

The city of València in the poetry of Vicent Andrés Estellés

Jordi Oviedo

UNIVERSIDAD CATÓLICA DE VALENCIA SAN VICENTE MÁRTIR

jordi.oviedo@ucv.es

ORCID: 0000-0003-4690-688X

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ABSTRACT

This article reviews the relationship between the poetry of the Valencian writer Vicent Andrés Estellés and the city of València as a centre of a certain literary geography. Based on a corpus of the author's poetic texts selected from the 1950s, we can see the evolution of València's presence, with its different nuances and intensities, in Estellés' poetry. Books such as *Llibre de meravelles* treat spaces in diverse ways: the streets and the city itself are associated with fulfilled or repressed desire, while interior spaces are linked to death and anxiety. Likewise, the sources of this relationship between poetry and the city, as well as the network upon which it is built, are also analysed. Thus, journalism and cinema—especially the latter—become the main cultural systems that comprise the poetry of urban spaces.

Keywords: València, *Llibre de meravelles*, urban poetry, literary geography, cinema and literature, Catalan poetry.

Corresponding author: Jordi Oviedo. Rúa Compostela, 1, 1º, E36700, Tui (Pontevedra).

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*Le vieux Paris n'est plus (la forme d'une ville
change plus vite, hélas! que le coeur d'un mortel)*

Le cygne, BAUDELAIRE

CITY, MODERNITY, AND CULTURE

A brief review of the relationship between contemporary literature and culture and cities brings us to the poem *Le cygne* by Baudelaire—one of the most significant examples of the link between literary visions and urban geographical spaces. It puts aside the romantic relationship with space, of overcoming the individual, by unveiling the poetry of the city—a

trend based on a certain idea of confusion and the feeling of ontological chaos which became more popular throughout the 20th century.

Related to this process of growth and of the centrality of cities, personal means of modernity and urbanisation were developed. These included journalism and film, two of the fields which had the strongest links with

this rapid process of urbanisation in modern cities. Simultaneous origin and consequence: newspapers and films reflected this change from different perspectives and languages and gave way to a new popular culture, often based on consumption and the adoption of Anglo-American cultural models, superimposed onto those of autochthonous popular culture.

From more current theoretical perspectives, systemic models based on relational thought are the basis of polysystem thought (Even-Zohar, 1999, p. 27), which is used to explain the relationships between literature and new systems and cultural languages, themselves added to the literary tradition of urban spaces. In this sense, new cultural movements such as neorealism, which characterise modernity, speak through literature and cinema to productively speak a language full of nuances. Therefore, we find ourselves with a space like a city, with different layers of representation and perspectives which behaves as if it were a kind of palimpsest; one which is favoured in cities because they simultaneously contain historical and cultural references from the past, and they focus on a selective past and a contemporary present. Cinemas, infrastructure, new neighbourhoods, new inhabitants, and the tradition and memory of spaces are all added to history in a sample of semiotic polyglotism, as defined in the city of Iuri Lotman (2004).

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE CITY OF VALÈNCIA AND VICENT ANDRÉS ESTELLÉS: INFLUENCES AND LANGUAGES

Considering these specific modern urban culture coordinates and the context of the post-Spanish Civil War, the work of Vicent Andrés Estellés is personally and intimately linked to the city of València. This urban space became the centre of a set of spatial references from which its poetic 'self' can give rise to its own verse, and to a certain extent (and with time), its own collective, because of the symbolic value it acquires. In the work we present here, if

we understand the 'poetry of a city' according to Dionisio Cañas' definition¹, we explore 'València's poetry' in the work of Estellés:

[A city's poetry is the result of the relationship between a poetic subject and an object formed by an urban space and its inhabitants. These relationships range from the most absolute rejection of the city to its complete acceptance; provided that, implicitly or explicitly, the dialogue, or its negation, between the city and the poetic subject is expressed. In the same way, the treatment of this conflicting exchange can be both referential and imaginative, ambiguous or intimate and positive in its postures] (Cañas, 1994, p. 17).

Biographical relationship with the city

The revised edition of the complete works of Vicent Andrés Estellés was published in different volumes under the direction of Vicent Salvador and Josep Murgades in a chronological and stylistic order that promotes an orderly perspective on the different creative moments in Estellesian poetry. It also highlights how certain experiences of the poet are referenced in his work and are intimately linked to space. These 'lived spaces' would also become poetic material for his later texts, based on memories. The study by Ferran Carbó (2014), carried out prior to the edition of the first volume, picks out two events from the late 1940s which link València city both to Estellés' biography and with the author's writing: on the one hand, his work as a journalist at the newspaper *Las Provincias*, where he took over from its director Martí

1 As Joan Francesc Mira points out (2011, p. 84), rural and urban poetry cannot be distinguished based on the association between *urbanity* and *modernity*, as opposed to *rurality* and *traditionalism*. In fact, in *El primer llibre de les èglogues* [The first book of eclogues], Estellés takes the model of eclogues, a typically bucolic poetic form, and places them in an urban context linked to desire and sexuality. Similarly, a work like *El gran foc dels garbons* [The great bonfire of sheaves], set in the rural Burjassot of the author's childhood, is modern because of the universe it portrays and the urban outlook it projects. The special use of space is what determines the modernity of Estellesian poetry.

Domínguez, around 1950.² On the other, towards the end of the 1940s, he met his wife to be, Isabel Lorente Riva, who worked as a typist for the València City Council. In the 1950s, his work as a journalist connected him with local culture, including some significant moments such as coverage of the opening ceremony of an exhibition about the *Diccionari català-valencià-balear* [Catalan-Valencian-Balearic Dictionary] at the València City Council. Several personal and family events also marked the poet's relationship with the city, such as his courtship and subsequent marriage with Isabel Lorente Riva on 16 February 1955. The couple settled in an attic at flat 19, number 17 Calle [street] Micer Mascó in central València, where he would write poems and poetry collections including 'Coral romput' [Broken chorus]—part of *La nit* [The night], *Primera soledad* [First Solitude], and part of *Llibre de Meravelles* [Book of Wonders], among others.

Evidence of the literary importance of this space is that it appears in the title of a compilation of Estellés' poems, as well as in the specific text 'Educadament, Misser Mascó, 17' [Politely, Micer Mascó, 17]—an extensive poem published in 2012 in the volume titled *L'inventari clement de Gandia* [The clement inventory of Gandia]³ A dedication in the original compilation evokes the atmosphere of the house and its relationship with other characters of the time, within a very specific space and urban itinerary:

[To Vicent Ventura, who treated me to rolls sequets made at an old bakery in Plaça Mirasol, and then I treated him to a cognac, and then

he treated me to a glass of wine at Casa Pedro, now run by [left blank], and then we met with Paco Lozano who had come from Xàtiva and was going to Bétera, and at the end of the day Vicent Ventura took me up to my home and on another day I took him back to his home, and on the day that he didn't take me home and I didn't take him home, we both wept under the stars at Misser Mascó because Bernat Artola had just died in Madrid] (Andrés Estellés, 2015c, p. 163).

However, within a few months, the death of his daughter at the end of February 1956 marked his subsequent literary production and would lead to the cycle known as the *Recomane tenebres* [I recommend darkness], with work such as part of *La nit* or *La clau que obri tots els panys* [The key that opens all locks], among others. This set of texts is different to those from prior to 1956. Their intertextuality is more present and there are more interdiscursive relationships [between] his poems and his journalistic activities [...] and especially with cinema, based on his cinematographic critiques (Carbó, 2014, p. 23). In fact, it is possible that these 'discursive relationships' were justified by Estellés' material need to write about these issues as a source of economic income. There is a poem in *La nit* from June 1956 in which Estellés deals with his economic problems and his use of film commentaries to get through them, [written] only a few months after the death of his daughter:

Ha hagut pau en ma casa, una pau de cristall.
Venien els meus pares i estaven admirats
de la meua alegria, donant mercés a Déu.
La meua dona reia com no reia fa temps.
Tot era pur i alegre, i fins era innocent.
Ara, però, resulta que els diners no ens arriben
més que al divendres pròxim, que encara és 22,
i no tinc més remei que escriure, escriure, escriure
del divorci de Rita Hayworth, sobre les noces
de Raniero i Grace, sobre el que diu Vittorio
de Sica de Sofia Loren o de la Lollo,
i quina, de les dues, té més grans les mamelles.
No tinc altre remei, no hi ha solució.
He d'escriure i a més a més he de recórrer

2 On 8 January 1959, the newspaper *Las Provincias* announced the appointment of Estellés as editor-in-chief. The article highlighted the fact that he had worked for the newspaper for nine years and said "como crítico cinematográfico ha desarrollado una labor de la más elevada calidad" [his work as a film critic is of the highest quality] (Casanova, 2003, p. 38).

3 The poetry anthology containing this text was awarded in the *Ausiàs March de Gandia* poetry award in 1966 but remained unpublished until 2012, when *Edicions 96* published it under the guidance of Maria Josep Escrivà and Josep Lluís Roig. This was because in 1971, instead of his prize-winning poetry compendium, Estellés had sent a different poetry anthology—presumably deliberately so—also entitled *L'inventari clement* for publication.

diaris i revistes per tal que m'ho publiquen,
per tal que em paguen bé, per tal que m'asseguren
nou dies de menjar, exactament nou dies.
(Andrés Estellés, 2014b: 212-213)

In the same way, in September 1958, Estellés wrote a letter to essayist from Sueca, Joan Fuster, in which he explains the economic difficulties involved in moving from his home in València—we understand it to be the attic at 17 Micer Mascó—to [his native] Burjassot. Estellés tells Fuster about some verses about this space which take their title from where they were written, and which Fuster must have already known about: “*Hauria pogut buscar els de ‘Misser Mascó, 17’, llibre acabat i, és clar, totalment inèdit. Però no he tingut temps de buscar i t’envie algunes coses no massa llunyanes. Fes allò que et sembla bé*” [I could have looked for those from ‘Micer Mascó, 17’, a finished and, of course, totally unedited book. But I haven’t had time to look for it and so I’m sending you some things that are quite similar. Do what you think best]. In addition, the letter deals with the possibility of writing about “*allò que siga necessari*” [whatever is necessary], such as “*coses de cine*” [cinema stuff], or a possible “*col·lecció de coses vagament turístiques*” [collection of vaguely touristy things] about the Albufera or Navarre Pyrenees for an editorial by Miquel Arimany. The poet from Burjassot describes this genre as ‘tourist literature’, explains some specific topics, and that it might be published in the Raixa Library collection of the Mallorcan publishing house, Moll: “*el Ponz, el Cavanilles, el Tormo, el Ciro Bayo (i el 98), etc. Fins arribar, inclús, a l’Hemingway. [...] Un altre volum podria ser —amb més ja literatura— de l’Albufera (Palmar, més bé)*” [the Ponz, Cavanilles, Tormo, Ciro Bayo (and the 98), etc. Until getting to Hemingway. [...] Another volume could be—with more literature—the Albufera (Palmar, better)].

Therefore, we note how the public and professional discourse of his work at the newspaper has an intimate flip side marked by need and by autobiography, as can be seen in his poems and letters. Thus, references to the world of cinema in his poems were a demonstration of his feelings of anguish shared with those he references. They form part of the same world of repression, misery,

and suffocation, as symbolic elements that evoke a specific context, as analysed by Adolf Piquer (2010).

During 1959, Estellés managed to move to Burjassot.⁴ However, although the poet lived in València city for relatively little time (between 1955 and 1959), this experience is reflected in many of his poems, not only in writing from that place and time, but in later work built upon his memories of it. He would not live in the centre of València again until the mid-1960s, in a house on Calle Pintor Peiró, owned by the newspaper he worked for.⁵

If we look for the presence of cities in general, and specifically that of València, in Estellés’ work from the 1950s onwards, we can see that cities are presented as an abstract concept—a sublimation of a certain Garcilasian arcadia, presented to us in *Ciutat a cau d’orella* [Whispers of the City], which becomes ever clearer, especially in ‘Coral romput’ from *La clau que obri tots els panys*, or in *Llibre de meravelles*, which were produced almost simultaneously. The focus is on closed spaces, like different rooms in a house, in a way that deepens the creation of a literary identity and which searches for literary models, if not also models for life.

On the other hand, from a global point of view, Lluís Meseguer proposes that Estellés’ work is thematic in its construction of territory, in which the city of València, from private and writing spaces to the streets and condition of the city, transport us to areas of memory and identity in a special way:

4 On 8 January 1959 Estellés was appointed editor-in-chief of *Las Provincias*; from 18 February 1959, he began to publish the section ‘Bon dia Roc!’; these two facts are explained by the poet’s ‘need’, which he had explained a few months prior and which the newspaper’s owner may have taken into account. Víctor Mansanet collected and analysed a sample of the work done by Estellés as a journalist (2003).

5 As pointed out by Carbó (2018, p. 30–31), the poet started living in València city again around 1968; specifically, in flat 11, number 7 Calle Pintor Peiró. It is possible that there, he reconnected with his previous experiences and with the socio-cultural recovery movements of the time. Estellés finished *Llibre de meravelles* there, work studied by Carbó.

A. Memory and identity vector: (a) private spaces and related objects, writing spaces and point of view, metonymic spaces; (b) the street, the city (of València), the cities and towns, and the country's designation.

B. Vector of learning, recognition, and knowledge of the journey: (c) recognition of Catalan culture in terms of its spaces (Tarragona, Mallorca, Barcelona); (d) the idea of Europe according to its historical and lived spaces (Meseguer, 2013. p. 621).

Therefore, we note how, chronologically, and from the point of view of the creation of these poetry compendiums, the cycles of the 1950s and beginning of the 1960s are more directly linked to València city, either as vectors of a lived experience and its memories, or as elements used to form both a national and literary identity.

Literature, journalism, and cinema: the city

In Estellés' dialogue with urban spaces, starting with the book *Ciutat a cau d'orella*, published in 1953 and which refers to Tarragona, I would like to highlight an initial stage not yet dominated by explicit referentiality. Here, urban space becomes central in his first personal appropriation of it.⁶ This how Joan Fuster described it in 1954 in the *Pont Blau* magazine:

[The city of Vicent Andrés, surprised in an unexpected moment, seems disconnected from these literary precedents, even—we would say—does not resemble the real city, Tarragona itself. [...] a poet, seeing a landscape can copy it or interpret it. They can even do a subtler thing: they can transfer their inner hope. Then, the landscape, while remaining a landscape, takes on a new trait, another real or unreal quality. In

the end, a man is a poet insofar as he knows how to grab [parts of] the world and translate them into lasting words. Vicent Andrés Estellés took the experience of this type of poetic possession from Tarragona to València] (Fuster, 1954).

Therefore, we can note how appropriation of the world that Estellés creates around the city is linked to specific experiences, and how this would be echoed by the poet's dialogue with his poetic subjects, either by investigating beauty or from a position of pain or of loss.

Even so, this dialogue starts from previous perspectives on general literary tradition, as already indicated by Fuster in relation to Estellés and Tarragona, and [from] other languages that relate to the city. Beyond his biographical linearity as a post-war cultural journalist in València, Estellés' relationship with literature, essay-like journalism, and cinema, was part of a trend that characterised modernity, in the same way that the arts and the complexity of the cultural artefacts derived from it are interrelated. These interrelations pose more than a few difficulties when critiquing Estellesian texts; in this respect Enric Bou's paraphrasing of Franco Moretti are appropriate: the products of cultural history are always complex, but it is difficult to distinguish the dominant mechanism in their composition. The internal or the external, style or history, nation or the world. This controversy is difficult to resolve (Bou, 2017, p. 13–14).

From this starting point, we suggest how Estellés' work—itself a cultural artefact—receives the literary tradition of urban spaces (especially that of València city), and that of cultural movements such as Italian neo-realism or other cinematographic antecedents, languages, and journalistic models (all non-literary), as an integral part of the Valencian–Catalan literary tradition. As described by Joan Fuster, Estellés was a “*Poeta de realidades*” [Poet of realities], or an “*prosista extraordinario que escribe en verso*” [extraordinary prose writer who writes in verse]. Josep Pla that said these relationships between languages effectively show the mixture of elements of reality and creative

⁶ The presence of the urban phenomenon in the *Ciutat a cau d'orella* poetry anthology is now relevant in Estellesian poetics if we compare the weight assigned to this topic in what is considered the first book of poems written in Catalan by Estellés, *Ombra d'ales a l'aigua* [Shadow of wings in the water]—which remained unedited until a few years ago—and, as Carbó (2016) pointed out, whose composition is very close to that of the [*Ciutat a cau d'orella*] compilation.

fiction and whose poetics converge. To him, these are superimposed onto a poetics of their own, imprinted by transtextuality and intertextuality and by the relationship with other artistic manifestations which mark the complexity of [Estellesian] poetry under an apparent simplicity (Carbó, 2018, p. 40).

The spaces of the city of València in Estellesian literary geography

The superposition of both literary and popular references would come to influence the form of the poetics of València city in Estellés' work. Therefore, the poems often contain elements about the city from the world of cinema or journalistic or literary writing. Thus, adapting Meseguer's proposal of spaces as vectors of memory and identity as basis for this work, two perspectives on the urban space of València can be seen: the city and its internal spaces as observed from the inside, and an external view of the streets and the entire city. Despite all this, the literature of Estellés, linked to the city of València, continuously mixes these spaces—as occurs with references to different [non-verbal] languages—in a journey that symbolically recreates what is descriptive via that which is experiential or imperative, in the form of literature.

Interior spaces: private spaces and related objects, and the spaces of writing and points of view

The previously mentioned biographical circumstances favour the allusion to interior, domestic spatial referents, where Estellés centres the core poetic tension in the space of the home. One of the first examples of this infiltration is the text 'La casa, ara sí' [The house, now yes], the last poem in *La nit*:

Després de certes coses s'ha de tornar a casa.
 Quan sembla que ja tot ha passat, ha conclòs,
 s'ha de creuar la nit encara, s'ha d'anar
 lentament i humilment, encara, cap a casa,
 i s'ha d'entrar a casa i arribar a certs llocs
 i anar furtivament, com si no fos ta casa,
 amb un tacte suau, per tal que no es desperte
 cap cosa en cap de lloc: per tal que no es desperte
 la casa exactament: la casa, el llop enorme;

per tal que no es desperte aquest gegant nocturn
 que és la casa i et tombe amb el pànic només
 de veure'l, dret i negre, com un dol vertebrat.
 (Andrés Estellés, 2014b: 215)

The interior space is filled with a multitude of images, comparisons, and metaphors of a high-intensity place, marked by the mourning of the death of his daughter; regarding this symbolic space, Irene Mira points out: The house represented here is the main space of the pain because it materialises in spatial terms, that is, the metaphorical projections made by the poet in other cases of psychic pain manifesting itself over physical pain, in this case are imposed onto architecture (Mira, 2015, p. 386). Thus, the dwelling he refers to in the previous poem must be 17 Micer Mascó, and so it takes on a new meaning:

Abans era com si visquéssem en el món.
 Vivíem en el món, potsar al mig del món,
 voltats per l'infinit. Un lloc inabastable.
 Amb el cel i la terra i al mig els nostres cossos.
 I el món, el món voltant-nos. Tot el món, tot el cel,
 tot el mar, tot el món. Ara tot és distint.
 Se'ns imposa el costum, o la comprensió,
 la limitació, les parets, les finestres,
 les vint-i-quatre hores. La casa, brutalment.
 La casa, com un dol corpori, edificat.
 (Andrés Estellés, 2014b: 220)

In this way, domestic spaces are shown in everyday objects and in the space and time of writing. The night time silence intensifies the reception of stimuli, the configuration of the poetic self towards a space presented to us in detail in the form and tone of the different sections of 'Coral romput' from *La clau que obri tots els panys*:

No escriu ara el veí. Ara s'ou el soroll
 de l'aigua en una pica. No ho he dit: estic sol;
 estic sol en ma casa. Mire un moment els mobles;
 he passat una mà suaument per la taula;
 he recordat que tinc, dins un caixó, en un sobre,
 un grapat de papers, les factures dels mobles.
 Les cadires, la taula, el llit, l'aparador,
 una taula petita per a la cuina... Anàvem

a poc a poc comprant-ho, vacil·lant, calculant,
renunciant... ¿Recordes? Començarem llavors
a anar renunciant, ara açò, demà allò...
(Andrés Estellés, 2014d: 391)

I de sobte, al despatx,
aquesta nit em sé dins d'un nínxol d'aquells,
i m'entren unes ganes horribles de plorar,
i tots dormen, i és just que tots dormen, ho sé,
i açò no és ningun nínxol, açò és el meu despatx.
I em sent, sense taüt, ajagut en un nínxol,
encara viu, ho sé, i no puc evitar-ho.
I ara me n'aniria pegant crits per la casa,
i amb això no sabia si jo estic viu encara,
ni encara que Isabel em digués que estic viu,
ni encara que els veïns deixassen els seus llits
i pujassen a casa i em diguessen que estic
viu i que estic en casa.
(Andrés Estellés, 2014d: 424)

In this agonising climate, even typical urban elements
as an elevators, become symbols of the passage between
life and death, between the street and the home,
marked by mourning and memory:

I puja l'ascensor. I l'escolte.
I encara no s'atura. I puja. I puja encara.
I no puc menejar-me i eixir i obrir la porta
i abocar-me a l'escala. I puja l'ascensor:
no deixa de pujar. Ja no en deuen quedar
més pisos, però encara el sent pujar, lentíssim.
Ara el sent per damunt el meu cap, i gravita
damunt el meu cervell tot l'enrenou dels ferros.
(Andrés Estellés, 2014d: 425)

Conversely, it emphasises the external view of the
city, which becomes more descriptive and is often
introduced with verses set in the present, a mark
of simultaneity in his writing and of his capacity
to appropriate any element and turn it into literary
material:

Veig, des de les terrasses —les terrasses domèstiques
on s'exposen, per ordre, familiars assumptes,
assumptes conjugals, higièniques coses,
i això amb una sintaxi trèmula, del filferro—,

veig, des de les terrasses, on s'exalta la calç,
la meua pura Pàtria, la meua sola Pàtria,
allà, en l'altra ribera, a l'altra part del vent.
Hi ha xiques eixugant-se les llargues cabelleres
i daurant-se l'esquena, i les cuixes, i els pits.
L'aire hi és ple d'ampolles amb missatges de
[nàufrags].
(Andrés Estellés, 2014d: 371)

In addition, in this case the landscape is presented
to us as a text, with "*una sintaxi trèmula, del filferro*"
[a twin syntax, of thin wire]; where: "*L'aire hi és ple
d'ampolles amb missatges de nàufrags*" [The air is filled
with bottles with shipwreck messages] is written. But
this specific vision of the city can also go beyond this
description to show a critical position: one against
the social silence, which he wants to bear witness to
without shying away from literature, and in his own
Estellesian style:

*Veig, des dels ponts, el lent, el trist, l'irremeiable
crepuscle suburbà: veig despulles, residus;
veig domèstics vestigis crepusculars, indicis:
veig mudes referències, al·lusions a penes,
veig silenci. Una pobra, una bruta evidència,
potser un estupor, un testimoni amarg.
Veig cases, xemeneies: veig una polseguera
abatent-se, tristíssima, sense forces, com un
fracàs, silenciosa. Veig fracàs, veig silenci:
veig, des dels ponts, el pobre, el diari estupor.*
(Andrés Estellés, 2014d: 381)

His vision of the city would also become linked to his
internal writing spaces and to the question of the poet's
literary identity where he associated certain streets
with a way of understanding the literary tradition
and with literature in particular:

L'horabaixa petita, i trista, i entranyable,
d'aquests carrers antics que m'agrada recórrer,
on jo voldria viure i escriure versos grisos,
absolutament grisos, mentre es crema l'espígol
damunt les quatre brases; una taula petita,
damunt d'ella una manta, parets empaperades,
un taulell un poc solt, i creure dolçament
que Campoamor fou un poeta formidable,

que «El Ama» és un poema com se n'escruien pocs,
i llegir en veu alta certes rimes de Bécquer
i jaure, i no dormir, pensant només, pensant
que he d'escruiure un poema en octaves reals
i no com els poetes del dia, que no solen
rimar perquè és difícil.
(Andrés Estellés, 2014d: 393-394)

In contrast to these 'traditional' streets, Estellés claims he is tied to another space, which he identifies directly with his literary work; not without reason, he produced a large part of his best books from the 1950s, and of all his literary body of work, at 17 Micer Mascó:

Sí, Misser Mascó, 17. No és el títol d'un llibre:
és el meu domicili. És el món. És ma casa.
Ma casa és una casa entre altres vint-i-nou.
Sí, Misser Mascó, 17. És molt més que una adreça;
és, també, més que un llibre: és tota la meua obra.
Tota la meua vida entre quatre parets.
Les quatre parets llises i clares de ma casa.
(Andrés Estellés, 2015c: 198-199)

Outdoor spaces: the street and the city (of València)

The city, the streets, and the spaces that became its metonymies and metaphors would come to constitute a second centre in Estellesian literary geography, which would materialise in a special way in the city of València. An incipient urban perspective was already present in *Ciutat a cau d'orella* which often takes the form of a cinematographic camera that captures the movement and life of the city but uses the resources of literary language. The American actor and director Orson Welles noted the descriptive and aesthetic capacity of the poetic gaze as an inspiration for cinema:

A film is never really good unless the camera is an eye in the head of a poet. Distributors, naturally, are all of the opinion that poets don't sell seats. They do not discern whence comes the very language of the cinema. Without poets, the vocabulary of the film would be far too limited ever to make a true appeal to the public. The equivalent of a babble of infants would not sell many seats. If the cinema had never been

fashioned by poetry, it would have remained no more than a mechanical curiosity, occasionally on view like a stuffed whale. (Welles, 1958).

The presence of cinema in the urban poetics of Estellés is evident in anthroponymic evocations in the creation of literary fiction characters (Oviedo, 2011). Adolf Piquer also noted his abundant use of the names of actors and actresses (2008, 2010), which, among other functions, established cultural connections with Europe and the United States. This abundance of cinematographic references comes from the poet's professional work with these subjects at *Las Provincias*. The perception of a chronicler of reality comes from this world, one in which the cinema of the time also projected a certain vision of reality, which Estellés commented on in different articles with a certain critical tone. As an example, here we reproduce one of these commentaries, the one entitled '*Proceso a la sociedad actual*' [An analysis of current society], written in 1958 under a pseudonym (and later published by Adolf Piquer) which gives us "*un tast sobre neorealisme*" [A taste of neorealism]:

[At first it was the Italians who, after chronicling the European post-war period, the account of poor people, began a kind of bitter, violent survey, in which a whole society was questioned. All this culminated in 'Proceso a la ciudad'. '*Proceso a la ciudad*' evoked a past society, but the cannonry pointed to clear, specific objectives, and the film produced uneasiness. The Italians produced this type of cinema without being soft, without hesitation. They made a type of direct and bitter cinema] (Piquer, 2004, p. 252–253).

In addition, it is worth noting that different sources show the vitality of film and the presence of cinemas in València in the middle of the 20th century, from before the civil war and during the military conflict. For example, the Coliseum cinema, one of the halls that Estellés referenced in several poems, was designed in 1926 following the model of the modernist façade of the *Estación del Norte* [North station] in València, had 2,627 seats and was the largest in the Spanish state in the time (Aliaga, 2009). It was inaugurated in 1932 and mainly showed re-release films in continuous sessions (Sena, 2013, p. 137).

In addition, the founding of the CIFESA film producer and distributor in 1932 to take advantage of the consolidation of [arrival of] sound in films and the adaptation of most cinema halls to this technical novelty, demonstrates the vitality of cinema in València at the time and had a remarkable impact on the prestige of cinema in the Spanish state (Fanés, 1981). Especially from the 1950s to the beginning of the 1970s, cinemas became one of the main leisure spaces with a considerable range of offerings: from those showing international premieres to those screening re-releases in different neighbourhoods, all within reach of most of the population (Tejedor, 2013). Moreover, the opening of new cinemas was superimposed onto urban development plans in new neighbourhoods in the city that, at that time, used certain streets, such as Paseo Ruzafa, Ribera, or Colón, among others, as central points at which most cinemas that Estellés cites in his texts were located.

As a result, Estellesian writing took on a cinematic feel that captured urban scenes, environments typical of a certain neorealism that often contrasted with characters who referred to classical literary tradition, as in the case of the poem ‘Mort d’Hipòlit i les nits de Fedra’ [Death of Hippolytus and the nights of Fedra], from *Ciutat a cau d’orella*, which highlights two fragments where the poet becomes a special cameraman with the vocabulary which Welles referred to a few lines above:

*(Creuen tramvies pel carrer.
La nina dubta si passar.
Hipòlit parla amb els amics
i Fedra el veu des del balcó
—la roba estesa als fils d’aram.
Hipòlit ha deixat la moto
zelosament vora el rastell
i l’acarícia, parlant.
Passen tramvies i donzelles.
Surt una olor d’oli fregit.
La tarda és un llençol banyat,
suara estés no se sap on.)*

[...]

*(Fedra, de peu al menjador,
observa Hipòlit, que es pentina
en el capvespre del dissabte.
Després avança lentament...
Hipòlit xiula una cançó.
Algun amic crida en l’escala,
i quan Hipòlit vol obrir
es creua Fedra al seu camí...
Hipòlit no comprén encara,
somriu i diu adéu només,
i Fedra el veu des de l’escala...
En el desfici del dissabte,
Fedra gemega sobre el llit
totes les coses que ha perdut
i enveja un món d’amics i motos
i xiques sense més ni més:
el goig només de viure, d’ésser,
d’anar anant i anar rient...
Les nits lentíssimes de Fedra,
tenen besllums de ganivets...)*

(Andrés Estellés, 2014a: 108-109)

This type of cinematographic plan, ranging from generalised to detailed, which focuses on the perception of what is seen and heard, also appears in other poems by Estellés. In fact, the three cantos of ‘Coral romput’ are an example of Estellesian urban poetry which also has an almost cinematic description, like a camera that zooms from the outside to the inside at different times. This is especially true of the first verses of both canto I and canto II:

Una amable, una trista, una petita pàtria,
entre dues clarors, de comerços antics,
de parelles lentíssimes, d’infants a la placeta,
de nobles campanades i grans llits de canonge,
d’una certa grogor de pianos usats,
mentrestant la humitat amera l’empedrat
—hi ha fulles de lletuga espargides per terra—,
la conca entre les cames, el rosari en família,
la corda de l’escala —el carrer de la Mar,
el carrer del Miracle— i la filla major
brodant inicials conjugals al coixí,
l’avi de cos present entre quatre brandons,
els corcons de la taula. Una lenta tristesa,

un amor, unes llàgrimes, una pobra nostàlgia.
(Andrés Estellés, 2014d: 386)

Fins on estic arriba la música del ball.
També, de tant en tant, s'ou el xiulit del tren,
S'ou el clàxon d'un cotxe. I res més. O poc més.
S'ou, per damunt de tot, la trompeta del ball.
Tot açò és pel crepuscle: el vespre del diumenge.
Els altres dies s'ouen cançons de les criades,
el soroll de les piques, de l'aigua entre les coses,
l'escomesa brutal que té l'aigua dels vàters.
(Andrés Estellés, 2014d: 404)

In addition to this relationship between cinematographic and poetic language, there are explicit references to actresses such as Norma Talmadge, Lilli Palmer, or Ingrid Bergman in 'Coral romput'; the film *Stromboli*, among other allusions to Italy and the cinema produced there, is also referenced and is marked by a neorealism which presents scenarios and urban characters characterised by the conflict between desire and a reality that made it impossible. As an example, Carbó also analysed the Estellesian connection between 'Coral romput' and the film movement originating in Italy after the Second World War. Starting with Simbor's analysis (2005) of the relationships between neorealism and Catalan narrative, Carbó emphasises the everyday nature and colloquiality as fictional frames of Estellés' literary language:

[The diction derived from the proposal contributes to the cinematographic and literary protagonism of the colloquial register, and has an agile and repetitive syntax, the prosaism, narration, descriptive enumeration, and in a very special way, conversational tone and importance of the dialogue] (Carbó, 2009. p. 187).

In addition, Carbó highlights Fellini's films *Almas sin conciencia* and *La strada* as specific examples of this neo-realist influence (2009, p. 188). Both films were reviewed by Estellés in an article titled 'Presencia de Fellini' [The presence of Fellini], in the 1957 yearbook, the *Almanaque de Las Provincias* [The Provincias Almanac], while he was writing 'Coral romput'.

References to the world of cinema are also presented to us in relation to a poetic and literary view of the city, as in the following poem from *La nit*:

2

Tan sols de nit s'hi pot oir l'oculta música
de l'aigua i de l'asfalt en claroscurs insòlits,
fluïnt vers llunyanies de murtes i xiprers.

Tristis anima mea... El pensament s'esvara,
apegant-se l'asfalt com un pneumàtic, vers
la pau, com si la pau fos Marilyn Monroe,
la pau vista en un *film*, com Marilyn Monroe,
o en un aparador, com Marilyn Monroe,
o bé amb Joe di Maggio, com Marilyn Monroe.

La pau vista del braç, o bé del cor, dels altres,
sempre buscada amb un ardentíssim anhel.

En veure ací o allà la pau, sent el desig
de xiular fortament com si veiés passar
una *girl* de Samuel Goldwyn de Hollywood.

(No aclareix nostra nit l'espurna del plaer,
brevíssima, que surt rabent dels nostres cossos
i ens desploma a l'avenc en un bac biològic...)
(Andrés Estellés, 2014b: 177-178)

In this sense, València's cinema spaces are also abundant in the texts of Estellés, either because of references to the city-centre streets where they were concentrated, or by specifically naming some of them. On several occasions the Valencian Coliseum and Metropol cinemas appear as spaces linked to desire and, in a special way, to a climate of misery and social and sexual repression:

«Jo l'he vista en el Coli». «Què vols dir amb això?»
«¿Jo? Jo no vull dir res. Jo ho dic; jo ja ho he dit».
«Si no calles et trenque la cara...» «¿Vosté?» «Jo!».
(Andrés Estellés, 2014d: 394-395)

I metropol era més còmode i era més accessible
si es considera bé. érem immensament feliços,
recorda aquell dia que vas seure damunt les
meues cames i recorda aquella benèvola i febril
rotació. de vegades però arribaven també allí
els sinistres violins endolats vestits com el fill
aquell del taüter que tocava al royalti i tots
ens amagàvem sota les butaques i passaven

pel cinema els violins i el cinema era buit i la pel·lícula era muda i al dors de les butaques es secava es cristal·litzava ràpidament el semen que esdevenia aleshores un semen immemorial cosa prehistòrica cosa rupestre matèria de reproducció de porcar. (Andrés Estellés, 2018: 80)

In other references to these spaces, eroticism is even mixed with elements from classical literary tradition. Thus, the superposition of elements that Estellés uses in his poetry also reaches these spaces: as in the case of the following poem from *Testimoni d'Horaci* [Testimony of Horaci], which besides referencing Calle Ribera and Calle Ruzafa in València, also mentions Calle Apuntadores, in Palma, in a demonstration of the urban poetics of desire that surpasses the city of València itself:⁷

Ara aniran, lentíssims, tots agafats pels muscles,
cantant cançons llarguíssimes pels carrers d'humitat,
dins la boira; hi haurà altes noies, vermelles,
a les portes, dempeus, fumant, mirant, esveltes,
oferint els seus béns de manera distreta,
amb les teles cenyides, mentrestant passen ells
cantant cançons llarguíssimes, embriagats, rient-se,
agafant-se pels muscles, Cheryl, xiulant en veure-les,
pegant un colp de peu a una ampolla de sobte
o tirant una pedra iradament a un gat,
pel carrer de Ribera, si no és el de Russafa,
o bé el d'Apuntadors, ben enramat d'orins.
Ara et traduiria, a l'angle fosc del bar,
els cultes epigrames interditos de Marcial.
(Andrés Estellés, 2014c: 268)

As already mentioned, another vector that Estellés links to the space of cinemas is memory; he shows us its desire and physiological condition contrasted with the idea of pure love, of official and chaste love, the characteristic duality of Estellesian work shown in 'Ègloga VIII' [Eclogue VIII]:

Mai no t'oblidaré. Aquell cinema, pobre,
de corfes de cacau, on tu m'iniciaves
en tot allò que jo tenia ben sabut
i retrobava intacte com si els dos ho inventàsem.
Vares ésser feliç, immensament feliç,
mentrestant jo plorava en la foscor del cine,
car hauria volgut ésser pura, innocent,
com tu m'imaginaves o bé com tu em volies,
però ja no era així —i jo tampoc podia
dir-te per què no era com tu ho imaginaves,
i em besaves la boca amb aquells besos grans,
i no em veies els ulls que em creuava la pena.
(Andrés Estellés, 2015a: 111)

As with everything else, the cinematic space can also be linked to a humble daily life, which is presented, from memory, as if it were a film. Cinema, street, and life turn out to be a first level of cultural references to which the poetic literary tradition is again added as we glimpse in 'Projecció' [Projection], from *L'inventari clement*:

PROJECCIÓ

Hem disfrutat moltíssim de la vida,
podem tancar els ulls tranquil·lament,
podem tranquil·lament creuar les mans
per damunt el baix ventre com un pàmpol.

Hem gaudit del carrer amb ulls de joia
i del «film» de la vida en aquest cine
de barri que és el nostre, i de bon grat
tornaríem a veure'l altra volta.

Però és tard, és tan tard, encara hauràs
de posar el bollit, fregar els plats
i traure els comptes de paper d'estrassa.

Ens hem d'amar també, i hem de pensar
greument el vers aquell de l'Argensola:
«Ciego, ¿es la tierra el centro de las almas?»
(Andrés Estellés, 2015b: 137)

⁷ European cities such as Paris, London, Vienna, and Cannes, among others, that give their names to poems such as *Antibes* or *Hamburg*, would also be associated with urban experiences of desire in Estellés' work. The names of the cities are transformed into metonymies with a remarkable connotative value of erotic experiences in different times and spaces, as indicated by Vicent Salvador (2000, p. 82).

Without a doubt, the *Llibre de meravelles* collection of poems gathers the highest number of references to the different spaces that make up the urban environment of València. According to Ferran Carbó, it was mostly written in 1958, with some additions and structuring

around 1968 (2014, p. 48; 2018); when the poet returned from Burjassot to live in València, he formed a symbolic vision of the city that, for him, represented a milestone in how he related poetry, Catalan culture, and the Valencian capital. Because of this foundational role, and based on the reception of *Llibre de meravelles*, according to Lluís Meseguer:

[If urban ascription is an essential mechanism of socialisation in societies with an oppressed national reference model, without a doubt, the work can be conceived as the modern historical invention of the civil València—municipal and at the same time intimately linked to the countryside—of its lived-in streets and corners] (Meseguer, 2013, p. 625).

But, *Llibre de meravelles*, published in 1971, interacted with other books and publications that looked at the city of València as an object from different perspectives and used alternative, often antagonistic, methodologies; thus, we could qualify them as 'hypotexts' or 'parallel texts'. Sanchis Sivera's studies on the city or the urban offerings of Salvador Ferrandis Luna (both based on poems in *Llibre de meravelles*), Joan Fuster's book, *El País Valencià* [The Valencian Country] (1962) or *València y su reino* [València and its kingdom] by Almela and Vives (1969), and more literary visions such as those in València by Azorín (1949; 1959) or *Valencia, ciudad abierta* [València, open city], by José Ombuena (1970)—the director of *Las Provincias* where Estellés worked—all contribute to a single varied thematic corpus. It should also be noted that the prologue of the first edition of *Llibre de meravelles*, from 1971, was by Manuel Sanchis Guarner, who, a year later, published *La ciutat de València* [The city of València], a book that, in Cortés' words, was the most awaited and most quickly sold-out work of the post-war Valencian bibliography (Cortés, 2002, p. 290).

In addition, we must also consider the specifically poetic literary tradition surrounding the city of València, collected in large part by Maria Josep Escrivà and Pau Sif (2002). This tradition was already being developed by Arabic-Andalusian poets, including Ar-Rusâfi with whom Estellés specifically converses with

in *Cercles del Russafi* [Circles of the Russafi], taking the city of València as a common thematic element, as Jordi Oviedo indicates:

[The theme and imagery of a man in exile is again represented, one who loves his land, his city, but who watches it from outside, displaced, and from a memory full of images and metaphors of emptiness. Thus, an identity of pain is constructed through literary fiction, where the past returns to the present without limits] (Oviedo, 2018, p. 31).

The aforementioned anthology, also contains the poem about València and Barcelona by Teodor Llorente, 'Mal ensomni' [Bad dream], as well as 'El cant de València' [The song of València] by V.W. Querol, 'A València en festa' [València in celebration] by Joan Maragall, 'Somni d'Esperança' [Dream of Hope] by Miquel Duran de València, the 'Nou poem de València' [New poem of València] by Carles Salvador, the 'Epigrama de València' [Epigram of València] by Bernat Artola and, in addition, the 'Poema sobre València' [Poem about València] by Joan Fuster. It stands out that Estellés related both the *Renaixença* [Catalan Renaissance] authors and the poets of the then current and the coming generation to each other on many occasions in his work, establishing a dialogue that shaped his literary identity in a particular way.

In this context it is understood that Estellés, with his doubts and characteristic estrangement from the city (Sòria, 2003)—that is, in a literary way—set forth his bibliographic and cultural point of departure for becoming part of this tradition; this aspect is explicit and appears in several poems in *Llibre de meravelles*:

M'agradaria escriure la guia de València.
Jo no assenyalaria, com ho fan, llocs il·lustres,
monuments impassibles, les pedres en cos i ànima,
els llibres que tragueren de Sant Miquel dels Reis,
l'amable biblioteca llatina del Magnànim,
sinó els recomanables llocs on tant ens volguérem,
on t'obrires la brusa amostrant-me els teus pits,
on per primera volta et va besar un home.
(«Vida, sinó», Andrés Estellés, 2015d: 246)

...a unes tres milles de la mar,
a la banda occidental del riu Guadalaviar,
sobre el qual hi ha cinc ponts...

SIR JOHN TALBOT DILLON

Pense que ha arribat l'hora del teu cant a
[València.

Temies el moment. Confessa-t'ho: temies.
Temies el moment del teu cant a València.

La volies cantar sense solemnitat,
sense Mediterrani, sense grecs ni llatins,
sense picapedrers i sense obra de moro.

[...]

Ah, València, València! Podria dir ben bé:
Ah, tu, València meua! Perquè evoque la meua
València. O evoque la València de tots,
de tots els vius i els morts, de tots els valencians?
Deixa-ho anar. No et poses solemne. Deixa l'èmfasi.
L'èmfasi ens ha perdut freqüentment els indígenes.
Més avant escriuràs el teu cant a València.
(«Cant de Vicent», Andrés Estellés, 2015d: 271-272)

From this position, the city is presented from memory, a vector linked to certain lived-in spaces in the city; either from the memory of love and desire as in consummation and fulfilment, or as memories of a landscape marked by sexual and sociopolitical repression, with references to spaces of the memory of the war and the post-war period, such as the Modelo or Torres de Quart prisons.

The most representative poems of the former type are 'No escric èglogues' [I do not write eclogues], 'Demà serà una cançó' [Tomorrow will be a song], 'Un amor, uns carrers' [A love, some streets], 'Els amants' [The lovers], and 'Postal' [Postcard]. These texts link the spaces of the city to personal erotic and loving memories, as a stage for fulfilment: a walk through the streets in the city centre, the cinemas, the [Paseo de la] Alameda, and the river culminate in the space of a terrace—which must correspond to the newlyweds' home at 17 Micer Mascó—from which to see the city and enjoy the love:

Et permets recordar amb un paisatge i tot:
les butaques del cine, el film que es projectava,
del que no vàreu fer gens de cas, està clar;
i evoques l'Albereda, les granotes del riu,
les carcasses obrint-se en el cel de la fira,
tota València en flames la nit de Sant Josep
mentre fèieu l'amor en aquella terrassa.
(«Demà serà una cançó», Andrés Estellés,
2015d: 241)

In fact, Estellés directly and explicitly links love with the city's streets, in an association that would become key to the subsequent reception of his work:

Sols evoques això: una mà en una mà,
una paraula amable, no gentil, sols amable,
un lent anar per uns carrers inconeguts
que pel seu nom evoques, per tots els seus balcons.
(«Un amor, uns carrers», Andrés Estellés,
2015d: 242).

The extreme expression of this personal love story, built on a specific urban space and itinerary, is presented in the poem 'Cos mortal' [Mortal body], as a metonymy of the city in which only the names of the streets of València are cited because they themselves are poetically significant. If, as Walter Benjamin said, the city is a cosmos of language conformed by the names of its streets (cited [in Spanish] in Calatrava, 2011, p. 14), it is in this text by Estellés that this idea of the city is most evident, although now from the perspective of a poet with his own voice:

COS MORTAL

Si com aquell que és jutjat a mort

AUSIÀS MARCH

Trinquet dels Cavallers, La Nau, Bailén, Comèdies,
Barques, Trànsits, En Llop, Mar, Pasqual i Genís,
Sant Vicent, Quart de fora, Moro Zeit, el Mercat,
Mercé, Lope de Vega, Colom, Hernan Cortés,
Trenc, Ciril Amorós, Pelayo, Campaners,
Palau, Almirall, Xàtiva, Cabillers, Avellanes,

Pouet de Sant Vicent, Cavallers, Sant Miquel,
 Roters, Sant Nicolau, Samaniego, Serrans,
 Rellotge Vell, Sant Jaume, Juristes, Llibertat,
 Soledat, Ballesters, Bonaire, Quart de dins,
 Blanqueries, Llanterna, l'Albereda, Correus,
 Nules, Montolivet, Gil i Morte, Espartero,
 Miracle, Cordellats, Misser Mascó, Minyana,
 el Portal de Valldigna, Porxets, Soguers, Navellos,
 Querol, Reina Cristina, Mayans i Ciscar, Temple,
 Ponts de la Trinitat, del Real, de la Mar,
 d'Aragó, dels Serrans, de Sant Josep, de l'Àngel.

I l'Avenida del Doncel Luis Felipe García Sanchiz.
 (Andrés Estellés, 2015d: 268)

Among these streets, we highlight Gil y Morte and Micer Mascó. Calle Micer Mascó has already been described as central in Estellés' urban poetry, not only as a space for creation, but also one of love and loss. On the other hand, Gil y Morte street appears in the poem 'Cant de Vicent', also from the *Llibre de meravelles*, and becomes central in the poem 'Balada' [Ballad], from *L'ofici de demà* [Tomorrow's occupation], because it was the place Isabel Lorente lived before marrying Estellés:

En el carrer de Gil i Morte,
 segons s'entra a mà esquerra,
 vaig conèixer l'amor,
 era una jove esvelta i bruna,
 li agradaven els melons d'Alger,
 les llimeres de Marxuquera,
 el seu pare va morir de pena poc després
 d'acabar la guerra.
 Jo recorde el carrer de Gil i Morte.
 (Andrés Estellés, 1986: 107)

Thus, the streets of 'Cos mortal' are those of a personal love itinerary, which contrasts with the last verse, which references the name by which the Puerto de València avenue was known during the Franco regime, and thus moves away from the poet's *intimate* city and transports us to another set of references and fields of meaning, such as those which form part of the poem 'Crim' [Crime], also from the same book of poems:

Com jo viu clar aquest tan gran oprobí
 ROÍS DE CORELLA

La soledat del port aquell vespre d'hivern.
 En aquell bar mesquí. Tenia els cristalls bruts.
 La taula, apegalosa. Fumàvem en silenci.
 Pel Recatí hi havia les restes d'un navili
 fet pols durant la guerra. Emergien uns ferros.
 Ningú dels dos pensava, potser, en Baudelaire.
 El cel gris, el mar brut. I l'escenografia
 habitual del port. La soledat del port.
 (Andrés Estellés, 2015d: 257)

Secondly, the poems about the memory of forbidden sex and repression contained in *Llibre de meravelles* are 'Crònica especial' [Special chronicle], 'L'estampeta' [The confidence trick], 'Crim', 'Reportatge' [Report], 'Arbres de pols' [Trees of dust], 'No me'n recorde' [I don't remember], and 'Això' [That]. Interestingly, the titles of this set of poems are ones of denial or ambiguity, and together they document a description of a bitter daily life, written in Estellés' journalistic style but with the freedom of a poet. As stated, the urban space of these poems refers to spaces of desire and its repression, such as the dance halls or the transitional spaces of the railings on the river, places where the spaces of lovers mixes with that of prostitution. The places of post-war social and political repression are also present in this set of poems. In addition to the references to the Modelo or Torres de Quart prisons in the poem 'Això' (Andrés Estellés, 2015d, p. 270), or the improvised prisons used in the city just after the Spanish Civil War, it also refers to other places that, according to Pierre Nora constitute 'places of memory', such as prisoner concentration camps or places where executions took place after summary trials.⁸ The following poem superimposes

8 Estellés' book, *Ofici permanent a la memòria de Joan Baptista Pesset, que fou afusellat a Paterna el 24 de maig de 1941* [Memorial in the name of Joan Baptista Pesset, executed by a firing squad in Paterna on May 24, 1941] (Andrés Estellés, 1979), is included in this area of —literary—recovery of the historical memory of the repression and is linked to specific Valencian spaces, such as the Carraixet riverbed ravine in the l'Horta region of València.

these spaces, mixing the music of the official dance with dialogues reporting on the post-war repression and its corresponding spaces:

El plat de criadilles bullides, un arròs
amb dos fulles de ceba, tants d'hòmens presoners.
L'han condemnat a mort. Té tres penes de mort.
El meu home morí en Porta Coeli. L'altre
va morir en el Puig. El meu, en el Saler.
Els matins de Paterna i les nits de Paterna
(sabeu bé si la torre és àrab o romana?).
Sonaven les trompetes al·lucinants del ball

[...]

Es plantava la fira en el Pla del Remei.
(Segons Ferrandis Luna era un lloc molt històric.)
Bé. Es plantava la fira i sonaven les músiques,
les músiques humils, pobres, desvergonyides.
I dins del barracó honest del tir al blanc
per dos duros podies folgar seguint els clàssics.
Podies escollir. Sempre es pot escollir,
àdhuc en les més tristes i amargues
[circumstàncies:
el barracó de fira o les dures baranes
del riu. Entre les fulles seques dels antics arbres,
al dematí hi havia preservatius gastats.
Celada entre verds trèmuls, hi havia a l'Albereda
certa font, secretíssima, per als amants més cultes.
(«Reportatge», Andrés Estellés, 2015d: 259).

Even so, despite the sordid and sad atmosphere of the València city described in most of *Llibre de meravelles*, the book's last verses offer hope—which was typical both of the historical moment Estellés found himself at the end of the 1960s and early 1970s, and of the role of commitment that he and a lot of his of his poetics would end up assuming and promoting. Author of 'Vientos de salmos...' [Winds of psalms...], León Felipe, translated the work of North American poet Walt Whitman—one of Estellés' influences in the creation of the 'País' space in *Mural del País Valencià* [Mural of the Valencian Country]—into Spanish; the following fragment from an epigraph by Felipe proposes psalms, cantos—ultimately, poetry itself—as the constructors of cities.

No hi ha millor arma que el salm:
enderroca els murs i els enlaira,
desfà les ciutats i les fa,
i l'esperança està en el salm.
(Andrés Estellés 2015d: 322)

Therefore, it is a poetic statement that reminds us of the epigraph of this article, by Baudelaire, on how the shape of a city can change faster than the heart of a mortal. The Estellesian reference to "*les ciutats*" [the cities], hints that cantos about a city can be extended to other urban spaces, demonstrating that these spaces extend to other cities, especially those in Europe and in Spain itself.

CONCLUSIONS

Poetry about the city of València by Vicent Andrés Estellés is related to specific experiences and spaces. He transformed his home at 17 Micer Mascó street, into a primary 'literary place' in Estellesian poetics because it is linked to the creation of different poem compendiums and determines his individual view in others. Thus, in a special way, his literary production of the 1950s focuses on urban spaces, in an evolution that begins in *Ciutat a cau d'orella*, develops in a unique way in *La clau que obri tots els panys*, with 'Coral romput' at its centre, and culminates in *Llibre de meravelles*. From memory, it shows the completion of a city poetics that specifically takes shape in the 'Estellesian city' which València becomes. This collection of poems contains a broad paradigm for the treatment of space in Estellés' poetics: the private or domestic sphere, that of interior spaces, serve as starting points for a reflection or achieved desire. Public spaces or streets also present an ambivalence built upon social and erotic repression and the association between the city and literary experiences—in a positive key—and of love and enjoyment.

Estellés' literary relationship with the city of València uses the resources of multiple languages: the city is presented with a cinematic feel, somewhere between creative fiction and a daily 'reality' that floats between

the verses as if it were a report or a documentary. His poetry about the city shows his polysystemic poetics, because it becomes a dynamic and heterogeneous system: one of the most outstanding qualities of his work that, from the perspective of Even-Zohar with which we began this article, demonstrates the functionality of this mechanism. Thus, because of the richness of the nuances it presents, Estellés' work becomes an object for open study which focuses on the urban sphere as a characteristic feature of modernity. The spatial tour of València that Estellés takes us on through his literature allows the city that, according to Mira, "se lee en las páginas de Estellés completamente a la Valencia in se" [you can clearly read València itself in Estellés' pages]. One more piece that undoubtedly contributes to establishing the identity of the city and to give it strength as a space of fiction (Mira, 2018, p. 42).

[València] city is the scene of a personal poetic chronicle, marked both by its own post-war period and that which affected Europe, giving way to spaces of contrast between desire and reality: the lights of the films and the centre of the city hide the shadows of the bodies in the river-edge scenarios, or in other spaces. Finally, in Estellesian literature, the city of València is at the centre of the region to which it gives its name, where the main conflict about the creation of a new national identity would later develop. If "*la poesía, como la ciudad, es el producto refinado de una historia que la ha hecho como es*" [poetry, like the city, is the refined product of a history that has made it the way it is] (Salvador, 2000, p. 133), Estellés' poetics about València contributed to its literary construction with a clear and recognisable voice that is intimately related to streets that now have both a personal and collective vision of [its inhabitants].

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Jordi Oviedo has a doctorate in Catalan Philology from the Universidad de Alicante and produced a critical edition of the *Segon del Cartoixà* (1500) by Joan Roís de Corella. He is currently a professor on sabbatical from the Universidad Católica de València San Vicente Mártir. He was the literary editor of the *Obra completa revisada de Vicent Andrés Estellés IV* [Revised complete work of Vicent Andrés Estellés IV] (2017) and V (2018) and is a member of the *Grup d'innovació docent Geografies literàries 3.0* [the literary geography 3.0 teaching innovation group], attached to the Universitat de València.

