SCRIPTA MEDITERRANEA

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'THIS MAY BE COMPARED TO AN ATHLETE WHO WAS WRESTLING WITH A ROYAL PRINCE',[1] GOD AND THE ARENA IN JEWISH RABBINICAL LITERATURE

Much has been written in past scholarship about Roman public spectacles, their socio-political background, the different kinds of performances, and the variety of devices employed.[2] *Panem et circenses*,[3] bread and circuses, served the Roman Emperors as a means of consolidating their power over the plebeian masses.[4] The circus and the arena became in time the central stage where the sovereign displayed his power.[5]

With the expansion of the Roman Empire, this culture became a part of life in the Roman cities of the provinces.[6] Herod the Great, the King of Judea, was one of the first Hellenistic rulers under Roman patronage in the oriental world who introduced Roman public specta-

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[1]*Midrash Rabbah*, Genesis, 77.3 (ed. Theodor and Albeck).

[2]R. Auguet, *Cruelty and Civilization*, London, 1972, repr. 1994; J.P.V.D. Balsdon, *Life and Leisure in Ancient Rome*, London, 1969; M. Bieber, *The History of the Greek and Roman Theatre*, Princeton, 1961; J.H. Butler, *The Theater and Drama of Greece And Rome*, San Francisco, 1972; A. Cameron, *Bread and Circuses: The Roman Emperor and his People*, Oxford, 1974; J. Carcopino, *Daily Life in Ancient Rome*, New Haven and London, 1940; E.N. Gardiner, *Athletics of the Ancient World*, Oxford, 1930; J.C.Golvin, *L`Amphitheatre Romain*, (2 vols.), Paris, 1988; J.C. Golvin and C. Landes, *Amphitheatres et Gladiateurs*, CNRS, 1990; J.H. Humphrey, *Roman Circuses: Arenas for Chariots*, London, 1984; M.B. Poliakoff, *Combat Sports in the Ancient World*, New Haven, 1987; T. Wiedemann, *Emperors and Gladiators*, London, 1992.

[3]Juvenal, *Saturae*, 10,81.

[4]Carcopino, 1940, pp. 227-234.

[5]Auguet, 1972; Wiedemann, 1992.

[6]Weidemann, 1992, p. 41; A. Segal, 'Theatres in Ancient Palestine during the Roman and Byzantine Period', *Scripta Classica Israelica*, 1989; Z. Weiss, 'Roman Leisure Culture and its Influence upon the Jewish Population in the Land of Israel', *Qadmoniot*, 109 (1995), pp. 2-19. (Hebrew); Z. Weiss, *Games and Spectacles in Roman Palestine and their Reflection in Talmudic Literature*, Thesis Submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy to the Senate of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1994 (Hebrew).

cles into the region.[7] Herod established an impressive variety of amusement facilities in the cities of Judea and beyond its borders,[8] where he
showed different types of performances,[9] that were foreign to the character of the Jewish and non-Jewish communities in the Syria-Palestine
region at that time.[10]

However, it was some time after Herod's reign that the theater and the
circus became a part of life in the cities of Roman Palestine. In the early centuries of the Christian era many different amusement facilities were set up
throughout the Roman Empire, including the cities of Palestine,[11] apparently initiated and funded by the residents of the provinces, who were now
consumers of the amusement culture.[12] The major cities of Palestine boasted of their variety of ornate amusement facilities. These facilities indicate
how pervasive was the culture of the Roman games.[13]

The influence of Hellenistic-Roman culture on the Jews of Palestine
and its assimilation into their culture is well portrayed in rabbinical literature.[14] There is evidence of some knowledge and use of the Greek
language by Jews. Greek names were common and widespread in the
Jewish *onomasticon* during the *Mishnaic* and *Talmudic* periods, and
Greek and Roman customs and manners were adopted. Rabbinical literature was well rooted in the Greco-Roman culture,[15] therefore Greek

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[7]To mention just two that antedated Herod: Antiochus IV held games at
Daphne in 167 BCE (Polybius 30.25-6), and the Roman proconsol Q. Marcius
Rex preceded King Herod while he built an hippodrome in Antiochia some 50
years before the foundation of Caesarea. Humphrey, 1984, p.457.

[8]A. Segal, 'Roman and Byzantine Theaters of Palestine', in A. Kasher, G. Fuks
and U. Rappaport, *Greece and Rome in Eretz Israel*, Jerusalam, pp. 233.
(Hebrew); Weiss, 1995, pp. 2, 8-10.

[9]Josephus, *Antiquities*, 15, 267-275; 16, 136-138.

[10]Segal, 1989, pp. 235-236; for another opinion, see Weiss, 1994, pp. 38-48.

[11]Segal, 1989, p. 237 ff.

[12]cf. Midrash Rabba, Exodus, 51, 8.

[13]E. Dvorjetski,'The Theater in Rabbinic Literature', in A. Segal (ed.), *Aspects of
Theater and Culture in the Graeco-Roman World*, Haifa, 1994, p. 52 (Hebrew);
Weiss, 1995, p. 3.

[14]S. Lieberman, *Greek and Hellenism in Jewish Palestine*, Jerusalem, 1984, pp. 12,
69 (Hebrew); M.D. Herr.'External Influences on the World of the Rabbis in
Palestine: Absorption and Rejection', in Y. Kaplan and M. Stern (eds.),
*Acculturation and Assimilation: Continuity and Change in the Cultures of Israel and
the Nations*, Jerusalem, 1989, p. 102 (Hebrew); L.I. Levine, *Judaism and
Hellenism in Antiquity: Conflict or Confluence?*, Seattle and London, 1998, pp.
131ff. etc.

[15]D. Stern, *Parables in Midrash, Narrative and Exegesis in Rabbinic Literature*,
London, 1991, pp. 19-20.

and Roman parables and allegories were used by the Rabbis, and even art motifs and themes in the ancient synagogues were borrowed from this culture.[16] It is worth citing H. Fischel's comment that "It is fortunate that at this stage of scholarship no further defense has to be made for the assumption that Greco-Roman situations were well-known to the creators of the *Midrash*... Rather the problem is how far this knowledge went...".[17]

In the present paper an attempt is made to examine this issue in one of its aspects: How extensive was the influence and impact of Roman public spectacles on the Jews.

Rabbis were familiar with the theater culture, and their struggle against its influence is well attested in Talmudic literature.[18] Sages compared the nations of the world, who waste their days in the theater and the circus, with the people of Israel, who spend their time in the synagogues and *Batei Midrash* (schools of religious learning).[19] This comparison is evidence of the cultural struggle and conflict between the theater culture and the synagogue culture, but on the other hand, theatrical elements were integrated into the liturgy of the ancient synagogues.[20] This enabled the synagogue to compete with the theater in attracting the public.

The sources used in this article were drawn from the *aggadic* (legendary) stratum of classical rabbinic literature,[21] which constitutes one

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[16]Lieberman, 1984, pp. 110-123; Herr, 1989, pp. 100-102; Levine, 1998.

[17]H. Fischel, *Rabbinic Literature and Greco-Roman Philosophy*, 1973, p. xi.

[18]Tosefta, *Abodah Zarah* 2, 5-6 (ed. Zuckermandel); BT, *Abodah Zarah*, 18b, etc. T. Grossmark, 'Images of God in Rabbinical Literature Borrowed from the Sphere of the Roman Spectacles', *Proceedings of the Twelfth World Congress of Jewish Studies*, Devision B, Jerusalem, 2000, pp. 75-84 (Hebrew); Dvorjetski, 1994, pp. 59-61; S.Krauss, *Persia and Rome in the Talmud and Midrash*, Jerusalem, 1948, pp. 220,284-286 (Hebrew); Herr, 1989, pp. 89-92; M.D. Herr,'Synagogues and Theatres (Sermons and Satiric Plays), S. Elizur et als (eds), *Knesset Ezra, Literature and Life in the Synagogue, Studies Presented to Ezra Fleischer*, Jerusalem, 1994 (Hebrew); M.Z. Brettler & M. Poliakoff,'Rabbi Simeon ben Lakish at the Gladiator's Banquet: Rabbinic Observation on the Roman Arena', *HTR*, 83(1990), pp. 93-98; Weiss, 1994.

[19]JT, *Berakhot*, 4,7d; *Psikta d'Rab Kahana*, 28, (ed. Mandelbaum), etc.

[20]Y. Heinemann, *Public Sermons in the Talmudic Period*, Jerusalem, 1982, pp. 8-9 (Hebrew); H. Mack, *The Aggadic Midrash Literature*, Tel-Aviv, 1989, pp. 41-42 (Hebrew); Herr, 1994, p. 119.

[21]i.e. Rabbinical literature that was written and edited during the late Roman period until the early days of Islam (2nd to 8th cent. CE) mainly in Palestine. J. Fraenkel, *The Aggadic Narrative Harmony of Form and Content*, Tel-Aviv, 2001, p. 75, n. 1 (Hebrew).

of the two genres of that literature—*halakha* and *aggada*.[22] While the former reflects the judicial-normative aspects of the Torah, it is not easy to define the latter. Rabbinic *aggada* embraces almost any literary genre, and its simplest definition is the negative one, i.e. everything in rabbinical literature which is not a *halakha* is an *aggada*. Both genres are found in the different rabbinical compilations, either *tannaite* or *amoraic*.

Parables, fables and allegories are rhetorical tools,[23] originating probably in oral traditions[24] that are to be found frequently in rabbinical literature either *halakhic* or more often a*ggadic*.

Most of the parables in the Talmudic literature did not survive in their narrative context but rather in exegetical contexts,[25] as part of the *Midrash*, i.e. the study and interpretation of the *Torah*.[26] Scholars explored the relationship between the *aggada* found in rabbinical literature, and the liturgical activity in the synagogues of Palestine in the period under discussion. It is established that at least some of the legends originated in the *derasha* (sermons) and the *targum* (Aramaic translation), which were part of the liturgical activity in the synagogue.[27] The *targum* was necessary as most of the Jews who lived during these periods spoke the lingua franca of the region, which was Aramaic. They did not speak Hebrew and could not follow the reading of the *Torah*.

Both the *derasha* and the *targum* delivered in the synagogues were rhetorical tools used by the rabbis to animate the biblical stories, to explain and adjust the laws of the *Torah* to their own days, and bring the *Torah* to the Jewish public as a *Torah* of life.[28] The *derasha* and the *targum* were used to reach the public at large, not an elitist circle, therefore it used a language and terminology that were common and known to all. Allegories and parables were among the rhetorical-literary techniques employed by the rabbis. The essence of the parable is that it hints, through a narrative at some ulterior lesson.[29] The power of these rhetorical tools derived from the audience's familiarity with them. However,

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[22]Y. Heinemann, *The Ways of the Aggada*, Jerusalem, 1970. (Hebrew); A. Shinan, *The World of the Aggadic Literature*, Tel-Aviv, 1987. (Hebrew); Mack, 1989.

[23]See Stern on the parable and allegory. Stern, 1991, pp. 11-12.

[24]Ibid., p. 6.

[25]Ibid., pp. 7, 17-18, 47.

[26]Ibid., p. 1.

[27]Mack, 1989, pp. 34-49; A. Shinan, *The Embroidered Targum*, Jerusalem, 1993, pp. 11-15 (Hebrew).

[28]Lieberman, 1984, p. 86; Shinan, 1993, p. 14.

[29]D. Stern and M. Mirsky (eds), *Rabbinic Fantasies, Imaginative Narratives from Classical Hebrew Literature*, Philadelphia and New York, 1990, p.11.

parables were not historical events, rather they were fictional narratives that used a realistic framework.[30]

Thus the legends of rabbinical literature, found either in *tannaite* compilations such as the *Mishna, Tosefta* and the *tannaite midrashim*, or in *ammoraic* sources such as the Jerusalem and Babylonian *Talmud* and the *amoraic midrashim*, are literary creations. Even if these legends were told as part of the oral sermons in synagogues or *Batei Midrash*, when they were included in the different compilations they were changed and converted so as to fit into their new literary framework. However even in their new exegetical settings they still retain their rhetorical nature.[31]

Therefore the use of allegories and parables borrowed from the Roman amusement culture indicates the degree to which the Sages and the Jewish masses were familiar with this culture.[32] But there is another fact that needs attention: The hero of certain parables borrowed from the Roman public spectacles is God himself, portrayed as the Hero of the arena. This choice cannot be accidental, and the fact that the Sages did not refrain from using that imagery is full of meaning as will be presented in this paper.

The article focuses on three issues:

*Allegories referring to athletes and gladiators: *munera gladiatoria*
*Hunting contests: *venations*
*Images and allegories borrowed from the circus/hippodrome.

Allegories referring to athletes and gladiators/ *munera gladiatoria*

The word 'athlete', from the Greek ἀλητής *athletes*, is mentioned several times in rabbinical literature. It originally meant the contestant in the ἀγωνvagon competition,[33] and was used to mean 'wrestler' in the rabbinical writings, probably the competitors of the *pankration*.[34] Thus in *Midrash* of *Genesis Rabbah* for the verse: 'And when he saw that he prevailed not against him...'(Gen.32:26) describing the struggle between Jacob and the angel, there is a parable related to Rabbi Hama b. Hanina:

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[30]"The genius of midrash is that it exists in a kind of gray area between these separate realms of imaginative literature on the one side, exegetical commentary on the other... creating narratives in the service of interpretation..." Stern & Mirsky, 1990, p. 8; Stern, 1991, p. 20; Lieberman, 1984, p.154; Weiss, 1994, p. 276.

[31]Stern, 1991, p. 7.

[32]Grossmark, 2000; Weiss, 1995, pp. 16-19.

[33]H.G. Liddell, and Scott, 1889 repr. 1987, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 7th edition, Oxford., s.v. αγων *(agon)*.

[34]Krauss, 1948, p. 219; M. Jastrow, *Dictionary of the Talmud*, n.d. s.v. 'athlete'; Weiss, 1995, p.12; Philostratos, Eikones, 2.6.

R. Hama b. R. Hanina said:

> It was the guardian prince [angel] of Esau (*saro shel Esau*) ... this may
> be compared to an athlete who was wrestling with a royal prince; lift-
> ing up his eyes and seeing the king standing near him, he threw him-
> self down before him...[35]

In Rabbi Hama b. Hanina's parable it is the guardian prince of Esau
(*saro shel Esau*), and not the angel, who is fighting with Jacob. As Esau is
usually synonymous with Rome in rabbinical literature, this substitution
transfers the biblical story into the realm of the conflict between Judaism
and Roman culture. In Rabbi Hama b. Hanina's parable, Jacob is likened
to a prince wrestling with an athlete, that is, the guardian prince of Esau.
God is compared to a king, whose presence in the arena, next to the
wrestlers, decides the battle. When Esau saw God / the king, he threw
himself down before him, i.e. he submitted to Jacob and his God. [36]

One of the main features of the *derasha* (sermon) was in providing
words of comfort and redemption by the use of allegories or parables
that hinted at the future salvation of the People of Israel.[37] The above
legend is of this type. The moral lesson of the fable is that even though
the conflict between the two cultures seemed at the time insoluble,
eventually even Esau/Rome will submit himself before the God of
Israel. Using a parable of struggling athletes, it declares the future vic-
tory of Jacob/Israel over Esau/Rome with the help of God.

But is there any historical background to that parable? As a rule the
rabbinical legends are not historiography, rather they are literary fic-
tions based on a real background.[38] The presence of the Roman emper-
ors or other high officials at the different games is well documented in
Roman literature. Suetonius tells us that Nero not only attended the
games as a spectator, but also took part in them as a contestant, and
even played the role of umpire,[39] and there are other references to the

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[35]*Midrash Rabbah*, Genesis, 77.3 (ed. Theodor and Albeck); cf. *Tanhuma, Vyigash* 3.

[36]Levinson pointed to the feminine aspect of Esau's behaviour in this parable
and in other parables. J. Levinson, 'Fatal Fictions', *Tarbiz*, 68 (1998), p. 81 note
113 (Hebrew); cf. Weidemann, 1992, pp. 38-39.

[37]Y.L. Zunz, *Die Gottesdiesntlichen vortrage der Juden historisch entwickelt*,
Jerusalem, 1892 (trans. Hebrew, 1974), p. 171; Stern, 1991, pp. 124ff.

[38]Ziegler in his pioneering book about king parables in the Midrash proved
that the characteristic lines of the 'king' of the midrash were borrowed from
the image of the Roman Emperor or his governors in the provinces. I. Ziegler,
Die Konigsgleichnisse des Midrasch, Breslau 1903, pp. XXII ff. However most of
the scholers who dealt with this type of parables do not accept Ziegler's belief
that the king parables were actually historical events. Stern, 1991, pp. 19-20.

[39]Suetonius, Nero 53.

presence of Roman emperors in the games.[40] Therefore depicting the presence of God (king) in the wrestling arena was taken from the reality of the Roman public spectacles.

Rabbi Simeon ben Lakish (Resh Lakish), who might himself have been a gladiator in his youth,[41] also used the analogies of athletes:

> '*And I will harden Pharoah's heart*'(Exodus XIV,4), R. Simeon b. Lakish said: It can be compared to two prize-fighters, one of whom was stronger than the other. The stronger prevailed over the weaker and then placed a garland on his own head. Was it not the weaker who caused the stronger to receive the Garland? Likewise was it not Pharaoh, whom He overthrew, that caused God to take praise and glory.[42]

God is likened to the winning athlete who crowns himself with a garland. The custom of crowning the winner in competitions with a wreath was an ancient one. Already known from the classical era, this custom continued in the Roman and Byzantine periods as well. A marble relief on the base of the obelisk that was brought from Egypt to the Hippodrome of Constantinople by the Emperor Theodosius in the 4th-century BC, is a good example. The relief shows the emperor in his chamber in the Hippodrome, presenting a wreath to the winner of a race.[43]

Palm tree branches were another symbol of victory, granted to the winners of the chariot races or the winner gladiators.[44] A palm frond was an Hellenistic symbol of victory associated with Nike, the goddess of victory, who was often depicted holding a palm tree branch in her hand.[45] The manner of welcoming a conqueror on his arrival from war with palm fronds was an accepted practice during the Hellenistic period. Therefore the literary description of the victory celebration of Judah the Maccabee over the Seleucids was influenced by this custom.[46] The

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[40]Wiedemann. 1992, pp. 177ff.

[41]BT, *Gittin* 47a; Resh Lakish, who became one of the most eminent *amora'im* of the 3rd century BC., used a lot of allegories taken from the Roman spectacles. Brettler & Poliakoff, 1990.

[42]*Midrash Rabba*, Exodus 21,11; cf. *Midrash Rabba*, Exodus 27:9.

[43]E. Kitzinger, *Byzantine Art in the Making*, Cambridge, 1976, pp. 32-33; fig. 61; cf. L. Robert, *Comptes rendus de l'Academie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*, 1982, pp. 264ff.

[44]L. Friedlander, *Roman Life and Manners Under the Early Empire*, London, 1908 repr. 1965, p. 22; Carcopino, 1940, p. 264; Auguet, 1994, p. 58; CIL, X, 7297; Suet. Calig., 32.

[45]Even the Roman poet Martial refers to Nike: 'Let Victory sadly break her Idumaean palms', Martial, X, 50.

[46] The Book of the Maccabees 1.13.51.

use of palm branches in the context of the Imperial *adventus* is also attested in Roman literature.[47] Besides, it was a symbol of victory that was presented to the winner in the games. In *Midrash* Leviticus Rabba:

> R. Abin said: The matter may be illustrated by a parable. It is like the case of two people who have come to a judge, and regarding whom we do not know which has been victorious. But if one of them takes a palm-branch in his hand we know that he is the victor. So it is with Israel and the nations of the world. The latter come and bring accusations before the Holy One, blessed be He, on New Year and we do not know which has won. But by reason of the fact that Israel go forth from the presence of the Holy One, blessed be He, bearing their palm-branches and their citrons in their hands,[48] we know that it is Israel who are victorious, that Israel were successful in the judgment and that their iniquities were pardoned, and the nations exclaim: 'Israel are victorious!'.[49]

The narrator of the *Midrash* used the Greek word ,¿°Ó (*baion*), instead of the Hebrew '*caput temarim*'(palm tree branches).[50]

The story of Cain and Abel presented the rabbis with a difficult moral dilemma regarding God's responsibility for man's deeds. The second-century *tanna*, Rabbi Simeon ben Yohai, addressed this moral issue using a parable:

> R. Simeon b. Yohai said: It is difficult to say this thing, and the mouth cannot utter it plainly. Think of two athletes wrestling before the king; had the king wished, he could have separated them. But he did not so desire, and one overcame the other and killed him, he [the victim] cry-

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[47]The adventus is the ceremonial arrival of the Roman Emperor in Rome or some other city. There is common agreement amongst art historians that the image of the arrival of Jesus in Jerusalem (John 12:13), a common theme in Byzantine art since the 4th century, is borrowed from the Imperial adventus imagery. However Thomas F. Mathews rejects this idea in his book 'The Clash of Gods', T.F. Mathews, *The Clash of Gods, A Reinterpretation of Early Christian Art*, 1993, pp. 24-27,43-45.

[48]During the holiday of *Succot*.

[49]Midrash Rabba, Leviticus, 30:2 (ed. Margulies); cf. Midrash Psalms, 17:5; *Pesikta de-Rab Kahana* 27,2 (ed. Mandelbaum); Z. Weiss, "The Jews of Ancient Palestine and the Roman Games: Dicta vs. Communal Practice", *Zion*, 66(2001), pp. 445-446 note 84.

[50]S. Krauss, *Griechische und lateinische lehnworter in Talmud, Midrash und Targum*, Berlin, 1899, s.v. *baion*, p. 136; Krauss, 1948, 220; D. Sperber, 'Greek and Latin Words in Rabbinic Literature, Prolegomena to a New Dictionary of Classical Words in Rabbinic Literature' *Essayes on Greek and Latin in the Mishna, Talmud and Midrashic Literature*, 1982, pp. 22-26.

ing out [before he died], 'Let my cause be pleaded before the king!' Even so, *The voice of thy brother's blood cries out against me.*[51]

Considering its violent nature and results, this parable is not about the wrestling competition or the *pankration*, rather it is borrowed from the gladiator's arena where the competitors fought to the death. And yet the competitors in the parable are called 'athletes' and not 'gladiators'. There is considerable confusion in rabbinical literature between the 'athlete' and the 'gladiator'. That can be explained by the fact that since the 1st century CE a transmission of classical terms from the wrestling sports into the gladiators' arena was detected in Greek and Roman literature.[52] However, this confusion can be attributed also to the fact that since these parables were first related, probably as part of some oral sermon, they were told and retold and then were written down and subjected to the processes of editing, and subsequently copied and recopied during the years that followed. Some of these editing processes took place in times when the Roman public spectacles were but a faraway shadow in the past.

The parable pointed to an accepted custom in the gladiators' arena: the gladiator who had downed his rival needed approval from the director of the games before administering the final deathblow.[53] At this moment the drama was transferred from the two gladiators in the arena to the imperial platform and the seats of the audience. Now it was the turn of the spectators to either plead for the defeated gladiators' life or to ask for his death. A subtle, indirect reference to this custom, which sometimes made it possible to rescue a beaten gladiator from his fate, is found in Tractate *Abodah Zarah* of the *Tosefta*:

> He who goes up into gentiles' amphitheaters... this is forbidden...
> R. Nathan permits on two counts: Because [the Israelite] cries out in order to save the life [of the loser], and because he may give evidence in behalf of a woman [whose husband is killed in the struggle], that she may remarry.[54]

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[51]*Midrash Rabba*, Genesis, 22,10, (ed. Theodor and Albeck); see Levinson, 1998

[52]Weidemann, 1992, p.54, note 142; Levinson, 1998, p. 66; Weiss, 1994, p.261

[53]Auguet, 1972, pp. 49-51; A. Halevi, *The World of Aggada*, Tel-Aviv, 1972, pp. 232-233 (Hebrew)

[54]Tosefta, *Abodah Zarah* 2,7 (ed. Zuckermandel); R. Natan, who permitted theater-going in these two conditions, lived in the period of Bar-Kokhba revolt. The permission to go to the theater for the purpose of saving souls or relieving deserted women of their situation, probably reflects traumatic events that the Jews of Palestine suffered during his time. Suetonius tells us that when the four sons of a chariot driver asked for their father's amnesty, Claudius responded by announcing to the Roman People that they should try to raise

Without spelling out the moral of the story R. Simeon b. Yohai places the responsibility for the death of Abel on God.[55] Without words, we can read his intention: if it was God's will he could have saved Abel, just like the king who could have separated the two athletes. Thus the parable serves as a means for expressing controversial ideas or things that might be interpreted as a defamation of God.[56]

The term used in rabbinical literature for the gladiator is *'ludar'*.[57] Other terms for the gladiator are *'monomachos'* from the Greek word,[58] and rarely *'zarzarin'*, from the Hebrew word *'zira'* meaning arena.[59]

The gladiator contests and the gladiators' lifestyle were familiar to the rabbis of Palestine. Hence in a debate about the redemption of prisoners in Tractate *Gittin* of the Jerusalem Talmud, the issue of redemption of a man who sold himself as a gladiator was raised.[60] Selling oneself into service as a gladiator is attested as a Roman practice of avoiding debt,[61] or poverty.[62] The discussion in the Jerusalem Talmud proves that this practice was known among young Jews who sold themselves as participants in the gladiator games because of economic distress. A similar debate in the Babylonian Talmud includes a story about the famous *amora*, Resh Lakish (R. Simeon ben Lakish), who sold himself

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many sons 'because they can serve as a shield and a shelter even for a gladiator' (Suetonius, Claudius, 21). The same idea is expressed by R. Nathan. On the power of the masses to influence a gladiator's fate, see Wiedemann, 1992, pp. 165-180.

[55]"Yet rather than fully explicate the parallels between the fiction and its real-life application or exegetical occasion, the *mashal* [the midrashic parable] tends to imply the parallels, leaving it to the reader to work out the full meaning of the narrative's message. Much of the *mashal's* rhetorical power stems directly from its planned silence and intentional suggestiveness, the gaps in its narrative that the reader must fill, thereby actively participating in the construction of the *mashal's* fictional world." Stern & Mirsky, 1990, p.11.

[56]M. Halbertal, 'If it were not a Written Verse it could not be Said', *Tarbiz*, 68(1998), pp. 43-44 (Hebrew); Stern, 1991, p. 50; 130-132; Similarly, according to another legend in *Midrash Tanhuma*, Cain accused God of letting him kill his brother; were it not God's will, the deed would have ended differently. *Midrash Tanhuma*, Genesis 10,25 (ed. Buber).

[57]Krauss, 1948, p. 219; Jastrow, s.v., ludim, ludarius.

[58]Liddell and Scott, s.v. μουμάχος *'monomachos'*; Jastrow, s.v. monomachos; *Midrash Yelmadenu*, Genesis 49.

[59]JT, *Rosh-Hashanah*, 1, 57a; *Midrash Rabba*, Lamentation, 5.1; Jastrow, s.v., zarzar, zarzir.

[60]JT, *Gittin*, 4, 46a-b.

[61]Quintilian, *Declamations*, 302.

[62]Carcopino, 1940, pp. 259-260; cf. Weidemann, 1992, p.28.

as a gladiator, and his craftiness, which led to his release:

> Resh Lakish once sold himself to the *Ludim...*[63] he said, it is a known
> fact that on the last day they grant any request [of the man they are
> about to kill] in order that he may forgive them his murder.[64]

This legend documents the accepted custom, in the gladiator bar-
racks, of fulfilling the last wish of the gladiator about to appear in the
arena.[65] The meal of the *gladiators*, in the early morning hours before the
games began, probably the *cena libera*,[66] is also mentioned in Talmudic
literature,[67] and even their diet is mentioned.[68]

The gladiator matches, the *munera*,[69] were called *philotimi* in
Talmudic literature, from the Greek φιλοτιμία *(philotimia)*,[70] and were
known to the public at large and to the rabbis. Thus in another parable
hinting at the future salvation of Israel:

> It is like a man who came to a city where he heard that a *philotimia*
> was about to be held. He asked a gladiator (ludar): When will the show
> take place? He replied: It is far off yet. Then he asked the one who was
> to give the show, and he replied: Soon. He then said: Did I not ask the
> gladiator this, yet he said, 'It is far off'? He replied: Is this your sense,
> to ask the gladiator? Is he then anxious for me to stage the gladiatori-
> al exhibition, knowing as he does that he may be slain when he
> descends into the arena? Similarly, when Israel asked Balaam: When
> will salvation come? He replied: '*I see him, but not now; I behold him, but
> not nigh*' (Num. XXIV, 17). Said the Holy One, blessed be He, to them:
> Where is your sense? Know ye not that Balaam will eventually descend
> into Gehinnom, and therefore does not wish my salvation to come?[71]

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[63]'*Ludi*' are the people hiring men for gladiatorial contests or keepers of the
gladiators, Jastrow, s.v. ludim, ludea; *lanistae* (Latin).

[64]BT, *Gittin*, 47a.

[65]Brettler & Poliakoff, 1990, pp. 95-98.

[66]Auguet, 1994, p. 180; P. Plass, *The Game of Death in Ancient Rome, Arena Sport
and Political Suicide,* London, 1995, p. 52; Brettler & Poliakoff, 1990.

[67]BT, *Shabbat* 10a; BT, *Pesahim* 12b.

[68]Brettler and Poliakoff, 1990, pp. 97-98. cf. M. Sokoloff and J. Yahalom, *Jewish
Palestinian Aramaic Poetry from Late Antiquity,* Jerusalem, 1999, 33,89, p. 217
(Hebrew).

[69]A. Futrell, *Blood in the Arena, the Spectacle of Roman Power,* Texas, 1997, p. 2,
205-210.

[70]*Philotimia (philo-*love and *timh-*honour) means also ambitious display; Liddell
& Scott, s.v. *philotimia.* In Talmudic literature it means public show especially
gladiatorial exhibition or combats of beasts.

[71]*Midrash Rabba,* Exodus, 30:24.

Here the Holy One is likened to the games director the αγωυοθτηζ (*agonothetes*)/ *editor*, who was sometimes the emperor himself or one of his officials.[72] It is worth noting that Augustus, understanding the potential source of popularity in the *munera*, restricted the number of gladiatorial shows that his officials were allowed to present, and that from the days of Domitian the gladiatorial games were considered an imperial domain.[73] Therefore the allegory God / *agonothetes* is borrowed from the realm of the emperorship.

In other texts God is likened to the *lanista*, the owner of the gladiators, who is interested in preserving the well-being and security of his gladiators, a very valuable asset:

> The Congregation of Israel said before the Holy One, blessed be He: Master of the universe, It is the usual case that if a man owns two gladiators, the one stronger, the other weaker, he makes the stronger one submit to the weaker, so that the one will not arise and kill the other, because he, their owner, cares about his property. And yet you, you do not seem to care about your nation. You leave them among the nations.[74]

The social status of *lanistae* was very low. They were at the bottom level of Roman society. One may wonder then about the comparison in the above parable between God and the *lanista*. By using this unflattering comparison the narrator protested against his God; even the despicable *lanista* looks after his gladiators better than God looks after his people!

The gladiatorial arena was the place were the emperors staged their power. They were the donors who presented the games for the public, they were the owners of the gladiators and the gladiatorial training schools at least in Rome,[75] and during the games they had the power to decide the fate of a beaten gladiator. All these aspects were borrowed and incorporated into rabbinic legends as allegories of God.

Furthermore, certain emperors were keen on this type of show, but very few of them actually dared to take on the role of a gladiator. Emperors who did, like Nero or Commodus, had a bad reputation. Accordingly, the Talmudic legend that did not refrain from presenting God as the victorious athlete receiving the honors,[76] never used the image of the gladiator as an allegory for God.

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[72]Weiss, 1995, p. 11.

[73]Weidemann, 1992, p. 8.

[74]*Midrash Rabba,* Lamentations 5,1; JT, *Rosh Hashanah* 1, 57a; see Stern, 1991, pp. 133-134.

[75]Weidemann, 1992, p.8.

[76]*Midrash Rabba,* Exodus 21,11; cf. *Midrash Rabba,* Exodus 27:9.

Hunting contests (*venations*)

Among the performances usually held in the amphitheaters alongside the *munera gladiatoria*, there were also hunting contests, the *venations*.[77] The *venations* included a wide variety of shows ranging from the almost naïve exhibition of rare and unknown animals, through a kind of hunt in which trained hunters were made to fight wild beasts, to the most atrocious and murderous shows in which wild beasts were matched with one another or those condemned to death were exposed to the starving beasts. The trained 'hunters', known as the *bestiarii* or *venatores*, were trained in special facilities like the *ludus matutinus* near the Colosseum in Rome.[78]

The hunting shows are called *kangiyon* in the Talmudic literature, from the Greek κυνήγιον *(kunegion)* meaning hunting.[79] The rabbis fought against attending the *kungiyon* along with their struggle against other spectacles, the theater and the circus.[80] However their disapproval did not prevent Jews from attending these shows. Weiss discusses a paradox found in the texts: the rabbis condemn attending amusements, but, in the very same sermon make use of images borrowed from these games in order to convey their message.[81] In the *Midrash* of *Leviticus Rabba*, the author of the sermon promises those who refrain from visiting the hunting shows in this world, a special kind of hunting show in the afterlife:

> R. Judah b. Simeon said: *Behemoth* and *Leviathan* (whale) are to engage in a wild-beast contest before the righteous in the time to come, and whoever has not been a spectator at the wild-beast contests of the heathen nations in this world will be accorded the boon of seeing one in the World to Come. How will they be slaughtered? *Behemoth* will, with its horns, pull *Leviathan* down and rend it, and *Leviathan* will, with its fins, pull *Behemoth* down and pierce it through.[82]

According to a slightly different version of this legend in *Pesikta de-Rab Kahana* the match between the two was decided only when God interfered.[83]

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[77]Auguet, 1994, pp. 81-106; Weidemann, 1992, pp. 57-67; Weiss, 1995, p. 15;

[78]Weidemann, 1992, p.57

[79]Krauss, 1948, p. 15; *Midrash Rabba*, Genesis 32, 8 (ed. Theodor and Albeck)

[80]BT, *Abodah Zarah* 18b; *Pesikta de-Rab Kahana* 28 (ed. Mandelbaum)

[81]Weiss, 1995, p. 18

[82]*Midrash Rabba*, Leviticus 13,3 (ed. Margulies); cf. *Yalqut Shim'oni, Torah*, #535; *Yalqut Shim'oni, Job*, #927

[83]*Pesikta de-Rab Kahana, sup. 2* (ed. Mandelbaum)

The two primordial beasts of the Bible, *Behemoth*-the land monster, and *Leviathan*-the sea monster, most probably belonged to an ancient Near-Eastern mythological context, assumed a new symbolic meaning in post-biblical Jewish scriptures, in the context of the messianic days.[84] They were to become the food of the righteous at the messianic feast.[85] According to certain rabbinical legends, including the one cited here, *Behemoth* and *Leviathan* would be engaged in a duel in the messianic era. The most detailed description of that dual between these two primordial beasts is to be found in a *piyyut* (liturgical poetry) by the *payytan* R. Eliezer Kalir.[86] All these legends refer to familiar scenes from the arenas of the *kunegion*, in which different beasts of prey were matched with one another, to the enjoyment of the spectators.

Another literary description of a *kunegion* is found in the Babylonian Talmud:

> When R. Dimi came, he said in the name of R. Jonathan: Gabriel is to arrange in the future a chase of *Leviathan*; for it is said: *canst thou draw out Leviathan with a fish hook? Or press down his tongue with a cord?* And if the Holy One, blessed be He, will not help him, he will be unable to prevail over him; for it is said: *He only that made him can make His sword to approach unto him.*[87]

The legendary narrative, about the future game of hunting the

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[84]It is beyond the scope of this article to deal with the Biblical evidence and debate on the issue of *behemoth and leviathan*. J. Guthmann, 'Leviathan, Behemoth and Ziz: Jewish Messianic Symbols in Art', *Hebrew Union College Annual*, 39 (1968), pp. 219-230; H. Wallace, 'Leviathan and the Beast in Revelation', *The Biblical Archaeologist*, 11 (1948), pp. 61-68; J.G. Gammie, 'Behemoth and Leviathan; On the Didactic and Theological Significance of Job 40:15-41:26', *Israelite Wisdom*, 1978, pp. 217-231; J.V.K. Wilson, 'A Return to the Problems of Behemoth and Leviathan (Job 40)', *Vetus Testamentum*, 25 (1975), 1-14; M. Cohen, 'On Behemot and Leviathan in Job 40:15,24', *Beit Mikra*, 44(1999), pp. 193-208 (Hebrew); etc.

[85]BT, Baba Bathra 75a.

[86]J. Schirmann,'The Battle between Behemot and Leviathan', *Proceedings of the Israel Academy of Science and Humanities*, 1970, pp. 27-62 (Hebrew); J. Yahalom, *Poetry and Society in Jewish Galilee of Late Antiquity*, Tel Aviv, 1999, pp. 245-258 (Hebrew); R. Eliezer Kalir lived in Palestine in the Byzantine period: J. Schirmann, 'Hebrew Liturgical Poetry and Christian Hymnology', *JQR, ns*, XLIV(1953), pp.145-146.

[87]BT, Baba Bathra 74b-75a; cf. *Yalqut Shim'oni, Job*, #927; M. Fishbane, 'The Great Dragon Battle and Talmudic Redaction', *The Exegetical Imagination, On Jewish Thought and Theology*, London, 1998, pp. 41-55. There is a slightly different version of the chase of the *leviathan* by the angels in a pictorial *Midrash: Pesikta de-Rab Kahana, sup. 2* (ed. Mandelbaum).

Leviathan, used the related verses from the book of Job,[88] while refer-ring to the *'kunegion'*, in which the hunter is the angel Gabriel and the hunted is the *Leviathan*. But it is the intervention of God that determines the outcome. God becomes an active participant in the hunting show.[89]

As early as the beginning of the imperial period, Roman aristocrats sometimes took part in the hunting contests in the arena.[90] Among the emperors who enjoyed hunting were Trajan and Hadrian, Alexander Severus and many others, and there is also some evidence of the partic-ipation of certain Roman emperors in the hunting shows. In some cases, the reference is to a well-directed hunting show, where care was taken to ensure the emperors' safety.[91] Weidemann implied that Emperor Commodus associated himself with Hercules by his appearance as *bes-tiarius* or as gladiator, and he goes on about the connection between Hercules and the arena: "The arena was where Roman society dealt not just with the chaos represented by wild beasts and of crime, but also the chaos of death. It was a symbol of the ordered world, the cosmos; It was the place where the civilized world confronted lawless nature. To kill wild beasts was to share in the divine mission of Hercules... The Roman emperor was... a guarantor of law and order like Hercules.".[92]

As the *Leviathan* was taken as the negative-chaotic creature in Jewish tradition, presenting the God of Israel as taking part in the *kune-gion* of the *Leviathan*, either as the one who presented the hunting games, according to the first legend, or as a *bestiarius* who actually over-comes the monster in the second, can be associated with this concept of the arena as the stage where the ruler of the universe is presenting his power over the chaotic elements.

Images and allegories borrowed from the circus/hippodrome

The races of horse-drawn chariots that were held in the circus/hippo-drome were the most common and most popular spectacles during the

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[88]Job 40:20, 25

[89]According to both, the piyyut and the *Pesikta de-Rab Kahana, sup.* 2 (ed. Mandelbaum) the two legends were united into one story in which the chase game of the *leviathan* is the first, and it explains how the *leviathan* was brought to paradise for the final battle.

[90] *'in circo aurigas cursoresque et confectores ferarum, et nonnumquam ex nobilissima iuuentute produxit'* [=Chariot races and foot races took place in the Circus, and among those who hunted the wild beasts were youngsters of distinguished families] Suetonius, Augustus, 43,2; cf. Suetonius, Nero, 11

[91]Suetonius, Tiberius, 72,2; Suetonius, Nero, 53; Weidemann, 1992, pp. 177-178

[92]Weidemann, 1992, p. 179

Roman and Byzantine periods.[93] Magnificent hippodromes that were
built throughout the Roman Empire, including the eastern provinces,
attracted the multitudes during the days for the racing games.[94]
Therefore it is not surprising that the *circus* is frequently mentioned
alongside the theater in rabbinical literature.[95] The Jews of Palestine did
not refrain from attending the racing games despite the rabbis' struggle
against these shows. Evidence supporting this can be found in *Sefer ha-
Razim* (literally: the Book of Secrets) an essay written in Roman
Palestine in late antiquity, which deals with the practice of magic and
the use of charms, including a guide for installing a charm that will
ensure its owner a victory in a horse race.[96] *Sefer ha-Razim* is a unique
example of folk literature that did not originate in the elitist circles of
the Sages.

The common word used in our sources is *circas*, from the Latin *cir-
cus*,[97] the word *hippodromin* from the Greek ἱππόδρομος (*hippodromos*) is
less common.[98]

The most popular among the races were those in which a chariot
was harnessed to four horses, perhaps because in these races the chari-
oteer needed much more ability, skill and control over the horses than
in a chariot tied to one or two horses.[99] As a result of its popularity, the
chariot drawn by four horses become a frequent motif in art, known
since the archaic period in Greece, but it gained greater popularity dur-
ing the Roman period.[100]

The victorious athletes, gladiators and charioteers gained an
unequaled fame. They were the equivalent of the sport-stars of our

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[93]Bussemaker & Saglio, s.v. *circus*; Martin, s.v. *Hippodrome*, in Daremberg &
Saglio (eds.) *Dictionnaire des antiquities.*; Carcopino, 1940, p. 234.

[94]Y. Tsafrir, *Eretz-Israel from the Destruction of the second Temple to the Muslim
Conquest*, Jerusalem, 1985, pp. 125-127 (Hebrew); Weiss, 1995, pp. 8-13; Y. Dan,
The City in Eretz-Israel During the Late Roman and Byzantine Periods, Jerusalem,
1984, p. 209 (Hebrew); J.H. Humphrey, 'Prolegomena to the Study of the
Hippodrome at Caesarea Maritima', *BASOR*, 213 (1974), pp. 38-39.

[95]JT, Berakhot 4, 7d.

[96]M. Margalioth (ed.), *Sepher ha-Razim*, 1967, pp. 35-40.

[97]Jastrow, s.v. *kirkasa, kirkasiot* etc.; Krauss, 1948, pp. 285-286.

[98]Krauss, 1948, p. 284; Krauss s.v. *hippidromos*; A detailed description of a
Byzantine hippodrom and its races is found in a late *midrash: Otzar ha-
Midrashim 526, (Aizenshtein)*; E. Ville-Patlagean, 'Une image de Salomon en
Basileus Byzantin', *Revue des études juives*, 121 (1962), pp. 9-33.

[99]Auguet, 1994, pp. 120-148.

[100]L. Vogel, 'Circus Race Scenes in the Early Roman Empire', *The Art Bulletin*,
51 (1969), pp. 155-159.

days. R. Auguet implied that: 'Nothing better illustrates the prestige enjoyed by charioteers, gladiators and *bestiarii* than the ardour and persistence with which certain emperors laboured to imitate them'.[101] Although many of the Roman emperors had a keen passion for the chariot races,[102] very few of them actually drove a racing chariot in public as did Caligula and Nero,[103] who were both known for their bad reputation according to the Roman historians. Even the atrocious emperor, Commodus, avoided being seen driving a racing chariot in public.[104] Therefore it is worth questioning the fact that during the late Roman period the image of the charioteer driving the four-horse chariot became the symbol of the emperor. The image of the charioteer-emperor stems from two interweaving images: the one is borrowed from the circus while the other has to do with the iconography of the sun god, *Helios*, who is often portrayed driving a chariot drawn by four horses. Depicted in the image of a charioteer, holding imperial attributes, such as a globe and a whip, in one hand, and lifting his other hand in a gesture of blessing, *Helios* symbolized the governor of the world in Roman art, the invincible sun *Sol invictus*.[105] The adoration of *Sol invictus* originated in the oriental deification of the sun, which was assimilated, in the Hellenistic period, with Greek gods such as Apollo or Helios.

At the time of the emperor Elagabalus (218-222 CE), the first attempt was made to transform the ritual of *Sol invictus* into the main imperial cult in Rome. What Elagabalus had failed to do was finally achieved in 274 CE, when the emperor Aurelianus, who unified and restored the power of the empire, established the cult of *Sol invictus* as a central imperial cult. It maintained this status until the Christianization of the empire.[106] Some emperors of the third century actually identified themselves with the image of *Helios/Sol*. Therefore in late Roman art, *Sol invictus* symbolizes the power of the emperor as the sole omnipotent ruler.[107] In Christianity, the image of *Sol invictus* was

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[101] Auguet, 1994, p. 170.

[102] Friedlander, 1965, p. 25ff.

[103] Suet. Cal. 54; Suet. Nero, 7; 22; 24.

[104] Dio Cassius, 73.

[105] M. Dothan, 'The Figure of Sol Invictus in the Mosaic of Hammath-Tiberias', in: H.Z. Hirschberg (ed.), *All the Land of Naphtali*, Jerusalem,1967, pp. 131-133 (Hebrew); LIMC, IV,1-2, pp. 619 ff.

[106] N.G.L. Hammond and H.H. Scullard, (eds.), *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 2nd edition, Oxford, 1970 repr. 1989, s.v. *Sol*; Levine, 1998, p.153.

[107] Z. Weiss, and E. Netzer, *Promise and Redemption: A Synagogue Mosaic from Sepphoris*, Jerusalem, 1996 , pp. 36-37 (Hebrew).

identified with Jesus cosmocrator, ruler of the world.[108] This imagery
was the one adopted by the Jews.[109]

Five mosaic floors found in ancient synagogues in Palestine, with
representations of the zodiac, constitute a unique group in synagogue
art that contains the combination of the zodiac with *Helios/Sol* in a cen-
tral medallion and the personification of the four seasons in the cor-
ners.[110] The sun on the central medallion in the zodiac mosaics that
were excavated in these synagogues is designed in the image of *Sol
invictus*.

The mosaic floor in the Hammath Tiberias synagogue dating from
the fourth century is the earliest of that group. In the central medallion
stands *Helios* dressed in a purple cape, a symbol of imperial dress, hold-
ing the globe and the whip in his left hand,[111] while his right hand is
raised in a gesture of blessing. On his head is a halo-like crown with
rays. The lower half of the medallion, which contained his chariot and
horses, was destroyed in later construction.

In the Na'aran synagogue, the images on the mosaic floor were van-
dalized by iconoclasts in ancient times, but it is still possible to discern
the image of *Helios* in the central medallion. His head is crowned by a
halo with rays, he wears a coat decorated with stars, and he is holding
a whip. It is interesting to compare this portrayal of *Helios* with the fol-
lowing description by Suetonius of Nero's "adventus" to Rome, coming
from Greece after his "victory" in the chariot races during the Olympic
games: "He entered the city with white horses.. and wore a purple robe
and Greek cloak adorned with stars of gold, bearing on his head the
Olympic crown..".[112]

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[108]Dothan, 1967, p. 134; J.H. Huskinson,'Some Pagan Mythological Figures and
their Significance in Early Christian Art', *BSR*, 42 (1974), pp. 78-80

[109]A kind of folksy belief in *Helios* by Jews in Palestine in late antiquity is attest-
ed in *Sepher ha-Razim*, pp. 97-100, see also Margalioth's 'On the Prayer to
Helios', ibid. pp. 12-16

[110]Levine, 1998, p. 152, and the bibliography ibid., note 13-14; One parallel
mosaic has been excavated in Germany, dating from the third century CE,
LIMC, IV, no. 291, pp. 611-612; An illumination from the Vatican copy of
Ptolemy's Astronomy, made between 813 BC and 820 BC, shows the universe
ruled by *Helios* the sun god (P. Brown, *The World of Late Antiquity*, London,
1971 repr. 1997, fig. 50). The similarity between the *Helios* mosaic from the
fourth-century synagogue of Hammath Tiberias and the ninth-century illu-
mination is striking.

[111]The globe and the whip are imperial attributes also according to the rab-
binical literature: *Mishnah, Abodah Zarah, 3,1*(ed. Albeck); *Tosefta, Abodah Zara,
5,1* (Zuckermandel)

[112]Suetonius, Nero, 25

The most complete portrayal of *Helios* in a zodiac mosaic is found in the synagogue in Beth-Alpha dating from the sixth century where *Helios* is depicted as a figure driving a chariot drawn by four galloping horses. His face is ruddy and his head is crowned with rays. The upper part of his body is covered with a colored piece of clothing.

The latest excavated mosaic floor with a zodiac is from a synagogue in Sepphoris dating from the fifth century. This is a special variant of the zodiac. The chariot of the sun god appears in the central medallion, inside the inscription. The uniqueness of the Sepphoris zodiac is mainly the absence of the figure of *Helios*. Above the chariot in the center of the sky is a ten-rayed sun. The central ray descends into the chariot, creating the impression that the sun is driving the chariot.[113]

Scholars have disputed the precise meaning and significance of that clearly pagan symbol in the context of the synagogue.[114] Weiss and Netzer imply that it seems that the zodiac in the ancient synagogue mosaics represented the godly cosmic order expressed in the annual cycles. *Helios* symbolizes the centrality of the sun in the universe, as well as the blessing of its rays.[115] A verbal image of the sun as a charioteer who blesses the universe is known in the *Midrash*.[116]

L.I. Levine questioned the extent of pagan influence in that case: 'One major point of dispute among scholars in this respect is how much emphasis ought to be put on the issue of Hellenistic influence and symbolic interpretation... Were the Jews borrowing ideas and concepts, and not merely external forms?'.[117] Both the allegorical depiction of the sun as *Helios* in the mosaic floors and its description as a charioteer in the *Midrash* are definitely a conceptual borrowing.

However, certain Sages went even further in using allegories borrowed from the pagan world. Thus in the *Midrash* of *Exodus Rabba*, a direct image of God, as the driver of a chariot harnessed to four mules, appears in the context of the story of the Golden Calf:

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[113]Weiss & Netzer, 1996, p.26

[114]R. Hachlili, *Ancient Jewish Art and Archaeology in the Land of Israel*, Leiden, 1988, pp. 301-309. Israel Levine raised the question whether the use of the image of Helios/Sol in synagogue art had merely an aesthetic decorative significance or whether it contained some religious significance as could be assumed from the way Helios was portrayed as one of the angels in Sepher ha-Razim (see Levine, 1998 p. 152). Does the portrayal of the image of Helios in the synagogue indicate that the popular belief in Helios as the angel of the sun was not only that of the common people but permeated the world of the synagogue and the Sages.

[115]Weiss & Netzer, 1996, p. 26

[116]*Midrash Rabba*, Numeri, 12, 4

[117]Levine, 1998, p. 153

When I come to Sinai to give them the Torah, I will come down in my
(*tetramouli)* chariot with four animals abreast. Yet though they will
observe me and unhitch one [of the four animals of my chariot] and
provoke me...[118]

The system of images used in this text is complex, combining bibli-
cal imagery with those borrowed from the Hellenistic-Roman culture.
The author of the *Midrash* draws the description of the chariot with four
different beasts in the biblical vision of Ezekiel.[119] In rabbinical legend a
connection was made between the images of the chariot in the Book of
Ezekiel as a description of divine revelation, and between the revelation
of God on Mount Sinai and the story of the Golden Calf.[120]

According to the *Midrash* the children of Israel removed the ox from
the chariot and formed the Golden Calf in its image, thus provoking
their Lord. By using the word *tetramouli*,[121] meaning a chariot harnessed
to four mules or horses, the author linked his story to the world of the
circus and race shows as well as to the imagery of *Sol/Helios*. Since the
image of *Sol/Helios* was actually an intertwined combination of alle-
gories of the Roman emperor and the race charioteer, and since the
chariot driver of the above *Midrash* is God himself, the depiction of God
in that way is not merely an adoption of external imagery, but actually
the borrowing of a concept of the omnipotent ruler of the universe iden-
tified with the image of the omnipotent ruler of the empire.

Conclusions

It is a fact that rabbis of the Roman and Byzantine periods used images
and allegories borrowed from the Roman public spectacles, even
though, in principle, they disapproved of this culture.[122] It seems, then,
that despite the official position presented in the rabbinical literature,
which rejects the Roman amusement culture, the Jews of Palestine were
involved in numerous and diverse ways in this culture, and therefore
the images and allegories drawn from this culture became an effective
rhetorical tool.[123] In this allegories and fables, the God of Israel some-

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[118]*Midrash Rabba*, Exodus 3,2 (ed. Shinan); Ibid., 42, 5; 43, 10.

[119]Ezekiel 1:5-10.

[120]D.J. Halprin, *The Merkaba in Rabbinic Literature*, New Haven, 1980, pp. 53-55,
61, 133, 180-183 etc.

[121]An unattested Greek compound consisting of the prefix *tetra* [=four] and
mouli [=mule] from the Latin *mula*, which probably refers to a local translation
of the Latin *quadriga*. Jastrow, s.v., *tetramouli*; Krauss, 1899, s.v., *tetramoulin*...

[122]Weiss, 1995, p. 18.

[123]Ibid., pp. 16-17.

times takes on the role of the Roman emperor, who was involved in the different games. 'The choice of the Roman emperor as a symbol for God was a paradoxical one. Nothing was more characteristic of the Roman emperorship than the imperial cult, a fact that did not escape the Rabbis', writes D. Stern in his book *Parables in Midrash*.[124] Following Bickerman's article, 'Symbolism in the Dura Synagogue',[125] he suggested that the solution of that paradox is to be found in the awareness of the Sages of the difference between idols, used for worship, and images that were for representation. And he goes on:

> 'Although the Rabbis stringently opposed the practices of the imperial cult on religious grounds, the imagery and regalia of the cult, once removed from their lived context, lost their transgressive character. They could be 'Judaised' in the *mashal* and used as a medium for symbolizing God'.[126]

The same rules held regarding the art of the synagogue, as expressed in the inclusion of the image of *Sol Invictus* in the zodiac mosaics in the Palestinian synagogues.

Thus in the Jewish art and literature of Palestine, from the fourth century and onward, the image of God assumed the external form and attributes of the Roman emperor,[127] including those borrowed from the theater and the arena.

But was it only the external features of the Roman Emperor that were borrowed? We believe that the answer to that question, raised by Levine in his book *Judaism and Hellenism in Antiquity'*,[128] is not that simple.

When the Sages used parables and legends that contrasted the Emperor and god, parables that were meant to malign Roman culture, they also indirectly intended to demolish the myth of the Emperor God.[129]

But when R. Simeon ben Yohai used the imagery of the Roman

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[124]Stern, 1991, p. 94

[125]E.J. Bickerman, 'Symbolism in the Dura Synagogue', *HTR*, 58 (1965), pp. 127-151

[126]Stern, 1991, p. 96; and see Levinson's comment on this issue, Levinson, 1998, p. 84, note 130

[127]An identical process took place in Christian art of the same period. Christianity adopted the forms of expression and symbols of the imperial art, and used the emperor and his retinue to represent its own heavenly hierarchy. Jesus and his disciples were, from the fourth century on, depicted according to imperial standards; Stern,1991, pp. 94-95; Kitzinger, 1976, p.19

[128]Levine, 1998, p. 153

[129]Stern, 1991, p. 94

emperor in the parable of the wrestling athletes with reference to Cain and Abel,[130] he emphasized the murderous qualities of his model not in order to contrast God with the emperor, but on the contrary to imply their likeness.[131] This is definitely a provocative adoption of the conceptual qualities of emperorship by the narrator of the parable.[132] Comparing God with the *lanistae*, in another parable,[133] did not do any good to the image of the merciful God. It is worth questioning whether there were any hidden intentions using this type of parables. We do believe that the answer to this question is positive.

The gladiatorial and racing arenas functioned as the quintessential stage where the emperors presented their political and social power, but also their power to decide the fate of the gladiators, i.e. to decide on matters of life and death. Moreover, by presenting the hunting scenes of wild beasts (and sometimes even taking part in them) as well as in the scenes where the condemned were thrown to the beasts of prey, the emperor presented himself as the defender of order against disorder and chaotic elements. All these aspects can be traced in rabbinical legends.

But there is more to it. The arena was not only the stage for the emperors' power but also that of the people.[134] The Roman people and their emperor met around the arena. The people could plead, they could beg, they could raise their claims, and they could even riot. The emperor was not supposed to be a tyrant, but rather to listen to his subjects and be a defender of law and order.[135] Sages fully realized this role of the Roman games and so by using parables of the arena of the *munera gladiatoria*, the *venations*, and the circus, they created a revolutionary daring virtual space for meeting with their God, where God was expected to be the defender of law and order in the universe and protect his People, as the Roman emperor was expected to do in real life.

In various ways, the Sages used and manipulated the imagery of the emperor in the public spectacles known to the Jewish people in order to serve their aims, adopting both external and conceptual features of emperorship.

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[130]Midrash Rabba, *Genesis*, 22,10 (ed. Theodor and Albeck).

[131]Levinson, 1998, p. 84, n. 130.

[132]On the boldness of R. Simeon's exegesis, see Stern, 1991, pp. 161-166; Halbertal, 1998, pp. 43-44.

[133]Midrash Rabba, *Lamentations* 5,1; JT, Rosh Hashanah 1, 57a.

[134]Weidemann, 1992, p. 176.

[135]*Ibid.*

Domenico Pietropaolo

VICO'S THEORY OF ALLEGORY

In a brief appendix to the 1730 edition of the *Scienza nuova* Vico says that one could compile a number of indexes, each representing a separate aspect of every important idea that he had advanced in that work, as an editorial aid for readers interested in searching it very quickly. Ten of the potential indexes that he had in mind, four of which were of a philosophical and six of a philological nature, seemed to him especially important, and he briefly illustrated them by presenting the same item— the idea of Jupiter—from each of the perspectives in which the indexes would have to be grounded. With the help of these indexical routes, the busy reader who had already studied the text could quickly go through the complex philosophical and philological configuration of the *Scienza nuova*, identify by simple inspection the essential aspects of Vico's thought, quickly retrieve them separately, and examine them as parts of a systematic whole. The theoretical basis of the indexes was therefore constituted by a set of analytical categories capable of capturing the essence of Vico's thought and of defining the thematic range to which his science could be applied. In so far as it is possible to view it from the multiple vantage points represented by its philosophical and philological discoveries, Vico's science of humanity could be described in turn as a science of each of the areas of research demarcated by the indexes.

Among the philological indexes, Vico includes one called "Indice delle allegorie univoche," which, if compiled, would refer the reader to all the characters and fables whose true meaning Vico reveals by shining the light of his science on them. Allegory, in other words, was so clearly central to Vico's project that, to the extent that it was a philological science, his science was also a science of univocal allegories.[1] We

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[1] The indexes are described in *Correzioni, miglioramenti ed aggiunte quarte* (ca.1733), paragraphs 1473-1486, in *La scienza nuova, giusta l'edizione del 1744 con le varianti dell'edizione del 1730 e di due redazioni intermedie inedite*, a cura di Fausto Nicolini (Bari: Laterza, 1928). All textual references by paragraph number are to this edition of the *Scienza nuova* and its variants. The complete list of indexes is the following: *Indice de' principi, Indice dell'origini, Indice delle nature,Indice dell'eterne proprietà le quali escono da sí fatte nature, Indice delle mitologie istoriche, Indice delle allegorie univoche, Indice delle frasi poetiche che spiegavano i concetti con verità, Indice dell'etimologie che portano istorie di cose, Indice delle tradizioni volgari vagliate dal falso, Indice dell'identitadi in sostanza e delle modificazioni diverse.*

shall presently return to the idea of univocity mentioned in Vico's
description of the allegorical index; for now it is important to insist on
the fact that allegory was one of the ten areas of research in which Vico
thought he had made a substantive contribution. Of course, the fact that
the indexes remained a pure hypothesis cannot be regarded as evidence
to the contrary, for Vico decided against compiling them for reasons of
convenience. The indexes would have made the volume much thicker,
and Vico had "né la pazienza, né il tempo, né la voglia" to compile them
(SN 1486). Besides, he reasoned, though potentially useful, such index-
es were not at all necessary, for readers willing to study the text with
care do not require any analytical lists of its contents, while those who
do not intend to go through the whole text in the first place would hard-
ly find such lists sufficient. What is significant is not the practical aid
represented by the indexes for the hurried reader but the categories on
which they would have to be based, for these describe the conceptual
parameters of Vico's science, as was illustrated by his single example.
Indeed, one can argue, as Vico must have argued, not even that exam-
ple is necessary to readers who have carefully studied the whole of the
Scienza nuova, and so, in preparing the 1744 edition, Vico removed even
his awkward appendix from the text.

We therefore do not have an index of univocal allegories, and that,
given the scant attention that Vico has received as a thinker concerned
with allegory, is most unfortunate. Had we had such an index, we
might have been reminded more forcefully of the centrality of allegory
in the text of the *Scienza nuova*. To be sure the *dipintura*, which stands
outside the text as a complex emblematic allegory of the work as a syn-
chronic whole, has attracted the attention of a number of serious schol-
ars,[2] who, from different perspectives, have all pointed out its signifi-
cance, despite the fact that abridged editions of the *Scienza nuova* have
been routinely published without it. But Vico's concern with allegory
in the body of the text, his explicit reflections on the concept of allego-
ry itself, and his references to allegorical cognitive forms in his descrip-
tion of the central categories of his philosophy are generally given no

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[2]See especially Mario Papini, *Il geroglifico della storia: Significato e funzione della
dipintura nella Scienza nuova di G.B. Vico* (Bologna: Cappelli, 1984); Margherita
Frankel, "The 'Dipintura' and the Structure of Vico's *New Science* as a Mirror
of the World," in *Vico: Past and Present*, ed. Giorgio Tagliacozzo (Atlantic
Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press, 1981), pp. 43-51; Angus Fletcher, "On the
Syncretic Allegory of the *New Science*," *New Vico Studies* Iv (1986), pp. 25-43;
Franco Lanza, "Sinossi allegorica della *Scienza nuova*," in *Contributi dell'Istituto
di filologia moderna, serie italiana*, Pubblicazioni dell'Università Cattolica del
Sacro Cuore (Milano: Società editrice Vita e pensiero, 1961), pp. 99-135; Enzo
Paci, *Ingens sylva* (Milano: 1949), pp. 179-220.

more than an incidental remark if they are not passed over in silence altogether by Vico scholars. The inhibiting power of Romantic and Neo-Idealistic aesthetics, with its declared hostility to all forms of allegory, has been of such magnitude as to cause mainstream Vico scholarship to blur out of focus the role of allegory in the *Scienza nuova*.

Vico, however, had no doubts as to the significance of what he had to say on the subject. Briefly stated, his thesis is the following: (i) As a thought form based on imaginative universals and hence as a signifying structure grasping both the general and the particular, (ii) univocal allegory is the basis of mythical narration and (iii) the principle of all poetic etymology, as well as an essential aspect of poetic language, understood, chiefly but not exclusively, as the language of the poetic ages of history. As a consequence of this, allegory is also (iv) an integral part of poetic theory, and (v) the chief principle of historical hermeneutics. My purpose in this paper is to provide evidence, both textual and inferential, for this thesis and to examine in detail Vico's arguments in each of its five parts.

As a way of approaching the subject, let us recall that for Vico the question of allegory concerns first of all the study of myth, in which context he recognizes the existence of two types of allegory, one philosophical and the other historical. Philosophical allegory is what Plato sought to identify in ancient myths, regarded by him as textual carriers of a concealed philosophy, which however could be extracted from them and made plain in the conceptual language of the interpreter. Plato's hermeneutical operation was for Vico not unlike the one rehearsed by Manethus on hieroglyphic script, which he regarded as the carrier of a mystical philosophy invisible to the populace but discernible to the skilled interpreter (128). By philosophical allegory Vico therefore means what, in the ages of reason, including his own, was generally understood by the term allegory, namely a text constructed so as to exhibit a semantic surface that is radically different from its semantic interior. A concise definition of this type of allegory had been given centuries before by Isidore of Seville in the *Etymologiae* (I, 37, 22), where the Greek term is rendered as *alieniloquium*, that is to say a form of speech which means something foreign to what it actually says. The purpose of the interpreter in the case of philosophical allegory is consequently first to show the discontinuity between the exterior and interior of the text and then to reformulate its interior with the aid of a critical and philosophical vocabulary. Vico does not discuss this type of allegory, other than to reject it as a structural model of ancient myths.

Historical allegory is instead the kind that Vico himself is generally engaged in identifying in his efforts to uncover the true meaning of ancient myths, the characters and narrative structures of which he sees as a function of the preoccupations and cognitive abilities of primitive

people. Read as a historical allegory, the myth of Prometheus narrates
how at the dawn of civilization men brought down fire from the moun-
tain tops, on which the Sky was thought to rest its gigantic body while
reigning over the earth (64). The purpose of the interpreter in the case
of historical allegory is to strip away from the ancient story any foreign
layers of meaning that may have been superimposed on it by misguid-
ed philosophical allegorists and to show that, when it is placed in its
true context of origin in the history of mind and in the history of social
institutions, its narrative surface exhibits completely its true and only
meaning. Historical allegory therefore describes a structure of significa-
tion to which primitive men had recourse in their effort to make sense
of and to describe their perception of reality. It is the only kind of alle-
gory with which Vico is concerned on a theoretical level.

The key to historical allegory is none other than the "chiave maes-
tra" to the *Scienza nuova* as a whole, the one idea on which Vico spent
most of his philosophical life ("ci ha costo la ricerca ostinata di quasi
tutta la nostra vita letteraria," 34), namely the premise that our ancient
forefathers spoke by means of poetic characters or imaginative genera.
With the aid of these thought-forms, they gave themselves a satisfacto-
ry understanding of natural phenomena and then narrated to them-
selves the civil history that ensued from the acquisition of such knowl-
edge. The tales in which we find the poetic characters of the divine and
heroic ages of history, when the ancient myths were created, are true
accounts of the way in which those who told them understood their
own existence in relation to the scheme of things as that scheme was
apparent to them. The myths (favole) of ancient Greece were therefore
"favelle vere", that is to say instances of truthful speech, and they were
inevitably structured as historical allegories. In the *Idea dell'opera* Vico
informs his readers that in the actual text of the book that structure is
made quite plain:

> e se ne scuoprono l'allegorie, contenenti sensi non già analoghi ma
> univoci, non filosofici ma istorici di tali tempi de' popoli della Grecia.
> ("and their allegories are found to contain meanings not analogical but
> univocal, not philosophical but historical, of the peoples of Greece of
> those times" [34]).*

This brief statement contains the essential difference between the
two types of allegory: philosophical allegory signifies analogically,
whereas historical allegory does so univocally. The importance of this
distinction must be duly stressed, since failure to notice it results in the

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*Translations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from The New Science of
  Giambattista Vico, Revised Translation of the Third Edition (1744), by
  Thomas Goddard Bergin and Max harold Fisch. Ithaca and London: Cornell
  University Press, 1968.

assumption that the term "allegory" has only one acceptation in Vico, namely the still current one of philosophical allegory, a fact which has led into error several otherwise careful readers of the *Scienza nuova*.[3] The two meanings of the word allegory represent yet another instance of what Nicola Badaloni has identified as a general procedure followed by Vico, which was to begin with the current structure of a given historical object, represented by the meaning the term denoting it has in the present, and to go back in time to the structure that it must have had when it first came into being, on the premise that we can grasp the sense of historical evolution as such by studying the structural transformations undergone by individual products of the human mind, which is itself a product of history.[4] In the case at hand the object in question is allegory, and so we must begin with allegory as it is known in the present (philosophical allegory) and return to what allegory must have been like in the age of history (historical allegory) when it first emerged as a cognitive and signifying form.

Philosophically the distinction that Vico draws between the two types of allegory is based on a long metaphysical tradition that, since the Middle Ages, contrasted "analogia" and "univocatio" as different ways of understanding the concept of being with respect to man and God, and, consequently, as different ways of signifying it by means of this word. For St. Thomas Aquinas, for example, the term "being" had analogous rather than identical senses when applied to God and man, since the being of God is uncreated and inseparable from the essence of God whereas the being of man is created and separable from the essence of man. But for Duns Scotus, the power of whose philosophy Vico had first discovered as a young man under the guidance of the Jesuit Giuseppe Ricci, the concept of being was applied univocally to both God and man, since man had to have this much in common with God in order to have any knowledge of Him.[5]

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[3]Beginning with Benedetto Croce, who, in *La filosofia di G.B. Vico* (Bari: Laterza, 1973; first edition, 1911), p. 64, states: "I miti o favole non contengono sapienza riposta, cioè concetti ragionati, avvolti consapevolmente nel velo della favola; e perciò non sono allegorie." For more recent examples see Alasdair MacIntyre, "Myth," in *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Paul Edwards (New York and London: Macmillan, 1967; rpt., 1972), V, p. 435, and David Bidney, "Vico's New Science of Myth," in *Giambattista Vico: An International Symposium*, ed. Giorgio Tagliacozzo and Hayden V. White (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1969), pp. 274-275.

[4]Nicola Badaloni, *Introduzione a Vico* (Bari: Laterza, 1984), p. 4.

[5]For a concise statement of these issues in St. Thomas and Duns Scotus, see Frederick J. Copleston, S.J., *A History of Philosophy*, volume II, *Augustine to Scotus* (New York: Doubleday, 1984), pp. 353-356 and 503-506.

To the extent that Aquinas and Scotus may be considered the chief representatives of these two philosophical attitudes toward being, it follows that the metaphysical assumption behind Vico's notion of philosophical allegory is of the Thomistic type, while the one behind his notion of historical allegory is of the Scotist sort. The significance of this preference emerges more clearly when we recall that, in connection with the protracted dispute over the nature of universals, it was on the basis of the Scotist realism imparted to him by Ricci, himself "scotista di setta ma zenonista nel fondo," that Vico came to reject the nominalism of his earlier teacher Antonio del Balzo and, in addition, to discover the attraction of modern Platonism, which is closer to Scotism than to any other version of Scholasticism, as well as to see the possibility of developing a "Zenonist" metaphysics of his own.[6] Scotism was what linked the Scholastic tradition to the philosophical context of "renewed Platonism," as Badaloni calls it, in which Vico developed the central tenets of his own philosophy.[7]

A major implication of the Scotist allusion in the language of Vico's theory of allegory is that, for a given imaginative genus, the manifold species signified, in so far as they are looked at exclusively under the aspect represented by the genus, are not only nominally indistinguishable but also ontologically identical. In the genus that historians call Thrice-Great Hermes, each of the many anonymous figures signified by the same name over a period of several centuries is ontologically identical to all the others and to the first one to be called by that name: they are all made of the same being—namely the being of one in possession of such vulgar wisdom as is necessary to found a civilization—and are therefore identical. On the linguistic level this means that historical allegory transforms a proper name into a common noun, while on the metaphysical level the same operation identifies, as Badaloni puts it, "la proprietà col personaggio."[8] Using somewhat more technical language, we could say that in Vico's conception of historical allegory an accident, which originally inheres in a substance, is treated as if it were a substance itself. For example, the valor of Achilles is treated as if it were Achilles and is called Achilles whenever it is met in a person whose essential nature appears to be the same as that of the original Achilles. But because an accident cannot become a substance in the material sense, we must conclude that the allegorical operation gives existence only to an "ens rationis", that is to say to a substance that does not have

[6]*Autobiografia* in *Opere*, ed. Fausto Nicolini (Milano-Napoli: Ricciardi, 1953), pp. 3 and 6.

[7]Badaloni, p.27.

[8]*Ibid.*, p. 88.

the being of a substance outside the mind perceiving it.

As an ens rationis each of the allegorical significations of a given myth is real without being material, and it is not distinguishable from the others because no non-univocally predicated attributes are involved. An allegory of this nature, Vico says revising Isidore's famous definition of philosophical allegory, is properly called a "diversilo-quium",[9] that is to say a configuration of superimposed "diversely speaking" images, since by means of a single imaginative genus allegory signifies a multiplicity of species which are separate in number and identical in substance. In commenting on axiom 49, which refers the reader to Iamblichus's presentation of Thrice-great Hermes as the figure to whom the Egyptians attributed the invention or discovery of all that is useful and necessary to human life, Vico states:

> E quest'ultima degnità, in seguito dell'antecedenti, è 'l principio delle vere allegorie poetiche, che alle favole davano significati univoci, non analogi, di diversi particolari compresi sotto i loro generi poetici: le quali perciò si dissero "diversiloquia", cioè parlari comprendenti in un general concetto diverse spezie di uomini o fatti o cose . ("The last of these three axioms, when added to the other two, is the principle of the true poetic allegories which gave the fables univocal, not analogical, meanings for various particulars comprised under their poetic genera. They were therefore called diversiloquia; that is, expressions comprising in one general concept various species of men, deeds, or things" [210]).

Nor can the identity of the signified species be reduced to a mere similarity of a few characteristics, such as could indicate that the individuals to whom they belong are similarly suited to carry out equivalent parallel roles in their separate historical contexts. Species of this type would certainly be perceived as being equal in some respects, since they are related to their historical contexts in parallel ways, but they cannot be perceived as being equal in all respects, because non-univocal attributes are always involved in the perception of the separateness

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[9]Vico's exact wording in paragraph 210 of the 1744 edition, "le quali [allegorie] si dissero *diversiloquia*," is somewhat unfortunate because it suggests that he borrowed this Latin term from some source that has since dropped out of currency, since his editors have failed to identify it. Thomas Bergin and Max Fisch, in their English version of *The New Science* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1968), reinforce this idea, by translating the passage as "They were therefore called *diversiloquia*." But in the 1725 edition there is no such suggestion. There Vico's words indicate rather that *diversiloquia* was the way he rendered what the Greeks must have meant by allegories: "Le significazioni di sí fatti parlari devono essere state sul lor principio propiamente le allegorie, che pur i greci con tal voce voglion dire" See *La Scienza nuova prima*, a cura di fausto Nicolini (Bari: Laterza, 1931), par. 265.

of parallelism, and therefore cannot be regarded as identical. That sort of limited functional equivalence would be no more than what Thomism knows as "convenientia proportionis" and modern scholarship as analogy of attribution.[10] It is no equality at all, not even in part, since the attribution of a given property to different entities, such as the attribution of the same (rather than the same type of) vulgar wisdom to individuals in different periods of history, is similar but not exactly the same. For Vico the identity of the signified species, rather, is total, in the sense that, to the mind perceiving them, they are fully convertible and can therefore be predicated of each other. They are, in effect, different instances of the same thing. Vico insists upon this consequence of the univocity of predication in historical allegory and is very careful to avoid any possible misinterpretation of his view as a case of the identity of proportion. In the attempt to rule out all ambiguity and to make his view crystal clear, he goes so far as to say that, in his description of historical allegory, the defining terms are to be read in the (precise and ascertainable) technical sense that they have for the Scholastic tradition. The passage in question is long, but the sense of urgency with which Vico sees the need for clarity and the number of significant details that he mentions in the process no doubt warrant its full quotation.

> Quindi le mitologie devono essere state i propi parlari delle favole (che tanto suona tal voce); talché essendo le favole, come sopra si è dimostrato, generi fantastici, le mitologie devono essere state le loro propie allegorie. Il qual nome, come si è nelle Degnità osservato, ci venne diffinito "diversiloquium", in quanto, con identità non di proporzione ma, per dirla alla scolastica, di predicabilità, esse significano le diverse spezie o i diversi individui compresi sotto essi generi: tanto che devon avere una significazione univoca, comprendente una ragion comune alle loro spezie o individui (come d'Achille, un'idea di valore comune a tutti i forti; come d'Ulisse, un'idea di prudenza comune a tutti i saggi); talché sí fatte allegorie debbon essere l'etimologie de' parlari poetici, che ne dassero le loro origini tutte univoche, come quelle de' parlari volgari sono piú spesso analoghe. E ce ne giunse pure la deffinizione d'essa voce "etimologia", che suona lo stesso che "veriloquium", siccome essa favola ci fu diffinita "vera narratio". ("Thus the mythologies, as their name indicates, must have been the proper languages of the fables; the fables being imaginative class concepts, as we have shown, the mythologies must have been the allegories corresponding to them. Allegory is defined as diversiloquium insofar as, by identity, not of proportion but (to speak scholastically) of predicability, allegories signify the diverse species or the diverse individuals comprised under these genera. So that they must have a univocal sig-

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[10]See, for example, Frederick Copleston, S.J., *A History of Philosophy*, Volume II, *Augustine to Scotus* (New York: Doubleday, 1985), p. 356.

nification connoting a quality common to all their species and individuals (as Achilles connotes the idea of valor common to all strong men, or Ulysses an idea of prudence common to all wise men); such that these allegories must be the etymologies of the poetic languages, which would make their origins all univocal, whereas those of the vulgar languages are more often analogical. We also have the definition of the word "etymology" itself as meaning veriloquium, just as fable was defined as vera narratio" [403]).

This is a fundamental statement, not only because in it Vico makes explicit that his concept of allegorical univocity is grounded in metaphysics, but for a variety of other reasons as well. The passage, in fact, invites commentary on several points. In the first place, Vico draws an important distinction between myth and mythology. When it is separated into its two root words, the term "mythology" means no more than the speech of myth, "i propi parlari delle favole." Mythology is therefore understood neither as a totality of related myths nor as the discipline that studies them, which are the two common meanings of the term, but, etymologically ("tanto suona tal voce"), as that which a myth utters forth to the community in virtue of which it exists and which looks to it for sense and guidance. This is the reason why Vico speaks here of "mitologie", in the plural, for each myth speaks its own message. And in being so spoken, that message acquires material existence and thereby becomes available for philological examination. When this takes place, the mythological utterance of a myth may be properly called its allegory, since the latter refers only to the real signification of the myth as identified by the historical hermeneutics of philology.

In the second place the passage makes the point, more forcefully than elsewhere in the Scienza nuova, that the signification of historical allegory is always a relational structure, in the sense that it is the epistemic bridge that links genus to species. With respect to number, allegory is a mode of going from the singular to the plural, while with respect to essence, we have the added feature that the members of the signified plurality are all identical, their identity being a consequence of their univocal determination by means of a "ragion comune", which is Vico's term for what classical Thomism would call the ratio of each signified species or the thing that determines them all because it is their semantic and ontological content.[11] This recognition of its relational form makes Vico's concept of historical allegory much more familiar to modern readers of the Scienza nuova. For students of literature, for

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[11]On this point see, I.M. Bochenski, "On Analogy," in *Inquiries into Medieval Philosophy* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Publishing Co., 1971), p. 101.

example, are acquainted with this kind of structure from such characters as Everyman in medieval drama and from such texts as the first two verses of Dante's Commedia, where, by means of the pronouns "nostra" and "mi" ("Nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita / mi ritrovai per una selva oscura") the interpretive focus is made to glide back and forth along the line that links genus to species and is finally made to rest on the essential identity of all the species imaginable under that genus. Because it uses an imaginative genus to represent a plurality of species, historical allegory is furthermore recognizable as the prototype of what, perhaps since Cicero, has come to be regarded as the most common understanding of allegory, which is that allegory is an extended metaphor.[12] For surely the structure in which a genus represents a plurality of species may be regarded as an extension of the structure in which the same genus stands for a single species, that is to say an extension of a certain type of metaphor, since a configuration for the transference of genus to species is, as Vico read in Aristotle, one of the four possible structures of metaphor, the first, in fact, to be analyzed in the Poetics.[13]

In the third place the above passage establishes the epistemic structure of historical allegory as the etymological principle of all poetic phrases and words. There are four steps in Vico's argument. First, when the Greek word for "etymology" is resolved into "etymon" and "logos", Vico observes that etymology becomes "veriloquium' or true speech. Second, on the orthographic model of this attested Latin word, and allusively in opposition to Isidore's "alieniloquium", Vico suggests the constructed term "diversiloquium" as the etymology of allegory. Third, on the basis of what he has already said regarding the univocal nature of primeval communication, Vico claims that poetic languages are grounded in univocity, whereas vernacular languages, which are produced by means of conventional signs (173), are grounded in analogy. And fourth, Vico interprets "mythos" as "vera narratio' and suggests that this interpretation is authenticated by a respectable philological tradition. From these considerations Vico concludes, on philosophical and on philological grounds, that an etymological account of the origin of poetic languages is of necessity mythical and hence allegorical.

When it is viewed in the context of the considerations on allegory so far analyzed, Vico's argument is both clear and forceful. However it calls for further commentary, since the validity of his philological foundation has been questioned by his most authoritative modern editor, and since Vico himself was for some time uncertain regarding the best

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[12]*De Oratore*, 3, 166.
[13]*Poetics* 1457[b]10.

way to present his reasoning. With respect to philological accuracy, Fausto Nicolini regards Vico's statement that he has valid predecessors in the interpretation of myth as "vera narratio' an "affermazione priva di fondamento."[14]While it is true that no Greek usage of mythos in this acceptation is attested,[15] Vico's statement is fully justified if we keep in mind that he understood myth as history. For the phrase vera narratio is indeed found in Renaissance historiographical theory as a definition of history. Vico could have encountered it in Sebastian Fox-Morzillo's *De Historia Instituenda* (1557) or, more likely, in Jean Bodin's *Methodus ad Facilem Historiarum Cognitione* (1566), the first chapter of which opens with the following words: "Historiae, id est verae narrationis, tria sunt genera."[16] Vico borrowed the expression because he, quite legitimately, saw it as covering also his notion of myth.

Regarding Vico's own concerns, we note that the 1730, the 1734, and the 1744 redactions of the passage in question contain variants which indicate that he struggled for considerable time with the structure and content of his argument, fearing without doubt that it might be regarded as philologically extravagant and logically less than clear. With respect to philology, the only troubling moment was his statement that vernacular languages, that is to say languages developed on the principle of conventional signification, are analogical while primitive languages univocal. In the 1730 edition he attempted to give this part of his argument philological roots by presenting his position as a rejection of the one that he thought Caesar had defended against Cato the Censor in his lost work *De analogia*. In this attempt to give philological grounding to a theoretical proposition, Vico was following his usual method, doing here no more than he had done, say, when he extrapolated his concept of the three ages from Herodotus (52). But he must have realised that his conjecture on the content of Caesar's work was purely speculative and that his assumption that Caesar had written that work against Cato was unfounded, being based on a misreading of Svetonius, as Nicolini has shown,[17] and so in the 1744 edition he dropped the passage altogether.

As for the clarity of his logic, in the fourth series of his *Correzioni,*

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[14]In his edition of Vico's *Opere* (Milano-Napoli: Ricciardi, 1953), p. 517, n.2.

[15]A fact which, as Nicolini observes in his *Commento storico alla seconda Scienza nuova* (Roma: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1978), I, p. 147, was pointed as early as 1749 by Damiano Romano.

[16] p. 11 of the 1577 edition (Parisiis: Apud Martinum Iuvenem). For Fox-Morzillo's use of the definition and for his relationship with Bodin, see John L. Brown, *The Methodus ad Facilem Historiarum Cognitionem of Jean Bodin: A Critical Study* (Washington: The Catholic University of America, 1939), pp. 61-62.

[17]Nicolini, *Commento storico*, II, p. 163.

miglioramenti, ed aggiunte, which represent the 1734 redaction of the
Scienza nuova, Vico attempted to improve it by adding inferential
details: "Talché essendo l'etimologie quelle che ne danno l'origini delle
voci, e le favole furono le prime voci che usò la gentilità, le mitologie
poetiche sono appunto quelle che qui noi trattiamo, che ne danno le
vere origini delle favole" (1219). But in preparing the 1744 edition Vico
decided in favour of brevity and excised the sentence. The conclusion
that etymology is reducible to mythological allegory does not in effect
need these details, because it is clear that, as he goes back to the very
beginnings of linguistic history, the etymologist cannot but meet at the
root of every name man's first epistemic form, which Vico has already
established as univocal allegory.

Vico's discussion of etymology in the above quoted paragraph con-
tains yet another point of interest, mentioned by him in an almost inci-
dental way, since it is not a central part of the immediate argument.
This is the idea that poetic language can survive and is possible in the
non-poetic ages of history, the allegories of which "sono piú spesso
analoghe." If univocal allegory is the root of poetic language as such, it
must be also the root of the poetic language that can still be found in the
non-poetic ages of history, that is to say, the language of poetical texts.
As a consequence, allegory becomes an integral part of poetic theory.
"Tutte queste degnità," he says with reference to the axioms that define
the nature of poetic characters,

> compiono tutta la ragion poetica nelle sue parti, che sono: la favola, il
> costume e suo decoro, la sentenza, la locuzione e la di lei evidenza, l'al-
> legoria, il canto e per ultimo il verso. ("cover the divisions of poetic the-
> ory: namely, fable; custom and its appropriateness; sentence; locution
> and its expressiveness; allegory; song; and finally verse" [SN 235]).

Besides the addition of allegory to the list of conceptual categories
that concern poetics, other differences distinguish Vico's understanding
of the theory of poetry from Aristotle's. Whereas the categories of plot
("favola"), thought ("sentenza"), and verse ("verso') correspond exact-
ly to the original ones used by Aristotle, diction, which is here under-
stood from the perspective of a stylistic preference for perspicuity
("locuzione e la di lei evidenza") corresponds in part to the original,
whereas "costume e suo decoro" only very imperfectly recall the
Aristotelian "ethos." These differences are in themselves significant
deviations from Aristotelian premises, but it is undoubtedly the pres-
ence of allegory that most radically distinguishes the Vichian from the
Aristotelian notion of poetics. Here Vico vindicates the status of allego-
ry as a concern for poetic theory by means of a radically polemical ges-
ture against the anti-allegorical critical tradition, which ultimately
derived from Aristotle's Poetics. Aristotle, it will be recalled, does not

recognize that it is possible for an allegorical action to be developed alongside the one imitated by the plot, since this would dissolve away the poem's essential unity. Therefore in the *Poetics* he does not grant "hyponoia", which is the classical term for what came to be called allegory, any status whatsoever. Allegory is not for him an appropriate analytical category through which to view the content of poetry. Consequently a critical stance that purports to bring allegory into the domain of poetics is automatically of an anti-Aristotelian character. In proposing to do just that, Vico assumes a revisionist role and in the above quoted passage redefines the traditional domain of poetics.

In the early eighteenth century, when the philosophical conception of the discipline of poetics was still to a very considerable extent dominated, with varying degrees of orthodoxy, by Aristotelianism, Vico's revisionist stance in the definition of its legitimate concerns is noteworthy, but its significance must not be exaggerated, for contemporary practical criticism most certainly did not shun the question of allegory. What may instead be considerably more surprising to a reader who approaches Vico from the perspective of the problem situation of early eighteenth-century poetic theory is the conspicuous absence in his text of any allusion to contemporary research on allegory, whether or not this research carried with it the philosophical need for a new definition of the discipline of poetics. For since the turn of the seventeenth century, the question of allegory had become culturally central, so much so that it is only reasonable to assume that Vico was familiar with, and had an opinion on, the chief theories that had been advanced.

A quick glance at some highlights of Dante criticism can give us a sufficiently accurate idea of contemporary interest in allegory. The first edition of Dante's letter to Cangrande della Scala is published in 1700 issue of Galleria di Minerva by Apostolo Zeno, while in 1708 Gianvincenzo Gravina in the *Ragion poetica* first proposed analysing the complex allegory of the *Commedia* in terms of a signifier-signified dichotomy, and in 1723, Anton Maria Biscioni, in his *Prose di Dante Alighieri e di Messer Gio. Boccacci*, greatly improved the text of the, previously unintelligible, passage of the *Convivio* (II, 1, 3) in which Dante distinguishes the literal from the allegorical sense of poetry, and attempted the first systematic allegorization of Beatrice.[18] The impression that one gets from the *Scienza nuova*, however, is that Vico's reappraisal of allegory was conceived in a totally independent manner, despite his well known struggle to reconcile his admiration for Dante's "barbaric" poetry with his aversion to its philosophical content, and despite the fact that in 1728 or 1729, that is to say just before issuing his

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[18]On these issues see Domenico Pietropaolo, *Dante Studies in the Age of Vico* (Ottawa: Dovehouse, 1988), pp. 56-58, 216-218, 354-371.

second edition of the *Scienza nuova,* he was so involved in Dante criti-
cism as to accept to collaborate on a project to publish a new annotated
edition of the *Divina Commedia.*[19]

Yet in the *Scienza nuova* Vico does not discuss the implications of
his theory of allegory for practical literary criticism, though his inclu-
sion of allegory in the domain of "ragion poetica" clearly indicates that
he did not wish his ideas to be confined to the examination of ancient
myths, that is to say to the realm of the poetic as a historical category.
One is almost tempted to interpret Vico's silence concerning the exter-
nal context in which his readers would place his notion of allegory as
another instance of his peculiar need to create for himself a rhetorical
persona heroically distant from his contemporaries. But such an inter-
pretation would be unjustified, because Vico clearly developed his
notion of allegory as a logical implication of his system of thought, in
response to the internal exigencies of his philosophy of man in history,
and not also as an explicit response to what contemporary literary crit-
ics had to say on the matter. His silence concerning other theories can
certainly be regarded as a gesture of rejection, as a statement that con-
ventional approaches to allegory are irrelevant to his science of human-
ity, but it cannot be regarded as a restriction of his theory to the histor-
ically poetic.

It is true, however, that Vico's interpretation of historical allegory as
the principle of poetic characters, and consequently also as the semantic
basis of myth and etymology, in terms of a univocal relationship
between species and genus makes use of a vocabulary that is as margin-
al to the tradition of poetic criticism and theory as it is central to that of
logic. To be sure, words such as "genus" and "species" have a high fre-
quency of occurrence in metaphysical discourse, and we have already
seen how Vico's use of them explicitly recalls the metaphysical assump-
tions behind his idea of imaginative genre. But in so far as it can be
regarded, apart from the nature of the things that it names, as a vocabu-
lary for the signification of thinking about reality, the language of meta-
physics becomes the language of logic, "perché quella ch'è metafisica in
quanto contempla le cose per tutti i generi dell'essere, la stessa è logica
in quanto considera le cose per tutti i generi di significarle" (400).

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[19]Though it was first published posthumously only in 1818, the article known
as "Giudizio sopra Dante" (Fubini) or "Discovertá del vero Dante" (Nicolini)
was originally meant to preface Pompeo Venturi's edition of Dante's
Commedia, which was later published, without Vico's preface, by Capurri in
Lucca in 1732. On the probable date of Vico's article see Benedetto Croce, "Il
giudizio su Dante del Vico e il commento del Venturi," now in *Conversazioni
critiche,* serie terza (Bari: Laterza, 1932), p. 318. On Vico's Dante criticism see
Pietropaolo, pp. 63-92 and 99-105.

This grounding of allegory in logic would seem to undermine somewhat its status as a legitimate object of poetic theory. But that is not the case, because in choosing to develop his theory of allegory from within the realm of logic rather than rhetoric or poetics, in which he would probably have had to conduct his analysis in terms of symbols and metaphors and to relate it to the other issues surrounding the traditional "res et verba" dichotomy, Vico actually adheres to an old philosophical practice which regarded rhetoric, poetics, and logic as disciplines that had much in common in so far as they were the tools of knowledge or the ancillary "instrumental sciences" of philosophy.[20] In the sixth century, Simplicius had first included the Poetics and the Rhetoric among the philosopher's logical works, that is to say together with the Peri Hermeneias and the other treatises of his Organon, a grouping which eventually came to function as the chief hermeneutical paradigm for the examination of each of the works involved. Through the Arabic transmission of Aristotle, that paradigm reached the Italian Renaissance, significantly conditioning, not only the way in which these works were to be interpreted by Aristotelian scholars, but also the manner in which the problems contemplated in them were to be analyzed even outside of Aristotelian studies.[21]

One consequence of this classification was the free interpenetration of the different disciplines and hence the natural availability of the conceptual framework of one of them for the illumination of issues that conceptually belonged to the others. For Vico this perspective was furthermore advantageous in that conventional poetics was not equipped to deal with the historically poetic, that is with the cognitive and signifying forms of primeval times, since it had been developed principally for the analysis of the rhetorically poetic, which uses those forms, including allegory, as artistic tools. And since, according to axiom CXVI of the *Scienza nuova*, theories must begin with the first historical appearance of the objects that they theorise, Vico could not explain the origin

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[20]Bernard Weinberg, *A History of Literary Criticism in the Italian Renaissance* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1961), p. 13. In more recent times Pierre Gassendi had no difficulty classifying allegory as part of logic. As represented in the Bible, the domain of logic for Gassendi is constituted by "sanis sermonibus, historiis gravibus, concinnis carminibus, propositis eleganter aenigmatibus, allegoriis etc., quibus a pueritia usque imbuerentur," *De logicae origine et varietate liber unus* in *Syntagma philosophicum*, in *Opera omnia* (Lyons: 1658), p. 35, quoted by Francesco Bottin in "Pierre Gassendi (1592-1655)", in *Storia delle storie generali della filosofia*, ed. Giovanni Santinello (Brescia: Editrice La Scuola, 1981), p. 142.

[21]On the Arabic acceptance of the "logical" view of the *Poetics*, see Ismail M. Dahiyat, *Avicenna's Commentary on the Poetics of Aristotle* (Leiden: Brill, 1974), pp. 12-20.

of allegorical thinking without having recourse to the science concerned with the structure and signification of thought. Vico's treatment of allegory, therefore, does not compromise its status as an integral part of poetic theory; on the contrary, it explains how allegory was structured and how extensive was its scope prior to its transformation into the instrument of artistic discourse familiar to conventional poetics.

A second consequence of the interpenetration of the instrumental sciences was that the identification of primordial allegory could be seen as a fundamental task of the discipline concerned with understanding the act of naming, that is to say with general hermeneutics, a discipline which, in Vico's science of humanity, can have status only as historical hermeneutics. In the 1730 edition of the *Scienza nuova*, after asserting that allegory is the principle of etymology, Vico makes this very explicit. Referring to Aristotle's work on interpretation, which, as we have seen, had been generally grouped together with the Logic and the Poetics, he says:

> E questa è la Periermeneia o interpretatione de' nomi: parte di questa logica poetica, dalla quale doveva quella di Aristotele incominciare. ("And this is the peri hermeneias or the interpretation of names: a part of this poetic logic, with which that of Aristotle ought to have begun" [1219, my translation]).

Aristotle's *Peri Hermeneias* is a treatise on the relationship between speech and thought. It is based on the principle that names signify by convention, and it is written from the perspective of logic, understanding speech, not as a grammatically coherent or incoherent combination of words, but as the true or false expression of thought. From a Vichian perspective one can argue that in writing this work Aristotle failed to observe that, everywhere and in all periods of history, mutes are able to make themselves understood by means of gestures or by exhibiting objects which their interlocutors can naturally associate with given ideas, a failure which induced him into concluding that there is no natural signification and that only conventional language is possible (16a20). Moreover, Aristotle does not see that an investigation of the process whereby thought is signified cannot begin and end with an analysis of the structures of expression in the rationalist present, which are mostly analogical and grounded in convention, for it presupposes the effort to see through those structures all the way back to the primordial utterances from which they ultimately derive. As axiom CVI teaches, a theory of how thought is signified by speech must begin with an explanation of how the very first human thought was so signified.

The basic methodological principle of general hermeneutics, which is that the interpretive method must lead back to the point where the

process of formation of the object being examined actually began, was fundamental to Vico's philosophy, as Betti has shown.[22] Therefore the interpretation of names can only be a historical hermeneutics grounded in etymology. The conventional relationship between names and thoughts in the present is the final result of a historical process that began in the natural univocity of historical allegory. A Vichian treatise on the interpretation of names, that is to say a Vichian *Peri Hermeneias*, would have to begin its explanation of the essence of nomenclatural practice with a description of man's first naming act at the dawn of civilization.

As Vico began to look at historical evidence of primitive mental processes, he realised that the critical apparatus available to him for the general investigation of modes of thinking, namely the conceptual categories of philosophy and the inferential algorithms of rational logic, was not universally applicable, as it was thought to be, but was limited to the analysis of discursive thought alone. To apply it to non-discursive thought processes, such as those which obtained prior to the development of the rational faculty, as in the case of primitive peoples and of all children, and those followed by creative artists, whose minds leap from one image to the other without the aid of rules of inference, would be to assimilate them to logic and to distort them beyond recognition. This apparatus needed to be enriched with a hermeneutical category capable of grasping the way in which species is related to genus, by and in a mind that can have no recourse to abstraction, and hence of understanding cognitive dynamics that are not grounded in rules of inference. That interpretive paradigm is for Vico univocal allegory.

The individual allegories subsumed in the original names were to comprise the allegorical index that Vico at one point thought of appending to the text of the Scienza nuova. Had he compiled it, the list would have been a collection of ideas radically different from the ones that contemporary interpreters of ancient mythology and literature generally read into the traditional stories of gods and heroes. Through the agency of univocal allegory, the Vichian interpreter of civil history could return to the age when men first felt the need to organize their thoughts into explanatory narratives. Like contemporary philosophical or analogical interpreters of ancient culture, the Vichian philologist begins with modern perceptions of mythology, but, unlike them, he does not argue in favour of this or that equally rationalist interpretation of individual stories. Conscious as he is that mind is not only the agent

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22 For Betti that principle is in fact a consequence of the *verum-factum* premise applied to history. See Emilio Betti, "I *Principi di scienza nuova* di G.B. Vico e la teoria della interpretazione storica," in *Diritto, Metodo, Ermeneutica*, a cura di Giuliano Crifò (Milano: Giuffré, 1991), p. 462.

of history but also its product, he moves backwards along the process of man's social development until he meets a point beyond which there is only darkness. He then looks forward to the present, explaining each stage of that development in terms of the correlative modifications that occur in the human mind as it acquires and masters the ability to reason. Univocal allegory is the key to the way men thought out the scheme of things at the beginning of historical time, when their very lack of that ability first caused them to terrify themselves out of bestial confusion and to begin their long climb to rational humanity.

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PEDAGOGICAL FANTASY: A SURVEY OF
19TH-CENTURY CHILDREN'S LITERATURE IN SPAIN

It has been suggested by Carmen Bravo-Villansante, one of the pioneers in the study of children's literature in Spain, that only by tracing the development of children's magazines can one find the beginnings of a children's literature in Spanish. This is not surprising given the fact in Spain the 19th century is considered to be the century of the Press, hailed in the December First 1853 issue of the newspaper *El Oriente*[1] as, "locomotora de la vida intelectual, telégrafo eléctrico del pensamiento escrito, ligera como el siglo, variable como la época, flexible como el tiempo..." ("locomotive of intellectual life, electrical telegraph of written thought, light as the century, changeable as the era, flexible as time...").[2] In 1860, with an illiteracy rate of 76% there were 154 newspapers and other periodical publications in print circulating in Madrid alone. A decade later, in 1870, the number of publications circulating in the capital city had climbed to 302 in comparison with only a slight drop in the illiteracy rate to 72%.[3]

The children's press, as Cazottes so aptly stated, were the "poor cousins" of their adult counterpart (122). From the numbers quoted above, in 1860 only 7% of publications were dedicated to children; by 1870 that number had declined to 4%. Most of these publications appeared in the form of a magazine and were only available through tri-monthly, half-a-year or yearly subscription; they were rarely, if ever, sold in loose numbers to the general public (Martínez, 4). It is only in the latter part of the century that we will find the emergence of a small but successful number of publishing houses dedicated exclusively to the publication and dissemination of works written exclusively for children in book form.

In terms of their content, at the outset and throughout the 19th century, most of the texts dedicated to children were often written by

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[1]Cited in Seoane, 12.

[2]All translations, unless otherwise noted, are mine.

[3]Raw data cited in Sinclair, xi. cf. with Cazottes study in "Presse Madrilene et Lecteurs"(pps 7-10),which quotes from another source the readership in Madrid: 7.18% of a population of 246,767 , or almost 18 thousand readers during the year 1856 suscribed to a newspaper or magazine.

moralists and pedagogues[4]; when professional writers penned stories for children they would invariably assume the role of an educator. For example the motto of *La Aurora, Periódico de los niños*, a monthly publication that ran from January 1851 to December 1853, was "la virtud, la ciencia y el trabajo" ("virtue, science and work"). The contents of this magazine reflected this motto, it featured articles such as "La Obediencia" ("Obedience"), and "Ricardo ó la utilidad de la lectura" ("Ricardo or the usefulness of reading"); if tales were published they tended to be moral in nature or biblical stories. Another periodical similar in name, but published almost a decade later, *La Aurora de la vida, único periódico ilustrado Dedicado á los niños de Ambos Sexos*, promised in their introductory number that came out on November 10th, 1860 to "entertain as well as to instruct" and they included girls explicitly in their mission statement:

> ... a realizar el elevado pensamiento de instruir deleitando. Conociendo que la dificultad de instruir á los niños consiste en fijar su débil atencion en los objetos, procuraremos que estos estén al alcance de sus facultades intelectuales.
>
> Aun cuando LA AURORA DE LA VIDA es un periódico dedicado á la educación é instrucción de los niños de ambos sexos, no tratará los asuntos tan vaga y sencillamente que no satisfagan las exigencias de los mayores: los padres, los preceptores, y en particular las madres, encontrarán en él un fondo de recreativa y pura distracción, que contribuirá á endulzar la felicidad doméstica; sin poner en tortura su mente, hallarán en LA AURORA DE LA VIDA máximas que inculcar á los niños, ejemplos de virtud que exponer á las niñas; historias, leyendas, fábulas etc. con que distraerlos, así como consejos morales é higiénicos que en ciertos momentos de la vida son dulcísimo y reparador beleño de nuestros sufrimientos.
>
> ("... to fulfil the elevated ideal of instruction and entertainment. With the knowledge that the difficulty involved in the instruction of children consists of fixing their weak attention upon an object, we shall ensure that this is within reach of their intellectual faculties.
>
> Even when THE DAWN OF LIFE is a newspaper dedicated to the education and instruction of children of both sexes, it will not treat matters in such a vague and simple manner that it will not satisfy the demands of the adults: the parents, the preceptors, and in particular the mothers, will find in it a recreational and purely entertaining setting, that will contribute to sweeten domestic bliss; without torturing their minds, they will find in THE DAWN OF LIFE maxims to instil in the boys, examples of virtue to describe to the girls; stories, legends,

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[4]This comment is also true of children's literature produced outside Spain during the first half of the 19th century. cf. Geoffrey Summerfield, *Fantasy and Reason* (London: Methuen, 1984).

fables, etc. with which to entertain them, as well as moral and hygienic advice that at certain moments in life are the sweetest and restorative panacea of our suffering.")

While the high moralizing content that so characterized the genre prevailed throughout the century, the latter half of it was characterized by the inclusion of more ludic elements, hence the title of this article: Pedagogical Fantasy. This slight shift in focus from one *Aurora* to the next is of great significance because it is an indication of the relaxation of certain precepts governing the era's perception of what is a "child", and although it does not open the door to the creation of the kind of children's literature that we are used to nowadays in the 21st Century,[5] it at least leaves the door ajar to new ideas on writing for children.

These children's magazines were geared towards the rearing of the "well-bred" child, the parameter under which all being that dictated the way the ideal child ought to be and behave. In order to achieve that "model of perfection", the child who should be carefully guarded and nourished in the privacy of their homes and under the careful supervision of their mother. This idea of "child" was not a universally applicable concept, bourgeois practices –at societal and institutional levels– were great determiners of who would fall under this golden category of "child", social status and wealth being important and decisive factors[6]; after all the viability of these publications relied heavily upon the subscription of adults with purchasing power.

In general, when approaching the study of a text written for children, apart from the writer and the youthful reader, it is important to acknowledge the existence of a third party, one whose participation is never explicit but cannot be ignored: that of the parent, guardian, or teacher, because they select the reading material for the child. Efforts are usually made to strike a balance between what the child wants and what is considered to be appropriate reading, but ultimately, in case of conflict, the adult will almost always have the upper hand. Thus, what is being categorized in this study as "children's literature" is a rather

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[5] If we stray away from works which are part of the school curriculum, most of the children's literature in Spanish available today are mostly translations of very popular foreign ones such as the *Harry Potter* series by Rowlings.

[6] These magazines were directed to children of the upper and middle classes, who had to be "persuaded" with "honey" and "sweets" to learn. The "other" children, the orphans, the children living under precarious economic conditions, were to learn a trade. In Spain, boys in orphanages would be sent to be apprentices in the army or the navy, girls were trained in all the gentle crafts "suitable" to their gender so that they could live their life as someone's maid or presumably wife. (Fernández Vargas, "Los aspectos teóricos: El derecho y el aprendizaje",129-161)

highly politicized and manipulative discourse, designed to encourage
the grooming of those "good qualities" that are supposedly innate to
children, therefore guiding them to take the path of goodness qualifying
"goodness" as meaning the ability to conform to the social order, which-
ever one that may be. As a result of this, a large number of the works
published in the 19th century under the rubric of Children's Literature
consist mainly of thinly disguised moral or pedagogical tracts.

The moral concept of a "well-bred" child arose and took form in the
17th century, doubtlessly as a product of the reforming beliefs of an elite
of thinkers and moralists who occupied positions of power (i.e. Church
or State). The "well-bred" child was a creature who should be preserved
from the roughness and immorality which that would become a special
characteristic attributed to the lower classes (Aries, 328). Rousseau's
ideas concerning education, which he expounded in *Emile*, found
favour beyond the borders of France, especially in Spain, where his
writings on children and education were widely known.[7] The French
thinker conceived children as being naturally good and that the goal of
education should be that of nurturing these innate qualities. Children
should be guided and allowed to develop naturally into morally and
intellectually self-reliant individuals, useful to their families and to soci-
ety. Children should be provoked into learning useful and practical
things. An ideal child should be some sort of a miniature Crusoe, some-
one who had learnt to survive through his wits, his resourcefulness and
his innate talents. This all pervasive attitude towards childhood,
explains the inextricable link that exists between children's literature
and children's education; not in the sense of teaching the child an estab-
lished curriculum, but in the sense of helping him/her assimilate and
perceive the world as it should be perceived.

Didacticism and morality are the two predominant words that best
characterize the bulk of writings dedicated to children in the 19th cen-
tury. The fantastic and the marvellous, so in vogue today, were
approached a hundred years ago with the utmost care, and accepted
only as an afterthought; it was never accepted at face value, and it was
mainly used to illustrate a didactic and/or moral point.

Whenever the word "fantasy" is mentioned within the context of
children's literature, fairy tales usually spring to the forefront.
However, fairy tales were not created to address the specific needs of
children; rather, their main function according to Max Lüthi in *Once
Upon a Time: On the Nature of Fairy Tales*, was to present "the poetic
vision of man and his relationship to the world ... Even though man

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[7]Rousseau's ideas on education were filtered into Spain mainly through the
popularity amongst Spanish pedagogues of one of his admirers, M. Arnaud
Berquin who was proprietor and editor of the periodical *L'ami des enfants*.

may feel outcast and abandoned in the world, like one groping in the dark ... The fairy tale, ... not only inspires trust and confidence; it also provides a sharply defined image of man: isolated yet capable of universal relationships." (Lüthi, 21) The Grimm Brothers also saw similar qualities in the fairy tales they compiled and published in 1812 under the title of *Kinder und Haüsmarchen* ("Children and Household Tales") They wished the tales to be educational, to teach those who read them to become more aware of their own nature. Fairy tales were already fashionable in the late 16th century, thanks to the publication in France of Charles Perrault's *Contes de ma Mere L'Oye* ("Mother Goose Tales") in 1697, a popularity that despite the censorship of educators and moralists, carried well into the 18th century, since the main followers were all members of the nobility. It was only with the publication of the Brothers Grimm's work that fairy tales were able to infiltrate into the strata of middle-class consciousness and become the bland staple they are today.

In the case of Spain, the work of the Grimm Brothers did not appear in full translation and in a book form until the establishment in 1876 of the Saturnino Calleja Publishing House. However, the stories were already well-known thanks to the efforts of an ever-increasing number of children's periodicals circulating in Spain and its overseas empire. For example, the popular Madrid periodical *Los Niños* devoted quite a lot of space to the publication of fairy tales in translation, the work of the Grimm Brothers were not the only ones included in the publication there were also translations of Mme D'Aumont, Perrault, etc. (Villasante, 121-131)

If we look at the first children's magazine to be published in Spain, we will find many examples that adhere very closely to the moralizing spirit so pervasive in the 18th century. The main purpose of the periodical, *Gazeta de los Niños, o principios generales de moral, ciencias y artes, acomodados a la inteligencia de la primera edad*, published in 1798 by Joseph and Bernabé Canga Argüelles, was to educate the child in a simple and pleasant manner:

> Este es el objeto que en nuestros días se han propuesto algunos hombres célebres como Campe, Schummel, Weise, autores alemanes, y últimamente Berquin, a quien con razón se le puede llamar "El amante de la niñez". Este hombre bienhechor, últimamente persuadido a que los niños reciben la instrucción con más placer comunicada por la boca de otros niños, los ha hecho hablar en sus obras, esparciendo en ellas las semillas de todas las virtudes, en unos diálogos vivos y animados, al mismo paso que instructivos...Este rasgo fijó nuestra atención y nos obligó a pensar que sería más fácil infundir a los niños, por el mismo método de Berquin, las nociones más útiles, no sólo de la moral sino de todas las ciencias y artes compatibles con su capacidad por medio de un periódico.

Confesaremos que este pensamiento no es enteramente nuestro, y que en París se publica una obra muy semejante intitulada *Correo de los Niños* (Children's Herald), por Jauffret. Siguiendo, pues, este sistema, ofreceremos en nuestro periódico que se podría llamar la *Enciclopedia de los Niños*, los últimos resultados de las fatigas de los grandes sabios en todos los siglos que nos han precedido. Se inculcarán las máximas de la moral más pura, con toda la energía que puede inspirar un ardiente deseo de hacer bien no por medio de axiomas descarnados y estériles, sino presentando la moral en acción, en cuentos y anécdotas.

("This is the objective that was proposed in of our days by some worthy men like Campe, Schummel, Weise, German authors, and ultimately Berquin, whom with reason can be called the "Friend of Childhood". This benevolent figure of a man, ultimately persuaded that children are more receptive to instruction when this is communicated through the mouths of other children, has made them speak in his works, spreading with them the seeds of all virtues, with lively, animated and, at the same time instructive dialogues. This trait fixed our attention and made us think that it would be easier to infuse children, following Berquin's method, with the most useful notions not only of morality but of all the arts and sciences compatible with their faculties through a newspaper.

We have to confess that this idea is not entirely ours, and that in Paris a very similar work is published entitled *Correo de los Niños* (*Children's Herald*), by Jauffret. Following, thus, this system, we offer in our publication which could be called the *Enciclopedia de los Niños* (*Children's Encyclopaedia*), the latest results of the labour of the greatest geniuses in all the centuries that has preceded us. We shall instil maxims of the highest moral order, with all the energy that can be inspired from the ardent desire to do good not by way of withered and sterile axioms, but through the presentation of morality in action, in stories and anecdotes.")

About the notion of fantasy, "se desterrarán de la *Gazeta de los Niños* todos los ejemplos de engaños, de supercherías, de poca contingencia de las pasiones, como también los apólogos." ("We shall expel from the *Gazeta de los Niños* all examples of deceit, fraud and any eventuality of passion, as well as any apologues.") It is obvious that the editors shared their belief with many educational experts of the day that fairy tales confused children with notions of wonderful and supernatural events, brought about by imaginary beings; above all, they were perceived to be devoid of any apparent moral and were therefore not conducive to juvenile edification.

Here is a sampler of the magazine's offerings to their youthful readers:
*El Castaño: cuento para animar a los niños al estudio (The Chestnut: *A Story to Encourage Children to Study)
*El plátano: cuento moral (The Planteen: Moral Tale)

*La linterna mágica, o principios de cosmografía y geografía (The *Magic Lantern or The Principles of Cosmology and Geography)
*Mariana y Amadeo: diálogo sobre la electricidad (Mariana and Amadeo: Dialogue on Electricity)
*Los campos o la teoría de los abonos (The Country or Theory of Fertilizers)

When the fairy tale finally made an appearance in publications devoted to children, the beauty and the terror that characterized the form were completely changed and transformed into some kind of pedagogical fantasy, a thinly disguised moral tract or didactic tale suitable to the edification of the "Well-bred" child. An example of this is "Viaje al País de la Gramática" ("Voyage to the Land of Grammar"), an "adventure" story by J. Macé, a French educator, translated into Spanish and serialized in the magazine *Los Niños* in 1870. The story is about the travels of a child in the magical land of Grammar, where he meets all sorts of magical creatures which also happen to named after grammatical categories such as Mr. Adjective, etc.

Philippe Aries argues quite convincingly in *Centuries of Childhood* that the concept of childhood as we have it today originated sometime in the 18th century with the inception of a middle-class consciousness and the genesis of the modern family unit. Up to the 17th century, "the family fulfilled a function: it ensured the transmission of life, property and names; but it did not penetrate very far into human sensibility. Myths such as courtly and precious love denigrated marriage, while realities such as the apprenticeship of children loosened the emotional bond between parents and children." (Aries, 411) However, with the arrival of the Industrial Revolution and the quick propagation of a prosperous merchant middle-class, a new concern with education outside apprenticeships "would gradually install itself in the heart of society and transform it from top to bottom. The family ceased to be simply an institution for the transmission of a name and state... it assumed a moral and spiritual function to mould bodies and souls. Parents, in this case the mother particularly, were held responsible infor providing a training for life to all their children." (Aries, 412)

This new ethos was a direct result of the separation between public and private spheres, "The public sphere constituted the world of business and commerce, the market and the world of politics. The private on the other hand was constituted around the home and the family." It is also at this time that there is a clear demarcation in the status of women as "private citizens" (and thus excluded from public office and hence from power), whose major role in life was to provide solace for the "public man" and nurture his children.[8]

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[8]In many writings the mother figure is often referred to as "el ángel del hogar".

Moreover, because of this new responsibility felt by parents in the rearing of their children, literature that was written explicitly for them was the most closely monitored and therefore the easiest to target for censorship (nowadays in the 21st century, this censorship has not lessened, we will find that the most censored books are those written for children). The editors and publishers that tried to mass market their creative wares were aware of this scrutiny. Spanish publishers were by no means impervious to this scrutiny. Competition for the patronage of the reading and buying public was fierce. The longest-lasting Spanish children's periodical, *El Amigo de la Infancia* (1874-1936), boasted at some point of having two thousand subscribers. By just sifting through some of the titles of the publications available in the 19th century we can see that the strong didactic and moralistic current established in Spain by the *Gazeta de los Niños* in 1798 was still to prevail until the beginning of the 20th century.

Unlike other European countries, which had the likes of a Dickens, Thackerey, Ruskin, Rossetti, Wilde, Lorenzini-Collodi, De Amicis or Verne, Spain did not foster any major mainstream writer interested enough to write a major work for children and thus participate in the creation of a "national" children's literature, as well as to elevate with their established status the general esteem in which the genre was held. This is not to say that important Spanish writers did not take an interest in children's literature. Indeed in the roster of some popular children's periodicals such as *Edad Dichosa*, included the pensworks of Eugenio Hartzenbush, Cecilia Bölh de Faber (sometimes under her pseudonym of Fernán Caballero), Antonio de Trueba, Ramón de Campoamor, Angela Grassi, etc. However, for these mainstream figures, writing for children was a marginal exercise, done usually at the request of some friend or acquaintance who happened to run a children's magazine or publish a children's supplement to the main newspaper. Such was the case of the relationship between Hartzenbusch and Carlos Frontaura. Frontaura was not only the proprietor and editor of the successful satirical paper *El Cascabel*, he also published the highly acclaimed children's magazine *Los Niños*, which won various prestigious international prizes. Both Zorrilla and Hartzenbusch contributed quite frequently in *Los Niños* with poems.

During the latter half of the century there was to be a surge in publishing houses dedicated exclusively to the publication and dissemination of children's literature in book form. Amongst the most well-known is Saturnino Calleja[9] Publishing House, established in Madrid in

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[9]The publishing activity of this house had spanned almost a century when in finally closed its doors in 1958. For many, Calleja was not only a pioneer in creating a market for children's books by targeting educators and their insti-

1876. Calleja published the works in translation of Perrault, Grimm and Andersen as well as his own series of children's stories called *Cuentos de Calleja*. It is also in the latter half of the century that we can see an interest on the part of professional writers to produce children's literature. In some cases, this was aided by the fact that some magazine proprietors, apart from having their regular periodicals for the general public, started to have a children's supplement published every so often; therefore it was logical for them to ask their staff writers to produce something for the children's supplement as well.

Overall, we can see a movement from a strictly didactic and moralistic set of writings for children at the beginning of the 19th century, influenced no doubt by the dominance of the Spanish "Ilustración", towards a more entertaining, less moralizing—although didactic tendencies were never to be completely eradicated—and even playful narratives in the latter half of the century. A set of writings in which the desire to educate or teach moral and ethical notions was still very much in evidence, but was preceded by a much higher desire to stimulate and to inspire the imagination, as opposed to dictating moral and ethical behaviour.

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tutions, he was also instrumental as an "agent of cultural and pedagogical modernization." cf. Ruiz Berrio, J. A. Martínez Navarro, C. Colmenar and M. Carreño, *La editorial Calleja, un agente de modernización educativa en la Restauración*. Madrid: UNED, 2002.

María Teresa Caro Valverde
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THÉORIE DE L'INTERTEXTUALITÉ DANS LA POÉSIE DE MALLARMÉ

L'« intertextualité », ce pouvoir humaniste que les écrits ont de dialoguer avec la vie de leurs lecteurs, est un processus de transcendance textuelle indispensable pour la croissance démocratique des espoirs formatives que le secteur de Théorie de la Littérature octroie aujourd'hui à l'Éducation littéraire. Dans ce sens, comme expose Antonio Mendoza dans plusieurs publications à cet égard (Mendoza 1994, 2001, 2003) l'intertextualité est un composant décisif parce qu'il apporte les connaissances spécifiques pour interpréter sémiotiquement la discursivité de la littérature et renforcer de cette façon l'enseignement-apprentissage de la compétence communicative.

Comme nous savons, le terme fût accoté dans le domaine de la Théorie Littéraire par Julia Kristeva à partir du concept bajtinien de « dialogisme » entre textes et fût employé par Gérard Genette pour élaborer son organigramme de la transtextualité, ainsi comme par Michael Riffaterre pour stipuler la compétence littéraire du lecteur en attention aux codes culturels. Cependant, si on recherche la généalogie du concept en fonction des premiers écrits qui illuminèrent sa fonctionnalité épistémique, nous observerons dans les études de tels critiques qui coïncident à pointer comme précurseur, la réflexion sur la créativité d'un poète absolument nécessaire pour accéder à la lyrique d'avantgarde en Occident : Stéphane Mallarmé. Parcourir la théorie littéraire qu'il éparpille sagement dans ses textes, signifie tracer avec une profondeur esthétique et philosophique cette généalogie sur la valeur de l'intertextualité comme une expérience d'écriture démocratique.

La poésie de Mallarmé capture comme les araignées de cristal qui illuminent les théâtres. Multiples et vibrants, ses reflets spectaculaires séduisent les prunelles des lecteurs vers la beauté sensitive du mystère. A son époque, le génie éblouissant du poète aveuglait les esprits conventionnels et était apprécié seulement par quelques initiés dans les correspondances de ses vers comme de beaux passages vitrés du sens incalculable qu'Octavio Paz définissait par inversion à l'hermétisme gongorien, puisque pour Góngora le poème est une métaphore du monde, mais pour Mallarmé le monde est une métaphore du mot (Paz 1991). Je partage son discernement à la lueur de la poétique qui projeta l'œuvre du *maître* depuis les dettes initiales jusqu'aux efforts finaux,

laquelle ne palpait pas son orient entre des obscurités baroques mais qui saisissait avec élan les idées noires de son néoromantisme détrôné ou la voix de l'artiste n'annonce plus les destins humains, mais le silence luctueux des certitudes émincées sur la table de l'artiste par le tranchant coupant des lettres. Dans la nuit mystique de la poésie, se élève, insolite le soliloque adamantien de ses textes maîtres de perplexités.

Celui qui lira Mallarmé en s'abandonnant à *ce qu'*il dit, brisera prunelles contre strophes sans aucun plaisir. Il faut le fréquenter avec une autre disposition, comme qui recherche des questions et caresse des énigmes. Mais ce n'est pas un jeu raffiné ou ésotérique qu'il nous propose, c'est —expliquait- il dans *Le Mystère dans les lettres*— c'est plutôt une éducation esthétique du regard de ses lecteurs, lesquels sont invités à reconnaître la beauté profonde et libre que la littérature engendre, « signifiant fermé et caché, qui habite le commun » (Mallarmé 1984 : 383) au-delà du sens évident qui se vante de mots fidèles dans les dictionnaires. Il confessa avoir appris cette sagesse de son propre travail quand il a découvert, en écrivant, l'abîme de sa propre identité qui attire vers le néant le vieux fondement de tout. Le fait incroyablement moderne d'avertir que c'est l'écriture qui dispose sur l'homme, et pas l'inverse comme on croit d'habitude, ne l'a pas cependant conduit à la dépression du vide inerte mais à la faculté pure de la création : transfigurer ce qui est réel sans chercher un autre dieu que le sublime dans le ciel enfoncé d'un papier.

Une allégorie de la poétique de la mort de l'auteur aux mains de l'écriture, c'est le long poème Hérodiade. Là Herodias parle distraitement avec sa nourrice pendant qu'il se contemple dans le miroir, lune gelée où se courbe sa figure appétissante et interdite, inviolable comme le mystère, sensuelle comme l'aspic ; et après Saint Jean profère un cantique prophétique du néant, après avoir été décapité aux mains de cette vierge somnambule belle jusqu'au terrible. Tous deux sont des personnages symboliques d'un effort stylistique atroce recherché par l'artiste à propos de ladite pièce, auquel il octroie le nom de « transposition » parce que cela consiste à peindre non pas la chose, mais l'effet qu'elle produit (Mallarmé, 1959, I :137), ceci est, imiter non pas l'objet mais l'imitation comme telle, et accéder pour cela à la transparence des objets dans la diaspora des reflets. Avec cette façon intime et singulière d'annoter des impressions si fugitives, le poète s'emploie dans l'inconvenance de tracer ses possibles interrelations et effets esthétiques avec le désir de les orchestrer comme dans une symphonie de vibration ivre. Son but est de montrer ce qui est beau par suggestions de façon semblable au mode dans lequel on évoque entre rêves, les objets à partir des états de l'âme humaine. Sa rédaction donc, se jouit non pas dans l'essence métaphysique mais dans la suggestion et le déchiffrement lecteur que les prismes de son imagination comportent.

Mais la passion poétique pour toucher le mystère des mots avec l'artifice conscient de chercher tels accords comporte le risque de perdre le terrain stable, puisqu'il pousse le poète vers le tourbillon funèbre de l'itération où le langage, mettant face à face les miroirs d'une mimique sans autre modèle que la mimique comme telle, se désarticule en un puits infini de correspondances. Le poème qui donne le titre à cette savante fadeur provoquée par la force signifiante du langage, est *Le démon de l'analogie*. Quand en écrivant il découvre que la pensée pure est la force du reflet, son je   sans sujet ni objet se dissémine en altérités spectaculaires et cède l'initiative aux mots qui demandent une carnation poétique de son,   rythme, numéro et peinture —de tout ce qu'il ne compte pas dans le mot maîtrisé par l'habitude— pour jouer à se refléter les unes dans les autres, « mirage interne de mots eux mêmes » (Mallarmé, 1984 ; 1489), vibrantes dans l'éclatement réciproque de ses feux. Et fasciné il les poursuit pour l'instrumentation syntactique de ses lettres (Mallarmé, 1984 : 648) dans le vers, dans le poème, et de façon extrême dans le *Livre sur ce qui est Beau* qui l'accompagna comme un projet fantôme pendant toute son existence. Ce serait un livre où le langage pour être allégorique de soi-même s'anagramatiserait et travaillerait sur soi-même en raison de son inachèvement ; un livre joué des lettres à l'intertextualité où les textes se liraient, s'illumineraient et s'écriraient les uns aux autres, sans l'intervention du critère d'autorité.

Maurice Blanchot (Blanchot, 1970) fait voir que pas même la civilisation du livre — qui se supporte par une mémoire transmetteur et un système de relations qui ordonne l'espace et le temps du début à la fin et de l'unité à la diversité selon un système d'archives concentré dans l'utilisation du signe comme substance d'une empreinte de l'origine qui force la lecture à interpréter de telles convergences dans un seul sens-elle ne peut pas se soustraire non plus à la condition autre du livre littéraire, qui parce que c'est une fiction qui mine d'absences la présumée monosémie de la présence, est capable de révéler dans la liberté rhétorique dont le langage jouit là le cruel émondage significatif que souffre le signe dans le discours du tout autant et du particulier. De plus, quand la civilisation du livre expulse de la vérité à la littérature avec le qualificatif d' « extériorité » à la présence, elle oublie que toute son organisation dépend de cette extériorité, étant donné que la totalité qu'elle cherche comme origine absolue, est au-delà, elle n'est pas contemporaine, et cette différence temporelle invalide l'être de son antithèse.

Donc le livre mallarméen déchaîne un jeu dangereux dans la civilisation du livre en substituant la sévérité des séparatismes par le rire du hasard et en proposant, encore mieux que la lecture constative du sens imaginé par l'auteur, multitude de lectures intermédiaires performatives d'infinité de sens où les lettres se tirent au sort entre textes et con-

textes. Et ainsi, en libérant le procédé de la signification, elle fait irruption dans la modernité de sa lyrique comme une franche didactique de l'intertextualité pour la création littéraire.

À la racine d'une aralyse du poème « Tombeau (à Verlaine) », Paul de Man énonce avec une admirable simplicité ce que cette modernité illumine dans la théorie de la communication humaine : « la différence entre le faux type de transcendance qui érige l'immortalité poétique sur le destin exemplaire du poète comme personne (…) et l'authentique immortalité poétique qui est totalement libre de circonstances personnelles » (200). Il ne faut pas commettre l'erreur psychologique de confondre le sujet impersonnel de la poésie avec le sujet empirique de la vie puisque telle impersonnalité advient dans la discontinuité suscitée dans le jeu intertextuel entre le je personnel et la voix qui parle de l'autre rive du poème comme excédent où l'interprétation diffère de la compréhension finale et chiasmatiquement le sens décisoire où l'auteur serait *Igitur* meurt.

Igitur est un conte dramatique dense et abstrait sur la mort volontaire de l'auteur de radicalité cartésienne. Comme l'attitude du personnage porte la logique de l'idéalisme au comble de ses conséquences, puisque se faire « *Igitur* » —raison de toutes les raisons— c'est un acte de déification qui réduit les vérités au miroir, cette obsession à cause de son absolue, lui rapporte l'expérience de la lassitude face à sa propre nullité ; après il décide de se suicider. L'adolescent descend les escaliers du château de la pureté et il arrive jusqu'à un tombeau où il y a du venin et des dés. Il les secoue et il les jette. Ensuite il boit la fiole et se couche sur le tombeau, argument allégorique du *logos* qui, se cherchant exclusivement à soi-même, meurt dans le sein de sa pensée.

Cependant l'évolution poétique mallarméenne exhale la négativité syllogistique d'*Igitur* quand ce coup de dés est encore une fois dramatisé comme le triomphe de l'Infini sur l'Idée. *Un coup de dés jamais n'abolira l'hasard* signifie le délogement de l'horizon idéaliste de cette poésie-là qui par son fond poursuivait la chimère de travestir le poème dans le double idéal de l'univers et par sa forme imposait la typographie longitudinale comme lecture du monde ordonnée par succession, étant donné qu'elle inaugure une superficie vacante à disposition de n'importe quelle hasardeuse formation mimétique sans aucun sujet qui l'assume. Il s'agit d'un nouvel espace littéraire où la plume gribouille les mouvements nomades du hasard, en jouant le trait du vers non pas dans la ligne mais dans les pages comme s'il imitait la chute libre du hasard quand on lance les dés. Une telle exposition typographique est doublement précurseur de la poésie moderne, étant donné qu'elle peint la dissémination incessante de la phrase à la fois qu'elle poétise la rhétorique de la *dispositio* . Et avec cette aventure d'assemblage ou de composition, elle invite à une lecture agile et corrélative de stratégie

cubiste, vu qu'elle requière une pondération tabulaire attentive à une correspondance infinie et séminale des sens, scénario dans lequel continuera à se lancer le hasard que Garcia Bacca, en périphrasant Mallarmé même, qualifie comme « une Somme Totale en formation » (67). Dans la préface du poème cité, l'écrivain parisien avertit que les espaces en blanc du papier entre les mots assument une importance spéciale dans la conformation du texte étant donné qu'ils provoquent un espacement de la lecture par lequel on mûrit dans la considération significative et esthétique des silences dans la labeur versificatrice ; labeur spéciale dans ce cas, puisqu'elle ne prétend pas la mesure mais plutôt la dispersion et elle travaille comme l'image pour que les mots intiment les uns avec les autres dans le volume non pas du syntagme successif mais de la toile entière et simultanément de la page. De cette façon, « la fiction affleurera et se dissipera vite, d'après la mobilité de l'écrit, autour des arrêts fragmentaires d'une phrase capitale, dès le titre introduite et continuée. Tout se passe, par raccourci, en hypothèse ; on évite le récit. Ajouter que de cet emploi à nu de la pensée avec retraits, prolongements, fuites, ou son dessin même, pour qui veut lire à haute voix, une partition » (Mallarmé, 1984 :455).

Entre ceux qui ont continué l'enseignement poétique de Mallarmé on trouve les principaux essayistes qui à partir de la sémiologie ont éclairci les règles méthodologiques sur lesquelles se déroulent aujourd'hui la théorie de l'intertextualité. On note par-dessus les autres l'intérêt montré par Julia Kristeva, puisqu'à partir de celui-la on justifie la pierre angulaire de sa science sémiotique: la théorie de la signifiance. Le *coup de dés* lui éclaircit le processus productif de cette écriture qui se produit à soi-même et opère pour cela un paragrammatisme qui établit un lien entre «la déconstitution du sujet et sa constitution, la déconstitution de la parole et la constitution du texte, et la déconstitution du signe et la constitution de l'écriture » (90). L'espace littéraire montré par la textualité mallarméenne se construit par cette écriture paragrammatique qui après la mort de l'auteur, encourage la jonction de signifiants excédents à la traditionnelle logique de la grammaire qui postule la présence sujet-prédicat comme articulation bivalente des discours vu que la signifiance engendre une structure dont les fondements opératifs sont, selon Kristeva, les suivants :

—le « geno-texte », entourage structurel d'infinité de signifiants qui sou tendent et transposent la structure vers le jeu de l'intertextualité.
—Le texte associable avec le travail du rêve, est aussi transpositeur de la structure vers l'incommunicable
—le producteur du texte n'est pas tellement l'auteur comme une instance signifiante productrice de sens, qui confère aux actes de lire et écrire une infinité mutante, théâtrale et anonyme.

Mot après mot Kristeva applique une curieuse sémanalyse au titre du poème connu avec l'intention de traduire son allégorie comme s'il s'agissait d'un récit méthodique : « un » se réfère à la totalité indivisible ; « coup » est la métaphore de l'acte de la signification, « dés » si on le rapporte à « datum » pourrait être entendu comme le sacrifice du sujet avant le jeu de signifiants qui ne sera jamais aboli ; « jamais », décomposé en « ja » et « mais » révèle l'excès temporel de la signification « n'abolira pas » renverrait au creux de la superficie du jeu, et « hasard », dans son interprétation évidente, est synonyme de chance, mais dans l'obtus, Kristeva essaie un jeu de mots : étymologiquement (arabe) *hasard* signifie *dés*, de façon que la phrase « un coup de dés n'abolira jamais le hasard » est une tautologie : « un coup de dés n'abolira jamais (le coup de) dé » (302). De tout cela on infère comme enseignement que la prédication du sujet s'annule dans le cercle signifiant de la tautologie. Et alors c'est la scansion du hasard permutation du jeu duquel surgit le numéro comme geste de régulation qui convertit le poème en architecture. Malgré l'interdiction de Mallarmé dans la Préface du poème —« on évite le récit »— Kristeva ose reconstruire non seulement l'allégorie du titre mais celle du poème entier comme un récit didactique de la phénoménologie de l'intertextualité dans le cœur de la littérarité où le Maître se convertit en plume.

Elle n'est pas la seule à avoir traduit avec soin l'exemple du poème. Blanchot a aussi vu dans le *Coup de dés* la scène dionisienne du naufrage ou Aiôn joue le hasard du livre (109). Hasard qui ne s'oppose pas au destin, mais qui le recouvre, puisque comme le titre avertit, le coup de dés n'abolit pas le hasard, bien au contraire il le renforce ; le coup de présence réaffirme le hasard parce que, si nous associons, en ce point la sagesse rhétorique de Mallarmé avec celle de Nietzsche, ce qui revient c'est la même chose réitérée, pas l'un mais ce qui est différible, l'éternel retour du tirage. Nous devons à Gilles Deleuze une étude profonde sur l'affinité peu méprisable entre Nietzsche et Mallarmé, où il identifie la pensée avec le tirage d'un coup de dés qui affirme le besoin à partir du hasard, « et le numéro fatal et sidéral produit le nouveau tirage, de la même façon que le livre est à la fois unique et mobil » (51) ; et pourtant, à différence du critère que j'expose dans cet article, Deleuze attribut à Nietzsche la déclaration franche du vitalisme dionisien de l'écriture pendant que dans Mallarmé il accuse le ressentiment nihiliste duquel il n'a pas atteint les expectatives d'un idéalisme absolu. Je pense que son diagnostic pêche de diamétral et ne compte ni avec l'ironie qui traverse l'idéologie mallarméenne comme colonne vertébrale de l'acte créateur, ni avec les propos et l'évolution globale de sa poétique.

Beaucoup plus adroit est le fameux essai « La double session » que Jacques Derrida dédia au *coup de dés*, duquel il postule sa force déconstructive à partir du moment où il dépouille au titre de la capitale arro-

gance qui est conféré dans le discours logocentrique quand il décide de le montrer en suspense en l'éparpillant tout au long du poème, en laissant en haut de la page un grand espace en blanc. Il livre la thématisation sémantique à l'artisanat syntactique de l'écriture esthétique : « Ainsi il m'apparaît d'abord la phrase que le papier rejeta, dans un dessin sommaire, que je vois après, que j'épure, que je réduis, que je synthétise » (cité par Derrida, 1975 :271). Par cette syntaxe typographique les marques poétiques redoublent avec des traits qui se soustraient à la pertinence de la vérité par contre position à la fausseté. Selon on indique en *Mimique* —un autre texte emblématique pour la déconstruction— ce qui est important maintenant c'est mettre en scène l'action mimique comme telle, sans livret préétabli, et activer le double jeu entre acteur et spectateur sans s'assujettir au référent comme patronage de reproduction. Ce mime confond les positions, occupe un espacement de réciprocités qui annule les contraires, disloque comme un sophiste l'alibi de la présence dans laquelle se protège la notion de *mimesis* ontologique d'enracinement socratique. L'écrivain est ce mime qui écrit en lisant le texte écrit par le mime, qui a son tour lit pour écrire. Dit d'une autre façon il est impossible d'assigner une origine unique à la lettre, parce que sa motion est l'itération différée dans le temps.

Roland Barthes déclara de façon convaincante l'innovation éducative que le poète parisien apporta à la création littéraire. « Depuis Mallarmé, sans doute, est en cours une réforme importante des lieux de notre littérature ; ce qui s'échange, se pénètre et s'unifie est la double fonction, poétique et critique, de l'écriture » (47). A partir du moment où la discrimination est neutralisée dans l'espacement rhétorique de l'écriture, son innovation met en crise non seulement la littérature canonique mais aussi la critique décisoire qui la fomentent comme opinion d'auteur de plein sens. *Crise de vers* est le texte mallarméen où il laisse constance des changements supra discursifs qui impliquent sa reconsidération interactive de la textualité : « L'œuvre pure implique la disparition locutoire du poète, qui cède l'initiative aux mots, par le heurt de leur inégalité mobilisée » (366). Ecrivain et lecteur se trouvent souscrit et appelé à intervenir dans le travail syntactique d'une écriture qui a coupé la tête au regard chosifiant, transcendantal, de Méduse avec des métaphores effilées dans l'irrationalité des agilités métonymiques. L'œuvre ne cherche pas le Lecteur Modèle, mais plutôt de lecteur qui n'étant pas maniable prolonge l'inachevé qui rend l'art sublime.

J'ai cité la revendication critique de la poétique mallarméenne du point de vue de Julia Kristeva, Roland Barthes et Jacques Derrida, entre autres, puisque eux tous participèrent dans la première revue parisienne qui dans les années 60 avait aposté pour convertir de telles réflexions en la didactique d'un acte militant avec la culture : *Tel Quel* (VV.AA : 1968). Son intérêt était de revendiquer l'inconscient du texte

pour déconstruire le concept de Représentation avec l'appui non pas de la science classique mais du discours littéraire travaillé par Mallarmé, où le sens est effet du texte non pas de l'intention de l'auteur. C'est comme cela que le concept de *pratique intertextuelle* dans le projet communicatif du discours prend de la relevance. Parce que le texte n'est pas le domaine pour assembler les sens inaltérables mais plutôt une machine pour transformer le sens. Lire et écrire sont des pratiques intertextuelles qui connectent des textes et les éclaircissent dans leurs résonances mutuelles. La conception mallarméenne du texte comme transposition s'inscrit ainsi dans la nécessaire traversée des contextes, par laquelle d'une perspective interdisciplinaire Kristeva, Genette et Riffaterre identifient la compétence littéraire du lecteur de la transposition de codes intertextuels. De mon côté, à la lumière du mystère poétique de Mallarmé et de la critique littéraire qui le divulgue, j'investigue théorique (1999, 2004) et didactiquement (2000, 2003a, 2003b) la créativité intertextuelle d'une vocation proche à celle montrée par Rodari et Queneau dans ses ateliers et par Azorin dans ces réflexions sur les classiques où il a devancé *Tel Quel* dans le principe esthétique avec lequel il annotait. « Les œuvres classiques n'ont pas été écrites par ses auteurs, c'est la postérité qui les écrit » (Azorin, 1998 :698).

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THE MALTESE NOVELS OF NICOLAS SAUDRAY

The French novelist Nicolas Saudray, born in Normandy in 1942, has spent his professional career as an economist in the French civil service; for six years he served on the *conseil d'administration* of the Bibliothèque Nationale. His nine novels (described below) are set in various countries (the Orient, France, Malta, the France of the future) and have as common theme the hunger for faith of the modern world. His two Maltese novels (*Dieu est-il gentilhomme?, Chevalerie du soir*) are more "realistic," with less hint of spiritual transcendence, than his other works. They treat the final years of rule of the Order of St. John and the French and British invasions. The novels—novelized history more than fiction—are crammed with vivid incident and are rigorously researched. The knights fail to defend Malta because they have lost faith in their mission. Saudray treats with affectionate exasperation an Order which had refused to reform itself and had lost its reason for existence. The world, Saudray suggests with a certain melancholy, was no longer worthy of the chivalric ideal:

—Nous avons perdu Malte, enchaîne Giulio, parce que nous ne la méritions plus.
—Dis plutôt, réplique Raczynski, que notre époque a perdu sa chevalerie, parce qu'elle n'en était plus digne. (*Chevalerie du soir*, 358)

The Novels of Nicolas Saudray

Le Maître des fontaines (1978), a powerful and disturbing novel of spiritual awakening, raises the question of God's communication with man in an age without religious belief. The lost Gospel of Thaddeus is discovered in a poverty-stricken Jacobite monastery in the Diyarbekir region of Turkey, close to the frontiers of Syria and Iraq. The Gospel, addressed to the Hebrews, although physically a forgery, allows the words of Jesus to be heard anew. The Gospel heralds a possible reconciliation of Christianity and Islam, offers a message of hope to a grey Western world (which includes the Church) craving for faith. Like the original gospels, the Gospel of Thaddeus rapidly inspires conversion and martyrdom. *Le maître des fontaines* is written in a rapid, readable style, with a shifting narratorial perspective which combines dialogue, diaries, *style indirecte libre*, and third-person narrative. As in many of Saudray's novels, a scholarly apparatus is included in the form of notes and historical references to a lost Gospel.

Terres de vent, terres de songe (1979) similarly suggests a need for transcendence, for escape from the insufficiencies of everyday life. *Terres de vent, terres de songe* relates the excursion of four adolescents into an uninhabited mountain region, the Terres Franches, between France and Italy. One of the adolescents elopes with their mysterious guide, apparently one who has returned from the dead, to sojourn in the "kingdom of Dreams," "La patrie de ceux qui n'ont pas été réconciliés, qui n'ont pas eu leur juste part de la vie."

Mourir un jour de fête (1981), set in Saudray's native Normandy and spanning a time period from the Feast of the Assumption (August 15) to the following Easter, offers a realistic account of villagers' reactions to the murder-rape of a child, Paschaline. Tightly constructed, written in a spare prose, *Mourir un jour de fête* proposes a reality that transcends the perceptions of ignorant villagers and sophisticated investigating officials: the intervention from Heaven of the saintly, sacrificed child to bring redemption, forgiveness, and love both to the *bourgeois* murderer and to the mentally-backward farm worker who had falsely accused himself of the crime.

La maison des prophètes (1984) returns to the themes of *Le maître des fontaines*: the craving for faith and transcendence in the modern world and the need for reconciliation between Christianity and Islam. Set in the fictitious nation of Marsanée (a thinly-disguised Lebanon), *La maison des prophètes* portrays the rising fanaticism of certain Islamic groups and of Christian militias and the consequent destruction of the previously-peaceful coexistence of three communities (Moslem, Christian, Jewish). The first-person narrator, the Mozarab (Christian) architect Gabriel, now in exile, had dreamed of designing a mosque which would symbolize the convergence of Christianity and Islam, a convergence which, according to Abouna Pierrot, human imperfection prevents us from grasping. For Abouna Pierrot, the three religions have their specific virtues: faith (Islam), hope (Judaism), charity (Christianity). As in *Le maître des fontaines*, *La maison des prophètes* is accompanied by notes, which in this case refer the reader to the Koran and to the situation of Christians in the Middle East. *La maison des prophètes* was awarded the Prix Méditerranée and the Prix Maurice-Genevoix in 1985. It has been translated into English (*The House of the Prophets*, Doubleday).

Saudray's next two novels, *Dieu est-il gentilhomme?* (1986) and *Chevalerie du soir* (1987), deal with Malta and will be treated later in this article.

In *Voyage au pays des frogs* (1990), a teacher, Monique, who had, with others, been frozen for sixty-five years pending the discovery of a cure for cancer, returns to the Paris of the future. Paris (Big Pear) is dominated by television and drugs; the language spoken is "basic English"

("off-shore American"); French birth-rate is low; the majority *beurs* (Moslems) are the most vital element in France. The France of the future possesses features of the present: a labyrinthine bureaucracy, a hypocritical and selfish *bourgeoisie*. In a society which has neither love nor purpose for existence, Christians are reduced to a tiny group awaiting the return of the Messiah.

Les mangeurs de feu (1994), despite its rather forced plot (a French convert to Islam, the unwitting dupe of a CIA venture to destabilize the Iranian regime, attempts to locate the Twelfth Imam), contains a wealth of information on Shiite and Zoroastrian beliefs. Saudray, in the dedication page, returns to the theme of *Le maître des fontaines*, that of our desperate need for a Messiah:

> Ayant perdu le sens du sacré, occidentalisé —plutôt américanisé— de façon agressive, notre monde orphelin a de plus en plus besoin de Quelqu'un. D'une manière ou d'une autre, nous attendons tous le Douzième Imâm.

The Maltese Novels

Dieu est-il gentilhomme ? (1986) covers Maltese life in the period 1768-1791 ("le temps des fêtes et des querelles"). In a brief introductory note, Saudray indicates that "tous les personnages ont réellemnt vécu, aimé et souffert." The "Annexes" to *Dieu est-il gentilhomme?* provide information on the organization of the Order of St. John in the eighteenth century, copious notes on persons mentioned in the novel (including Saudray's sources and parallels between Maltese history in the past and in the present, such as the conflict between Church and state which reappeared with prime minister Dom Mintoff's conflict with ecclesiastical authority in 1982), and an abundant bibliography. Saudray claims that his sources were mainly archival (the archives of the Order of St. John in the National Library of Malta, the archives of the Inquisition in the cathedral museum of Mdina, numerous French archives).

Saudray's technique is to weave into a panoramic vision fleeting glimpses of numerous historical figures connected with Malta and the Order of St. John. *Dieu est-il gentilhomme?* begins with the arrival in Malta of the eighteen-year-old novice Déodat de Dolomieu of the Langue of Auvergne; we follow the quarrelsome Dolomieu's first expedition to sea, his imprisonment in Fort St. Elmo after killing a fellow-novice in a duel, his loves and friendships, his law suits and intrigues, his passion for geology ("dolomite" is named after its discoverer), his travels on geological expeditions and his visits to the Order's properties in France. Other knights of the Order who receive more than passing mention are: the abbé Boyer and the hunchback Abel Loras, both high-

ly intelligent and arch-schemers; the snobbish sailor Prince Camille de
Rohan-Rochefort; Giulio Litta, who receives the Russian grand duke
Paul Romanoff and travels to Russia to organize a fleet of galleys to
fight the Swedes; and the treasurer Ransijat, engaged in a hopeless
struggle to control the expenditure of an Order living far beyond its
means.

We learn numerous details of the life of the knights: their military
training, the education of pages, the services in St. John's Cathedral, the
knights' amusements (falconry, performances in the Manuel de Vilhena
theater, flirtations, masonic intrigues, alchemy), their rivalry for prefer-
ment, their constant disputes over precedence and nation. The Order is
attacked by French philosophers as corrupt and anachronistic; its justi-
fications for existence—its fine hospital, where patients have individual
beds, and its keeping the Straits of Sicily free from corsairs—are increas-
ingly irrelevant in the late eighteenth century.

Grand Masters evoked are: Pinto de Fonseca, "cet insecte noir et
luisant" (21), an astrologer who kept mistresses and who seized the
church of the Jesuits; Ximenes de Texada, who died of a fall from horse-
back; and Emmaneul de Rohan, who became Grand Master in 1775 at
the age of fifty. The reformer Rohan had learned Maltese, ennobled
members of the Maltese *bourgeoisie*, reopened the university, repaved
the roads, lowered the price of wheat, and behaved leniently towards
Maltese rebels and disorderly members of the Order. Rohan possessed
charm, but lacked the firmness necessary to deal with quarrelsome
knights, outside pressures, and constant financial problems. Rohan's
values are those of the Enlightenment. For Rohan, God is a fellow "gen-
tilhomme." As the cynical abbé Boyer explains, "Dieu ne parle à per-
sonne au-dessous de quatre quartiers de noblesse" (94); however, with
the French Revolution threatening the property of the Order, Rohan
realizes that: "Non, vraiment, Dieu n'est plus gentilhomme" (282)

The history related in Dieu est-il gentilhomme? is threefold: the his-
tory of the Maltese, the history of the knights of St. John in Malta and in
Europe, and the outside historical pressures which affect the situation
of the Order. The high price of grain in the summer of 1775 led to brig-
andage and to the rebellion headed by the Floriana priest Dun Gaetan
Mannarino, who complained of the lack of piety of the knights and
seized Fort St. Elmo and the cavalier of Italy before being obliged to sur-
render. Maltese nobles proclaimed their loyalty to the rule of the Order.
Despite Rohan's reforms, the knights remained unpopular with the
Maltese. To control discontent, Rohan planned a Maltese regiment, one
third of whose members would be Maltese. A focus of Maltese opposi-
tion was to be found in the Church. The powerful cathedral chapter was
in Maltese hands; despite the antagonism of many knights, a Maltese,
Albino Menville, was elected prior of St. John's. Out of a population of

37,000 males, 7,000 Maltese, many of whom were married, could claim clerical privileges, including not paying taxes. Brigands could escape justice by seeking the immunity of country chapels.

The meeting of the General Chapter of the Order in Valletta in 1776 demonstrated the impossibility of reforming the Order from within. Rohan's lack of firmness, disputes over precedence and nation, and financial problems weakened the Council, which, for Dolomieu, offered a proof that "toute aristocratie dégénère en gérontologie" (146). Rohan established an Anglo-Bavarian Langue, to which Polish knights could be admitted; the Langue of Provence disputed with the Anglo-Bavarian Langue the garrisoning of forts; the Langues of Auvergne and Provence united against Rohan's reforms. Dolomieu, defeated in an election in the Langue of Auvergne, appealed through the Inquisition to Rome and to France. Other knights, disappointed in decisions of the Order, could appeal to the Inquisitor Scotti, who referred all disputes to Rome. Upon Rohan's urging the Pope to suppress the Tribunal of the Inquisition in Malta as a useless body, the Pope blocked all appointments within the Order. For Rohan, Malta was too small an island to contain the energies of some 300 to 400 knights, condemned to the inactivity of peace, educated as nobles to defend minor points of honor; furthermore, the checks and balances of the constitution of the Order encouraged endless disputes. Dolomieu, leaving Malta for revolutionary France, reflected that, despite its intrigues, the Order could offer itself as an example of a league of nations:

> L'île des orangers, c'était surtout l'île des intrigues. Une chevalerie sans but, retournée contre elle-même —et sécrétant quand même une amitié assez rare. Une société des nations, volontiers dissonante, souvent troublée, mais que le continent aurait pu prendre en exemple, au lieu de faire la guerre. (297)

The position of the Order of St. John in Malta depended on a wider European political context. Russia, implicated in the Maltese rising of 1775, schemes to purchase the sovereignty of Malta from the grotesque Neapolitan royal family. Rohan must negotiate the restoration of the Polish priories and procure funds from Prussia and Bavaria. With France's attention being concentrated on England, Vienna pressures the Order to reform. Knights of the Order pursue their rancors in European courts. The Neapolitans confiscate Sicilian properties of the Order. Finally, the French Revolution leads to the abolition of tithes, the sale of the property of the clergy, and the imminent jeopardy of the Order's French revenues.

Saudray refers to numerous features of Maltese life: the Strada Stretta (where duels are allowed), the island winds (*majjistral, grégal,*

sirocco), the orange trees and windmills, the lack of water, the necessity
to import food, the rocks and catacombs, the well-organized system of
quarantine, Maltese crops (rotation of wheat, cotton, vegetables), the
vicissitudes of galley slaves, the ancient statues of Hagar Qim, the trap-
ping of birds, the Maltese aristocracy (disdainful of the knights, exceed-
ingly pious) and their Mdina palaces, a rural wedding, the costumes of
carnival, the celebrations of September 8. Occasionally, Maltese words
are used: *fenech* (hare); "*Sliem ghalik*, o salib" (98) (exclaimed by
Dolomieu's maid); "Moulay Allah, Sultan-is-sema" (Sinjura Bettina's
prayer). Individual knights seek remedies for the island's poverty:
Dolomieu constructs economic ovens for the bakery of Valletta and has
a project for manufacturing porcelain; knights plan to use wind power
for a sawmill; Admiral Suffren imports Malabarese Indians to teach the
Maltese the weaving of Indian cloth. The Polish count Jean Patocki
loves the Maltese countryside with its magnificent village churches.
Maltese peasants are hard-working; there is less poverty, Dolomieu
declares, in Malta than in France. Maltese houses and villages are clean-
er than those of Lower Dauphiné and Sicily.

Dolomieu lovingly evokes Malta and its people:

> En fait d'infidèles, on n'avait sous la main que des descendants de con-
> vertis : quelques centaines de chevaliers dominaient cent mille maltais.
> Ces curieuses créatures noiraudes, incompréhensibles, étrangement
> préservés de l'indolence orientale, s'affairaient dans l'ombre de leurs
> échoppes, ou sur la terre avare de leurs champs. Le coton occupait les
> meilleurs sols. Mais chaque métairie, chaque ville recelait son bosquet
> d'orangers, défendu des regards et des vents par de hauts murs. Et, au
> printemps, ces présences invisibles embaumaient le chemin du
> promeneur, comme un poème.
> Malte, île au goût de sel et d'orange. Monde enchanté que l'on craig-
> nait de faire disparaître en se frottant les yeux. (11)

> La Vallette. Toujours la même pierre blonde, la même réverbération
> sur les phares. Toujours les rues plongeantes, où déambulent des
> insectes noirs : femmes aux trois quarts voilées, bourgeois copiant les
> abbés, abbés contents de l'être, commandeurs singeant les baillis, bail-
> lis singeant les grands maîtres. Seule touche de couleur, les gardes de
> Son Altesse, écarlates sous leurs bonnets à poil.
> Mais quand tu seras las, ami, de toute cette pruderie, tu n'auras qu'à
> glisser à tribord, jusqu'à la criée des poissons, ou à babord, vers le
> Mandragg, pour retrouver les pêcheurs coiffés de rouge et les jolies
> filles aux pieds nus. Même là, les rues sont plus propres que celles de
> France, grâce aux cochons en liberté qui assurent le service du net-
> toiement. Vois ceux qui ont l'oreille fendue ! Ils appartiennent à la con-
> frérie des Ames du Purgatoire, et les citadins pieux les nourrissent par
> prédilection. (65)

The minor novelistic intrigue concerns the Sinjura Bettina, friend (and perhaps mistress) of Rohan, and her violent squabbles with her husband. The family exemplify Rohan's wish to create a body of Maltese landowners loyal to the Order; Rohan had elevated Bettina's freemason husband and her brother to the nobility. In an attempt to embarrass the Grand Master, the Inquisition investigates both husband and brother. Two incidents are, according to Saudray, based on his archival research: Bettina's attempt to kill her husband by sorcery and her slave's taking sanctuary in a church with a demand to be returned to Morocco. At a lower social level, a further minor amorous intrigue has Sergeant (and later *donat*) Doublet court and marry Lunzjata, who works in a fish market.

Chevalerie du soir (1987) continues the story of Malta and of the Order of St. John from 1792 to the definitive British occupation of the islands. As in *Dieu est-il gentilhomme?*, Saudray uses numerous brief episodes, ranging from three lines to three or four pages, conversation, reflections, and historical commentary to produce a highly effective panoramic vision. The two sieges of Malta (by the French and the British) are described in considerable and vivid detail; perspectives of invaders, besieged, and the Maltese are given. The persons evoked, save for the Maltese family Buhagiar-Carbott and the slave Sabaheddine, are taken from historical archives and chronicles. At the end of the novel Saudray provides notes on his sources and a bibliography.

Chevalerie du soir is crammed with historical detail, with reference both to Malta and to the larger international scene. The young French knights are trapped in Malta, cut off from the larger movements of history. The French properties of the Order have been sequestered; French knights have lost their citizenship and are banned from France. Malta, deprived of resources, cannot provide enough oarsmen for its galleys and is forced to sell slaves to the sultan of Morocco. The Order desperately needs a protector, whether from France, Great Britain, or Russia. The reformer Rohan, "maltais de cœur" (135), dies on 13 July 1797; his inadequate successor is the fifty-three-year-old Ferdinand von Hompesch, the *protégé* of the Austrian Emperor. Almost immediately, Hompesch is faced with the arrival of Napoleon's fleet, to which he ignominiously surrenders (June 1798). Malta is transferred to French sovereignty; Hompesch receives a large indemnity (to be paid by selling the Maltese property of the knights); the Maltese receive guarantees for their religion and property; "Tout est perdu, même l'honneur" (214). The Order had become an anachronism; incapable of reforming itself, persisting in its aristocratic exclusivity and vain disputes, it had failed to win the affection of its Maltese subjects.

With equal detail, Saudray evokes the subsequent fortunes of the French in Malta: Napoleon's supposed reforms, the pillaging of the

Cathedral of St. John, the news of Nelson's destruction of the French fleet in Aboukir Bay (1 August 1798), French exactions, the Maltese rising in Mdina, the protracted siege of Valletta by land and sea, the sufferings of the besieged, French surrender (September 1800), (in a note) the subsequent fortunes of the Maltese sympathizers who depart the island with the French.

Saudray portrays the British occupation favorably. Captain Ball, serving as acting governor in the Palace of San Anton, energetically strives to win Maltese sympathies and to prevent other foreign powers (France, the Order of St. John, Naples, Russia) from gaining a foothold in Malta. Sinjura Bettina approves English manners as frankly superior to those of previous occupiers. Under the British, Malta gains prosperity and tranquility: goods are smuggled from Malta into the Europe of Napoleon's continental system; many British troops pass through and are supplied in Malta; the Jews return; Captain Ball is esteemed by the Maltese.

Much of the action of *Chevalerie du Soir* concerns the activities of knights of the Order outside of Malta. The knight Giulio Litta negotiates in Russia the ambitious plans for two Russian Grand Priories (Catholic and Orthodox), with Tsar Paul as Grand Master of the Order; Tsar Paul's assassination in March 1800 ends Russian interest in Malta and the Order. Fifty-two knights join Napoleon's expedition to Egypt; their Egyptian adventures and contributions to science are described in detail. Attention is also given to diplomatic negotiations concerning Malta (the Treaty of Amiens and the Congress of Vienna), Hompesch's sad wanderings, papal policies toward the Order, Russia's constant intrigues to become a Mediterranean power, the atrocities of the counter-revolutionary rulers of Naples.

As in *Dieu est-il gentilhomme?*, numerous references to the customs, activities, and landscape of Malta are introduced into *Chevalerie du Soir*: the two-wheeled carriages, the fortifications of Valletta, Maltese cleanliness (akin to that of Holland) and prosperity (greater than Italy's), the ill-trained native militia, the overpopulation of the island (partly relieved by British recruitment for its navy), the procession of All Souls Day with its statue of Il Marbut, Maltese celebration of Epiphany, the Blue Grotto, the three-tailed lizard of Filfla, the medicinal fungus found in Gozo, the outbreak of plague in March 1813, when 4,600 people die. Maltese is sparingly used for local color: the exclamation "Salib imqaddes" (56), the hymn "Ikun imbierek Allah" (266).

Maltese individuals are mentioned. The young Franco-Maltese Nicolo Isoard writes music for cantatas. Mikiel-Anton Vassalli attempts to create a Maltese written language. Censu Barbara proposes the formation of a Maltese Langue open to commoners and married men; Barbara later conspires against Rohan, joins Napoleon's forces, and is

finally captured by a Tunisian corsair. In France, the defrocked monk Zammit attacks the Order. The noble Count Ciantar-Paléologue, a poet and archaeologist, is informed of workers' discovery of pre-Roman remains, including human skeletons and the tusks of dwarf elephants (Hal Saflieni). The priest and professor of philosophy Dun Mikiel Xerri is shot by the French, "laissant dans le cœur des Maltais une cicatrice durable" (308).

Invented characters are the family of the washer girl from the cave houses of Mandragg, Lucija Buhagiar, who is courted by the young French knight Antoine de Saint Exupéry, despite the hostility of her uncle, the gruff priest Dun Rokku Buhaggiar. Her brother Pinu Buhagiar deserts from the French navy in Egypt to join the British. A further fictitious incident centers around the young Tunisian galley-slave Kassem ben Hussein, whom Saint Exupéry befriends and assists in a thwarted attempt to escape.

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Saudray and Malta

Nicolas Saudray has kindly forwarded to the author the following comments on his relations with Malta:

Quelques remarques sur mes rapports avec Malte

Ce qui m'a attiré à Malte
Depuis longtemps, je m'intéresse au Proche-Orient. Je parle un peu arabe. Or Malte est comme la pile d'un pont (détruit, ou non encore construit) entre l'Europe et l'Orient.

Pourquoi j'ai écrit "Dieu est-il gentilhomme? (Malte à la fin du XVIIIème siècle)
J'étais fasciné par cette petite société si particulière, hors du temps —les chevaliers mécréants d'un côté, les pieux Maltais de l'autre— avec ses rites compliqués, ses violentes querelles pour des enjeux futiles.
Décadence d'une institution glorieuse, masquée par une fête brillante.

Pourquoi j'ai écrit "Chevalerie du soir" (Malte de 1789 à 1816).
Deux phénomènes m'avaient frappé:
   • des chevaliers chargés d'un passé prestigieux capitulent sans combat devant Bonaparte, parce qu'ils ont cessé de croire en eux-mêmes;
   • cette modeste île, escale oubliée sur la route de l'Orient, devient soudain l'objet de toutes les convoitises (France, Angleterre, Russie) et

constitue pendant quelques années le noeud de la politique européenne.

Mes séjours à Malte

Trois séjours durant mes vacances, passés:
• à consulter les archives de l'Ordre, à La Valette, ainsi que celles de l'"inquisition de Malte, à Mdina;
• à parcourir l'île en autobus ou à pied.

Mes impressions de Malte

A La Valette, ainsi que dans certains faubourgs, et à Mdina, le passé est resté très présent. On a le sentiment que les chevaliers sont partis hier.

J'aime, dans les campagnes, ces grandes églises à coupole (presque disproportionnées par rapport aux villages) que l'on découvre dans toutes les directions.

J'aime aussi les paysages tourmentés, presque déserts, du nord de l'île et de Gozo.

Bibliography of the Novels of Nicolas Saudray

Le maître des fontaines (Denoël, 1978).
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Mourir un jour de fête (Denoél, 1981).
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Dieu est-il gentilhomme? (Seuil, 1986)
Chevalerie du soir (Seuil, 1987).
Voyage au pays des Frogs (Balland/Desclée de Brouwer, 1991).
Les oranges de Yalta (Balland, 1992).
Les mangeurs de feu (Balland, 1994).

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[14]In his edition of Vico's *Opere* (Milano-Napoli: Ricciardi, 1953), p. 517, n.2.

[15]A fact which, as Nicolini observes in his *Commento storico alla seconda Scienza nuova* (Roma: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1978), I, p. 147, was pointed out as early as 1749 by Damiano Romano.

[16] p. 11 of the 1577 edition (Parisiis: Apud Martinum Iuvenem). For Fox-Morzillo's use of the definition and for his relationship with Bodin, see John L. Brown, *The Methodus ad Facilem Historiarum Cognitionem of Jean Bodin: A Critical Study* (Washington: The Catholic University of America, 1939), pp. 61-62.

Reviews

New Directions in the Study of Islam and the Crusades

Review essay of Michael Frassetto and David R. Blanks eds. *Western Views of Islam in Medieval and Early Modern Europe: Perception of Other*, (New York, St. Martin=s Press, 1999) 233pp. Index; Robert I. Burns SJ and Paul E. Chevedden with the participation of Mikel de Epalza, *Negotiating Cultures: Bilingual Surrender Treaties in Muslim-Crusader Spain*, (Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1999)xviii+279pp. Bibliography, index; Reuven Firestone, *Jihad. The Origin of Holy War in Islam*, (New York, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1999) vii+195pp. Bibliography, index; Alan V. Murray, *The Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem: A Dynastic History 1099-1125, (Oxford,* Linacre College, 2000) 280pp. Bibliography, index; Anne-Marie Eddé, *La principauté Ayyoubide d=Alep (579/1183-658/1260)*, (Stuttgart, Franz Steiner Verlag, 1999). Freiburger Islamstudien, Band 21. 727pp. Appendices, maps, bibliography, index;

Since its appearance Edward Said's book, *Orientalism*, with its disdain toward the professionals engaged in its study, has dominated the discussion of Islam and the West. The European interest in its past cultural perceptions of Islam and Muslims has been since recognized by the European associations of Islamists and Arabists, who have resorted to inviting political leaders from the Middle East to address their meetings, but so far it remains unequaled and unreciprocated. Yet, the need for an intellectual dialogue between Islamic societies and the West has never been more urgent Only now has a less flamboyant and more balanced approach to the study of Western views of Islam and Muslims prevailed, one which rightfully incorporates the scholarly study of Islam and Islamic societies in Europe since about WWI. Studies have appeared that highlighted the fact that the European perception of the Muslim was a changing and mutating concept, which varied at different periods in time according to the proximity to and involvement of the various nations and groups with Muslims. In other words, an evolutionary curve of the historical *modus vivendi* can be drawn from the early medieval perception of the 8th century invading Arabs, to their co-existence in Muslim Spain and then to the Ottoman Turks who were masters and co-citizens of Europe and Europeans.

The fundamental thesis of the book *Western Views of Islam*, a collection of papers dealing with this evolutionary curve, is the centrality of the question to the European psyche. The image of the Muslim extracted from the literary texts demonstrates how it changed, gaining different components with the passage of time, events and changing context. But as the individual cases studied by the authors show, no single methodology should be used, instead, both cultural and historical methodologies should be given equal credit. The papers highlight a variety of components. By the 11th century the hostile image of the Muslim, as reflected in the writings of a preaching monk, was that of a heretic, an image enhanced by comparison to the Pagan Romans as persecutors of Christians. That image remained dominant during the Crusades, a defining moment in the historical relationship, inaugurating the aggressive streak in the European-

Muslim relationship throughout the Mediterranean region even though the terms Islam and Muslim had not yet appeared. At a later stage, even while the image of the pagan and the heretic still dominated, the religious image also incorporated Greek, Aristotelian, concepts such as triunity, which was passed through Averroës into Christian theology and surfaced in the Biblical exegesis. Another component, highlighted by the literary texts of late medieval Italy, while a continuation of the *Chansons de geste*, was the image of the Saracen as a warrior, an earlier image resulting from the wars with the Carolingians. The changing Muslim image retrieved symbols from the late classical period, comparing the Saracen to the Goths, Vandals and Lombards. The infusion of Roman elements into the old French portrayal of the Saracen are solidly in place here; The original Saracen was a pagan, idol worshiper and devil's disciple, with physical deformities, horns, magic, sorcery, but he was also depicted as bold, daring, genteel. The humanistic texts from 15th century Italy reflect the early European sense of intellectual power and authority over Muslim societies. Eventually, the warlike Saracen replaced the religiously dominated image of the heretic. New literature and a new image emerged with the appearance of the Turk but even though the image of the Ottomans included different components the negative overtones remained constant.

Nowhere was the history behind the image better documented than in the Iberian Peninsula, where Christians and Muslims locked horns for several centuries while engaging in a very different kind of *conviviencia* than occurred in the rest of Mediterranean Europe. The changing balance of power in the Iberian peninsula was a prolonged, drawn-out process, affecting the culture of both communities. While the medieval church referred to it as a "Crusade", and it did involve some similar historical questions such as settlement and colonization, it was, on the whole, very different from the Crusades to the Holy Land. Burns/Chevedden and Epalza's book is a collective effort to reconstruct the process of Spanish occupation of the densely settled Eastern Iberia by attaching it to two bi-lingual treaties signed between Muslim cities' governors and the Aragonese king in the 13th century. The list of privileges provided to the Muslims reflect a desire to allow for continuous economic, social and even religious survival. What is impressive is the kindly, friendly almost comradely tone in which the Muslim commanders were addressed by the Christian kings in these documents. Intolerance, forced conversions and property expropriation all came later. The modern Spanish historiography, quoted here by Epalza, has looked for historical parallels between the medieval treaties and those contracted between the Spanish government and Arab countries in the 18th century in a desire to create a normal and universal pattern of relationships with the Muslims.

Western interest in the Islamic concept of the Holy War, *Jihād*, is usually linked to its revival at the time of the Crusades, but recently, for obvious reasons, has become the center of attention. Firestone's book on the subject preceded the 9/11 attacks but his research makes it perfectly clear that the evolution of the concept of *Jihād* within the Islamic theological body of literature should rather be linked to internal historical conditions, political, religious and social stimuli, traceable to an early period, from pre-Islamic Arabia through the rise of Islam. According to him, the crucial moment in the formation of the new concept of war occurred because at a certain point there was a shift from pre-

Islamic social conduct of the tribe to that of the early Muslim community, or from `material war= to a `religious war= and that it resulted from this particular antagonism and the rise of individualism. The decisive moment of the shift from non-belligerent to belligerent behaviour was related to the formation of the community in Medina, and the change in the sense of kinship from tribal to *umma* which made it possible. It was a shift to a political *umma* endowed with an ideological motivation. The attacks by the new Muslims on their Meccan kin, unimaginable during pre-Islamic times, were now possible. They called on God to justify it precisely because it was a major departure. The result was that the Muslims began to see all their future wars in ideological terms and all wars as wars against God. The transition which accompanied it from fractious and fractioned clan to a unified community under God provided all that was needed in terms of the shift from a material war to a Holy War. This interpretation reduces the evolution in the Islamic concept of Holy War to a strictly internal development based on short term and immediate needs without allowing for the long term interpretation of influences from an outside historical ideology, historical events, or political force.

New insights into the relationship between Muslims and Christians among others are also provided by two new and very different books on the Crusades to the Holy Land by two historians, both of whom have chosen to write in the format of dynastic history. Alan Murray's approach to dynastic history is to use prosopograpica, the micro-history methodology par excellence. Focusing on the short period of the reign of the first three rulers of the Kingdom of Jerusalem of the Bouillon-Boulogne family, Godfrey, Baldwin I and Baldwin II, 1099-1125, he has set out to reconstruct their immediate milieu, their own family and entourage, clients vassals and friends both in Europe and the Middle East. By casting a wider net over the individuals surrounding the monarch and expanding the view to include Godfrey's family affairs as dukes of Lotharingia, Murray has provided the context for Godfrey's election and the governance patterns adopted in Jerusalem. For instance, by reconstructing the sale of his ancestral holdings before his departure, Murray has provided a plausible scenario for why Godfrey was determined to stay in the Holy Land. The fact that Baldwin I was already recognized as his brother's heir in Europe explains why the first succession on his death in 1100 was so peaceful. While Murray has not made much use of the continuity factor in the institutional structures between Europe and the kingdom of Jerusalem, he has identified the actors in each of the events and explored the individuals' family, vassalage and other relationships which explain why they were chosen to fulfill the role they did. The identity of individuals who accompanied Godfrey on the Crusade and staffed the new institutions, carefully reconstructed from a variety of documents, resulted in a detailed history of the first generation. Enhanced by appendices which trace the individual histories of each of them, this is a very intimate history, an insider story of the historical narrative.

Anne-Marie Eddé's dynastic history of the Ayyubid Aleppo principality between1183 to 1260, is a very different history. An important center ruled by Saladin's heirs, and the neighbour of Crusader Antioch, the history of Aleppo during a period not much longer chronologically than that of Murray's, is a comprehensive study which includes the political, social, economic, religious and literary life of the city and its dependencies. Written in the large format of

the French Thèse d'État it is a testimony both to the perseverance required of French historians, and to the wealth of the Islamic sources which have allowed an elaboration on this scale. While the relationship with Frankish outposts south and West of Aleppo are not the focus of the book, its political chapters reconstruct the division which followed Saladin's death and the infighting among his sons and brothers. That, and the Mongol invasion of the Middle East, explain the survival of the Crusaders' cities for another 100 years. Moreover, the elaboration of the institutional structures of the Ayyubid state offers interesting comparative possibilities. In spite of the general perception that Islam did not have "feudalism", at least not in the European sense, the land grants, *iqtā,* made by the Ayyubids to family members, military commanders and tribal chiefs affected the sultan's attempts to concentrate power in his hands in a very similar way to that in which the Frankish nobility conducted relations with their own monarchy. The constant lack of manpower, the occurrence of female regency, the military tactics and siege warfare, were all shared concerns of both the Latin cities and Aleppo's masters at different times. Moreover, Frankish Antioch's collaboration with the Mongols and the Armenians against Aleppo, reflect the degree of the Latins' integration in the region and their familiarity and share in the political game. The chapters dealing with the economy reinforce this sense of peaceful Western integration by documenting the penetration of the Venetians into the regional trading network through numerous treaties now commonly signed with other Muslim rulers in the region. The chapters on the cultural and religious life demonstrate the sophistication of municipal and learning institutions that dotted the Alepine urban scenery and that neither Frankish society nor the Mongols, Kurds, Turks and others gathering at the gates could have either enjoyed or appreciated at the time. In the larger frame of the Islamic perspective of the history of the Crusades, this new synthesis manifests, how unique was the momentary unification that resulted in Saladin's triumph at Hattin. It was not the unity achieved by Saladin, but the political patterns described in the bickering of his heirs, which was the norm. These were the intrinsic patterns of the region during the roughly five centuries that separated the Abbasid empire from that of the Ottomans, and during which the Crusades took place. The image conjured here is of a society of cultural strength and political fragility.

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Nuessel, Frank & Cedeño, Aristófanes (Ed.). *Selected Literary Commentary in the Literature of Spain.*Ottawa: Legas, 2004.

Selected Literary Commentary in the Literature of Spain presents a collection of literary commentary from major literary works of the Spanish Peninsular canon. According to the authors, their intention has been to provide a representative sample of the historical development of literary theory and literary commentary in peninsular literature.

It comprises ten chapters with literary commentary found in the works of major writers. There are seven chapters on the Golden Age period including

literary commentary by Juan de Valdés, Juan Martínez de Jáuregui, Góngora, Quevedo, Lope de Vega and Cervantes. The three texts from the nineteenth century exhibit literary commentary by Mesonero Ramos, Larra and Pardo Bazán. Each text is fittingly organized and contextualized. Every chapter starts with biographical information and the literary-historical contextualization of the author's work. Additionally, there is bibliographical information on relevant critical sources. Regarding the actual selection of literary commentary, the authors have highlighted important terms, name of authors, etc., and these appear, in lieu of footnotes, at the end of the book.

As for the specific content of the selections, for the Golden Age period, the authors have chosen a number of texts illustrating Juan de Valdés' views on Spanish literature, namely a Renaissance perspective on Spanish literature; the debate on *culteranismo*; Lope's ideas on the dramatic work; and Cervantes' theory of the novel. The nineteenth-century selection includes texts representing Mesonero Romanos' parody of Romantic literature, Larra's views on Spanish literature and Pardo Bazan's reflections on Naturalism in Spain.

Selected Literary Commentary in the Literature of Spain has been prepared with literary pedagogy in mind. It provides an excellent introduction and context to the study of some of the major literary debates of the Peninsular canon. One wonders if the project might have been better served if it had focused exclusively on one of the major periods. Nevertheless, the book could be an excellent aid as an introduction to some of the most important literary issues in Peninsular literature from the perspective of literature itself. Those who habitually work or might be interested in working with some of these literary debates in their courses will benefit from having them organized and properly contextualized in this book.

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La presse judéo-arabe dans la Tunisie coloniale (1884–1896). Mohamed Larbi Snoussi. Preface by Khalifa Chater. Tunis: MediaCom, 2003.

Supplementing and correcting the work of such earlier scholars as Eusèbe Vassel, Daniel Hagège, *et al.*, Mohamed Larbi Snoussi examines numerous journals published in "judéo-arabe" (Tunisian Arabic transcribed in Hebrew characters) between 1884 and 1896. Tunisian Jews split into two communities: the Twansa (indigenous Jews) and the Grana (Jews of Italian ancestry and sympathies). For the early period of this study, covering journals published under the press law of October 1884, Mohamed Larbi Snoussi details publishers and editorial content of such ephemeral publications as *Moubachar Sidq* (1885), *Mounawar El Haq* (1886), *Moucharrah Al-Asdar* (1886), *Al Badr Al Kamel* (1886), and *Fahhah al-Asrar* (1887). The liberal press laws of 1887 to 1897 saw the publication of numerous, for the most part short-lived, journals in Judeo-Arabic, of which the most important were the Zionist *El-Boustan* (1887–1895), which opposed the evangelizing efforts of Cardinal Lavigerie, *El-Mouhayyar* (1891–1892), and *Al-Ittihad* (1893 – 1894), which unfavorably contrasted the situation of Jews of Tunisia with those of France and which called on Tunisian Jews to assimilate French culture.

One of the strengths of Dr. Snoussi's study is his evaluation of the context in which Judeo-Arabic journals were published. The censorship imposed by the press law of January 1897 was not responsible for the death of Judeo-Arabic journals, which had already succumbed to the strains of Twansa-Grana disputes, generational conflict, tiny circulation, and the appearance of Jewish journals published in French. Tunisian anti-Semitism for Snoussi was a Christian phenomenon, found in French anti-Dreyfusards and poor Italian colonists. Even before the Dreyfus Affair, Marc Fournel had claimed: "le juif est un animal nuisible envoyé par le Diable pour nuir à la Tunisie" (*Le Christianisme et l'Islam dans l'Afrique septentrionale*, Paris, 1886). The colonial power feared the Italian sympathies of the Grana. Anti-Jewish riots in 1898 and 1899 also made the publication of journals in Hebraic characters inadvisable.

Dr. Snoussi's text is accompanied by copious notes, bibliography, and an index.

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Enrique Nieto. *Con dos sentidos. Una selección de artículos publicados en prensa (1975–2003)*. Antología de Victoria Vidal Navarro. Murcia: Fundación Cajamurcia, 2003.

Enrique Nieto made his career as a teacher in Cartagena, is an artist —the work under review is illustrated in black and white drawings by the author—, and has for many years commented on local society in the press of Cartagena and Murcia. *Con dos sentidos* contains selected articles written between 1975 and 2003. Nieto provides penetrating vignettes of the social transformations—not always favourable—that have overwhelmed Spain in the last quarter of a century. He notes the unplanned, urban sprawl of La Manga, ecological destruction, societal indifference to the plight of immigrants and the poor, teenage slang, bureaucratic jargon, pollution and industrial decline in Cartagena, the isolation of the old, the selfishness of a consumer society, and cultural impoverishment.

Nieto offers a first-hand account of an underfunded education system: overcrowded classes of up to forty pupils, *masificación* in universities, unmotivated students, insufficient classroom space and supplies, bureaucratic demands, inappropriate programs especially in the (now reformed) *Formación Profesional*, the decline in prestige of the humanities, and inappropriate university entrance examinations. Despite overwork and stress, most Spanish are conscientious professionals. Nieto notes the problems faced by many Spanish teenagers: the emotional difficulties of the children of divorced or unemployed parents, alcoholism and drug addiction, the inner void of overprogrammed youth, aggressively foul language, violent behavior, truancy, lack of career opportunities, and a sexual freedom which is often accompanied by sexual ignorance and emotional immaturity. Nieto also understands the difficulties of parents valiantly coping with financial pressures and struggling to come to terms with a generation gap that is perhaps more pronounced in Spain than in North America.

Less interesting for the non-Murcian reader are Nieto's at first gently iron-

ic but later somewhat harsher portrayals of the workings of the Asamblea Regional between 1990 and 1993. Nieto favorably compares the action of Fraga in Galicia to the petty squabbles of many Murcian politicians (19-X-1993). Nieto seemingly respects above all qualities he found in the mayor of Cartagena, Antonio Vallejo: *serenidad, falta de agresividad, buenas maneras* (p. 427).

It is difficult to praise sufficiently this collection of articles. Nieto writes with a pleasantly colloquial style. Never strident, always compassionate, with a sense of humor akin to that of the British, he treats with indulgence human weaknesses and is tenderly affectionate toward those he portrays, whether politicians, teenagers, housewives, or functionaries. *Con dos sentidos* is a faithful reflection of the concerns of middle-class Spaniards from the heady days of the *transición* to the present affluent –but spiritually invaluable source of contemporary Spanish social history.

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