

**Reclaiming the Past:
Les veus del Pamano and *Pa negre***

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Em revolta la mentida i la gent
Que s'aprofita de les mentides.
Les veus del Pamano (497)

Les guerres sempre deixen un rastre
que dura anys i costa
de curar i que a vegades pot ser tan
dolent com la mateixa lluita oberta.
Pa negre (346)

The recognition that it is time to come to terms with the past and do justice to the vanquished of the Spanish Civil War has grown in intensity during the closing years of the twentieth century and the opening ones of the twenty-first. Organizations such as the Asociación para la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica, created in 2000, and the Associació per a la recuperació de la memòria històrica de Catalunya (2006); important milestones, such as the 75th and 70th anniversary, respectively, of the 1931 proclamation of the Second Republic and the 1936 outbreak of the war; and laws such as the Ley de Memoria Histórica (2007), all have added impetus to efforts to counteract the distortions of Francoist historiography and the official amnesia of the Transition. Scholarly books, notably those by Paloma Aguilar, José Colmeiro, Ofelia Ferrán, and David Herzberger, have drawn attention to the fact that recovery/reconstruction of the past is a problematic endeavor due to problems of representation, the elusiveness of “Truth,” and the inevitably political nature of reconstructions, a point that is highlighted by the title of Aguilar’s 2008 book: *Políticas de la memoria y memorias de la política*. Ferrán observes that the question of “whether access to the past is a recovery or recreation of events” (2007: 16) is a major theoretical issue, and she argues that visions of the past are always “partial, incomplete, and

fragmented” (2007: 194). Gianni Vattimo, speaking of history, maintains that there are no facts, only interpretations (1997: 2). The fraught distinction between history and fiction is a further complication in the case of novelistic treatments of the war and postwar years. Each discipline frames its discourse differently; each offers its own “truths.” Javier Marías defends the superior truth of fiction, asserting that “la única manera de contar algo verdadero es bajo el elegante y pudoroso disfraz de una invención.” (2008) His affirmation could be endorsed by Javier Cercas, author of *Soldados de Salamina*, and the two Catalan authors who are the subject of this essay, Jaume Cabré and Emili Teixidor. Both set out to reclaim the past in their novels *Les veus del Pamano* (2004) and *Pa negre* (2003). In *Narrating the Past: Fiction and Historiography in Postwar Spain*, Herzberger explores how the Franco regime co-opted the past and state historians silenced dissident voices. He singles out a 1945 declaration by Federico García Sánchez as the epitome of Francoist rhetoric:

Spain is the only country in History where there cannot be, nor has there been, nor is there any difference between moral and religious character and national historical character; because in Spain the Hispanic and the Christian are united, and they come to form a consubstantial whole. . . . One cannot be Spanish and not be Catholic, because if one is not Catholic, one cannot be Spanish. Whoever says that he is Spanish and not Catholic does not know what he is saying. . . . In Spain all men are gentlemen and Christians. (1995: 26)

The Catholic/Falangist perspective and conception of truth, as Herzberger makes clear, deny diversity and difference. Cabré, in contrast, foregrounds dissonant voices that provide alternative visions of the past. His pluralistic, dialogic versions contest the monologic discourse of official history, which he does not attack directly but instead undermines by exposing how overblown and empty Falangist and Catholic rhetoric is and how those who spout it attempt to justify ignoble and even criminal deeds.

Since its publication in January 2004, *Les veus del Pamano* has become one of the most widely read Catalan novels of recent

years, and a television miniseries based on the book is scheduled for release in 2009. That *Les veus* has struck a chord with the public is understandable in light of Cabré's masterly storytelling, his sensitive treatment of the theme of the recovery of historical memory, and the dialogic nature of his text. He has affirmed in *Lletra*, the online encyclopedia of culture published by the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya, that "per a mi escriure és dubtar. Jo no em considero en possessió de cap veritat. Si de cas, en possessió d'opinions" ("Qui sóc i per què escric"), and he avoids dogmatism and Manichaeism. Cabré could well subscribe to the words of the character Gabriela of Josefina Aldecoa's *La fuerza del destino*: "Venganza no, però memoria sí" (1997: 75), a sentiment prevalent in the best recent novelistic and cinematic treatments of the Civil War and postwar years.

The primary setting for Cabré's 700-page novel is Torena, an imaginary town in Pallars Sobirà, and its principal character is Elisenda Vilabrú, whose given name has historical and literary resonance. It evokes fourteenth-century Elisenda de Moncada, last wife of Jaume II of Aragon and founder of the convent of Pedralbes in Barcelona (Cabré's Elisenda owns a large apartment in the Pedralbes district) and the Elisenda of Gabriel García Márquez's 1968 tale "Un señor muy viejo con unas alas enormes," who decides to charge an entrance fee to see an angel and thereby enriches her family. Cabré's character has a voracious appetite for sex, money, and power, and she does not hesitate to use the first two in the pursuit of the third. Devoid of scruples, she cultivates anyone who can help her get what she wants, be they Falangists, members of the Catholic hierarchy or Opus Dei, representatives of different political parties, or the monarchy. Elisenda dominates those around her and the pages of the novel. She also links the two main plot lines, which centre around teacher Oriol Fontelles, who is murdered in 1944, and teacher Tina Bros, who is murdered in 2002 while trying to clear Oriol's name. The novel thus spans a period of some sixty years. Its structure illustrates that past and present are interwoven and the repercussions of the former reverberate in the latter, confirming the validity of the words of William Faulkner's Gavin Stevens: "The past is never dead. It's not even past" (1951: 92). In lieu of chronological order and a straightforward progression from beginning to end, unity of place, and

a single narrative perspective, Cabré employs a variety of temporal and spatial planes, analepses and prolepses, shifting points of view and levels of discourse, and fragmentation in his presentation of multiple stories that are entangled like a handful of cherries. Abundant dates enable readers to rearrange narrated situations and events in their chronological sequence, or *fabula*, as contrasted to their order of presentation, or *sjuzet*. The action that sets in motion the chain of events that will culminate years later in Tina's murder is the killing of Elisenda's father and brother in July 1936 by members of the FAI, first alluded to in chapter 5. It is not until chapter 59 that we learn that the killings were an error: the anarchists had mistaken the town of Torenà for Altrou.

The novel opens (chapter 0) with a mysterious breaking and entering. The unidentified intruder copies computer files labeled O.F., destroys the originals, and steals related printed documents. It is only hundreds of pages later than we are able to situate this crime in Tina's apartment in the year 2002 and assign ultimate responsibility to Elisenda. Part of this initial chapter is repeated in the final pages of the novel with an added piece of information: that the intruder still has to "fix" Tina's car; consequently we infer that the crash which ended her life was not an accident.

The seventy-one numbered chapters of the novel are grouped in seven parts, each of which begins with an unnumbered chapter set in the Vatican and describing a beatification ceremony, and ends with a reproduction of a gravestone and remarks by a member of the Serrallac family of stonemasons who represent *la veu del poble*. The inscriptions on a number of the tombstones, which function as *lieux de mémoire* (Nora: 1989), illustrate graphically that history is written by those who wield power and who distort, misrepresent, or conceal facts to suit their purposes. As the political situation changes, so too do images of people, versions of events, and the language in which they are expressed. The first stone, for instance, carved in 1944, describes José Oriol Fontelles Grau as "Caído por Dios y por España" and is decorated with a cross and the Falangist yoke and arrows (59). A later monument, dating from 2002 after Oriol has been beatified, casts him as "beat màrtir," recipient of the "Homenatge de tots els seus conciutadans," and bears a cross but not the Falangist symbols (662).

The stone Jaume Serralac would *like* to carve tells a more accurate story —“A l’Oriol Fontelles i Grau . . . mestre, maqui, pintor, amant furtiu, mal espòs, heroi per força” (663) — and is adorned with a hammer and sickle, symbols that reveal as much about Jaume’s political orientation as about Oriol’s. The 1953 tombstone of Valentín Targa, inscribed with the words “Alcalde y jefe local del movimiento de Torená. La patria, agradecida” and decorated with a cross, yoke, and arrows (458), of course makes no reference to the fact that Targa, whom Elisenda refers to as her Goel (i.e., avenger), murdered Oriol and fourteen-year-old Ventureta, whose 1943 gravestone (196) does not even identify the victim by his full name. The stone chiselled free of charge by Jaume after Franco’s death in 1975 gives the boy’s complete name and nickname, adds the phrase “Vilment assassinat pel feixisme,” and is graced with a dove (517). As Jaume Serralac remarks to Tina at one point, “Als cementiris trobarà la història dels pobles, congelada” (91).

Bakhtin has emphasized that language is not unitary:

At any given moment of its historical existence, language is heteroglot from top to bottom: it represents the co-existence of socio-ideological contradictions between the present and the past, between differing epochs of the past, between different socio-ideological groups in the present, between tendencies, schools, circles and so forth, all given a bodily form. These “languages” of heteroglossia intersect each other in a variety of ways, forming new socially typifying “languages.”
(1981: 291)

Cabré demonstrates brilliantly that language is saturated with ideology, and he uses multiple linguistic registers to distinguish among socio-ideological groups. If the Serrallacs’ everyday, down-to-earth words voice the truth, others do everything in their power to silence or distort it and to pervert language. Elisenda presents herself as a devout Catholic and lavishes bribes to ensure Oriol’s farcical beatification even though she knows her version of his beliefs and behavior is a tissue of lies. Churchmen recite reams of Latin and assert that “qualsevol activitat . . . tendent a l’anorreament i l’anihilació de les hordes dolentes, malfactors, assassines, comunistes, roges, atees,

maçones, jueves i catalanoseparatistes, és plaent a Déu Nostre Senyor, Amo de la Justícia i Dispensador del Càstig Diví i Garant de la Sagrada Unitat d'Espanya" (212). The Falangists harp upon "la Pàtria" and "l'aixecament gloriós" (294, 329) and rant about "les hordes soviètiques i separatistes" (294). Cecilia Bàscones, who has studied pharmacy, lards her conversations with medical terminology. The misuse of language is not restricted to representatives of Church and State or their adherents, for Tina's husband Jordi declaims passionately about honour and the importance of multiculturalism, cultural hybridity, and transversalism, but his actions belie his words. Cabré also mocks the supposed saintliness and humility of the founder of Opus Dei by ostentatiously enumerating his posts and honours, and he ridicules the pretensions of the Vilabrú and Centellels-Anglesola i Erill families by repeatedly reeling off the names of their ancestors.

In the midst of this dark panorama of self-serving and cynical behavior, moral degradation, corruption, and hypocrisy, Tina Bros, spokesperson for the importance of recovering historical memory, is a beacon of light. While photographing the old village school in Torena, she unearths a box that contains the notebooks Oriol wrote for the child he never saw. This disinterment of the past is, of course, rich in symbolic overtones and brings to mind efforts undertaken in Colombia and Argentina on behalf of *los desaparecidos*. And the notebooks dispel the lie that Oriol was an ardent Falangist (as the 1944 stone over his grave claims) and recount his work with guerrilla fighters. There are a number of parallels between the protagonist and Tina: teachers both, with a creative bent (he paints, she takes photographs, the two write) and similar family tragedies. Oriol's pregnant wife, Rosa, leaves him, believing that he is a Falangist and responsible for the death of Ventureta, and moves to Barcelona, where she gives birth to their child and dies of tuberculosis shortly later. Tina's husband has an affair with one of her co-workers, and her son decides to become a Benedictine monk, a decision the parents cannot understand inasmuch as they are not believers. Even while Tina's world is crumbling because of Jordi's infidelity, her son's decision, and her impending operation for breast cancer, she strives to make known the truth about Oriol. She insists to uncomprehending

colleagues that it is vitally important to resurrect Oriol's memory and clear his name:

—M'agradaria restablir la veritat...

—I a qui li pot interessar, això?

—A la memòria.— Va abaixar els ulls perquè li semblava que el que havia dit

sonava massa solemnia— A la seva família. A la seva filla. A mi. (361) ¹

Tina muses at one juncture that it is necessary to write against death and that Oriol “va escriure desesperadament perquè mai la mort no tingués l'última paraula” (47), actions that the author supports.

Cabré's repeated use of flashbacks and flashforwards reminds us of what occurred previously and what is yet to happen and thus tightens the threads that weave past and present together. Valentí Targa sits in the same armchair “que faria servir la Tina més de cinquanta anys després” (302), and Elisenda's car is parked “al lloc on cinquanta-sis anys després un congelat Doscavalls [Tina's car] vermell ploraria una traïció” (300-01). The inn where Jordi and his mistress hold their trysts is the same one where years before Oriol and Elisenda celebrated their assignations. Story lines frequently interrupt one another without any break in the text, and narrative points of view shift within the same paragraph or even sentence in what are akin to cinematic montages and dissolves. Direct and indirect discourse alternate. In one particularly interesting passage the text captures the flow of Tina's thoughts as she copies a passage from Oriol's notebooks. Her mind moves from the suffering and figurative crucifixion of Oriol, suggestive of Christ's, to the betrayal of her by Jordi (whom she addresses), to their son, who she hopes will continue being a good person, and then the passage abruptly cuts from Tina to Oriol in his classroom and the departure of the last student, another youth:

¹ The fact that Oriol fathered not a daughter but a son is not revealed until later in the novel.

Ella, ara que estava passant a l'ordinador un moment culminant del viacrucis de l'Oriol Fontelles, el viacrucis que el va portar a la crucifixió, pensava en el doctor Zhivago [her cat] . . . en el Jordi traïdor a totes les il·lusions, que no recordes el petó que ens vam fer a l'entrada de Taizé, eh, i el jurament de fidelitat, eh, no ho recordes, Jordi . . . i també pensava en què deu estar fent ara mateix l'Arnau. Déu meu, que no estigui posant els ulls en blanc i que no faci aquella veu impostada, litúrgica, falsa i ritual i que continuï essent un bon noi, amén. Després de veure com desapareixia l'últim alumne, la pissarra meticulosament esborrada, les cendres de l'estufa remogudes, l'Oriol se n'anà al lavabo. (245)

The epigraphs that open each part of the novel are taken from diverse sources: Joan Vinyoli, Jordi Pàmias, Vicent Andrés Estellés, Johann Michael Friedrich Rückert, the Gospel of Saint Mark, John Allen Muhammad (the infamous Virginia sniper), and one of the novel's characters. Most significant is the quotation from Vladimir Jankélévitch that prefaces the entire novel: "Pare, no els perdonis, que saben què fan," which reverses Jesus's "Pare, perdona'ls, que no saben el que fan" (Evangeli segons Lluç 23.34). Elisenda, most certainly, has never forgiven anyone for anything, but she is hardly one to hold up as a model of conduct. Can — and should — Ventureta's family forgive? And what of other innumerable victims, nameless, faceless, buried in unmarked graves or beneath tombstones that deny the truth of their existence? After saying "Venganza no, pero memoria sí," Aldecoa's Gabriela adds "Perdonad, pero no olvidéis" (75): easier said than done. What Cabré asks of us is, above all, to remember and to reflect on our moral responsibility for our acts.

Herzberger employs the term "novels of memory" for "those fictions in which past time is evoked through subjective remembering, most often by means of first-person narration. . . . The past that is explored in each case (the external referent of the text) is the past largely eschewed or appropriated by historiography under Franco, the lived past of the Civil War and the strains of dissent that anticipate the conflict and persist in its aftermath" (1995: 66). Although the works Herzberger discusses were written during the 1960s and 1970s, his term is applicable to *Pa negre*, which concentrates on the early postwar years when restrictions and hunger were especially severe and

denunciations frequent. The novel's epigraphs bespeak an interest in the writing of history and underscore what a complex and difficult endeavor this is.

The initial chapters provide an exemplary introduction to the rural world of *Pa negre*, and the book's opening sentence establishes the retrospective vision that will predominate: "Quan feia bon temps, des de Pasqua florida fins a principis de tardor, quan el bosc canviava de color, vivíem a les branques dels arbres" (9). The *nosaltres* consists of Andreu, the central character, his older cousin Quirze, and younger cousin Núria, la Ploramiques. Each claims as his/her own a branch of the plum tree that is private space and refuge. From their observation points they can see the orchard, meadow, barn, farmhouse, henhouse, pigsty, threshing floor, monastery of Sant Camil de Lelis, and the highway that leads to Vic. The leisurely, often lyrical description might lead readers to assume that *Pa negre* will exemplify the *beatus ille* tradition and the notion that childhood is paradisiacal, but ominous notes soon intervene. Andreu's father, who "es va significar massa" (112) before and after the Civil War, is in prison and later dies there, and the boy's mother labours in a textile factory, so Andreu lives with his father's family in the farmhouse that is owned by the Manubens, wealthy absentee landlords. The key figure of the household is the grandmother, Mercè, and her references to the Allies, Churchill, Roosevelt, resistance, fascism, and exile situate the narrative in the early 1940s (chapter 2). Chapter 3 introduces the rhetoric of illness/health that will be important and chapter 4 the leitmotif of the significance of words and the contrasts between *els altres* or *els facciosos* and *els nostres*, as well as between adults and children. Chapter 5 focuses on the local school and the forest, the setting for Andreu's sexual initiation. By the end of this last chapter Teixidor has limned a physical and emotional portrait of a world riven by differences of political orientation, economic circumstance, social class, and age.

Franz Stanzel's distinction between the experiencing and the narrating self is pertinent to a reading of *Pa negre*. The narrating self, writes Stanzel, "distinguishes itself from the experiencing self by greater insight and maturity, by a tendency to retrospection and reflection . . .; between the experiencing self's experience of an event

and the narrative re-creation of the same event at the hands of the narrating self there are therefore differences of valuation and interpretation which become visible in the structure of meaning of the novel” (1971: 70-71). As a rule the temporal span between the narrating and the experiencing process is more or less clearly marked (61); adverbs of time and place (*then vs. now, there vs. here*) signal the temporal and spatial distance between the two selves. Such deictics are, however, relatively rare in *Pa negre*.² Teixidor is well known for his fiction for children and young adults, and it is the vision of the experiencing self that prevails in his 2003 novel. The boy Andreu is the focal character; people and events are presented as they appear to him, and because of his limited vision, there is much that this “innocent eye” does not understand but that readers do grasp. Mercè, for instance, regales her grandchildren with spine-tingling stories about *follets*, and on various occasions the children report seeing the goblins, which adult readers realize are maquis who have come to the *masia* for food and shelter.³

Many words are unfamiliar to the children, and they listen attentively during those rare moments when the women of the household rest from their labours and talk among themselves. “Teníem l’oportunitat d’escoltar paraules noves, misterioses, brillants en la seva raresa, que copsàvem amb interès, sense que les dones se n’adonessin” (29). These words are a window into the adult world, and the children are prone to “repetir-les, pensar-les, rebregar-les, interrogar-les, omplir-les, deixar que naveguessin pel nostre cap fins a trobar un port que les lligués a un continent de terra ferma, d’experiències conegudes, de coses sabudes” (30). Who, they wonder,

² The notable exception is chapter 17, in which the adult narrator reflects on the role of memory and why we remember certain things and forget others. His reiteration of the demonstrative *aquell* stresses temporal distance from the era he recalls.

³ With her wealth of stories and rich vocabulary, the grandmother is the embodiment of popular wisdom and speech. Teixidor draws attention to words that only she uses (*llepolies* [231]) and distinctions (*un paller vs. una pallerà*[11]) that city folk would be incapable of making. In his interview with Francesc Bombí-Vilaseca (III), Teixidor laments the loss of oral culture.

is the “putot” the adults speak of, who is suffering from “un mal lleig,” what does “el fato” mean (30-31)? And they struggle to figure out which persons form part of the “we” group and which belong to “the others.”

During the Franco era various methods of silencing were used to oppress and control. People learned to watch their words, hold their tongues, and conceal their thoughts, to communicate indirectly rather than speak freely. After a threatening visit from local authorities, for example, Quirze’s father angrily protests “¡Que no es pugui parlar clar ni a casa!” (194). In this environment, novelists resorted to circumlocution, periphrasis, euphemism, indirectness, vagueness, oblique or elliptical presentation, and incomplete or truncated versions of events (Pérez: 1984, 129). Teixidor utilizes some of these same strategies and relies upon readers to connect bits and pieces of information, to read between the lines, to fill in textual blanks. Adult conversations in *Pa negre* are often so elliptical as to mystify Andreu, as when his mother and Aunt Ció speak of Enriqueta, who, we deduce, is having an affair with a Civil Guard and making a mockery of the man she had agreed to marry.

Instead of openly criticizing the Church and its representatives for their authoritarianism, singularly unchristian lack of charity, and concern with trifles, Teixidor makes effective use of Andreu’s inability to comprehend adult behavior, beliefs, and values that are without logic or justification. Why, the boy wonders, does a supposedly beneficent God pursue non-believers with such a vengeance? He concludes — echoing arguments advanced by the Church and the Franco regime — that God’s omnipotence is shown by the fact that “havia triomfat a la guerra ajudant els que lluitaven en el seu nom, i els incrèduls que havien cremat temples i burlat les seves lleis havien perdut i ara es veien perseguits, exiliats, empresonats, blasmat, arraconats” (85-86). Similarly, apropos the humiliation of having to put aside all sense of personal dignity and figuratively lick the boots of those who could, if they wished, come to his father’s defence, Andreu comments that “No em cabia al cap que només amb la veritat no es pogués aconseguir la victòria de la justícia” (119). In a more humorous vein, he is amused when sanctimonious Senyora Manubens and her friends obsess about dress codes (skirts and sleeves

must cover knees and elbows, low necklines are verboten), and he remarks that he never could have imagined anyone would worry about such nonsense. The child's "unfallen way of perceiving the world" (Fiedler: 1971, 494) and his unblinking gaze expose the corruption, hypocrisy, and irrationality of postwar Spain.

In *A Time of Silence: Civil War and the Culture of Repression in Franco's Spain, 1936-1945*, Michael Richards studies the rhetoric used by the regime to justify its ruthless elimination of dissent. It trumpeted the need to purify Spain, to cleanse the nation, to purge society of its ills, and presented itself as synonymous with health, cures, and redemption, while employing pathological language to characterize its opponents as contaminated, disease-ridden, plagued by parasites, cancer, and putrefaction, and therefore in need of surgical pruning. Teixidor deftly subverts this rhetoric of illness/health in his treatment of Andreu's reaction to the tubercular patients cared for at the monastery of Sant Camil. The boy's initial description of the naked, skeletal young men who sun themselves in the monastery's garden is overwhelmingly negative:

monstres als nostres ulls, fantasmes d'un món prohibit, malalts rosegats i corcats per un microbi terrible, testimonis d'una malaltia contagiosa i supurenta . . . una malaltia maleïda que es contraïa pels vicis i la mala vida... , malalts condemnats en vida, testimonis del càstig del pecat i la immisericòrdia divina . . . un mal físic, signe palpable del mal espiritual, invisible, una mena de manifestació repugnant del pecat. (24)

The negativity is so exaggerated that it provokes a contrarian reaction on the part of readers, who know full well that tuberculosis is not a punishment from God, and it inspires sympathy for the patients. Gradually Andreu too comes to feel pity for them and compares their naked bodies to images of various saints and the crucified Christ. He is especially attracted by the physical beauty of one adolescent, and a reference to the latter's "cara d'arcàngel" (289) is a dramatic reversal of the Francoist language of revulsion.

Cabré's Elisenda manages to get possession of Oriol Fontelles's son and rear him as her own, and he turns out to be as unprincipled and ruthless as his adoptive mother. In parallel fashion,

the childless Manubens “generously” offer to take Andreu off his relatives’ hands, educate him, and make of him a *persona de bé*, a phrase that is indeed ironic. He no longer knows humiliation or cold, no longer has to eat dark bread. Although he used to get a lump in his throat when his mother had to conclude her visits to the *masia*, he now resents the intrusion into his new life of “aquella dona esprimatxada, fràgil, envellida, desamparada, desnortada i sola” (391). What was once a sensitive, vulnerable child with a strong sense of justice willingly leaves behind the ranks of the vanquished and aligns himself with the victors, as did many of his countrymen. Like a number of Ana María Matute’s youthful characters, Andreu does not grow *up* (a word implying ascension to a higher state) but *down*, experiencing a descent into adulthood. Death, usually violent, is ubiquitous in *Les veus del Pamano*; it is figurative, moral death that looms largest in *Pa negre*.

The illustration for the cover of Cabré’s novel is a sepia-toned photograph of a group of schoolchildren, most of whom are solemn-faced, although some scowl and a few have a half-smile on their lips. The picture calls to mind the children of the school where Oriol taught in the 1940s. The photograph on the cover of *Pa negre* shows four boys on roller skates who race towards us and appear about to burst through the frame of the photo. In both instances the children’s clothing dates these archival images. Susan Sontag describes photography as an elegiac, a twilight art, and declares that “a photograph is both a pseudo-presence and a token of absence,” an incitement to reverie (1977: 15, 16). When we look at images caught and held in a photograph taken long ago, like the ones on the covers of *Les veus del Pamano* and *Pa negre*, it is as if the subjects were still alive. The past is recovered and made present visually; within the novels it is recuperated and made present through words.

Les veus del Pamano and *Pa negre* differ markedly in terms of technique. Whereas Cabré sustains suspense by means of jumbled chronology, fragmented presentation of events and story lines, and repeated shifts in focalization as well as in space and time, Teixidor writes a linear narrative in which a single voice prevails, as does one place (the *masia* and its environs), and the action extends over a period of several years, not decades. The two authors, however, share

a desire to reclaim the past. Andreu's teacher reminds his students "que la història l'escriuen els guanyadors, i que els vençuts no tenen dret ni a una nota a peu de pàgina en el gran llibre de la història" (205). Teixidor and Cabré set out to remedy that injustice by adding not just footnotes but entire texts which counteract the distortions and omissions propagated by official history, with its monologic vision and single-voiced discourse. Instead they reckon with the past, feature realities long silenced, and tell the stories of *els vençuts*.

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