

# Joaquim Xirau i Palau (1895-1946)

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Firstly, we must say that the personal and intellectual career of Joaquim Xirau i Palau, one of the most successful thinkers of the twentieth century in this country, has been the subject of various literature proposals, so our contribution does not represent any significant development. Indeed, the figure of Xirau—who was forced into exile in 1939, where he died in 1946 as a result of a road accident—remained in the background during the long darkness of Franco's regime. Only with the advent of the transition to democracy, his public recognition was allowed, with demonstrations of admiration and respect from some of his disciples such as Jordi Maragall, Josep M. Calsamiglia, Francesc Gomà and Miquel Siguan.

Nevertheless, as Francoism vanished, Xirau's work began to circulate in Catalonia, although many years had to pass for his complete works to be printed. In the same vein, it is worth mentioning that, in 1969, the book *Manuel B. Cossío y la educación en España* (Ariel, Barcelona, 1969) was published for the second time. It first came out in Mexico in 1945 and it served to stress the role of the Institución Libre de Enseñanza (Free Educational Institution), which had been systematically ostracised during the first decades of the Franco regime. At any rate, this process was accentuated when the transition to democracy arrived, with the restoration of civil and political liberties and in a new favourable environment for highlighting the links and connections between Catalonia and the core of the Institución.

Thus, in 1978, the Provincial Council of Barcelona published the Bibliographical Exhibition Catalogue, which commemorated the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Institución Libre de Enseñanza. It was organised on the occasion of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Education in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Week, which took place in April 1976, and saw the collaboration of the Club d'Amics de la Futurologia. The Catalogue included a chapter on the Institución Libre de Enseñanza, through a series of

Catalan authors and a collection of the most representative texts. Among the selected figures, and next to Joan Maragall and Josep Pijoan, the name of Joaquim Xirau stands out (pp. 54-55). Unsurprisingly, among the references of books on the Institución, some works by Xirau are cited, and *L'amor i la percepció dels valors* (Barcelona, 1937, 72 pp.) and *Manuel B. Cossío y la educación en España* (Mèxic, 1944, 316 pp.) are in a prominent position. Precisely that year, in 1976, Reine Guy's book *Axiologie et métaphysique selon Joaquim Xirau. Le personalisme contemporain de l'Ecole de Barcelone* appeared, and became one of the first systematic approaches to the Catalan thinker, and followed the line of work begun by her husband, Professor Alain Guy.

During the eighties Xirau's most important philosophical work was re-published. In particular, we are talking about the volume *Amor y mundo y otros escritos*, printed by Península in 1983. In addition to *Amor y mundo* (1940), *Lo fugaz y lo eterno* (1942) was reissued as well as a third minor text entitled *Tres actitudes: poderío, magia e intelecto*. This work was presented as a joint initiative of the Autonomous University of Barcelona and the Colegio de México. Furthermore, it included a preamble by Ramon Xirau in which he stated that the above-mentioned *L'amor i la percepció dels valors* (1937) was a clear antecedent of *Amor y mundo* (1940). A foreword followed the preamble, in which Jordi Maragall sketched a personal and intellectual profile about the author.

Three years later, the publisher Eumo launched the anthology *Pedagogia i vida*, with an introduction and selection of texts by Miquel Siguan Soler, who had also had contact with Joaquim Xirau at the University of Barcelona, in the thirties. This pedagogic anthology appeared in 1986, and the second edition was published in 1999. Meanwhile, as the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his birth was approaching, references to Xirau's work increased to the extent that several monographs appeared, most of which were collective. However, the most important thing was the recovery of Joaquim Xirau's texts, which was achieved thanks to two near-consecutive endeavours. In 1996, Xirau's *Obra selecta* appeared in two volumes, with an introduction and a selection of texts by Ramon Xirau (El Colegio de México, México). Subsequently, the edition of his *Obres Completes* in four volumes came out between 1998 and 2000. While more texts have been found later on (journalistic texts, especially) the truth is that this works' edition — an initiative of the Fundación Caja Madrid and Editorial Anthropos — provides access to the Catalan thinker's production of articles and books.

Regarding the existence of bibliographies on Joaquim Xirau, we are aware of two collections. One is an authentic bio-bibliography and was published by Irene de Puig i Oliver within the *Annals de l'Institut d'Estudis Gironins* in the early eighties. As the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Xirau's birth was approaching, Daniel Gili, —with the collaboration of Enric Pujol and Ramon

Xirau— prepared a second bibliography, which was published in 1995 by the Figueres Town Council. In view of what is being said, thus, the collection presented here aims to contain the most significant of what has been said and written about Joaquim Xirau since then, especially during the period 1995-2013 with some prior references.

It is worth adding that, in recent years, the figure of Xirau has achieved a very strong position in the Catalan and Hispanic school of thought, which enables the study of his work to be carried out aside and regardless of commemorative dates. Somehow, we can point out — by way of conclusion — that as Catalan philosophy has normalised, the name of Joaquim Xirau has become a benchmark in our thought, and he now attracts the interest of scholars from America and Europe, so not only from this country but also from elsewhere. Whilst a few years ago Alain and Reine Guy followed the trail of Xirau, today other researchers — such as the Italian Alessia Cassani — track his footsteps, to the extent to which she pieced a bibliography together in 2006, which she entitled, in a very suggestive fashion, *L'amore è stato creato per pensare*.

Once preambles and prior remarks are made, here is our bibliographic contribution, which simply aims to offer some references that can have propaedeutic value to gain knowledge of the line of thought and criticism (the most recent secondary literature) of this philosopher and educator, who put together a stimulating thinking built on the basis of loving consciousness, which points towards an axiom that seeks full meaning of life, with the understanding that the teacher should make one fall in love, and his disciple, in turn, should know how to love. After all, Xirau's formula is steeped in the spirit of Saint Augustine. Not in vain, the thinker from Figueres wrote: "Through love all the roads are clear, all perspectives are bright. *Ama et fac quod vis.*"

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