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LA CIUDAD PERDIDA. SPACES OF RECONCILIATION AND DISSIDENCE IN 1950S SPANISH LITERATURE AND CINEMA*

reconcile.
(From Latin: *reconciliāre*)

1. v.tr. To restore friendly relations, or to bring unrelated or estranged elements into agreement.
2. v.tr. To bring a person who has strayed from church doctrine back into the community of the Church.
3. v.tr. To hear a brief or minor confession.
4. v.tr. To bless a sacred place, due to its having been violated.
5. v.tr. To confess certain offences that are minor or were forgotten in another confession recently made.
6. v.tr. *Rel.* To make a confession, especially a brief one or one of minor offences.
(Real Academia de la Lengua, 2001)

Imagine an understanding

On 30 September 1955, a première was held at Madrid's Teatro Musical of a film that today is all but forgotten: *La ciudad perdida* (The Lost City, Margarita Alexandre and Rafael Torrecilla), an adaptation of the novel of the same name by Mercedes Fórmica (1951). The film tells the story of Rafa, a Spanish exile who secretly enters the country to take part in an attack organised by anti-Franco guerrilla forces. When the mission fails on his arrival in Madrid, the protagonist ignores his orders and gives in to an impulse to wander the streets of the city he had defended during the Civil War and was forced to abandon after Franco's troops arrived

in 1939. On his wanderings, the character waivers between fascination for the city reclaimed and the oppression of knowing he is being hunted down. In an effort to secure an escape he knows is impossible, he takes a hostage: María, a lady of high society who, by virtue of a kind of confession intoned by the fugitive, will become his redeemer. The adaptation of *La ciudad perdida* constituted a curiously symbiotic exercise between the author Mercedes Fórmica—the first national delegate of the female wing of the Spanish Students' Union and a member of the Women's Section of the Falange—and the duo formed by the pioneering Margarita Alexandre and Rafael Torrecilla, who, after their time working in the Spanish film industry in the 1950s, would go into exile in Cuba in 1959 to place themselves at the service of the newly declared Revolution.

A thematic and aesthetic analysis of the film reveals some bold narrative propositions and combinations of genres which, being in keeping with the historical, political and cultural context in which they were produced (the end of Franco's autarky and the subsequent alliance of his regime with the Western powers during the Cold War), make Alexandre and Torrecilla's film valuable material for studying the guiding principles that came into play in Spanish cinema during these years. It was a moment when the triumphalist and revanchist rhetoric of *cine de cruzada*, predominant during the first years after the Spanish Civil War, necessarily gave way to discourses which—generally with rabidly anti-communist sentiments—offered products that were more easily digestible in the liberal democracies of the Western block. This no doubt gave rise to a greater ambivalence towards the topic of the Civil War, beginning with the possibility that the "vanquished" would be given space on the screen and might awaken some kind of sympathy or affection in the audience. However, in Francoist discourse, the restitution of the vanquished back into Spanish society invariably required confession and repentance (the reference to Catholic concepts was not accidental) for the errors committed in the past. But *La ciudad perdida* went beyond this. As will be discussed below, underlying the discursive strategies employed both by Fórmica and by Alexandre and Torrecilla is an attempt to articulate spaces (by which we mean symbolic spaces) of reconciliation which, given the intransigence of the censors, could also be interpreted as an early form of dissidence. Based on this approach, in the pages that follow I will offer a thematic and aesthetic analysis of the novel and the film, without losing sight of the context of the cultural discourses which, in the early 1950s, gave rise to the complex atmosphere described above.

An unprecedented film

In thematic terms, *La ciudad perdida* forms part of a series of films resulting from "the evolution of cinema inspired by the Civil War and its aftermath, now heavily coloured by the international context of the Cold War" (Gubern, 1981: 81). *Cerca del cielo* (Domingo

Figure 1. Dust jacket for the first edition of *La ciudad perdida* (Mercedes Fórmica, 1951). Over a background of the city at night, with Madrid's Telefónica building and La Cibeles fountain both recognisable on the skyline, a man dressed in a hat and gabardine coat, his face in shadow, casts a worried look off frame

Viladomat and Mariano Pombo, 1951) and *Dos caminos* (Arturo Ruiz Castillo, 1953) constitute examples of different styles within this group of films which, with the early exception of *Rojo y negro* (Carlos Arévalo, 1942), only began to find a place in the Spanish film industry once the international anti-Franco embargo—imposed by the allied nations against the Axis powers in the Second World War—came to an end.[1] As Román Gubern (1981: 81) suggests, "*En un rincón de España* (1948) by Jerónimo Mihura did it by exhorting exiled republicans to return to Spain without fear of reprisal, representing a turning point that was reassuring to Western democracies. The same reassuring propaganda underpinned the subsequent film *Rostro al mar* (1951) by Carlos Serrano de Osma, which also showed the horrors suffered in the Soviet internment camps, in harmony with the global ideological battle of the Cold War." However, *La ciudad perdida* did not appear so much to try to please the anti-communist block through the depiction of a hero who was repentant or wracked with guilt as to articulate a view that sought to integrate the vanquished in the Civil War back into Spanish society. It did so chiefly by encouraging visual and narrative identification with the character of Rafa, played by an attractive Italian actor (Fausto Tozzi), depicted as a middle-class university-educated Spaniard with profound humanitarian convictions, and secondly, through the love story been him and María (Cosetta Greco),[2] in which the attraction is activated, quite apart from the political and moral convictions of both characters, under the sole imperative of love and desire.

On the other hand, from the perspective of aesthetics and genre, Alexandre and Torrecilla's film bears some interesting resemblances to popular detective drama formulations which—boosted by the new interest in appealing to the Western powers (and their cultural forms) that the regime began to promote in the early 1950s—proliferated in those years. In spite of the importance that the protagonist's republican past plays in the plot of *La ciudad perdida*, the story is articulated around the persecution and inevitable capture of the fugitive by the police, and includes elements typical of the crime story (both literary and cinematic), such as the police commissioner (played by Félix Dafauce, a familiar face in the genre) and his agents, the shoot-outs and the squalid nocturnal settings. Moreover, the film features numerous key scenes that serve as a pretext for offering postcard shots of the streets of the Spanish capital, filmed on location, in which the character Rafa mixes in with the passers-by of the Madrid of 1954. In this way, the representation acquires a photographic realism that is also recognisable in films like *Apartado de correos 1.001* (Julio Salvador, 1950), *Los peces rojos* (José Antonio Nieves Conde, 1955) or, to a lesser extent, *Los ojos dejan huellas* (José Luis Sáenz de Heredia, 1952).[3]

Figure 2. Poster for *La ciudad perdida* (Margarita Alexandre and Rafael Torrecilla, 1955. 9 x 14 cm five-ink print. Like Mercedes Fórmica's novel, the poster for La ciudad perdida adopted the visual style of the detective genre with a romantic touch

In this respect, Elena Medina de la Viña highlights the fact that IFI, Ignacio F. Iquino's Barcelona studio specialising in detective films,[4] held distribution rights for 20th Century Fox productions at a time when Fox had begun filming on location with non-professional actors (cf. Labanyi, Lázaro-Reboll, Rodríguez Ortega, 2014: 266), an intuition which, in the case of *La ciudad perdida*, seems to be confirmed by the fact that Hispano FoxFilm assumed its distribution. Authors like Labanyi, Lázaro-Reboll and Rodríguez Ortega (2014: 266) also refer to the influence of Italian neorealism on this realist branch of Spanish detective films, especially following the success of *Surcos* (José Antonio Nieves Conde, 1951). However, it is worth recalling that the influence of neorealism, even in Italy, extended to popular detective films, and that a film like *Four Ways Out* (La città si difende, Pietro Germi, 1951), with Cosetta Greco and Fausto Tozzi, presented a detective story that identified the conditions of social inequality as the cause of the crime, in a kind of "pseudo-social" cinema, as Guido Aristarco has described it.[5]

In any case, shooting on location opened up new opportunities to present an image of post-war Spain that differed from the glowing picture postcard images offered by the regime through the *No-Do* newsreel series, and although, as Román Gubern notes, this genre, which took Hollywood detective films as its model, would invariably fall into the habit of "exaltation of the repressive apparatus of the State" (Gubern, 1981: 81), it is also equally true that, as debtors to the realist tradition of the thriller and film noir genres and their fondness for gritty underworld settings, these films were able to subvert the moral tone that directors were obliged to adopt to reassure the regime (cf. Labanyi, Lázaro-Reboll, Rodríguez Ortega, 2014: 266). This is exactly what happened in the case of Margarita Alexandre and Rafael Torrecilla's film, which was mutilated by the political and moral objections alleged by the censors (AGA, 1954: 36 / 04750 C/ 13.820).

This brief thematic and generic analysis of *La ciudad perdida* should

prompt us to reflect on the unprecedented nature of Alexandre and Torrecilla's film in a context marked by the emergence of new discourses on the Civil War, far removed from the pro-Franco propaganda of *cine de cruzada*, and from visual approaches that connect with international trends like Italian neorealism or American or European film noir. While the film studied here clearly reflects the elements of theme and genre described, it is equally true that it constitutes a kind of mutation in which the detective story serves as a pretext to push the depiction of the *vanquished*—to use the official terminology of the era—and the representation of the past to the very limits of permissiveness.

However, to fully understand the support that more commercial formulas could bring to visions of the recent past that offered alternatives to the official discourse, it is worth considering the literary source of *La ciudad perdida* and the place occupied by its author, Mercedes Fórmica, in the cultural context of 1950s Spain. The combination of a commercial formula that was considered inferior to the type of cinema promoted by official agencies and the use of novels clearly supportive of Falangism became a calculated strategy from the moment that the incipient dissidence began seeking political alternatives in the realm of cultural representations. It is hardly surprising that Margarita Alexandre should have asserted that "those of us in the film industry began doing things, often with books or ideas of the Falangists, because we thought that, being the story of a Falangist, [the censors] would be more benevolent. It was sort of an opportunist idea of finding a way around the censorship" (M. Alexandre, personal communication, 23 June 2014).

The novel *La ciudad perdida*

Mercedes Fórmica's novel, published in 1951 with a generous print run of 5,000 copies, was triumphantly launched by its publisher, Luis de Caralt, who placed it unhesitatingly among the best books he had read in the ten years prior to its publication. In a curious mixture of publisher marketing and personal reflection, Caralt asserted on the back flap of the book's dust jacket: "The atmosphere of a nocturnal Madrid full of contrasts and the stage for a dramatic tale is masterfully described, and the [narration of the] chase and capture of the fugitive is reminiscent of Graham Greene's best writing." Caralt concluded his review by linking the novel to "the literary movements in vogue around the world" and, in a display of unquestionable optimism, or perhaps of sharp business savvy,

Figure 3. Advertisement for *La ciudad perdida* published in *La Vanguardia* for the première in Barcelona, 20 October 1955. The promotional material for *La ciudad perdida* highlighted the "human problem" addressed by the film and its status as a "detective adventure"

he promised that "*La ciudad perdida* will have a huge international impact" (Fórmica, 1951). Notwithstanding the enthusiasm of its publisher, the topics addressed in the book that were hardly dear to the regime, such as anti-Franco guerrilla forces and the Civil War (Arroyo Rodríguez, 2010), articulated in the form of a detective story, a genre that also found little sympathy with the censors (Valles Calatrava, 1991; Abio Villarig, 2013), placed the novel in a complex situation in terms of censorship. Indeed, this was something that Fórmica herself was quite aware of: in the third volume of her memoirs, published in 1988, with respect to *La ciudad perdida* the author remarked that "the story's ending was phoney, but the censors would never have allowed the protagonist's suicide and we writers in those days either submitted to certain expectations or we would not be published" (Fórmica, 2004: 26).

Nevertheless, the novel was supported by Fórmica's unequivocal background as a *white shirt* in the Falange and by her first novel, *Monte de Sancha* (1950), nominated for the Barcelona City book prize,[6] with a story that evoked the *red terror* experienced by the writer in Málaga during the first months of the Civil War. The publisher also had numerous credentials placing him in the ranks of Francoist officialdom,[7] a fact which, although it probably influenced the attitude of the censors, did not prevent certain frictions with which Caralt was in any case already familiar: the novel, whose file contained a "copy of the typescript with numerous handwritten alternatives by the author", was authorised "with the classification of 'tolerated'" after the censors indicated their approval of "the natural restraint of the author" when entering into "the core of the moral landscape painted because he [sic] either does not know it or does not dare" (Larraz, 2013).

In a context in which moral issues were almost as important as the political orientation of the cultural product, the development of a story that openly called up the ghosts of the Civil War in the invariably unorthodox context of a police chase ("Is it dangerous, politically speaking, for a besieged resistance fighter to evoke sympathy?" asked the censor) required an extremely delicate balancing act on the part of the publisher in order to defend his author. The legitimation of the book through the various mechanisms of publishing strategy thus proved essential. Shortly after the Civil War, in 1942, Luis de Caralt had founded his publishing house in Barcelona with the publication of two titles by Spanish authors on the Civil War (*Mis amigas eran espías* by Luis Antonio de Vega, and *No éramos así* by José María García Rodríguez), but its catalogue was characterised from the

Figure 4. ***La ciudad perdida*** **(Margarita Alexandre and Rafael Torrecilla, 1955). Fausto Tozzi, in the role of Rafa, dressed as a republican militiaman**

beginning by Spanish and international titles of recognised prestige, alongside other more commercial products. Thus, "in its catalogue appeared important names in literature like William Faulkner, John Steinbeck and John Dos Passos, along with commercial authors like Cecil Roberts" (Moret, 2002: 56). Otherwise, Caralt was, together with Bruguera (established in 1939) and Josep Janés (founded in 1941), one of the first publishers to introduce detective novel collections in Spain, other than the cheap paperbacks that had been sold at newspaper stands since the 1920s. According to Abio Villarig (2013: 212), "these collections were placed on the quality literary market [and] included numerous American noir fiction novels", as confirmed by the slogan of the *El Club del Crimen* collection, which first appeared in 1947: "*Las novelas policíacas se visten de tela y lujo*" ("Detective novels dressed up in style").

Perhaps taking this legitimising ambition a little further, and in view of the publisher's clearly commercial intention to position the book as a detective novel,[8] *La ciudad perdida* was published in the Spanish authors' series of the *Gigante* collection, reserved for "the most select works of world literature", in an effort to give the tale of intrigue the stamp of "high culture" that authors like the aforementioned Graham Greene had begun to give the genre in the English-speaking world. However, Mercedes Fórmica's novel had nothing at all to do with the search for new narrative forms embarked on in the 1940s and early 1950s by authors like Camilo José Cela or Carmen Laforet and that would continue in the critical realism of Juan Goytisolo, Rafael Sánchez Ferlosio and the authors of the so-called Generation of '50 (cf. Valles Calatrava, 1991: 96). On the contrary, *La ciudad perdida* could be more suitably identified as an heir to the Civil War and "red terror" serial novels produced during the first years after the war by authors like Carmen de Icaza, Luisa María Linares, María Mercedes Ortoll and Concha Linares-Becerra (Rodríguez Puértolas, 2008: 631-635), but with, at least, one difference: rather than the revanchist character, tinged with hatred for the "reds", that characterised the works of those authors, Fórmica's novel introduced a desire for reconciliation and, consequently, integration of the vanquished into post-war society, openly recognising the affections and interests shared by the members of her generation who took one or the other side in the Civil War. Although it was a degraded and *kitsch* version of the novels of "the great American anti-Franco novelists" that Caralt bragged of having published after the end of the dictatorship (Moret, 2003: 58), its author recognised the importance that a novel like *La familia de Pascual Duarte* (Camilo José Cela, 1942) had played in her development as an author, because "beneath the Solana-style gruesomeness lay a great tenderness and, for the first time, a 'red assassin' was spoken of with compassion" (Fórmica, 2013: 367).

From this perspective, *La ciudad perdida* is a novel that reflects the ghosts of its author, as she explains in her memoirs: the Civil War experienced as a fratricidal tragedy in which the young men of the best generation that Spain had given us were cut down; the frustration that no dialogue occurred to prevent so many deaths (a willingness for which the author attributed to the *absent* Falange founder, José Antonio

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Primo de Rivera); the common ideal, albeit understood from a different perspective, shared by Falangists and communists, defined by the idea of "social justice" (Fórmica, 2013: 290-292). Ultimately, this was what led many of the *old shirts* of the Falange, under Dionisio Ridruejo, to join an early dissident movement within Franco's regime. Rather than the *red terror* experience in Málaga in the first months of the Civil War, which the author describes

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in the pages of *Monte de Sancha*, *La ciudad perdida*, set twelve years after the end of the conflict, focuses on other aspects: as noted, the protagonist is a republican exile who enters Spain to launch an attack on Franco's regime, but, instead of giving him the sinister character with which the republicans were usually depicted in the culture of early Francoism, Mercedes Fórmica places him in a middle-class family, as a formerly brilliant medical student who joined the republican side by virtue of his honest communist convictions. Meanwhile, María is the widow of a Francoist aircraft pilot named Carlos[9] who, in spite of having been taken as a hostage by Rafa, feels an irresistible attraction to her captor, who reminds her so much of her late husband.

The literary techniques employed obviously play a fundamental role in the series of identifications articulated in the novel and which, inevitably, would be adopted in the film. Resorting to a multiple focalisation with numerous paralepses, each instance of enunciation gives access to the thoughts and emotions (and thus, to an understanding of the motivations) not only of the kidnapped and imperilled woman, but also of her kidnapper and of other characters who together compose a mosaic of the moral bankruptcy of post-war Madrid. Otherwise, it is a story with a markedly impressionist character, where the urban spaces operate as an objective correlative of the emotions of the characters, which seem to be projected onto the landscape ("chaste light", "hostile city", etc.) (Fórmica, 1951: 11, 20), while the exploration of the gritty streets of Madrid at night becomes the stage for a dialogue, in the full sense of the term, in which, above all, the characters long to understand and be understood. In tune with the central nature of dialogue and the creation of meeting spaces for characters who embody irreconcilable positions from the perspective of the institutional discourses, the idea of reconciliation, in its sense of "to resume a friendly relations, or to bring unrelated or estranged elements into agreement" is powerfully expressed in statements like: "Who were the ones responsible for the fact there was no dialogue?" (Fórmica, 2013: 292); and "Who are you? Tell me. Why don't you tell me what's wrong?" (Fórmica, 1951: 60). Last of all, the tone of the detective novel allows Fórmica to describe the gritty underworld of Madrid and its inhabitants, embodied by the clientèle that frequent the sleazy taverns of the Barrio de La Latina neighbourhood where the protagonists pass through, and by the characters at the police station visited by the butler Eliseo in the early hours of the morning. As noted above, the descriptions of these spaces in the novel, together with the paralepses that give access to the thoughts of the characters, make it possible to explain (and thus understand) their reasons for choosing a life of what the public discourse classified as vice, sin or crime. Underlying their behaviour is the terrible social inequality which the regime made efforts to gloss over and which the detective genre, with its realist focus, exposed in both literature and cinema, again and again.

Figure 5. ***La ciudad perdida*** **(Margarita Alexandre and Rafael Torrecilla, 1955). Cosetta Greco and Fausto Tozzi joined in a passionate embrace**

Different fates for the same story

It was undoubtedly the effort made by Fórmica to offer a more nuanced and integrative vision of the vanquished and of the recent past which, in spite of the melodramatic touches sprinkled through the novel, inspired Alexandre and Torrecilla to attempt a film adaptation. This is something which, many years later, allowed Alexandre herself to affirm: "[Mercedes Fórmica] never seemed to me a good writer, but her book had something interesting: an exile who comes back to Madrid and re-encounters his hometown. A man who had to leave at a particular moment of his youth. That was what interested us. The rest was anecdotal." (M. Alexandre, personal communication, 23 June 2014). However, the fate of Alexandre and

Torrecilla's film was very different from that of Fórmica's novel. While the novel, with some reservations on the part of the censors, was released onto the market under the conditions mentioned above, the film saw its première delayed by almost a year due to the interminable negotiations with the censors that the directors had to deal with, and only reached the screens after the removal of several shots and the introduction of new dialogues written by the censors and dubbed over the original soundtrack (AGA, 1954: 36 / 3.518 C/ 34.519, 13.453). In spite of all their objections, the political baggage of the character of Rafa did not bother the censors as much as the fact that an upper-class lady would speak so familiarly to a communist. While the censors' report suggested that "if for unquantifiable reasons it was impossible to shoot a new ending, the film could be rectified by cut out all political references therein [...] through the re-dubbing of a series of sentences and with the elimination of the scene showing the protagonist dressed as a militiaman", in the end the scene in question was not eliminated based on the argument that "the way in which the film has been shot not considered truly important or of political significance and if reservations were expressed in the first viewing it was because the instructions in the censors' original approval of the screenplay had not been strictly adhered to" (AGA, 1954: 36/ 3.518 C/ 34.519, 13.453). However, the dialogues were changed so that, in spite of the passionate embraces shared by María and Rafa, the characters continued speaking to each other in an absurdly formal manner (addressing each other with the Spanish formal form "*usted*" rather than the familiar "*tú*") until the fatal conclusion of the film, because the censors deemed it inadmissible that the "red protagonist" should have a "likeable and heroic character". Moreover, they required that "the young woman must not fall in love but on the contrary, rather than offering him refuge, should reproach him and condemn him" (AGA, 1954: 36/ 3.518 C/ 34.519, 13.453).[10]

Based on the reports issued by the censors, it could be argued that in their final decision questions of class and gender (that an upper-class lady should fall in love with a communist) took precedence over political factors (the very idea of a *hero* belonging to the republican side), pointing to the conclusion that, in a certain sense, the criteria of the censors shifted in this case from the public sphere (the question of visibility) to the private sphere (the choice of love object). In any case, the film was "penalised" by the *Sindicato Nacional del Espectáculo* (Spain's film industry union, which determines subsidies for film projects) with a category of "First B" and a subsidy of only 875,000 pesetas (Anon., 1956) out of an estimated cost of 3,864,737 pesetas (AGA, 1954: 36 / 04750 C/ 13.820), which brought Nervión Films to the brink of bankruptcy. All of these are reasons to assert that the case of *La ciudad perdida* ultimately demonstrated that the regime's supposedly liberal discourse still had a long way to go, and that the representation of the political opposition in films addressing the Civil War was far from being genuinely inclusive. Meanwhile, the real discourse of reconciliation could be seen as the tip of the iceberg of the dissidence movements,[11] as yet concealed under the still waters of a frozen sea. ■

Notes

* This study has been completed in the context of the R+D+I research project *Hacia una reconsideración de la cultura posbélica: análisis de los Modos de Representación en el cine español (1939-1962) a partir de la impronta de Wenceslao Fernández Flórez* (CSO2012-34648). Ministry of the Economy and Competitiveness. Government of Spain. The author would like to thank Marga Lobo, Trinidad del Río, Catherine Gauthier and Alicia Potes (Filmoteca Española), and Raquel Zapater (IVAC-La Filmoteca) for their assistance in this research.

1 On the return of films with the Civil War as a theme during the 1950s, see Sánchez-Biosca, 2006: 145-179.

2 *La ciudad perdida* was a 50-50 Spanish-Italian co-production between Nervión Films (the studio founded by Alexandre and Torrecilla) and the Italian studio Pico Films. The title of the Italian version is *Terroristi a Madrid.*

3 According to the statements made by the production manager José María Ramos to Sofía Morales (1954: 28), *La ciudad perdida* had the police commissioner, writer and journalist Comín Colomer as its *police advisor.*

4 Iquino's studio, Emisora Films, produced films like the aforementioned *Apartado de correos 1.001* and *Brigada criminal* (Ignacio F. Iquino, 1950). Meanwhile, *La ciudad perdida* was shot in Chamartín Studios, the main centre for detective film production in the Spanish capital.

5 In an interview given to *Fotogramas*, Cosetta Greco recognised that her role in this film bore similarities to the character of María in *La ciudad perdida.* (Andresco, 1954: 18). The importance to the press of location shooting, attention to realistic details and authenticity of acting performances is made clear in the articles published by Sofía Morales in *Primer Plano* (1954: 28-29) and Víctor Andresco in *Fotogramas* (1954b: 18-19).

6 The City of Barcelona book prizes were promoted by Caralt in 1949 and were awarded by the city council, on which he acted as Deputy Mayor for Culture.

7 In addition to holding a position on the Barcelona City Council, Luis de Caralt Borrell was an original *old shirt* who had fought during the Civil War with the Virgen de Montserrat battalion. In 1951 he was decorated by the National Ministry of Education with the Order of Alfonso X the Wise, and was also honoured with the Knight's Cross of the Order of Cisneros, awarded by the Secretary General of the Movement. See the article published in *La Vanguardia* on 29 July 1951, p. 13.

8 This is confirmed, for example, by the design on the book's dust jacket: over a background of the city at night, with Madrid's Telefónica building and La Cibeles fountain both recognisable on the skyline, a man dressed in a hat and gabardine coat, his face in shadow, casts a worried look off frame.

9 Presumably based on Carlos Haya, a personal friend of the author's, who was killed in combat at the Battle of the Ebro.

10 In the case of the novel the censors found that "its tone is always measured even if the crux of the plot is a woman's kidnap-

ping" (Larraz, 2013), which led them to the authorisation of its publication without acknowledging the fact that the "kidnapping" motif hardly masked the desire of the female protagonist for her captor (an extremely common narrative mechanism in popular romantic novels).

11 The call of the Communist Party of Spain in exile "for national reconciliation, for a democratic and peaceful solution to the Spanish problem" was broadcast on Radio España Independiente in June 1956.

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