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Prayers as worldmaking in the publications of the *Pomells de Joventut* (1920–1923)

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ABSTRACT

The popular yet doomed Catalan youth group, the *Pomells de Joventut de Catalunya*, which existed between 1920 and 1923, introduced a generation of young readers to a vibrant range of Catalan-language texts, many of which were of a religious and nationalist nature. Despite the rich material left behind by the *Pomells*, the intentions and potentials of their devotional prayers and acts of worship have not been thoroughly analysed. By mobilising the concept of "worldmaking" and applying this to the prayers and texts of the *Pomells*, the desires and concerns of these young Catalans are laid bare. Drawing on a variety of sources, this article reveals that the *Pomells*, despite their age, were actively engaged in a number of debates from their time via their prayers in Catalan and that their devotional practice was innovative and transgressive in its own way. However, these interventions by Catalan youth would awaken hopes and stir up fears within different wings of the Catholic Church in Catalonia.

KEYWORDS

Catalonia; Catholicism; interwar youth; prayer; worldmaking

Let there be light: worldmaking through prayer

The *Pomells de Joventut de Catalunya* (1920–1923, hereinafter referred to as the *Pomells*) were a short-lived Catalan youth group that strove for Catholic values and Catalan nationalism, asserting a need to restore and maintain the status of the Catalan language whilst also seeking independence from the Spanish State. Breathed into being by Josep Maria Folch i Torres, the *Pomells* engaged children as young as five all the way up to youths in their late teens. The organisation had a meteoric rise, going from 20 groups limited to the Barcelona area in late 1920, to 849 groups across Catalonia in 1923, alongside groups in Madrid, Buenos Aires in Argentina, and Pelotas in Brazil.[1] The *Pomells* left behind a trove of publications and commanded a large-scale public presence through their events and celebrations. Yet, when the initially invested Catalan industrial elite became increasingly concerned by the possible threat of a left-wing insurgency, they cast the *Pomells* aside, allowing them to be one of the first victims of the Primo de Rivera dictatorship. In this article, engaging with the organisation's overlooked textual legacy, I explore the contexts and emotions that fuel the prayers and religious excerpts found across the publications of the *Pomells*. As part of this analysis, I look to what the prayers

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themselves are advocating for, how these divine supplications shaped ideologies among the young and faithful, and explore wider responses to the prayers and actions of the *Pomells*. Several scholars have commented on Catalonia´s religious identity in the early twentieth century, focusing mainly on contributions from priests and others empowered by the Catholic Church as an institution. However, such a framing overlooks individual believers as well as smaller groups like the *Pomells* and their religious musings. By exploring the prayers and religious reveries written by members of the *Pomells*, as a contextual perspective, we can see the world through the eyes of one subset of Catholic Catalan youth during a tumultuous time in interwar Europe, as several countries courted new forms of radical politics, and Spain veered towards its first dictatorship in the twentieth century.[2]

In this article, I focus on the acts of "worldmaking" that can be found within the religious writings and publications of the *Pomells*.[3] Worldmaking and its processes were initially explored in depth by Goodman (1978). In recent years, a range of scholars have continued to flesh out the concept across different disciplines through concrete case studies from a wide array of disciplines (for example: Gutiérrez-Pérez and Andrade 2018; Kamalika Jayathilaka 2020; Koch 2015; Stone-Davis 2015). Building on this scholarship, Boyle (2022, xv) argues that worldmaking is understood when we "examine language as a material and historical figure which acts as the means by which individuals construct their personal, local, transnational and spiritual identities." And it is from that point of departure that my inquiry begins: How do the *Pomells*, through their textual outputs and religious references, engage in worldmaking? Focusing on a Protestant, rural, Scottish context, Webster (2017, 32) points to prayers as "the product of collective thoughts, feelings and actions," all of which he notes as things that "cannot easily be separated." This is evident when we try to understand the prayers of the *Pomells*. By considering the rich wealth of ideas, identity markers, and emotional drives found within their prayers, I bring these elements into the discussion to add greater nuance to these acts of worldmaking.

To complicate this inquiry, it is important to examine what is considered a prayer. The publications of the *Pomells* do explicitly denote some writings as prayers, and structure them as such. However, there are also long snippets of prose, which may not look like prayer, but nevertheless have a religious element to them. As Hammerling (2008, 3) notes, prayer "is at one and the same time a very simple and remarkably complicated concept." For example, in the view of (Fredenburg 2011, 122), prayer "evokes new reality." This is particularly relevant for my discussion of worldmaking as the *Pomells* describe their own realities and dream up new ones. Fredenburg's view is also echoed to some extent in Bandak's definition (2017, 8), in which prayers are understood as a "socialised language and perceptiveness that are formed and transmitted in a religious tradition." However, as I shall go on to reveal, the *Pomells* seem to complicate Bandak's definition by deploying specific figures from Catalan history, nearly all of whom exist beyond the religious tradition, and are better fixed within a national imaginary. By beseeching such individuals through prayer, the *Pomells* actively turn those national totems into holy figures. To complicate matters further, prayer, in the context of contemporary Catalonia, is not often the subject of academic scholarship – and even less so in the case of Catalan-speaking youth. This is unusual when we consider the number of fervent religious youth organisations that sprung up throughout twentieth-century Catalonia, such as the *Lliga*

Espiritual de la Mare de Déu de Montserrat (established in 1899) and the *Federació de Joves Cristians de Catalunya* (established in 1931), and how those groups would go on to shape Catalan identity, society, and politics. The power of prayer is certainly noticeable in other contexts. Against the backdrop of Fascist Italy in the 1920s, Bettin (2005, 333) reveals that prayers in Hebrew became part of creating a sense of community and destiny, namely encouraging migration to Mandatory Palestine, among young Jews in Gorizia, under the guidance of Angelo Da Fano and through his regional youth movements.

Whether prayer triggers human migration, pause for reflection, or social revolution, we must recognise its potential for instigating change. Considering the development of prayer among young people at the start of the 21st-first century, Tatala (2009, 114) puts forward several opinions:

> Young people, who, looking for their own identities, reject the hitherto authorities, criticize the religiousness of adults and question the forms of their religious life, regarding them as unauthentic and insincere. An individual growing up refers to praying formulas handed down to them by their parents and catechists with distrust and suspicion. Having rejected them for some time, they usually "come to like" the traditional prayers, such as the "Our Father," "Hail Maria," "Beneath Thy Compassion," etc. A young person wants to be absolutely sure that the prayers they have known since their childhood are expressed by them in an authentic, sincere way, with an internal conviction that they are their own praying expressions.

This recognition of prayer's ongoing evolution among believers as they age grants us ingress to the religious publications of the *Pomells* as we consider the content of their prayers, how the youth organisation interacted with the Catholic Church in Catalonia, and what these prayers meant for wider Catalan society. Furthermore, considering this social complexity and competing forces, we would do well to acknowledge that prayer, as a force of worldmaking, is particularly notable in cases of oppression. For example, in the case of the Dalit in India (Mohan 2016, 56), hymns and prayers serve to create "a new social space for those who were denied access to public space." In this sense, prayers may grant us a better insight into the thoughts and feelings of minority language youth during tumultuous times. In locations where competing religions or sects meet, prayers can also become part of a group's arsenal as they engage in spiritual warfare. In the case of the *Pomells*, as a Catholic and Catalanist youth organisation, with a clear goal of achieving an independent Catalonia, prayer could serve as vehicle for expressing nationalist aspirations and commitment.

The *Pomells*, interwar youth, and the Catholic Church in context

The *Pomells*, as a force for Catholicism blended with Catalanism, form part of a wider wave of European youth mobilisation in the wake of the First World War. Souto Kustrín (2018, 49) argues that whilst youth had not been divorced from politics prior to the war, it was the interwar period that would see an enhanced level of engagement as new generations, as well as their socio-political concerns, came of age. Salomón Chéliz (2021, 351) posits that many Spanish Catholics in the early the twentieth century saw their fragile Spain, battered and bruised from the loss of an overseas empire, as "sick, but not yet dead" and in need of a cure "by the hand of God." How Catholics would go about forcing that hand was subject to geography and overarching objectives, but youth would play a pivotal role in the process. The first move made by a number of Catholic organisations in interwar

Iberian contexts was to mobilise the devout. For example, *Acción Católica de la Mujer*, founded in Madrid in 1919 and presided over by the archbishop of Toledo, Victoriano Guisasola y Menéndez, would fix women's suffrage as one of its aims. In this instance, an excessive dependence on the aristocracy, in the view of (Lannon 1999, 77), meant that the initiative reaped few results.[4] Another organisation, established in 1920, the *Confederación Nacional de Estudiantes Católicos* sought to bring Christian morality into Spain's universities and, later, secondary schools. Despite these aims, Barba Prieto (1999, 131) indicates that much of its leadership was openly against Primo de Rivera and his dictatorship, which later sealed the organisation's fate. The trend towards mobilising the devout confirms Vincent's observation (2017, 124–125) that Catholicism in twentieth-century Spain was becoming a political identity.

Whilst Catholicism may have served as a rallying point for a political identity, a constellation of different factions emerged from the interplay between religious and national identity. By way of illustration, the Social Youth of Zaragoza described themselves in 1919 as both Catholic and Aragonese (Salomón Chéliz 2021, 361). This declaration of identity, in the context of Aragon, was not seen as problematic or understood as an anti-Spain stance. In Euskadi, as noted by Ruiz Descamps (2013, 61), *Juventud Vasca*, the Basque Nationalist Youth, emphasised their religiosity in tandem with their Basque identity, particularly through their celebrations. In Catalonia, a wide array of competing Catholic camps, all spurred on by different nationalist goals and possible futures within or outside of Spain, took shape and veered towards conflict. For example, devout Carlist youth, who were in favour of a Spain under a different branch of the Bourbon royals, took to the streets to fight with pro-independence Catalan youths (Smith 2007, 291). The *Pomells* would have certainly shared a Catholic identity with the contemporaneous Carlist youth, but had opposing views on Catalonia's political destiny. Other organisations sought a different path, such as the Catalan scout movement of the 1920s that blended "Catholic morality with a cautious patriotism" (Dowling 2012, 600).[5]

Despite the array of positions on Catalonia, Lannon (1987, 140) posits that, in the early twentieth century, there were devout Catholics who believed that the Church "needed Catalanism" and that Catalonia would in turn benefit from embracing that religious tradition. This would, in Winston's view (1985, 10), turn Catalonia into the epicentre for both the "elitist and populist currents of the Spanish Catholic right." Resina (2008, 68) acknowledges this religious reality to some extent, but argues that the modernising political forces, like the *Lliga Regionalista*, a party that dominated Catalan politics at the time and which sought to see Catalonia leading a federal Iberia, were certainly respectful of Catholicism, but were still far from being ardent acolytes or true-blue enablers. This respect could have been a way of satisfying the Lliga's varied membership, made up largely of "republicans, Catalanists, Carlists, and Catholics" alongside "sizeable sections of the middle class and petty bourgeoisie" (Sanabria 2009, 157). Despite this mixed backing, in late 1922, Francesc Cambó i Batlle, the leader of the *Lliga Regionalista*, approached Folch i Torres and sought, in vain, to bring the *Pomells* into alignment with his own party. This was an unusual move as the *Lliga Regionalista* sought decentralisation, instead of independence from Spain, with the hope that Catalonia would serve as an industrial leader and transformative force to restore lost glories (Smith 2010, 146–147). Committed to Catalan independence, Folch i Torres could well have found this proposal from a catch-all party unsavoury, hence the rejection to align with Cambó.[6]

As Conway (1997, 13) notes, Catholicism was not "immune from divisions of social class," and it is important to recognise that the *Pomells* came into being at a time of increased tensions as the spectre of class revolution, made all the more palpable after the Russian Revolution, haunted the high and mighty. This class element is apparent in interwar youth organisations as different political ideologies attempted to speak to class identities. For example, the Spanish Scouts Movement, as noted by Moreno-Luzón (2020, 246), met "a demand among elites and the middle classes" between 1912 and 1931, but failed to gain traction among the poor. Although there were no membership fees to be in the *Pomells*, the organisation's socio-economic character is difficult to pin down. Scholars, such as Sampere i Ministral (1994), reveal specific towns in rural Catalonia where all the local children were part of the *Pomells*, suggesting the movement was able to transcend class boundaries. This is confirmed to an extent by Marquès et al. (2003), 66–67), who note that, in the province of Girona, the *Pomells* had numerous groups across rural and urban sites and that they were present in more remote farming villages such as Pedret i Marzà. Pointing out a new interest in spiritual purity among the local *petite bourgeoisie*, Capdevila i Capdevila (2008, 692–694) highlights that economic prosperity in the rural village of Tàrrega, in the province of Lleida, ties in with the appearance of four *Pomells* groups for local girls and six groups for boys in 1921, alongside another group in nearby El Talladell. There is also clear evidence that members of the *Pomells* from the metropolitan *haute bourgeoisie* were active in shaping the movement, particularly through the adoption of their signature hoods (Huddleson 2024, 82–83). These entanglements, between the *Pomells* and their middle- and upper-class backers, should be understood as an exercise in class politics as the elites threw their support behind a youth movement that posed no threat to their own social, economic, and political status.

Prior to the rise of the *Pomells*, the role of young people within the Catholic Church itself also underwent several changes. His Holiness, Pope Pius X, who led from late 1903 to late 1914, was interested in actively engaging children and bringing them into the Holy Mother Church. Orsi (2004), 80–81) points to the Pope's decision to lower the age of first Communion from early teens to the age of seven and reveals cases where the Pope directly intervened to give Communion to younger children. Within the context of the Iberian Peninsula, the importance of children and youth within the Church was also becoming more apparent. The energies resulting from the revival of Spanish Catholicism in the late nineteenth century had, as Lannon remarks (Lannon 2000, 61), been channelled into "educational and pastoral initiatives," and there was a surge in the "distribution of Catholic publications of all kinds." In the town of Betelu (Navarra), a Colombian missionary, Soledad de la Torre, set up *La Obra de los Sacerdotes Niños* (The Society of Child Priests) in 1920, which sought to cultivate the next generation of male priests. Children were also becoming empowered as key witnesses to religious phenomena and divine presence. For example, the several apparitions of Our Lady of Fátima to rural children in central Portugal between 1916 and 1917, and the miraculous healing of Antonie Rädler in Wigratzbad, Bavaria, in 1918.

Consolidating Catalan within the Catholic Church: resistance and oppression

At the start of the twentieth century, the *Associació Protectora de l'Ensenyança Catalana*, which was founded in 1898, had already begun to challenge the supremacy of Castilian in Catalonia within the education system, placing a new emphasis on teaching through the

medium of Catalan. The *Mancomunitat de Catalunya* (the Commonwealth of Catalonia, 1914–1925) would continue that legacy by promoting education and research in Catalan. However, the normalisation of Catalan as a language of devotion within the Catholic Church was not yet secured. The *Pomells* would play a small, but definitive role in the struggle for Catalan. The *Pomells*' deliberate decision to use Catalan as a medium for prayers was, in and of itself, youth-led language activism and a response to wider debates about the place of the language in institutions and society. Through the lens of language activism, the *Pomells* can be understood as a continuation of the legacy of Josep Torras i Bages (1846–1916), the bishop of Vic from 1899 to 1916, who introduced several changes that favoured Catalan and brought the language back to the parishes. In 1898, upon his election to the *Reial Académia de Bones Lletres de Barcelona*, Torras i Bages made his commitment to the Catalan language clear, stating that it was his "llengua de la terra" (language of the land) and "llengua de la casa" (language of the home), and that God alone had the power to silence the language (1986, 177). Despite his desire to protect Catalan, Torras i Bages was not in favour of an independent Catalonia. Writing in 1892, prior to the Disaster of 1898, Torras i Bages (1935, 14), saw Catalonia as integral to the larger puzzle of Spain, seeing the latter as a "conjunt de pobles units per la Providència" (a collection of peoples united by Providence). At the turn of the century, Josep Morgades i Gili (1826–1901), bishop of Vic from 1882 to 1899 and later Barcelona from 1899 to 1901, had also raised questions regarding language and religious ritual through seven open letters, advocating for a greater use of Catalan to ensure understanding among the faithful (Duran Solà 2009, 78). Coming to the end of the *Pomells*' timeline, Lannon (1987, 176) notes that, by 1923, Catalans bishops "had confirmed an already established norm that preaching in Catalonia should normally be in Catalan."

Throughout this article, it is important to consider the political punch of writing prayers in Catalan and how prayer acts as a means of normalising Catalan as a language of religious devotion. After centuries of oppression, Catalan underwent a significant cultural revival among the urban elite in the nineteenth century, and by the time of the *Pomells*, there were numerous demands across society to bring Catalan into the classroom as a medium for education. Continuing this long legacy of restoring the Catalan language, the *Pomells* espouse a clear linguistic mission through their publications, with instances of individual members acting as instigators of linguistic resistance. What is particularly interesting is how this fight for language rights is connected to religious convictions and imaginaries. In the writings of the *Pomells*, there are deliberate attempts to link the Catalan language back to the Divine, as part of creation. For example, in the April 1922 Issue of *Àmfora* (8), the *Pomells*' main monthly publication, as part of the "Lletres a Jordi Cadascú" ("Letters to Geordie Anybody") section, an agony column of sorts, Folch i Torres tells his readers, "La llengua catalana no l'han inventada pas els catalanistes. Fou el mateix Déu qui ens la posà als llavis, i per això és eterna i invencible" ("The Catalan language was not invented by Catalanists. It was God Himself who put it on our lips, and that is why it is eternal and invincible"). The use of religious language is also notable in *Endavant*, a local Pomells publication from Rubí, from 9 September 1923 (2), as one local member instructs his fellow *Pomells* to become apostles for the Catalan language both within and beyond the home.

The long and arduous battle to bring Catalan back into the Church seems to have secured some victories when we consider individual testimonies from *Pomells* members, particularly in the deeds they record in *Àmfora*. Reflecting a shift in language ideology

through praying behaviour, one member of the *Pomells*, A. Llorens, reports that his good deed is to switch from Castilian to Catalan when praying (*Àmfora*, 15 April 1922, 25). In the December issue of that same year, one member reports (*Àmfora*, 20) that she has convinced a friend to read religious texts in Catalan in preparation for First Communion. The tensions between language activism and following holy scripture also manifest in the deeds of some *Pomells*. In the same December issue of *Àmfora* (1922, 18), one child remarks that, although it may seem like a sign of disrespect, his good deed is to remind Catalan-speaking parents to use Catalan with their children instead of Castilian.

Prayer as an expression of Catalan identity: mobilising mountains and saints

The prayers of the *Pomells* were not grand sermons that would echo through mighty cathedrals and ornate chapels. Instead, they were meant to be read by individual members of the *Pomells* or in groups, sometimes at their weekly meetings. This approach to prayer was changed through the publication of the Eucologi dels Pomells (1922), the *Pomells*' Prayerbook, hereinafter *Eucologi*, a text which prepared the reader to understand what is going on during various masses and other rituals with the original Latin and a Catalan translation.[7] A set of prayers, for use at different points of the day or for specific occasions, are also included in the text. The reason for this publication, as indicated in the May 1922 issue of *Àmfora* (27), was to combat a "falta d'unitat" (lack of unity) which could lead to "individualisme antipàtic" (hard-hearted individualism). Whilst the article does not go into great detail on this point, it is clear that it was hoped that the prayers in this booklet would give the *Pomells* some level of cohesion in their devotional practice. Printed by the Abadia de Montserrat, which has been an authority in publishing Catalan devotional literature since 1499, the appearance of this text reflects the favour and power that the *Pomells* enjoyed within religious circles. The *Eucologi* did not trigger the suspicions of the ecclesiastical censor, Lluis Carreras. This is unusual when we consider a set of prayers specifically dedicated to Our Lady of Montserrat, which young readers are told to pray in order to ensure "sa poderosa intercessió en favor del poble català" (her powerful intercession for the benefit of the Catalan people).[8] What that benefit may be or lead to (i.e. independence from Spain) is not entirely disclosed. In this instance, it is up to the faithful to create meaning and arrive at their own conclusions – and to do so, they must engage with the world on the page.

Despite its innocent charm and ability to evade the censor, the *Eucologi* did elicit strong emotions from within elements of the Catholic Church in Catalonia. Writing to Cardinal Vidal, on the 6 September 1922, Josep Miralles i Sbert, bishop of Lleida from 1914 to 1925, raises the alarm regarding the publication, seeing it as a deviation and direct threat.[9] Miralles had already issued a ban on blessing the flags of local *Pomells* groups, and, as reported by *La Publicitat* in November 1922, would later prohibit his charges from talking in Catalan during meetings. As Massot i Muntaner (1991, 32) notes, there does not seem to be a reply from Vidal, suggesting he was either on the side of the *Pomells* or did not wish to entertain Miralles' objections. Nevertheless, the furore caused by Miralles does seem to have had an effect. Without any clear explanation, the Abadia de Montserrat would later publish the *Missa Popular Gregoriana: Tret de l'*Eucologi dels Pomells (1922), which was taken directly from the *Eucologi* with the text solely in Latin, without a Catalan translation or any explanations of the worship.

The *Eucologi* had certainly managed to awaken tensions in the Catholic Church, but, within its pages, other changes were taking root. Considering the prayers found in the *Eucologi*, a new spiritual hierarchy of sorts is laid out for the reader in the morning and evening prayer, starting with God and working down to Our Lady of Montserrat and Saint George.[10] What is interesting about this order is that the last two divine figures that are being beseeched, Our Lady of Montserrat and Sant Jordi, or Saint George, have established links to Catalan identity, and seem to replace the usual Virgin Mary and the figure of Jesus:

Feu, Déu meu, que passi aquest dia en vostra gràcia i amistat. Àngel de la meva Guarda, protegiu-me. Madona de Montserrat, Regina de Catalunya, pregueu per nosaltres. Gloriós Sant Jordi, intercediu per nosaltres.	God of mine, let me spend this day in your grace and friendship. Guardian Angel, watch over me. Our Lady of Montserrat, Queen of Catalonia, pray for us. Glorious Saint George, intercede for us.

Elsewhere in the *Eucologi*, we find images of Our Lady of Montserrat and Saint George, alongside concise prayers for each divine individual. The mobilisation of the religious past, particularly a medieval one, as articulated through reverence to Our Lady of Montserrat, shows a deliberate attempt within the prayer to create a geographical centre within Catalonia that believers would be familiar with, given that numerous *Pomells* events were held at Montserrat, and that site then acts as an anchor for a sense of continuity and community.[11]

Catholicism in the 1920s, as Chappel contends (2018, 23), was one of pragmatism. The Church was embroiled in its own search for "the proper Catholic alternative to modernity" (25), and one such proposal was that of a Catholic neomedievalism. His Holiness, Pope Benedict XV (in office from September 1914, until his death in January 1922) had, in the view of Pollard (2014, 119), "abandoned" the fight against modernity. His successor, His Holiness, Pope Pius XI (in office from February 1922, to February 1939) may well have followed suit as part of his pragmatic approach. Chappel (2018, 27) argues that the return to the medievalist view was a "simple one" because war and industrial capitalism had brought up "incalculable misery and suffering." This made the desire to return to something more stable, based on "solid forms of hierarchy, obedience, and faith," all the more appealing. This view is echoed by Salomón Chéliz (2021, 356), who notes that Catholic social discourse placed a heavy emphasis on "the leading role of faith in the accomplishment of the glorious deeds of the past," and that historical legacy would serve a springboard for "the reconquest of society" in the here and now. Whilst forces at a much higher level were returning to the past for answers and explanations, it is interesting to note that the *Pomells* themselves, as a youth organisation, were also looking to the past for guidance and idea(l)s.

The neomedievalist trope is unmistakable when we consider Catalonia's key male saint, *Sant Jordi*. For the *Pomells*, this brave knight is the perfect archetype of their ideals, bringing together a love for God and for Catalonia. Appearing in all his grandeur on the front cover of the 15 April 1922 issue of *Àmfora*, Sant Jordi steals the show and the *Pomells* are instructed to recite a prayer, either out loud or internally, and beseech the nation's Saint:

Gloriós cavaller Sant Jordi,
Patró de la Nació nostra,
Intercediu prop de nostre Senyor
Per a que sia ben tost reconeguda a
Catalunya la seva plena i lliberima
personalitat, i encengui cada dia més en el
cor dels catalans l'amor a la pàtria. Amén.

Glorious Knight, Saint George,
Patron of our Nation,
Intercede for us at Our Lord's side,
So that his full and most free being is
known throughout Catalonia, and that he
may spark love for the homeland in the
hearts of the Catalans every day. Amen.

With nine pages of different contributions from the *Pomells*, in preparation for the Saint's day, the April 1922 issue of *Àmfora* offers a generous amount of space for prayers and stories about Sant Jordi.[12] However, the Saint is not the only one due for praise. One recitation, *La Regina dels Pomells* (Queen of the *Pomells*), written by F. X. Prats i Subirà (19), from Arenys de Mar, brings the reader's attention back to Our Lady of Montserrat:

La Verge de la serra
prenent un troç de cel
en fa una cinta blava
i lliga cent Pomells;
Serà aviat tan llarga
Que'n lligarà cinc-cents.
Llavors, Regina hermosa
de Montserrat, veureu
venir a la Muntanya,
postrant-se a vostres peus,
les flors de Catalunya,
Els odorants Pomells
Vessant la seva essència
que té sentor d'encens.
Al arribà aquell dia,
al nostre pas pendrem
roselles i ginesta,
i amb elles formarem,
ben dretes, quatre barres,[13]
i deixarem després,
en nom de Catalunya,
l'escut als vostres peus.

The Virgin of the mountain,
taking a piece of heaven,
makes a blue ribbon,
and ties together one hundred garlands;
That ribbon will soon be so long
that it will bind together five hundred.
And then, beautiful Queen
of Montserrat, you shall see,
flocking to the Mountain,
bowing down at your feet,
the flowers of Catalonia,
the sweet-smelling Garlands [of Youth]
pouring out their essence
which smells like incense.
When that day comes,
as we go we shall pick
poppies and rush broom,
and with them we shall make
four straight bars[7],
and then leave,
in the name of Catalonia,
the shield at your feet.

As was the case with the *Eucologi*, this *Pomellista* has turned to Our Lady of Montserrat as the focus of her prayer, promising to bring her flowers.

Whilst we often consider prayer as a language act, it can also be expressed through the body and movement, as seen in some followers of Pentecostal and charismatic Christianity as they claim to be overcome with the Holy Spirit. The body, as a channel for the sacred, is invoked in several prayers in contributions from the *Pomells*. One prayer of adoration to Our Lady of Montserrat, written by Salvador Casañas, in *Àmfora*, (May 1922, 15), from the Pomells group "Bell Montserrat" (Beautiful Montserrat), creates a clear connection between the divine and the body of the reader:

Estimem-la, pomellistes i catalans tots;
portem gravada sa faç divina dintre els
nostres cors; siguem bons catalans per tal de
veure prompte lliure i ditxosa a la nostra
estimada Catalunya.

Let us love Her, *Pomellistes* and Catalans
alike; We bear her divine face etched in our
hearts; Let us be good Catalans so as to
soon see our beloved Catalonia free and
blessed.

The divine essence of Our Lady of Montserrat, as being an integral part of the body of the Catalan believer, and the call to free Catalonia would have been alarming to elements of the Catholic Church in Catalonia as it could be understood as an attack on the eucharist. This is because if the body of Christ is offered and received by the faithful from a priest, then how can the "divine face" of Our Lady of Montserrat be already present in the hearts of the *Pomells*?

Mansueto (2002, 97) holds that Marian devotion, across a variety of geographic locations and historical periods, has direct political implications from revolutionary revolt to combatting Communism. He goes on to argue that in this particular articulation of piety we can find "profound socioreligious dynamics which would otherwise go unexpressed in the Christian tradition" (97). However, the move by the *Pomells* to embrace the figure of Our Lady of Montserrat was not unusual, and there are plenty of examples of religious individuals being reimagined by the faithful for nationalist gain. Louzao Villar (2013, 665) argues that the late nineteenth and early twentieth century saw a "reinvention of devotion to the Virgin Mary in Spain." Elsewhere in Europe, interwar youth adoring the Virgin Mary were engaged in similar processes to the *Pomells*. For example, Čuplinskas and Motiejūnaitė (2022, 169–171) point to how young Catholics in inter-war Lithuania took the image of a pagan priestess, the *vaidilutė*, and transformed her into a Christian, nationalist symbol of modernity for young women.[14] This was done mainly through a publication, *Naujoji Vaidilutė* (1921–1940), and a play by Vincas Mykolaitis-Putinas, *Nuvainikuotoji Vaidilutė* (1927). In the case of 1920s Romania, as Clark (2012, 538) highlights, Orthodox Christian publications such as *Gândirea* (1921–1944), which was subsidised by the State, were engaged in "inflating the importance of religion to nationalism by making it the subject of heated debates." These developments could well serve as proof for Conway's claim (Conway 1997, 3) that Catholicism had "come of age as a political ideology" in interwar Europe. The merging of Catholicism and Catalanism had become a palatable option for several groups aimed at adults in the early twentieth century. The *Pomells* were now bringing that choice to a younger audience.

As illustrated through the publication of the *Eucologi*, the *Pomells* undoubtedly curried favour with the Abadia de Montserrat, but their ongoing access to religious spaces reflects power relations and shapes their prayer production. Within the *Pomells*' Christian geography, Montserrat served as a central site of pilgrimage, prayer, and celebration, but what of other holy sites in Catalonia? For example, the cave of Saint Ignatius of Loyola, found in Manresa and en route to Montserrat, is absent from the *Pomells*' publications. The Spanish Saint was, perhaps, too divorced from their mission for Catalonia and wrapped up in a politics that did not suit the *Pomells*, and so their Christian geography is one that is exclusively Catalan. This is an interesting reality as, in 1931, thousands of devout Catalans flocked to Ezkioga, in the Basque Country, in the wake of Marian Apparitions. Christian (1996, 104) notes that whilst the Basques saw this religious appearance as "reward" for their own nationalism, the Catalan visitors had no sense that they were "intruding" on a special relationship between Our Lady and the Basque people.

Alongside Montserrat and other sites from this world, the *Pomells* also look to the transcendental and supernatural as they construct a religious geography, engaging in worldmaking as they mark and try to understand death. The obituary section in the January 1922 (29) issue of *Àmfora*, observes the passing of Maria dels Dolors Palet i Martí, the daughter of a former politician. What is interesting is that the text frames the death as a transition from a *Pomell* group on this Earth to one in Heaven, joining the "Pomell del Cel." In the same obituary, another child's passing, that of Maria Ferré Sanahuja (aged 14), is framed as a deliberate choice as the text remarks that she has preferred to be with the *Pomell* group of Heaven itself. In one of the few surviving copies of Nova Llavor (1923), a supplementary publication made by the *Pomells* groups in Conca de Barberà (Tarragona), we find an obituary (3–4) for Josep Cendra Vila Tota, who passed away at the age of six on the 10th of April 1923. It is noted that he was eager to receive First Communion, and whilst that did not come to fruition, he holds a specific honour as the first to die from the area. As the "primera flor" (first flower), he will open a path in Heaven for other local children who follow and he awaits them there. Despite the tragedy of his death, Josep is granted agency and admiration. In life, the *Pomells* turn their thoughts towards Montserrat as a place of safety. By looking to the sacred mountain, as a site imbued with both Christian and Catalan meaning, prayers exert and reinforce power by ordering the site in the mind of the young reader. Whilst spaces are never stable, and can be re-interpreted or re-imagined as power shifts, Montserrat continues to be well fixed as a site in their imaginings. In death, however, the Pomells find stability in their religious imagination by turning to Heaven itself. Despite its sorrowful tone and function, the obituaries in *Àmfora* always end with a hopeful message: "Al Cel els poguem veure!" (May we see them in Heaven!).

Prayers for national heroes: creating new saints?

Intercessory prayers to the Virgin Mary, particularly in her manifestation as Our Lady of Montserrat, are to be expected within a Catholic and Catalan organisation. Curiously, whilst some religious figures like Saint Ignatius were dropped entirely, other individuals from beyond the religious canon were being sought out for the *Pomells* to beseech when at prayer. The incorporation of these individuals raises questions as to how the *Pomells* negotiated the delicate balance between Catholic devotion and Catalan nationalism. In the September 1922, issue of *Àmfora*, the historical figure of Rafael Casanova (1660–1743), a Catalan jurist and enduring symbol of Catalan identity and self-governance, who served as Mayor of Barcelona and military commander during the 1714 Siege of Barcelona, is directly beseeched in one prayer written by Marian Lleixa (3):

A EN RAFAEL CASANOVA

Oh, generós capdill
de faç greu i ennoblida, que un jorn per
Catalunya donàreu fins la sang,
fiteu vostra mirada
envers la gran florida
de flors que esclaten verges
en mig de tolls de fang.

A vostres peus postrem-nos per dar-nos la
fermesa
de que si un jorn va caure nostre penó
sagrat, avui el pit ben noble
i el cor ple d'ardidesa
ben alt fem voleiar-lo, sedents de llibertat.
Al fons del pit sentim-la vostra punyent
ferida,
com roentor febrosa
en l'ànima esllanguida
pels jorns que el terrer nostre viu trist i
endogalat.

Mes ja l'esperit s'omplena
De vida i de frisança,
Per dur-vos prompte en paga l'eterna
deslliurança trenada amb la llaçada
de l'escut blau-barrat.

TO RAFAEL CASANOVA

Oh, generous leader
with a grave and ennobled face, you who
one day for Catalonia, gave your own blood,
Cast your gaze
towards the great bloom
of virgin flowers that burst forth
amidst the muddy puddles.

We bow down at your feet to give us the
strength,
so that if one day our sacred banner fell,
today our noble chests
and daring hearts,
fly it high once again, thirsty for freedom.
In the depths of our chests, we feel your
stinging wound,
like a feverish burning,
in the exhausted soul
for the days that our land
is beset by sadness and restrained

But our spirits are now filled
with life and vigour,
to pay you promptly eternal liberation
braided with the loop of a blue barred
shield.

This appeal to a man who was neither a saint nor a religious martyr is an interesting development. It shows that whilst some figures and locations, such as Our Lady of Montserrat and her holy shrine in the mountains, are well-established elements within the Catalan national and Catholic imaginaries, the *Pomells* were eager to incorporate other individuals from Catalan history and had begun to create their own saints of sorts. Worryingly for the Catholic Church, there are some clear allusions to Christ in this prayer, as Casanova's suffering and his blood being spilt are linked back to national redemption. It is these trials and tribulations that make him a powerful totem to which the *Pomells* pray, but they also recognise an outstanding debt to Casanova and hope to repay it by delivering independence. It is worth noting that some *Pomells* record the reading of books relating to Casanova's life as one of their weekly acts for the Catalan nation, as declared by an R. Feliu, documented in *Àmfora* (June 1922, 32). Some earlier Catalan youth publications with religious leanings had also chosen specific individuals to elevate and commemorate. For example, the 28 December 1918 issue of *L'Amic del Poble* ("Friend of the People," 1913–1918), a publication which was aimed at young Carlists, chose to focus on Pau Claris, a key Catalan figure in the Reapers' War (1640–1659) who reflected the Carlists' anti-centralist verve.

Thinking of religious practice beyond written prayers, there is some evidence that the *Pomells* were also engaging in their own rituals, similar in ways to other expressions of Folk Catholicism, to honour a lost Catalan past.[9] In a special publication from 1922, produced by two Pomells groups (*Els Patriòtics* and *Mariola*) in Lleida, the dead of 1714 are remembered for their sacrifice, but not explicitly named (6). Although there is no specific indication as to how the dead should be remembered, in *El Pomellista*, from 10 September 1922 (3), we can see

that readers are reminded, in bold: "Honoreu als martres de Catalunya de 1714" (Honour Catalonia's martyrs of 1714). However, in an issue of *Endavant*, from 9 September 1923 (1), it is reported that the *Pomells* in Rubí held a requiem mass for those who died in 1714. Again, there is no attempt to name any specific victims. The figure of Rafael Casanova, despite his national charge and promotion in certain *Pomells*' publications like *Àmfora*, is entirely absent from all of these texts. Despite the lack of textual devotion, groups of the Pomells did engage in ceremonies, as is part of custom today, bringing flowers to the statue of Casanova in central Barcelona. There is also evidence that flowers were left at statues of Casanova elsewhere, such as in Sabadell in 1921, by local *Pomells* groups. In Argentona, as part of the same celebrations, the evening edition of the *Veu de Catalunya* (13 September 1921, 13) reports that the local *Pomells* placed an exquisite funerary wreath at the feet of a statue to Casanova.

Casanova was not the only non-religious figure from the past that would serve as an expressive vehicle for the *Pomells*. In the June 1922 issue of *Àmfora* (20), one member of the *Pomells*, F. M. Albanell, celebrates the contributions of Martin the Humane (1356–-1410), the King of Aragon, Valencia, Sardinia, and Corsica, and the final chain in the dynasty of the House of Barcelona. Albanell notes that in his passing, Catalonia "s'omplenava de dol" (was filled with sorrow) as a violent interregnum took root.[15] Amidst the praise for earthly royalty, the stage is being prepared for a Kingdom of Christ as the text states that Jesus is certainly King of Kings, but also "de fet i de dret Rei i Compte de Catalunya" (King and Count of Catalonia). This claim to a throne is further intensified in the statement that Jesus is the "successor legítim del Rei Martí" (the legitimate successor of King Martin), even going so far as to state that all Kings following Martin are there merely by accident. This was undoubtedly a direct challenge to the authority of Alfonso XIII, from the House of Bourbon-Anjou, who sat (uneasily) on the Spanish throne at the time. And, if there were to be any uncertainty, the piece ends with this short declaration that seeks to solve any queries regarding who reigns as king:

Al bon rei d'Aragó, Déu l'hi dó glòria, mes el Rei i Senyor del cel i terra, qui'l rellevà en son trono no morirà mai més. Alabat sia!	May God grant the good King of Aragon glory, but the King and Lord of Heaven and Earth, who has now taken his throne shall die no more. Praise be unto Him!

This anti-monarchist verve is unusual among Catholic believers, and even more perplexing when we consider that the *Pomells* were not linked to any of the radical left political waves that were gaining ground in Catalonia at the time. At the same time, this focus on Jesus and the taking of a throne reflects a wider trend towards the cult of Christ the King, which would receive backing from Pope Pius XI in 1922. The *Pomells*' exploration of the past is also an echo of earlier discussions from the nineteenth century, spearheaded by Víctor Balaguer i Cirera and Antoni de Bofarull i Brocà, as they attempted to construct histories of Catalonia. Smith (2014, 77) notes that such discussions, on Martin the Humane and the Compromise of Casp, would lead to "polemics" as blame was dealt out and enemies were fashioned, all of which enlivened Catalan nationalism. Here, by looking at this prayer and the world it articulates, we can see that the *Pomells* are certainly politically engaged and embracing medieval history for their own purposes. The *Pomells* are, to some extent, reflecting a wider Catholic fervour in their adoration of Christ as King, but

they also reverberate earlier debates that sought to refine and consolidate Catalan identity. Through such prayer and the amalgamation of different ideas, legacies, and sources, the *Pomells* were defying the usual conventions of right and left within the Catalan political spectrum, carving out their own particular path.

A world asunder: prayers against apocalypse

As mentioned earlier in this article, the Spanish State was in a constant state of disarray as short-lived governments repeatedly failed, a reality which set the stage for Primo de Rivera's coup d'état. Núñez Seixas (2018, 381) argues that World War I led to "deep political and strategic mutations" across Catalan political factions. Part of this could be rooted in frustration as various states and nations such as Czechoslovakia, Finland, and Poland emerged from the chaos and devastation of war. At the 1919 Paris Peace Conference, petitions for self-determination from Albanian, Catalan, Croatian, Irish, and Ukrainian representatives all fell on deaf ears (Manela 2007, 59). Although the disempowered Catalans could only watch from the sidelines as sweeping changes redefined the map of Europe, Wilsonianism's principle of self-determination led to a "renewal of the political vocabulary of the Catalan movement" (Núñez Seixas 2018, 396). In the view of (Dalle Mulle and Bieling 2023, 661), the Wilsonian wave in Catalonia quickly faded out as the working class were not included and social protest took over. However, they also recognise that this "failure" (Dalle Mulle and Bieling 2023, 652) of Catalan campaigns for autonomy prevented Catalan nationalism from taking up a more ideologically radical heft.

Whilst the prayers of the *Pomells* do not explicitly mention the doctrine of Wilsonianism, its impact can be felt in their acts of worldmaking, particularly as they repeatedly frame Catalonia as a nation facing apocalypse. Focusing on faith in contemporary Nigeria, Oha (2005, 39) notes that "praying for the nation in distress" reveals an interest in where the country is headed, whilst also raising questions of how the nation is continually re-making itself. One poem, *La fé de la raça* (The Faith of the Race), by J. Llop, featured in the issue of *Bona Llevor*, November and December 1922 (21), a local *Pomells* publication from Reus, evokes both a far-flung utopia, perhaps an allusion to a Catalonia past, and an immediate dystopia, in which the current Catalonia finds itself:

> So vingut de llunyes terres, on no's parla mai de guerres, on no hi ha arrelat el mal, on hi ha'l nervi de la raça, on l'orgull, tan sols hi passa com el llamp, d'un temporal.
>
> I al trovar-me aquí a la plana i sentir gent catalana que blasfema del més alt, n'he restat esporuguida, i he temut fins per ma vida boi [*sic*] sentint disbarat tal.
>
> I've come from far-off lands, where there is no talk of war, where evil has not taken root, where the nerve of the race is, where pride, flicks through like a thunder bolt.
>
> And finding myself here on the plain, hearing the Catalan people blaspheming against the most high, I am overtaken by fear, and I have even feared for my life, hearing all these slights.

Considering the nation in distress, this appeal to the reader does not suggest flight from the world, but rather a need to reclaim it, thus enforcing the general mission of the *Pomells*. Although the horrors of the world are splayed out across the publications of the *Pomells*, particularly when we peruse the obituaries in *Àmfora* and its commentaries on the violent *pistolerisme* that dominated Barcelona, which sometimes took the lives of innocent children, we do not find a reactionary Catholicism invested solely in personal

salvation and which shuts itself off from the world. Instead, the *Pomells* call for direct action based on faith. In the same issue of *Bona Llevor* (24), the nation in distress motive can again be found in one piece, *Als Catalans* (To the Catalan People), by M. Blanch. Religion, here, is seen as a defence against annihilation in the face of modernity and its trappings:

I ont és, avui la Fé? En què tenir-ne en eixos temps, regnat de l'ambició? Sols una font ne raja a dolls purissims es eixa font, la santa Rel·ligió! [*sic*] Corréu-hi a beure doncs, assadolleu-ne vostres cors, aleshores vencereu! Pit enfora i avant!, que no pot ésser mai poble esclavitzat, poble que creu!	And where is the Faith today? Why have it in these times, in this age of ambition? Only one fountain brings forth pure streams and that fountain is the holy Religion! Run to drink from it, and fill your hearts with it, and you shall conquer! Chests up and out! A people who believe can never be a people enslaved!

Militarism, against spiritual demons or real-world enemies and afflictions, is a frequent trope in aggressive forms of prayer. The *Pomells*, in contrast to many nationalist youth movements in the twentieth century, were not interested in violence and did not aspire to train their members for combat. However, there is a clear demand being placed on young Catalans to do something for Catalonia. In the *Oració Ingènua d'un noi de 6 anys* (22), published in the May 1922 issue of *Àmfora*, Joaquim Serra commands his fellow *Pomells* to show love for their nation:

Oh Pomells d'amor! Aixequem nostra bandera; així veuran que tenim lluita. Com volen que els estimem si tenim les mans lligades, i com volen que siguem del seu poble si nosaltres som catalans. Doncs, aixequem nostra bandera, que ens farà més triomfants.	Oh, Pomells of love! Let us raise our flag; So that they may see that we are ready for battle. How can they want us to love them if our hands are bound? And, how can they want us to be part of their nation if we are Catalans? So, let us raise our flag, as it will make us all the more triumphant.

The description of bound hands, as if enslaved or taken hostage, is a powerful image and open criticism of Catalonia's unfavourable position within the Spanish State. The trauma and humiliation exerted on Catalonia, however, is simply met by the raising of a flag. We may wonder here if this young boy wants to issue a call to violence, but finds that this would contradict Christian teachings. Disregarding its brevity, the publication of this short prayer marks a turning point as *Àmfora* evolves from what was simply a vehicle for relaying information to its young readers to becoming a space for Catalan, Catholic youth to articulate their devotion, and, in doing so, revealing their hopes and fears for the Catalan people and nation.

In the prayers mentioned so far in relation to the nation in distress trope, religious feeling is certainly apparent, but there is no direct mention of any divine figure. However, when suffering does afflict the Catalan nation, it is the Virgin Mary, in her form as Our Lady of Montserrat, to whom the *Pomells* turn. Mansueto (2002, 120–121) argues that Marian devotion is "deeply rooted in the sufferings and struggles of the subaltern classes" that articulates different forms of oppression, whilst also expressing "hope in a new social order." This is apparent in the prayers of the *Pomells* as this Catalanised Virgin Mary is sought out as

a remedy for the nation in distress. In the same issue, Florenci Espinalt, from the *Pomells* group "Nostra Dona de Montserrat," beseeches Our Lady of Montserrat to save Catalonia:

Regina de la Pau, treieu de Catalunya
l'esperit de discòrdia i ajunteu a tots sos fills
amb cor de germans…
Féu que mai es desfassi aquest poble català
que Vós espiritualment engendràreu…
Defenseu d'enemics espirituals a tota la
terra catalana que teniu encomanada…
Alcanceu als pobles de Catalunya una pau
cristiana i perpètua.

Queen of Peace, banish the spirit of discord
from Catalonia and bring together all your
children with the heart of brotherhood…
Ensure that the Catalan people, who You
spiritually engender, are never undone…
Defend all of the Catalan land entrusted to
you from spiritual enemies…
Bestow upon the towns of Catalonia a
Christian and perpetual peace.

Herein, the political risk of prayer is perfectly palpable as Espinalt carefully weaves her words to avoid specifically mentioning who the enemy truly is.

Despite its frequent usage, the trope of the nation in distress and wanting of salvation is not the sole frame used by the *Pomells*. There are also numerous prayers and declarations that speak of a love for the Catalan nation, thus reinforcing the need for it to be protected, alongside the Catalan language. In *Àmfora*, June 1922 (21), N. Dausa, from the *Pomells* group "Els nous almogàvers," writes a "Cant de Patria" (Song of the Nation):

Oh terra que m'has vist néixer!
Oh breçol de ma infantessa!
Soc ditxós quan te veig créixer,

quan admiro ta grandesa.
Ets per mí font de dolçura,
consol de les meves penes,
treus de mí tota amargura
quan ton drap barrat destrenes.

Oh, land that witnessed my birth!
Oh, cradle of my childhood!
I am happy to see you grow,
when I admire your greatness.
You are a source of sweetness,

comfort against my sorrows,
you take away all my bitterness,
when your four-barred cloth unfurls…

In contrast to the other prayers which highlight subjugation and moral decay, Catalonia is described here in the most endearing of terms. The signs of Catalan identity, such as the Four Blood Bars, are mentioned and, once again, call the reader back to a medieval past. What is most notable about this entry is that it is void of any religious verve.

A legacy of prayer as language activism

Throughout this article, we can see that the prayers of the *Pomells*, whether read to oneself or recited aloud to a group, act as imaginative engines as they conjure up and awaken emotions and nationalist idea(l)s, fixing devotees' attention on particular sites or individuals both within and beyond a Christian narrative. In these instances of worldmaking, we can observe that the deliberate recycling and explicit mention of geographical locations and national symbols in the prayers speak to a historical and linguistic memory. By invoking this memory, the prayers of the *Pomells* seek to create a sense of belonging among devout youth by focusing them towards religious sites within Catalonia as well as locations beyond this world, such as those that exist within a religious or nationalist imaginary. The co-opting and sacralisation of national heroes and long-dead monarchs, a process legitimised and further enhanced through prayer and religious ceremony, reveals conscious attempts by the *Pomells* to wed their religiosity with their Catalan identity as they articulate their aspirations for a Catalonia free from the shackles of Spain. Offering us

a history from below through acts of worldmaking, the prayers that I have analysed in this article reveal an array of strategies to mobilise, inform, and inspire devout Catalan youth. Although the *Pomells* did not lead the charge for Catalan as a language of devotion in the twentieth century, their prayers worked to normalise the language amongst the devout whilst also creating an intricate collage of religious and historical references rooted in Catalan histories. In the case of the *Pomells*, we can see that their prayers are more than just words on the page, but further inquiry is required to analyse the *Pomells*' relationship with the materiality of religion, understood as both physical things, such as commemorative plaques at Montserrat, and ritual practice, such as liturgical drama and special masses. If a dialogue can be created between the textual and material legacies of the *Pomells*, we will obtain a better understanding of interwar Catalan youth.

Notes

1. Determining the exact number of participants in the Pomells is "impossible" (Sampere i Ministral 1994, 17). However, as each group had a minimum of five members, we can guess that there would have been, at the very least, four thousand two hundred and forty-five members.
2. Whilst the prayers found in the heterogenous texts discussed in this article were certainly written by members of the *Pomells*, they were published in the organisation's main magazine, *Àmfora*, an adult-mediated source.
3. Most of the sources discussed in this article come from *Àmfora* and the *Eucologi dels Pomells*, as well as local *Pomells*-affiliated publications, such as *Bona Llevor* (Reus), *Endavant* (Rubí), and *Nova Llavor* (Conca de Barberà), and one-off publications from the groups *Els Patriòtics' i "Mariola"* (Lleida).
4. Whilst the *Pomells* were certainly popular, given their numbers and geographic spread, they would nevertheless fall victim to an elite that would ultimately betray them.
5. A similar trend amongst the Scouts movement in Mallorca is noted by Cerdà (1999, 65), highlighting that these differing Catholicisms were able to coexist to some extent in the early twentieth century.
6. As well as reflecting a growing awareness of the political importance of Catalan youth in the interwar years, the encounter with Cambó is a possible milestone in Folch i Torres' own political maturing. It could well explain why, following the collapse of the Primo de Rivera dictatorship, Folch i Torres addresses the former *Pomells* through *En Patufet* (2 May, 1931, 501), reminding them of their relevance to the political parties of the day and instructing them to follow whatever path best serves Catalonia within the new order.
7. The *Eucologi* is not attributed to any particular *Pomells* group or religious figure, making its authorship uncertain.
8. Our Lady of Montserrat, also known as *La Moreneta*, is a Black Madonna of medieval origin, housed in the Santa Maria de Montserrat Abbey, who serves as the patroness saint of Catalonia.
9. Massot i Muntaner (1991, 289) notes that the use of Catalan in religious publications and by priests would continue to be an issue for Miralles i Sbert later on during the Primo de Rivera dictatorship. Correspondence from Cardenal Sbarretti in Rome, dated 4 January 1929, blames the *Foment de la Pietat Catalana* and its groups for the ongoing strength of the Catalan language, revealing further tensions within the Church.
10. Saint George, known in Catalan as Sant Jordi, is the patron saint of Catalonia. His red cross is part of the municipal flag of Barcelona, and it is frequently used in Catalan symbols.

11. The *Pomells* held frequent celebrations and masses at Montserrat, as well as excursions to the site, as the organisation continued to grow.
12. La Diada de Sant Jordi, or Saint George's Day, is celebrated every year on the 23rd of April.
13. These are a reference to the four blood bars of William the Hairy, which are found in the Senyera flags of Catalonia, the Balearic Islands, Valencia, and Aragon.
14. Lithuania had only regained its independence in 1918, and subsequently went through a quick succession of wars against Soviet Russia (1918–1919), the Bermontians (1919) and Poland (1920) to ensure its continued independence and territorial integrity. Whilst Lithuanian as a language had not been banned outright within the Russian Empire, there was a ban on the use of the Latin script in Lithuanian publications between 1865 and 1904. This was to favour the use of Cyrillic, as part of a wider cultural programme of Russification.
15. The *Pomells* were not alone in holding this sentiment. Antoni Borrell i Soler (1962, 137) also defines this moment as the sudden failure of a "màquina perfecta," signalling a downward spiral for Catalan identity. Through their rejection of all who came after Martin the Humane, the *Pomells* also dismiss the Compromise of Casp (1412), which saw the Castilian House of Trastámara take the Aragonese crown and set the stage for a union between the Crowns of Castile and Aragon in 1469 through a marriage between Ferdinand II and Isabella the Catholic. This union would, in turn, lay the foundations for the contemporary Spanish State, from which the *Pomells* sought independence.

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