

Against hunger and cold

JOAN MANUEL TRESSERRAS UPDATED 25/12/2014 00:00



JOAN M. TRESSERRAS

(/firmes
/joan_manuel_tresserras/)
(h
..

Segueix-me

Happy Christmas. Good company. Days when we take stock and make resolutions. We look back with hindsight. We look forward with determined excitement and firm commitment. These days we admit that we are guilty of harbouring great hopes and hanging on to them. Of having wanted and wanting to vote. Of having defended dignity and democracy against totalitarianism. These are the days when we agree on the social turn, both urgent and necessary for dignity and democracy themselves. These are days when we must make decisions to avoid ever having to blame ourselves again. Immediate decisions that channel the energy of the pro-independence movement towards achieving a wide democratic majority. Days when we agree and confederate because, in the words of Manuel Forcano ("Ciència Exacta" --"Exact Science") "we need what we wish for / to come true".

I recommend you a terrific read: "La pell de la frontera" ("The Skin of the Border"), a book by Francesc Serés published in Catalan by Quaderns Crema in 2014. It focuses on a Catalonia that is seldom visible and taken into account: that of the latest migrations to rural areas. It reveals truths that are too concealed. And it is great literature.

Serés' narrative style is material, tactile. It is the result of an enduring, disciplined effort to capture a reality that already contains, in its surprising complexity, every possible fiction. And the will to transmit it. Serés' literature is anchored on journalism. The kind of reporting that is concerned with what is substantial, important and decisive, rather than the ephemeral current events of our mundane representations. Serés' book seeks to understand the vicissitudes of a country and the people who are rarely shown in media. It's a more diverse, ill-fitting country than we would like to admit. People on the brink of exclusion, trapped in the mortifying periphery of the system. Tough, uncertain lives, focused on what is most elementary; a continuous exercise in survival.

Francesc Serés' writing is raw and dry. It shuns affectation. It describes, exposes and looks for an objective standpoint. It photographs. It takes a stand, it puts analyses to the test; it moves, criticises and rebels. It forever self-enquires and asks questions, especially to those who are never interviewed. It scouts the terrain; literally, the borders and skins. Literary journalism? Journalistic literature? Reports? Tales? Short stories? An original, intelligent look, penetrating, profound, never missing a detail. And style. Colour. Beat. A great expressive skill, a great technique, an exceedingly broad lexis, a language firmly rooted to the ground.

In "La pell de la frontera" we travel to Alcarràs, Saidí, to the Cinca river banks, to Fraga, to meet the new protagonists of the huge transformations that this land has undergone, far from Barcelona, during the current cycle of the globalisation and recession. The stories it tells encompass the turn of the century up until the time when the bells of Lleida's cathedral rang and spread the news of the Catalan Way all over the country, in the afternoon of September 11, 2013. Along the way, we meet men and women from Algeria, Morocco, Mali, Catalonia, Senegal, Ukraine, Romania ... They are on their way to somewhere else or perhaps have settled down for good. They arrived on

their own, only days earlier, or sometimes they have had their families here for a while. Sleeping rough, in derelict barns, in shanties built with reeds and raffia leaves; or with their own home and children who go to school. With and without legal papers; with casual, precarious jobs, or jobless ...

The extraordinary complexity of Catalonia today does a better job of explaining the pro-independence excitement than its shortcomings when trying to build a vast majority. The variety of individual situations --age, origin, employment situation, career expectations, family circumstances and so forth-- means that the choice of independence is the product of reasons that differ from one case to the next, each one carrying very different expectations. Knowing the nation well and being able to think it as a whole is a must to be able to build a future project that everyone can look forward to. In order to win, the alleged main beneficiaries of independence must be persuaded first. The bulk of the working classes will choose independence if they are convinced that it encapsulates the best opportunity possible for their emancipation, both socially and nationally. It is the social programme that can make the path to independence unbeatable. Support for independence is not compatible with the hunger and cold of those close to us; nor with their causes. Everyone must know this. It is the starting point of any invitation to unity for independence.

Comparteix a facebook (https://www.facebook.com/sharer/sharer.php?u=http://ara.cat/_4bd86554?s=f)

Comparteix a twitter (http://twitter.com/share?url=http%3A%2F%2Fara.cat%2F_4bd86554%3Fs%3Dt&via=diariARA&text=Against%20hunger%20and%20cold)

()

© ARA Manifest fundacional (/manifest_fundacional.html) Qui som (/qui_som.html)

Espai del subscriptor (<https://subscripcions.ara.cat/espai/>)

Publicitat (</publicitat.html>) [Avis legal \(/avis_legal.html\)](/avis_legal.html) [Contacte \(/contacte.html\)](/contacte.html)



Generalitat de Catalunya
Departament de la Presidència (<http://presidencia.gencat.cat/ca/>)