

# “Pajaritas de papel” by Jaime Campmany: a contribution to Spanish literary journalism

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## *Las “Pajaritas de papel” de Jaime Campmany (1966-1970): aportación al periodismo literario español*

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### **Abstract:**

*The purpose of this article is to give the reader an overview of Jaime Campmany's early career as a columnist who wrote literary articles he called 'Pajaritas de papel' (folded papers birds), which were published daily in the newspaper Arriba from 1966 to 1970. Due to the excellent quality of his literary writings within the framework of a new type of journalism being developed at the time, 'Pajaritas de papel' made a clear contribution to the study of literary journalism near the end of the post-war period in Spain due to his ability to reveal information in his articles at a time when the press was still suffering the impediment of censorship. For that reason and more, we consider his articles to have set a valuable precedent for the exalted status that opinion columns achieved in the decades that followed.*

### **Keywords:**

*Jaime Campmany; literary journalism; opinion column; history of Spanish journalism; freedom of speech.*

### **Resumen:**

Este artículo da a conocer a grandes rasgos la primera etapa de Jaime Campmany en el ejercicio de la columna periodística a través de la escritura de unos artículos literarios que su autor llamó 'Pajaritas de papel', publicados diariamente en Arriba entre 1966 y 1970. De gran calidad literaria y enmarcadas en una época en que se gestaba un nuevo periodismo, las 'Pajaritas' constituyen una clara contribución al estudio del periodismo literario de finales de la posguerra española por cuanto pudo expresar Campmany en un tiempo en el que todavía la prensa sufría las trabas de la censura. Por ello y además, podemos considerarlas como un precedente preclaro al apogeo de la columna de opinión en las décadas sucesivas.

### **Palabras clave:**

Jaime Campmany; periodismo literario; columna periodística; historia del periodismo español; libertad de expresión.

## 1. Introduction

Although the journalistic biography of Jaime Campmany (Murcia, 1925-Madrid, 2005) is wide and varied<sup>1</sup>, his most popular period turned out to be that of his tenure as an *ABC* columnist from the years of the Spanish Transition to the date of his death, which tends to be the period that is most frequently studied<sup>2</sup>. However, between 1966 and 1970, we find an immensely valuable and creative period of Campmany’s career that has not been investigated until now, and that deals with the time when the journalist began work as a newspaper reporter churning out articles of great literary quality that were published in the newspaper *Arriba*, and that were known as “Pajaritas de Papel”.

As the column genre of journalism developed in several phases in the hands of Campmany, “if we had to point out two notable periods of this dedication (...), we would have to refer to the phase when he was writing his articles ‘Pajaritas de Papel’ in the newspaper *Arriba* in the ungrateful years of the Franco regime, as well as the phase he has been cultivating at *ABC*” (Cantavella, 2011: 78). In this present article, which comes from a more extensive investigation of Campmany’s literary journalism, we will focus on the ‘Pajaritas’ period, which until now has not been addressed from an academic perspective.

As such, the objective of this article is to unravel and make known the period of Campmany’s literary journalism of the late 1960s of the last century. In addition, these texts, which had not been reproduced since the period in which they were published, contributed greatly to the study of the relationship between Journalism and Literature, and were a valuable addition from the start. The timeless character acquired by the ‘Pajaritas’ due to their having been written with literary expression might be useful in helping us to understand the moment of Spanish history in which they were produced, along with the added delight of reading them.

Another purpose of this research is to place ‘Pajaritas’ in the position of being a plausible and audacious phenomenon of opinion journalism in the years when the press was still suffering the restrictions of censorship. In spite of that situation, as Groshman points out - cited by Antonio López Hidalgo - it was in the 1960s that “a new journalism started to emerge” (2012: 20) and reached its peak during the Transition. Thus, by analyzing these articles, we can affirm that ‘Pajaritas de

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<sup>1</sup> From his beginnings in the Murcian press in the 1940s to the last column he wrote for *ABC*, we find diverse periods and more genres in addition to the column that enhanced the journalistic stature of Campmany. During the fifties and sixties, combining his writing with other tasks such as that of correspondent in Rome or his program on *Radio Nacional*, Campmany wrote mainly for the journals *Juventud*, *El Español* and *Arriba*. His writings included literary articles, interviews, essays and commentaries, theatre reviews, travel and football chronicles, narratives, and obituaries. In 1978, when he was already working for *ABC*, Campmany dedicated himself specifically to writing his opinion column until the day of his death on 13 June, 2005.

<sup>2</sup> That period of Jaime Campmany is studied in two doctoral theses. The first one: *Humour resources in opinion journalism. Analysis of journalistic columns. Political Scenes* (1987), by Professor Fabiola Morales, read in June 1989. The second: *The rhetoric of the argumentative text in the political opinion column of Jaime Campmany* (1983), by Lourdes Roman, defended in 2016. Also, Professor Juan Cantavella analyzes the journalistic romance in the columns of Campmany in his article *The column in verse: memory and presence of poets and versifiers*, published in 2011 in *Doxa Comunicación*.

Papel' represented a clear antecedent, not only within the framework of the journalistic work of Campmany - as a foundation and influence in his second phase as columnist at *ABC*, pointed out by professor Cantavella - but also, with special emphasis, as a milestone that preceded the emergence and golden age of Spanish column writing of the 1970s and 80s of the last century.

The importance of literary journalists in those years was enormous, as in the case of Jaime Campmany and his 'Pajaritas de Papel', because with their articles they were creating a new way of speaking and a new era in which the press would be transformed into the so-called "Paper Parliament"<sup>3</sup>, where opinion columns would play a major role in society, in the history of the Spanish press, and in the literary tradition of the country.

As for the structure of the article, the intent was to establish a diachrony that began with the period preceding that of the 'Pajaritas', or in other words, the experience of Campmany in Rome as a correspondent, in order to enter fully into the period that was researched, which ran from 1966 to the middle of 1970.

## 2. Methodology

Journalist Alfonso Ussía writes in the foreword to Campmany's book '*Cartas Batuecas*' that "the great literary work of Campmany is, unfortunately, in newspaper and periodical libraries." As such, in order to carry out this investigation it was necessary to search through archives for writings that had never been reprinted after their initial publication. The following three sources were used for our study:

- Primary sources. These are the 'Pajaritas' writings themselves. Much of this documentation was found in the Personal Archive of Campmany at his home in Madrid, as well as in the Conde-Duque Municipal Archive of Madrid. Some of these 'Pajaritas' were also found in Campmany's own collection of articles from 1997 under the title *Doy Mi palabra. Mis 100 mejores artículos* (I give you my word. These are my top 100 articles).
- Secondary sources. This is a collection of monographs, scientific articles, periodicals, and testimonies that helped us create an adequate and truthful context of journalism in the 1960s in Spain.
- Spoken archives. Here we refer to the interviews with relatives of Campmany: his wife Conchita Bermejo, his son Emilio Campmany, and his first cousin Francisco Javier Díez de Revenga, carried out between 2014 and 2016. These

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<sup>3</sup> According to Daniel Vela, it was at the end of the 1960s and throughout the Transition that a New Journalism appeared in Spain, a somewhat late imitation of the New Journalism trend. The first signs of an "informative creative writing" were led by authors such as Francisco Umbral, Manuel Vicent, Jaime Campmany, Rosa Montero and Manuel Vázquez Montalbán. This was a detour from traditional journalism: literary techniques were accepted as valid for journalism. It sought to impassion the reader, to achieve emotional communication without the need to make the world fictional, but rather to present reality as content" (Vela, 2009: 697).

testimonies were of vital importance in tracing with biographical precision this period of the author’s life, as well as providing a human element to the text.

The article is divided into three parts: First, Campmany’s life before the period of ‘Pajaritas’ is described, as well as the epoch during which he wrote the articles; Secondly, the journalistic environment of the 1960s is briefly put into context—that being the incipient but obstructed liberalization that was favouring the column genre; Thirdly, the literary contribution of Campmany’s ‘Pajaritas’ to the evolving opinion journalism. In the third section, an analysis of the ‘Pajaritas’ writings is carried out and they are classified into a typology that is based primarily on the content. The aim was to develop a theory of these texts according to their theme, the literary language used, the value of sincerity in defending freedom of expression, the purpose and intent of the author, and the impact they had on society and journalism at the time.

### 3. State of journalism in the late 1960s

After a four-year stay in Rome as a correspondent for *Pyresa*, Campmany returned to Spain in January 1966 to work as director of that agency. In Madrid he combined management of the agency - until 1970 - with the writing of ‘Pajaritas de Papel’ in *Arriba*. The publication of these columns in the Nationalist Press occurred at a time when journalism in Spain was being transformed and experiencing a certain liberalization, although timidly and with impediments —“The press was still curtailed by censorship” (Vela, 2009: 623)—. This encouraged the forging of opinion newswriting in the journalistic environment that would reach its zenith in the years of the political Transition.

As previously stated, obstacles restrained this breath of freedom. Consequently, Delibes in a 1968 article stated that “Journalistic freedom is being increasingly diminished. In other words, liberty is progressing backwards, like a crab” (2010: 12). The Press Law of 1966, also known as the ‘Fraga Law’, remained a barrier to the full exercise of journalistic freedom. Moreover, although freedom of expression was recognized, “such freedom was not absolute, as the state continued to be watchful of journalistic activity” (Vela, 2009: 623). The conditions of Article 2 set the limit and reduced the possibilities of the first: “The freedom of expression and the right to the dissemination of information, recognized in Article 1, will have no more limitations than those imposed by the law. The limitations are: respect for truth and morality; compliance with the Law of Principles of the Nationalist Movement, and other Fundamental Laws (...)”<sup>4</sup>

This meant that during the years in which Campmany wrote his ‘Pajaritas’ articles, measures continued to be taken, “which showed that the State was not going to disregard control of the press, and that despite the new 1966 law, hopes for a great, open spirit could not be accommodated” (Vela, 2009: 624). For this reason, Campmany recalled his journalistic work at that

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<sup>4</sup> Fragment of Article 2 of the ‘Fraga Law’, taken from the text by Pablo López Hurtado. Retrieved from: <http://233grados.lainformacion.com/blog/2012/01/la-ley-fraga-luces-y-sombras.html> [Retrieved on April 5th, 2017].

time as an act of courage. "In those years I wrote a daily column with the sign of an origami paper bird, to which I had a special affection, because I think I managed to say many things that were prohibited at that time thanks to the tone of humble intimacy and even lyrical reproach" (1997: 21).

In the case of 'Pajaritas de Papel', we relive an epoch of history in which the literary imprint of Campmany reached a level of supremacy, enriching stylistically the journalism of those years, especially the genre of article writing<sup>5</sup>, and reclaiming with his desire for freedom an openness that was on the horizon. His previous experience as a correspondent in Rome was of great importance and influence, as it proved invaluable in his conception of the new journalism that would soon begin in Spain. Francisco Umbral said that Campmany, "who had brought from Murcia a classical style, was enlightened, and in Rome he bathed himself once again in classicism and was reborn, or perhaps even experienced a new Renaissance."<sup>6</sup>

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Democratic experience in Rome and literary reinforcement

After working as a soccer reporter in the late fifties and early sixties, Jaime Campmany became a correspondent in Rome from 1962 to 1966. The journalist came to Rome at one of "the most intriguing moments of the century" (Campmany, 1997: 19). The Second Vatican Council was being held at the time and Italy was experiencing a compelling political moment with the birth of the centre-left party, which involved a mutual understanding between socialism and Christian democracy. Living for some time in a democracy was heaven for Campmany, mostly because it was a breath of fresh air "to leave Spain and live four years in Rome at a time when traveling was more difficult, and Italy was the *dolce vita*."<sup>7</sup>

In Italy Campmany felt gratified by seeing the high value placed on his profession. Consequently, when the new neighbours asked Conchita Bermejo, Campmany's wife, what her husband did for a living, and she replied that he was a "*giornalista*", the people became excited<sup>8</sup>. During the years of the Franco regime, "if the press was viewed as a public service institution, then journalists became something like "public servants" of that institution at the service of the regime and its propaganda"

<sup>5</sup> Before the democratic transition, the columnist was called a news writer. Today there is a distinction between both genders. In *La columna. Periodismo y literatura en un género plural*, López Hidalgo points out the distinction between an article and a column using the thesis of Susana Gómez Reyna, who establishes the differences between the two genres. "For the author of the thesis, the news writer wants to make an assertion, defend or attack a position. On the contrary, the columnist tries to make known his personal opinions regarding a specific event. (...) The article generally adopts an argumentative form, sometimes an expository form, and as an exception the narrative or descriptive form, while common features of the column are exposure, description and narration" (2012: 43-45).

<sup>6</sup> Extract from the article by Francisco Umbral, published on 28 February 2001 in the print edition of *El Cultural de El Mundo*. Retrieved from: <http://www.elcultural.com/revista/letras/Jaime-Campmany/2966> [Retrieved on 04/05/2017].

<sup>7</sup> Interview with Emilio Campmany in December 2015.

<sup>8</sup> Interview with Conchita Bermejo in May 2014

(Pizarro 1992: 171). This situation, added to the fact that the Official School of Journalism belonged to the institutions of the regime and that the journalism profession was isolated from the university, could do nothing more than lower the esteem of the profession.

For that reason, the return of Campmany to Spain in 1966 when he was appointed as director of the Agency for which he had been a correspondent was, in the beginning, a small disappointment for him. His desire was not to return to his country at that time but to continue working as a reporter in Rome:

“I have to confess that I came to Madrid reluctantly. My wish would have been to go to Paris as a correspondent for four years before returning here. The years of the Spanish Transition were approaching, and even if those years were going to be interesting, it seemed to me even more interesting to see the inner workings of other democracies before it arrived to Spain. In fact, my experience in Italy, a country whose historical moment was in some ways very similar to that of Spain, was highly valuable to me. Italy had emerged from a dictatorial regime to become a full, stable democracy, and that was also going to happen in Spain” (Campmany, 1997: 20)

As for the style of the articles written in the Italian agency, Campmany commented in an interview that they were “urgent chronicles, dictated by the current situation in Rome. Only occasionally did I whirl around and find myself more interested in the form than the content. When I returned to Spain I felt potentially strengthened” (Line, 29/01/1967). So much so that when he left Rome for Spain, Campmany offered readers a last sentimental chronicle of the correspondent who said goodbye, nostalgically, to the city where he had lived for four unforgettable years. With the title *Goodbye, Mum Roma*, the article was published on January 2nd, 1966, and we believe it may have been the seed of the future expression of his 'Pajaritas':

“I have given you four years of my life, Mother Rome, and I now know that I would have given you my whole life, the light of my eyes, all of my song, my words only for you, and my heart that you have won forever. Four years with you, Mother Rome, and now that I am leaving, a parade of thoughts passes before my dimmed eyes of tenderness, astonishment, of the great gifts you have given me, of the days I have lived perched upon your knee, as they say about the person whose entire life passes before his eyes in one second like a fast, pristine film for the urgent, excited memory of those who are about to die” (1997: 322-324).

#### 4.2. Anatomy of the 'Pajaritas de Papel'

On June 9th, 1966, Jaime Campmany inaugurated his first 'Pajarita' in *Arriba*, entitled 'Pajaritas de Papel' (folded paper birds). In the first article the journalist, in addition to dedicating the writing to Miguel de Unamuno, “due to the fact that the rector of Salamanca had been the only origami artist in the universe, as far as I know, and who had told all of us everything he knew about the Pajaritas de Papel”, explained what “the brood of folded paper birds” was going to consist of:

“...this is the first of a number of unhatched ‘Pajaritas de Papel’ that have found their aviary and refuge in this section of *Arriba*, at which you can peer a bit each morning, if you like. (...) The little bird, cocotte in French, hence *cocotología* in Spanish (origami in English), is an almost perfect and harmonious being, and for that reason I take it as a symbol, figure and emblem of my daily lines” (*Arriba*, 9 June, 1966).

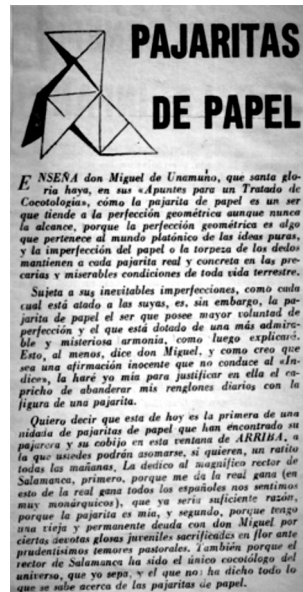
In the first ‘Pajarita’ article, Campmany talked about the geometric concept of origami paper birds and highlights three points that his “Pajaritas” would clearly articulate. “In my work and life as a journalist, I seek nothing more than to fold up little paper birds that stand on three points... One is liveliness; another is tenderness; and the third is irony” (1967a: 3). Campmany weaves together journalism and literature through these three pillars. He works the present with tools of fiction that end up turning the articles that apparently have a lifespan of one day into something everlasting. Thus, the “Pajaritas” remain in time after linking current affairs, humanity and a literary form to its three pillars of support:

“Because one cannot write every day in the newspaper, which is a commodity as delicate as a rose that withers in the afternoon when it is born in the morning, something not possessing the liveliness of that which is modern; because I believe that we Spaniards, here and now, desperately need to put tenderness in our eyes and words, since we are so accustomed to looking at each other with discourtesy, envy, suspicion, sometimes unrest, and other times even with hate; and because irony is a thing that sometimes serves to tell the truth to the morning star and produces more smiles than scandals, without doing too much damage. (Campmany, 1967a: 3-4)<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> These words were spoken by Campmany at a conference in Murcia on October 31, 1967. The newspaper *Línea* published them in their entirety in the supplement *Murcia Document* on November 5 of that year.

Table 1. First 'Pajarita' by Jaime Campmany in the newspaper *Arriba*. June 9, 1966



Source: Personal archives of Jaime Campmany

1. - Liveliness. We understand this word as an allegory of modern times. In the examples, we will see how tenderness, irony and literary prose come from current reality: either the demise of a public figure, an event, or even the beginning of autumn or summer. In short, liveliness was the journalistic bastion from which the 'Pajarita' was born:

“Gerardo Diego, professor and poet; professor among poets and poet among professors, has taught his final lesson at «Beatriz Galindo» High School. Nowadays, Gerardo wears the slippers of retirement” (1997: 49).

2.- Tenderness. Tender and lyrical details are characteristics well established in the journalistic prose of Campmany. In his 'Pajaritas' we find moments in which the author stops and takes delight in soulful, human observation that lead us to the point of establishing possible influences of post-war Spanish cinema, such as that of Berlanga, or of Italian neorealism.

“You were good, Manuel<sup>10</sup>. I know that today, the first day after your death, you will be seeking Baby Jesus while the grapes ripen in the celestial vineyards, and with your innocent sense of humour as sardonic and sentimental as Bacchus, you will ask the question from the most disconcerting Castilian carol:

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<sup>10</sup> This refers to the poet Manuel Fernandez Sanz, known by the nickname of Manolo *el Pollero* (*the poultry man*), who died in 1966. He is author of the Baby Jesus Carol that Campmany reproduced in his obituary.



When with the other children  
 You played as a child,  
 Did you know or did you not know  
 That you were the Baby Jesus? (1997: 45).

3. Irony. Undoubtedly, it was one of the subtle techniques, in addition to his intimate tone, that allowed Campmany to express certain things that were still prohibited at the time. This irony, moreover, became the preamble to his humorous and satirical vein that would lead to his zenith in his second phase as columnist for *ABC*.

“Poor Ava Gardner; beautiful, admired, applauded, celebrated and desired! Unfortunate and envied woman! Poor and unhappy Ava Gardner, aged inside the golden cage of fame ... beaten without respite by the frightful thrashing of glory! ” (1997: 47).

#### 4.2.1. The sincere language of 'Pajaritas' as a defender of free expression

The value of sincerity accompanied Campmany from the beginning. When he burst onto the literary scene in post-war Murcia with his *Alerce* poems (1943), Campmany, at the age of 20, declared in an interview for *La Verdad de Murcia* that his book possessed “a sincerity that is rare in today's poetry” (20/12/1945). His verses captivated a wide audience thanks to the “lyrical sensitivity achieved through sincere words” (Line, 01/05/1947). Díez de Revenga, referring to young writers of the time, among whom was Jaime Campmany, one of the most promising poets, made the following comment; “this was a group of authors who were integrated into the modernity of those years by way of sincerity” (2005: 9)<sup>11</sup>.

Just as the poetic style was grafting itself onto the journalistic prose of Campmany, we can also appreciate how the poetic sincerity that characterized his early verse writings favoured the desire for freedom of expression despite the censorship that he was forced to live with. Campmany writes: “I have never written a letter under bribe, out of fear, or to flatter. My words may be mistakes or miseries, but all are mine, very much mine, and nobody has ever dictated them to me, and when someone tried to do so, I did not write them down. I have always written my thoughts from sincerity” (1997: 14).

The Royal Spanish Academy (RAE) defines the term *sincerity* with adjectives – “simplicity, veracity, free of pretence<sup>12</sup>” - which also defines the essence of Journalism: clear and simple language, defence of the truth, free expression. This way of expressing oneself without guise overlays the journalism of Campmany, who in a 'Pajarita' entitled *El perfil amable* (The friendly profile), published on 24 August 1967, recreates a conversation with a politician from the sixties who urges him to

<sup>11</sup> For more information regarding this epoch of Campmany in Murcia, one can read the article by Fernandez, A. (2016): "Murcia: Land and heart of Jaime Campmany," *Murgetana*, no. 135, pp. 171-193. URL: <http://www.regmurcia.com/docs/murgetana/N135/N135-07.pdf> [Retrieved on 6 April, 2017].

<sup>12</sup> Definition of the Royal Spanish Academy (RAE) consulted in the Online Dictionary. Retrieved from: <http://dle.rae.es/?id=XwnKRc7> [Retrieved 05/04/2017].

change the critical tone of his “Pajaritas” in order to “help people forget about problems, faults, injustices, ugliness.. You have to emphasise the gentle profile of things for the reader (...). If I had any ascendancy or authority over you I would forbid you from writing those critical articles that seem dictated by an eternal discontent”. But Campmany replied to the politician that he would always write from his own sincere inner being.

Campmany: “—I also write about the gentle side of things, the gentle side of events, the gentle side of people.”

Politician: “—Well, that’s how you should always write”..

Campmany: “— but then I would not be objective. It would distort the reality that I have around me. Above all, I would not be sincere. The only value my writings can have is that of sincerity, of writing in the best possible way about what I see, what I believe, what I think. You want me to write «happy» journalism, but life is not always happy, the story of life is not a romance novel. (*Arriba*, 08/24/1967).

Nearly one year after the publication of the first 'Pajarita', Campmany wrote *Razón de Amor* (Reason for Love), published on 27 May 1967, in which he affirms that there are many words that need to be spoken in this country, “where my ‘Pajarita’ was born, where my ‘Pajarita’ lives, and the country that my ‘Pajarita’ loves”; ours is a country that needs “a sincere and generous voice to listen to the discontent of the people. We Spaniards have so many things to say to each other beneath hollow solemnities and lofty debates!” There is a call for humanity. In his last ‘Pajarita’, published on June 1st, 1971, Campmany writes a revealing phrase: “Both my ‘Pajarita’ and I would like to be able to say at the end of our nearly parallel lives what was uttered by Tacitus: Nothing human is alien to me”. Moreover, it is the human element that feeds Campmany’s articles. This is what he says in *Alpiste Para la Pajarita*:

“I tell all of you about everything that happens to me, the good and the bad, and tell you the things that happen to yourselves, also the good and the bad. In that way, we all get to know each other. And we learn about each other’s problems. And so my ‘Pajarita’ has a little birdseed to take into his little paper belly and keep going. Living and singing. Singing the pain and the hope. ” (*Arriba*, 19/10/1967).

#### 4.2.2. The poetic language of the 'Pajarita' for a clear, simple, literary journalism

To achieve the sincerity of which we have been speaking, it is necessary to talk in plain language, to abandon “the euphemisms, the secret allusions, the tortuous detours, the encrypted codes, the abstract, intricate and vague sentences”. This is what Campmany says in another 'Pajarita' entitled *Hablar* (Talking), in which he advocates a journalistic language stripped of the resourceful and abstruse resources that served to avoid censorship but that made understanding difficult:

“At times my ‘Pajarita’ asks to speak in plain language (...) Those of us who write in newspapers are being stripped of the various tricks and resources that we have been promoting in recent years in order to score a goal against the censors, make a suggestion to a Minister, or prompt the Administration to act without being discovered by

other readers beyond the few who knew about the secret. It was a way of practicing a nearly clandestine criticism, deprived of all danger, and it was also a way of turning critique into a non-functional, sterile exercise.” (*Arriba*, 04/10/1967).

Campmany maintains in *Hablar* that the best way to achieve journalistic sincerity and clarity is “to return to the poetic style in the Machadian sense of the word.” Campmany recalls a scene from *Juan de Mairena*, by Machado, in which the teacher writes on the chalkboard, “Undistinguished occurrences that transpire along the boulevard” then asks one of his pupils, Martinez, to write the same sentence, but in poetic language. The student writes, “Things that happen in the street.” The teacher Mairena thought it was not too bad. “The best thing is to return to the poetic style... It seems to me that all of us need to learn something from the student Martinez”, affirms Campmany, who believed in this clear and simple language as an exercise in humility for the good practice and reputation of the journalism profession.

“Regarding the virtue of clarity and simplicity, I believe that we, the journalists of the new age, should adorn ourselves with the virtue of humility and accustom ourselves to adapting our own opinions to the opinions of the people around us, to the people who walk in the streets, to those who read our writings and those who do not, to those who believe that all of this public dialogue that newspapers have started is conventional, as if “what is said” were written and distributed beforehand. (...) At this time, I believe we are the ones who can gather public opinion and give it our voice, putting it beforehand into “poetic language” (*Arriba*, 04/10/1967).

When in 1947 Campmany published his second collection, *Lo fugitivo permanece* (The fugitive remains), in the Murcian magazine *Azarbe*, Jose Ballester, who was a writer and journalist from Murcia as well as director of *La Verdad* in those years, points out that the purpose of a young poet “is to capture moments in time” (*La Verdad*, 19/07/1947). Furthermore, for us to see a similar purpose in journalism, Campmany pointed out half a century later words similar to those of Ballester in an interview on Radio Nacional in which the interviewer asked him what advice he would give to journalism students. Campmany stressed the importance of reading in order to be able “to tell what we contemplate in life; we have to define things: furniture, situations, landscapes, feelings of people... and none of this can be recounted if the words are unknown” (Radio Nacional España, RNE, 4 July 1997). This is the added value of literary journalism. It captures current events with the time pressure of traditional journalism, and at same time with the quiet re-creation of literary expression.

Kramer states that in literary journalism, “the art of stylistic and narrative writing, which has always been associated with fictional literature, helps to capture the transitory nature of events, which is the essence of journalism” (Lopez and Gómez, 2010: 119). In addition to utilizing impeccable language and embellishing information, the tools of literature must help to soften and enliven the reading, yet neither densify nor make it lavishly baroque. Literature for purely ornamental purposes is a failure, and as stated by Delibes, “it disappeared on the day that the architect Perret recognized «that ornamentation always conceals a construction flaw»” (2010: 36).

### 4.3. *Classification and examples of ‘Pajaritas’*

We could choose many typological models of the journalistic column in order to classify Campmany’s ‘Pajaritas’, assuming as Antonio López Hidalgo points out, that the column is “an unclassifiable genre” (2012: 165). However, “gender typologies can be infinite”, in addition to the fact that different classifications can be designed “according to theme, functionality, style or structure” (López, 2012: 165).

The ‘Pajaritas de Papel’ belong to two types of news columns that are both more narrative, proposed by Irene Andrés-Suárez: the micro-story column, and the poem-column in prose. The first refers to a journalistic text that is written in the style of micro-stories, sharing characteristics such as “brevity, concision, intensity, condensation, maximum use of resources, elimination of all embellishment, omission, expressiveness and aesthetic quality” (López, 2012: 164). As for the second category, prose columns “usually reflect moments of great emotional intensity and true lyrical effusion that are transmitted grammatically in the first person.” (2012: 165).

For this work, we will classify the ‘Pajaritas’ according to theme, due to the fact that the topics of these articles, in short, vary among restoration, nostalgia and the re-creation of events; always with the self-presence of the writer and the clear exquisiteness of high-quality, literary journalism.

#### 4.3.1. Daring “Pajaritas”

In the “Pajarita” from 21 June 1966, Campmany recalled a poem by Pablo Neruda related to summer spirit, which favoured the start of summertime. According to Daniel Vela, despite the fact that in the late 1960s there were those who tried to prevent certain authors from being cited, Campmany wanted to defend his right to speak about one of his preferred poets, one of which was Neruda (2009: 672). Thus, the article began as follows:

“Summer starts today. I write: «Red violin summer». I say that today summer comes as an excuse for writing: «Red violin summer». I quote Pablo Neruda, whose verses comprise the loftiest poetry of the lively, wide, blue tongue of Castile. I quote Pablo Neruda. His real name: Naphtali Reyes. Chilean and communist.

I want to quote Pablo Neruda deliberately, to imprint his name on these pages, to put his name here, on top of mine. (...) I know that there are some who say: "do not quote them, do not mention them, do not say their names. Do not repeat their verses "(Campmany, 1997: 125).

Campmany, who at a conference in 1967 stated that his ‘Pajarita’ “was a friend of poets”, and that his ‘Pajarita’ “spoke about them”, and because of them his ‘Pajarita’ “was helped and relieved” (1967a: 4), defended his right to cite those authors because he loved a country in which “clear words and beautiful verses are not banished” (1997: 1297). He called out for a process of political openness that was on the horizon. Thus, writing paragraphs in this way with the associated risks of a rigid regime was an extraordinary act of courage in a time of vulgarity.

“I love the new Spain where poets no longer have to write with the threat of blood and fire, where the winds of the country no longer need to blow with hurricane force (...) where every Spaniard who is born no longer has to suffer the cold-heartedness of one or the other half of the country, where the twenty poems of love triumph over the song of despair, where the Song to Stalingrad is read with the same serenity as the Araucana. I love the new Spain where anyone can quote Neruda saying that summer is like a red violin (...) I love the new Spain that does not banish clear words and beautiful verses, where one can speak without dying, Alberti the stubborn and Pemán the impatient ... Is it possible?” (Campmany, 1997: 125-127).

#### 4.3.2. Nostalgic ‘Pajaritas’

One of the main characteristics of this column was the presence of the self. Under an intimate and confident halo, Campmany left “an imprint of his own inner nature” in his articles, expressed by Lopez Pan (Ruiz de la Cierva, 2012: 1745), and this allowed many readers to approach the daily column with an affinity for thought. “From this arises an essential characteristic: loyalty to the columnist and an atmosphere of intimacy that exists between columnist and reader” (2012: 1745).

Fragments of the proposed article contain much of the closeness between the author himself and the reader in the nostalgic return to the house where each was born. We should remember that a ‘return’ is one of the great themes of universal literature, such as Homer’s *Odyssey*, which relates the story of Ulysses’ return to Ithaca. With the title of *La herida del tiempo* (The wound of time), published on 15 September 1967, Campmany also narrates his own return to Ithaca. Sentiment and reminiscence surround his inspiration and he sets out to create an article in which writing feels more than ever like something synonymous with weeping.

“I am writing in the house where I was born. Never does the wound of time hurt so much as in those hours when I return to the province. I look at the corners of the house, full of shadows, and my heart jumps because the memories turn into almost living beings, which then fade away with an indefinable pain of having lost them again. My hand leaves me, without looking, towards some old desired object, and also without looking, cups itself for the caress. I lose my gaze and am taken back in time to a place I thought was lost forever. I relive memories of tender scenes from my childhood, the combative years of adolescence, and the dreams of my early youth.”

Campmany observed the objects in his old house that helped him relive a memory that he thought had been forgotten, in a magical and literary blending of the shabby present with the happy past.

“I fall into a kind of rapture. Maybe I dream, maybe I remember, maybe I die. The things of my old house lose their sense of usefulness. I look at the clock, the clock is not something that indicates time, but a magic box where old hours come out, crowded memories, words and gestures that I believed were archived forever in

oblivion. I look at a book, and I do not see pages full of letters like successive lines of ants, but something like an invisible fluid that surrounds the entire book, that emanates from the smell of the binding. I see fine white fingers that hold the dented silver napkin holder, that put roses or jasmines in the chipped vase, that organize the white linen in the crisp drawer of the old dresser, that twist the yellow tangle of that complicated tablecloth.

I am writing in the house where I was born. The bells of the last incantation sound out from the bell tower. The voice of the neighbour on the balcony is heard across the narrow, shady street. In the pots are jasmines that must be the great-grandchildren of those I saw being watered. There is some broken porcelain that I repaired one night, now distant, with Syndetikon glue, with an almost criminal furtiveness. There is an old portrait that I look at, I look at, I look at, I look at, without being able to divert my stare, and I keep looking even though my eyes ache, and I keep looking even though my eyes weep”.

At this emotional point of the article, Campmany asks directly if the reader has ever experienced the same situation that is happening to the writer at that moment: Has an old house of yours ever died? Has the house where you were born ever died? Has the house where all of the people you have ever loved and where all of them have passed away ever died?” Of outstanding literary quality, this text is a blend of a micro-story column and a poem-column in prose, and it reveals a sincere and emotional feeling of humanity exemplified at the moment when Campmany finds some of his parents’ letters:

“And then the papers. The papers are yellowed and the ink of the writing has faded from the years. A pale violet ink, like that of a withered lily. There are letters that begin with «Dearest parents». And others that begin with «Dearest mother». And still others that end with «Be good, my son. Always be good and fearful of God, and may the Virgin accompany you and bring you among us soon». How painful is the wound of time in those letters!”

In the last paragraph, Campmany awakens from the memory, still in an introspective state. He realizes that night is falling; he asks himself how long he has been in this state; quiet, silent.

“The evening is falling. How many minutes have I been in this condition, quiet, silent, like in rapture, without putting a new word on the page? I don’t know. The house is becoming dark. It seems as if the shadows are moving now. Something strange is happening: voices that do not break the silence are heard. The voices pass through the silence like rays of sunlight through glass. My God! Is this all an hallucination? The evening passes pleasantly along the sweet roads of September. The bells are muted. I am sitting, hands hanging as if ill, not knowing if my illness is from nostalgia or from the pallid ailment of discouragement. I ache, as never before, from the wound of time. The wound of time that will never heal. I can’t say for sure, but I might be weeping. Or writing. Sometimes they are the same” (1997: 328-330).

### 4.3.3. 'Pajaritas' events

Other 'Pajaritas' were written in the style of literary commentary on events outside the author's introspection. The two that we highlight here deal with the overflow of the Arno River in Florence and the collapse of a roof where a class was being taught, a consequence of the poor state of some Spanish schools at the end of the sixties.

On 13 January 1967, Campmany's 'Pajarita' that day was called *Llanto* (Weeping). Two months had passed since the tragedy in Florence. Campmany, for whom Italy was so dear, and who said in an interview that Florence was his favourite city, "his dream city" (*La Verdad*, 12/11/1995), justified very poetically the reason for his delay in writing about the event: "I find no excuse for the delay of my weeping other than to think that by doing so I will not increase the flooding with my tears".

"Florence slept. Florence slept like a princess. Florence, my friends, the most beautiful city in the world. Florence, the place of flowers. Florence, the stone jewel. Florence, museum of the West. Without Florence, Europe would have left only a slight, unimportant imprint on the History of Art, which is like saying the History of Mankind. Florence slept while the waters flooded the promenades that ran along the banks of the river, invaded the streets and squares, stormed the libraries, the workshops of artisans and craftsmen, the basements of the antiquarians".

Campmany describes with metaphors and similes how many Florentine monuments and classic works of art suffered from the tragic event:

"The *Puente de las Gracias* (Bridge of Grace) looks like the deck of a ship that is about to sink. The apse of the Santa Croce is reflected in the dark mirror of the muddy waters. The marble statues have water up to the knee. The Florentines are struggling against the running water; they cling desperately to a passing table, which perhaps holds the secret to the art of astonishing centuries... The Arno River has flooded the historic centre of the city. The "Borgo Pinti" is just a muddy swamp. The Christ of Cimabue. (...) Come, help us! Paolo Ucello is under the water in the green cloister of Santa Maria Novella. And the divine footprints of Botticelli in the church of Ognisanti. The frescoes of Lorenzetti, Simone Martini and Domenico Veneziano are sinking. The mad waters improvise a pathetic music on the instruments of the Bardini Museum"

In this state of helplessness where great intentions could be uttered, Campmany poetically relates that if he had a brush dipped in tears and blood he could mend some of the missing pieces:

"I had an obligation to mourn over Florence. I had the obligation to give a nearly drowned-out scream about the tragedy of Florence and to place over the indelible memory that dwells in my loving eyes this belated lamentation, this mournful and desolate word. I wail over Florence. And if my hands could manage a privileged brush, I would wet it with my blood and tears to recompose, one millimetre at a time, the Christ of Cimabue. (...) I only have tears, and I shed them today for Florence, the most beautiful city in the world." (*Arriba*, 01/13/1967).

On July 10th, 1966, in another 'Pajarita' entitled *Escuela para pobres* (School for the poor), Campmany recounts the minutes before a roof collapsed in a school in Madrid. The author used this article to reproach the poor conditions of some Spanish schools in those years. Formally, the article is a clear example of a micro-story column, and its structure is so highly narrative that it clearly has the essence of fiction due to its stylistic brevity, description of characters, growing tension, and the climax at the end. Unfortunately, however, it was not fiction.

“The teacher repeated once again, *silence!* When the teacher said *silence* with that sharp and imperative tone, life seemed to stop in the classroom for a few moments. It was like when a film projector stops in the theatre. The children were motionless, some with their mouths still open in mid-syllable, moving only their eyes. The teacher dropped a book dramatically, a folded newspaper, a pencil, and a coin to the floor. Then he went on to explain the law of gravity”.

These first lines about the theory of gravity, and of “dropping a book dramatically to the floor”, were premonitions of the tragic final event. In the moments before the collapse, Campmany describes the deteriorated state of the classroom and the cracks in the roof about to break:

“Some distracted glances climbed the chipped walls, eaten away by the scourge of time and humidity. Some distracted glances stopped on the map of the mountains (...) the distracted glances then climbed the walls and kept the eyes on the ceiling, following the drawing made by the cracks, which curved and took capricious courses like highway routes on a map.

One of the desks was missing half the seat. The severed desk was stuck in the place where the shorts end and produced a red mark, like a scar. When the children entered the classroom they ran to the best desks, and the one who was less clever, always the same person, had to sit at the broken desk. The children knew each desk better than the book, already filthy and shabby. They knew where the nails were halfway out, where the half-raised splinters were located, where to find the holes made with a knife ... ”

Being a teacher in a poor school is difficult. When you dictate the lesson there are children who say they do not have a notebook because their mother cannot buy it until Saturday. If you use the pointer to indicate the mountains of Spain on the "orographic" map, Mulhacen Mountain is peeled away, as well as the peaks of Urbión and the mountains of Toledo. There are children who yawn continuously. Why is not clear. There are children who cough all winter. There are children who disappear from school for months and then return without remembering the list of the Gothic Kings, nor the multiplication table, the conjugation of the verb to be, nor the Capes of Spain”.

The final moment arrives. A gap opens in the roof and tragedy is served. The event harms the teacher more than the children, who come to help him immediately:



“The teacher said that every object tends to fall to earth if there is no greater force to keep it in the air. (...) The cracks in the roof were becoming increasingly more complicated. Some inattentive glances followed the drawing as if solving a labyrinth. There were thick cracks like large rivers and fine cracks that looked like tributaries and sub-tributaries. There was even a thick, thick, thick crack, like the Amazon.

The teacher said *silence!* Then he went on to explain. Suddenly, the ceiling opened. Some children cried out in fear. The rubble fell on the teacher and he fell to the ground. The children were scrambling in the dust. They went to the injured teacher. They cleaned his face with dirty handkerchiefs. The teacher, wounded, continued saying, «The law of gravity... »”.

Once the story ends, Campmany notes with irony, as if it were an epilogue, the details of the event: the date, the name of the teacher, the neighbourhood of Madrid where the school is located, which converts this apparently fictitious event into a true, historical reality: “I don’t know the name of the teacher. He might be Pedro Lorenzo Utrilla. I don’t know the names of the children; Pedro, Juan, Francisco, etc. I don’t know what the neighbourhood is called. It might be Usera. I don’t know the name of the city. Surely, it’s Madrid. It wasn’t very long ago. It might have been in 1966” (1997: 128-130).

#### 4.4. ‘Pajaritas’ in one attempt: urgent literature, calm journalism

Santamaría and Casals affirm that the literary article is “urgent literature and calm journalism” (Gutiérrez, 2009: 41). By interchanging the adjectives, we notice there is an alteration in the rhythm of both disciplines, a transfer of its main characteristics to the service of a new discipline of humanistic study: literary journalism. This is what Campmany did. He sat in front of the typewriter and the words came out in a torrent, with great intensity, until he put together a text on the first attempt, written with journalistic speed, to later become a highly literary haven of rest for quiet reading. In 2004 he spoke about this in the *Faro de Murcia*. It was his last interview:

“At times, not knowing what I’m going to write about, I sit down, meditate for five or six seconds, and then write a title. I think by writing a title I already have more than half the article written. From that point on, ideas are born, things arise, associations are made between concepts... I think this ability is due to the enormous amount of reading I have done from the time I was quite young (...) That’s why I find it easy to write an article every day, and sometimes even two or three ” (*El Faro*, 10/13/2004).

Regarding the association of ideas that shaped the articles, César González-Ruano made the following comment; “His words have a special magic, they pull on each other, they are ‘somethings’ that are destined to become a ‘whole’ (Perlado, 2007: 20). Ruano spoke of the daily inspiration needed to write about a different topic each day. In the case of Campmany, the same thing happened. There were many who wondered with true curiosity how he could find something to write about every day in his ‘Pajarita’, and many others hoped that his source of inspiration would eventually run out. Campmany answered with a ‘Pajarita’ published on 11 August 1966, entitled *Cada día* (Every day):

"Look, my friends. Life is full of topics for my «Pajaritas». I open my eyes, I look around, and my eyes are filled with ideas. (...) «Love and poetry, every day», was the motto of Juan Ramón. My God, there are countless things to love and countless things to say that we leave out of each day! And our eyes glide over things and beings without stopping to know them a bit, to love them for a while! (...) And we pass by, indifferent to the eternal blue lesson of the sea, to the golden, pluralistic humility of the sand, to our luminous and unfailing sun, to dreams, sighs, hopes and tears of the people who surround us, of the people who build our houses, who knead our bread, and who water the flowers that offer enchantment for our eyes!" (Campmany, 1997: 325-326).

A profuse amount of words burst incessantly onto the typewriter. Francisco Javier Díez de Revenga, Jaime Campmany's first cousin, still remembers the sound of the keys striking the typewriter when Campmany spent the summer in Campoamor with his family in the 1960s.

"We were all there talking until the moment came when Jaime had to send the 'Pajarita' to Madrid, and then Conchita would come and say: «Jaime, la 'Pajarita'», and he would reply: «Yes, yes, I'll do it later. Now I'm talking to my uncles and cousins». Then, at a certain moment, he would say to us: «Excuse me for a few minutes. I'm going to write my article» And he put himself in a room with an Olivetti and we all heard him typing very fast. It was amazing."<sup>13</sup>

Conchita Bermejo witnessed Jaime write the articles in twenty minutes. «I already have it in my head», Campmany told his wife. He also told her that if he had been an athlete “he would have run the 100-metre race exclusively, because that's what he did best. For long books, he was very self-critical”<sup>14</sup>. Campmany was referring to his adeptness at writing journalistic articles, the urgent literature that later becomes calm journalism. In fact, in a literary article written by Campmany for the weekly journal *Juventud* in 1953 he expressed the same idea of writing hastily but with the “slow” consequence of what was written: “One sees, and hears, and smells what is happening, miraculously, in his surroundings, and writes about it with hardly enough strength to stop and rest. The prose later becomes slow and sluggish, as if being poured in a sweet and fruity way”. A suggestive and lyrical definition of literary journalism.

#### 4.5. *The suspension of Arriba and the song of freedom*

From 1970 onwards, the ‘Pajaritas’ were published only intermittently until June 1971. The reason was that Campmany had been appointed Director of *Arriba* and perhaps the new position took time away from his daily writing. In his inauguration in the new position on 22 April 1970, Campmany expressed his intention to make a newspaper for all, “without excluding anyone” (*Arriba*, 04/23/1970). However, that good intention did not last long. Campmany himself said that he was asked

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<sup>13</sup> Interview with Díez de Revenga in March 2014.

<sup>14</sup> Interview with Conchita Bermejo in May 2014.

to be the Director of the newspaper “with the task of opening its pages to political discrepancy, preparing for the burial of the past and unviable formulas, and gradually smoothing the way toward democracy. But as I said, the honeymoon was short-lived (...). Just one year after my inauguration, I was fired as Director of *Arriba* (1997: 21).

As Juan Cantavella points out, the pressures that Campmany was experiencing “prompted him to leave the job” because “at a certain moment he had realized that it would have been too difficult to accomplish what he wanted to do because of the closed environment in which he had to work, and the situation was not good for the column” (2012: 78).

In August of 1971, two months after his dismissal, Campmany gave the opening speech at the 11th Annual Festival of Cante de las Minas, and judging by its tone and the content of what was expressed, we can draw our own conclusions and allegories based on his resolute fondness for *cante jondo* (flamenco singing) and journalistic freedom: “In Cartagena there is a prison, and people sing there as well. In the prison the residents only sing in the same way as a captive bird sings. What hurts most in the soul is not love. What hurts most, my friends, is something called freedom”<sup>15</sup>.

**Table 2.** Sketch that recreates Campmany perched on the back of his celebrated ‘Pajarita’



Source: Molin. Hoja del Lunes of Murcia, 27 November, 1978, p. 3.

<sup>15</sup> The opening speech appears in the book *Pregones del festival del Cante de las Minas (La Union)*, by César Oliva (1997: 31-37).

## 5. Conclusion

- Jaime Campmany's “Pajaritas” possess an exalted journalistic and literary value. That being the case, we would describe these articles as authentic jewels of literary journalism in the second half of the 20th century. In them, Campmany professes the need for a new type of journalism based on sincerity, contrasting opinions, and a simple, clear, literary language for a new Spain that was anticipating change and liberty that could be seen on the horizon.
- The writing of these texts represented the link that recaptured and updated the Spanish tradition of literary journalism and joined it to the new demands of opinion journalism: that of the modern column that would experience its golden age in the decades of the 70s and 80s of the 20th century. Therefore, we affirm that the 'Pajaritas', having possessed exquisite, outstanding literary quality, were a clear antecedent of the columnist journalism that was to follow.
- The three pillars upon which the 'Pajaritas' stood – spiritedness, tenderness and irony - would also influence Campmany's later journalistic work as a columnist in which he was characterized specifically by his humanity, tenderness, humour and satirical irony
- As for the typology that this research provides when classifying the 'Pajaritas', it should first be noted that with regard to formal characteristics, Campmany's writings are categorized as micro-story columns and poem-columns; and as for the topics, the articles oscillate among restoration, nostalgia and the re-creation of events.
- This work invites others to conduct similar research regarding other literary journalists who in the 1960s also called for free journalism for a democratic Spain. The historical moment and journalistic atmosphere of that time makes further investigation into this subject highly intriguing.
- In short, with regard to the discipline that investigates the relationship between Journalism and Literature, this investigative work provides an original model of literary articles such as the ‘Pajaritas de Papel’, which are writings that are very useful in analyzing the journalism of those years, and for understanding that period of Spanish history with greater clarity.

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