

*Biblical Intertextuality in Ferran de Pol*¹

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Abstract: The main objective of this article is to offer an intertextual study of the presence of the Bible in the work of Ferran de Pol. Intertextuality is understood as the relationship that exists between two or more texts when we can identify in one of them more or less explicit phrases taken from others, in this case from the Bible. We do not analyse any religious intention of the author, but we note that the Bible was undoubtedly one of his formative books. We find the greatest biblical presence in his novels *Érem quatre* ('We Were Four', 1960), *Miralls tèrbols* ('Cloudy Mirrors', 1966) and the unpublished *Ella, jo i el càntic* ('She, I and the Song', 1987). Ferran de Pol's rewriting of the Bible has multiple and heterogeneous functions: in some cases it acts as the central axis of a specific work, in others it has compositional, rhetorical, satirical, conceptual or parodic functions.

Keywords: intertextuality; Bible; Ferran de Pol; rewriting

1. The Bible and contemporary Catalan literature

In the Bible and the Greco-Latin tradition we can find the hermeneutical key to a large part of the texts and works of art that the West has produced for more than two millennia. Despite the evident changes in religious values and in contemporary society, the Bible – like the Greco-Latin past – was the keystone of our culture for much of the 20th century, and continues to provide essential elements for shaping the collective Western imagination of identity in the 21st century. In short, it is a truly international cultural intertext in which valuable contributions are exchanged (Camarero 2008).

The Bible has always been the subject of academic study, but only in recent decades has there been a growing interest in exploring the book as a literary object, and its influence on literature. Northrop Frye (2001 [1981])

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is an authority in this area of research. He has demonstrated that the Bible is an important source of plot and thematic material for literary production. Recognition on the part of readers is one of the reasons for the widespread use of elements drawn from the Bible by literary authors. Its influence on Western civilisation is present, implicitly or explicitly, in Western literature (think of Blake, Dante, Milton or Cervantes, for example), and therefore also in Catalan literature.

The sacred text is present from the earliest texts in Catalan (*Homilies d'Organyà*) to contemporary literature (Santamach, Ferrer & Dalemus 2022). Its influence is a common element both in the work of the author we are going to analyse (Ferran de Pol) and in that of other contemporary writers: Mercè Rodoreda, especially in *La plaça del diamant* ('Diamond Square', 1961), but also in *El carrer de les camèlies* ('Camellias Street', 1966) and *Quanta, quanta guerra* ('So, So Much War', 1980); Francesc Trabal, with *Judita* ('Judita', 1930); Joan Oliver, with *Allò que tal vegada s'esdevingué* ('That Which May Have Come to Pass', 1936), *Terra de Naufragis* ('The Land of Shipwrecks', 1956), *Saló de tardor* ('Autumn Room', 1947), *Vacances pagades* ('Paid Vacation', 1961), etc.; Salvador Espriu, in all his works, from *Laià* ('Laià', 1932) to *Setmana Santa* ('Easter', 1971); Joan Sales, with *Incerta glòria* ('Uncertain Glory', 1956); or Jaume Vidal Alcover, *Oratori per a un home sobre la terra* ('Oratory for a Man on Earth', 1969–1972) and *El fill pròdig* ('The Prodigal Son', 1970), among other authors and works.

The Bible is a collection of texts of various genres (letters, stories, prayers, laws, etc.), "a work of bricolage" (Frye 2001 [1981]), written in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek by dozens of authors over almost a thousand years. The Old Testament includes the Pentateuch, historical books, books of wisdom and of prophets, written at different times in the history of the Hebrew people. The New Testament contains 27 short texts written between 50 and 130 AD. They include four gospels, 21 epistles, the Acts of the Apostles and the Book of Revelation. It is the library of the first communities of followers of the risen Jesus of Nazareth. (Ferrer 2006: 21)

2. Ferran de Pol and the Bible

If we had to mention one event that marked the life and work of Lluís Ferran de Pol (Arenys de Mar, 1911–1995), it would be the Spanish Civil War and his subsequent exile in Mexico. We still have several literary works by the author about the war – especially the Battle of the Ebro – and the subsequent exile from 1939 to 1948, after internment in French concentration camps. The experience of the war and the subsequent contact with pre-Hispanic cultures transformed and

defined his immediate work: *Abans de l'alba* ('Before Sunrise', 1955), *La ciutat i el tròpic* ('The City and the Tropic', 1956), *Érem quatre* ('We Were Four', 1960), *De lluny i de prop* ('From Far Away and Close Up', 1973), *Campo de concentración* (1939) ('Concentration Camp (1939)', 2003), *Un de tants* ('One of Many', 2009) could be organised around these assumptions (Garcia Raffi 1998).

De Pol was a lawyer by trade, but he never stopped writing all kinds of text in Catalan: prose fiction – in addition to the titles mentioned above, *Tríptic* ('Triptych', 1964) *Miralls tèrbols* ('Cloudy Mirrors', 1966), the unpublished *Ella, Jo i el càntic* ('She, I and the Song', 1987); drama – *Costa brava hivern* ('Costa Brava, Winter', 1963), *La princesa que vivia a l'infern* ('The Princess Who Lived in Hell, 1980), both unpublished; journalistic articles – in *Serra d'Or*, *Avui*, *Diario de Barcelona*, etc.; and translations – Hegmingway's *The Old Man and the Sea* (1966); as well as unpublished studies on Àngel Guimerà or Francesc Macià, etc.

Rewriting is a fundamental element in Ferran de Pol's work: Greco-Latin texts, Aztec and Mayan myths, biblical intertexts, self-translation, etc. (Garcia Raffi 2021: 121–140). He was an autodidact, and in his home town the sculptor Francesc Arnau taught him to read Greek and Latin classics such as the collection at "La Bernat Metge", the Catalan classics of "Els nostres clàssics", the library of novels "A tot vent", published by Proa, and contemporary authors such as Proust, Cocteau or Gide. Later, in Mexico, he studied philosophy and literature while working as a journalist for the newspaper *El Nacional*, a job that transformed his writing style:

A certain taste for primitive forms, a curiosity for myths, an appreciation of sounds, colours and shapes, an interest in the plastic arts, an attempt to reconcile reality and fantasy. The memory of books, mainly biblical and second-hand classics, translated, of course. Signs of verbal bloat, against which the best remedy would be my nine years of professional journalism in Mexico (Ferran de Pol 1964: 25).²

The Bible was one of de Pol's formative books, and so we find many instances of intertextuality in his work that refer to it. For him, it was an awe-inspiring book that he read and reread frequently (Mengual 1992: 20). A text that transcended Christianity and the author's religious experience. From his years as a boarding student at the Valldemia de los Maristas school in Mataró, the Holy Book accompanied him throughout his personal and literary life:

² All quotations from the books have been translated by Manuel Gil Fernández at the request of the author of this paper.

At that time there was a book that made a great impression on me and for which I had a strong affection: the Bible, which gave me a pessimistic feeling about life; that 'seventy times seven' thing, divine retribution, and at the same time the image of Christ, whom I no longer worshipped as God, but came to admire deeply as a man. (Rendé 1985)

From an early age he regularly read the Vulgate by Scío de San Miguel; some time later Joan Sales gave him the Spanish version by Cipriano de Valera, and then he bought the Montserrat Bible in Catalan (Serra 1985: 127–128). The daily presence of the Holy Book was further strengthened when he married a Welsh woman, Esysllt Thomas Lawrence. Welsh culture is an indispensable pillar of linguistic resistance. The Bibles in the collection of the legacy of Ferran de Pol-Esysllt Thomas Lawrence (located in the P. Fidel Fita Library in Arenys de Mar) include copies in four languages: in English, there is *The Holy Bible: Containing the Old and the New Testaments* (1925), the oldest in the collection; in Spanish, *La Santa Biblia: antiguo y nuevo testamento* (1939); in Welsh, two different editions, *Y Beibl: cyssegr-lan* (1937) and *Y Beibl: cymraeg newydd* (1988); and, in Catalan, *La Bíblia. Versió dels textos originals i notes pels Monjos de Montserrat* (1989).

3. Rewriting and biblical intertexts in the work of Ferran de Pol

In this paper, We will try to go beyond simply pointing out the presence of the Bible in the author's work and show how he used or reworked biblical texts. Ferran de Pol, unlike other writers such as Jorge Luis Borges or Joan Oliver, does not focus mainly on one biblical character (Job, Noah, etc.). The presence of the Bible in his work is much more widespread and must be traced.

In contemporary literary theory as well as in discourse analysis, the relationship that occurs between two or more texts when one of them (the quoting or derived text) contains more or less explicit phrases taken from other texts (the quoted or source text) is called intertextuality or, in Genette's (1989 [1982]) broader term, transtextuality. The text resulting from the rewriting is linked to the 'original' through additions, markings, and rhetorical and conceptual traces that may complement, modify, or contradict it.

Biblical references fulfil different functions: they can be rhetorical, used to reinforce the register or the effect sought with a particular text (pathetic, comic, ironic), to breathe life into the characters, and to reinforce and/or open up the meaning and subtext of a work. Some quotations can illustrate significant passages in the development of the characters and contribute to the overall meaning of the work.

In general, we can say that the narrators and characters in Ferran de Pol's literary work introduce literary figures of biblical origin into their speeches, dialogues and monologues in order to deepen the narration of the events, giving them a transcendence that they would otherwise lack and elevating them above the literal narration.

The influence of the Bible on Ferran de Pol's work could go even further. Among the documents preserved in the author's legacy, there is a list of titles of possible works, with one of these projects being for a collection of short stories which he notes as "partly finished", and whose suggestive title was *Nova degollació del Baptista* ('The New Beheading of the Baptist'). Unfortunately, there is no manuscript corresponding to this title. Such a work would mark Ferran de Pol's attempt to recreate the biblical narrative itself.

a) "Primera història" (1935) (*Tríptic*, 1964): a playful and ironic transformation of the hypotext.

Ferran de Pol uses the first verses of the Bible (Gen 1–5) in the story "Primera història" ("First Story", 1935), published in the volume *Tríptic* (1964). The reader – familiar with the biblical story – knows that God creates the first man, Adam, and gives him a companion with whom he will grow and multiply, and that they will eventually be expelled from paradise because of the original sin. In this story we have a literary exploitation of the humorous effect of irony. The effect is produced by a semantic-pragmatic transformation (Genette's *pastiche*) from the book of Genesis; that is, he changes the meaning of the hypotext by modifying essential elements of the plot, without affecting the diegetic framework (the spatial and temporal coordinates) (Genette 1989 [1982]: 375–397).

Creation becomes a game for the Lord, with Adam as the victim of dramatic irony in the absence of original sin. Ferran de Pol changes the storyline, which has a direct impact on its meaning. This transformation is achieved both by expanding the narrative – by including conversations between the Lord and Adam – and by reducing the biblical text by eliminating the serpent episode. The Creator is confronted with an unforeseen situation that turns his initial intentions upside down: ironically, after rejoicing in the creation of a being who can finally dialogue with Him, when He is no longer alone, He is confronted with the need to create a woman for Adam, which results in God ending up alone again, albeit in a complacent and understanding solitude.

b) *Campo de concentración* (1939) and the symbolic reference to the book of Exodus.

Published posthumously, this is a memoir of the end of the Spanish Civil War, his imprisonment in French concentration camps and his journey to Mexico on the ship *Sinaia* in June 1939. The text was written for the Mexican newspaper *El Nacional*, but only a third of the texts he wrote for it were published, and *Campo de concentración* was not one of them. Ferran de Pol later worked as a journalist for the same newspaper. His writings in Spanish contain a great deal of intertext of all kinds. We will highlight for analysis one of the chapters, entitled *Éxodo* (Ferran de Pol 2003: 76–82). This text rewrites, in reported speech, a letter (fictional or otherwise) written by the wife of a comrade who shared a barrack with the narrator in the Saint-Cyprien concentration camp. The intertitle ‘*Éxodo*’ was used in the exile Republican egodocuments to describe the flight of thousands of people to France to escape Franco’s army. It is easy to see the weight of the biblical idea of exodus, a good metaphor for the situation of the Spanish Republicans.

c) *Notes en els marges d’una biblia* (‘Notes in the Margins of a Bible’, 1950).

Among the materials preserved in the Ferran de Pol-Esyllt T. Lawrence legacy, there is a notebook with grid-lined pages containing two handwritten pages by the author with this title at the top, dated 1950. There are also handwritten pages with notes on various elements of the history of the Church (“Pentecost, Sadducees, Pharisees, Zealots, Scribes, Jesus, Christian sources, political situation”) and on the books of the Bible and the Four Evangelists.³

In just these two pages, Ferran de Pol attempted to comment on and summarise the Holy Book. He included quotations, but also a literary commentary. The following is a transcription of the first lines:

The creation of the world, which begins: “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth”, does not only include the mystery of the birth of everything. In the supreme simplicity of the story, we learn to give the words a new, brilliant meaning, unsoiled for everyday use. To relate great things by putting together simple words is something that only a few people can do. The first book of the Bible – Genesis – explains clearly, with naive simplicity, how it all began. The last one – Revelation – echoes with terrible, dark images. Is this further proof that it is easier to start something than to finish it? Or does it

³ In the classification system of the Ferran de Pol-Esyllt T. Lawrence legacy, the documents are identified as 15.8.15, 15.8.16 and 15.9.

prove the inevitable variegation of all narratives, of all literature? Either way, the world – or its history – begins with simple words (albeit great ones) and ends in verbal confusion.

d) *Érem quatre* (1960): from Crucifixion to the Valley of Josaphat.

Érem quatre is the adventure of four archaeologists in search of the lost city of Tollan. They are Professor Leopoldo Enguiano and three foreign students: the Catalan Republican exile Pau, the German Hedwig Bergen, and the American Patrick Craig. Throughout the novel, legend, myth, superstition and religion complement each other in such a natural way that the reader is almost unaware of it. This interweaving gives rise to a number of episodes that reveal how the narrator relives biblical episodes. Religious elements such as the Crucifixion, the Valley of Josaphat, or when one of the protagonists, Pau, recalls his journey into exile and when he remembers the wife of Graupera, a passenger, and introduces the intertext marked by quotation marks (Gen 24:1–66), an evident intertextuality, even in terms of typography and semantic signs (Camarero 2008: 43), which guides the reader's competence:

Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink...

But she had never read the Bible, nor perhaps any other book. Her name was not Rebekah, nor was she a virgin, but the wife of Graupera, the great one... She did not answer: "Drink, my Lord," because she had never read the Bible, and her name was not Rebekah... I drank from her pitcher. A water that did not quench my thirst; neither this nor any other. Ferran de Pol 1984 [1960]: 27).

But there is a biblical hypotext, the Song of Songs, which links two novels by Ferran de Pol: *Ella, Jo i el càntic* (unpublished), which we will discuss later, and *Érem quatre*. The next of the biblical references in the novel appears during Pau's illness, with the hallucinations produced by the fever. Pau relives the Passion of the Christ on the Mount of Olives, experienced in his own skin in Sarinyena, on the Spanish war front. We find other references, such as the Valley of Josaphat, when they arrive at the Sanctuary of Chalma, a place of pilgrimage. These hallucinations give us an insight into his subconscious, which mixes European and Mexican literary reminiscences and his unconfessed infatuation with the female protagonist of the story, Hedwig: "You, our Lord, you, my love... and I have followed you and I have been your wife for a year. But now, my dear Sir, the blond in my hair is ripe, the year is over... Hedwig, will you wipe away my blood?" (Ferran de Pol 1984 [1960]: 76–78). Another quotation from the Bible is essential at a particularly critical moment in the novel: "We were serious, we didn't talk to each other, we didn't even dare to look at each other. As if we had lost

our innocence, as if we had tasted the fruit of the tree of knowledge..." (Ferran de Pol 1984 [1960]: 223). This intertext evokes Genesis and corresponds in the diegesis to the moment after Professor Enguiano and Hedwig have fallen in love, when Pau's violent reaction triggers the end of the novel. All these episodes are examples of serious (unironic) transposition or transformation of fragments of the biblical hypotext.

e) *Miralls tèrbols* (1966): rewriting the parable of the prodigal son.

In this novel, Ferran de Pol reconstructs the conflicts and events that took place in a Catalan coastal village in the 1920s, when a worker from Marenys, Jaurés, was building a new harbour. The protagonists are his family. He has three children: Antoni; the heir, Enric, the son who quarrels with his father and leaves home with Carminya, the nurse of his newborn sister, Roser, to live with Vadó, a rubbish collector and undertaker. In *Miralls tèrbols*, Marenys (the literary transformation of Arenys de Mar, the author's birthplace) is the main protagonist of the novel, which is a mosaic of characters, a space that can be symbolic at times and realistic at others, with references that are still recognisable.

This is the latest novel published by Ferran de Pol and it contains a new transposition of the Bible, whose central motif is the parable of the prodigal son. In this parable, told in the Gospel of Luke (15:11–32), the younger son claims his share of the inheritance from the father. He then travels around the world squandering it, until he has no choice but to work as a swineherd and, repentant, returns to his father, who welcomes him with love, much to the chagrin of the faithful first-born son, who had remained in his father's house.

The tension in the plot of this work comes from Enric Jaurés's rebellion against his father, reinforced by the use of parable. It is a showdown between the rising new generation and the old generation in power. The demand for filial respect is prominent in the New Testament parable expressed by the narrator himself: the fallen son, who returns home repentant, sacrificing his love for the Galician nurse on the family altar, a human sacrifice that contrasts with that of Isaac.

Miralls tèrbols contains another biblical intertext that is as powerful as the Gospel parable and creates tension from the very first chapters. It corresponds to Genesis 17–21, when Abraham and Sarah are both over ninety years old. Abraham has a son, Ishmael, by Sarah's slave, Hagar, but this son cannot be his true heir because his lineage cannot be perpetuated by a son fathered by a slave. God helps Sarah to have a son of her own: Isaac. The scene in the novel that most closely parallels the biblical text is the crescendo that foreshadows the rupture and departure of the eldest son when Enric (the protagonist) learns that

his mother is pregnant. In the text of Genesis, it might seem that the only parallel between the two is the biblical reference to the age of Sarah and Abraham. But if we read the text carefully, we see an insistence on astonishment, disbelief and surprise: not because Sarah will have a son, but because she had to lie with Abraham to conceive him, there was sexual pleasure involved. Transposed to the novel, Ferran de Pol uses the reaction that the reader might have when reading the biblical text – which the Bible smothers with a promise from Yahweh – to reinforce the decision to leave the father: “A son? ‘Is mother expecting a son at her age? That’s disgusting! Did you know? I see, you find it very natural. Mother is only fifty-two, and father is in his sixties... What do you want? The heart is young’, Enric contained a chuckle, ‘I’m not so surprised about father’” (Ferran de Pol 2008 [1966]: 85)

But there is yet another instance of the Biblical hypotext, now exemplified in the Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector (Luke 18:9–15). A monologue by Enric remarks this admiration and hatred for his father:

If you allow me to quote the Gospels as is your style, Mrs Pasqual, he is a good Pharisee. He has always thanked God for not being like the others... If we are to speak of parables, that of the Pharisee is a good fit and this external exemplary nature of my father, if you want to know, is what I find intolerable, revolting... (Ferran de Pol 2008 [1966]: 227).

Finally, let us remember one last biblical image, that of the dove on Noah’s Ark, which went out and came back again and again after the Flood, until one day the earth dried up and it did not return (Gen 8:6–12): “Jaume is like the dove in the Ark. Now he goes but he comes back. I’m afraid the day will come when he finds a place, a hideout, where he can settle down and make himself at home. That day, I am sure, he will not return, and all my efforts will have been in vain. I hope I am wrong. That is my greatest wish.” (Ferran de Pol 2008 [1966]: 93).

f) *Ella, Jo i el càntic* (1987): the power of the Song of Songs.

This is an unpublished novel. We have the printing proofs, retouched, scratched, with deletions and additions, as I have analysed elsewhere (Garcia Raffi 2021: 135–136). We have ninety-eight numbered extended pages⁴ of a novel that de Pol submitted for the 1986 Sant Jordi Prize – he was a finalist. It is a

⁴ In the classification system of the Ferran de Pol-Esyllt T. Lawrence legacy, the documents are identified as Installation unit 1: 1.1.5, 1.16 and 1.17.

pre-publication text with a series of proofs controlled by the author in preparation for the first edition. We can treat this work from the point of view of genetic criticism.

Set between Wales and Catalonia in the 1960s, this is the story of the anti-hero Pere Taieda, a former Republican fighter in the Spanish Civil War and in the British army, at odds with his Catalan family and uprooted from his environment. The novel offers a range of polyphonies, from a phrase by Teresa of Jesus to various political slogans from the Spanish Civil War, written in italics. But there are also references to Max Stirner and *The Unique and Its Property*, from which the novel includes some quotations. They use quotation marks, the clearest of all intertextual devices, to show textual co-presence and allusion.

The title of the work is a rewriting of the Song of Songs – *Càntic dels càntics* in Catalan – a borrowing from the Bible to the novel. The title establishes a parallel (maintained throughout the work) between the intertextual play with the biblical text and the sexual relationship between the two protagonists: Pau and Ceridwen. The intertextuality with the Bible is explicit:

“We must begin the *Song*”, he told me... It is clear that the *Bible* is a religious book, but the love of man and woman is not excluded... Two shall become one flesh, God said to the human couple. And two becoming one flesh means that man and woman must become one. And becoming one means that every couple must rejoice in love, in the practice of it and in all the acts and situations that the union of love requires, from the first caresses to the final mutual ecstasy... And look, Pere, to become one flesh is a divine plan, one of the first in the *Genesis*... (84)

We have already said that the Song of Songs is the biblical book that links two of Ferran de Pol's novels. Traditionally, the marriage of the protagonists has been interpreted as an image of God's covenant or love for His people: the groom being Christ and the bride being the Church. However, Ferran de Pol gives the text a sense of reality, as a song between a man and a woman; a love that is removed from the trivial through images and metaphors, a love in which we can also find mythological and religious symbols (Lurker 2018: 7). This is the interpretation that the author gave to his rewriting of *Ella, Jo i el càntic*.

After this recreation of the Song of Songs, the diegesis progresses with multiple Biblical references and becomes a kind of redemption for the protagonist, a scapegoat for all the misfortunes he suffered in the war, as the female protagonist explains to him, with great precision, that can be found in Leviticus (16:15–28):

“Well, yes, I’ll explain”, she says, smiling. “Look, the Third Book of Moses, also known as Leviticus... Wait, I’ll give you the exact words...” she laughs, walks over to a table and takes a thick book: “See? Here we have the Bible. We Welsh people have the good fortune to have an excellent translation of the Bible, from the 16th century exactly...” (61)

Since the second part is set in Wales and the protagonist, Ceridwen, is the daughter of a Methodist reverend, the presence of the Bible goes beyond the intertext and becomes part of the story and characterisation. In Methodism, which is very popular in Wales, reading the Bible is a daily activity and the book is an important text in the written transmission of the Welsh language (Ferran de Pol 1988).

In Ceridwen’s father, then, we find a character who uses biblical metaphors, a patriarch and champion of his people. In fact, the behaviour of the reverend as the guide of his flock, conforms to the characteristics seen in the Parable of the Good Shepherd (John 10:1–18). In the parable, the good shepherd gives his life for the sheep, defends them from the attack of the wolf; he knows them and they know him. They are an indissoluble community, because they are one flock and one shepherd. Ceridwen’s father, a reverend in a mining valley of impoverished people, leads the community and defends it from injustice: he counsels and helps his congregation, making them feel united in love and in the defence of their language, culture and land: “I was well received everywhere because of my father, Reverend Dafydd, who they said always had his doors open, and gave advice to the miners, and a few coins as well...” (63). He is the protector of the weak, he stands up to the police and soldiers: “with his arms outstretched he wanted to block the way of some cavalry policemen charging against the miners... And he told us that Welsh was the language of Heaven...” (63).

Moreover, in times of crisis his physical appearance resembles the biblical description of angels. When his house burns down, Reverend Dafydd returns to save his young children, surrounded by a wreath of fire: “He came back, entered the house with his arms stretched out, through the burning door, like an angel of fire, to look for my two little brothers...” (59) The narrator takes this image from the Book of Ezekiel (8:2–3): “I looked, and I saw a figure like that of a man. From what appeared to be his waist down he was like fire, and from there up his appearance was as bright as glowing metal.”

This unpublished novel is undoubtedly Ferran de Pol’s most intensely biblical work. The characters quote the Bible several times metatextually, and the book becomes one of the driving forces of the plot, providing metaphors of great power and intensity. Finally, let us look at one Biblical metaphor that sums up all the suffering of the Spanish Civil War and the author’s exile. As is customary in apocalyptic prophetic exhortations, man is described as an impure beast, capable

of anything: "Because man is a wicked beast, he gets drunk with dreams in the best of cases, then he goes to the trough, or gets in bed with the whatever harlot he comes across, or has his hands full with other people's money and blood..." (41)

Conclusion: the multiple functions of biblical rewriting

There is a notorious presence of biblical intertexts in Ferran de Pol's narrative work. Some are first-degree, co-presence (literal quotations, direct allusions, lexicalised figures and tropes), but there are also second-degree examples (transformation, reworking, and metaphorisation) that require more from the reader, both to recognise them and to interpret the reading that these intertexts are trying to enhance. These two types are, in the words of Gignoux (2005), microstructural and macrostructural intertextualities. However, as Camarero (2008: 63) points out, within the framework of intertextuality, the first text does not determine the second, but rather the second text gives access to the first and influences past meanings and status, transforming it from the present through textual interactivity. In short, each text carries within the potential for intertextuality, which other texts will update or materialise through rewriting, translation, etc.

Ferran de Pol's deepest and most complete use of intertextuality, in which he rewrites the biblical hypotext, can be found in the three novels studied: *Érem quatre*, *Miralls tèrbols* and *Ella, Jo i el càntic*. The complex process of constructing a novel is the ideal framework for Ferran de Pol to create a narrator who integrates the biblical world as a framing device, a presence or a transformation. This is not the case in other works by this author. Among the biblical books, Genesis is the one most often quoted. For Ferran de Pol, it was the one with the strongest universal implication, the most powerful language. We must not forget that in his novel *Abans de l'alba* and in other unpublished texts, Ferran de Pol rewrote the sacred book of the Maya, the *Popol-Vuh*, or 'Book of Counsel'. Indeed, our author used the first two parts of the sacred book, a mythological account of the creation of the world, the animals and the first human beings, the Mayan tribes.

Ferran de Pol was a good reader of the Bible: an interested, perceptive and imaginative reader. His creative work is embedded in a Western tradition that spans centuries and cultures. The universe of biblical intertextuality is inexhaustible: a semiotic universe of interrelations fostered by this paradigmatic book of the Judaeo-Christian tradition, which runs through the writer's entire oeuvre. The eagerness of authors like Ferran de Pol to discover and rewrite biblical passages, exploiting their immense narrative potential, invites multiple readings and interpretations.

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