

SCRIPTA MEDITERRANEA



Volume XXIV 2003

CANADIAN INSTITUTE
FOR MEDITERRANEAN STUDIES
INSTITUT CANADIEN
D'ÉTUDES MÉDITERRANÉENNES



SCRIPTA MEDITERRANEA

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Scripta Mediterranea is the journal of the Canadian Institute for Mediterranean Studies, an international learned society based in Canada and devoted to the study of all aspects of Mediterranean culture and civilization, past and present, with a special interest in interdisciplinary and cross-cultural investigation.

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Cover by: Vinicio Scarci

Produced by: Legas, 3 Wood Aster Bay,
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, K2R 1B3.

www.legaspublishing.com

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ISSN 0226 8418

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Volumes XXIV, 2003

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AMMIEN MARCELLIN ET LE RENSEIGNEMENT EXTÉRIEUR ROMAIN (353-378 après J.-C.)

Depuis une vingtaine d'années, des érudits d'histoire ancienne s'intéressent aux activités liées au renseignement entreprises par les Romains de l'Antiquité. Au sein de l'historiographie consacrée à ce sujet, un débat subsiste à propos de l'importance des activités de renseignement extérieur (espionnage)¹. Certains historiens prétendent que les Romains manifestent peu d'intérêt pour l'espionnage, et cela tout au long de leur histoire (Dvornik 110; Sheldon [1987] 183-184), alors que d'autres avancent que l'importance de l'espionnage effectué par les Romains a été jusqu'à présent mal appréciée (Neilson, McKercher 21 ; Lee 170-171 ; Browning 207).

Dans le but de vérifier cette dernière affirmation, nous effectuons, dans le cadre de la présente étude, une évaluation des références à l'espionnage romain contenues dans une des sources documentaires les plus importantes de la seconde moitié du IV^e siècle : le *Res gestae*, œuvre d'Ammien Marcellin. Ainsi que nous le verrons, le *Res gestae* témoigne d'incidents pouvant être identifiés comme des activités d'espionnage romain en Germanie et surtout en Perse, effectuées de 353 à 378 après J.-C. Cela suggérerait, du moins à cette époque, que les Romains étaient effectivement impliqués dans ce genre d'activité.

Difficultés et contexte historique

La principale difficulté rattachée à l'étude de l'espionnage chez les Romains semble surtout être reliée à la rareté des sources qui en trait-

¹Nous définissons le renseignement extérieur comme étant "the product resulting from the collecting and processing of information concerning actual and potential situations and conditions relating to foreign activities and to foreign or enemy-held areas" (Carl 281). Même si les activités de renseignement extérieur comprennent la collecte de renseignement sur la présence étrangère (diplomatique et autre) à l'intérieur de son propre État (A Consumer's Guide to Intelligence, 44), cet article a comme objectif principal de vérifier l'existence d'activités de renseignement extérieur effectuées hors des frontières de l'empire romain. L'existence de telles activités semble présentement représenter l'aspect le plus débattu de l'historiographie sur le renseignement romain. Dans le but d'alléger le texte, nous employons le terme 'espionnage' pour désigner des activités de renseignement extérieur.

ent. Le premier facteur expliquant cette situation est le fait qu'à l'exception des Germains et de l'empire Parthe, puis Perse², et ce jusqu'à la fin du IV^e siècle, Rome n'a pas d'ennemi suffisamment redoutable à vaincre et pour lequel l'emploi de l'option militaire représenterait un enjeu trop risqué. De plus, très peu d'incidents liés à l'espionnage sont rapportés simultanément à la fois par les Romains et par leurs adversaires. Fréquemment, les ennemis de Rome, comme les Germains, sont illettrés et ne laissent donc pas de documents. Dans le cas des Perses, très peu de sources écrites ont survécu aux tribulations de l'histoire (Drijvers, Hunt 195).

Un autre facteur à considérer est l'absence, chez les Romains, d'archives centralisées vouées au renseignement. Nous ne possédons aucune référence historique suggérant l'existence d'un bureau central où l'on aurait pu entreposer ce genre de documents. Finalement, même si ce facteur est difficile à évaluer, il y a la complication résultant de la volonté apparente des Romains de dissimuler la pratique d'opérations ou d'activités clandestines allant à l'encontre de la tradition valorisant la force militaire, par opposition à la tricherie (Sheldon [1997] 300; Sheldon [1987] 1).

Il est utile de souligner que la nature et les besoins du renseignement à l'époque romaine, diffèrent de ceux de notre temps. Dépourvu des moyens et des outils modernes, l'art du renseignement chez les Romains repose grandement sur le renseignement humain (Lee 150; Austin, Rankov 9). De plus, la réalité et les besoins des Romains dans le domaine du renseignement sont surtout axés sur des préoccupations militaires. Les questions modernes en matière de renseignement, tels l'espionnage économique, technologique et scientifique, n'existent pas à cette époque (Crump 45; Neilson, McKercher 25).

Ammien Marcellin et le *Res gestae*

Le *Res gestae* est un ouvrage historique de dix-huit volumes³ rédigé entre 380 et 390 après J.-C. et couvrant une période historique relativement courte d'environ vingt-cinq ans (353-378 après J.-C.). À l'aide de ses quelques 880 pages traduites du latin par John C. Rolfe pour la Loeb Classical Library, le *Res gestae* offre une description approfondie des événements de l'époque. À l'exception de ce que nous divulgue son oeuvre, nous ne possédons que peu de détails sur la vie de l'auteur du *Res gestae*. Nous croyons qu'Ammien est né à Antioche, aujourd'hui

²Les Parthes sont remplacés par les Perses à partir de 224 après J.-C. à cause d'un changement dynastique majeur. L'ensemble du royaume perse correspond alors au territoire actuel de l'Iran et de l'Irak.

³L'oeuvre originale comprenait trente et un volumes. Les treize premiers sont disparus.

Antakya en Turquie, entre 330 et 335 (Barnes 60-63 ; Ammianus Vol I IX; Blockley 141 ; Dautremer 7)⁴. Issu d'une classe aisée, Ammien reçoit une excellente éducation. Son statut social lui assure un poste relativement prestigieux au sein de l'armée. Sa formation académique et son expérience militaire comme officier d'état-major font de lui un témoin inestimable de son époque; en plus de rapporter en détails les événements de son temps, Ammien en fournit une interprétation informée (Crump 1).

Le récit d'Ammien débute en 353, alors qu'il est déjà un membre du corps d'élite des *protectores domestici* (Ammianus Vol I XLIII ; Barnes 1 ; Austin [1979] 13)⁵. Comme membre de cette organisation, Ammien "fortuitously acquired a wide range of additional military experience, including the intelligence work and political intrigue of a staff officer as well as actual combat in some engagements" (Crump 12 ; Drijvers, Hunt 17-18 et 59 ; Austin [1979] 7 et 22). En plus de former la garde personnelle de l'empereur, les *protectores domestici* sont fréquemment, de façon individuelle, « envoyés auprès des généraux afin de les secondar dans des circonstances difficiles » (Dautremer 13 ; Bunson 35). C'est une affectation de ce genre qu'effectue vraisemblablement Ammien en 353 lorsqu'il est muté à l'état-major du général Ursicinus, occupant le poste de *magister militum*, affecté en Orient de 349 à 360 (Southern, Dixon 39)⁶. Ainsi que nous le verrons, le renseignement n'est pas un concept étranger pour l'auteur du *Res gestae* (Drijvers, Hunt 27).

Certains historiens modernes reconnaissent en le *Res gestae* une source incontournable dans l'étude de l'histoire romaine du Bas-empire (Austin, [1979] 7; Southern, Dixon 39)⁷. L'ouvrage est même comparé aux "best examples of classical historiography" (Crump 131). Les critiques reconnaissent généralement la crédibilité et l'objectivité d'Ammien. Sa réputation est telle qu'on le considère comme étant "the Roman Empire's last great historian" (Crump 34), et même "the great-

⁴Il est possible qu'Ammien soit né à Tyre ou à Sidon en Phénicie, dans l'actuelle région syro-palestinienne. L'année exacte de la naissance d'Ammien et celle de sa mort demeurent incertaines.

⁵Vers 320, l'empereur Constantin I^{er} dissout la garde prétorienne, fondée par l'empereur Auguste trois siècles auparavant. Constantin I^{er} remplace la garde par les *protectores domestici*, formés de troupes dont la fidélité est plus sûre. Ces derniers tombent sous l'autorité du *magister officiorum*, le nouveau 'bras droit' de l'empereur. Le poste de préfet prétorien est maintenu, mais son rôle est redéfini et comprends surtout des tâches reliées à la haute administration impériale.

⁶C'est-à-dire commandant militaire suprême d'une région de l'empire. Ursicinus a aussi guerroyé en Gaule pendant cette période.

⁷La période du Bas-empire débute à l'avènement de Dioclétien en 284 pour prendre fin en 476 avec la chute de l'empire en Occident.

est literary genius that the world has seen between Tacitus and Dante” (Ammianus Vol III V). Ammien a rédigé le *Res gestae* avec “sober judgement and a spirit of impartiality which was quite remarkable for a man of his time” (Crump 1)⁸. Dans son imposant ouvrage classique traitant du déclin et de la chute de l’empire romain, E. Gibbon ne tarit pas d’éloges à l’endroit d’Ammien (Gibbon 65). En effet, lorsque, à l’occasion, Ammien offre des perceptions plutôt personnelles, ces descriptions sont suffisamment détaillées pour permettre au lecteur d’élaborer une version plus objective des faits (Drijvers, Hunt 110). Lors des lectures effectuées, nous avons constaté que rares sont les ouvrages présentant une critique plutôt négative à l’égard de l’objectivité historique d’Ammien⁹.

Les Germains et les Perses

Sur la scène extérieure, à des degrés divers selon les époques, l’empire romain est menacé sur deux fronts (Crump 46). Il fait face, au nord, aux peuplades germaniques, alors qu’à l’est il doit tenir tête aux Parthes et leurs successeurs, les Perses. Il y a des différences fondamentales entre ces deux types de menace. En considérant la différence entre les deux collectivités au niveau de l’organisation civique, du développement urbain ou de la centralisation de l’autorité, il devient évident que les autorités romaines doivent utiliser une approche stratégique différente envers chacune (Lee 89-158; Neilson, McKercher 25)¹⁰.

Les Perses possèdent les infrastructures organisationnelles nécessaires pour monter une expédition militaire d’envergure et soutenir une

⁸Par exemple, Ammien, qui n’est pas un chrétien, demeure “liberal in his attitude towards the Church” (Ammianus Vol I XIV). Cette attitude peut nous paraître normale. En revanche, elle demeure étonnante à une époque où les confrontations entre le paganisme et la chrétienté, et même entre les différentes factions chrétiennes elles-mêmes, sont fréquentes et enflammées.

⁹Par exemple, Barnes reproche à Ammien (qui n’est pas chrétien) de ne pas maîtriser assez bien la nomenclature de la religion chrétienne. Il critique même la qualité imparfaite du latin écrit d’Ammien (qui est d’origine grecque). Les arguments de Barnes sont d’intérêt, en revanche nous ne croyons pas que ces derniers soutiennent son affirmation qualifiant le “*Res gestae* as a work of imaginative literature” (Barnes 198).

¹⁰La menace des Germains se résume à une pression permanente et croissante sur les frontières du nord dans le but d’accéder aux richesses du monde civilisé. La menace parthe ou perse est d’une toute autre nature. Sans trop s’attarder sur les aspects complexes de la rivalité entre Rome et la Perse, il suffit de mentionner qu’elle est liée à la lutte perpétuelle pour la démarcation de la frontière commune entre les deux empires et pour la suzeraineté sur l’Arménie (Goldsworthy 183; Sheldon [1997] 301).

invasion. En revanche, cet immense appareil étatique peut s'avérer un handicap en ce qui touche la complexité des préparatifs de ce genre d'expédition et le fait qu'ils soient difficiles à dissimuler (Barnes 163). Le degré de complexité de l'organisation sociopolitique de l'empire perse permet des échanges diplomatiques avec les Romains. Cela augmente le degré de connaissance mutuelle entre les belligérants et fournit des occasions de se livrer au renseignement. Il devient alors facile de détecter des préparatifs militaires en utilisant la présence de délégués et d'espions chez l'ennemi.

Les Germains, quant à eux, n'ont pas les structures organisationnelles nécessaires pour soutenir des expéditions prolongées. Ils bénéficient cependant des avantages que représentent la vitesse et l'imprévisibilité relative de leurs attaques en territoire romain (Luttwak 145). L'organisation plus primitive des communautés germaniques (comme l'inexistence de grands centres urbains et de pôles économiques) diminue, chez les Romains, les occasions d'opérations de renseignement, ainsi que leur portée (Lee 183). Pourtant la germanisation de l'armée romaine du Bas-empire engendre la disponibilité de bon nombre de candidats comme espions¹¹.

Les organisations reliées au renseignement

À l'époque du règne d'Hadrien (117-138 après J.-C.), une agence militaire nommée *frumentarii* s'occupe du transport et de la distribution des céréales (ou *frumentum*) aux militaires des légions cantonnées aux frontières de l'empire. Sillonnant tous les coins du monde romain, les *frumentarii* deviennent les yeux et les oreilles de l'empereur sur ce qui se passe aux frontières, mais surtout des affaires internes (Dvornik 100-110; Neilson, McKercher 18). Les empereurs les emploient aussi comme policiers, comme espions (*speculatores*)¹², voire même comme bourreaux, appliquant des peines sévères aux éléments perturbateurs de la population de l'empire (Besnier 197). À la longue, les *frumentarii* acquièrent une sinistre réputation aux yeux de la population du fait de leurs activités peu scrupuleuses et de l'évidence de leur corruption (Sheldon [1987] 174 ; Bunson 164). Les *frumentarii* forment la première

¹¹Il est à noter qu'au IV^e siècle, persiste un manque de recrues pour l'armée. Par décret impérial, on devient alors soldat de père en fils et on enrôle des fédérés germaniques en nombres croissants. À la fin du IV^e siècle, la pénurie de recrues devient un problème critique (Crump 66).

¹²Selon nos lectures, il semble que, jusqu'au début de la période impériale, le terme *speculator* conserve un sens large, c'est-à-dire qu'il réfère à toute personne engagée dans des activités reliées au renseignement. En revanche, dans le *Res gestae*, ce terme est généralement utilisé pour référer à des agents effectuant de l'espionnage.

institution connue à être sanctionnée par l'État romain pour effectuer des activités de renseignement. En revanche, il n'existe présentement pas d'indication historique suggérant que les *frumentarii* aient été impliqués dans l'espionnage.

Au début du IV^e siècle, face à une opposition grandissante, l'empereur Dioclétien (284-305) se voit obligé de dissoudre les *frumentarii*. En peu de temps, Dioclétien constate la nécessité de maintenir un organe de renseignement et en fonde un nouveau, plus important, qu'il nomme *agentes in rebus*¹³. Règle générale, les tâches des *agentes in rebus* sont dérivées de celles de leurs précurseurs, les *frumentarii* (Sheldon [1987] 175; XIV,11,19) ; en revanche, il y a quelques nuances. La première réside dans le fait que, contrairement aux *frumentarii*, les *agentes* ne sont pas recrutés parmi les militaires et cela même si la structure hiérarchique et les titres demeurent. De plus, les *agentes* ne répondent pas au préfet prétorien mais plutôt aux *magister officiorum* (Dvornik 109; Ammianus Vol I 576). C'est au sein du corps des *agentes* que le *magister officiorum* recrute certains membres de son état-major "which should indicate that the corps, as a whole, possessed a reasonable degree of literacy" (Sinnigen 240 ; Dvornik 130). Il y a aussi la différence considérable du nombre des effectifs qui composent le corps, soit "the size of the agency increased from 200 *frumentarii* to 1200 *agentes in rebus*" (Ferrill 56)¹⁴.

Le premier rôle des *agentes* consiste à transmettre les directives et décrets impériaux aux autorités provinciales ou locales. Les *agentes* doivent aussi veiller au bon fonctionnement du colossal appareil administratif de l'empire. Parfois, les *agentes* sont au service direct de l'empereur pour des tâches spéciales en servant, par exemple, d'espions (Dvornik 130). Mais, tout comme leurs prédécesseurs, les *agentes* sombrent à leur tour dans la corruption et l'abus de pouvoir. Pourtant, le corps n'est pas démantelé, sa présence étant sans doute reconnue comme indispensable par la grande majorité des empereurs. Concernant la sinistre réputation des *agentes*, Ammien rapporte que l'empereur Julien (361-363), qui les abhorre (XVI,5,11 ; XXII,7,5), réduit leur nombre à dix-sept sous prétexte du grand nombre de plaintes, mais cette réduction ne restera en vigueur que pendant son règne (Sinnigen 245 ; Dvornik 130).

¹³L'empereur Dioclétien est vraisemblablement responsable de l'établissement des *agentes* malgré le fait que la première référence historique date de 319, soit pendant la dyarchie de Constantin I^{er} (306-337) et de Licinius (307-324) (Dvornik 129, Bartolini 101-114).

¹⁴Il y a 1, 174 *agentes* (*mille centum septuaginta quattuor*) oeuvrant au sein de l'empire en 438 après J.-C. (Code théodosien 6,27,23) et pendant le règne de Léon I^{er} (457-474), on en compte 1, 248 (Code de Justinien 12,20,3).

Le *Res gestae* présente de nombreux incidents d'*agentes* impliqués dans des activités de renseignement. En revanche, les références possibles à l'espionnage nous semblent plutôt obscures et peu convaincantes.

Au début du IV^e siècle apparaît une autre organisation liée au renseignement et au service de l'empereur : les *notarii*¹⁵. Comme les *agentes*, les *notarii* sont recrutés en dehors de l'armée même si, tout comme les *agentes*, ils adoptent la nomenclature militaire. Cet organisme civil est sous la direction du *magister scriniorum* (Maître des Livres), lui-même subalterne du *magister officiorum* (Sinnigen 241; Bunson 255 et 378). Le rôle des *notarii* diffère de celui des *agentes* par le fait qu'ils s'intéressent surtout à l'application ou la mise en oeuvre des politiques, directives et décrets impériaux (Neilson 19)¹⁶. Les *notarii* participent aussi au recrutement pour l'armée¹⁷. Leur autorité, tout comme celle des *agentes*, affecte tous les habitants de l'empire. Encore ici, si les responsabilités principales des *notarii* relèvent de l'administration impériale, on fait aussi appel à ces derniers pour effectuer des tâches délicates, dont certaines reliées au renseignement (Sinnigen 242-245; Sheldon [1987] 182).

Il semble que, tout comme pour les *agentes*, les *notarii* subissent des coupures radicales d'effectifs durant le règne de Julien¹⁸. Cette fois, ainsi que nous le verrons dans les prochaines pages, le *Res gestae* illustre des exemples concrets où des *notarii* passant alors pour des *speculatores* ou *exploratores*, participent à des activités d'espionnage hors du *limes*.

Reconnaissance militaire ou espionnage ?

Quoique les précisions puissent varier, de brèves définitions de base s'imposent avant de poursuivre afin de démontrer les nuances entre des activités de reconnaissance militaire et celles reliées au renseignement.

¹⁵Dans le *Res gestae*, Rolfe traduit *notarius* en anglais en utilisant les termes de 'secretary' et de 'stenographer'.

¹⁶Concernant la transmission et l'exécution des directives et des décrets impériaux, il semble qu'à la fondation de ces deux agences, soit au début du IV^e siècle, le rôle de la transmission revient aux *agentes*, tandis que les *notarii* se chargent de la supervision et de l'exécution. Dans le *Res gestae*, soit pendant le troisième quart du IV^e siècle, cette distinction est devenue difficile à discerner. Les rares sources existantes demeurent laconiques à propos des détails portant sur les descriptions des responsabilités de ces agences.

¹⁷Le début d'une lettre rédigée, entre 342 et 351 après J.-C., en Égypte, par un dénommé Sambas, envoyée à Abinnaeus, le commandant de la place forte romaine de Dionysias au Fayoum, annonce l'arrivée imminente d'un *notarius* comme agent recruteur (Abinnaeus 60).

¹⁸De quatre, sous le règne de Julien, les *notarii* seraient passés à 520 en 381 après J.-C. (Libianus Or.2.58; Or.18.131-134; et Teitler 34).

Dans un contexte romain antique, nous reconnaissons les activités de reconnaissance militaire comme étant généralement effectuées en temps de guerre et liées aux déplacements de troupes en campagne à l'intérieur des frontières lors d'une invasion, ou à l'extérieur du *limes*, en territoire potentiellement hostile. Ces activités sont effectuées par des unités rattachées à un corps d'armée en campagne oeuvrant normalement à une distance relativement réduite de celui-ci. Une troupe effectuant de la reconnaissance militaire profondément dans un territoire extérieur de l'empire ne le fait généralement que lorsqu'elle précède une armée en campagne, ou pour être en mesure de prévenir cette dernière de tout danger imminent. Les objectifs d'ordre tactique (court terme) d'une troupe de reconnaissance se résument donc à reconnaître le terrain et à détecter l'ennemi.

Quant aux activités d'espionnage, nous reconnaissons *a priori* que celles-ci sont généralement effectuées à l'extérieur des frontières de l'empire et qu'elles ne sont pas directement liées à un mouvement tactique ou opérationnel d'une armée en campagne. En fait, elles sont même fréquemment effectuées en 'temps de paix'. Les objectifs d'une opération d'espionnage tournent généralement autour de la collecte de renseignements d'ordre stratégique (moyen et long terme) concernant les intentions, les forces et les vulnérabilités d'un ennemi potentiel au niveau politique et militaire (tel que défini dans la note 1). Il est vrai qu'à l'époque romaine, la reconnaissance militaire et l'espionnage sont effectués dans un contexte militaire. Mais, nous sommes d'avis que les activités d'espionnage (surtout l'aspect de la collecte) débordent largement du cadre de celles que l'on considère comme étant de la reconnaissance militaire.

Ammien semble utiliser les termes *speculator* et *explorator* de façon interchangeable, parfois pour désigner des agents effectuant des activités reliées à la reconnaissance militaire ou encore réalisant de l'espionnage¹⁹. Les sources modernes consultées n'en disent pas plus long sur la distinction entre ces deux termes (Bunson 152 ; Austin [1979] 42). Les termes *exploratores* et *speculatores* seraient-ils synonymes à l'époque d'Ammien ? C'est possible. En revanche, à l'aide du *Res gestae*, nous

¹⁹Rolfe traduit les termes latins *speculator* et *explorator* en utilisant le mot 'scout'. En voici quelques exemples : *Verus indicat explorator* : 'trustworthy scout' (XXIX,5,40) ; *speculatores vero* : 'scouts' (XXI,13,4) ; *exploratores* : 'scouts' (XXI,7,7) ; *speculationibus fidis* : 'trusty scouts' (XIV,2,15) ; *speculatione didicit fida* : 'trustworthy scouting party' (XXVII,2,2) ; *exploratorum* : 'scouts' (XXV,7,1). Des consultations dans un dictionnaire latin/français confondent aussi ces termes en les définissant tous les deux dans le même ordre, soit observateur, éclaireur, puis espion (Gariel, A. *Dictionnaire Latin-Français*. Collection Portefeuille. Paris: Librairie Hatier, 1939. p 224 et 631).

pouvons avancer qu'au IV^e siècle, des agents romains, dont certains recrutés parmi les *notarii*, effectuent de l'espionnage. Il est possible qu'il s'agisse parfois de soldats normalement engagés dans des activités de reconnaissance militaire et temporairement affectés à des activités liées à l'espionnage. Dans les deux cas, ces agents sont alors nommés *explo-ratores* ou *speculatores*. La majorité des exemples présentés sont insuffisamment détaillés pour permettre de désigner un ou l'autre des termes pour un type d'activité en particulier (reconnaissance ou espionnage). Lors de leurs missions, les *speculatores*²⁰ ne travaillent pas en groupe, mais agissent plutôt en "penetrating deeper into enemy territory and hence working covertly and alone" (Lee 170-171). Les Romains ont donc des *speculatores* oeuvrant clandestinement parmi la population des nations entourant l'empire dans le but d'informer les autorités impériales de menaces réelles ou potentielles (Dvornik 117). En revanche, il paraît utile de préciser que les *speculatores* ne semblent pas avoir évolué comme organisation au point de devenir une agence ou une unité distincte au sein de l'appareil d'État (Bunson 394). Le terme de *speculatore* semble désigner la pratique d'un type d'activité (espionnage) effectué par un individu, plutôt qu'un titre comme membre d'une organisation. La notion moderne d'espion professionnel ne semble pas exister à cette époque.

La guerre contre les Germains (357-360)

Sur le front germanique, la victoire romaine de Strasbourg en 357, par le futur empereur Julien met fin à une série de campagnes militaires contre les Alamans. Ces derniers demandent la paix qui leur est accordée. Peu après, Julien apprend secrètement que les Alamans, à l'aide de renforts, se préparent à une nouvelle offensive. Il décide alors de prendre l'initiative et d'attaquer le premier (XVII,1,4). Il faut noter qu'Ammien utilise l'expression 'a sure source' (*quibus clara fide comper-tis*) pour décrire le porteur de renseignements concernant les projets alamans. Étant donné qu'il est question d'une source dont la fiabilité n'est pas remise en cause, il ne peut s'agir ici d'un déserteur ou d'un captif. C'est plutôt un *speculator*, vraisemblablement d'origine alamande, œuvrant à la solde des Romains. Nous croyons qu'Ammien fait la distinction entre une source fiable ou digne de confiance et une source dont la fiabilité est non confirmée²¹. De façon constante dans le

²⁰Pour alléger le texte, nous utilisons *speculator* pour désigner un individu impliqué dans de l'espionnage.

²¹Voir XIV,2,15; XX,4,1; XXI,7,7; XXI,13,4; XXV,7,1; XXVII,2,2 et XXIX,5,40. Fréquemment, Ammien dissocie, au sein de la même phrase, les sources sûres et les déserteurs. En voici des exemples : *as deserters (perfugae) in agreement with our scouts (exploratoribus)* (XX,4,1); *until scouts (exploratores) or deserters*

Res gestae, lorsqu'il s'agit de renseignements émanant d'un déserteur ou d'un prisonnier (donc d'une source dont la fiabilité est non confirmée), Ammien conserve la désignation originale (*transfugae, perfugae*) même si les renseignements obtenus sont corroborés ou véridiques. Dans d'autres cas, lorsqu'il s'agit d'une source dont la fiabilité n'est pas remise en question, Ammien se sert alors du terme *speculatore* ou *exploratore*.

Un autre cas, ayant eu lieu en 359 et impliquant Julien et les Alamans, est relaté par Ammien, qui démontre explicitement l'emploi d'un *speculator* romain d'origine germanique envoyé profondément en territoire barbare. À la suite de la pacification d'une tribu alamande en 'Germanie libre' (au-delà du *limes*), Julien souhaite obtenir des renseignements et connaître les intentions d'une autre tribu potentiellement hostile occupant une région encore plus éloignée. Référons-nous directement à Ammien :

Without anyone's knowledge he (Julien) had sent Hariobaudes, an unattached tribune of tried fidelity and courage ostensibly as an envoy to Hortarius, a king already subdued, with the idea that he could easily go on from there to the frontiers of those against whom war was presently to be made, and find out what they were plotting; for he was thoroughly acquainted with the language of the savages (...) Hariobaudes returned after examining into everything, and reported what he had learned (XVII,2,2-7).

Lorsque nous étudions les activités d'espionnage romain effectuées sur le front germanique durant le IV^e siècle, nous devons aussi considérer l'existence des *arcanii*. Certains chercheurs modernes tentent de minimiser leur importance parce qu'il n'existe qu'une référence historique à leur sujet (Dvornik 117). Dans le livre XXVIII du *Res gestae*, Ammien réfère à l'un de ses livres antérieurs maintenant perdu où il discute des *arcanii*. Citons ce passage important :

The *Arcanii*, a class of men established in early times, about which I said something in the history of Constans (empereur en Occident de 337 à 350), had gradually become corrupted, and consequently he removed them from their post. For they were clearly convicted of having been led by the receipt, or the promise, of great booty at various times to betray to the savages what was going on among us. For it was their duty to hasten about hither and thither over long spaces, to give information to our generals of the clashes of rebellion among neighbouring peoples (XXVIII,3,8).

(*perfugae*) should give information of the moving of the enemy (XXI,7,7); but the scouts (*speculators vero*) and deserters (*transfugae*) who appeared from time to time (XXI,13,4); learned from the true accounts of scouts (*exploratorum*) and deserters (*perfulgarumque veris*) (XXV,7,2).

Cette courte, mais révélatrice, référence nous permet d'affirmer que les *arcanii* ont le rôle de surveiller les activités des Germains à proximité du *limes* et, au besoin, de se rendre profondément en territoire étranger afin de récolter des renseignements (Ferrill 57). Ammien explique la dissolution des *arcanii* pour cause de corruption. Cela semble plausible lorsque l'on considère le sort des *frumentarii*. En revanche, l'agence des *arcanii* aurait pu, elle aussi, renaître. Cela ne semble pas être le cas. Nous devons alors considérer la possibilité que les autorités impériales aient déterminé que le rendement qui aurait été obtenu grâce au rétablissement de ce type d'agence ne valait pas l'investissement des ressources nécessaires. Cela suggère alors la probabilité du transfert, au IV^e siècle, de la totalité de la responsabilité d'espionnage aux *speculatores* généralement recrutés selon les besoins au sein des *notarii*.

La campagne contre les Perses (358-363)

C'est pendant la guerre que mène l'empire romain contre le royaume perse, entre 358 et 363, que le *Res gestae* offre les exemples les plus explicites d'espionnage. Cette situation s'explique en grande partie par la nature de l'adversaire et par la participation active d'Ammien à ces campagnes. En 357, le roi des Perses, Châhpuhr II, réclame de la part de l'empereur Constance II l'octroi des provinces romaines de Mésopotamie et d'Osroene (le nord de l'Iraq et la Syrie orientale), en plus de l'abandon définitif de toute influence romaine sur l'Arménie. Déjà, en 358, soit bien avant le début des hostilités, les Romains connaissent la portée des intentions perses grâce à des rumeurs, subséquentement confirmées grâce à des renseignements émanant de 'messagers sûrs', donc vraisemblablement de *speculatores*. Voyons cet extrait :

The fortunes of the Orient kept sounding the dread trumpets of danger; for the king of Persia, armed with the help of the savage tribes which he had subdued, and burning with superhuman desire of extending his domain, was preparing arms, forces, and supplies (...) he planned with the first mildness of spring to overrun everything (...) news of this came, at first by rumours and then by trustworthy messengers (*nuntii certi perferrent*)" (XVIII,4,1-2).

Une série d'échanges diplomatiques est réalisée, mais demeure sans effet. Châhpuhr II ne réduit pas ses revendications, auxquelles Constance II refuse d'accéder. Ammien décrit des échanges diplomatiques où il est possible de discerner la conduite d'activités d'espionnage de la part des Romains. Dans l'une des premières délégations envoyée par Constance II auprès de Châhpuhr II, délégation dirigée par un dignitaire romain nommé Prosper se dissimule un *notarius* (*tribunus et notarius*) nommé Spectatus. La mission de ce dernier, relevant du domaine de l'espionnage, est la suivante : "by some craft or other to

stay Sapor's (Châhpuhr II) preparations, so that his northern provinces might not be fortified beyond the possibility of attack" (XVII,5,15). Cette affirmation d'Ammien est intéressante à deux points de vue. D'abord, Ammien semble sous-entendre que Spectatus doit recueillir des renseignements sur la cour perse, les intentions du souverain et l'état général des préparatifs de guerre. Ensuite, il a la mission de retarder, autant que possible, le renforcement du système défensif perse sur les frontières du nord. Nous pouvons déduire que Constance II croit, ou tout au moins soupçonne, que la guerre est imminente et qu'il cherche le talon d'Achille du colosse perse.

À propos d'une autre de ces ambassades romaines envoyée à la cour perse, Ammien décrit les activités d'espionnage d'un dénommé Procopius, un *notarius* (*tunc notarius*) apparenté au futur empereur Julien²². Sous le prétexte de faire un dernier effort pour sauver la paix, l'empereur Constance II envoie auprès de Châhpuhr II une ultime délégation dont fait partie Procopius (XVII,14,3). Ammien suggère un second motif derrière la mission de Procopius en relatant certains détails particuliers. Procopius, sous la toge d'un diplomate, est retenu à la cour perse n'est pas en mesure de communiquer avec les siens demeurés en territoire romain. Il est vraisemblablement empêché de le faire par ses hôtes; une pratique usuelle, à l'époque, dans des circonstances diplomatiques délicates. Il parvient tout de même à transmettre, de façon subreptice, un message secret à Ammien, à ce moment affecté à Amida, aujourd'hui Diyarbakir en Turquie. Ammien supervise le renforcement du dispositif défensif de la cité romaine, située au coeur du territoire revendiqué par Châhpuhr II. Ammien rapporte que le message en question contient des détails sur les projets de conquête de Châhpuhr II en Orient. Ce qui est intéressant est que le contenu du message est codé et qu'il parvient à Ammien dissimulé à l'intérieur d'un fourreau de glaive (XVIII,6,17-18).

Réalisant que la guerre est inévitable en 359, Constance II quitte Constantinople, la capitale, et se rend à Edesse (aujourd'hui Urfa en Turquie) à la tête d'une armée considérable. Constance II demeure à cet endroit pour quelques mois, attendant le retour de *speculatores* (qu'Ammien désigne cette fois d'*exploratores*) envoyés en territoire perse ou l'arrivée de déserteurs (*perfugae*) dans le but d'en savoir davantage sur les préparatifs de guerre et les mouvements des Perses (XXI,7,7). Le *Res gestae* rapporte à cette même époque un incident au cours duquel Ammien lui-même participe à une opération d'espionnage. Accompagné d'un centurion, il se rend secrètement en Corduene (région d'Arménie) pour se renseigner à propos des événe-

²²Procopius serait un cousin de Julien. (XXVI,6,1; Sinnigen 244; Bunson 349; Blockley 55).

ments qui s'y déroulent auprès d'un sympathisant de la cause romaine nommé Jovinianus. Une fois les renseignements transmis, Ammien et le centurion demeurent cachés dans les montagnes pendant trois jours, attendant le moment propice pour quitter les lieux tout en épiant l'armée perse qui bivouaque plus bas dans la vallée (XVIII,6,20-23 ; Drijvers, Hunt 24)²³.

Les Romains ne sont pas les seuls à avoir recours aux activités de renseignement. Ammien rapporte qu'une fois les hostilités engagées, il est lui-même témoin, en Syrie, de la capture et de l'interrogatoire d'un *speculator* perse d'origine gauloise.

There all the inhabitants had decamped, but we found one soldier hiding in a remote spot. He was brought before the general (Ursicinus) because he gave contradictory answers and so fell under suspicion. But influenced by threats made against him, he told the whole truth, saying that he was born at Paris in Gaul and served in a cavalry troop; but in fear of punishment for a fault that he had once committed he had deserted to the Persians. Then (...) he was sent as a spy (Ammien se sert du terme de *speculatorem*) to our territories and brought back trustworthy news (XVIII,6,16).

En grande partie grâce aux renseignements provenant de *speculatores*, Constance II réalise que l'offensive perse est plus importante que prévu et demande à son adjoint Julien, guerroyant sur le Rhin contre les Alamans, d'envoyer des renforts (XX,4,1). C'est à ce moment que les légions de la Gaule, refusant de quitter leur région d'origine, se révoltent et proclament Julien empereur. Constance II considère cette élévation comme un acte d'usurpation, mais meurt de causes naturelles en 361 avant que ne se matérialise toute opposition importante contre Julien. Dès lors, Julien règne seul sur tout l'empire romain et hérite de la guerre contre les Perses.

En 362, l'offensive perse s'essouffle et Julien décide d'entreprendre les préparatifs d'une contre-offensive prévue pour l'année suivante. Ammien, un participant à cette campagne militaire, y décrit en détails les différentes opérations militaires. Certaines d'entre elles révèlent de l'espionnage. Par exemple, il rapporte qu'à la suite de la prise et de la destruction d'une ville perse, une source digne de confiance (*index nuntiaverat certus* et non pas *transfugae* ou *perfugae*) avise l'empereur Julien de la présence d'une troupe armée dissimulée dans des tunnels situés

²³Jovinianus est un dirigeant local favorable à la cause romaine. À la lumière de cet extrait, il semble probable que certains *speculatores* soit, comme Ammien, des *protectores domestici* affectés à des 'tâches spéciales' reliées au renseignement. En revanche, mise à part cette mention concernant Ammien, le *Res gestae* n'offre pas d'exemples additionnels concrets.

sous les murs de la cité. Ici encore, il s'agit vraisemblablement d'une source digne de confiance, donc d'un *speculator* ayant infiltré la population locale, incognito, bien avant le début de l'offensive romaine en Mésopotamie, plutôt que l'œuvre d'un soldat effectuant de la reconnaissance militaire et précédant de peu l'arrivée de l'armée romaine. En effet, l'arrivée de ce genre d'individu aurait vraisemblablement éveillé des soupçons chez les défenseurs de la cité au courant de l'arrivée imminente des Romains. Il aurait alors été peu probable que les Perses aient laissé un étranger déambuler librement à l'intérieur des remparts, amassant de précieux renseignements sur les dispositifs de défense de la cité, peu avant un siège.

Julien apprend par cette source que la troupe a prévu attaquer l'armée romaine au premier moment opportun. Les malheureux sont forcés de leur cachette par le feu et massacrés (XXIV,4,29). La campagne militaire romaine en Perse se poursuit jusqu'à la mort de Julien. Jovien est alors désigné pour lui succéder. En échange d'une concession territoriale de la part des Romains, Châhpuhr II offre à Jovien la cessation des hostilités et un sauf-conduit jusqu'à la frontière. Jovien, à la tête d'une armée affamée et stratégiquement défavorisée, accepte la paix (Crump 58).

Conclusions

À la lumière des incidents rapportés par le *Res gestae*, nos recherches démontrent clairement que des *notarii* (et possiblement d'autres individus) sont employés comme *speculatores* dans des missions d'espionnage lors de la seconde moitié du IV^e siècle. Ammien décrit de nombreux exemples d'opérations d'espionnage menées à la fois chez les Germains et les Perses. Nous n'avons rapporté que les principaux, dont les exploits d'Hariobaudes en Germanie; et en Perse des *notarii* Spectatus et Procopius ainsi que d'Ammien lui-même en tant que membre des *protectores domestici*.

Comment expliquer alors la ligne de pensée de certains chercheurs modernes cherchant à minimiser, voire à nier, l'existence de l'espionnage chez les Romains ? Nous avançons deux explications plausibles. La première découle probablement du manque d'appréciation du contexte militaire sur lequel sont basées la majorité des activités d'espionnage romain. L'historiographie révèle une forte tendance chez de nombreux auteurs modernes à confiner les incidences historiques d'espionnage à la catégorie d'opérations de reconnaissance militaire. Ce cadre, que nous jugeons restrictif, ne tient pas compte des nuances des objectifs et contextes respectifs de chaque type d'activités. Par exemple, on aurait tort de désigner comme mission de reconnaissance militaire l'opération d'espionnage militaire réalisée par Ammien lui-même dans les montagnes d'Arménie. Dans le même ordre d'idées, il serait erroné

de qualifier de reconnaissance militaire les activités d'espionnage de Spectatus et de Procopius, oeuvrant clandestinement au sein de missions diplomatiques envoyées à la cour perse.

La seconde explication émane d'interprétations erronées ou incomplètes de certains événements. Il est possible que certaines traductions ambiguës soient à l'origine d'interprétations inadéquates de certains termes latins utilisés par les auteurs du IV^e siècle. Nous n'avons qu'à considérer par exemple l'utilisation par Ammien du terme de *speculatores* (ou *exploratores*) traduit en anglais par 'scout'. Dans le *Res gestae*, ce terme réfère parfois à des éclaireurs effectuant une reconnaissance militaire et autrement à des espions engagés dans des activités de renseignement. Seule une lecture minutieuse du *Res gestae* permet de distinguer auquel des deux types d'activité se réfère Ammien. Un autre exemple de ce genre d'ambiguïté réside dans la traduction du terme *notarius*. La traduction française de ce terme est 'secrétaire' ou 'sténographe'. Un lecteur non averti peut facilement être induit en erreur par le sens propre moderne de ces termes. Dans le *Res gestae*, Ammien se sert probablement de tous ces termes en supposant que le lecteur connaît leurs définitions. Peut-être parce qu'il l'a déjà fait dans un de ses livres disparus, il ne considère pas nécessaire de s'étendre sur des explications précises et détaillées. En réalité, ce n'est qu'en effectuant une analyse minutieuse des activités mêmes des gens que l'auteur du *Res gestae* nomme *speculatores* (ou *exploratores*) et *notarii*, qu'il devient possible de déterminer l'étendue et la nature réelle de leurs activités. C'est alors que font surface des indications claires démontrant la présence d'espionnage.

Ainsi que nous l'avons souligné plus tôt, nous devons aussi considérer l'apparente volonté des Romains à dissimuler les activités liées au renseignement parce qu'elles sont considérées comme des subterfuges indignes et contraires à la tradition guerrière romaine. Serait-il possible que l'ambiguïté entourant les définitions de ces termes soit la manifestation d'une volonté chez les auteurs classiques romains de dissimuler ou minimiser la présence d'activités d'espionnage ? Nous ne pouvons pas exclure cette possibilité. En fait, cette affirmation ajouterait peut-être aussi à l'explication de l'abolition définitive de l'organisation de renseignement des *arcarii* et l'absence d'un service de renseignement romain officiel.

Le produit du dépouillement d'une source documentaire unique ne suffit généralement pas à renverser une tendance de l'historiographie. Cette étude ne fait pas exception à cette règle. En revanche, à la lumière de ce que nous avons démontré, et considérant les paramètres généraux définissant ce que sont les activités d'espionnage, nous sommes en mesure de proposer une remise en question de l'opinion contestant l'existence de ces dernières. Nous croyons qu'une révision méthodique

des sources existantes effectuée dans un contexte de renseignement mieux défini mériterait d'être considérée, dans le but de réévaluer la nature et l'étendue réelle de ces activités chez nos ancêtres de l'Antiquité.

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ARTISTS AND AUTHORS IN SACCHETTI'S NOVELLE

The immense richness of the themes and different motifs that alternate in an uncontrolled and absolutely unpredictable manner throughout Franco Sacchetti's *Trecentonovelle*, making it extremely difficult to group them together in terms of theme, correspond to a great variety of different characters, each with his or her own individuality, united only by the common characteristics of an unassuming personality, without grand ideals or passions, trying to live from day to day and moved by interests that are eminently practical.

Sacchetti himself makes reference to this particular category of characters in the *Proemio* (Preface), when he warns the reader that in his short tales (*novelle*) "si tratterà di diverse condizioni di genti, come di 're e principi e' marchesi e conti e cavalieri, e di 'uomeni' grandi e piccoli, e così di grandi donne, mezzane e minori e d'ogni altra generazione" ("we are going to talk about different kinds of people and their status, like kings and princes, marquises, earls and knights; and about men, great men and common men, and about women, great or common women belonging to every condition of life")¹ [*Trecentonovelle*,1].

Thus, the author makes it very clear that all the contemporary social strata appear or are represented in his work. However, the immense majority of anonymous people that are dealt with, sometimes naive and sometimes shrewd, sceptical and superstitious, alert and absent-minded, form a part of a well-defined social class of which Sacchetti makes himself the interpreter and faithful narrator. What Massimo Miglio defines as the "choral presence of an urban multitude" (Miglio, 184) represents the multifarious reality of Tuscan society in the second half of the *Trecento*; each character has a distinct role as protagonist, co-protagonist or simple extra within a municipal reality for which the Florentine writer makes himself the spokesman and distinguishes his work from that of his master, Boccaccio. Any psychological dimension is totally absent in Sacchetti's characters, all of whom lack any complex or profound psychological profile. Not one has survived in the memory of the reader, and the critics have always preferred to discuss "types" rather than true protagonists. As Muscetta points out, we are facing a

¹All citations in English are my translation.

carousel of anonymous, unknown figures who are nothing more than shadows (Muscetta, 513).

In spite of this, the presence of certain social categories which Sacchetti characterizes with special care and attention is observed: figures pertaining to artistic and literary circles are dealt with, acquiring a special importance within the narrative. If Sacchetti's interest in the second of these groups is, as seems obvious, due to the fact that he includes himself within the same category, it is also certain that the position he assumes in the field of the artistic world is equally important, although undoubtedly not as well-known. In the period when he writes his compilation of *novelle*, Sacchetti is involved actively with the production of important symbolic works, both religious and lay.² According to Simon, since Dante, the figure of the artistic-artisan, and above all of the painter, slowly becomes the object of interest of Florentine literature and gives birth to a biographic-artistic literature that is best represented in the fourteenth century in the city of Florence. This fortunate literary genre begins with Filippo Villani, nephew of Giovanni, who in his work *De origine civitatis Florentia et eiusdem famosis civibus* mentions, among the most eminent Florentine citizens, famous painters such as Giotto y Cimabue and their disciples Maso, Stefano and Taddeo (Simon, 452).

Nevertheless, the interest in symbolic art is not only reflected in the vast literary production of the principal chroniclers of the period but also in the pages of the great writers such as Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio, as well as in the work of Sacchetti himself.³ Through these writers, the place that artists of the magnitude of Giotto occupy can be observed in the literary panorama of the thirteenth and fourteenth century, and above all, in the advanced urban context as seen in the Florentine society. As Castelnovo observes in his Introduction to the work of Ernst Kris and Otto Kurz, this new taste for symbolic art is developed thanks to an important phenomenon of secularization by which this art may satisfy objectives that are no longer exclusively religious and magical (Kris & Kurz, IX). Moreover, the fact that in the *novelle* of the *Decameron* the representations of the great painters such as Giotto and Buffalmacco in the role of protagonist is an important indicator of an awakening popular interest in these artists.

Yet, in the *Trecentonovelle*, a slightly different posture towards the

²See Lucia Battaglia Ricci's interesting book *Palazzo Vecchio e dintorni. Studio su Franco Sacchetti e le fabbriche di Firenze*, listed in Works cited. Concerning Sacchetti's artistic interests and his active role within the painting world see also Anita Simon, 443-479.

³For some observations concerning the presence of the figurative arts in Tuscan literature see also Laura Carlucci's article, listed in Works cited.

representation of the painters can be appreciated if we compare them with that of Boccaccio in the *Decameron*. Unlike the author of Certaldo, it does not seem to interest Sacchetti to stress importance and fame, and all of the painters who appear in the *Trecentonovelle*, including such great names as Giotto, Buffalmacco, and Cimabue, stand out much more for their inventiveness and wit than for their recognized artistic ability.⁴

"Che maledetto sia chi mai maritò nessuna femina ad alcuno dipintore, che siete tutti fantastichi e lunatichi, e sempre andate inebbriando e non vi vergognate!" ("A curse upon anyone who gave a woman in marriage to a painter, as they all have such a strong and moody temperament and they all live in such a condition of alienation and pleasure without feeling ashamed of it!") [*Trecentonovelle*, LXXXIV, 171]. This brief eulogy is uttered by the wife of Mino, the painter of crucifixes, who is known for his portraits of ever-drunken lunatics. Sacchetti opts for converting these "fantastic and lunatic" men into the protagonists of his various *novelle*, especially the *novelle* of *beffa* (tricks) and of *motto*, where they often play the role of *beffatore* and stand out for their verbal skills in using ingenious phrases to their best advantage.

Another example of the inventiveness which characterizes all of the painters is found in the *novella* CLXX, where the painter Bartolo Goggi, described in the same way as most of them as a "new man" and a great drinker, quarrels with a client over the decor of a room. Confronting the dissatisfaction and anger of the client, he closes the argument with an ingenious response that manages to justify the limited presence of the birds painted round the trees,⁵ playing with the "magical" duplicity that is created between the painted image on the wall and reality.

The immense, multicoloured group of characters portrayed in this composition of Florentine society during the last decades of the fourteenth century are described in the *Trecentonovelle* and great painters such as Giotto and Buffalmacco, whose many and renowned frescos are conserved in the churches of Florence, among them. To them Sacchetti dedicates numerous *novelle*, the majority of which are openly comical

⁴The only exception found in the *novella* CXXXVI, whose theme is one of the most common in medieval literature: a woman's vanity and her fictitious beauty. To criticize the feminine attitude Sacchetti invents a meeting of the grand figures of pictorial art of his period, as Andrea Ocagna and Taddeo Gaddi, that argue over who could be the best Tuscan painter after Giotto. In the end, they all will agree to assert that the best women painters of all times are Florentine women.

⁵According to Simon's information, a fashionable custom existed during the period, according to which the bedrooms were painted to decorate them, above the wallpaper, with some leafy trees surrounded by multicoloured birds. See Anita Simon, 455.

and tend to highlight the sense of humour and wit that characterizes these painters.

This is the theme of *novella* LXIII, which focuses on the commission by a modest artisan and given to Giotto to paint a coat of arms with his insignia. The painter, and through him the author too, decides to punish the presumptuousness of this little man who aspires to boast with imaginary heraldic symbols as if he were to be treated like the King of France, and paints absurd and ludicrous objects on the coat of arms: iron gauntlets, a pair of cuirasses, a pair of bracers, a sword, a lance, a knife, etc. The artisan sues Giotto, but he is acquitted thanks to a shrewd speech that succeeds in convincing the judge of his innocence. A similar motive is also found in *novella* LXXV, where Giotto's responses provoke laughter in all of his friends. Sacchetti himself concludes the *novella* reminiscing about Giotto's witty sayings "uomo virtuoso e maestro d'ogni cosa" ("a great man with many virtues") which are recounted for quite a long period of time in the city.

The other great painter portrayed in the compilation is Buffalmacco, already present in the numerous *novelle* of the *Decameron* (VIII 3, 6, 9 and IX 3, 5) where he was responsible for many a bad joke at other peoples' expense, and who here appears as the protagonist of four *novelle* (CLXI, CLXIX, CXCI, CXCII). Once again, we are referring to a small group of short stories that appear in discontinuous form within the work. Consequently, at the beginning of *novella* CXCI Sacchetti justifies his decision to reintroduce a character who appeared previously (CXCI, 434). The writer considers the character of Buffalmacco too important to condense all of his merits in just one *novella* and feels the need to explain to his readers the reason behind his decision, in accordance with his will to establish a continuous dialogue between himself and his audience.

However, among the "new things" and the merits of this "new man" the author refers to, very few have anything to do with the prestige and artistic fame of Buffalmacco. Now, the reference to the Florentine painter's abilities are limited to a succinct initial presentation where Sacchetti defines him as "grandissimo maestro e buono artista della sua arte" ("a great master and a talented artist"). In fact, what emerges from an attentive reading of the four *novella*, whose arguments appear to be some of the most original and amusing, is the image of an astute, intelligent man who loathes ignorance and is prone to pay those who try to swindle him with the same coin. In short, we are confronted with the prototype of the perfect *beffatore*. There are many ruses and jokes, both good and bad, with which Buffalmacco tries to punish those who, in his opinion, deserve punishing: an overly clever bishop (CLXI), the entire community of Perugia for their ignorance (CLXIX), a far too demanding master (CXCI) and, finally, a female neighbour who is too noisy (CXCII).

The subject matter of the first two *novelle* is the same: the fame a painter makes for himself when the bishop commissions him to paint the chapel of Arezzo, and when the people of Perugia send him to paint a crown of laurels on the head of Saint Ercolano, the patron saint of the city (CLXIX). The high-handed and ignorant attitude of the two clients will bring Buffalmacco to punish them by playing a dirty trick, employing in both cases the same tactic and the only weapon of vengeance that he possesses: his painter's brush. Both narrative development and the end of the two *novelle* are identical: an astute painter completely screens off his work with a partition, only allowing the work to be seen when he has finished. Thus, the two clients find themselves standing in front of paintings that are totally different to those they had commissioned, and the initial shock gives way to outrage and then to carrying out the order to have Buffalmacco banished from the city. Both cases concern two extremely offensive jokes that oppose the political and religious beliefs of those commissioning Buffalmacco. In the first case, Buffalmacco paints a lion (the symbol of the Guelphs) that is devouring an eagle (the symbol of the Hohenstaufens), knowing that the bishop belonged to the latter of the two factions. In the second *novella*, the devoted saint of the city of Perugia is portrayed wearing a garland of fish on his head. In the last two *novelle* dedicated to Buffalmacco, apart from his characteristic craftiness and cleverness, Sacchetti highlights another aspect of the character that has nothing to do with his artistic prowess: the artist's extreme laziness. With subtle, carefully set up and extremely comical tricks, played on an overly demanding master who tries to keep his disciple (Buffalmacco himself) painting through the night, and an unfortunate woman from the neighbourhood who makes a lot of noise every night at her spinning wheel, Buffalmacco will obtain the desired effect and will be able to fulfil his desire to sleep. As an example, not only of the shrewdness of the character, but also of Sacchetti's great narrative and descriptive ability, we want to pause momentarily on the first of the two *novelle*, number CXCI.

Buffalmacco must devise a plan to avoid fulfilling his master Tafo's wishes for him to wake up during the night in order to paint. The trick consists of fastening small candles to the backs of cockroaches so that at night they would scare the ingenuous Tafo, who would interpret them as signs of a demon. Behind this prank, brilliantly engineered by Buffalmacco, the sharp and rational explanation of the reason for such strange phenomena will convince his master never again to oblige him to paint throughout the night. Unlike other pranks present in the *Trecentonovelle*, whose development is limited to the essential, the *beffa* devised by Buffalmacco are really ingenious, as are all of those invented by this character. The painter knows how to carry the joke subtly to its end and Sacchetti describes the jokes in minute detail, pausing over

each gesture, each word, as a demonstration of the extreme lucidity and intelligence of his protagonist, who is capable of dominating the situation at every moment⁶ and converting himself into one of the most successful of Sacchetti's characters.

Clearly, we can now affirm that in the immense majority of cases the Florentine writer assigns the familiar painters a specific role in the *novelle*: witty and joking, due to the peculiar characteristics with which each are portrayed in the *Trecentonovelle*, the sense of humour, the gift of speech that often allows them to dominate a difficult situation by means of an opportune phrase, and above all, their great wit and inventiveness.

Consequently, we note that in the Sacchetti collection not only does the character of the artist-painter incarnate the form of the perfect *beffatore*, but he also shows characteristics of other popular literary figures: the buffoon and the man at court. In this context, it is interesting to note the curious detail that serves to confirm this point: in the famous work of the chronicler Filippo Villani, information about the Florentine painters was included along with that of the musicians and buffoons (Villani: 1997, 34-36).

The second social category that stands out among the multitude of distinct types in the pages of the *Trecentonovelle*, is that of the writers. We must begin with Sacchetti himself, whose presence is arrogantly felt after the Preface when he informs his readers that he will be the author of the compilation of *novelle*. Furthermore, still in the Preface and in reference to the stories to come, Sacchetti indicates that he will deal with "vicende che io vidi, e fui presente" ("I saw what happened, because I was there").

Throughout the *Trecentonovelle* the presence of the author as author and narrator, becomes constant and demonstrates the heavy responsibility that he feels towards his audience in his role as a witness to events. All of which is conveyed in the frequent use of phrases such as "io scrittore fui presente" ("I was there, as a writer") (XXI); "io scrittore già vidi" ("I had seen it already, as a writer") (CLXVI); "io scrittore trovandomi a Bologna" ("I was in Bologna, as a writer") (XXXVIII); "se

⁶The first step in devising the joke consists of finding the necessary objects: thirty cockroaches, needles and candles. The extreme care demonstrated in the choice of the necessary "material" to the execution of the plan is indicated by Sacchetti through the employment of diminutive forms, which contribute to emphasizing the precision of the operation carried out by Buffalmacco: "e trovato modo di avere certe agora [needles] sottile e piccole, e ancora certe candeluzze di cera, nella camera sua in una piccolo cassetina l'ebbe condotte" ("and after he managed to find such little, thin needles and then such little candles, he took the cockroaches to his room and put them in a drawer") [CXCI, 434].

io scrittore dico il vero, guardisi l'esempio" ("consider the example to see if I tell the truth, as a writer") (CXCII); "yo scrittore ne potrei far prova" ("I could give you some evidence, as a writer") (CXXIV); "fu ai miei dí, e io il conobbi" ("It was in my days, when I met him") (XCI), among others. The frequent use of these phrases becomes a true "rhetorical device" that, as Testa recalls, has its origin in the exemplary literature, where the formula for the *adestatio rei vise* guaranteed the authenticity of the deeds, adding credibility and authority and, consequently, filling the narrative with exemplary values.⁷

Throughout the *novelle* Sacchetti's voice is so repetitious and extensive that it becomes the backbone of the entire piece. It is a voice that unites one *novella* with another, which indicates the line of the text and the interpretation of the artistic signatures, and which very often intervenes with personal judgements. The constant presence of this voice, at times enjoyable, ironic, severe or sententious, dominates and controls the perfection of the mosaic of heterogeneous narrative that is the structure of the *Trecentonovelle*.

Sacchetti, the author, intends to reduce to a minimum the distance between himself and his readers, in the same way that the distance between himself and his characters is minimized when the author-narrator directly participates in the events he himself describes. In fact, sometimes the author's participation in the events he is narrating and his firm intention to involve himself in the first person brings him to identify completely with his characters. For example, this happens at the end of *novella* CXI, when his words are aimed at specifying his membership of a social category, that of authors, which until then he had only referred to in a very general way.⁸

The same responsibility that the author feels towards his readers, to which we have made a number of references, continues to exist between him and the characters in his *novelle*. The spatial proximity (Florence and the Tuscany region), temporal proximity (end of the 14th century) and environmental proximity (the municipal Florentine society) binds the writer to the small, anonymous "heroes" of his work, and this con-

⁷Testa makes mention, among others, of the Preface of the *Tractatus de Habundantia Exemplorum* by Humbert de Romans, where the religious affirm that a good *exemplum* has to have an authority (*auctoritas*) derived from the written sources, or from the unarguable honesty of their protagonists. However, another form so that the narrated episodes by the preachers acquired authority was through the demonstration of having been direct witnesses of said episodes. See Bruno Testa, 288.

⁸See Franco Sacchetti, 226. The syntactic error is only apparent, because the change in number of verbs (singular-plural) implies the identification of the character with the category.

tinuous communication is confirmed by Sacchetti himself in two undoubtedly significant exordia that demonstrate the responsibility with which the writer is invested: "Antonio Pucci, piacevole fiorentino, dicitore di molte cose in rima, m'ha pregato che io il descriva qui in una sua *novella*" ("Antonio Pucci, a fine man from Florence, who was able to say many things in rhyme, asked me to describe him and one of his jokes") [*Trecentonovelle*, CLXXV, 391]; "Uno contadino di Francia mi si fa innanzi a volere che io lo descriva in un suo sottile accorgimento" ("A farmer from France comes to me and asks me to talk about him") [*Trecentonovelle*, CXCIV, 447].

To transform himself into the protagonist of the *novella*, the author-narrator coincides with the actor in the story, occupying a preferential position within the narrative without relinquishing the pursuit of his moralistic purpose, through his continual presence in the exordia and epilogues of the *novelle*. Sacchetti takes the role of protagonist on four occasions (LXXI, CIV, CXII, CLI), which demonstrates all of his oratorical skills.

In *novelle* in which dialogue forms a major part, the intrusions of the author within the narrative are always manifested through phrases that serve to introduce the accredited opinion with which he manages to convince the rest of the listeners: "e io dissi", "e io risposi", "e io contraddicendo" ("and I said", "and I answered", "and I replied"). Once more making clear the great value that the writer attributes to the power of words, although his superiority is manifested here with some variants: assuming the role of the serious defender of reason (LXXI, CLI), or that of the narrator of stories that are so incredible they appear to be jokes (CIV), or even stories of a reveller, as in *novella* CXII where Sacchetti emphatically affirms that a person becomes fatter as a result of practicing sexual acts more often. His point of view is contrary to his colleagues who insist on the harmful effects of sleeping with women frequently. Despite dealing with different arguments, the four *novelle*, focus on the same motif: the taste for and pleasure of, conversation. On the other hand the gathering of the *piacevolezze* (pleasantries) constituted, without a doubt, a much appreciated pastime in its day.

Another illustrious writer it is necessary to mention is Giovanni Boccaccio, the exemplary writer recalled by Sacchetti in the Preface of the compilation: "e riguardando, in fine allo eccellente poeta fiorentino messer Giovanni Boccacci, il quale descrivendo il libro delle Cento *Novelle* [...], quanto al nobil suo ingegno quello è divulgato e richiesto per modo che infino in Francia e in Inghilterra l'hanno ridotto alla lor lingua" ("and looking at the magnificent poet from Florence, Giovanni Boccaccio, who created such a masterpiece with his book *Cento Novelle* [...], a great example of remarkable structure, complexity and thematic variety that was even translated into French and English") [*Trecentonovelle*, *Proemio*, 1].

The words that refer to the brilliant narrative success of Boccaccio must not deceive us. In fact, contrary to what we might expect after these affirmations, throughout the work we do not encounter either an explicit or implicit reference to the celebrated writer of Certaldo, although we do find a reference to his most famous work.

In *novella* XLIX, a judge who plays the secondary role in the development of the story is identified by Sacchetti as the brother of *messer* Nicola da San Lupino. Messer Nicola da San Lupino himself is another judge who appears in Boccaccio's book and whose underwear is removed by the buffoon Ribi (VIII, 5). In *novella* LXVII another reference to the eighth day of the *Decameron* appears, although this time he deals with a better known *novella* than the previous one (VIII, 3). Sacchetti's anecdote tells the story of how Messer Valore de Buondelmonti wanted to pose a riddle to a group of people he was conversing with, asking them which was the most precious stone in existence. Some said it was the ruby, others the sapphire, and others Calan-drino's heliotrope.⁹ This same character returns to be remembered at the end of *novella* LXXXIV, in the amusing scene where Mino's wife is hitting her husband and threatens to give him a worse beating than that which Calandrino's wife gave hers: "io ti concerò peggio che la Tessa non acconciò a Calandrino" ("I will give you a worse beating than that which Tessa gave Calandrino"), directly alluding to the *novella* of the *Decameron* (IX, 5).

We know that Sacchetti has no intention of imitating the style of Boccaccio, nor does he intend to utilize the same narrative material as his master, despite being familiar with the *Decameron*, as the references to the previous *novelle* would be recognized, but also the motifs and arguments of the *Decameron* that constitute the most immediate, nearest source of some of Sacchetti's *novelle*, as do the presence of some Boccaccio's characters. However, it seems easier to demonstrate that the limited interest that the disciple dedicates to Boccaccio's form is reflected in his decision not to include it in any of his *novelle*. In all probability, his mention in the *Proemio* represents just one form of expressing admiration for his illustrious predecessor, who had been converted into an obligatory point of reference not only for Sacchetti, but also for two other Tuscan *novellieri* from the end of the century: Giovanni Fiorentino and Giovanni Sercambi.

Another grand Florentine poet who, in contrast, receives a totally different treatment in the *Trecentonovelle*, is Dante Alighieri. Beyond the

⁹Calandrino was the Florentine painter Giovannozzo de Pierino's nickname. His exclusion from the section which we have dedicated to the painter's characters simply is due to the fact that, unlike the *Decameron*, he is the protagonist of numerous adventures along with his inseparable friends Bruno and Buffalmacco, in the work of Sacchetti his name appears only on this occasion.

classic phrases of circumstance, the numerous expressions of admiration on Sacchetti's part, as well as the quotes taken directly from the verses of the *Divine Comedy* that we find in the *novelle*¹⁰ demonstrate the great consideration and respect that Sacchetti felt for the "supreme poet". The character of Dante, furthermore, transforms into the protagonist of four *novelle* (VIII, CXIV, CXV, CXXI).

In the first of the *novelle*, the gift of speech and the wisdom of the Tuscan poet, whose "piacevole risposta" leaves a Genovese scientist satisfied that he had asked for advice about how to behave correctly with his beloved. This leads to a clever, wise response, as occurs with the *beffa* and the *motto*, and is transformed into the indicative expression of a specific feature of the protagonist.

Novelle CXIV and CXV are in the category of anecdotes and represent Sacchetti's explicit condemnation of all forms of ignorance. Both have the same narrative structure and are constructed around the same motif: the indignant and partly violent reaction of the poet towards those who ruin his verses. In the first, Dante destroys the workshop of a blacksmith, while in *novella* CXV he manages to hit a mule driver who is so ignorant that "non sapeva né chi fosse Dante" ("he did not even know who Dante was").

Undoubtedly, Sacchetti's decision to associate certain significant gestures with a character of the fame of Dante, whom Sacchetti considers an "honoured and strict" man, invests the story with a special value; more precisely, the conscience of the Florentine poet with respect to the importance of his profession, as well as the sensation of seeing his very own rights as an author trampled, transforms him into the most adequate character for the development of the anecdotes and the moral considerations that form the closure of the two *novelle*.

In the last *novella* dedicated to the author of the *Divine Comedy*, Sacchetti introduces the form of another man of literature, Antonio da Ferrara, one of the best court poets of the Italian *Trecento*. The motif is again that of the demonstration of the fame and admiration that Dante enjoyed among writers of the period, although in this case Sacchetti's narration verges on heresy. In the city of Ravenna, Antonio da Ferrara enters the church where the mortal remains of the "great poets" are conserved. Seeing a crucifix surrounded by a great number of candles, the poet picks them all up and leaves them at the feet of Dante's tomb, considering this to be more worthy than so much devotion to Christ. Interrogated in front of the archbishop concerning his heretical conduct,

¹⁰The references to the incomparable art of Dante, as well as to some of the characters in the *Divine Comedy* and to the verses of the work that Sacchetti decides to reproduce faithfully, or to paraphrase, appear in the *novelle* IV, XV, CLXXV, CXCIII, CCVIII, and CCX.

Antonio da Ferrara does not repent and continues defending his behaviour, providing reasons that will leave the archbishop himself perplexed:

“io gli levai quelli lumi e puosigli al sepulcro de Dante, il quale mi pareva che gli meriti più di lui; e se non mi credete, veggansi le scritture dell'uno e dell'altro. Voi giudicherete quelle di Dante esser meravigliose sopra natura a intelletto umano, e le cose evangeliche essere grosse e se pur ve n'avesse dell'altre e meravigliose, non è gran cosa che colui che vede il tutto e ha il tutto dimostri nelle scritture parte del tutto. Ma la gran cosa è che un uomo minimo come Dante, non avendo, non che il tutto, ma alcuna parte del tutto, ha veduto il tutto e ha scritto il tutto; e però mi pare che sia più degno di lui di quella luminaria, e a lui da quinci innanzi mi voglio raccomandare” (“I took the candles off the crucifix and put them in front of Dante's grave, as I thought he deserved them more; and if you do not believe me, compare the different literary productions of both. You will realise that Dante's is something beyond anything else written before, the highest expression of culture. The most important thing is that a common man like Dante managed to see everything through his own eyes, so that what he wrote was about what he saw, which means everything. And that is why I believe he deserves my full attention in order to commemorate such magnificence”). [*Trecentonovelle*, CXXI, 245].

Finally, we conclude by affirming that all of the details that are referred to in the Florentine poet's figure, the details that Sacchetti directly contributes as much as those that can be deduced from the *novelle* in which Dante plays the part of the protagonist, are intended to illustrate several other characteristics of the character, categorized within the well determined social group of the writers. As always occurs in the *Trecentonovelle*, what interests Sacchetti is not so much the individual himself but the category to which he belongs.

Nevertheless, if we took the works of some of the great biographers and chroniclers of the period as a point of reference, we would discover that not all shared praise along with the fame, sensibility and other talents with which Sacchetti characterizes Dante in his *novelle*. Taking a case in point, in the famous *Chronicles* of Giovanni Villani, which represent the oldest of the Dantesque biographies as Sacchetti very probably knew, Dante is depicted as a taciturn, presumptuous man who disdains ignorant people: “Questo Dante per lo suo saper fu alquanto presuntuoso e schifo e isdegnoso, e quasi a guisa di filosofo mal gizioso non bene sapea conversare co' laici” (“This man called Dante was rather presumptuous and was spreading his knowledge and his religious imagination around, in a way as if he posed as a philosopher who was not able to talk with laymen”) (Villani: 1991, 337)¹¹. This is one charac-

¹¹On this subject see also Marziano Guglielminetti's article, listed in Works cited.

terization that without a doubt leaves much to be desired if compared with Sacchetti's assessment of Dante as an "eccellentissimo poeta volgare, la cui fama in perpetuo non verrà meno" ("an excellent vernacular poet, whose popularity will last forever") [*Trecentonovelle*, CXIV, 231].

Therefore, given that Sacchetti's compilation is essentially based on the historic accuracy of the narrative and that one of the keys for the audience consists of knowing that the *novelle* reflect real characters and events that have actually occurred, we could ask ourselves to what extent the difference between the two characterizations is due to so illustrious and well-known a character as Dante. The answer, as noted by Saverio Bellomo, lies in the relationship between the biographical detail and the *novella*. The critic sketches the line that separates the biographer from the *novelliere* and underlines the major interest that the first feels towards the individual, which always represents the centre of his attention unlike the second, who is more interested in an exemplary case than in the character, as occurs with our writers and above all with Sacchetti.

At first sight, this affirmation could lead us to suppose that the author of the *novelle* is permitted to have a lax relationship with reality and that, therefore, his words would not have to reflect reality rigorously. However, Bellomo sustains that historical reality does not have to coincide with the truth, and to demonstrate his affirmation he cites Boccaccio's significant example, which narrates some aspects of Dante's and Petrarch's lives that do not exactly correspond with reality. The critic recalls that biography, above all medieval biography, is often based on details that are demonstrated not to be historical, but that this was "institutionally and honestly" accepted (Bellomo, 151-162). From this perspective, the different features that characterize Dante's character turn out to be perfectly justified. To put it more simply, two writers' different points of view which want to call attention to definite profiles of the characters they deal with and permit them to illustrate so many other characteristics of the Dantesque personality.

Other famous writers such as Guido Cavalcanti (LXVIII) and Antonio Pucci (CLXXV) who, together with Sacchetti,¹² were the principal exponents of Florentine municipal literature of the 14th century, and Matteo di Landozzo desli Albizi (CXXXIX, CXCIV) are transformed into protagonists in the *novelle*. The latter, less well-known, was the author of love poems inspired by Petrarch. However, in the *novelle* which Sacchetti dedicates to him, Sacchetti does not properly distinguish him for his poetic sensibility. All of the characters are character-

¹²Lanza shows that Sacchetti maintained an intense poetic correspondence with Pucci, compiled in the *Libro delle Rime*. See Franco Sacchetti, 685.

ized by their inventiveness, and all of the *novelle* they appear in belong to the category which we have described as sharp and clever.

Brief anecdotes tend to underline the ingenuity of the writers and the ease of speech with which the protagonists manage to avenge themselves for wrongs they have suffered, as in Antonio Pucci's *novella*, in which we encounter an interesting case of *controbeffa* (counter-trick) where the poet brings a clever investigation to its end to discover the authors of the prank that has caused the destruction of his orchard. In *novella* CXXXIX, in which the main character succeeds in exiting gracefully from an initially awkward situation, Sacchetti demonstrates his reluctance to renounce the endless source of humour caused by allusion to the character's sexual attributes. The anecdote is very simple: Matteo di Landozzo degli Albizi, poet and "new man", is discovered in prison, sharing a cot with a judge. During the night the poet grips the judge's member and begins to fidget with it in an unmistakable manner, believing it to be his own. The elevated comical effect is produced by the description of the embarrassing situation in which the two men are found and magnified by the involuntary blunderbuss of a Latin phrase with which Matteo tries to pardon himself in front of the judge. In this *novella* we are faced with a clear example of Sacchetti's descriptive capacity and of his inclination to attribute a special force to the use of words, searching for a way of entertaining an audience of readers especially prone to happiness. This is one comic scene that the distinguished scholar Letterio Di Francia did not appreciate, refusing to comment on the *novella* considering it so obscene that the narrative thread was lost.¹³

In the second *novella*, the comical tone of the narrative is abandoned and Matteo di Landozzo degli Albizi's cleverness and wisdom is stressed, denouncing a neighbour's avarice, resorting to three reasons (*tre belle ragioni*) that, according to Sacchetti, were successively spread throughout the world, making themselves more famous than if they had been pronounced by Plato himself.¹⁴

The only exception to this positive characterization of writers is represented by Guido Cavalcanti, who in Sacchetti's *novella* assumes the role of *beffato* and allows a child with "sottil malizia", to cheat him; ridiculing him in front of everyone. Cavalcanti's character, as we remember him, already appeared in a *novella* of the *Decameron* (VI, 9), where in one brief anecdote which he creates he is presented as an "ideal logician and philosopher, amusing and courteous and eloquent" who manages to insult a group of Florentines who wish to play a joke on him, thanks to his sharp, polite, and very clever answer.

¹³See Letterio Di Francia, 207.

¹⁴See Franco Sacchetti, 447.

In the *Trecentonovelle*, this elegant image of the great poet and intellectual *stilnovista* is degraded. We observe that Sacchetti does not hesitate to portray this character, as he does not hesitate with other Decameronian characters, in a form different from that of Boccaccio. Evidence of a more limited interest is dealt with, which Sacchetti demonstrates towards the model of the writer of Certaldo, from whom he distances himself significantly.

In general terms, the features which characterize and are common to the characters of famous writers and painters that Sacchetti includes in the complex structure of the *Trecentonovelle* are: the inventive, the sense of humour, the skilful and attentive use of witty comments and clever words, the capacity to devise funny and subtle jokes, and many other comical resources typical of a third social category that occupies a significant place in Sacchetti's *novelle*: the buffoons. It would be useless and wrong to consider them individually as each of them belongs to their social group and embodies their most outstanding characteristics.

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Geni Pontrelli

CARLISM IN VALLE-INCLÁN'S *JARDÍN UMBRÍO (THE SHADED GARDEN)*

One of the more prominent themes in Ramón del Valle-Inclán's selection of short stories *Jardín umbrío (The Shaded Garden)* is Carlism, an important political ideology in nineteenth-century Spain. These short stories were written at the turn of the century, a period when Spain was suffering from a crisis of image, and social and political upheavals. Democracy and Liberalism, the main political ideologies throughout Western Europe, had also reached Spain. However, these political ideologies are not reflected within these short stories. Instead of embracing one of these forward-looking political ideologies, Valle-Inclán chooses to look backward and embrace Carlism. What is Carlism and which sector of society supported it? Another question we must ask is why Valle-Inclán turns to Carlism as the solution to his discontent with his own world? In answer to the second question Ignacio Elizalde, who writes that Valle-Inclán "se refugia en su culto para manifestar su desagrado, su profundo descontento con la política que a él le tocó vivir. Su esperanza renovadora se basaba en una vaga y arcaica sociedad medieval que tenía más de utópico sueño que de posible realidad" (67), (took refuge in his writing talents in order to manifest his distaste and profound discontent with the politics of his day. His only hope was based on a vague and archaic medieval society, that was more of a utopian dream than a possible reality). This 'utopian dream' would come to fruition through Carlism. Nineteenth-century Spain seemed to be in constant political turmoil. Two Carlist Wars erupted—the first lasted from 1833 to 1840, the second from 1870 to 1876. It can be concluded that Carlism had enjoyed a certain amount of support for many generations. What is Carlism and why was it so popular? The Carlists came into being when King Ferdinand VII acquiesced to his wife's plea to break with Salic Law (in accordance with which the inheritance of the throne passed only through the male line), and declared his infant daughter, Isabella, to be his rightful heir. Many violently opposed this and leaned towards Ferdinand's brother, Don Carlos, as the rightful successor, thus becoming known as Carlists.¹ Carlism, then, was an ide-

¹According to Gerald Brenan, Don Carlos was not the rightful heir to the throne: "Don Carlos' claim to the throne rested upon the question of whether

ology that demanded an absolute monarch, here Don Carlos, to rule over Spain, a Spain that would tolerate no change and be inimical to any liberal reform. Liberalism had been brought in with the French Revolution. The Carlists feared that its forward-thinking ideology would bring many changes to the **Antiguo Régimen** (feudalism) and as such was seen as the enemy of the state. Gerald Brennan writes:

They (the Carlists) were taking up arms against Liberalism, which in their eyes was but a second wave of the old Lutheran heresy, to resist which Spain in the past had given her life-blood. Any concession to new ideas, any mitigation of the old Church and State absolutism would, they saw, let in the poison. (204)

According to Casimiro Martí, Carlism was also:

contra el progresismo a ultranza, el carlismo aspira a la revitalización de las viejas herencias medievales que se entenderán como consustanciales con el ser de España. Contra el federalismo abstracto representado por Pí y Margall, el carlismo propugna la restauración foralista de aquellas entidades nacionales que se confederaron en tiempo de los Reyes Católicos. Contra la libertad religiosa, la integridad católica. Contra el desamparo del proletario industrial, el recurso a los antiguos genios. (177)

(against progress at all costs, Carlism aspires to the revitalization of the old medieval legacies that are seen as inseparable from Spain. Against the abstract federalism of Pí y Margall, Carlism proposes the restoration of the “fuero”, the municipal law codes, which had been in existence since the era of the Catholic kings. Against religious freedom, catholic integrity. Against the helplessness of the industrial proletariat, returning to the old ways is the only recourse.)

What Carlism stood for was the “old” way, that is, the **Antiguo Régimen** (feudalism). It wanted to keep the people in their allotted stations to prevent any change within society. The Carlists felt that the peo-

the Salic Law, which had from all time regulated the right of succession in the Bourbon family, should apply in a country such as Spain which had never admitted that law. It was true that, at the time of the Treaty of Utrecht, Philip V had issued a decree by which it was declared that the throne could not descend through the female line, nor could any prince born out of Spain inherit it. The object of this decree was to prevent any possibility of the union of Crowns of France and Spain. But some seventy years later, when the possibility had vanished, Charles IV, who had been born in Naples, called a secret meeting of the Cortes to ratify the abrogation of this decree. This Pragmatic Sanction was published in 1830 by Ferdinand. Thus, even if, as the Carlists maintained, one king could not with the assent of the Cortes annul the decree of another, Don Carlos was still not the rightful heir, for his father, having been out of Spain, had no legitimate right to the throne (204).

ple were much happier in a state of ignorance. In this way the aristocracy and the church would maintain its stranglehold on the rest of society. They disagreed with the liberal tendencies of the political parties, such as the *progresistas*, who were to be incorporated in 1872 into the Radical Party, which wanted to deplete the power of the church and the aristocracy and give more to the burgeoning bourgeoisie and industrialists.

Ignacio Elizalde gives an explanation of Carlism's importance to Spanish life in the nineteenth century:

Dentro de la problemática española, la guerra carlista es el acontecimiento cumbre del siglo XIX español. España vivió durante este siglo en continua guerra civil, sólo interrumpida por corto períodos de paz superficial. La calma del conformismo que infecta la vida española del ochocientos es una delgada capa que cubre la ebullición interior que desgarrar la vida de la nación. El carlismo, los pronunciamientos liberales y conservadores, y los motines populares, no son manifestaciones esporádicas del descontento nacional, sino muestras de la convulsión vital que sufre la vida española en perpetua revolución. (61)

(Within the problematic situation of Spain, the Carlist War is the most significant event in the Spanish 19th century. Spain lived in continuous civil war during this century, only interrupted by short periods of superficial peace. The calm of Conformism which infects Spanish life in this century is a thin cover which hides the internal churning state that is ripping up the nation's life. Carlism, the Liberal and Conservative risings, and the popular revolts are not sporadic manifestations of national discontent, but rather, the signs of the turbulence that Spanish life is suffering because of this perpetual revolution.)

Thus it seems that Valle-Inclán sought refuge in Carlism to demonstrate his displeasure with the politics of his time. His solution lay within an archaic society.

The Carlist strongholds were basically maintained in the mountainous and rural areas through guerrilla warfare. With this type of warfare it was easy to elude the government forces, however this very isolation was the reason that their sphere of influence did not move beyond these areas. There was no support for Carlism on the east coast, for example. According to José Barreiro Fernández, although the urban areas did not openly support the Carlists, there was a conspiracy that manifested itself by means of passing on important news, money and other necessities to the guerrillas, thus enabling them to maintain their attacks. The government's army, became aware of this conspiracy and sought to sever this link, thus crippling the Carlist movement. Deprived of supplies, the guerrillas were obliged to get whatever they could from the countryside and its peasants. This caused great friction between the countryside and the guerrillas. From 1837 the skirmishes between the guerrillas and the country folk intensified (151-3). Valle-Inclán does not

give an historical account of the Carlist Wars, but rather he hints at events and, as in the case of "Un cabecilla" (A Rebel Leader), he tells a story that has been told to him second-hand. According to José Pérez Fernández,

Valle, en puridad, no hace Historia de España; recoge las escorias históricas que han llegado a la calle. No cuenta la verdad ni la mentira, sino lo que el pueblo sabe o inventa"

(Valle is not writing the History of Spain; he gathers the stories/tales that have reached the streets. He is neither telling the truth nor lying, but rather tells what the people know or invent. (*Valle-Inclán (humanismo, política y justicia) (Humanism, politics, and Justice) 111*).

Valle is giving the reader the version he heard of those Isabeline years that was still circulating in the streets of Madrid.

In her article "Galicia en Valle-Iclán", M. D. Lado focuses her study of Carlism on Galicia. She writes that Carlism was largely accepted within the rural clergy and the rural aristocracy. A large part of Galician Carlists were made up of priests and nuns, "La *hidalgúa* y el clero fueron los dos pilares del carlismo en Galicia. De 532 carlistas procesados en todos los años que duró la refriega, el 65,3 % no eran campesinos" (The nobility and the clergy were the two pillars of Carlism in Galicia. Of the 532 Carlists processed during the war years, 65.3% were not peasant farmers)(50). In "Un cabecilla" (A Rebel Leader) we can easily discern the lack of enthusiasm on the part of the **campesino** (peasant farmer) when the old man "*reaparecía cargado con su escopeta llena de ataduras y remiendos, trayendo en su compañía algún mozo aldeano de aspecto torpe y asustadizo que, de fuerzo o grado, venía a engrosar la filas*" (reappears, carrying his gun, mended and patched, dragging behind him some frightened and clumsy village boy, who, by will or force, was going to become one of the rank and file) (50). According to M. D. Lado, the Galician peasant had no interest in Carlism because the peasant

"estaba económicamente agarrotado por un sistema socioeconómico del que eran los directos beneficiarios la *hidalgúa* y el clero, es decir, los defensores del carlismo'. En Galicia, los cabecillas carlistas eran los mismos que cobraban rentas y foros, diezmos y primicias, los usureros y los ejecutores de embargos"

(was economically strangled by a socio-economic system, whose direct beneficiaries were the nobility and the Church, that is to say, the defenders of Carlism. In Galicia, the Carlist rebel leaders were the same people who collected rents and tithes, the moneylenders and the executors of embargos (50).)

The peasants realized that they would gain nothing in a cause that would only empower those in already elevated positions. M. D. Lado

goes on to state that the figure of the **cabecilla** is “más bien un ejemplo del fanatismo bárbaro y brutal, que tanto le gusta pintar al autor, que un héroe legitimista” (is an example of crude and brutal fanaticism, which the author likes to depict so much, rather than a Legitimista hero)(50).

The **cabecilla** (rebel leader) showed characteristic Carlist violence and fanaticism. According to Gerald Brenan, the Carlists manifested these characteristics because:

they were an anachronism in a modern world that had ceased to care for the things they lived by. They believed that they were engaged in a holy war against Liberals, freemasons and atheists: all around them were the hosts of Satan, the men of the century, the madmen who believed that the rule of life must change because time moved. They alone were faithful. They alone were entrusted with the judgements of God. (214)

In “Rosarito”, such a man can be found in Don Miguel, who is the enemy of Carlism and as such seen as evil. Don Benicio describes him as a “un hombre terrible, un libertino, un masón!” (terrible man, a libertine, a freemason!)(106). The outcome of the story is not surprising. The Catholic religion views liberalism as the snake and Spain as the Garden of Eden. In this story Rosarito is the innocent and Don Miguel the snake who invades her idyllic life and brings bleakness and tragedy to the garden. Michael Predmore, in his article, “The Murder of Rosarito: An Inquiry into its Mystery”, states that Don Miguel’s liberal leanings have corrupted him to the extent that he has become demented and violent, which leads him to rape and murder Rosarito. Predmore believes that Don Miguel seduces Rosarito not because he is a womanizer, a Don Juan, but rather because of the dementia caused by his political life:

The insistence by the narration, therefore, on the historical and social condition of Don Miguel and on his political life and character allows us to see that his assassination of Rosarito is not the action of the Don Juan in him, as the the old rake and libertine; it is rather the action of the political man, the emigré, who represents a corrupted form of revolutionary of the upper classes. Don Miguel may be a dissolute man in his sexual life, but, more importantly, he is a man who has been terribly deformed by his political life. (263)

Predmore continues to say that Don Miguel’s political life made him an enemy of his own class. His liberal ideology wanted to put an end to the old feudal system. Rosarito can be seen as the symbol of Spain and her murder can be taken as an act of destruction on the part of a liberal, a conspirator who has become corrupt and deranged (264). In “Rosarito” Valle-Inclán offers a commentary on the harm that liberalism inflicted on traditional, aristocratic life of Spain in the nineteenth century.

Brenan, for his part, explains that there was also an economic reason for the Carlists' violence. Since the Carlists were hiding in the mountainous and rural areas, they did not enjoy the same conditions as the royal army. The Carlists had no means of raising money and had to rely on their supporters. But even so they were driven to live upon the countryside and basically prey on the towns and villages in order to acquire whatever they needed. This situation did not sit well with the peasants, leading, as Brenan puts it, to "a deterioration in the character of the war" (214). Because of their dire circumstances the guerrillas became nothing more than a pack of bandits. This caused flagging spirits within the Carlist ranks. Some of these men who robbed did so for the cause, as did the priest of San Rosendo de Gondar, in "El rey de la máscara" (King of the Masque). He is said to ". . . machacar la plata de sus iglesias y santuarios para acudir en socorro de la facción" (have wrested the money from their churches and sanctuaries in order to aid the faction) (*Jardín umbrío, The Shaded Garden*, 58). There were also mercenaries who joined the Carlist ranks in order to gain whatever they could (Brenan 214).

Elizalde points out the religious aspect of Carlism in Valle-Inclán's trilogy "*Las guerras carlistas*" (*The Carlist Wars*) that can also be applied to these short stories: "Valle-Inclán advierte de manera clara el aspecto religioso y militante del carlismo" (Valle-Inclán draws attention to the religious and militant aspects of Carlism in a clear manner)(75). Valle-Inclán realizes that Carlism involved much more than the issue of a legitimate heir. It involved a way of life, a social and economic order that was to be maintained. What the Roman Catholic Church wanted was a civil government with which it could be intimately united. The Carlist credo was: Dios, Patria, Rey (God, Country, King) and in this order. Consequently we can see how Carlism is directly linked with the Catholic Church since it was its biggest supporter. The Church was intent on regaining its lands previously appropriated by Mendizábal's government in the 1830's and Carlism provided a vehicle for their goal. In the short stories of *Jardín umbrío* (*The Shaded Garden*), we can see the relationship between the Church and Carlism in the role of the clergy during both wars. Barreira Fernández writes, "nunca faltaron sacerdotes en las guerrillas. Cuando unos caían otros ocupaban su lugar. Ni los bandos, ni los procesos, ni los fusilamientos pudieron detenerlos. El clero se entregó al carlismo con una generosidad sin límites" (there never was a lack of priests within the guerilla faction. When lives were lost, others took their place. Neither edicts nor threats of prosecution or execution could deter them. The priests gave wholly to the Carlist cause with a generosity that knew no limits (163). Basically they were fighting for their survival.

In "Beatriz", the Countess's personal confessor is Fray Ángel. He is described as:

un viejo de ojos enfoscados y perfil aguileño, inmóvil como tallado en granito. Recordaba esos obispos guerreros que en las catedrales duermen o rezan a la sombra de un arco sepulcral.(36).

(an old man with sullen eyes and a sharp-featured profile, motionless as if cut from granite. He reminded one, of those warrior bishops who sleep or pray in the shadow of a sepulchral arch found in cathedrals.)

In the story it is stated that Fray Ángel had been not only a Carlist sympathizer but also a leader of a faction:

Fray Ángel había sido uno de aquellos cabecillos tonsurados que robaban la plata de sus iglesias para acudir en socorro de la facción. (36)

(Brother Ángel had been one of those tonsured rebel leaders who stole money from their churches in order to fund the faction.)

Such was his devotion to the cause that even years after the war he dedicated masses for one of the most famous leaders of the Carlists in the first war, Zumalacárregui. Obviously Beatriz's mother has knowledge of his political leanings and since she is also a sympathizer she has given him a place in her home as her personal chaplain.

In "Rosarito" Don Benicio is the personal chaplain to the Countess of Cela. He admits his past as a Carlist:

Los años quebrantan las peñas, Señora Condesa. Cuatro anduve yo por las montañas de Navarra con el fusil al hombro, y hoy, mientras otros baten el cobre, tengo que contentarme con pedir a Dios en la misa el triunfo de la santa Causa. (105)

(The years erode the cliffs, Madame Countess. In my youth I walked through the mountains of Navarre with a gun on my shoulder, and now, while others heed the call to war, I have to be content dedicating masses, asking for God's help so that the Holy Cause may triumph.)

In "El rey de la máscara" (The King of the Masque) we encounter the priest of San Rosendo de Gondar. He is described in exactly the same language as Fray Ángel, "era uno de aquellos cabecillas tonsurados que, después de machacar la plata de sus iglesias y santuarios para acudir en socorro de la facción, dijeron misas gratuitas por el alma de Zumalacárregui" (was one of those tonsured rebel leaders that, after wresting money from their churches and sanctuaries in order to aid the faction, had free masses dedicated for the soul of Zumalacárregui) (58).

There were very few highly placed aristocrats that openly supported Carlism. According to Barreira Fernández, "la *hidalguía* orientada hacia las armas no suele tomar partido por el carlismo. Piénsese, por ejemplo, que varios de los coroneles que durante estos años dirigen la acción contra los carlistas, son miembros de la *hidalguía* y segunda nobleza" (the nobility which was trained in the military arts did not

take the side of Carlism. For example, various colonels, who, during these years, commanded the campaigns against the Carlists are members of the nobility and the secondary aristocrats (167). The reason for this was that these **hidalgos** (nobles) had no link to the land and thus Liberalism posed no threat to them. It was the rural aristocracy who supported the Carlist movement since their livelihood was linked to the land and **foro** system. The rural aristocracy's support can be seen through Beatriz's mother and the Countess of Cela, whose sympathies lie with the Carlists since they both chose former Carlist supporters as their personal chaplains. Also, we discover that Beatriz's grandfather supported this cause, and consequently the family's titles were lost:

La Condesa era unigénita del célebre Marqués de Barbanzón, que tanto figuró en las guerras carlistas. Hecha la paz despues de la traición de Vergara —nunca los leales llamaron otra suerte el convenio—, el Marqués de Barbanzón emigró a Roma. Y como aquellos tiempos eran los hermosos tiempos del Papa-Rey, el caballero español fue uno de los gentileshombres con cargo palatino en el Vaticano. Durante muchos años llevó sobre sus hombros el manto azul de los guardias nobles, y lució la bizarra ropilla acuchillada de terciopelo y raso. El mismo arreo galán con que el divino Sanzio retrató al divino César Borgia! (34)

(The Countess was the only child of the famous Marquis of Barbanzón, who figured so prominently in the Carlist Wars. When peace was declared after the betrayal at Vergara—that was the only way the loyal forces referred to the treaty—the Marquis emigrated to Rome. And since those were the wondrous days of Pope "Blessed" Pius IX, the Spanish knight was one of those gentlemen with knightly duties in the Vatican. For many years he wore the blue cloak of the noble guards and displayed the dashing uniform slashed with velvet and satin. The same handsome dress with which the wonderful Sanzio painted the divine Caesar Borgia!)

It is because of the Marqués' fanatical support for this cause that he condemns his progeny to lives of obscurity. His last will decreed that if any of his descendants supported Isabel they would be cursed.

In "Mi bisabuelo" (My Great-grandfather) we find out that Don Manuel Bermúdez had not been imprisoned in Santiago for shooting Malvido but rather because he had been a member of a Carlist faction: "muchos años después, para una información genealógica, he tenido que revolver papeles viejos, y pude averiguar que aquella prisión había sido por pertenecer al partido de los apostólicos el señor Coronel de Milicias Don Manuel Bermúdez y Bolaño" (many years later, for some genealogical information, I had to go through some old papers and was able to confirm that he had been imprisoned for belonging to the Carlist party) (101).

"Del misterio" (About the Mystery) is a story of superstition based on the narrator's perspective as a young boy. An old lady, Doña Soledad Amarante, a friend of his grandmother's, comes over one night and they discuss the boy's father who is presently imprisoned in Santiago for being a Carlist. The old lady goes into a trance and tells his mother and grandmother that he has freed himself but at the cost of his jailer's life. He is now on the run.

In "A medianoche" (At Midnight) we encounter a mysterious horseman travelling by night so as to remain undetected. He is to meet a boat where he will join the others of his faction:

—Tú, ahora te vuelves con el caballo. Yo tomo la barca.

—Y si no se atopan allí los mozos de la partida?

—Estará, cuando menos, Don Ramón María. No te ha dicho que me esperaba? (94)

(— You, return now with the horse. I am taking a boat.

— And if the men from the faction aren't there?

— They'll be there. At least Don Ramón María will be. Didn't he tell you that he would be waiting for me?)

Another group of nobles who supported Carlism were those who were directly linked to governmental administration or certain professions such as clerks, lawyers, mayors, secretaries of the municipal governments whose prosperity were also linked with the land and the **foros**. According to Barreira Fernández, these people reinvested their money in the land, hence it was natural for them to favour the status quo, which meant supporting the Carlists.

Carlism never recovered from the last Carlist War and finally faded into a minority right-wing party. Although Carlism had been able to revive itself after 1840, it was because of the turbulent political ambiance that dogged the heels of the Isabeline government. However, with the restoration of Alfonso XII after the second Carlist war, Spain enjoyed political stability. This stability, artificial though it was, was brought about by Antonio Cánovas del Castillo. The "**turno pacífico**" as it was called, consisted of power being passed peacefully between the conservatives (Cánovas) and the liberals (Práxedes Sagasta) through elections carefully controlled by the Minister of the Interior and his "**caciques**" (bosses) who ran the government at the municipal and provincial levels. This stabilization rang the death knell for the Carlists (Blinkhorn 30-1). Thus, without any turbulence to take advantage of, the Carlist movement quietly faded away. Even though there were a few die-hard supporters, Carlism would never again raise itself to the force it once was.

In these short stories, we can remark, then, that Carlism is looked upon favourably by Valle-Inclán. He is fed up with Spain's current sit-

uation and thus in his short stories looks backward to a time when everything seemed simpler and honour was a part of life. Antonio Maravall writes:

Lo que Valle denigra y desprecia, sobre todo, es la estólida rigidez de los funcionarios, la rancia y chismosa poquedad de los palatinos, la zafiedad de ciertos clérigos —a diferencia de la exquisita educación y liberal criterio de los grandes eclesiásticos romanos—, el inútil parasitismo de señoritos aristócratas, la *cínica* concupiscencia de banqueros y políticos, la ignorante petulancia de algunos escritores, en la sociedad superficialmente aburguesada que rodea el trono de Madrid. (243)

(What Valle denigrates and scorns, above all, is the tiresome rigidity of the civil servants, the stale and scandal mongering triviality of the palace court, the coarseness of certain members of the clergy – in contrast to the exquisite education and liberal criteria of the great Roman ecclesiastics, the parasitical uselessness of the young aristocrats, the cynical greediness of the bankers and the politicians, the ignorant petulance of some of the writers, in the superficial middleclass society that surrounds the Spanish throne.)

Valle, then, had accepted Carlism as a form of violence against a society he viewed as deformed and in decay, in favour of one that in medieval times had run smoothly, where heroism, honour, and justice reigned.

In Valle's short stories we can appreciate his longing for a simpler time, when everyone's place seemed to be more clearly defined. With the coming of the Industrial Revolution these lines became blurred, producing changes that did not sit well with Valle-Inclán. Lily Litvak states that Valle-Inclán was a part of the "anti-industrial movement which prevailed in artistic circles throughout the Western World during this period" (3). One of the individuals who spread this anti-industrial sentiment was John Ruskin, who influenced Valle's view of industrialism. Ruskin believed that industrialism created ugliness and misery and dehumanized urban life. Valle-Inclán believed, like Ruskin, that a hierarchical society was the most perfect society. Thus in this pyramidal order there was no discontent - it fell in with the natural order of the universe. In Valle-Inclán's world the rich helped the poor since, in his view, the poor could not fend for themselves. They had to be protected and guided by their superiors—those in the higher echelons of this pyramidal society. For Valle this type of society provides harmony which in turn reflects a harmonious universe (Litvak 224-5). This feudal society was a much better option than the one in which he presently lived (1890-1910). With this feudal attitude in mind, Valle recreated the old Galician **pazos** (ancestral homes) and villages. Valle felt that this type of society was a stable one, reconciling freedom and authority. That is, it gave everyone a place in society and a leader to guide him. This belief is advo-

cated in "Mi Bisabuelo" (My Great-grandfather). The peasants go to their leader for solutions to their problems. Valle feels that the generosity of the nobles towards their peasants has been replaced by selfishness and egocentricity, which is a by-product of industrialism. To Valle, industrialism instigated the decline of the human spirit (Litvak 222-3).

Valle's anti-industrial tendency manifests itself in the desire to escape to an archaic milieu, as well as to return to a more natural or primitive lifestyle. He felt a renewed interest in folklore. He returned to a more simple, childlike religious faith, i.e. the exaltation of naïve forms of religiosity considered typically rural. This would include religious folk traditions of Christ and the saints, such as the story of the Magi, "La adoración de los reyes" (The Adoration of the Kings) and of Amaro in "Un ejemplo" (An Example). The coming of industrialism changed the status of the peasant. It forced them to move from the country to the city. This was the first step in the desintegration of feudal society. Whereas before families remained close, bound by patriarchal authority, working together for the common good of the family, now they were splintered, each faction going its own way in an attempt to find its own individual economic security. The economic security of the rural family had been based upon cottage industries such as spinning and weaving, but as the younger members of the family left in search of independence and wealth, this rural economy was destroyed leaving the rural area in a much poorer economic state than before. This exodus impoverished the countryside and produced a rapid disintegration of the rural patriarchal way of life. However the new proletariat found that his life in the slums of the cities was no better, and in many cases, worse. Consequently the lack of any agricultural reform and the advent of industrialism brought the peasant to the pinnacle of unhappiness and misery (Litvak 114).

We find that these short stories represent Valle-Inclán's advocacy and idealization of Carlism. In his short stories it is the Carlist fighter who is noble and courageous. He also seems to idealize the Galician world. For example, the only distress we find is in "Mi bisabuelo" (My Great-grandfather). It is produced by the town clerk, Malvido, who is attempting to defraud the peasants of their grazing land.

It is in a rural world that Valle chooses to set his stories. According to Lily Litvak, Valle uses the Galician language to suggest this rural world. In "La adoración de los reyes (The Adoration of the Kings)" Bethlehem is replaced with a Galician setting. The peasants sing in Galician. This story opens and closes with two **villancicos** (Christmas carols) in Galician. Litvak states that in this particular story, "these popular rural elements are not only ornamental; but, being millennial traditions, they also transport the scene out of space and time into a universal rurality. The voices of these peasants are voices that have per-

petuated, throughout the centuries, a precious rural legacy" (133).

However, Valle's support of Carlism can be taken another way. According to Francisco Ayala, it was the norm for Valle's fellow intellectuals to "mystify the public with their political statements" (37). When, at the beginning of his literary career, Valle declared himself to be a Carlist, many believed Valle did so simply to shock the public, striking a pose that was not to be taken seriously. However, Ayala believes that Valle took a Carlist position because it was a lost cause, one relegated to the past (37). Later, when he develops the **esperpento**, he uses it to unmask the political situation against which the Carlists had rebelled to no avail. After having read these short stories and taking into account these opinions, one could argue that Valle-Inclán could have sincerely believed in Carlism, but then, realizing the futility of such a political movement, he continued to support it solely as a pose. Valle-Inclán uses the theme of Carlism in these short stories to describe the plight and situation of the Carlist followers which is mirrored by the dilapidation of lands and houses. The peasant workers stay, not because of any hope of payment, but rather because of familial loyalty. The relationship between the "lord" and servant still exists only because of this loyalty. Whether or not Valle-Inclán sincerely supported Carlism will always be cause for speculation. However, what he demonstrates in *Jardín umbrío* (*The Shaded Garden*) is that the **Antiguo Régimen** (feudalism) belongs in the past as does Carlism.

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"Asleep beneath Sicilian skies..."

THE CANADIAN WAR CEMETERY AT AGIRA

The term D-Day has become synonymous with a single event in the Second World War, the great cross-Channel assault codenamed Operation Overlord that took place on June 6, 1944. So long awaited, and so decisive in the war's outcome, the Normandy landings have ever since assumed almost mythic status in public memory, thanks in no small part to films such as *The Longest Day* and *Saving Private Ryan*. The year 2004, like any major anniversary year, has seen a proliferation of books, documentaries, museum displays, and memory projects commemorating the battle of Normandy and describing the experiences of the soldiers, sailors, and airmen who took part.

The significance of the Normandy invasion makes it easy to forget that 'D-Day' refers to any day on which a major military operation is undertaken. There were over a dozen such days in the Second World War, including the six amphibious operations undertaken in the Mediterranean theatre. Five of these preceded the Normandy landings and yielded a number of useful lessons to the planners of Overlord. Foremost in this regard was Operation Husky, the Anglo-American invasion of Sicily (and thus the first Allied assault directly on the Axis powers), which took place on July 10, 1943. In scale and logistics, Husky rivals the better known Overlord. A series of convoys totalling over 3,000 ships converged from more than a dozen ports and carried 160,000 soldiers to the three main American landing zones in the Gulf of Gela and to the five British landing zones in the Gulf of Noto. As in Normandy, a massive air campaign involving reconnaissance and bombing prepared the way for the attack, while the seaborne landings were preceded by airborne assaults aimed at seizing control of vital points. Although the landings exposed some flaws in the planning and coordination of combined air, sea, and land operations, Husky achieved its objectives with fewer casualties than anticipated. Most importantly, it answered one key question for the planners of Overlord, namely, that the newly devised amphibious transports (DUKWs) could keep an invading force fully supplied over the beaches, thereby eliminating the need to capture a port in the initial attack.¹

¹On Operation Husky and the Sicily campaign, see Carlo D'Este, *Bitter Victory: The Battle for Sicily, 1943*. London: Collins, 1988.

Husky was the first of four seaborne operations in the Italian campaign. It was followed by the combined Operations Baytown and Avalanche, which brought the Anglo-American armies to southern Italy in September 1943; and by Operation Shingle, the Anglo-American landings at Anzio in January 1944. The anniversaries of these operations pass unnoticed, and it is richly ironic that the servicemen who took part in them came to be known as the "D-Day Dodgers" once the Normandy landings had relegated the Italian campaign to the status of a sideshow. In response to Lady Astor's infelicitous phrase implying that theirs was an easy lot compared to the plight of the soldiers fighting the real war, the soldiers of the British Eighth Army made up a set of verses, sung to the tune of *Lily Marlene*, jesting at the harsh conditions and fighting they had endured. The last verse, though, strikes a more wistful tone:

*Look around the mountains, in the mud and rain,
You'll find the scattered crosses, some that have no name,
Heartbreak and toil and suffering gone,
The boys beneath them slumber on,
They are the D-Day Dodgers, who'll stay in Italy.*

The 321,000 Allied casualties representing the final toll of the twenty-two months of the Italian campaign belie the conceit that Italy was a safer place to be than in northwest Europe. After the war, the temporary burial grounds with their scattered crosses were remade into proper military cemeteries; and today the remains of 45,000 British and Commonwealth servicemen lie buried in forty-two sites marking the trail of the Eighth Army from the tip of Sicily to the Po Valley. The task of designing and supervising the construction of these cemeteries fell to Louis de Soissons (1890-1962), the principal architect assigned to Italy and Greece by the Imperial War Graves Commission. De Soissons had studied in Paris before doing military service in the First World War, including time on the Italian front, and had made his reputation with the Welwyn Garden City project and a number of other civil architectural designs during the 1920s and 1930s.

The magnitude of his accomplishments on behalf of the War Graves Commission is all the more impressive in face of the difficulties confronting him at the outset. Not only did he have to contend with the number of dead and the dispersion of the burials, but also with a miscellany of local problems such as the negotiation of cemetery boundaries, adverse soil conditions, drought and water supply, availability of materials, and of labour, all vitiated by budgetary constraints. It is hardly surprising that the war cemeteries in Italy were not finished until the late 1950s; but where circumstances permitted, de Soissons exploited landscape and tradition to enhance the fixed monumental features of the Commonwealth war cemeteries. Even a cursory review of his work

reveals the skilful blending of locale with aesthetic effects to transform provisional burial grounds into monuments of lasting propriety.²

The cemeteries vary in size and setting. In some places a suggestive historical setting could forge a link between past and present, Britain and Italy. The Rome War Cemetery adjoins a portion of the Aurelian Wall, near the Pyramid of Gaius Cestius, and across the road from the Protestant Cemetery where the graves of Keats and Shelley recall the ties between the Romantics and Italy. More ancient ties were evoked by the placement near the Stone of Remembrance of a piece from Hadrian's Wall in commemoration of the English servicemen who came from what had been the northernmost edge of the Roman Empire. The largest of the war cemeteries, at Cassino, employs layout and setting to memorialise the British army which fought in Italy and to offer tacit recognition to one of the great tragedies of the campaign. The burial ground contains 4,266 headstones deployed in sections around a central portion in which the architect set up panels to record the names of the 4,044 servicemen "to whom the fortunes of war denied a known and honoured burial". The burial ground was in turn apportioned among the many nationalities represented in the ranks of the Eighth Army. The insignia on the headstones record the last great roll-call of the British Empire, which only sixty years ago could still summon a host of peoples from around the world to fight on her behalf. Cassino is but one of several war cemeteries containing Australians, New Zealanders and Maoris, South Africans of English, Afrikaans and native descent, Rhodesians, Cypriots Greek and Turkish, the Sikhs, Gurkhas, Hindus, and Muslims of the Indian Army, Jews of the Palestine Regiment, Newfoundlanders, French and English Canadians—an amazing array of languages, sects, and races whose mute presence makes Cassino into a reliquary of an empire now as seemingly remote as the Roman Empire. Atop the adjacent hill stands the restored Abbey of Monte Cassino, looming over the cemetery as a reminder that the cost of the war in Italy extended beyond the toll in human lives.

In other sites where setting and history were less dramatic, de Soissons used a variety of effects and features to distinguish the cemetery. At Gradara, the hillside was sculpted into terraces matching the site to its name. Elsewhere, as at the Sangro River cemetery, the landscaping was carried out on a grander scale. Here the rows of headstones stretch out in a wide arc across the hillside to create an amphitheatre overlooking the Eighth Army's arduous route along the Adriatic coast. The entrance to the Coriano Ridge cemetery displays the classicising

²Philip Longworth, *The Unending Vigil. The History of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission*. London, Constable and Company 1967; reprinted 2003 by Leo Cooper, Barnsley, Yorkshire, pp. 187-213.

and English garden traditions from which de Soissons drew. The gateway, flanked by façades in the style of Roman temples, gives onto a broad lawn leading to the burial ground through an elegant threshold. A raised platform, surfaced in geometric mosaic patterns, supports facing temples, also in Roman style, and stands opposite the Cross of Sacrifice at the end of the central aisle, whose great width is modified by the insertion of four pairs of flowerbeds.

Simple architectural features help to make cemeteries in unprepossessing locations more moving and memorable. In the little war cemetery at Foiano della Chiana (256 burials), south of Arezzo in eastern Tuscany, a short path leads from the entrance to the Cross of Sacrifice; to its left stands a small brick shelter rendered in the style of a Roman temple, but whose broken pediment and overhanging eaves nod at the region's Etruscan past. The 212 headstones in the Canadian war cemetery at Villanova stand well apart in three long lines spanning the width of the burial ground. The placement of a simple, temple-shaped gateway, built of white marble and axially aligned with the Cross of Sacrifice, establishes a strong vertical line by which to balance the extended horizontal perspective. At Ancona, a site without much inherent interest, the stately entrance and the symmetry of the headstones ascending the slope maintain an aura of repose and dignity even as the city sprawls out around the cemetery precincts.

Unlike the large war cemeteries, into which the fatalities of prolonged campaigns were gathered, and where the headstones record widely varying details pertaining to nationality, date of death, and regiment, the smaller cemeteries tend to be stories in themselves. The dates of death are concentrated within a limited period coinciding with a particular action, and the soldiers buried there are often of the same nationality. The setting and historical context of these cemeteries combine with the landscaping and architecture to lend them a singular poignancy. One such is the Agira Canadian War Cemetery, situated in the rugged terrain of eastern Sicily, where location, design, and intrinsic detail combine to form a moving testimonial to Canada's first major campaign in the Second World War.

The cemetery commands a fine position on a knoll between the towns of Agira and Regalbuto. It overlooks the concluding scenes of the Canadian campaign in Sicily, which began on the beaches near Pachino and wound its way through a series of towns whose names mark the stages of the Canadian advance on the left flank of the Eighth Army—from Ispica through Vizzini, Grammichele, Caltagirone, Piazza Armerina, Valguarnera, Leonforte, Assoro, Nissoria, Agira, Regalbuto, all the way to Adrano on the western foot of Mount Etna.³ The burial

³Good accounts of the Canadian battles in Sicily are found in Colonel G.W.L. Nicholson, *The Canadians in Italy, 1943-1945*, Ottawa: The Queen's Printer,

ground was chosen by Canadian graves registration officers in September of 1943 as the most fitting place to concentrate 490 of the 562 Canadian dead of the Sicily campaign. Agira is one of three cemeteries in Italy designated as Canadian (along with the Moro River cemetery at Ortona and the aforementioned Villanova), but it holds the distinction of being the lone Second World War cemetery in which only Canadians are buried.

Sixty years on, it is still an isolated but highly evocative place. The eponymous town of Agira occupies the western slope of a sharply peaked hill. It was the home of the historian Diodorus Siculus, the sole source for Agira's ancient past, but the town was to dwell in obscurity until the twelfth century, when the Norman king William Roger consolidated his hold on the interior of Sicily by building a string of castles at strategic high points, two of which, Assoro and Agira, were to be etched into the memory of the Canadians who fought there in July 1943. The historical setting acquires added drama from the topography, for the whole site is framed against the bulk of Mount Etna.

The rustic setting and magnificent backdrop on eastern and western side alike hardly needed embellishment. The task faced by de Soissons imposed more practical problems, such as ensuring adequate water supply and checking soil erosion, which he solved by sinking wells and planting pines and almond trees around the sides of the knoll. The rough temporary crosses were replaced by headstones of Portland stone shipped from England; these were set up in four plots, two on the forward slope and two on the rear. The entrance to the cemetery, however, warrants attention, as it was here that de Soissons sought to magnify the natural beauty of the site. The gate is set within a limestone wall enclosing a mosaic patio. Once through the gate, the visitor faces a broad lawn leading upwards to the crest of the hill, where the Cross of Sacrifice stands in stark profile against the sky. Terraced bastions capped by plant beds flank the ascent and terminate in rounded bastions on either side of a mosaic platform placed halfway up the hill. As the visitor proceeds past this point, Mount Etna comes into view over the crest. The Cross of Sacrifice, mounted on a stone platform, marks the central point for the four quarters of the burial ground.

The stone shelters in the corners of the lower entrance area contain features linking them to their setting in the Sicilian landscape. The tiled roofs, and the stonework with its quoining in the walls and rusticated voussoirs over the doorways, evoke the feeling and traditions of the Italian countryside. Like the mosaic patterns adorning the platforms in the entrance way, the stonework is allusive rather than strictly imitative,

1956; and Bill McAndrew, *Canadians and the Italian Campaign*, Montreal: Art Global, 1996.

decorative rather than functional, but these touches enhance local context in a war cemetery whose principal features derive from British commemorative traditions and honour soldiers from a distant foreign land.

The cemetery, however, does more than perpetuate the memory of the soldiers buried within its precincts. Taken together, the details on the headstones—rank, name, regiment, date of death, and age—outline the saga of the Canadian First Division and First Army Tank Brigade which waged a 26-day campaign in the parched, dusty landscape against skilled and tenacious defenders. The dates read like a fever chart of the fighting, relatively light in the early days between the landings on July 10 and the first serious encounter with the Germans at Valguarnera on July 18, with the cost in casualties steadily mounting thereafter, peaking in correlation with the major attacks launched between July 21 and August 5. The division was withdrawn into rest on August 6; but the sprinkling of dates from late August to December of 1943 speaks for the soldiers who died of their wounds. In a closer context, the dates also trace the fortunes of particular regiments. July 21 and 29 stand out as costly days for the Seaforth Highlanders of Canada, July 27 for the Royal 22nd Regiment, or August 2 for the West Nova Scotia Regiment. The collocation of date and regiment often points to the place where the soldier lost his life, as for instance the members of the Loyal Edmonton Regiment who died in the fighting around Leonforte on July 21-22.

The sequence of details on each headstone conforms to the pattern established by the Imperial War Graves Commission after the First World War and maintained for the British and Commonwealth war dead of the Second. Also retained was the provision that the families of fallen soldiers could have a short valedictory inscription incised at the base of the headstone, beneath the cross. The Commission provided a list of suitable inscriptions to assist families in their choice of words, and it is clear from the recurrence of formulae that many families selected the epitaph they wished to appear on the headstone. Yet there is a wide variety among the inscriptions, indicating that just as many families elected to say farewell in their own words. As a result, within the officially prescribed memorials standard in all Commonwealth war cemeteries there exists a record, unique in history, of the response of the general populace to the deaths of soldiers, commemorated not collectively and anonymously, but individually as sons, husbands, brothers, or fathers whose loss cast a shadow over many other lives. What do these inscriptions, be they conventional or exceptional, have to tell us?

A number of epitaphs attest the regional affiliations of the regiments within the First Division and the strong regimental pride fostered in soldiers who came to look upon their regiment as a second family. The following groups of inscriptions illustrate the shared local origins and loyalties that knit each regiment together :

Born Saint John, New Brunswick. Requiescat in pace.

Captain Thomas Southall Porter, Carleton and York Regiment, 18.7.43 (29)
Son of Magloire Plourde and Annie Gagnon Plourde, Edmunston N.B. Canada.
Private Reginald Plourde, Carleton and York Regiment, 2.8.43 (21)



Rome War Cemetery

The Carleton and York regiment hailed from New Brunswick and drew many of its recruits from the Saint John river valley. It was one of three regiments making up the Third Brigade, which included another regiment from the Maritimes, the West Nova Scotia Highlanders. These two Maritime regiments were built out of the militia units mobilised when war broke out in 1939, whereas their fellow battalion in the brigade, the Royal 22nd Regiment, was a regular unit in the small Permanent Force maintained by Canada during the 1920s and 1930s. It carried a proud tradition reaching back to the First World War, and as the only French-speaking regiment in the First Division, its ranks were filled by men from Quebec :

Son of Captain Leo A. Tougas, Quebec Fire Brigade, and Amanda Angers.

Lance Sergeant Jean Paul Tougas, Royal 22nd Regiment, 27.7.43 (26)

De St-Narcisse, co. Rimouski, P. Québec, Canada. Priez pour lui.

Private Emile Banville, Royal 22nd Regiment, 27.7.43 (23)

Né à Montréal, P. Qué. Canada. Fils de M et Mde Narcisse A. Couture.

Private Gérard Couture, Royal 22nd Regiment, 30.7.43 (30)

The Second Brigade was composed of three regiments from western Canada. One of them was the Loyal Edmonton Regiment, which drew many of its recruits from northern Alberta. Another western Canadian unit, the Saskatoon Light Infantry, served as the division's support battalion:

Son of Wm. and Jessie McEwan, Barrhead, Alberta. Husband of Gladys McEwan of Oxted, Surrey, England.



Cassino War Cemetery with Abbey in background

Sergeant Robert McEwan, Loyal Edmonton Regiment, 5.8.43 (24)
Of Fort Garry, Manitoba, Canada. "Greater love hath no man than this"
 Lieutenant James Gordon Leggo, Saskatoon Light Infantry, 24.7.43 (26)

Where some regiments were drawn from rural areas, others had strong connections with cities. The 48th Highlanders of Canada was a longstanding, socially prominent militia unit from Toronto, and it is a sign of the 48th's cachet that in Agira and elsewhere we find families using the regimental motto as the soldier's epitaph. In another case of regimental loyalty, the family recorded the connection with the soldier's original unit :

'Fidelis'

Lieutenant Robert Free Osler, 48th Highlanders of Canada, 26.7.43 (32)
"Dileas gu brath" Faithful forever.



The Terraces at Gradara War Cemetery

Private James Howard Simmons, 48th Highlanders of Canada, 12.8.43
Formerly of the Royal Regiment of Canada. Son of John and Annie Chase,
Peterborough, Ontario, Canada.

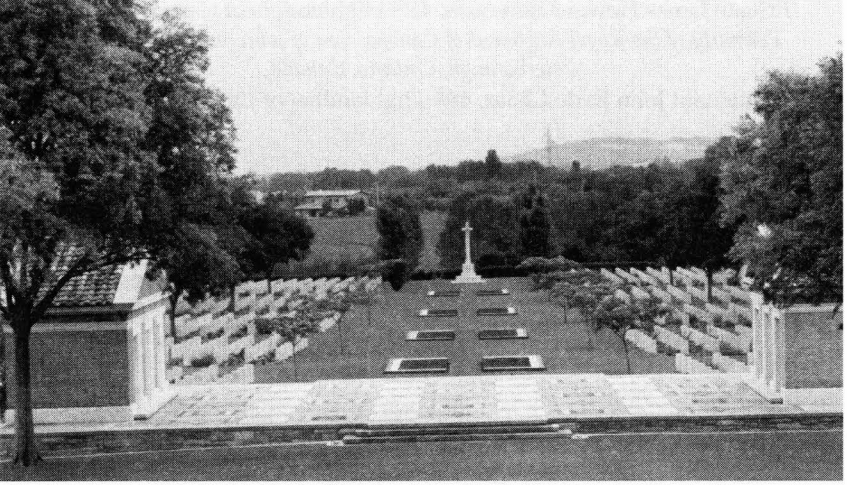
Lieutenant John Earle Chase, 48th Highlanders of Canada, 1.8.43 (29)



The Sangro River War Cemetery

Like the Pals regiments of the First World War, shared background and intense loyalty instilled a sense of pride and professionalism in the regiments of the First Division and kept its morale intact during the long period of inactivity in England. Pride in regiment is a leitmotiv in soldiers' accounts of the Sicily campaign, but it was also a double-edged sword, as shown in Farley Mowat's *And No Birds Sang* or Strome Galloway's *Bravely into Battle*, where the authors describe the dispiriting effect of seeing their regiments turn from bands of friends and familiar faces into collections of strangers as men from the reinforcement pools replaced the lost.

The First Division included men from all parts of Canada, who came from many walks of life. They had been among the first to go overseas, arriving in England in late 1939. One of the myths about the men who signed up holds that they joined the army to escape unemployment. In fact, nearly 80% of the men who volunteered in 1939-1940, before the imposition of the National Mobilisation Resources Act, left jobs or occupations to join the armed services. This is not to say that their motives were entirely idealistic, but there were men for whom religious conviction or a sense of duty, or the basic but firm belief that Nazi Germany and its allies represented a threat to their values or way of life, played a part in the decision to take up arms. A number of epitaphs state the principles for which the soldier fought, or the principles which his family felt had guided his choice to enlist :



The Treshold at Coriano Ridge Cemetery

He died for democracy, freedom, liberty and justice.

Private Martin Alleman, Loyal Edmonton Regiment, 3.8.43 (49)
*J'ai combattu pour l'honneur, la gloire et la justice. J'attends de Dieu ma
 recompense.*

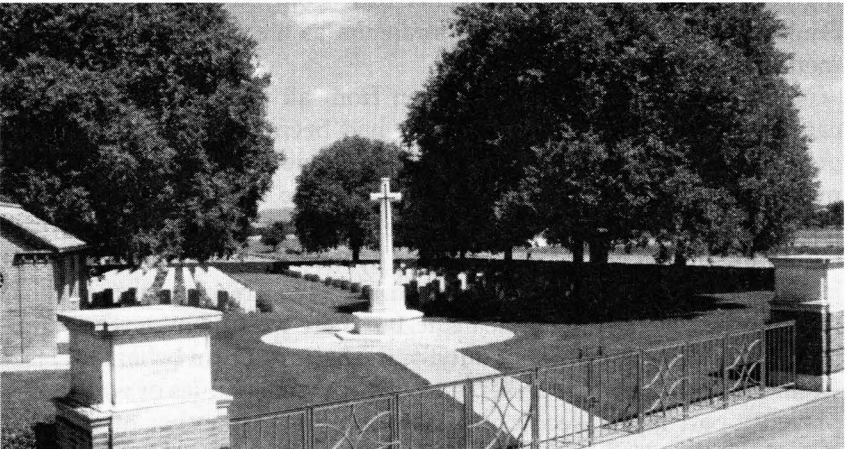
Private Albert Perreault, Royal Canadian Ordinance Corps, 25.7.43
In loving memory of an anti-fascist fighter. Helen and Mother.

Private Hugh Reid Anderson, Royal Canadian Regiment, 18.7.43 (28)
Joe. One of the best. Lost fighting for peace. God knows how mother misses you.

Private Patrick Joseph McKenna, Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment,
 25.7.43

He lived as he died, to keep peace in this world.

Private John Thomas Ferguson, Seaforth Highlanders of Canada, 21.7.43



View of Foiano della Chiana Cemetery

The question of motivation takes on a different aspect with soldiers of the Jewish faith. A Star of David marks the headstone of one young sol-

dier, Private Besserman, who was killed while rushing against a German position, driven by his hatred of the Nazis. Nearby lies another soldier whose family likewise extolled his service to his people :

For Israel and Canada. Ever remembered by Mother, Father, sisters and brother.

Private Jack Besserman, 48th Highlanders of Canada, 18.7.43 (29)

O Israel, here lies your servant; defender of truth, justice and brotherhood.

Private Ibbie Bell, Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment, 25.7.43 (24)



Villanova Canadian War Cemetery

It is not surprising to find in the epitaphs of fallen soldiers patriotic sentiments such as the following :

In loving memory of our beloved brother who fought and died for his country.

Private Omar Burton Gallagher, Carleton and York Regiment, 22.7.43 (24)

"For thee, o dear, dear country"

Gunner Frederick Stewart Roberts, Royal Canadian Artillery, 25.7.43 (31)

Il est mort pour son pays.

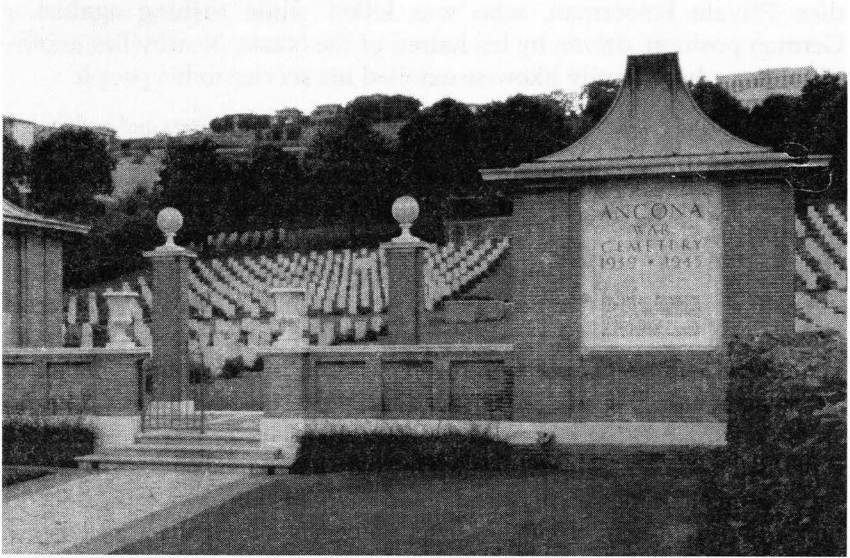
Private Napoleon Labrie, Royal 22nd Regiment, 27.7.43 (31)

Other epitaphs indicate that Canadians had yet to conceive of their country as a self-standing entity. At a time when Canada's population was half British in origin, and the country itself a dominion of the British Empire, many English Canadian soldiers were only a generation or two removed from Britain, still bound to the Mother Country by the links of family or marriage. Canada still saw itself in terms of her British heritage and connection, and had gone to war because Britain had. Although her soldiers had a primary allegiance to their native land, it is not unusual to find Canadian epitaphs expressing ties or pledging loyalty to Great Britain.

Beloved husband of Margaret Rachel Cameron. Ardiersier, Inverness, Scotland.

Private Bruce Donald Davison, Loyal Edmonton Regiment, 28.7.43 (23)

For King and Country.



The Entrance of Ancona War Cemetery

Corporal Alfred Wilson Clements, Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment,
22.7.43 (32)

Here, my beloved, England lives; go tell the English why I died.

Captain Maurice Herbert Battle Cockin, Hastings and Prince Edward
Regiment, 21.7.43

British influences and sentiments appear also in the choice of literary quotations for epitaphs. The works of Rudyard Kipling were standard fare in school readers, anthologies, and above all in the prose and poetry commemorating the Glorious Dead of the Great War. Kipling, the father of the term "Tommy's", was the poet of empire and the lowly soldier who served it, and his verses were chosen more often than those of any other author. Two headstones in Agira carry quotations from his works, the first from the preface to *Barrack-Room Ballads*, the second from a poem written on the death of the Boer War hero Lord Roberts:

"They rise to their feet as he passes by, gentlemen unafraid" Kipling

Sapper Lloyd Alexander Johnston, Corps of Royal Canadian Engineers,
28.7.43 (23)

Glory is the least of things that follow this man home.

Lieutenant Edward Martin MacLachlan, 48th Highlanders of Canada, 15.7.43 (31)

Tennyson was another popular source of quotations, particularly for his threnodic *In memoriam*, from which this epitaph cites a line :

Fighting for humanity he fell. God's angels saw him and they wept. "God's finger-touched him and he slept"

Private George Nelson Towart, Royal Canadian Regiment, 24.7.43 (18)

The notions of duty and sacrifice which Kipling's and Tennyson's poems exalted ran deep in the commemorative pieces composed in the wake of the First World War. The Victorian diction in which such consolatory themes were phrased to give meaning to the hecatombs of the Somme or Passchendaele and to alleviate the pain of the bereaved was taken up again after the Second World War. Significantly, it was not to Owen, Sassoon, Graves or Blunden (all of whose work had long been published) that families turned for quotations, but to John Arkwright's *O Valiant Heart*, or to the anonymous inscriptions on Great War monuments:



Agira (centre) and Mount Etna

R.I.P. O valiant heart, no laggard thou. In remembrance your life shines on.

Private Cyril George Peck, Loyal Edmonton Regiment, 3.8.43 (22)

He died as few men get the chance to die, fighting to save a world's morality.

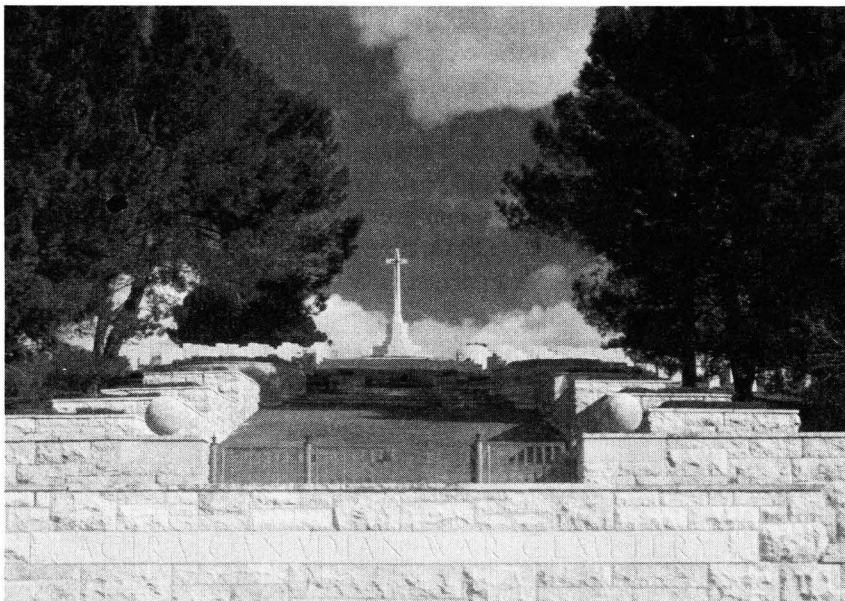
Captain George Turnbull Whitelaw, 48th Highlanders of Canada, 1.8.43 (23)

The themes of sacrifice and redemption are even more pronounced in the passages from Scripture or hymns which families selected to portray the soldier's death as an offering for peace, democracy and freedom, or for a better world.⁴ It had been a common response after the First World War to liken the soldier's sacrifice to that of Christ, a comparison also made explicitly in the first inscription given below, found on the headstone of one of the two 17-year old soldiers buried in Agira:

"I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep"

Gunner Leigh MacKay, Royal Canadian Artillery, 11.12.43 (17)

His life was given, a sacrifice for others.



Entrance to Agira Canadian War Cemetery

Private William Blaylock, Loyal Edmonton Regiment, 22.7.43 (18)

With his life blood he paid our debt. A brave boy, a noble son.

Private Ferdinand Leonard Nash, Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment,
19.7.43 (20)

They died that we might live.

Lance Corporal Rupert Rhoades Story, Seaforth Highlanders of Canada,
29.7.43 (25)

*My dear husband James, so young, so strong, so brave. He died not in vain. He gave
this life to save.*

Private James Alexander Mailman, Carleton and York Regiment, 1.8.43 (22)
He chose him out of all men living to offer sacrifice to God.

Lance Corporal Leon Joseph Richard, West Nova Scotia Regiment, 2.8.43 (25)
Faithful to duty, called into higher service from glory unto glory.

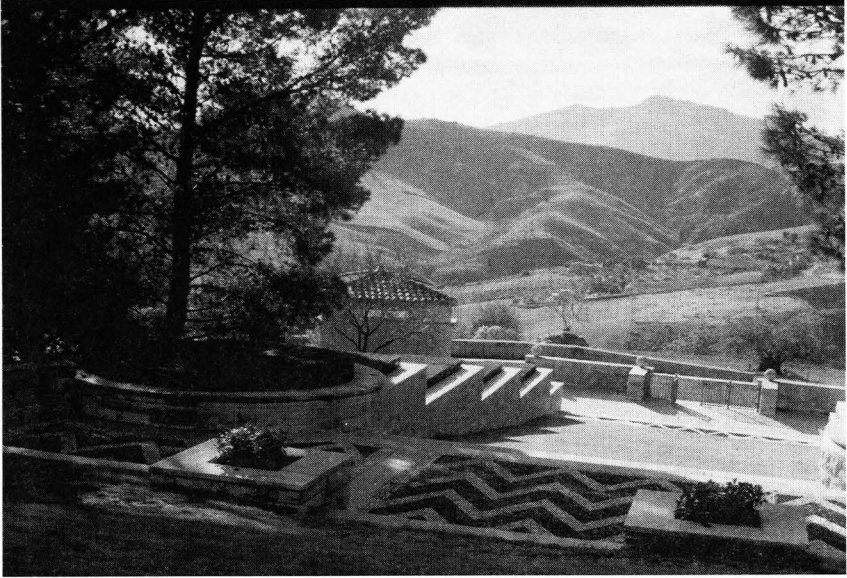
Gunner Orvil Edward Brown, Royal Canadian Artillery, 31.7.43 (23)
He made the supreme sacrifice for the love of God and humanity.

Private Arthur Morton, 48th Highlanders of Canada, 25.7.43 (25)
Que son sacrifice apporte la paix au monde.

Private Albert Harrisson, Royal 22nd Regiment, 18.7.43 (29)
Sublime sacrifice. Puisse ton immolation ne pas avoir été faite en vain.

Private Jean Yves Hamel, Royal 22nd Regiment, 27.7.43 (23)

⁴The Canadian response to the losses of the First World War and the reliance on themes of sacrifice and redemption are discussed by Jonathan Vance, *Death So Noble. Memory, Meaning and the First World War*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1997, esp. chapter 2.



The Ascent to Agira

The final pair of epitaphs show that French Canadians too were the heirs to the uplifting consolatory sentiments of the Great War. But French Canadians, who made up a third of Canada's population at the time, could not be expected to feel the same commitment to an Empire from which they felt estranged by their language and faith. Those who volunteered for active service—and there were more of them than is commonly supposed—came from a tradition-oriented society which predicated its survival on the pillars of Church, language, and family. The epitaphs of French Canadian soldiers therefore tend to focus more closely on the defining traits of French Canada and to emphasize the soldier's loyalty to his Church and to his own people. They are also more prone to invite fellow Catholic passersby to assist in the work of the soldier's salvation by saying a prayer for his soul :

Frère bien aimé. Mort pour Dieu et patrie. Repose en paix au ciel. Une prière.

Private Jules Gagnon, Royal 22nd Regiment, 1.9.43 (33)

Qu'il repose dans la paix du Seigneur. Il a sacrifié sa vie pour les siens.

Private Gerald Joseph Doucette, West Nova Scotia Regiment, 2.8.43 (20)

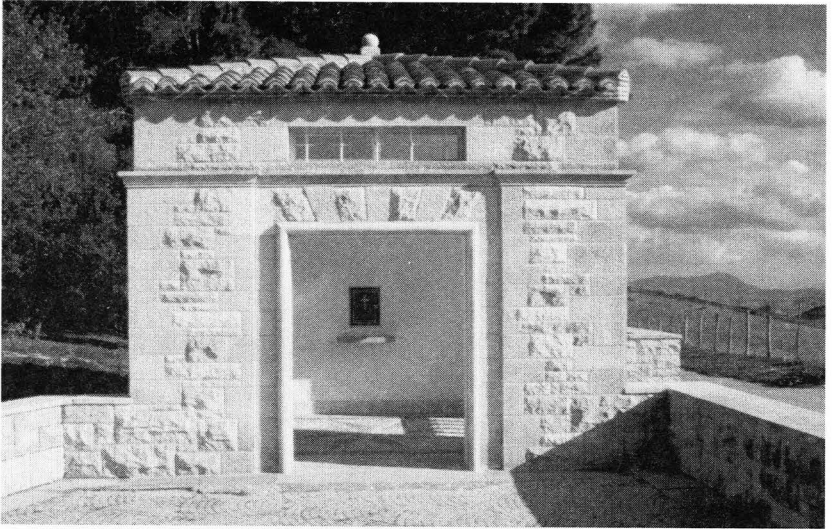
A tout ami Catholique, une prière s'il vous plait.

Private Marcel Arsenault, Royal 22nd Regiment, 19.10.43 (23)

For the glory of God, my country, my family. Marcel.

Private Joseph Marcel Ducharme, Royal 22nd Regiment, 18.7.43 (21)

The names of the soldiers buried in Agira reflect the predominantly British and French composition of an older Canada. In any Canadian war cemetery, however, glimmers of the demographic changes that set



Stone Shelter at Agira

pre-war Canada apart from its post-war descendant are visible in the number of foreign languages in which inscriptions appear – Ukrainian, Polish, Russian, Hungarian, Finnish, Swedish, Danish, Icelandic, Dutch, Italian, as well as in two examples in Agira, one of a Jewish soldier whose Hebrew epitaph is given in translation,⁵ the other of a soldier of Czech ancestry:

In memory of my good and beloved son's soul. Joseph, son of Alter Attis, who was killed on the sixth day of Av 5703.

Bombardier Joseph Wilfred Attis, Royal Canadian Artillery, 7.8.43

V ?izine se narodil, v ?izine mlad? svùj ?ivot za demokracii polo?il.

(He was born in a foreign land, and in a foreign land he lay down his young life for democracy)

Private Steve John Slavik, Royal Canadian Regiment, 24.7.43 (30)

There are no generals or famous names to be found in the register at Agira. Two Lieutenant Colonels bear the highest rank among the fallen. There are also majors, captains, and a handful of lieutenants, but for the most part the soldiers are mere privates and corporals whose names rarely if ever appear in the histories of the battle for Sicily. Among them were men who performed heroic actions, such as Private Sidney Cousins who singlehandedly destroyed two German machine gun positions on the heights above the town of Leonforte, only to be killed by a shell shortly afterwards; but the majority were ordinary young

⁵I wish to express my thanks to Professor Libby Garshowitz of the University of Toronto for translating this epitaph for me.



Headstones in Agira

men who died carrying out the orders given to them, and whose names are known to no one but the families who bore the blow of their loss. These simple, plaintive inscriptions are reminders that for countless families the issue of the war was not victory or defeat:

In loving memory of my boy who is sadly missed.

Gunner James Osborne, Royal Canadian Artillery, 21.7.43 (17)

Our only son whom we have sorely lost. Sadly missed by his father and mother.

Lance Corporal John Frolis, Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment, 3.8.43 (23)

We thought his life too soon done; ended, indeed, when scarcely yet begun.

Private Daniel James Murray, 48th Highlanders of Canada, 25.7.43 (20)

He may be dead but my sister and I will never forget him.

Private Adolphe Louis Poulain, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, 23.7.43 (22)

Dear Ken, rest in peace from the roar of battle. Love, Aunt Mary.

Private Kenneth John Earnshaw, Royal Canadian Regiment, 1.8.43 (21)

We are waiting, Frankie lad. Mother and Dad.

Sapper Oscar Frank Foster, Corps of Royal Canadian Engineers, 4.8.43 (22)

Others serve notice that the consequences of obscure, forgotten battles and campaigns will be part of many lives for some time to come:

A memory dearer than gold of a daddy we loved and will never forget. Phyllis and Sylvia.

Sapper Clement Irwin, Corps of Royal Canadian Engineers, 31.7.43 (33)

"He was ours and we remember" His loving wife and daughters, mother and Dad.

Corporal Hugh Mercer, Seaforth Highlanders of Canada, 20.7.43 (36)

In loving memory of a dear husband and daddy. Ever in our thoughts.

Private Thomas Fowler Simpson, Seaforth Highlanders of Canada, 21.7.43 (32)

The Canadian involvement in the Italian campaign was to go on for another eighteen months after the capture of Sicily. By the end, the ranks of the D-Day Dodgers held 93,000 Canadians, of whom 26,254 became casualties, a final tally that includes 5,964 dead. Canadians are not used to thinking in terms of their country's place in the history of Europe or the Mediterranean, tending instead to see the influences and effects of the Old World upon the New; but the Canadian role in Italy from 1943 to 1945 represents an important chapter in the national experience of both countries in the Second World War. The materials assembled by the army field historians, the soldiers' memoirs, the war art and photographs, the accounts of the war correspondents, and the reports of the battle psychiatrists are among the sources retailing the history and the multifaceted individual experiences of the Italian campaign.⁶ To this record the war cemeteries add a tragic, human perspective, preserving some memory of soldiers who were not just faceless pawns on a tactical chessboard but young men wrenched from their lives at home and inserted into the alien, lethal world of war. The war cemeteries stand as permanent witnesses to the links between Italy and the Commonwealth nations whose soldiers fought there, and it is fitting to close with two epitaphs from Agira which, like de Soissons's Italianate touches, connect a soldier from a faraway country to the land where he is buried. The first is taken from Shelley's *Adonais*, the elegy written in memory of his friend Keats, and the second is a valediction from Italian-Canadian parents who in all likelihood never saw the grave where their son was laid to rest :

*"And that unrest, which men miscall delight, can touch him not, and torture not
again"*

Trooper Frederick Sturdee Jarvis, Ontario Regiment, 25.8.43 (28)
*Asleep beneath Sicilian skies in an honoured soldier's grave is the son we loved and
miss. He rests among the brave.*

Corporal James Michael Vincent Dilio, Three Rivers Regiment, 5.8.43 (21)

St. Clement's School, Toronto

⁶W.J. McAndrew, "Recording the War: Uncommon Canadian perspectives of the Italian Campaign," *Canadian Defence Quarterly*, vol. 18 (Winter 1988), 43-50.

Manuel Galeote

CONCERNING THE POETS OF THE RIVER GENIL
AND RAFAEL ALBERTI

(Improvised poetry from the geographical centre of Andalusia)

Preliminary Notes

Along the shores of the "Middle Valley" of the Genil River an ancient tradition has been preserved. According to the flamenco critic and specialist Juan Casillas (Juan Atero),¹ this tradition is that of improvising verses (in five line stanzas) which are then interpreted by *cantaores* (singers of the flamenco style) to the sound of the *fandango cortijero*. The area native to the song of these poets extends from the localities of Granada of Huétor-Tajar, Loja, Zagra and Algariñejo; to Cordoba: Iznájar, Rute, Lucena and Cuevas de San Marcos (where the greatest dam in Andalusia and the third largest in Spain was built; the same dam that retains the waters of the Genil) until reaching Malaga's own Villanueva de Algaidas, Villanueva de Tapia and Villanueva del Trabuco.²

In Juan Rejano's opinion it is clearly stated in the following verses, that the Genil River has its own personality. It doesn't lack in poetry and is made up of many centuries of history:

¿El río es vida o es muerte?
¿Mi sangre es río o es mar?
¿Dónde acabará su curso
Y cuándo, yo, de soñar?
(Is the river life or is it death?)

¹We thank Don Juan Casillas for conceding us an interview at his home in Antequera where he offered us his explanations and commentaries. He is now retired from singing completely.

²The largest dam in Andalusia was flooded in 1968 drowning half a dozen people, flooding 605 homes, and leaving 2000 people homeless in the municipality of Iznájar. Along with them the most popular poets of the region emigrated and were traumatically dispersed, including El Cávila and Pedro Rama. The Pharaonic construction took 14 years to complete and more than 1000 days were required to fill it. The new dam guaranteed a water supply to 200,000 inhabitants of Cordoba and provided water to 80,000 hectares of irrigated land. But it seriously affected the lives of many people. Franco formally opened the dam in 1969.

Is my blood a river, or is it the sea?
 Where will its course end
 And when will I stop dreaming?)

Juan Rejano, *El Genil y los olivos*, 1944.

In this entire area, almost a natural region that distributes its territory between the regions of the Subbética Cordobesa, the west of Granada and the northeast of Málaga, the village poets abounded. These poets improvised their verses in *fiestas de palillos* (flamenco song parties) and in the gatherings of poets as well as in any other auspicious moment such as weddings, baptisms and a variety of family celebrations. They are in some ways the carriers forward of the Malagan *decimista* tradition (poets that improvise poetry in ten line stanzas) that Vicente Espinel initiated and that crossed the Atlantic where it spread across Hispanic-America.³

This region is one characterized by the olive crops and the fertile irrigated areas on the dried-up banks of the Genil that Pedro de Espinosa commented on in his *Fábula de Genil*. Historically and culturally, it is a transitional land between High Andalusia (the old Nazari kingdom of Granada) and Low Andalusia (the flatter lands bathed by the Guadalquivir). This border character has been established by historians, geographers, linguists and other researchers.⁴

Rafael Alberti discovers the poets of the Genil River

In recent times a group of poets, among whom we include Gerardo Páez, *El Carpintero* (a man of great brilliance and talent), who has ener-

³For more information on the Hispanic-American decimist tradition, see the valuable works coordinated and edited by M. Trapero; *La décima popular en la tradición hispánica: actas del Simposio Internacional sobre la Décima*, (Las Palmas, del 17 al 22 de diciembre de 1992), Las Palmas de Gran Canaria: University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria: Cabildo Insular de Gran Canaria, 1994; *El libro de la decima: la poesía improvisada en el Mundo Hispánico*, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Servicio de Publicaciones, 1996; *VI Encuentro-Festival Iberoamericano de la décima y el verso improvisado*, Ed. M. Trapero and others, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Ministry of Education and Culture, 2000; and the recent collective monograph *La décima: su historia, su geografía, sus manifestaciones*, Gran Canaria, Centro del a Cultura Popular Canaria, 2001.

⁴See F. Ortega Alba, *El Sur de Córdoba. Estudio de geografía agraria*, 2 vols., Publicaciones del Monte de Piedad, Cordoba, 1974; C. Torres Delgado, *El antiguo reino nazari de Granada (1232-1340)*, Granada, Anel, 1974; Manuel Alvar, "Estructura del léxico andaluz", *BFUCh XVI* (1964), 5-12; J. Mondejar, *El verbo andaluz, Formas y estructuras*, Madrid, CSIC, Añejo XC de la RFE, 1970; M. Galeote, *El habla rural del treviño de Iznájar, Vva. De Tapia y Venta de Sta. Bárbara*, Granada, Ediciones TAT, Ayuntamiento de Iznájar (Córdoba), 1988.

getically promoted the recovery of the art of the Genil poets. This art is the same one that Rafael Alberti knew. In the winter of 1924–1925 he was convalescing at his sister's home in Rute where she was the wife of the local notary. During his stay in Rute that winter, Alberti was in contact with these poets and so he speaks of them in his personal letters, sent consecutively to Federico García Lorca and to José Bergamín⁵

Carta número 2 a Federico García Lorca

Sierra de Rute (h. 1924-1925)

Federiquísimo sacrosanto. (Ora pro nobis).

Un abrazo muy fuerte desde la punta nublada del Monte de las Cruces.

Aquí no hubo tormenta. Aquí lo que hay, desde hace una semana, es una niebla espesa, que no me deja ver desde mi cuarto la carreterita de Loja. (Por ahí, por ahí se va a Granada). (...)

No se puede salir a la calle, ni al campo, ni a ningún sitio (...)

Si el tiempo mejorara iríamos de excursión algunos chicos y chicas a las *Granjas del Genil*, donde los poetas tienen su Huerto. Allí se reúnen todos y hacen sus fiestas. Guitarra, baile, cante e improvisación de poesías. Debe ser algo extraordinario. Tanto es el prestigio de estos poetas, que cuando hay jolgorio en Iznájar, Cuevas o Benamejí, reciben sus cartas y acuden todos, por dos o tres duros, a amenizar la juer-ga con sus versos (...)(cursiva nuestra)

Rafael Alberti

(Letter number 2 to Federico García Lorca

Rute Mountains (h. 1924-1925)

My dearest and most holy Federico. (Ora pro nobis).

I send you a very strong hug from the cloudy peak of the Mountain of the Crosses.

Here there was no storm. Here what there is, since about a week ago, is a thick fog, which prevents me from seeing from my room the small highway to Loja. (It's that way, that way that one goes to Granada). (...)

One cannot go outside at all now, not to the countryside, nor any place (...)

If the weather gets any better a group of us, girls and guys, will make an excursion to the *farms of the Genil*, where the poets have their kitchen garden. There they all reunite and have their parties. There is guitar, dance, song and the improvisation of poems. It must be an extraordinary experience. Such is the prestige of those poets that when there is fun in Iznájar, Cuevas or Benamejí, they all receive letters and flock there for 10 or 15 pesetas to enliven the party with their verses (...) (our italics)

Rafael Alberti)

⁵See *Cuaderno de Rute (1925): un libro inédito de Rafael Alberti*, Revista Litoral (Numbers 70-72), Torremolinos (Málaga), 1977. It is well known that in Rute Alberti typed his manuscript of *Mar y tierra*, see R. Alberti, *Marinero en tierra; La amante; El alba del alhelí*, ed. by R. Marrast, Castalia, Madrid, 1972, 29.

Carta número 1 a José Bergamín

Rute, diciembre 8, 1925.

Queridísimo Pepe:

(...) Como llueve a mares, no puedo salir al campo. Es un fastidio. Si el tiempo continúa así, *se nos aguará la fiesta que proyectábamos: iríamos, para Navidad, chicas y chicos, a las Granjas, donde está el Huerto de los poetas. Y oiríamos las coplas que se echan unos a otros; porque siempre hablan en verso.* Luego, en barcas, merendaríamos por el Genil, que ya por las Granjas va muy ancho. ¡Cuánto iba yo a aprender! ¡Cuánto me iba a divertir! Pero, ¡abajo las ilusiones!, porque, según me han dicho, este mes de diciembre suele ser muy malo por esta parte de Córdoba. ¡Qué jeringazo! (...) [our italics]⁶

Rafael Alberti

(Letter number 1 to José Bergamín

Rute, the 8th of December, 1925.

Dearest Pepe:

(...) As it is raining cats and dogs I cannot go out to the countryside. It is such a bother. If the weather continues this way, *it will rain us out of the party that we were planning: we would go for Christmas, all of us boys and girls, to the Farms, where the garden of the poets is. And we would listen to the verses that they utter to one another, because they always speak in verse.* Later, in boats, we would picnic on the Genil since by then we would have had enough of the farms. All the things that I was going to learn!! How much fun I would have had!! But, my dreams are dashed! Because as I have been told, this month of December tends to be very bad in this part of Córdoba. How annoying!! (...) [our italics]

Rafael Alberti)

In the last thirty years much has been done due to the many requests to rescue, preserve and divulge those popular song and dance parties with the poets of the land, accompanied by guitars and other musical instruments. However, as strange as it may seem, although we have seen that Rafael Alberti left us evidence of the existence of those popular poets that improvised their verses on the shoreline localities of the Genil River, even today we lack studies on the continuation of the phenomenon. Those same popular artists call themselves (and the public calls them) poets, par excellence, although some of them today perform for the public as *troveros* (local poets that improvise verse), under the influence of the *troveros* of the Alpujarra region.

Alberti defines the five-line stanza

Without a doubt, there is a text in the recovered *Cuaderno de Rute* that seems to us to be exceptional: it is the unequalled definition that Alberti achieved of the five-line stanza:

⁶*Ibidem*, 117-120.

—Antoñuelo: ¡qué tema para una copla de esas que tú, de pronto, te sacas de las sienas. ¿No ves tú ya, cerrando los ojos, cinco hileras de versos como cinco llorosas veredillas? Por la primera, amigo, baja tiritando, el alba; por la segunda, sube, nostálgica, la pena de Rafael, que es muy grande porque tiene sueño y quisiera quedarse allí calentito, entre las pajas del pajar; por la tercera, camina, pensativo, el mismo Rafael, lejos de sus compañeros; por la cuarta, vienen, en tropel, con los brazos abiertos y escarchadas las frentes, los olivos; por la quinta... ¿Qué vuela por la quinta, Antoñuelo? El aire frío de la serranía, curvo, como un alfanje. ¡Qué copla para ti, amigo!⁷

(—Antoñuelo: What a subject for a verse of those that you so quickly pluck from your brain. Don't you see now when you close your eyes, five lines of verse like five tearful paths? Along the first one, my friend, comes shivering the dawn; along the second, Rafael's sorrow nostalgically goes up—a sorrow so big because he is sleepy and would like to stay nice and warm between the sheets; along the third walk, pensively, this same Rafael, far from his companions; along the fourth comes a mob of olive trees, with their arms open and faces frosty; along the fifth ... What flies by the fifth, Antoñuelo? The cold air of the mountain ranges, curved like a cutlass. What a verse for you, friend!)

Undoubtedly, this original definition of the five-line stanza should not go unnoticed by the researchers of improvised oral poetry in the Hispanic world. It seems to us that no other definition can rank with Alberti's: five lines, barely five rows of words to condense a thought, attack his companions, ridicule the public, express an idea, formulate a wink of humor, satirize his opponent, etc., etc.

An entire world is condensed into five lines along with the circumstantial setting of the poet who with great intelligence, speed and mastery improvised the verse. The last line is always the most important, the origin and the essence, the conclusion, the invisible axe blow, the impeccable cut that leaves the public breathless: the fifth line of verse: "*What flies by the fifth, Antoñuelo? The cold air of the mountain range, curved, like a cutlass.*" (our italics).

The sound archive of the Genil Poets

Today we are working on the history, genealogy, the anthropological recovery of oral texts and the classification of this improvised popular poetry around the Genil. It is about compositions of five-line stanzas that the poets of the region improvised going back to ancient times. This art then, deserves that its literary, musical, linguistic-dialectal and artistic-cultural importance as a whole be recognized and disseminated.⁸

⁷*Ibidem*, 90.

⁸Many researchers have explored this poetry of the region and have published a few introductory pages from the musical and anthropological perspective,

Of all the old poets of the Genil, those that remind the people and fans of the region's improvised poetry and those that have now passed into history and legend are *Los Lázaros* (who R. Alberti listened to),⁹ *Los Ruchos*, *José y Luis Serrano*, *Juan Alba*, *Los Tosquillas*, *Basilio el de Los Claveles*, *El Conejillo* or *Luis Ariza*. For different reasons or because of their deaths, the following retired from singing completely: *Pedro Rama*, *Juan Casillas*, and *El Cávila*. Many other such as *Fermín*, *Zamorano*, *Chorrillos*, *Petaca*, *Lojilla*, *Dominguillo*, *Valoy*, *El Sorupa*, *El Carbonero*, *Lizana*, *Cabrillas* or *El Timba*, only sing sporadically. Unfortunately, there is no continuation of this tradition among the younger generations.

In the history of the verses created on the shores of the Genil many poets deserve special recognition: *Diego Castillo*, *Juanico Carboneras*, *María Serrano*, *Isabel Hinojosa La Guapa*, *El Chispa de las Peñuelas*, *Dieguito Páez*, *Ricardín de las Fuentes* and *El Ciego de la Rincona*.

But in the genealogy of the Genil Poets without a doubt we would have to demand an honoured spot for Gerardo Páez, *El Carpintero* (born and raised in Villanueva de Tapia, Málaga) who in the last decade has fought against wind and tide so that the whole world (including both scientific and academic fields) might recognize the art and poetry that abounds on the shores of the Genil. This recognition was also sought at International Festivals such as Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Las Tunas or San Luis Potosí. In the company of his friends *El Caco*, *El Guardia Civil Lojeño* and *Chaparillo*, *El Carpintero* has elevated the improvised five-line stanza to the place it deserves within popular folklore and the art of Andalusia.

El Carpintero, along with *El Caco*, *Chaparillo* and *El Lojeño* in 2003 recorded a record titled *Así cantan los poetas del Genil (Homenaje a Rafael en el I Centenario de su nacimiento)*. This recording pays homage to the universal Rafael Alberti, *El Carpintero's* godfather. As such, they give us a valuable linguistical-musical and ethnographic testimony to improvised poetry.¹⁰

see José Arenas, Ramón Rodríguez and Miguel A. Berlanga, *El Trovo de la Subbética* (Sevilla, Consejería de Educación de la Junta de Andalucía, 1998); and Miguel A. Berlanga, "Fiestas de poetas en la(s) Subbéticas andaluzas", en <http://www.ugr.es/~berlanga/trovo.htm> (page visited on May 15th, 2003); and also the recompilation of verses of F. Rodríguez Aguilera, *La poesía popular en la serranía sur de Córdoba*. Lucena, Gráficas González, 1987.

⁹See the brief narration "Rafael el de la Lázara", "inspirada en personajes reales que vivían por aquellos años en Iznájar, Rute y Almería" ("inspired by true characters who lived around those years in Iznájar, Rute and Almería), *Cuaderno de Rute*, op.cit., 90-92.

¹⁰*Así cantan los Poetas del Genil: Homenaje a Rafael Alberti en el I Centenario de su nacimiento*, Edition of Manuel Galeote, Col. Fonoteca del Genil, vol. 1, Ediciones ALDA, Málaga, 2003.

Currently, El Carpintero, now 70 years old, continues to show to Andalusian society and to the general public, his skills on stage alongside his companions and friends. It is an art that he learned from his ancestors who were also poets, particularly his grandfather best known by his nickname of Dieguito. In homage to El Carpintero, in the year 2000 the Municipal Council of Villanueva de Tapia realized the appropriateness of celebrating a gathering in that villa nueva (new town) (founded by Licenciante Pedro de Tapia in 1603) of both Andalusian and international talents in improvised poetry in the Hispanic world. It was in this way that the I Festival Internacional de Poesía Improvisada was born. Its success was instantaneous. The news of the Festival spread like wildfire throughout the region and Andalusia. Thousands of spectators arrived during those days to contemplate the artistic custom of improvisation. The Town Hall of Villanueva de Tapia, represented by its Mayoress, with great clairvoyance and intuition offered the emotional, poetic and unequalled Homenaje a El Carpintero (Homage to El Carpintero) in 2001. This moment will remain etched forever in the memories of El Carpintero, all those who attended, in that of his friends and everyone there. Along with El Carpintero another master of improvised poetry also collaborated in the organization of that I Festival: the Cuban artist Alexis Díaz Pimienta, the universal magician of words and of the Improvised Oral Ten-Line Stanza (Décima) in Cuba and Hispano-America.

Alexis Díaz Pimienta and El Carpintero were successful in convincing many people at that time (above all the authorities) to allow the X Congreso Internacional de la Décima Oral y el Verso Improvisado to be celebrated in 2002 in Villanueva de Tapia (Málaga), the native land of Vicente Espinel, the inventor of the ten-line stanza or *espinela*. At this Conference the aforementioned cantaor Juan Atero, Juan Casillas, the distinguished representative of the Genil poets, received a special tribute. In this way it came about that in Villanueva de Tapia (Málaga) the flag was raised to convert the locality into the Capital of Verse and the Improvised Ten-Line Stanza in the Hispanic World. These types of Festivals and gatherings of poets will continue to be necessary so that the tradition of the Genil poets renews itself, does not fade away and continues its path into the future. It is necessary to fight strongly on all fronts and using all the available media on behalf of this artistic, literary and musical tradition from the geographical centre of Andalusia; this art that fits into the framework of popular improvised poetry of the Hispanic world.

Ildefonso Pérez Aguilera (nicknamed *El Caco chico*, as he is the son of *El Caco*, another poet since passed away) one of the most popular poets of the Genil, along with the master of Priego de Cordoba (*Fermín, Zamorano* and so many others) also participated in the recording of *Homenaje a Rafael Alberti*. Ever since boyhood *El Caco* has experienced

the poetical-musical and artistic vocation that he learned from the popular poets of his region, including his own father. This people's poet adores rural life and the cultivation of the land. He enjoys improvising his five-line stanzas in the poets' gatherings just as only he can sing them: with guile and irony in his unmistakable voice. He has proved his artistic greatness in the *Concursos de Troveros de Priego de Córdoba* where he was declared the winner on various occasions. On Spanish stages he has performed alongside artists from Argentina, Puerto Rico, Cuba and Panama. He is a poet who actively and regularly participates, as do his companions, in the gatherings in the shoreline localities of the Genil. As well, *El Carpintero* has proven how important it has been for him to participate in radio and television programs in order to spread the art of the five-line stanza that he has performed ever since he was a young man. His work heading up the organization of the *Concurso de Trovos de Priego de Córdoba* is very valuable and makes him the true leader of the annual meeting.

Likewise, José Arévalo, *Chaparrillo*, (a name inherited from his father *Chaparro* along with his inclination for the art of improvised poetry in five-line stanzas) has become an unquestionable figure due to his talent. His innate poetic vocation continued to develop within him until he met Gerardo *El Carpintero*, *El Pavo de las Mesetas*, Luis Ariza *El Relojero* or *Fermín*. It was at that time that he dedicated himself to cultivating this art of the five-line stanza. His personal voice and his characteristic style have made him a famous and applauded poet in the region. In the *II Festival Internacional de Cante de Poetas* and the *X Congreso Iberoamericano de la Décima y el Verso Oral Improvisado* (Villanueva de Tapia, July 2002) he triumphed on stage because of his disputes with Arcadio Camaño, a brilliant Panamanian *repentista*. *Chaparrillo* won first prize in the *Concurso de Trovos de Priego de Córdoba* in September of 2002, competing with time-honoured masters such as *El Cávila* and others.

José María Rufino Pérez, a native of Loja (Granada) and nicknamed *El Lojeño*, has worked for many years as a civil servant. The passion for flamenco singing and poetry runs deep in his veins and he has harvested prizes and had great success in the *Concurso de Trovos de Priego de Córdoba* and in other regional competitions. Among the masters he remembers with special fondness *Madero (cantaor)*, *Los Ruchos* and *Doroteo*. He has shared the stage with *El Cabo*, *Torres*, *El Greñas*, *Nogales*, *El Sorupa* and the rest of his colleagues. He has performed alongside the troveros of Murcia, the *decimistas* of Puerto Rico, of Cuba and of other Hispanic-American countries in the *Festivales de Cante de Poetas* of Villanueva de Tapia (Málaga). He is a regular participant in the gatherings of poets of Rute, Zambra, Iznájar, Loja, Montefría, Algaríñejo, Huétor-Tájar, Lucena and Achidona.

Recently, *El Carpintero*, *El Caco*, *Chaparrillo* and *El Lojeño* have made a new live recording, still unedited, in the company of other poets:

Dominguillo, Lojilla, Lizana, Petaca o Tomizo.¹¹ Without a doubt, in the years of 1950 to 1970 the two great Genil Poets that triumphed with their voices and their verses were *Pedro Rama* (pronounced *Pedrorrama*) and *Jose Ruiz El Cvila*. There was no comparison to his success along the left and right margins of the Genil River, respectively: *Pedro Rama* was born in El Adelantado de Iznjar (he died in the year 2003 as an Andalusian immigrant in Navarra); *El Cvila*, native of Los Juncares (another village of Iznjar as well), —had to emigrate to the province of Sevilla, where he currently resides after the construction of the Dam of Iznjar in the flow of the Genil.

What we propose with the collection Fonoteca del Genil is to contribute to the Project conducted by the Archivo Lingstico Digital de Andaluca (ALDA), which comes to life with this valuable digital sound archive (a vast audiovisual digital archive of the live performances). In our judgement, with these materials but above all with the archive of the performances we will contribute to saving, investigating and divulging a little known, almost forgotten yet alive, part of the oral-musical patrimony of Andalusia.

As for the genealogy and history of these poets, it is easier to verify the artistic name and gather together some of his verses, etc., before turning for insight to his name and surnames or the biography and the personal character sketch. All of these personal characteristics are normally adorned with popular legends relative to the poet being bohemian, his openness towards others, his solidarity, his miserable living conditions, etc.

From the linguistic perspective, the five-line stanzas of the poets of the Genil are characterized by a refined dialectal archaism that is consistent with the archaic *repentista* poetic tradition. As much from the phonetic point of view as morphosyntactic and lexical the five-line stanzas participate in the Andalusian roots typical of the region that we have studied in other places (*seseo*, phonetic neutralizations, aspiration of the implosive –s, phonologised vocalic opening, conservation of the ancient aspirated medieval /h/; verbal forms not used in modern Spanish, arabisms that have endured in the region; local expressions, etc.)¹² It proves that rural speech resists the pressures of linguistic stan-

¹¹*Los poetas del Genil: Mano a mano*, Edition of M. Galeote, Col. Fonoteca del Genil, vol. 2, Ediciones ALDA (in print).

¹²See M. Galeote, *El habla rural del Trevio*, op.cit.; “Lexico rural del trevio de Crdoba, Granada y Mlaga?”, *Revista de Dialectologa y Tradiciones Populares* XLV (1990), 131-168; *Hablas cordobesas y literatura andaluza*, *Actas de los Primeros Cursos de Verano de la Subbtica* (Iznjar, Crdoba, 1994), University of Granada, 1995; “Terminologa dialectal del cultivo olivarero tradicional en el centro geogrfico de Andaluca”, in M. Galeote (ed.), *Crdoba lingstica y literaria*, Iznjar (Crdoba), 2003, 17-40.

andardization and socioeconomic development, locked within the five-line stanzas of the poets. Given the rural themes of these compositions, the disputes are frequently concerning agricultural life. Consequently it can be affirmed without error that the rural characteristics of the five-line stanzas begin to fossilize, separating them from idiomatic reality. The dialectical polymorphism of the region around the Genil, is a result of the convergence of diatopic and diastratic isoglosses that separate different Andalusian linguistic areas: besides the Castillian archaisms of olive terminology, for example (*haldudo* "olive tree with hanging branches", *zaranda* "olive sieve"), there are documented modern creations (*guitarrilla* "machine to knock down the olives"), including arabisms (*almazara* "oil mill", *azahar* "olive blossom") in addition to typically Andalusian formations (*alero* "long pole", *alameño* "variety of olive tree", etc.) or metaphorical designations (*frailear* "to cut down", *yorón* "olive tree with hanging branches").

This is the rural poetic language that distances itself from colloquial language and presents itself in manners, expressions and archaic forms of speaking that make it difficult for the younger generations to understand. They do not comprehend the sense of humor, irony or satire of the verses. In this way, poets like *Chaparrillo* (an authentic innovator) have initiated a renewal process of the poetic language and are gaining greater success among the public of the region.

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Translated by Maria Claire Hadzis-Bezies

Reviews

Galeote, Manuel (Ed.). *Córdoba lingüística y literaria*. Iznájar, Córdoba: Colección Letras de la Subbética, 2003.

Córdoba lingüística y literaria is the third volume of the collection *Letras de la Subbética*. The main goal of the collection is to present linguistic and literary studies pertaining to the regions of Córdoba and Andalusia in Spain. However, considering the repercussion many figures from this region have had on Spanish cultural life, it will be of value to all those interested in the Iberian Peninsula for, in fact, underlining this collection is a concern with peripheral relationships between these regions and the centres of Spanish cultural and political life.

The articles in this volume are divided into two parts, linguistic and literary studies respectively. The linguistic section comprises articles on sociolinguistics and lexicography. Manuel Galeote presents three studies on a variety of issues such as the urban dialect of Puente Genil or how the lexicon of olive growing, a major economic activity in the area, has permeated the dialects of Andalusia's geographical center. Galeote also discusses pedagogical issues regarding the teaching of Spanish as a foreign language in Córdoba and Andalusia. Felipe Gómez Solís analyzes, from a lexicographical perspective, problem areas, such as grammatical category, in the *Diccionario de la Real Academia Española*.

The literary studies section is the largest in the collection; it presents ten articles on a variety of literary topics with a regional connection. The articles examine Spanish Golden Age Literature, the Romantic period, the Spanish American War and its treatment in the journal articles of literary figures as well as the twentieth-century Spanish Avant-garde.

Two articles, Matilde Galera Sánchez's "Don Juan Valera y el Desastre de 1898" and Josep Esquerrá Nonell's "Julio Burell y la España del 98" study the repercussion of the Spanish American War on two important figures, the author Juan Valera and the journalist Julio Burell. Through the analysis of Juan Valera's newspaper articles and personal letters, Galera Sánchez reveals the author's perceptible analysis of Spain's predicament in the nineteenth-century. Josep Esquerrá Nonell sees the same awareness in the newspaper articles of José Burrell, a native of Córdoba, who, as a journalist and later Minister of Education, was at the center of Spanish intellectual life in the nineteenth-century. Manuel Gahete and María José Porro Herrera, "El *Album Amicorum* de los Marqueses de Peñaflor" and "Un *Album Poético* cordobés a las puertas del siglo XX" respectively, make a strong case in favor of the poetic album for its importance in understanding the artistic life and influence of literary currents in peripheral areas through to the twentieth century. These biographical and collective poetic enterprises organized in honor of someone often constitute a mosaic of literary tendencies and are, they argue, an invaluable source for the researcher. Antonio Cruz Casado, "Los cuentos de Antonio de Hoyos y Vinent",

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Juana Toledano Molina, "El teatro de Ramón Goy de Silva" and Francisco J. Sedeño Rodríguez, "Entre Montilla y Amsterdam: una 'Peregrinatio Amoris'", also undertake an archeological enterprise. Cruz Casado presents a study of a forgotten early twentieth-century author whose fantastic fiction, mainly short stories, deserves vindication; Juan Toledano Molina does the same with the symbolist Spanish theatre of the nineteenth-century, which she considers to be at the core of twentieth-century innovations in Spanish theater. Sedeño Rodríguez presents the forgotten works of a seventeenth-century Sephardic writer, Miguel de Barrios, who, in Holland, continued to innovate and write in the Spanish literary tradition that exiled him. Lastly, Emilio Quintana's article traces the literary experience of several young vanguard poets in Madrid in the heyday of Ultraism. The critic studies the evolution of these young poets, who, after winning regional literary prizes, arrived in Madrid and clustered around a transatlantic peripheral figure, the Chilean poet Huidobro, head of this avant-garde school.

Córdoba lingüística y literaria, and the collection *Letras de la Subbética*, is an excellent academic enterprise for all interested in these Spanish regions and the Iberian Peninsula in general. Both the linguistic and literary studies in the volume are a fine showcase of academic endeavors in the area. Finally, its focus on region-center cultural interactions provides an enriching perspective on diverse literary topics and traditions.

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Encounters with Malta. Eds. Petra Bianchi and Peter Serracino Inglott. Malta: Encounter Books, 2000.

On Pope John Paul II's visit to Malta in 1990, the pontiff declared that "Malta is not unaffected by the problems and changes transforming the cultural as well as the political face of Europe and the world. Because of its geographical position and history, Malta presents a symbiosis of European and Mediterranean cultures and is thus well-placed to observe and participate in the present changes of outlook" (351). Long before the Pope's declaration, Maltese studies had been a rigorous and fascinating research area with boundaries often crossing and complementing more mainstream disciplines. The central location of Malta and her sister islands in the Mediterranean had lured visitors from around the globe to study and to recount their experiences with her rich culture. Despite the plethora of research materials now available, students outside the archipelago wishing to delve into Maltese studies have had to work diligently in piecemeal fashion to gain a comprehensive overview of Maltese history and culture, especially when in relation to global history and culture. Thankfully, both new and experienced researchers can get that essential overview from *Encounters with Malta*.

This book documents various "encounters" that significant foreigners had with Malta or Maltese culture. Benedict Anderson's seminal study *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (1st ed. 1983; rev. ed. 1991) recognised that representations of a culture by foreigners can have as much

if not more impact than natives' construction of their own national identity. Appropriately, the editors of *Encounters with Malta* chose wisely to profile individuals who did not necessarily travel the Maltese islands, but who still contributed to perceptions of Malta and the Maltese. Two of the most recognisable contributors to *Encounters with Malta* are long-time Maltese scholars Peter Serracino Inglott and Paul Xuereb. The research team consists of other academics and professionals with established interests in multi-disciplinary fields that both include and exceed Maltese studies. Consequently, the volume represents a cross-section of the humanities, with particular attention to literature, music, the visual arts, history, and politics. *Encounters with Malta* bridges cultures and disciplines over more than two millennia, making it an excellent resource.

Encounters with Malta opens with a foreword by Professor Guido de Marco, President of Malta, and active promoter for over 30 years of Malta's international significance. A second foreword by Michael J. Bianchi, a representative of the researchers' sponsor (*Encounters with Malta* is the "Millennium Project of Vodafone Malta Ltd" [5]), acknowledges the continued need for cross-cultural communications and studies to promote "a deep and knowledgeable understanding of the other side" (5) to ensure a world of tolerance and cooperation. These forewords testify to the importance of Maltese studies within and beyond the academy. The volume is then divided into three major sections. "Section One" examines Malta from its recordings in ancient Greek epic to AD 1530 when the Knights of St. John colonised the islands. "Section Two" examines the period of Malta's effective Europeanisation during the Knights' 268-year reign. "Section Three" examines Malta during British colonisation and post-1964 independence. Each section begins with a historical overview of the period, followed by brief biographies and descriptions of significant individuals who "encountered" Maltese culture. At over 400 pages in length, the volume "is clearly not a full list of the numerous eminent and famous people who ever came into contact with the Maltese Islands and Maltese affairs" (13)—for example, the book makes no mention of *The Maltese Falcon* novelist Dashiell Hammett and the subsequent film starring Humphrey Bogart—yet the more than 240 entries presented provide an excellent overview of the "lives and events of the travellers, scientists, politicians, writers, artists and others" (13) from Homer to Sir Tom Stoppard who experienced or shaped Maltese culture.

The appendices include lists of foreign fiction influenced by or produced in Malta, and the names, dates, and nationalities of composers, opera singers, and painters who also contributed to the global recognition of Malta. A 24-page bibliography of mostly academic documents, an index of proper names, and eight brief *curricula vitae* for the main contributors completes the volume. Fully coloured images of portraits, maps, sketches, paintings, photographs, postcards and other artifacts — many of these visuals are rare — decorate and reinforce the content in ways that text alone could not.

Occasional typographic flaws mar this work, such as mistyped letters and some missing prepositions, though these errors do not hamper the reader's comprehension. Otherwise, the writing is informative, entertaining, and succinct. Some scholars may be put off initially by the coffee-table book format. However, the format is a good marketing tool, allowing for a wider profiling of Maltese culture beyond the academy. Rest assured that the research is accurate and substantial.

Maltese studies remains an under-represented field beyond the Maltese islands, especially in North America, despite Malta's long influence over other cultures. This scholarly but not pedantic encyclopedia will appeal to a wide audience and should arouse more curiosity about Malta, her culture, and the foreigners who put her on the map. *Encounters with Malta* is a successful introduction to Maltese studies and is truly "a valuable tool for further research" (13).

Kevin Magri

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Canadian Institute for Mediterranean Studies,

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