



Alambique. Revista académica de
ciencia ficción y fantasía / Jornal
acadêmico de ficção científica e
fantasia

Volume 4
Issue 2 *Manuel de Pedrolo's "Typescript
of the Second Origin"*

Article 2

Introduction. "Typescript of the Second Origin": Paradoxes of Catalan Literature

Sara Martín
Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, sara.martin@uab.cat

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarcommons.usf.edu/alambique>



Part of the [Other Languages, Societies, and Cultures Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Martín, Sara (2017) "Introduction. "Typescript of the Second Origin": Paradoxes of Catalan Literature," *Alambique. Revista académica de ciencia ficción y fantasía / Jornal acadêmico de ficção científica e fantasia*: Vol. 4 : Iss. 2 , Article 2.

<https://www.doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.5038/2167-6577.4.2.1>

Available at: <https://scholarcommons.usf.edu/alambique/vol4/iss2/2>

Authors retain copyright of their material under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial 4.0 License](#).

The career of Catalan writer Manuel de Pedrolo (1918-1990) was conditioned by his intention to become “a whole literature” (Coca 19), rather than just a writer, during a historical period when Francisco Franco’s dictatorial regime (1939-1975) severely repressed private and public communication in Catalan. Pedrolo certainly proposed in his fiction “a radical inversion of the repressive status quo” (Colmeiro 60) and managed “to make on his own the most impressive act of presence which a literature officially in state of extinction could make” (Triadú 13). Like many other Catalan writers, Pedrolo was limited by a fierce linguistic and literary censorship, to which he reacted with astounding resilience. The method he followed consisted of writing in complete freedom whatever his prolific artistic imagination dictated to him, keeping some works concealed in the hopes of publishing them in better times, and braving censorship as well as he could in the case of the rest.¹ Since he eventually became the most often censored writer in Spain, this means that there are important discrepancies between the dates when he wrote his books and the dates when they were published: between 1949 and 1980, thirty-three of his books waited for longer than ten years before publication (Moreno “Pedrolo i la Censura” 7). This, in turn, resulted in a distorted view of his production, which did not particularly bother his many readers, but that contributed to confusing the Catalan literary establishment, already puzzled by Pedrolo’s ambition and boldness. The first paradox, then, is that one of the most complete writers ever produced by Catalan Literature is also one of the least understood, even in our days.

The second main paradox (there are many others, as will be seen) is that out of the more than 120 volumes that Pedrolo published, he is mostly remembered by one: *Mecanoscrit del segon origen* (1974) (English translation, *Typescript of the Second Origin*, 2016) a novel which he considered just a minor work. According to the author’s daughter, Adelais de Pedrolo, her father felt extremely uncomfortable about the immense success that his novel had achieved. Apparently, he had often declared that he would never have written *Typescript* if he could have foreseen that he would be remembered for it (Aliaga “Adelais de Pedrolo”). Writers, however, have no say in how their post-humous image is constructed and the fact is that *Mecanoscrit* is not only the absolute best-selling novel in Catalan fiction of any kind (with sales around 1,800,000 copies) but also a book much loved by its readers. Pedrolo would have preferred being remembered for the text he regarded as his masterpiece, the eleven-volume series *Temps obert* [*Open Time*]² but, clearly, this experimental project could only appeal to a small readership. Why and how the immense cultural capital embodied by the large *Typescript* readership has not been exploited for the benefit of both the author and of Catalan Literature is an issue that should be urgently addressed.

Manuel de Pedrolo: A Total Author

Manuel de Pedrolo was born in L'Aranyó (Lleida), eastern Catalonia, in 1918, the son of a conservative Catalan nationalist father who was also an impoverished landowner of aristocratic origins. In another of those paradoxes abundant in his life, Pedrolo inherited from his patriarchal father a love of the Catalan land that would eventually crystallize in an undaunted independentism, yet he ended up embracing Marxist socialism and leading a very modest author's life, quite different from his upper-class childhood. Pedrolo, who lost his mother aged only two and was raised by a spinster aunt, described his school days in Tàrrega as an experience in isolation, for his family insisted in marking the class differences between him (also his younger brother) and the other local children. Not that he felt more integrated at home, where his singular personality, which seems to have developed in self-defense against his authoritarian father, was often deemed eccentric, if not downright crazy.³

Pedrolo moved in 1935 to Barcelona, at age 17, with the purpose of studying Medicine to become a psychiatrist. Instead, the newly discovered pleasures that the city offered to a naive small town youngster and the onset of the Civil War (1936-39) soon deflected his course. Also, his meeting a pretty textile worker, Josefina, who, much to Pedrolo senior's dislike, would eventually become his wife (in 1946) and the mother of his only child, Adalais. Pedrolo enlisted on the Republican side as a medic in an artillery regiment. Once the military rebellion headed by Franco won the war to establish a long-lasting harsh fascist regime (1939-75), Pedrolo avoided both prison and exile by using his father's contacts, doing instead a three-year-long military service far from Catalonia, in Valladolid. Although he had already written some short pieces, Pedrolo made then the decision to become a writer. His mother's legacy allowed him to spend the early 1940s, also marked by deep post-war depression that never left him, back in his hometown Tàrrega, until he married Josefina and the couple moved to Barcelona.

Helped by Pedrolo's father to establish their modest residence (he also financed Pedrolo's first book, the poetry collection *Ésser en el món* [*Being in the World*] 1949) the couple embarked then on a long struggle to make ends meet. Pedrolo took a variety of low-paid jobs, among them writing reader's reports and translating, first into Spanish but soon into Catalan, a variety of first-rank novelists. As a translator, he became "a key figure, inserted in the right intellectual moment, for the introduction of American fiction in Catalonia" (Parcerisas 47). His translations of American authors such as Steinbeck, Dos Passos and Faulkner and also of French existentialist fiction (Camus, Sartre, Lautrémont) are highly praised, even though he did not actually speak either English or French.⁴ Pedrolo's translations had, thus, the double function of approaching Catalan readers and writers to the best modern fiction then being produced and of placing Pedrolo's own work at the avant-garde of Catalan Literature, slowly and painfully reborn from the 1950s

onwards. During this period, Pedrolo wrote not only novels but also poetry, short fiction and drama, mostly inspired by Beckett.⁵

Pedrolo's literary career as a novelist took off between the late 1950s and early 1960s on two very diverse literary fronts. He produced a number of increasingly experimental novels inspired by Sartre's existentialism and by Robbe-Grillet's *nouveau roman* at the same time that he became the main popularizer of detective fiction in Catalan. Among his realist, existentialist novels, a few titles stand out: *Elena de segona mà* [*Second-hand Elena*], written in 1949, published 1967; *Cendra per Martina* [*Ashes for Martina*] 1952/1965; *Balanç fins a la matinada* [*Reckoning until Dawn*] 1953/1963 and *Avui es parla de mi* [*Today They Talk about Me*] 1953/1966. In 1963, Edicions 62 offered him the chance to direct a new series, 'La cua de palla' [The hidden fault] (1963-69)⁶, specializing in detective fiction. Pedrolo, who had already published a novel of this kind in Catalan as early as 1954, *Es vessa una sang fàcil* [*Blood Easily Spilling*], embraced this unique chance to create a new popular fiction tradition in his native language by translating well-known authors but also by recruiting new local talent. He soon realized this was still too scarce, which led him to write two quite popular titles, *Joc brut* [*Dirty Game*] (1965) and *Mossegar-se la cua* [*Biting Your Own Tail*] (1968).

Pedrolo's most respected novel is the allegory *Totes les bèsties de càrrega* [*All the Beasts of Burden*] (1965/1967); although conceived as a veiled critique of Franco's regime, this novel has stood well the test of time as a universally valid dystopia. The 1960s were also the decade when Pedrolo produced the eleven volumes of his masterpiece, *Temps obert* (written 1963-1969/ published 1968-1980). Pedrolo set himself the impossible task of narrating all the different lives that his protagonist Daniel Bastida could have lived, depending on the outcome of the initial event in each volume: the bombing of his home in Barcelona during the Civil War. He covered a first cycle in the initial nine volumes but he eventually abandoned his project after writing the two novels of the second cycle realizing, as his publisher warned, that, continuing publication made no sense in financial terms. Today the series can be read as a pioneering example of the use of the multiverse in what we might call fiction inspired by quantum physics. Another valuable series by Pedrolo, the tetralogy *La terra prohibida* [*Forbidden Land*] (1957/1977-79), found more favor with his readers.

Understandably, the literary establishment (including both critics and fellow writers) started feeling disconcerted, even annoyed, by Pedrolo's prolificness and proficiency in all genres, even by his success (Coca 13). This, together with the constant persecution of the censors and Pedrolo's own introverted personality, resulted in relative isolation. The author himself granted that he had a solitary disposition and that although he enjoyed meeting people—many readers did visit him at his home—he did not enjoy the social life connected with writing, which he found a waste of time (Coca 31). Despite this personal isolation, Pedrolo managed nonetheless to attract a considerably large readership (not big enough, however, to free him from his

task as translator for decades) and also to win all the major awards of Catalan Literature, culminating in the 1979 Premi d'Honor de les Lletres Catalanes, the highest distinction awarded to Catalan writers.

Despite this official recognition, when Pedrolo died in 1990 he was buried with the only presence of his wife, his daughter and a friend. Both the one-day academic conference celebrated in 2014 and the documentary released in 2015⁷ refer to the word 'oblivion' in their titles, a matter in need of urgent consideration. Just four volumes in Pedrolo's extensive production are currently available today (in 2017): *Mecanoscrit del segon origen*, the SF collection *Trajecte final* [English translation, *Final Trajectory*, 1985], and the already mentioned detective fiction novels *Joc brut* and *Mossegar-se la cua*.⁸ Academic critic Víctor Martínez-Gil claims that this sample of Pedrolo's genre fiction remains available because "actually, he is a genre author, one of the greatest we have ever had" (19); however, valuable as his praise is, this is a very partial view of the author. Pedrolo worked at a time when writers sold the copyright of their work, which may explain the scant reprints in a rabidly commercialized publishing context; competition for the few Catalan readers is harsh and publishers possibly see little advantage in re-issuing books for literary prestige.

Additionally, Catalan academia has contributed so far too little to upholding Pedrolo's memory. One major obstacle, no doubt, is the fact that he is "an *oeuvre* author rather than an author of works" (García web); yet, since this *oeuvre* is so extensive and the demands of academic life so immediate, most studies of Pedrolo refer to partial aspects: one of the genres he practiced or a sample. There have been, then, partial studies but never a sustained interest, either because "The Catalan literary system has been unable to place Pedrolo" (Martínez-Gil 15), or because "the local *intelligentize* has never regarded the Pedrolian production as a mirror of Catalan society" (Coca 13).

A more specific comment is offered by Maria Aurèlia Capmany, herself a major writer, who attributes Pedrolo's paradoxical marginal position in Catalan academia to changing fashions. In her view, by the time Pedrolo's *oeuvre* was extensive enough, the 1960s, "the new academic generation which rose to dispense honors started by confusing the emerging issues with fashion (...). In order to follow the fashions, you needed to reject the names of existentialism or deep psychology and invoke the names of Marx and Lukács" (95). Due to his rejection of social realism, Pedrolo fell, in short, on the wrong side of the academic fashions. Even so, it is still hard to explain why there is not yet a monographic study of his works beyond *Rellegir Pedrolo*, the collective volume published in 1990 to honor him after his death and, that, although accomplished, is not up-to-date (also, it fails to explore the reasons for the success of *Mecanoscrit*). Besides, only four PhD dissertations analyzing his works have been presented, none of them produced in a Catalan Department located in Catalonia.⁹ This relative academic silence is, then, both anomalous (particularly if we think of similar figures in an Anglo-American context, perhaps George Orwell or Grahame Greene) but also typical of a

conservative university context with little room for authors as protean as Pedrolo.

Other factors are at work, strangely connected with the author's political opinions, which raises the question of how deep the grip of officialdom is on Catalan culture. To summarize a quite complex, delicate situation, once Franco died and the Spanish Transition toward democracy started, sealed with the 1977 referendum, Pedrolo started presenting himself as an adamant independentist in favor of establishing a republican federation of the Països Catalans, all the regions where Catalan is spoken. The Catalan political parties then trying to secure the autonomous government for Catalonia within Spain, promised by the new 1978 Constitution, found his opinions quite inconvenient. Although they could by no means silence him, they did little or nothing to promote Pedrolo's work in the 1980s. This situation "profoundly depressed Pedrolo" (Ginés web).

Even at the cost of limiting the impact of his work among Spanish speakers in Catalonia and in Spain, Pedrolo chose not to collaborate in any Spanish-language media nor in any Catalan media that would not allow him to express his independentism. Nonetheless, the new Catalan-language press gave Pedrolo complete freedom to articulate his political opinions, which lead to the publication of two influential volumes: *Cròniques colonials* [*Colonial Chronicles*] (1982) and *Cròniques d'una ocupació* [*Chronicles of an Occupation*] (1989). Ironically, the discontent with the limited self-government that Catalonia obtained in the early 1980s has progressively lead to the growth of independentism, now espoused by the same political parties that found Pedrolo too unorthodox. His political thinking is, indeed, fully orthodox today among large segments of the Catalan intellectual establishment, though not his socialism.¹⁰

The time is now ripe, then, to break the embarrassing silence often surrounding Pedrolo, a process to which Fundació Pedrolo, established in 2005, is doing its best to promote. Hopefully, the 2018 centennial celebrations will help to start the long overdue debate.

Typescript of the Second Origin: In Search of International Projection

Typescript of the Second Origin is a medium-size novel (only 45,000 words), written in an agile, unadorned prose of great effectiveness. It narrates the story of how Alba, a 14-year-old girl, and Dídac, then 9, survive the brutal destruction of their world by alien invaders; these aliens have chosen to devastate Earth in preparation for colonizing it, a project which they eventually abandon for unknown reasons. Ignoring the actual extent of the catastrophe, Alba and Dídac start struggling for their own survival with unusual maturity for their age. Their pragmatism leads them to take small, cautious steps that initially limit them to their original rural surroundings but that eventually take them to the outskirts of a totally ruined Barcelona. The alien attack, produced using a mysterious vibration, kills all mammals

(humans and animals), affects all machinery, and badly damages most buildings. The journey that Alba and Dídac take into a ghostly Barcelona full of rubble and skeletons is truly haunting; their naïve efforts to make the best of whatever they can scavenge are certainly touching.

Typescript has the strange quality of being both dystopian and utopian. The story starts at a dismal low point, when it seems simply impossible that Alba and Dídac will survive in the extreme desolation of their new world. Soon, however, the girl understands that the future of humankind lies in her hands and depends on her body (also, secondarily on Dídac's skills as provider). The few survivors that the couple encounter, all adults, are either deranged or locked into terminal violence. This is why Alba convinces Dídac that their only hope—and the only hope for the future—is that they become a new Adam and Eve as soon as the child Dídac is ready to procreate. Mathilde Bensoussan observes that in Pedrolo's novel the myth of Adam and Eve is reversed, for Alba/Eve is given the leading role and “instead of a male Savior we have here, and this is quite original, a female Savior” (79). Alba's decisions also alter humankind forever, since, unusually for 1970s Catalonia, Dídac is a mixed-race character (his father was black). Alba and Dídac's baby will, therefore, erase racial difference forever.

Pedrolo expressed in conversation with fellow Catalan author Jordi Coca his conviction that science fiction is a genre in which “few works are good but in which those that are good are truly good” (in Coca 43). At the time when this conversation took place, early 1973, Pedrolo was at work on *Typescript*; as he told Coca, he already had a title and a basic plot. Since he was a writer convinced that science fiction and literary merit need not be opposites and since he considered genre fiction essential to normalize Catalan Literature, there is no reason to suppose that Pedrolo wrote *Typescript* with little ambition or eagerness, quite the opposite. Pedrolo, it must be noted, was not unhappy with the novel itself but with its unexpected, immense success, as it obscured the rest of his production. As Antoni Munne-Jordà observes,¹¹ his case is quite similar to that of French writer Antoine de Saint-Exupéry (1900-44), an extremely accomplished author and National Book Award winner in the USA, today remembered mainly by his children's novella *The Little Prince* (1943).

The discomfort of the author with his best-selling novel is shared by the Catalan critics, with more or less sympathy for the merits of *Typescript*. Jordi Arbonès practically ignores *Typescript* in his otherwise thorough study of Pedrolo's works (up to 1980), even doubting that this novel is science fiction at all (68), possibly because he identifies the genre only with space opera. Xavier Aliaga calls *Typescript* “a little jewel” but notes that this novel contributed in the same measure to enlarging Pedrolo's readership as “to concealing the virtues of his other works” (“Manuel de Pedrolo” web). In an article entitled “Less *Typescript* and More Author”, Jordi Castañeda bitterly complains that Pedrolo's successful novel was “the moment of glory and the perfect excuse to neglect a much more extensive *oeuvre* with a clear sense of

struggle for the national emancipation of the Catalan people” (34), forgetting that the author leaves the regeneration of the whole human species into the hands of two Catalan characters. Joaquín Carbó praises Pedrolo for “not trying (...) to make the most of his success” and for producing after *Typescript* “some of his most hermetic and difficult texts (...)” (74), novels which actually failed to connect with his new, young readers and that further isolated Pedrolo from critics and fellow writers. There seems to be widespread agreement that, anyway, the success of *Typescript* is due to its inclusion and permanence in the syllabus as compulsory and/or recommended secondary school reading. Only Jaume Vidal among the academic critics suggests that whereas this circumstance helped indeed to popularize the novel, *Typescript* has evident merits: “the theme is attractive, it’s ‘modern’ and current, and the way to express it is also attractive and up-to-date” (169).¹² Perhaps tired of this lack of attention, Antoni Munné-Jordà, currently the main specialist in Pedrolo, sentences, using whimsical grammar, that “Pedrolo is not just *Typescript*, but too” (Munné-Jordà “La Ciència-ficció de Manuel de Pedrolo” 7).

Pedrolo always questioned the almost compulsory use of realism in the Catalan fiction of his time. He often wrote fantasy works in which reality itself is often disrupted, among them the existentialist novellas dealing with death *Mister Chase, podeu sortir* [*Mr. Chase, You May Come Out*] (written 1953/published 1955), *Introducció a l’ombra* [*Introduction in the Shade*] (1956/1972) and *Entrada en blanc* [*Blank Entry*] (1958/1968). *Typescript* is by no means the first science fiction Pedrolo attempted.¹³ His collection *El premi literari i més coses* [*The Literary Award and Other Matters*] (1953), already included an early sf short story, “Transformació de la ciutat” [“The Transformation of the City”] (1947), whereas the volume *International Setting* (title originally in English, 1955/1974) incorporated the science-fiction story “L’origen de les coses” [“The Origins of Things”]. Another 1950s collection, *Crèdits humans* [*Human Credits*] (1956/1957) features “Les civilitzacions son mortals” [“Civilizations are Mortal”], a story in which a boy and a girl decide to reboot history after their city collapses, seemingly the seed for *Typescript*. In 1973 Pedrolo published the catastrophe story “Darrer comunicat de la Terra” [“Earth’s Last Message”] (1973), focused on time travel. *Typescript*, published in November 1974, was followed by the stories in the science-fiction collection *Trajecte final* (1975) and by *Aquesta matinada i potser per sempre* [*Next Dawn and Maybe for Ever*] (1976/1980), which Pedrolo highlighted as his best sf novel, in competition with *Successimultani* [*Simultaneous event*] (1979). In his later fiction, Pedrolo often mixed science fiction with the theme of the mythical foundation of religion in works such as *Múltiples notícies de l’Edèn* [*Plenty of News from Eden*] (1984/1985) or *La creació de la realitat, punt i seguit* [*The Creation of Reality, Period*] (1984/1987).

Pedrolo only appeared once on television, in 1983, as a guest of the excellent TV3 interview series *Vostè pregunta* directed by Joaquim Maria

Puyal. Part of the appeal of the program was that anyone might call and freely ask any question. One of Pedrolo's readers, nurse Maribel Alcalá, asked a most insightful question on a key point that all critics had missed: "How can you be so cruel with your stories and so tender with your characters?" Pedrolo, who thanked her sincerely as "not all readers see things this way", explained that he certainly loved his unfortunate characters because "one way or another I love people". He added "I treat my characters with more tenderness, the more unfortunate they are, since we are all unhappy". This is the key to understanding the success of *Typescript*: Pedrolo puts Alba and Dídac in the direst possible circumstances, with their childhood world literally gone forever, and the reader sympathizes with them because it is easy to appreciate that the author loves them.

This sympathy is, logically, particularly strong among young readers. Although it was not conceived as a novel addressed specifically to teenagers, *Typescript of the Second Origin* has been particularly successful among them. Josep Maria Castellet, head editor of Edicions 62, made the decision to place it in the series 'El trapezi' [The trapeze] aimed at young readers. Dictator Francisco Franco died in 1975 and when the restrictions on teaching Catalan language and Literature in school were lifted, many teachers started including *Typescript* in the new syllabi for secondary education. Castellet moved then Pedrolo's novel to the more popular 'El cangur' [The kangaroo] series, where it has remained a steady best-seller. The Catalan public television channel TV3 contributed to the book's popularity with a dignified low-budget adaptation in 1986, the first television series locally produced.¹⁴

I was myself one of the beneficiaries of the collective decision by Catalan Literature teachers to trust Pedrolo to interest us, young students, in reading.¹⁵ I cannot vouch for the impact that Pedrolo's story had among young Catalan boys, but I can declare with no hesitation that brave Alba became for us, 1980s Catalan girl readers, a simply wonderful role model. We were then so young that we just did not know about the many restrictions limiting girls in post-Franco Spain and Catalonia (and that still apply in many ways). Alba was simply and definitely, what we needed as women: a born survivor. Her clear-headed determination and strong common sense, which perfectly represent Catalan *seny* (or moral good sense) make her absolutely memorable. She is not only an exceptionally strong female character in 1970s Catalan Literature but, arguably, a much more solid version of the girl heroes now popular thanks to young adult series such as Suzanne Collins's *The Hunger Games*.

Adding to the paradoxes that surround Pedrolo, I need to mention that not all readers, not even those who call *Mecanoscrit* their favorite novel, understand that it is science fiction. This is a peculiar reaction in view of the very palpable presence of extraterrestrials in the text. The resistance to seeing *Typescript* as science fiction and its almost total exclusion from the academic analysis of Pedrolo's *oeuvre* bespeaks a general discomfort with this genre, felt by the academia but also by the secondary school teachers who, at least in

my time, presented his novel simply as an interesting example of Catalan Literature. Today, when Catalan science fiction appears to be much more respected it is time,¹⁶ then, to assess the many qualities of *Typescript* and how it has contributed to persuading many generations of Catalan readers that the fantastic deserves as much respect as realism.

Breaking New Ground: *Typescript of the Second Origin* in International Academia

The monographic issue that the reader can enjoy here in *Alambique* springs from the Barcelona Eurocon of November 2016.¹⁷ As part of the organizing committee, and following the suggestion made by fellow member Cristina Macía, I undertook the task of producing a trilingual volume, which included the original Catalan text, the 1975 translation by Domingo Santos¹⁸ and my own translation into English, the first one ever into this language. The Institut d'Estudis Ilerdencs of the Diputació de Lleida kindly accepted our petition for help and published this volume in a limited, non-commercial edition, intended as a gift for all Eurocon participants.¹⁹ Happily, Wesleyan University Press will be publishing the English translation as a separate volume in the spring of 2018.

I believe, however, that the process of publicizing *Typescript of the Second Origin* among its new Anglophone readers must be accompanied by some form of guidance, hence the project to edit this monographic volume. Despite the enormous cultural importance of Pedrolo's novel in his native Catalonia, there is scarce academic criticism about it. Our monographic issue is actually the first volume ever entirely focused on *Typescript*, in any language, including Catalan. I give here my warmest thanks to the editors of *Alambique*, Juan Carlos Toledano Redondo and Miguel Ángel Fernández Delgado, for accepting my proposal to publish the issue, which, in its very modest way, is attempting to make history. Also, to the authors for accepting the challenge of exploring new territory.

The articles approach Pedrolo's novel from a variety of perspectives. Antoni Maestre-Brotons's examines its countercultural discourse, presenting *Typescript* as a political allegory in which the always-radical Pedrolo offers a fantasy by which the bourgeois lifestyle is wiped out, on behalf of an alternative with many hippie elements. Maestre-Brotons warns that, nonetheless, this is not an uncomplicated utopian tale, quite the opposite. Pere Gallardo Torrano sees affinities between *Typescript* and the acclaimed 2013 film by Barcelona-born brothers Álex and David Pastor *Los últimos días* [US title *The Last Days*]. In both works, survival and the regeneration of a ravaged humankind depends on a woman's body. Gallardo Torrano, like Maestre-Brotons, cautions us, however, that the apparently optimistic ending can only be correctly interpreted if considered against the social and political background that the catastrophe destroys in each text.

Concerns with crucial gender issues in *Typescript* articulate the essays by Pedro Nilsson-Fernàndez and Isabel Santaulària, and my own. Pedro Nilsson-Fernàndez challenges traditional approaches to *Typescript* by denying its exceptionality in Pedrolo's *oeuvre* and by connecting it with key Pedrolian themes, particularly through the transformation of the landscape and of the female protagonist, Alba, into political texts. In his view, far from being a feminist text, as it is often believed, *Typescript* participates of Pedrolo's more than habitual sexism. Disputing this claim, Santaulària connects the heroic Alba with other 'future girls' in contemporary YA, such as Cassie and Marika in the *5th Wave* trilogy by Rick Yancey, seeing her as a singular forerunner. Also supporting the feminist reading of *Typescript*, I address the issue of Didac's mixed-race genetic legacy and consider how his pliability is essential for Pedrolo's anti-patriarchal regeneration of mankind to function. The final article, by Anna M. Moreno-Bedmar considers the reception of *Typescript of the Second Origin* among today's young Catalan readers. She examines the strategies that these new readers follow to approach Pedrolo's novel from a quite different generational perspective.

It is the hope of authors and editor that our work, offered in homage to a novel we all love, helps Manuel de Pedrolo's *Typescript of the Second Origin* to find the readers it deserves, as the classic of science fiction that it is already here, in Catalonia.

Notes

¹ For the author's own description of his troubles with the censors, see Pedrolo ("El Meu Gra de Sorra a la Història de la Censura").

² On this series, see the volume by Munné-Jordà (*Temps obert de Manuel de Pedrolo*).

³ The father, Manuel de Pedrolo i d'Espona, an avid reader, had a substantial library inherited from his ancestors to which he contributed many new volumes. This library was a major factor in Pedrolo's education (Ginés 129). The biographical information on Pedrolo is summarized from Coca, Ginés, the entry "Manuel de Pedrolo" in the AELC website, and García ("Manuel de Pedrolo").

⁴ His daughter describes a working method similar to the translators from the classical languages who do not necessarily speak Latin or Greek (in the documentary directed by Eduard Miguel).

⁵ See on Pedrolo's short fiction Arbonès ("Els Contes de Manuel de Pedrolo"), and for an analysis of his plays, Rosselló.

⁶ About this fundamental series, see Canal and Martín.

⁷ *Manuel de Pedrolo: Trencant l'Oblit* (documentary film), directed by Eduard Miguel, broadcast date: 25 June 2015 (Canal 33, TVC). Produced by Zeba Productions and TVC. See: <<http://www.ccma.cat/tv3/alacarta/el-documental/manuel-de-pedrolo-trencant-loblit/video/5535249/#>> (also: <<https://vimeo.com/131804610>>). The conference "Manuel de Pedrolo, Contra l'Oblit", organized by Bearn Sala de Lletres and the magazine *Forma*, was held on 15 May 2014 at the Universitat Pompeu Fabra (See <https://jornadapedrolo.wordpress.com/about/>).

⁸ The plans of the Fundació Pedrolo for the centennial celebration of the author's birth in 2018 include offering at least ten of the titles again to readers.

⁹ See: Rosselló on Pedrolo's drama, Martín Escribà on detective fiction in Spain, Moreno's PhD thesis on the reception of *Mecanoscrit* in primary and secondary education, and Pijuán on Pedrolo as poetry translator.

¹⁰ This new orthodoxy might explain the recent publication of a volume on Pedrolo's independentism (Ferré).

¹¹ In the documentary *Manuel de Pedrolo: Trencant l'Oblit* (2015).

¹² There is not, in any case, an academic analysis of the actual merits of the book. The two only academic articles that analyze *Typescript* (Bensoussan's and my own) compare it with other texts.

¹³ For a complete overview of Pedrolo's science fiction see Munné-Jordà ("La Ciència-ficció de Pedrolo") and Moreno ("Manuel de Pedrolo, Abans i Ara").

¹⁴ This can be seen at <http://www.edu3.cat/Edu3tv/Fitxa?p_id=28383>. The film *Segon origen* [*Second Origin*] (2015, released internationally with the English title), originally conceived by Bigas Luna and completed after his death by Carles Porta, is a very poor adaptation which even eliminates the extraterrestrial attack, a key element in the novel.

¹⁵ Today, as Moreno-Bedmar explains, *Typescript* is not compulsory reading, just recommended. It is read by school children aged 10-14, younger than the 14-16 readers of the 1980s. As she suggests, knowing that teenagers are less interested in reading because of their constant use of social networks, teachers have moved the novel to an earlier stage in Catalan children's education (Moreno "Manuel de Pedrolo, Abans i Ara" 12).

¹⁶ See the entry on Catalan science fiction written by Antoni Munné-Jordà for the *Encyclopedia of Science Fiction* <<http://www.sf-encyclopedia.com/search-results>>.

¹⁷ See <www.eurocon2016.org>. Many of the talks are available on YouTube, see the playlist 'Charlas de la Eurocon' at <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLqA7nRotzVciios3Q5-7_UUYeqttwDEs>

¹⁸ Although the choice of Santos, a prestige name within Spanish SF, as translator suggests that Pedrolo's novel was expected to be also very popular in Castilian Spanish, the fact is that *Typescript* is not well known among Spanish readers. This is relatively unsurprising if we take into account that Pedrolo did absolutely nothing to promote his books in their Spanish translation because of his independentism. It is also the case that *Typescript* is far more popular in Catalonia than in other Catalan-language areas of Spain, most likely because of its inclusion in secondary-school syllabus regulated by the local government, the Generalitat de Catalunya.

¹⁹ My thanks to David Alcoy and Hugo Camacho for their help in contacting the IEL and presenting so successfully our joint project. This is the volume that all the authors reference in their articles.

Works Cited

NOTE: All internet resources accessed December 2016.

Aliaga, Xavier. "Adelais de Pedrolo: 'El Meu Pare Va Morir Molt Sol i Molt Desil·lusionat'", *El Temps* 1610 (21 April 2015a): 16-17,

<http://www.eltemps.cat/ca/notices/2015/04/adelais-de-pedrolo-el-meu-pare-va-morir-molt-sol-i-molt-desil-lusionat-9508.php>

---. "Manuel de Pedrolo: La Veu Incòmoda". *El Temps* 1610 (21 April 2015b): 11-17. <http://www.eltemps.cat/ca/notices/2015/04/manuel-de-pedrolo-la-veu-incomoda-9507.php>

-
- Arbonès, Jordi. *Pedrolo Contra els Límits*. Barcelona: Aymà, 1980.
- . "Els Contes de Manuel de Pedrolo, Com a Planter d'Idees Seminals". *Rellegir Pedrolo*. Ed. Xavier García. Barcelona: Edicions 62, 1990. 179-196. Print.
- Bensoussan, Mathilde. "Mecanoscrit del Segon Origen de Manuel de Pedrolo: Una Nova Interpretació del Mite del Recomençament". *Zeitschrift für Katalanistik* 1 (1988): 73-79,
http://www.traces.uab.es/tracesbd/zfk/1988/zfk_a1988v1p73.pdf
- Canal i Artigas, Jordi & Àlex Martín Escribà. 'La Cua de Palla': *Retrat en Groc i Negre*. Barcelona: Alrevés, 2011. Print.
- Capmany, Maria Aurèlia. "Pedrolo Encara Reixas a Través". *Rellegir Pedrolo*. Ed. Xavier García. Barcelona: Edicions 62, 1990. 81-100. Print.
- Carbó, Joaquim. "Títols, Personatges i Més Coses". *Rellegir Pedrolo*. Ed. Xavier García. Barcelona: Edicions 62, 1990. 47-80. Print.
- Castañeda, Jordi. "Pedrolo, Més Autor i Menys Mecanoscrit". *Serra d'Or*, 551 (November 2005): 33-35. Print.
- Coca, Jordi. *Pedrolo Perillós?: Converses amb Manuel de Pedrolo*. Barcelona: La Magrana, 1973 (1991). Print.
- Colmeiro, José F. "Stretching the Limits: Pedrolo's Detective Fiction". *Catalan Review* III.2 (1989): 59-70,
<http://www.raco.cat/index.php/CatalanReview/article/viewFile/309334/399312>
- Ferré i Trill, Xavier. *Manuel de Pedrolo i la Nació, 1957-1982*. Barcelona: Edicions de 1979, 2016. Print.
- García, Xavier (ed.) *Rellegir Pedrolo*. Barcelona: Edicions 62, 1990. Print.
- . "Manuel de Pedrolo". *Lletra: La Literatura Catalana a Internet*. Barcelona: Universitat Oberta de Catalunya, 1999.
<http://lletra.uoc.edu/ca/autor/manuel-de-pedrolo>
- Ginés, María. "Manuel de Pedrolo, un Escriptor Compromés". Fundació Pedrolo, undated. <http://www.fundaciopedrolo.cat/?seccio=ped-Biografia>
- . "Manuel de Pedrolo: Alguns Aspectes de la Seua Vida". *Assaig de Teatre* 7,8,9 (1997): 127-137,
<http://www.raco.cat/index.php/AssaigTeatre/article/view/145352>
- "Manuel de Pedrolo", AELC (Associació d'Escriptors en Llengua Catalana), undated, <http://www.escriptors.cat/autors/pedrolomde/index.php>
- Martín Alegre, Sara. "Mujeres en la Literatura de Ciencia Ficción: Entre la Escritura y el Feminismo". *Dossiers Feministes* 14 (2010): 108-128,
<http://www.raco.cat/index.php/DossiersFeministes/article/view/229293/311003>. ISSN 1139-1219
- Martín Escribà, Alejandro. *La Recepció de la Novel·la Negra en la Literatura Catalana: Rafael Tasis, Manuel de Pedrolo i Jaume Fuster*. PhD dissertation. Salamanca: Universidad de Salamanca (Departamento de Lengua española), 2010. Print.

-
- Martínez-Gil, Víctor. “Malentesos (i Alguna Rectificació) a l’Hora de Llegir Pedrolo”. *Serra d’Or*, 666 (June 2015): 15-19. Print.
- Moreno Bedmar, Anna M. “Pedrolo i la Censura”. Fundació Pedrolo, 2007. <http://www.fundaciopedrolo.cat/articulos/censura.pdf>
- . “Manuel de Pedrolo, Abans i Ara”. *Faristol* 73 (September 2012): 10-12. http://www.clijcat.cat/faristol/descargas/73/3_73.pdf
- . *La Literatura Juvenil de Ciència-ficció de Manuel de Pedrolo*. PhD dissertation. Barcelona: Universitat de Barcelona (Departament de Didàctica de la llengua i la Literatura), 2016. <https://www.educacion.gob.es/teseo/mostrarRef.do?ref=1223664#>
- Munné-Jordà, Antoni. “La Ciència-ficció de Manuel de Pedrolo: Més que el *Mecanoscrit*, però També”, Fundació Pedrolo, 1-7. http://www.fundaciopedrolo.cat/articulos/ciencia_ficcio_a_munne.pdf
- . *Temps obert de Manuel de Pedrolo: Entre les dues cultures*. Tàrrrega: Ajuntament de Tàrrrega, 1995. Print.
- . “La Ciència-ficció de Pedrolo: Procés de Contextualització Insuficient”. *Quaderns Pedrolians* 2 (1997): 57-73. Print.
- Parcerisas, Francesc. “Manuel de Pedrolo, Introductor a Catalunya de la Narrativa Nord-americana Contemporània”. *Quaderns: Revista de traducció* 14 (2007): 39-48. <http://www.raco.cat/index.php/QuadernsTraduccio/article/view/70313>
- Pedrolo, Manuel de. “El Meu Gra de Sorra a la Història de la Censura”. *Serra d’Or* 226-227 (July-August 1978): 43-44. Print.
- Pijuán Vallverdú, Alba. *Manuel de Pedrolo, Traductor de Poesia*. PhD dissertation. Bellaterra: Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (Departament de Traducció i d’Interpretació), 2016. <http://www.tdx.cat/handle/10803/385750>
- Puyal, Joaquim Maria (dir., presenter), *Vostè Pregunta: Manuel de Pedrolo*. TVC, 1983. <https://vimeo.com/8918468>
- Rosselló, Ramon X. *Anàlisi de l’obra dramàtica de Manuel de Pedrolo*. Tàrrrega: Ajuntament de Tàrrrega, 1997. Print.
- Triadú, Joan. “Manuel de Pedrolo i l’Aventura d’Escriure”. Xavier García (ed.), *Rellegir Pedrolo*, Barcelona: Edicions 62, 1990. 11-30. Print.
- Vidal Alcover, Jaume. “La Narrativa de Pedrolo: Una Literatura Oberta?”. Xavier García (ed.), *Rellegir Pedrolo*. Barcelona: Edicions 62, 1990. 159-177. Print.