vita*, it is probably not because of direct imitation of this latter work but because both shared a similar cultural milieu. We cannot forget that both authors were nobles, especially Mother Isabel de Villena, who did not hesitate to state this in her *Vita Christi*. Thus, when referring to the relic of the infant Jesus’ shirt, she mentions that “because of the privilege of great excellence, it pleased our Lord that the Kings of Aragon possess it, as the faithful and devout Christians that they are, and they conserve it with great veneration and reverence and are fully confident that the Lord who has worn and borne it will grant great mercy and grace to the house of Aragon and all its descendants, since he has entrusted such a dignified and excellent relic to them” (ch. xciv). She makes no reference to the fact that this relic had been conserved in the cathedral of Valencia since 1424 and therefore that she herself

must have seen and venerated it. What she does remark is that she considers herself one of the descendants of the royal house of Aragon.

But the place where Mother Isabel's aristocratic heritage stands out the most is in the courtly setting and royal address of the most important characters in *Vita Christi*. Thus, the birth of Jesus is heralded by the quartet made up of Saint Joseph singing tenor and the three archangels in a kind of courtly chamber music; Saint Michael Archangel is presented as a "prince", "viceroys" or "camerlengo"; Saint Joseph as a "knight"; the angel who appears to Saint Joachim as the "royal chamberlain" of the celestial court; the Holy Innocents as a "noble cavalry"; Moses as "the prince of the Jewish people"; the Virgin Mary as the "captain and mistress of the holy [apostolic] college; Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus as "noble barons of the city"; and in consequence, Jesus is called "His Majesty" and Mary "Her Ladyship", "Her Mercy" or "Her Highness", or simple "the Lady" or "the Glorious One". Many of these aristocratic elements were eliminated in the second edition of the *Vita Christi* (1513) and, in imitation of the latter, in the Barcelona edition from 1527. The streamlining of the second edition carried out by an anonymous "Master in Holy Theology" also affected the morphology, syntax and lexis, in an effort to adjust Mother Isabel's text to the new trends in pious literature in Catalan, which was predominantly bourgeois. In fact, the 1497 edition had been justified not only as a work meant for a select group of nuns in the Trinitat convent but "so that the simple and ignorant may know and contemplate the life and death of [...] Jesus".

Mother Isabel's language is moderately educated in terms of her use of lexical and syntactical Latinisms, while it is also colloquial with nuances in her use of common terms from everyday parlance. The use of diminutives – some of which were quite common in the colloquial language of Valencia – is considered a hallmark of her style, along with her detailed descriptions, but these traits are inherent to the mediaeval tradition of the lives of Christ. In reality, diminutives and detailed descriptions only appear in some sections and are closely related to women's domestic life.<sup>23</sup> One example from chapter x of *Vita Christi*, when Mother Isabel describes a scene in Jesus' family life with a level of domestic detail that could only come from a woman's pen, should suffice to illustrate how this writer very imaginatively recreated it with affectionate overtones and great narrative skill:

"And Anne accompanied the lady her daughter [Mary] to Joseph's house, which was very clean and only bedecked in poverty. The house had two small rooms. In the first was a little bed for the lady, with few bed linens, and in the other was a little bed, a very poor one, for Joseph. And the noble lady, as a lover of all virtue, refused to accept the better room but instead chose the smaller and poorer one.

And the lady her mother [Saint Anne], after leaving Mary in Joseph's house, returned to her own, and recalling the poverty she had seen in her daughter's house, she sent a pair

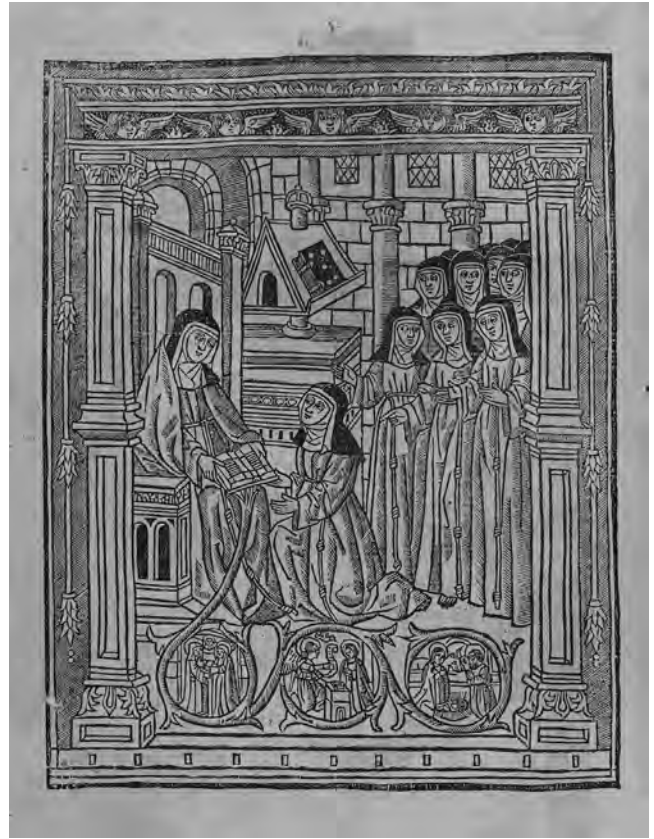


FIGURE 5. Engraving of the verse on the cover of *Vita Christi* (Valencia, Jordi Costilla, 1513) by Sister Isabel de Villena, depicting the author giving her book to her nuns in Valencia's Trinitat monastery.

of blankets and a few home implements. And the lady her daughter accepted them more out of love for Joseph than for herself, and profusely thanked the lady, her mother."

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

- [1] A good example of this is the recent publication in the United States, overseen by Peter Cocozzella, of an edition and study of the *Tragèdia de Caldesa* entitled *Text, Translation and Critical Interpretation of Joan Roís de Corella's 'Tragedia de Caldesa', a Fifteenth-Century Spanish Tragedy of Gender Reversal. The Woman Dominates and Seduces Her Lover* (The Edwin Mellen Press, Lewiston 2012), in which we read that Corella's famous story is announced as "Spanish".
- [2] For an overview of Catalan fiction in the 15th century, see: Albert HAUF (dir.). *Panorama crític de la literatura catalana*. Vol. II. *Edat mitjana. Segle d'Or*. Vicens Vives, Barcelona 2011; Lola BADIA (dir.). *Història de la literatura catalana. Literatura medieval*. Vol. III. *Segle XV*. Enciclopèdia Catalana, Barcino and Ajuntament de Barcelona, Barcelona 2015. For the study of the tendency towards an increasingly Spanish lexicon in the *Història de les amors de París e Viana*, see: Antoni FERRANDO, "La traducció catalana de la *Història de les amors de París e Viana*", *Caplletra*, no. 42 (Spring 2007), pp. 59-74.

- [3] A critical edition of the four volumes of *Lo Cartoixà* is currently being prepared, overseen by Josep Vicent Garcia Peris, Jordi Oviedo, Joan Maria Furió Vayà and Josep Antoni Aguilar, respectively.
- [4] Lambros KOTSALÁS. “El Oeste en el Este”. Hacia una historia de la *Història de Jacob Xalabín*. *Scripta*, no. 9 (2017), pp. 18-59. Modernised Catalan edition: Lola BADIA (ed.). *Història de Jacob Xalabín*. Barcelona 1982. Spanish version: Juan Miguel RIBERA (trad.). *Història de Jacob Xalabín*. Madrid 2000. Italian version: Anna Maria COMPAGNA (trad.), *La storia di Jacob Xalabín*. Introd.: Núria PUIGDEVALL. Alessandria 2010. English version: Barry TAYLOR (trad.). *History of Yaqub Çelebi*. Leiden and Boston 2016.
- [5] Antoni M. ESPADALER. “La *Història de Jacob Xalabín*. Realitat i ficció al voltant de Kossovo”. *eHumanista/IVITRA*, no. 8 (2015), p. 210.
- [6] Antoni M. ESPADALER. “La *Història de Jacob Xalabín*...”, *op. cit.*, p. 212.
- [7] Lola BADIA. “Estudi introductori” in *Història de Jacob*..., *op. cit.*, p. 6.
- [8] Antoni M. ESPADALER. “La *Història de Jacob Xalabín*...”, *op. cit.*, p. 219.
- [9] Antoni M. ESPADALER. “La *Història de Jacob Xalabín*...”, *op. cit.*, p. 220.
- [10] Abel SOLER. *La cort napolitana d’Alfons el Magnànim: el context de ‘Curial e Güelfa’*. Doctoral thesis supervised by Antoni FERRANDO. Universitat de València, Facultat de Filologia, Traducció i Comunicació, Valencia 2016. A summary of the hypothesis of the authorship of Enyego d’Àvalos in Abel SOLER. “Enyego d’Àvalos, autor de *Curial e Güelfa*?”. *Estudis Romànics*, no. 39 (2017), pp. 137-165. One of the arguments cited is the coincidence between the coat-of-arms that Curial uses in honour of Güelfa and the real coat-of-arms that Enyego d’Àvalos adopted when signing his marital pledge with Antonella d’Aquino, who inherited this coat-of-arms. The following hypotheses on authorship are all in situated in Naples: Antoni FERRANDO (*Consciència idiomàtica i nacional dels valencians*. València 1980), in favour of Joan Olzina (hypothesis abandoned in 2007); Júlia BUTINYÀ (“Sobre l’autoria del *Curial e Güelfa*”. *Boletín de la Real Academia de Buenas Letras de Barcelona*, no. 41 (1987-1988), pp. 63-119), in favour of Lluís Gras; and Maria Teresa FERRER I MALLOL (“Fou Lluís Sescases l’autor de *Curial e Güelfa*? El nord d’Àfrica en la narrativa del segle XV”. In: Ricard BELLVESER (ed.). *La novella de Joanot Martorell i l’Europa del segle XV*. Vol. II. Institució Alfons el Magnànim, Valencia 2011, pp. 415-450). For arguments on the shortcomings of the hypotheses of Olzina and Sescases: Antoni FERRANDO. “Joan Olzina, secretari d’Alfons el Magnànim, autor de *Curial e Güelfa*?”. *Estudis Romànics*, no. 35 (2013), pp. 443-463. In contrast, “the work was written in an Iberian setting related to the Trastámaras in the 1440s”, according to Lola Badia and Jaume Torró. See Lola BADIA and Jaume TORRÓ. “Curial entre Tristán y Orlando”. In: *Estudios sobre la Edad Media, el Renacimiento y la temprana modernidad*. San Millán de la Cogolla 2010, p. 44. In her review of ANONYMOUS, *Curial e Güelfa*, translated by Cesáreo CALVO and Anna GIORDANO (Aracne, Rome 2014), in *Llengua i Literatura* 26, 2016, pp. 186-188, Lola BADIA considers that “il grande mistero del *Curial e Güelfa*” is the fact that “si ignora nome [of the anonymous author] e contesto” of the romance (p. 186).
- [11] Antoni FERRANDO. “Precaucions metodològiques per a l’estudi lingüístic del *Curial e Güelfa*”. In: Antoni FERRANDO (coord.). *Estudis lingüístics i culturals sobre ‘Curial e Güelfa’, novella cavalleresca anònima del segle XV en llengua catalana*. John Benjamins, Amsterdam 2012, p. 103.
- [12] See, for the sources, “Introducció”, in ANONYMOUS. *Curial e Güelfa*. Critical, annotated edition by Lola BADIA and Jaume TORRÓ. Quaderns Crema, Barcelona 2011, pp. 9-114, and especially, Abel SOLER, *La cort napolitana*..., *op. cit.*; for the language and cultural context, Antoni FERRANDO (coord.). *Estudis lingüístics i culturals*..., *op. cit.*; for the philological edition of the text, ANONYMOUS. *Curial e Güelfa*, introduction and edition by Antoni Ferrando. Anacharsis, Toulouse 2007. Electronic Spanish version: Júlia BUTINYÀ (trad.). *Curial y Güelfa*. 2003. French version: Jean-Marie BARBERA (trad.). *Curial & Güelfa*. Toulouse 2007. German version: Gret SCHIB (trad.). *Curial und Güelfa. Ein katalanischer Ritterroman*. Berlin and Munich 2008. English version: Max WHEELER (trad.). *Curial and Güelfa*. Amsterdam and Philadelphia 2011. Portuguese version: Ricardo DA COSTA (trad.). *Curial e Güelfa*. Santa Barbara (California) 2011. Italian version: Anna GIORDANO and Cesáreo CALVO (trad.). *Curial e Güelfa*. Rome 2014. Asturian version: Pablo SUÁREZ GARCÍA (trad.). *Curial ya Güelfa*, Uviéu 2016.
- [13] Antoni FERRANDO. “Precaucions metodològiques...”, *op. cit.*, pp. 56-70; “Nuevas miradas acerca del *Curial*”. In: *En Doiro antr’o Porto e Gaia*. Porto 2017. A highly debatable version in: Lola BADIA and Jaume TORRÓ. “El *Curial e Güelfa* i el ‘comun llenguatge català’”. *Cultura Neolatina*, no. LXXIV, 1-4 (2014), pp. 203-245.
- [14] A comparative study of both versions was performed by Cesáreo CALVO. *Estudi contrastiu del lèxic de la traducció italiana del ‘Tirant lo Blanc’ (1538)*. Institut d’Estudis Catalans, Barcelona 2012. Critical edition: Albert HAUF and Vicent J. ESCARTÍ (ed.). *Joanot Martorell i Martí Joan de Galba, Tirant lo Blanc*. Valencia 1990. Spanish version: Martí de RIQUER (trad.). *Tirante el Blanco*. Madrid 1947-1949. English version: David H. ROSENTHAL (trad.). *Tirant lo Blanc*. New York 1984. French version: Jean-Marie BARBERA (trad.). *Tirant le Blanc*. Toulouse 2003. German version: Fritz VOGELSGANG (trad.). *Der Roman von Weissen Ritter Tirant lo Blanc*. Frankfurt 2007. Italian version: Paolo CHERCHI (trad.). *Tirante il Bianco*. Turin 2013.
- [15] Agustín RUBIO VELA. *Joanot Martorell y el condado de Dénia. Una clave en el ‘Tirant’*. Gráficas Papallona, Valencia 2010; Mateu RODRIGO reviews the aforementioned book

- by Agustín RUBIO. *Estudis Romànics*, no. 24 (2012), pp. 632-637; Antoni FURIÓ. “Car la retòrica més se pertany a notaris que a cavallers. Escripura, orgull de classe i autoria del *Tirant*”. *eHumanista/IVITRA*, no. 4 (2013), pp. 150-164; Ferran GARCIA-OLIVER. “Joanot i Ausias”. *eHumanista/IVITRA*, no. 4 (2013), pp. 201-219. Jaume Torró’s arguments in favour of equating the writer with the master rational of the Prince of Viana in Jaume TORRÓ. “Els darrers anys de Joanot Martorell, o en defensa del *Tirant*, la novel·la cavalleresca i la cort”. In: Ricard BELLVESER (ed.). *La novel·la de Joanot Martorell i l’Europa del segle xv*. Institució Alfons el Magnànim, València 2011, pp. 573-599.
- [16] A summary and critical commentary of these three hypotheses in: Antoni FERRANDO. “Llengua i context cultural al *Tirant lo Blanc*. Sobre la identitat del darrer Joanot Martorell (1458-1465)”. *eHumanista/IVITRA*, no. 22 (2012), pp. 623-668.
- [17] Agustín RUBIO VELA. “Autobiografia i ficció en l’*Espill* de Jaume Roig. A propòsit de l’episodi en l’hospital”. *L’Espill*, no. 17-18 (1983), pp. 127-149.
- [18] Joan FUSTER. “Jaume Roig i sor Isabel de Villena”. In: *Obres completes*. Vol. I. Edicions 62, Barcelona 2002, pp. 175-210; Rosanna CANTAVELLA. *Els cards i el llir: una lectura de l’Espill de Jaume Roig*. Quaderns Crema, Barcelona 1992.
- [19] Antònia CARRÉ. “L’*Espill*, de Jaume Roig”. In: Lola BADIA (dir.). *Història de la literatura...*, *op. cit.*, p. 288.
- Philological editions: Anna Isabel PEIRATS (ed.). *Jaume Roig, Spill*. Acadèmia Valenciana de la Llengua, València 2010; Antònia CARRÉ (ed.). *Jaume Roig, Espill*. Barcino, Barcelona 2014. Spanish version: Anna Isabel PEIRATS (trad.). *Jaume Roig, El Espejo o Libro de las mujeres*. Centro de Lingüística Aplicada Atenea, Madrid 2009. Italian version: Aniello FRATTA (trad.). *Jaume Roig, Specchio o Libro delle donne*. University of California at Santa Barbara, Publications of eHumanista, Santa Barbara 2014.
- [20] Albert HAUF. *La ‘Vita Christi’ de sor Isabel de Villena (s. xv) como arte de meditar. Introducción a una lectura contextualizada*. Biblioteca Valenciana, València 2006, p. 46.
- [21] Antoni FERRANDO. “Llengua i espiritualitat en la *Vita Christi*, d’Isabel de Villena”. *Scripta*, no. 6 (December 2015), p. 37.
- [22] Antoni FERRANDO. “Llengua i espiritualitat...”, *op. cit.*, p. 44.
- [23] Rosanna CANTAVELLA. “El denominat ‘estil afectiu’ en la *Vita Christi* d’Isabel de Villena. Notes d’exegesi isabelina”. In: *Els escriptors valencians del segle xv*. Edició de Germà COLÓN. Universitat Jaume I, Castelló de la Plana 2013, pp. 193-233. Modernised version: Vicent J. ESCARTÍ (ed.). *Isabel de Villena, Vita Christi*. Institució Alfons el Magnànim, València 2011. Albert Hauf has completed a critical edition of the *Vita Christi* by Mother Isabel de Villena.

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