THE CROSS AND THE SWORD: POLITICAL MYTH-MAKING, HEGEMONY, AND INTERICONICITY IN THE CHRISTIANIZATION OF THE IBERIAN PENINSULA AND BRITAIN

A Dissertation

by

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ABSTRACT

The myth-making (mythopoeia) of El Cid and King Arthur as hegemonic devices flows through a diachronical shapeshifting process with religious and political functionality linked to the Christianization of Spain and Britain. These myths interlock with the hegemonic rhetoric of Christian Reconquest to shape national identities and their procedural correlates, i.e., the monarchical Castilianization of the Iberian Peninsula (Spain) and the formation of the English monarchy (Britain). Consequently, there occurs a gradual imposition of a monolingual politico-epistemological model over the plurilingual and multi-ethnic cultural mosaic. Mythical heroes and saint-warriors substitute real figures to create fictional iconosystems and redesign collective memory and cultural identity. In this context, El Cid and King Arthur as mythemes/iconemes develop in functional correspondence with the Christianization of Britain and Spain and the establishment of national monarchies. El Cid and King Arthur are myth-synthesis since in them a variety of worldviews and textual-iconographical traditions crystallizes to create new transmedia narratives with symbolico-allegorical character. This functional relationship takes place through complex intericonic and intertextual processes in the social and cultural imaginary of medieval Spain and Britain. Special heed is paid to the impact of Byzantium's religious, military, and literary paradigms upon the formation of Arthurian and Cidian iconosystems and narratives. Aiming to understand and describe the functionality of El Cid and King Arthur as hegemonic myths, we apply a comparative methodology intertwined with a cross-cultural perspective according to which myths, as complex devices gathered together from iconic and textual discourses, bear a concrete functionality. This functionality appears

linked to the human calling to ontological self-interpretation, world-understanding, and socio-political legitimation.

Furthermore, there is a continuity of these mythemes linked to contemporary cybercultural multi- and transmedia storytelling. In other words, the mythopoeia of El Cid and King Arthur takes place today via transmedia adaptations within the framework of cyberculture and digital technologies. Special forms in which these mythemes appear today are digital cinema, video games, and online educational resources. This transmedia shape-shifting process shows that traditional myths still hold a significant capacity of impact on individual and collective imaginaries. This continuity also indicates that the mythopoeia of King Arthur and El Cid is still expanding to further stages in new social and technological environments. Additionally, this process occurs in an iconological field largely determined by bio-digital categories of cyberbeing. These two conditions transform the traditional formal, diegetic, and ideothematic fashion of these mythemes according to new transmedia possibilities.

DEDICATION

To my wife and daughters

To my parents

To Dulce Maria Sastre-Eimil *In Memoriam*

An eche word of leof and wonder

to Wif' and Douȝtren myn weorlde;

Ȝet humbly scholde my tongue bi-holden,

and speke for me leu' ic þe sceopen:

"¡Plega a Dios e a Sancta María

que aún con mis manos case a estas mis fijas,

o que dé ventura e algunos días vida

e vós, mugier ondrada, de mí seades servida!"

Grey the mist --- cold the dawn;

Cruel the sea and stern the shore.

Brave the man who sets his course

For Albion.

Sweet the rose --- sharp the thorn;

Meek the soil and proud the corn.

Blessed the lamb that would be born

Within this green and pleasant land.

Hi-o-ran-I-o

Hi-o-ran-I-o

Coronach - Words and music by David Palmer

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NOMENCLATURE

PMC	*The Poem of the Cid.*
PMCs	*Poema de mio Cid.*
HR	*Historia Roderici.*
CC	*Carmen Campidoctoris.*
CA	*Carmen de expugnatione Almariae Urbis.*
CrC	*Crónica de Castilla*
PA	*Poem of Almería.*
MR	*Mocedades de Rodrigo.*
EdE	*Estoria de España*
ChAI	*Chronica Adelfonsi Imperatoris.*
ChN	*Chronica Naierensis.*
CGE	*Crónica general de España.*
CrCd (1498)	*Corónica del Çid Ruy Díaz (Bachiller Francisco de Arce, Toledo).*
CrCd (1512)	*Crónica del famoso cauallero Cid Ruy Diez campeador (Pedro de Velorado, Abad del Monasterio de San Pedro de Cardeña, Burgos).*
CrCd (1526)	*Crónica del muy esforçado e inuencible cauallero el Cid Ruy Diaz campeador de las Españas (Miguel Eguía, Toledo).*
R	*Romances.*
AandP	*Arthur and the Porter.*
YG	*Y Goddodin.*
CacO	*Culhwch ac Olwen.*
GSE	*Gereint Son of Erbin.*
AandK	*Arthur and Kaledvwlch*

QAH	*The Quarrel of Arthur and Huail.*
ECB	*St. Gildas's De Excidio et Conquestu Britanniae*
HB	*Nunnius's Historia Brittonum.*
HRB	*Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia Regum Britaniae.*
GRB	*William of Rennes's Gesta Regum Britannie.*
CB	*Layamon's Chronicle of Britain (Brut).*
WRB	*Wace's Roman de Brut.*
AC	*Annales Cambriae.*
JdA	*Robert de Boron's Joseph d'Arimathe*
Mn	*Robert de Boron's Merlin*
LPI	*Giraldus Cambrensis's Liber de Principis instructione*
SE	*Giraldus Cambrensis's Speculum Ecclesiae*
ChHM	*Chronica Halensis Monasterii*
ChrMA	*Margam Abbey Chronicle*
GRA	*William of Malmesbury's Gesta Regum Anglorum*
HRA	*Wilhelmus Neubrigensis' Historia rerum Anglicarum*
MA	*Le Mort d'Arthur.*
PDB	*Προκοπίου Καισαρέως Ὑπὲρ τῶν πολέμων (Prokopiou Kesareos Yper ton polemon or De belli.)*
HKB	*Geoffrey of Monmouth's History of the Kings of Britain.*
PK	*Πάτρια Κωνσταντινουπόλεως (Patria Constantinoupoleos.)*
VC	*Vita Constantini* or *Κεφάλαια τοῦ κατὰ Θεὸν βίου τοῦ Μακαρίου Κωνσταντίνου βασιλέως (Kefalea tou kata Theon viou tou makariou Constantinou basileos.)*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

1. INTRODUCTION

Μὴ νομίσητε ὅτι ἦλθον βαλεῖν εἰρήνην ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν·
οὐκ ἦλθον βαλεῖν εἰρήνην ἀλλὰ μάχαιραν.
Matthew 10:35

1.1. Mythopoeia and Shapeshifting of El Cid and King Arthur

The present dissertation focuses on the myth-making (mythopoeia)[1] of El Cid and

King Arthur, and their diachronic shapeshifting as hegemonic myths[2] with a religio-

political functionality during the process of the Christianization and monarchical

centralization –castilianization and Englishing, respectively– of Spain (5th – 16th Century)

and Britain (6th – 16th). This work examines how these myths interlock with the hegemonic

rhetoric of the Christian reconquest and expansion in a functional articulation with the

shaping of a national identity along with its procedural correlates, i.e. Christianization and

monarchical centralization. Additionally, it is described here how the gradual imposition of

a monolingual model upon a politico-cultural discourse determined the hegemonic

preeminence of universalized local identities over the plurilingual and multi-ethnic cultural

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[1] For an early use of the term 'mythopoeia,' see C. C. J. Bunsen, *Egypt's Place in Universal History: An Historical Investigation in Five Books*, volume IV, translated by Charles H. Cottrell (London: Longman, Green, Longman, and Roberts, 1860), 450: "The first two, the most remote stages, are purely linguistic germs of mythology: the third is in the domain of mythopoeia, or myth-building." For a later use, see J. R. R. Tolkien, *Mythopoeia (Philomythus to Misomythus)*, in *A Scottish Catholic Blog*, accessed 12/13/2017, https://exlaodicea.wordpress.com/2013/07/31/mythopoeia-by-j-r-r-tolkien/. Finally, for the meaning of mythopoeia as creation of an 'artifical mythology,' see "Mythopoeia," in *BestPhantasyBooks.com*, accessed 12/12/2017, http://bestfantasybooks.com/mythopoeia.html.

[2] For a more precise understanding of the meaning of myth in our study, and its relationship with culture, literature and discourse as a form of reality, see Robert Bernasconi (ed.), *Hans-Georg Gadamer. The Relevance of the Beautiful and Other Essays* 9th ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 70. For the interpretation of the Christian sacred scriptures as a form of 'myth' without the implication of 'falsity' or 'truthlessness,' see C.K. Barrett, "Myth and the New Testament: the Greek word μύθος," in *Myth: Critical Concepts in Literary and Cultural Studies*, Robert A. Segal vol. 4. (London: Routledge, 2007), 65-71. Last, for a more meaningful interpretation of the relationship between myth, self-consciousness and personhood, see Aleksei F. Losev, "Myth is a Miracle," in *The Dialectics of Myth* (London: Routledge, 2003), 152-66.

mosaics –Roman-Welsh, Anglo-Saxon-Frankish; Castilian-Leonese, Aragonese-Catalan, etc.[3]

In Spain, Christianization and *Reconquista* also meant Castilianization. This process began with the Castilian-Leonese unification under Fernando I, King of León (1037-1065), previously Count of Castile (1029-1037), and continued from the creation of the Kingdom of Castile for Fernando's son Sancho II (1065-1072) up to the reign of the Catholic Monarchs Fernando and Isabella (1474-1516) which inaugurated the dawn of the modern era in Spain.[4]

The beginning of a systematic Christianization of Britain as a centralized entity can be traced to the ascent of the English *folc* to political control –especially after the triumph of King Alfred of Essex (871-899) over the Danish and Guthrum's conversion (probably in connection with the Treaty of Wedmore [878]) –, the further formation of the Anglo-Normand dynasty after the invasion of William II, Duke of Normandy (1066), and, definitely, the empowerment of Plantagenet and Tudor dynasties from Henry II, ascended to the throne in 1154, onwards. In Britain, the process of Christianization obviously preceded the formation, enthronement, and expansion of the English monarchy, and is

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[3] In the Middle Ages, linguistic fields were not yet integrated with socio-political structures so as to create the binomial 'nation-state/national literature-and-language' relationship: "The linkage of language and state is ultimately an innovation of the Renaissance. In the Middle Ages, if there was an explicit bond, it was between language and genre," and that each attempt to emphasize a natural bond between national state and language/literary corpus in a monolingual sense, "apparently contradicts a medieval monolingual imaginary," and therefore, "It would serve both national schools of philology and linguistics well to learn each other's lesson: that both language and text, while maybe synonymous with an individual, are not always synonymous with the nation." Anthony P. Espósito, "Bilingualism, Philology and the Cultural Nation: The Medieval Monolingual Imaginary," *Catalan Review* 9 (1995): 125-39, 136-7.

[4] The title of "Reyes Católicos" was bestowed upon them by Pope Alexander VI in 1494. This meant the papal recognition of their politics oriented to the final Castilianization of the Iberian Penisula –except the Kingdom of Portugal– and the monarchic concentration of power under the Catholic faith, resulting form the Christianization/Unification of Spain via the *iustum bellus* against the Moors as well as the expulsion of the Jews of Spanish territories. See H. Kamen, *Spain 1469-1714: A Society of Conflict* (Oxford: Routledge, 2005), 37.

stimulated by the interest of Christian writers –such as Geoffrey of Monmouth, Wace, and Layamon– in encoding the intricate cross-cultural scenario of Britain, and especially of the figure of King Arthur, from the perspective of the Christian faith. To this end, these authors undertook an intertextual / intericonic appropriation of Welsh, Breton and Anglo-Saxon mythical-literary materials, along with other pre-extant Jewish, Classical (Greco-Roman) and Byzantine traditions. An essential historical step towards a more radical consolidation of power is seen in the reign of Henry II, when Arthur definitely is embedded in English history through the convenient finding of his mortal remains at the Monastery of Glastonbury, the subsequent reburial ceremony, and his glorious literary exaltation in the *Chronicon Halensis Monasterii*.

1.2. General Objective

The present work aims to describe the functional correspondences of El Cid and King Arthur as hegemonic myths in the complex intericonic and intertextual processes that take place within the socio-cultural imaginaries of medieval Spain and Britain, respectively. We apply a comparative methodology based on a cross-cultural perspective and interpret myths as complex devices growing out of iconic and textual materials – iconemes,[5] cultural ideals, textual fragments, oral traditions, etc. These devices bear concrete meanings linked to the threefold human calling to self-interpretation (ontological dimension), world-understanding (existential dimension), as well as cultural, social, and political self-legitimation (cultural dimension).

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[5] See page 73 of the present work.

1.3. Central Hypothesis

The myth-making and shape-shifting of El Cid and King Arthur develop in a functional, systematic correspondence with the Christianization of Britain and the Iberian Peninsula, and the establishment of English and Castilian national monarchies.

1.4. Analytic Unfolding of Central Hypothesis

El Cid and King Arthur as mythemes/iconemes develop in quality of functions of the Christianization of Britain and Spain, and the formation of their national monarchies. Thus, in El Cid's case, we can present this relation as El Cid/King Arthur $\rightarrow$ Christianization / Castilianization, where:

Domain A (set of departure) = (1) Pre-Castilian Stage; (2) Castilianization; (3) Benedictine Expansion in Spain (since Alfonso VI), and

Codomain B (set of arrival) = (4) El Cid's Prototypopoeia; (5) Prototypoferesis / Paradigmatopoeia; (6) Benedictine Epigonal Prototypoeia.

This makes the following relation(r): r= {(1,4), (2,5), (3,6)}

Also, in King Arthur's case the relation appears as King Arthur $\rightarrow$ Christianization / English Unification of Britain:

Domain A (set of departure) = (1) Celtic / Roman-Welsh Culture; (2) Preplantagenet Transculturation; (3) Postplantagenet English unification.

Codomain B (set of arrival): (4) King Arthur's Paradigmatopoeia; (5) Paradigmatoferesis / Christic Prototypopoeia; (6) Prophetico-Royal Protoypopoeia.

Thus, we have also the relation(r): r= {(1,4), (2,5), (3,6)}, when 4,5,6 are images of pre-images 1,2,3, and constitute the *range* of domain A.

This relation shows that to each element from domain A corresponds *one and only one element* form domain B, so we have *a relation of function* between these elements of both domains or sets. Therefore, if set A(1),(2),(3) → set B(4),(5),(6), when f: set A→ set B and each element of set A(1),(2),(3) = x and each element of set B(4),(5),(6) = f(x), then we obtain the functions y=f(x) and f(x)=3x, when y=each element of codomain B as a function (range images) of each x element of codomain A.[6] We demonstrate that this functional relation is formally the same for both King Arthur's and El Cid's myth-making, and that this means that there are functional correspondences between these gradual cultural processes and the concrete shape-taking of the myths. Additionally, it means that only by understanding these relations *as a function* – i.e. a form of dynamic correspondences (A→B, pre-images→images) that can be also understood as F^{-1} (the inverted form of *F*) which denotes that 'dynamic correspondence' means here multidirectional symbolic exchanges – and not just as a 'cause-effect' diachronicity, it is possible to understand the *raison d'être* of the mythopoetic shape-shifting of El Cid and King Arthur.

1.5. Methodology

The methodology that determines in the present work the analytic approach to the object of study consists of several approaches: (1) *Critical approach*, according to which myths are interpreted as intertextual icons with symbolic and socio-political functionality linked to processes of hegemonic legitimacy. (2) *Archive-based approach*, i.e. working

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[6] This analysis responds to the basic definition of Set Theory, as follows: "1.1.1. DEFINITION. Let *A* and *B* be sets and let *F* be a subset of the product *A X B*: = {(a, b) : a ∈ A, b ∈ B}. Then, there is a correspondence with the set of departure *A* and the set of arrival *B* or just a correspondence of *A* (in)to *B*. See Semën Samsonovich Kutateladze, *Fundamentals of Functional Analysis*, in *Texts in the Mathematical Science*, vol. 12 (Dordrecht: Springer, 1996), 1.

with original texts in original languages. (3) *Interdisciplinary and cross-cultural approach*. This means tracing and examining transcultural/transnational impacts and contributions through different –socio-cultural, philosophical, theological, philological– perspectives. Thus, this approach refers to the disciplines involved in the study of the aforementioned processes. (4) *Multi-modal approach*. By this approach it is meant the systematic study of texts, icons, and socio-cultural processes in dialectal and functional intericonic and intertextual relationships.

1.6. State of the Question

During the development of this work, it was possible to realize the deplorable condition of Cidian and Arthurian studies in certain areas of crucial importance. In summary, the state of the research suffered from lack of: (1) a systematic analysis of King Arthur's and El Cid's total mythopoeia as hegemonic myths in a functional relation to religious and socio-political processes, (2) a systematic description of the moments/stages of development of Arthur's and El Cid's total mythopoeia as hegemonic myths, and of (3) studies of the phenomenology of digital appropriation of King Arthur and El Cid as 'post-hegemonic cybermyths.' Also, along with the aforementioned absences, it was found, such as: (1) underestimation of the role of the Christianization process in King Arthur's and El Cid's total mythopoeia as hegemonic myths, (2) underestimation of the relatively autonomous religious-spiritual aspect of early Arthurian textuality, and the Benedictine/Cistercian role in its formation, (3) overestimation of the 'political agenda' model, and underestimation of the cultural-epistemological meaning of faith issues and theology matters in pre-modern mind, (4) failure to distinguish modern 'political mind' from medieval 'theologal mind,'and (5) underestimation of the Byzantine impact and role

6

in the formation of cultural imaginary in Spain and Britain in general, and in Arthurian and Cidian myth-making, specifically.

The present study aims to contribute to fix these 'problems,' and to open a path toward the systematic and multi-modal (religious, iconico-literary, socio-political, cyber-cultural) analysis of El Cid's and King Arthur's total myth-making as both hegemonic and post-hegemonic myths.

1.7. Essential Research Questions

The present research was originally inspired and driven by essential questions that demanded, if not definite answers, at least an intent of response and clarification in the light of the iconic, textual, and cultural materials at hand. These 'essential questions' can be summarized as follow:

1. How to understand the shape-shifting of King Arthur from being a local tribal British popular folk-hero to become gradually a 'universal,' cross-cultural (Celtic-Welsh/Anglo-Norman/Christian/Anglo-Saxon) hegemonic myth and cultural synthesis?

2. How to interpret the striking intertextuality and intericonicity existing between the most important texts of Arthurian and Cidian materials and the Old-New Testament textual and iconic tradition?

3. Can these parallelisms and the gradual Christification of Arthur and hagiopoeia of El Cid be properly interpreted in the light of a hegemony-centered hermeneutics?

4. How to understand the morphological similarities existing between Cidian, Arthurian, and Byzantine cultural productions in the iconic cultural imaginary

(e.g. the notion of 'holy City,' the border-heroes, the *iustum bellum* ideology) as well as in the literary and iconographical typologies?

5. What is the importance and determination capacity of the 'Church agenda' of a universal Christianization of Britain and the Iberian Peninsula, and of the theological imaginary in these early medieval cultures?

1.8. Theoretical Framework: Intericonicity

With this multilayered model as a general framework, the phenomenon of intertextuality can be understood as an anticipated consequence of pre-existing *intericonic layers*. Intericonicity is understood here as a hegemonic strategy that constructs collective memory and cultural identity by implanting in the audience the illusion of knowledge through the recognition of a new reality that seems objective, self-evident, and "natural."[7] As different from the intertextual paradigm, intericonicity, "n'en est pas une simple sous-catégorie, mais constitue un outil à part entière capable de prendre en charge les enjeux et les problématiques que l'image soulève en propre en tant que système non-verbal."[8] The term *intericonicity* has already developed its own genealogy.[9] As a process related to iconic influences and references in visual arts, it appears to have been coined by French authors Victor Ferenczi and René Poupart as part of their studies of the interface between art and society in the context of production, consumption, reproduction, and circulation of

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[7] For example, 'El Cid *is* a national Christian hero-warrior-saint, and not just a pre-national independent warrior or a Castilian knight/vassal, grandson of Rodrigo Álvarez, member of the court of Fernando I king of Leon, and of Laín Calvo, one of the legendary judges of Castile, from his father's side; and: 'King Arthur *is* the legitimate British predecessor of the English, not only of Bretons and Welsh.'

[8] Mathilde Arrivé, "L'intelligence des images - l'intericonicité, enjeux et méthodes," *E-rea*, 13.1 (2015), online since 11/15/2015, accessed 11/8/2016. URL: http://erea.revues.org/4620., 10.

[9] Ibid., 21-29.

images.[10] The notion of *intericonicité* derives from the concept of *intertextualité*. As both Ferenczi and Poupart state, if allusion in the rhetoric of discourse is a manifestation of intertextuality, so allusion in the rhetoric of images is a manisfestation of intericonicity. Later in 2007, the term was used again by Clément Chéroux who, approaching the iconic representation of the tragic events of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, attempts to understand and illustrate how the iconographical background embedded in the imaginary of American society, resulting from the globalization of news media and entertainment industries, decisively determined the way these events were visualized by the American and worldwide public in general: "Ce que le 11-Septembre permet en fait de mesurer, ce sont les effets de la globalisation sur les représentations médiatiques. Désormais contrôlé par un nombre réduit de diffuseurs, le marché des images est canalisé, l'offre visuelle se raréfie, s'uniformise et se répète."[11]. After his return to Paris, Jean-Jacques Courtine incorporated the notion of intericonicity into his series of conferences at the Sorbonne Nouvelle, from 2003 to 2004.[12] Although intericonicity is originally "entendue comme l'ensemble des phénomènes de circulation, de transfert et de dialogue entre les codes graphiques,"[13] we extend the scope of this notion in order to include in it 'mental' iconic, non-verbal imaginations embedded in the collective imaginary, and

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[10] Victor Ferenczi and René Poupart, *La societé et les images: approaches didactiques* (Saint-Cloud: Didler, 1981), 82.

[11] Clément Chéroux, "Le déjà-vu du 11-Septembre. Essai d'intericonicité," *Études photographiques*, 20 (2007) : 148-173, 153. Also available online since 09 Septembre, 2008, accessed 3/31/2107, URL: http://etudesphotographiques.revues.org/998, 32.

[12] Nilton Milanez Correiro, "Intericonicidade: funcionamento discursive da memória das imágenes," in *Acta Scientiarum. Language and Culture*, v. 35, 4 (2013): 345-355, 346, accessed 11/5/2016, Doi: 10.4025/actascilangcult.v35i4.20232.

[13] Mathilde Arrivé, "L'intelligence des images - l'intericonicité, enjeux et méthodes," op. cit., 21.

intertwined with text production, memory and identity phenomena, as well as further reproductions and recreations. Thus, intericonicity is understood as a power device of a hegemonic strategy intended to implant in the receptors *the illusion of a certain knowledge* through the recognition of a new reality as something objective, self-evident, and 'natural,' constructing in this way collective memory and cultural nation-identity. Primordial statements such as 'El Cid *is* a Christian warrior-hero instead of a mercenary soldier,' or 'King Arthur *is* the legitimate British predecessor of the English monarchs' shaped the general perception of politico-cultural phenomena and paved the way for people's rational sanction and emotional involvement. For instance, under Constantine the Great (274-337 A.D.), the link between the worship of the Sun-god (Baal) and Jesus Christ seems to have been established. According to Michael Grant: "Constantine was a monotheist who revered the Sun, like his forebears before him in their Sun-worshipping Balkans," [14] and "Constantine the Great began his vast homogenous series of coinages inscribed *SOLI INVICTO COMITI....*"[15] This certainly is not the place to discuss, up to what extent Grant's statements are totally justified by the facts. Yet Grant's indications point to two essential things. First, the intericonic connection established by the Emperor between Baal and Christ as cultural iconemes, and, second, the series of coinages bearing the Latin inscription, which functioned as devices of noetic manipulation aiming to implant effectively the new symbolic Baal-Christ syntax in people's mind. It is not coincidential at

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[14] Michael Grant. *The Collapse and Recovery of the Roman Empire* (London: Routledge, 1999), 51.

[15] Ibid.

all that Grant considers that Emperor Constantine's strategy was a "huge scale operation unmistakably intended to implant an idea in the minds of the population of the empire."[16]

Ferenczi and Poupart also aim to examine the values that symbolic images convey from one epoch to another. Ferenczi quotes Diderot to suggest that it is necessary to interrogate the relationship, within the visual tissue, between rational and sensible elements along with their social pertinence as structures of meaning. Of course, the object of analysis of Ferenczi and Poupart is the interpretation of illustrated panels produced by the contemporary society on the occasion of an electoral consultation. In this context, they examine how visual documents can become *both sources of representation and models of interpretation*. According to Ferenczi and Poupart, there are levels of meaning that lie beneath the outer semantic layer of the image. These levels of meaning defy a naive perception of the visual event and tricks the receptor with the complexity of the *trompe-l'oeil* and the *savoir-faire artisanal*. Likewise, mythical, social, and mental images generally encompass deeper perception-challenging semantic levels which can produce meanings that connote and synthesize cultural ideals and self-interpreting imaginations.

There is a danger of a partial approach to iconic phenomena –what the afore-mentioned French authors called an "anachronic perspective"– that springs out from the reductive analysis of images as merely pictographic units. This risk can be successfully counteracted by the implementation of an interdisciplinary methodology that uses literary, socio-political and anthropological data which are linked to images as extremely dynamic cultural artifacts. Indeed, a basic iconic unit –an iconeme– will always be part of a far more complex iconic structure within a self-coherent semantic field –an iconosphere–, which on

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[16] Ibid.

11

its part belongs to a polynomial structure of different iconospheres and iconosystems.[17] Thus, hegemonic myths are understood in the present work as complex multilayered conflations of ontological, cosmological, iconic and literary sources and narratives, whose meaning can be reached only by describing their functional relations and correspondences within polynomial 'molecules' of interlaced iconospheres.

Additionally, new iconographical models can also emerge as a rupture –a semantico-morphological split– with pre-existing forms as encoded by official institutions. In other words, these new iconic formations produce a disruption of a pre-established order – an order which is supposedly 'natural' in origin and with inherent socio-political legitimacy. For instance, the formation of a monolingual iconic / literary discourse means a peculiar form of rupture with former social structures. According to Guy Halsal in *The Worlds of Arthur*, post-Roman society in Britain was much more multicultural and plural than usually thought. This means that the traditional war-block models of 'Celtic/Roman-Welsh' vs 'Anglo-Saxons,' or 'Anglo-Saxons vs Juts,' and later after 1066 of 'Anglo-Saxons vs Normands,' fail to explain the social and cultural layouts of British society in the light of recent archeological evidence and finds-analysis. In this case, not only images and literature, but especially archeology and anthropology come to form a multifactorial methodology to approach the complexity of the formation of the modern British nation.[18]

Confronted with these *de facto* multicultural configurations, authors such as Geoffrey of Monmouth and especially Layamon – unlike what we can see in Gildas with

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[17] See pp. 62-63 of the present work.

[18] Halsall, "Swords in the Stones: The Archeology of Post-Imperial Britain," in *Worlds of Arthur: Facts and Fictions of the Dark Ages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 26-49, and "Beyond Brooches and Brochs: Rethinking Early Medieval British Archeology," in ibid., 102-34.

his Anglo-Saxon perspective– conceived the project of interpreting British history as a teleological movement oriented towards the total synthesis of Welsh, Anglo-Saxons, Anglo-Normands, and even Juts, Picts, and Scots. All these national traditions will conflate in a society consolidated by Christianity (faith and institutions) and united under the hegemony of a new English identity incarnated in the monarchical institution. Later, the English themselves were interpreted as legitimate descendants of Arthur via Edward the Confessor, and therefore heirs of the right to the crown instead of usurpers of it. King Arthur's icon as a hegemonic myth forms and transforms as a functional correlate of this process of Christianization in a multi-ethnic Britain. This can be seen in Arthur's semantic *peripetiae* from being a local Roman-Welsh hero-warrior to becoming the universal King-Messiah that would return to restore his reign over the British and that will be later exalted to heavens as an eschatological saint-king-warrior sitting at the right hand of Christ. The *Chronicon Halensis Monasterii* presents Arthur as the only prophet able to fight and destroy the beast Leviathan:

> Rex fuit arthurus. rex est post regna futurus. Prelia facturus vincet. numquam periturus. Hic orbem rexit. Sed christus ad ethera uexit Regem tam fortem nec sensit corpore mortem. Enoch translatum legimus super astra leuatum, ethereasque uias, curru penetrauit helias. Isti pugnabunt cum hostem non superabunt. Sed magis arthurus prudens ad prelia durus. Leuiathan feriet et ei uictoria fiet.[19]

Both textual and iconographic constructions of Arthur's image will mirror Old Testament typologies, like Melquisedec and David, and New Testament prototypes, primarily Christ himself as absolute Archetype. Via transtextual narrative insertions, King Arthur was conceived through a supernatural intervention (in this case Merlin's magic

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[19] "Chronicon Monasterii de Hales," "Arthurian Fragments," *MLA,* 18.1 (1903), 84-94, 87, accessed 16/05/2015, Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/456476.

power); he is said to be the greatest King that shall have ever lived on earth and, according to Layamon, he will feed poets and his people (*beordes*) with the flesh of his breast and even with his own blood.

Another intericonic source is the Roman/Byzantine representation of saint-warriors, such as St Dimitrios, St George, and St Theodore, along with the sacred iconography displayed both in frescoes and manuscript illumination. At that point, surely after the decisive appropriation made by kings like Henry II, Richard I, Edward II, and even Henry VIII, King Arthur appears already as the universal King of an in-progress united Christian kingdom. This all-encompassing political structure would harmonically put together the pieces of a complex polynomial social field that involved not only different, but often openly opposite, cultural identities and traditions. This process did not stop of course in Sir Malory's nostalgic swan-song of chivalry. On the contrary, in Victorian Romantic pictorial and literary appropriations of the figure of King Arthur there can also be seen a continuity of the impact of this hegemonic mytheme in the formation of the English national identity.[20]

Similarly, there is an internal dialectical progression in the cultural icon of El Cid as prototype and paradigm. From being a warrior / hero as represented in *HR*, El Cid morphs into a hero-warrior, *princeps* by the king's grace, by which Rodrigo becomes a paradigm of good vassal as mirrored in the *PMCs*. At this point, El Cid's glory must

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[20] In Inga Bryden's words: "Indeed, from an initial sampling of nineteenth-century Arthurians it is clear that a diverse group of people, from different social and cultural backgrounds, were engaged in the manufacturing of the Victorian Arthur […] This had in part to do with the literary establishment's concern to express nationalist sentiment in an appropriately epic form […] Historians grappled with fitting the King into an appropriate national history." See Inga Bryden, *Reinventing King Arthur: The Arthurian Myth in Victorian Literature* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 3-4. This book is very important to this assertion but also to question the absolutization of Arthur's role in the formation of the modern English imperialist ideology.

inform and inspire the spirit of the Reconquest as such, but also of Christian aristocracy generally.[21] Once the hegemonic myth is installed in the cultural iconosphere, then it can definitely survive through many centuries impacting and informing the identitary self-understanding of a nation. El Cid as a hegemonic myth is called to have concrete socio-cultural functions. Essentially, he must incarnate the paradigm of the good vassal which is intended to legitimize the power of the Spanish kings, creating at the same time a national symbol as embodiment, in the cultural imaginary, of the Christian eschatological destiny of the Spanish nation. Therefore, this warrior / hero, the paradigm of the Christian good vassal, came to strengthen the God-sanctioned legitimacy of the Reconquest and the Christian institutions. In other words, with El Cid the national mythologeme of the teleological necessity of a Christian Spain unified under Castile's monarchs is thoroughly shaped. Still in 1929, in Aurelio M. Espinosa's history of Spanish literature we can read that El Cid was the great inspirer of Spanish nationalism and Castilian supremacy. In his inner iconic complexity, El Cid echoed glorious paradigms which were representative of the *Spanishness* as the metaphysical foundation of the nation and its institutions. Figures like Visigoth king Roderick, Charlemagne, and the Byzantine military saint-warriors played a leading role in this process. Through Navarra and Aragon with their outstanding French influence, the shadow of figures like British king Riothamus (9th century) – who

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[21] Following Gonzálo Martínez Díez, it is clear that the Reconquest reached its first great momentum with Fernando I King of León, still count of Castile. Therefore, in a first moment, processes of Castilianization and of Christianization (Reconquest) of all Iberia were not convergent. Later, after the enthronization of Sancho II, son of Fernando I of Leon, as King of Castile and the elevation of Castile to the dignity of kingdom, there is no essential difference between Castilianization and Christianization. See Gonzálo Martínez Díez, *El Condado de Castilla (711-1038): la historia frente a la leyenda*, t. II (Valladolid: Marcial Pons Historia, 2005), and, as a general reference, Gonzálo Martínez Díez *Sancho III el Mayor Rey de Pamplona, Rex Ibericus* (Madrid: Marcial Pons Historia, 2007).

came down from Britain to assist his cousin Joel king of Brittany against the Visigoths and is considered by Geoffrey Ashe as the best candidate to be king Arthur's historical model–, may be considered as a potential intericonic reference impacting shaping of El Cid as a hero-warrior, especially in his original epic form (10th-11th centuries). These are examples of intericonicity which are utilized in the present work in order to disclose the internal phenomenology of El Cid and King Arthur as hegemonic mythemes. Applying the conceptual framework of intericonic / intertextual fields as functional correlates of cultural metaphorization and identitary production to different literary artifacts, can help to improve our understanding about the origin, genealogy, and expansion of the mythopoiesis of El Cid and King Arthur. Also, this conceptual application will shed light on the correspondences between these mythemes and different cultural contexts, as well as on the ways through which the collective –popular or aristocratic– "imagination"[22] and socio-political processes reach a concrete expression –typically metaphorized and concealed from the uneducated eye– *as* mythico-literary artifacts.

1.9. Theoretical Pertinence of the Notion of Intericonicity

The theoretical pertinence of a model based on the notion of intericonicity as different from the intertextual method springs from the fact that right at the threshold of the 20th century a paradigm shift shook the post-structuralist models that had proclaimed the "end of history," (Francis Fukuyama 1995), the "death of painting" (Douglas Crimp

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[22] See Michelle R. Warren, *History on the Edge: Excalibur and the Borders of Britain, 1100-1300*, Medieval Cultures, vol. 22 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 11.

1981),[23] and the "end of art" (Artur Danto).[24] The autonomy of visual representations was radically challenged by artists and scholars and thus painting and images generally were deprived of aesthetic and even semantic independence. The ideo-thematic contents of pictorial representations were reduced to the creator's ideas or "poetic," and the options left were abstractionism, minimalism, and the total identification between space and image as it appeared in art instalations:

> The artistic fusion of two-dimensional painting and its surrounding space, elaborated in the second half of the 20th century by Minimalism, Conceptual Art, and Earth Art, created gradually, in the final quarter of the twentieth-century, the meta-medium of Installation Art, which indeed manifests the era of "the end of the history of art". Installations are conceived as spatial environments in which effectively the image cannot be separated from the organic spatial whole in which it is placed.[25]

Following the Derridian notion of *spacement*,[26] images were interpreted as spatializations of writing itself, in such an unclear and obscure way as to remain one of the most enthralling theoretical riddles of post-structuralist thought. In Efal's words: "'Spacing'" entails exactly this blurring of the boundaries between an image and its environment. The image was 'spaced-out' and articulated as a continuous movement of

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[23] See Douglas Crimp, "The end of painting," *October* 16 (1981): 69-86, accessed 12/15/2017, Stable URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/778375.

[24] See Arthur C. Danto, "The end of art: A philosophical defense," *History and theory* 37, no. 4 (1998): 127-143, and Adi Efal, "Iconology and Iconicity. Towards an Iconic History of Figures, Between Erwin Panofsky and Jean-Luc Marion," *Naharaim* 1 (2008): 81–105, 81, accessed 11/20/16, DOI 10.1515/naha.2008.007.

[25] Ibid., 83.

[26] "The term 'spacing' ('*espacement*') is absolutely central to Derrida's entire corpus, where it is indissociable from those of *différance* (characterized, in the text from 1968 bearing this name, as '[at once] spacing [and] temporizing'), *writing* (of which 'spacing' is said to be 'the fundamental property') and deconstruction (with one of Derrida's last major texts, *Le Toucher: Jean-Luc Nancy*, specifying "spacing" to be 'the first word of any deconstruction')." See Louise Burchill, "In-Between 'Spacing' and the 'Chôra' in Derrida: A Pre-Originary Medium?" in *Intermedialities: Philosophy, Arts, Politics*, edited by Henk Oosterling and Ewa Plonowska Ziarek, TEXTURES: Philosophy / Literature / Culture (Maryland: Lexington Books, 2011), 1.

differentiation and cavity-formation of the gesture of 'writing.'"[27] The pictorial paradigm

shift occurs within this theory and creation framework. Mathilde Arrivé reminds us that,

"W.J.T. Mitchell décrète en 1994 un 'tournant pictural' en écho au 'tournant linguistique'

de Richard Rorty."[28] In the present study, special attention is paid to the impact of

Byzantine textuality and iconicity upon Cidian and Arthurian narratives. It results indeed

very compelling that the "pictorial turn" that challenged postmodern iconoclastic

bewilderment came up essentially intertwined with appropriations and hermeneutic

adjustments of Byzantine iconography and iconology to Western theoretical needs. More

than a thousand years after the formation of Merovingian, Caroligian, Gothic, and

Romance imaginaries, Byzantium came again to provide the fundamentals of a new

iconological theory and a renewed approach to the irreducible autonomy of images: "In the

midst of the mourning period, however, another direction of research and theory was

starting to take form and develop: […] the explorations of Byzantine theurgical icons and

the theories pertaining to them."[29]

1.10. Preeminence of Phenomenon of Iconicity

If the 'linguistic turn' seemed to have definitely taken the theoretical scene of

European thought during the decades of 1960 and 1970, after Mitchell's 'picturial turn,' its

grip was challenged by the new understanding of iconic –and its relationship with

linguistic– signs. Julie Orlemanski notes that: "The twenty-five years since the special

issue's publication have witnessed a reorientation, a turn away from the linguistic turn, as

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[27] Adi Efal, op. cit., 83.

[28] Mathilde Arrivé, op. cit., 22.

[29] For a compendium of the most important authors and works involved in this iconographic / iconologic revival in Western theory, production, and reception of images, see Adi Efal, op. cit., 83-86.

it were. In her 2014 retrospective account of the *Speculum* special issue, Spiegel writes that there now 'seems to be a growing sense that what was variously called 'the linguistic turn,' 'postmodernism,' or 'poststructuralism' has run its course.'"[30] Even though Spiegel's assertion looks hyperbolic, the fact is that there has been a focus shift from linguistic to iconographical studies with the consequent vindication of the latter. The aim here certainly is not to carry forward a philosophical inquiry of the linguistic and iconographical phenomena as such, let alone a substitution of one theoretical framework for another. We rather seek to dig in the relation between text and imagine and the ways they interact and overlap to form more complex intericonic and intertextual structures. The epistemological and phenomenal preeminence of image and visuality over word and discourse is also examined.

Intertextuality is based on the temporality of discourse as linguistic structure, while intericonicity is based on the spatiality of the image as iconographical presence. Of course, there can be a sequential display of iconographical presences as they conflate in technical succession. This is an illusion effect particularly idiomatic to cinema. Yet this temporal-arithmetical succession of singular icons produces a meaning that results from their diachronical combination. However, an isolated word can also be considered a spatial representation of a meaning and would be then identical to the iconographical presence. Yet this idea is challenged by the fact that the difference between signifier and reference in words discloses a form of duplicity that cannot be found in the iconographical sign. A word *signifies* precisely by pointing to a reference other than itself with which it keeps a

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[30] Julie Orlemanski, "Philology and the Turn Away from the Linguistic Turn," *Florilegium*, vol. 32 (2015): 157-181, accessed 11/15/2017, DOI: 10.3138/flor.32.007.

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semantic relationship that has been culturaly and arbitrarily enacted. This constitutes what Charles Sanders Pierce called the "symbolic sign."[31] On the contrary, the iconographical sign produces meaning *by showing in itself* the immediate presence of the reference, even when the material difference between sign and reference might be self-evident. This corresponds to what Pierce called "indexical" and "iconic" signs.[32] For a word to have a representable meaning as a symbolic sign, an icon must pre-exist as the source of the representable meaning; in other words, the icon opens and clears the semantic *energeia* of the word. Between reference and word there lies always an icon, or an iconical intentionality.

After being borne up to the goddess Dike on mystic horses, Parmenides relates to the light the mental representation in which the Being of beings unconceals; therefore, to know things is to see their ideal aspect in the light of the noetic unconcealment: Ἵπποι ταί με φέρουσιν, ὅσον τ΄ ἐπὶ θυμὸς ἱκάνοι … ἣ κατὰ πάντ΄ ἄστη φέρει εἰδότα φῶτα· τῇ φερόμην·"[33] Not being cannot exist because what lacks presence cannot be represented, and what cannot be represented cannot exist: "... τὸ γὰρ αὐτὸ νοεῖν ἐστίν τε καὶ εἶναι."[34] Only when a thing is called to appear or unconceal in the noetic light as a pre-verbal clearing, can it be properly said through verbal articulations. On his part, Plato understood

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[31] See note 46.

[32] Ibid.

[33] *Παρμενίδου Περὶ φύσεως (Parmenidou Peri Physeos)*, 1-4, in *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker: Griechish und Deutsch*, edited by Hermann Diels and Walther Kranz (Berlin: Weidemann, 1974), 117-8: "Das Rossegespann, das mich trägt, zog mich fürder, soweit ich nur wollte, nachdem es mich auf den vielgerühmten Weg der Göttin geleitet, der allein den wissenden Mann überallhin führt. Auf diesem also fuhr ich…" *Παρμενίδου Περὶ φύσεως*, 1-4, ibid: "The steeds that bear me carried me as far as ever my heart desired, after I was led up to the much-praised way of the Goddess, through which only wiseman are conducted. On what way was I borne." (The translation from Greek to English is my own).
[34] Ibid, III.

the Eternal Forms as the Being of beings and therefore *their ultimate reality*. The term

used by Plato to indicate this primordial Being of beings is *εἶδος / εἴδη* (*eidos / eide*), a

word which essentially means aspect, way to appear. Therefore, for Plato the ultimate

reality of beings is suprasensible but not purely conceptual; it is the form in which truth as

de-oblivion[35] of the Being of beings occurs *as a showing of the real, i.e. metaphysical*

aspect of things.

There is an essential relationship between iconic formation (iconogenesis) and

experience as the source of meaning. Experience precedes and determines the semantic

capacity of language. Both ontological and epistemologically, image antecedes language as

discursive structure, i.e., tissue of words: *text*. In other words, to think of some-*thing*, even

when this thing is overtly, at least to a certain extent, determined by language structures,

there must be a primordial clearing where thing and discursive language converge in the

icon-symbol as that which holds together[36] and as an image that anticipates –even still

under the form of a shadow prior to the dawn of meaning–, and allows mental

representation. The primordial production of meaning at the level of image the Greeks

called *ἀπεικόνησις*, *apikonisis*, from the prefix *ἀπό*, *apo*, from, through, made possible by,

and the noun *εἰκόνησις*, *eikonesis*, imagining, i.e. the phenomenon of coming to the *gnosis*

(mental image) of something in language through the imagining of the thing as a semantic

anticipation. This process is determined by what can be called here the essence of *iconicity*

as *eikonesis*, that is the pre-linguistic imagining of the thing as a mental iconic

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[35] The Greek word for truth is *ἀλήθεια*, *aletheia*, lit. "no-oblivion" or "de-oblivion."

[36] From Greek *σύμβολον*, *συμβάλλω*, *συμβάλλειν* (symballein), in its most ancient meaning, "to throw and cast something together." The word is formed by the prefix *syn* (together, together with, along with) and the nominative form of the verb *bállein* "to throw." See José M. Pabón de Urbina, *Vox. Diccionario manual griego-español*, 17 edición (Barcelona: Bibliograf, 1994).

intentionality, and only in a derivative way as a language-mediated material visual / iconic

representation (a painting, etc.) Iconicity then has an absolute epistemological primordiality

in the process of knowing. As epistemological phenomenon, this primordiality carries also

a semantic dimension, but it cannot be reduced to it. And this because *iconicity* is not

primarily a semiotic attribute of signs, but rather a radically primordial epistemological

phenomenon which responds to worldliness as man's fundamental constitution, and

spatiality as existential structure.[37] Iconicity as disclosure of beings precedes language as

speech in a proportional relation the fact that *phenomenon*, taken in the original Greek

sense of 'showing itself,' precedes both *gnosis* and *aesthesis*. Language conveys meaning

because meaning is the epistemological character[38] of the unconcealment of beings as

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[37] For the notion of "worldliness," see Martin Heidegger, "Being-in-the-World in General as the Fundamental Constitution of Dasein" and "The Worldliness of the World," 53-86, in Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, ed. Dennis J. Schmidt (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2010). For the notion of "spatiality," see Martin Heidegger, "The Aroundness of the Surrounding World and the Spatiality of Dasein," 99-111, in *Being and Time*, ibid. For the relationship between Dasein's worldliness, references, and signs, see Martin Heidegger, "Reference and Signs," 76-80, in *Being and Time*, ibid.

[38] The word 'character' must be understood here in the sense of the Greek χαρακτήρ (*character*), i.e. the way of being where it is shown to χάραγμα, something given in order to *propriate*, to identify something as its own in difference to others: the χαράκτης (*charactes*) was the one whose job was to engrave the surface of the coins in order to identify them according to their value, but also still whosoever was able to imprint a surface with identifying signs to make it *authentic*, that is *itself*, even with ornamental purposes. According to the Judeo-Christian tradition, man is "image and likeness" of God. Human being therefore bears in his very essence the χάραγμα of the Sacred. And not only the human being: *the whole Creation as such becomes hierophanic*. In Psalm 19, we read that, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth His handiwork."[38] Saint Paul prophesizes that when all things shall be subdued unto Christ, then "God may be all in all."[38] God himself then is man's and nature's χαράκτης, the one who determines their essential character and expression. Saint Paul, in his epistle to the Hebrews, says that Jesus is the "character of God." This is translated in the Douay-Rheims Bible as "the figure of his substance." (Hebrews 1,3) thus translating the Greek χαρακτὴρ by the latin-rooted English 'substance.' But the original Greek reads χαρακτὴρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως του Θεού, i.e. lit. "character of the hypostasis of God," being 'character' a mark, a 'scratch' upon the surface by which something is identified and become recognizable, like Odysseus's scar. Odysseus is afraid of being recognized – i.e. identified – by Eurycleia should she touch or perceive his scar: "ὣς ἄρ᾽ ἔφη, γρηῢς δὲ λέβηθ᾽ ἕλε παμφανόωντα / τοῦ πόδας ἐξαπένιζεν, ὕδωρ δ᾽ ἐνεχεύατο πουλὺ / ψυχρόν, ἔπειτα δὲ θερμὸν ἐπήφυσεν. αὐτὰρ Ὀδυσσεὺς / ἷζεν ἐπ᾽ ἐσχαρόφιν, ποτὶ δὲ σκότον ἐτράπετ᾽ αἶψα: / αὐτίκα γὰρ κατὰ θυμὸν ὀΐσατο, μή ἑ λαβοῦσα / οὐλὴν ἀμφράσσαιτο καὶ ἀμφαδὰ ἔργα γένοιτο." [*Homer. The Odyssey with an English Translation*, ed. A.T. Murray, Book XIX, 386-90 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, London, accessed 06/22/2017, http://data.perseus.org/citations/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0012.tlg002.perseus-grc1:19.361-19.404: "The old woman took up a burnished basin she used for washing feet and poured in bowls of fresh cold water before she stirred in hot. Odysseus, sitting full in the firelight, suddenly swerved round to the dark, gripped by a quick misgiving— soon as she touched him she might spot the scar! The truth

phenomena. As Heidegger explains, "The Greek expression *φαινόμενον*, from which the term 'phenomenon' derives, comes from the verb *φαίνεσθαι*, meaning 'to show itself.' Thus *φαινόμενον* means: what shows itself, the self-showing, the manifest … the totality of what lies in the light of day or can be brought to light."[39] The relationship between *phenomena* – as originally epistemological unconcealment under the fashion of meaning – and beings is established by the fact that, "Sometimes the Greeks simply identified this with *τὰ ὄντα* (beings)."[40] The things that appear as phenomena *can be seen* because they are *let be seen* by *λόγος* (logos). Indeed, "the function of *λόγος* as *ἀπόφανσις* lies in letting something be seen by indicating it … *λόγος* is a specific mode of letting be seen."[41] Yet because *logos* can let things be seen, also in *logos* things can be covered up and presented "as something in front of something else passing off *as* something it is *not*."[42] Thus, a more radical connection between things and truth is to found in the phenomenon of aesthesis, because aesthesis is the simple and direct perception of things as they appear in their most immediate "being for themselves." Because of this immediacy, through aesthesis things are simply "true" in the sense that they are precisely *as they appear to be*. Aesthesis as perception has its correspondence with gnosis as intellection of aesthesis. By virtue of this

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would all come out." [*Homer:The Odyssey*, trans. Robert Fagles, Book XIX, 386-90 (New York: Penguin Group, 1997)]. The scar is the *character* of the 'idea' of Odysseus in the disguised old man. That idea arises in Eurycleia's mind as soon as she discovers the scar; then the old man (in which truth is concealed or 'forgotten') disappears and Odysseus comes up as *ἀλήθεια* (*aletheia*), i.e. lit. de-oblivion or unconcealment of the truth. In the present work, *meaning* – the essence of language – is understood as the most immediate manifestation (or 'recognizable mark,' i.e. *character*) of Being.

[39] Martin Heidegger, "The Concept of Phenomenon," in *Being and Time*, op. cit., 27.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Heidegger, "The Concept of Logos," ibid., 31.

[42] Ibid.

correspondence, *gnosis* is always "true" as the unconcealment of beings before the eyes, and can be only its opposite as absence of unconcealment at all. But this *lack of presence* cannot be mistaken for a *deceitful presence*. Only in the expansion of logos as discourse can things be mistaken *for what they are not*. Now, as Heidegger points out, "When fully concrete, discourse (letting something be seen) has the character of speaking or vocalization in words."[43] Thus, because phenomena, *aesthesis*, and *gnosis* are always implied in logos as discourse, the essence of logos is *iconicity* and not discourse in the sense of textuality or 'discursive tectonic' (Figure 1). The Greeks certainly realized the primordiality of mental representation (*eiconesis*) in the discursive production of meaning: "*λόγος* is *φωνή*, indeed *φωνὴ μετὰ φαντασίας*–vocalization in which something always is sighted."[44] This allows us to better assess the role of intericonic transactions in socio-cultural phenomena generally and, more specifically, in the formation and further shape-shifting of politically functional myths.

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[43] Ibid.

[44] Ibid.
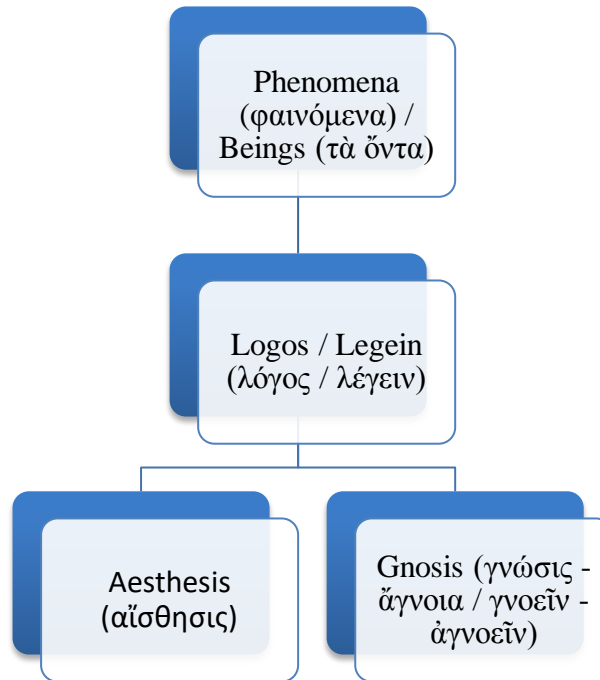
Figure 1: Phenomenon, Logos and Aisthesis.

Iconicity is not just a primary semiotic attribute of signs. Charles Sanders Pierce establishes three semiotic attributes of signs in general, i.e. as *semiotic beings* or pure *signs*. Interested primarily in the way through which signs produce meaning, he reaches these kinds of signs according to their immediate relation to the references (the things signified), i.e. between signs/signifiers (language) and things themselves as signified (extra-linguistic elements). Specifically regarding to the notion of iconic sign, Pierce "indicates those circumstances in which the signifier resembles the signified. A portrait may be considered iconic in that it resembles the person pictured."[45] Althoug Pierce's approach is essentially a semiotic one, his basic observation points to a phenomenon

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[45] See Jane Bayly, "Attacks on the United States: Index, Icons, and Intericonicity in Photojournalism," *E-Rea: Revue électronique d'études sur le monde Anglophone* 13, 1 (2015), footnote 5, accessed 05/19/2017, URL: http://erea.revues.org/4615, DOI: 10.4000/erea.4615.

whose importance consists in allowing that more complex intericonic processes take place in broader cultural fields.

1.11. Preeminence of Iconogenesis and Intericonicity over Intertextuality

Intertextuality responds here to a more fundamental process of iconogenesis that actualizes different textual as well as iconographical (visual) materials to create an icon-synthesis with a complex interiority insofar as it conflates ontological ideas, moral ideals, allegories, symbols, and socio-political hegemonic strategies. This multilayer structure shows the complexity of intericonic processes.[46] This icon-synthesis is held together by the collective memory, and mirrors cultural ideals and even unconscious processes extant and taking place in the collective cultural imaginary. The whole of these contextual elements forms what Ferdinand de Saussure, referring to word correspondences, called "rapports associatifs."[47] Intertextuality ultimately responds to the formation of a cultural icon full of political and hegemonic symbolism. Yet this intertextual polyphonic web is a field gathered together by a more essential process that holds sway over it: intericonicity. Therefore, the existence of intertextual structures indicates the formation, or the pre-existence, of a cultural icon that, as a symbol, holds them together in a context of meaning. This icon is full of ontological, moral, and socio-political meaning. The actualization of the

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[46] For instance, the idea of the Christian warrior-hero, the allegory of the holy war and the intricate relations between sword and cross, and between warlike fashion and deep faith, the hegemonic process of the Christianization of Spain and Britain, the symbol of the rebel or the good vassal, the fight against monsters, the sacred chronotope linked to the heroes, like Avalon, Glastonbury, San Pedro de Cardeña, "la apelación implícita a diversos homólogos bíblicos … mediante mecanismos intertextuales al asociar a la exaltación de Rodrigo una fraseología utilizada en diversos pasajes, en especial veterotestamentarios, para referirse a los libertadores que, ante el clamor popular, Dios hace aparecer para salvar a su pueblo de la opresión, los *saluatores* Otoniel (*'Qtni'el*) y Aod (*Eḥud*)**,** según el relato de Jue 3, 7-15." etc. See Alberto Montaner Frutos, "Rodrigo el Campeador como *princeps* en los siglos XI y XII," in *e-Spania. Revue interdisciplinaire d'études hispaniques médiévales et modernes* 10 (2010), 9, accessed 11/25/16, http://e-spania.revues.org/2020, DOI: 10.4000/e-spania.20201.

[47] Victor Ferenczi and René Poupart, op. cit., 81-82.

semantic possibility of holding together complex intertextual structures in an eidetic matrix (concrete symbol/allegory as general idea) of universal cultural meaning (ontological/anthropological/cultural ideals) is precisely that morphs an icon into *a myth*. When this icon appears primordially as a function of socio-political processes, it is called here a *hegemonic myth*.

There is a dialectical cross-determination between icons and intertextual correlates. This means that, for instance, El Cid of *HR* as a prototypal icon-myth holds together textual discourses that produce literary creations such as the aforementioned *HR* as well as the *CC*. The way in which these texts are later inherited and interpreted changes in the new context of the Castilianization of Iberia and the perspective of the Castilian king as an absolute hegemonic individual. This, for its part, determines the new and different way in which El Cid will appear as a hegemonic icon in the social imaginary of 12th-13th century Spain. In other words, the intertextual polyphonic web is a field gathered together and preserved by *iconicity* as a more essential process that holds sway over it.

Yet iconicity, as a process of imagining, overlaps with both its preceding iconic products (as in the dialectic of the earlier archetypal and the later epigonal / archetypal Cid of the Benedictine chronicles and the romances) as well as with the iconographic material extant in the reservoir of cultural imaginary (for instance, the icon / remembrance of King Roderick, or the Roman-Byzantine Christian saints / warriors), producing in this way a new, far more complex iconosystem in whose iconic actuality different iconic references become visible in the sense of 'an icon *within* an icon.' Here the icon-reference does not become completely concealed by the actual icon falling into cultural oblivion –as would be the case of a palimpsest. On the contrary, this process takes place in a way that the

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presence of the actual icon *calls* the icon-reference to the foreground and makes it visible, opening new possibilities for its hegemonic function as cultural myth resulting from the process of *intericonicity*. Therefore, intericonicity can be seen also as a morpho-semantic overlap of images in the dialectical context of a cultural space-time convergence that leads to an iconic standardization. This chronotopic dialectics is recognized by Clément Chéroux, who notes that:

> …l'analyse de l'intericonicité révèle que le phénomène d'uniformisation agit non seulement spatialement, mais aussi temporellement. De même que l'offre visuelle est standardisée dans l'espace, elle l'est aussi dans le temps, à l'échelle de l'histoire et par l'entremise de la mémoire. Dans leurs représentations médiatiques, les événements d'aujourd'hui ressemblent ainsi de plus en plus à ceux d'hier.[48]

1.12. Myth, Language, and Social Constructions: Ernst Cassirer

Along with the notion of intericonicity, we also focus on the functional relationship between myth and language, the latter as material substrate of discourse and literary productions. There is an essential relationship between myth and language. This means that modern/contemporary theories of myth have always appeared interlaced with a determined interpretation of the nature of language and linguistic signs. When Ernst Cassirer defines man as *homo symbolicus*, he is asserting that every representation and knowledge are made possible by the mediation of sign-symbols as formal-transcendental structures of mind itself, and language is recognized, together with myth, as one of the primordial symbolical modes of consciousness. The relationship man establishes with the world, the notion of world and self, are governed and determined by symbolic appropriation of empirical experiences that function as formal pre-Ego structures, which transcendentally determine all representation and knowledge, including of course the

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[48] Clément Chéroux, op. cit., 32.

knowledge of 'oneself.' Cassirer states that it is impossible to have epistemological access to things themselves, but on the contrary only to symbolic constructions / relations that, even in their most extreme rational formulations, have at their core a sort of iconic nature insofar as they are symbols made possible by what he calls "the energy of mind" as a fundamental creativity oriented towards the reception and further conceptual / aesthetic-ethic elaboration of these sensorial contents. Phenomena perceived by man as life or nature, can be properly perceived only insofar as they are shaped via a mind symbolic operation into a world-representation according to different modes of interpreting. For instance, death for a biologist can be interpreted as the cessation of cell-based chemical exchange processes. For the philosopher, it can be the most peculiar possibility of man's way of being as existence. For the psychologist, it could rather be a source of trauma and so it would require a different approach through, say, cognitive, behaviorist, or psychoanalytical therapies. For the religious man, death can be an eschatological event that leads man to further and more radical ways of self-experiencing and onto-fulfillment. For the artist, death can be an object of inspiration and contemplation of the life's mystery.

As a Neo-Kantian thinker, Cassirer does not attempt to determine the ontological-epistemological status of these representations regarding the possibility of an objective truth (and therefore judging which one is "truer" and more correct). On the contrary, he recognizes the ground conditions of possibilities of these different world-representations and how they come to be from a phenomenological perspective: i.e. observing and describing the process as such without further adventuring into determination of its relationship with an "objective truth." His position in this sense is conciliatory. Each of these subjectivities –mytho-religious, scientific, metaphysical, aesthetico-artistic, etc.– is

'holds its own truth' in the sense that, via the symbol-making operation of mind, they have created a world of meaning that perceives –that is, constructs– the object of empirical experience according to a unique perspective. They all, however, have in common the transcendental forms of perception and representation that make possible all kinds of knowledge in any epistemological field: mental symbol-making operation, language, concepts, etc. Cassirer rejects rationalism since reality as such cannot be thought of or represented in pure rational concepts; even more, reality as such does not consist of subjectless objects, but it is an epistemological construct that cannot dispense with the subject's mental categories to exist. Thus, ontological categories of Western metaphysical systems – as well as all scientifico-rational notions whether in mathematics, physics, or metaphysics – are but formal linguistic expressions; as such, they manifest the essentially symbolic process of the epistemological appropriation of the world. For Cassirer, then, myth reflects a different kind of reality. Instead of things themselves which are elusive, or rather irreducible to rational concepts, myth primarily reflects *the reality of the subject*. Accordingly, the study of myth must focus on the mental processes that create myth instead of the presupposed 'real' objects of myth:

> Instead of measuring the content, meaning, and truth of intellectual forms by something extraneous which is supposed to be reproduced in them, we must find in these forms themselves the measure and criterion for their truth and intrinsic meaning. Instead of taking them as mere copies of something else, we must see in each of these spiritual forms a spontaneous law of generation; and original way and tendency of expression which is more than a mere record of something initially given in fixed categories of real existence.[49]

El Cid and King Arthur are, just as many of their intericonic affluents, symbolic constructions that reflect a cultural hermeneutic, through which a new form of political

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[49] Ernst Cassirer, *Language and Myth* (New York: Harper and Brother, 1946), 8.

subjectivity strives to take shape. They move along multilayer avenues of ideals, emotions, and complex structures of feelings in the making-up process of a national mindset with a Byzantium-sourced taxonomy that conflates Christianity, monarchy, and *iustum bellum* ideology in an all-unifying device: the Reconquista. These figures, as hero-warriors, are mythical symbols that comprise in themselves basic mythemes intertwined with Spain's Christian identity. Therefore, they are neither a naturalistic, objectivistic appearance of a historical reality that one-sidedly shapes the new imperial-crusade ideology, nor a fictional reflection that distorts reality out of ideological interests. On the contrary, they are hegemonic myths insofar as their myth-making as hero-warriors is indissoluble from the social-political making of the Castilian-Leonese and hence of the Spanish centralized monarchy. Their shape-shifting is not an ideological refraction of a given and preeminent objectivity –e.g. a historical circumstance that we can 'figure out' only by examining their chronicles and heroic traditions–, but the construction of a historical entelechy via the shaping of the cultural imaginary of Christian Britain and Spain. King Arthur and El Cid are incarnations of the Reconquista's notions of military saint and hero-warrior, and as such they cannot be reduced to anything other than themselves as mythical synthesis. Myth is not the distorted subjectivization of objective reality but the subjective expression of reality-shaping 'imaginations.' They are semantic nucleus of identity, and identity is the horizon of cultural and political intersubjectivity in which language *propiates* man as history.

Therefore, myth is necessarily a dialectical synthesis of thought and reality. A simultaneous dialectical synthesis of an event-mediated subjectivity that reshapes reality as its object of representation in the mediation process. For this reason, the question of

whether Arthur or El Cid *existed* as 'historical' –i.e., non-discursive, non-mythical–characters does not make any sense for us. *Their reality is their mythopoeia*, and their historical temporality is their iconico-literary shape-shifting as cultural myths. In this sense, we side with Higham in his rejection of any search for a historical Arthur and in his focusing on the understanding of the idea of Arthur acquired via multiple hermeneutics across the intertextual fields and intertwined iconosytems that shape his world: "The present work will…make no effort to judge between one 'real' Arthur and another, let alone prepose another variant. Rather than continuing to address questions concerning Athur's historicity, it will be proposed that a focus instead on the *idea* of King Arthur and its shifting utility in different texts has greater potential to carry forward our discussion of the past into fruitful areas."[50] Although Higham does not develop his notion of the *idea* of Arthur enough to reach an understanding of the process of inconicity and intericonicity and their role in Arthur's myth-making, he certainly puts the finger on the sore when he recognizes the futility of attempting to establish Arthur's historicity.

On his part, Cassirer's thought exhibits an essential resonance with Edmund Husserl's central notion of *Intentionalität*. This notion features the internal energy of consciousness as a perpetual, spontaneous, and entirely self-governing outwards movement toward things themselves. This epistemological movement is, according to Husserl, the origin of time as the intentional consciousness's horizon of temporality. Of course, in the light of their Königsberg model, Husserl with his ultimately rational architectonics of the transcendental onto-formal categories of consciousness appears to be much more of a Neo-Kantian than Cassirer himself. It is not the intention here to argue with Cassirer about his

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[50] N. J. Higham, *King Arthur: Myth-Making and History* (London: Routledge, 2002), 3.

basic Neo-Kantian positions. Yet in the present work an extended use is made of his notion

of symbolic representations in culture and his understanding of man as a *homo symbolicus*.

The aim is to provide a rational account of the symbolic transactions that take place in

King Arthur's and El Cid's making and shape-shifting as hegemonic myths.

1.13. Bruce Lincoln: Myth and Social Constructions

While proposing a new classification of narratives, "not by their contents but by the

claims made by their narrators,"[51] Bruce Lincoln also introduces his interpretation of myth

as a type of discourse in which both credibility and authority are combined in a preferential

way.[52] The essential idea here is that myhts –mythical discourse and imaginaries– can be

used to construct new and totally unfamiliar social formations by reiterating patterns of

information which carry with them worldviews and taxonomico-axiological classifications

in a revolutionary way. Thus, Lincoln states that:

> Beyond this [fables, legends, and history] there is one further category, and that a
> crucial one: Myth –by which I designate that small class of stories that possess both
> credibility and *authority*. Evoking the sentiments [in this Lincoln follows Durkheim
> and Mauss] out of which societal structures are constructed, myth as a discursive
> act "can be employed to construct new or unfamiliar social formations, much in the
> manner of revolutionary slogans.[53]

In this sense, myth as a kind of narrative possesses a special way to convey

credibility and authority into the collective memory, in a venue opened already by

anthropologists such as Malinovsky when he described myth as a form of social charter

and Clifford Geertz with his characterization of religion as being simultaneously a 'model

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[51] Bruce Lincoln, *Discourse and the Construction of Society: Comparative Studies of Myth, Ritual, and Classification* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 24.

[52] Ibid.

[53] Ibid., 25.

of' and a 'model for' reality.[54] For Lincoln, mythical discourse is related "not only to the status of truth, but what is more, to the status of *paradigmatic* truth."[55] Although his notion of 'paradigmatic truth' is still a very broad one, it supports the main assertion of the present work that mythical discourse can work –as is the case of El Cid's and King Arthur's mythemes– as a functional correlate of religious and socio-political processes in the formation of cultural identities.

1.14. Myth, Language, and Symbol: Claude Lévi-Strauss

Another paradigmatic instance of this "mythical-linguistic turn" can be found in the French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss, who developed the notion of myth as a symbolic attestation and resolution of non-linguistic contradictions in nature as well as in the social and political orders of communities that do not participate in the rationalist (metaphysical, scientific, and technological) paradigm of Western modernity based upon the structural understanding of language opened by Ferdinand de Saussure in his *Course on Linguistics*. Lévi-Strauss's magnum opus, *Structural Anthropology*, is very well known among scholars.[56] But it is noteworthy how the French anthropologist presents a delicious synthesis of his essential scientific, philosophical, and anthropological persuasions in a booklet called *Myth and Meaning*, composed out of a series of talks Lévi-Strauss delivered in English for the Canadian Broadcasting Company around 1977.[57]

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[54] Ibid., 24.

[55] Ibid.

[56] Special heed is given here to Chapter IX, "The Structural Study of Myth," 206-231, see Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology*, op. cit.

[57] Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Myth and Meaning: Cracking the Code of Culture* (New York: Schocken Books, 1978).

As pointed out by its prologuist, the most important thing in this book has perhaps to do with the fact that in it Lévi-Strauss discloses his mind with forceful clarity and presents himself as a sort of "out-of-the-closet" universalist, by formulating beyond any trace of a doubt his persuasion that the human mind as shown in the structural, essentially binary mythical patterns, seems always to seek after order. Symmetrical architectonics might be an indication that the universe after all is (Lévi-Strauss says "possibly") an ordered instead of a chaotic whole. Furthermore, Lévi-Strauss arrives at the conclusion that there are, in the nature of myth, general phenomenological structures that ultimately respond to a complex, universal, and all-pervading dualism that he synthesizes in his so-called 'canonical formula' Fx(a) : Fy(b) ~ Fx(b) : Fa−1 (y)."[58] This interdisciplinary overlap between anthropology and mathematics has stirred up scholars's interests on

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[58] See Jack Morava, "On the Canonical Formula of C. Levi-Strauss," in *arXiv:math/0306174v2* *[math.CT]*, accepted 11 June 2003, accessed 04/29/17, https://arxiv.org/pdf/math/0306174.pdf. This formula has been critized among mathematicians: "[…] this subject, which has a somewhat controversial history [5] among mathematicians." (Ibid., 1). Others, like P. Maranda and J. Morava himself, defend its relevance and go further trying to adjust it even more to the purely mathematical episteme: "In formal terms, an equivalence relation is a relation between two objects (to be concrete: triangles in the plane), with the properties that i) if object A is related to object B (in symbols: A ~ B), and object B is related to object C (ie B ~ C) then necessarily A ~ C, ie object A is related to object C; ii) if A is related to B, then B is similarly related to A (this is the axiom of symmetry, which can be stated symbolically: if A ~ B then B ~ A), and finally iii) the axiom of reflexivity: any object is related to itself, ie A ~ A. This notion permits us to disguish equivalence from identity; thus in plane geometry the symbol ~ is traditionally used for the relation of similarity, which means that two triangles have the same angles, but are not necessarily of the same size. The point is that things can resemble each other in various ways [size, color, . . .], and that there may be good reason to compare differing sorts of equivalences (in the way that CLS says that his formula is about 'analogies between analogies'). What Cˆotˊe, Racine, and Schwimmer all suggest is an interpretation of the canonical formula in which the right-hand side is a transformation of the left; in more standard mathematical notation, this might be written Fx(a) : Fy(b) → Fx(b) : Fa−1 (y) The existence of such a transformation turning the left side into the right does not preclude that transformation from being an equivalence; all it does is allow us to regard axiom ii) above as optional. This fits quite naturally with current thinking about category theory." (Ibid., 2.)

further studies. Among them, P. Maranda's cross-analysis of the relationship between ethnographical theories and morphodynamic models stands out.[59]

Thus approached, these are undoubtedly ontological statements that attempt to disclose and put in front of our eyes under a rational fashion the very structural nature of things. The totality of the structural patterns constitutes a metalanguage, i.e. an ontology that seeks to explain the ontic attributes of certain sets of things. This is then a metaphysics that was foreshadowed in Anselm of Canterbury's "ontological argument": for Lévi-Strauss, as for Anselm, the empirical-particular fact (the idea of the perfect binary order of things and the idea of the perfect Being, respectively) means the possibility of factual existence of the idea itself. Of course, Claude Lévi-Strauss's "structural metaphysics" is far more determined –if at all determined– by Descartes's metaphysical bias or even by August Compte's universalist positivism than by Anselm of Canterbury's attempts to reconcile faith and reason. Anyway, this linguistic-symbolic turn found outstanding predecessors in thinkers such as Sigmund Freud and Friedrich Nietzsche and followed a firm pace toward the 20th century until it reached the more radical hermeneutics that appears both with Jacques Derrida and Jacques Lacan.

Already in the first decades of the 20th century, empiricists like Edward Sapir established that in the process of representation language was to be considered the alpha and omega of both meaning production and reality construction. This means that language as structure is not only a condition *sine qua non* for the unfolding of discursive thinking, but it also holds sway over the mind, imposing on it its own pre-extant syntactical and

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[59] P. Maranda, *The Double Twist: From Ethnography to Morphodynamics* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001).

36

morphological structures. Consequently, always according to Sapir, it is not possible 'to think the real' if this means that the represented thing, the reference, is mirrored in mind through language as a mediating web. Accordingly, the ontological attributes of the things would be then reflected on the mind under the form of ideas. On the contrary, language is *all* insofar as it throws its semantic-morphological grid upon the mind and so it determines its logic structure and lexical possibilities.

1.15. Martin Heidegger and the Critique of Western Binarism

One of the first and strongest critiques of the binary structure of thought as present in Western ontology, epistemology, and axiology, is to be found in Martin Heidegger's "Letter on Humanism."[60] Talking about the sway of the either-or "logic" with its implicit binay structure, Heidegger states: "Should we not rather suffer a little while longer those inevitable misinterpretations to which the path of thinking in the element of Being and time has hitherto been exposed…? […]. With the asistance of logic and ratio –so ofter invoked– people come to believe that whatever is not positive is negative and thus that it seeks to degrade reason…"[61]

1.16. Aleksei F. Losev: Myth as Miracle

In 1930, Russian philosopher Aleksei F. Losev wrote a book, published many years later because of Stalinist censorship, entitled *Dialectic of Myth*. This book was so much disregarded or rather unknown by Western scholars, that its first translation into English and publication in the English-speaking world occurred in 2003. In this book, Losiev does

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[60] Martin Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," in *Martin Heidegger. Basic Writings*, ed. David Farrel Krell (New York: HarperCollinsPublishers, 1992).

[61] Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," in David Farrel Krell (ed.), ibid., 249-250.

not attempt to reach a rational "general definition" of myth as cultural and epistemological phenomenon. He aims to deconstruct all rational attempts to reach a universal and "abstract" definition of myth. Losev especially rejects the possibility of simply implementing "philological" approaches to the phenomenon of myth, as these methods would conceal the essence of the mythical experience and would produce a conceptually monopolizing and colonizing master narrative. Losiev proposes to let myth show itself in what it is as "miracle" by projecting ourselves to the experience horizon of the mythical mind.

This effort implies the transformation of our own mind structures to approach myth more as a real experience of Being-in-history than as an object of knowledge or a narrative superstructure. For Losev, the Kantian attitude that reduces the totality of experiences to subjective, essentially mental categories as epistemological matrixes *a priori* to every representation is not in position to understand the meaning of myth: "The attitude of mythical consciousness is directly opposite. Myth is the most necessary – one should say directly, transcendentally necessary – category of thought and life. There is nothing contingent, unnecessary, arbitrary, invented, or fantastic in it at all."[62] Myth is *the* authentic and maximally concrete reality. We wonder up to what extent Losev's project makes sense in the light of man's cultural determination as "being-in-the-world." Yet it is self-evident that Losev believed in what the later historicist turn will make its core standard: thinking the 'Otherness' from the other's perspective, and myth and cultural productions from their material manifestations in culture (original forms of rituals, manuscripts, etc.) instead of

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[62] Aleksei Fyodorovich Losev, *The Dialectics of Myth*, trans. Vladimir Marchenkov (New York: Routledge, 2003), 8.

through the hermeneutical authority of master narratives. This constitutes an essential step toward postcolonial thought and its related post-philological stances. Losev even anticipates Jacques Derrida in his interpretation of the rational principle of Western Modern philosophy, i.e. "logos = reason," as itself a mytheme.[63] Losev suggests that logocentric-scientific episteme that defines the essence of modern scientific and metaphysical thought is necessarily based on *mythical* premises. Yet science, metaphysics, and myth are, from the perspective of method, object of interest, and subjective self-consciousness, essentially different: "We must conclude, therefore, that, *even at the primitive stage of its development, science has nothing in common with mythology*. Thus, there is a fundamental difference between Derrida's and Losev's understanding of myth, mytheme, and metaphor. Unlike Derrida, Losev has no intention to 'deconstruct' science or metaphysics to their metaphorized mythologemes. He does not interpret science and metaphysics as a carrying a 'concealed' or rationalized mythology either. Indeed, states Losev:

> Just as the existence of a 'white man' proves nothing about 'man' and 'whiteness' being the same thing, and just as it proves, on the contrary, that 'man' (as such) has nothing in common with 'whiteness' (as such) – because otherwise 'white man' would be a tautology – likewise there is only an 'accidental' but not 'substantial' identity between mythology and science.[64]

On one side, Losev aims to show the essential unity between life, thought, and mythical consciousness. On the other, the fact that all scientific and metaphysical thought lies upon *initial intuitions* of mythical character: "And it turns out that beneath this [Descartes's] positivism there lies a particular mythology […]. Such is generally the

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[63] See chapters III and IV, ibid., 13-33.

[64] Ibid., 15.

individualist and *subjectivist mythology that lies at the foundation of modern European culture and* philosophy."[65] According to Derrida, metaphysics is "a white mythology which assembles and reflects Western culture…"[66] For Losev, speech, either 'primitive,' scientific, or metaphysical, is essentially *mythical* insofar as, through it the human person seeks to reach the ontological experience of Meaning and contemplates "the emergence of the world before the enchanted gaze of the human mind."[67] Their premises are always principles of faith, what Losev calls their "unconscious faith," and also "their own mythology."[68] Marchenkov explains Losev's attitude towards the relationship between thought, myth, and metaphor and his contrast with Derrida's post-structural theory in the clearest terms: "In constrast to Derrida, Losev has no inclination to reduce philosophy to mythology […] Losev is captivated by the picture of the continuity of cultural tradition in which, it turns out, concepts do not trample down a withered mythology, but soak it up –in which philosophy absorbs the intuitons of mythology."[69]

In the light of this approach to myth as a "miracle" in which both dimensions of Transcendence and innerworldliness become unified, the myth-making of King Arthur and El Cid as hegemonic myths can be understood as part of a general dialectal movement of historical consciousness by which a culture attempts to reach the complete convergence of

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[65] Ibid., 15-16.

[66] See Jacques Derrida, "White Mythology: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy," in *Postmodernism: Critical Concepts*, Victor E. Taylor and Charles E. Winquist, vol. I, Foundational Essays (London and New York: Routledge, 1998): 235-99, 240.

[67] See Vladimir Marchenkov, "Alekei Losev and his Theory of Myth," in *The Dialectics of Myth*, op. cit., [47].

[68] Losev, op. cit., 15.

[69] Marchenkov, op. cit., [48].

transcendental *telos* and immanent vocation. Within this framework, textual productions and political praxis in medieval Spain do not hide or just reflect like palimpsests a certain mythological past. On the contrary, they become articulated *as* moments themselves of the mythical conscionsness that permeates the totality of human appropriation of the world. The articulation of mythical consciousness is internally linked to the formation of the cultural imaginary as a communal self-interpretation. Therefore, intericonic processes are an expression of a general iconogenesis, from which more concrete iconospheres and iconosystems spring shaping the cultural iconographic map. El Cid and King Arthur are not just simple metaphors of something 'real' concealed behind their semantic materiality. They are *mythemes* insofar as they are moments of a *more general mythopoetic structure*. Also, they are culturally relevant iconemes only because they exist in a dialectical relationship with different iconosystems. This is the essence of intericonicity. El Cid and King Arthur are allegory of a national-religious project that, at the same time, exists dialectically *as* the mythical construction of the warrior-hero. But this is possible only because, in the living unity of culture, *reality* and *self-propriating speech* are essentially identical in the common matrix of mythical consciousness: a cultural "miracle."

1.17. Myth and the Genesis of Literaty Text

In his book *The Relevance of the Beautiful*, Hans Georg Gadamer points to the transition process from religious texts related to ritual praxis to what he calls "the work," in which man's aesthetical disposition and his pleasure in story-telling and discourse production takes literary form proper: "I do not claim that this transition to the work belongs to the religious cult […] I would say that we can observe such a gradual transition from ritual to the 'work' in the development of Greek literature, a transition that eventually

culminates in a work written to be read."[70] In this sense, myth has a metaphysical function

that goes beyond its literary-narrative dimensions, as interlaced with non-literary or

aesthetical functions. But, according to H. G. Gadamer, in mythical narratives there

emerges, alongside its cosmologico-metaphysical function, the essential element of the

aesthetic consciousness, i.e. the pleasure of discourse and the awareness around the

discursive material as a formal perception value independent of pragmatic utility.[71] Now,

what matters is not just the fact that the mythical discourse must articulate the deepest

ontological beliefs of a civilization guaranteeing the incorporation of the Sacred into the

profane chaos of the world. It also matters how mythical discourse is produced. Therefore,

special heed is paid to linguistico/iconic materials and the ways through which these

materials are shared and communicated in community life. In Gadamer's words: "We must

ask again how it relates to the beginning of Greek thought. Where does myth stand in

relation to poetry and truth? I would say that the primary thing about myth is the act of

telling itself."[72] Yet the ritual-religious dimension of myth cannot be either reduced to or

made dependent on the aesthetico-narrative device of mythical speech. Thus, according to

Gadamer, there is, "the dimension of the divine that is recounted in stories… the ritual and

ceremony, all forms and expressions of religious observance that are already established,

can be repeated again and again according to hallowed custom without anybody feeling it

necessary to pass judgment upon them."[73] Thus, Gadamer distinguishes in myth the double

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[70] Robert Bernasconi (ed.), *Hans-Georg Gadamer. The Relevance of the Beautiful and Other Essays* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 145.

[71] Ibid.

[72] Ibid., 144.

[73] Ibid., 145.

dimension of the religious *imago mundi* and the self-referential "work." He recognized a kind of transitional morphodynamics between both relatively autonomous moments: "Now the step from this kind of mythical and poetical tradition to 'literature' is [...] the step from the recounting of stories to the work."[74] This idea privileges a two-factor dialectic: first, the concurrence of mythico-religious and aesthetic consciousness and, second, the passing of time.

There is then an aesthetical consciousness in mythical speech and, therefore, a special relevance is bestowed to the phenomenon of the beautiful as such. Here Gadamer remarks that out of this primordial narrative stuff, literature came to exist as an independent and autonomous aesthetic-artistic creation. Ancient epics such as *Gilgamesh*, *Iliad*, *Odyssey*, *Mahabharata*, *Ramayana*, etc., fed themselves from this primordial aesthetic consciousness that, for the first time, focuses not only on the practical effectiveness of ritual and formulae but also on the autonomous beauty of their expressive formal elements. In texts as ancient as Aryan *Vedas* or the Jewish *Genesis*, there could be appreciated in a special way, following Gadamer's standpoint, the presence of what provides the foundations of literary self-consciousness: the aesthetic pleasure in storytelling as a self-referential, i.e. autonomous praxis. Gadamer's view helps to better understand the way in which myth-making processes intertwine with textual and iconographical artifacts.

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[74] Ibid.

1.18. Chronotope: Pre-Literary and Literary Meaning[75]

In his essay: "Forms of Time and the Chronotope in the Novel,"[76] M. Bakhtin provides a definition according to which the chronotope consists of the inherent interlace between spatial and temporal relationships that are artistically expressed in literature. In chronotope structure the inextricable condition of space and time (time as the fourth dimension of space) becomes articulated. The literary artistic chronotope constitutes a subspecies of chronotope in general, in which "spatial and temporal indicators are fused into one carefully thought-out, concrete whole."[77] As essentially intertwined with space, time acquires a special meaning in the literary narrative and shares with space a concreteness that is usually adscribed to the latter only. In Bakhtin's words: "Time, as it were, thickens, takes on flesh, becomes artistically visible; likewise, space becomes charged and responsive to the movements of time, plot and history. This intersection of axes and fusion of indicators characterizes the artistic chronotope. The chronotope in literature has an intrinsic generic significance...."[78] Yet the chronotope represents not just the meaningful fusion of time and space as formally constitutive categories of objective reality but also the subjective moment of man's appropriation of his environment as a pre-extant 'given.' In other words, in the chronotope discloses also man's way of being as 'temporality' and 'spatialization.' For this reason, the chronotope is essentially lnked to the

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[75] For a further exposition on this notion, see Inti A. Yanes-Fernandez, "Poetics of Dreams: The Narrative Meaning of the Dream-Chronotope in Calderón de la Barca's *La Vida es Sueño* and Geoffrey Chaucer's *The House of Fame,*" in *Mediaevistik: internationale Zeitschrift für interdisziplinäre Mittelalterforschung* 29 (2016): 207-224.

[76] Mikhail M. Bakhtin, "Forms of Time and the Chronotope in the Novel," in *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, ed. M. Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1982), 84-258.

[77] Bakhtin, ibid, 85.

[78] Ibid.

image of man in literature, and, even more, it "determines to a significant degree the image of man in literature. The image of man is always intrinsically chronotopic."[79]

The chronotope in literature is the artistic appropriation of time and space as objective attributes of reality *an sich*: "We employ," explains Bakhtin, "the Kantian evaluation of the importance of these forms in the cognitive process but differ from Kant in taking them not as 'transcendental,' but as forms of the most immediate reality."[80] The formulation of the *chronotope* idea is initially related to positive science, especially Mathematics, Physics and Biology. The term chronotope as 'space-time continuum' had been employed already in mathematics after being inaugurated as a scientific category by Einstein in his Theory of Relativity.[81] Bakhtin also points out the scientific usage of the term mentioning A. A. Ukhtomski's dissertation on the notion of chronotope in Biology.[82] It is also worth emphasizing here the importance of the chronotope in the narrative structure. According to Bakhtin, the chronotope comes to determine the genre of the literary creation and its varieties.[83] This means that the chronotope in literature has not only a diegetic, but also a morpho-semantic function. Thus, summarizing Bakhtin's concept of chronotope, Philippe Lorino distinguishes:

> Four ideas that we deem useful to analyze the organizing process: • the spatial and temporal frames of a narrative are closely integrated and make up one unique 'spatial-temporal' frame (chronotope), • the spatial/temporal frame of a narrative plays a key role in the production of meaning and sense, • the chronotope of the narrative is closely linked with certain value systems, classes of identity

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[79] Ibid.

[80] Ibid.

[81] Ibid., 84.

[82] Ibid.

[83] Ibid., 85.

(professional / organizational / cultural identities) and generic characters, • the chronotope of the narrative relates its interpretation by a reader, a spectator, or a researcher with the historic, social and cultural setting in which it is interpreted.[84]

1.19. Mythopoeia, Shapeshifting, and Hegemonic Myths

El Cid and King Arthur are great shape-shifters. Aiming to give an account of the extreme malleability of the Arthur-mytheme, Inga Bryden notes that, "Arthur is protean."[85] Interestingly enough, the same mythopoetic plasticity has failed to be recognized in El Cid's case. One of the goals we envisage in the present work is precisely to fill this gap that still exists in Cidian scholarship. Both El Cid and King Arthur undergo, as hegemonic myths, successive changes and reworkings but in different ways.

1.20. Border Cultures and Post-Philology

The notions of border culture and post-philology occupy a central place in our research. In this area, we certainly benefit the most from Michelle Warren's studies on cross-cultural and border cultural processes. Doubtlessly, Warren's post-philology appears as a necessary theoretical tool intended to criticize and de-construct hegemonic figures of power underlying the traditional modern meta-narratives that form the hermeneutical –and therefore ontological– taxonomy of hegemonic cultures. Warren seeks to construct a post-philological corpus –i.e. a philosophy compatible with the most important principles of post-colonial and post-modern epistemes– as the reunion in philology of the aesthetic post-modern critical attitude against a meta-narrative originality and sway that privileged cultural hegemonic centers over made-to-be peripheries.

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[84] See Yanes-Fernandez, op. cit., 212. See also Philippe Lorino, "The Bakhtinian theory of chronotope (spatial-temporal frame) applied to the organizing process," in *Second International Symposium on Process Organization Studies - – General Track*, accessed 04/26/2016, http://www.alba.edu.gr/sites/pros/Papers/PROS-022.pdf.

[85] Inga Bryden, op. cit., 6.

46

The ethico-ontological decenteredness and the deconstruction of the absolute

preeminence of master narratives appear as distinguishing features of this paradigm shift.

In the frame of literary and hermeneutic studies generally, a systematic critique of

traditional aesthetico-epistemological taxonomies is produced. The notion of the 'canon' is

regarded an authoritative ideological construction intended to generalize and levy a

universal figure of expertise which dictates the hermeneutic norm through the imposition

of master-narratives and geopolitico-hegemonic categories.[86] The postcolonial sensitivity

towards political orders and its figures of domination pursues the breakdown of these

'colonial' epistemological establishments by developing a new criticism of textual and

iconological artifacts. Postphilology is therefore just another creature in the already profuse

progeny engendered and devoured by the Kronos called postmodern theory.

This critical mechanism appears as a *new* form of philology harboring the

modernist interest in hermeneutics without producing –in intent as least– master narratives.

It also combines the new criticism's obsession for original sources prior to its being

reshaped and made-to-fit-in via hermeneutical *propriation*, with the understanding of the

contextual relevance of editions, critical studies and hermeneutics.[87] All of it is but a new

positioning of modernist philology through self-reflexive critique and, as far as this seems

to be a fairer way of doing philology and therefore a more authoritative and 'truthful' way

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[86] So, original artifacts, hermeneutics, copies, all would have something to say according to the conditions of their production and the epistemological interest/bias of the reader.

[87] We use in the present work the notion of propiation following Martin Heidegger. In a more general context, we think propiation also as a process related to the historical acquisition of cultural self-consciousnes and therefore of defining an identity. For the notions of *propiate* and *propriation*, see M. Heidegger's notion of 'sich ereignen': "On the basis of owning, these things show themselves, each on its own terms, and linger, each in its own manner. Let us call the owning that conducts things in this way-the owning that bestirs thye saying, the owning that points in any saying's showing-the propriating." Heidegger, "The Way to Language," op. cit., 414ff.

to be, it is also about philology's still unavoidably being a modern *Wissenschaft* in its foundations: the essential difference being its already well-known new cultural axiom that, even still producing master narratives, Philology has to be very polite and make sure of letting others do the same. Certainly, it has to be also clever enough to find new ways of impositions, just subtler and less visible ones to post-modern and post-colonial eyes.

Essentially, characteristics of the postcolonial and postmodern turn would be the suspicion toward monocultural metanarrative, and the idea of a leading culture embedded into a metaphysics of progress depending on a metaphysics of time. This modern notion of time asserts the idea of an essential (that is immanent) content that is to be unfolded and realized in history. Therefore, History is produced through a teleological process oriented to a transcendental *telos*. Against a philology that tried to understand national literatures as a result of the national spirit of a people and henceforth part of its historical-cultural essence,[88] a theoretical discourse emerges oriented toward the critique of the notion of a centralized *logos*, of national metanarratives, and of the superiority of some cultures over others. This epistemological stance can be called, following Warren, post-philology.

In our approach to El Cid and King Arthur as hegemonic myths, we partly develop a philological analysis of the construction of hegemonic mythemes and the textuality-iconicity linked to it. This analysis leads us to a disruption of the internal coherence of such symbolic constructions on which the legitimacy of hegemonic hierarchies is based. In doing so, we show the process of meaning production intended to consecrate both heroes

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[88] Regarding the character of Spanish literature Hume claims that there are certain qualities that belong to the essence of that literaty tradition: "But though languages might have chanced, masters come and go, and cultures from other lands introduce new features into Spanish literature […] the native spontaneous character of Spanish literature, derived from the sturdy root-qualities which which have distinguished it from all others." See Martin Hume, *Influence of Spanish Narrative on English Literature* (London: Eveleigh Nash, 1905), 4.

as national, ideology-legitimizing icons in the context of global religious-geopolitical projects. These projects can be summarized as the Christianization of Britain and Spain and the further formation of an ethno-political self-consciousness, along with its power devices and institutions, determined by this peculiar cultural teleology called identity.

1.21. Heroes and Borders: Liminal Narratives

In our approach to intericonic crossroads between King Arthur, El Cid, and Byzantine narratives, the notion of 'border' comes to the analytical foreground. King Arthur, El Cid, Digenis Akritas, Belisarius, and the literary production linked to them are border figures and border artifacts. In their own ways, they have come to exist under cross-cultural circumstances, and their narratives' development and variations have been largely determined by a plurilingualism proper to border cultural formations. Thus, the border-chronotope with its intrinsic heteroglossia, polymorphism, and instability becomes at the same time a space of transcultural processes leading to new cultural synthesis. According to Inga Bryden, King Arthur: "[…] inhabits the realm where the borders of national, cultural and mythological identities overlap."[89] In her book *History on the Edge*, Michelle Warren analyzes the process of construction of English history as a post-colonial account that manages to integrate Welsh, Danish, and Saxon colonized spaced into a self-coherent identitary narrative by interpreting those socio-cultural formations as ancestry and predecessors of English imperial self-consciousness. This is an instance of border construction. The assimilation of these space-narratives into English history means naturally passing from a colonial stage of domination where war and hegemonic imposition are necessary devices of coexistence, to a stage of integration where talking

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[89] Inga Bryden, *Reinventing King Arthur…*, op. cit., 1.

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about colonial hegemony becomes senseless and even improper. Could it be said say that today's Welsh or Scotish are *sensu stricto* colonized cultures? Beyond extreme nationalistic and ethno-centrist ideologies, such a position would be very difficult to sustain while honoring historical verisimilitude. Warren talks about a process of "Englishing" of Welsh, Danish, and Saxon heritages because of cross-culturing in a border space: Severn River, near Gloucester and Worcester. An especially important chapter of her aforementioned book is entitled: "Here to Engelande. Settling into the English Present." Warren sees in post-philology the conflation of post-modern critique to aesthetic and political centralism or cultural-axiological monolingualism and of postcolonial critique to the hegemonic ascendency of one culture over another which is this way deprived of self-determination capacity, political freedom, and autonomous identity. Here the so-called 'deconstruction' as postmodern methodology plays an essential role in disentangling the grip of binary structures –good vs. bad, primary vs. secondary, lord vs. bondsman, center vs. periphery, etc.– that generally shape a specific colonial world hierarchy; particularly of the bond between colonizer and colonized. For his part, Alberto Montaner Frutos approaches the figure of El Cid as a border hero, highlighting the semantic-narrative significance of his borderly condition for his epic profile and the *sujet*'s development. Montaner Frutos underscores also the intrinsic mobility of the border as a geopoetical *propriation* of a geopolitical spaciality. In this sense, epic work and geopolitical borders are mutually determined. For this reason, geopolitical and geopoetical aspects are essentially inextricable:

> La frontera entre los reinos cristianos peninsulares y los territorios andalusíes en los siglos XI y XII no era precisamente una entidad estable […]. Tomada como territorio cartografiable, el área de la frontera se configura en el Cantar como el espacio que recorren el Cid y sus hombres, movimiento que articula el enlace o

ensartado de los diversos episodios que conforman la primera trama del poema
[…]. Tomada como conjunto de paisajes pintables o fotografiables, la frontera se
articula, sin llegar a disgregarse, en los distintos puntos concretos que el
Campeador recorre y, en especial, aquellos en los que se asienta y convierte en su
residencia temporal […]. Ambos se conjugan merced a una situación muy concreta:
el control del espacio se ejerce desde puntos privilegiados, que son justamente
aquellos en los que el Cid y los suyos posan. De este modo, se hacen inseparables
geopolítica y geopoética.[90]

At this point, it is crucial to underscore the dialectical relationship between what

Anthony P. Esposito calls the "cultural nation,"[91] language and textual production, and the

formation of the well-bordered national states (whose apex is to be found in the 18th–19th

centuries) when it comes to explaining the hegemonic and political functionality of visual

and linguistic artifacts. If it is undeniable that the nation state can legitimate certain

cultural artifacts as subproducts of ideological constructions and political agendas –i.e. a

certain cinema or literature may support and drive forward specific authors or works to the

detriment of others–, it is also true that the centralized nation state as a geo-political project

needs to find self-legitimation both in certain already-extant cultural iconic-literary

artifacts as well as in imaginary ideosystems that constitute the reservoir of cultural

memory for a certain social group. This is part of the construction of its own legitimacy as

a hegemonic structure. In the cultural and geo-political context of self-legitimation, El Cid

and King Arthur appear as great shape shifters. They undergo, as hegemonic myths,

successive transformations but in different ways. El Cid's mythopoiesis goes from his

being a generic cultural archetype (*Historia Roderici*) to becoming a concrete ethnic

warrior / hero in a way directly proportional to the expansion of the *gesta de Reconquista*

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[90] Alberto Montaner Frutos, "Un canto de frontera (geopolítica y geopoética del *Cantar de Mio Cid*)," *Ínsula* 731 (2007): 8-11, 8.

[91] Anthony P. Espósito, "Bilingualism, Philology and the Cultural Nation: The Medieval Monolingual Imaginary," *Catalan Review* 9 (1995): 125-39.

and the growth of the Christian aristocracy as a strongly centralized power in Spain. El Cid travelled an intericonic path from autonomous prototype of chivalry to paradigm of vassal of the *Imperator totius Hispaniae*, Alfonso VI (*PMC*).

King Arthur, from a pagan hero-warrior (*The Ymddiddan Arthur a'r Eryr* ['Dialogue of Arthur and the Eagle']), a leader of battles (Nennius's *dux bellorum*), and a paradigm of folk-hero and chieftain of a band of mythical/magical warriors and gods (*Culhwch ac Olwen*, *Pa gur yv y porthaur?* ['What man is the gatekeeper/porter?' also known as *Ymddiddan Arthur a Glewlwyd Gafaelfawr*, 'The Dialogue of Arthur and Glewlwyd Gafaelfawr']), morphed into a prototype of messianic King (Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*, Wace's *Roman de Brut*, Layamon's *Brut*,). His mythopoeia can be interpreted as an intericonic construction based on Judeo-Christian and Roman-Welsh narratives, functionally linked to the Christianization of a transcultural Britain, the de-paganization of the already partly christianized Wales, and the formation of a unified –or at least politico-culturally integrated– identity. King Arthur is primarily shaped after the figure of Christ as absolute Archetype, and his myth-making and shape-shifting respond to the logic of Christianization of a multicultural society and the genesis of nation-identitary self-consciousness. The crystallization of this unity would have been impossible without the notion of a God-anointed royalty with divine privileges, among which were the pontifical bridging of the nation with its transcendental *telos*, and the preserving of this unity symbolized in the Monarch figure. The concrete incarnation of this idea was the political corpus gathered together by a divine origin and a sacred mission under the cultural/eschatological calling of Christianity and the Church as its visible manifestations. King Arthur as hegemonic myth was an iconic matrix in the formation of

the new 'earth-heaven/*saeculum-Deus*' binding Monarch. This becomes clear in the fact

that, after Henry VIII, the Monarch came to be the absolute Head of both the political body

and the Church. Additionally, one of the most essential features defining the narrative

ethos and the ideo-thematic specificity of textual and iconographic exchanges between

Byzantine epic tradition and Western epic is the fact that they all belong to the literary

subgenre of "cantos de frontrera," i.e. border epics. This is the first element pointed out by

Chilean scholar Castillo Didier in his comparative study on El Cid and Diyenís Akritas:

> Testimonio de los hechos característicos de la frontera y del contacto, lucha y
> convivenvia entre los dos pueblos de credos distintos, hay tanto en la épica
> hispánica como en la poesía heroica griega medieval. Recordemos que el Cid tiene
> un amigo fiel, a toda prueba, en el moro Abengalvón […] Y en el campo fronterizo
> oriental, bizantino, Diyenís, él mismo es mestizo, hijo de cristiana y de un emir
> árabe; y que el hijo del héroe Amurís se casará con la hija del emir que había
> apresado a su padre, y así se sellará la reconciliación y la paz."[92]

It must be added here that the phenomythical unity of these figures is to be found in

the coherent totality of their multiple versions or variations within the complex scheme of

mythological time, which, according to Lévi-Strauss, is reversible and non-reversible,

synchronic and diachronic.[93] This leads to what Lévi-Strauss calls "the very core of our

argument,"[94] which is summarized by him as follows: "The true constituent units of a myth

are not the isolated relations but *bundles of such relations*, and it is only as bundles that

these relations can be put to use and combined so as to produce a meaning. Relations

pertaining to the same [mythemes] bundle may appear diachronically at remote intervals

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[92] Miguel Castillo Didier, "El Cid y Diyenís: ¿héroes de novela o de epopeya?" en *Byzantion Nea Hellás*, 28, 2009, accessed 03/31/2017, http://www.scielo.cl/pdf/byzantion/n28/art08.pdf.

[93] Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1963), 211.

[94] Ibid.

[…]."[95] Therefore, we describe mytheme bundles diachronically and synchronically ascribed to El Cid's and King Arthur's myths throughout their textual and iconic shape-shifting. For instance, only when different texts from the literary corpus on El Cid are put together in a synchonical relationship, can the meaning of the variations observed in the relations between El Cid and the kings be understood. Also, only then we can be able to observe the functional role that El Cid plays as hegemonic myth in the context of the Reconquest, Christinization of Iberia, and universalization of Castilian monarchy. Similarly, only by understanding the relations of King Arthur's several mythical variations in a reversible and synchronical way, can we recognize the essential unity of their mytheme bundles –the Celtic local hero and universal Messiah; the pre-Plantagenet Christified King; the Post-Plantagenet Kind-Prophet– so as to understand their meaning in connection with the Cristianization of Britain, the preeminence of the English monarchy, and the formation of a unified multi-cultural identity. Without losing sight of the differences and variants, we identify the essential commonalities that allow us to consider them (to put it in musical terms) *mythical unified themes/motifs with several variations*. So, by following Lévi-Strauss's principle that a myth "is always made up of all its variants,"[96] the seeming contradictions of recognizing the unity of mythopoetic "bundles" *through a relatively extended period of historical time* against the background of common and coherent variations can be sorted out. The diachronicity of the variations of these myths is not necessarily at odds with the persistence of a leading theme that as a sort of *cantus firmus* bestows unity upon the myth as a whole and which appear in different parallel

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[95] Ibid.

[96] Ibid., 212.

variations. The mythical unit will preserve self-coherence "as long as it is felt as such" in the actual setting of cultural experience.

1.22. Toward the Construction of an English Identity in Britain

Aditionally, M. Warren points to several strategies utilized by Layamon of Worcester and Robert of Gloucester in their construction of an English identity via assimilation of older histories and traditions. She mentions the use of vernacular English to address their texts to an English not-so-educated audience that might have found it a bit uncanny reading the book in French or Latin –notwithstanding this it is also very probable that Layamon and Robert would have made use anyway of vernacular English as ideological gesture. Warren also refers to the selection of the sources summoned to write their account, such as the assimilation of Welsh traditions and mythemes with strong potential for becoming universal cultural prototypes in the collective imaginary, p.g. Arthur's mythical material. Yet perhaps even more important here is what is omitted and disposed of as non-essential. Warren mentions the way in which so-called "Otho redactor" intervenes and modulates Layamon's *History* by mostly diminishing Rome's role in Insular history.[97] This omission or, at least, critical reduction of influence means necessarily to boost the role played by Welsh, Danish, and Saxon elements in the formation of the English-British identity. This connection between discourses and peripheral accounts with master narratives to produce a monolingual and diversity-blind national history is an essential part of the process of intericonicity.

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[97] Warren, "*Here to Englelonde*: Settling into the English Present," op. cit., 84.

Michelle Warren uses the phrase "perhaps surprisingly"[98] noting that the Britons (Welsh, Roman-Welsh) "provided the historical foundations of post-colonial English imaginations."[99] We see two things here. First, the fact that Warren finds this "perhaps surprising" seems to indicate, up to a certain point, that the author still fails to understand Layamon's and Robert's radical intentionality in building up an all-embracing, universal principle of geo-political phenomenology. A principle intended to create, if not a political nation in the sense of a 'United Kingdom,' at least a religiously integrated multi-ethnic nation under the aegis of the Cross (Christian Church) and the Sword (Christian Monarchy). All these textual, intertextual, transtextual, iconic, and intericonic modulations, interventions and constructions essentially respond to the ultimate goal of bestowing a religious-political unity under English leadership onto cross-cultural Britain. The same process is observed in the myth-making and successive shape-shifting of El Cid since the blossoming of a Christian national consciousness in the Iberian Peninsula under the Asturian kingdom until the conquest of Valencia and the weakening of the Almoravid power in Levante. Around these years, two military events occurred that turned the balance of the war in favor of the Christian armies: the taking of Toledo by Alfonso VI (1085), and the proclamation of the First Crusade by pope Urban II (1096), just a year after the seizure of Valencia by El Cid.

The second element worth underscoring in Warren's phrase is the use of the term "imaginations." The word 'imaginations' comes from *image*, or *icon*. These imaginations form the collective imaginary of a culture and are mirrored with greater or lesser variations

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[98] Ibid., 83.

[99] Warren, ibid.

in individuals' imaginary as well. Although these imaginations are undoubtedly interlaced with discursive structures, the first nevertheless remain different from the latter because of their semantico-morphological nature. This justifies our use of intericonicity as a process of production of cultural imaginaries via overlapping and assimilating different imaginations that produce new imaginations functionally linked to the formation and self-legitimation of hegemonic structures.

Concerning the Cidian matter, Warren's notion of postphilology appears to be a useful theoretical tool at hand. It helps to disentangle the hegemonic discourse based on the Benedictine ideology of the *iustum bellum*. Yet the intrinsic merit of a more 'traditional' philology cannot be denied. Our interest in following semantic clues, and vivisecting several key words and names –such like Diyenis, Akritas, Cid, etc.– in order to understand their ideological and epistemological substratum cannot be concealed. The fair critique of a suspiciously universalist and monolingual master narrative, as present in the *modus operandi* of traditional philological studies, cannot mean the demerit of all its valuable theoretical resources. We must throw away the dirty water while keeping the baby inside the bathtub.

1.23. Arthurian, Cidian, and Bizantine Matters

In general, relations between Byzantium, Spain, and Britain –and specifically the impact of Byzantium upon the formation of Spanish and English literature– constitute a barely explored field.[100] Among the studies devoted to the presence of Byzantine culture in Spain and Western Europe generally and its multilayered cultural legacy, stands out Francisco J. Precedo Velo's opus *La España bizantina*. Precedo Velo managed to

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[100] Modern studies are decisively contributing to change this state of facts.

successfully integrate the complex dynamic of historical, artistic-cultural, and ideolectal levels of relations between Visigoths and Byzantium. A especial emphasis is laid on the Byzantine root of most of Visigothic and post-Visigothic aesthetic, legal, and religious heritage in Spain, largely established "cuando los visigodos se ponen en contacto con Bizancio en su primera aproximación a las tierras del Danubio y del Ponto, donde adoptan el arrianismo en su forma constantinopolitana…."[101] Not only the Byzantine heritage of Visigoths and Ostrogoths, but also the definite fall of the Western Roman Empire opens a channel for Byzantium's influence upon 'Far-West' cultures such as the Merovingian, Carolingian, British, and Hispanic ones. As Presedo Velo points out, when in 476 Arrian king Odoacer dethroned Romulus Agustulus all imperial prerogatives are held by Byzantium: "A él [the Eastern Roman Empire] han de dirigirse todos los embajadores y él ha de intervenir en todas las contiendas en que se ventilen intereses imperiales."[102] Indeed, even though the power in the Old Rome was in his hands, Odoacer understood himself as subdued to the Emperor in Constantinople. In this sense, the extent of Byzatium's impact and role in the formation of British / English and Spanish cultures cannot be overemphasized.

In the present work, a special heed is paid to the role of Byzantine notions of *Ἁγία Πόλις* and *Στρατιωτικοί Ἅγιοι*[103] in the intentional shaping of narratives of King Arthur and Rodericus Didaci as *hegemonic myths*. King Arthur's and El Cid's myth-making is partly shaped after Byzantine prototypes provided by Christian hero / warrior / saints, and

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[101] Francisco J. Presedo Velo, "Conclusiones" 21, *La España bizantina*, ed. Aurelio Padilla Monge (Sevilla: Universidad de Sevilla. Secretariado de Pubicaciones, 2003), 167.

[102] Ibid., 26.

[103] Another important reference regarding to Byzantine politico-eschatological imaginary is Gilbert Dragon, *Constantinople imaginaire. Études sur le recueil des Patria* (Paris: Puf, 1984).

becomes linked to the processes of Christianization, socio-political integration, and Reconquest in Britain and Spain. The sacred Camelot and the politico-religious alliance of Absolute Monarchy and Catholic Church respond to Byzantium's Christological/eschatological theology and its politico-metaphysical ideal of *Ἁγία Πόλις* and Patriarch/Emperor dialectics. We underscore the impact of Byzantine 'warrior/saint' textuality and iconicity upon Benedictine abbot Aelfric of Eynsham's hagiographical works. We focus on Byzantine prototypes of military saints that represent the new ideal of the Christian hero / warrior exported from Byzantium to the whole Roman empire. Already in the end of the 4th and the beginning of the 5th century, the cultural iconotypia of military saints had been absorbed and embedded into the Christian imaginary, to the point that Christ Himself was represented wearing a military (imperial) outfit in one of the mosaics of the Archbishopric chapel (Cappella Arcivescovile) located in the second floor of the Episcopal See in Ravenna, Italy. In this unusual representation, Christ appears "με στραιωτική ενδυμασία, το σταυρό στο ένα χέρι και ανοικτό ευαγγέλιο στο άλλο να πατά επάνω σε ένα λιοντάρι και ένα φίδι ως ο αδιαμφισβήτητος νικητής του κακού."[104] Jesus bears the Cross upon His shoulders like a sword and looks ready for battle faithful to His own assertion –taken in a rather literal sense…– that: "Μὴ νομίσητε ὅτι ἦλθον βαλεῖν εἰρήνην ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν· οὐκ ἦλθον βαλεῖν εἰρήνην ἀλλὰ μάχαιραν."[105] Henceforth, the Cross and the sword come to represent two different dimensions of the same eschatological

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[104] Μαρία Καζαμία (Maria Kazamia), "Μνημειακή ζωγραφική: Χριστιανική γραμματεία, τέχνη, λατρεία στην πρώτη χιλιετία," in *Ιστορία της Ορθοδοξίας*, συλλογικό έργο, edited by Ιωάννης Πέτρου, Χρήστος Αραμπατζής , and Φώτιος Ιωαννίδης, τόμος 3 (Αθήνα: Εκδόσεις Road, 2009), 500: "[Christ appears] with a military outfit, the cross in one hand and the open gospel in the other, stepping on a lion and a snake as the undisputed victor of evil." (The translation from Modern Greek into English is my own).

[105] "Do not think that I came to send peace upon earth: I came not to send peace but the sword," Matthew 10:34. (Douay-Rheims Version).

combat: the spiritual and the secular, respectively. On this basis, the Church will create a new social doctrine by ultimately interpreting violence as a necessary resource to defend and preserve Christendom against heathens, heretics, and –just two centuries later– Muslims. Shortly after the reconquest of Italy by emperor Justinian with Belisarius as leader of the Byzantine armies (540 AD), the figure of military martyr Demetrius was added to the mosaic composition of the procession of martyrs at the center aisle of the basilique of St. Apollinare Nuovo, in Ravenna. From this city irradiates the legitimacy of the *iustum bellum* over the whole Christendom, especially when, on archbishop Maximian, Ravenna was elevated to the archbishopric dignity. Furthermore, in 568 Ravenna became *ἕδρα ἐξαρχάτου* (edra exarchatou) of the Empire, i.e. a military-administrative district (or headquarter) of Constantinople.[106] Definitely, the synthesis between warrior and saint (and hence further of the allegorical meaning of the secular war as a *πνευματικὸς ἀγώνας* [a "spiritual fight"]), along with the notion of the *iustum bellum*, acquires solid theological foundations and soteriologico-eschatological meaning in the person of Jesus Christ as the perfect hypostasis of the secular and spiritual warrior (Figure 2).

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[106] Μαρία Καζαμία (Maria Kazamia), 'Μνημειακή ζωγραφική,' ibid., 501-502.

Figure 2: Christ Treading the Beasts, Chapel of St. Andrew, Ravenna. Photo by J. L. Bernardes Ribeiro.

Following in part Charles Williams's theological narrative, which interprets Byzantine Empire and its echoes in King Arthur's Camelot "as a metaphor for the union of geography, physiology and metaphysics," and the notion of incarnation as "the keystone of […] King Arthur and the quest of the Holy Grail,"[107] the present work points out intericonic 'Byzantium-Britain'/'Byzantium-Spain' connections that make that pre-existing figures which are representative of ideal notions and identitary constructs –for instance, the Christian warrior saint as a new cultural ideologeme and the *iustum bellum* ideology– emerge in the collective imaginary incarnated in Rodericus Didaci's and King Arthur's mythemes. Williams links Byzantium and mythical Camelot with the human body but the latter symbolizing "all creation and, more specifically, the 'true physical body,' 'proper

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[107] See Jan Curtis, "Byzantium and the Matter of Britain: The Narrative Framework of Charles Williams's Later Arthurian Poems," *Quondam et Futurus* 2, 1 (Spring 1992): 28-54, 29-30.
 accessed 23-06-2017 17:58 UTC, http://www.jstor.org/stable/27870173.

social order,' and, perhaps more importantly, 'unfallen man.'"[108] Therefore, the ideal

Byzantium is the incarnation of the heavenly order which is also revealed in the body of

Christ as the in-history restoration of fallen man's body. Christ's body then as incarnation

of the Logos of God becomes a living epigram of 'heaven' as allegory of Transcendence.

In parallel, Camelot, the "floure of chevalry," the "noble knyghts of mery Inglonde," and

the "hyghe order of knyghthode" becomes the allegorical incarnation "of which the body is

a living epigram."[109] In this sense, the mythemes of King Arthur and El Cid can be seen as

allegorical epigrams of English and Castilian utopias incarnated in the cultural projects of

full Christianization/'Englishing' and Christianization/'Castilianization' of Britain and

Spain, respectively (Figure 3).
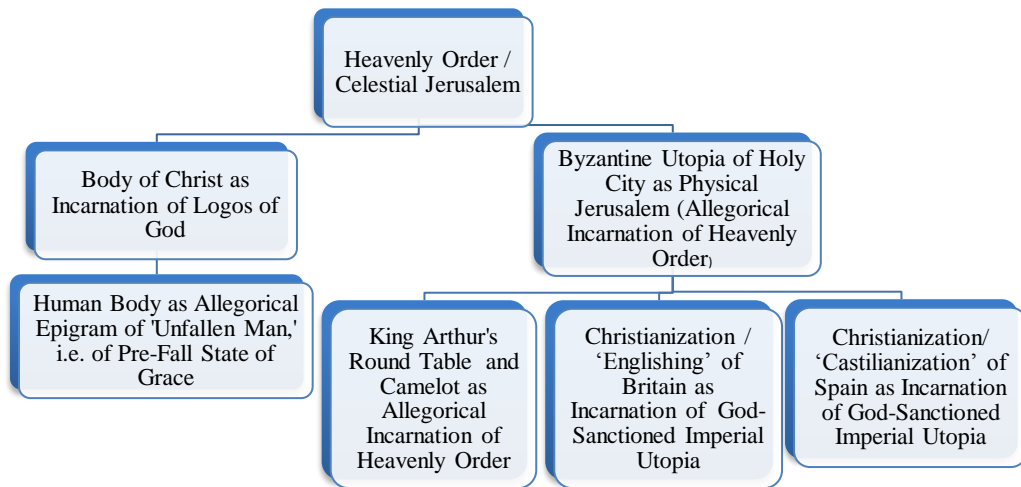
Figure 3: Mythemes of King Arthur and El Cid as Allegorical Epigrams.

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[108] Ibid., 29.

[109] Ibid., 30.

The intericonic relations established between Christian theological principles and their projection on cultural projects, as shown in the previous infographic, and the figures of El Cid and King Arthur contribute to –and attempt to guarantee– the massive acquiescence in institutional legitimacies –English and Castilian Monarchies–, and practical policies –Englishing of Britain, Castilianization of Iberian Peninsula, Reconquest. Consequently, the evoked image (the saint-warrior) acquires an importance as crucial as the factual reference (Arthur or Rodericus) in the context of these socio-political processes. The 'concealed' iconological referentiality becomes as meaningful as the *référentialité indicielle* (Roland Barthes). The historical facts of St. Benedict's and St. John Cassian's influence on Celtic monastic spirituality in Britain and Ireland, the Visigothic migration westwards from Franco-Germanic territories until the Iberian Peninsula –both men held strong ties with the Eastern Empire, although in different ways–, the Byzantine Spania with cities such as Carthagena and Malaga until the 6th century, along with the Byzantine-Gothic wars, plus the fact that Aelfric of Eynsham included *De Sancto Georgio* and *De xl. militibus* in his *Homilies* –probably following either St. Basil's or Eusebius of Caesarea's accounts of the facts–, support the idea of the relevant impact of Byzantine religious textuality and iconicity upon epic and chronicle productions and, therefore, of their shaping both Arthurian and Cidian narratives.

1.24. Intericonic Complexity

There are multifocal, more complex and interactive forms of intericonicity such as the combination of persons, ideas –political projects [Reconquest, ethnic social unification], cultural ideals [Christianization of Spain and Britain, and ethnic political synthesis / homogenization], and mythical constructions [*Rex quod erat et erit, princeps*

inuictissimus, etc.]– and processes to form a hegemonic icon that is synchronically a synthesis and a disjunction. Parallel to El Cid's mythopoiesis, there was a figure of higher authority that had been called already to fill the cultural loophole from the ecclesiastical perpective: St. James the Apostol, the same 'Santiago' that found his see in Compostela (the third "New Rome") and was made a warrior-saint protector of Spain.[110] The likelihood was still open for Rodericus, in theory at least, of becoming a king in a similar way to King Arthur's royal investiture according to Celtic-Welsh and later Christian iconotypal models.

1.25. Lord/Bondsman Dialectic.

During his practical and symbolic exchanges with Alfonso VI, El Cid morphs into a form of "Unhappy Conciousness." He experiences the fate of being a loyal knight-vassal without his lord. Yet since his lord is now an essential moment of his knight-vassal self-consciousness, El Cid as "Unhappy Consciousness" constanly longs for the restitution of his vassalage to the king.[111] In this sense, El Cid, during the *PMC* as never before and never later, is the living encarnation of the nostalgic knight: his life is mostly the painful way back to his "señor natural" as his ontological completion.[112] Once El Cid's condition of bondage as knightly vassalage to the kings of Castile is firmly established, it would not

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[110] William Melczer, *The Pilgrim's Guide to Santiago de Compostela* (New York: Italica Press, 1993), 7-28.

[111] We follow here Hegel's terminology referring to the "Herr-Knecht-Dialektik," in Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, "Werke in zwanzig Bänden, herausgegeben von Eva Moldenhauer und Karl Markus Michel," (Frankfurt/M: Suhrkamp Taschenbuch, 1969), 165ff. In the present work, following A. V. Miller's translation, we use the nomenclature of "lord and bondsman." See *Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel. Phenomenology of Spirit. 1817. Translated [from the 5th ed., 1952] by AV Miller with analysis of the text and foreword by JN Findlay* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 111ff. Also, the expression "Herr-Knecht-Konfrontation" is used as referring to a more confrontational moment in this peculiar relationship. See Dieter Wandschneider, "Der skeptizistische Widerspruch als Paradigma psychischen Verstricktseins. Zu Hegels Analyse des 'unglücklichen Bewusstseins,'" in ZPPM *Zeitschrift für Psychotraumatologie, Psychotherapiewissenschaft. Psychologische Medizin* 9 (2011): 87-97, 88, accessed 11/22/2016, http://www.philosophie.rwth-aachen.de/global/show_document.asp?id=aaaaaaaaaabvvvx.

[112] The term *νοσταλγία* (*nostalgia*) literally stands for 'pain for the journey of return,' consists of two words: *νόστος* (*nostos*, journay of return) and *αλγος* (*algos*, pain).

be broken again despite the efforts of the Benedictine monks of San Pedro de Cardeña to turn the hero into a Christian warrior / saint after prototypes such as Saint George, Saint Constantine, Saint Acacius of Byzantium, etc. F. Bautista states that El Cid would take advantage of this new interpretation of the lord / bondsman ties as a natural interplay to use his vassalage to the king as a device of social ascent. In his own words: "El Cid promueve esta idea y se pliega a ella ejemplarmente, lo que le permite recuperar su lugar en la corte y evita que sea meramente un príncipe independiente."[113] We cannot know what the 'real Cid' did proper. Yet we do know the way in which El Cid as myth-made hegemonic icon undergoes his prototypoferesis and becomes a paradigm of good vassal in the king (lord)/bondsman (knight) device. This process we study in chapter II. The distinction of royal dignity between Arthur and El Cid must always be borne in mind. The first was a king *ab origine*; the second, an *infanzón* (baronet) who could only aspire to become a king *a regimine*. This condition was almost materialized in his *de facto* reign of Valencia. But, notwithstanding his preeminent status there, El Cid was either just a knight, i.e. a "vasallo" of his lord, or a *princeps* by the king's *gratia*.

1.26. Contents of Sections: Section 2

Section 2 is devoted to the study of the myth-making process of El Cid. From being a cultural prototype (*HR*), El Cid morphs into a concrete ethnic hero-warrior in a way directly proportional to the expansion of the *gesta de Reconquista* and the growth of the Christian aristocracy as a strongly centralized power in Spain. A realistic and imitable, i.e. 'this-worldly' paradigm of hero incarnated an ethno-religious synthesis to legitimize the politico-cultural establishment emerging in the Iberian Peninsula: The Christian Kingdom

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[113] F. Bautista, "'Como a señor natural': interpretaciones políticas del *Cantar de Mio Cid*," *Olivar* 10 (2007): 173-184.

of Spain. El Cid travelled a long journey from autonomous prototype of chivalry (*HR*, *CC*,

PA) to paradigm of vassal of the Imperator totius Hispaniae, Alfonso VI (*PMC*). We

follow the formation of the iconeme of El Cid as a prototype –epic hero-warrior and

princeps militum, from here to the stage of paradigmatic good knight-vassal, and again

carried forward to an epigonal and contradictory restoration of his earlier prototype status

in the Benedictine tradition–, whose glory and dignity are called to inform not only the

spirit of the Reconquest[114] but also of Christian aristocracy in a moment of military

expansion and nation-identitary construction.

Also, in chapter II special attention is paid to textual and iconotypal paralellisms

between Diyenis Akritas and El Cid in the context of akritic studies.[115] There is a

conspicuous corpus of comparative approaches centered on manuscript E, kept at the El

Escorial, in Madrid, of the Diyenis Akritas and *PMC* following mostly thematic,

morphological, and lexical criteria. Recognizing the hagiographical element present in

Diyenis Akritas as an ethnological hero and tracing the enhanced iconotypal impact of the

Diyenis even in historical figures, we devote an important section to a comparative

approach between Belisarius, the famous of Emperor Justinian's generals, and El Cid.

While there are some significant differences between both textual and iconotypal traditions

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[114] Following Gonzálo Martínez Díez, it is clear that the Reconquest reached its first great momentum with Fernando I King of León, still count of Castile. Therefore, in a first moment, the processes of Castilianization and of Christianization (Reconquest) of all Iberia were not convergent. Later, following Sancho II's ascent to the throne as King of Castile and the elevation of Castile to the dignity of kingdom, there is no essential difference between Castilianization and Christianization. See Gonzálo Martínez Díez, *El Condado de Castilla (711-1038): la historia frente a la leyenda*, 2 vols., vol. II (Valladolid: Marcial Pons Historia, 2005), 713, and, as a general reference, Gonzálo Martínez Díez, *Sancho III el Mayor Rey de Pamplona, Rex Ibericus* (Madrid: Marcial Pons Historia), 2007.

[115] See Marina Díaz Bourgeal and Francisco López-Santos Kornberger, "El *Cantar de Mío Cid* y el *Diyenís Akritas* (manuscrito de El Escorial). Un estudio comparativo desde el legado clásico," in *Estudios medievales Hispánicos* 5 (2016): 83-107; Miguel Castillo Didier, "El Cid y Diyenís: ¿Héroes de novela o de epopeya?," in *Byzantion Nea Hellás* [online] 28 (2009), accessed 04/21/2017:<http://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=363847673007> ISSN 0716-2138.

–especially concerning the contrasting endings of their life trajectory–, the similarities observed are important enough to justify, and even demand, a task still waiting to be done in both Cidian and Byzantine studies.

1.27: Section 3

In Section 3 it is examined how King Arthur, from paradigm of local king morphed into a prototype of deified messianic King: an ethno-prototype. His mythopoeia can be interpreted as an intericonic construction based on Judeo-Christian and Roman-Welsh narratives. This construction is functionally linked to the Christianization of a 'transcultural' Britain and the formation of a properly Modern English identity. The King's making-up as a prototypical Christian 'king-savior' shaped after the figure of Christ as absolute Prototype, his shapeshifting, the Christification of his life and death (documented by Giraldus Cabrensis and the *Chronicon Monasterii of Hales*), and the mystic chronotopia related to them (the Ile of Avalon, the "kingriche of aluene," etc.), respond to the logic of Christianization of a multicultural Britain toward the genesis of the identitary self-consciousness of England. The 'textualization' of historical figures as a result of intertextual and intericonic processes, since the composition of *HR* and *CC*, or of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britaniae* and Layamon's *Brut*, means that we are not witnessing the history of concrete –naively historical– individuals, but rather a 'history' of functional icons and intericonic formations and transformations of mythological *eide* with a symbolic allegorical function. There are intericonic connections that we can traced both in oral and written testimonies. These connections open complex horizons of intericonicity, in whose area our research will progress.

In this section, the symbolic way in which Arthur carried upon his shoulders the unity and the historical destiny of his original (Welsh) and foster (Anglo-Norman and Saxon) *folces* is examined. Arthur's shape-shifting goes through three main stages: (1) local folk-hero paradigm, (2) universal Messianic prototype, (3) universal prophet-king. He was called to be a Christian king, faithful to Christ and the Church, and at the same time, the prototype of a messianic warrior-hero, able to synthesize in his semantic density the complex ethnic and icono-literary polyphony of medieval Britain. In this way, he becomes point of convergence of the new English political imperial construction under the "one nation—one king" narrative. The elements of messianic universality and all-encompassing nature in King Arthur were the result of this cultural logic.

From being a distant and arbitrary epic prototype (*HR*, *CC*, *PA*, *acta de Toledo*), El Cid morphed into a paradigm of warrior-vassal and a late epic icon, able to legitimize the royal nobility with his ancestry, but unable to reach for himself the status of king. He was to represent the new optimistic impetus of the *Reconquista* in a world in which Christian triumph, if not already certain, was at least very probable and totally possible. El Cid's cultural *vocatio* was then to be changed into an icon of 12th – 13th centuries' military realism. He was the hegemonic device that, as intericonic symbol, held together part of the literary corpus used by the Spanish kings for self-legitimation both as unified nation and pan-Iberian Christian monarchy. Through an intericonic insemination of historical memory and identity, El Cid was turned into a national Christian hero / savior, the sublimated self-projecting ideal – as well as the icon / synthesis –, of a triumphant Christian empire that interpreted and announced itself as *the* eschatological destination of Spain. Additionally, he was sanctified by a nostalgic Benedictine clergy that, during the convulsed Spanish

world of the 15th-16th centuries, longed for and sought to re-edit in his figure the glorious past of hegemonic mytho-cultural icons such as Alexander the Great, Aeneas, Brutus, Roland, King Arthur, Charlemagne, and Barbarossa.

1.28: Section 4

Section 4 examines the continuity of the mytheme of El Cid and King Arthur in contemporary cyberculture. This continuity is linked to cybercultural media and their 'mission' of providing communicative and informational possibilities which respond to the essential phenomenon of technohedonistic entertainment. In other words, the mythopoeia of El Cid and King Arthur takes place today via transmedia adaptations within the framework of cyberculture and digital technologies. A special form in which these mythemes appear today are video games. This transmedia shape-shifting process of traditional myths shows that they still have a significant capacity of impact on individual and collective imaginaries. But it also shows that the price paid for this impact is their becoming embedded into the virtual, de-ideologized, and onto-epistemological decentered cyberworldliness. Finally, this chapter confronts the theoretical urgency to examine how the mythopoetic continuity indicates that King Arthur's and El Cid's shape-shifting as myths is still expanding to further stages in new social and technological contexts. Additionally, a scrutiny is made of how this process occurs in an iconological field to a huge extent determined by cyberbeing's categories, and how the new cybernetic environment transforms the traditional formal, diegetic, and ideothematic fashion of these mythemes according to new transmedia possibilities.

1.29: Section 5

In Section 5 El Cid's and King Arthur's journey as hegemonic myths, whose shape-shifting stages bear a functional correspondence with religious and socio-cultural processes, is drawn following literary, iconographic, and historical clues. The Christianization of Britain and Spain, the identitary nuclearization of the Iberian Peninsula and Britain ethno-cultural plurality, and the formation of the nation-identitary ideosphere and all-encompassing national monarchies are seen as the background field forces that set the course of Arthur's and Rodrigo's mythopoeia. To achieve this goal, a multidisciplinary set of categories such as intericonicity, intertextuality, iconemes, iconospheres, and iconosystems is set in motion, with which we seek to create the technical tools demanded by the analysis. Section 5 pays special attention to the impact of Byzantium upon the formation of British and Spanish cultural imaginaries with a focus on El Cid's and King Arthur's myth-making within the framework of the intericonic processes. Bearing in mind the scarcity of studies in this area, this is one the most significant contributions of the present work. The goal is not 'to demonstate' facts but rather to open new trails for further research in a field that keeps unimagined secrets and promises surprising developments. The research is conducted with as much scientific rigor and fact-bound objectivity as possible. Therefore, the resulting knowledge is not arbitrary albeit surely limited by our inevitable ignorance and consequent omissions.

This section summarizes the mythopoeia of El Cid and King Arthur in relation to medieval British and Iberian social taxonomy. The processes of Christianization of Britain and of Christianization/Castilianization of the the Iberian Peninsula are given logic and ontological preeminence over the socio-political constructions and the design of history

consciousness and nation identity. By doing that, the socio-cultural role of religious beliefs and in a world-epoch where theological and ecclesiastical matters treasured an often-underestimated cultural leverage. Later, the hypothesis that, either a "cantar juglaresco," a cult epic composition in Latin imitating Classical models, or even a chronicle, the probability exists for an earlier manuscript or oral source to have provided the typological ancestor of epic Rodrigo as found in *HR* and suggested in *PA*. The 'iconotypal ancestor'of Rodrigo, in other words, the typological source from which Rodericus Didaci may have taken his epic shape could have been Byzantine, Gothic, or even of Celtic-Armoric origine. In any case though, the main shaping iconotype and his theologico-literary environment might have come from Christian Byzantine notions of hero-warrior-saint and holy city.

Also, the section surveys the problem of the relation between historicity and fiction in *PMC*. Several scholars have point out the historicist will of the *PMC*'s author, which makes it unique among medieval epic literature. Many of them have also noted that, judging from the accuracy of historical events and loci, the writer of *PMC* might have conducted some preliminary research before gathering the text together. Certainly, the fact that –despite having a metric system based on long verses with two hemistichs split by cesura, following generic conventions of the Castilian mediaeval epic–, the *PMC* stands out for its realistic tone and its treatment of the historical setting and topographical details, as well as for the economy of literary tropoi in constrast to epic medieval standards, brings the work closer to the chronicle literature. Certainly, part of the historicity of the *PMC* has not had a proper consideration. In other words, the consequences of the *PMC*'s will to historical facticity have not been properly measured and assessed by scholars. This also means that its literary genre –epic poetry– has been taken for granted. The facts that the

amount of historical accuracy surpasses the extent regularly found in most medieval epic productions, and that there exists a clear intention of fact-bound historicity in the author, provide the work with the intentionality of a *chronicle* rather than of an *epic poem*. After cross-arguments and a critical assessment, the conclusion is reached that the *PMC* should be treated as paradigm of hybrid, liminal literature that conflates chronicle with epic poetry, if not just as a chronicle in epic form. Replicating, perhaps, a socio-cultural environment defined by the processes of Christian identitary self-propiation and emancipatory expansion with unstable and ever-changing borders, the *PMC* comprises two literary genres with blurred and imprecise borders.

1.30. Conceptual Adjustments

The main taxonomical concepts or categories through which we approach El Cid's and King Arthur's shapeshifting as hegemonic myths are:

1. Archetype > Jesus Christ as absolute Icon (Jn 1,14) and original Word (Jn 1,1) presiding over the whole medieval iconic and textual productions.

2. Prototype > King Arthur, El Cid (*HR, CC,* Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*, Wace's *Roman de Brut*, Layamon's *Brut, Alliterate Mort d' Arthur,* Sir Mallory's *Le Mort d'Arthur*, Robert of Boron's *Vulgata Cycle*, Chretien de Troyes's Grial saga), King Sancho VI, King Alfonso VI, the king figure generally.

3. Paradigm > El Cid as good vassal. Imitable model, the realistic fashion of El Cid reduces the early epic distance and therefore his prototypal status. King Arthur as Celtic pagan folk-hero (*The Ymddiddan Arthur a'r Eryr* [*Dialogue of Arthur and the Eagle*]).

Furthermore, there are specific processes linked to the afore-mentioned taxonomic categories and the heroes' shape-shifting:

1. Prototypopheresis: The process through which hegemonic myth is depriped from being an allegorical prototype.

2. Paradigmatopoeia: The process through which a hegemonic myth is morphed into a cultural paradigm or symbol of determined ideals, socio-ontological self-interpretations, or moral values.

3. Prototypopoeia: The process through which a hegemonic myth acquires a prototypal condition.

4. Epigonal prototypopoeia: The process through which a hegemonic myth acquires a prototypal condition without ceasing to be a paradigm (*Crónica particular del Cid* [*CP*], *Genealogía del Cid* [*GC*], *Crónica de Castilla*.)

In these cases, the philological rationale follows the paradigm of word constructions such as 'prosopopoeia' and 'onomatopoeia' widely and unconditionally accepted by the scholarship. We also make use of the following iconological categories:

1. Iconeme: the single image –physical or mental– from the point of view of its cultural meaning. In other words, the minimum semantic iconico-narrative units that are part of more complex iconospheres and iconosystems. In the iconographical context, these categories match with other linguistic, theological, and anthropological notions such like mythemes, phonemes, theologemes, mimes,

etc. For instance, King Arthur; El Cid, Alfonso VII, Ramón Berenguer, Excalibur, Tizona, etc. [116]

2. Iconotype: a single image (iconeme) insofar it works as iconographical and semantic reference to another image as iconographical model. For instance, the icon of St. George as Byzantine military saint, King Arthur as Mesiah, El Cid as Spanish hero-warrior linked to the Reconquista. the image of El Cid as a good vassal during his second mythopoetic stage, etc.[117]

3. Iconotypia: the conceptual notion of being an iconotype. It is an abstract notion by definiton.

4. Iconosphere: the most general iconographical (semantic-morphological) system in a given historical period of a cultural formation. The iconosphere is gathered together around a variaty of wide-ranging thematical areas, concepts, and motifs. For instance, Byzantine and British-Hispanic fields of intericonic relationships.[118]

5. Iconosystem: a specific iconographical system gathered togethered around particular themes, concepts, or motifs. For instance, Arthurian literary and iconographical formations.[119]

6. Iconological Field: a space where two or more iconospheres or iconosystems converge that cannot be synthesized into a single iconosystem because of cultural

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[116] See Panovsky's notion of *primary* or *natural meaning*, in Erwing Panovsky, *Studies in Iconology. Humanistic Themes in the Art of the Renaissance* (New York: Icon Editions / Harper & Row, Publishers, 1972), 5.

[117] See Panovsky's notion of *secondary* or *conventional* meaning, ibid.

[118] See Panovsky's notion of *intrinsic meaning* or *content*, ibid.

[119] Although there is a general correspondence between our iconographical categories (iconeme, inconotype, etc.) and Panovsky's afore-mentioned semantical notions (primary, secondary, and intrinsic meanings), they cannot be identified either in number or in meaning proper.

differences (for example, Belisarius's and El Cid's iconospheres, or Byzantium and Castile).

1.31. Summary

Summarizing, we focus on El Cid's and King Arthur's myth-making and the process through which this mythopoiesis takes place. As mytheme bundles, El Cid and Arthur constantly change their mythical figures according to the socio-political mutations of their cultural contexts. Because of this context-dependency we call them here hegemoci myths. The fact that they appear related to the Christianization of Spain and Britain, the genesis of a national identity, and the formation of absolute monarchies defines their mythical shape-shifting profile. Within this general framework, we make an analysis of both the different ways and the several stages through which this mythopoiesis develops. In this context, intericonic and intertextual exchanges that involve a variety of cultural sources, such as Celtic-Welsh, Classical (Greek-Roman), Gothic, and Byzantine are examined. Finally, we scrutinize the processes of reception and interpretation of El Cid's and King Arthur's traditional myths in the light of cyberculture. Specifically, we focus on the ways these traditional myths are deprived of all intentional symbolic-allegorical meaning. We see how they have been reduced to electronic-game devices under the force-fields of what we call the 'cybergame' as the joint-structure that summons the 'avatar' through the 'call-to-play' as an alienated moral-practical imperative. Therefore, along with the aforementioned processes, we also refer to El Cid's and King Arthur's 'cyber-mythopoieia' within the new categories of cyberbeing (Figure 4).
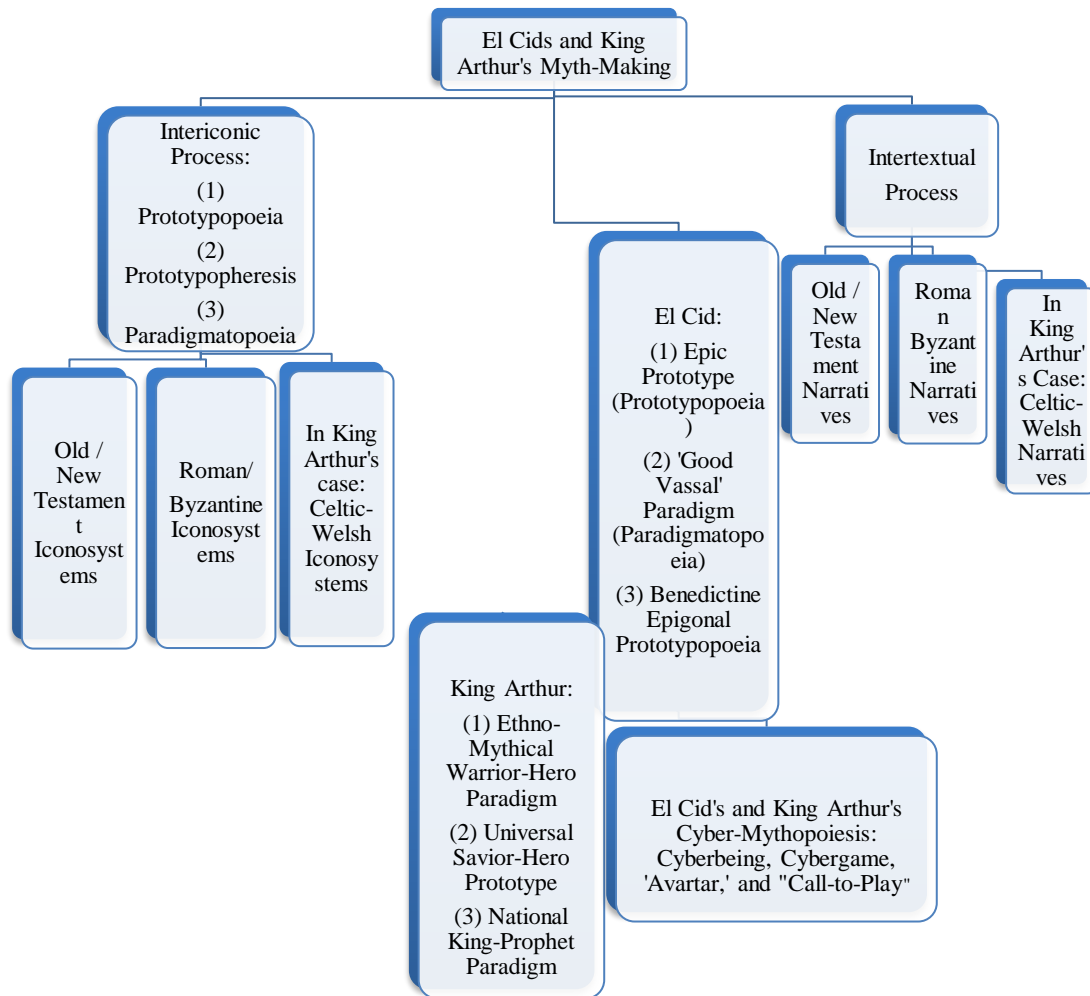
Figure 4: Mythopoeia of El Cid and King Arthur.

El Cids and King Arthur's Myth-Making

Intericonic Process:
(1) Prototypopoeia
(2) Prototypopheresis
(3) Paradigmatopoeia

Old / New Testament Iconosystems

Roman/ Byzantine Iconosystems

In King Arthur's case: Celtic-Welsh Iconosystems

El Cid:
(1) Epic Prototype (Prototypopoeia)
(2) 'Good Vassal' Paradigm (Paradigmatopoeia)
(3) Benedictine Epigonal Prototypopoeia

King Arthur:
(1) Ethno-Mythical Warrior-Hero Paradigm
(2) Universal Savior-Hero Prototype
(3) National King-Prophet Paradigm

El Cid's and King Arthur's Cyber-Mythopoiesis: Cyberbeing, Cybergame, 'Avartar,' and "Call-to-Play"

Intertextual Process

Old / New Testament Narratives

Roman Byzantine Narratives

In King Arthur's Case: Celtic-Welsh Narratives

2. MYTH-MAKING AND SHAPESHIFTING OF EL CID AS HEGEMONIC MYTH

2.1. Intericonic Milieu of El Cid

El Cid appears to be an epic prototype during the 11th and 12th centuries according to the literary profile of the hero handed down to us by historical chronicles and poetic creations such as *HR* and *CC*, respectively. Nevetheless, El Cid morphed into a vassal and warrior-hero already in the 13th century in a way directly proportional to the expansion of the *Reconquista*, the Almoravid empire's collapse, and the hegemony of the Castilian church-state Caesaropapism. A realistic, imitable paradigm of vassal-hero was needed, i.e., a national myth/synthesis able to legitimize the Christianization of Spain and the crusade ideology linked to it. Nevertheless, during the 15th and 16th centuries El Cid, phoenix-like, is re-exalted as a prototype, yet this time a coherent Christian hero-warrior-saint, in the context of the Benedictine interpretation of the Reconquista. This interpretation followed the Byzantine notion, already present in Alfonso X's *Estoria*, of the holy war against Muslims. In this epigonal prototypopoeia, El Cid appears bearing in himself the unsolved contradictory lord / vassal relationship inherited from his constituent identitary principles (El Cid as an *epic prototype*, and El Cid as a *warrior / hero, paradigm of the good Christian vassal*). In other words, the epic prototype of *HR* and *CC* morphs into a paradigm of the god Christian vassal via a twofold process of prototypoferesis and paradigmatopeia. This the Rodericus we meet in *PMC* as a figure representative of the exaltation of the king and the consequential subordination of El Cid in his now well-defined role of hero vassal. Later, a new shapeshifting takes place and, both in chronicles and romances, Rodericis Didaci partly recovers his epic identity, yet always in counterpoint with his condition of vassalage to a king whose self-affirmation becomes

absolute in the context of the expansion of Castilian monarchy, and the overall Christianization of the Peninsula.

The hero's myth-making develops through intertextual and intericonic processes. Intericonicity and intertextuality work as linking devices that allow a single mytheme to become a hegemonic myth in the framework of cultural practices that determine a certain historical period. El Cid's myth-making during these centuries appears to be based on an essentially religious/political intericonic construction. It implies the need to link El Cid to epic/legendary figures of a glorious past. The earlier literary mentions of El Cid are found in the *Historia Roderici* (1189) and the *Poema de Almería* (1148). In both, El Campeador appears still as a distant and contradictory epic prototype, suggesting the existence of pre-Iberian intertexts according to which Ruy Díaz' epic profile was shaped. We recognize four main possible intericonic references: Byzantine, Carolingian, Visigothic, Roman-Welsh/Breton. Special attention will be paid to the extent of Byzantine impact upon the myth-making of El Cid.

There are intericonic interlocks that we can trace both in oral and written testimonies that point out to possible intericonic sintaxis, i.e., pre-extant iconic figures representative of ideals and self-interpreting identitary constructs that are "called up" into the cultural foreground by the iconic mytheme of Ruy Díaz. This means that, unlike the palimpsestes, the evoked image here acquires the same or even greater importance than the factual reference –e.g. the historical Cid. In other words, the temporal "iconographical meaning"[120] supersedes the immediate spatial denotative referentiality, the "référentialité indicielle" in Rolland Barthes's words. Additionally, there are multifocal, more complex

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[120] Panovsky, op. cit., 11.

and interactive forms of intericonicity producing a hegemonic myth/icon.[121] Due to its

mythical nature, the hegemonic icon is synchonically synthesis and split, i.e., a nodal

convergence of past and present that synchronizes the arithmetic lineality of historical time

with the geometrical circularity of collective memory's figurative temporality. As

mytheme, El Cid dwells in a complex intericonic milieu (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Intericonic Milieu of El Cid.

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[121] See for instance the combination of persons, ideas –political projects [Reconquest, ethnic social unification]–, cultural ideals –Christianization of Spain and Britain, and ethnic political synthesis/homogenization]–, and mythical constructions –*Rex quod erat et erit, princeps inuictissimus*, etc.

2.2. Origins of Spanish Epic

During his conferences dictated at the University of Baltimore, published under the title of *L' épopée castillane à travers la litteratúre espagnole*, Ramón Menéndez Pidal underscores the very ancient origin of Spanish epic, and most important for the present research, the fact that it reveals itself as a continuity of Visigothic as well as Byzantine inocosystems and literary themes. In his own words: "También tracé un bosquejo de la vida de la épica española […] mostrando cómo la epopeya española era de origen antiquísimo y se revelaba continuadora de usos y temas visigóticos."[122] This means that the influence of French epic upon Spanish epic can be deemed posterior and, therefore, a historical preeminence over older influences can be recognized to other-than-Fench literary traditions. In the framework of our intericonic approach, it must be considered the fact that Germanic, Danish and Byzantine hero-warrior models have arrived at Spain alongside Visigothic literature and cultural uses. These cultural icons could have exercized a decisive influence in the formation of epic hero-warrior archtypes such as El Cid, both through intertextual contributions as well as via the imaginay of a warrior aristocracy whose socio-political self-consciousness was in process of historical formation in the new Peninsular context.[123]

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[122] Menéndez Pidal, "La épica medieval española. Desde sus orígenes hasta su disolución en el romancero", in *Obras de Menéndez Pidal*, ed. Diego Catalán y María del Mar de Bustos, tomo XIII (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, SA, 1992), 70. For the Visigothic epic literature, see F. Hanssen, "Sobre la poesía épica de los visigodos," *Anales de la Universidad de Chile*, 1957, 300-306, http://www.anales.uchile.cl/index.php/ANUC/article/viewFile/10948/11204. Pdf.

[123] Even in the Old English literary traditions, we observe the emergenge of new cultural typology that synthesizes the traditional Danish/Anglo-Saxon warrior with the figure of the Christian hero-warrior that existed already in Roman and Byzantine culture-literary, especially hagiographical, productions. Instances of this can be found in poems like *Beowulf* and the *The Vision of the Rood*. For more on this, see Chapter II of the present work.

The impact of Byzantine warrior-saint textuality and iconotypia upon Benedictine hagiographical works and the Spanish *Vorepik* determined the future development of Cidian iconosphere. Spanish *Vorepik* supplied contributing sources used towards the composition of early Cidian texts (*HR* and *CC*) as well as later extensive works like *PMC*, the Castilian chronicles, and the Romances. The image of Byzantine hero / warrior / saint prototypes, such as St. George, St. Theodore Tyron, St. Theodore Stratelates, and St. Demetrius, spinned around El Cid's and King Arthur's historical personhoods, which will eventually be thoroughly 'wrapped up' by the legitimating authority of those iconotypes throughout complex intericonic assimilations. Byzantine military saints represent the new ideal of Christian hero-warrior. They cast an ideological spell upon both known and anonymous figures; a spell that will be conveyed later over Rodericus Didaci as a loyal vassal following a substantial shape-shifting from early works until *PMC*, the *corónicas*, and the Romances.

2.3. State of the Question

The claim about intertextual and intericonic relationships between Old/New Testament and Classic (Greek, Roman, and Byzantine) narratives is not new. In an article entitled "Eneas, El Cid y los caminos trillados del exilio heróico," J. M. Pedrosa studies some structural and morphological similarities between the *Eneida* and the *Cantar de Mio Cid*. After stating that the "coincidencias entre la *Eneida* y el *Cantar del mio Cid* comienzan en la propia estructura narrative general de ambas epopeyas,"[124] Pedrosa, following somewhat freely George M. Foster's terminology, number a series of diegetic matches between both works. Essentially, using Foster's concept of "situación de bienes

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[124] José Manuel Pedrosa, "Eneas, El Cid y los caminos trillados del exilio heroico," in *Ínsula* 731 (2007): 11-15, 11.

limitados," Pedrosa manages to show how both epic narratives end in a situation of total satisfaction of the original privations. Eneas and El Cid, as epic heroes, belong to prestigious noble lineages, yet limited by the fact of being a second-degree aristocracy. They are inferior in nobility to counts, infants, and, of course, kings. As we see in our study, this taxonomical position largely determines El Cid's myth-making and the process of his shape-shifting as a hegemonic myth. El Cid and Eneas, continues Pedrosa, were brought up by their parents in relative secrecy. This secrecy aimed at avoiding conflict situations arising from their irregular birth. Despite their obscure origin or, states Pedrosa, precisely because of it, these heroes offset the flaws of their births with the nobility of their hearts, the courage of their actions, and the strength of their arms. Both gain *a posteriori* by their own merit what they were not granted *a priori* by their birth and lineage. Also, Pedrosa highlights the double meaning of their marriages as, at the same time, the expression of a sincere love, and the quickest passage to their socio-political incardination into the highest circles of the Castilian nobility. After providing several examples to make his point, Pedrosa touches the thorny problem of the origin of these structural, morphological, and thematic parallels between both sagas. They can be the result of the transmission of the Classic epic material from an author, or a people, to another, in a way that the historically preeminent model (the *Aeneid*) would be formal and efficient cause of the *Cantar*. They could also have common heroic models; or they could just be the unlikely result of a casual polygenesis. Recognizing that there are between both epics as many differences as similarities, Pedrosa concludes that, "[…] la mayoría de las coincidencias pueden ser explicadas si aceptamos la influencia del fondo común, flotante, migratorio, universal, de estructuras, de conceptos y de motivos épicos de los que beben, y

que reciclan y combinan sin descanso, los relatos heroicos de todo el mundo."[125] With his

theoretical stance, Pedrosa comes to reafirm Menedez Pidal's notions of the

"tradicionalidad" and "arcaicidad" of early popular romances (the "romances viejos"

studied by Menéndez Pelayo) sung and transmited by minstrels during the early Middle

Ages as the origin of the medieval epic.[126] Still in the line of Classic intericonic parallels,

Ángel Escobar examines the way in which the *CAI* and the *Prefatio Almariae* make use of

several Classic sources within an scholarly rather than courtly environment. After

analyzing their typological features, Escobar claims that the likelihood exists of possible

Virgilian, Ovidian, and Horacian echos in both the *CAI* and *PA*.[127] Despite rhetorical and

lexical evidences, Escobar concludes that the works indicate just a sporadic use of

Classical sources with an aesthetic rather than ideological function: "Tanto en la *CAI*

como, sobre todo, en el *PA* se observa un recurso muy esporádico a fuentes clásicas,

siempre con función de embellecimiento, más que ideológica."[128]

Concerning the role played by Byzantium in the formation of the Spanish culture,

already the 19th and early 20th centuries saw the flourishing of ground-setting studies such

as Amador de los Ríos's *El Arte Latino-Bizantino en España y las Coronas Visigodas de*

Guarrazar: Ensayo Histórico-Crítico, [129] F. Fita's "Indicciones griegas en lápidas

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[125] Ibid., 12.

[126] Menéndez Pidal, op. cit., 80-87. Referring especially to the Spanish epic, Menedez Pidal states that: "[…] la arcaizante realidad que sus textos ofrecen hace que el tradicionalismo sea algo indispensable, insustituible." Ibid., 80.

[127] Ángel Escobar, "La materia clásica y sus accesos en la España medieval: el ejemplo de la *Chronica Adefonsi Imperatoris*," in *e-Spania* 15 (2013), 17-22, accessed 05/20/2017, URL: http://e-spania.revues.org/22240; DOI: 10.4000/e-spania.22240.

[128] Ibid., 24.

[129] Amador de los Ríos, *El Arte Latino-Bizantino en España y las Coronas Visigodas de Guarrazar: Ensayo Histórico-Crítico*, Classic Reprint Series, Spanish Edition (London: Forgotten Books, 2017).

visigóticas,"[130] and "Ceuta visigoda y bizantina durante el reinado de Teudis,"[131] L.

Brehier's "Les colonies dórientaux en Occident au commencement du Moyen Age,"[132] J.

Cabré's *Monumento cristiano bizantino de Gabia la Grande (Granada)*,[133] H. Schlunk's

"Relaciones entre la peninsula Ibérica y Bizancio durante la época visigoda,"[134] Ch.

Diehl's *Justinien et la civilization byzantine au VIe siècle*,[135] and the afore-mentioned *La*

España bizantina, by Francisco J. Presedo Velo.[136] The early connections between

Visigoths and Byzantium in the 9th century as a well-established fact has been examined by

Franz Görres in his study "Die byzantinische Abstammung der spanischen

Westgotenkönige Erwich und Witiza, sowie die Beziekungen des Kaisers Maurikios zur

germanischen Welt."[137] Gothic kings sought to find royal genealogies and imperial

legitimacy by linking themselves to Byzantine emperors. This transcultural process is

attested in the chronicle *Sebastiani Salmanticensis nomine Alfonsi III regis vulgatum*.[138] In

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[130] See F. Fita, "Indicciones griegas en lápidas visigóticas," *Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia* XXI (1892): 5-19.

[131] See ---, "Ceuta visigoda y bizantina durante el reinado de Teudis," *Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia* LXVIII (1916): 622-628.

[132] See L. Brehier, "Les colonies dórientaux en Occident au commencement du Moyen Age," in *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* XII (1903): 1-39.

[133] See J. Cabré, *Monumento cristiano bizantino de Gabia la Grande (Granada)* (Madrid: Junta Superior de Excavaciones y Antigüedades, 1923).

[134] See H. Schlunk, "Relaciones entre la peninsula Ibérica y Bizancio durante la época visigoda," in *Archivo Español de Arqueología* XVIII (1945): 177-204.

[135] See Ch. Diehl's *Justinien et la civilization byzantine au VIe siècle* (Paris: P. Leroux, 1901).

[136] See note 85 of the present work.

[137] Franz Görres. "Die byzantinische Abstammung der spanischen Westgotenkönige Erwich und Witiza, sowie die Beziehungen des Kaisers Maurikios zur germanischen Welt." *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 19, no. 2 (1910): 430-439.

[138] See *Sebastiani Salmanticensis nomine Alfonsi III regis vulgatum*, edited by Enrique Flórez. In *España sagrada: theatro geographico-historico de la iglesia de España*. T. XIII. 2nd edition. C. 3. Madrid, 1789.

an interesting passage, Görres states that he would accept, appealing to the textual

authority of the aforementioned chonicle, Ferrera's belief that Visigothic king Erwich was

son to Byzantine Ardabastus. Yet Görres thinks that Ferrera goes 'wait too far' with his

claim that Ardabastus was Martyr Hermenegid's nephew:

> Man darf, wie gesagt, unter Berufung auf die Chronik von
> Salamanca den Gotenkönig Erwich für den Sohn eines vornehmen
> Byzantiners namens' Ardabastus gelten lassen. Aber viel zu weit geht
> es, wenn einige altere Spanier, namentlich Ferreras, Geschichte von
> Spanien, deutsch von Baumgarten II, Halle 1754, S. 380, §§ 529 den
> Ardabast gar zu einem Enkel des „Martyrers" Hermenegild (f 585,
> wahrscbeinbch am 13. April, zu Tarragona), oder genauer zu einem
> Sohne Athanagilds, jenes zu Byzanz zurückgehaltenen einzigen Kindes des
> „Blutzeugen" und dessen Gemahlin Ingundis, stempeln wollen.')
> Selbst Aschbach, Westgoten, S. 294 gibt zu viel zu, wenn er annimmt,
> der vornehme Grieche Ardabast wäre vielleicht ein Nachkomme Athanagilds,
> des Sohnes von Hermenegild, gewesen.[139]

While Ardabastus –also Ardo or Ardonus– was also the name of the last Visigothic

king in Hispania who reigned probably until his death (c. 720-1) in battle after the Arabs

took Narbonne, the Ardabastus mentioned here by the chronicle, Ferrara, and Görres seems

to be another Ardabastus, i.e. "a Byzantine of probably Armenian descent who is attested

in Spanish sources as being exiled to Visigothic Spain, where he married a niece of King

Chindasvinth in the second half of the 7th century."[140] The fact that Ardabastus married the

niece of a king certainly means –for the 7th century's standards– that he himself was a

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[139] Franz Görres, op. cit., 431-2: "One may accept, as said before, citing the chronicle of Salamanca, that the gothic King Erwich was the son of a distinguished Byzantine named Ardabastus. But it goes too far when some older Spaniards, namely Ferreras, History of Spain, German by Baumgarten II, Hall 1754, p. 380, §§ 529, claim Ardabast to have been even a grandson of the "martyr" Hermenegild (f 585, probably on April 13, in Tarragona), or more precisely hijo de Athanagild, the only child, held back at Byzantium, of the "martyr" and his wife Ingundis). Even Aschbach, Westgoten, p. 294 admits too much, when he assumes that the noble Greek Ardabastus might have been a descendant of Athanagild, the son of Hermenegild." (Unless otherwise noted, translations from German to English are my own.)

[140] Evangelos Chrysos, "Roman and Foreigners." *Fifty Years of Prosopography: The Later Roman Empire, Byzantium and Beyond*, edited by Averil Cameron Series Proceedings of the British Academy (London: British Academy, 2003), footnote 15, 123.

member of the high nobility of even a king. Note that, during his refutation of Ferrara and Aschbach, Görres himself refers to Ardabastus as "the noble Greek Ardabastus." ("der vornehme Grieche Ardabast…"). Yet beyond these historical arguments and the contrasting stances among scholars, what matters here is the clear relation between Iberian-Visigothic kings and Byzantine figures in a period as early as the 7th-8th centuries. All these scholars came to highlight the Byzantine presence and impact on Visigothic and post-Visigothic Spain, especially via religious art, funeral inscriptions, jewelery, as well as royal genealogies and cultural self-understanding.

In contrast, the Byzantine presence and impact in the formation of the Cidian legend and his myth-making has been practically ignored by most of contemporary scholars. In his article "El eterno renacer: la leyenda y el mito cidianos,"[141] F. Javier Peña Pérez recognizes that El Cid's iconosphere was populated not only by Castilian-Spanish peers but also by figures from the Classical epic past with whom the hero was compared and measured: "Y finalmente, el *Cantar* representa un avance en la vía maquiladora y mitificadora de la imagen de Rodrigo […] pretende endiosar –eso sí, con colores paganizantes– su figura mediante su equiparación con algunos de los grandes guerreros que animan la literatura épica grecorromana: Paris, Pirro, Eneas o Héctor."[142] No mention, however, of Byzantine sources during the process of El Cid's mythopoeia.[143] Similarly,

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[141] F. Javier Peña Pérez, "El eterno renacer: la leyenda y el mito cidianos," in *El Cid: del hombre a la leyenda*, edited by Juan Carlos Elorza Guinea (Madrid: Junta de Castilla - León y Sociedad Estatal de Conmemoraciones Culturales, 2007): 244-254.

[142] Ibid., 245.

[143] Peña Pérez also omits to mention that, the comparison of Rodrigo with Classical epic figures is a fact already since the *CC*:

Ella gestorum possumus referre
Paris et Pyrri, nec non et Eneae

José María Díez Borque offers a general prospect of what is known about the Cidian oral and textual tradition, and the relationship between them. In the rather erudite article –and despite his references to the scarce epic sources, to the romances, and to the "ciclo carolingio," i.e. the French-theme epic Spain– no mention is made of Byzantine sources and their potential ipact in the shaping of the oral tradition and the iconogenesis of El Cid as epic figure.[144] The silence regarding Byzantine iconic and literary sources related to the Cidian matter is kept also by Eukene Lacarra Lanz, who examines philological and genealogy questions in the *PMC*,[145] and by Ángel Gómez Moreno in his article devoted to the Castilian epic and the Cidian cycle.[146] Also, no reference to Byzantium in connection with Cidian literature or iconography is made by Carlos Alvar Esquerra and Losé Manuel Lucía Mejías, whose study focuses rather on the transition from orality to *scriptura* in the context of the Cidian matter.[147] On her part, Paloma Díaz-Mas addresses the between "el romancero del Cid" and other heores of the Castilian epic, yet also here any attempt to link

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multi poetae plurimum laude
que conscripsere.
II
Sed paganorum quid iuuabunt acta,
dum iam uillescant uetustate multa?
Modo canamus Roderici noua
principis bella.

In this poem, El Cid was found superior than his Classical challengers: "Hoc fuit primum singulare bellum, / cum adolescens deuicit nauarrum; / hinc Campidoctor dictus est maiorum / ore uirorum." See Serafín Bodelón, "Carmen Campidoctoris: introducción, edición y traducción," *AO* XLIV-XLV: 340-367, 354-5.

[144] See José María Díez Borque, "El héroe épico: desde la voz a la letra," in Juan Carlos Elorza Guinea (ed.), op. cit., 258-265.

[145] Eukene Lacarra Lanz, "Cuestiones filológicas y de linaje en el Cantar de mío Cid," ibid., 268-276.

[146] Ángel Gómez Moreno, "La épica castellana medieval y el ciclo cidiano," ibid., 277-287.

[147] Carlos Alvar Esquerra and Losé Manuel Lucía Mejías, "Del juglar al scriptorium," ibid., 288-296.

Castilian epic heros with other than domestic or Classical Greek-Latin sources is missing.[148]

2.4. Some Exceptions

Notwithstanding the noisy silence of some scholars regarding the role playd by Byzantium in the formation and development of Cidian iconosystem and the literature linked to it, the well of interest in and production of outstanding research on the 'Byzantium-El Cid' topic is not dry at all. A significant critical scholarship has been produced around the intriguing parallels between El Cid and the Byzantine figure of Diyenís Akritas, without this to mean that this intericonic vein has been exhausted at all. Among the most meaningful and worth-refering comparative studies developed on these epic figures, and certainly one of the most recent ones, stands out Marina Díaz Bourgeal's and Francisco López-Santosa Kornberger's very compealing article entitled "El *Cantar de mio Cid* y el *Diyenís Akritas* (manuscrito de El Escorial). Un estudio comparative desde el legado clásico."[149] Like J. M. Pedrosa with Eneas, Díaz Bourgeal and López-Santosa Kornberger point out to series of ideo-thematic similarities between these epics. Among them, they refer to a common condition shared by El Cid and Diyenís that is determined by their historical and cultural context: both can be considered border hero-warriors. The most

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[148] Paloma Díaz-Mas, "El romancero del Cid y otros héroes de la épica castellana," ibid., 297-330. Díaz-Mas certainly recognized that, "Con el paso del tiempo…el romance se convirtió en un molde poético en el que se vertieron toda clase de narraciones, desde aventuras caballerescas procedentes del roman o novela en verso medieval, hasta episodios históricos de distintas épocas…pasajes de la antigüedad clásica o de la Biblia, milagros de santos o mordaces sátiras de la vida cotidiana." See Juan Carlos Elorza Guinea (ed.), ibid., 297. Yet this mention is irrelevant to our study, becuase, first, it refers to the romances that are a rather late literary gender no atter what its sources are, and, second, becuase it can be assumed with certainty that by the expression "antigüedad clásica" she is pointing to only to the Classical Greek-Roman period.

[149] Marina Díaz Bourgeal and Francisco López-Santosa Kornberger, "El *Cantar de mio Cid* y el *Diyenís Akritas* (manuscrito de El Escorial). Un studio comparative desde el legado clásico," in *Estudios medievales hispánicos*, No. 5, 2016: 83-107.

important part of their lifes, their actions that confer them glory and publicity, as well as the role they play as bicultural synthesis is developed in the border zone of two co-existing cultures: Christianity and Islam. They share this common political and cultural background in different geophysical loci. The chronotope in which their lives unfold comprises a complex dialectics of contradictory coexistence between two cultures that seek to define themselves by the negation of the other as irreconcilable difference. The border-awareness is an essential part of the production of El Cid's and Digenís's textuality; and it is not casual that the twofold, borderly nature of his origin has blueprinted Digenís Akritas's cultural personhood to the extent of having become his proper name. The Greek *Διγενής* means "two genders," from Greek *δύο* (*dío*, two) and (*genos*, gender), in the sense of two identities, to cultural profiles. His last name, *Ἀκρίτης*, is in fact a kind of gentilicio, from the Greek term *ἄκρον* (akron, extreme), meaning "from the border," or even "border-dweller." Marina Díaz Bourgeal and Francisco López-Santosa Kornberger emphasize the existence of the common social and cultural background as one of the causes that likely can explain the structural, thematic, and morphological parallelisms found between *PMC* and *DA*. Concerning the problem of the origin of their manuscripts of *DA*, but having implicitly account the Cidian manuscripts and narrative as well, the authors are confronted by the question whether the equivalences between *PMC* and *DA* are the result of their common background without geo-physical impact of the latter upon the first (or in general of Byzantium upon the primitive Hispanic epic), or, on the contrary, they are the offspring of concrete *facie ad faciem* cultural encounters and exchanges via migrations, clashes, wars, and all kind of cultural communications that took place between East and West during all these centuries. Essentially following the opposition between "teorías

individualistas" and "teorías tradicionalistas" so well studied and defined by Menedez Pidal,[150] these authors summarize the variety of current hypothesis into two main groups: "aquellas que dan más peso a una actividad creative punctual […]; y las teorías que subrayan la existencia de una vasta tradición oral previa que fue eventualmente recogida por escrito y posteriormente "formalizada" en el griego "arcaizante" de la corte. Esta división resulta también interesante en tanto guarda algunos paralelismos con las opiniones que se formularon sobre el origen del *PMC*."[151] In the context of the teoría individualsita and the emphasis on the relation of Latin sources with the *PMC*, Colin Smith appears to be one of the most outstanding scholars defending this intertextual influence. His article "Fuentes clásicas de dos episodios del *Poema de Mío Cid*," included in a major volume, creates the framework for an understanding of the Cidian literature generally as a Latin product adapted to the new Ibero-Christian circumstances of the Reconquest.[152]

Díaz Bourgeal's and López-Santosa Kornberger do not further insist in this point. Yet, recognizing the importance of these essential 'on the ground' exchanges, it is necessary to dig even deeper in the meaning of the names in both figures. If we paraphrase Digenís Akrítas's name, we would obtain a literal depiction of his cultural condition: the "two-gender border-dweller." His name is not just an appellative refence, but a real iconic scripture, a linguistic epigram of his essence as a cultural entity. It likewise occurs with El Cid. The voice *cid* is not Spanish but has Arabic origin. It derives from *sidi* and literally

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[150] Menéndez Pidal, op. cit., 93.

[151] "El *Cantar de mio Cid* y el *Diyenís Akritas* (manuscrito de El Escorial). Un estudio comparativo desde el legado clásico," op. cit., 88.

[152] See Collin Smith, "Fuentes clásicas de dos episodios del *Poema de Mío Cid*," in Colin Smith, *Estudios Cidianos* (Madrid: Cupsa, 1977): 109-123.

means "master," "lord," "superior." Even today bishops of the Christian Antiochean Church are called *sidi* or *sayedna*, being the Arab equivalence of Italian *monsignore*, French *monsignor*, and Spanish *monseñor*. The more Rodrigo Díaz is assimilated into the official History as the living icon of Christian knights in the process of Reconquista, the more his border-dwelling constitution appears and determines his cultural essence by practically substituting his original Roman-Visigothic name, Rodericus, with the Arab-Hispanized appellative of "(mio) cid." He is also a border-dweller, like Digenís; and only as a cross-cultural hybrid whose literary parallel is to be found in Alfonso VI's imperial aspirations and Alfonso X's encyclopedic project, can El Cid and his myth-making shapeshifting process as a hegemonic figure be understood proper.[153]

After noting that the resemblances between *PMC* and the *DA* are compelling and undeniable, Díaz Bourgeal and López-Santos Kornberger state that "no es de extrañar que académicos y no académicos hayan señalado una cierta equivalencia entre el *CMC* y el *DA*, constituyendo nosotros, hasta donde sabemos, el último eslabón en una serie de estudios comparativos entre las dos tradiciones."[154] In this direction, alongside the afore-mentioned authors many other scholars have underscored the similarities observed between Byzantine and Spanish "cantares de gesta." Alongside these scholars, one worth mentioning here for the importance and extension of his studies (translations included) is Chilean Miguel Castillo Didier. His monumental *Poesía heroica griega. Epopeya de Diyenís Akritas. Cantares de Armuris y de Andrónico* reveals a rich vein of intertextual and

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[153] King Arthur is also a liminal figure, a border-dweller. Yet in his case, the synthesis moment becomes dominant and acquires total preeminence over the differences the he comprises. A special role is this is played by the fact that, differently from El Cid and Digenís, Arthur is a king *ab origine*, and his synthetic calling makes him transcend the particular differences towards a final national unity.

[154] "El *Cantar de mio Cid* y el *Diyenís Akritas* (manuscrito de El Escorial)," op. cit., 86.

intericonic horizons between Byzantium and Western epic literature that opens vast possibilities for this still underdeveloped area of comparative studies. In a later article, Castillo Didier specifically focuses on the ideo-thematic and literario-morphological confluences – at the same time recognizing outstanding differenes – between El Cid and Diyenís. In his own words: "Más allá de los elementos novelescos que se encuentran en el Poema de Mio Cid y en la Epopeya de Diyenías Akritas, el carácter épico de ambos textos es indudable. Esto asemeja ambas obras. Las figuras de ambos héroes están igualmente cerca en ciertos aspectos, mientras que en otros existen diferencias notables."[155]

2.5. The *Crónica de Castilla*, Further Versions and General Sources

Inés Fernández-Ordóñez refers to the genealogy and elaboration of the *Crónica de Castilla*, which was the source of many later versions, among them the copies produced and edited (and in the latter case also published) by Francisco de Arce and Pedro de Velorado[156]:

> La *Crónica de Castilla* se elaboró tomando como base un relato emparentado a veces con el de la Versión amplificada y, al tiempo, con la Primitiva utilizada por la Versión crítica [all these from Alfonso X's *Estoria de España*, and Sancho IV's amplified version of the same *Estoria*], combinación de modelos que ha conducido a llamarlo Versión mixta. Ese relato básico … fue refundido y combinado con otras fuentes que el cronista autor de esa Crónica llegó a conocer, como poemas épicos y otras fuentes en prosa de carácter más novelesco, como la *Estoria de los reyes moros de África* atribuida a un tal Sujulberto. A su vez, el cronista noveló el texto recibido deduciendo e inventado episodios que no existían en sus modelos. El punto de vista ideológico es pronobiliario y las fuentes se tratan con gran libertad. Se fecha, como muy tarde, en el reinado de Fernando IV (1295- 1312).[157]

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[155] Ibid., see note 41.

[156] For the significance of Francisco de Arce's copy of the *Crónica de Castilla*, see Vaquero's comparison between De Arce's and Pedro de Velorado's copies, in Mercedes Vaquero, "La *Crónica del Cid* y la *Crónica de Fernán González*: entre editores, copistas e impresores, 1498-1514," *Romance philology* 57 (2003): 89-103, pp. 98-100.

[157] Inés Fernández-Ordóñez, "El *Mio Cid* a través de las crónicas medievales," 14, accessed 06/08/2017, https://www.uam.es/personal_pdi/filoyletras/ifo/publicaciones/17_cl.pdf, in Emiliano Valdeolivas and Jesús

In her characterization of the *CrC*, Fernández-Ordóñez undercores the historico-philological significance of the fact that this text was a mix of several sources.[158] Indeed, Fernández-Ordóñez states that the *Crónica de Castilla* derived from Alfonso X's *Estoria de España* and Sancho IV's amplified version of the same *Estoria* by combining the *Version primitiva*, the *Version amplificada* (1289), and several epic poems and other sources. Among these epic poems, the scholar recognizes "poemas épicos muy vinculados a la gesta cidiana, como las Mocedades de Rodrigo, Las particiones del rey Fernando, junto al propio *Mio Cid*, que fueron incorporados con gran libertad al texto cronístico."[159] Yet, as this chapter aims to indicate, there is no reason to limit the intertextual and intericonic impact on the *CrC* only to Iberian-Castilian textual fields and iconospheres, respectively. On the contrary, a wide horizon was open for textual and iconic overlappings between Iberia –with its own cultural polyphony–, Britain, France, Italy, and –as a protosource informing all these textual fields and iconosystems– Byzantium.

2.6. Byzantium, Cidian Narrative, and Intericonicity

The impact of Byzantine culture on Spain via a systematic influx of religious ideas and aesthetic-artistic models at least since 552 –when, according to Francisco J. Presedo Velo, E. Stein and P. Goubert, took place the Byzantine landing on Iberian soil–[160] is a historical fact that has been well established and documented by scholars such as Amador de los Ríos, F. Fita, J. Cabré, H. Schlunk, J. Puig y Cadafalch, J. Pérez de Barradas, C.

Gómez (eds.), *Ochocientos años del "Mio Cid": una visión interdisciplinar* (Madrid: Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia de España, 2008), 153-176.

[158] Ibid., infographic III, 15.

[159] Ibid.

[160] *La España bizantina*, "Conclusiones," op. cit., 165.

Mergelina, E. Camps Cazorla, C. E. Dubler, P. Goubert, J. Werner, M. Pinard, and

Francisco J. Presedo Velo, among others.[161] For instance, E. Camps Cazorla refers to

ornamental and architectural elements of Oriental origin which can be observed in several

monuments across Spain, among which stand out for their importance the ruins of the

Ermita de Santa María, in Quintanilla de las Viñas.[162] On these bas-reliefs, phytomorphic

(trees crowned with palm leaves) and zoomorphic (lambs, deer, leopards) motifs of

realistic character are combined with mythical animals such as winged and bird-headed

griffins.[163] Also, the 'hieratic' frontal representation of Christ, a typically Byzantine

stylistic feature, along with the presence of flying angels around the Lord constitute further

reliable instances to assess the early impact of Byzantium on the Iberian imaginary. A

special significance must be ascribed to the representation of the sun and the moon

surrounding the figures of a blessing Christ accompanied by two Evangelists.[164] In other

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[161] See Amador de los Ríos, op. cit., note 106; F. Fita, "Indicciones griegas en lápidas visigóticas," op. cit., note 107; op. cit., note 110, H. Schlunk, "Relaciones entre la peninsula Ibérica y Bizancio durante la época visigoda," op. cit., note 111; J. Puig y Cadafalch, "L'Architecture religieuse dans le domaine Byzantin en Espagne." *Byzantion* 1 (1924): 519-533; José Pérez De Barradas. "La Basílica Paleocristiana de Vega del Mar. (San Pedro de Alcántara. Málaga)." *Archivo Español de Arte y Arqueología* 8, no. 22 (1932): 53-72; C. Mergelina, "La basílica bizantina de Aljézares," *Archivo Español de Arqueología* 13 (1940): 5-32; E. Camps Cazorla, "España visigótica (414-711 d. J.C): El arte hispano visigodo," in *Historia de España*, tomo III (Madrid: Espasa Calpe, 1941); C. E. Dubler, "Sobre la crónica arábiga bizantina de 741 y la influencia bizantina en la península Ibérica," *Al-Andalus* 11 (1946): 283-7; P. Gobert, "L'adminstration de l´Espagne byzantine. Influences byzantines religieuses et politiques sur l´Espagne byzantine," *Revue des Études Byzantines* 4 (1946): 71-134; J. Werner, "Hallazgos de origen bizantino en España," *Cuadernos de Historia Primitiva* 3 (1948): 107-112; M. Pinard, "Chapiteaux byzantins de Numidie actuellement au Musée de Carthage," *Cahiers de Byrsa* 1 (1950): 231-268.

[162] Cazorla, "Capítulo VI: Estudio monográfico de monumentos y restos decorativos," "El arte hispano visigodo," opus. cit., 635-59.

[163] Ibid., 647.

[164] See figures 424-29, ibid., 654-57.

areas a Cross-bearing Christ appears with a blessing gesture also surrounded by two angels.[165]

According to Camps Cazorla, a reconstruction of the original disposition of these figures will show that they were located, "en torno al arco toral, en lo alto y en el centro, el Salvador acompañado de dos evangelistas, a abajo, a uno y otro lado, el Sol y la Luna llevado por ángeles…."[166] Camps Cazorla's hermeneutic approach to this ensemble seems to be particularly careful and conservative, as he states that, "no se alcanza el significado total de las representaciones concentradas así en este ensemble…."[167] He interprets the figures of the Sun and the Moon as representations of Nature in adoration to Christ its Creator. Although this is a very logic reading of the meaning of the figures for being a common Christian motif, the sun and the moon can also be seen in this context as symbolic representations of Christ and the Virgin Mary, respectively. This iconotypia is totally coherent with the early Christian transformations and incorporations of pagan mythical symbols to the Church's imaginary and liturgical praxis.[168] Thus, in an early tropar included in the *typikon* of the feat of Nativity, Christ is called Ἥλιος τῆς δικαιοσύνης (*Helios tes dikaiosines*, lit. "Sun of justice"),[169] and His nativity –according to what

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[165] See figure 428, ibid., 656.

[166] Ibid.

[167] Ibid.

[168] In this sense, Camps Cazorla also hightlights the Pagan origin of the winged, fringe-bearing angels which alongside the Sun and the Moon are part of the same ensemble: "El tema de los ángeles […] es pagano en su origen, que se refiere a los genios funerarios de los sarcófagos, como el de San Pedro el Viejo, de Huesca." See ibid., 657.

[169] The tropar reads: "Ἡ γέννησή σου, Χριστὲ ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν, ἀνέτειλε στὸν κόσμο τὸ φῶς τὸ τῆς γνώσεως· διότι σ᾽ αὐτὴν ἐκεῖνοι ποὺ πρῶτα λάτρευαν τὰ ἄστρα, τώρα διδάσκονταν ἀπὸ ἕνα ἄστρο νὰ προσκυνοῦν ἐσένα, τὸν Ἥλιο τῆς δικαιοσύνης, καὶ νὰ γνωρίζουν ὅτι εἶσαι ἡ ἐξ ὕψους ἀνατολή· Κύριε, δόξα σοι." See "Ὑμνολογικὰ τοῦ ὄρθρου τῆς ἑορτῆς τῆς Χριστοῦ Γεννήσεως (μὲ νεοελληνικὴ ἀπόδοση)," accessed 11/3/2016,

Andrew McGowan calls "one extremely popular…most loudly touted" theory– was

officially set by the Church to be the date on which the Roman pagan world celebrated the

mid-winter saturnalia festival. In 274 A.D., emperor Aurelian established the celebration of

the birth of *Sol Invictus* on December 25th.[170] The intericonic contiguity between Virgin

Mary and the figure of the moon was already established by St John in his *Book of*

Revelation,[171] according to early interpretations made by St. Epiphanius, Cassiodorus,

Andreas of Cesarea, and Oikoumenios, among others.[172] Therefore, the sun and the moon

represented on the toral arch of the hermit of Santa Maria could be symbolic iconemes of

Christ and the Ever-Virgin Maria themselves. In any case, this 'Byzantium $\Rightarrow$ Spain'

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http://users.uoa.gr/~nektar/orthodoxy/explanatory/ermhneia_xristoygenna_ymnologika_orthros.htm. "Your Nativity, O Christ our God, / Has shone to the world as the Light of knowledge / For by it, those who worshipped the stars, / Were taught by a Star to adore You, / *The Sun of Justice*, / And to know You, the Orient from on High. / O Lord, glory to You!" (Italics and translation are my own unless indicated otherwise).

[170] Andrew McGowan, "How December 25 Became Christmas, *as it originally appeared in* Bible Review, *December 2002*," *Bible Archeology Review* (2015), accessed 6/29/2017, http://www.biblicalarchaeology.org/daily/biblical-topics/new-testament/how-december-25-became-christmas/. McGowan essentially opposes to this more traditional and "popular" interpretation of Christ's nativity, "trying to leave *unknown* how December 25th was picked...," and stating instead "that December 25th was picked because it is 9 months after March 25th, and that Jesus supposedly was executed on March 25th." See N. Doug, "The Christmas Celebration in December: Are They Right or Wrong?" in *Jesus' Words Only*, accessed 7/29/2017, https://www.jesuswordsonly.com/reviews/jwo-reviews/240-christmas-celebrations-right-or-wrong.html. The Catholic Church itself has recognized that there is a historical relation between the establishment of Christians on December 25th and the celebration of the birthday *Sol Invictus*. (See Cath. Encyclopedia Vol. III (N.Y.: 1913), 724-727.) However, this relationship was denied by Ratzinger, according to whom the date was picked because it fell nine months after March 25th, i.e. after the celebration of the Annunciation of the Virgin Mary by Archangel Gabriel, see "The Christmas Celebration in December: Are They Right or Wrong?" in *Jesus' Words Only*, ibid., footnote 24.

[171] *Book of Revelation* 12:1,17 (Douay-Rheims Version).

[172] See "Epiphanius Salaminis Episcopus - Homilia in laudes Mariae deiparae," in *Documenta Catholica Omnia*, accessed 7/3/2017,
http://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/02g/0320-0403,_Epiphanius_Salaminis_Episcopus,_Homilia_in_laudes_Mariae_deiparae,_MGR.pdf., and *Oecumenius: Commentary on the Apocalypse*, Series Father of the Church (Pittsboro, NC: Catholic University of America Press, 2006), 107.

transiconicity[173] of phytomorphic, zoomorphic, and angelic figures, as well as the symbols

of the sun and the moon already before the 7th century is well established.[174] Worth

underscoring here is the fact that Quintanilla de las Viñas is a small rural town located in

the Province of Burgos, Castile, the birth town of Rodericus Didaci. Thus, such as these

transiconicities gave rise to architectural/ornamental overlaps, so they must have

determined concrete transtextual and intericonic interceptions in Spanish imaginary –

certainly less conspicuous but equally real– which the present work attempts to expose.

Eusebius of Caesarea refers to the existence of icons of Jesus Christ and apostles

Peter and Paul already in the beginnings of the 4th century. In approximately 305-6 AD

came together the Synod of Elvira (*Concilium Eliberritanum*), held in the Roman province

of Hispania Baetica, today's city of Granada in southern Spain. The Cannon 36 of this

Synod explicitly prohibits the use of imagines in churches as well as in any religious

service or devotion either public or private. Many of these were portable icons, whose

artistico-morphological features –along with imagines represented on fresco and tempera–

respond to early Byzantine models based on panegyric and funeral portraits on wood of

Roman emperors and high-rank officials. A well-known example of this funeral art can be

found in the portraits from the Fayoum Oasis, on the West bank of the Niles, which can be

dated from between the 2nd to the 4th century AD.[175] The icon of Ever-Virgen Mary bearing

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[173] 'Transiconicity' is understood here as a form of interinconicity in which a certain iconosystem (or iconosphere generally) impacts another iconosystem without being itself transformed or modified. Thus, transiconicity is a one-directional, mostly transitive process of intericonic impact in which the impacting agent remains essentially changeless and self-identical.

[174] Camps Cazorla, 'Los temas y su origen. Ángeles volantes. El Sol y la Luna,' op. cit., 657-59.

[175] Μαρία Καζάμια, 'Φορητές Εικόνες' ('Portable Icons'), "Η Χριστιανική Τέχνη της Πρωτης Χιλιετίας" ("Christian Art of the 1st Millenium"), in Ιωάννης Πέτρου (John S. Petrou), dir., Χρήστος Αραμπατζής & Φώτιος Ιωαννίδης (Christos Arambatzes and Fotios Ioannides), eds., *Χριστιανική Γραμματεία, Τέχνη, Λατρεία*

the baby Jesus shows the *Theotokos* (Mother of God) surrounded by warrior saints and probably archangels Gabriel and Raphael (emphasizing the military character of the composition) in a date as early as the 6th century (Figure 6). This means that the iconeme of military saints was well-shaped during the first centuries of Christianity, clearly before the 9th century, in the Eastern (Greek-speaking) side of the empire. The morphological impact of the iconotypia of Egyptian funeral figures on iconography is beyond discussion.

**Figure 6: Mary and Child, St. Catherine's
Monastery, Sinai. Photo by Weitzmann, K., 2008.**

στην Πρώτη Χιλιετία (*Christian Literature, Art, and Worship in the 1st Millenium*), vol. 3 (Athens: Road, 2000), 550-551.

2.7. Byzantine Notions of 'Holy City' and 'Military Saints.'

Byzantium not only exports the rudiments of religious visual arts and music that will form the sacred tradition of ecclesiastical representations to the West, but also –and preeminently– its notions of *Ἁγία Πόλις* (Holy City) and *Στρατιοτικοί Ἅγιοι* (military saints) with allegorical connotations. The conflation of theological and political notions in the Eastern Roman Empire, largely enriched by the contributions of theologians such as Clemens, Origen, Cyril and Athanasius the Great from the North African Greek-cultured Alexandrian school, and the Cappadocian Fathers –Basil the Great, Gregory of Nysa, and Gregory of Nazianzus– among others, paved the way towards Byzantium's eschatological self-understanding as the "New Rome." This is apparent in the *Actae* of the First Ecumenical Synod of Nicea (AD 325),[176] in which there can also be witnessed the development of the Empire-restorative ideology pervading the theologico-political thought of Justinian I.[177]

According to the 5th-century historian Socrates of Constantinople, Emperor Constantine –after transferring the capital of the Empire from the Lazio to the old city of Byzantium at the feet of the Bosphorus– called the city after his own name: "ἴσην τε τῇ βασιλευούσῃ Ῥώμῃ ἀποδείξας, καὶ «Κωνσταντινούπολιν» μετονομάσας, χρηματίζειν «δευτέραν Ῥώμην» νόμῳ ἐκύρωσεν· ὃς νόμος ἐν λιθίνῃ γέγραπται στήλῃ, καὶ δημοσίᾳ ἐν τῷ καλουμένῳ στρατηγίῳ πλησίον τοῦ ἑαυτοῦ ἐφίππου παρέθηκε."[178] In a text as early as

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[176] See John Behr, *The Formation of Christian Theology. The Nicene Faith* (New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2004), 163-427.

[177] See Inti Yanes-Fernandez, "Ορθόδοξη εκκλησία και ιεραποστολή στην Λατινική Αμερική εντός των πλαισίων της μετανεωτερικότητος," Master of Theology thesis, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, 2011, accessed April 21, 2017, http://ikee.lib.auth.gr/record/127649/files/?ln=es.

[178] "Σωκράτους Σχολαστικοῦ Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ Ἱστορία," *ΔΡΟΜΟΙ ΤΗΣ ΠΙΣΤΗΣ – ΨΗΦΙΑΚΗ ΠΑΤΡΟΛΟΓΙΑ* (Εργαστήριο Διαχείρισης Πολιτισμικής Κληρονομιάς, Πανεπιστήμιο Αιγαίου, Τμήμα

Πάτρια Κωνσταντινουπόλεως,[179] we witness a city-centric narrative of the foundation and development of the new imperial see, to the extent that architectural and in general infrastructural depictions are kept in the foreground of the diegetic structure in detriment of emperors and patriarchs. The latter are mentioned only insofar as they are deemed relevant for the exaltation of the City. For instance, describing the magnificent consecration of the Patriarchal Cathedral of Saint Sophia, the *Διήγησις* tells that after sacrificing 1000 bulls, 6000 sheep, 600 deer, and 1000 boars, plus ten thousand (*ἀνὰ δέκα χιλιάδες*) of different kind of birds and cocks, and feeding the hungry until the third hour (9:00 am) with up to thirteen thousand bushels (*μόδια τρις μύρια*), Emperor Justinian "τότε εἰσώδευσεν … μετὰ τοῦ σταυροῦ καὶ τοῦ πατριάρχου Εὐτυχίου. Καὶ ἀποδράσας ταῖς χερσὶ τοῦ πατριάρχου ἀπὸ τῶν βασιλικῶν πυλῶν ἔδραμεν μόνος μέχρι τοῦ ἄμβωνος καὶ ἐκτείνας τὰς χεῖρας αὐτοῦ εἶπε¨ 'Δόξα τῳ θεῷ τῶ καταξιώσαντί με τοιοῦτον ἔργον ἀποτελέσαι¨ ἐνίκησά σε, Σολομών."[180] Here, not only Constantinople, its main Temple, and its emperor are compared to Jerusalem, the Temple and Salomon, respectively. The text goes far beyond by stating, through the emperor's mouth, that Constantinople, Saint Sophia, and the emperor himself surpass in glory the most sacred treasures of the Chosen People. This is a necessary conclusion within the framework of Orthodox eschatological theology that, after

Πολιτισμικής Τεχνολογίας και Επικοινωνίας, 2006), accessed 10/24/2016, http://khazarzar.skeptik.net/pgm/PG_Migne/Socrates%20and%20Sozomenus%20Scholasticus_PG%2067/Historia%20ecclesiastica.pdf. For English edition: "…he named it Constantinople, establishing by law that it should be designated New Rome." See "The Ecclesiastical History, by Socrates Scholasticus," in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, edited by Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, Series II, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids, Michigan: WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1885): 1:16, 53. The full text of the *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* published by Christian Classics Ethereal Library is freely available at: http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf202.pdf.

[179] *Scriptores origenum Constantinopolitanarum*, edited by Theodore Preger. Leipzig: R. G. Teubner Verlag, 1901.

[180] *Scriptores origenum Constantinopolitanarum*, ibid., 105.

the resurrection of Christ and the foundation of the Church, interprets Old Testament references as prophetical signs and allegorical revelations of the things to come and to be fulfilled through both the economy and the theandric person of Jesus Christ. Now, the Church as spiritual communion is called the "New Jerusalem," and the world-chronotope where the physical church as living community of the faithful is located, inherits the mystagogical dignity of being the material *σημεῖον* of the new Kingdom of Christ. While *Patria Constantinoupoleos* is properly a history of the city, and in it the city itself is the absolute protagonist, other *actae* such like *Περὶ τῆς Ἁγίας Σοφίας* do more to include the figure of the great Emperor in the theandric apotheosis.

On the other hand, the sacredness of the City is underscored via the traditional device of the king's dream[181] that shows the divine intervention in the *ναοδομία* or construction of sacred buildings and temples devoted only to religious celebrations: "[…] τότε ὁ βασιλεὺς Ἰουστινιανὸς λαβὼν ἰδίαις χερσὶ τὸ ἄσβεστον μετὰ τοῦ ὀστράκου καὶ εὐχαριστῶν τῷ θεῷ ἔλαβεν ἐπὶ τῶν θεμελίων πρὸ πάντων […] τὸ δὲ σχῆμα τοῦ ναοῦ ἄγγελος κυρίου ἔδειξε κατ᾽ ὄναρ τῷ βασιλεῖ."[182] In Constantinople's theological context, the divine / eschatological nature of the City is incarnated in its temple *par excellence*, i.e. Saint Sophia. The emperor himself experiences awe and ecstasies before the divine beauty of the Imperial church: "Ὁ δὲ Ἰουστινιανὸς μόνος ἤρξατο καὶ μόνος ἐτελείωσε τὸν ναὸν μηδενὸς ἑτέρου συνδρομὴν ποιήσαντος ἢ οἱανδήποτε οἰκοδομήν. Θαῦμα δὲ ἦν ἰδέσθαι ἐν τῷ κάλλει καὶ τῇ ποικιλίᾳ τοῦ ναοῦ¨ ὅτι πάντοθεν ἔκ τε χρυσοῦ καὶ ἀργύρου

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[181] For the topic of dreams in medieval literature, see Inti Athanasios Yanes-Fernandez, "Poetics of Dreams: The Narrative Meaning of the Dream-Chronotope in the *House of Fame* and *La vida es sueño*," *Mediaevistik: Internationale Zeitschrift für interdisziplinäre Mittelalterforschung* 29 (2016): 207-244.

[182] *Scriptores origenum Constantinopolitanarum*, ibid., 82-83.

ἐξήστραπτεν."[183] This light that "shined out of the gold and silver" allegorically resembles the mystical light that blinded apostles' physical eyes while opening their spiritual vision on Tabor Mount during Christ's glorious Transfiguration.[184] There is then a correspondence between the Christian theological dogma of the incarnation of the Logos of God-Father in the person of Jesus Christ and the hierophany of God's glory in the spiritualized materiality of the temple.[185] In the same way, the Paulian mystical tropological figure of the bride and the bridegroom as material *analogia* of the eschatological relationship between Christ and the Church will provide the iconological substance to unfold to its farthest consequences the mystical theology of perichoresis between God and the soul as found later in theologians such as John Climacus, Maximus the Confessor, and Simeon the New Theologian.

Thus, the Byzantine notions of *Ἁγία Πόλις* (Holy City) and *Στρατιωτικοί Ἅγιοι* (military saints) will play an essential role in the formation and development of the ideology and iconotypia of Spanish *Reconquista*. The alleged discovery of St. James's tomb, the Benedictine participation in the skyrocketing and establishing of James's iconotypal formation as a warrior / saint in the context of the anti-Muslim *iustum bellum* ideology, and the Byzantine notions of holy city and eschatological ethnos as concretely applied to Hispania and the Goths (first) and to Asturian / Leonese / Castilians (later), are thoroughly studied by William Melczer.[186] The Peninsular roots of this attitude must be

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[183] Ibid., 102.

[184] Matthew 17:1-8; Mark 9:2-8; Luke 9:28-36. (Douay-Rheims Version.)

[185] This mystical aesthetics will reappear some centuries later in the Gothic style, representing one of the many cultural debts of Western Europe to Byzantium.

[186] William Melczer (trans. & ed.), "Part I. Introduction," *The Pilgrim's Guide to Santiago de Compostela* (New York: Italica Press, 1993), 7-23.

found in St. Isidorus Hispalensis's *Historia de regibus Gothorum, Vandalorum et Suevorum*, in which Hispania is granted an allegorical meaning as the holy spiritual *mater* of Western peoples, the *illustrior portio terrae* ("the most glorious gate of Earth") and Goths are considered the historical tool used by God –St. Isidorus attempts to prove the Jewish origin of the Gothic people etymologically– to establish the superior destiny of Hispania as a divine teleology: "… o sacra, semperque felix principium, gentiumque mater Hispania…illustrior portio terrae: in qua gaudet multum ac largiter floret Geticae gentis gloriosa fecunditas […] Gens fortissimo etiam Judaeam terram vestatura describitur."[187] Alexander Pierre Bronisch carries out a thorough analysis of the concept of Spain in Asturian and Visigothic historiography. In doing so, the Historian barely mentions the Byzantine presence in the development of these events. The notion of 'presence' must be understood here in a literal sense, since Pierre Bronisch only slightly alludes to Byzantium when he refers to the fact that, "Isidoro de Sevilla elaboró la exaltación de Hispania en la versión larga de su *Historia Gothorum* cuando los godos, bajo su rey Svintila, habían expulsado a los bizantinos de sus últimas plazas en la Península, y justificó de esta manera este exterminio del antiguo poder y la llegada del nuevo."[188] Both the Visigothic Byzantine heritage and the necessary cultural exchanges that take place in the southern border of the Visigothic Kingdom and Byzantine Spania are missing in Pierre Bronisch's otherwise splendid account.

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[187] Isidorus Hispalensis, *Historia de regibus Gothorum, Vandalorum et Suevorum* (California: The Perfect Library, 2017): 5-7.

[188] Alexander Pierre Bronisch, "El concepto de España en la historiografía visigoda y asturiana," in *Norba. Revista de Historia* 19 (2006): 9-42, 31.

The *Historia de regibus Gothorum* is therefore a careful teleological construction based on theological principles that interprets Goths and Spain as the historico-cultural realization of God's will to establish a new Chosen People on earth. This indicates a parallel relationship with the sacred history of Israel as the original Chosen People and with the prophetical typology of future New Israel incarnated in the Church and Constantinople –the "New Jerusalem"– as its mystical and socio-cultural correlates, respectively. Furthermore, the inception of the 'warrior ⇔ Cross' synapsis cannot be overlooked. The first iconogenesis within the framework of this symbolico-allegorical grammar can be traced back to Constantine's vision of the Cross and the further provisions he ordered. The chapter 314, "De lo que contessio en el anno seteno," of *Primera Crónica General de España*,[189] relates this foundational event and reveals King Alfonso's awareness of the cultural / political meaning of the vision of Constantine –first Christian Byzantine monarch– for the legitimacy of his own empire. According to the *Crónica*:

> En el seteno anno […] segund cuenta Hugo el de Floriaco en el Quinto de la su estoria, que quiso ell emperador Costantino sus huestes por yr a Roma a lidiar con Maxencio; et yendo por la carrera pensado mucho en el fecho de la batalla que auie de auer, adormeciosse, et uio en suennos en el cielo la sennal de la cruz que resplandecie a manera de fuego, e uio los angeles quell estauan a derredor et dizienle en el lenguage teutonico: 'Costantin, por aquesta uencras tu.'"[190]

The common textual source used in the confection of this passage in the *Crónica* was most likely the *Vita Constantini*, ascribed to Eusebius of Caesarea. In the first Logos of the *Vita* an account is given on Constantine's hierophanic vision: "ἀμφὶ μεσημβρινὰς ἡλίου ὥρας, ἤδη τῆς ἡμέρας ἀποκλινούσης, αὐτοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς ἰδεῖν ἔφη ἐν αὐτῷ οὐρανῷ

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[189] *Primera Crónica General de España*, ed. Ramón Menéndez Pidal, T. I (Madrid: Editorial Gredos, 1955), 182.

[190] Ibid., 182.

ὑπερκείμενον τοῦ ἡλίου σταυροῦ τρόπαιον ἐκ φωτὸς συνιστάμενον, γραφήν τε αὐτῷ

συνῆφθαι λέγουσαν· τούτῳ νίκα. θάμβος δ' ἐπὶ τῷ θεάματι κρατῆσαι αὐτόν τε καὶ τὸ

στρατιωτικὸν ἅπαν."[191] In a noteworthy passage, the chronicler refers to the benefits a

warrior can expect from carrying on the Holy Cross during the battle. Constantine had

already ordered that the Cross be embossed on military banners and on his own Imperial

labarum: "E desque Constantino oyo aquello, mando luego pintar aquella sennal de la cruz

que el uiera, en la su senna que auie nombre labaro, et en todos los pendones et las armas

de sus caualleros."[192] King Sancho might have stamped, like Constantine, the Holy Cross

on his royal emblem. *HR* refers to the special love that king Sancho IV professed for

Rodericus: "Rex autem Sanctius adeo diligebat Rodericum Didaci multa predilections at

nimio amore…"[193] The conflation of Sancho's affection and Rodericus's courage resulted

in the latter being exalted as *princeps* of Sancho's armies: "…quod constituit cum

principum super omnem militiam suam."[194] *PA*'s author seems to suggest that king Sancho

cherished more ambitious plans with Rodericus:

> Quem sic dilexit Sancius, rex terre,

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[191] Eusebius of Caesarea, *Vita Constantini. Κεφάλαια τοῦ Κατὰ Θεὸν Βίου τοῦ Μακαρίου Κωνσταντίνου Βασιλέως*, A, 28.2, accessed 04/05/2017, file:///Users/intiyanesfernandez/Desktop/Vita%20Constantini.pdf. Concerning the authenticity of the *Vita* and Eusebius' authorship, there has almost eversince existed a long controversy on this issue, that can be summarized in two main positions: the first concedes Eusebius the only authorship of the Vita, and regards the events related as essentially historical and hence truthful; the second either partly denies Eusebius' authorship or, in a radical stance, states that attributing the work to Eusebius is a complete mistake. Esta problemática es muy antigua ya que se remonta hasta el siglo XVII. Sin entrar en detalles que nos alejarían del objeto de este trabajo, es sintomático que para algún autor "los antiguos eruditos tenían como evidente que Eusebio no escribió la Vita", mientras que otro advierte sobre la tradición no contradicha por la historia, que atribuyó, desde por lo menos fines del siglo V, a Eusebio la paternidad de la Vita Costantini…" See Florencio Ubeñak, "La construcción del mito de Constantino a partir de Eusebio de Cesarea", in *POLIS. Revista de ideas y formas políticas de la Antigüedad Clásica* 23 (2011): 61-88, 64, accessed 04/05/2017, file:///Users/intiyanesfernandez/Desktop/Dialnet-LaConstruccionDelMitoDeConstantinoAPartirDeEusebio-4010942.pdf.

[192] *Primera crónica general de España*, op. cit., 182.

[193] *Historia Roderici*, ed. Gonzalo Martínez Díez, S.J. (Burgos: Amábar, S.L., 1999), 54.

[194] Ibid.

iuuenem cernens adlata subire,
quod principatum uelit illi prime
cohortis dare.

Illo nolente, Sancius honorem
dare uolebat ei meliorem,
nisi tam cito subiret rex mortem,
nulli parcentem.[195]

Also, the Navarre *Chonica Naierensis* reads that El Cid appeared in all battles fought by the king's armies in Plantata and Uulpegera (Golpejera) bearing the king's battle-standard: "In omnibus autem bellis que Sanctium rex fecit cum Adelfonso rege in Plantata et Uulpegera et deuicit eum, tunc Rodericus Didaci tenuit regale signum regis Sanctii…"[196] A similar mention we find in *Carmen de expugnatione Almariae Urbis* (*CA*): "Sunt in uexillis et in armis imperatoris / Illius signa, tutantia cuncta maligna; / Auro sternuntur quotiens ad bella feruntur. Cetus Maurorum uisu prosternitur horum, / […] Hec lux uittatos sic proterit Ismaelitas."[197] Again, battles in Plantata and Golpejera are mentioned by Lucas Tudensis in his *Chronicom Mundi*. Here, like in *CA*, El Cid's presence is consigned but there is no mention of king Sancho's *signum* as such: "Sed in illis diebus surrexerat miles quidam nomine Rodericus Didaci armis strenuous, qui in omnibus suis agendis extitit uictor […] est dicens: '[…] Irruamus igitur super eos primo mane illuscente die et obtinebimus ex eis uictoriam."[198] In *De rebus Hispaniae*, Archbishop of Toledo Don

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[195] "Carmen Campidoctoris: introducción, edición y traducción," ed. Serafín Bodelón vv. 33-40, *Archivum* II, 44-45 (1994): 340-367, 355. "Y le estimó Sancho el rey de su tierra, / viendo al joven emprender grandes gestas, / puesto que quiso confiarle el mando, / de sus mesnadas. / Se opuso el héroe, Sancho iba a darle / un más importante cargo en la Corte, / si tan presto no llegara la muerte inexorable." Ibid., 362.

[196] *Chronica Naierensis*, ed. Juan A. Estévez Sola (Tornhout: Typographi Brepols Editores Pontifici, 1995), 55.

[197] Juan Gil (ed.), "Carmen de expugnatione Almariae Urbis," vv. 85-94, in *Habis* 5 (1974): 45-64.

[198] *Lucae Tudensis Chronicum Mundi*, 62, in *Lucae Tudensis Opera Omnia*, edited by Emma Falque. Tomus I. Corpus Christianorum. Continuatio Medievalis 72 (Turnhout Brepols Publishers, 2003), 297.

Rodrigo Ximénez de Rada refers again to Battle of Golpejera and El Cid's presence in it –
in less laudatory words regarding the latter– without any direct mention of king Sancho's
insignia: "En este día que esto contesció era con el rey don Sancho, Ruy Díaz Campeador,
buen cauallero; e este Ruy Díaz quando vio fuir al rey don Sancho, llamólo e esforçólo, e
consejóle que ayuntase las gentes lo mejor que pudiese…"[199]" A detailed account of both
battles is provided also in Alfonso X's *Primera crónica general de España*. Rodrigo's
presence and involvement is noted basically following the *ChN*'s account, specially
concerning El Cid's strategy to defeat by surprise king Alfonso's armies, and his valorous
intervention to save king Sancho from being captured or even killed by his brother's
troops. Regarding the Battle of Llantada, it reads that: "Et fue en esta batalla muy Bueno
Roy Diaz mio Çid."[200] After being defeated in this first battle, Alfonso challenged his
brother Sancho to a last and decisive battle in Golpejera. King Sancho was defeated by
Alfonso, but Rodrigo does not give up and suggests Sancho to attack "all alua [et] ferid en
la hueste de los leoneses et de los asturianos a dessora…"[201]

El Cid's scheme is successful and "assi como auemos contado libro el Çid a su
sennor, et tornosse con el a sus castellanos; et leuaron preso a Burgos al rey don
Alffonso."[202] Bearing the standard was not something special given that Rodericus was
precisely Sancho's standard-bearer. Yet the fact that this detailed is highlighted in different

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[199] Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada, *Crónica de España del arzobispo Don Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada*. Capítulo CXLIV, in *Historia de los Hechos de España* (Madrid: Imprenta de J. Perales y Martínez, 1893) (Kindle Location 5790). Kindle Edition.

[200] *Primera Crónica General de España (Estoria de España)*, cap. 824, in Ramón Menéndez Pidal et alii (eds.), T. II (Madrid: Gredos, 1955), 502.

[201] Ibid., cap. 825, 502.

[202] Ibid., 503.

narratives undoubtedly gives food for thought. The image displayed in the aforementioned *signum* is not mentioned either in *ChM*, *HG*, *ChN* or in *PA*. For this reason, Juan Gil praises Montaner Frutos' "ingeniosa solución" to the conundrum posed by the omission. Montaner Frutos suggests that the image might have been the Holy Cross, since in *PA* there is a reference to Sancho's insignia that is said to infuse fear in his enemies and protect "del maligno y sus efectos (*tutantia cuncta maligna*), algo que se puede decir de la cruz, pero no del león."[203] The known fact that it was common at the time to go out to the battle field bearing crosses leads Montaner Frutos to the belief that the image embossed on the king's standard was the Holy Cross.[204] If assumed following Montaner Frutos that Sancho IV's *labaro* showed the Cross on it, and not the lion, then the intericonic transaction between Emperor Constantine and King Sancho is beyond discussion. El Cid, as Sancho's standard-bearer and *princeps* of his armies, partakes also of this intericonicity since the fundations of his profile as a hegemonic myth linked to the Reconquista and the Christianization of Spain are laid in this early stage of his life.

In this mythpoetic narrative, there are some iconemes that will reappear in the Cidian narrative, especially in the hagiopoetic Benedictine chronicles during the epigonal prototypopoeia of the hero. These iconemes are: (1) the event as such: the hierophania; (2) the chronotopic elements of the hierophanic event: the moment ([timing] before going to

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[203] Juan Gil, "El *Poema de Almería* y la tradición épica," in *e-Spania* [online], accessed 04/26/17, URL: http://e-spania.revues.org/22253; DOI: 10.4000/e-spania.22253.

[204] "Los efectos de dicho emblema son tan «contundentes» (v. 90-94) que resulta un tanto dudoso que puedan atribuirse a un león que, propiamente, es un mero 'jeroglífico'. Habida cuenta de que en esta época era habitual salir a la batalla con cruces enarboladas (al estilo de la Cruz de la Victoria ovetense), ¿no se estará refiriendo aquí a una cruz de este tipo? Esto justificaría bastante bien, no solo el segundo hemistiquio del verso 89, sino el verso 90, que me parece poco explicable si los *signa* corresponden a un león pintado o bordado en una bandera (además, el león de las armas leonesas es cárdeno, no dorado)." Quoted by Juan Gil, op. cit., footnote 92.

an important battle for the hero's honor,) the space (the liminal topos of the road.) This creates the chronotope of the hero's hierophanic vision in the moment of embarking on a liminal journey prior to an important battle; and (3) the assurance or revelation that the hero will triumph in his warfares. El Cid embarks in a pilgrimage journey towards the sacred City of Compostela (the "New Rome") as a liminal journey before his battle with Martín Gonzales for the city of Calahorra.[205] Thus, the *Crónica particular del Cid* (1512) reads: "El rey don Fernando tanto que se partio de alli embio por Rodrigo de Bivar et contole todo el pleito en como era et en como hauia de lidiar. E quando esto oyo Rodrigo plogole mucho […] pero que entre tanto que el plazo se allegaua que queria yr en romeria que tenia prometido de yr."[206] On his way to Compostela, El Cid is introduced to the reader as an authentic Christian who helps the poor and downtrodden: "et el yendo por el camino fazia mucho bien et mucha limosna fartando los pobres et los meguados."[207] Suddenly, El Cid runs into a leper, whom he treats with abundant mercy and Christian *caritas*: "E él yendo por el camino falló un gafo lazerando en un tremedal que non podía salir dende, e començó de dar muy grandes vozes que lo sacasen dende por amor de Dios. E Rodrigo cuando lo oyó fuese para él e descendió de la bestia e púsulo ante sí e levolo consigo fasta la posada donde alvergavan."[208] There is a clear New Testamentary intertextuality connected with this passage, [209] which can be heard resounding in a deeper

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[205] *Crónica particular del Cid*, op. cit.,

[206] Ibid., "Capitulo Syete," fol. IIIa.

[207] Ibid.

[208] Ibid.

[209] See Parabole of the Good Samaritan. Lucas 10, 29-37.

semantic structure like a *cantus firmus* that comes to reinforce the profile of El Cid as a paradigm of Christian warrior-saint.

2.8. El Cid and Zotikos of Constantinople, The Orphanotrophos

There is a relevant figure that overshadows El Cid, especially in the context of the Emperor Constantine/El Cid intericonic field: fourth-century leper saint and hyeromartyr Zotikos of Constantinople, the Orphanotrophos. Two facts of St. Zotiko's life cannot be overlooked. First, "According to the *Synaxarium*, Zotikos was a civil official of middling rank, specifically a *magistrianos* (an *agens in rebus*), who came to grief at the hands of Constantius [Emperor Constantine's son] for establishing a leper colony across the Golden Horn at a place called Elaia."[210] Notwithstanding the reference to an *agens in rebus* as a civil official, this office actually had a military status in the Byzantine hierarchico-bureaucratic system. In other words, the *agentes in rebus* formed an independent *militia* that directly responded to the Masters of Offices, and the latter had immediate access to the Emperor himself. Indeed, these *magistrianoi*[211] were chosen from the junior cavalry officers, a military corps, and were divided into different ranks of military nature. According to Christopher Kelly:

> These military parallels were deliberate. In part reflecting its origins, many of the formal trappings of later Roman bureaucracy were closely modeled on the army. Service was known simply as *militia*; on appointment, officials in the Praetorian Prefecture were enrolled in the five *legio I adiutrix*. Some bureaucratic terminology still retained ots military style. *Agentes in rebus* (a corps of imperial agents and messengers attached to the palace) advanced through five service grades with the

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[210] Jean-Claude Cheynet and Claudia Sode (eds), *Studies in Byzantine Sigillography*, vol. 8 (München: K. G. Saur Verlag, 2003), 53.

[211] From Greek *μαγιστριανός / μαγιστριανοί*, "μέλος τῆς ὑπηρεσίας τοῦ μαγίστρου," i.e. "a member of the master's service." See *Dictionary of Greek*, accessed 09/21/2017, http://greek_greek.enacademic.com/94049/μαγιστριανός.

same titles as non-commissioned ranks in the cavalry: *equites*, *circitores*, *biarchi*, *centenarii*, and *ducenarii*.[212]

As mentioned here, the *magistrianoi* had a doble condition as courier (messengers) and agents proper. Procopius, in his *Secret History*, explains synoptically both imperial services: Οἱ μὲν γὰρ Ῥωμαίων αὐτοκράτορες ἐν τοῖς ἄνω χρόνοις γεγενημέμοι, προνοήσαντες ὅπως ἅπαντά τε σφίσιν ἐπαγγέλλοιτο τάχιστα, καὶ μηδεμιᾷ διδῷ το μελλήσει […] δημόσιον ὀξύν τινα πανταχόσε πεποίηνται δρόμον τρόπῳ τοιῷ δε."[213] St. Zotikos, though not in a typical way or as a battlefield soldier proper, conflated in his person the attributes of both as a military saint that was martyrized by Constantius for devoting to the care of orphans and lepers.

In second place, Zotikos was very dear to Emperor Constantine who, having built Constantinople and ranked it as Imperial capital, invited Zotikos to the Holy City with other godly men. As early texts on Constantine, like Eusebius' *Vita…*, were well known in 13th-century Spain and translated into Castilian to be included in Alfonso X's encyclopaedical project, in the same way it can be assumed that a corpus of both written and oral traditions on people, especially famous saints and martyrs, who were close to the Emperor has been preserved and was hence well known also by learned nobles, aristocrats, and clerics. Furthermore, the historical migrations and constant cultural exchanges between

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[212] Christopher Kelly, *Ruling the Later Roman Empire* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2004), 20.

[213] Προκοπίου (Procopius), *Ἀπόκρυφη Ἱστορία* (*Arcana Historia*), in *Ἑλλήνων Δίκτυο*, accessed 04/06/2017, http://www.hellinon.net/ProkopiosAnekdote.htm. "For the preceding Roman emperors, so that they might most quickly and easily have news of enemy invasions into any province, of sedition in the cities or any other unexpected trouble, of the actions of the governors and everyone else everywhere in the Roman Empire, and also so that those bringing in the annual taxes might be kept from delay and danger, had established a system of public couriers everywhere in the following manner." See Procopius, *Secret History*, trans. Richard Atwater (New York: Covici Friede, 1927), reprinted, Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1961, with indication that copyright had expired on the text of the translation, accessed 04/06/2017, http://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/procop-anec.asp.

both side of vast Roman Empire, including the relocation of "barbarians" that established within the Empire's borders, play a key role in this transcultural process. Their continuousness and intensity allow us to beleive that many of textual / iconographic parallels and similarities observed are likely to be rather the result of actual physical cross-cultural overlaps than of spontaneous productions emerging out of a common cultural context.

Continuing with the *Crónica…*, the mysterious leper turns out to be Saint Lazarus who announces the hero his future victories and assures him that he has been chosen by God's especial benediction: "[…] et a la media noche en dormiendo Rodrigo: diole un resollo por medio de las espaldas: que tan grande fue el bafo et tan rosio que le recudio a los pechos. Et Rodrigo desperto mucho espantado […] E cató el gafo et no falló ninguna cosa […] E el estando cuydando en esto a cabo de un gran tiempo aparesciole un ome en vestiduras blancas et dixole duermes Rodrigo [...] yo soy san lazaro que te fago saber que to era el gafo […] et otórgate dios un gran don […] que comiences la cosa que quisieres fazer: asy como en lides o en otras cosas todas las acabras complidamente […] et los enemigos nunca te podrán empecer. E moriras muerte honrrada en tu casa: E en tu honrra. E nunca serás vencido antes serás vencedor siempre ca te otorga dios su bendición."[214] This is by far one of the most mystic passages in the entire Cidian literature. From this moment on, El Cid, like Constantine after the vision of the Holy Cross, and Santiago in his new role of warrior-saint protector of Spain, morphs into an eschatological figure. His deeds, battles, and his heroical exploits stand now under the direct blessing of God. Therefore, they are an unconcealment of Gods's presence (a *hierophania*) in the world as

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[214] *Crónica particular del Cid*, ibid., fol. IIIb.

well as an indication of His will. El Cid's life, as shaped by Benedictine hagiographic

interests becomes a resemblance of the lives of saints. As part of his epigonal

prototypopoeia, El Cid is called to become himself a saint following the iconotypal model

of Byzantine warrior-saints. Indeed, like Constantine, both in *PMC* and in the chronicles El

Cid will receive during his sleep Archangel Gabriel's visitation in a dream:

> Í se echava Mio Cid después que fue cenado,
> un suéñol' priso dulce, tan bien se adurmió;
> el ángel Gabriel a él vino en sueño:
> '¡Cavalgad, Cid, el buen Campeador!
> Ca nunqua en tan buen punto cavalgó varón;
> Mientra que visquiéredes bien se fará lo to.'
> Cuando despertó el Cid, la cara se sanctigó,
> sinava la cara, a Dios se acomendó.
> Mucho era pagado del sueño que á soñado.[215]

On the end of El Cid's life, Saint Peter pays a visit to the hero in a dream to make

him aware of his imminent death: "Cuenta la historia que un día yaziendo el cid en su

cama […] aparesció un hombre blanco como la nieve et era como viejo et como crespo et

traya en sus manos unas llaues. […] Yo so san pedro príncipe de los apóstoles que vengo a

ti con más apresurado mandado que non es el que cuydas del rey bucar: et esto es que has

de dexar este mundo et yr te a la vida que no ha fin: et esto será de oy en treynta días."[216]

Adjusted already to this Constantinian profile, the hero comes out thriumphant from his

battles guided and sustained by God's aiding intervention. However, despite the

Benedictine efforts, the spiritual responsibility in the Reconquest and Christianization of

Spain was already in hands of Santiago Apostol, the *Matamoros*. This spiritual

responsibility reaches of course the battlefield and was already well linked to war activities

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[215] *The Poem of the Cid*, vv. 404-412, ed. Ian Michael (London: Penguin Books, 1984), 42.

[216] *Crónica particular del Cid*, op. cit., fol. XCIIIa.

in 12th century, as can be inferred from the mention of Santiago in *CMC* in the context of a battle: "Los moros llaman Mafómat / e los crisitanos Sancti Yagüe / cayén en un poco de logar / moros muertos mill e trezientos ya."[217]

2.9. Byzantium, Romanesque France and Visigothic and Postvisigothic Spain

In this context, a figure like Guilhem VII Count of Poitou, "the first *troubadour*,"[218] can shed light –as just one case among many others– not only on the issue of the intense impact of Byzantium upon Romanesque France and Visigothic and Postvisigothic Spain (Figure 7), but also on the cultural brigdes through which these cultural elements spread out. As soon as the news of the capture of Jerusalem by the Crusaders reached his ears, Count Guilhem decided to set up his own expedition to the Orient. To obtain the money he needed for his enterprise, Gilhem decided to mortgage his domains to England's king, William Rufus, the son of William the Conqueror. Immediately, messengers were sent to William pledging the duchy of Aquitaine in return for money to fund Guilhelm's own crusade. King William accepted on the spot; especially because, according to Guilhelm's biographer, Orderic Vital, he longed to count Aquitaine among his father's duchy and kingdom, i.e. Normandy and England. However, Guilhelm's fate suddenly changed when King Willian Rufus 'accidentally' was killed by an arrow while hunting in the New Forest in 1100.[219]

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[217] *The Poem of the Cid*, vv. 730-732, ibid., 60.

[218] For a complete profile of this interesting personage, see Claude Marks, "Guilhem VII: The First Troubadour," in *Claude Marks, Pilgrims, Heretics, and Lovers: A Medieval Journey* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co. Inc., 1975): 34-90.

[219] William Rufus was hated by the Church because of his bitter anticlericalism. Considered a monstrous blasphemer, comments Claude Marks, "the clergy saw his death definitely as an act of God." See *Pilgrims, Heretics, and Lovers…*, op. cit., 59.
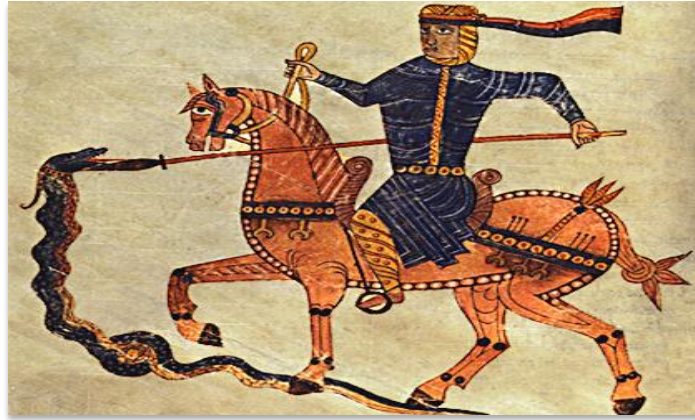
Figure 7: Triumphant Warrior Slaying a Dragon.
Photo by Tillman, 2012.

Gilhelm would not give up and turned to Bertrand, Count of Saint-Gilles, and offered him to mortgage Philippia's patrimony, relinquishing his rights to the county of Toulouse in exchange for cash. Now the count was ready to carry out his long-cherished project. After "taking the Cross," i.e. becoming a crusade knight himself, and gathering an army of about thirty thousand Crusaders from Aquitaine and Gascony, Gilhelm and his warriors crossed the Rhine and headed to Constantinople. It does not matter that his Crusade –in which Gilhelm had also joined forces in Germany with Guelf, Duke of Bavaria, and Ida, Markgravin of Austria– ended in a complete disaster. His visit to the court of the Byzantine Emperor Alexius I Comnenus (1081-1118) gave Gilhelm the opportunity to witness personally Byzantium's grandeur and surely, we can guess, to engrave in his curious mind Byzantine military –both ideological and pictorial– iconotypes which he could take with him back to Poitiers and, even most importantly, to the Iberian Peninsula. As Claude Marks points out, Gilhelm VII further cultivated his predecessors'

ties with the court of Aragon,[220] and in 1119, two years after Pope Paschal II traded

Gilhlem's excommunication ban for some concessions to the Church, the count "agreed to

join King Alfonso I of Aragon in a crusade against the Almoravide Moors in Spain."[221]

Among these concessions counted many presents that Gilhelm charitably gave to religious

houses in Toulouse. One outstanding example is the Romanesque Christ on the Cross that

he presented to the Basilica of Saint-Sernin. According to Claude Marks, Gilhelm "is said

to have brought it back from his Crusade to the Near East, but it suggests Spanish

workmanship."[222] From what is known of Gilhelm's crusade, "Near East" stands here for

Byzantinum. Indeed, the frontal position of Christ, his peaceful expression and the

sensation of "lightness" of the body hanging on the Cross evoke Byzantine iconographical

principles (Figure 8). Even if the piece was handcrafted in Spain, this notwithstanding

would underscore the presence of the Byzantine aesthetico-artistic codes in the Peninsula

(Figure 9). Thus, through manifold cultural routes and ways, the Byzantine legacy arrived

at the Iberian Peninsula and pervaded its cultural iconosystem in a religious, political, and

artistic sense.

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[220] In 1086 Sancho-Ramiro, King of Aragon, married Philippia, daughter of Gilhelm IV, Count of Toulouse. This gave the Aragonese king rights to the country of Toulouse via his wife Philippia who was the rightful heir to it. See *Pilgrims, Heretics, and Lovers…*, op. cit., 52.

[221] Ibid., 84.

[222] Ibid.

Figure 8: Cross at the Basilica of Saint Sernin, Toulouse, France. Photo by Léna, 2011.

Figure 9: Crucifixion, Santa Maria Antiqua, Rome. Anonymous Painter, 8th Century.

2.10. El Cid *Campidoctor* and Belisarius *Archistrategos*

One of the most outstanding intericonic intersections between Byzantium and the Cidian Matter can be found in the figure of Belisarius (500-565), a Byzantine war leader under Emperor Justinian I (Reign 527-565). The textual presence of Belisarius in early Visigothic Iberia is witnessed by the mention that of his name in the *History of the Goths*: "In ipso autem Belisarii occursu priusquam congressio fieret…"[223] Undoubtedly, this is also one of the earliest literary footprints of Byzantium in Spanish territory. In Procodius's *The History of the Wars*, completed by 545 and updated in 551 before publication, there can read in the introduction the reason provided by the author to explain to the reader, and justify, the writing of his work:

> 1.1.1 Προκόπιος Καισαρεὺς τοὺς πολέμους ξυνέγραψεν, οὓς Ἰουστινιανὸς ὁ Ῥωμαίων βασιλεὺς πρὸς βαρβάρους διήνεγκε τούς τε ἑῴους καὶ ἑσπερίους, ὥς πη αὐτῶν ἑκάστῳ ξυνηνέχθη γενέσθαι, ὡς μὴ ἔργα ὑπερμεγέθη ὁ μέγας αἰὼν λόγου ἔρημα χειρωσάμενος τῇ τε λήθῃ αὐτὰ καταπρόηται καὶ παντάπασιν ἐξίτηλα θῆται, ὧνπερ τὴν μνήμην αὐτὸς ᾤετο μέγα τι ἔσεσθαι καὶ ξυνοῖσον ἐς τὰ μάλιστα τοῖς τε νῦν οὖσι καὶ τοῖς ἐς τὸ ἔπειτα γενησομένοις, εἴ ποτε καὶ αὖθις ὁ χρόνος ἐς ὁμοίαν τινὰ τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ἀνάγκην διάθοιτο.[224]

The author's declared goal in writing the *History* is, then, to prevent the accounted deeds from falling into oblivion and to make them a source of knowledge, experience, and inspiration for future generations should they find themselves in similar circumstances. It

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[223] Isidorus Hispalensis, *Historia de Regibus Gothroum, Vandalorum et Suevorum*, 84 (California: The Perfect Library, 2017), 26.

[224] Procopius, *De bellis. Προκοπίου Καισαρέως ὑπὲρ τῶν πολέμων. Λόγος πρῶτος*, in *Εργαστήριο Διαχείρισης Πολιτισμικής Κληρονομιάς*, 1.1.1., www.aegean.gr/culturaltec/chmlab. Accessed 04/25/2017. "Procopius of Caesarea has written the history of the wars which Justinian, Emperor of the Romans, waged against the barbarians of the East and of the West, relating separately the events of each one, to the end that the long course of time may not overwhelm deeds of singular importance through lack of a record, and thus abandon them to oblivion and utterly obliterate them. The memory of these events he deemed would be a great thing and most helpful to men of the present time, and to future generations as well, in case time should ever again place men under a similar stress." See *History of the Wars*, ibid., 1.1.1.

is worth noting that *La crónica del Cid*, copied probably in Toledo by Canciller Francisco de Arce in 1498,[225] does not give any reason to justify its existence other than to give an account on "los grandes fechos que fizo [Ruy Díaz] en el tiempo de los nobles rreyes que reynaron en Castilla en ese tiempo."[226] This scarce introduction is, however, at odds with the elaborated prologues that we find in later chronicles. In the *Crónica del famoso cavallero Cid Ruy Díez Campeador*, written at the Benedictine abbey of San Pedro de Cardeña in 1512, the author offers to the reader more sophisticated motives and explains, among others, the origin of "scriptures" and chronicles as literary genres:

> Las escrituras y crónicas, según que los doctors dizen: allende de otras muchas causas principalmente fueron halladas para que los hechos hazañosos y notables et dignos de memoria: pudiesen tener alguna perpetuydad, pues según nuestra flaca memoria et corta vida, de otra manera no se podría hazer. Y ansí, puestos por escriptura et leydos y publicados por muchas partes sería para los subcessores espejo y escuela para los inducir et atraer a las obras de virtud: et a procurar hazer otras semejantes.[227]

In a not so eloquent style, the scribe of the *Corónica del muy esforzado e invencible cavallero el Cid Ruy Díaz campeador de las Españas* (Toledo, 1526), Miguel de Eguía, shifts the interest to focus on the scholarly and spiritual benefits of his account to those well disposed to receive it: "Aquí comienza un libro llamado Suma de las cosas maravillosas que hizo en su vida el buen caballero y esforçado el Cid Ruy Díaz con gracia y esfuerço que nuestro señor dios le dio […] Y porque es necesario dar principio a las

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[225] *La crónica del Cid Ruy Diaz, copied by Canciller Francisco de Arce in 1498*, unedited, MS. 4798, serie Vaticana Latina, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Roma.

[226] Ibid., fo. 1.

[227] "Prólogo. Proemio," *Crónica del famoso cavallero Cid Ruy Díez Campeador*, 1512, facsímile edition from the copy in the library of Archer M. Huntington, at the De Vinne Press, in New York, 1903. Digitized by the Internet Archive in 2011 with funding from University of Toronto, http://www.archive.org/details/cronicadelfamoso00newy. In the present work, we will refer to this chronicle by the simple title *Cronica del Cid*.

cosas porque el medio y el fin dellas sea notado. Y nuestro señor dios que da sus gracias a

quien se quiere disponer para las recebir…"[228] According to his own testimony, it was also

the ethno-pedagogical necessity to preserve the cultural memory as socio-political identity

that moved St. Isidorus of Sevilla to write his *History of the Goths*: "Per multa quippe retro

saecula ducibus usi sunt, postea regibus, quorum oportet tempora per ordinem cursim

exponere, et quo nomine actuque regnaverint, de historii libata retexere."[229] These are then

several elements that show unambiguous equivalences between El Cid and Belisarius:

A. Both initially enjoy the king's especial recognition and favor.

In *Crónica particular del Cid*, many passages reveal El Cid's nearness to kings

Fernando I and Sancho II, and how much they trusted him. El Cid was not only a brave

warrior, but also a trusted counselor to his lords. Before conquering Coimbra, the king,

"fuese para santiago en romeria por consejo de Rodrigo de biuar…"[230] The fact that El Cid

had not been armed knight yet comes to underscore the nature of his relationship with the

king. Even more, as a kind of prophet, Rodrigo assures the king that, if he goes in pilgrim

to Santiago de Compostela, then "le ayudaria dios a cobrarla [the city of Coimbra]" On the

spot Rodrigo asks the king to knight him on his return from Compostela.[231] In Belisarius's

case, he appears to the right of emperor Justinian on a mosaic at the Cathedral of San

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[228] *Corónica del muy esforzado e invencible cavallero el Cid Ruy Díaz campeador de las Españas*, 1526, facsimile from the copy in the library of Archer M. Huntington, at the De Vinne Press, in New York City, in the month of November 1903, online digitized text, http://hdl.handle.net/2027/ucl.$c234139, accessed 04/12/2016, Public Domain, Google-digitized, http>//www.hathitrust.org/accsess_use#pd-google.

[229] Isidorus Hispalensis, op. cit., 7.

[230] *Crónica del Cid*, cap. XIIII, ibid., fo. Vb.

[231] Ibid.

Vitale, Ravena, Italy.[232] Also, he is called by Emmanuel Georgillas "the eye of Constantinople": "εἰς τὸν καιρὸν τοῦ ἄνακτος Ἰουστινιανοῦ μεγάλου / […] ἐφάνη Βελισάριος, ἀνὴρ σοφὸς ἀνδρεῖος¨ ἐν τοῖς πολέμοις τοιγαροῦν κ᾿ εἰς μηχανὰς καὶ πράξεις νὰ εἶπες κ᾿ ἦτον ὀφθαλμὸς τῆς Κωνσταντινουπόλης."[233]

> B. Both are victims of the deadly sin of envy emanating from a king or emperor, courtiers, and some important military leaders.

Envy has a key actantial role in the diegesis. Envy's intrusion brings about a radical *peripetia* in both Belisarius's and El Cid's life. This is attested to in the very first stanza of the *Poem*: "¡Grado a ti, Señor, Padre que estás en alto! / Esto me han buelto mios enemigos malos."[234] Weeping and kissing his hands, Ximena says to his husband in their painful farewell that the wiles of mischief-makers are driving him out of Castile: "¡Merced, Canpeador, en ora buena fuestes nado! / Por malos mestureros de tierra sodes echado."[235] El Cid is finally restored by his reconciliation with Alfonso VI. Yet even then, envy keeps gnawing deep in the heart of Rodrigo's enemies: "Todos los demás d'esto avién sabor; / peso a Álbar Díaz e a Garcí Ordóñez."[236] Francisco de Arce's copy of *CrCd* (1498), relates that when El Cid responded to King Fernando's desire for him to accept Ximena Gómez in marriage, "El Rey saliole a rescebir e fisole muchas honrras de lo qual peso mucho a todos

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[232] See image 5.

[233] "Ἐμμανουὴλ Γεωργιλλᾶ Ἱστορικὴ ἐξήγησις περὶ Βελισαρίου," vv. 7-12, in *Carmina Graeca Medii Aevi*, edited by Wilhelm Wagner (Leipzig: Neuer Verlag von B. G. Teubner, 1874): 322-347, 322. Available online at: https://archive.org/details/carminagraecamed00wagnuoft: "In times of Emperor Justinian the Great appeared Belisarius, wise man of such a corage that one would say that he was, in war, schemes, and deed, the eye of Constantinople."

[234] *Poem of the Cid*, I, 8-9, ibid., 22.

[235] Ibid., 15, 265-267, 36.

[236] Ibid., 104, 2041-2042.

los condesque estavan ende a la sazon."[237] In Belisarius' case, the fall from grace caused by envy brought the hero to a point of no return. Envy is a topic that is already present in the earliest known account on Rodrigo's life and deeds: *HR*. After defeating the king of Granade Al-Muzaffar, García Ordóñez and Fortún Sánchez, El Cid returns to Castile with glory; envy then appears as an actantial figure that brings about a major dramatic change in Rodrigo's life: "Pro huiusmodi triumph ac uictoria a Deo sibi collate quamplures tam propinqui quam extranei cause inuidie de falsis et non ueris rebus illum apud regem accusauerunt."[238] When Rodrigo seizes Toledo, certainly against Alfonso's wish, then, "huiusmodi causam sibi obicientes sibique curiales inuidentes regi unanimiter dixerunt…"[239] Finally, the exile is unavoidable: "Huiusmodi praua et inuida suggestion rex iniuste commotus et iratus eiecit eum de regno suo et male."[240] Not only courtiers and part of the clergy, but also the king himself harbored envy in his heart against Rodrigo. Thus, knowing that the king was in Tudela, El Cid comes to him looking for reconciliation, "sed imperator adhuc tractauit in corde suo multa inuidia et consilio maligno, ut eiceret Rodericum de terra sua."[241] Thus the attempt of reconciliation fails.

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[237] *La crónica del Cid Ruy Diaz, copied by Canciller Francisco de Arce in 1498*, op. cit., fo. 4b.

[238] *HR*, ibid., 56. "A causa del triunfo y victoria de este modo otorgados por Dios, muchos hombres, tanto parientes como extraños, movidos por la envidia, lo acusaron ante el rey de cosas falsas y no verdaderas." *HR*, ibid., 106.

[239] Ibid., 57. "…y, por esta causa, los que lo reprochaban y los miembros de la curia envidiosos dijeron a una al rey…" Ibid., 107.

[240] Ibid., 57. "Conmovido y airado el rey por la malévola y falsa insinuación, desterró a Rodrigo del reino injustamente y de mala forma." Ibid., 107.

[241] Ibid., 61. "…pero el emperador todavía removió en su interior mucha envidia y aceptó el consejo maligno de que desterrara a Rodrigo a su tierra." Ibid., 18.

Called by Justinian to command the Byzantine armies against England, Belisarius accepts out of obedience to the emperor, but not without lamenting his fate: "οὐκ ἐγενόμην, βασιλεῦ, ἀντάρτης εἰς ἐσένα, πῶς οὕτως μὲ συνέφερεν ὁ φθόνος, πῶς ἐκλώθη, καθὼς εἶπας, ὦ βασιλεῦ, νὰ χάσω τὴν ζωήν μου καὶ τὴν ἀξιὰν καὶ τὴν τιμὴν καὶ φῶς τῶν ὀμματιῶν μου…".[242] Actually, Belisarius initially declines the emperor's call : "κἀμὲ δὲ ἄφες ὥς με δεῖ τοῦ νὰ 'μαι τυφλωμένος, μή τι συνέβη με δεινὸν ἐκ τῶν ἀπροσδοκήτων."[243] Yet, like El Cid in medieval Spain, Belisarius incarnates the figure of the good vassal in Byzantium's imaginary. His bondage to his earthly lord is stronger than his freedom. The emperor no longer requests but demands from Belisarius immediate submission to his will: "τὸν ὁρισμόν μου ποῖσέ τον, ἐγώ σὲ συμβουλεύω¨ τὸ θέλημά μου πλήρωσον καὶ ἀπειθὴς μὴ γίνου."[244] Now, Belisarius's response to the emperor goes beyond the limits of mere obedience; he actually *venerates* Justinian in a way that resembles the ritual *προσκίνησις* (veneration) which, according to the doctrine of the Orthodox Church, is due to the holy icons. Thus, Belisarius's act bears a double meaning. First, it is the perfect expression of his unconditional bondage to the emperor as part of the Byzantine ideal of Imperial hierarchy. Second, it is the allegory of a penitent Byzantium that venerates Christ Himself, seeking forgiveness for its many sins, particularly for its soul-gnawing sin of envy. Here, Belisarius is a living icon. He connotes both the contrite sinner and the innocent martyr, victim of the world's sinful will. On his part, Justinian allegorizes Christ Himself as the

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[242] "Ἐμμανουὴλ Γεωργιλλᾶ Ἱστορικὴ ἐξήγησις περὶ Βελισαρίου," vv. 207-210, ibid., 328: "I never became, my King, a rebel against you, how envy brought me to my present condition, how was I chosen, as you my King said, to lose my life, and my value, and my dignity, and the light of my eyes…"

[243] Ibid., vv. 216-217: "And just leave me alone since I face the fate of my blindness, lest terrible things occur to me out of the unexpected."

[244] Ibid., vv. 218-219, 329: "Listen to my advice: obey my command, fulfill my will, and become not disobedient."

soteriological prototype at whose feet the sinner falls in hope of redemption. Through

patience and self-effacement, Belisarius will be able to shift from fall to grace. In his

person, the theological process of original grace (Paradise), fall (expulsion from Paradise),

and restoration (return to Paradise through Christ) is symbolically reenacted. Although

showing important variations, El Cid in his own life goes through the same eschatological

stages: from grace (Fernando I, Sancho IV), to fall (Alfonso VI), and from here to the final

restoration (reconciliation with Alfonso VI and marriage of his daughters to the Infantes of

Navarra and Aragón).

Not only the diegetic structure, but also the very nature of their act of submission,

attests to the intericonic overlap between El Cid and Belisarius. In the *Διήγησις* it reads:

"πάραυτα Βελισάριος ἔκλινε τὸ κεφάλιν, πίπτει εἰς γῆν καὶ προσκινᾷ τὸν μέγα βασιλέα,

πρῶτα φιλεῖ τὰ χώματα, ἔπειτα τὸ τζαγκίν του, καὶ τότε μὲ τὰς χεῖράς του ἔλυσε τὸ

μανδήλιν."[245] Then Justinian exhibits a strange eschatological authority: "ὅπου ὁ

Βελισάριος ἐκεῖθεν ἐτυφλώθην, ἐκεῖ πάλιν τῆς τ᾽ ἔλυσεν ὁ βασιλεὺς ὁ μέγας."[246] The use

of the verb ἔλυσεν (*elysen*, loosed) underscores the allegorical Christification of Justinian.

In that semantic context, the verb λύναι (to loosen) is synonym for verb ἀφιέναι (to

forgive). In the Gospel according to Luke, Jesus replies the Pharisees with the following

words: "Τί ἐστιν εὐκοπώτερον, εἰπεῖν, ἀφέωνταί σοι αἱ ἁμαρτίαι σου, ἢ εἰπεῖν, ἔγειρε καὶ

περιπάτει;"[247] In a parallel expression of vassalage, El Cid shows in the strongest terms his

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[245] Ibid., vv. 120-126, 329: "On the spot Belisarius bowed his head, falls on his knees, and venerates the great king; he first kisses the soil, then the king's boot, and with his hands he loosens his tunic."

[246] Ibid.: "There where Belisarius was blinded, there again loosed [his blindness] the great king."

[247] "Which is easier to say, Thy sins are forgiven thee; or to say, Arise and walk?" Luke 5, 23, (Douay-Rheims Version).

will to reconciliation with his lord: "los inojos e las manos en tierra los fincó, / las yerbas del campo a dientes las tomó, / llorando de los ojos tanto avié el gozo mayor; / assí sabe dar omildança a Alfonso so señor."[248] Like Belisarius, El Cid morphs into an Imperial allegory: the greatest knight lowers himself to the groud in the presence of his lord (fig. 11). As a paradigm, El Cid indicates what the whole Christendom is expected to do before the Castilian monarch, in which the old Asturian utopia of Gothic restoration becomes not just accomplished but essentially reformulated. Alfonso VI sets his gaze upon French model of absolute monarchy. He does not persue the revival of a glorious past but the glory of a new present. Of course, 11th century Spain is not Byzantium. El Cid's passage lacks the religious character that is essential to Belisarius' and Justinian's self-consciousness. This can be seen in the lexical difference exhibited in each case: while in the *Διήγησις* we find the verb *προσκινã* (*proskina*, lit. "[he] venerates"), in El Cid's account the word used in the verbal form "dar omildança." It is impossible venerating without humbling oneself; but nothing prevents humbling oneself without venerating. El Cid humbles himself; he preserves his self-reconciled condition of vassal and stands completely commited to his bondage. But he does not venerate the king; at least this is not what he *primarily seeks to do*. Alfonso's behavior difers from Justinian's in that, while the Byzantine emperor is totally aquiescent with Belisarius's veneration, Alfonso knows that the reason for El Cid's act is not *primarily* veneration but *reconciliation*. Then he asks El Cid to stop: "Levantados en pie, ya Cid Campeador…"[249] Additionally, the different ending of the lives of El Cid and Belisarius borrows its meaning from their respective societal milieus. Belisarius's

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[248] *The Poem of the Cid*, op. cit., vss 2021-2024, 128.

[249] Ibid., vss 2027, 128.

account is based on a work written in the 15th century by Emmanuel Georgillas, when Byzantium was at the verge of its fall. Therefore, and fitting very well within Byzantium's traditional fondness for symbols and allegories, envy acquires a metaphysical dimension and is deemed responsible for the inexorable fall of the Holy City: "Dans le texte de Georgillas, c'est advantage l'envie gangrenant Byzance qui est dénoncée, a un moment où elle rend inefficace la lute contre les mahométans."[250] It would not be unreasonable to think that the shockwaves caused by the Fall of Constantinople to the Turks (1453) amplified, as an intericonic *déjà vu*, both the cosmic dimension and *ethnos*-destructing impact of envy from earlier variations of Belisarius's saga, in which this evil sentiment dominates the center stage (Figure 10).
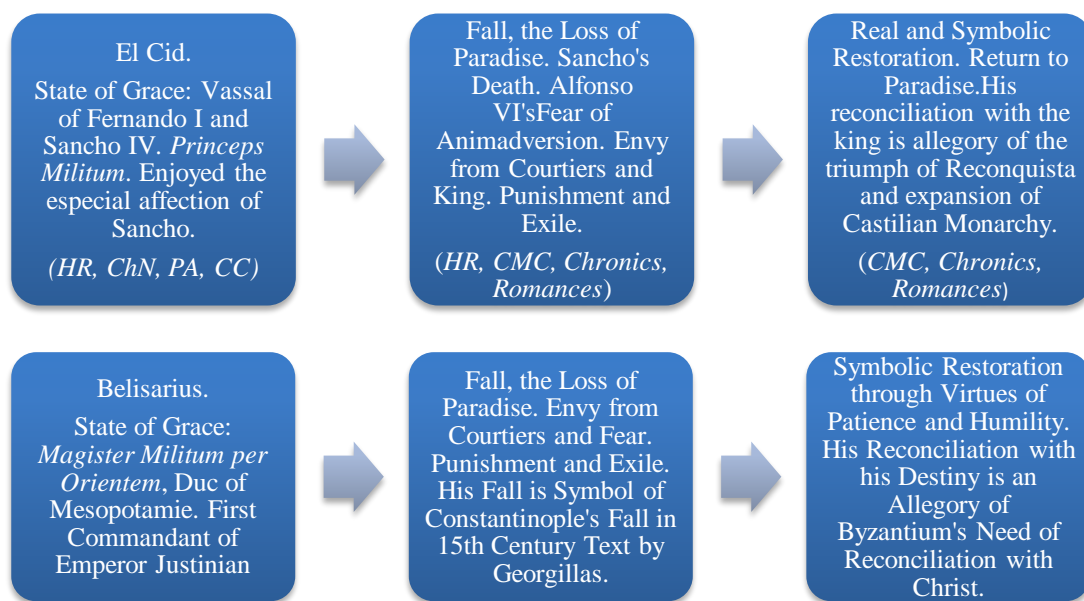
Figure 10: Envy, Fall and Restoration in El Cid and Belisarius.

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[250] Anne-Sophie Barrovecchio, "Bélisaire: Géneral byzantin, héros européen," in *Ακρίτες της Ευρώπης. Ευρωπαϊκή ακριτική παράδοση: από τον Μεγαλέξανδρο στον Διγενή Ακρίτα* (Αθήνα: Κέντρον Ερεύνης της Ελληνικής Λαογραφίας της Ακαδημίας Αθηνών, 2005), 80-95, 82-83.

C. Opposition between gracious acceptance and treacherous ingratitude.

As vassals, El Cid and Belisarius accept with loyalty their bondage to the king, the kingdom, and the imperial project they are involved in. Despite of that, El Cid will be exiled twice by Alfonso VI, and Belisarius will be blinded by the same emperor Justinianus for whom he conquered huge territories.

D. Both suffer exile as an undeserved punishment for crimes they did not commit.

E. Both are "border heroes" linked to projects of Reconquest.

Regarding Belisarius, Anne-Sophie Barrovecchio states that "Belisaire réalisa la rêve de *Renovatio* de Justinien en reconquerant an nom de son Empereur de nombreux territoires romains perdus au fil des siècles…"[251] From Belisarius, El Cid inherited the model of a vassal that Barrovecchio calls "héros de confins,"[252] which is essentially described in terms of being "surtout un satellite du pouvoir central, chargé d'exécuter ses voluntés jusqu'aux limites de l'Empire at au-delà de sus frontières."[253] His "border-hero" condition represented for El Cid many challenges. Forced out of Castilla by the king, El Cid must confront not only Almoravid kings, but also Christian counts like Ramon Berenger. The simple presence of El Cid in bordering lands was enough to create anxiety and concerns and was felt as an insult to the count's sovereignty: "Llegaron las nuevas al conde Barcilona / que Mio Cid Rruy Díaz quel' corrié la tierra toda; / ovo gran pesar o tóvos'lo a grant fonta."[254]The complexity of Byzantine borders is attested in two verses of

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[251] Anne-Sophie Barrovecchio, ibid., 82.

[252] Ibid.

[253] Ibid.

[254] *The Poem of the Cid* 55, vss 957-960, ibid., 72.

Georgillas. Praising Belisaurius as an invictus warrior, he says: "εἰς Πέρσας καὶ Σαρακηνοὺς ἀλλὰ κ᾽ Ἰσμαϊλήτας καὶ πανταχοῦ ἐγίνετο νικητὴς τροπαιοῦχος."[255]

    F.   The important reference to the hero and his wife. (Belisarius-Antonina/El Cid-Ximena).

Although both are presented as loyal supporters of thoer husbands, a worth-mentioning difference between Ximena and Antonina is that, while the first played generally a passive role in El Cid's public life,[256] the latter was highly skilled in safeguarding her husband's prestige and protecting his life.[257] About her Procopius will say: "Ἀντωνίνα […] ἦν γὰρ ἱκανωτάτην ἀνθρώπων ἁπάντων μηχανᾶσθαι τὰ ἀμήχανα."[258]

    G.   The heroes' role in the expansion of Reconquests.

While El Cid was active part in the Spanish Reconquista across the Iberian Peninsula against the Moors, Belisarius represented Justinian's hopes to restore in full extension the Roman Empire by conquering the Italian Peninsula and defeating the Persian danger. The king calles the hero to accomplish military ops of strategic importance for the Empire's survival (to defeat the Persians [Belisarius], and the Almoravides [El Cid]).

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[255] *Διήγησις*, ibid., 172-3: "Over Persians and Saracens, but also Ishmaelites and everywhere he was the trophy-bearing winner."

[256] Some exceptions may be her responsibility after el Cid's death in the battle against Yusuf and his armies, and in both the *Corónica del Cid* [1492] y *Corónica del muy esforzado cavallero Ruiz Díaz* [1512], where Ximena asked King Fernando I personally to marry her to El Cid because he killed her father. In *Corónica del muy esforzado cavallero Ruiz Díaz* or *Crónica particular del Cid* we can read: "Señor yo soy fija del conde don Gómez y Rodrigo de Bivar mató al conde mi padre […] y señor vengo pedir vos merced que me dedes por marido a Rodrigo de Bivar. De que me tendré por bien casada y por mucho honrada…" Facsimil edition form the copy in the library of Archer M. Huntington (New York: De Vinne Press, 1903), fo. II.

[257] See *History of the Wars* 1, XXV, ibid., 14ff.

[258] *De bellis*, ibid., 1, XXV. "Antonina […] was the most capable person in the world to contrive the impossible." *History of the Wars* 1, XXV, ibid., 19-20.

H. The heroes' upper position as commanders, and the special relationship they had with their armies, and sometimes even with the enemy.

This reinforces the image of genuine Christian warriors who combine strength, courage, and charity. After Alcocer's battle, El Cid ordered that his men provide the Moorish survivors with food, water, and other essential supplies: "A so castiello a los moros dentro los an tornados, / mandó Mio Cid aún que les diessen algo."[259] Of course, he shares the rest of the spoils with his own vassals: "¡Dios qué bien pagó a todos sus vasallos, / a los peones e a los encavalgados!"[260] As a war leader, Belisarius's character is always severer than El Cid's. Yet he also promises to make his men rich and glorious if they are able to achieve victory. The expression "μετὰ καλῆς καρδῖας" somewhat smooths the general tone of the speech and introduces an affectional link between Belisarius and the soldiers.[261] Furthermore, Belisarius was *Magister militum per Orientem* and "duc de Mesopotamie" for more than 25 years,[262] while El Cid was made *princeps* of the armies by king Sancho, and was *de facto* a kind of "duc" of Valencia describing a similar trajectory: "Rex autem Sanctius adeo diligebat Rodericum Didaci multa dilectione et nimio amore, quod constituit eum principem super omnes militam suam."[263] Belisarius receives from

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[259] *PMC* 40, 803, ibid., 64.

[260] Ibid., 806-8.

[261] *Διήγησις* v. 279, ibid., 330.

[262] Anne-Sophie Barrovecchio, "Bélisaire: Géneral byzantin, héros européen," op. cit., 82.

[263] *Historia Roderici*, op. cit., see note 97.

emperor Justinian the highest military rank: "ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν δίδω σου τὴν ἀξίαν τοῦ νὰ ᾿σαι καπετάνιος ἐγ᾿ὅλην τὴν ἀρμάδα."[264]

      I.   The *affectional realism* in the image of the hero going to war or exile leaving his beloved wife behind (Ximena in San Pedro de Cardeña, Burgos; and Antonina in Byzantium [Constantinople]).

It is well known the passage of El Cid's farewell from his wife and daugthers in the monastery of San Pedro de Cardeña. Here the poet does not spare with realistc details in conveying throught the text the emotional stance of the Spanish hero: "Enclinó las manos la barba vellida, / a las sus fijas en braço' las prendía, / llególas al coraçón, ca mucho las quería; llora de los ojos, / tan fuertemiente sospira: 'Ya doña Ximena la mi mugier tan conplida, / como a la mi alma yo tanto vos quería. / Ya lo vedes que partir nos emos en vida, / yo iré e vós fincaredes rremanida.'"[265] In a by far less emotional account, we are also shared the detail that, as departing to war against the Persians, Belisarius left his wife behind in Byzantium: "[…] ἐπ' αὐτῷ τε γενομένης τῆς Ῥωμαίων ἐλπίδος αὖθις ἐπὶ Πέρσας ἐστράτευσε, τὴν γυναῖκα ἐν Βυζαντίῳ πολιπών."[266] If it is true that the use of the direct speech in El Cid's passage provides the text with a special rhetorical emphasis, it is also true that the reference to the heroes' wifes seems to underscore their humanity alongside their commitment with the sacred (in both Roman-Spanish and Roman-Byzantine religious

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[264] *Διήγησις* vss. 227-8, op. cit., 329: "From now on I bestow upon you the honor of being captain of the entire army."

[265] *PMC*, vss. 274-281, ed. Ian Mitchel, ibid., 36.

[266] *De bellis*, ibid., 1, XXV. "And it was on him that the hope of the Romans centred as he marched once more against the Persians, leaving his wife in Byzantium." *Procopius*, 1, XXV, *Book of Wars*, trans. by H. B. Dewing (The Project Gutenberg eBook, 2005), 16-18. ISO-8859-, http://www.gutenberg.org/files/16764/16764-h/16764-h.htm#PageI_xxv_10 04/03/2017.

contexts) institution of marriage. Furthermore, the "down-to-earth" nature of both warriors is preserved via this rhetorical narrative device. It is noteworthy that, as Claude Marks explains, "Although the 11th century *chanson de gestes* helped to create the values of chivalry, the notion of *l'amour courtois* had not emerged.[267] Therefore, in a patriarchal warrior-centered society like the European during the chivalric Middle Age, these mentions of the hero's women and even some details of their lives, although relatively scarce, reveal the special relation bore by those knights with their beloved ones.

J. The popularity enjoyed by the hero, and his nearness to the king or emperor.

In both *PMC* and *The Books of the Wars* (*BW*) is clear that one main reason for the heroes' popularity and intimacy to the king was their military skills and their almost-certain triumph in war affairs. Both heroes, El Cid and Belisarius, enjoyed an undisputable popularity among the people (even Moors in several occasions) and his own troops. Since the beginning of the *Poem*, Rodrigo's men pay allegiance to their master. El Cid will always analogously reciprocate to their frienship and loyalty. For that reason: "Alegres son Valencia las yentes cristianas / tanto avién de averes, de cavallos e de armas."[268] In cantar 45 we read: "Mio Cid Rruy Díaz Alcocer á ven[d]ido, / ¡qué bien pagó a sus vassallos mismos! / A cavalleros e a peones fechos los ha rricos, / en todos los sos non fallariedes un mesquino, / qui a buen señor sirve siempre bive en delicio."[269] El Cid's fame reached back to his homeland Burgos. So that, even after his dead, people crowed to hail his mortal remains at San Pedro de Cardeña: "Mucho era grande et sin mesura la gente que estaua ay

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[267] Marks, op. cit., 38.

[268] *PMC*, 96, vss 1799-80, ibid., 116.

[269] Ibid., 45, vss 845-50, 66.

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de toda castilla: por ver al Cid ruy diaz en qual guise venia. E quando fueron ay et lo vieron fueron mucho marauillados…"[270] Procopius tells that Belisarius, especially after his triumph over the Italians and during his incursions against the Persians, was honored and exalted by the people. Indeed, on him was laid the hope of defeating the Persians and saving the still young Empire: "Ἐν τούτῳ δὲ Βελισάριος Ἰταλίαν καταστρεψάμενος βασιλεῖ ἐς Βυζάντιον ξὺν Ἀντωνίνῃ τῇ γυναικὶ μετάπεμπτος ἦλθεν, ἐφ' ᾧ ἐπὶ Πέρσας στρατεύσειε. καὶ τοῖς μὲν ἄλλοις ἅπασιν ἔντιμός τε καὶ λόγου πολλοῦ ἄξιος, ὡς τὸ εἰκὸς, ἦν […] ὅτι δὲ αὐτὸς μὲν τὸ ἐκ πάντων ἔχθος ἐφ' ἑαυτὸν εἷλκε, Βελισάριος δὲ πάντων εὐδοκιμῶν μάλιστα ἔτυχεν·"[271]

2.11. Internal Complexity of El Cid as Hegemonic Myth

Montaner Frutos mentions two facts that, when put in the general context can better illustrate El Cid's internal complexity as a hegemonic myth. In Ibn Bassam's afore-mentioned testimony on El Cid, the Arab word used to define the nature of Rodrigo's special call is *istanqada*.[272] This word's only meaning is "salvar." And, properly, only a savior can bestow salvation or, as the case is presented to us by the dotal letter, convey God's salvation to the people on His behalf. So, according to this text, in the 11th century El Cid iconizes (mirrors) semantic *eide* of prophets (Otoniel and Aod), kings (David, Solomon) and, somehow, of Christ Himself, as mediator between his people and God's salvation. This is essentially linked to the fact that "… el Campeador y su entorno […] no

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[270] *Crónica particular…*, op. cit., fo. XCVII.

[271] *Διήγησις* vss. 235, op. cit: "At that time Belisarius, having destroyed Italy, was ordered by the king to return to Byzantium to his wife Antonina, where he campaigned against the Persians. And in everything he was an honorable man who deserved the praise of others […] to the extent that he attracted the enmity of all, though he always suffered it patiently with good will."

[272] Montaner Frutos, "Rodrigo el Campeador como prínceps en los siglos XI y XII," op. cit., 4.

se inspiren sólo en el modelo de reconquista, sino también en el de cruzada."[273] And Montaner adds: "En efecto, el preámbulo del diploma de 1098 y la frase recogida en *Addahirah* coinciden en establecer una justificación del *iustum bellum*, no sólo en el legitimismo goticista, sino en su condición de *bellum sanctum*."[274]

This leads us to the second fact mentioned by Montaner: the new Valencian bishop, whose see is the cathedral endowed by El Cid, was consecrated directly by the same pontifex that, in 1095 in the speech at the end of the Synod of Clermont, proclaimed the first Christian crusade as a necessary and therefore legitimate (in religious terms, holy) war, i.e. Urbano II. The intericonic complexity of El Cid's figure already in 1098 is clearly visible in the fact that, in these references, spin around him prophets, kings, and Old Testament iconotypes and intertexts. The essential idea that he himself is a warrior-hero is also present, whose mission is to save his people in God's name and bring into fulfillment Visigothic king Rodericus's incomplete task -and the new utopia rescued and relaunched by the Asturian-Leonese kingdom-, i.e. the Reconquest and total Christianization of the Iberian Peninsula. Writing about the gradual fall of the Roman Empire in Iberia and the replacement of its traditional institutions with the Germanic (Goths, Vandals, Suebi) kingship and its new conception of nobility, Bernard F. Reilly states: "Yet the most profound transformation in process during that 150 years was the Christianization of the Iberian population. That conversion was, of course, intimately related to the emergence of a stable monarchy and a stable nobility as institutions which could survive the eight-

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[273] Ibid.

[274] Ibid., 5.

century collapse of the Visigothic realm itself and emerge, phoenix-like, in the new Christian world of Asturias."[275]

2.12. El Cid as Warrior-Hero Prototype

El Cid reveals here his epic condition as a warrior-hero prototype. In his intericonic complexity the hegemonic device is exposed, by which both a historic memory and an eschatological destination are embedded into Spain's cultural imaginary as identitary master-narratives: The Peninsula is called by God to be essentially Christian. The Christianization process had begun already with the Visigothic converted kings, like Roderic, and was interrupted by the Muslim conquest. The Muslims, therefore, are the enemies God and Spain. As a kind of Holy Land, like Israel, Spain is not forsaken by God. He rather sent a warrior-hero, a saint-prophet, such as then Otoniel and David, with the sacred mission to save the people and restore God's kingdom by a war that was not only *iustum* but also *sanctum*. This man is Rodrigo Díaz, El Cid.

Yet this narrative had a problem: the eschatological, metaphysic Christian condition of the Iberian Peninsula was in a concrete innerworldy, entirely historical structure of hegemony: The Church and the Crown. El Cid –the shadow of the historical Rodrigo– was neither a prelate nor a king. For some reason, this intertextual / intericonic myth-making never morphed El Cid into a total king. As pointed out by Montaner Frutos, he became *princeps inuictissimus*, and precisely like king David, "sobre la base de una nueva legitimación no extraída *ab origine* (en términos genealógicos), sino, al contrario, como el modelo davídico, *a regimine*, es decir, a partir de una actuación que quedaba

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[275] Bernard F. Reilly, *The Medieval Spains* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 17.

justificada en clave providencialista."[276] The hero-warrior, still an epic prototype who is

almost completely autonomous in deeds and works, must undergo another intericonic

shape-shifting. Both power structures, the Church and the Empire, needed to hold on to the

hero as a standard of heroic Christianity and holy zeal, but not any more as the restoration

of the pre-Asturian/Leonese Visigothic eschatological mission and kingdom, let alone as a

power offset against the legitimate royal aristocracy of Castilla-León. El Cid certainly had

to stay, *yet* in a different way.

Certainly, the solution was at hand already: El Cid was made a *princeps*, not only

by God, according to the diploma of Toledo, but also by King Sancho according to

Historia Roderici: "Rex autem Sanctius adeo diligebat Rodericum Didaci multa

dilectione…quod constituit eum principem super omnem militiam suam."[277] This is El

Cid's apex as epic prototype and at the same time the beginning of his prototypoferesis. In

his neighborhood to kings, Rodrigo's figure acquires a profile increasingly closer to the

royal dignity. Montaner Frutos mentions the fact that: "Tres fuentes latinas de los siglos XI

y XII aplican el dictado de princeps a Rodrigo el Campeador en un total de cinco

ocasiones."[278] Indeed, the *Carmen Campidoctoris* refers to Rodrigo as prince:

> Sed paganorum quid iuuabunt acta
> dum iam uillescant uetustate multa?
> Modo canamus Roderici noua
> principis bella.[279]

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[276] "Rodrigo el Campeador como prínceps…," op. cit., 5-6.

[277] *HR*, 5.

[278] "Rodrigo el Campeador como prínceps…," op. cit., 1.

[279] *Carmen Campidoctoris*, vv. 5-8, opus. cit., 354. "Mas ¿qué ayudarán las paganas gestas, / ya envejecidas por su lejanía? / Mas cantemos ya las guerras recientes / de nuestro héroe." Ibid., 360. In this context, the translation of genitive *principis* as [de…] *héroe* seems to be extremely inaccurate.

The same poem mentions King Sancho's intentions to honor El Cid by making him prince of the king's cohorts:

> Quem sic dilexit Sancius, rex terre,
> iuuenem cernens ad alta subire,
> quod principatum uelit illi prime
> cohortis dare.[280]

El Cid as iconeme receives a decisive intericonic impact not only from Old Testament figures but also from Visigothic king Rodericus. Because of its importance, we reproduce here the whole passage in which Montaner Frutos underscores the messianic connection established between Visigothic king Rodericus and El Cid:

> Este trasfondo bíblico se une a las peculiares connotaciones goticistas del texto, que concuerdan con las palabras de Rodrigo sobre sí mismo en relación con el último rey godo llegadas a los cronistas alfonsíes23 y que son corroboradas por la noticia que proporciona Ibn Bassām, quien se basa en un testigo directo: ḥaddaṯanī man sami'ahū yaqūlu waqad qawiya ṭam'uhū walağğa bihī ğaša'uhū: —'Alà Ruḏrīqa futiḥat hāḏihi lğazīratu waRuḏrīqu yastanqiḏuhā = 'Me lo contó quien se lo oyó decir, cuando se acrecentó su avidez y lo atosigó la codicia: —Bajo un Rodrigo se conquistó esta Península y un Rodrigo la salvará'[281]

Thus, El Cid showcases a messianic profile related to St. Isidro's eschatological vision of Spania as the new theo-political axis the Christian world. Rodrigo is called by God to save the Peninsula. Saving the Peninsula means laying the foundations of the earthly Jerusalem. At this moment, Christ as absolute Archetype overshadows Rodrigo's figure and raises him to a close-to-Messiah status. Such as Christ inaugurates the Kingdom of His Father on earth, so Rodrigo is called to establish the eschatological Christian Spania. The relationship between God-Father and Christ as God's Logos is replicated on

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[280] Ibid., vv. 33-36, 355. "Y le estimó Sancho el rey de su tierra, / viendo al joven emprender grandes gestas, / puesto que quiso / confiarle el mando / de sus mesnadas." Ibid., 362.

[281] "Rodrigo el Campeador como prínceps…," op. cit., 13.

El Cid as 'earthly logos' of Christ Himself. In a 11th century document, a diploma of endowment of the cathedral of Valencia, Rodrigo is said to have been *suscitauit*, i.e. called by God Himself as *inuictissimum principem* to protect the people and restore Christendom in the Peninsula: "ego Rudericus Campidoctor et principes ac populos quos Deus quandiu ei placuerit meę potestati comisito."[282] Among the princes, Rodrigo stands out bearing preeminence in character and mission: "…exigente iustitia et puis precibus nostri principis obtimatum que illius."[283] Rodrigo, in the condition of epic prototype, is a vassal essentially only to God Himself, which explains his systematically being at odds with Alfonso VI in *HR* and his being praised almost as an autonomous figure in *CP*. Both *HR* are *CP* are very early works. Montaner Frutos further elucidates the importance of this document to understand the meaning of the expression *inuictissimus princeps* as applied to Rodericus already in the 11th century:

> Expedido "Anno siquidem incarnationis Dominice LXXXXº VIIIº post millesimum [post c.:millesimo ante c.]" (15-16), por el cual "ego Rudericus Campidoctor et principes ac populos quos Deus quandiu ei placuerit meę potestati comisito" (16) realizan la donación de diversas heredades a la iglesia catedral de Valencia. En la extensa exposición de motivos que precede a esta mención en primera persona, con la que se inicia el dispositivo, se había presentado a su principal actor como "inuictissimum principem Rodericum Campidoctorem" (11), en acusativo debido a ser el objeto directo de "suscitauit" (12), cuyo sujeto es nada menos que Dios Padre, formulación relevante para el caso que nos ocupa, como se advertirá luego.[284]

One of the conclusions to which Montaner Frutos arrives is of no lesser importance when it comes to recognize El Cid's epic-prototypal status in the earliest phases of the

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[282] Quoted by Alberto Montaner Frutos, ibid., 1.

[283] Ibid., 1.

[284] Ibid., 1.

Christian Reconquest and the Castilianization of the Iberian Peninsula. Montaner Frutos states: "Que en el diploma valenciano de 1098, la adopción del título de *princeps* por parte de Rodrigo no responde sólo al intento de dignificar y solemnizar el acta de dotación de la catedral de Valencia, sino también a la voluntad política de marcar la autonomía del señorío valenciano, con atributos cuasi-regios."[285] Yet, despite the royal rank enjoyed, at least symbolically, by Rodrigo, the prototypoferesis was already an ongoing process which developed in parallel to the advance of the Reconquista, the Castilization, and the consequent universalization of the figure of king/emperor. To be a good warrior-hero in the force field of the even more centralized Spanish monarchy, El Cid *had to morph into* a more complex, yet at the same time more "manageable," myth.

2.13. Lord/Bondsman Dialectic: El Cid Without His Lord

From being an epic prototype, El Cid came to mirror in his modified nature the cultural *eidos* of the new kind of crusade-knight: a good vassal subdued to his lord, and willing to sacrifice his own life –and even the life of his own family, as convincingly shown in *PMC*– for his king, "señor natural," in obedience and humility should the circumstances so require. This type of natural bondage to the lord was the social result of a process of erosion of the traditional feudal lord-servant ties, based on land property, the alienation from basic survival means, and its substitution with a more essential and eschatological kind of dependence: a natural bondage as a twofold hegemonic structure of lord and bondsman.

Indeed, the kind of vassalage we find in *PMC* is a culturally specific type of bondage idealized by a self-consciousness that defines itself by superseding the being of

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[285] Ibid., 70.

the common people as *sine nobilitate* and hence of axiologically lower value: it is the way of the knight that needs two self-consciousnesses, contradictory with each other, to exist as a concrete self-consciousness. The knight recognizes the non-initiated as essentially different from himself and in so doing he is set to eliminate this alien selfhood. At this moment, the knight *is* the lord. Yet at the same time, the knight lifts himself against the king and submits to him insofar as his independent knighthood is superseded by the self-consciousness of a stronger otherness, and morphs into a vassal. His bondage is now a vassalage proper.

Synchronically and as a self-identical being, the knight becomes a self-consciousness in so far as he affirms himself by negating and eliminating the lower selfhood of the common people, and by negating and eliminating himself since he affirms a stronger self-conciousness, becoming ontologically dependent on it: the king. He is ontologically dependent on both the bondsman as a lord, and the king / lord as a vassal, but he is culturally enabled to recognize this dependence only regarding the king, and never regarding the plebeians or commoners. And this because, as stated by Hegel, in the life-and-death struggle of these rival self-consciousnesses, the fact that "the two self-consciousnesses are at bottom the same becomes deeply veiled."[286]

The concentration of royal power in the Castilian house makes the king demand more loyal vassals. There was nothing more effective to this end than a bond that was primordial and preeminent over the will of both lord and bondsman, i.e. a bond determined by the *nature* of things themselves. Surely, this is an expression of a more general

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[286] G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, transl. by A. V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 521.

paradigm shift. In this sense explains Leonardo Funes that, "Según la documentación del siglo XII, este concepto se desarrolló como reacción contra las revueltas de burgueses y caballeros pardos, en tiempos de Alfonso VII, y como mecanismo para defender la legitimidad regia frente a las aspiraciones de los sublevados."[287] The more the Cid exists as an epic prototype, the less he is dependent on the king as a bondsman to his lord. As a prototype, El Cid exists for himself in a *positive* way in *HR*. He contains in himself a twofold negation, yet this negation of two different othernesses reinforces El Cid's "being-for-himself" as a self-affirmed individual in his work. As an outstanding knight, he is at the same time "not-a-plebeian" and "not-a-king." While being the negation of the plebeian condition means for El Cid a fulfilment, his being not-a-king will mean always, in the framework of an initial process of monarchization of Spain's hegemonic structure, an ontological privation. However, his early archetypal profile grants for El Cid the possibility to supersede the other culturally dominant self-conciousness (the king) in order to become certain of himself as a real independent *self*. In *HR* El Cid appears to be essentially in contradiction with the king as another self-consciousness and a figure of power. Against him, El Cid affirms himself by eliminating the king's selfhood and keeping one-sidedly his own self in the moment of pure opposition. For this reason, El Cid strengthens himself during his exile and dies as a *de facto* "king" of Seville without restoring the vassalage bonds with the king. Simply, he was not properly *a vassal* then. There is an essential contradiction between being an epic hero and being a knightly vassal. This is the contradiction that can be perceived between El Cid of *HR* and El Cid of *PMC*.

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[287] Leonardo Funes, "Los estudios cidianos en el octavo centenario de la copia de Per Abbat," *Medievalismo*, nº 17 (2007): 313-335, accessed 4/21/2016. 12:50 am.
http://revistas.um.es/medievalismo/article/download/72111/69581.

Yet, *not being a vassal proper* does not mean for El Cid *not being properly a bondsman*. He is indeed a bondsman in a twofold condition although in different ways. Being a lord towards the plebeians makes him a plebeian-bound self-centered consciousness; and being a vassal to the king makes him a lord-bound self that supersedes his own self for a culturally more preeminent self-consciousness, i.e. the king. El Cid is then a simple "I" that in its immediacy is a "being-for-self" as an individual. Yet this immediate unity is determined by the plurality of internally mediating moments: plebeian, lord, himself, and culture generally. This unity, however, exists insofar as it breaks itself down into those moments in an explicit way, disclosing in each case their differences: the plebeian is certainly not the lord; the lord in not the plebeian; El Cid, as at the same time *a knight* and *a vassal*, is neither lord nor plebeian. Despite his love for his vassals and his respect for his king, El Cid as prototype remains always *in difference* regarding those other froms of self-consciousnesses. In the same way, none of those othernesses will regard their own being as an essential sameness against El Cid's being. They are, each in front of the other, *different things*. Playing their well-dictinct cultural roles, they understand themselves as some-thing different from the others, and insofar they immediately understand their position in the cultural taxonomy. Yet they do not understand their essential unity as being the purely negative ontological moments of a preeminent and all-embracing "substance" which is their common cultural horizon. In Hegel's words:

> They are, *for each other*, shapes of consciousness which have not yet accomplished the movement of absolute abstraction, of rooting-out all immediate being […] in other words, they have not yet exposed themselves to each other in the form of pure beign-for-self, or as self-conciousnesses. Each is indeed certain of its own self, but not of the other, and therefore its own self-certainty still has no truth."[288]

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[288] Hegel, *Phenomenology…*, op. cit., 113.

Naturally, such "rooting-out all immediate being" that would lead to the real self-conciousness as a self-certainty that *has in itself* truth, is still far from becoming accomplished. Not only will these differences remain, but they will change form in analogue correspondence with the reshaping of their common cultural mediation. The advance of the *Reconquista* and the formation of Spanish Christian monarchy impact as an efficient cause upon El Cid's epic constitution bringing about its shape-shifting and accordingly the dialectical transformation of the whole structure of interchained self-consciousnesses. Both El Cid's profile and the structure of 'lord-bondsman' relationship change *in respond to* the mytho-symbolic demands of the new cultural iconosystem.

Thus, the more El Cid becomes a paradigm of knight / vassal, bound to his lord by the natural bondage of vassalage, the less he can keep his earlier epic selfhood. This is also the moment when the kings of Castile, especially Fernando I, Sancho II, Alfonso VI and Alfonso X, from being local kings *inter regis*, expand their power and become Spanish monarchs as part of the process of castilianization, Reconquista and Christianization of Spain. A process that will culminate with the expulsion of the Moors from Granada and the integration of Aragon as part of the Castilian, now Spanish proper, crown by the *Reyes Católicos* Fernando and Isabel in 1492. Once the condition of bondage as knightly vassalage of El Cid toward the kings of Castile is firmly established, it would not be broken again, even despite the efforts of the Benedictine monks of San Pedro de Cardeña to turn El Cid into a Christian warrior-saint, perhaps bearing in mind prototypes of military saints such as Saint George, Saint Constantine, Saint Acacius of Byzantium, etc. F. Bautista states that El Cid would take advantage of this new interpretation of the lord / servant bonds as a natural interplay to use his vassalage to the king as a device of social

ascension. In his own words: "El Cid promueve esta idea y se pliega a ella ejemplarmente, lo que le permite recuperar su lugar en la corte y evita que sea meramente un príncipe independiente."[289] We cannot know what the "real Cid" did proper. Yet we do know the way in which the myth-made hegemonic icon undergoes a dialectic of prototypoferesis and paradigmatopoeia and becomes a paradigm of vassal in the lord (king)/bondsman (knight) relation. This is indeed an essential moment. As stated by Hegel, the self-consciousness of these cultural/spiritual figures is primarily defined not only in the abstract movement of their mutual recognition as self-consciousnesses but also *through* the practical interaction with the material world as immediate object of the simple "I" and the most alienated way of being *something*. Two of these fundamental forms of practical interactions or activities are, according to Hegel, *desire* and *work.* In order to exist as a "being-for-self," the "I" must supersede things as they present to itself under the form of independent beings. Yet this supersession means not only the I's self-affirmation as spirit but also the nullification of things in the moment of this self-affirmation. The form of this primordial self-affirmation as a self-consciousness is desire: "[…] and self-consciousness is thus certain of itself only by superseding this other that presents itself to-self-consciousness as an independent life; self-consciousness is Desire."[290] But the satisfaction that desire provides is ephemeral insofar as, "Thus self-consciousness, by its negative relation to the object, is unable to supersede it; it is rally because of that relation that it produces the object again, and the desire as well."[291] Therefore, to build its self-consciousness upon a more

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[289] F. Bautista, "'Como a señor natural': interpretaciones políticas del *Cantar de Mio Cid*," in *Olivar* 10 (2007): 173-184.

[290] *Phenomenology…*, op. cit., 109.

[291] Ibid.

permanent ground, the self needs not only to consume its object as something totally independent upon which it cannot hold sway; it also needs to gain a certain dominion upon its object in a way that it can achieve its most primordial desire as "I," i.e. becoming a permanent self-consciousness. Yet, "Self-consciousness exists in and for itself when, and by the fact that it so exists for another; that is, it exists only in being acknowledged."[292] Consequently, what the desiring I is called to hold sway upon is precisely another I that presents in the form of another self-consciousness. This consciousness that puts the other self-consciousness as a necessary mediation for itself, and determines the other's self *exactly as such mediation*, is the lord. In this unequal relationship, the lord holds the other in subjection. And it is then when desire produces work. The lord subjugates the bondsman insofar as the action that the lord *performs upon the bondsman* is an action that he ultimately *does to himself*. It means that both, lord and bondsman are still alienated in each other and sustain a mediated relationship with things. Yet here there is an essential difference. The lord relates to things not *as the result of his own work and effort* but as what is granted *by the effort and the work of the bondsman*. In this relationship, the lord negates things' independence by making them *his own* in the experience of the sheer enjoyment of their presence. On the contrary, the bondsman is also able to supersede things' independence but he can never make them *his own proper*: the bondsman, in Hegel's expression, "only works on it."[293] Indeed, the only real activity of the lord in this power device is not considered a work proper, but it is culturally rendered as a transcendental, even divine privilege: *the lord's primordial activity is precisely holding the*

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[292] Ibid., 110.

[293] Ibid., 16.

144

bondsman in bondage. The bondsman appears as a "thing" that is the lord's immediate object of desire, and as such he is also the lord's object of possession. Yet at the same time the bondsman is a self-consciousness that grant the lord the satisfaction of his most radical ontological desire, i.e. the desire of recognition as a self-consciousness himself. But since the bondsman is just a "thing" and to that extent an "object," the lord's recognition, gained by the bondsman's mediation, will be as alienated and incomplete as the bondsman's reified self: "[…] for recognition proper the moment is lacking, that what the lord does to the other he also does to himself, and what the bondsman does to himself he should do to the other. The outcome is a recognition that is one-sided and unequal."[294] In this context, El Cid is never a lord proper; he is not in possession either of his vassals or his own wife. Therefore, the most interesting side for our analysis is precisely his being a bondsman. El Cid as a bondsman relates always *only to the king*.[295] Also, the bondsman holds a special relation with his work and his own identity is defined *through* and *by* work as an essential activity.[296] Furthermore, and especially during the Middle Age, work had for each kind of bondsman a very specific cultural determination. This determination as a mode of activity immediately implied also an ontological determination: *the being of medieval man was determined by his work determination*; and his work determination and cultural role were determined by a kind of ontological destination. As a bondsman, El Cid's work

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[294] Ibid., 116.

[295] We are considering here the kind of 'spiritual bondage' El Cid had regarding God and supernatural things. Therefore, our analysis will be centered only in El Cid's bondage to the king and in how it changes throughout the years and the different circumstances of his life.

[296] *Phenomenology…*, op. cit., 117-118. It is not our intention to discuss here the nature and social implications of Hegel's interpretation of the bondsman's relationship with work. Our interest is just studying how El Cid's work as a 'warrior' determines his relationship with his lord and his own identity as hegemonic myth.

determination was *being a warrior*. Thus, his essential activity, the action through which

his identity is established and by which he is systematically profiled is *war*. War is actually

the activity through which El Cid, as a bondsman, "becomes conscious of what he truly

is."[297] It is hence important to understand that El Cid's work as a "warrior" determines his

relationship with his lord and provides the horizon of his own identity as hegemonic myth.

So, there takes place a dialectic of bridging and disjunction. El Cid's

prototypoferesis is just the negative moment of his shape-shifting. It exists as dialectically

determined by a simultaneously contrasting and complementing process, i.e. El Cid's

paradigmatopoeia. El Campeador is now a paradigm of knightly virtues just to the extent

that he accepts the king's hegemonic preeminence as a *natural* privilege and defines his

cultural identity precisely *according to* it. He loses his self-sufficiency to make his

aristocratic legitimacy increase, as can be seen in *PMC*. But increasing in aristocratic

legitimacy means at the same time decreasing in epic stature and autonomy. His

hegemonic (real) as well as actantial (diegetic) self-sufficiency retreats in front of the

king.[298]

2.14. Moments of Shape-Shifting of El Cid

The internal unfolding of El Cid as hegemonic myth goes through three moments,

whose specificities reveal their common essence as part and parcel of a more general

process: (1) epic prototype, (2) paradigm of good vassal, (3) epigonal paradox of epic

prototype and 'good-vassal' paradigm. In documents like *HR*, *PA*, and *AdT*, Ruy Díaz is

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[297] *Phenomenology…*, op. cit., 118.

[298] For this category in Greimas's Propp-inspired actantial model, see Louis Hébert, "Le modéle actantiel," in *Signo. Site Internet de Théories Sémiotiques*, accessed 11/1/2016, http://www.signosemio.com/greimas/modele-actantiel.asp. See also Louis Hébert, *Dispositifs pour l'analyse des textes et des images* (Limoges: Presses de l'Université de Limoges, 2007).

the cultural thesis of the essence of the warrior / hero in his epic identity. Yet due to his

being a general form, a cultural prototype, this epic mythologeme is still essentially

universal, autonomous, and self-contradictory. It is a symbolic / allegorical icon whose

connection with the process of Reconquest and Christianization of Spain is still too

ambiguous and weak to be able to serve as political incarnation of those national projects.

2.15. From Epic Prototype to Good-Vassal Paradigm

On the other hand, El Cid, a thesis of the universal epic warrior/hero as a cultural

prototype, is also the antithesis of the concrete, nationalistic figure which is gaining

cultural definition in 11th century in Spain: the imperial king as a resemblance of Byzantine

and Visigothic models. Although El Cid is compared with King Roderick in the *acta de*

Toledo, the fact that he was not a king *ab origine* prevented him from accomplishing the

cultural role of becoming Spanish monarch and confronted him with King Alfonso VI

immediately after King Sancho II's death. This is clear in *HR*, and constitutes a matter

recovered and used by the Benedictine monks to reshape El Cid's figure by exalting his

epic profile, as can be seen in Toledo's edition of *Coronica del muy esforzado y inuencible*

cauallero el Cid ruy díaz campeador delas Españas (1526).[299] Later, from being thesis of

the universal essence of the epic warrior hero and antithesis of the in-formation universal

monarch,[300] El Cid undergoes a dialectical turn that makes him antithesis of himself and

thesis of the former antithesis. El Cid's self-consciousness as an epic prototype is always a

function of the self-consciousness of the king / monarch, in so far as they are both

[299] *Coronica del muy esforzado y inuencible cauallero el Cid ruy díaz campeador de las Españas. El Cid campeador* (New York: Kraus Reprint Corporation, 1967).

[300] For the first time, after the Visigothic era, very well shaped in Alfonso VI as shown in *El Cid campeador*.

moments of a cultural process that holds sway over them and determine their cultural substance.[301] This is El Cid we meet in *PMC*. For this reason, we side with Menéndez Pidal, Samuel G. Armistead, Diego Catalán, y Francisco Marcos Marín in the idea that *PMC*, or at least the oral / literary matter utilized for its composition, already existed in a very concrete form around the first half of the 12th century, that is in a date close to the life and reign of Alfonso VI.[302]

The essence and substance of El Cid's self-consciousness in *PMC* is still the same one that determined his individual hypostasis since the beginning, i.e. the *epic character*. El Cid of *PMC* is undoubtedly an epic figure. Yet now being epic means the antithesis of being an epic prototype. Determined by the negation of his universal substance, El Cid

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[301] As said, the Reconquest and Christianization of Spain, and the formation of the Spanish absolute monarchy.

[302] Leonardo Funes opposes this dating. He states that "Hubo un tiempo, bastante extenso y hoy lejano, en que la hipótesis pidalina que databa el *Cantar de Mio Cid* en 1140 era asumida como verdad indiscutible. Ya no es así: desde mediados del siglo xx, tímidamente primero y luego de modo contundente, fueron allegándose argumentos y evidencias que retrasaron la fecha de composición a fines del siglo XII o comienzos del XIII." Yet the argument presented later by this scholar does not seem to be so "contundente" at all: "Si nos atenemos al único testimonio conservado, el llamado 'Códice de Vivar,' hoy custodiado en la Biblioteca Nacional bajo la signatura Vit. 7-17, allí leemos en el colofón: 'Per abbat le escriuio en el mes de mayo / En era de mill τ C.C.xl.v años". Convertida la era hispánica en era cristiana, nos da la fecha de 1207.'" Based on the knowledge that this specific manuscript was copied in the 14th century, Funes concludes that this date indicates a *subscriptio copiata* that alludes to the model used by the copyist of the codex of Vivar. This is true, but it is also true that this is the limit of the certainty we can have with the references at hand: the copyist says that he copied from a manuscript from 1207, and nothing else beyond. Nevertheless, Leonardo Funes takes for utterly certain and naively reliable the copyist's words, and affirms that "En consecuencia, podemos decir con absoluta certeza que en 1207 se copió el texto que está en el origen de una cadena de transmisión manuscrita que culmina en el testimonio conservado." First, our 14th century copyist may have had several reasons to choose that one as the date of composition of his copy (personal, religious, etc.); and, second, even though this copy was made in 1207, it does not mean that the 1207 manuscript (if there was any at all) was the oldest. Indeed, pointing timidly to this problem, Leonardo Funes admits himself a paragraph later that although "Una parte hoy mayoritaria de la crítica concuerda en aceptar esta fecha como la de composición del Cantar," it is wise to leave "(… al margen la cuestión todavía en debate de si esto implica la puesta en escrito de un cantar oral o la redacción original del texto)." See Leonardo Funes, "Los estudios cidianos…", ibid., 314.

emerges now as the other self-consciousness of the Castilian kings. Totally determined now by the essence of the lord, lacking his former freedom, El Cid morphed into the antithetical function of this hegemonic structure, i.e. into a bondsman. In *PMC*, El Cid's cultural substance bears all the time the determination of the lord, to the extent that during the whole poem the Campeador experiences himself as an incomplete vassal. He is not yet complete in his being if not as a de-alienated bondsman, i.e. as a servant recognized as such and accepted as such by his "señor natural," the king. In total contrast with *HR* and *CC*, El Cid of *PMC* not only exists himself as a being-for-other, but his being-for-other is the ontological necessity imposed by the cultural essence ascribed to him in this moment of his mythopoetic journey: the essence of the perfect warrior-knight bound up as a bondsman to *a* lord by *natural*, that is transcendental and effectively unbreakable ties. Like Japanese 武士人 (*bushijin*), the infinitely loyal warrior that we find in Noh theater plays and in general in the Zen culture, El Cid appears now as a realistic paradigm of loyal knight, whose essence does not lie quietly and simply on himself but remains out of himself alienated in the essence of the king as the self-consciousness of the lord. Like the Japanese warrior, El Cid is a knight who is infinitely loyal in so far as his essence lies infinitely out of his individual hypostasis, i.e. in the lord's essence. He incarnates the perfect identity between bondsman and vassal.

It is after all by partaking, as bondsman, of the cultural interplay of the lord / bondsman structure that El Cid will be able to recover his ontological integrity. This recovery occurs by negating his exiled condition – which means being out of the king's grace – and returning to his place of origin now as a self-conscious Christian after reaching his most proper determination through the otherness's (the Moors') mediation. Therefore,

149

as an intericonic mytheme El Cid gathers together in himself intertwined cultural ideals. He is synchronically the anti-Muslim Christian warrior / hero, the knight / vassal paradigm, and the hegemonic device used to implant in the collective memory the notion of Castilian supremacy as an eschatological (teleological and therefore unavoidable) destiny of Spain. This was indeed the *natural* way. And, ultimately, in the medieval mind *all that is natural is also divine*, because God is the Creator of all *natural* things as beings not made by human operation (hand and labor).[303]

El Cid is not a direct actor in *Chronica Adelfonsi Imperatoris* [*ChAI*] (1153-57).[304] Nonetheless, his figure is still holding some sway over the composition of the chronicle. On the end of the two books, the chroniclers added the *Carmen de expugnatione Almariae urbis* or *Poema de Almería* (1147-49). El Cid's outstanding position is underscored through a rhetorical comparison with his right hand on the battlefield and friend Álvar Fáñez Minaya:

> Ipse Rodericus, Meo Cidi saepe vocatus
> de quo cantatur quod ab hostibus haud superatur
> qui domuit Mauros, comites domuit quoque nostros,
> hunc extollebat, se laude minore ferebat.
> Sed fateor verum, quod tollet nulla dierum:
> Meo Cidi primus fuit Alvarus atque secundus.[305]

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[303] Essentially, this reproduces the Greek distinction between *physis* (*φύσις*) and *poiesis* (*ποίησις*).

[304] *Chronica Adefonsi Imperatoris*, ed. Luis Sánchez Belda (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1950). "The Chronica Adefonsi Imperatoris was written by an anonymous author toward the middle of the twelfth century. In one sense it participates in the court-oriented historical view in that it is devoted to the reign of the Emperor, Alfonso VII, who ruled from 1126 to 1157. However, this monarch and his court are not the only subjects of this history. The work is rich in historical data of twelfth-century Spain. Along with the *Historia compostelana*, the *Crónica najerense* and [2] the *Crónica silense* this is one of the more important Spanish chronicles of the high Middle Ages." See "Introduction," "The Chronicle of Alfonso the Emperor," *The Library of Iberian Resources Online*, ed. Glenn Edward Lipskey accessed 5/04/17, http://libro.uca.edu/lipskey/chronicle.htm.

[305] "It has been sung of Rodrigo, often called 'My Cid,' that he never suffered defeat at the hands of his enemies. It was he who subdued the Moors and our own nobles also. He praised Alvaro and considered himself lesser in glory. However, I must confess a truth which time will not change: My Cid was the first and Alvaro the second. Valencia mourned the death of its friend Rodrigo. The servant of Christ could not thwart

This is not an accidental reference, given El Cid's leading role in the formation of Spanish monarchy, the spread of the *sanctum bellum* ideology, and the successful expansion of the Reconquist: all national causes of which Alfonso VII was a prominent defender.[306] In the *ChAI*, as the name indicates, Alfonso VII is *totius Imperator*. Parallel to *HR*, Rodrigo González, Consul of Toledo, Rodrigo Fernández, and Captain Munio Alfonso are said to receive the Emperor's grace. In this new context, after Sancho's grace that bestowed El Cid with the dignity of *princeps militum* (something indeed more eschatological and transcendent than his "dilectione et nimio amore" (*HR*)), the royal *gratia* will play an unprecedented role in conferring this military degree: "consul Rodericus Gunzaluii inuenit gratiam in conspectu imperatoris at imperator"[307]; "Imperator tandem dedit Toletum Roderico Fernandiz […] et factus est princeps Toletane militie";[308]

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his demise. Oh Alvaro, the young men also mourn you, and tears adorn their faces. It was they whom you trained well and to whom you kindly gave arms." See Glenn Edward Lipskey (ed.), "Poem of Almería," op. cit. A comparison of this passage with the poem *Y Goddodin* shows a very interesting parallel in the intervention of the narrator to clarify the superiority of El Cid and King Arthur, respectively, despite the undiscussable exploits and valor of the other heroes mentioned in the poems. In *Y Goddodin* reads: "More than three hundred of the finest were slain. / He struck down at both the middle and the extremities. / The most generous man was splendid before the host. / From the herd, he used to distribute horses in winter. / [Gorddur] used to bring black crows down in front of the wall / of the fortified town – though he was not Arthur / amongst men mighty in feats / in front of the barrier of alder wood – Gorddur." Arthur, the narrator makes clear, is superior to Gorddur. The similarity of both verses, though purely coindcidential or a product of a common poetic *ethos*, i.e. "though he was not Arthur" and "Sed fateor verum, quod tollet nulla dierum: Meo Cidi primus fuit Alvarus atque secundus" seems nevertheless quite evident.

[306] "The method and conception of the work are conditioned by the personality of King Alfonso VII. His imperial disposition supplies the author with a singular purpose and conviction: that is, that this ruler did indeed become an Emperor and did establish an empire. This state was recognized by other European powers, and at its political apogee, it achieved trans-Pyrenean dimensions. This fact is attested to in the characteristic imperial rhetoric of the chronicle: '...et facti sunt termini regni Adefonsi regis Legionis a mare magno Oceano, quod est a Patrono Sancti Jacobi, usque ad fluvium Rodani.'" See Glenn Edward Lipskey (ed.), ibid.

[307] *Chronica Adefonsi Imperatoris*, ibid., II, 23.

[308] Ibid., II, 31.

"Imperator uero uidens quod Munio Adefonsi esset uir bellicosus, iussit eum uenire ante conspectum suum et dedit ei suam gratiam, et constituit eum secundum principem…"[309]

Thus far, El Cid is as *paradigm* of good knight the negation of the epic prototype attested to in *HR*. Absorbed now as hegemonic device in the complex lord/bondsman dialectics, the hero has experienced a prototypoferesis by estranging his essence toward the king's self-affirmation as the new cultural *prototype* linked to the Reconquest and the Christianization of Spain. So, prototypoferesis is the moment of self-negation that affirms the other self-consciousness (the king), and synchronically leads El Cid towards his affirmation as perfect vassal via a paradigmatopoeia. Nonetheless, with the development of the Benedictine interpretation of the Reconquest as *iustum* and *sanctum bellum*, the conquest of Toledo by Alfonso VI, and the subsequent proclamation of the First Crusade by Urbano II, we witness the pale return of the epic substance of El Cid.

2.16. From Good-Vassal Paradigm to Epigonal Epic Prototype

This epic return, although limited, is clearly attested to in the Romances. A young Rodrigo, whose profile reminds the impetuous hero of *Mocedades de Rodrigo*, beheads Count Lozano to avenge his own father who had been affronted by the count in front of the king Fernando I: "Determinado va el Cid, / y va tan determinado, / que en espacio de una hora / quedó del conde vengado."[310] In the first six romances, Rodrigo appears in radical opposion to the king. This radical opposition between Rodrigo and King Fernando I is at odds with the rest of the Cidian literature. It also features a totally self-sufficient Cid that

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[309] Ibid., II, 49.
[310] "Romance II," in *Romancero e historia del muy valeroso caballero El Cid Rui-Díaz de Vibar*, Vicente González del Reguero (Madrid: Imprenta de Cano, 1818), 5, see facsimile edition made in Lexington, KY, 17 January 2017.

not only refuses to kiss the king's hand but also openly challenges the king and his legitimizing authority: "Como Rodrigo esto oyó, / aprisa pide el caballo, / con la voz muy alterada / contra el Rey asi fablando. / Por besar mano de Rey / no me tengo por honrado, / porque la besó mi padre / me tengo por afrentado."[311] Such as in *HR*, the Christic intericonicity becomes tangible again in these romances. For instance, in Romance V, in a series of appositions, Rodrigo contrasts with the rest of his vassals like Christ regarding his apostles; also, in this passage Rodrigo's name is emphatically mentioned seven times in a row.[312] In addition to Jesus's seven miracles, John's gospel contains also seven "I am" statements through which Jesus reveals his divine nature along with different aspects of the soteriological economy.[313] Aditionally, in the first five romances, i.e. before his reconciliation with King Fernando, Rodrigo is name 'El Cid' three times onl;y, while he is called by the more epic name 'Rodrigo' (closer to Classic-Roman and Visigothic traditions) in sixteen occasions.

El Cid then morphes into a national icon that incarnates in his cultural being the ideals of freedom from the Muslim yoke, catholicization of Iberian Peninsula, and establishment of the absolute monarchy over all Spain. Now, El Cid is the negation of the negation, the antithesis of the antithesis which means the synthesis of a hegemonic device that encompases in himself a new power offset. This construction reaches a more concrete cultural expression while at the same time recovering part of the prototypal epic character that had almost been lost in *PMC*.

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[311] Ibid., 12.

[312] Ibid., 10.

[313] John 6:35; 8:12; 10:9; 10:11; 11:25-26; 14:16; 15:5.

2.17. Benedictine Epigonal Prototypopoeia and Hagiopoeia

This epic self-affirmation of El Cid does not mean, however, the absolute negation of the other self-consciousness (the king-moment). On the contrary, while firmly establishing himself as a renewed epic prototype, El Cid negates his former negation of the king's self-consciousness and keeps for himself his *being a loyal vassal*. This can be observed in the sudden constrast between the first five romances and the rest of the book. In romances VI to X, in which the reconciliation process takes place, Rodrigo is consistently called 'El Cid' and 'Rodrigo' a few times only. Yet this just an ephemeral epigonal return of Rodrigo's epic prototype. Already in romance X, Rodrigo appears in the king's presence and, in a sudden peripetia, "El Rey salio á recibirlo / que mui mucho le queria."[314] Rodrigo's attitude toward the king is also radically changed: "Pláceme, Rey y Señor, / Don Rodrigo respondía, / en esto y en todo aquello / que tu voluntad sería."[315] Rodrigo's ontological self-sufficiency as shown in romances I to V is now replaced by the 'good vassal' figure. Consistently, El Cid's "being-for-self" is again granted not by himself, but by the king as preeminent self-consciousness. Being Rodrigo in Zamora seated in the court by King Fernando, messengers sent by Moorish kings who were vassals of El Cid come up bearing wedding presents to the hero. They call themselves "humillados" before El Cid. Rodrigo's respond in this situation summarizes itself his new relationship with the king: "El Cid les digera: amigos / el mensahe habeis errado, / porque yo no soi Señor / adonde está el Rey Fernando; / todo es suyo, nada es mio, yo soi su

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[314] Ibid., 18.

[315] Ibid., 19.

menor vasallo."[316] Immediately, the King comfirms Rodrigo's words: "El Rey agradeció mucho / la humildad del Cid honrado, / y dijo á los mensageros: / decidles á vuesos amos, / que aunque no es Rey su Señor, / con un Rey está sentado, y que cuanto yo poseo / el Cid me lo ha conquistado, / y que yo estoi mui contento / en tener tan buen vasallo."[317] Now, in the frame of the semantical analogy between God (heavenly King) and monarch (earthly King), Rodrigo is "baptized" again and given a name by the king, completing in this way his ontological cycle: "El Cid despidió á los moros / con dones que les ha dado, / siendo dende alli Adelante / el Cid Rui Diaz llamado, / apellido entre los moros / de home de valor, y estado."[318]

2.18. Complex Coexistence of Epic Prototype and Good-Vassal Paradigm

At this moment, both his epic and his knight / vassal characters coexist for El Cid *in himself*, reconciling for the first time both cultural essences (epic prototype and loyal knight / vassal) in a unified hypostasis. This is the Cid we meet in the *Coronica del muy esforzado y inuencible cauallero el Cid ruy díaz campeador delas Españas* (1526), in *Cronica del famoso cauallero Cid Ruy Diez Campeador* (1512), and in *Coronica del Cid* (1498). This is totally explicable, if we understand the significance of the Reconquest and the extended influence of the Church-Crown monolith during the reign of Alfonso X. This synthesis, however, as a multilayered device determined according to intertextual and intericonic processes, does not entirely abolish the particularity of the synthesized moments: the epic prototype and the 'good vassal' paradigm. These cultural essences do

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[316] Ibid., 23.

[317] Ibid.

[318] Ibid., 23-24.

not dissolve completely in each other. The intericonic overlapping is never complete. On the contrary, they preserve their own specificity, not certainly in a quiet and absolute way, in the dialectical interplay of thesis-antithesis-synthesis. In *Coronica del muy esforzado y inuencible cauallero el Cid ruy díaz campeador delas Españas* (1526), for instance, we see sudden *peripetiae* in El Cid's actions and nature: his voluntary vassalage to the kings Sancho II and Alfonso VI, alongside the tensions with Alfonso, which first clearly come up after King Sancho's death, the epic self-affirmations –as in El Cid's vigorous demand that Alfonso declare under oath whether he played a role in King Sancho's assassination, and the one-sided decision to invade, sack, and almost totally destroy Toledo, despite Alfonso's promise to the Moorish king that this would never happen…– interlaced with the most extreme displays of bondage –as when, in parallel to the *PMC* matter, El Cid concedes to King Alfonso the right of the final decision-making regarding his daughters' marriage with the princes of Navarra and Aragón), etc.

2.19. El Cid's Benedictine Epigonal Prototypopoeia and Hagiopoeia

During the Benedictine construction of El Cid's figure, different intertexts are held together by the new mytheme-iconeme emerged during Alfonso X's reign and thereafter. Most of these textual sources are taken from the Cidian matter itself, revised and re-accommodated according to the new hegemonic cartography of Spain in the 14th and 15th centuries. Also, the divine participation is reinforced through the narrative device of Saint Peter's appearance to El Cid announcing him the particulars of his own death: "E […] quando vino la media noche vio entrar por el palacio una gran claridad et un grand olor […] aparescio le un home tan blanco como la nieue et como Viejo et como Crespo et traya

en sus manos unas llaues […] E el dixo: Yo so san pedro principe de los apostoles…"[319]

The fact that, in the Christian hagiographical tradition, only saints are privileged by God with this kind of eschatological revelations indicates the complexity of intertextual and intericonic processes taking place in El Cid's figure during these centuries. Certainly, there are several important passages in the *Coronica del muy esforzado e invencible cavallero el Cid ruy diaz campeador de las Espanas*,[320] in which the dialectic between Rodericus's prototypal and paradigmatic stages become especially relevant to explain El Cid's *Benedictine epigonal prototypopoeia* as hegemonic myth linked to the Reconquest, Castilianization of Iberian Peninsula, and gradual formation of the Spanish absolute monarchy.

2.20. Castile versus Rome, France, and Holy Roman-German Empire

A necessary step towards El Cid's and King Arthur's hegemonic myth-making consists in the formation and affirmation of their national identity. Chapter I confronts us with a very suggestive intericonic transaction. In support of king Ferdinand I, El Cid campaigns against German emperor Enrique, the king of France, and the Pope of Rome. Differently from Arthur, Ferdinand I and El Cid never reach Rome because the latter defeats don Ramón, Count of Sauoya, in the battle of Tolosa. The cause that triggered the crisis was that emperor Enrique requested the Pope to demand king Ferdinand to pay tributes to him as Holy Roman Emperor:

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[319] *Cronica del famoso cauallero Cid Ruy Diez Campeador* (New York: De Vinne Press, 1903), fo. XCIIIa, facsimile from the copy in the library of Archer M. Huntington, available online free at: http://www.archive.org/details/cronicadelfamoso00newy.

[320] See *El Cid Campeador* (New York: De Vinne Press, 1903) facsimile from the copy of the *Coronica del muy esforçado e inuencible cavallero el Cid ruy diaz campeador de las Españas* (Toledo, 1526), in the library of Archer M. Huntington, available online free at: http://hdl.handle.net/2027/ucl.$c234139

E el estando en esto el papa Urbano fizo concilio: et fue ay el emperador Enrique et muchos reyes cristianos […] E el emperador querellose del Rey don Fernando de españa que no le conoscia señorio ni le queria ser tributario assy como los otros reyes […] E el papa entonce embio amonestar al rey que conocsciese señorio al emperador sino que embiaria cruzada sobre el […] E el rey mostrole las cartas [al Cid] entonces el Cid tornose contra el rey su señor: et dixole. Señor en mal dia vos nacistes en España si en el vuestro tiempo ha de ser metida a tribute […] E [Fernando] mando guisar sus gentes segun que hauia fablado con el Cid: et el Cid leuaua la delantera. [321]

King Arthur campaigns against Rome exactly for the same reason, according to the account of Geoffrey of Monmouth in his *Historia*:

Namque senes bis sex moderatis passibus adsunt, / Qui coram rege astantes hec uerba profantur: / 'Lucius Augustus, cui totus subiacet orbis, / Miratur qua fronte tuas excedere metas / Ausus es et nostrum ius, iuris federe rupto, / Usurpare tibi […] Metis ubi semina nulla sparsisti…spargis ubi spicas colliget alter![322] Cur uectigalia nobis / Reddere contempnit subiecta Britannia nostris? […] Roma sua iura remitte […] Dira cede flagellatus proprio priuabere regno; / Omnibus amissis si sit tibi uita relicta, / Principis existet clementia micior equo […] 'O quorum mentes belloque togaque / Expertus noui, michi pandite quid sit agendu […]Temeraria Roma tributum / Exigit a nobis. Si placet, idque michi, socii, prodesse uidetis, / Precedessorum michi reddere iura meorum / Mandabo Rome, que priuat honore meo me […] Romam munitus ueniam non ere sed armis […] Attamen in uultu tam principis ista iubentis / Quam promittentum firma hec promissa potentum / De facili potuit belli pars uicta notari.[323]

Book IX begins with an ominous phrase, whose meaning will be known later: "Nonus agit bellum."[324] For the time being: "Uictoria Cesare ceso / Arturo cedit."[325] It is worth noting the diegetic parallel between both narratives despite the fact, already underscored, that El Cid was not himself a king. Yet in this case El Cid as a good vassal

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[321] *Cronica del famoso cauallero Cid Ruy Diez Campeador*, ibid., fo. VIIIb-IXa.
[322] The phrase: "Metis ubi semina nulla sparsisti…spargis ubi spicas colliget alter!" could be a veiled reference to John 4:35-8.

[323] *The Historia Regum Britannie of Geoffrey of Monmouth*, ed. Neil Wright (New York: D. S. Brewer, 1991): 200-226, 200.

[324] Ibid., 230.

[325] Ibid.

represents Fernando I who, in fact, never came in time to fight against the French: (1) Peace. Initial moment of independence and celebration –King Fernando "estaua muy alegre por el bien que le dios fiziera en cobrar tan sancta cosa," because he had successfully transferred the holy body of St. Isidro from Sevilla to Castilla on Queen Sancha's advice;[326] King Arthur "continuis sollempne tribus celebrare diebus / colibuit festum," likely the Easter.[327] (2) Disruption of the peace; (3) Claim of disobedience on behalf of the Emperor,[328] –i.e., "cui totus subiacet orbis," center of the Christian world in terms of secular power; (4) Demand to bondage via tributes and warning of the consequences should the king fail to comply; (5) Petition of council; (6) Decision making of the king (or of El Cid in lieu of the king) and *casus belli*; (7) Campaign against the enemy (Rome is a common enemy); (8) Triumph over the enemy, and; (9) Restoration of the initial moment of independence (Table 1). In King Arthur's case, just for an ephemeral moment, because: "Noua narrat fama Modredum / Arturi uiolasse thorum," and Arthur "Regreditur ergo / In patriam,"[329] not to enjoy the restoration of peace but to fight the last battle against Mordred in Camlann. This intericonic parallel finds a common background in the effort by Britain and Spain in preserving cultural and political independence against the fast-growing Holy Western Roman Empire

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[326] *Cronica del famoso cauallero Cid Ruy Diez Campeador*, ibid., fo. VIIIb.

[327] *The Historia Regum Britannie*, ibid., 200.

[328] In El Cid's case, through Pope Urbano.

[329] *The Historia Regum Britannie…*, ibid., 230.

Moments of Development	El Cid	King Arthur
(1) Initial moment of independence and celebration. Peace.	King Fernando "estaua muy alegre por el bien que le dios fiziera en cobrar tan sancta cosa,"	King Arthur "continuis sollempne tribus celebrare diebus / colibuit festum," likely the Easter
(2) Disruption of the peace	"E el emperador querellose del Rey don Fernando de España…"	"Namque sense bis sex moderatis passibus adsunt, / Qui coram rege astantes hec uerba profantur."
(3) Claim of disobedience on behalf of the Emperor	"…que no le conoscia señorio ni le queria ser tributario assy como los otros reyes."	"'Lucius Augustus, cui totus subiacet orbis, / Miratur qua fronte tuas excedere metas / Ausus es et nostrum ius, iuris federe rupto, / Usurpare tibi.'"
(4) Demand to bondage via tributes and warning of the consequences should the king fail to comply	"E el papa entonce embio amonestar al rey que conocsciese señorio al emperador sino que embiaria cruzada sobre el."	"Cur uectigalia nobis / Reddere contempnit subiecta Britannia nostris? […] Roma sua iura remitte […] Cede flagellates proprio priuabere regno; / Omnibus amissis si sit tibi uita relicta, / Principis existet clementia micior equo."
(5) Initial moment of independence and celebration. Peace.	King Fernando "estaua muy alegre por el bien que le dios fiziera en cobrar tan sancta cosa," "E el rey mostrole las cartas [al Cid] entonces el Cid tornose contra el rey su señor: et dixole. Señor en mal dia vos nacistes en España si en el vuestro tiempo ha de ser metida a tribute."	King Arthur "continuis sollempne tribus celebrare diebus / colibuit festum," likely the Easter, "Temeraria Roma tributum / Exigit a nobis […] 'O quorum mentes belloque togaque / Expertus noui, michi pandite quid sit agendu."

Table 1: Parallel Diegetic Structure.

Moments of Development	El Cid	King Arthur
(6) Decision making of the king (or of El Cid in lieu of the king) and *casus belli*	"E [Fernando] mando guisar sus gentes […] e mouio con ocho mil et novecientos caualleros suyos et del Cid."	Si placet, idque michi, socii, prodesse uidetis, / Precedessorum michi reddere iura meorum / Mandabo Rome, que priuat honore meo me."
(7) Campaign against the enemy (Rome is a common enemy.)	"…et el Cid leuaua la delantera […] el Cid metio mano a quemar toda la tierra et robar quanto fallauan de todos los que les non querian vender vianda…"	"Roman munitus ueniam non ere sed armis […]"
(8) Triumph over the enemy (In El Cid's case, over don Ramón, Count of Sauoya on behalf of the King of France).	"E fueron vencidos los del conde: et el conde fue preso et otros muchos con el […] E después desto houo el cid otra batalla con todo el mayor poder de Francia et venciolos."	"Attamen in uultu tam principis ista iubentis / Quam promittentum firma hec promissa potentum / De facili potuit belli pars uicta notari."
(9) Restoration of the initial moment of independence and peace (In King Arthur's case, just an ephemeral restoration.)	"E el conde pidio por merced a Cid que lo soltase […] E entonces el papa embio con su poder complido a miscer Ruberte Cardenal de santa sabrina […] et afirmaron su pleito muy bien que nunca jamas tal pleito fuese demandado al rey de España."	"Arthur […] Regreditur ergo / In patriam."

Table 1: Continued.

2.21. Lord/Bondsman Dialetic between Alfonso VI and El Cid

In *El Cid Campeador*, chapter XLII (42) points to a key moment to understand the

synthesis operated within the 'lord/bondman–king/vassal' dialectic in this late period of El

Cid's myth-making. The king says that el Cid deserves to be seated alongside kings but

concurrently praises him for being his "mejor vasallo." In the king's words: "Cid el

cauallero que reyes vence y vassallos tiene reyes con emperadores y reyes se deue iassentar."[330] At this moment, El Cid's noble *being-for-self* is synchronically an autonomous element of his *being-in-self* and a dispensation of the king's royal self-consciousness. It is important to underscore the fact that El Cid cannot provide royal self-attestation because he is not a *rex ab origine*. In his absolute preeminence, the king is the ontological source for himself and for El Cid insofar as, in the latter, vassalage and bondange have become already totally identified. El Cid accepts to stay beside the king yet *at his feet* as a good vassal, in this way affirming his ontological profile as a *de facto* free self-consciousness. Paradoxically, El Cid is a free self-consciousness insofar as he is a perfect bondsman. Being recognized by the king that he recognizes and accepts in his absolute kingship, means for El Cid the essential reconciliation with the main moments of his mythopoetic journey: being an epic prototype, a sanctified warrior-hero, and a faithful vassal. The relevance of this passage did not pass unnoticed by illustrator Rene Ben Sussan, who in 1958 illustrated Robert Southey's translation and edition of *La crónica del Cid*.[331]

The 'lord/bondsman' balance between Alfonso VI and El Cid is very unstable and regularly shows divergences and contradictions. An important moment of antithesis between king Alfonso and Ruy Díaz can be seen in chapter XVIII. We can assume that the whole court harbored serious doubts concerning the likelihood for Alfonso VI's role the

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[330] *El Cid Campeador (Toledo: 1526)*, ibid.

[331] *The Chronicle of El Cid*, ed. Robert Southey, ilust. Rene Ben Sussan, Collector's Edition (New York: The Limited Editions Club, 1958).

[331] See John E. Keller and Richard P. Kinkade (eds.), "Iconography in Medieval Spanish Literature," *Web project Cantar de Mio Cid*, dir. Matthew Bailey, Liberal Arts ITS, University of Texas Austin, accessed 04/27/17, http://miocid.wlu.edu/main/images.php?v=nor.

death of his brother Sancho. However, *only* El Cid made public utterance of his thoughts and in a manner clearly improper of a vassal regarding his lord. In front of the court, El Cid demanded in strong terms that the king assure himself under oath that he had no active involvement in king Sancho's assassination. In this moment, loyalty towards hapless king Sancho and coherence consequence with his moral imperatives supersede the "vassalage / bondage" in El Cid, who keeps being – for a while at least – a bondsman without being a vassal proper. Since the king was "señor natural," being or not being a bondsman was not an option left to the knight. Insofar as lord and bondsman are both just co-essential moments of a dialectical movement, the "natural" condition of the king as *lord* was also the natural condition of the vassal as *bondsman*. Yet vassalge was a contingent (external) connection with the king as a moral, social, and even divine *auctoritas*, rather than a necessary (internal) bond. Since *HR* it was clear that El Cid, as an epic prototype, could be an exiled lord-less vassal free from his "señor natural." In other words, during his exile in *HR* El Cid is not a vassal proper. But his referentiality to the king is as permanent as his self-consciousness as a lord-less vassal: he is always an exiled lord-bound bondsman. In *PMC*, when the moments of vassalage and bondage are totally identified and therefore appear practically undifferentiated, El Cid is always recognized –and he recognizes himself- as a vassal longing for his lord. Consequently, already in the third stance of the poem "Exiénlo ver mugieres e varones, / burgeses e burgesas por las finiestras son, / plorando de los ojos, tanto avién el dolor; / de las sus bocas todos dizían una rrazón; / '¡Dios, qué buen vassallo, si oviese buen señor!'"[332] In this sense, in chapter XXII (22) of *El Cid Campeador* there is an apparent intertext with *HR*, in which the clash between

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[332] *The Poem of the Cid*, vss 16b-20, ibid., 22.

Alfonso VI and El Cid is all the most evident and remains unsolved: "…el cid fue sabidor de como le habian vuelto con el rey…y llegado a el cuando le besar la mano. Y el rey no se la quiso dar y con gran saña le dijo. Que saliesse de su tierra y de su reyno…"[333] The epic Rodericus (*HR*, *PA*, *MR*) can be a lord-less vassal without becoming an Unhappy Consciousness. That is granted by the fact that, still, vassalage and bondage are distinct moments. This difference results from Rodericus's condition of being an epic prototype. Yet later, after his prototypoferesis and especially in *PMC*, vassalage and bondage appear totally identified each with the other. Despite his triumphs and exaltation, El Cid of *PMC* will mourn as an Unhappy Consciousness the loss of his "señor natural," and will find no rest and recognize no limit until his vassalage (the bondage was never superseded) be fully restored.

While bondage and exile can coexist, vassalage and exile are terms essentiallty contradictory and therefore their coexistence is by definition impossible. In *Crónica del muy esforzado et inuincible cauallero…* (1526), we read: "Sin duda el cid es el mas noble cauallero que nunca fue armado en castilla / y assi me ayude dios yo he muy gran plazer de sus buenas andanzas…"[334] This statement of legitimacy, uttered by Alfonso about El Cid, is a negation of the negation. Alfonso negates El Cid as a necessary bondsman to affirm him as a free vassal (ontologically, an independent *being-for-self*) in the sense that, in his freely accepted vassalage, el Cid becomes a paradigm of perfect Christian knight. But in this way, el Cid at the same time affirms King Alfonso as perfect king and genuine incarnation of the hegemonic self-consciousness in the context of the Castilianization /

[333] Called here after the shorter title *El Cid Campeador (Toledo: 1526)*, op. cit.

[334] Ibid., chapter XXXIII.

164

Christianization of Spain and the absolute monarchy. It is essential here that, once again, the device of king's *gratia* works a *reciprocal hegemonic legitimacy* in the dialectical structure of 'king / vassal - lord / bondsman device': "… y por le hazer merced otorgole a Valencia y todo lo que a Ganado y lo ganare de aqui adelante que sea suyo … y do licencia a todos los que de mis reynos querran yr alo seruir que vayan con mi gracia y sin pena alguna…"[335]

El Cid Campeador's chapter XLIX (49) gives an account of the second marriage of El Cid's daughters. This second marriage to Infantes of Aragon y Navarra works as a device with a double function: first, the restoration of the hurt honor of El Cid's daughters, and second, the further exaltation of El Cid by affirming his natural kinship to the royal condition. Through this union El Cid reconciles with himself governing as a *de facto* "king" of Sevilla, symbolically returning to the royal *environment* to which he belongs *ab origine* according to his linage and ancestry. At this moment, El Cid is a paradigm of good vassal through his reconciliation with Alfonso VI via the king's *gratia*. In summary, there are three main moments in which El Cid's nearness to the kingship discloses in a special way: (1) The marriage of his daughters to the Infantes of Navarra and Aragón; (2) Alfonso VI's invitation to take seat beside him; (3) The parallel between King Fernando and El Cid's eschatological visitations (St. Isidro and St. Peter). Regarding 'Don Fernando / El Cid' parallelism, it is noteworthy that the first receives St. Isidro's visitation at the beginning of the book (chapter II [2]), while the latter is blessed with St. Peter's visitation right towards its end (chapter LIIII [54]). In both cases the eschatological event takes place on the twilight of their lives. Yet while in King Fernando's case the divine intervention

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[335] Ibid.

comes as an endorsement of his royal dignity-sanctity, to El Cid it means, at the same time, the endorsement of his sanctity (indicated since the beginning by the "gafo" passage), and the upgrading of his social- condition as a *gratiae regis* noble. In other words, El Cid is granted a place along the king as *par inter pares*, but *only on the condition* of the immediate alienation of such an equity on the king as his "señor natural" (Figure 11).

King *ab origine* → Nobility *de iure* → Sanctity *per acquisitionem*

El Cid:

Vassal *ab origine* (Not being *rex ab origine* will be an irreparable privation)

Sanctity *per acquisitionem* (identity between vassalage and bondage)

Nobility *per gratiam vel dispensationem regis* (Partakes in King's nobility)
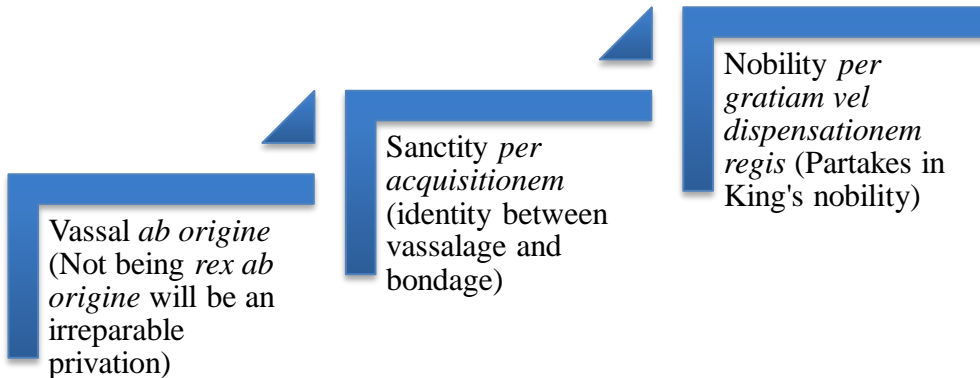
Figure 11: Relation to Nobility.

2.22. Christico-Hagiographical Intericonicity

There are also several Christico-hagiographical intericonic moments as part of the Benedictine efforts to redesign a knightly myth resembling the traditional patterns of Roman-Byzantine warrior-saints. In chapter II of *El Cid Campeador*, St. Isidro comes to the King Fernando as messenger of eschatological news: "Estando un dia en oracion sant

166

Ysidro le aparecio y le dijo el dia y la hora en que habia de morir…"[336] Also, following the same semantic pattern the preface of chapter CCLXXVIII (278) announces that "el apostol san Pedro aparescio al cid et le dixo el dia de su muerte et que hauia de ser saluo: et que despues de muerto venceria al rey bucar."[337] Such as Layamon and Sir Malory make King Arthur resemble Jesus Christ in many of his words and actions, in the same way in chapter XI the *Corónica*'s author puts words in El Cid's mouth that bear a clear Christic resonance: "…y con la gran priessa que ouo de lo seguir nole pusieron espuelas / y tanto ahico su cauallo que llego muy cerca del y no lo pudo alcanzar entonces el Cid dijo. Maldito sea el cauallero que caualga a cauallo sin espuelas."[338] Interestingly enough, there is a Christic gesture in El Cid's curse. In Mark's gospel, Christ curses the sika when it has no fruits for him and the tree immediately withers. Due to the sika's privation, Jesus's will remains unfulfilled. Of course, the spiritual meaning of this passage is self-evident. For his part, El Cid curses the knight who forgets to put spurs on his horse because his oblivion proved him unable to reach Vellido Dolfos, who betrayed and murdered king Sancho. In chapter LVII (57), El Cid emerges as a mystic vision in the battlefield resembling archangels or any of Church's saints as depicted in St. John's *Apocalypsis*: "…y entre todos un cavallero en un caballo blanco: y tray en la mano diestra una seña colorada y una cruz blanca y una espada que parecia de fuego…"[339] The supernatural element is emphazised here by the fact that in this moment El Cid is already dead. For this reason,

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[336] Ibid.

[337] Ibid., fo. XCIIIa. See also note 160.

[338] Ibid.

[339] Ibid.

167

this posthumous victory over the Almoravid king Yusuf constitutes an eschatological deed and a miracle worked by El Campeador. Also, the convergent unity of monarchic and ecclesiastical self-consciousnesses is denoted by the image of El Cid bearing the white Cross and the flame-bladed sword.

A crucial intericonic overlap occurs here, whose resolution will decide El Cid's fate as hegemonic myth in the Spanish imaginary. In paralell to El Cid's development as an epic prototype, the cult of St. James (Santiago) advances by leaps and bouds in Compostela. As William Melczer points out, the city was even called the "New Rome" emulating un this way both with Byzantium and the imperial Old Rome.[340] In 844, Santiago appears to side with the Christians in the battle of Clavijo helping them defeat the Moors. Especially important was his involvement in the battle of Navas de Tolosa (1212), a military action of crucial meaning for the *Reconquista* alongside the siege of Toledo (1094), by Alfonso VI, and Sevilla (1095) by El Cid. By being himself a warrior-saint, St. James incarnates the reconciled unity of the two ontological dimensions of Christian theology, i.e., heaven and earth, spiritual and physical. In his iconotypia, Santiago combines many of Byzantine inconotypal characteristics of earlier representations St. Jabob, St. George, and the warrior-saitns generally. In this sense, William Melczer states that "Romanesque form-culture adopts the ready-made Byzantine traditions with the usual Western formal energy and iconographic reinterpretation."[341]These intericonic transactions explain the formal similarities between Santiago's and Byzantine warrior-saints' iconotypes, as well as the specific representation of St. James as "on many a *Kleinkunst*

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[340] Melczer, op. cit., 21.

[341] Ibid., 64.

168

carving, in the act of receiving the devotions of the pilgrims."[342] In the latter reference,

Goths' role in the import of Byzantine models into France and Spain is evident.

As King Arthur at some stage of his myth-making, also Santiago underwent an

obvious hagiographic arquetypification that culminated, although it did not prevail, in his

Christification. The latter can be summarized in two essential moments:

1. The iconographic typology.

This typology is described by Melczer in the following words: "A centrally placed,

frontally seated or standing figure of Santiago with one pilgrim flanking him on each side,

quite often husband and wife."[343] The resemblance of this image with Byzantine iconotype

called *Δέησις* is beyond discussion. In the *Δέησις*-icon, Jesus Christ is flanked by Virgin

Mary on his right and St. John the Baptist on his left. Comparing the variations in size in

these icons, and its possible relationship with the semantic level, Melczer also notes that:

"the old Byzantine principle of size as an indication of theological relevance is apparent

here."[344]

2. Iconotypo-theological "anomaly."

Melczer refers to what he calls "the theological anomaly encountered earlier

concerning St. James," consisting of the fact that the saint is represented as being himself a

pilgrim visitng his own grave and relics among other pilgrims."[345] Thus, a process between

displacement and overlapping was taking place here, by which St. James was at the same

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[342] Ibid., 69.

[343] Ibid.

[343] Ibid.

[345] Ibid., 68.

time saint and pilgrim, and saint and Christ himself as object of pilgrim. Melczer states that "this anomaly has come to a full circle: it is Christ Himslef who turns into a pilgrim of Santiago."[346]Turning Christ into a pilgrim of Santiago makes somehow Santigo turn into the ultimate object of devotion and pilgrim in Christian theology: Christ Himself. This role exchange is utterly difficult to explain. It shows nevertheless the intense dynamic of the intericonic transactions in the formation of Christian Spanish imaginary and the role played in it by Byzantium.

It is noteworthy that places like Compostela, Glastonbury, and the duality 'San Pedro de Cardeña/Valencia' acquiere a sacred dimension directly proportional to the degree of Christification and hagiopoiesis of Santiago, El Cid, and King Arthur (Figure 12). Also, in their spiritual meaning, these sacred places bear the connotation of sacred chronotopiae: Compostela/The New Rome; Glastonbury/Avalon; Valencia/San Pedro de Cardeña (Figure 13).

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[346] Ibid.
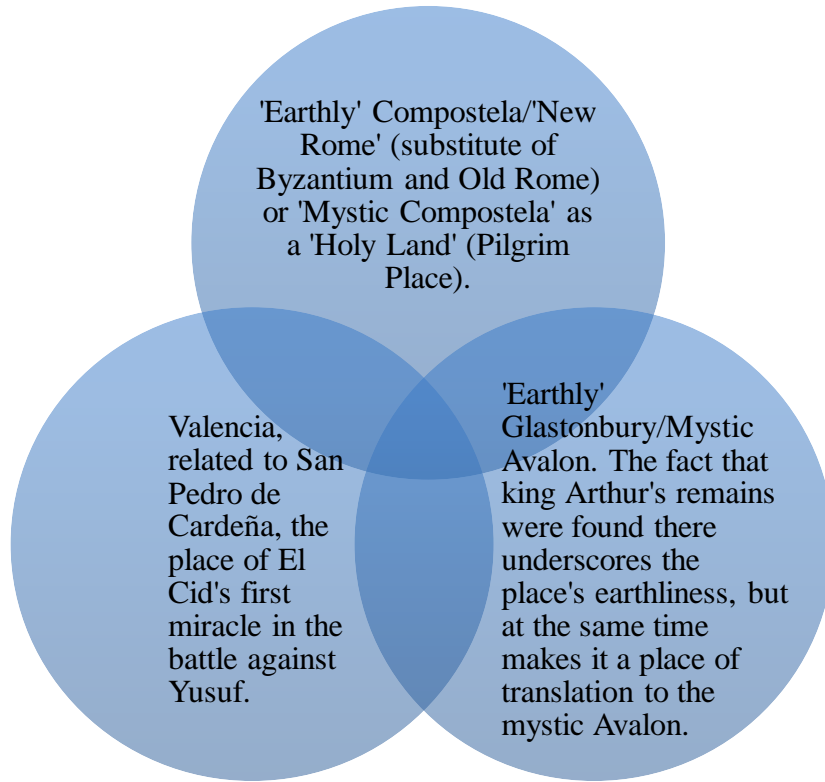
Figure 12: Sacred Chronotopiae.

This shows an apparent equivalence with the Byzantine notion of Sacred City:
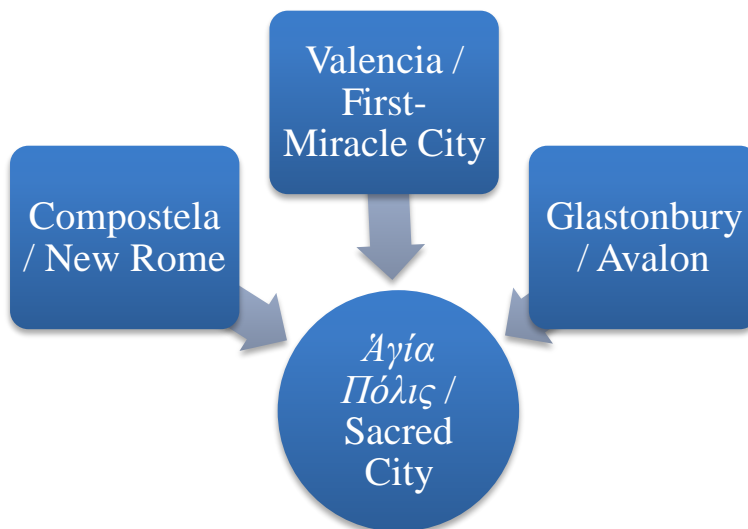
Figure 13: Equivalence with Byzantine Notion of Sacred City.

Furthermore, in the Spanish context, El Cid's position between Santiago and the Kings (Fernando I, Sancho IV, and Alfonso VI) can partly explain his shape-shifting as hegemonic myth. On the one hand, Santiago was an Apostle who became warrior in the belligerent milieu of the *Reconquista* and Christianization of the Iberian Peninsula. He was then a saint *ab origine* that was morphed into a warrior *a posteriori* as the protector and guide of Christians in their *iustum bellum* against the Muslims. On the other hand, Frernando, Sancho, and Alfonso were kings *ab origine* that were bestowed a nature of sainthood because of their role in the Reconquista and the production of the important ideological narrative of an under-monarchy-and-Church unified Peninsula. Rodrigo, on the contrary, was a noble and a warrior, but he was neither a nor a saint *ab origine*. In both cases, he *had to become* such. During these intertextual and intericonic processes El Cid morphed into a saint and a *de facto* "king" in Valencia. Yet, despite the Benedictine narrative around El Cid's hagiopoeia, the latter never enjoyed either the theological or liturgical privileges granted to a saint in the context of the Catholic faith. Furthermore, despite being exalted by Alfonso VI after his triumph in Valencia, El Cid was never a king proper, a lack that is always apparent in his relationship with King Alfonso.

Concerning Apostol Santiago, the *Breviarium Apostolorum* points out to Byzantium as the cultural ground upon which further interpretations and iconogaphical modeling took place. According to Melczer: "[…] of the sixth or seventh century, a Latin text derived from a Greek original written somewhere in the Byzantine realm."[347] In a revealing passage of the aforementioned *Breviarium*, we can read that: "Jacobus qui interpretator filius Zebedei frater Johannis. Hic Spaniae at occidentalis loca praedicatur et

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[347] Melczer, op. cit.., 10.

sub Herode gladio caesus occubuit sepultusque est in Achaia Marmarica VIII. kal. Augustus."[348] The geopolitical indication of Spania as the "hic" where the writer is located is noteworthy. Indeed, Spania was the name of the landstrip at the South of the Iberian Peninsula that was restored to the Byzantine (Roman) Empire during Justinianus's expansion wars. Therefore, the "somewhere in the Byzantine realm" to which Melczer refers might well have been the Byzantine Spania. This idea is reinforced by several facts. First, the *Breviarium* seems to have been written any time during the 5th or the 6th century; second, the Visigothic kingdom had an active and extense South border with Spania and, third, the several decades of Visigothic-Byzantine (Spania) wars catalyzed at the Southern borders intense cultural exchanges between two societies that shared the Christian Byzantine heritage. Santiago's shafe-shifting from apostole to warrior-saint was a fast-track process. Already in the 7th century, Aldhelm of Malmsbury (died in 709) states in his *Carmen in duodecim apostolorum aris* that St. James Apostle converts the Spanish nations."[349] In his *Commentary on the Apocalypse*, written in Northen Spain (8th century), Beatus of Liebana divides the world in different lots or provinces, each one corresponding to an apostle.[350] Also in the 8th century, the *De ortu et obitu partum*, a book attributed to St. Isidor of Sevilla, shows an interpolation that refers to Santiago's preaching activity throughout Spain.[351] There is an hymn wrongly attributed to Beatus of Liebana and

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[348] Quoted by Melczer, ibid.

[349] Ibid., 11.

[350] Ibid.

[351] Ibid.

included in the *breviarium* of the hispano-mozarabe rite, the *O Dei Verbum Patris*, in

which St. James appears as the protector (the patron saint) of Spain:

> Magni deinde filii tonitrui,
> Adepti fulgent prece Matris inclytae
> Utrique vitae culminis insignia:
> Regens Joannes dextram solus Asiam,
> Ejusque frater potitus Hispaniam.
>   …
> O vere digne sanctior Apostole
> Caput refulgens aureum Hispaniae!
> Tutorque nobis, et patronus vernulus,
> Vitando pestem, esto salus coelitus:
> Omnino pelle morbum, ulcus, facinus.[352]

The belligerent character of the poem stands out in many verses, but especially the

stanza VIII the verbs "coercens," and "punit" applied to "magorum," "daemonum," and

"aemulantia," highlights the opposition between Christians and their enemies. In the stanza

IX, the idea of martyrdom reappears but in a new context. Bearing the standard of peace,

St. James restores health to the sick, but he himself reaches glory dying by the sword:

"Vexilla pacis ad salutis copiam, / Enseque functus se communit gloria."[353] In the same

way, Christians should seek peace but be ready to die for Christ in the holy fight against

"magicians" and "demons." This rethoric reponds to the beginning of the process of

Reconquista in the Iberian Peninsula. It is then not concidential that the afore-mentioned

texts, in which Santiago takes the leading role, were all composed precisely during the 8th

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[352] "Quedan los grandes hijos del Trueno / que, a ruegos de su generosa madre, / han / conseguido con razón el honor supremo / de regir Juan sólo toda Asia / y su hermano apoderarse de España … ¡Oh apóstol santísimo y digno de alabanza, / cabeza refulgente y dorada de España, / defensor nuestro y patrono nacional / sé nuestra salvación celeste contra la peste / y aleja de nosotros toda enfermedad, llaga y maldad!" See *O Dei Verbum Patris ore proditum*, trans. Miguel C. Vivancos Gómez, OSB., accessed 05/07/17, http://www.xacobeo.fr/ZF2.02.mus.O_Dei_Verbum.htm.

[353] "y, con el signo de la paz, le devuelve la salud, / asegurando para sí la gloria al morir bajo la espada." Ibid.

and the 9th centuries. For the first time in Spain, sword, warrior, battlefield, and glorious death will be interlaced forming a semantic field around the idea of the *iustum bellum*.

Thus, trapped between two powerful cultural force-fields –between Santiago as a warrior-saint and the kings *ad origine*– Rodrigo as the weaker particle came to occupy the position that fit with his cultural attributes: a paradigm of good vassal, deeply blessed by God but not a saint *sensu stricto*. Also, an invencible warrior and a key factor in Christian triumph during the Reconquista, but this only *insofar as* he stands loyal to his "señor natural" and thus, consequently, the two moments of vassalage and bondage remain totally identified in his cultural self. El Cid then must be *inferior* than Santiago in sainthood and

inferior than the kings in royalty (Figure 14): "οὐκ ἔστιν ὁ δοῦλος μείζων τοῦ κυρίου αὐτοῦ"[354].
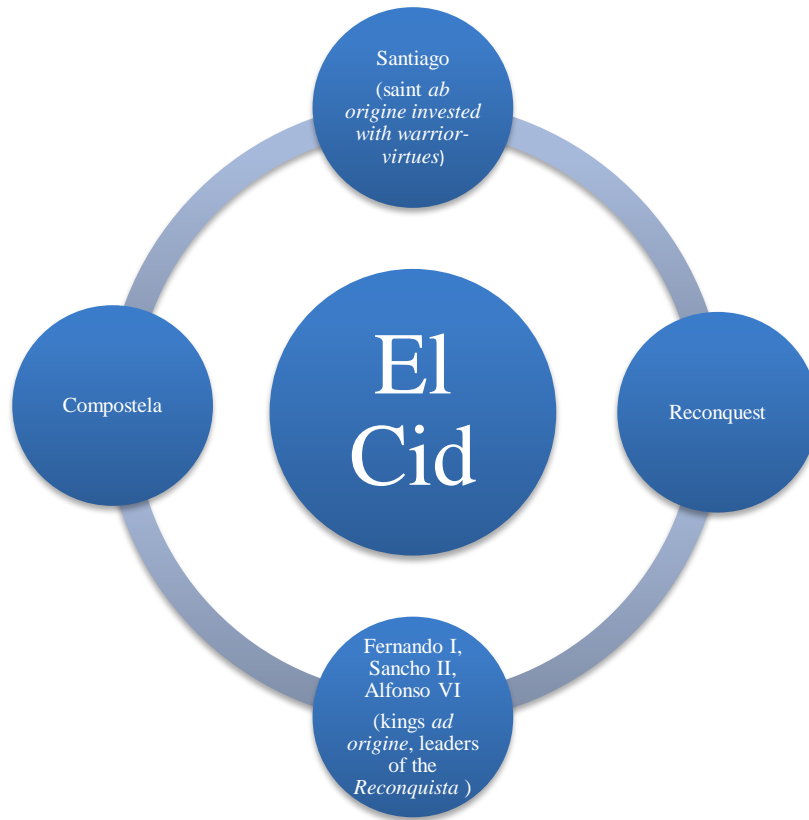
Figure 14: Cultural Force-Fields.

In the *Cronica del muy esforçado et inuencible cauallero el Cid Ruy Diaz* (1526), chapter LIIII (54), an event comes to reinforce the supernatural and hagiographic elements. Apostle St. Peter appears to El Cid bearing a crucial revelation: "[…] Rodrigo no temas que yo soy el apostol san pedro et vengo ati por te hazer saber que de oy en trynta dias dexaras este mundo et yras en la vida bienauenturada […] la tu gente desbaratara al rey

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[354] "The servant is not greater than his master." John 15:20, (Douay-Rheims Version).

bucar: et tu seyendo muerto venceras esta batalla por la onrra de tu cuerpo."[355] Receiving the visit of the Prince of Apostles and knowing the day of their own death, were already high priviledges reserved to the saints. But this passage goes beyond that. It states that El Cid will defeat King Bucar "*for the honor of his body.*" In other words, St. Peter confirms El Cd's sanctity by announcing that his dead body will have miracle-working properties. Thus, this passage is essentially connected to the account of the ten-year exposition of El Cid's embalmed corpse at the monastery of San Pedro de Cardeña. In the *Cronica particular del Cid* (1512) it reads: "E en la noche yaziendo dormiendo vino a el un angel que le dixo. Cid vete a osadas: et no temas nada: ca siempre te yra bien mientras vesquieres: te acabaras todas las cosas que comencastes…"[356] In chapter LIX (59) we are told that: "Y el rey de nauarra y todos los caualleros se marauillaron mucho dela hermosura que el cid tenia despues de muerto / que parescia estar biuo."[357] Chapter XLII (42) relates how the miraculous event that: El Cid "estuuo diez anos despues de muerto assentado en su escano…"[358] Additionally, he works an important miracle towards the Jude that wanted to yank his beard and later "tornose christiano."[359] Chapter LXI (61) suggests a parallelism between the monastery of San Pedro de Cardeña and Avalon as mystical chronotopes where the heroes dwell after their passing from the present *saeculum* to the Transcendence. King Arthur is said to live in the Ile of Avalon; El Cid died

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[355] *Cronica del muy esforçado…*, op. cit.

[356] *Cronica particular...*, fo. XXIX.

[357] Ibid.

[358] Ibid.

[359] Ibid.

physically but remained alive in a spiritual sense. The correlation between world and Transcendence in Christian theology allows this device to work in a perfect way keeping El Cid still "on earth" while at the same time physically deceased. Both the monastery of San Pedro de Cardena and the Ile of Avalon are sacred chronotopiae where the heroes' ultimate hierophanic shapeshifting takes place. Furthermore, a close relationship can also be established between the monasteries of Glastonbury and San Pedro de Cardeña as sources of an essential part of hagiographical / eschatological textuality and imaginary shaping the figures of King Arthur and El Cid as Christian hero-warriors.

The merit of the intericonic transaction in chapters XXXIX (34) and XL (40) must be especially underscored. Here, the opposition between el Cid and the Infantes de Carrion, based upon the opposition between gracious acceptation and treacherous ingratitude, iconizes the relationship between Christ and Judas Iscariot. Notwithstanding the favors and love the infants received from el Cid, they betrayed their master moved by envy and greed. The expression "… y con todas las onrras y bienes que el cid les hizo nunca su maluado proposito oluidaron segun que adelante se dira"[360] intertexts with two passages of the Gospel where Judas's envy and greed are clearly stressed. According the Gospel of John, Judas bitterly protests when Mary, sister of Martha and Lazarus, wipes Jesus's feet with a likely expensive ointment: "λέγει οὖν εἷς ἐκ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ, Ἰούδας Σίμωνος Ἰσκαριώτης, ὁ μέλλων αὐτὸν παραδιδόναι· διατί τοῦτο τὸ μύρον οὐκ ἐπράθη τριακοσίων δηναρίων καὶ ἐδόθη πτωχοῖς; εἶπε δὲ τοῦτο οὐχ ὅτι περὶ τῶν πτωχῶν ἔμελεν αὐτῷ, ἀλλ᾽ ὅτι κλέπτης ἦν, καὶ τὸ γλωσσόκομον εἶχε καὶ τὰ βαλλόμενα ἐβάσταζεν."[361] The same idea

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[360] *Crónica…*, ibid. See also *The Poem of the Cid*, vv. 2681-2753, op. cit., 164-166.

[361] "Then one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, he that was about to betray him, said: Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?"

appears also in the Gospel of Mathew when Judas negotiates with the Jews a deal to deliver Jesus. He seemed to be satisfied with the offer of thirty pieces of silver: "Τότε πορευθεὶς εἷς τῶν δώδεκα, ὁ λεγόμενος Ἰούδας Ἰσκαριώτης, πρὸς τοὺς ἀρχιερεῖς εἶπε· τί θέλετέ μοι δοῦναι, καὶ ἐγὼ ὑμῖν παραδώσω αὐτόν; οἱ δὲ ἔστησαν αὐτῷ τριάκοντα ἀργύρια."[362] Likewise, greed is the motive for Infantes de Carrion to approach El Cid and merry his daughters. Contrastingly, or rather complementarily, their reasons to betray El Cid and vex their own wives are envy and revenge. Although greed will have always the leading role, Byzantine tradition sees all these passions synthesized on Judas Iscarote's figure. From among them, envy will be mirrored in emperor Justinian's courtiers and deemed the main reason for the emperor to blind Belisarius. Beyond this, envy will also be morphed into the allegory of late Byzantium's soul-disposition and main cause of its fall. So, the same semantic structure that combines envy, greed, and will to revenge as the main motives for betrayal repeats in at least three of the Byzantine-European hero narratives, having Christ and Judas as iconotypal matrices (Figure 15).

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[6] Now he said this, not because he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and having the purse, carried the things that were put therein." John, 12:4-6. Douay-Rheims 1899. American Edition (DRA).

[362] "And said to them: What will you give me, and I will deliver him unto you? But they appointed him thirty pieces of silver." Mathew 26-15, (Douay-Rheims Version).

Christ	Judas Iscariote
Belisarius	Emperor Justinian's Courtiers
El Cid	King Alfonso VI's Courtiers and Himself
King Arthur	Mordred / Lancelot
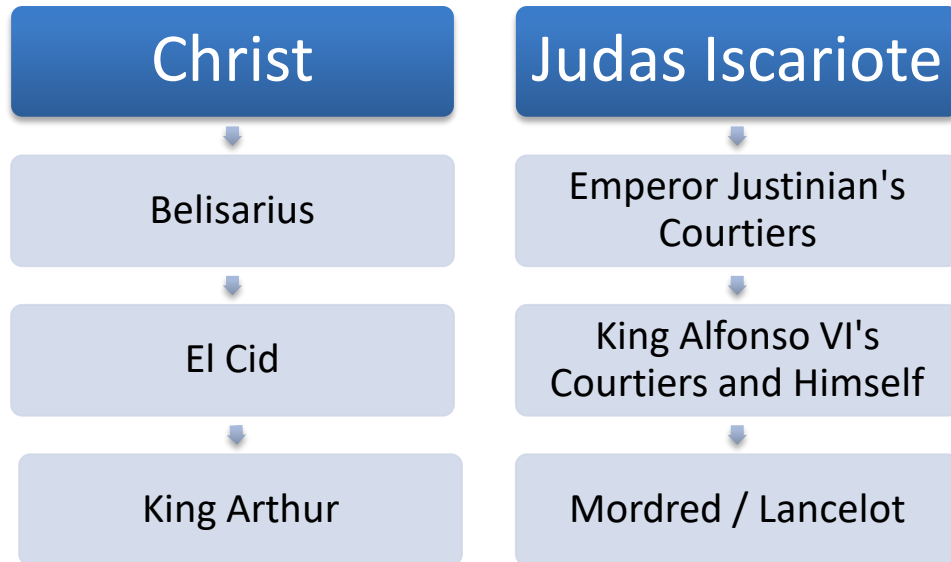
Figure 15: Christ and Judas as Iconotypal Matrices.

2.23. Conclusions

The mythopoeia of El Cid as hegemonic myth flows through a diachronical shapeshifting process with religious and political functionality linked to the Christianization of Spain and Britain. The mytheme interlock with the hegemonic rhetoric of Christian Reconquest in the shaping of Castilian-Spanish national identity and its procedural correlates, i.e. the re-Christianization and monarchical Castilianization of the Iberian Peninsula. The diachronical shapeshifting process of El Cid showcases several specificities which reveal their common essence as part and parcel of a more general process: (1) *Prototypopoeia*: Rodericus Didaci Campidoctor appears as cultural thesis of the essence of the warrior-hero in his epic identity. This moment can be observed in texts such as *HR*, *PA*, *CC*, and *MR*. (2) *Paradigmatopoeia*: El Cid appears as paradigm of 'good vassal' and loyal, invincible knight, always subsumed into the identitary gravity of the figure of the King as the "señor natural." This myth-making stage has been examined in tects such as *ChN*, *ChAI*, *PMC*. (3) *Epigonal Prototypopoeia* (*Benedictine epigonal*

hagiopoeia): complex intersection of epic prototype and 'good-vassal' paradigm, as present in *opera* such as *CrCd (1498)*, *CrCd (1512)*, *CrCd (1526)*, and the Romances in general.

3. MYTH-MAKING OF KING ARTHUR, CHRISTIANIZATION OF BRITAIN, ENGLISH MONARCHY, AND THE UNITED KINGDOM

> *History rather blushes at the mention of his name;*
> *legend, on the other hand, brags much of him.*
> Graeme Fife

3.1. Socio-Cultural Paradigm Shift

According to the 5th-century Gaulish *Life of Germanus of Auxerre*, St. Germanus was sent to Britain to arbitrate between 'orthodox' Catholic Christians and Pelagian heretics. For historical reasons, however, the Saint's mission was not confined only to the spiritual realm, and Germanus rather soon found himself engaged in a military action. Whilst in Britain, he took command of a local defense force against a combined Pictish-Saxon 'army'. Germanus stationed a British army in ambush on both sides of a valley. When the barbarians approached without imagining their certain fate, the bishop and his warriors dashed ferociously at the enemy shouting 'Alleluia.'[363] Hearing the yelling, the Anglo-Saxons immediately ran away. This account is important not because of the military significance of this action, but of the cultural encounter, i.e. the cross-cultural overlap taking place in this bizarre fellowship.

In such context of cultural exchanges –fostered certainly by the Roman 'melting-pot,' the frequent inter-ethnic war alliances alongside internecine wars, the systematic and progressive establishing of the Christian Church, and the dissemination of Christianity via assimilation of mythical pre-Christian traditions and worldviews in the multi-ethnic Britain– the myth-making of Arthur as christified warrior-hero and king appears to be part

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[363] Guy Halsall, "The Pictish wars," in *Worlds of Arthur, Facts and Fictions of the Dark Ages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 14.

of a cross-cultural construction functionally linked to the general process of Christianization of Britain based on Greek-Roman, Old/New Testament and Byzantine narratives and iconosystems. By the expression 'myth-making of King Arthur' we mean his gradual metamorphosis from a local British warrior-hero into a universal cross-cultural King-Messiah, the *rex quondam rexque futurus* in Christian-Celtic imaginary. Additionally, in a wider mythopoetic process, Arthur morphs into a King-Prophet and appears to the right of Christ, with a specific mytho-symbolic role during the ruling of House of Plantagenet and afterward. The *Chronicon Monasterii of Hales*[364] says that Arthur is stronger than Enoch and Elijah and, raised up to the Heavens by Christ Himself, is claimed to be the only one able to defeat the evil beast Leviathan. Thus, the relations of King Arthur's several mythical variations can be summarized in the three-stage process to understand their meaning in connection with the Christianization of Britain, the preeminence of the English monarchy, and the formation of an integrated multi-cultural identity: (1) Pre-Galfidian stage or Celtic-popular mythical unit: Arthur as an ethnic folk-hero and defender; (2) Post-Galfidian state or Pre-Plantagenet unit: Arthur as a Christified eschatological King, universal Messiah and, especially in Britanny, a kind of demi-god object of popular cult;[365] (3) Post-Plantagenet English unit: Arthur as King-Prophet and this-worldly, legitimacy-source monarch, symbolical unity of the nascent Empire.

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[364] "Chronicon Monasterii de Hales," "Arthurian Fragments," *MLA* 18 (1903): 84-94, 87, accessed 16-05-2015 01:58 UTC. Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/456476>

[365] Robert Huntington Fletcher quotes Villemarqué's work *Romans de la Table Ronde*, in which there is a mention of "a bas-relief in a Breton church which may possibly give evidence for an Arthurian 'cult' in Brittany about 1100." See Robert Huntington Fletcher, *Arthurian Material in Chronicles, Especially Those of Great Britain and France*, Vol. X, in *Studies and Notes in Philology and Literature* (Boston: Modern Language Departments pf Harvard University, 1906), 102.

According to Guy Halsall, there is a shift from the traditional paradigm –i.e. the "bipolar terms" or the "moving front model" of Britons (or Roman-Welsh) versus Anglo-Saxons–, toward the cross-cultural framework of "the Welsh fighting the Welsh and the English fighting the English," in Halsall's expression.[366] As he himself states: "Sometimes allies are summoned from neighboring kingdoms of a different ethnicity; Anglo-Welsh confederacies fight temporary alliances of English and Welsh."[367] Thus, the "Roman vs. Barbarians/Britons vs. Saxons" model is shifted by the 'cross-ethnicity' model. This socio-cultural model describes in better terms the societal situation in the Roman/Byzantine Empire generally. Indeed, writing about the Battle of Camlann, Geoffrey of Monmouth summirizes in one single passage the ethnic complexity of early medieval Britain: "[In the Battle of Camlann] "On Mordred's side there fell Cheldric, Elaf, Ebbrict…, all of them Saxons. The Irishmen…and the Scots and Picts… On Arthur's side there died Obbrict, King of Norway; Aschil, King of Denmark…others from many peoples he had brought with him."[368] *The History of Scotland, from the Earliest Period of the Scottish Monarchy* reads that the seven sons of Edelfredus, king of the Northumbrians, who "fell in battle detesting Christian religion," fled to king Eugenius, the son of Aidanus and king Kenneth's successor, seeking protection and there, "instructed by the bishops, embraced the Christian faith, desiring and receiving baptism."[369] Additionally, cultural clashes were taking place inside Christendom itself. Augustine of Canterbury was sent by Pope Gregory the Great in

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[366] Halsall, op. cit., 161-162.

[367] Ibid.

[368] Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The History of the Kings of Britain* (London: The Folio Society, 1969), 236.

[369] Rev. James Carruthers, *The History of Scotland, from the Earliest Period of the Scottish Monarchy to the Ascension of the Stewart Family*, Vol. I (Edinburgh: John Moir, West Register Street, 1826), 151.

595 to convert Æthelberht, the English king of Kent, likely because the Kinf was married

to a Christian princess, Bertha, daughter of Charibert I the King of Paris. King Æthelberht

embraced Christianity along with many of his subject. Yet when some years later (601),

encouraged by the success, Pope Gregory sent more missionaries and attempted to

persuade the native Cetic bishops to submit to Augustine's authority –and by extension to

Rome's Catholic See– failure occurred. Using an expression that clearly questions Celtic

Christendom's authenticity, William of Rennes states that, "Ecclesias igitur Britonum

legatus et urber / Uisitat et sanctum semen disseminat illis."[370] Augustine makes the

Britons a reasonable request: "…Summo pontifici subiecti more priorum, / Exhibeatis

opem nobis ad restituendum / Anglos ecclesie…."[371] Britons deem it unacceptable to

cooperate with Rome for two main reasons: they hate the Anglo-Saxons, and they will not

submit their autonomy to the Holy See.[372] This failure in understanding between Augustine

and the British clergy brought about a bloody war between Britons and English; and since

595 several English communities had already converted to Christianity, it is logical to

surmise that, in part at least, this war turned Christians against Christians as well. A few

centuries later years, as attested in the *Chronicle of Bargam Abbey*, Wales' society

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[370] See William of Rennes, "Liber Nonus" (230-259), in *Historia Regum Britannie of Geoffrey of Monmouth V: Gesta Regum Britannie*, ed. Neil Wright (London: D. S. Brewer, 1991), 250. "Therefore the envoy visits the British churches and cities and sows the holy seed amongst them." Ibid., 251.
Regarding the *Gesta*'s authorship, Wright warns us against easy solutions: "The identity of the author of the poem is more difficult to determine." ("Introduction," ibid., xi.) However, we follow Francisque-Michel and Rosemary Morris in accepting Michel's identification of the author. As Neil Wright points himself out: "Indeed, in favor of Michel's identification it could be argued that William, as a Breton born in Thorigné, might well have been responsible for a verse paraphrase of the *Historia Regum Britannie* which was of evident relevance to contemporary Breton politics and addressed to a Breton bishop." (Ibid., xii.).

[371] Ibid., 252. "…to obey the highest pontif as your ancestor did and to give us your aid in restoring the English to the Church." Ibid., 253.

[372] Ibid. vss 400-09, 252.

presented practical challenges to important Welsh villages and Cistercian monasteries.

According to the annalist, in 1226: "Combusserunt Walenses tres villas de Glamorgan ;

villam scilicet de Sancto Nicholao, villam de Novo Castello ; et villam de Lagelestune,

nonnullosque homines occiderunt."[373] Should these attacks on town properties and men be

not enough, Welsmen "perversi homines," also raid upon Margan Abbey and

"Concremaverunt oves nostras plusquam mille, cum duabus domibus, in una

septimana."[374]

3.2. The Long Process of Christianization of Britain

Within this different socio-cultural framework, the process of Christianization of

Britain occurred by the re-dimensioning of some pre-Christian ideolectal patterns

representative of Celtic and Anglo-Saxon imaginary, as well as through the incorporation

of the Christian faith as praxis and narrative into the Celtic-British and later also Anglo-

Saxon worlds. Consequently, the specific profiling of King Arthur's figure as ethno-

cultural reflecting the Christian prototype of military saints, the concrete depiction of his

life and death, as well as the mystic *chronotopia* associated with these events (Camelot, Ile

of Avalon, the 'kingriche of aluene,' etc.) ultimately respond to the socio-cultural

dialectics of the expansion of Christian faith and formation of an English identity in a

united Christian nation. King Arthur's myth-making essentially appears as a functional

correlate of the Christianization of Britain.

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[373] Walter de Gray Birch, *A History of Margam Abbey Derived from the Original Documents in the British Museum, H. M. Record Office, The Margam Monuments, etc., with Numerous Illustrations* (London: Bedford Press, 1897), 218.

[374] Ibid.

This process shows three main diachronically related moments: (1) the Christianization of the 'pagans' alongside the introduction of Christianity in Britain during Roman rule and especially after Constantine's Edict of Milan in 323. This moment is symbolized in Arthur's journey to the Otherworld searching after the magic cauldron, as represented in the poem *Preiddeu Annwm* (*The Spoils of Annwm*).[375] This textual corpus was put together in the *Mabinogion*,[376] but it is also present in the aforementioned *Historia Bretonum*; (2) the homogenization of internally divided Christian Church in Britain, and (3) the formation of the 'one nation-one king' imaginary and identity (Figure 16).[377]
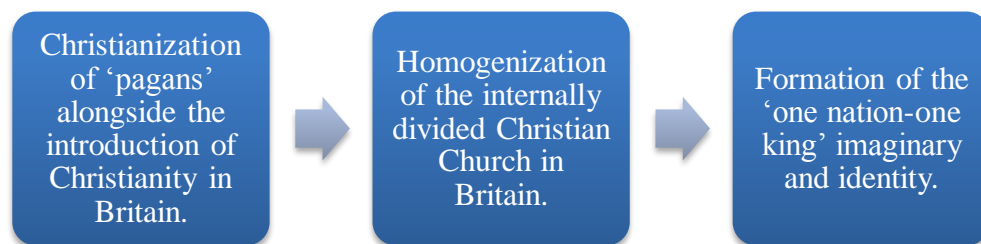
Figure 16: Process of Christianization of Britain.

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[375] For a cultural, non-mythical approach to this poem, see Ashe, pp. 156-58. For a radical myth-centered explanation see Sir John Rhys, *Studies in the Arthurian Legend* (NY: Cornell University Library, 2009), and more recently with a distinct mystic-religious perspective R. J. Stewart, *Merlin: The Prophetic Vision and The Mystic Life*, 2nd Edition (NY: Arkana Peguin Books, 1994), 427-29.

[376] See *The Mabinogi and other Medieval Welsh Tales*, ed. Patrick K. Ford (Berkeley. CA: University of California Press, 1977), and *The Mabinogion, from The Welsh of the Llyfr Coch o Hergest*, ed. Lady Charlotte Guest (London: Bernard Quaritch, 1877).

[377] Through the works of Geoffrey of Monmouth and Layamon, but also of Giraldus Cambrensis (see 'Liber de Principis instructione,' c.1193 and 'Speculum Ecclesiae,' c. 1216, in *Britannia, Sources of British History*, accessed 25/3/2015, file:///C:/Users/Inti/OneDrive/Documents/Two%20Accounts%20of%20the%20Exhumation%20of%20Arthur's%20Body%20%20Gerald%20of%20Wales.html. For William of Malmesbury and the Glastonbury monks, see *Chronicon Monasterii de Hales*, op. cit.

3.3. Christianization, Re-Christianization, and Transculturation

However, an objection could be raised here: Celtic (Roman-Welsh) Britain, under the Roman Empire, at least after AD 323, was already a Christian land. Then, how can it be claimed that the mythopoiesis of King Arthur takes place as a function of the process of Christianization of Britain, the unified nation-identity building, and the formation of the English absolute monarchy? The answer lies in what it is understood here by 'Christianization of Britain.' Essentially, 'Christianization of Britain' stands here for the complex process of founding and expansion of Christendom in Britain in intersection with the building of a self-coherent national-identitary narrative which will be able to conflate Celtic and Roman-Welsh elements with English, Frankish, and Anglo-Saxon components to create a unified nation-empire under the agglutinative monarchy of the English. This narrative is presided by King Arthur as cultural prototype –i.e. a hegemonic myth-synthesis– reflecting Christ as absolute Archetype.[378] Additionally, there is also the inclusion of early Arthurian (Christian or not) traditions into the Christian scriptural corpus –a sort of 'Great Christian English Canon' –able to provide a self-coherent and general Christian form to the multiethnic post-Roman British-Frankish-Anglo-Saxon society.

Indeed, as for an earlier well-established presence of the Church in Britain, since the beginning scholars harbored serious doubts about the historical possibility of such presence. For instance, in *Ecclesiastica Documenta* Arthur West Haddan and William Stubbs state that the idea of the presence of British Christians at Rome and in Britain, as well as of Apostles or apostolic men preaching in Britain in the first century rest upon

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[378] A picture completed by the Knights of the Round Table and the sacred *chronotopia* of Avalon, in a mystic context that becomes further unfolded in the Grail-saga.

either guess, mistake or fable; and that "evidence alleged for the existence of a Christian church in Britain during the second century is simply unhistorical."[379] In the same spirit, Pryce calls these early agencies "gratuitous assumptions, plausible guesses, or legendary fables."[380] However, Eusebius[381] speaks as though some of the Twelve or of the Seventy had "crossed the ocean to the isles called British; *but* the passage is actually rhetorical and indeterminate. In his *Church History* he omits Britain from the apostolic mission-field […] Irenaeus of Lyon, who enumerates all the churches one by one, knows of none in Britain."[382] It is noteworthy Schaffer's claim that:

> The first introduction of Christianity into Britain is involved in obscurity […] But these legends cannot be traced beyond the sixth century, and are therefore destitute of all historic value. A visit of St. Paul to Britain between a.d. 63 and 67 is indeed in itself not impossible (on the assumption of a second Roman captivity), and has been advocated even by such scholars as Ussher and Stillingfleet, but is intrinsically improbable, and destitute of all evidence.[383]

The lack of internal unity of Christianity in Britain was largely due to the complex underlying process of transculturation. Often, it implied internecine dissentions not just

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[379] Arthur West Haddan and William Stubbs, "IX. English Church during the Anglo-Saxon Period. A.D. 595-1066," in *Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents relating to Great Britain and Ireland*, vol. III (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1869-78), 22-26.

[380] *Councils and Ecclesiastical…,* ibid., 30.

[381] *Eusebius of Caesarea, The Proof of the Gospel*, ed. W. J. Ferrar, Vols. I and II (Oregon: Wipf & Stock Pub, 2001), accessed 15/11-/2014, 12:50 CDT, <http://www.preteristarchive.com/ChurchHistory/0312_eusebius_proof.html>.

[382] Philip Schaff, '§ 8. The Britons,' "Vol. IV: Mediaeval Christianity, A.D. 590-1073," in *History of the Christian Church* (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997), 13-16 (14-15). This material has been carefully compared, corrected¸ and emended (according to the 1910 edition of Charles Scribner's Sons) by The Electronic Bible Society, Dallas, TX, 1998, accessed 28/03/2015, 14:50 CDT <http://www.chucknorris.com/Christian/hcc4.pdf>.

[383] Schaff, ibid., 14.

with Rome[384] but also in the lap of the British Church.[385] On the other hand, nothing could prevent Christianity from becoming pervaded by ancient Celtic mythological and magical beliefs. Beyond concrete beliefs or mythologemes, we also find the attempt to produce an 'autochthonous' theology able to reflect the traditional Celtic *imago mundi*, which was challenged by the newly imported doctrines.

Pelagianism, for instance, is more than a simple heresy. It represents an early Celtic reaction against Latin-Greek theology in order to preserve the divine-human holistic character of their traditional beliefs.[386] Indeed, neither Gildas nor Bede were convinced of the orthodoxy of British Christians' faith. Besides, the collapse of the Roman Empire brought about the end of formal Christian religion in the east of England, and the new Germanic immigrants arrived –or had already begun to arrive- with their own polytheistic pantheon. Despite the was continuous and steadfast process of Christianization, there always existed, as Fleming states, a confusing and bizarre array of local practices and religious ceremonies.[387] As elsewhere, assimilating and Christianizing already-extant

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[384] See pp. 168-9 and footnote 290 of the present work.

[385] Schaff, op. cit., 13.

[386] Pelagianism was a doctrine named after the British monk Pelagius (354 - 420 or 440). In essence, Pelagius's doctrine consists in affirming that death proceeds from Adam according to a natural necessity and not through sin, that the original sin does not impair human free will from choosing between good and evil insofar it affected only Adam and not the whole of mankind, and therefore that, although it would be surely an aid, divine Grace is not strictly necessary to acquire faith, to perform good works, and to pursue eternal life. This doctrine was condemned by the Synod of Carthage in 418, where the Fathers of the Church assembled under the presidency of Aurelius, bishop of Carthage, to take action concerning the errors of Caelestius, a disciple of Pelagius, denouncing the Pelagian doctrines on human nature, original sin, grace, and perfectibility; and it fully approved the contrary views of Saint Augustine of Hippo. See "Pelagius and Pelagianism," in *Catholic Encyclopedia: New Advent*, ed. Kevin Knight, accessed 29/05/2015, http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0126.htm. See also Schaff, ibid., 15: "A notorious heretic, Pelagius (Morgan), was from the same island; his abler, though less influential associate, Celestius, was probably an Irishman; but their doctrines were condemned (429) […]."

[387] Robin Fleming, *Britain After Rome: The Fall and Rise, 400 to 1070* (London: Penguin Books, 2011), 160-61.

mythological traditions and even eschatological ideas was a regular and surely necessary practice of the Church. Sometimes the synthesis was not perfect, and both traditions remained syncretized, i.e. essentially separated and distinct under a veil of homogeneity.[388]

According to Bede and other contemporary scholars[389], a more systematic Christianization of Anglo-Saxon occupied territories and other Celtic populations does not occur in Britain proper until after Saint Augustine's arrival in Southern England in 595-96[390] and in Canterbury in 597[391] sent by Pope Gregory the Great. Therefore, Germanus's *gesta* must be undoubtedly considered one of the earliest cases of Christian-British/Anglo-Saxon cross-cultural mix. In this dialectical unity two elements, still at odds with each other, come together: the Christian spiritual, ethical, and literary legacy and Celtic/Anglo-Saxon –from the Christian perspective– pagan and 'barbarian' traditions. The idea of the Northern barbarian tribes still predominant among the most 'civilized' continental imaginary was of ferocious, warlike, and blood-vicious folk. As a matter of fact, this idea was not essentially incorrect. Therefore, we can read in Bede's account of the Christianization of Britain:

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[388] Rather than the sudden upsurge of a new religious phenomenon, cultural-spiritual movements like the 'New Age' with its strong revolt against the official Christianity and its 'return' to pre-Christian traditions such as the Druid-Celtic one, we think it is the unavoidable explosion of 'pagan' elements that were always extant as a parallel non-assimilated tradition in the innermost of Christian culture. Similar phenomenon can be found in highly multi-ethnic and 'syncretic' areas such like many Latin American countries, where the African religious elements exhibit an originality and authenticity that challenge the idea of the possibility of a total transculturation and inter-assimilation between different cultures.

[389] For example, Guy Halsall, "Sword in the stones," in op. cit., 26ff. See also Philip Schaff, "Medieval Christianity, A.D. 590-1073," in *History of the Christian Church*, Volume IV, op. cit.

[390] "Introduction," in "Early Church: Gregory I and England," Christian History Institute, together with the references to *The History of the English Church and People* by Bede, trans. A.M. Sellar, abridged and modernized by Stephen Tomkins, edited and prepared for the web by Dan Graves, accessed 10/09/14. https://www.christianhistoryinstitute.org/study/module/gregory-the-great-evangelizes-england/

[391] Guy Halsall, *Worlds of Arthur. Facts and Fictions of the Dark ages*, ibid., 32.

He [Gregory I] was inspired by God, in 596 – about 150 years after the English first came to Britain – to send the servant of God Augustine with other monks who feared the Lord, to preach the word of God to the English nation. They set off obediently, but were soon seized with terror, and wanted to return home instead of going to this barbarous, fierce and unbelieving nation where they did not even know the language. They agreed that it was safer to return, so Augustine – who was appointed to be bishop if they were accepted by the English – went back humbly to implore the blessed Gregory to let them off this dangerous, hard and uncertain journey. The Pope responded by sending them a letter urging them on to the work of preaching God's word, and to rely on God's help.[392]

In this context, Saint Germanus' and the Bretons' temporary triumph over the Pictish-Saxon invaders was an early allegorical foreshadowing of the massive transcultural process that was already on its way. This state of facts reinforces our belief that the formation, transformation, and final depiction of the figure of King Arthur as a hegemonic myth occurred as a functional correlate of the transborder and cross-cultural founding and expansion of Christianity in Britain. More specifically, the myth-making of the figure of King Arthur as a Christified hero-warrior with a Messianic profile constituted a practical device of inculturation used by the Church in its missionary activity essentialy focused not just on British (Celtic, Roman-Welsh) populations but on the whole island with its ethnic diversity. In other words, the lesser the presence of the Church and its missionary activity in Britain, the lesser –in a direct proportionality– the myth changes and the figure of Arthur acquires Christian features. Conversely, the more intense the Church's presence and its missionary activity, the more the myth changes and Arthur's figure attains and reflects Christian moral and theological principles.

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[392] *The History of the English Church and People* by Bede, ibid. See also, Eusebius of Caesarea, *Demonstratio Evangelica*, trans. W. J. Ferrar, 1920, III. 5, accessed 05/25/2016, http://www.tertullian.org/fathers/eusebius_de_05_book3.htm.

Britain was already, supposedly, a Christian land during its Roman period, partially at least. Then, how can it be affirmed that the myth-making of King Arthur is a functional correlate of the process of Christianization of Britain? Is there not an *in-praesentiae* contradiction here? It is known that, "The Anglo-Saxons who arrived in the fifth and sixth centuries were pagan, sharing the same religion as related Germanic tribes on the Continent. However, the country they conquered had been Christian since fourth century when Constantine declared that the Roman Empire was to adopt Christianity […]"[393] The question here is *how far* the Celtic people had really embraced and assimilated Roman-Greek Christian theology –which, since the Ecumenical Synod of Nicea (323), was effectively shaping the official dogmatic formulation of the Christian faith–, Christ as their Savior and the Church as the sacramental way to salvation *as a fact* in their everyday life. This is, of course, difficult to assess.

As apparent in many processes of transculturation, at some point incoming religion, worldviews, and set of values can exist at a 'nominal level' without crossing the general political ideosphere, far from people's minds and hearts. In fact, syncretism or conscious simulation are known reactions to these attempts at mass indoctrination. Syncretism and simulation are different things. The first supposes a real conflation, a mix of originally opposed elements which essentially conserve their opposition. This process is not necessarily conscious and takes place deeply in the ideo-symbolic dimension of cultural being. On the contrary, simulation is the conscious, deliberate, and totally subjective making-believe that something is *exactly what it is not*. It is the attempt to feature a thing

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[393] Elaine M. Treharne and Duncan Wu (eds.), *Old and Middle English Poetry* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2002), 2.

phenomenologically that at the same time *stands essentially for the opposite* to the thing featured. This is what Historian Philip Schaff means when he refers to the "child-baptism" condition.[394] At this level of cultural insertion, the new beliefs have not yet embedded themselves into the colective social consciousness. They have not yet reached the symbolic dimension of historical self-interpretation and therefore are unable to operate as actual semantic mediations in the process of cultural self-*propriation*. They are abstract, totally formal entities whose real content is essentially *other*. As history shocases, in some cases embracing Christianity was even a political strategy intended to reach other prioritized goals. For instance, in 793 Viking incursions to Britain began with the sack of Lindisfarne in Northumbria. During the reign of King Alfred of Wessex (871-879), a territorial division between the Anglo-Saxon settlers and the Celtic part of the country was officially recognized with the creation of the Danelaw ruled by the Vikings. Consequently, already in 878 King Alfred and Guthrum, the Danish king, signed the Treaty of Wedmore.[395] The point is that a condition for Guthrum to strike an agreement with King Alfred was the conversion of the first to Christianity. This did not represent a problem because the only thing Guthrum had to do was *to appear to be* a Christian: it was not a question of *being*, but of *appearing*: an example of medieval *Realpolitik*.

Thus, although a nominal presence of Christianity existed in Britain since the year 323 where Constantine the Great proclaimed the Edict of Milano, the real fact seems to be that Christianity played a minor role either in both Celtic everyday life and their mytholiterary productions. It is known Bede's claim that, "Christianity had fallen into

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[394] Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, vol. IV, op. cit., 11.

[395] See 'Introduction,' in Elaine M. Treharne and Duncan Wu (eds.), op. cit., 2.

decline and that defeat of the Celts at the hands of Anglo-Saxons was a result of their sins against God."[396] Furthermore, in a very interesting connection Halsall points out how the pagan –mainly Anglo-Saxon– rites of creation and the burial of grave-goods, which were held to indicate pagan beliefs, "began to die out during the seventh century, which was of course the period of the Anglo-Saxons' conversion to Christianity, beginning with Saint Augustine's mission to Canterbury in 597."[397] It can be thought that, either through peaceful settlements or even via war clashes, Anglo-Saxons would have had a wider Christian influence from the Celts should the latter have converted massively to Christianity since 323.

According to Elaine M. Treharne and Duncan Wu: "In the North Christianity was spread by Celtic missionaries from Ireland and Scotland, always after 697."[398] And they add: "In 664, at the Synod of Whitby, Roman and the Celtic Christians came together to decide upon the course of Christianity in England: the Romans advocates won the day, and from then onwards, Roman methods of organizing the church prevailed."[399] This decision would not have been necessary if Celts were already massively Christians and had a strong and well-organized church since the 4th century. Moreover, if we approach the mythological material of Welsh and Celts, much of which must have been produced between the 3th – 4th and the 7th centuries, there can be observed an overwhelming world of pagan traditions, myths, and legends along with social, moral and even cosmological

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[396] Ibid.

[397] Guy Halsall, *Worlds of Arthur*, op. cit., 32.

[398] "Introduction," op. cit., 2.

[399] Ibid.

interpretations –yet nothing is Christian.[400] It is therefore clear that, in principle, the

historical fact that Christianity was formally present in Britain since the 4th century is not

enough to dismiss our basic claim in the current work: King Arthur as a hegemonic myth

essentially means a cultural conscious and interested construction that synthesizes

Celtic/Anglo-Saxon and Christian traditions to unify and Christianize Britain under the

figure of a leading hero-warrior in the image and likeness of Christ. This synthesis itself,

with its further development and literary variants, directly responds in a first moment to the

founding and expansion of the Church in Britain through its missionary activity. Later, in

what has been called here the "Post-Plantagenet period," the processes of nation-identity

building and formation of the English absolute monarchy come to play a leading role as

well along with the ecclesiastical interests. Certainly, the more the ethno-political element

increases and gains in cultural impact, the more the determination of the Christianization of

Britain upon the myth-making of Arthur decreases, obviously because in 1190, when the

remains of Arthur, Guinevere, and –according to the *Margam Abbey Chronicle*– also of

Mordred, are discovered by a monk of Glastonbury Abbey and solemnly transferred to a

marble tomb in the abbey church,[401] Britain was officially a Catholic Christian nation.

Another case worth mentioning here is that of *Beowulf*. This poem, despite being a

narrative of the exploits of a hero of the Geats in Scandinavia, is a locus in which the

pagan past and the Christian present meet: the first represented in the characters of the

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[400] *The Mabinogi and other Medieval Welsh Tales*, edited by Patrick K. Ford (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1977), and (ed.), *The Mabinogion, from The Welsh of the Llyfr Coch o Hergest*, Lady Charlotte Guest. London: Bernard Quaritch, 1877. Accessed 10/29/2014. http://www.archive.org/stream/mabinogion00unkngoog#page/n18/mode/2up.

[401] See, "The Discovery of King Arthur's Grave at Glastonbury," *Sources of British History*, in *Britannia*, accessed 12/12/2017, http://www.britannia.com/history/docs/margam.html.

work, the second in the author of the poem. In this sense, according to Frederick Klaeber, *Beowulf* may be considered a poetic creation whose Christian elements are as much an organic part of it as the pagan warlike traditional values that pervade the whole poem: "Most of the subsequent scholarly commentary builds on the solid base of Klaeber's demonstration of the organic nature of the poem's Christian elements."[402] Additionally, scholars such as Orchard state that the very symbolico-allegorical structure of the poem "echoes and uses, within limits, the normal discourse of Christianity, including both Old and New Testament sources."[403] Following this direction, R. D. Fulk, Robert E. Bjork, and John D. Niles entertain the possibility that *Beowulf* may have performed a mediating role between pagan and Christian culture: "[…] a mediating role whereby the culture of the hall was articulated in terms acceptable to the culture of the cloister, and vice versa."[404] This mediating position is especially meaningful because of the cross-cultural mediating function we adscribe to the figure of 'King Arthur' as a hegemonic mytheme.

In fact, these Christian elements often are considered to be the inner semantic scaffolding of the poem. Fulk, Bjork, and Niles claim that, "Although the narrative action of *Beowulf* is set in the pagan past of the Germanic peoples … expressions pertaining to Christian believe abound."[405] Robinson recognizes the origin of this Christian material in the religious preferences of the narrator, who is a Christian.[406] The determining influence

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[402] 'Christian and Heroic Values,' "Introduction," in *Klaeber's Beowulf*, ed. R. D. Fulk, Robert E. Bjork, and John D. Niles (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), lxvii.

[403] Ibid., lxvii-lxviii.

[404] Ibid., lxviii.

[405] Ibid.

[406] Ibid., lxix.

of these elements can be sometimes clearly found not only at the diegetic level, but also in the ideosphere of central characters like Hroðgãr's, whose "'sermon (ll. 1700-84), for example, has been found amenable to analysis in terms of Pauline imagery of spiritual warfare and other motifs of Christian homiletic literature […]"[407] Other scholars like Donahue and Fulk, Bjork, and Niles themselves have felt "inclined to recognize features of the Christian Savior in the destroyer of the hellish fiends, the warrior brave and gentle, the king who dies for his people."[408] As we can see, solid foundations were laid in the Anglo-Saxon society for the flourishing of the Christian culture. Works like the translation of Bede's *Account of the Poet Cædmon* and the even more paradigmatic *The Dream of the Rood*, show the gradual introduction of Christianity in this warrior-centered sociolect. There is also linguistic evidence of precedent notions which facilitate the assimilation of the foreign culture. For instance, it is not difficult to understand that the hero-warrior is conceived as the one that brings healing to the society in a cosmological sense by restoring and protecting the integrity of the primordial order.

Thus, Beowulf travels to Denmark to fight with a man-devouring monster that is killing King Hrothgar's thanes. Indeed, the noun *hæle*, i.e. warrior, relates to the verb *hælan*, to heal, to save. And, right here, another essential connection pops up: the sense of healing appears already linked to the act of saving. From the verb *hælan* springs the present participle *hælend*, the one who *is* saving, which turns into a noun and then we have the word *Hælend* standing for Savior. Thus, we read in *The Dream of the Rood*: "Hwædre

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[407] Ibid., footnote 1, lxix. See also footnote 3 and the referred "parallels in the representations of Beowulf and the Moses of OE biblical paraphrases."

[408] Ibid., lxxix.

ic þær licgende lange hwile beheold hreowcearig Hælendes treow…"[409] So, there is a semantic link between the prototypes of the 'warrior,' the 'hero' and the 'savior' as paronimia of the ideal human being, which reappears in the verb *hæleþ*, i.e. warrior, hero, man. This explains why, in a first moment, Christ was assimilated into the pre-extant warrior-type in the framework of an intense cultural exchange. As Mitchell and Robinson put it: "The poet of *The Dream of the Rood* discovered in the central event of Christian history an opportunity for using his people's native poetic tradition to encompass and naturalize the alien ideals of the new faith."[410] However, in some sense this new faith was not so alien. The new doctrines also teach about the struggle between good and evil represented in a warrior-hero's deeds. Moreover, they emphasize the final triumph of the Good. Consequently, as the same authors state, Christ is taken for a powerful warrior dispensing healing, i.e. salvation to his people and, as such, a spiritual extension of the archetypes with which those pagan cultures were familiar: "In so far as the crucifixion required great courage of the Savior […] he was a warrior-king doing battle with the devil."[411]

From these passages, two main conclusions can be surmised: first, there was a nascent Christian culture in Anglo-Saxon communities during the 8th and 11th centuries,' and second, such as in Beowulf's figure, a cross-cultural synthesis –in this case mainly Anglo-Saxon / Christian– was taking place which occurred also in the myth-making of King Arthur. Nevertheless, the presence of a Christian culture in Anglo-Saxon

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[409] "The Dream of the Rood," 24-25, in *A guide to Old English*, ed. Bruce Mitchell and Fred C. Robinson, sixth edition (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Inc., 2001), 259.

[410] "The Dream of the Rood," ibid., 256.

[411] Ibid.

communities as early as 8th - 11th centuries cannot negatively impact our hypothesis for several reasons:

1. *Beowulf* is a poem that primarily mirrors the author-narrator's Christian experience, but it does not mean at all that such an experience was general and systematic among Anglo-Saxon peoples.

2. Some asymmetries have been found regarding the distribution of the Christian elements during the *sujet* of the poem. In this sense, K. McCone notes that "the Christian elements are not distributed evenly throughout the narrative, but rather are associated with the main plot […] and with the speeches of Hroðgar and Beowulf […]"[412] This could mean that the author may have written the poem moved, in part at least, by a pedagogical intention because of his perception, like in Bede's case, that Christianity was undergoing a crisis rather than flourishing among the people.

3. Even if some Christian fervor were to be conceded to these Anglo-Saxon communities, we can state that, either for linguistic or cultural causes (or both), *Beowulf* later fell into oblivion for centuries, perhaps because the ethno-unifying role it was called to play was successfully assumed by King Arthur and his knights.

However, two things must be emphasized here for their significance in relation to our research. Concerning the author of *Beowulf*, Fulk, Bjork, and Niles affirm that: "What he does show is a strong interest in depicting a version of the pagan past that, with its high deeds and sententious speeches, has its own narrative consistency and could have had

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[412] Ibid., lxviii.

ethical value for the members of his Christian community."[413] In other words, if not essentially a missionary one, the intention of the poet of *Beowulf* was undoubtedly a proselytistic one, which reveals a 'missionary' zeal. Furthermore, a transcultural assimilation also was taking place, if not as a general process, at least in the private world of *Beowulf* author. Could it then be claimed that the *Beowulf*'s poet seeks to achieve with his Beowulf-depiction what Geoffrey of Monmouth, Layamon of Gloucester and Robert of Boron did with King Arthur, i.e. to build a symbolic prototype capable to synthesize pagan Celtic/Anglo-Saxon and Christian cultures in a coherent cultural unity? *Beowulf*'s poet did not see his goal achieved but, later, King Arthur as a hegemonic myth exceeded by far all expectations. Whether Beowulf's unfinished cultural construction took place prior to or in parallel with King Arthur's mythopoiesis is something that cannot be determined until a more precise chronological datation of this poem is attained. Therefore, the poem *Beowulf* is, along with the Arthurian cycle, one of the most outstanding cultural *utopias* rendered in literary form. A utopian project which, in *Beowulf*'s case, was not granted to be more than an unaccomplished ideal, or rather an ideal that became achieved in the more complex mythical construction incarnated in King Arthur's figure.

Thus, a two-dimensional process of synchronic Christianization of non-Christian Anglo-Saxons, Picts, Scots, and Jutes, and Re-Christianization of a vast Welsh-British population still living in an entirely syncretic Christianity was taking place here. Additionally, when we conflate Guy Halsall's multi-ethnic transcultural model, Geoffrey Ashe's idea of the pagan mythification of Arthur based on the ancient British god Bran

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[413] Ibid., lxix.

(Ashe,),[414] and the insertion of Christianity in Britain, then it is easier to explain the myth-making of Arthur as a cross-cultural synthesis. This suggests a bridging of pagan and Christian elements as found already in Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*, Wace's *Roman de Brut*, and Layamon's *Brut*. Pagan god Bran supplied the matter for Arthurian mythopoiesis: the way: the year-long sleep; the *chronotope*: the cave, the Ile of Avalon, the raven-avatar, etc. From Jesus, our authors took the form: the universality, the unifying character, the conversion of the "Lord-Bondsmand" into the "Lord – disciples/friends" structure as seen in John's gospel and symbolized in the Round Table and the utopian Camelot.[415] The efficient cause was the process of Christianization/Unification of multi-ethnic Britain. The ultimate goal: a strong and independent British Church and Empire, in the image and likeness of Rome and Constantinople as socio-cultural iconosystems whose impact essentially helped to shape King Arthur's myth-making. Thus, the Christianization of Arthur does not deny his 'pagan' side. On the contrary, the Christian elements must be coherently included in his mythical profile. They are not just either a contingent 'addendum' or a 'super-structural' layer varnishing the already-made Arthurian mythologeme. The intentional Christianization of Britain plays a much more decisive role in Arthur's myth-making than has been thus far attested to generally. Therefore, it seems more reasonable to think that King Arthur's immortality along with his chivalric-messianic character were supplied by the Judeo-Christian tradition –Christ, the Prophets, and Byzantine military saints– rather

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[414] Ashe, op. cit., 152-154.

[415] See *Brut*, op. cit., 71.

than by Roman god Saturn[416]or by hero king-warrior Batraz –a hero king of the Caucasian people whose primary descendents today are the Ossetians– and Scythian and Alan horsemen who migrated to Western Europe in the frame of the Roman empire.[417]

In the light of the later cultural exchanges fostered by the systematic missionary praxis of the Church, King Arthur's myth can be interpreted as an intentional construction based on Christ-and-prophets-related narratives and therefore functionally linked to the process of Christianization of Britain. This process took place by the re-dimensioning of pre-Christian ideolectal patterns representative of the Celtic cultural identity. Consequently, King Arthur's figure as ethno-cultural hero and at the same time Christian prototype, the concrete depiction of his life and death events, as well as the mystical chronotope associated to them –Camelot, Avalon, the "kingriche of aluene," etc–, respond to the socio-cultural logic of the missionary praxis of the Church and the shaping of the British-English culture's identitary consciousness. It was a Christian priest and later Bishop –Geoffrey of Monmouth– who was the first to compile, reshape and project to the educated Europe the Arthurian mythical corpus. Similarly, it was also a Christian secular priest (Layamon) the first author who rendered these myths into the English language addressing both to the British (Celtic) population and the Anglo-Saxon settlers –tribes

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[416] Ashe, op. cit., 151-53.

[417] See C. Scott Littleton and Linda A. Malcor, *From Scythia to Camelot: A Radical Reassessment of the Legend of King Arthur, the Knights of the Round Table, and the Holy Grail* (NY: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 1994). These authors attempted to prove that literally all of Arthurian characters, textuality, and events derived from the Sarmatians that inhabited the Roman Scythia or Alania and the Caucausian Mountains between 600 BC – AD 450, and from the Nart cycles. Yet Contrary to Geoffrey Ashe, N. J. Higham, Guy Halsal, et. al., C. Scott Littleton and Linda A. Malcor provide insufficient textual and archeological evidence to support their theory convincely. Moreover, the fact that Caucasian oral traditions of the Narts were recorded only during the late 19th century definitely comes to make the task of digging in the origins of the Scynthian-Celtic intertextual transactions –if there were any at all– and in the problem of textual preeminence even more complicated and unreliable.

form Low Countries, Jutland in Denmark, Angles and Germans– which, according to Bede, first came into England as mercenaries after the invitation of king Vortingern in the late 440s.[418]

However, another objection can be raised here. Might not Arthur's myth, as myth, essentially respond to an inner and autonomous dynamics that translates into allegorical and symbolic constructions the inner phenomenology of the unconscious? Should this be true, then how could be King Arthur's myth interpreted as a cross-cultural synthesis moulded by the exterior force fields of Judeo-Christian and Byzantine influence in the framework of the Church's expansion in Britain? In his influential work *The Myth of the Birth of the Hero*, Otto Rank argued that the births of many mythical heroes follow and describe a common pattern. Rank includes the story of Christ's birth as a paradigm. Following a Freudian hermeneutical key of the "Jesus-myth," Alan Dundes attempts to 'unconceal' the true inner logic of Jesus-myth by reducing it, as expected, to a sex-based economy of imaginary sublimation of ground instincts repressed by the religious cultural 'Über-Ich.'[419] In this sense, he interprets, for instance, the resurrection of Jesus as a figuration of a phallic erection. This is more 'understandable' if we bear in mind the linguistic fact that in Greek the term ἀνάστασις is a noun deriving from the verb ἀνίσταμαι that literally means 'to stand up again', and is directly connected with the term ἔγερσις, i.e. 'erection' in a general sense, used both to signify the erection of a building and the erection

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[418] Bede, "Book I," Chapter XV, in *Ecclesiastical History*, op. cit. In Halsall's words: "Now Gildas' 'Eastern Section' begins, with rumours of impending barbarian attack. A council, under a 'proud tyrant' (*tyrannus superbus*), invited the Saxons to defend Britain. This tyrant is named by Bede and later sources as a certain 'vurtigernus'—Vortingern." Guy Halsall, op. cit., 15.

[419] Alan Dundes, *The Hero Pattern and the Life of Jesus* (Berkeley: The Center for Hermeneutical Studies, 1976), 22-25.

of the phallus. In Dundes' highly-suspicious reading, it is not at all accidental –and it seemingly lacks of any other spiritual or gender-related explanation– that Jesus' first post-resurrectional encounter occurs with Mary Magdalene, a woman, the object of desire.[420] David Leeming lists Moses, Jesus, and King Arthur as examples of the "heroic monomyth" calling the Christ's story "a particularly complete example of the heroic monomyth."[421] Leeming regards resurrection as a common part of the heroic monomyth in which heroes are resurrected, often as sources of "material or spiritual food for their people." [422] In this connection, Leeming notes that Christians regard Jesus as the "bread of life."[423]

Thus, a common element to all these views is the fact that the origin of myth, its inner structure, developments and variations, do not respond to socio-cultural events that impact man's psychological processes, but to the autonomous phenomenology of "mental archetypes." These arquetypes can be unconscious metapsychological –as in C. G. Jung–,[424] forms of "universal metaphors or dreams" –according to Leeming's expression–,[425] or just "projective psyche modes," in William Doty's words.[426] Also, they could be a kind of

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[420] For a critical review of this essay, see Clifton Jolley, *Western Folklore*, Vol. 38, 1 (Jan., 1979): 56-58, published by Western States Folklore Society, accessed 11/12/2016, URL:http://www.jstor.org/stable/1498986.

[421] David Leeming, "Christian Mythology," in *The Oxford Companion to World Mythology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 53.

[422] David Leeming, "Resurrection," ibid., 24.

[423] Ibid.

[424] See K. G. Jung, "The Unconscious," 55-59, and "The Content of the Unconcious," 67-71, in *The Theory of Psychoanalysis* (NY: Nervous and Mental Disease Publishing Co., 1915).

[425] David Leeming, "Introduction," ibid., vii.

[426] Quoted by David Leeming, ibid., vii-viii.

subjective matrix of procedural principles with a variety of psycho-emotional functions as Sigmund Freud and Alan Dundes claim.

However, independently from their nature, these mythical mental arquetypes appear to be metasocietal, autonomous, self-referential and universal patterns as intrinsic part of human psyche. Yolanda Russinovich de Solé, for instace, applies this method in her hermeneutic approach to the mythical Spanish knight Amadís de Gaula. Russinovich de Solé seeks "Una interpretación del valor significante de lo mítico-simbólico en el Amadís," which means, "un modo más de acercarnos a las constantes de la naturaleza humana, a pesar de las variantes de lugar, tiempo y cultura que influyan en su formulación. Como tal nos permite asomarnos una vez más a una visión vivida, intuida por el hombre en otras épocas, a la vez que nos permite recrear conceptualmente la experiencia que se encubre detrás de ella.[427]

Mythical constructions and narratives around King Arthur and Christ do not primarily belong to human unconsciousness's hero-savior archetypes in the sense of "las constantes de la naturaleza humana."[428] We are persuaded that Arthurian mythology as a cross-culture synthesis has been shaped according to Old and New Testament iconemes via intericonic processes within a cultural socio-political framework. In our approach, we are siding with a 'middle-term' position, according to which an archetypical myth represents universal principles of human mind, but these principles are not enough of an efficient cause to grant a cultural, i.e. concrete existence to a myth in a societal formation.

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[427] See Yolanda Russinovich de Solé, "El elemento mítico-simbólico en el *Amadís de Gaula*: interpretación de su significado," in *THESAURUS*, Tomo XXXIX, 1 (1974): 129-168.

[428] Ibid.

Therefore, King Arthur's myth-making and its shape-shifting respond to religio-political nation-identity and collective memory design processes: essentially, the Christianization of Britain and the formation of the 'one nation-one king' idiolect and socio-political device. Another current interpretation confers priority to the political factor. According to this view, the mythopoiesis of Arthur was intentionally motivated *only* by ethno-political goals, especially during the times of the Norman and Angevin periods: "The life and career of the legendary early medieval British 'King' Arthur are well known, and are largely the invention of Anglo-French writers in the 12th -13thcenturies." [429] In the same article it is stated that:

> [Geoffrey of] Monmouth's *Historia* served a political purpose, pandering to the Normans by vilifying the Saxon English (whom the Normans had conquered in 1066), providing Britain with a legendary national hero to match the French Charlemagne, and painting a vision of a British empire extending far into Europe. As a Welshman, [Geoffrey of] Monmouth also used the opportunity to glorify the Welsh (descendants of the pre-Saxon Britons), moulding his new national hero out of earlier Welsh traditions, creating as he did so a cultural history of Britain drawing on Celtic roots far more subtle and interesting than *Beowulf* and other brutal and tiresome Anglo-Viking epics.[430]

The political motivations of authors directly involved in the creation of King Arthur's cycle cannot be denied. Lewis Thorpe notes that, "Geoffrey had several clear-cut political reasons for what he wrote, his desire to give 'a precedent for the dominions of the Norman kings' … and his wish to ingratiate himself with various dedicatees."[431] Similarly, Martin Schichtman and Laurie Finke shows Arthur as "social signifier whose function was

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[429] 'Flegetanis,' Secretary to Lord Oriel Yves-Saturnin, "King Arthur and the Doorway to Avalon," in *The Flaneur*, 1, accessed 11/2/2014, http://www.theflaneur.co.uk/arthur.html.

[430] Ibid.

[431] Lewis Thorpe, "Introduction," in Lewis Thorpe, trans., *Geoffrey of Monmouth: The History of the Kings of Britain* (Penguin Classics, 2015), 10.

to smooth over the ideological conflicts created by the Norman colonization of England,"[432] ignoring both pre-Norman and post-Plantagenet, especially Tudor stages of Arthur's mythpoeia, when the Norman "ideological conflict" did not exist. Certainly, the 'political motivation' model fails to explain several phenomena that essentially underlied and determined Geoffrey's, Wace's, and Layamon's workmanship, undervalue the socio-cultural impact of the religious-theological consciousness in the Middle Ages, and exaggerate the political turn of late modern and postmodern approaches. Indeed, Thorpe quotes J. B. Tatlock's idea that Geoffrey also aims to provide the Norman kings with 'a precedent for the dominions,' in other words with a royal pedigree linked to Celtic and Roman-Welsh ancestry. Thorpe also adds that, "to some degree the book pretends to be an ecclesiastical history as well as a political one."[433] If Tatlock's and Thorpe's points of view are conflated, it is crystal-clear that Geoffrey attempts to build a cultural-anthropological bridge between British and Normands in the unifying framework of the Catholic ecclesiastical institutions. With this goal in sight, Geoffrey found in Arthur the key piece to put together the multiple melodies of British ethno-cultural polyphony. Concretely, the 'political motivation' model fails to justify the motifs behind the extensive embedding of Old/New Testament and Byzantine narratives and iconography into Arthur's myth symbolism. Also, the further variants and growth of the myth's mystical character introduced by Nennius, Geoffrey of Monmouth, Wace, Layamon, Chretien de Troyes and Robert de Boron, and attested to by Giraldus Cambrensis, are hardly reducible to specific events of Britain's/Britanny's political life and would remain largely unexplained by the

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[432] Warren, op. cit., 11.

[433] Ibid.

'political-motivation' model. Yet the political element is not to be denied. It plays an important role in Geoffrey's design of British-Normand historical memory, and create in Normand imaginary the intericonic reflection of a British ancestry. Nevertheless, in Geoffrey, such as in Layamon, the religious motivation of a complete Christianization of Britain and of a derived cultural, social, and surely political integration plays the leaning role.

The cross-cultural dimension of much of the literary production during these centuries has been naturally already recognized by several scholars. For instance, N. J. Higham states that Nunnius's *Historia Brittonum* was more carefully constructed than it has generally been believed. In Higham's view, the *Historia* was written as both a British and Christian history.[434] According to this, the external socio-cultural influence is *as much determinant and decisive as* the inner phenomenology of myths as symbolico-archetypal expressions of the human psycho-spiritual life. That is the reason why King Arthur constitutes a typology of hero that, despite sharing general features of the mythological hero-saviors and of being linked to the Christ-related "mythology," differs from the Judeo-Christian imaginary in some essential ways. Indeed, Leeming contrasts the myth of Jesus with the myths of other Christian heroes such as St. George, Roland, el Cid, and even King Arthur. The latter hero myths, Leeming argues, reflect the survival of pre-Christian heroic values, in his own words: "values of military dominance and cultural differentiation and hegemony, more than the values expressed in the Christ story."[435] This is seemingly at odds with our statement that King Arthur's iconeme has been shaped in its specific

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[434] Higham, op. cit., 45.

[435] David Leeming, "Christian Mythology," in *The Oxford Companion to World Mythology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 38.

iconoliterary typology according to Old and New Testament patterns reflecting the prophetico- soteriological traditions linked to Christ. However, the contrasting elements between both cultural products showcase the "Celtic trail" of King Arthur's mythopiesis; elements that, certainly, could not have been provided by the mythical Judeo-Christian reservoir. In summary, in the hermeneutical approach to the Arthurian literature, three main models can be pointed out:

1. *Ethno-national (political) model*: King Arthur is to be understood primarily as an interested political (nationalistic) construction (Higham 2008, Halsall 2013).

2. *Mytho-poetic (archetypical) model*: Suggests that the Arthur myth unfolds following universal patterns, i.e. archetypes, according to the "monomyth of the hero model" found in other mytho-cultural traditions (Graves 1948; Barber 1979; Leeming 2008; Dom 2013).

3. *Mystico-eschatological model*: Primarily based on Merlin the Magician, recognized in Merlin's prophecies –as well as in other characters associated with Merlin's life– a symbolico-practical way leading toward ultimate cosmico-personal onto-realization (R. J. Stewart 1986; David Dom 2013).

Yet there is another face of the myth, and it is related to the already Christianized Celtic hero-king in its most essential aspects resulting from Roman-Byzantine intericonic processes. This transfiguration is directly proportional –and therefore responds– to the socio-cultural expansion of the Christianization of Britain. This cross-cultural process that combines different and often conflicting textual and iconotypal traditions would not have been possible without the methodical and systematic missionary endeavor of the Church. This endeavor that we call "process of Christianization" is understood here as the primary

catalyst of cross-cultural synthesis of Roman, Celtic-Welsh, and Christian cultures. At this moment, King Arthur's prototypal iconosphere resembles the essential iconemes that constitute the archetypal iconosphere around Christ's figure (Figure 17).

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                          ┌──────────────┐
                          │    Christ    │
                          └──────┬───────┘
                                 │
        ┌──────────────┐   ┌─────┴──────────────┐
        │ King Arthur  │───│ Mystical Chronotope│
        └──────────────┘   └─────┬──────────────┘
                                 │    ┌──────────────────┐
                                 ├────│ The Isle of Avalon│
                                 │    └──────────────────┘
                                 │    ┌──────────────────┐
                                 ├────│   Glastonbury     │
                                 │    └──────────────────┘
                                 │    ┌──────────────────┐
                                 ├────│    Camelot        │
                                 │    └──────────────────┘
        ┌──────────────┐         │
        │ Christotopic │─────────┤
        │ Iconosphere  │         │
        └──────────────┘         │
     ┌──────┬──────────┬─────────┤
┌─────────┐ ┌──────────┐ ┌─────────────────────┐
│ Merlin's│ │ Atypical │ │ Adoration and Gifts │
│prophecies│ │  birth  │ │      of Magi        │
└────┬────┘ └────┬─────┘ └──────────┬──────────┘
┌─────────┐ ┌──────────┐ ┌─────────────────────┐
│Merlin as│ │The knights│ │Arthur's mystical   │
│Arthur's │ │surrounding│ │translocation from  │
│"forerunner"│Arthur as │ │Camlann to Avalon   │
│featuring │ │Christ's  │ │                    │
│John the │ │Apostles  │ │                    │
│Baptist  │ │          │ │                    │
└─────────┘ └──────────┘ └─────────────────────┘
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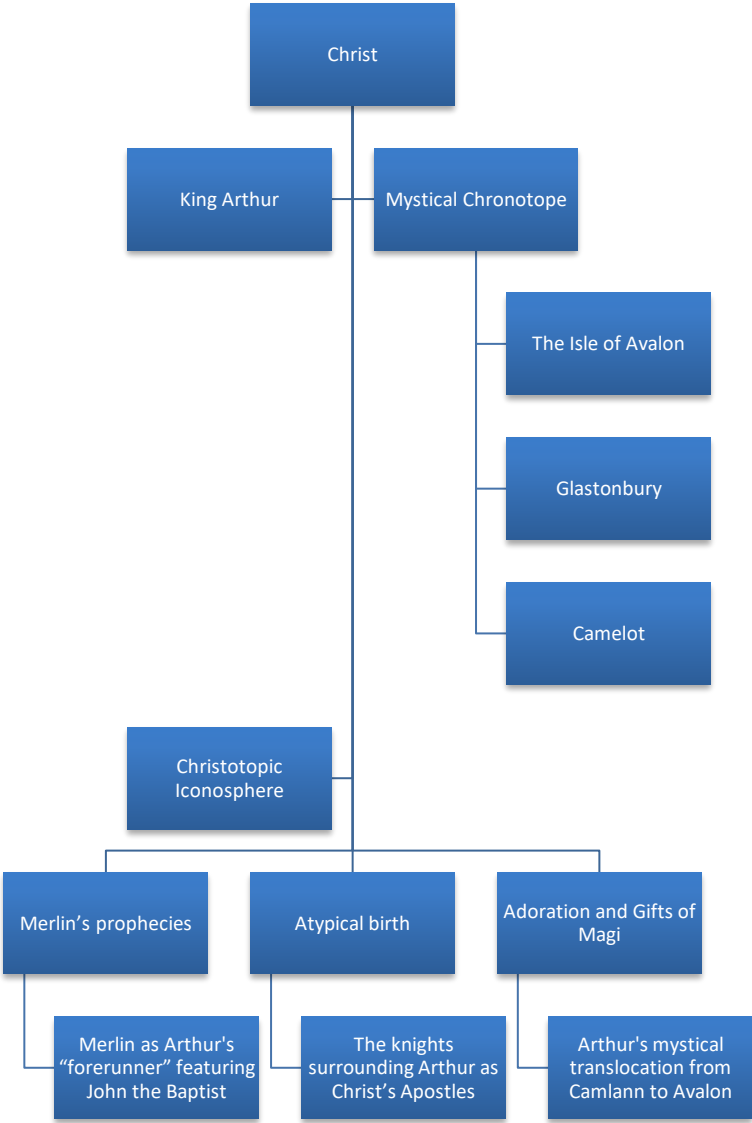
Figure 17: Archetypal Iconosphere Around Christ.

Paraphrasing Karl Rahner's idea that the incarnation of God [i.e. Jesus Christ] is the unique and highest instance of the actualization of the essence of human reality, we can

state here that King Arthur constitutes the highest possible ideal; and the only possible and functional ethnico-sociopolitical wayout –as synthesizing symbol-tone for different counterpointing identitary melodies– available for the British-English cultural imaginary to reach an all-encompassing unity. In musical terms, so far, and especially in the post-imperial age, the dominant socio-political and cultural circumstance was the existence of a polyphonic tissue unable to converge harmonically upon a tonic note. In contrast, the counterpoint of Pictish, Scottish, Irish, Anglo-Saxon, Celtic, and Christian melodies remained, as in the twelfth-thirteenth century *motete*, well-differentiated and autonomous despite their necessary melodic interaction and cross-influence. The cultural reality of Britain prior to its overall Christianization and the determining Church influence in ample socio-cultural fields –which is to say during the first stages of Arthur's mythopoeia– was of several 'melodic' lines without a common unifying tonal center: like the *motete*, this culture was polyphonic both in melody as in tone, i.e. a complex tissue based much more on self-difference than on inner identity or harmonic *necessity*. On the contrary, King Arthur's mythopoeia,[436] by synthesizing both pagan[437] and Christian worlds –imaginaries, idiolects, languages, etc.– becomes the symbol *par excellence* of a nation which is still in process of cultural integration as later strict tonal-free polyphony of the *motete* paves the way towards the all-harmonizing, modal, though still polyphonic *madrigal*. The mythicized figure of King Arthur is also an epoch-opening synthesis. As a symbol,[438] it

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[436] As in part occurred also with the Mother Goddess and Virgin Mary assimilation and the allegorical amalgamation of courtly and spiritual love's linguistic and in general aesthetic-expressive rhetorical devices.

[437] Primarily the Celtic-British, but ultimately the Pictish, Scottish, Irish, Anglo-Saxon cultures as well.

[438] 'Symbol' must be understood here not in the sense of a mere abstract 'representation' or *imago mundi*, but as an active, practical, world-propiating and even eventually world-transforming self-interpretation of man in culture in the existential dialectic of "being in the world" and "being to transcendence". It could be more

represents a moment of multicultural crystallization as well as of reinvention of further

nation-identity interpretations and constructions.

The intense cultural dynamic dominating both sociolectal and ideolectal spheres in

British society during these years of change, of alchemic conversions and transformations

–especially after the conquest of England by William I on 1066– are very accurately

described by John Richard Green in his book *The Conquest of England*. In a significant

passage, he points to three main elements: socio-cultural significance of passing-over from

heathendom to Christianity, formation of the political unity of the nation in the king as a

power-convergence figure, and the development of writing. Concerning the latter, it is

meaningful not only the fact that "custom began to harden into written law,"[439] but also

that oral traditions began to turn into written literature:

> Few periods of our history seem drearier and more unprofitable to one who follows
> the mere course of political events than the two hundred years which close with the
> submission of the English states to Ecgberht […] It is only when we view it from
> within that we see the importance of the time. It was, in fact, an age of revolution –
> an age in which mighty changes were passing over every phase of the life of
> Englishmen; an age in which heathendom was passing into Christianity, the tribal
> king into the national ruler, the ætheling into the thegn; an age in which custom
> began to harden into written law.[440]

The process of King Arthur's mythopoeia is *just* not the result of an immediate

exercise of power carried out intentionally by a group of individuals ideologically

motivated –i.e., the Church clergy, or the 'aristocracy'– nor of a supra-structural

"replication" of material-productive conditions in early medieval Britain. The notion of

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properly understood in the sense of the Hofmannsthal's *Ereignis*, later developed by Heidegger in writings
like "Unterwegs zur Sprache," "Was heisst Denken", etc.

[439] John Richard Green, "Chapter I. The England of Ecgberht," in *The Conquest of England*, Kindle Edition,
Location 40, accessed October 22, 2014.

[440] Ibid.

"cultural fields" as developed by Pierre Bourdieu is relevant[441] to explain here the exchange of different cultural fields, each one bearing a differential socio-cultural force – Old English literature, folk oral traditions, sacred textuality such as hagiography, devotional hymns and prayers, etc., the landlords, the Landlords' dependent thanes, the Catholic Church itself, etc.– and acting through complex overlapping waves of cross-influence and inter-determinations. These cross-influence and inter-determinations can become dominant or dominated in direct proportion to its position in the fields of forces. The fact that these fields of forces are different means precisely that each one had a distinct capacity impact upon the other. From the 5th to the 14th century, Catholic Church and its cultural heritage formed the main cultural field of Byzantine-Europen culture. Yet this was neither a quick nor an even process. In order to transform Celtic and Anglo-Saxon cultural imaginary and its symbolic expressions, the new faith had to become deeply embedded into their ethno-social iconosphere. It was a diachronical process of cultural dialogicity whose successful outcome was directly proportional to the in-depth conversion of the host culture to Christian faith. In Schaff's words:

> This superficial, wholesale conversion to a nominal Christianity must be regarded in the light of a national infant-baptism. It furnished the basis for a long process of Christian education. The barbarians were children in knowledge, and had to be treated like children. Christianity, assumed the form of a new law leading them, as a schoolmaster, to the manhood of Christ.[442]

In an interesting passage, Philip Schaff gives account of the significance that the missionary praxis of the Church might have not only in passing down Christian faith to

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[441] Bourdieu, Pierre. *Las reglas del arte*, trad. Thomas Kauf (Barcelona: Anagrama, 1995).

[442] Schaff, "Chapter II. Conversion of the Northern and Western Barbarians, § 6. Character of Mediaeval Missions," ibid., 11.

unbelievers or heterodox populations, but also in creating cultural refinement, cultivating

sensibility and social-communitarian awareness and providing the necessary tools for a

further development of thought, ethical consciousness, and aesthetic-artistic education.

Although indirectly, Schaff recognizes the transformative role that the Church might play,

even 'incidentally,' in the complex development of a cultural formation:

> The Christianization of the Kelts, Teutons, and Slavonians was at the same time a
> process of civilization, and differed in this respect entirely from the conversion of
> the Jews, Greeks, and Romans in the preceding age. Christian missionaries laid the
> foundation for the alphabet, literature, agriculture, laws, and arts of the nations of
> Northern and Western Europe, as they now do among the heathen nations in Asia
> and Africa."[443]

Similar instances of collateral –but not less essential– impacts of the multi-sided

missionary activity of the Church upon different social layers to the extent of transforming

and occasionally creating a totally new cultural product, can be traced also in other

historical processes, such as the Christianization of Russia initiated by the monks Cyril and

Methodius who, on the basis of the Greek alphabet, created the Cyrillic alphabet, or the

insertion of Christian Catholicism in the American continent. In this latter case, monks also

brought with them the Latin alphabetical writing system. It is noteworthy that Max Müller,

the prominent German Classicist, points to linguistic impulse as a scientific discipline ("the

science of language") which underwent, in his opinion, settlement and expansion through

Christianity. Indeed, in Müller's point of view this impact may not be considered limited to

language only but should be made extensive to different branches of knowledge as well.

Not less remarkable is the fact that Philip Schaff quotes the German scholar in his *History*:

> "The science of language," says a competent judge, "owes more than its first
> impulse to Christianity. The pioneers of our science were those very apostles who
> were commanded to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature;

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[443] Schaff, ibid., 10.

and their true successors, the missionaries of the whole Christian church." The same may be said of every branch of knowledge and art of peace. The missionaries, in aiming at piety and the salvation of souls, incidentally promoted mental culture and temporal prosperity. The feeling of brotherhood inspired by Christianity broke down the partition walls between race and race, and created a brotherhood of nations.[444]

The socio-cultural condition of possibility for this inter-influence is granted by the fact that: "In many ways the organization of medieval English society consisted of various systems or institutions which worked together as blocks to build the complete structure."[445] This social tissue facilitated the synchronic and always the relative autonomy of its "block" –to use Garbaty's word– in the power relations and the cultural inter-determinations. From the researcher´s point of view, this autonomy makes the task of tracing and locating different sources of socio-cultural material (literary, musical, etc.) easier. It also becomes intertwined with other materials to create new modes and genders or to enrich the already existing ones. This is especially relevant when we try to follow the footprints of the missionary intentionality of the Church in the process of the Arthurian saga's articulation and further mythopoeia. As Garbaty points out: "In literature these social blocks were represented by what might be called *modes* –courtly, popular (or bourgeois), and spiritual– as against specific literary *genres*; and like the institutions, the modes were never pure, but an amalgamation of different influences."[446]

In this sense, King Arthur's mythpoeia can be approached from a cultural point of view as a synthesis of Celtic –and later even Anglo-Saxon– and Jewish-Christian

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[444] Ibid.

[445] "The Church and influence on the development of literary genres," "General Introduction: Aspects of medieval English literature," in Thomas J. Garbaty (ed.), *Medieval English literature* (Illinois: Waveland Press, Inc., 1997), 14.

[446] Ibid.

traditions, and from a more specific aesthetic-literary standpoint as an amalgamation of the

courtly-heroic mode with the spiritual doctrines –especially in this case of the

Christological and eschatological natures– of the Church. More concretely, from the

perspective of the inner societal power-related mystification of King Arthur and his

mythopoiesis can be interpreted as a more or less conscious or intentional-practical

accommodation for inculturating purposes facilitated by "natural" social block

interrelations and aimed at a real Christianization of the Celtic culture. The interest in these

lands showed by early European, especially French and Saxon continental powers, can

help to reinforce our main thesis. The complexity of the ethnic composition in British

society exponentially increased after Anglo-Saxon waves and even more following the

Frankish conquest. In John Richard Green's words:

> The ethnological character of the country had, in fact, changed since the close of the
> age of the conquest […] The winning of Western Britain opened, in fact, a way to
> that addition of outer elements to the pure English stock which had gone on from
> that day to this without a break […] The result is that, so far as blood goes, few
> nations are of an origin so more mixed than the present English nation.[447]

These blood mixes had an immediate impact upon the social imaginary, the

symbolic production and even, albeit more indirectly, on the emergence of new literary

genres or at least the conflation of existing one, like courtly literature and hagiographical

tradition. This necessarily implied both social and political changes. For this reason, we

disagree with Green's statement that, "as regards the political and social structure of the

people, indeed, the intermingling of blood has had little or no result. They remain purely

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[447] John Richard Green, "Chapter I. The England of Ecgberht," in *The Conquest of England*, Kindle Edition,
Location 40.

English and Teutonic."[448] Indeed, linguistic borrowings, inextricably intertwined 'pagan' and Christian literary materials, and most of all, cross-cultural intertextual and intericonic transactions based precisely on border-crossing of fixed and independent identities are examples of this. Meanwhile the Church, as a social institution playing an essential socio-cultural and later even identitary-unifying role, finds its way into the Celtic imaginary by conflating popular beliefs from "outside" of the "official" literary canon with elements taken from the sacred Judeo-Christian tradition.

The idea of the Church's adapting and incorporating popular secular and pre-Christian literary and ethical values is clearly indicated by Garbaty.[449] First, the strong influence of the Church and the theologico-hagiographic corpus was immense and cannot be underestimated. For a literary mode or gender to be accepted by the upper social strata, it had first to receive the *nihil obstat* from the Church. In other words, it could not be apparently at odd with official theology and ecclesiastical censorship. As Garbaty recalls: "Certainly we can state categorically that in these early years the life of letters depended on the life of the Church … In these places of peace and repose and humane and spiritual thought, learning flourished…"[450] If we accept as a principle the fact of the cultural-literary dominance of the Church during these years, then we can conclude that it would have been at least very improbable that a figure like King Arthur had gained so much cultural representativeness; to the extent of becoming the archetypal model of the new Celtic-Christian set of values and worldviews without an assimilation-amalgamation process

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[448] Ibid

[449] Garbaty, op. cit., 28.

[450] Garbaty, "The Church and influence on the development of literary genres," op. cit., 14.

having taken place. In that process, the popular stories of a legendary king, 'immanent' inasmuch as ethno-centric and nationalistic, became intertwined with the soteriological ideas of the Catholic doctrine. And the Church wanted and attempted to proselytize as many masses of people as possible. The development of monasticism and the consequent influence of the friars was determining and essential. The Church soon understood that excommunicating and frightening with fears of eternal condemnation were no any longer the best way to appeal to and convert huge masses of 'heathens.' Preaching and writing abilities, especially from the mendicant orders like Dominicans and Franciscans, opened a new possibility: adaptation of popular materials through spiritualizing hermeneutics, and interpretation and through the reshaping of traditionally pagan heroic ideals into symbolico-allegorical references of religious life, as well as cultivation of virtues and the spiritual struggle of the soul against evil forces to reach eternal salvation. As Garbaty states: "Indeed, the Church could do little at first but ban and excommunicate … But with the coming of the friars, one of the most important and influential specifically religious occurrences in Middle Ages, alternate forces and solutions were brought into play."[451] The fondness of medieval mentality, even the popular mind, to *analogia entis*, symbols, and allegories constituted a condition of possibility for the realization of this meaningful epistemological-literary shift.

All this process of cultural amalgamation, literary assimilation, intertextuality, and intericonicity was directly intertwined with the missionary activity of the Church. And, as Garbaty affirms and history proves: "Certainly the mission spirit has always proved

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[451] Garbaty, ibid., 16.

successful for the Church,"[452] and "In many other ways, too, the Church attempted to woo the large group of unsophisticated folk."[453] Already in 1224, Saint Francis called his followers the *joculatores Dei*, or 'God's minstrels,' significantly borrowing a secular expression to qualify the mission and the nature of the activity of his fellow monks. And, as reflected in this expression, an inter-influence occurs according to which secular materials are morphed into allegories of spiritual life. Ecclesiastic texts acquire for the first time the popularity necessary to have a far reaching cultural impact. Of course, this popularity is the direct result of the use of vernacular languages. In Garbaty's words: "Perhaps the most valid background against which to view the progressive changes in Middle English literature is that of the development of the English language."[454] Additionally, Schaff states that the Arthurian legend was Christianized and blended with other Christian chivalric continental traditions. More compelling here still is the context in which this remark was made:

> King Arthur (or Artus), the hero of Wales, of the Chronicles of Geoffrey of Monmouth, and the romances of the Round Table, if not entirely mythical, was one of the last Keltic chiefs, who struggled against the Saxon invaders in the sixth century. He resided in great state at Caerleon in Wales, surrounded by valorous knights, seated with him at a round table, gained twelve victories over the Saxons, and died in the battle of Mount Badon or Badon Hill near Bath (a. d.520). *The legend was afterwards Christianized*,[455] transferred to French soil, and blended with the Carlovingian Knights of the Round Table, which never existed.[456]

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[452] Ibid.

[453] Ibid., 17.

[454] Ibid., 4.

[455] The italics are mine.

[456] Schaff, ibid., 17.

Schaff never attempts to establish a direct connection between King Arthur's myth development, its multiple variations, and the cultural-literary fact of its Christianization. Schaff even states that the content of the legends themselves is not important at all out of a purely literary context and interest. He clearly ignores the significance of the formation and multi-layered development of Arthur's saga in the ethno-cultural self-consciousness of Britain, and especially in the cross-cultural interlock of Celtic, Anglo-Saxon and Christian heritages and worldviews: "From this period of the conflict between the two races dates the Keltic form of the Arthurian legends, which afterwards underwent a radical telescopic transformation in France. They have no historical value except in connection with the romantic poetry of mediaeval religion."[457] But ultimately, the issue of the further development of the Arthurian 'legend' in particular falls outside the scope of Schaff's attention.

The courtly eroticism, the internal phenomenology of carnal love, as well as the heroic deeds and adventures of knights and heroes were among the raw material transformed and interpreted, i.e. Christianized, as an allegory of spiritual life. It was a two-way process, a cultural exchange in which sometimes the distinct borders between secular and sacred, spiritual and carnal, aristocratic and popular, plain and symbolic-allegorical become blurred and inextricably intertwined. Indeed, these newly mixed literary products seem to bear the mark of ambiguity or ambivalence to the extent that "the love described by the troubadours was neither platonic nor purely sensual, but a mixture of both, and, in theory at least, sometimes adulterous."[458] This affects especially the approach to the figure

[457] Schaff, op. cit.

[458] Garbaty, op. cit., 21.

of Virgin Mary. First, a vocabulary borrowed from love songs, of a totally pagan and secular origin, was used in songs and invocations addressed to the Virgin. The hermeneutical shift and the allegorical implementation were proportionally necessary to the fact that a secular, sensual and even explicitly carnal love was chosen as main source of this Marian-devotional literature.[459] Garbaty says:

> […] the greatest interest is the confusion which developed between the courtly and religious language, between secular and spiritual love … The songs directed to Mary, in fact all invocations to Mary, were written by men, monks or friars who borrowed the vocabulary of the secular love songs. Thus, the words *sovereign mistress*, *lady*, *love*, *physical and spiritual savior*, *mercy*, *queen*, *prayer*, came to have double meanings, and were applicable in both religious and secular terms.[460]

This form of intertextuality is not certainly a phenomenon limited to Middle English literature and culture. A mention can be made also about the lexical material incorporated into the Byzantine *Ακάθιστος Ύμνος* (*Akathistos Ymnos*), a series of doxological invocations addressed to the *Θεοτόκος* (*Theotokos*, the Mother of God). Most of this linguistic imagery had been inherited primarily from Ancient Greek erotic-lyrical poetry. It immediately reminds us of Sappho's and Anacreon's sentimental, love-longing or lover-praising poetry. Besides, this heritage saw itself enriched from the close counterpointing with other sources of gallant courtly, world-centered erotic poetry, as those presented in the Anacreontic poetry.[461] Although we cannot speak here of a literary genre

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[459] Perhaps, most of the irony contained in the figure of Dulcinea del Toboso and in Don Quixote's totally idealized relation with her, lies precisely in the fact that she represents already the total fusion (or rather *con*fusion) between Mary and the courtly "lady," between the sacred and the profane, the religious and the secular.

[460] Garbaty, ibid., 22.

[461] Federica Ciccolella (ed.), *Cinque Poeti Bizantini. Anacreontee dal Barberiano greco 310* (Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso, 2000).

as such,[462] Anacreontic poetry consists of an amalgamation of both religious and secular productions.[463] Its common element is to be found not so much in content as in the formal element of the metric.[464] Of course, there existed also a tradition of religious poetry coming from Saint Gregory the Theologian down to Saint Andrea of Crete, Saint Roman the Melodist, Saint Simeon the New Theologian and Saint Simeon the Translator, the latter who is believed to have given final consolidation to the *Akathistos*. There must be underscored here the fact that, just like in the Middle English period under our attention, also in Byzantine culture the influence of a secular, worldly-erotic poetry was decisive in gathering together a doxological literature linked to Virgin Mary.[465]

Furthermore, Garbaty seems to explain the emergence and development of the cult of the Virgin Mary as result and resemblance of the much more ancient mother cult whose reminiscences can still be traced back to the prehistoric Mesolithic figures of the "fat woman" found in Malta and in general to matriarchal societies: "Sometime in the fourth

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[462] "La produzione anacreontica si qualifica per il tipo dei metri impiegati, e non costiuisce un genere letterario propriamente detto. Infatti nell'ambito della produzione di anacreontee, che abbraccia un periodo assai ampio (dalla fine dell'eta ellenistica fino al XIII-XIV secolo), si osserva un'estrema varieta di stili e contenuti." See "Introduzione", in Federica Ciccolella (ed.), ibid., XXI.

[463] For instance, in the referred "Collezione Palatina," we find coexisting without contradiction "poesie di argomento religioso, poste all'inizio (Sofronio di Gerusalemme, Sofronio Iatrosofista, Elia e Michele Sincello, Ignazio), carmi in qualche modo connessi con la corte costantinopolitana (Areta, Leone Magistro, e poi ancora Leone il Filosofo), e carmi di argomento profano (Giovanni di Gaza, 'Giorgio Grammatica', Sergio, Leonzio, Costantino Siculo, Teofane)." "Introduzione," in Federica Ciccolella (ed.), ibid., XXXI.

[464] "I carmi hanno argomento erotica, funerario, narrativo, religioso; variano anche la struttura della versificazione e la lunghezza dei componimenti. I metri tipici della poesia anacreontica sono due specie di dimetri: il dimetro giambico catalettico, o eptasillabo giambico, detto emiambo ("– – – – – " A); e il dimetro ionico con anaclasi tra il primo e il secondo *metron*, detto anaclomeno o anacreonteo (– – – – – – – ")." See "Introduzione", in Federica Ciccolella (ed.), ibid., XXI.

[465] Κωνσταντίνου Παίδα (Constantinos Paida), *Εισαγωγή στη Βυζαντινή Ποίηση. Λόγια κοσμική ποίηση, θρησκευτική ποίηση και υμνογραφία* (Αθήνα, 2011), and Νικολάου Τωμαδάκη, *Η Βυζαντινή Υμνογραφία και Ποίησις* (Thessaloniki, 1993).

century, interest in the Virgin Mary seemed to be developing in ecclesiastical ritual. The idea of a mother cult is an ancient one, and literary folklorists have drawn parallels between the worship of the Mother of God and the Pan-Mediterranean devotion to the Magna Mater, the White Goddess."[466] Garbaty suggests the attractive idea that the Church could have decisively contributed to strengthen its influence by having prepared the ground-work for woman veneration.[467] The idea is not pointless. It is especially interesting because we believe in the likelihood that a parallel process took place in the formation and development of King Arthur as hegemonic myth. Indeed, Church's influential force upon the rest of cultural fields in Roman-Celtic society seems to have been strong enough to have created the conditions of possibility, not only for the shaping of a new form of socio-erotic *ars* –i.e. the courtly love–, but also for the emergence of a new –or at least contextually renewed– spiritual praxis. Also, Church's determining influence was *sine qua non* cause in the birth of a new literary genre: the *romance* or courtly-love based poetry: "So we can say that the Church both motivated in part and utilized in part the courtly tradition."[468] This process can be seen in many literary products that constitute evidence of the amalgamation of worldviews, sensibilities, geners, and texts already in the mid-thirteenth century. First, there is Marian devotion: "Lyrics devoted to the Virgin Mary increased in popularity and must be classed among our finest medieval religious songs. Justly famous is the haunting song *I Sing of a Maiden* […] Chaucer's *Prioress's Tale* is the most famous of the 'miracles of the Virgin,' a specific literary genre."[469] The 'spiritual-

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[466] Garbaty, ibid., 22.

[467] Ibid.

[468] Ibid.

[469] Ibid

worldly' cross-iconicity was so intense that, in Garbaty's words: "The 'Queen of Love' could have easily been Venus (worshiped in the courtly-love ritual) as Mary, and so could the 'Mother of the God of Love.'"[470]

Meanwhile, the process of intertextuality reached such important *momentum* in the iconico-literary field that it was a regular praxis resorting to a clergy or even a friar to ask for worldly advice and counsel, as can be seen in Franciscan friar Thomas of Hales's love song, being impliedly of course an allegory of the soul-God erotic play, written upon a nun's request: "A mayde Cristes me bit yorne/That ich hire wurche a luve-ron,/For whan heo myhte best ileorne/To taken on other soth lefmon."[471] Curiously enough, in his depiction of Christ, the friar describes a "'knight' of perfect qualities, rich and powerful,"[472] which means that this could be one of the first cross-cultural constructions of a Celtic-Christian hero –if only virtual and fictional– in English literature, seen as a cultural-literary *type* of King Arthur's myth-making. At least, it is a parallel construction that shows how a cultural clash was to be surpassed by a synthesis of polarities or opposites both in the cultural *imaginarium* and in literary artifacts. This cultural phenomenology suggests that King Arthur's variation from local ethnic king into synthesis of ethnico-heroic ideals of the Celtic culture and the Christian 'theologemes' was not only possible *but necessary* in the effort to Christianize Britain. The heroic Old English narratives, the courtly-love poetry and the missionary spirit and praxis intermingle with the lauding and recitation of minstrels' art.

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[470] Ibid.

[471] Ibid., 23.

[472] Ibid.

This could be understood indeed as one of the most significant examples of cultural symbiosis in history of Western culture. Referring to secular deeds, war and power struggles between Christians and Saracens as part of Charlemagne epic, Garbaty says: "It was an act of devotion, a religious observance of a kind, for the minstrel to sing them and for an audience to listen. As Baugh has noted, 'judged by both choice of subject and treatment the English Charlemagne romances seem, with one or two exceptions, to be a group in which the missionary spirit is made to work through minstrel recitation.'"[473] But Charlemagne, like Beowulf, was a stranger to most of Britain's imaginary: the representation of a foreign power later incarnated in William I. Britain lacked a far-reaching and all-encompassing unifying mytheme. This absence was filled by King Arthur as a cross-cultural hegemonic myth.

3.4. Textual Digressions in Arthurian Saga

Some specific changes in the literary approach to King Arthur's figure may be considered in order to sustain our standpoint. In the early Welsh Christian hagiography (saint's lives) King Arthur was systematically considered an enemy of the Church, invested with some magic powers and surrounded by semi-mythological warriors. Later, contrastingly, he appears to have been fully assimilated to the Christian hagiographic narrative and is referred as devoted to the quest for the Grail: "The Holy Grail is generally considered to be the cup from which Christ drank at the Last Supper and the vessel used by Joseph of Arimathea to catch his blood as he hung on the cross. This significance, however, was introduced into the Arthurian legends by Robert de Boron in his verse romance *Joseph d'Arimathie* (sometimes also called *Le Roman de l'Estoire dou Graal*),

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[473] Ibid.

which was probably written in the last decade of the twelfth century or the first few years of the thirteenth."[474]

From a historico-chronological point of view, we could speak of two stages in the development of the Arthurian saga. The first would be, prior to the mythologization of Arthur's figure, the birth of an ethnic king, a "worldly" paradigm as depicted after the model of the heroic warrior rather than of the self-sacrificing savior. Therefore, this would be the "ethnotypal Arthur." Robert Huntington Fletcher argues that "All indications point to the conclusion that Geoffrey's workmanship consisted in refining and magnifying the figure of Arthur which previously existed in the popular imagination."[475] At this stage, Arthur's figure could be associated with a warrior called Arthur as depicted on Nennius's *Historia Brittonum*. Nennius mentions a *dux bellorum*, an expression that means "leader of battles." Such an expression could designate a military leader rather than a formal king, yet it does not necessarily mean that this mysteriors personage was not a local tribal king at all. In Nennius, multiple references to Arthur can also be found according to which he would have triumphed in a series of twelve battles against the Saxons, which culminate in a decisive victory at Mount Badon.

According to Halsall, "In this jumbled-looking history, which ever refers to itself as a 'heap,' are included two passages about somebody called Arthur." [476] To the first passage we have already referred. The *dux bellorum* appears depicted according to realistic, historical, at least verisimilar features which may indicate that at this stage the formation of

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[474] See Alan Lupack, "Frequently Asked Questions about the Arthurian Legends," in *The Camelot Project*, accessed 09/18/2014, http://d.lib.rochester.edu/camelot/text/frequently-asked-questions.

[475] Robert Huntington Fletcher, *Arthurian Material in Chronicles,* op. cit., see note 336.

[476] Halsall, op. cit., 3.

Arthur as a nuclear mytheme was either in progress or had not yet been forged as a prototype in the cultural imaginary.[477] Therefore, the second passage is greatly significant: "The passage alludes to a tale about a great boar-hunt, seemingly a story told in central medieval Welsh Arthurian romance, saying where in the hills around Builth Wells you can see the footprint of Arthur's giant hound embedded in a stone in a cairn."[478] Although it is easy to imagine that this new cultural iconeme could have existed in parallel with the more 'historical' depiction of Arthur,[479] it represents a huge step in Arthur's myth-making as a functional correlate of the shaping of a unified national self-consciousness. This national self-consciousness's growth in fact was directly proportional to the migration and settlement of the Anglo-Saxons in Britain. We find ourselves now in a wholly mystical environment: the giant hound's footprint embedded in a stone, the grave of Amr, "son of 'Arthur the soldier' and slain by Arthur himself, that is never the same length when you measure it, etc. Here, the miraculous factor is not something *added to* or overlapping a rather realist –though toughly warlike– atmosphere. On the contrary, showing clearly the Celtic origin in contrast with the Judeo-Christian element, in this passage the 'miraculous-supernatural' constitutes precisely the 'nature' of things. The ontological logarithm of beings here is neither the Greek order of essence and phenomena nor the Jewish historico-teleological eschatology, but the 'magic' –extralogic, synchronically self-rounded and

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[477] One could object that slaying hundreds of Saxons in a single battle is not precisely a verisimile action. Yet we must bear in mind that Arthur received his strength from God himself through the icon of the Virgin (or the Cross) he was carrying. Thus, in an essentially hagiographico-theological context, Arthur's performance in battle amounts to a miracle, but the figure as such keeps his well-defined humanity within very realistic frames.

[478] Halsall, op. cit., 4.

[479] In a sense which is similar to the belief still accepted by several scholars that *HR* or even *CC* could have been written during El Cid's lifetime.

228

polynomial like 'triskelion' and 'ogham' symbols– of the holistic animism of the Celtic world. Additionally, the fact that both accounts are interlaced in the same text is already an indication of transcultural intericonicity. Christian and 'pagan' ideolects not just collide but merge to create a – never actually complete – British-Christian cultural synthesis (Figure 18).

Figure 18: British-Christian Synthesis.

As Halsall states, this second passage could be "more inconvenient to 'fans' of the historical Arthur."[480] However, this is highly significant to our study because, "In this (jointly with the Battle-List) earliest datable reference to Arthur, he is already a legendary figure."[481] We are indeed inclined to believe that the historical existence of *an* Arthur, *a* warrior of ethnic profile and author of praiseworthy battle deeds is a fact upon which the legend/myth was born and developed. Nevertheless, we remain somehow indifferent to the question of whether this person had indeed historical existence. The fact regarding which we cannot remain indifferent is, on the contrary, how in so early a historical stage, around

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[480] Ibid.

[481] Ibid.

the 5th or 6th centuries according to Halsall,[482] this figure had been already idealized to the extent of becoming an ethnic icon and of having been vouchsafed a place in the otherwise difficult-to-access mythopoetic imaginary.

This early mythopoiesis might have served as Celtic-ethnic original source for the forging of a transcultural Arthur, i.e. a Christian king that incarnates the ideals of a Christianized Celtic Britain. This transfigured figure is neither a random 'product' of the popular fantasy nor the one-sided construct of a non-Christian culture. It is rather the necessary result of the Church's missionary activity as an all-pervading force field which is 'flexible' enough to absorb, synthesize and eventually redesign all these cultural elements. Regarding whether the idealized figure referred to in *Historia Brittonum*'s second passage is to be considered the same as the historic figure in the first, Halsall himself states that, "There's no convincing reason to suppose that the two passages refer to different Arthurs."[483] Thus, we can suppose that the semi-legendary character called Arthur whom people could hear about in Gwynedd around 830 was exactly the same war leader referred as *dux bellorum* by Nunnius.[484]

In the early Welsh tale *Culhwch and Olwen*, the 'primal' Arthur has also been associated with the leader of a group of demi-mythological warriors gifted with super powers, who join Culhwch in his search for Olwen. *Culhwch and Olwen* appears to be the earliest Arthurian romance and it is usually dated to the 11th century.[485] In it, Arthur is

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[482] Ibid.

[483] Halsall, op. cit., 4.

[484] Ibid.

[485] *Culhwch and Olwen*, owned and operated by *Camelot On-line*, accessed 10/27/2014. http://www.heroofcamelot.com/romances/culhwch-and-olwen.

Culhwch's cousin and is settled in at his court in Celliwig, Cornwall, this being one of the earliest references to specific locations of courts of Arthur in literature or oral tradition. This is a meaningful source of comparison with the court of Camelot or Caerleon as depicted in later Welsh, English and continental Arthurian legends.[486]

Another symbolic element of special importance is the appearance of the mythological figure of the 'giant,' which must be defeated so that the hero can reach his 'object of value,' in this case the giant's daughter Olwen. Thus, as for the gradual formation of King Arthur's myth, we are still in the stage of the *archetypal structuration* of a figure able to symbolize a general notion[487] but still lacking the *concretion* needed to become the implementation of a Celtic-Christian cross-cultural synthesis. This can explain why the *mythopoiesis* process follows subsequently a very concrete trajectory towards the crystallization of a post-pagan medieval Christian self-consciousness in Britain.

There exists also a figure named Riothamus, called "King of the Britons" by the 6th-century historian Jordanes.[488] According to scholar Léon Fleuriot, Riothamus is a Latinization of the Brythonic personal name 'Rigotamos,' meaning "king-most," "supreme king," or "highest king." [489] Furthermore, both Fleuriot and Geoffrey Ashe consider that this figure can reasonably be deemed a candidate for the historical Arthur.[490] Geoffrey Ashe speculates that this Riothamus "may have been associated with Arthur by Geoffrey

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[486] Ford (ed.), *The Mabinogi and other Medieval Welsh Tales*, op. cit., 119–121.

[487] Such as courage, nobility, the search after a transcendent value incarnated in Olwen's person, the struggle between good and evil in Arthur/giant opposition, etc.

[488] Getic XLV. 237.

[489] Léon Fleuriot, *Les origines de la Bretagne: l'émigration* (Paris: Payot, 1980), 170.

[490] Ibid.

of Monmouth (the author of a 'history' of the kings of Britain, a work which introduces into the tradition many fictional elements that are now seen as essential parts of the story of Arthur)."[491]

Therefore, *Culhwch and Olwen*'s Arthur, Nunnius' *dux bellorum*, and Jordanes' Riothamus may well be thought of as the historical raw material, *type* and *prefiguration*, of Arthur's mythopoietic figure. From tenth to twelfth century, Halsall recognizes that an explosion of textual Arthur-related references takes place. Retaking a metaphor he had previously introduced –that of the "lid on a bubbling kettle of popular tales or legends"[492]–, he adds that "Within 200 years of the compilation of the *Welsh Annals*, however, the lid of our 'kettle' had blown right off. Mixing our metaphors somewhat, the steam had turned into a veritable geyser."[493] Furthermore, in his book *Concepts of Arthur*, Thomas Green examines the principle Pre-Galfidian figures of Arthur, from which, states the author:

> It should be It should be clear from the above analysis that 'great Arthur, a mighty defender' and paragon of martial valour was an extremely common concept of Arthur in the non-Galfridian legend. It is found in virtually all the early sources – including Culhwch ac Olwen, Pa gur yv y porthaur?, the Historia Brittonum, Marwnad Cynddylan, and the Celtic-Latin Saints' Lives. It dominates Arthur's role in the folkloric tradition recorded from the early modern period onwards in Wales, where Arthur is 'the greatest of Giant Killers'.[494]

Attempting to acquiere an accurate periodization of Arthur's shape-shifting as a Pre-Galfridian, folk hero and warlord, Green identifies three main strands to the depiction of Arthur in this early surces: (1) The concept of Arthur "as a 'great' warrior," which, "is

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[491] Alan Lupack, *The Camelot Project*, http://d.lib.rochester.edu/camelot/text/frequently-asked-questions, accessed 09/18/2014. Also, Geoffrey Ashe, *The Discovery of King Arthur* (London: Guild Publishing, 1985).

[492] Guy Halsall, op. cit., 5.

[493] Ibid.

[494] Thomas Green, *Concepts of Arthur* (Gloucestershire: Tempus Publishing, 2007), 129.

thoroughly entrenched in non-Galfridian tradition and is related from the earliest period to

Arthur as a 'mighty defender', with these two ideas being clearly closely linked."[495] This

can be observed in the mid 7th-century *Marwnad Cynddylan* (*The Death-song of*

Cynddylan, a 7th-century prince of Powys), *Kadeir Teyrnon*, in which Arthur is called

"blessed Arthur," a "defender in battle" and a "trampler of his enemies," also in the poem

Pa gur yv y porthaur? (*What man is the gatekeeper?*), in which Artur is depicted as a folk-

tale figure, a wandering hero at the head of a band of peculiar folk-heroes living a reckless

life of adventures, fighting against monsters and magical adversaries. As a folk-hero, in

this early poem Arthur has likely been even granted some supernatural powers himself,

specifically the ability to make himself and his men invisible, though this would depend on

the philosogic subtlety of a different, likely a better translation of the Old Welsh word

gwared:

> Interestingly, it has been suggested that the word gwared, which Sims-Williams
> translates as 'vouch for', may be best translated as 'disclose, discover, reveal',
> which would give 'I shall reveal them, and you shall see them' with reference to
> Arthur's men. Thomas Jones has brought attention to this word and has intriguingly
> argued in light of this that the sense of the passage should thus be taken as
> indicating that when Arthur and his followers arrive at the gate they are invisible
> and that, 'since Arthur promises to reveal them' so that the porter can 'see them',
> one of Arthur's ''endowments' or magical gifts in the background story was the
> power to make his men invisible.'[496]

In this early mythical environment though, the likelihood for a folk-hero such as

Arthur to be endowed with magical powers is strengthened by the facts, that there exists an

early and strong tradition according to which Arthur possessed an Otherworldly mantle

called Gwenn ('white, pure, sacred, holy, Otherworldly') able to grant invisibility and, that

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[495] Ibid., 95.

[496] Ibid., 81-2.

in *Culhwch ac Olwen* one of Arthur's men, Menw son of Teirgwaedd, possessed the same gift.[497] The twelfth-century non-Galfridian poem *Ymddiddan Arthur a'r Eryr* (*The Dialogue of Arthur and the Eagle*) can also be mentioned here, where Arthur is also praised as a great military hero. In Green's words: "He is 'Arthur of the terrible sword', whose 'enemies stand not before your rush'. He is also 'strongest in valour', the 'bear of the host' and a 'joy of shelter', the latter again referencing his protective role."[498] In *Kat Godeu* (*The Battle of the Trees*), a poem that can be dated to c.AD 900 according to Thomas Green,[499] there is a mention of a character called Guledig of Prydain, a warlord who had authority over all Britain: "I am not he who will not sing of / A combat though small, / The conflict in the battle of Godeu of sprigs. / Against the Guledig of Prydain, / There passed central horses, / Fleets full of riches."[500] Since Arthur is mentioned later in the poem: "Ye intelligent Druids, / Declare to Arthur, / What is there more early / Than I that they sing of,"[501] it can be guessed that both figures, i.e. Guledig of Prydain and Arthur, are likely to be one and the same. Also, the fact that Arthur is mentioned here among other folk-heroes and therefore having no special stardom privilege at all, it can be surmised that, at the earliest stage of his myth-making, Arthur was a paradigm of warlord and folk-warrior but not a prototype –and therefore individualized and preeminent over other hero-warriors– of christified emperor-king or prophet-king as he will be at a later time. (2) The

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[497] Ibid., 82.

[498] Ibid., 94.

[499] Ibid., 48.

[500] "The Battle of the Trees," in *Celtic Literature Collective*, trans. W. F. Skene, accessed 1/2/2018, http://www.maryjones.us/ctexts/t08.html#3.

[501] Ibid.

concept of Arthur as a "'paragon of heroism and valour,' the ultimate standard of comparison," present in *Y Gododdin*, in the archaic heroic elegy *Marwnad Cynddylan*,[502] and also, though we believe to a limited extent, in *Culhwch ac Olwen*. In the latter text, Arthur shows some heroic features yet lacking a systematic epic dimension. Notwithstanding this, a certain mystico-allegorical character is granted to Arthur's portrayal by the fact that it reproduces the pattern of the 'porter scene,' which is probably a narrative formula of vernacular story-telling, ultimately derived from Celtic mythology and associated with the god Lugus.[503] (3) The "concept of Arthur as a liberator of prisoners from the Otherworld," which, according to Green, it is a strong one in the pre-Galfridian British tradition.[504] In the rather hermetic poem *Preiddeu Annwm*, Arthur and his host descend to the Otherworld to take the magical cauldron of power form the various castles (Caer Sidi, Caer Vediwid, Cae Rigor, Caer Vandwy, and Caen Ochren).[505] The magical cauldron should be brought back to the human world because, according to this version, it would bring paradise upon earth. Therefore, Arthur finds himself here in an eschatological mission that Stewart compares to the portal symbolism and the mixture of night and twilight referred to in *The Prophecies* where Janus guards the door of Ariadne, who, as a cosmic allegory, unweaves the solar system.[506] Also, Arthur's messianic profile can be seen here in its protozoic phase. Probably, the later mythical unit of Arthur −or Garwain, or

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[502] Green, op. cit., 53.

[503] Ibid., 81.

[504] Ibid., 56.

[505] Stewart, op. cit., 427-28.

[506] Ibid., 429.

even Lancelot– rescuing Guinevere from her kidnapper King Melwas of the Summer Country, can also be interpreted in the framework of a portal symbolism, according to which Arthur as a liminal figure –in this case in the ontological border of 'thisworldliness' and otherworldliness'– must conquer evil (the savage Burmaltus featured as a pickaxe-wielding man) and rescue the spiritual element imprisoned in Annwn's castle, in order to restore peace and harmony on earth. The first written mention of the abduction of Guinevere can be found in Caradoc of Llancarfan's *Life of Gildas* (12th century). According to this account, Gildas, being "exceedingly distressed" due to constant incursions by pirates that came from the islands of Orcades, decided to abandon Echin and, "on board a small shipd, and, in great grief, put in at Glastonia."[507] The orginial symbolism of the story is strengthened by the fact that King Melwas took Guinevere to Glastonia "for protection." Glastonia is said to mean "the glassy city, which took its name from glass, is a city that had its name originally in the British tongue."[508] So, Glastonia and Glastonbury appear to be the same place, having taking the latter name "after the coming of the English and the expulsion of the Britons, that is, the Welsh, it received a fresh name, Glastigberi, according to the formation of the first name, that is English glass, Latin vitrum, and beria a city; then Glastinberia, that is, the City of Glass."[509] Thus, Guinevere was held at Avalon, from where she was rescued by Arthur according to the original myth, or through the mediation of the abbot of Glastonia and Gildas himself.[510] Though it might be impossible

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[507] "The Life of Gildas, by Caradoc of Llancarfan," 10, in *Celtic Literature Collective*, op. cit., source: *Two Lives of Gildas by a monk of Ruys and Caradoc of Llancarfan*, trans. Hugh Williams, first published in the Cymmrodorion Record Series, 1899, accessed 1/7/2018, http://www.maryjones.us/ctexts/gildas06.html.

[508] Ibid.

[509] Ibid., 14.

[510] Ibid., 11.

to tell whether the connection between Glastonia/Glastonbury and Avalon was prior or later to Arthur's messianic prototypopoeia, it is not coincidential that, according to other mythical variations, both King Arthur's and Guinevere's –and, as claimed in the *Margam Abbey Chronicle*, even Morderd's– remains were laid to rest in Glastonbury.

In another Celtic legend, the cauldron has the power to bring dead men back to life. Stewart suggests that Arthur's descent to *Annwn* and his fail in rescuing the cauldron and bringing back to earth restoring peace and harmony on it, is essentially linked to Arthur's 'honorable wound' in the battle of Camlann and to him being carried to the Ile of Avalon as an otherworldly chronotope, where the King would have his wound cured and would become restored in his original *salus* (i.e. in his state of salvation) to return saving his people. There is, states Stewart, a "harmonic mythical unity" that links all these mythical bundles –"scattered through poems and texts spread over several centuries"– together as a coherent narrative.[511] Here the importance of Geoffrey of Monmouth must be emphasized as both author and compiler of such a huge intertextual heritage. The introduction in his *History of the Kings of Britain* of new elements and change of existing ones by Geoffrey was shocking even for other medieval readers, as is the case of William of Newburgh, who failed to understand the rationale for such variations of the 'original' narrative. Certainly, *relevant* and *contrasting* diegetic transformations had taken placed during 200 years after the *Annales Cambriae*. According to William of Newburgh –whom William Jewis Jones called "the severest of all Geoffrey's critics"–[512] the work sprung out from Geoffrey's inordinate love of lying, or for the sake of pleasing the Britons:

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[511] Stewart, op. cit., 429.

[512] William Jewis Jones, *King Arthur in History and Legend* (Cambridge: University Press, 1914), note 1, 69.

Haec cum juxta historicam veritatem a venerabili Beda expositam constet esse rata; cuncta, quae homo ille de Arturo et ejus vel successoribus vel, post Vortigirnum, praedecessoribus scribere curavit, partim ab ipso, partim et ab aliis constat esse conficta; sive effrenata mentiendi libidine, sive etiam gratia placendi Britonibus, quorum plurimi tam bruti esse feruntur, ut adhuc Arturum tanquam venturum exspectare dicantur, eumque mortuum nee audire patiantur. [513]

Naturally, he could not understand the decisive influence that the Christianization of Britain and the amalgamation of cultures had upon people's imaginary as expressed in these textual variations. This was not a new phenomenon, since already in the *Annales Cambriae* it reads that under the year of 516 –before the arrival of San Augustine to Britain– there took place, "Bellum Badonis, in quo Arthur portavit crucem Domini nostri Jhesu Christi tribus diebus et tribus noctibus in humeros suos et Brittones victores fuerunt."[514] Yet the new strand here was the extension and complexity that this cross-culture intericonic transactions had reached.

3.5. Byzantium and the Arthurian Matter

This complexity increases with the contribution of Byzantium to the formation of Western-European iconosystems. First, King Arthur appears directly linked to Virgin Mary's image if we accept the hypothesis that Nennius's *dux bellorum* is also Arthur; second, he is related to the Cross of Christ as referred to in the *Annales*. In both cases, Arthur appears as a standard-bearer, and it is not clear whether these images represent Arthur's own emblem as king or rather another king's insignia. If we put together both iconemes (Virgin Mary and the Cross), then Arthur relates to the two most important

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[513] William of Newburgh, *Selections from the "Historia regum anglicarum*,*"* ed. Charles Johnson, M.A., (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1920), 10, accessed 1/7/2018, https://ia800206.us.archive.org/8/items/selectionsfromhi00willrich/selectionsfromhi00willrich.pdf.

[514] "The Battle of Badon, in which Arthur carried the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ for three days and three nights on his shoulders and the Britons were the victors." For both Latin original text and English translation see *The Annales Cambriae*, trans. James Ingram (London: Everyman Press, 1912).

religious symbols of the Oriental Christian Empire. Scholars like J. Shepard, Geof Egan, and P. M. Richards have underscored the role of Bizantium in the formation and development of English medieval literature and culture. Among the most important iconographical testimonies of the presence of Oriental Roman Art in England there must be counted the AD 4th-century mosaic floor from a villa at Hinston St. Mary, Dorset, England (Figure 19). This mosaic's central roundel shows the figure of Christ wearing a Roman robe.

Figure 19: Jesus Christ, Mosaic, 4th-Century. Reprinted with Permission from British Museum, AN1255209001.

The figure was located on the focal point of the main floor in the position traditionally occupied by a representation of a pagan divinity. However, Greek letters X and P (chi and rho) right behind the figure's head indicate that the person certainly is Jesus Christ after His glorious resurrection. At either side of Christ there are pomegranates, a fruit associated with spiritual fecundity and immortality. This roundel is probably the

earliest known mosaic picture of Christ, and it can therefore be considered a typological forerunner of the Byzantine icon of Christ as *Κύριος Παντοκράτωρ* (*Kyrios Pantokrator*, Lord All-Mighty) who is painted on the interior walls of the central dome presiding the mystic chronotopia of the temple and the assembly of the faithful. The icon of *Christ Pantokrator* is one of the most common religious images of Orthodox Christianity, and its Christic inocotypia was one of the first developed in the Early Christian Church and as such remains a dominant icon of the Eastern Orthodox Church. The oldest known surviving example of the icon of Christ as *Kyrios Pantocrator* was painted in encaustic on panel in the 6th or 7th century (Figure 20). This holy icon is one of the few ones that survived the Iconoclastic disputes that twice afflicted the Eastern Church (726 to 787 and 814 to 842). The survival of the image was granted by the fact that it was sheltered in the remote desert of the Sinai, at the Monastery of St. Catherine.
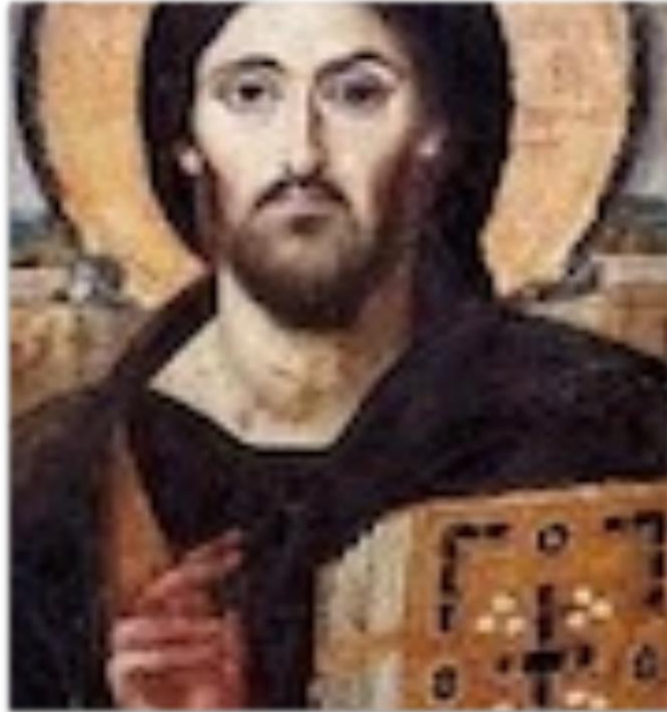
**Figure 20: Christ the Saviour Pantokrator,
Anonymous Painter. Digital Image, 2011.**

In 516, Rome was still under the Osthrogoth rule. Some years later, as part of Justinian I's endeavors of Imperial reconquest and restoration, General Belisarius will arrive at the Eternal City, will besiege it, and will make it fall to the Byzantine armies. Naturally, the Rome that Belisarius took mirrored the overall decline of the Western empire. Still the largest city in the West, Rome's population had dropped considerably, and buildings ruined by Vandals and Goths in the previous century had not been restored. On the other hand, the 6th century was the moment of full expansion of the Byzantine empire under emperor Justinian. Consequently, early Christian aesthetico-artistic iconosphere, both among Merovingians and Carolingians as well as among Visigoths and Osthrogoths, was shaped under direct sway of Byzantium. An exceptional example of this is the mosaic showing a horse-riding Arthur fighting a monster, located at the church of Otranto, South

Italy, and dated by 11th century. Despite the geographical distance, England was no exception to the rule. Not only the mosaic as itself an artistic technique, but also some iconotypal elements reveal the Byzantine origin, stylistically speaking, of the piece. Two outstanding examples in Arthur's mosaic are, first, the frontal hieratic stance of the figure and the "hand of God" blessing the king that protrudes from "Heaven" at the upper-right corner of the composition. Moreover, in the mosaic Arthur appears surrounded by Old Testament figures, like Abel, Adam, Eva, King Salomon, Queen of Saba, etc. Arthur's integration to this biblical milieu denotes the extension of Celtic-Christian iconographic fusion reached already by the 11th and 12th centuries, probably as a visual response to the textual-iconic exchanges that had been occurring for several centuries. There is also a drawing dating from the 15th century (1430) that confirms both the existence of the iconotypia of the equestrian statue of Justinian in frontal-hieratic position and the iconographic impact of Byzantium upon British iconotypes (Figure 21). In this direction, Figures 22 and 23 show the persistence of variants of this Byzantine iconotypia in Europe.

Figure 21: Justinian Augustaion Nimphyrios, AD 1430. Photo by Charles Diehl, 1901.
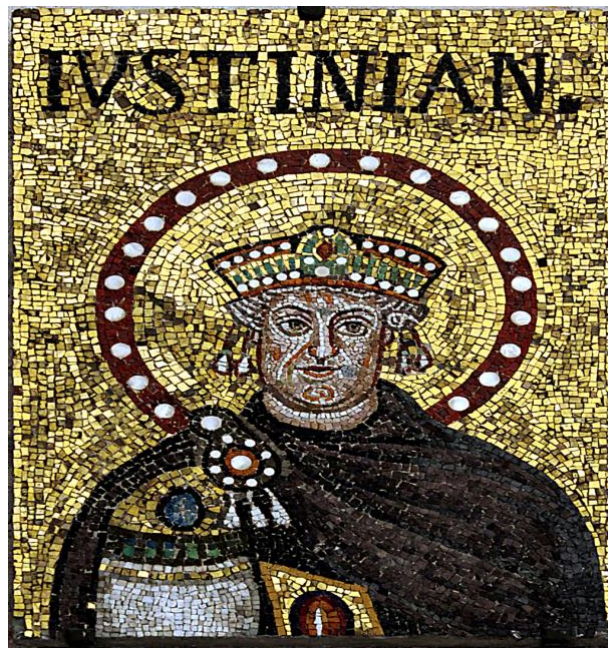
Figure 22: Mosaic of Justinian I, Basilica of Sant'Apollinare Nuovo, Ravenna. Photo by J. L. Bernardes Ribeiro, 2016.

Figure 23: Diptych Barberini Louvre. Photo by Marie-Lan Nguyen, 2011.

Besides trade and military exchanges between Byzantium and England, a doorway for the entry of Byzantine culture into Britain was the monastic influence. Through Aelfric of Eynsham, the Byzantine notion of "warrior-saint" enters British literature especially in Books III "Deposito Sancti Basilii Episcopi," IV "De Sancto Iuliano et Basilissa," XI "De XL militium," and XIV "De Sancto Georgio."[515] This early inculturation facilitates Layamon's task of morphing Arthur into a complete Christian hero at the image and likeness of Byzantine warrior-saints, who always enjoyed a special popular devotion across the vast Empire. Specifically concerning the formation of the emperor iconotype, the early iconographic revolution from Classic Greek-Roman to Roman-Byzantine Christian models operated under the influence and sway of Byzantine representation of the All-Mighty

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[515] "Deposito Sancti Basilii Episcopi," (51-90), "De Sancto Iuliano et Basilissa" (90-115), "De XL militium" (238-260), and "De Sancto Georgio," in Walter W. Skeat (ed.), *Aelfric's Lives of Saints: Being a Set of Sermons of Saints' Days Observed by the English Church* (London: N. Trübner & Co., 1910). Aelfric calls St. Julian, martyred under Diocletian's persecution (4th century), "þam æþelan cnihte," i.e. "the noble knight" (see *Aelfric's Lives of Saints…*, ibid. v. 12, 90), and also "Crist clypode þa to ðam clænan cnihte…," i.e., "Christ called out then to the pure knight…" (see *Aelfric's Lives of Saints*, ibid., v. 56, 94.)

Christ (*Χριστός Παντοκράτωρ*). One of its earliest representations was a *fresco* painted by

Panselinus, which can still be appreciated on the apse wall of Hagia Sophia in

Constantinople. Once the iconic connection between Christian warrior-saints and pre-

Christian iconotypal models was accomplished, then the necessary conditions towards King

Arthur's hagiopoeia and quasi deification were set. In writing his "De XL militium,"

Aelfric of Aynsham likely followed Eusebius of Cessarea's or St. Basil's version of the

events of the saints's life, martyrdom, death, and glorification. According to this account,

the forty Christian martyrs of Sebaste were martyred by emperor Licinius in 320.[516] Yet

when Constantine and Licinius became sworn enemies, the first managed to convey the

image of Licinius as a soporter of pagans and a murderer of Christians, aiming to make his

popularity decrease. However, according to Alexander Canduci, the image of Licinius as a

bloody tyrant persecutor of Christians is not necessarily true to historical facts.[517]

Therefore, from Aelfric's account we can surmise the preeminence of Byzantine over other

Latin sources.

Furthermore, Aelfric of Eynsham was a Benedictine monk, indeed, one of the most

outstanding figures of the Benedictine Reform. Interestingly enough, St. Benedict based

his monastic rule on both St. Basil's *Ἀσκητικόν* and St. John Cassian's works. In both cases

Byzantium appears as the main source informing Aelfric's literary and monastic

Weltanschauung. Indeed, St. John Cassian lived and was educated in Constantinople after

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[516] These Martyrs should not be mistaken with the later Forty Martys of England and Wales, a group of Catholic believers who were martyrized between 1535 and 1680, and canonized by the bishop of Rome, Pope Paulus VI, in 25 October 1970. See "Martyrs of England and Welas (1535-1680)," in *Hagiography Circle. An Online Resource on Contemporary Hagiography*, accessed 04/26/17. http://newsaints.faithweb.com/martyrs/England01.htm.

[517] Alexander Canduci, *Triumph and Tragedy: The Rise and Fall of Rome's Immortal Emperors* (Sydney: Murdoch Books Pty Limited, 2010), 125ff.

his ordination to the deaconate by St. John Chrysostomus. During many years, John Cassian served the Arzbishop of Constantinople as his archdeacon. His works later will exercise a strong influence upon Celtic Benedictine monasticism both in Ireland and Britain. There are reasons to believe in the likelihood that, in the context of a vivid culture in process of formation and development, the figure of King Arthur as a hegemonic myth embodied the Byzantine iconotypal models of Christian warrior-saints. These iconic models had seen since the 4th century a coast-to-coast expansion through popular devotion across the Roman Empire. They represented the new ideal of an increasingly important figure in a geo-cultural milieu where military force –under the form of an organized Christian army– gradually became a *sine qua non* device for political survival. Once the Church assimilated the notion of *iustum bellum* as a necessary form of violence with self-defensive purposes, the way was paved for official recognition and promotion of military saints. A special instance of the role that Byzantium played in this intericonic process can be found in the development of St. George iconotypal model from secular to ecclesiastical milieu. There are early representations of soldiers impaling fallen enemies with their spears, as it can be observed in secular iconotypes exhibited to the public at Victoria & Albert Museum, in London.

This iconotype seems to have become the basic iconeme in the construction of St. George's ecclesiastical representation as a warrior-saint. Both on doorway lintels and as two-dimensional icons, the standardized image of St. George saying the dragon will assimilate and reinterpret pre-extant secular models in light of Church's doctrines and the new forms of Christian popular devotional praxis. It is true that Arthur himself did not killed a dragon –although one might wonder up to what extent the monster shown on the

mosaic at the Italian church of Otrento should be interpreted as such. While the red dragon became the symbol of Wale, and since Merlin's prophecy and Vortingern's legend, it was associated with Arthur as future king, it is also true that the white dragon represented an enemy figure: the English. Therefore, for the construction of Arthur as propitiatory symbol of the English-led unity, the white dragon must dissapear and the red dragon must be exalted yet with a new, more universal and all-encompassing content, like Arthur himself. To this aim two main iconographical shifts were necessary.

First, St. George, the Byzantine warrior-saint, became the patron of England. Originally, the patron saint of England was St. Edmund, king of East Anglia and martyred by the Saxons in 870. On the battle's eve during the Third Crusade in Palestine (1199), King Richard I visited the grave of St. George in Lydda. The next day the Saint blessed the king with a great triumph. Thus, St. Edmund's influence began to fade when Richard the Lionheart adopted St. George as his personal patron and put the army under his special protection. This shift had certainly less to do with the saints' own persons than with the new focus of attention. The crusaders' main goal was to recover the Holy Land from Saracen hands. This brought them to Palestinian soil and put them in close contact with Byzantine soldiers and –as in the case of Count Gilhelm VII of Poitu's visit to Emperor Alexius I Comnenus– even with the high-rank aristocracy of Constantinople. It is plausible that the imperial legitimacy in English imaginary would spring forth off Byzantium rather than the purely autochthonous sources of Anglo-Saxon history. Richard I not only visited different Byzantine territories, such as the isles of Rhodes and Cyprus, but he also kept deep ties with king Sancho VI of Navarra, whose daughter, Berengaria of Navarra, was king Richard's fiancée. Regarding their marriage, we are reminded that, "Before leaving

Cyprus, Richard married Berengaria, first-born daughter of King Sancho VI of Navarre.

The wedding was held in Limassol on May 12, 1191, at the Chapel of St. George." [518]

Additionally, this conflation of axiological replica and cultural intericonicity underscores

the role played by Byzantium as model-supplier in the further formation of the unified

kingdom. Furthermore, in 1348 King Edward III formed the Order of the Garter in St.

George's name. The king officially made St. George the Patron Saint of England and,

consequently, St. Edmund was finally superseded. According to Michael Collins, "The

earliest records of the Order of the Garter were destroyed by fire, but it is believed that

either in 1348 or in 1344 Edward proclaimed St George Patron Saint of England." [519]

Finally, King Henry V further advanced St. George's cult at the battle of Agincourt in

Northern France (1415), strengthening in this way the ties between England and St. George

as a military saint. It is noteworthy that these English monarchs who took an active part in

St. George's ascent, decisively contributed also to the mythopoeia of King Arthur. [520]

Second, Wales was totally incorporated to the English cultural-political imaginary

not only via Plantagenet and Tudor kings' appropriation of Arthur's iconeme but also

through the construction of a renewed heraldic iconosystem. It is precisely with Henry II,

Richard I, and the claim of the discovery of Arthur's and Guinevere's remains made by the

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[518] See "Richard I of England," in *The World Encyclopaedia*, accessed 05/13/2017,
http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Richard_I_of_England.

[519] Michael Collins, "St. George," in *Britannia. History*, accessed 05/13/2017,
http://www.britannia.com/history/stgeorge.html.

[520] For example, among the terms of the Treaty of Sicily, signed by Richard I, Philip II, and Tancred of
Sicily, read that: "Richard officially proclaimed his nephew, the son of Geoffrey, Arthur of Brittany, as
his heir, and Tancred promised to later marry one of his daughters to Arthur when he came of age (Arthur
was only four years old at the time). Richard and Tancred exchanged gifts as was customary; Richard
gave Tancred a sword claimed to be Excalibur, the enchanted blade of King Arthur." "Richard I of
England," in *The World Encyclopaedia*, ibid.

monks of the Benedictine Monastery of Glastonbury that the final intericonic assimilation

of British-Celtic Arthurian iconosystems into the Anglo-Norman imaginary was to be

accomplished. The English kings moved on with a simple but effective *petitio principii* in

cultural terms: they interpreted their own historical self-consciousness as kings, i.e. their

royal identity, *through* Arthur's figure as their natural ancestor. So, while supposedly

presenting a historical *fact*, they were precisely *creating history* by *interpreting* and

designing the collective cultural memory. Certainly, the semantic essence of the word

"history" is an inquiry and an inquiry-narrative, the final story-telling.[521] The stress seems

to be laid upon the subject that makes history more than upon the relationship between

historized contents and historizing subject. In any case, the Plantagents and further English

monarchs accomplished this task by implementing different cultural strategies. As Higham

explains: "Arthur was too useful, for a variety of interlocking political and cultural

purposes… Although it is quite easy to over-emphasize Arthur's importance, he was

successively used for political and cultural purposes by Edward IV, Henry VII, Henry VIII

and Elizabeth, then James VI and I, variously as a source of dynastic legitimacy and

imperial status, as a Protestant icon, as a touchstone of nationalism and the new identity of

the realm with the monarch's own person, and as a source of courtly ideals and

pageantry."[522] Also, notes Vale, "'Round Tables' –jousting and dancing in imitation of

Arthur and his knights– took placed at least 8 times in England between 1242 and

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[521] See Greek nouns *ἱστορία*, *ἵστωρ*, and the verb *ἱστορέω-ῶ*, *Online Etymological Dictionary*, accessed 05/02/2017. http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=history. "Especially interesting the fact that in Middle English, [history is] not differentiated from story; sense of 'narrative record of past events' probably first attested late 15c. Meaning 'the recorded events of the past' is from late 15c. As a branch of knowledge, from late 15c."

[522] Higham, op. cit., 239.

1345,"[523] and in 1284 Edward I celebrated his conquest of Wales and consequent 're-unification' of Arthurian Britain and England with a Round Table.[524] In a similar display of teleological unity: "In the same year [1485] Henry Tudor returned from exile and, marching through Wales under the banner of Arthurian Red Dragon, defeated and killed Richard III at Bosworth Field to take the English crown."[525] Henry was not just the figure that was able to unite in his own person the rival dynasties of Lancaster and York after years of vicious war, but also he was perceived as the rightful successor of Cadwaladr and Arthur. This perception is clearly attested by "some of the numerous genealogies constructed during his reign, particular in the early years," which record his putative descent.[526] Underscoring his Arthurian ancestry, Henry VII named his first-born son Arthur at Arthurian city of Winchester, where the boy was born in 1486.[527] There has been mentioned already Henry VIII's posing as King Arthur for the Round Table now exhibited at the Great Hall in Winchester.

3.6. Arthurian Synthesis and Symbolic Variations on Coat of Arms of Kings

Henry VI's coat of arms shows the King's Beasts supporting the English shield (Figure 24). It is thought that King Henry was the first monarch to employ systematically the King's Beasts in doing this function. This fictious creatures with serated horns, tuffs of hair, tails of unicorns and a tusk protruding from its nose make no reference to Welsh

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[523] J. Vale, "Arthur in English Society," in *The Arthur of the English*, ed. W. R. J. Barron (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1999), pp.185-196, at pp.186-7.

[524] Ibid.

[525] Ibid., 234-5.

[526] Ibid., 235.

[527] Ibid.

symbolic value or emblem despite the fact that Henry VI was Henry V's son, who was born at Monmouth Castle, Wales, therefore with a direct Welsh ancestry.

Figure 24: Coat of Arms of Henry VI of England. Vector Image Created by Sodacan, 2010.

Figure 25: Coat of Arms of Henry VII of England. Vector Image Created by Sodacan, 2010.

Additionally, Henry VII's coat of arms shows a Welsh dragon supporting the English Monarchy on the Royal arms of England (Figures 25 and 27). Indeed, Henry was born at Pembrock Castle, Wales, so he was clearly a Welsh monarch. Not so clear notwithstanding were his Arthurian pedigree and the genealogical link between the Welsh royal line and the crown he was to bear upon his head.

Figure 26: Coat of Arms of Richard III of England. Vector Image Created by Sodacan, 2010.

Figure 27: Coat of Arms of Henry VII of England. Vector Image Created by Sodacan, 2010.

Richard III was not only the last king of the House of York, but also the last Plantagenet monarch. His coat of arms displays two wild boars on each flank upholding the English crown (Figure 26). The boar was symbol of courage and was an animal directly linked to King Arthur since Merlin foretold, according to Geoffrey of Monmouth, that the boar of Cornwall shall expel the Saxons giving triumph and relief to the Britons: "Aper etenim Cornubiae succursum praestabit et colla eorum sub pedibus suis conculcabit. Insulae Oceani potestati illius subdentur et Gallicanos saltus possidebit. Tremebit Romulea domus saevitiam ipsius et exitus eius dubius erit. In ore populorum celebrabitur et actus eius cibus erit narrantibus."[528] These boars are white instead of red, being white the color which identifies the Anglo-Saxons –in contrast to the British red on Henry VII's coat of arms (figs. 25 and 27)– in Merlin's prophesy: "Vae rubeo draconi nam exterminatio eius festinat. Cavernas ipsius occupabit albus draco, qui Saxones quos invitasti significat. Rubeus vero gentem designat Britanniae, quae ab albo opprimetur."[529] Therefore, the white boars may be a transcultured symbol in which the English white color and the Welsh (Cornwall's) boar meet one of their early amalgamations. Yet the red dragon is the

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[528] *Historia Regum Brittaniae,* Liber septimus, 3, see Jacob Hammer (ed.), "Geoffrey of Moumouth, Historia Regum Brittaniae, a Variant Version," in *Medieval Academy Books*, No. 57, 1951, p. 124 (print edition), accessed 12/11/2017, http://www.medievalacademy.org/resource/resmgr/maa_books_online/hammer_0057.htm#hd_ma0057_head_016. "For a boar of Cornwall shall give his assistance, and trample their necks under his feet. The islands of the ocean shall be subject to his power, and he shall possess the forests of Gaul. The house of Romulus shall dread his courage, and his end shall be doubtful. He shall he celebrated in the mouths of the people and his exploits shall be food to those that relate them." See *History of the Kings of Britain by Geoffrey of Monmouth*, Book VII, Chapter III, Introduction and notes by Prof. Leah Shopkow, source: J. A. Giles, ed. *Six Old English Chronicles* (London: Bohn, 1848), pp. 173-271, accessed 12/11/2017, http://www.indiana.edu/~dmdhist/arthur_gm.htm#7.3.

[529] *Historia Regum Brittaniae,* Liber septimus, 3, see Jacob Hammer (ed.), ibid. "Woe to the red dragon, for his banishment hasteneth on. His lurking holes shall be seized by the white dragon, which signifies the Saxons whom you invited over; but the red denotes the British nation, which shall be oppressed by the white." *History of the Kings of Britain by Geoffrey of Monmouth*, ibid.

typological symbol of the Welsh as refred to by Merlin: "Rubeus vero gentem designat

Britanniae…"[530] And it is the red dragon the figure chosen by Henry VII and Henry VIII to

represent their Welsh ancentry and Arthurian pedigree on their shield.

Figure 28: Coat of Arms of Henry VIII
of England. Vector Image Created by Sodacan, 2010.

In Henry VIII's case, another variation summons our attention. While Henry VII

still uses the white dog as a symbol of nobility and spiritual vigilance, his successor

substituted the dog with the English golden lion, a figure that then appears duplicated on

the left side and the top of the shield (Figure 28). With Henry VIII, the lion is moved from

the right to the left flank of the coat. The fact that, in Western culture, the operation of text

and image reading unfolds from left to right, that is rightwards, guaranteed that the English

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[530] *Historia Regum Brittaniae,* ibid.: "…but the red denotes the British nation." *History of the Kings of Britain by Geoffrey of Monmouth*, ibid.

lion acquired visual primacy and semantic priority. Wales and Arthur provided sound pedigrees for the English crown, but ultimate legitimacy and all-encompassing hegemony went to the English crown as incarnation of the complete British unity. This is still clearer if taken into account that Henry VIII, beyond his obvious practical rationale, quarrelled with the Roman Catholic see and declared himself the Head of the Church of England. He presented himself as the absolute vortex of socio-cultural and religious nation-identitary convergence in a moment when England became a stronger and more important imperial power in Europe.

In contrast, Henry II's coat of arm stands out by its simplicity and synthesis: a red background with a golden lion on hind legs facing to the side are the only elements of the austere composition. Henry was neither a Welsh king nor seemed to have been interested in anything other than desmystifying Arthur's figure to highlight his death and his burial in the premises of Glastenbury Abbey and so indicate the furtherance of the Welsh royal line in the Anglo-Norman monarchs. In Higham's words: "Arthur had, of course, be laid to rest, and so disabled as a symbol of Welsh resistance to Anglo-Norman domination, and this was achieved spectacularly at Glastonbury, where his remains (alongside those of Guinevere) were 'discovered' in 1191."[531] Henry II, allegedly advised of the whereabouts of Arthur's body by a Welsh bard, instructed the excavations that were undertaken with King Richard's support.[532] This does not mean that Henry II was not interested in

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[531] Higham, op. cit., 230.

[532] Explaining Richard's interest in the appropriation of Arthur from his Welsh origins by the Anglo-Norman élite, Higham points out that, "It opened the door to a political cult to rival that of Charlemagne, which Richard much needed in his dealings with his rival, brother-in-law and fellow crusader, Philip Augustus." Higham, op. cit., 232.

capitalizing on Arthur's figure for his own royal benefit and legitimacy. It just means that Henry's concern on Arthur was completely determined by his politico-territorial rather than religious interests which from 1154 onwards had extended from Northumberland to the Pyrenees, and by his will to expand his power over Wales, Ireland, and Scotland.

Thus, the figurative and symbolic evolution of the coats of arms of the English kings from Henry II to Henry VIII showcase both the gradual complexity of the Welsh-Anglo-Norman transcultural process and the monarchs' awareness of the politico-cultural advantage of the Arthurian ancestry for the integration of Wales to the unified crown. And Geoffrey's Arthur, morphed already into a hegemonic myth directly linked to Anglo-Norman self-legitimation as kings of Great Britain, played an essential role in this cultural design: "From Henry II onwards until at least Henry VIII, English kings, their courtiers and their apologists took the existence of Geoffrey's Arthur as a matter of fact which was beyond doubt."[533] Figures 10 and 12 show how this assimilation process reaches a paramount moment with Henry VIII's self-construction as not only political but also religious embodiment of both the English nation and the British unity. It is also clear that, especially during the Plantagenet and Tudor periods, the political factor played –along with the religious fervor– an essential role in the myth-making and further shape-shifting of Arthur as hegemonic myth. The symbolic variations exhibited in the coat of arms are neither chaotic nor the purely aesthetical –i.e. formal and non-conceptual– choice of these kings. On the contrary, such as Arthur's mytheme, also these visual composites are semantic functions of background politico-cultural processes that systematically hold sway over them and determine their essential combinations. The visual grammar of these shields

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[533] Ibid., 226.

represents the intericonic visualization of the British-English imaginary in a crucial period of Christian re-shape and monarchical formation in Britain. The War of the Roses and the contrasting events of Henry VIII's religious-political fusion and Queen "Bloody" Mary I's (1553-1558) –and also James II's (1685-1688) after the Civil War during the Stuart Restoration– reaction to force people to embrace their Roman Catholic faith under Pope's aegis and supervision, showcase how dialectical oppositions in both religious and political fields were engineering the new establishment, officially acknowledged for the first time in the Act of Union in 1707, of a United Kingdom of the Great Britain and Ireland. William III (1688-1702) and Anne (1702-1714) will reign under the royal title of King and Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, respectively.[534] The impact of the religious factor on Arthur's myth-making decreased indeed but did not disappear. Yet now, after the shift from clerical writers with immediate ecclesiastical interests to kings and their royal courts, in other words, after the radical secularization of Arthurian textual-iconic universe, the religious ceased to hold preeminence over the political factor. Having lost its systematic condition, it depended on the personal devotion of the king rather than on other socio-political –i.e. 'objective' and structural– elements. An example of this can be found in both Edward I and Edward III. Both Plantagenet kings were keen Arthurians and visited and endowed the Arthur's cult site at Glastonbury. They also patronized the founding and development of a courtly culture inspired in Arthurian idelas as present by Geoffrey, Wace, and Layamon. Edward I in particular, as refered to by Higham, "patronized a shrine of Arthur in the church, which seems to have survived up to the Dissolution, the base of which was

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[534] See "Timeline of the Kings and Queens of Britain: The Stuarts," in *Project Britain*, construed by Mandy Barrow, accessed in 12/11/2017, http://projectbritain.com/monarchy/stuarts.html

discovered by excavation in 1663."[535] Just after Easter in 1278, Edward, along with his

wife Eleanor of Provence, presided over a grand reopening of Glanstonbury tomb. In

addition, he fostered the cult of Joseph of Arimathea also linked to Glastonbury which at

the moment had strong mystical connotations after being identified with the religious

chronotope of Ile of Avalon. In 1284, Edward I celebrated the 're-unification' of Arthurian

Britain and England with a Round Table. The Winchester Round Table itself appears to be

related to Edward and, though the idea of a round table seems to have emerged with Wace

and been adopted by Layamon from Wace's *Roman de Brut*, King Edward could have

been responsible for the construction of the Winchester Round Table , "which is first

known to have been used as the centerpiece of a great feast at Winchester in 1290 and was

probably commissioned for the purpose." (Figure 29).[536] Edward I's devotion to Arthurian

Welsh chivalric ideals found a clear expression also in his activity as a castle builder.

Among the castles built under the king's supervision are the northern Welsh Conway

castle, Caernarvon castle, Beaumaris castle, and Harlech castle.[537]

　　　Henry VIII's religious fervor seems to play a certain role in his appropriation of

Arthur's iconeme to legitimate both his imperial project and his decision to break up with

Catholic Rome and the pope and establish himself as the head of the Church of England.

However, Henry VIII's political pretensions, his dubious piety, and the fact that, as

Higham notes, "by 1533 Henry VIII…was apparently prepared to sacrifice Arthur and

back Polydore's work [*Anglica Historia*] in Bade in order to profit from its portrayal of his

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[535] Higham, op. cit., 232.

[536] Ibid.

[537] See "Timeline of the Kings and Queens of Englad: The Plantagenet (1216-1399)," op. cit.

English kingship as an empire," suggest that he rather embodies the paradigm shift from a religious to a political preeminence in the process of Arthur's Anglo-Norman –in this case Plantagenet and Tudor– appropriation (Figure 30). In any case, Arthur works here as a cultural signifier able to in England and the Tudor kings. The definite formation of the United Kingdom of the Great Britain and Irland during the Stuart, a dynasty of Scottish origin, is a cultural evidence of centripetal force of Arthur's icononeme in the multicultural environment of Britain. In this light, Michelle R. Warren's assertion against Schichtman and Finke that Arthur's reception "seems to have divided the different peoples who claimed his heritage more than it unified them,"[538] proves not only inaccurate but also theoretical and ideologically biased. Her post-colonial inclination toward deconstruction and *difference* makes her lose of sight the fact, that "the different peoples" who claimed Arthur's heritage were already divided before Arthur's appearance in their cultural imaginaries. Although the continuity of cultural differences and clashes cannot be denied, the transculturation processes that took place with Arthur as their common denominator – historically justified or just as fictional enginnering with religious and later also political goals– bear a cultural significance greater than theoretical fads that are, as known, essentially fickle.

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[538] Warren, op. cit., 11.

Figure 29: Round Table, The Great Hall, Winchester, England. Personal Photograph by Author, April 2017.

Figure 30: Portait of Henry VIII as King Arthur, The Great Hall, Winchester, England. Personal Photograph by Author, April 2017.

3.7. Dragon and its Meaning in Celtic and Christian Cultures

The semantic duplicity of the dragon reflected in St. George's and English heraldic's iconography can be explained by attending to the double origin of the mythological creature. In Celtic culture, dragons and snakes were generally symbols of wisdom, fertility, and immortality. According to the Symbol Dictionary: "The serpent was related to the dragon, and was connected with healing pools and springs."[539] The magic properties abscribed to the serpent, even to serpent's eggs, were also exported to the dragon as the incarnation of the untamed forces of Nature, revered and worshiped in the animist Celtic-Druid religious beliefs. For this reason, the figures of snake and dragon were a symbol of kingship and a reference of divine authority: "A hybrid horned dragon / snake figure was connected to the torque collar, a symbol of kingship and status, and to the horned deity Cernunnos."[540] Indeed, Geoffrey of Monmouth depicts Arthur donning "a helmet, on whose crest shines a dragon bright with gold" before going to battle.[541]

With the advent of Christianity in Irland and Britain, Judeo-Christian theological mindset collided with Celtic pagan traditions. Since the Old Testament, the snake was related to the capital sin of pride and was considered a co-agent in mankind's fall from God's grace. Alongside basilisks and griffins, dragons conform in Christian imaginary to the triad of fabulous creatures directly linked to the Malign and his evil praxis.[542] The latter is explicitly referred to in the Book of Daniel: "σὺ δέ, βασιλεῦ, δός μοι ἐξουσίαν, καὶ

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[539] "Celtic Animal Symbols: Dragons and Serpents," in *Symboldictionary.net. A Visual Glossary*, accessed 04/26/17, http://symboldictionary.net/?p=917.

[540] Ibid.

[541] See note 365.

[542] Carlos Valentini y Marcela Ristorto, *Bestiarios medievales e imaginario social*, *Scripta* 8/1, 2015: 13 – 24.

ἀποκτενῶ τὸν δράκοντα ἄνευ μαχαίρας καὶ ῥάβδου. καὶ εἶπεν ὁ βασιλεύς· δίδωμί σοι …

καὶ ἔλαβεν ὁ Δανιὴλ πίσσαν καὶ στέαρ καὶ τρίχας καὶ ἥψησεν ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ καὶ ἐποίησε

μάζας καὶ ἔδωκεν εἰς τὸ στόμα τοῦ δράκοντος, καὶ φαγὼν διερράγη ὁ δράκων. καὶ εἶπεν·

ἴδετε τά σεβάσματα ὑμῶν."[543] And ultimately the dragon came to be identified with

Lucipher himself, and the dragon-figure is used in John's *Book of Revelations* to describe

Archangel Gabriel's heavenly battle against the rebel angel, who is finally defeated and

dropped down to Hell with his cohorts.[544] Alongside the Celtic-origin positive hermeneutic

of the dragon, several examples can be found where the dragon appears as telluric, evil-

linked figure related to the Malign according to the New Testament. One of these examples

stands out at the choir wooden decorations of the Cathedral of Winchester, England (Figure

31).

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[543] Δανιήλ 13, 24-26, http://www.imgap.gr/file1/AG-Pateres/AG%20KeimenoMetafrasi/PD/50.%20DanielVil&Drakon.htm "But give me leave, O king, and I will kill this dragon without sword or club. And the king said: I give thee leave." Daniel 14, 25-26, Douay-Rheims 1899 American Edition (DRA), accessed 04.26/217, https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Daniel%2014:24-&version=DRA.

[544] "Καὶ ἐγένετο πόλεμος ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ· ὁ Μιχαὴλ καὶ οἱ ἄγγελοι αὐτοῦ -τοῦ πολεμῆσαι μετὰ τοῦ δράκοντος· καὶ ὁ δράκων ἐπολέμησε καὶ οἱ ἄγγελοι αὐτοῦ, καὶ οὐκ ἴσχυσεν, οὐδὲ τόπος εὑρέθη αὐτῷ ἔτι ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ. καὶ ἐβλήθη ὁ δράκων, -ὁ ὄφις ὁ μέγας ὁ ἀρχαῖος, ὁ καλούμενος Διάβολος καὶ ὁ Σατανᾶς, ὁ πλανῶν τὴν οἰκουμένην ὅλην, ἐβλήθη εἰς τὴν γῆν, καὶ οἱ ἄγγελοι αὐτοῦ μετ᾽ αὐτοῦ ἐβλήθησαν. καὶ ἤκουσα φωνὴν μεγάλην ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ λέγουσαν· ἄρτι ἐγένετο ἡ σωτηρία καὶ ἡ δύναμις καὶ ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ ἡ ἐξουσία τοῦ Χριστοῦ αὐτοῦ, ὅτι ἐβλήθη ὁ κατήγορος τῶν ἀδελφῶν ἡμῶν, ὁ κατηγορῶν αὐτῶν ἐνώπιον τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡμῶν ἡμέρας καὶ νυκτός." (Ἀποκάλυψις Ἰωάννου 12, 7-10.) "And there was a great battle in heaven, Michael and his angels fought with the dragon, and the dragon fought and his angels: [8] And they prevailed not, neither was their place found any more in heaven. [9] And that great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, who seduceth the whole world; and he was cast unto the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. [10] And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying: Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: because the accuser of our brethren is cast forth, who accused them before our God day and night." *The Apocalypsis of Saint John* (*Revelation*) 12, 7-10. (Douay-Rheims Version.)

**Figure 31: Entrapped Dragon, Winchester Cathedral,
England. Personal Photograph by Author, April 2017.**

Through all these processes of intense intertextuality, intericonicity, and cultural

overlaps, a Christian king resembling in glory Byzantine warrior-saints is embedded into

the British socio- and idiolectal imaginary as cultural synthesis of Celtic non-Christian

warrior-centered heroic worldviews and of the sophisticated doctrines of love and self-

sacrifice proclaimed by the Church and witnessed by saints' lives and deeds. Furthermore,

a very important hermeneutical shift takes place in the works of Robert de Boron and in the

Vulgate Cycle. Merlin's figure, who was a diabolical creature created in hell by the devil's

consensus as an anti-Christ, or the offspring of an incubus and a mortal woman, morphed

into a beneficial entity reinforcing Arthur's transfiguration; a fact narratively marked by his

being baptized by her mother after the advice of her confessor: "Merlin's mother is

impregnated by an incubus; but with the advice of her confessor Blaise she baptizes her

son; and he becomes a force for good, not evil."[545]. If Arthur's figure was to be

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[545] Alan Lupack, *The Camelot Project*, ibid.

Christianized and assimilated to the new faith, this could not be achieved without the parallel transformation of his personal counselor and helper Merlin. In addition, some scholars support the idea that much of Middle English literature has most probably been depicted following narrative as well as material patterns taken from hagiographical sources. This can be seen as part of the more general process of assimilation through minstrels of much of the hagiographical material already available and is certainly not limited to the Arthurian saga. Garbaty[546] points to the similarities of several incidents in Horn's story with the legend of Saint Cuthbert. There are also outstanding similitudes –which are interpreted here as a basically intentional intertextuality– with the Old and especially the New Testament in the narrative of the life of Arthur. Irene P. McKeehan, in *The Book of the Nativity of St. Cuthbert*, sustains the theory of the minstrels' borrowing from hagiographic sources in general as a regular praxis.[547]

3.8. Christified Arthur

The second stage that follows the mythopoiesis of Arthur as already inserted into a mystico-soteriological context, most probably intertwined with ancient gnostic traditions. Here we can speak of the 'deified' or 'Christified Arthur.' This is a demi-divine, archetypal Arthur who represents man's existential search for the meaning of Being though always anchored in the nationalistic context of the British ethno-cultural self-interpretation. This can explain why the Arthurian myth, despite having evolved intrinsically linked to the missionary needs of Christianization of England, promptly derived into a symbolico-allegorical metanarrative of mythopoietic nature oriented towards the realization of onto-

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[546] Garbaty, op. cit., see note 773, 161.

[547] Irene P. McKeehan, "The Book of the Nativity of St. Cuthbert," *PMLA*, XLVIII (1933): 981-999.

existential transcendentals of man. At this point, the Arthurian saga unfolds with relative autonomy showing a self-determination relatively undisturbed by heteronarrative functions such as missionary goals or power legitimacy.

In other words, at this moment the Arthurian saga is not just either national literature in the autonomous sense as referred to by H. G. Gadamer[548] or a cultural device playing an identitary role. It is also man's mystical self-interpretation as "being in the world open to Transcendence." In this sense, Guinevere corresponds to Troilus' Criseyde, both allegories of the erotic object, or better, the eternal Beauty as transcendental goal of the soul. As in Troilus, this beauty is hijacked and possessed by an evil agent: Diomedes and Mordred. Therefore, the active part of the soul represented in the male hero-warrior must fight to recover what belongs to it (Arthur) or to find a different and more direct way to reach its metaphysical calling (Troilus). For Arthur, killing the enemy and defeating the evil source that disturbs the harmony of the self-accomplishing spiritual process is a practical imperative. First, the primary passions must be set down and conquered (Arthur's fight against the giant), but later the most important battle must be fought: the destruction of the evil principle that conceived the chaos: Mordred. By destroying the evil being, the hero-warrior deifies himself for which he must necessarily die –and death is understood here allegorically as the process of self-negation as "being in the world."

Some texts paradigmatically represent the symbolico-allegorical spiritualization of the Arthurian material. Among them there stands out Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Vita Merlini*, in which Geoffrey states that, "after many years had passed under many kings,

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[548] Hans-Georg Gadamer, "Aesthetic and religious experience," *The Relevance of the Beautiful and Other Essays*, ed. Robert Nernasconi (Cambrige University Press, 1986), 144.

Merlin the Briton was held famous in the world. He was a king and prophet; to the proud people of the South Welsh he gave laws, and to the chieftains he prophesied the future."[549] Also in the *Vulgata Cycle*, Merlin's transformation is described in more details. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, for its part, has Gawain and not Arthur as foreground hero and constitutes one of the most significant pieces of the Arthurian saga generally. *The Book of Taliesin,* attributed to a 6th-century poet but available to us only in a 14th-century manuscript, conveys the story of Arthur's journey to the land of Annwn searching for a magical sword[550] and a cauldron –believed by some to be the precursor to the Holy Grail. Finally, Mallory's *Le Morte d'Arthur* comes to represent the synthesis of the most meaningful melodies of the vast Arthurian symphony.

Regarding these textual variations, there cannot be ruled out the likelihood of interpolations intended to re-interpret former textual traditions in a new hermeneutical light. For instance, in Layamon's *Brut* there occurs a change of mind in Arthur in the least expected moment. The King had announced revenge and death to Childric once defeated: "Swa wes Childriche,/ þan strongen and þan riche;/ he þohten al mi kinelond/ setten an his aȝere hond,/ ah nu ich habbe hine idriuen/ to than bare daede,/ whaeðer swa ich wulle don,/ oder slæ oder ahon."[551] After having warned that a grim fate was looming over Childric's head, King Arthur surprises us with this mood shift: "Nu ich wulle ȝifen him grið/ and

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[549] See http://www.heroofcamelot.com/historic-documents/vita-merlini. The fact that Merlin could prophesize the future means that he had undergone already his particular transfiguration from being a demonic creation as an anti-Christ to turn into a God-reborn figure.

[550] A reference will be made later to the mystical symbolism existing between Arthur's sword Calibur and Christ's Holy Cross.

[551] *Brut*, vss. 460-3, op. cit., 68.

leten hine me secken wið;/ nulle ich hine slae no ahon/ ah his bode ich wulle fon;"[552] Childric's life gets not only pardoned, but he is granted some access to Arthur since the latter will "leten hine me secken wið." Of course, Arthur has some reasons to act in this way. Most probably, he is trying to guarantee some future peace for his kingdom in the hope that his enemies will consider in a positive way his leaving them not only alive but also free. Layamon's actual words are rather obscure and open different hermeneutical trails: "and swa heo scullen wræchen/ to heoren scipen liden, /sæilien ouer sæ/ to sele heore londe; and þer wirdliche/ wunien on riche, / and tellen tidende/ of Arðure kinge, /hu ich heom habbe ifreoieð,/ for mineð fader saule,/ and mine freo-dome/ ifruereð þa wraechen."[553] However, they are not equal. These men are neither akin to the king nor especially appreciated by him: they are "wræchen." So, what does this change of behavior stand for? Is there something implied here, other than Arthur's obvious war strategy and display of cultural superiority?

At least two things are surreptitiously passed here. First, for whatever reason, Arthur *is* able to grant pardon to his enemy −and it was about "Childriche, / than strongen and than riche." He was then *not* like *them*. Arthur was not a 'barbarian Celtic warchief any more. He was a Christian king defending not just *one* culture against strange invaders, but a faith and *a* new axiological taxonomy which was essentially at odds with the values incarnated in Childric's figure. As described in "The Return and Ravages of Childric,"[554] the latter, along with Colgrim and Baldulf, attacked Arthur back. They destroyed

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[552] Ibid.

[553] *Brut*, vss. 468-73, ibid.

[554] *Brut*, vss. 474-502, ibid., 68-69.

everything and "al heo hit [Childric] nomen, / þat heo neh comen."[555] Now, feeling

stronger and undefeatable, they even mock Arthur and admonish him by prophesizing

gloomy things to happen against his kingdom and himself: "þa scolden heom i-halden/ in

heore onwalden;"[556] and more particularly:

> And ȝif Ardur weoren swa kene/ þat he cumen wolde/ to fihten wid Childrichen,
> þan stongen and þan richen, / heo wolden of his rugge / makien ane brugge, and
> nimen þa ban alle/ of aðele þan king, / and teien heom to-gadere/ mið guldene
> teȝen, and legge i þare halle-dure, / per aech mon sculde uorð fahren, to wurdscipe
> Childrich, þan strongen and þan riche."[557]

It can be witnessed, in frightening and realistic details, the barbarian nature of Childric and
the culture he represented:

> Sone swa heo a lond comen, / þat fole heo asloȝen;/ þa cheorles heo uloȝen; / þa
> tileden þa corden;/ heo hengen þa cnihtes/ þa biwusten þa londes, / alle gode wiues/
> heo stikeden mið cnifes;/ alle þa maiden/ heo mið morde aqualden; and þaie
> ilærede men/ heo læiðen on gleden […] þa sukende children/ heo adrenten inne
> wateren. / þat orf þat heo nomen / al heo sloȝen.[558]

Although this was perhaps his worse crime: Childric failed to appreciate Arthur's

gentle gesture of granting his life and setting him free after being defeated in a fair match.

Childric was completely insensitive to the spiritually relevant fact that it was done "for

mineð faðer saule."[559] Clearly, the *sujet* has been arranged aiming to highlight Arthur's

kingship and heroic nature; and this through the sharp contrast between Arthur's granting

life and freedom to Childric and Childric's reciprocating with slaughter, death, and

desolation. Finally, this also justifies Arthur's merciless backlash in the Battle of Bath,

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[555] *Brut* v. 486, ibid., 69.

[556] Ibid.

[557] Ibid.

[558] *Brut* vss. 474-484, ibid., p. 68-69.

[559] *Brut* v. 472, ibid., 68.

where Colgrim and Baldruf were killed but Childric escaped, only to be slain later by Duke Cador of Cornwall on the Isle of Thanet.

Second, *peace* is exalted here over more traditional pagan-heroic values of war and courage in battle. Arthur grants Childric "grið … for mineð fader saule, / and mine freo-dome."[560] Naturally, pre-condition to establish and perpetuate the Christian faith was the creation of a prosperous, safe and autonomous socio-cultural and political environment. In other words, as it was shown after 313 with the Edict of Milan, there must be a fusion, an identification, and a total consolidation between the secular power structure representing the Kingdom and the religious power structures incarnated, *now*, in the Roman Catholic Church. This passage clearly shows how King Arthur has been morphed into a Christian hero-warrior according to the Byzantine incotype of the saint-warrior in a way which is completely proportional to the missionary activity of the Church and the subsequent Christianization of Britain: from being a Celtic nationalistic hero he became a Christian *Δεσπότης* (*Despotis*, Lord) of the kind of Constantine the Great. The phenomenology of the mythopoeia linked to King Arthur and Emperor Constantine XI Paleologos, the last Byzantine emperor, is very similar. They both were a living synthesis of two originally opposite traditions –Celtic and Christian, in the first case; Roman and Christian, in the second. Both were received by *divine* entities –elves and angels, respectively– and were transferred to a divine *chronotope* –Avalon and Heaven–, in which they were cured of their wounds to return as ethn0-soteriological heroes to redeem their people from the subjugation from a foreign power –the Anglo-Saxon in Arthur's case, the Turkish-Otoman in the case of Constantine. Are these similarities the construction of heroic figures out of a

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[560] Ibid.

synchronic-timeless, Jungian "collective unconscious," or do they just respond to the cross-cultural exchanges between West and East via concrete cultural activities such as migrations, trade, literary and iconic transactions, and wars? Both processes seem to work along. Some universal patterns are traceable here, such as the idea of the ethnic savior, his sacrificial death and his soteriological return. But at the same time, some particular similarities, some specific patterns, as well as some very concrete textual variations and intericonic overlaps seem to be only the result of concrete cross-culture interactions in a completely historical, socio-cultural sense. These variations respond to the inner cultural logic of the complex dialectic between the societal imaginary with its symbolico-allegoric contents and ideals, and the symbolic negotiations and transactions –eventual contradictions, oppositions, coordination, and synthesis– that take place in the socio-cultural dynamic.

In this sense, is remarkable the ethic contrast of King Arthur at the end of the *Alliterative Morte Arthure*. After slaying Mordred the traitor in a ferocious battle, Arthur, "Entres the Ile of Aueloyne, / and Arthure he lyghttes, / Merkes to a manere there, / for myghte he no forthire."[561] Immediately later, Arthur calls for a confessor "with Criste in his armes."[562] This underscores the iconeme of a Christian king in his last moments caring about his spiritual salvation and thinking of his Savior, Jesus Christ. A universal, limitless act of forgiveness should now be expected, according to the Christian hagiographic tradition. However, the opposite takes place: "And sythen merke manly/ to Mordrede

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[561] *The Alliterative Morte Arthure* 885-886, in Garbaty, op. cit., 118.

[562] Ibid., 119.

children, / That they bee sleyghely slayne/ and slogan in watyrs."[563] The logic of this decision, taken on the verge of death, is provided immediately: "Latt no wykkyde wede waxe/ ne writhe on this erthe."[564] This still seems to expose the dark side of Arthur, evidence of his pagan origin as though the mixture of both Celtic and Christian cultures were unfinished and incomplete, i.e. a still in progress transculturation. This impression emerges especially when we contrast the last will of the Christian king with Christ's command to let the tares grow together with the wheat:

> Another parable he proposed to them, saying: The kingdom of heaven is likened to a man that sowed good seeds in his field. But while men were asleep, his enemy came and oversowed cockle among the wheat and went his way. And when the blade was sprung up, and had brought forth fruit, then appeared also the cockle. And the servants of the goodman of the house coming said to him: Sir, didst thou not sow good seed in thy field? whence then hath it cockle? And he said to them: An enemy hath done this. And the servants said to him: Wilt thou that we go and gather it up? And he said: No, lest perhaps gathering up the cockle, you root up the wheat also together with it. Suffer both to grow until the harvest, and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers: Gather up first the cockle, and bind it into bundles to burn, but the wheat gather ye into my barn.[565]

An allegorical interpretation can be made here in parallel with John Meyendorf's hermeneutical approach to the "Last Judgment parable."[566] Mordred could be understood as the allegorical incarnation of the soul's inner evil that must be thoroughly uprooted to be able to access –after going through an all-pervading process of illumination, purification, and deification– to the Eternal Life implied in the ideo-thematic chronotope of the Ile of Avalon. Arthur is currently preparing himself to enter this mystic space as indicated by his

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[563] Ibid.

[564] Ibid.

[565] Matthew 13, 24-30. (Douay-Rheims Version.)

[566] Mattew 27, see Πάβελ Εβδοκίμοφ (Pavel Evdokimof), Ορθοδοξία (Thessaloniki: Εκδόσεις Ρηγοπούλου, 1970), 115.

being wounded and requesting a priest with "Criste in his armes" to hear confession. Thus, slaying and destroying, in this apparently merciless form, may be understood here in a twofold way: (1) as a textual appearance of Arthur's pagan identity, and (2) as a symbolico-allegorical figure: the triumph of the virtuous soul over every form of darkness and sinful will. A triumph followed by the ascetic task of ousting and incinerating the tares. Paradoxically, this purgatory-like process must be carried out by means of decisive violence and compelling force, as in an exorcism. Christ's own words can witness this violent moment as an internal necessity in the phenomenology of the soul's illumination and *catharsis*: "Do not think that I came to send peace upon earth: I came not to send peace, but the sword. For I came to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's enemies shall be they of his own household."[567]

Additionally, the historical improvement of the Christianization of Arthur can be also affirmed in this context through another textual variant. In Malory's *Le Morte d'Arthur*, the slaying of Mordred's offspring by Arthur's command is staved off. This might be the logical result of the shift of the betrayal against Arthur with Guinevere from Mordred to Lancelot: "So, to passe upon this tale, Sir Launcelot wente to bedde with the Quene and toke no force of his hurte honed, but toke his plesaunce and hys lyknge untyll hit was the dawning of the day."[568]

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[567] Matthew 10, 34-36. (Douay-Rheims Version.)

[568] Sir Thomas Malory, *Le Mort d'Arthur*, http://www.gutenberg.org/files/1252/1252-h/1252-h.htm, accessed 11/19/2014.

3.9. Diegetic Symbolism and Chronotopic Transferences

In Layamon's *Brut*, the diegesis acquires a symbolico-allegorical dimension directly linked to chronotopic transferences and dialectical constructions within the framework of a metaphorical spatiality. In *Brut* a chronotope-transfer process which takes place according to a threefold pattern can be traced. This transferential process is not qualitatively neutral; rather, it becomes enriched by the acquisition of higher levels of metaphysical hypostasis. The movement ascends, describing at the same time spiral-like trajectories containing concentrical circles. Being concentrical means here that, though standing in different symbolic levels, namely the diegetic temporality and the cultural dimension, these are complementary elements as moments of an identical process of self-completion. Thus, there can be pointed to three essential moments in this process.

The first one is the 'war-chronotope.' This is a necessary stage towards the archetypal construction of Arthur's earthly kingdom of peace. Here Arthur responds to the principles of pre-Christian Celtic and Anglosaxon values, and his cultural identity is that of a heroic chieftain rather than of a Christian king. The 'pagan' mark will never vanish from the iconeme of Arthur. On the contrary, it will appear either subsumed or in opposition to the king's Christian dimension. Normally, in Arthurian literature the war-chronotope appears in the narrative plot after an external agent (e.g. an invited knights' envy, the Green Knight, Rome's tax demands over Arthur's kingdom, etc.) comes up suddenly and disrupts peace. This semantic structure resembles the opposition between God's will and human trespass that led to the expulsion from Paradise. Also, the immediate cause of the fall is a sin: "Ælc hafede an heorte leches he ȝe; and lette þat he weore betere þan his

iuere."[569] To complete the logic of sin and fall, the evil caused by the sinful transgression is ultimately lifted by the administration of justice and the eventual triumph of Good. Immediately, already in Cornwale, Arthur is met by a "crafti weorc-man" that offers himself to build a round table for the King, suggesting that thus all knights will be pleased to occupy an equal position and a future bloodshed could be prevented: "Ah ich ye wulle wurche a bord swidde hende, þat her maȝen setten to sixteen hundered and ma, al turn abuten, þat man ne beon uten, wið uten and wið inne, mon to-ȝaenines monne."[570] Arthur is depicted here as a severe ruler able to inflict exemplar punishment on those who dare to disturb his well-rounded peace. Also, Arthur's christified condition is underscored as he will punish the first capital sin, i.e. pride. Similarly, King Arthur's violence externally can be emulated with Chedric's. There is through an essential difference: Chedric invades a 'foreign' land and disregards Arthur's deference that granted him [Chedric] clemency. On his part, Arthur is reacting to the destruction of the peace of his kingdom, and it is to that extent that he is punishing, as a fair christified king, the sin of pride committed by many of his guests. In this light, the structure 'Arthur/Chedric' as representing the duality of Good and evil, can be understood as a foreshadowing of the King's battle with Mordred in Camlann, which is on its part an allegory of the eschatological battle between Archangel Gabriel and Lucifer. Figure 32 shows the intericonic continuity that links these mythemes to create a whole mythical bundle.

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[569] *Brut* vss 584-585, op. cit., 72.

[570] *Brut* vss 584-585, Garbaty, ibid, 74-75.

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┌──────────┐      ┌──────────┐
│   Arch.  │      │ Lucifer  │
│  Gabriel │      │          │
└────┬─────┘      └────┬─────┘
     │ ┌────────┐      │ ┌─────────────┐
     ├─│ Arthur │      ├─│ Chedric/Guests│
     │ └────────┘      │ └─────────────┘
     │ ┌────────┐      │ ┌─────────────┐
     └─│ Arthur │      └─│   Mordred   │
       └────────┘        └─────────────┘
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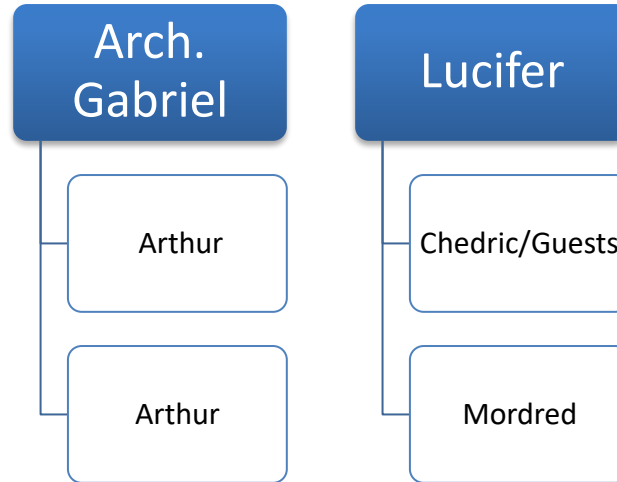
Figure 32: Intericonic Continuity.

The description of Arthur's fiercy vengeance is very reminiscent of Anglo-Saxon epic-

heroic poems:

> Þa cleopede Ardur, adelest kingen,
> 'Sitteð, sitteð swiðe, elc mon bi his liue,
> and wa swa ha nulle don, he scal for-demed beon.
> Nimeð me þene ilke mon þa þis feht ærst bigon
> and doð wiðe an his sweore and draȝed hine to ane
> more,
> and doð hine in an ley uen; ther he scal liggen.
> And nimeð al his nexte cunt ha ȝe maȝen iuinden,
> and swengeð of tha hafden við breoden eouwer
> sweorden; […]'[571]

A second moment can be found in the efimeral 'peace-earthly chronotope.'[572] This

appears as a symbolico-allegorical chronotope with eschatological meaning. In its semantic

field an allegorical foreshadowing of the eternal, avalon-centered chronotopia is featured.

Three physical references appear linked to this specific earthly chronotope: The Round

Table, Camelot, and Glastonbury. According to the literary sources, there can be surmised

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[571] Ibid, 72-73.

[572] Ibid., 71.

274

that Arthur's death, an early case of a Christic intericonic impact, was covered by a veil of mystical mystery from the beginning. In the *Verses on the Grave of the Heroes*, an early poem contained in the *Black Book of Carmarthen*, Arthur's death and burial are deemed "a mystery," and his grave is called "an eternal wonder."[573] Concerning the aforementioned early Christ (Archetype)/Arthur (prototype) intericonic device, in many occasions Christ's death and burial were refered to as a "mystery," and his grave was linked to the wonder of resurrection and eternal life. As for the first case, *Τά Ἐγκώμια* (*Ta Engomia*, "Praises") chanted in the service of Matins in Holy Saturday, read: "Ἀπορεῖ καί φύσις, νοερά και πληθύς, ἡ ἀσώματος Χριστέ τό μυστήριον, τῆς ἀφράστου καί ἀρρήτου σου ταφῆς."[574] Regarding Christ's grave, it has been called "σαββατισμόν αἰώνιον,"[575] and his burial cave was scene of wondrous events, from the angelical presence to the resurrection as paramount supernatural episode: "Αἱ Μυροφόροι γυναῖκες […] εὗρον ἄγγελον, επί τόν λίθον καθήμενον…,"[576] and also: "Εἰ καί ἐν τάφῳ κατῆλθες Ἀθάνατε, ἀλλά τοῦ Ἅδου καθεῖλες τήν δύναμιν˙ καί ἀνέστης ὡς νικητής, Χριστέ ὁ Θεός…"[577]

Additionally, this clearly underscores the pivotal role played by Byzantine culture in the formation of the mytho-national self-consciousness of Britain in this early medieval stage. Notwithstanding being relatively ignored by scholarship, the role of Byzantium in

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[573] Inga Bryden, *Reinventing King Arthur…*, ibid., 10.

[574] *Ἁγία καί Μεγάλη Ἑβδομάς, μετά τῆς Κυριακῆς τοῦ Πάσχα*, ed. Εὐάγγελος Π. Λέκκος (Thessaloniki: ΣΑΪΤΗΣ), 748: "Neither the mental nature of men nor the bodiless angels O Christ, can grasp the mystery enfolding Thy burial, incomprehensible and ineffable." (Unless otherwise noted, translations from Greek into English are my own).

[575] Ibid., "Σήμερον συνέχει τάφος…," 773.

[576] Ibid., 846: "The myrrh-bearing women […] found an angel sitting upon the stone…".

[577] Ibid., 868: "Despite having descended to the grave, you destroyed Hades's power: and you rose as a triumpher, O Christ, our God."

the formation and development of English medieval literature and culture has been underscored by scholars like J. Shepard,[578] Geof Egan[579] and P. M. Richards,[580] among others. Additionally, the bilateral correspondence between earthly/mystical Arthur and the *chronotopia* associated with him can also be found in the *Life of Saint Gildas* by Caradoc of Llancarfan, which links King Arthur to Glanstonbury for the first time. Glastonbury is granted supernatural identity as a mystical chronotope in Arthurian literature and iconosystem.[581]

The third moment is the 'eternal peace heaven-chronotope,' i.e., the mystical Ile of Avalon proper: the definite eternal dwelling of ever-lasting peace and stability. Like Christ, King Arthur is expected to return to rescue his people and lead them from the duality of 'war-' and 'efimeral peace-earthly chronotopes' into the definite 'Heaven-chronotope.' Accordingly, as we move from a small-diameter circle to a larger-diameter one, we can see how the allegorical matter experiences a proportional transformation. In other words, while in the small-diameter circle, 'war' must be understood in a totally practical, linear sense, later this meaning acquires an allegorical dimension. From being (1) the factual exercise of battle and (2) the negation of physical battle via an earthly peace that still can be disturbed and superseded by its opposite, i.e. the factual battle, 'war' leads –by drawing on the

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[578] J. Shepard, "The English and Byzantium: A Study of their Role in the Byzantine Army in the Later 11th Century," in *Traditio* 29 (1973): 53-93.

[579] Geof Egan, "Byzantium in London? New Archeological Evidence for 11th Century Links Between England and Byzantine World," in Michael Grunbart (ed.), *Material Culture and Well-Being in Byzantium (400-1453): Procedings of the International Conference (Cambridge, 8-10 September 2001)* (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2007).

[580] P. M. Richards, *Byzantine Bronze Vessels in England, and Europe: The Origins of Anglo-Saxons Trade* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge, 1980).

[581] Inga Bryden, *Reinventing King Arthur…*, ibid., 10.

Christian allegorical theology of internal 'battle' of the soul against evil, developed by the

Fathers of the Desert during the first four centuries after Christ– into the spiritual state of

eternal bliss in a totally different chronotope: Avalon, the space of ontological stability,

eternal beauty, and perpetual peace. An essential moment of this eternally onto-preserving

peace must be its universalization, i.e. its growth across the whole *folc*, the *οικουμένη*

(*oikoumene*) according to the Greek notion of "inhabited world-house." As shown in

Figure 33, there is a cross-assimilation of these different semantic layers into Arthurian

literary corpus and into Arthurian iconosphere.

War in a literal sense. It is the primary way to reach an earthly peace as a precarious balance of contradictory elements.

First supersession of war in the notion of earthly peace. Peace still can be disturbed by evil.

Notion of mystical, transcendetal peace. It is placed in the Ile of Avalon as a mystical chronotope. Here, peace acquires an ontological meaning and therefore cannot be disturbed.
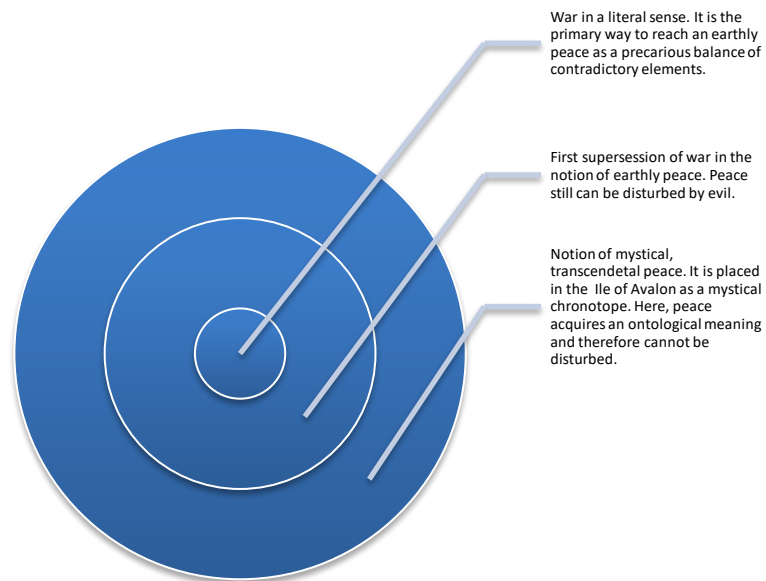
Figure 33: Chronotope Levels.

In Layamon's *Brut* there can be found a sequence showing the contradiction,

between the 'earthly-chronotope' and the 'transcendence-chronotope,' based on the

appositional device consisting of two *ideospheres* and two ideonarrative fields. In this

sense, we can speak of an 'appositional device' as a conceptual narrative strategy of bi-dimensional opposition between 'world' and 'Transcendence.' The ideosphere of the appositional device refers only to the conceptual axis supporting the narrative construction. Thus, the ideosphere is not itself narrative, in the sense that it does not belong either to the narrative structure or to the literary materiality of the work. The ideosphere is to be understood as a set of ideas that immediately determine the *sujet* and the narrative field. The ideosphere should not be identified either with the *fabula*, i.e. with what constitutes the narrative matter. In fact, this narrative matter (for instance, Arthur's birth, rise, kingdom, death and deification) necessarily responds to the determination of the ideosphere. In this case, the ideosphere reflects, in a first moment, the opposition of two interacting elements: Celtic and Christian cultures. This lies still on a cultural level and therefore it does not constitute the deeper layer of the ideosphere. Each of these cultural compounds is based upon different ontological horizons: within its mythological beyond-worldly horizons, the Celtic imaginary is deeply rooted in the "being in the world" as a social existence and holistically embedded in a general image of all-encompassing Wholeness.

Conquering the enemies and destroying the giant as a figuration of the destructive principle that threatens to extinguish the innerworldliness, means the affirmation of "being in the world." Moreover, even the interest in earthly peace and stability must be interpreted as a resemblance of that constitutes the only properly real in the Christian imaginary: The Kingdom of Heaven. Therefore, Christianity is essentially determined by the affirmation of "being for Transcendence" and this all-pervading principle regulates the formation of concrete ideospherical contents –Christian virtues, self-sacrifice, love, reconciliation,

capacity for forgiveness– and narrative fields. This is why, in a second moment, the ideosphere represents the underlying cultural self-interpretation as ultimately pertaining to a determined *ontotopia*: i.e. 'innerworldliness' or 'Transcendence.' One of the most important moments that reflects the chronotope shift is Arthur's entering the Ile of Avalon after being wounded by Mordred. The rather fragile kingdom of Arthur is ultimately challenged by Mordred's treason. As a necessary preparedness to become inducted to the divine chronotopia of Avalon, the primary structures of the hero-warrior's innerworldliness must be neutralized and abolished. We hear from Layamon that after the battle of Camlann:

> "mon I þan fihte non þer ne mihte ikenne nenne kempe,
> No wha dude wurse no wha bet, swa þat wide wes
> imenged;
> for ælc sloh adun riht, weore he swein weore he cniht.
> Þer wes Mordred of-sla3e all þa snelle,
> Arðures hered-men he3e and lowe,
> and þa Bruttes alle of Arðures borde,
> and alle his fosterlinges of feole kineriches,
> And Arður forwunded mid wal-spere brade;
> fifteen he hafde feondliche wunden.[582]

Every earthly place appears to be essentially transient and ephemeral: his Kingdom, loyalty, his own life. Yet, at the same time, this very condition paves the way for the hero-warrior's entering the spiritual realm, where his wounds will be cured and he will dwell upon until his final return: "And ich wulle uaren to Aualon, to uairest alre maiden […] And seoðe ich cumen wulle to mine kineriche, and wunien mid Brutten mid muchelere wunne."[583] Layamon keeps Geoffrey of Monmouth's version that Arthur was introduced into the Ile of Avalon while being still alive. Geoffrey says: "Sed et inclitus ille Arturus

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[582] *Brut* vss 1157-67, op. cit., 90.

[583] *Brut* vss 1188-9, op. cit., ibid.

letaliter vulneratus est, qui, illinc ad sananda vulnera sua in insulam Avallonis evectus, Constantino, cognato suo et 50 filio Cadoris Cornubiae, Britanniam regendam dimisit, anno ab Incarnatione Domini quingentesimo quadragesimo secundo."[584] If we recall the New Testament narrative, we will find in the Arthurian text the faithful reproduction of diegetic elements from both the ideosphere and the *sujet* of the gospel of Christ. We note the *destruction of the group* in different ways: most of Arthur's knights were killed in the battle of Canlam and he was left almost alone. In Geoffrey of Monmouth's account, this a tragic destiny equally shared by both Christ and Arthur: "Inito igitur certamine committitur dirissima pugna, in qua fere omnes duces qui ex utraque parte affuerant cum catervis suis mutuis vulneribus occubuerunt."[585] Similarly, when the disciples failed to accompany Jesus to his sacrifice, they rather dispersed after the apprehension of their Master in Gethsemane –with the only exception of John. Arthur was deadly wounded like Christ himself, with the only difference that in Layamon's version Arthur does not seem to have died before entering Avalon. This indefinition of 'world and Transcendence' borders was possible in the context of British Christianity with its Celtic mythical legacy –Pelagianism must be recalled here– which was based on a more holistic, animist/pantheistic worldview. In opposition to this, Greek-Roman Christian strict distinction between God-Creator and

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[584] Jacob Hammer, ed. *Geoffrey of Monmouth, Historia regum Britanniae, a variant version*, in *Medieval Academy Books*, No. 57 (1951), accessed 12/3/2017, http://www.medievalacademy.org/resource/resmgr/maa_books_online/hammer_0057.htm#hd_ma0057_head _032. For English version, see John Allen Gilles, ed. *The British History of Geoffrey of Monmouth: In Twelve Books* (London: William Stevens, Printer, Bell Yard, Temple Bard, 1842), 230: "And even the renowned King Arthur himself was mortally wounded; and being carried thence to the isle of Avallon to be cured of his wounds, he gave up the crown of Britain to his kinsman Constantine, the son of Cador, duke of Cornwall, in the five hundred and forty-second year of our Lord's incarnation."

[585] "The fight now grew more furious than ever, and proved fatal to almost all the commanders and their forces." Ibid.

creation, and therefore between world- and divine-cronotopes, makes practically impossible to ascent to Heaven other than through physical death.[586] Therefore, before his descending to Hades and his resurrection, Jesus had to experience physical death; an eschatological event that is strongly emphasized in both Gospel narrative and further Christian theology.

However, to acquire a more accurate picture of the vagueness around Arthur's death in relation to world- and Transcendence- cronotopes, Geoffrey's and Layamon's accounts must should be considered with the later variants rendered in the *Morte d'Artur* and the *Alliterative Morte Arthure*. In the latter, for instance, it reads: "He saide, 'In manus' with mayne on molde, whare he ligges, and thus passes his speryt, and spekes he no more."[587] In Malory's *Le Morte d'Arthur* we are told that Arthur is brought to the Ile of Avalon, and that many Britons believe that Arthur remains alive and therefore expect his second advent as a savior-king: "YET some men say in many parts of England that King Arthur is not dead, but had by the will of our Lord Jesu into another place; and men say that he shall come again, and he shall win the holy cross […] But many men say that there is written upon his tomb this verse: *Hic jacet Arthurus, Rex quondam, Rexque futurus*."[588] Although the author states that this is the opinion of others, and that he himself won't say

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[586] Exceptions to this principle are the Catholic dogma of the Assumption to Heaven of the Ever-Virgin Mary, whose body, according to this dogmatic formulation, did not know the physical death, and the possibility, pointed out by St Paul, of being transformed in the present life during the Second Advent of Christ: "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall rise again incorruptible: and we shall be changed." 1 Cor. 15, 52. (Douay-Rheims Version.)

[587] *Brut* vss 902-4, op. cit., 119.

[588] Sir Thomas Malory, *Le Morte d' Arthur*, ed. William Caxton, Chapter VII, Vol. 2, in *Project Guttenberg*, produced by Mike Lough, and David Widger, accessed 11/19/2014, http://www.gutenberg.org/files/1252/1252-h/1252-h.htm.

that much: "I will not say it shall be so,"[589] he provides us with an account of Arthur's actual death: "[…] ladies brought him to his burials; and such one was buried there, that the hermit bare witness that sometime was Bishop of Canterbury."[590] Arthur himself speaks of his inevitable death: "Ah Sir Launcelot, said King Arthur, this day have I sore missed thee: alas, that ever I was against thee, for now have I my death, whereof Sir Gawaine me warned in my dream."[591] Therefore, it seems that, according to *Le Morte d'Artur* and the *Alliterative Morte Arthure*, when Arthur entered the Ile of Avalon he was already dead from his wounds –noted, of course, Malory's supposed uncertainty–, while Geoffrey and Layamon clearly state that the King was still alive when transferred to Avalon.

Yet, a problem of textual authority seems to be insurmountable. According to Malory, he could not find any other authorized reference to these events: "Thus of Arthur I find never more written in books that be authorised, nor more of the very certainty of his death heard I never read, but thus was he led away in a ship wherein were three queens."[592] On the contrary, a more detailed account is given of the final breaking of the rest of the Knights of the Round Table's most virtuous fellowship. Consequently, a kind of ambiguity is left regarding whether, in the author's own opinion, King Arthur died or not. After noting that the King died and was buried in Glastonbury, Malory immediately warns on that no certainty exists as for whether *that* body was indeed Arthur's. Unfortunately, no

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[589] Ibid.

[590] Malory, Chapter VI, in op. cit.

[591] Ibid.

[592] Ibid.

DNA-test could help solve this puzzle and sort out with certainty the identity of the mortal remains. So, it reads: "More of the death of King Arthur could I never find, but that ladies brought him to his burials; and such one was buried there, that the hermit bare witness that sometime was Bishop of Canterbury, but yet the hermit knew not in certain that he was verily the body of King Arthur: for this tale Sir Bedivere, knight of the Table Round, made it to be written."[593]

3.10. Christ-Arthur Intericonicity

Nevertheless, a careful look can easily distinguish the three moments of Arthur's final days: being wounded, death, and metathesis into the mystical Ile of Avalon. This allows us to acquire –from ideothematic and narrative perspectives– a complete and verisimilar *fabula.* It is difficult to accept the idea that by Malory's times many people still believed that King Arthur never experienced physical death. Perhaps, in parallel with Christ, many still expected his return from 'Heaven.' This seems to be confirmed both in the mytheme of Avalon and in the aforementioned passage from the chronicle of the Monastery of Hale, in which King Arthur is located in Heaven to the right of Christ, ready to defeat the monster Leviathan. Malory's book, significantly, is called *Le Morte d' Arthur*, whereof the whole history finally took his name. Second, although not stated in the clearest way, Malory seems to personally believe that Arthur died, hence, he limits himself just to deliver a rather mysterious statement on Arthur's life: "I will not say it shall be so, but rather I will say: here in this world he changed his life."[594] What does Malory mean by the phase "in this world he (Arthur) changed his life"? Is it just a rhetorical device intended to

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[593] Ibid.

[594] Malory, Chapter VII, in op. cit.

claim Arthur as a pagan king morphed into the Christian hero-warrior, lord and savior of all Britons? Or is it rather, in the Christian iconosphere of which Malory himself is a part, a statement that King Arthur became transfigured from a mortal into an immortal king –i.e. from a historical into a mythical / mystical figure–, from earth to Avalon, without experiencing death? If we bear in mind St. Paul's prophecy that, on the Second Advent of the Lord,[595] it is possible to think that Malory implies here that there was at least the belief that with the deification of Arthur the Second *Parousia* (Advent) of Christ had already begun. Therefore, in Arthur's figure the actualization of the Christian eschatological era takes place. The idea of an earthly king of peace as threshold to the definitive Kingdom of Heaven is declared in the first few verses of Revelation's chapter twenty, where it is said that this coming Kingdom will last a thousand years. Verse six says that saints will reign with Christ that long. That is, humanity will reign with Him for a thousand years in a physical and visible earthly Kingdom. Afterwards, we would reign forever with Christ in the *Καινὴ Κτίσις* ("New Creation").[596] In chapter twenty the idea of an earthly, though already transformed Kingdom is explicitly mentioned.[597] Last, we might think that such an outstanding wonder (i.e. Arthur's dispensation from dying) –especially considering that even the *Θεάνθρωπος* (*Theantropos*, the Godman) died on the Cross– would have been particularly emphasized by different authors and compilers. On the contrary, Malory states

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[595] 1 Cor 15, 51. "Behold, I tell you a mystery. We shall all indeed rise again: but we shall not all be changed." [1 Cor 15:51. (Douay-Rheims Version.)] "He aqui, Vn myfterio hos digo, Todos ciertamente refufeitaremos: mas no todos feremos mudados." (1 Cor 15:51. RV.)

[596] *Αποκάλυψις Ιωάννου*, 5:10. GV. "And hast made us to our God a kingdom and priests, and we shall reign on the earth." *The Apocalypse of Saint John*, 5, 10. (Douay-Rheims Version.)

[597] *Αποκάλυψις Ιωάννου* 20:6. GV. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection. In these the second death hath no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ; and shall reign with him a thousand years." *The Apocalypse of Saint John*, 20:6. (Douay-Rheims Version.)

that no reliable account can be given concerning Arthur's death. There is an underlying

semantic structure in both Arthurian and New-Testament narratives concerning the final

stages of Christ's and Arthur's earthly lives (Table 2).

	CHRIST	ARTHUR
1. Dispersion of the earthly kingdom.	Through the betrayal of a close disciple and friend: Judas Iscariot.	Through the betrayal of a close disciple and friend: Mordred / Sir Lancelot.
2. Wounds / Death.	Through a spiritual battle against the abusive behavior of the established power: Jewish religious hierachy and Roman political structure.	Through a physical battle with metaphysical symbolism: The Battle of Camlann.
3. Full incorporation into the divine-chronotope.	The Resurrection from among the dead.	Metathesis into the mystical Isle of Avalon.
4. Eschatological return to the world-chronotope.	Final and definitive Advent is still expected as the ultimate eschatological event and the closure of human history as known.	Expected Advent: Celtic imaginary. Apotheosis and presence to the right of Christ: definitive English assimilation of King Arthur by Henry II of the House of Plantagenet.

Table 2: Fourfold Semantic Structure.

285

3.11. Sir Gawain and the Green Knight

Another text that deserves special attention for representing a paradigm of the contradiction between 'earthly-chronotope' and 'transcendence-chronotope' behind the whole Arthurian narrative, as well as an intent of resolution of this contradiction in the symbolic sphere, is *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. The Green Knight introduces himself as a man of peace, he does not seek war or confrontation. So, the 'war-chronotope,' which essentially belongs to the Anglo-Saxon and Celtic imaginaries, is surpassed and denied. Both the Green Knight and Sir Gawain display such an exaggerated, over-effected courtesy that we must think that there is an intentional indication oriented to contrasting the 'rudeness' of the Anglo-Saxon warrior with the courtly, quasi-mannerist affectation of the Round Table knights. So, the Green Knight is not the incarnation of a 'natural spirit' or some naturalistic figure. He represents a special moment in King Arthur's mythopoeia, at a symbolico-imaginary level of cultural consciousness. The earthly-peace moment is broken by the intromission of the Green Knight. According to Garbaty, the green color could represent either a spirit of nature or an evil being; in any case, it will stand for an other-worldly entity: "Green was the proverbial color of beings from another world—fairies, even devils." [598] The inner necessity of the Arthurian myth-making 'creates' a textual variant addressed towards the destruction of the earthly-peace chronotope. Arthur's and his knight's destiny was to be Avalon, the transcendence-chronotope, not earth itself. If in a first moment the earthly-peace chronotope opposes the war-chronotope, now according to the inner necessity of Arthur's mythopoeia, it is negated by the transcendence-chronotope. For this negation, the Gawain-Green Knight relationship as a complex narrative function

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[598] Garbaty, op. cit., footnote 150, 260.

works dramatically as an *actant*[599] that produces, both at the narrative level as well as in a cultural symbolic-imaginary, or metanarrative, order, the disarticulation of the impossible stability of the earthly kingdom in order to affirm the autotelic and vtranscendent nature of the mystical Kingdom. 'War' as a *per se* cultural destination is superseded in earthly-peace as an allegory of the essential destiny of Arthur. Thus, war is superseded in Camelot, and Camelot is superseded in Avalon. The *telos* of the Arthurian mythopoeia is the total unification of Celtic-Welsh and Christian imaginaries, in a way that it accomplishes a practical goal, i.e. the Christianization of Britain and, later, the nation-identitary construction of a kingdom united under the aegis of English kings. Thus, Arthur must see disrupted unexpectedly his earthly self-content court of peace to find himself thrown towards the necessary fulfillment of his ethno-cultural mission. The Green Knight's axe came to cut off not only a volunteer's head, but also the essentially fragile continuity of Camelot. This has a twofold symbolism: the blow received by the Green Knight to show his otherworldly nature, and the 'diegetic blow' received by the narrative discourse with the appearance of the challenging Green Knight. Only once identified with the mystic reign of Avalon can Camelot properly recover its still alienated substance: being King Arthur's definite Kingdom and dwelling place. The keen contrast between the pre-Green Knight and the post-Green Knight *sujet*, the quasi strident splitting apart of the so far very self-coherent narrative plot, the disturbance created by the irruption of this strange character, these diegetic marks show beyond any reasonable doubt that the rupture that takes place here, at

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[599] "Actants have a kind of phonemic rather than a phonetic role: they operate on the level of function, rather than content. That is, an actant may embody itself in a particular character (termed an acteur) or it may reside in the function of more than one character in respect of their common role in the story's underlying 'oppositional' structure. In short, the deep structure of the narrative generates and defines its actants at a level beyond that of the story's surface content." See Terence Hawkes, *Structuralism and Semiotics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 89.

the visible narrative level, is only the *bijective* resemblance or reflection of a deeper rupture taking place in the inner, quasi-autonomous syntactico-grammatical structure of the myth.

However, at this point a theoretical problem arises. A problem that poses an important objection to our view as a potential contradiction. How could the idea be sustained that Arthur's myth-making as a Celtic-Welsh/Christian synthesis essentially responds to the missionary activity of the Church and its interest in the universal Christianization of Britain, against the fact that in almost all monastic texts –and monks were particularly involved in this process– King Arthur is either just ignored or depicted in a negative light?

3.12. Arthur and Monastic Texts

Arthur is mostly mentioned in non-monastic texts, but there are some exceptions. One of them is the Monk from Malmesbury, who in c. 1325 wrote the *Vita Edwardi Secundi*, a manuscript that saw the light at the Benedictine Abbey of Malmesbury. The *Vita* reads: "Furthermore, on account of Merlin's prophecy the Welsh believe that they will recover England. This is a frequent cause of their rebellion, since they wish to fulfill the prophecy; however, since they are ignorant of the right time, they are often deceived, and labour in vain."[600] Another case worth mentioning is the *Polychonicon*. Written c. 1352, this work is attributed to Ranulf Higden, a Benedictine monk of the monastery of St. Werburgh in Chester, and it stands out for two main reasons. First, a monk talks about King Arthur in a context where omission is the norm. Second, it is one of the earliest works that openly criticizes Geoffrey of Monmouth's claims about Arthur in his *Historia Regum Brittaniae*. Monk Higden mentions the name 'Arthur' six times in a row:

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[600] *Vita Edwardi Secundi*. Ed. W.R. Childs (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 45.

Many may indeed wonder how the things that have been said about this Arthur, whom Geoffrey praises more than any other, could be true […] If he did indeed defeat the king of France and slay Lucius Hiberius, the Procurator of Rome in Italy, it is peculiar that the chronicles of Rome, France, or the Saxons never mention such a noble ruler in their accounts […] Geoffrey states that Arthur defeated Frollo, the king of France, yet there is no evidence of anyone of that name in France. He also claims that Arthur slew Lucius Hiberius, the Procurator of Rome during the reign of Emperor Leo […] Arthur too was not even born then […] Geoffrey tells us that he has wondered at the fact that neither Bede nor Gildas mention Arthur in their narratives […] But perhaps it is the custom of every nation to praise some of their blood-relations excessively, as the Greeks great Alexander, the Romans Octavian, Englishmen King Richard, Frenchmen Charles; and so the Britons praised Arthur.[601]

Yet these examples come to confirm, not to deny, the rule. In his *Historia Brettonum*, Nunnius refers to an Arthur who "fought against them [the Saxons] in those days with the kings of the Britons, but he himself was leader of battles (*dux bellorum*)."[602] Geoffrey of Monmouth develops the Arthurian saga by adding further details and variations, and in his *History of the Kings of Britain* he presents for the first time a 'historical' depiction of Arthur as a just and courageous king: "Arthur was a young man only fifteen years old; but he was of outstanding courage and generosity, and his inborn goodness gave him such grace that he was loved by almost all the people."[603] Also, Dominican monk William of Rennes recreates King Arthur's heroic ἀρετή (*aretē*, virtue) emphasizing not as much the purely historical elements as the epic grandeur of the British king in his verse version of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *HRB*.[604] The fact that it was

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[601] Joseph Rawson Lumby (ed), *Polychronicon Ranulphi Higden Monachi Cestrensis*, Vol. 5 (London: Longman, 1874), 332-336.

[602] Alan Lupack (trans.), *The History of the Britons*, Chapter 56, in *The Camelot Project*, accessed 04/25/16. http://d.lib.rochester.edu/camelot/text/nennius-history-of-the-britons. See also J. A. Giles (ed.), *Six Old English Chronicles* (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1848).

[603] Geoffrey of Monmouth, op. cit.,189.

[604] See William of Rennes, "Liber Septimus" (174-199), in Neil Wright (ed.), op. cit.

conceived by its author as an epic composition bestows a special character to the *Gesta*.

Furthermore, the fact of being a metrical paraphrase of Geoffrey's *Historia* does not mean

that the *Gesta* does not contribute to the further development of Arthur's saga. Certainly,

for the purpose of the present study, Britain and Brittany constitute a single cultural

chronotope. After Bishop Dubricius had "hardly finished" his speech, the whole army

"snatches its weapons and eagerly demands to enter the frey,"[605] indeed a decisive battle

against the Saxons. Then:

> Induit Arturus loricam principe dignam;
> Assumit galeam cuius draco fulgidus auro
> Irradiat conum, clipem quoque nomine Priduen
> Fert humeris, in quo Christi genetricis ymago
> Fulget; fert gladium, cuius nomen Caliburnus;
> Hastam dextra gerit Ron dictam, cladibus aptam.[606]

William's motive is clear. Among all British kings, as Ranulf Higden notes,[607]

Geoffrey lavishes special praises to Arthur. His chronicle took advantage of the messianic

profile granted to Arthur in Celtic-Christian imaginary. This profile has been embedded

now into epic molds by William of Rennes. Geoffrey –and later Wace and Layamon– had

morphed Arthur's figure from a local hero, even mythified as an undefeatable Christian

warrior, into a universal prototype of savior-king. In him, pagan warrior-centered culture

and Christian imaginary intertwine. William of Rennes follows Geoffrey and underscores

the universal aspect of Arthur by making converge in him the Christian Cross and the

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[605] Neil Wright (ed.), *Gesta Regum Britannie*, op. cit., 184.

[606] "Arthur dons a hauberk worthy of a prince: he puts on a helmet, on whose crest shines a dragon bright with gold; on his shoulders he bears a shield named Pridwen, on which the image of the Mother of Christ blazes forth; he wears a sword, whose name is Caliburnus; in his right hand he carries a spear called Ron, an apt instrument of slaughter. Neil Wright (ed.), ibid., 184-185.

[607] *Polychronicon*, op. cit., 232.

pagan Sword, but in a way that the Cross blesses the Sword, as long as the Sword is used

to defend the Cross. It is noteworthy in Dubricius, Archbishop of the City of the Legion's

speech that the Byzantine notion of *iustum bellum* is used to justify the inexorability of

slaying other human beings on the battlefield. The iconic reference used by bishop

Dubricius is Christ Himself, and the warrior's self-sacrifice in the just war was exalted as a

Christian virtue based on the experience of evangelic love: "Whoever suffers death for the

sake of his brothers offers himself as a living sacrifice to God and follows with firm

footsteps behind Christ Himself, who did not disdain to lay down His life for His

brothers."[608] Disclosing the intericonic reflection of St. George slaying the chthonian beast

for the sake of Christ, the military action becomes not just sanctified but also turned into an

eschatologico-soteriological praxis: "It follows that if any of you shall suffer death in this

war, that death shall be to him as a penance and an absolution for all his sins, given always

that he goes to meet it unflinchingly."[609] In his conversion of Arthur into a universal

savior-king, Geoffrey of Monmouth links his figure to the mystical character of Merlin,

who even prophesies about Arthur's future deeds in mysterious ways, underscoring the

King's Christic profile. Thus, it is in Geoffrey of Monmouth that King Arthur's

paradigmatoferesis takes place systematically for the first time, and this process is

replicated by William of Rennes is his *Gesta*:

> Arthur himself put on a leather jerkin worthy of so a great king. On his head he
> placed a golden helmet, with a crest carved in the shape of a dragon; and across his
> shoulders a circular shield called Pridwen, on which there was painted a likeness of
> the Blessed Mary, Mother of God, which forced him to be thinking perpetually of
> her. He girded on his peerless sword, called Caliburn, which was forged in the Isle

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[608] *Historia Regum Britannie*, op. cit., 193.

[609] Ibid.

of Avalon […]. He drew his sword Caliburn, called upon the name of the Blessed Virgin, and rushed forward at full speed into the thickest ranks of the enemy.[610]

3.13. Textual Steps Toward Politco-Cultural Intergration of Britain

Nunnius's *dux bellorum* undoubtedly shows the features of Byzantine military warriors, but he is still a local Christian Celtic hero.[611] On the contrary, Geoffrey of Monmouth introduces a more universal figure that leads a multi-ethnic army and who as hegemonic myth *can turn later into the common framework* for the realization of the nationalist project of a united Britain under one God and one English king. In this way, the paradigmatoferesis of Arthur morphs into a prototypopoeia: the local king is now a universal Messiah or, at least, a great king resembling the Old Testament's blessed king-prophets to the right of Christ. Additionally, the border as peripherial chronotope of transcultural integration to different scattered ethnolects is precisely replaced by the logic result of the successful integration during more than two centuries: with the center, geopolitically indicated in a city, i.e. London. Geoffrey of Mounmouth and Layamon of Glocester are the writers that, for the first time, laid the ideological foundations for the future of an politico-culturally integrated Britain. William of Rennes, the Breton writer, comes to legitimize this effort insofar as he links King Arthur to the Classic tradition of epic heroes that shapes Western cultural self-consciousness. These authors, three Catholic clerics, paved the way towards the literary, ideolectal, and socio-cultural integration of what several centuries later will become the United Kingdom of Great Britain following

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[610] Ibid., 193-194.

[611] See note 349.

the Treaty of Union in 1706 which was ratified by the Acts of Union in 1707, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland with the Acts of Union in 1801.[612]

The expression "for the future" has a special weight here and especially when referred to Geoffrey of Monmouth. Some clarifications are then necessary. Following the most recent archeological findings, we can imagine that Arthur's and Mordred's armies were necessarily "multi-cultural" by dint of unavoidable war alliances and migratory processes. Geoffrey of Monmouth himself tells us that, "A treaty was agreed to and Cheldric pledged his obedience to the traitor Mordred as if to the King. Mordred had brought the Scots, Picts and Irish into his alliance…."[613] We also are told that, after the carnage, the battlefield was filled with corpses of different ethnical origins:

> On Mordred's side there fell Cheldric, Elaf, Egbricht and Brunning, all of them Saxons; the Irishmen Gillapatric, Gillasel and Gillarvus; and the Scots and Picts, with nearly everyone in command of them. On Arthur's side there died Odbrict, King of Norway; Aschil, King of Denmark; Cador Limenich; and Cassivelaunus, with many thousands of the various peoples he had brought with him.[614]

Yet this cannot mean that Geoffrey of Monmouth and William of Rennes would accept this reality *as a fact* in the same way in which we regard it today. The reality they perceived completely responded to the mental iconosystems that shaped their *imago mundi*. Geoffrey and William do not assess the politico-cultural effects of this peculiar diversity. Paradoxically, they do the opposite though only up to a certain extent. The

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[612] "Paved the way" is to be understood here in the sense of opening the horizon in ideolectal imaginary and self-consciousness for a transcultural, integrative construction of cultural identity and the design of a collective historical memory that learns to understand the complex diversity of these cultural processes as a common and self-coherent albeit problematic History. The role played by Romanticism –in its musical, visual, and literary expressions– in this identitary engineering cannot be underestimated at all.

[613] *Historia*, op. cit., 233.

[614] Ibid., 236.

cultural framework of Geoffrey's *Historia* is generally set up according to the duality of the "Welsh fighting the Welsh and the English fighting the English" pattern, in Halsall's expression.[615] This is clear in his accounts of battles' motifs and armies' arragements on the battlefield as well. The enemies are undoubtedly the Anglo-Saxons. They are described in the strongest negative terms: "Necessity urged them on, for as soon as the Saxons heard of the death of King Uther, they invited their own countrymen over from Germany, appointed Colgrin as their leader and began to do their utmost to exterminate the Britons. They had already over-run all that section of the island which stretches from the River Humber to the sea named Caithness."[616] William of Rennes operates exactly within the same paradigm. In a rhetorical speech addressed to Mordered by the author, Saxons are depicted as, "saxis, quibus hii sunt asperiores / Austerisque magis," in constrast to Arthur, who "laborat / Armaque iusta gerit pro libertate tuorum," Saxons "nituntur et uotis omnibus optant / Ut subeas seruile iugum."[617] As related to Hengist, the author argues that Saxons are his "proles prodiciosa" and they "Te … / Prodere molitur"[618] Towards the ending of his account, Geoffrey leaves no room for doubts about his understanding of the English nature: "At genus Anglorum, stirps impia, nacio fallax, / Gens in marte fugax, in agendis fraudibus audax, / Turba bibax, soboles mendax, populusque bilinguis…"[619] This

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[615] See note 188.

[616] Ibid., 189.

[617] *Gesta…*, op. cit., 243.

[618] "[…] stones, than which they are more rough and more unforgiving […] he toils at waging a just war for the freedom of your citizens […] They strive and wish with all their hearts to submit you to the yoke of slavery […] His treacherous descendents […] are plotting to betray you." *Gesta…*, ibid.

[619] "Yet the English population are a wicked race, a deceitful nation, a people cowardly in war but audacious in engineering treachery, a drunken crew, a lying breed, a mendacious line." *Gesta…*, ibid., 282-83.

means that Geoffrey's and William's mythopoetic universalization of Arthur must be understood in this biopolar model from a preeminently British (i.e., Celtic) perspective. Yet they yearn for a Christian Britain. Therefore, the conversion of Saxons and English to Christ would be for Geoffrey and William of Rennes, as it will be for Wace and Layamon, the perfect solution. We can feel William's missionary enthusiasm along his account of Pope Gregory's sending Augustine "meritis et nomine clarum / […] ut Anglos / Conuertat doceatque fidem preceptaque Christi."[620] Now Arthur, the universal Emperor that conquered the whole Europe, according to Geoffrey, plays his essential role also in Geoffrey's, William's, and Layamon's imaginations. Just as the English, if converted, would find in Christ their absolute spiritual principle in the transcendental sense, similarly they would find in King Arthur the absolute earthly principle: Christ the Head of the Church –the Pope is, ultimately, the vicar of Christ–, and King Arthur the head of the Empire. Thus, Christ as transcendental Archetype and King Arthur as immanent prototype will form a cross-complementing unity. This 'Christ/Arthur' intericonic device constitutes the plastic expression of the way in which these Christian clerics symbolically envisage the plenitude of Britain: a kingdom of peace and justice under Christ as transcendental Principle and King Arthur as Christified emperor. The image of this Kingdom of Peace will be developed later by Layamon in the "earthly-chronotope" of Camelot. While Geoffrey of Monmouth is certainly sparing with words when it comes to describe Avalon,[621] the 'earthly-chronotope' of Camelot is pre-figured already in William of

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[620] "Hither Pope Gregory of Rome sends Augustine, of noted achievements and reputation, to convert the English and teach them the religion and precepts of Christ." Ibid., 250-251.

[621] He just says that Arthur's sword Caliburn was "forged in the Isle of Avalon" (see note 456), and that, after the battle of Camlann, "Arthur himself, our renowned King, was mortally wounded and was carried off to the Isle of Avalon, so that his wounds might be attended to." (See *Historia*, op. cit., 236.)

Rennes's description of the Kingdom of Avalon, where "Pax et Concordia perpes: / Uer tepet eternum; nec flos nec lilia desunt / Nec rosa nec uiole; […] / Habitant sine labe pudoris / Semper ibi iuuenis cum uirgine. Nulla senectus, / Nullaque uis morbi, nullus dolor: omnia plena / Leticie."[622] In a theological mind like Geoffrey's, this is clearly the image of the Earthly Paradise before Adam's Fall. So, Avalon is in William of Rennes at the same time *a transcendental telos and a mystical encounter* with the condition of the world before Adam's Fall through the total restoration of Creation to its pristine state of Grace. This could indicate the presence in the Breton writer of the theological doctrine of the universal ἀποκατάστασις (*apokatastasis*) or restoration of all things in Christ, a doctrine in vogue in the Byzantine empire since 4th century with the theology of Cappadocian Fathers. In any case, the equivalence between the dualities of 'spiritual/physical,' 'Heaven/world,' and 'historical time/eschatological temporality' reached by William through his 'Christ-Arthur'/'Paradise-Avalon' intericonic parallels cannot be denied (Figure 34).

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[622] "There is unending peace and harmony; it is eternally warm spring, and flowers, lilies, roses, and violets are not lacking […] There youths ever live with maidens without the loss of their chastity. There is no old age, illness has no power, there is no sorrow. All is full of joy." Ibid., 246-247.
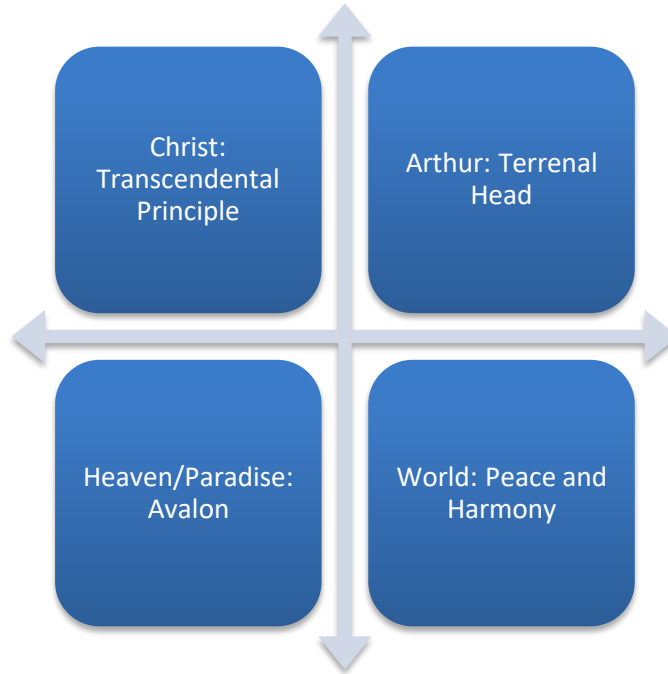
Figure 34: Equivalence Between Dualities.

In the romance *Culhwch and Olwen*, believed to be the earliest Arthurian romance, Arthur is said to have been asked for help by Culhwch. They go through a series of fantastic quests to win the hand of Culhwc's lady, Olwen. The *Annales Cambriae* makes two brief mentions of Arthur, thus recognizing him as an important king part of a royal history that begins in "days as dark as night."[623] The mentions are: "Year 516: The Battle of Badon, in which *Arthur* carried the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ for three days and three nights on his shoulders and the Britons were the victors,"[624] and "Year 537: The battle of Camlann, in which *Arthur* and Medraut fell: and there was plague in Britain and Ireland."[625] In Layamon's *Brut* Arthur appears as a triumphant noble King, a paradigm of a

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[623] *The Annales Cambriae*, in *The Camelot Project*, accessed 10/28/14, http://www.heroofcamelot.com/historic-documents/annales-cambriae.

[624] Ibid.

[625] Ibid.

Christian monarch whose reign becomes target of heathens' envy and a symbolic foreshadowing of the Kingdom of God, i.e. space of perpetual peace and bliss, human brotherhood and equality, of love-mediated justice and care: "Her mon mai arede of Arðure Þan king, hu he twelf ʒere seoðen wuneden here, inne griðe and inne friðe, in alle uæʒernesse."[626]

Each of the aforementioned works has, beyond language and subject matter, something in common: they are not monastic literary productions. In contrast to the exalted Arthur's figure we can find in this literary corpus of 'historical' and romance content, there is an important number of works of monastic origin in which the British king has either fallen into oblivion or is openly mistreated and censured. Certainly, several early works ignore Arthur's figure: "He is, for example, omitted from the early to mid-tenth-century British polemic *Armes Prydeein* (Williams 1972b), which offers two other early British champions famed in poetry and legend as exemplars of military leadership… Nor was Arthur included in many of the royal genealogies as those developed during the ninth and tenth centuries…"[627] In several later hagiographical texts Arthur is present and even has an important martial role. For example, in the *Life of St. Cadog*, Arthur is clearly portraited like a king for the first time in the literary record –though still closer to his first stage of mythopoeia, i.e. that of being a paradigm of folk-hero-warrior– and his protection is highly valued, but this Arthur is a lascivious character "reined in from satisfying his lust by the protests of his followers."[628] Additionally, the mention of Arthur along with "two other

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[626] *Brut*, vv. 568-570, in Garbaty, op. cit., 70.

[627] Higham, op. cit., 6.

[628] Ibid., 7.

early British champions famed in poetry and legend"[629] reinforces the fact that, in his first mythopoetic stages, Arthur was a paradigm of folk-hero with an ethnic profile immediately linked to the Celtic/Roman-Welsh culture. Indeed, Padel refers to Arthur's "mythological and topographical connections"[630] to explain his omission from several early British texts, among them *De excidio et conquestu Britanniae* (*Concerning the Ruin of Britain*), written by Gildas in AD 549. Given the time setting of the work and Gildas' own life time, one can expect a figure like Arthur to be mentioned and possibly more than once. However, this mention never occurs, and Gildas is unlikely to be referring to Arthur by a different name. Gildas brings out a man called Ambrosius, a king we can presume was a Christian himself "because he won his battles with God's help."[631] Depending on the translation, this figure can be interpreted to be an ancestor or "grandfather" of Gildas' contemporary kings (where Arthur can be included), or just the "ancestor" of these monarchs, a fact that creates fuzziness and confusion in the dating of Ambrosius's reign:

> Another issue which has caused some confusion is the dating of Ambrosius' reign. Gildas tells us His descendants in our day have become greatly inferior to their grandfather's excellence. The word which is translated as "grandfather" can also mean "ancestor." Historians are unsure which meaning Gildas intended. If the "grandfather" translation is the correct one, then it places Ambrosius at about a generation before the Battle of Badon.[632]

> Naturally, in either case he would not be by sure Arthur himself. Therefore, the

only remaining element by which he could be legitimately identified with Arthur is the

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[629] See note 580.

[630] Quoted by Higham, op. cit., 7.

[631] *De Excidio et Conquestu Britanniae* (*Concerning the Ruin of Britain*), accessed 10/28/14, http://www.heroofcamelot.com/history/gildas-and-bede.

[632] Ibid.

textual fact that Gildas mentions the Battle of Badon, universally attributed to Arthur, immediately after mentioning Ambrosius. This Ambrosius is the only fifth-century figure mentioned by Gildas. The narrative overlap between this figure and the Battle of Badon make some historians believe Ambrosius was Arthur. It is certainly odd that Gildas omits a figure who was so crucial to the Celtic-Welsh identity at that time.

But this, apparently, cannot be taken as proof for anything, since Medieval criteria of historic verisimilitude had nothing to do with ours today. Nevertheless, an outstanding scholar such as Garbaty seems to accept the possibility that Arthur may have been the Aurelius Ambrosius mentioned that Gildas mentions:

> Arthur, according to Nennius a *dux bellorum*, probably a Romanized Celt who successfully stood off the Saxon invaders, may have been the Aurelius Ambrosius mentioned by Gildas as the victor at the battle of Mount Badon in 496. In Geoffrey of Monmouth and other sources Aurelius Ambrosius is often confused with Arthur, perhaps because the two were identical.[633]

Oddly, Garbaty here states that Aurelius Ambrosius is confused with Arthur by, among others, Geoffrey of Monmouth. But in the footnote 291 of his *Medieval English Literature*, he recognizes that according to Geoffrey of Monmouth, Constantine II was a brother of Aldroenus, king of Britanny, father of Constans, Aurelius Ambrosius, and Uther Pendragon.[634] This means that Geoffrey of Monmouth affirms that Aurelius Ambrosius is simultaneously Arthur's uncle and Arthur himself. Yet, nowhere does Garbaty point out this contradiction. He also leaves unmentioned the fact that in Geoffrey of Monmouth, Aurelius Ambrosius takes ill, and a surviving son of Vortigern bribes his doctor to give him poison instead of medicine and kills him. Following his death, Uther Pendragon

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[633] Garbaty, op. cit., footnote 26, 256.

[634] Ibid., footnote 291, 63.

becomes king. He deals with fighting off the remaining Saxons, and disguised like Gorlois, duke of Cornwall, by Merlin's "eche-crafte," possesses Gorlois's wife Ygaerna, and fathers Arthur who, after Pendragon being poisoned and killed by the Saxons, is crowned king. Therefore, an identification of Aurelius Ambrosius with Arthur by Geoffrey appears to be a very bizarre conundrum. Garbaty just points out in the referred footnote 291 that "oddly, the chronicles Gildas (*De Excidio et Conquestu Brittanniae*, c. 540) and Bede name a Roman, or Romanized Celtic leader, Ambrosius Aurelianus, as the victor at Mount Badon over the Saxons."[635] It is worth noting that Bede's[636] *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, despite having been written around 731 A.D., following likely his predecessor's *Excidio*, does not make any mention at all of Arthur while it focuses on king Votingern and his betrayal of the Britons. Bede also mentions Constantine, referred by Geoffrey as Aldroenus' brother and the father of Constans the Monk, Aurelius Ambrosius, and Uder Pendragon, Arthur's father. But Arthur is not only the great absentee in Gildas's and Bede's works; he is also negatively depicted in later creations. In the twelfth-century *Life of Gildas*, the British king is mentioned only to make the point that he had killed Gildas's elder brother.

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[635] Idem.

[636] "The Venerable Bede was a monk, later made into a saint, who lived in the Northumbrian monastery of Saint Peter at Monkwearmouth in the eighth century. The monastery had access to a large library, which included works from a variety authors, and he apparently used this to draw on when composing his work. Historians consider him relatively reliable when compared with other sources from his time. Sometime about 731, he composed his Ecclesiastical History of the English People." See "Gildas and Bede," *The Hero of Camelot*, accessed 10/28/2014, http://www.heroofcamelot.com/history/gildas-and-bede,

3.14. Arthur's Mythopoeia, Christianization, and Monastic Silence

In the light of this textual evidence, a question remains unanswered: How could the hypothesis be sustained that Arthur's mythopoeia as a Celtic/British-Christian synthesis essentially is a function of the missionary activity of the Church and its interest in the universal Christianization of Britain, against the fact that in almost all monastic texts King Arthur is either omitted or appears negatively depicted? Indeed, there can exist several answers to this question. We discuss here what there seem to be the most meaningful ones:

1. Arthur, already a folk-hero and worshipped king, could have been so obvious a reference for the British people that there was no need to mention him. He was just taken for granted.

This is highly improbable. On the contrary, taking a quick look on history, in such cases the most reasonable would have been to praise him by highlighting his royalty, courage and exploits in favor of the Britons, exactly like Geoffrey of Monmouth, Wace, Layamon, the Pearl author, Sir Malory, etc., do.

2. In the *Life of Gildas*, Arthur is said to have killed Gildas's elder brother. Because of this action, moved either by hatred or by prudence, or both, Gildas could have decided to avoid mentioning Arthur. For this reason, he would also have omitted mention of other British kings, the only exception being Vortingern, not to give the impression of taking revenge against the most popular and dearest king.

Although this answer seems to be more verisimilar, one could object that it would have been somehow awkward and extravagant fro Gildas to throw into oblivion all the kings of Britain just to honor his willingness to completely ignore Arthur. Furthermore, Gildas was

deemed to be a holy man even during his earthly life. Therefore, his inability to forgive would contrast strikingly with his sanctity.

3. Bede does not mention Arthur out of solidarity with his fellow clergyman, monk Gildas, or in general with the monastic tradition that, perhaps more biased against his Celtic origin, used to depict Arthur –as well as and Merlin– in a negative light.

It is easy to understand that this argument is sustainable only insofar as the previous one is also. Besides, it is worth noting that, should this be the case, then an extreme tension between King Arthur and the monasticism as ecclesiastical institution should have been taking place for much of the sixth century and surely would have been amply documented in at least some of the referred sources.

4. A middle position can be found in Geoffrey Ashe's argument that Arthur could have gotten into some sort of conflict with the Church for having impounded some monastic properties in order to fund his military campaigns.

This argument seems to be more verisimilar but should be moderated. Arthur's 'run-in' might have been not with the 'Church' in general –that would have undermined in a great extent his popularity– but with some local monasteries. One of these could have been directly related to Gildas and Bede, so that the decision to omit mention of the king would have been taken based on prudence and common sense, more than of hatred and will to revenge. Indeed, Charles Martell had a similar experience in Gaul when he confiscated some monastic properties to fundraise his fighting against the Saracens.

5. The afore-mentioned reason should be understood alongside a further consideration. Regularly, monasticism features the most traditionalist and

conservative sector of the Church. Therefore, monks' suspicion towards

heathendom in general, and particularly towards the pagan Celtic culture, could

have determined that Arthur and his inner circle were unworthy of mention in

the texts written by monks themselves.

6. That Arthur might have a Roman origin does not change the basic fact that he
   was a British (i.e. Welsh) pagan king, and that is enough to become banned and
   excluded.

This could also explain why other more open-minded secular clergymen, such as

Geoffrey of Monmouth[637] Wace, and Layamon, used Arthur, his knights, and his kingdom

to fashion their Christian narrative. Moreover, a stand of certain criticism and even

skepticism from some monastic communities was not limited only to the Arthurian case.

On January 30, 1826, Historian Washington Irving received a letter from Alexander Hill

Everest, an American minister to Spain. Everest urged Irving to join him in Madrid

because several manuscripts dealing with the Spanish conquest of the Americas had

recently been made public. While in Madrid, Irving was invited to stay at the palace of the

Duke of Gor, who granted him uncensored access to his library containing many medieval

manuscripts and sources. The literary fruit of this effort was, among many, Everest's

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[637] According to Charles W. Dunn, Geoffrey of Monmouth may have served for a while in a Benedictine priory in Monmouth, but he was in no way a typical monk, and it can even be said that most of his adult life appears to have been spent outside Wales. See Charles W. Dunn, *Bibliographical Note to History of the Kings of Britain* (New York: E.P Dutton & Co., 1958). Geoffrey of Monmouth was probably a secular canon at St. George's college. In fact, all the charters signed by Geoffrey are signed as well by the Archdeacon of Oxford named Walter, also a canon at that church. Another frequent co-signatory is Ralph of Monmouth, a canon of Lincoln. See J. C. Crick, "Monmouth, Geoffrey of (d. 1154/5)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004), accessed 7/7/2009. As a further indication of his clerical canonicity, Geoffrey was consecrated as Bishop of St Asaph on 21 February 1152 by Archbishop Theobald at Lambeth. He had been ordained a priest at Westminster 10 days before. Nonetheless, "There is no evidence that he ever visited his see, and indeed the wars of Owain Gwynedd make this most unlikely." See "Introduction," in *The History of the Kings of Britain*, trans. Lewis Thorpe, (London: Penguin Books, 1966), 12.

Chronicle of the Conquest of Granada, a work published in 1829, in which Irving "claims to be translating one Fray Antonio Agapidas' description of an English contingent led by a second Woodville brother […]."[638] Later, it emerged that 'Fray Antonio Agapidas' was a fictional character. Yet, what matters here is the reason given by Washington Irving to explain his invention: "Irving explained twenty years later that: 'Agapida was intended as a personification of the monkish zealots, who hovered about the sovereigns in their campaigns, marring the chivalry of the camp by the bigotry of the cloister, and chronicling in rapturous strains every act of intolerance towards the Moors."[639] Certainly, there are reasons that explain why King Arthur is unworthy of mention in the monastic literature both of his time and later. At this point, it is possible to summarize King Arthur's iconosphere (Figure 35).

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[638] Jennifer Goodman Wollock, "Medieval England and Iberia," in Maria Bullon-Fernandez (ed.), *England and Iberia in the Middle Ages, 12th – 15th Century. Cultural, literary, and Political Exchanges* (NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 14.

[639] Ibid.
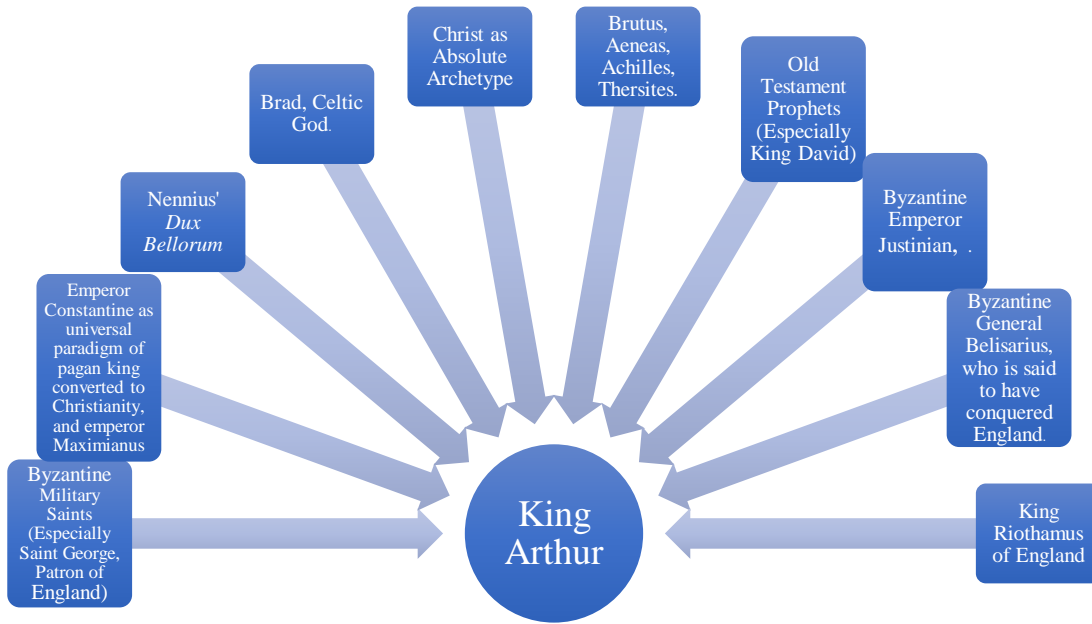
Figure 35: King Arthur's Iconosphere.

3.15. King Arthur and Classical Greek-Roman Intericonicity

Between 20 BC and 23 AD, Strabon, a Roman citizen of Greek descent, wrote an encyclopedic work titled *Geographica*. This work, consisting of seventeen books written in Greek, was a compendium of geographical knowledge. Strabon took his main reference about Byzantium and his founder from Herodotus of Halicarnasus' *Histories*. Later, Strabo's mythical account is used by Tacitus, who makes mentions of the Delphian oracle, the City of the Blind, and the Chalkedonians in his *Annales*. This situates us in front of the problem of the founding and origin of Byzantium, Britain, and Spain as sacred chronotopes linked to a hagiographic teleology with an ecumenical, i.e. universal reach and meaning, and of the cross-cultural intertextuality –with its diachronic interactions and synchronic overlaps– connected with the narrative of the founding event. Common elements to these

early accounts[640] of the founding of holy cities/lands are, in procedural terms, the original divine intervention via a prophecy or magical oracle[641] and the presence of mythical founder(s) –Byzas, the Goths, Brutus–, and in terms of contents are the fertility of the land, the variety of crops, the fair wheather, the profusion of fluvial sources, and the abundance of fishes that in some cases can be caught with bare hands. These elements are assessed as a divine benediction over the land either from a pagan or a Christian perpective.

A comparative apposition of the main textual references containing accounts of the original virtues of these holy lands and their mythical founders and founding process seems to indicate the possibility of a transborder impact –and not just a metapsychological/arquetypal coincidence– of early Roman-Greek materials upon later textualities and iconotypes. Examples of this are Geoffrey of Monmouth's narrative which draws on the Classical figures of Aeneas and Brutus and their Troyan ancestry to establish a noble origin for Britain, and Isidorus Hispalensis' nation-identity construction and collective memory design by making the Goths direct descendants of Israel, the Chosen People of God, and declaring Hispania the New Jerusalem and the Third Rome (Table 3).

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[640] For later accounts –from the 9th century onwards– on the founding of Byzantium, see Aubrey Diller, "Excerpts from Strabo and Stephanus in Byzantine Chronicles," *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association*, Vol. 81 (1950), 241-253, accessed Nov. 30, 2017, Stable URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/283582.

[641] Irad Malkin and Nino Shmueli concedes historical existence to the words attributed to the Persian general Megabazos, who, as "he observed [Byzantium's] marvelous position and, comparing it with that of Chalkedon on the Asian side of the narrow entrance to the Bosporus, remarked that its founders must have been blind not to have settled Byzantium first." See Irad Malkin and Nino Shmeli, "The 'City of the Blind' and the Founding of Byzantium," *Mediterranean Historical Review*, Vol. 3, 1 (1988): 21-36, 21, accessed Nov. 30, 2017, https://doi.org/10.1080/09518968808569535. These authors point to the posterior myth-making of this supposedly historical account and its embedding into the Greek divine-mythical imaginary: "These words of the Persian general became famous in antiquity, and we find them reverberating in a ficticious Delphic oracle given to the Megarians and ordering them to find the colony (Byzantium) 'opposite the City of the Blind.'" Irad Malkin and Nino Shmeli, ibid. The remark about the blindness of the founders of Chalkedon is attributed to Megabazos by Herodotus of Halicarnasus (see Herodotus, *Histories*, 4.1444), and its historical authenticity may be as dubious and spurious as the Delphi narrative.

Strabon, *Geographika*, 7,6:1-2.	Tacitus, *Ann*. XII, 63	Isidorus Hispalensis, *Historia de regibus Gothorum, Vandalorum at Suevorum*, Prol. 2	Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Historia regum Brittaniae*, Liber Primus, 2.
"Ἀπὸ μὲν οὖν τῆς ἄκρας τῆς τὸ πενταστάδιον ποιούσης ἐπὶ τὸν ὑπὸ τῆι Συκῆι καλούμενον λιμένα στάδιοι πέντε καὶ τριάκοντα, ἐντεῦθεν δ᾽ ἐπὶ τὸ Κέρας τὸ Βυζαντίων πέντε. Ἔστι δὲ τὸ Κέρας προσεχής, τῶι Βυζαντίων τείχει, κόλπος ἀνέχων ὡς πρὸς δύσιν ἐπὶ σταδίους ἑξήκοντα, ἐοικὼς ἐλάφου κέρατι· εἰς γὰρ πλείστους σχίζεται κόλπους, ὡς ἂν κλάδους τινάς, εἰς οὓς ἐμπίπτουσα ἡ πηλαμὺς ἁλίσκεται ῥαιδίως διά τε τὸ πλῆθος αὐτῆς καὶ τὴν βίαν τοῦ συνελαύνοντος ῥοῦ […]"	"Namque artissimo inter Europam Asiamque divortio Byzantium in extrema Europa posuere Graeci, quibus Pythium Apollinem consulentibus, ubi conderent urbem, redditum oraculum est, quaererent sedem caecorum terris adversam. ea ambage Chalcedonii monstrabantur, quod priores illuc advecti, praevisa locorum utilitate, peiora legissent. quippe Byzantium fertili solo, fecundo mari, quia vis piscium immensa Pontum erumpens et obliquis subter undas saxis exterrita […]"	"Merito te omnium ubertate gignentium indulgentior natura ditavit. Tu baccis opima, vis proflua, messibus laeta, segete vestiris, oleis inumbraris, vite praetexeris. Tu florulenta campis, montibus frondua, piscosa littoribus. Tu sub mundi plaga gratissima sita, nec aestivo solis ardore torreris, nec glaciali rigore tabescis, sed temperata coeli zona praecincta, zephyris felicibus enutriris. Quidquid enim arva fecundum, quidquid metalla pretiosum, quidquid animantia pulchrum et utile ferunt parturis. Nec […]"	"Britannia, insularum optima, quodam Albion nuncupata est, in occidentali Oceano inter Galliam et Hiberniam sita, octingenta milia passuum in longum, ducenta vero in latum continens. Terra optima frugibus et arboribus et alendis apta pecoribus ac iumentis; vineas etiam in quibusdam locis germinans; sed et avium ferax terra, fluviis quoque multum piscosis ac fontibus aqua praeclara copiosis. […]"

Table 3: Parallel Texts on the Foundation of Byzantium.

A first step towards King Arthur's myth-making was his singularization. The affirmation of Arthur as an outstanding figure within an autonomous iconosystem primarily meant the need to distinguish him from his Classical Greek-Roman contestants. Geoffrey of Monmouth is forthright at that. In the Book VII of his *Historia*..., he invokes muse Calliope and "cetu comitante sororum" to come and "pectusque arentis inane / Sacro fonte

riga," because the time has come to tell the story of King Arthur's deeds and glory, and the poet knows that, "neque enim describere gesta / Arturi metrice ne detractare uidere presume sine te."[642] Immediately, he states how the great Classic poets, Homer, Ovid, Vergil, and Cicero "Nil hic prodesset…" without the muse's blessing.[643] Such as the bards that sang the glory of Achille, Thersite, Caesar, and Aeneid, also Geoffrey needed the especial grace of the muse to carry out his central task: to sing the glory of Arthur. Geoffrey extols King Arthur over an illustrious company of ancient heroes: "Quantis fortis Achilles / Tersitem excedit, tantis prefertur Achilli / Laudibus Arturus. Cuius preconia uatis / Meonii condigna modis Eneidos auctor / Hystorie ueteris Anchise preposuisset, / Lucanusque grauis tacuisset Cesaris actus, / Et ueteres Thebe caruissent perpete fama, Si precessissent Arturi gesta poetas."[644] Arthur exceeds his predecessors in the whole catalog of virtues; among them, of course, his Christian faith is emphasized. On Pendragon's death, the British council assembled and judged Arthur worthy of his father's crown: "Ut quem commendat," says Geoffrey, "mentis Constantia, Christi / Gratia, larga manus, uirtus inuicta, diserta / Lingua, décor uultus, discretio, dextera fortis."[645] Arthur's *being-for-self* is

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[642] "Bright Calliope, come […] in the company of your band of sisters and moisten my hollow, thirsty breast from your sacred spring; for I do not presume to describe Arthur's deeds in verse without you." See *History…*, op. cit., 174-75.

[643] "…himself would fail in this task…" *History…*, ibid.

[644] "… since Arthur's glory exceeds that of Achilles by as much as Achilles's glory outstrips that of Thersites. The author of the Aeneid would have preferred Arthur's praises, which are worthy of the poetry of the Maeonian bard, to the story of old Anchises, weighty Lucan would have passed over Caesar's doings, and ancient Thebes would have lacked eternal fame, if only Arthur's deeds had preceded these poets." *History…*, ibid., 174-75.

[645] "He is recommended by his steady mind, grace of Christ, generous hand, and strong right hand.," *History…*, ibid., 176-177.

affirmed through his self-consciousness as descendant and heir of the Christian Roman emperors Constantine and Maximian."[646]

While far away from his see –he was to Italy claiming his rights to the Roman throne–, Arthur is also betrayed by Mordred. Although the events have different endings, the parallel between Constantine/Arthur and Maximian/Mordred is strikingly apparent. Both Maximian and Mordred are traitors who face the punishment of death as a result of their betrayal. Although it is not clear that Geoffrey intended it deliberately, this is an intericonic overlap worth noting. In any case, Arthur's prototypopoeia demands his singularization as an epic figure. Only after an epic distance was created between King Arthur and both his Classical and Celtic pagan models –such as the Celtic god Brad–, the total insertion of the mytheme in the different iconosphere of the Judeo-Christian imaginary became achievable.

3.16. Old Testament Intertextuality and Intericonicity

The prophecies of Merlin about King Arthur refer to multiple supernatural events, one of them is the ethno-soteriological birth of the hero. Arthur primarily appears as the savior of his *ethnos*: "Bute while wes an witeȝe Maerlin ihate; he boðeðe mið worde, his quides weoren soðe, þat Arður sculde ȝete cum Anglen to fulste."[647] Additionally, he must fight against the monster to prove his heroic pedigree and noble nature as David had to

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[646] Maximian's abdication in May 1, 305 transferred the Augustan title and office to Constantine's father, Constantius, and paved the wave for the recognition of Christianity as official Imperial religion: "Et Constantinus, Helene clarissima proles, / Prefuit imperio necnon et Maximianus; / In quorum succedo locum, non degener heres: "And Constantine, the most famous son of Helena, / and also Maximianus ruled the empire; I am their successor, no unworthy heir." *History…*, ibid., 202-205. Interestingly enough, Maximian attempted to seize Constantine's title in 310 while the latter was on campaign on the Rhine. He was captured by Constantine in Marseille and ordered by the emperor to commit suicide.

[647] Layamon's *Brut*, vss. 1202-1204 Garbaty, Ibid., 118.

fight against Goliath. Although it is obvious that this material pre-existed in the vast corpus

of Welsh legends and protomyths,[648] a well-organized work on this side of the Arthurian

saga did not exist until some point before AD 113, when Bishop Alexander, Geoffrey's

ecclesiastical superior, "invited him as a well-qualified scholar to explore the topic."[649] The

result of this research was the book *Prophetia Merlini*, which consists of a group of

prophecies credited to Merlin. This material, which Geoffrey stated to have translated from

an undetermined language, was originally independent of the *Historia Regum Britanniae*

and was only later incorporated into it by Geoffrey himself.

The fact that most of prophecies are –according to the claim of Gregory Ashe–

Geoffrey's own work,[650] raises an important question: what was Geoffrey's intention in

gathering together this work? Ashe asks the same question in better words: "Why did he

[Geoffrey] go to so much trouble to produce this farrago, with bogus authentications in the

first part and pointless ingenuities in the second?"[651] Did he adapt Merlin's story to

Arthur's life and deeds? This is important insofar if Geoffrey wanted to get such

accommodation, then this could indicate that he intentionally wished to provide the

'historical' Arthur (the *dux bellorum*) with the mystical aura and the mythopoetic mist

needed to become a prototypal figure rather than just being a folk-hero and tribal leader,

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[648] Lady Charlotte Guest (ed.), *The Mabinogion, from The Welsh of the Llyfr Coch o Hergest* (London: Bernard Quaritch, 1877), accessed October 29, 2014, http://www.archive.org/stream/mabinogion00unkngoog#page/n18/mode/2up.

[649] Geoffrey Ash, "The Prophecies of Merlin: Their Originality and Importance," in *Magistra Doctissima: Essays in Honor of Bonnie Wheeler,* ed. D. Armstrong, A. W. Astell, and H. Chickering, Project MUSE (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 2013.), 72, accessed 1/14/2015, https://muse.jhu.edu/chapter/891997.

[650] Ibid., 76.

[651] Ibid.

i.e. a Christic allegory rather than an ethnically-bound tribal hero-warrior. That Geoffrey intentionally was shaping a prototypal figure out of the historical Arthur seems to be Ashe's idea,[652] and it is totally coherent with the construction of Merlin as a great prophet gifted with supernatural powers, and to whom it is immediately granted the role of running a "supernatural sponsorship of the whole Arthurian adventure."[653] Yet, what were indeed Geoffrey of Monmouth's intentions?

As for the literary construction and its connotations in the further development of King Arthur's mythopoeia and his shape-shifting into a Christian prototype, it can be affirmed that Geoffrey's reshaping of mythemes of Merlin and Arthur precipitated and underpinned their immense popularity in later European literature; the popularity that lasts to this day. Therefore, Geoffrey can be regarded as the major demiurge of the 'Arthurian Canon.' As a complement to this, *Historia's* effect on the legend of King Arthur was so determining that Arthurian works have been categorized as "pre- Galfridian" or "post-Galfridian" depending on the impact of Geoffrey of Monmouth's creation on them.

In Christian theology, David is prophetically interpreted not only as akin to Jesus, but also as a typology of Christ, that is as a powerful and fair king. Likewise, Uðer of Pendragon, as a powerful king and Arthur's father, shows interesting resemblances to David's life. In this case, the overlapping takes place not directly upon Arthur's figure but upon his royal progenitor, who making use of his mighty position and assisted by Merlin's supernatural 'craft' usurped the place of a legitimate spouse (Gorlois) to possess Ygaerne, exactly as David did with Uriah and Bathsheba:

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[652] Ibid.

[653] Ibid.

Καὶ ἐγένετο πρὸς ἑσπέραν καὶ ἀνέστη Δαυὶδ ἀπὸ τῆς κοίτης αὐτοῦ καὶ περιεπάτει ἐπὶ τοῦ δώματος τοῦ οἴκου τοῦ βασιλέως καὶ εἶδε γυναῖκα λουομένην ἀπὸ τοῦ δώματος, καὶ ἡ γυνὴ καλὴ τῷ εἴδει σφόδρα. αὶ ἀπέστειλε Δαυὶδ καὶ ἐζήτησε τὴν γυναῖκα καὶ εἶπεν· οὐχὶ αὕτη Βηρσαβεὲ θυγάτηρ Ἐλιὰβ γυνὴ Οὐρίου τοῦ Χετταίου; αὶ ἀπέστειλε Δαυὶδ ἀγγέλους καὶ ἔλαβεν αὐτήν, καὶ εἰσῆλθε πρὸς αὐτήν, καὶ ἐκοιμήθη μετ᾽ αὐτῆς, καὶ αὐτὴ ἁγιαζομένη ἀπὸ ἀκαθαρσίας αὐτῆς, καὶ ἀπέστρεψεν εἰς τὸν οἶκον αὐτῆς.[654]

Uðer gets rid of Gorlois by causing his death, in the same spirit that David gets rid of Bathsheba's legitimate husband, Uriah, by sending him to a sure death on the battlefield against the Ammonites. Prophet Nathan reproaches David that he has sinned against God and makes the prophecy that from then on David's house will be fated to internecine wars and feud:

Τί ὅτι ἐφαύλισας τὸν λόγον Κυρίου τοῦ ποιῆσαι τὸ πονηρὸν ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς αὐτοῦ; τὸν Οὐρίαν τὸν Χετταῖον ἐπάταξας ἐν ῥομφαίᾳ καὶ τὴν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ ἔλαβες σεαυτῷ εἰς γυναῖκα καὶ αὐτὸν ἀπέκτεινας ἐν ῥομφαίᾳ υἱῶν Ἀμμών. καὶ νῦν οὐκ ἀποστήσεται ῥομφαία ἐκ τοῦ οἴκου σου ἕως αἰῶνος ἀνθ᾽ ὧν ὅτι ἐξουδένωσάς με καὶ ἔλαβες τὴν γυναῖκα τοῦ Οὐρίου τοῦ Χετταίου τοῦ εἶναί σοι εἰς γυναῖκα.[655]

For this reason, the imminent turmoil in David's household and across the Kingdom of Israel –including the death of Bathsheba's baby and the insurrection of prince

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[654] B Βασ. 11,1-4, http://users.sch.gr/aiasgr/Palaia_Diathikh/Basileiwn_B'/Basileiwn_B'_kef.6-12.htm#kef.11. 2 Samuel 11: "And it came to pass at the return of the year, at the time when kings go forth to war, that David sent Joab and his servants with him, and all Israel, and they spoiled the children of Ammon, and besieged Rabba: but David remained in Jerusalem. In the mean time it happened that David arose from his bed after noon, and walked upon the roof of the king's house: and he saw from the roof of his house a woman washing herself, over against him: and the woman was very beautiful. And the king sent, and inquired who the woman was. And it was told him, that she was Bethsabee the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Urias the Hethite. And David sent messengers, and took her, and she came in to him, and he slept with her: and presently she was purified from her uncleanness." (Douay-Rheims Version), accessed 10/10/2014, https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Samuel+11.

[655] B Βασ. 12, 9-10. http://users.sch.gr/aiasgr/Palaia_Diathikh/Basileiwn_B'/Basileiwn_B'_kef.6-12.htm#kef.11. 2 Samuel 12, 9-10: "Why therefore hast thou despised the word of the Lord, to do evil in my sight? Thou hast killed Urias the Hethite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon. Therefore the sword shall never depart from thy house, because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Urias the Hethite to be thy wife." (Douay-Rheims Version.)

Absalom– was explained as a punishment of God for the King's sins of adultery and murder.

3.17. New Testament Intertextuality and Intericonicity: Mother of the Hero

Ygaerne, Arthur's mother, is presented by the narrator as "wilfmonne, þu ært me leofuest,"[656] the loveliest of women, the best among women, incarnating like Mother Mary the eternal feminine values of purity of heart and self-offering obedience to the male principle, i.e. Gorlois –or rather Uðer Pendragon disguised as Gorlois–, and the Holy Spirit as coessential hypostasis of God-Father's οὐσία (ousia, essence). There is a persistent echo of the words addressed to Virgin Mary by her cousin Elizabeth, "ευλογημένη συ εν γυναιξί και ευλογημένος ο καρπός της κοιλίας σου...,"[657] in recurrent phrases such as, "…þat he heo biwinne, / bute þurh mine ginne / for nis na wimmon treowere in þissere weorlde-riche,"[658] or, "on leoden wimmonnen leofest,"[659] spoken to Ygaerde accompanied always by the praise of her offspring's virtues. A prototypal hero, like a prototypal savior, should be born only of a prototypal mother.

3.18. Heroico-Messianic Dignity

Jesus is called prophetically "great and […] the Son of the Most High."[660] On his part, Isaiah had prophesized: "The government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name

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[656] *Brut*, v. 253, op. cit., 61.

[657] Κατά Λουκάν 1,42. Luke 1,42: "And she cried out with a loud voice, and said: Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb." (Douay-Rheims Version).

[658] *Brut*, vss. 155-6, op. cit., 59.

[659] *Brut*, v. 192, ibid., 60.

[660] Luke 1, 32. (Douay-Rheims Version).

shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, mighty God, everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."[661]

David chants ἐν χορδαῖς καὶ ὀργάνοις his prophecy: "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the

heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession […]

Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's

vessel."[662] And also according to Matthew, the Archangel commands: "thou shalt call his

Name Iesus."[663] In a similar heroico-messianic iconosystem, and clearly mimicking the

same mystico-religious atmosphere, Layamon makes Merlin prophesize that King Arthur:

> Longe beoð æuere dæd ne bið he næuere […] þe wile þe þis world stænt ilæsten
> scal is worðmunt, of him scullen gleomen godliche singen […] and he streonede
> hire on ænne selcuðne mon, kinge alre keenest þæ auere com to monnen [...]
> scullen stan walles biuoren him to-fallen […] beornes scullen rusien, reosen heore
> mærken […] And he wes on ærde Ærður ihaten.[664]

3.19. Supernatural Birth

Both Jesus and Arthur were offspring of an extraordinary conception as allegory of

their essential estrangement to this *weorldriche*. Jesus was conceived by the grace of the

Holy Spirit, namely through a direct self-mediated divine operation. Naturally, God was

not the formal husband to Virgin Mary, but Joseph. Similarly, King Arthur was conceived

from Uther Pendragon resembling Gorlois. Therefore, he was fathered essentially by a man

other than Ygaerne's legitimate spouse, i.e. transformed by Merlin's magic, ultimately *not*

a regular man. Uðer Pendragon was the Commander in Chief and, besides that, he was

acting under Merlin's magical operation and *raede*: "Ah al this iwille wel scal iwurðen, for

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[661] Isaiah 9, 6. (Douay-Rheims Version).

[662] Psalm 2, 8-9. (Douay-Rheims Version).

[663] Matthew 1, 2. (Douay-Rheims Version).

[664] *Brut*, vss. 160-70, op. cit., 59.

ich con swulcne leche-craft þe leof þe scal iwurðen, þat al scullen þine gareres iwurðen

swulc þas eorles…"[665] On the other hand, Merlin's prophetical counsel is clearly granted

to Arthur as the coadjutant of his desire's fulfillment, which functions like David's royal

power upon his subjects. Certainly, in the different context of the political absolutism

inherited by David from Saul, the intervention of a supernatural agency was not necessary

to possess the object of desire. On the contrary Uðer, as also Arthur, was still in need of a

super-human mediation: "…for ich am on rade rihchest alre monnen and ʒif ich wilne æhte

þenne wurseðe ich on crafte…þat is þat soðe / þat ich þe sugge wulle / þurh alle þinge þu

scal beon / swule þu eorl weore…."[666] In this case, Merlin is the pagan substitution for the

Holy Spirit since Maerlin's magical powers represent the divine operation in the Christian

narrative. For this reason, Ygaerne, as Mary at God's will, showed total acquiescence at

Gorlois's/Uðer's desire. King Arthur must fight against 'sin,' represented in the monster

that corrupts and kills people.[667] Jesus, in a more symbolic way, was confronted by Satan

in the desert as an allegory of the universal temptations of evil. Jesus must overpower

Satan and his lavish offers, and King Arthur must vanquish the giant, which links Arthur

again to David's fall and restoration after his sins with Bathsheba.

3.20. Eucharistization of King Arthur by Layamon

In his *First Apology*, Saint Justin Martyr in the second century utilizes for the first

time the Greek word εὐχαριστία (*eucharistia*, thanksgiving) as a verb in the passive voice:

> [...] οὐ γὰρ ὡς κοινὸν ἄρτον οὐδὲ κοινὸν πόμα ταῦτα λαμβάνομεν¨ ἀλλ᾽ ὃν τρόπον διὰ λόγου Θεοῦ σαρκοποιηθεὶς Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς [...] καὶ σάρκα καὶ αἷμα ὑπὲρ

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[665] *Brut*, vss. 201-4, ibid., 60.

[666] Ibid.

[667] *Brut*, vss. 25641-26146, ibid., 76.

σωτηρίας ἡμῶν ἔσχεν, οὕτως καὶ τὴν δι᾽ εὐχῆς λόγου τοῦ παρ᾽ αὐτοῦ εὐχαριστηθεῖσαν τροφήν [...] ἐκείνου τοῦ σαρκοποιηθέντος Ἰησοῦ καὶ σάρκα καὶ αἷμα ἐδιδάχθημεν εἶναι.[668]

Yet it is John Evangelist who for the first time present Christ's resurrected body as real food and drink: "Ἡ γὰρ σάρξ μου ἀληθῶς ἐστι βρῶσις, καὶ τὸ αἷμά μου ἀληθῶς ἐστι πόσις."[669] Following this pattern, Layamon tells of Arthur that: "[…] of his breosten scullen æten æðele scopes; / scullen of his blode beornes beon drunken."[670] To build this completely eucharistized iconeme of Arthur, Layamon might have worked on Merlin's prophecy about the board (Arthur) destroying the Anglo-Saxons by stepping on their necks with his feet as related by Geoffrey of Monmouth (Table 4). The boar performs an act of courage and victory that "cibus erit narrantibus."[671]

Geoffrey of Mounmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*	Layamon's *Brut*
"In ore populorum celebrabitur et actus eius cibus erit narrantibus."	"[…] of his breosten scullen æten æðele scopes;/scullen of his blode beornes beon drunken."

Table 4: Eucharistized Iconeme of Arthur.

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[668] Saint Justin Martyr, 'Apología Primera,' "Segunda Parte: La Eucaristía en los Santos Padres. Siglo II," in *Textos Eucarísticos Primitivos*, I, 92, ed. by Jesús Solano, S. I., 2nd edition (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1952): 43-109, p. 62. "For not as common bread and common drink do we receive these; but in like manner as Jesus Christ, having been made flesh by the Word of God, had both flesh and blood for our salvation, so likewise have we been taught that the food which is blessed by the prayer of His word […] is the flesh and blood of that Jesus who was made flesh." See "Saint Justin Martyr, 'Of the Eucharist,' The First Apology," in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, ed. by Roberts, Alexander, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe, vol. 1 (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1885). Available online at: *Catholic Encyclopedia: New Advent*, ed. by Kevin Knight, accessed 5/29/2015, http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0126.htm.

[669] "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed." John 6. 54. (Douay-Rheims Version).

[670] *Brut*, vss. 165-6, op. cit., p. 59.

[671] Ibid.

People and bards will celebrate and sing both the boar's and Arthur's deeds, and will feed on them. Yet there is an importsnt variation in Layamon. Certainly, Layamon's emphasis shift is clever: instead of to the boar's acts in the framework of Merlin's prophecy, Layamon isolates Arthur's figure in order to highlight his meaning and refers to *Arthur himself* as drink and food that will be consumed by people and poets. If Layamon's words are read in the light of the multi-ethnic paradigm, King Arthur's transfiguration leading to his role as a King-Messiah appears as a socio-cultural necessity.

3.21. The Eschatological Power to Kill Leviathan: The King as Prophet

According to Isaiah's prophecy: 'In that day the LORD with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea'. Meanwhile, in the *Chronicon Monasterii of Hales* Arthur, being carried up by Christ to the Heavens, i.e. resurrecting himself, is the one chosen to kill the beast with his sword, in which appears to be another case of mystic association between the Cross and the Sword, both bearing the soteriological power of God:

> Rex fuit *arthurus*. rex est post regna futurus. Prelia facturus vincet. numquam periturus. Hic orbem rexit. Sed *christus* ad ethera uexit Regem tam fortem nec sensit corpore mortem. *Enoch* translatum legimus super astra leuatum, ethereasque uias, curru penetrauit helias. Isti pugnabunt cum hostem non superabunt. Sed magis arthurus prudens ad prelia durus. *Leuiathan* feriet et ei uictoria fiet.[672]

If taken into account that Isaiah's prophecy foretells the End of Times and the Universal Judgment, then the eschatological dimension recognized to King Arthur as a prophet, attested in this 12th-century text, is beyond doubts. Simultaneously, however, Arthur's ascent to the right of Christ was the Plantagenets' master stroke to emphasize King

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[672] *Chronicon Monasterii de Hales*, in *Arthurian Fragments*, op. cit., 87.

Arthur's real death, the consequent impossibility of his soteriological return as the King-Messiah of the Welsh, the continuity of Arthur's royal privileges in the English monarchy, and the latter's rights to a legitmate, just, and necessary domination of Wales.

3.22. The Mystic *Chronotopia*

King Arthur must fight against 'sin' represented in the monster that corrupts and savagely kills innocent people.[673] Jesus Christ is confronted by Satan in the desert as a symbolic chronotope for the spiritual soil under evil's attack. To be a real Savior, Christ must defeat Satan. King Arthur, on his part, must defeat the giant and the Leviathan to become a complete hero-warrior and prophet-king, perhaps in the symbolico-allegorical sense of having to defeat his own heroic self-consciousness as well as every possible *hybris* of knightly pride. This links Arthur to David and his fall and 'resurrection' after his sin with Bathsheba. As the protector of all Britons, for which he embraces a self-sacrifice that is, at the same time, a deifying process, King Arthur replicates the soteriological nature of Christ: "Bute while wes an witeȝe Maerlin ihate; he bodede mið worde, his quides weoren soðe, þat an Arður sculde ȝete cum Anglen to fulste."[674] In both cases self-sacrifice is a self-deification path steering to the salvation *of all*. This appears linked to the formation of a chronotope with a mystico-eschatological dimension: Aualon. In this sacred *topos* the hero dwells in bliss awaiting his *plenitudo temporis* (his *kairos*) to return to assist his people in the hour of need, darkness, and deadliest danger: "Bruttes ileueð ȝete þat he

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[673] *Brut*, vss. 25641-26146, op. cit.*,* 76 and 'The Alliterative Morte Arthure' vv. 933-1191, in Garbaty, op. cit., 100.

[674] *Brut* vss. 1202-1204, ibid., 91**.** Garbaty seems to read the word "Anglen" here as "Britons." [See *Brut* v. 1204, op. cit., 91.] Should this be so, the Layamon would have assimilated the word English to Britons (or viceversa) by using a common signifier (Anglen) with an extended transcultural meaning, i.e. Saxons = Anglo-Saxons but Anglen = Anglo = Britons.

bon on liue, and wunnien in Aualun mið fairest alre aluen…"[675]. The Ile of Avalon is the locus to stay 'in glory' after the sacrifice: "And ich wulle uaren to Aualun, to uairest alre maidene, to Argante þere quene, aluen swiðe sceone, and heo scal mine wunden makien alle isunde."[676] Arthur enters Avalon mortally wounded; Christ is ascended to Heaven after his glorious resurrection: from the suffering-chronotope to the bliss-chronotope. Self-sacrifice is the path leading to the eschatological plenitude. The promise of return essentially derives from the universal reconciliation granted by the Transcendence as the bedrock of the nation-identitary self-propriation beyond the transient and deceitful nature of the world: "and lokieð euere Bruttes ȝete whan Arður cumen lide."[677]

3.23. Treason by One of Disciples

Another pattern developed in the Arthurian saga is the treason by one of the "disciples." Jesus was betrayed by Judas Iscariot and in parallel King Arthur suffered Mordred's treason. This treason acquires a more somber meaning because Mordred was left in charge of Camelot and Queen Guinevere by Arthur himself. Both treasons catalyze the hero's self-sacrificial and self-deifying death. There are even some chronotropic parallelisms that indicate a more-than-random overlapping of the figures of Jesus and Arthur. According to *The Alliterate Morte Arthure*, mortally wounded King Arthur moves to Glaschenbery to be cared for and healed: "Graythe vs to Glaschenbery, vs gayness non other; Thare we may ryste vs with roo and raunsake oure wondys."[678] As we hear from

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[675] Ibid., vss. 1197-98, 91.

[676] Ibid., vss. 1184-86, 90.

[677] Ibid., 1199.

[678] "The Alliterate Morthe Arthure," vss. 879-880, Garbaty, ibid., 118.

Garbaty, according to the legend Glaschenbery-Glastonbury was a city founded by Joseph of Arimathea in Somersetshire. This will become the site of Arthur's tomb. His bones allegedly were found there by the monks of Glastonbury Abbey in 1191.[679] Glastonbury becomes identified as the mystic Ile of Aueloyne: "And graythes to Glasschenberye the gate at the gayneste; Entres the Ile of Aueloyne, and Arthure he lyghttes, Merkes to a manere there, for myghte he no forthire."[680] Joseph of Arimathea was the crypto-disciple who asked Pilatus for Jesus's body, found the unused sepulcher, prepared the corpse with ointments and myrrh along with other faithful women, and buried it. So, there is a chronotropic yuxtaposition of the sepulcher of Christ and Arthur's site of rest via a common actant that semantically links both events and allegorically intertwines their meanings, i.e. Joseph of Arimathea. Such as Christ's sepulcher is considered the source of eternal life, similarly the Ile of Avalon is the mystical chronotope where the human element is healed and renewed by the divine grace –or alternatively, by the *leche-craft* of the elves. But, while this analogy to Jesus is rather indirect, in verses 918-922 we find the crystal-clear assertion of the royal Trojan ancestry of Arthur. Thus, in Arthur's figure pagan tradition and Christian faith find an archetypal synthesis that must be understood not only as an ethno-nationalistic model but also as a paradigm of mystical realization that harmonically conflates Judeo-Christian and Hellenic traditions.[681]

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[679] Garbaty, ibid., footnote 879, 118.

[680]"The Alliterate Morthe Arthure," vss. 884-886, Garbaty, ibid.,118.

[681] A similar synthesis took place also, for instance, in Philo of Alexandria's philosophical system and in the theology of the Fathers of the Church.

3.24. Gifts of Magi and Fairies to the 'New-Born' King

Another meaningful parallel between Jesus and King Arthur can be found in

Layamon's *Brut*, verses 19252-69: "The Fairy Gifts to Arthur."[682] As referred to in the

Gospel of Matthew, the magi came "from East" to worship the new-born "king of the

Jews."[683] To this aim, they brought with them gold, frankincense, and myrrh, precious gifts

that had essential symbolico-allegorical connotations in Jesus's time. The meaning of the

three gifts responded to concrete spiritual analogies. Gold as a symbol of kingship on earth

shows the human nature of Jesus and his dignity a a king, according to the prophesy to

Joseph by Archangel Gabriel:

> Ἰωσὴφ δὲ ὁ ἀνὴρ αὐτῆς, δίκαιος ὢν [...] ἰδοὺ ἄγγελος κυρίου κατ' ὄναρ ἐφάνη
> αὐτῷ λέγων· Ἰωσὴφ υἱὸς Δαυίδ, μὴ φοβηθῇς παραλαβεῖν Μαρίαν τὴν γυναῖκά σου,
> τὸ γὰρ ἐν αὐτῇ γεννηθὲν ἐκ πνεύματός ἐστιν ἁγίου· τέξεται δὲ υἱὸν καὶ καλέσεις τὸ
> ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦν, αὐτὸς γὰρ σώσει τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν αὐτῶν.
> τοῦτο δὲ ὅλον γέγονεν ἵνα πληρωθῇ τὸ ῥηθὲν ὑπὸ κυρίου διὰ τοῦ προφήτου
> λέγοντος· Ἰδοὺ ἡ παρθένος ἐν γαστρὶ ἕξει καὶ τέξεται υἱόν, καὶ καλέσουσιν τὸ
> ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἐμμανουήλ· ὅ ἐστιν μεθερμηνευόμενον Μεθ' ἡμῶν ὁ θεός.[684]

Frankincense was a symbol of divinity. The divine nature of Christ will be

reinforced later more elaboratedly in the Gospel of John, by interpretating Jesus as the

Λόγος του Θεού (*Logos tou Theou*, the Logos of God),[685] truly human and truly divine in

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[682] Garbaty, op. cit., 62.

[683] Matthew 2, 1-2: "When Jesus therefore was born in Bethlehem of Juda, in the days of king Herod, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem. Saying, Where is he that is born king of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the east, and are come to adore him." (Douay-Rheims Version.)

[684] Matthew 1, 19-23: "Whereupon Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing publicly to expose her, was minded to put her away privately. But while he thought on these things, behold the angel of the Lord appeared to him in his sleep, saying: Joseph, son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son: and thou shalt call his name JESUS. For he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled which the Lord spoke by the prophet, saying: Behold a virgin shall be with child, and bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us." (Douay-Rheims Version.)

[685] "καὶ ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο καὶ ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν, καὶ ἐθεασάμεθα τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ, δόξαν ὡς μονογενοῦς παρὰ πατρός, πλήρης χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας." John, 1, 14: "And the Word was made flesh, and

his dual nature (*physis*), existing as a continuous, self-coherent, and ontologically mono-

hypostatical Person:

> ἕνα καὶ τὸν αὐτὸν Χριστόν, υἱόν, κύριον, μονογενῆ, ἐκ δύο φύσεων [ἐν δύο φύσεσιν], ἀσυγχύτως, ἀτρέπτως, ἀδιαιρέτως, ἀχωρίστως γνωριζόμενον· […] εἰς ἓν πρόσωπον καὶ μίαν ὑπόστασιν συντρεχούσης, οὐκ εἰς δύο πρόσωπα μεριζόμενον ἢ διαιρούμενον, ἀλλ᾽ ἕνα καὶ τὸν αὐτὸν υἱὸν καὶ μονογενῆ, θεὸν λόγον, κύριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν·"[686].

In the words of Maximus the Confessor: "Δύο γὰρ φύσεων πρὸς ὑπόστασιν ἀλλ᾽ οὐ

πρὸς φύσιν μίαν γέγονε σύνοδος, ἵνα καὶ τὸ καθ᾽ ὑπόστασιν ἕν ἐκ τῶν ἀλλήλαις

συνδραμουσῶν φύσεων δειχθῆι..."[687] Thus, myrrh was extendedly used as an embalming

oil in Jesus's time, and was therefore considered a symbol of death. According to Luke,

after Jesus's death and after Joseph of Arimathea recovered his body, "κατακολουθήσασαι

δὲ αἱ γυναῖκες, αἵτινες ἦσαν συνεληλυθυῖαι ἐκ τῆς Γαλιλαίας αὐτῷ, ἐθεάσαντο τὸ μνημεῖον

καὶ ὡς ἐτέθη τὸ σῶμα αὐτοῦ, ὑποστρέψασαι δὲ ἡτοίμασαν *ἀρώματα καὶ μύρα*.[688] This

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dwelt among us, (and we saw his glory, the glory as it were of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." (Douay-Rheims Version.)

[686] *Symbol of Chalcedon*, accessed 10/21/2014, https://rdtwot.files.wordpress.com/2009/02/symbol-of-chalcedon.pdf. See also: "Ἐπειδὴ καὶ ἑτέρα ἄϋλον φύσιν συνηνωμένην τῆι σαρκὶ ἔχει καὶ μετὰ τῶν δύο φύσεων ἐκείνων εἷς ὑπάρχει, καὶ τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ ἤγουν ἡ ὑπόστασις αὐτοῦ ἀχώριστον τῶν δύο φύσεών ἐστι..." See "The Questions of Constantine Copronymus," in Herman Hennephof (ed.), *Textus Byzantinos ad Iconomachiam pertinentes* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1969), 157.

[687] See Ἅγιος Μάξιμος ὁ Ὁμολογητής (Maximus the Confessor), Πρὸς Θαλάσσιον τὸν ὁσιώτατον πρεσβύτερον καὶ ἡγούμενον περὶ διαφόρων ἀπόρων τῆς θείας Γραφῆς," in *Mirobiblos: Digital Library of the Church of Greece*, accessed 10/15/2016, http://www.myriobiblos.gr/texts/greek/maximos/prosthalassion4.html.

[688] Luke 23, 56: "And behold there was a man named Joseph, who was a counsellor, a good and just man, (The same had not consented to their counsel and doings;) of Arimathea, a city of Judea; who also himself looked for the kingdom of God. This man went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. And taking him down, he wrapped him in fine linen, and laid him in a sepulchre that was hewed in stone, wherein never yet any man had been laid. And it was the day of the *Parasceve*, and the sabbath drew on. And the women that were come with him from Galilee, following after, saw the sepulchre, and how his body was laid. And returning, they prepared spices and ointments; and on the sabbath day they rested, according to the commandment." (Douay-Rheims Version.) The Douay-Rheims Bible translates the Greek word *μύρα* into *ointments*. King James Bible uses the same word. The word *μύρα*, however, literally corresponds to Latin *myrrha*, Old English *myrre* and *amp*, Middle English *mire,* Modern English *myrrh*, German *Myrrhe* and Spanish *mirra*. It is worth noting that the word myrrh is used as a particular scent different from the most general reference to other scents in use which are expressed by the neuter plural *ἀρώματα* (lit. perfumes,

hermeneutic can be found later as part of the Patristic tradition in Origen's apologetic

Contra Celsum:

> They came, accordingly, to Judea, persuaded that some king had been born; but not knowing over what kingdom he was to reign, and being ignorant also of the place of his birth, bringing gifts, which they offered to him as one whose nature partook, if I may so speak, both of God and of a mortal man—gold, viz., as to a king; myrrh, as to one who was mortal; and incense, as to a God; and they brought these offerings after they had learned the place of His birth."[689]

However, these precious substances, myrrh included, beyond the fact of having

been mostly associated in the cultural praxis with some very specific activities (like myrrh

to mortality and death; incense to divinity, etc.) appear to belong to the semantic-symbolic

field of royalty, pureness and divine nature. Another instance of this can be found in

Eusebius' hermeneutic of psalm XVII:

> And that which follows in the Psalm, "Myrrh, aloes and 238 cassia from his garments," and the other words besides, which speak as of a princess leaving her father's house, and being wedded to Him who has been foreshewn to be Christ and King and God, and calling Him her Lord, (b) might be referred to the Church of the nations, forsaking ancestral daemonic error, and purified and brought into the communion of the divine Word, if time allowed them to have their true interpretation.[690]

So, like the new-born Jesus of the Gospel, King Arthur receives gifts from a non-

ordinary world, a world defined by its magical and mysterious powers and practices. It is

totally meaningless here that, for most of early Christian commentators, the Magi were

idolatrous heathens probably linked to "evil" or diabolical practices, as we can find in

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scents). This allows us to think that myrrh, while part of a more general set, was considered a very particular scent for specific body-embalming uses.

[689] Origen, "Contra Celsum," in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe vol. 4 (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1885.). Revised and edited for New Advent by Kevin Knight, accessed 9/17/2014, http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/04161.htm.

[690] Eusebius of Caesarea, Chapter 2 [From Psalm xliv.], in *Demonstatio Evangelica*, ed. and trans. W. H. Ferrar, accessed 10/21/2014, http://www.preteristarchive.com/ChurchHistory/0312_eusebius_proof.html.

Origen's hermeneutic.[691] What is meaningful here is the insertion of a magical, transcendental world in the life of the newly-born king. This reinforces his intrinsic dignity and the legitimacy of his privileges in the culture to which he belongs. As Virgin Mary, Arthur's mother, Ygarne conceives her son and goes through all this process without a proper understanding of the events. Although in very different ways, both Mary and Ygaerne were protected by an ignorance intended to preserve their human fragility before the intervention of the divine –or magical– element in their lives. In both cases, a proper knowledge would have been a disturbing –or at least a defocusing– experience. Both mothers had to be safeguarded because they were carrying a precious man in their wombs. Medea, facing the truth of her condition, chose revenge against Jason by sacrificing the life of her children. This had to be prevented in Ygærne's case: "Nuste noht Ygærne wha læie on hire ærme, for æuere wende ful iwis þat it weoren þe eorl Gorlois."[692] Meanwhile, Virgin Mary could have tried to understand how it is possible to be the Mother of God and to conceive a man without having known her husband. In fact, she comes to formulate the question: "And Mary said to the angel, 'How will this be, since I am a virgin?'"[693] Gabriel's straightforward answer followed: "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore, the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For nothing

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[691] "To the Greeks, then, I have to say that the Magi, being on familiar terms with evil spirits and invoking them for such purposes as their knowledge and wishes extend to, bring about such results only as do not appear to exceed the superhuman power and strength of the evil spirits, and of the spells which invoke them, to accomplish […]", see Origen, "Contra Celsum," op. cit.

[692] *Brut*, vss. 268-9, op. cit., 62.

[693] Luke 1, 34.

will be impossible with God."[694] Then, blinded by a blessed ignorance, Mary decided to

retain in silence the most important thing: being the mother of the Savior of the world:

"καὶ ἡ μήτηρ αὐτοῦ διετήρει πάντα τὰ ῥήματα ταῦτα ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτῆς,"[695] and freely

chose obedience: "And Mary said, 'Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me

according to your word.' And the angel departed from her."[696] She certainly was not either

Medea or Ygærne. However, as a mortal she experienced the overwhelming nature of such

an unusual event: "But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what

sort of greeting this might be."[697] Consequently, Mary could have tried to decipher this

strange riddle in her life, in detriment to her faith and therefore to her ability to cope with

such a high and *in se ipsum* unintelligible mystery. It is curious that Garbáty does not see,

or at least does not comment or gives importance to, the parallelism of this passage with

the adoration of the Magi. He notes that, "the elves are quite similar to the *Marchen-feen*

in such a tale as that of *Dornroschen* (*Sleeping Beauty*) and may be traced to Norse

mythology, where the Nors often attended the birth of a child."[698] However, a cross-

cultural approach in the context of the decay of the pagan Rome and the enthronization –

following Constantine's Edict of Milan– of Christianity as the new official religion of the

Roman Empire would be helpful to understand that these 'King Arthur/Jesus' and

'Brut/New Testament' concordances should not be deemed just as a naïve or desinterested

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[694] Luke 1, 35-37.

[695] Luke 2, 51.

[696] Luke 1, 38.

[697] Luke 1, 29.

[698] *Brut*, op. cit., 62.

scriptural practice. Certainly, they have further connections to wider and more complex intercultural processes, such as the systematic evangelization of pagan populations, and the incorporation of Christian faith and imaginary into the British world. In this sense, King Arthur is given by the "aluen" three gifts through which he became invested with magical virtues. In other words, he was overshadowed by the mystery of the divine: "þe time com þa wes icoren, þa wes Arður iboren. Sone swa he com an eorde aluen hine iuengen."[699] Although the description of the gifts as such is missing and the virtues associated with them are not as clearly exposed as in Luke, it is easy to understand that these offerings were intended to provide the child with both physical and spiritual *aretai*.

It is virtually impossible to ignore Luke's passage of the Magi while reading these verses. Furthermore, Layamon says of child Arthur that "he wes mete-custi of alle quikemonnen; this the alue him 3ef, and al swa that child ithaeh,"[700] in a passage that resembles *in lettera* and spirit Luke 2, 52: "Καὶ Ἰησοῦς προέκοπτεν σοφίᾳ καὶ ἡλικίᾳ καὶ χάριτι παρὰ θεῷ καὶ ἀνθρώποις." Of course, there is an inversion of power relations in both accounts, and this means a very important difference. While Arthur, as a mortal-born hero, receives the "galdere swide stronge," that is the divine element from the elves, Jesus meanwhile, as truly Divine (Logos) and human, is the absolute source of blessing and power that irradiate over the Magi. Therefore, the elves give Arthur the element missing in his nature (i.e. the divine); the Magi, conversely, receive from Jesus their blessing and their partaking of the divine grace. However, instead of weakening our hypothesis, this fact comes to reinforce it: it was pointless to try to homologize King Arthur with Jesus the

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[699] *Brut*, vss. 270-1, ibid.

[700] *Brut*, vss. 277-8, ibid.

Lord. A bridging figure was needed, not a role-switch. The goal was the homogenous Christianization of Britain by gathering together all ethno-cultural differences into a transcultural wholeness. King Arthur was a man and he should always remain human in nature. Jesus is the Θεάνθρωπος ("Godman" - *Theanthropos*), i.e. the self-determining mythopoetic force and the absolute archetype for Arthur's successive protean shape-shifting.

3.25. Arthur's Humanness and Missionary Purposes

For missionary purposes, the fact that Arthur remains anchored in his humanness is essentially strategic. His faith and his being a true Christian hero-warrior in close intericonic interlock with Roman/Byzantine warrior-saints, steer him into the blessed reign of Avalon, i.e. the divine world. In his humanness, Arthur grants this eschatological possibility to all his people. As a deified man, Arthur will firstly be the announced savior and *rex futurus* of the Celtic-Welsh people under Anglo-Saxon oppression. This spirit is clearly pervading still Gregory of Monmouth's *Historia*. Later, Arthur will be the 'Omega-point' of the English identity and national transcultural unity. Especially during the Tudor dynasty and later, King Arthur is taken off his former liminal position and is morphed into the center of a new socio-political project: The United Kingdom of the Great Britain.

At the Great Hall, in Winchester, a round table is still conserved. At the 12 o'clock position, the figure of a king can be observed. It represents King Arthur presiding over the Table. Yet the figure is likely a portrait of Henry VIII, painted on a round table that Henry himself, as many of his predecessors, thought to be Arthur's original Round Table of Camelot (fig. 33). In the king's gesture, there is certainly much more than a simple display of narcissism. Henry VIII, the living icon of English political, cultural, and religious self-

sufficiency, takes on King Arthur's icon and presents himself *through* it in an intericonic transaction. Henry VIII represents the factual unity emerging in the new Empire, while King Arthur features the transcendental cohesion of the new *nation*. In Henry VIII, the absolute monarchy as the political device of European Early Modern period reaches a unique moment of fulfillment. A parallel can be found only in the Catholic Monarchs Ferdinand II of Aragon and Isabella I of Castile, or in Ferdinand VII and Louis XIV. By becoming the historical face of a mystical mytheme, Henry VIII closes a cycle of Arthurian hegemonic mythopoeia, but at the same time strips Arthur definitely of his eschatological promise of returning from Avalon to save the Britons. This eschatological promise had received its first shot of grace by Henry II and the Glastonbury monks, which paved the way for the total deconstruction of Arthur as a messianic myth and his definitive exile to the cultural symbolic iconosphere. This position will hardly change in future history. During the 1830s and later, a period that witnessed tumultuous technological, economic, social, and political paradigm shifts in Britain, a revival in Arthurian interest and literary production took place:

> […] it was only in the 1830s that a significant number of major reworkings of the Arthurian legends was produced… Tennyson's first Arthurian poems *The Epic: Morte d'Arthur and Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere: A Fragment* were written in the early 1830s and the first version of *The Lady of Shalott* […] was published in 1832. Much of the antiquarian groundwork of the Arthurian Revival was beginning to have effect.[701]

However, it is worth noting amid this revival movement, how King Arthur remained, for the collective imaginary, a disembodied metahistorical dweller in the romantic hermeneutic of cultural myths and national symbols. Higham points out that, "On

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[701] Inga Bryden, ibid., 2.

the basis of textual evidence, Arthur was widely considered implausible as an historical figure in the late Victorian era, when he was most often interepreted in mythological terms as a Brittonic culture-hero or demi-god."[702] In time of changes, King Arthur as a prototype of Christian hero-warrior embodies moral stability and provides an essential *being-for-self* with some metaphysical assurances of identitary permanence through multiple renovations. But it was precisely this mystical, supra-historical and eternal character of Arthur mytheme that became the focus of interest. Consequently, topics around Arthur's death, burial, and mystical Passover to the heaven-chronotope incarnated in the Ile of Avalon acquired an aesthetic and artistic preeminence over the rest of motifs. King Arthur presided over his entire nation, but he could not become identified with any of its contemporary historical heroes. In Bryden's words: "As a British, Christian hero King Arthur represented moral order, yet interest shifted to focus on his death […] the isle where, as legend has it, Arthur is laid to rest was conceived as the mythical Avalon, rather than a specific historical place, and it became more difficult to view contemporary British heroes, such as the Duke of Wellington, as embodiments of Arthur."[703]

Regarding the Christ/Arthur intericonicity, the spiritual deeds of Jesus are entirely substituted by exploits linked directly to King Arthur's campaigns desgined to resemble pre-Christian Celtic, Nord, and Anglo-Saxon warlike values and worldviews.[704] The

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[702] Higham, op. cit., 1.

[703] Ibid.

[704] As known, not only in the Celtic tradition but also among Vikings and Anglo-Saxons, war and battle had been not only made the central experience and life-leading activity of the community, but also they had been granted somehow a divine and mystic character as a privileged bridging way between this world and the Transcendental place of rest and eternal bliss, the *Wahl-halle*, which, as indicated in its name, was not a place open to all but only the 'chosen ones,' i.e. the war-heroes who died in battle or due to wounds suffered on the battle ground. See Charles Bemont & Gabriel Monod, "The Heroes and Immortality," *Medieval Europe,* 395-1270, Kindle Edition, Location 403.

Christian notion of equality before God and divine law, and the deconstruction of hegemonic relationships were also replaced by traditional pre-Christian values of social-strata differentiation and class privilege. These values *de facto* present in the Jewish society of Jesus's time, reappear later in the institutionalized Church after Constantine's Edict of Milan (313). Therefore, they are representative not only of the pagan world's axiological mindset. In this case, reintroducing social, hegemony-based privileges into the myth-making process of King Arthur may have been deemed more appropriate to accomplish the Christianization of Britain by Christian authors with missionary zeal and imperial sympathies. The equality among king and knights depicted in Layamon's *Brut* and incarnated in the symbol of the Round Table, is soon lost in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* and the *Alliterate Mort of Arthur*. Although it is unlikely to explain each of these iconic and textual variants as direct result of the implementation of the Church's missionary program or of the personal projects of Christian monks and priests, it is clear that these intertextual and intericonic devices are ultimately interlaced with and, up to a large extent *are a function of* those factors as their primary cause. The process of Christianization of Britain and the hegemonic formation of the absolute monarchy and of a cross-cultural, unified national identity are the keystons to explain King Arthur's mythopoetic itinerary. Higham puts his finger on the sore when he referes to "the *idea* of King Arthur and its shifting utility in different texts…."[705] He certainly underscores the fact that this *idea* of Arthur –as opposed to a blatant claim of Arthur's historicity– experienced a successive shape-shifting that refashioned to reflect the world-picture by the

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[705] Higham, op. cit., 3.

331

particular authors and their ideologico-cultural bias.[706] Notwithstanding his

acknowledgment of the preeminence of the "thought world occupied by the writers" over

"the texts *per se*" during Arthur's mythopoetic transformations, Higham fails to recognize

the decisive role played by the Christianization process and the Christian authors that

shaped the early *idea* of Arthur in British and Anglo-Norman literatures. Following the

common pattern, Higham grants primacy to ethno-nationalistic, i.e. politico-cultural

factors: "When all these visions are considered as a group, it becomes clear that questions

about ethnicity, group identity and nationality are commonly at issue."[707] In any case,

during Engish Victorian romanticism it is shown, perhaps in the clearest way ever, King

Arthur's paradigmatoferesis and mythical prototypopoeia. Despite what Higham calls "the

reappearance of an historical Arthur,"[708] linked to the post-war cultural and political

circumstances in Great Britain, the romantic, ahistorical –or, at least, not historicist–

construction of Arthur managed to survive and re-emerged during the 20th century in

authors as diverse as T. H. White, J. S. Lewis, Marion Zimmer Bradley, and Alfred Angelo

Attanasio.

3.26. 'Three Days and Nights' Formula: The Cross and the Sword

In Matthew's Gospel, the passage of prophet Jonas staying three days and three

nights in the belly of a whale is interpreted as a prophetical typology of the death and the

τριημέρου ἀναστάσεως (*triimerou anastaseos*) of Christ, i.e. of His 'third-day' resurrection:

"Ὥσπερ γὰρ ἐγένετο Ἰωνᾶς ὁ προφήτης ἐν τῇ κοιλίᾳ τοῦ κήτους τρεῖς ἡμέρας καὶ τρεῖς

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[706] Ibid.

[707] Ibid., 4.

[708] Ibid., 2.

νύκτας, οὕτως ἔσται καὶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ τῆς γῆς τρεῖς ἡμέρας καὶ τρεῖς

νύκτας."[709] The *Annales Cambriae* makes reference to "The battle of Badon, in which

Arthur carried the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ on his shoulders for three days and nights,

and the Britons were victorious."[710]

Another symbolic actant is the battle weapon, which is defined to fit each person's

nature and mission. Arthur was a Christian knight. Therefore, as a this-worldly warrior he

is entitled to the sword. Christ is the Godman, the Savior of the world, and therefore the

Cross constitutes His *arme de bataille*. In the Gospel of St. Matthew, Jesus's word is

compared to a sword that shatters the false peace of the world: "Μὴ νομίσητε ὅτι ἦλθον

βαλεῖν εἰρήνην ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν· οὐκ ἦλθον βαλεῖν εἰρήνην ἀλλὰ μάχαιραν."[711] In the same

way, during the intertextual dialectics of New Testament and Arthurian narratives, a two-

dimensional codeswitch takes place that brings Arthur near the cross. Reinforcing this

allegorical syntax, Malory states that: "Yet some men say in many parts of England that

King Arthur is not dead, but had by the will of our Lord Jesu into another place; and men

say that he shall come again, and he shall win the holy cross."[712]

3.27. The Denials

Malory introduces another textual variant opposing Sir Bedivere to his lord. The

first is commanded by his King to throw the sword Excalibur back in the lake. Since

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[709] For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. Matthew 12, 40. (Douay-Rheims Version).

[710] *Annales Cambriae*, in *The New Arthurian Encyclopedia*, ed. Norris J. Lacy, Geoffrey Ashe, Sandra Ness Ihle, Marianne E. Kalinke & Raymond H. Thompson (NY & London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1991): 8-9, p. 9.

[711] Matthew 10:34: "Do not think that I came to send peace upon earth: I came not to send peace, but the sword." (Douay-Rheims Version).

[712] Sir Thomas Malory, Chapter V, op. cit., 157.

Excalibur belongs to Arthur in an essential way, it had to be returned to the Lady of the Lake to prevent it from being desecrated. In other words, the 'king-savior' iconeme comprises the type of material instrument of its specific soteriological operation. In analogy with the Cross of Christ, no one else can use Excalibur because no one else is called to accomplish the task linked to it. Sword and Cross are both synthetic symbols of the whole process in which they partake. The sword goes back to the Lady of the Lake, where it will wait for Arthur to return. Yet Bedivere falls into temptation: he is conquered by greedy thoughts that prevent him from returning the sword and keeping his heart as pure as needed to comply with his master's will: "Sir Bedivere departed, and by the way he beheld that noble sword, that the pommel and the haft was all precious stones; and then he said to himself: If I throw this rich sword in the water, thereof shall never come good, but harm and loss. And then Sir Bedivere hid Excalibur under a tree."[713] In his second attempt, Bedivere, "thought sin and shame to throw away that noble sword, and so eft he hid the sword, and returned again."[714] In both cases, the knight's judgement and action were inspired by worldly standards. In contrast, King Arthur feels betrayed and talks to Bedivere in a way that clearly resembles the way Jesus spoke to the Apostles on Gethsemane before facing his own sacrifice.[715] Arthur said:

> Therefore go thou lightly again, and do my commandment; as thou art to me lief and dear, spare not, but throw it in … What saw thou there? said the king. Sir, he said, I saw nothing but the waters wap and waves wan. Ah, traitor untrue, said King Arthur, now hast thou betrayed me twice. Who would have weened that, thou that

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[713] Ibid.

[714] Ibid.

[715] Especially considering the line: "And but if thou do now as I bid thee, if ever I may see thee, I shall slay thee with mine own hands; for thou wouldst for my rich sword see me dead."

hast been to me so lief and dear? and thou art named a noble knight, and would betray me for the richness of the sword.[716]

An exhortation to obedience, world-detachment and spiritual awareness as essential virtues of the warrior that finds a spiritual parallel in Jesus's words to his disciples: "Καὶ ἔρχεται πρὸς τοὺς μαθητὰς καὶ εὑρίσκει αὐτοὺς καθεύδοντας, καὶ λέγει τῷ Πέτρῳ· οὕτως οὐκ ἰσχύσατε μίαν ὥραν γρηγορῆσαι μετ᾽ ἐμοῦ! Γρηγορεῖτε καὶ προσεύχεσθε, ἵνα μὴ εἰσέλθητε εἰς πειρασμόν· τὸ μὲν πνεῦμα πρόθυμον, ἡ δὲ σὰρξ ἀσθενής."[717] Last, the multiple denial constitutes also a rhetorical device that brings Malory's text closer to the New Testament narrative and somehow unifies the soteriological profiles of Jesus and Arthur. The denials of Peter well might have served as the inspirational source for Malory to depict Bedivere's denials: "ἀποκριθεὶς δὲ ὁ Πέτρος εἶπεν αὐτῷ· εἰ πάντες σκανδαλισθήσονται ἐν σοί, ἐγὼ δὲ οὐδέποτε σκανδαλισθήσομαι. ἔφη αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· ἀμὴν λέγω σοι ὅτι ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ νυκτὶ πρὶν ἀλέκτορα φωνῆσαι τρὶς ἀπαρνήσῃ με."[718]

3.28. Preeminence of Religious Over Political Ideosphere

Arthur's myth-making began in a pre-Christian context but developed primarily through pen and imagination of Christian clerics. It was a Christian priest and later Bishop, Geoffrey of Monmouth, who first compiled, remade and projected to educated Europe the

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[716] Sir Thomas Malory, chapter V, in *Le Morte d'Arthur*, ibid.

[717] Matthew 26, 40-41, http://www.synaxarion.gr/gr/cpgid/1cfb9825743945c6a57b2ade528d9162/cmspage.aspx: "And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." King James Bible, accessed October 24, 2016, http://biblehub.com/matthew/26-41.htm.

[718] Matthew 26, 33-35, accessed October 24, 2016, http://www.imgap.gr/file1/AG-Pateres/AG%20KeimenoMetafrasi/KD/01.%20Math.htm: "Peter answered and said unto him, though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended. Jesus said unto him, verily I say unto thee, that this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.". King James Bible, accessed October 24, 2016, http://biblehub.com/matthew/26-35.htm.

Arthur-related Welsh iconico-literary corpus. Likewise, a Christian secular priest, Layamon, was the first to render this material into the Anglo-Saxon language addressing both the British (Celtic) population and Anglo-Saxons settlers that firstly came into England as mercenaries after the invitation of king Vortingern.[719]

Last, the preeminence of the ecclesiastical-religious sphere can be interpreted in this context as sign of a relative subordination of the hegemonic political ideosphere to the religious-homogenizing goals of, at least, some important section of the English Church.[720] Yet the political factor was never completely absent and played an increasingly important role during the Tudor period and onwards. Proportionally, King Arthur's mythopoietic shape-shifting consists of successive stages of a complex politico-religious process functionally intertwined both with the century-long Christianization of Britain and with the construction of the nation-identitary consciousness that paved the way for the Plantagenet and Tudor centralization and the crystallization of the United Kingdom, that led to the Act of Union in 1707, under the Stuarts.

3.29. Conclusions

The shape-shifting mythopoeia of King Arthur as hegemonic myth develops through three moments, whose specificities reveal their common essence as part and parcel

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[719] As for Vortingern's and Magnus Maximus's identity, Halsall states that, "There are grounds to suspect that Vortingern and Magnus Maximus were confused by the ninth century at least," op. cit., 214. according to Bede, Vortingern called the Anglo-Saxon to Britain in AD 428. For the passage in question, see Halsall, op. cit., 202: "Now Gildas 'Eastern Section' begins, with rumours of impending barbarian attack. A council, under a 'proud tyrant' (tyrannus superbus), invited the Saxons to defend Britain. This tyrant is named by Bede and later sources as a certain 'Vurtigernus'—Vortingern.'"

[720] Perhaps as it occurred in Greek Orthodox tradition with the popular deification of whom Odysseus Elytis called "the last of Hellenes," i.e. Constantine Palaeologus, so-called 'Μαρμαρινός Βασιλεύς,' ('The Marble King'): 'And there lying prone/always with an unbroken word/between his teeth/Himself/the last of the Hellenes!' Odysseus Elytis, 'Death and Resurrection of Constantine Paleologos', *boundary 2*, 1.2 (1973) 414-417, accessed 31-05-2015, Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/302516>

of a more general process: (1) *Pre-Galfridian Paradigmatopoeia*: Arthur as a Cornish-Welsh folk-hero, a chieftain showcasing courage and a pagan moral relativism. (Opera: *YG*, *CacO*, *AandP*, *GSonE*, and *QAH*. (2) *Paradigmatopheresis – Prototypopoeia*: Arthur's messianic semi-deification/christification. The immortal Savior-King which is construed via works such as *HB*, *AC*, *HRB*, *WRB*, *CB*, *GRB*, *JdA* and *Mn*, *AandK*, and *MA*. (3) *Prototypopheresis – Post-Galfridian/Post-Plantagenet Paradigmatopoeia*: Arthur as earthly dead, non-returning Prophet-King, in Heaven to the right of Christ. This shift in Arthur's myth-making has been examined in texts such as *ChHM*, *LPI* (c. 1193) and *SE* VIII, IX, X (critique of 'stage 2'), *ChMA*, *HRA* (critique of 'Stage 2'), and GRA (critique of 'stage 2').

These stages of King Arthur's mythopoetic shape-shifting are a complex politico-religious process functionally intertwined with both the Christianization of Britain and the construction of the nation-identity consciousness through which the Plantagenet and Tudor centralization, the crystallization of the United Kingdom, and the Act of Union in 1707 under the Stuarts were brought into reality.

4. THE CYBER-CULTURAL MEANING OF MYTH AND INSERTION OF KING ARTHUR'S AND EL CID'S MYTHIC TRADITION IN CYBERCULTURE: DE-SUBSTANTIATION, TRANSMEDIA STORYTELLING, AND CYBER-MYTHOPOEIA

4.1. Cybermyth and Cyber-Mythopoeia

The phenomena of cybermyth and cyber-mythopoiesis has a crucial importance here because of the inextricable cultural link between myth, man's self- and world-propriation, and the meaning of the Sacred and the Real. Therefore, as a necessary complement to the understanding of the most recent develpoments of the myth-making process of El Cid and King Arthur, the phenomenon of mythopoeia, and its transformations from pre-virtual 'traditional' onto-reality to cyberworldiness, as experienced today in the postindustrial society must carefully approached. In other words, it is necessary to understand the way in which traditional mythopoeia changes in the new context of cyberworldliness.

In previous sections, an analysis has been made of the process of myth-making of El Cid and King Arthur as hegemonic devices with religious and political functionality during the process of Christianization of Spain and Britain. It has been showed how these myths interlock with the hegemonic rhetoric of the Christian reconquest articulated with the shaping of a national identity and its procedural correlate, i.e. the monarchical Castilianization of the Iberian Peninsula (Spain) and the formation of the centralized English monarchy and United Kingdom (Britain). In this context, El Cid and King Arthur as mythemes/iconemes developed in a functional correspondence to the Christianization of Britain and Spain, and the establishment of national monarchies. El Cid and King Arthur

then appeared as myth-synthesis insofar as in them crystalized a variety of worldviews and textual-iconographical traditions –i.e. different iconosystems– to create a new transmedia narrative with a symbolico-allegorical character. Yet the mythopoetic expansion of El Cid and King Arthur as mythemes/iconemes is not exhausted in its traditional fashion. On the contrary, the myth's expansion has continued and consequently Arthurian and Cidian mythical substance has been not only adopted by the cyberculture but extensely intervened and transformed in the context of contemporary phenomena such as transmedia appropiations, storytelling expansion, and public intervention as a form of interactive reception.

Therefore, in order to understand the way in which El Cid and King Arthur as cyber-mythemes are morphed into cybermyths, and how they function in the new mythopoetic conditions of video games, it is necessary (1) to present the essential contrasts between cybermyth and traditional myth, (2) to approach the phenomena of cyberculture and cyberbeing generally and, more specifically, (3) to present and define the main ontological attributes of cyberculture and cyberbeing as techno-genetic phenomena, i.e. 'cyberman,' 'cybergame,' 'avatar,' 'unijectivity,' and 'uniject.'

4.2. Unijectivity

Unijectivity as a new form of subject-object relationship is crucial to understand the internal phenomenology of cyberbeing. In the article: "Byzantine Sacred Arts as Therapeutic Way: A Medieval 'Pharmakon' for the Cyberman," it has been stated that unijectivity appears as soon as a real subject morphs into a bio-cybernetic function of a self-replicating automat.[721] In the context of bio-person and cyber-automat interface, the

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[721] Yanes-Fernandez, Inti. "Byzantine Sacred Arts as Therapeutic Way: A Medieval *Pharmakon* for the Cyberman." *The International Journal of Religion and Spirituality in Society* 7, no. 4 (2017): 1-16, p. 5.

bio-person becomes a function of an artificially self-centered cyber-automat. Unijectivity

is a phenomenon clearly dinstinguised from mere subjectivity and embodies a form of

'self-identity' which is essentially different from both formal and dialectical logics. This

essential difference is granted by the fact of unijectivity's being a two-dimensional

convergence of onto- and cyber-reality. Even determined by objective beings and other

subjectivities, unijectivity notwithstanding must be understood as a decentered, virtual-

networked, *in-process* form of 'subjectivity,' which is determined by the fictional and

'transcendental' structures of cyberbeing.[722] As a cyber-structure, unijectivity is a process

ontologized by an interface or 'joint-device' that we call 'virtual cybergame.'[723] Therefore:

"Unijectivity is so the operative correlate of what John von Newman in 1958 named

technological 'singularity.'"[724]

4.3. 'Traditional' Myth and Cybermyth

Differently from traditional myth, cybermyth's function is no longer to preserve

anthropological ideals in the cultural imaginary by opening for them a horizon of possible

realization. On the contrary, cybermyth allows the virtual game to work as a "joint-device"

between onto-reality and cyberworld. The operational horizon in which bodyliness –now

turned into a virtual app and flux of stimuli– becomes oriented, i.e. re-ordered and re-

programmed, in the direction previously opened, preserved and guaranteed by game itself.

In this context, game acquires an ontological dimension while being a synthesis of

practical reason and 'existential' meaning. Now, mythic figures are not cultural archetypes,

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[722] Yanes-Fernandez, ibid.

[723] For this, see as an example the film *Gate to Avalon*, a Polish-Japanese coproduction directed by Mamuro Oshii.

[724] See Yanes-Fernandez, op. cit., 5.

340

prototypes or paradigms for imitation depicting an axiologico-ontological horizon under the fashion of traditional mythic heroes. Myth is now *just a* "cybermyth," i.e., a virtual function through which the body completes its cycle or virtualization and, being a de-substantiated flux of stimuli, finally turns into an "avatar," i.e. a form of cyberbeing belonging to the new meaning of Being that is the *cyberness* itself. In the traditional mythopoiesis the mythical figure –say Varuna, Prajapati, King Arthur or Quetzalcoatl– stands higher in power and ontological constitution than the innerworldly mankind and therefore opens a way toward mankind's perfection. In cyberworld, on the contrary, myth *as cybermyth* becomes the functional/operational correlate of the bio-person (the human player) and the 'avatar' –in myth-related video games the central hero, for instance El Cid or King Arthur– as the 'real' self-identical entity in possession of a significant 'itselfness.' For this reason, while in the traditional mythopoeia historical person (Arthur, El Cid) or the idea (immortality, cultural unity, social identity, etc.) and myth coincide and merge together to the point of being impossible to distinguish one from the other, in cyberworld the avatar as bio-cyber-interface differs from the myth incarnated in it insofar cybermyth works just as a stimulant correlate of the 'real' process occurring here, i.e. the game itself as being in-between previrtual facticity (onto-reality) and cyberbeing, that is as *di-version*. When the bio-player turns on the video game in which El Cid is the central hero, then he appropriates El Cid and morphs him into his avatar. Thus, avatar synchronically "exists" as both mytho-incarnation and bio-player (onto-reality)/cybergame (cyber-reality) interface. The avatar then can play this threefold role *precisely because it is not a myth proper in the traditional sense*. It is a *cybermyth*, and as such it replicates the logic of cyberbeing which essentially consists of onto-axiological de-centeredness, de-substantiation as virtualization,

341

technohedonism, techo-autopoeia, and onto-replication under the fashion of fictional transcendences. In cyberworld there are no 'ideals' or potentialities of being to be realized through knowledge –usually self-knowledge– or praxis –usually transformative praxis. In cyberworld there are only 'operations' based on –and intended for– ordering and programming. Furthermore, the experience of moral satisfaction is turned into a form of 'technohedonism' through the re-ordering and re-programming of bodyliness into a flux of stimuli, and of personhood into unijectivity in the cyberpreserving chronotope of the avatar. This cyberpreserving chronotope is now guaranteed by the 'transcendental experience' of cybergame.

Within the traditional categories of onto-reality, myth is a determining reference in culture and therefore the mythical entity carries a hierarchical degree of power. In cyberworld, myth is just a *function* of the cyber-gathering as 'calling-to-play' and 'stimuli-reordering-and-reprogramming', subdued to the gathering power of the avatar as the highest possible cyberfacticity: *the in(cyber)carnation of cybergame*. In this sense, the essence of cyberness is the gathering together as avatar by cybermyth in the chronotope of cybergame. For instance, in the film *Avalon*,[725] for the bio-players 'Avalon,' as the mystical Ile or as symbolico-allegoric reference to human mystical transformation, is totally meaningless; yet it is not either a mere name: 'Avalon' as myth is here the 'calling-to-play' as a gathering in the in(cyber)carnation of the avatar. Thus, Avalon itself and its ethico-ontological horizon of meaning are meaningless: what is important now is not 'becoming something beyond oneself' in the sense of a cultural, moral or spiritual achievement, *but rather being gathered together by cybermyth's call-to-play to the re-*

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[725] *Avalon*, dir. Mamoru Oshii (2001), film, accessed 05/19/2017, http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0267287/.

ordering and re-programming of the body as decentered flux of stimuli and of the self-conscious self as the avatar's bio-function. This systematic de-substantiation that belongs to the essence of cyberbeing is called here "surface modeling" as a function of the more general process of genesis of fictional transcendences.

Thus, the essence of cyberbeing gathers together as the virtual facticity of cyberworldliness in cyberspatiality. The re-ordered and re-programmed body, along with an in(cyber)carnated consciousness in the avatar called-to-play by cybermyth, this cyborg-like meta-personhood dwells necessarily –according the 'pre-virtual' ontological perspective– as 'being there,' 'in-the-world.' But, what happens when bodyliness is just a flux of stimuli pouring out toward re-ordering and re-programming, and consciousness becomes a decentered polynomial structure anchored in cyber-facticity, not of traditional space and body but of avatar and cyber-spatiality? Is there room for any form of 'dwelling,' as dwelling is the way in which man exists as "being-in-the-world" *self-propriating* in the openness thrown to Transcendence? Indeed, there is. Man exists in a way that he cannot prevent himself from dwelling. The question then is: where does cyberman dwell? It has been shown that cyberworld is necessarily a form of spatiality: a cyber-spatiality. Cyberman as an avatar-centered, called-to-play-by-myth creature is an existential ecstasy also in this new context. As a self-projecting intentionality, man keeps always 'timing' and 'spacing' as *propriating* in the search after Meaning. This means that man exists in cyberworld in *the most peculiar way* of timing and spacing. In the cyberworld, pre-virtual man becomes an avatar gathered together (in[cyber]carnated) by myth in the cyberspatiality. But, what is the essence of cyberspatiality? This essence must certainly be *that* for whose sake the whole process of gathering together, calling-to-play,

343

de-substantiating cybermythopoiesis, and in(cyber)incarnation takes place: i.e., the *game itself.* Yet surely not "game" in the applied sense of playing a 'video game' or a 'table game,' but rather 'game' in the most essential way *of being a joint-device between onto-reality and cyberworldliness*, for the sake of ontoconversion, as re-ordering and re-programming the body into a chaotic flux of stimuli, and consciousness as a decentered cybernetic polynomial matrix.

Therefore, while man as "being-in-the-world" dwells as propriating in the neighborhood of things, the bio-player is gathered by cybermyth 'from a most radical instance' toward his cyberspatiality. In other words, both cyberworldliness and its facticity as cyberspatiality respond to the calling of a more original unconcealment of Being: *the game as a form of man's being in-the-free*, i.e. being openness to Transcendence *as pure no-thing*. In this sense, man dwells in cyberspatiality as "cyberbeing-in-the-game." And here the essence of cyberworldliness and cyberspatiality gets disclosed: there is nothing in them more solid, more 'stable,' and more perpetual *than game*. Naturally, while in the essence of onto-reality Being still has absolute preeminence, in cyberworldliness on the contrary Being has been gathered together through ontoconversion in the game as a self-reordering and self-reprogramming polynomial device. Consequently, man's being called to be avatar by cybermyth ceases then to be properly 'ontological' and becomes 'operational': a 'called-to-play-in-the-game cyberbeing' in the horizon of fictional transcendence.

4.4. Cyberculture and Cyberbeing

Within the framework of cyberbeing, the self morphs into a function of a new fictional cybersubject (the avatar) insofar as 'onto-reality' and bodiliness become scattered

shadows, as 'flux of stimuli' re-ordered and re-programmed in the cyberspatiality, by the 'game' as the joint-device between emptied onto-reality and cyberbeing. There is a total dissociation between body and selfness as the itselfness in general turns into a decentered pluralized polynomial: body itself becomes a function in the sense of an 'app' of the 'real,' that is a virtual cybercorporality based on cyberspatiality. The essence of cyberspatiality is virtual timelessness, exponential radicalization of the phenomenon of de-distancing, bodily de-encarnation, and "decenteredness."[726] In a clear way, in cyberbeing pure spatiality is unconcealed as the essence of time. This space-time relation had been pointed out by Hegel: "*Essence* is infinity as the *supersession* of all distinctions, the pure movement of axial rotation, its self-repose being an absolutely restless infinity; independence itself, in which the differences of the movements are resolved, the simple essence of Time which, in this equality with itself, has the stable shape of Space."[727] Also, Martin Heidegger points out that the experience of time has existential roots and, as such, it can be reduced to the primordial phenomenon of spatiality as the essence of Dasein's worldliness. In *Being and Time*, a "concept" on the "average everydayness of Dasein" is already gained. In its average everydayness, from an 'existentiell' perspective, Dasein "…can thus be determined as *entangled-disclosed*, *thrown-projecting being-in-the-world*, *which is concerned with its ownmost potentiality in its being together with the "world" and in being-with [Mitsein] others*."[728] Space then is neither an attribute of a world different from

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[726] For phenomenon of "de-distancing," see Heidegger, *Being and Time*, op. cit., 116: "The true spatial meaning of these expressions of Dasein ["The 'here,' 'over there,' and 'there'], however, documents the fact that the theoretically undistorted interpretation of Dasein sees the latter immediately in its spatial 'being-together-with' [Sein bei] the world taken care of, spatial in the sense of de-distancing [see German word *Entfernung*] and directionality."

[727] G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology…*, op. cit., 106.

[728] Heidegger, *Being and Time*, op. cit., 175-176.

Dasein nor an epistemological transcendental structure of Dasein's mind; on the contrary, the existential structures of *Mitsein* and *Mitdasein* [Dasein with] are "equiprimordial structures of Dasein together with *being-in-the-world*."[729] Heidegger notes the self-referentiality of Dasein as "I here."[730] This is essential because it points to two possible interpretations: "It is disputed whether the primordial meaning of locative expressions is adverbial or pronominal."[731] If pronominal, then we find a 'subject an sich' that must immediately be considered as an 'an und für sich,' entity, in other words, an ontologically autonomous subject that is *in front of*, *beyond*, or *out of the world*, but always essentially different from the world. Heidegger's indication in this important dispute of pronominal or adverbial preeminence of the expression "I here" is that: "The 'here,' 'over there,' and 'there' are not primarily pure locative designations of innerworldly beings objectively present at positions in space, but rather, characteristics of the primordial spatiality of Dasein. The supposedly locative adverbs are determinations of Dasein; they have primarily an existential, not a categorial, meaning."[732] Thus, in cyberbeing, for the first time the essence of man's being and consciousness, as well as his most primordial ontological structures, have reached their highest degree of externation, but in a totally alienated way as a virtual cyberworld. That is why we call this phenomenon 'fictional transcendence.'[733]

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[729] Ibid., 111.

[730] Ibid., 116.

[731] Ibid.

[732] Ibid. See also note 461 of the present work.

[733] As we will see, fictional transcendence is the most proper way of cyberbeing's being.

4.5. Ontology of Cyberbeing

Polish scholar Mariola Anita Sulkowska-Janovska states that: "The contemporary desire for virtualization somehow corresponds with religious will of transcendency."[734] Sulkowska-Janovska, however, does not seem to recognize the groundbreaking phenomenon that: "in cyberbeing, alongside all its concrete phenomenal modes, takes place the unconcealment of Being by showing man's transcendental (and therefore most proper) way of being."[735] The occurence of cyberculture appears for Western cultural experience as a fate, i.e. a "destining of revealing."[736] In cyberbeing and cyberculture unconcealment of man's transcendental structures takes palce in a way never witnessed before, with the only exception of Judeo-Christian personalistic mysticism. Western culture is definitely dwelling in 'cyberspace,' or it is at least preparing its definite entrance into the new world-epoch of 'cyberage.' In this sense, certainly, "digital technology and cybernetic 'intelligence' are indeed a shared destination as bio-social setting which we cannot just get rid of. And this because:

> In general, in the cyberage man belongs to cyberculture insofar as he finds himself already thrown into the cyberworld dealing with cyber-technological devices as techno-prosthesis at hand. Cyberbeing discloses […] man's onto-formal Transcendentals in the most peculiar but also most alienated way. Cyberculture is neither the opposite of the Sacred nor the absolute oblivion of it […] it is a peculiar way of dawning of the Sacred as a destination in post-industrial, web-networked digital cybersociety. In *cyber-ness* there is already something that belongs to the Sacred and to the essence of man as *homo theologicus*: the spell before the appearance of beings (the platonic νῦν δ' ἠπορήκαμεν...) and the wonder of "freedom" beyond "meatspatial" limitations.[737]

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[734] Mariola Anita Sulkowska-Janovska, "The virtualization of body," *Analecta Husserliana*, ed. A. T. Tymieniecka, 112 (2012): 189.

[735] Yanes-Fernandez, op. cit., 4.

[736] We follow in this essay Martin Heidegger's understanding of the notion of "destining" in history as crystalized in the word *Geschick*. See "The Question Concerning Technology," see note 12, 331.

[737] Yanes-Fernandez, op. cit., 4-5.

How could man be free, constrained by the horizon of a world that shows well-distinct, objective entities whose existence precisely creates man's selfhood as the experience of a limit, as *subjectivity*, and whose ontic attributes as space, time, identity, difference, etc., appear to have ontological preeminence over man's own way of being? How could man dwell bordered by objective things and be at the same time limitless and infinite as a person? In cyberbeing, a solution to these existential *aporias* was found, though a fictional one. Indeed, in the essence of cyberbeing dawns the unconcealment of Being destining man towards his post-objectual liberation in the Sacred, but in an alienated way essentially strange to onto-reality. Cyberbeing appears in culture as a fictional epiphany of the most proper way of dwelling, i.e. of "being-in-the-world" through death towards Transcendence, as will to blissful perpetuity. In order to witness this phenomenon, we aim to develop here a non-judgmental approach to it. Indeed, what must be done is to let cyberness *show* its most peculiar way of being.

The origin of unijectivity lies in the subject's shifting from onto-reality to cyberbeing as a function of a self-replicating automat. Replicating man's consciential intentionality, this automat gains 'human' profile and becomes an *avatar*. The avatar then comes into existence as a digital parasite that 'feeds' on bio-person's ontology insofar as the latter, dwelling still in onto-reality, cannot but being always and necessarily a self-conscious being. Indeed, person's phenomenological complexity as a self-conscious entity is gathered upon the bio-person itself within the framework of its interacting with both its objective and subjective environment. This is empowered by the fact that "consciousness in its activity is, in the first instance, a relationship of two extremes."[738] It this case, person still appears as a self-centered subject,

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[738] G. W. F. Hegel, "Freedom of Self-Consciousness," *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A. V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 133.

and its inner phenomenology constitutes a dynamic subjectivity. However, the decreased self-propriation and the cyber-subjection regarding to which man is reified throughout the process of avatar-making and in(cyber)carnation, turn human person into a '*minus*-subject' networked to a web of '*minus*-subjectivities' which are fundamentally intertwined with and therefore estranged in cyberbeing, now under the fashion of bio-digital interfaces (Figure 36).
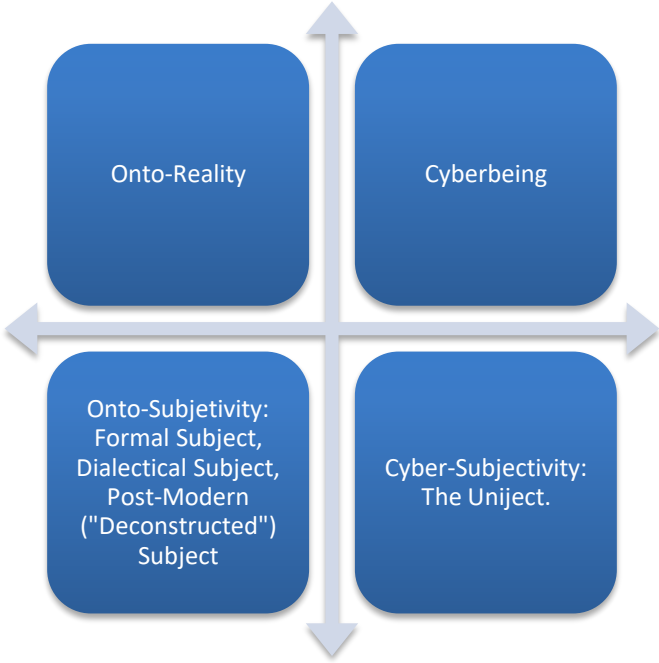

Figure 36: Bio-person and Cyber-Automat Interface

Certainly, in this phenomenal context of bio-person and cyber-automat interface, "the bio-person becomes a function of the artificially self-centered cyber-automat. Cyber-automat's self-centeredness is artificial because it depends on the real person to exist as a

cyber-reality. Yet this is not perceived in this way by the bio-person that grants the cyber-automat its mediated existence."[739]

4.6. De-substantiation and Cyber-Mythopoeia: Myth as 'Call-to-Play'

So far it has been described the phenomenical context in which traditional myth turns into cybermyth as part of cyberculture. Such as the context has changes, similarly the ways of mythopoeia along with the modes of reception of myths have had essential transformations. Myth itself as a cultural product and the receptor as a historical self-consciousness are now part of what has been called here cyberculture. The traditional receptor, whose self-understanding was barely mediated by any technological bridging, no longer exists. The gnoseological input of cybercultural subjects in our technologically driven world is always necessarily mediated by cyber-technology. In the same way, cultural products that see the light in our interactive village reveal the trace of the cybernetic branding. Precisely, phenomena of cybermyth and cyber-mythopoeia are critical due to the inextricable cultural link between mythical imaginations and self- and world-interpreting, as well as between the problem of experience of the Sacred –present in myth– and the ultimate nature of reality. Myth in general, as mythemic structure, is a complex icono-discursive construction that projects the ultimate ontico-ontological self-interpretation of man in the cultural imaginary, and therefore myth is essentially intertwined with man's axiological taxonomy and his searching after existential meaning. But at this point 'myth' is to be distinguished from 'cybermyth.' Being itself a cybernetic

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[739] Yanes-Fernandez, op. cit., 6. For a further development of the relationship between bio-person and avatar in the context of bio-digital interface, for our interpretation of cyberman as a form of digital "Unhappy Consciounsess," and for the intersection of unijectivity and the 'avatar-syndrome' as a cybercultural disease, see Yanes-Fernandez, op. cit., 6-10.

entity, cybermyth's function no longer preserves in the cultural symbolico-imaginary anthropological ideals that sustain values and identity and allows virtual cybergame to function as digital interface between bio-person and cyberbeing. Cyberworld is now the digital operative horizon in which the virtualized corporality, as flux of stimuli, becomes re-ordered and re-programmed in the direction previously opened, preserved, and guaranteed by virtual cybergame itself. Surely, what is implied here is not just the 'game' in the sense of, for instance, playing a video game, but rather the cybergame in the most essential way of being a joint-device interfacing onto-reality and cyberbeing for the sake of a de-carnation that morphs avatar into a virtual substrate for cyberman's "quality of subjective reality."[740] Cyberculture appears as the destining of revealing of our time, promising post-industrial man both a self-granted happiness and a cyber-immortality. Undoubtedly, *some* of this can be granted to cyberman via technological devices, but only in an alienated way, i.e. as fictional transcendences. Therein lies perhaps the greatest danger.

4.7. Medieval Public Minstrel and Post-Human Player

Medieval public dwelled somewhat in a virtual world. It was a perceptional virtuality determined by the special presence of Transcendence in the world. This experienced was synthesized in the notions of *analogia entis* and God's *immanence* in Being itself. This immancence of God in Being allowed medieval philosophy to create transcendental categories of Being itself: True, Beautiful, and Good. Clear enough, the foundations of this ontology where laid by Aristotle's doctrine of the "first ontology." Yet medieval virtuality does not imply an onto-emptying as it occurs in cyberbeing. The

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[740] This virtual substrate still requires the material substrate of the cybermachine. See D. I. Dubrovsky, note 26.

351

symbolico-allegorical device of medieval episteme, interlaced with the aforementioned notions of *analogia entis* and the transcendentals of Being, prevents medieval consciousness from estrangement in a de-ontologized *imago mundi* and guarantees the coherent correspondence between aesthetic consciousness and ontological categories. After the "Copernican revolution" of Modernity and the interpretation of the Self as absolute ontologico-epistemological principle, this correspondence aesthetico-ontological is preserved in the empirico-transcendental subjectitvity with its *a priori* epistemological categories (Descartes, Kant, Leibniz), or in the synthesis of the dialectical self-mediations of the *Absolute Idee* in the perfect concept of Itself and its history, which is at the same time the complete actualization of its most essential way of being (Hegel). Cyberculture, based upon the world as opened and proprieated by cyberbeing, lacks anchoring in onto-reality. Therefore, in cyber-reality there is no effective symbolic device bridging public reception, aesthetic consciousness, and ontological categories in a way that the hermeneutic act leads to the experience of a higher order of Being. In cyberbeing, public consciousness and representation become indissoluble, forming the interiority of the uniject. The self-consciousness of the uniject does not lie upon the experience of Beauty as "one way in which truth essentially occurs as unconcealment" of Being in the "work-being of the work,"[741] but upon the avatar gathered together by the game as "call-to-play" in the interactive, decentered, and polymorphic cyber-spaciality. Now, myth as cybermyth is deprived of relevant symbolico-allegorical capacity, and this for two main reasons: first, there is no personal self-centered entity to be called to witness the unconcealment of Being and, second, there is no Being to be unconcealed, *other than game itself*. This is the new

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[741] Martin Heidegger, "The Origin of the Work of Art," in David Farrel Krell (ed.), op. cit., 180-181.

context of reception of El Cid and King Arthur as cybermyths. They have been stripped of all tropologico-analogical meaning and of all allegorical effectiveness and became the *play-full* justification of avatar's cyberexistence. Cybermyths as cyberbeing's data chanelling, essentially linked to cyber-technohedonism, constitute the onto-emptied inversion of traditional pre-cybercultural myths.

Yet following Claude Levi-Strauss's interpretation of mythemes and discrete unfolding of mythical unities, it cannot be denied that the cyber-apropriation of traditional mythemes along their variations constitutes a legitimate moment of the same myth-bundle. They are part of the re-shaping of myths as entities functionally connected with their historico-cultural environment. For that reason, we must examine some of these variations in their new context of cyberbeing and observe the way in which they respond to their primary function as tools of cybergame.

In cybermyth three essential facts take place: (1) Change of cultural function: myth loses its hegemonic dimension as linked to a specific power device; (2) change of cultural meaning: myth loses its allegorical dimension as part of a political imaginary connected with the formation of national identities and the design of the collective memory; (3) material change: myth's existence is regarded as a virtual entity in the context of cyber-technology. In other words, myth is not primarily understood as a cultural event, *but as technological phenomenon*. This means the total disconnection of myth from any non-cybertechnological form of cultural being. Thus, traditional bundles like oral tradition and myth, or literature and myth become meaningless, until they reappear in the new mythical milieu of cyberculture. An outstanding example of this is the movie *King Arthur: The Legend of a Sword* (2017). First, differently from most electronic games, de-

mythologization appears here as a hermeneutic act, i.e. as a re-mythologization. This gives a continuity to the diachronic unfolding of the Arthur mytheme at the very core of cyberculture. Many essential aspects of the myth are radically changed. While the Christian aspect is almost missing, the celtic-magical enviroment is overemphasized. Arthur fights against king Vortingern, as suggested by Arthur's phrase: "why to have enemies when you can have friends." Peace with the Vikings –we guess that also with the Saxons, an achievement of King Alfred the Great– was reached without any battle. Merlin the Magician is an opponent now allied with Vortingern, and a woman mage that might well be Morgan le Fai becomes Arthur's irreplaceable *adjuvant* in his path toward his *objet*.[742] These shifts impact pre-extant elements which are common to the traditional variants of the myth and recreates its development. Given that the fabula essentially remains within the mythical world, *these changes are a continuity of King Arthur's myth-making within cyberculture*, and respond to the call of cyberbeing: it is surely a story of courage, bravery, and dispensation of justice, yet it is first and foremost *a call-to-entertainment*.

The call-to-entertainment, in which onto-reality is reduced to a tool of technohedonism, essentially belongs to the call-to-play that summons man to the kingdom of cyberbeing through game as a joint-device. While traditional myth-making developed in analogy to the Christianization of Britan and Spain and the formation of a national mocharchy, now the mythopoiesis responds to cybergame as an *end-in-itself*. The goal is the game as such, and therefore *entertainment*, i.e. *di-version*. Insofar as diversion

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[742] See Dirk de Geest, "Le schema actantiel," *La sémiotique narrative de A. J. Greimas*, in *Image [&] Narrative: Online Magazine of the Visual Narrative* 5(2003), accessed 05/15/2017, http://www.imageandnarrative.be/inarchive/uncanny/dirkdegeest.htm.

constitutes the nucleus of this seeming unity, this unity shown in the entertaining cyberdevice is *radically deceitful*: it is just the concentration of the polynomial dispersion of interactive, decentered cyberconsciousness through digital cyberlanguage. This electronic immanence appears as a transcendence, yet its transcendental' constitution is nothing more than the emotional, self-limited response of the subject involved in this aesthetic 'paradise' of autonomous sound, color, and shape motion. Second, the preeminence of the celtic-magical element is aligned with the cyber-experience of dominance of the almighty avatar, in which cyber-reality holds sway over onto-reality and determines its modes of being. The cyber-reality constructed through the power of the digital machine grants the artificial control of events as a characteristic of cyberbeing. The preeminence of the Celtic-magical element is partly achieved through the substantial oblivion of the Christian narrative that essentially pertains to the traditional Arthurian saga. Third, the empathy-creating visual effects –especially low-motion progressions and fast changes of camera angle– play an essential role in underscoring the spectator's involvement in the *fabula*. Yet this spectator is not passive but active to the extent that he accompanies Arthur through his different 'levels' and tests in order to reach his ultimate goal: accepting the sword, i.e. his past, his kingship, and his destiny. The essential digital fabric of the production presents it under the aesthetical fashion of the electronic video-game. But, precisely because of that, the spectator's activity arises from his involvement in Arthur's *peripetiae*, who acts *in lieu of* his viewers as an avatar in an electronic videogame. In this sense, the spectator's activity within the aesthetic framework of the movie appears to be hermeneutically passive. The more involved the spectator becomes in the movie, the lesser he is demanded to *understand* the myth in its traditional context with its spiritual and

existential meanings. Here the 'subject/myth' unity observed in traditional societies is replicated by the aesthetic involvement of the average viewer in the *fabula* as a fictional transcendence, i.e. as a 'reality' in which the average viewer's moral imperative is satisfied under the aesthetically formal fashion of the epic sentiment. This epic sentiment, however, is totally formal and therefore essentially strange to the viewer's average existence. Then, the satisfaction is not only *purely aesthetic* and hence deeply disconnected from any practical imperative of moral kind, but also alienated, insofar as it is the cybercultural form of the average viewer's most radical moral and ontological consciousness: a fictional transcendence. This aesthetic 'ecstasis-by-machine' morphs the epic sentiment into the fictional transcendence of *entertainment* as a form of the 'call-to-play.'

The main relationship between average viewer and movie is not *in any sense* hermeneutical *but radically sentimental*. This means that the critical distance of logocentric subjectivity is completely abolished and superseded by the formal-aesthetic involvement that belongs to cyber-subjectivity. King Arthur's myth and the mythical world it opens around itself are not there to be *primarily thought about* or *imitated* but merely enjoyed aesthetically as entertainment *for the sake of entertainment*. Despite this, it is worth noting that, as a moment of the traditional myth, the actantial structure of the diegesis is interlocked through the principles of onto-reality, i.e. the struggle between Good and evil, the hero's movement from ontological possibility (*dynamis*) to fulfillment (*energia*) as a symbol of and paradigm to mankind, and most importantly the location of the action in the chronotope of onto-reality as such. King Arthur, the sword, the mythical events, all of it is *real* in analogy to the human reality within the framework of this mythopoetic imaginary. The expressive language of the movie, however, lacks aesthetic autonomy insofar as it

356

clearly replicates the iconographical turn of video games. In her review of the movie, Susan Granger puts her finger on the sore by pointing out the disturbing vicinity of the movie to video games: "On the Granger Movie Gauge of 1 to 10, *King Arthur: Legend of the Sword* is a fumbling, fractured 4, unfolding like a frantic video game."[743] Another movie is worth examining here, in which Arthur's myth –especially its most mystical moment, i.e. the 'Avalon-chronotope'– is *completely embedded into cyberbeing* as directly related to cybergame. We refer to *Avalon*.[744]

4.8. Avalon in Cinema

In a future world in which unijectivity exists as the essential form of cybersubjectivity, an estranged society is increasingly becoming addicted to an illegal battle simulation-game called Avalon. A star player named Ash hears of rumors that there is a more advanced level of the game. Then she returns from her seclusion and joins a gang of explorers. The movie presents a sordid portrayal of the near cybertechnological future in an unreal town located somewhere in Central Europe. The town is gloomy and anarchic. Onto-reality has become a dystopic shadow, an oppressive chronotope that can be sorted out only by entering the cyberworld of the game. Yet this game has an ontological peculiarity: once players gets inside, they can only return to onto-reality by triumphing at the game. Thus, the player can die or otherwise remain trapped in a kind of cyberlimbo. Ash, ignoring all warnings, decides to play anyway and reach the highest game level:

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[743] Susan Granger, review of *King Arthur: Legend of the Sword*, in "Susan Granger's review of 'King Arthur: Legend of the Sword' (Warner Bros.)," section *Susan Granger: Entertainment Commentaries*, 13 May 2017, Movie Reviews, accessed 05/18/2017, http://www.susangranger.com/?p=9716.

[744] See note 664.

Avalon. In a dialogue with Bishop, another character-player, the latter describes to Ash what must be done to successfully complete the game:

> There's just one thing you have to do to complete it. That's finishing off the Unreturned. Your equipment and skill parameters are returned to default. All you have is a pistol and one clip of ammunition. There are neutral characters operating under free will. Hurt one of them and your game is over. There's no time limit. The only exit from the game is completion. If you get back safely, you can be one of us. Any questions?[745]

The parallelisms between Arthurian Avalon and the movie's namesake battle game are evident. In both cases, Avalon is the metaphysical chronotope which stands opposed to the world. Avalon appears linked to warfare, and triumph or death constitute semantic fields on which the relation to Avalon depends. Nevertheless, while Arthurian Avalon is opposed to the world *only in degree* but not in essence, the cyber-Avalon appears opposite to the world *in an essential way*. Arthur's Ile of Avalon is a space of healing, paralleled to the Heaven when Christ – like King Arthur in the mystic Ile – awaits the right moment for His Second Advent. Arthurian Avalon is soteriological and numinous. On the contrary, the cyber-Avalon is gloomy and destructive: it is the negation of onto-reality. To keep being *real*, players must win over Avalon. Therefore, this Avalon can be considered the alienated unconcealment of man's formal ontological Transcendetals and, to such an extent, cyber-Avalon appears as the highest form of fictional transcendendence in cyberculture. Yet the characters in the movie *are already located* within the horizon of subjectivity proper to cyberbeing, i.e. unijectivity. Therefore, as it is Murphy's case in the story ending, when high-performance players reach the highest levels and experience the virtual chronotope of cyber-Avalon, they may decide to be counted among the Unreturned: yet not among the

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[745] See "Avalon: Quotes," in *IMDb*, accessed 05/19/2017, http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0267287/trivia?tab=qt&ref_=tt_trv_qu.

Unreturned ones who died after losing the game, rather among those who freely chose cyber- over onto-reality. *Avalon*'s transmedia appropriation of Arthurian mytheme morphs the traditional myth into a cyber-myth insofar as it changes not only the expression media and some circumstantial states of things, but also the myth's plot of events and their deepest meaning. At this point, the movie shows the essential world-uncanniness of the characters along with their paradoxical empathy with cyber-Avalon. Ash's 'world-apathy / cyberAvalon-empathy' opposition exists on the basis of the functional correspondence between subjectivity (as unijectivity) and Avalon (as cyberbeing). 'Technohedonism' and 'fictional transcendences' are joint-categories which grant the total interface between bio-player and cybergame.

4.9. King Arthur, El Cid, and Transmedia Storytelling

King Arthur's and El Cid's mythical stuff has been reinterpreted in the context of the alternative reality games (RAG), this change showing the passing from onto-reality to cyber-reality as ontological *alternative*. This process of cybernetic mythopoiesis has evolved through the channels opened by a more general process: the transmedia appropriation of traditional materials, a process that Henry Jerkins newly-branded in 2003 under the name "Transmedia Storytelling."[746] Essentially, Jenkins recognizes that the transmedia process is as old as human communication media: "For most of human history, it would be taken for granted that a great story would take many different forms, enshrined in stain glass windows or tapestries, told through printed words or sung by bards and poets,

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[746] See Henry Jenkins, "Rewriting Life: Transmedia Storytelling: Moving Characters from Books to Films to Video Games Can Make Them Stronger and More Compelling," in *MIT Technology Review* (2003), accessed 05/18/2017, https://www.technologyreview.com/s/401760/transmedia-storytelling/.

or enacted by traveling performers."[747] Thus, a phenomenon of transmedia storytelling

takes place when traditional materials experience more or less essential changes in their

ontogrammar via the transmedia conversion. This affects in a special way the figure of the

traditional hero. In their book, *Transmedia Archaeology: Storytelling in the Borderlines of*

Science Fiction, Comics, and Pulp Magazines, Carlos Scolari, Paolo Bertetti, and Matthew

Freeman develop an analysis of how the storytelling and the hero as its referential figure

change through the process of transmedia appropiations.[748] They summarize the symbolic

transactions between traditional canon as brought up by the Media Industry and receptors'

transformative interventions – what they call "collaborative culture" or "fandom" – under

the formula:

 Media Industry (canon) + Collaborative Culture (fandom) = Transmedia Storytelling[749]

Also, in narratological terms, the same phenomenon can be traced in the convergence of

narrative expansion –or further unfolding of pre-extant narrative contents– and media

expansion essentially linked to the technological development, as a single narrative

experience. Scolari, et al. present this convergence in the relation:

 Narrative Expansion + Media Expansion = Transmedia Storytelling[750]

As we can see in several video games, many of mythemes forged and developed in the

early Middle Age via troubadours and minstriles thoughout Europe, such as King Arthur

and El Cid, are being reappropiated and reshaped by cyberculture according to the new

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[747] Ibid.

[748] See Carlos Scolari, Paolo Bertetti and Matthew Freeman, *Transmedia Archaeology: Storytelling in the Borderlines of Science Fiction, Comics, and Pulp Magazines* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

[749] Ibid., 3.

[750] Ibid., 4.

epistemological categories of cybersubjectivity and the chronotopic dimensions of cyberbeing. These changes do not affect only the narrative form (spatial-temporal relations, diegetic structure, text, image, etc.) or the artifact's materiality as such (music, oral poetry or chronicle, written text, etc.) but also the elements of the *fabula* and therefore the myth-making process proper as the events and hero's fate change, the notions of heroism and the connections between the hero's world and its values and the average man's 'real life' dramatically transform. Even the conception of war and the reasons for fighting vary from a societal formation to another –for instance, from the medieval notion of honorable vassalage and universal justice, to the modern notion of 'fight for the fatherland,' to the cybercultural technohedonist experience of cybergame as pure, i.e. de-ideologized *entertainment* or *di-version*. In some cases, specially when some cultural education is necessary, these *fabula* shifts respond lesser to the mass participation of average consumers than to the active recreations of certain users who are familiar with traditional myths, or with the technological media, or with both. Whether there is a massive participation or not, the fact is that users/consumers, within the decentered, interactive and fluid logic of cyberbeing, are able to intervene and reshape traditional mythemes and mythical stories according new interpretations and perspectives. This phenomenon is contained in what Scolari et al. have called the "fandom." According to them:

> The second feature of transmedia storytelling is the participation of users in the extension of the narrative worlds. We could image a pyramid of user participation and engagement: on the base, we find the consumer of a single media product … on the second level, the consumer of the different media products … on the third level, the fan who shares contents online and actively participates in the conversations around the narrative world; finally, on the top of the pyramid we find the prosumer: the fan who produces new contents and expands the narrative world. This is the core of the fan culture.[751]

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[751] Ibid., 2-3.

Figure 37 shows the pyramidal variations in the relation between mythistorema, media, and consumers in the case of El Cid's and King Arthur's video games.
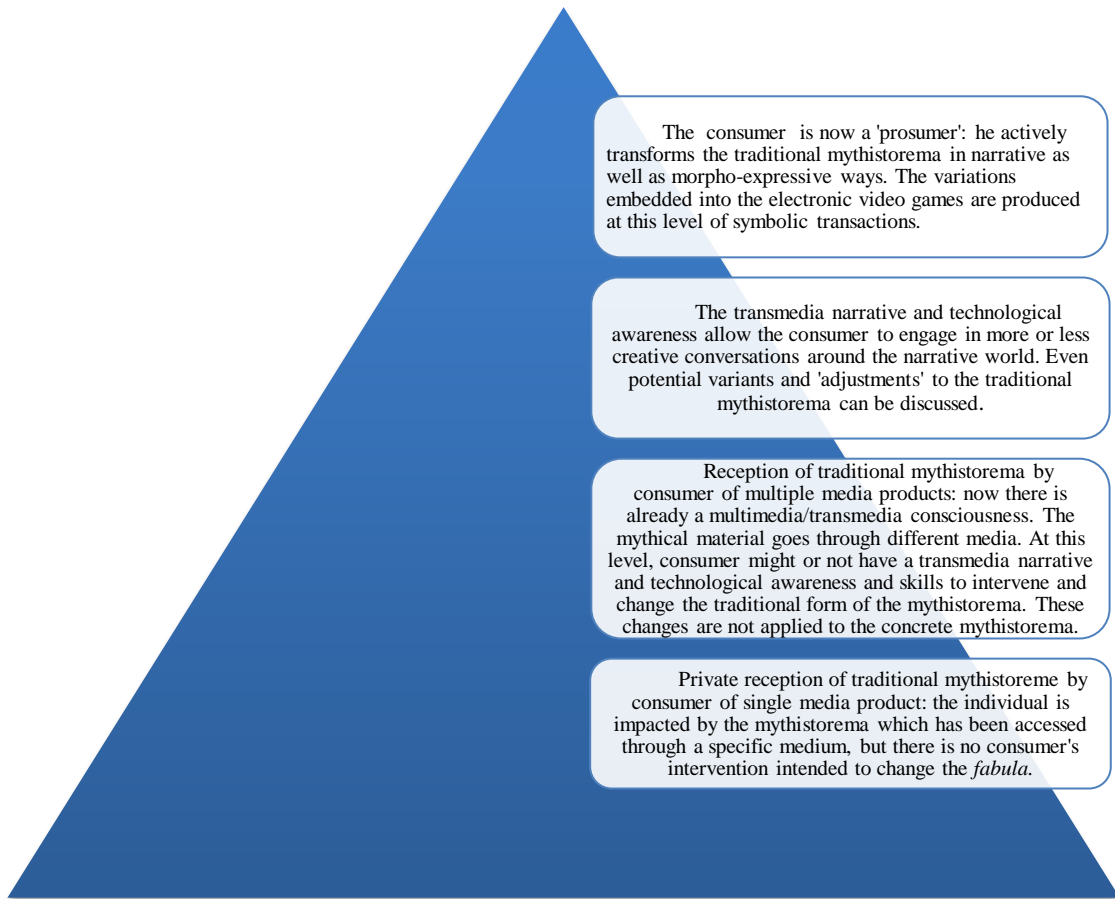

Figure 37: Transmedia Storytelling.

4.10. King Arthur as Cybermyth in Video Games

The specific transmedia appropriation not only implies but pressuposes the transformation of the hero's ontogrammar. For instance, in the video game "King Arthur: The Role-Playing Wargame (2009),"[752] Arthur is an interactive figure whose profile

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[752] Video game *King Arthur: The Role-Playing Wargame (2009)*, in *dfgames.net*, accessed 05/18/2017, http://dfgames.net/5450-king-arthur-the-role-playing-wargame.html.

essentially might change according the player's decisions: the prototypal hero is now in a first moment the cybernetic half-interface (in cyber-reality) to be completed by another half-interface in the onto-reality, i.e. the player himself.[753] Once cyber-Arthur and bio-player interact, the new cyber-reality will assume a leading role on the cyber-stage insofar as this new cyber-relaity will constitute the truth of both original cyber-Arthur and original bio-player, i.e. the avatar. Thus, we have: *Original Cyber-Arthur (half-interface) + Original Bio-Player (another half-interface) = Avatar (the truth of both summands.)* In the game guidelines, the potential player is invited to create his own legend by interacting with the game. We also read that:

> The saga of King Arthur is an epic tale about the conquest of Britannia through a story-based campaign. The Campaign is divided into chapters, like a chronicle, each with a unique tone and theme. The chapters all have objectives, long- and short-term goals that also fit together to draw a grandiose picture of an unfolding storyline. There are many possible events and outcomes that all influence the legend itself and determine the ending of the storyline.[754]

The bio-player is summoned to the game by the call "Create your own legend!" On the one side, this points to the player's creative capacity and, on the other, to the essential interative openness of the myth and the prosumer's collaborative operation. Yet the context of creation now is neither the *Volksbewusstsein* nor the epico-historiographical recreation of identity-related events and characters, but just the will to play. As a form of technohedonism. Indeed, the creative act as such is determined here by the technohedonist attitude that interprets cybertechnology as a matrix for self-creation or autogenesis. By producing the 'bio-player / cyber-hero' interface, the game as a joint-device not only

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[753] For other video games in which King Arthur features as the main hero, see Category of Arthurian games, in Wikipedia: https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Arthurian_games. See also, hyperlink "related games," in http://dfgames.net/5450-king-arthur-the-role-playing-wargame.html.

[754] Video game *King Arthur: The Role-Playing Wargame (2009)*, op. cit.

creates a 'new reality'; the game through the "call to play" creates *the reality* in proper

terms, i.e. the avatar. This shape-shifting dynamic is determined by the fact that, as Paolo

Bertetti indicates, "fictional worlds (transmedia or otherwise) and fictional characters are

not consistent … fictional worlds are generally inhabited by a multitude of characters, and

the different stories that are told in these shared universes may focus on any one of

them."[755] Different stories may focus also on any one of the mythopoetic shape-shifting of

the same core-mytheme. Thus, in the "Morality Chart" of *King Arthur: The Role-Playing*

Wargame (2009)'s guidelines, the player is told that: "Every decision in the game will

influence the position of King Arthur on the Morality Chart. King Arthur might become a

Christian ruler or the Follower of the Old Faith; a rightful or a ruthless monarch. These

choices unlock special contents, allies, heroes, units and developments."[756] In other words,

King Arthur may be aligned with the traditional mytheme as a Christian king (ruler) siding

with good causes, but he could just as likely become the opposite to the traditional

mytheme according to the bio-player's decisions. Thus, as cyber-Arthur essentially lacks

moral consistency, it is therefore innerly onto-emptied. Similarly, the bio-player approachs

these creative possibilities from a locus of ethico-ontological decenteredness; his only rule

is his will to play, and the results of his actions are as transcendental in the cyberworld as

they are frolicsome in the onto-reality. It is all about *playful*, not properly moral,

commitments. Yet 'playful' does not mean here 'unimportant.' On the contrary, this

playful commitment is strong and summons the bio-player's most essential energies,

certainly to the point that the bio-player alienates to the avatar his own pre-virtual reality in

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[755] Paolo Bertetti, "Conan the Barbarian," in Carlos Scolari et alt., op. cit., 17.

[756] Video game *King Arthur: The Role-Playing Wargame (2009)*, op. cit.

order to dwell in the borderline of the 'bio-player/cyber-hero' interface. It is then that not only new circumstances, new characters or new objects are added to the traditional or pre-extant *mythistorema*, but the avatar's actions provide the *fabula* with a new course of events. In other words, the mytheme experiences a multifold expansion in terms of expression media, diegetic structure, and *fabula*. Umberto Eco has referred already to the fact that, "From a semiotic perspective, a fictional possible world is not only a possible state of things, or a set of objects and individuals provided with properties, but also a set of action predicates that define a given course of events (Eco, 1979, 131)."[757]

4.11. El Cid as Cybermyth in Video Games

A clause in the description provided for the "Warhammer Ancient Battles" video game series warns the bio-player about expecting too much historical accuracy in the game, and highlights the real goal of the electronic game-device. This role is certainly not to provide historical learning or moral lessons, or to present El Cid's saga to a young public through game as pedagogical strategy. The goal, or rather the 'emphasis' as they put it, is still *having a fun* and *playful* experience via cybertechnology, i.e. a technohedonist one: "Don't expect massive historical accuracy though: the emphasis is still on a fun, playable system over real historical or military realism."[758] One could think that *pure diversion* is actually the norm for all transmedia conversions of El Cid's traditional mytheme into the cyberworld. Yet, on the contrary, there are indeed counterexamples that tell us exactly the opposite, i.e. that a cyberappropriation of traditional mythemes with

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[757] See Paolo Bertetti, op. cit., 16.

[758] See *Warhammer Ancient Battles video game series* (1998), accessed 0518/2017, https://boardgamegeek.com/boardgame/8003/warhammer-ancient-battles.

eminently pedagogical and even touristico-instructional purposes is perfectly feasible.[759] In these cases, traditional mythemes are not properly turned into cybermyths, there is no disjunction between onto- and cyber-reality, the consumer does not become a prosumer and therefore never intervenes in the transmedia products sacrificing the historiographical accuracy to technohedonist ends.

These video games are not just images in motion for the sake of entertainment; they also bear a huge corpus of intertextual and intericonic transactions described in the guidelines and rules of the game. It is precisely in this associated textuality that the collaborative interventionism *of consumers as prosumers* can be clearly observed and critically assessed. Prosumers' mythopoetic praxis shows the ability to modify the hero's identity, his cultural context, and the plot of events. This means that the transmedia appropriation of the mythical material takes place through the intentional modification of several of its identifying features. In other words, the transmedia appropriation of the mythical material occurs via a mythopoetic action that essentially belongs to the mythemes' shape-shifting process and therefore links these variations to the traditional myth bundles. Despite essential differences in expression media and socal function, transmedia cyberappropiation of pre-digital mythical material appears as a coherent continuity of the traditional mythemes and their successive developments.

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[759] See, for instance, *Cantar de mio Cid*, digital online educational project under academic direction of Dr. Matthew Bailey, Liberal Arts ITS, University of Austin, accessed 05/18 /2017, http://miocid.wlu.edu/index2.php?v=nor, and digital project "Camino del Cid. Un viaje por la Edad Media," *Consorcio Camino del Cid*, accessed 05/15/2017, http://www.caminodelcid.org/; and, children cartoon series "Ruy, el pequeño Cid" (1980), Spain, accessed 05/15/2017, http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1304919/.

For instance, in video game "Age of Empires: El Cid" from the *Age of Empires* series,[760] historiographical elements of El Cid's life mix up with variations of the *fabula* which cannot claim the same historical validity. Nevertheless, in the context of cybermyth these variations, already integrated to the broader diegetic corpus, become active part of El Cid's myth-making and therefore also part of the hero's history as hegemonic myth. The expansion process affects not only the expression media but also the *fabula* itself and its further diegetic unfolding. Indeed, both expansion processes – of *fabula* and expression media– occur in absolute synchronicity. The video game 'Age of Empires: El Cid' consists of six parts or units: "Brother against Brother," "The Enemy of my Enemy," "The Exile of the Cid," "Black Guards," "King of Valencia," and "Reconquista." Some mytheme variations resulting from the prosumers' collaborative interventions deserve a special mention. In the first unit, El Cid is introduced as an infantry Champion hero whose historically attested carrier starts in a tournament ground where he is welcomed by King Sancho. Also, "King Sancho also has a mission for El Cid: to bring his brother, King Alfonso to meet King Sancho once King Alfonso's army have been defeated."[761] In unit two, El Cid must visit an Imam on an unknown island to find out how to control the civil riot going on in the city of Toledo. To accomplish this mission, El Cid must find and take with him the Relics that rebels (both Moors and Christians) are in possession of. Unit three presents us with the exile of El Cid. Here Rodrigo is said to have attacked and conquered a castle under Alfonso VI's jurisdiction. This pits El Cid against Alfonso's armies: a totally baseless event from historiographical perspective. In the fourth unit, El Cid *begrudgingly*

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[760] See "Age of Empires: El Cid," 'Age of Empires Wiki,' in *Fandom*, accessed 05/19/2017, http://ageofempires.wikia.com/wiki/El_Cid.

[761] Ibid.

must rescue King Alfonso from the Sarracen Black Guard Army. The expression "Black Guard Army" was never employed in El Cid's saga, and certainly King Alfonso was never a prisoner of Sarracens. It is true that he covertly leaves Al-Mu'tamid's palace during the night out of fears of being retained there, but the reasons were totally different from being taken as prisoner to the last Sarracen ruler of the taifa of Seville. Worth noticing is the use of the adverb 'begrudgingly,' which in this context strengthens the idea of a direct fight between El Cid and King Alfonso VI. The sixth and last unit recreates the first miracle of El Cid. The dead hero –his body strapped on his horse and carrying his spear and sword– defeats king Yusuf (*sic*) and, temporarily at least, prevents Valencia from falling again under Almoravid rule. Here Ximena's role is overstated in detriment of Álvar Fáñez Minaya's leading role in the battle. Additionally, while *PMC* makes no mention of El Cid's death and therefore of his postmortem last battle, the chronicles refer to Bucar, not Yusuf, as the king defeated by El Cid in Valencia. For its part, *PMC* places "rrey Búcar" in stanza 118, in which El Cid slays the Almoravid king and gains from him his second sword, Tizona, several years before his death.[762] We left the fifth unit on purpose for the end. The reason is that it has a special important to better assess the transformative impact of prosumers' intervention in El Cid's cyber-mythmaking. The unit's title is "King of Valencia." We have already examined the essential role played by El Cid's social status – plus the fact that he was not a *king ab origine*– in the hero's relationship with kings and compared him to Arthur's kingship *ab origine*. Indeed, though morphed into a *princeps* by King Sancho's grace, *El Cid never became a king*. Not even of Valencia, where he

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[762] *Crónica particular del Cid*, op. cit., ch. CCLXXXII (282), fo. XCVa (95); *Corónica del muy esforzado e invencible cavallero el Cid Ruy Díaz campeador de las Españas*, op. cit., ch. LVII (52); and *The Poem of the Cid* 118 vv. 2425-28, op. cit., 148.

certainly ruled as a kind of *count de facto* rather than king. Even with the contradictions shown in *HR* and *CC*, El Cid always was in bondage to the Castilian kings, that is, until the cyber-variation of his myth-making. In the video game El Cid became for the first time actual King of Valencia and is made to build a so-called "Wonder of the World" as a sign of the superiority of the civilization over which he was now reigning.[763] This mythical cyber-bundle belongs to El Cid's mythopoiesis and comes to expand the set of his myth-making variations. However, while certainly being a further stage of El Cid's mythopoiesis, this mythical cyber-bundle –as located within the cyberbeing's framework– has completely lost its extra-diegetic hegemonic meaning, for instance, in socio-political processes). Nevertheless, this hegemonic meaning has been reinforced at the intra-diegetic level by morphing the hero into the actual Christian King of Valencia.

4.12. Relation between Traditional Myth (Pre-Cybermyth) and Cybermyth

There is a specific relation between traditional myth (pre-cybermyth) and cybermyth, and between traditional myth and cybermyth with different factors, such as expression media, mythopoetic context, mytheme's function, and *fabula*/*sujet* structuring (Table 5).

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[763] Indeed, "Building a Wonder of the World demonstrates the superiority of your civilization. Constructing a Wonder that stands for a certain period of time is one way to win the game." See "Wonder (Age of Empires II)," "Age of Empires Wiki," op. cit. http://ageofempires.wikia.com/wiki/Wonder_(Age_of_Empires_II).

Myth Categories	Traditional (pre-cybermyth)	Cybermyth
Expression Media	Oral Speech, Music, Iconography, Written Speech, Scenic Representation.	Electronic Video Games, Cybernetic Imagining in General.
Mythopoetic Context	Onto-Reality. Identity Formation, Socio-Political Constructions, Multi-Cultural (Border) Dialectics: Christianization, National Monarchy, Transculturation.	Cyber-Reality. Cyberbeing as the Essence of Cyberculture: "Call to Play," Game as "Joint-Device," Fictional Transcendences.
Mytheme's Function	Mediation-Moment Toward Identitary Self-Consciousness, Man's World-*Propriation* as "Being-in-the-World," Hegemonic Device for Socio-Political Legitimation.	Entertainment as *Di-version* linked to Cybernetic Technohedonism.
Fabula and Sujet Structuring	Self-Coherent as a Mytheme-Bundle, Shape-Shifting as Mytheme's Variations in Functional (i.e. Coherent and Not Erratic) Correspondence with Macro-Ideological Processes (or Ideological Metanarratives).	Interactive, Decentered, Prosumer-Intervened, Erratic, and Essentially Unlinked from Macro-Ideological Processes (or Ideological Metanarratives).

Table 5: Relation between Traditional Myth (Pre-Cybermyth) and Cybermyth.

4.13. Conclusions

King Arthur's and El Cid's mythical material has been reinterpreted in the context of the alternative reality games (RAG), moving from onto-reality to cyber-reality and, therefore, transforming the traditional myth into a cyber-myth. In this sense, Arthurian and Cidian mythical 'substance' has been not only adopted by the cyberculture but extendedly intervened and transformed in the context of contemporary phenomena such as

cyberculture, bio-cybernetic unijectivity, transmedia appropriations, storytelling expansion, and public intervention as a form of interactive reception.

The stubborn continuity of these mythemes' transmedia shape-shifting processes clearly shows that they still have a significant capacity of impact on individual and collective imaginaries. This continuity also indicates that King Arthur's and El Cid's mythopoiesis is still unfolding to further stages. This mythopoiesis takes place today within the framework of cyberculture and digital technologies. Additionally, it occurs in an iconological field to a huge extent determined by cyberbeing's categories. These two conditions come to transform the traditional morpho-expressive, diegetic, and ideo-thematic fashion of these mythemes according to new semantic circumstances in the context of cyberculture, bio-cybernetic unijectivity, and transmedia storytelling processes.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1. Mythopoeia of El Cid and King Arthur and Social Taxonomy

In the previous chapters, we have attempted to depict El Cid's and King Arthur's journey as hegemonic myths whose shape-shifting stages bear a functional correspondence with religious and socio-cultural processes. These processes are essentially the Christianization of Britain and Spain, the identitary nuclearization of the Iberian Peninsula and Britain ethno-cultural plurality, and the formation of the nation-identitary ideosphere and all-encompassing national monarchies. Although we do not claim to have exhausted the topic, we believe to have validated the effectiveness of this functional approach to explain the mythopoeia of El Cid and King Arthur within the symbolically dense field of iconic, literary, and socio-political transactions. To achieve this goal, we have operated with multidisciplinary categories such as intericonicity, intertextuality, iconemes, iconospheres, iconosystems, etc., which despite their linguistic thickness offer the necessary technical jargon that the analysis demands. We have paid special heed to the impact of Byzantium upon the formation of British and Spanish cultural imaginaries and, more specifically, of El Cid's and King Arthur's myth-making within the framework of the intericonic processes. This has been one the most significant contributions of the present work to the related scholarship, judging by the scarcity of attention devoted to the role played by the Greek-Byzantine civilization in the construction of Europe generally, and in a more particular way of British and Spanish cultural self-consciousness. There have been shown intericonic and intertextual connections, relations, in some cases textual and iconographical evidence, but in general, a horizon for further research has been opened in the quest of the ever-present/ever-fading Grial of certainty in knowledge. Rather than

providing 'demonstrations' and 'hard attestations' in the scientific sense, we have described fields of likelihoods and horizons of relations based on the study of a wide-ranging variety of texts, images, and cultural references. Any claim to definite certainty is a utopia in its very proclamation. Specially when our objects of research lie hundreds or thousands of years behind us, or appear today before our eyes as cryptic incarnations of that past –like enigmatic hieroglyphics whose essential meaning must be perhaps *constructed* rather than *discovered*. Yet the construction itself should not be arbitrary, as fruit of the most ardous effort to conflate the inevitable bias of subjectivity and the examined icono-literary reality.

5.2. Mythopoeia of El Cid: Castilianization of Iberian Peninsula

The construction of El Cid as an anti-Muslim Christian hero is directly proportional to the advance of the Reconquista and the Castilianization of the Iberian Peninsula. This determines the 'clerical turn' that Cidian literature experiences from being part of the "mester de juglaría" to entering the ideo-thematic area of the "mester de clerecía," especially after the *Versión amplificada* of the *Estoria de España*. As Fernández-Ordóñez notes, this encyclopaedical composition "está más próxima a la cultura clerical" y "encarece el valor de la aristocracia y de los prelados como élites que colaboran en el gobierno del reino."[764] This is also historiographically sustained by the epitaph found among the appendices of the *Crónica Particular del Cid*, on which Alberto Montaner has

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[764] Inés Fernández-Ordóñez, "El Mio Cid a través de las crónicas medievales," in Emiliano Valdeolivas, coord., y Jesús Gómez, dir., *Ochocientos años del "Mio Cid": una visión interdisciplinar* (Madrid: Ministerio de Educación, Cultura, y Deporte, 2008): 153-176,

pointed out "su evidente procedencia monástica, quizá enojosa cuando se postulaba una neta separación entre los mesteres de juglaría y clerecía."[765]

5.3. Origin and Genesis of Mythical Identity

King Arthur comes himself from royal origin, and therefore since the beginning – even if accepted that before being a king Arthur was just a folk-hero or a chieftain– his task consists in honoring his kingship/leadership and protecting his people. On the contrary, El Cid comes from a humble origin the lowest level of *hidalgía*, and his effort is oriented toward the conquest of knightly honor and social rank through deeds, exploits, and his exemplary vassalge. As king, Arthur is self-affirming, and so he must keep his identity as a synthesis-figure. Undoudtedly, he describes a mythopoetic journey with several shape-shiftings. Yet in each stage his socio-cultural status is self-identical, it can be reinforced in one direction or another, but his kingship remains always the same. In contrast, El Cid must deny himself to become *the other* and only through this 'thesis-antithesis' process can he forge his identity as hegemonic mytheme. El Cid affirms himself as self-negation moving toward the embedding of otherness in himself as the paradoxical expression of his *truest identity*. Located between *ab origine* saints and kings, he needs to shape his identity within complex cultural force fields. El Cid is exiled and outcast by King Alfonso VI. During his exile, Rofrigo keeps his bondage with a general king-figure but looses his concrete vassalage to Alfonso VI. Being denied by the 'royal' principle, i.e. the 'real' in the medieval order, Rodrigo must supersede the negation to affirm his own

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[765] Alberto Montaner Frutos, "El epitafio épico del Cid" en *Actas del IX Congreso Internacional de la Asociación Hispánica de Literatura Medieval. A Coruña, 18-22 de septiembre de 2001* (A Coruña: Gráficas Semenreira, S.A. – Noia, 2005), 194. Retrieved 4/8/2015. file://toaster/homes/f/r/frathanasios/nt/MONTANER_-_Epitafio_epico_del_Cid_AHLM_09_comprimido_plus-libre.pdf

selfness. He serves the Muslim kings of Zaragoza: "Rodrigo, entonces, ofreció sus servicios a reyes de taifas, lo que no era infrecuente, pues el propio Alfonso VI había sido acogido por al-Mamún de Toledo en 1072 durante su ostracismo."[766] Later, he reconciles with Alfonso VI to defend Seville and Castile from the Almoravids. His reconciliation process with Alfonso VI, which is an essential topic of *PMC*, marks El Cid's moment of completion of the 'good vassal' paradigm, when the perfect identity between bondage and vassalage is achieved. Yet Rodrigo is a border-hero. He is not entirely an enemy of Muslims; on the contrary, he helps to save the puppet-king al-Qadir and accepts *taifas* from Al-Qadir of Valencia in order to guarantee the latter's protection.

Also, in Zaragoza he tried to win al-Musta'in II's support, exempting him from his tax dues. Thus seen, El Cid's characterization clearly responds to the profile of a mercenary warrior. This gradually will change in a proportional relation to the advance of the Reconquista and the Castilianization of the Iberian Peninsula, when El Cid's morphs into a national hero-warrior *sensu stricto*. While being also a border-hero, King Arthur's epic-heroic figure remains stable and pervades his entire mythopoeia. This exposes the essential role played by the social origin in the heroes' myth-making and culrural legitimacy. Arthur is a hero of noble birth, prophecies have been uttered about him, he slays the anthropofagous monster, is linked to the mystic chronotope of Avalon, and is brought to Heaven to the right of Christ as a prophet, the only one capable to defeat Leviathan. For his part, El Cid, despite his hegemonic status and later Benedictine hagiopoeia, essentially turns into *a plain and realistic figure* stripped of his original epic prototypal form.

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[766] Montaner Frutos, ibid.

5.4. Problem of Literary Genre

The *PMC* appears to be a versified chronicle intended much more to convey a historical account rather than to extol El Cid's epic figure to produce in the reader an epico-aesthetic sentiment. It delivers a political message and supports Spanish nation-identitary construction. To this aim, the hero's epic dimension is sacrified as realistic bedrock of an ongoing religious and politico-nationalist project. If there is something typical in El Cid of *PMC*, it is precisely his lacking epic distance. This does not mean that several epic elements –such as verse structure in two hemistiches with caesura, epic epithets, reiterations, enumerations, insistence on the characters' warlike profile, etc.– are missing in the *Poem*. Yet the presence of such rethorical devices can easily be explained by the notion of a historico-cultural interwining of literary genres. In reference to an epitaph of the Cid found in the appendices of the *Crónica Particular del Cid* (1512), Alberto Montaner highlights the combination of epic and chronicle elements, of heroic legend and hagiography, and notes that this merge between literary genres has regularly been underestimated by the scholarship: "En definitiva, resulta patente que el Epitafio muestra una reveladora combinación de elementos épicos y cronísticos, de la leyenda heroica y de la hagiográfica, fruto de la productiva interrelación de modalidades y géneros literarios que parecen haber sido mucho más permeables entre sí de lo que a veces tendemos a suponer."[767]

Thus, King Arthur's saga immediately acquires a supernatural aura as mytho-allegorical construction. Arthur emerges as a figure with magic attributes, an extraordinary ethno-warrior that can slay hundreds by himself on the battlefield. He is regarded as an

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[767] Alberto Montaner Frutos, ibid., 203

eternal King with an eschatologico-messianic profile who will return from the mystical Ile of Avalon to save his people from the Anglo-Saxon yoke. In contrast, El Cid does not exhibit *systematically* mystical dimensions. The mystical shape of his figure responds to the specific stage of his mythopoetic process. In *HR*, El Cid lacks mystical aura in the mythical sense. No dragons or wondrous creatures populate his world, and no transition from the 'innerworldy-' to the 'otherworldly-chronotope' takes place. There can be observed a very limited intertextual/intericonic overlap with Old/New Testament references, but El Cid will never dwell in a mythological world proper. Thus, *HR* is essentially a story of courage and honor intended to exalt Rodericus Didaci's figure as epic prototype. In contrast, *PMC* ultimately conveys moral, political, and cultural meaning: El Cid embodies what the 'real Spanish knight' is supposed to be *as a Christian hero-warrior vassal to his "señor natural."* Beyond some early Old/New Testament allusions and later Benedictine interpolations of supernatural events, there is in El Cid's life no systematic mysticopoeia.

A huge number of outstanding scholars has sustained, especially after Menéndez Pidal, the plain realism of El Cid's figure and the preeminence of this historicist *verismo* over any presence of the supernatural: "Desde Menéndez Pidal, la crítica ha insistido en que el *PMC* es muy humano, sin elementos sobrenaturales."[768] This historicity prevails throughout the whole poem. No Grail, no further supernatural adventures, and no development of El Cid's fellow-knights; everything converges upon a higher politico-cultural goal: the legitimacy of the *Reconquista* and of the Christian *iustum bellum* against

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[768] Alfonso Boix Jovaní, "Aspectos maravillosos en el *Cantar de Mio Cid*," in *BLO* 2 (2012): 9-23, 14, accessed 04/09/17file:///Users/intiyanesfernandez/Desktop/Aspectos%20maravillosos%20en%20el%20CMC.pdf.

Muslims. It has been explicitly recognized by several scholars that the *PMC*'s author wanted to create an illusion of historicity, i.e. a claim of facticity which it is unlikely found in other epic poems. In Ian Michael's own words: "The *Poem of the Cid* exhibits a considerable haziness on some historical points and contains fictitious material, yet, unlike most medieval heroic poems, it contains much historical facts and some surprisingly accurate references to real personages."[769] According to P. E. Russell, some details regarding minor characters in the work, such as Diego Téllez, Mal Anda and Galind García, who had indeed historical existence, "provides some evidence that the poet may have done some historical research…to give the whole the appearance of history."[770] C. M. Bowra states that the *Poem* is "less epic" than other medieval heroic poems and that, "by rounding El Cid's character and giving us detailed account of his private life, the poet has diminished his impact as a heroic warrior."[771] In addition, Russell has also suggested that, "the one explanation of the partial 'historicity' of the *Cantar* which seems to have escaped consideration is that it could be the product of certain amount of historical investigation by its author."[772] Other scholars, such as Spitzer, has questioned the existence of an intentionality to historic authenticity in *PMC*'s author, and has highlighted the poem's artistic and fictional character: "para mí, el poema de mio Cid es obra más bien de arte y de ficción que de autenticidad histórica."[773]

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[769] Ian Michael, "Introduction," in *The Poem of the Cid*, op. cit., 2.

[770] P. E. Russell, "Some Problems of Diplomatic in the *CMC* and their Implications," *MLR*, XLVII (1952): 340-9, 348.

[771] C. M. Bowra, *Heroic Poetry* (London: Macmillan, 1952), 120.

[772] P. E. Russell, ibid.

[773] Leo Spitzer, "Sobre el carácter histórico del Cantar de mio Cid.," *NRFH*, II (1948), 105-17, 106.

We observe three things here. First, part of the historicity of the *PMC* has escaped proper consideration, which means also that its literary genre has been taken for granted by scholars. Second, the amount of historical accuracy surpasses the regular extent regularly found in most epic productions, and therefore "unlike most medieval heroic poems, it contains much historical fact…."[774] And third, there exists a clear intention of fact-bound historicity in the author. This gives the work the intentionality of a *chronicle* rather than of an *epic poem*. The assertion here is not that an epic poem lacks or must lack historical accuracy entirely, but that, in the epic genre the historiographical ethos does not hold sway over the whole poem. If presumably the author's intention was more historiographical than epic, then the question is, what is the reason to consider the poem as an epic work instead of a historiographical chronicle in verse? Perhaps, the *PMC* should be treated rather as paradigm of hybrid, liminal literature that conflates chronicle with epic poetry, if not just as a chronicle in epic form. In mimetic overlap with a socio-cultural environment defined by the processes of Christian identitary self-propiation and emancipatory expansion with unstable and ever-changing borders, *PMC* comprises two literary genres with blurred and imprecise borders.

5.5. Historicity and Supernatural Elements in *PMC*

Additionally, Leo Spitzer and Edmund De Chasca have certainly recognized the occurrence of some supernatural events in *PMC*. However, they have also admitted that their significance is minimal and therefore their impact should be regarded to a very limited extent. De Chasca claims that: "sí hay un elemento mítico en el *Poema*, pero

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[774] Michael, op. cit., ibid.

379

reducido al mínimo, a un principio embrionario."[775] Boix Jovaní strongly disagrees with this point of view by underscoring the meaning of dream revelations and divine communication in Ancient and Judeo-Christian literary traditions: "Creo que quienes hayan contemplado el sueño del Campeador como un mero acto onírico para resolver la aparición de San Gabriel y mantener la teoría del realismo total en el *CMC* no tuvieron en cuenta la extensa tradición de mensajeros sobrenaturales que llevan a cabo su cometido mediante sueños."[776] At the very beginning of his article, Boix Jovaní insists in that the traditional virtues adscribed to Rodrigo, such as *mesura* and *piedad*, are not necessarily at odds with some wondrous and even supernatural passages in *PMC*: "Sin embargo, no es conveniente llevar ciertas aseveraciones a extremos que no permitan contemplar otros asuntos con los que la mesura pueda coexistir. En efecto, y pese al realismo que vertebra a todo el cantar cidiano, es posible encontrar algunos pasajes que, en realidad, poseen rasgos extraordinarios, maravillosos,… incluso sobrenaturales."[777] He also points to the fact that the supernatural presence is not just a diegetic device but responds to the hero's exceptionality: "si [El Cid] recibe el privilegio de la aparición de San Gabriel, ello se debe a que es un vasallo excepcional, no como otro «cualquiera»," noting in this way that there is a contradiction in De Chasca's standpoint. [778] Notwithstanding Boix Jovaní's well-argued point of view, following both Menedez Pidal's and De Chasca's positions, we

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[775] Edmund de Chasca, *El arte juglaresco en el "Cantar de Mio Cid"* (Madrid: Gredos, 1967), 134, and Edmund de Chasca, *El arte juglaresco en el "Cantar de Mio Cid,"* segunda edición aumentada (Madrid: Gredos, 1972), 136.

[776] Boix Jovaní, op. cit., 11.

[777] Ibid., 9.

[778] Ibid., see Boix Jovaní's footnote 4.

believe that the role played by these supernatural events in most of Cidian works is not enough to deny their methodical *verismo* and strict realistic *ethos*. After all, Boix Jovaní himself recognizes that it is possible to find supernatural elements embedded into *PMC*'s narrative "pese al realismo que vertebra a todo el cantar cidiano."[779]

Like other great traditional heroes, e.g. Prometheus, Achilles, Samson, Arthur is also a hot-blooded warrior that cannot think twice what to do when it comes to dispensing justice and honor. Thus, he immediately decides to march against Rome when asked by the Rome procurator to pay taxes to the City. Later, he abandons his campaign in Europe to return to his homeland to avenge Mordred's and Guinevere's affront and usurpation. El Cid, except in some passages of *HR* and *Mocedades de Rodrigo* (*MR*),[780] remains cold-minded and thoughtful even when he knows about his daughters' vexation with the Infantes de Carrión. He prefers to appeal to royal mediation rather than to dispense justice with the vigor of his sword. This measured behavior is far from being a sign of cowardice or pusillanimity. On the contrary, the *PMC*'s hero contrasts with other epic figures for the maturity of his mood and the prudence of his actions. Boix Jovaní observes that: "La mesura ha sido, probablemente, la característica fundamental con la que siempre se ha descrito al Rodrigo Díaz que nos presenta el *PMC* […] Más tarde, además de la piedad que muestra para con quienes vence, llegará incluso a no buscar una venganza violenta particular contra sus malvados yernos, a quienes someterá a la justicia regia."[781] In

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[779] See note 374.

[780] Both epics are working on early epic material: the first shows the epic prototypal Rodericus; the second depicts the hero in the flower of his youth.

[781] Boix Jovaní, op. cit., 9.

contrast, Arthur personally slays dozens of knights and even several women as punishment for breaking his Kingdom's harmony according to Layamon: "And nimeð al his nexte cun Þa ȝe maȝen iuinden, / and swengeð of Þa hafden mid breoden eouwer sweorden; / Þa wifmen Þa ȝe maȝen ifinden of his nexten cunden, / kerueð of hire neose and heore wlite ga to lose / and swa ich wulle al fordon Þat cun Þat he of com."[782] Once again, the hero's origin plays a decisive role in the course of his his mythopoeia. As a king, Arthur was an autonomous and self-ruled principle of authority. In El Cid's biosphere, there is neither a substantial overlap of magico-supernatural worlds nor more than just *an epigonal attempt at deification*. While King Arthur's literary matter can be considered epic in nature, el *PMC* should be approached as a realistic or poetic chronicle rather than an epic poem. Of course, the borders between epic poetry and history have not always been clear and distinct. In his *Poetics*, Aristotle states that,

> Ὁ γὰρ ἱστορικὸς καὶ ὁ ποιητὴς οὐ τῷ ἢ ἔμμετρα λέγειν ἢ ἄμετρα διαφέρουσιν [1451b][1] (εἴη γὰρ ἂν τὰ Ἡροδότου εἰς μέτρα τεθῆναι καὶ οὐδὲν ἧττον ἂν εἴη ἱστορία τις μετὰ μέτρου ἢ ἄνευ μέτρου)· ἀλλὰ τούτῳ διαφέρει, τῷ τὸν μὲν τὰ γενόμενα [5] λέγειν, τὸν δὲ οἷα ἂν γένοιτο. Διὸ καὶ φιλοσοφώτερον καὶ σπουδαιότερον ποίησις ἱστορίας ἐστίν· ἡ μὲν γὰρ ποίησις μᾶλλον τὰ καθόλου, ἡ δ᾽ ἱστορία τὰ καθ᾽ ἕκαστον λέγει.[783]

From this point of view, what makes a text belong to either literary genre –poetic or historical– is the fact that poetry deals with universal notions (τὰ καθόλου) and therefore with what is possible but not already factual, while history focuses on factual events and, hence, on the particular proper (τὰ καθ᾽ ἕκαστον). Now, the *verismo* which is characteristic of Spanish epic and literature generally, when combined with an interest in a specific

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[782] *Brut*, vss. 628-33, op. cit., 73.

[783] Αριστοτέλους (Aristotle), *Περί Ποιητικής*, accessed 11/21/2015, http://users.uoa.gr/~nektar/history/tributes/ancient_authors/Aristoteles/poetica.htm.

historical accuracy –as it has been proved that it is the case of *PMC*'s author– brings about a fact-based account that attempts to narrate concrete events of El Cid's life as paradigm of Christian vassal, rather than to exalt his figure as prototype of a universal epic hero. If we then follow Aristotle's conceptual conventions, the *PMC* would be an example –surely impure and hybrid– of a poetic *history*.

In *PMC*, epic ethos and epic distance are missing. The contextual atmosphere is verisimil and immanent. It remains strictly restrained to the socio-political chronotope rather than open to the assimilation of magico-supernatural elements. Indeed, *PMC* lacks the mytho-diegetic *métier* of traditional epic poems and prose such as *Iliad* and *Beowulf*, or epic chronicles such as *Brut* and *Le Morte d'Arthur*. Against King Arthur, El Cid appears to be a one-dimensional and entirely realistic hero. It is true that a hagiopoetic process occurs. Nevertheless, El Cid's world is not crowded by the presence of divine-mythical events and creatures. Rodrigo is a hero bound up with his environing historical reality whose greatest achievement is becoming an aristocrat through personal effort, legitimized by royal power and enhanced later by the politico-eschatological nostalgia of San Pedro de Cardeña's Benedictine monks, who make him fit into the hagiographical canon. Notwithstanding the fact that a certain veneration might have sorrounded his figure during several years, as can be seen in the *Corónicas*, El Cid's cultural value remains always inscribed within this world. The religious dimension had been fulfilled by his spiritual counterpart since the very moment of his inception in Spanish history, which was also a Benedictine achievement, namely St. James. For El Cid, there is no metaphysical horizon subsumed in his ontological destiny. The absence of a deification process and a transdimensional shift, present in most of traditional heroic constructions, prevents us from

considering El Cid of *PMC* and the chronicles, *as a whole*, a 'classic' hero-warrior in a strictly *epic sense*, despite the fact that undoubtedly Byzantine military-hagiographical intericonicity constitutes one of his mythopoetic moments.

Yet, despite their theoretical concern about the epic nature of *PMC*, no scholar takes the easiest and most logical step: a genre shift. The *PMC* is not primarily an *epic work*; it is on the contrary a peculiar literary historiographico-biographical chronicle intended to serve as political-nationalistic propaganda in order to encourage and support the gesta de Reconquista: "It may not be too fanciful to see a poem which exalted the Cid as a man who succeeds by his own efforts in Moorish territory being used as part of a recruiting drive during the lull before the new and unstoppable Christian advance that began in 1212."[784] Not just the *scriptura* of the Poem has been deemed unusual in the context of the medieval literature, because of its intentional claim of historicity; the hero himself, brought back by the realistic device to a stark-naked innerworldliness, has been judged to show an unusual profile especially when he is considered to be an epic figure. In Michael's words: "The Cid of the poem is unusual among medieval literary heroes because of his practical aims and his down-to-earth humanity."[785] This coherent and ever-present "down-to-earthiness" of El Cid, which reduces to the maximum the epic distance and introduces both readers (or listeners) and hero into each other's world, this historical nearness contrasts in *PMC* with other epic transfigurations or chronicle accounts. For example, there is an overall claim of 'historicity' regarding to kings and facts in Layamon's *Brut*. There is also the author's intention to stay essentially within the

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[784] Michael, "Introduction," in op. cit., 5.

[785] Ibid.

framework of a chronicle or 'objective' storytelling of events. Nevertheless, the allusions and inextricable bonds between phantasy and historicity –as well as between human and supernatural beings– keeps the mythical world of the work in a dimension impossible for the reader to realistically dwell upon. Camelot, Avalon, the Round Table and its mysteries, Merlin and his magic, the Grail, the marvelous events surrounding them, are far from being something familiar for the rest of mortals. Additionally, the very literary form and poetic language of the *Poema* exhibit important though not absolute similarities with the language of the Latin chronicles, some of which surely must have served as primary or secondary sources for the poem itself. According to Colin Smith, and specifically regarding the lexicon of the Poem, many of phrases can be found that are most probably derived from Latin chronicles.[786] This is not enough to support the necessity to carry out a *PMC*'s genre shift from epic poem to historiographical chronicle. It can however support the fact that, the influence of the chronicle literature on *PMC* was a more determining factor and much more deeply embedded into the *Poem*'s structure than has usually been accepted by scholars. Instead of claiming that the *PMC* is somehow 'epic in form' and rather historiographical 'in spirit,' we prefer to shift *PMC* from the epic literary genre to the category of medieval *literario-historiographical chronicle*, in which epic elements, both formal and rhetorical, are not excluded but the strength is set upon the realistic depiction of the hero and his deeds for religious and political reasons.

Yet, can there be found in *PMC* at least a trace of a deeper mythical structure as in King Arthur's case? In a sense, we need to give a positive answer to this question. Yet this mythical element is never fully developed in *PMC*. Quite the opposite: there can be

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[786] Colin Smith, *The Making of the Poema de Mio Cid* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 95.

witnessed the swansong of El Cid's prototypal dimension along with his final

prototypoferesis, due to the irresistible centripetal force of the spirit of Reconquista. There

is indeed evidence of a relationship of the social, political, religious, and mythical levels in

PMC insofar as El Cid's actions and itinerary can fit perfectly to the traditional myth

scheme of hero-warrior. We totally agree with Peter N. Dunn on this point. Emphasizing

socio-political and religious levels of the poem leads necessarily to the apprehension of a

"mythologizable" narrative structure, a *fabula* especially sensible and manageable by the

mythopoetic will:

> I emphasize the broadly political, the social-religious aspect of the poem, not
> because I favor one kind of historical positivism as against another, but in part
> because it helps us to see the poem as an act of cultural consciousness which links
> past and present. But also, because it is on this level that the mythic structure, from
> which the poem at first appeared to be exempt, is most readily apparent.[787]

The problem is that Dunn seems to believe that this semantico-structural

parallelism between fabula and mythical consciousness responds to the fact that El Cid as

historical personage underwent a mythopoetic process and, consequently, the *PMC* would

be the epic concrescence of such a process. This wrongful perception is due to the fact that,

like many other scholars, Dunn fails to distinguish two cultural constructions, that, despite

having in common their entailment with myth, are totally different from the perspective of

their temporality, function, and their final destiny. These two figures are the *prototype* and

the *paradigm*. The processes linked to them are the rhetorico-literary phenomena of

prototypopoiea and the *prototypoferesis*. In Dunn's eyes, El Cid appears as a cultural

paradigm:

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[787] Peter N. Dunn, "Levels of Meaning in the *Poema De Mío Cid*," *MLN*, Hispanic Issue 2, 85 (1970), 109-
119, 116-7, accessed 11/24/16, http://www.jstor.org/stable/2908319.

This epic springs from a society which is archaic to the extent that, as a collectivity it is unsatisfied by historical fact, and demands that the individuality of its heroes merge with a paradigmatic model. Transposed into a historical narrative, such a model presents, not the origins of the race, or of the nation, but that of a new and important phase of cultural identity. It celebrates the unity of Castile and Leon, a growing ascendancy over Islam, the emergence of new order, imitating the stresses that arise in society as it passes from feudal personalism to the freedom implicit in new modes of authority.[788]

And Dunn is right. Yet this scholar understands here the condition of being a "paradigm" in the sense of being a "prototype." In fact, as he himself states, El Cid in the *PMC* would incarnate a mythical cosmological archetype associated with creational and original myths: "The Cid's pattern of exile (for Germanic peoples, the other world was beyond, not down) and return to glory retrieving both his own honor and the king's freedom to act openly and justly is, I suggest, the structural equivalent of myth."[789] Consequently, El Cid would be himself an archetypal figure with a mystico-cosmologic transcendence in correspondence with former mythical traditions as referred to by Dunn:

> Just as the Golden Fleece and the Niebelung hoard are tokens of a suprapersonal power and also objects which match the heroic qualities of the hero; just as the slaying of Grendel is both a rebirth of order from chaotic violence and the representation of Beowulf's honor and valor, so the Cid's defeat of the malice which surrounds the King, and his destruction of the power of the Beni-Gómez is both a reclaiming of order and justice and a representation of his heroic stature.[790]

In *PMC*, an entirely opposite development concerning traditional mythical arquetypes generally can be observed. Dunn, logically, attempts to discard elements that constitute part of the very notion of a cosmological (or in general monomythical) myth: "the birth omens, the various tests and feats, and so on."[791] However, the loss of El Cid's

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[788] Dunn, ibid., 118.

[789] Ibid.

[790] Ibid., 117.

[791] Ibid., 118.

prototypal profile and position in the Castilian culture is directly proportional to the loss of both mythical relevance and epic distance in the literary Cid. In the context of a certainly religious but de-mythologized, rather political culture, El Cid as prototypical myth *had no real functionality*. In other words, a distant, mythical Rodrigo could not meet the nation-identitary demands of the Spanish society, focused on the socio-political processes of *Reconquista* and Christianization of the Iberian Peninsula, and of formation of a centralized national monarchy. The self-interpretation of Castilian culture during the Gesta de Reconquista was determined by a form of realism in which the religious element was, in accordance with the Catholic theology, eschatological insofar it was *expectatio resurrectionis* but not mythico-symbolic. The most important "mythologemes" of Christian theology respond to the strict realism of the economy of salvation: incarnation, death, resurrection and ascension of the Logos of God-Father. Within the framework of this religious hermeneutic, mythos in the traditional sense was considered a 'false account,' i.e. a deviation form the thruth based on error and ignorance.[792] In this context, and especially in the most legalist and rational hermeneutic horizon of Western theology, a national paradigm could have been brought up only in the spirit of the most radical historicism by reducing or stripping off the mythical traces still extant, due to its literary heritage, in El Cid's *fabulatio*. From the epic prototype that we see in *CC* and *HR*, we are later introduced to the verisimilarly individualized, realistically personalized and down-to-earth Cid of *PMC*.

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[792] See for instance Κλήμης ὁ Ἀλεξανδρεύς (Clement of Alexandria), "Προτρεπτικὸς πρὸς Ἕλληνας," in *Κλήμης ὁ Ἀλεξανδρεύς, μέρος Α΄* (Athens¨ Ἐκδόσεις τῆς Ἀποστολικῆς Διακονίας τῆς Ἐκκλησίας τῆς Ἑλλάδος, 1956), 17-79.

Thus, given the importance of the speculative vein for the improvement and development not only of scientific-positive, but also humanistic studies, we can venture to claim the likelihood that there should exist (or have existed) a currently unlocated, lost or destroyed manuscript, in which El Cid appears with more disctinct epic features in the imagine and likeness of prototypes such as King Arthur, Beowulf, Sir Gawain, and Roland. It seems incredible and not verisimilar, that given the geopolitical neighborhood of Britannia, and in the light of the systematic Celtic migrations to Galicia and of the impact of Byzantine cultural imaginary upon the Merovingian, Caroligian, and Spanish culture via the Visigoths, that a more prototypal Rodrigo chronicled in some written or oral form existed either as a general chronicle or as an *epic* composition proper.

Martin J. Duffel compares El Cid with Sir Gawain,[793] which might serve as an indirect indication that, according to literary and mythopoietic criteria, it would be improper to heighten El Cid up to King Arthur's cultural, mythopoietic and symbolic level. This, of course, comes to reaffirm the suggestion of considering *PMC*'s Rodrigo not a prototype but a paradigm –which appears to be superior in degree but not in essence, so it is not only imitable, but somehow attainable and comparable– of ethnic hero-warrior type. In the *Poema de Almeria*, El Cid praises his comrade Álvar Fáñez even over himself: "…hunc extollebat [Álvar], se laude minore ferebat. / Sed fateor verum, quod tollet nulla dierum:/Meo Cidi primus fuit Alvarus atque secundus." [794] Even more, the *PA* promotes a unique heroic image of Alvar that at times seems to surpass the praises granted to Rodrigo:

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[793] Martin J. Duffell, "Don Rodrigo and Sir Gawain: Family likeness or convergent development," *MCS bis* (2002): 129-149.

[794] Juan Gil, ed., *Carmen de expugnatione Almeriae urbis*, retrieved 11/23/2016, Dialnet-CarmenDeExpvgnationeAlamariaeVrbis-653731.pdf.

Aluarus ecce ruit Roderici filius alti.
Intulit hic letum multis tenuitque Toletum,
Et pater in nato laudatur, natus et ipso.
Fortis at ille fuit, nec nati Gloria cedit.
………………………………………………
Cognitus omnibus est auus Aluarus, arx probitatis,
Nec minus hostibus ets itidem pius, urbs bonitatis.
Audio sic dici, quod et Aluarus ille Fannici
Ismaelitarum gentes domuit nec earum
Oppida uel turres potuere resistere fortes.
Fortia frangebat, sic fortis ille premebat.
Tempore Roldani si tertius Aluarus esset
Post Oliuerum, fateor sine crimine uerum,
Sub iuga Francorum fuerat gens Agarenorum
Nec socii cari iacuissent morte perempti.
………………………………………………..
Aluare, te plorant iuuenes lacrimisque decorant,
Quos bene nutristi, quibus et pius arma dedisti.[795]

Regarding the likelihood of an earlier iconotype of Rodrigo, closer to the Classical epic tradition than the *HR*'s, Juan Gil makes an observation that can be of ultility also in Rodrigo's case. Following the rhetorical device of *auctoritas*, characteristic of Greek and Latin epic, also the PA invokes the testimony of an unthorized predecessor: "La sopresa, en este caso," notes Gil, "estriba en que la obra aludida no es una historia latina, sino un cantar en romance: Rodericus, Meo Cidi sepe uocatus, / de quo cantatur quod ab hostibus haud superatur (233-234).[796] This "cantar en romance" cannot be either *HR*, which is a Latin chronicle, or the *Carmen Campidoctoris*, a poem also written in Latin language. The Poem was appended to the end of the *Chronica Adefonsi imperatoris*, which means that its literary sources should have been found in an early copy *PMC* or rather in a common source. Given some textual contradictions between the texts of PA and PMC, specifically

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[795] Ibid., vss. 217-242, 57.

[796] Juan Gil, "El *Poema de Almería* y la tradición épica," *e-Spania* [Online], op. cit., 71.

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regarding Alvar Fanez and El Cid's testimony of him, Juan Gil is inclined towards the second theory. Because of its crucial importance in our hypothesis about the existence of an earlier iconotype of Rodrigo with a more Classical profile, we prefer to quote the Juan Gil's whole passage:

> Ahora bien, este poema no parece ser el conservado hoy en la Biblioteca Nacional de España. En este último, el Cid llama a Álvar Fáñez "mío braço mejor" (3063) o "mío diestro braço" (753, 810), pero nunca le reconoce, como asegura el PA, la primacía en el combate: "Hunc extollebat, se laude minore ferebat". 'A este ensalzaba, él proclamaba merecer menor alabanza' (236)85. Esta afirmación, que no se encuentra en el Mio Cid, encorajina a nuestro clérigo, que propina un severo palmetazo al atrevido e ignoto autor de aquella epopeya: "Sed fateor uerum, quod tollet nulla dierum: / Meo Cidi primus fuit Aluarus atque secundus" 'Pero proclamo una verdad que no refutará ningún día: Mio Cid fue el primero y Álvaro el segundo' (237-238). Ahora bien, parece, en cambio, que se corresponde el PA con el Mio Cid en el pasaje exaltador de Álvar Fáñez: "nullaque sub caelo melior fuit hasta sereno" = 'ninguna lanza mejor hubo bajo el cielo' (232). El elogio nos hace recordar de inmediato la expresión "ardida lança" que el Poema del Cid aplica a Álvar Fáñez (489), pero obsérvese que el poema distingue con el mismo epíteto a Martín Antolínez (59) y a Galín García (443 b), mientras que lo dicho en el PA nos induciría a suponer que no hubo más "ardida lança" que Minaya. *Esta pequeña discrepancia, unida a la estridente diferencia señalada más arriba, invita a postular, con todas las salvedades del mundo, la existencia de un cantar juglaresco distinto del Mio Cid.*[797]

Either a "cantar juglaresco," or a cult epic composition in Latin imitating Classical models, or even a chronicle, in any case, what matters here is that the probability exists for an earlier manuscript or oral source to have provided the typological ancestor of epic Rodrigo as found in *HR* and suggested in *PA*. In addition, some scholars have recognized in the allusion "de quo cantatur…" found in the *PA* a reference to the *PMC*. If this were true, then we would need to accept two important conclusions: first, the date of the composition of the *PMC* should be set earlier than the date proposed by Montaner, i. e. the year 1200: "[...] un cúmulo de aspectos consustanciales al *Cantar* en todos sus niveles [...]

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[797] Ibid. (The emphasis at the end of the passage is my own.)

conducen a fecharlo sin apenas dudas en las cercanías de 1200."[798] And second, an earlier

text should have existed, either as a manuscript or part of the oral tradition, which would

have provided an epic prototype of El Cid. Indeed, the epic profile of Alvar Fañez in PA is

stronger –i.e. more Classical– than the profile found in *PMC*. This could have been an

indication that *PA* was utilizing a manuscript or oral tradition older than *PMC*, probably

common to both. A similar cultural logic can be applied to El Cid, whose epic profile

'weakened' during the process of prototypoferesis and paradigmatopoeia from the *HR*

onwards until epigonal Benedictine attempts of hagiopoeia of his figure. Thus, an icono-

textual material can be thought of, which could have been copied, modified, updated, or

used as a literary source also in the known 17th century *PMC* manuscript. In any case, one

thing can be taken for granted according to this mention of El Cid and the fact that he was

"cantatur quod ab hostibus haud superatur…,"[799] namely, that he already existed as a hero-

warrior prototype in the culture imaginary of the 12th century Christian Spain and most

likely even before. However, Alan Deyermond warns that: "Son escasos los cantares de

gesta de la España medieval que han llegado hasta nosotros. El material conservado es

muy poco en comparación con su equivalente francés."[800] Therefore, our 'missing link'

between Roman-Byzantine or even Byzantine-Visigothic, epic hero-warrior models and El

Cid of *HR*, *CC*, and *PA* may well be part of this lost material. In a similar way, José María

Díez Borque notes that, "…si de los romances hay multitud de testimonios en cancioneros

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[798] Montaner Frutos, "Introducción," in *Cantar de Mio Cid*, ed. Alberto Montaner Frutos (Barcelona: Galaxia Gutenberg/Real Academia Española, 2011), 289.

[799] See note 784.

[800] Alan Deyermond, *Historia y crítica de la literatura española, I. Edad Media*, ed. F. Rico (Barcelona: Crítica, 1980), 83.

y romanceros varios y en la tradición oral, de la épica hispánica apenas se conserva el Cantar de mio Cid, las Mocedades de Rodrigo, el fragmento de Roncesvalles, y el poema de Fernán González, más los versos del mismo de la 'teja de Villamartín de Sotoscuevas (Burgos)', de clerecía y no juglaría."[801]

Dunn seems also comfortable with the fact that there is a systematic historiographical intention present in the whole poetic corpus of *PMC*. He seems also to ignore that even the historical inaccuracies committed by the author are not an indication of a lack of historical interest or commitment with a fact-centered narrative accuracy. On the contrary, they seem to expose the author's historiographical will. Lacking in information to accomplish his verse chronicle, the author appeals to his creative imagination as was standard praxis resulting from medieval onto-epistemological *imago mundi* to fill in the historical blanks of his account. This would not be very different from what Geoffrey of Monmouth did in his *Historia Regum Brittaniae*. Geoffrey West seems also to recognize a clear-cut distinction between chronicles or "history" and poetry,[802] a fact that fits in much more with post-Renascence persuasions on literary genres than with the medieval genres' blurred and unstable frontiers. Some objections could be raised against cataloguing *PMC* in the genre of a literary historiographico-biographical chronicle. One of them might be that the text is written in verse, not in prose. There is, however, no contradiction between being a chronicle, even a complete history, and being cast down in versified form. Aong the most relevant examples are Wace's version to Old French of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*, Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia*

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[801] José María Díez Borque, op. cit., 255.

[802] Geoffrey West, "King and Vassal History and Poetry: a contrast between the '*Historia Roderici*' and the '*Poema de Mio Cid*,'" in *Mio Cid' Studies*, 1977: 195-208.

itself, and Layamon's *Brut*. The Cid of *PMC* is a personage morphed into a *historical* and *realistic* entity by the spirit of the Reconquista and the ascent of the Spanish monarchy.

5.6. Decay of Classic Paradigm and End of Chivalric World

With El Cid begins a process of denial and deconstruction of the 'classic' epic hero-warrior prototype that will culminate, passing through Spanish post-Arthurian knights such like Zifar and Amadís de Gaula, with *Don Quixote de la Mancha* as nostalgic expression of a tragedy. In order to exist, Spanish chivalry tradition and literature had to become sensitive to the sacred metarrealistic dimensions of mytho-diegetic constructions proper to the traditional epic. This confers universality to late Spanish chivalric-epic productions but introduces at the same time an element strange to their realistic sensibility. While in England the Arthurian matter sees an extraordinary revival in the Elizabethan times and even later. In Spain, on the contrary, the only way to "recover" epic consciousness and to make it a genuine part of the national identity was the implementation of a procedural 'madness' as rhetorical device. The essence of chivalry, its metahistorical horizons, its strenuous sense of courage and self-sacrifice, the mystical chronotope linked to it, and the typical world-uncanniness of personages involved in it was then reduced just to one state of the subjective mind: madness. Paradoxically, while being the symbolical return to the really classic prototypal ethos of chivalric tradition –insertion in a sacred-magical atmosphere, allegorical fights against monsters, sense of transcendence of the hero's deeds as a necessary way to impose justice in the world, etc–, Don Quixote's madness represents the impossibility of return, i.e. the self-affirmation of the postmedieval tragic condition of chivalry. To exist in the world, it must remain essentially strange to the world itself, in a paradoxical state of uncanniness and commitment. New times had come,

of course. Spanish medieval imagination was being impacted by the schockwaves of the individual-based ontologico-epistemological paradigm shift taking place in European thoughtand subjectivity, along with the emergence of a new pragmatic temporality brought about by early capitalism and the accelerated expansion of the known world. The essential principles of rationalist philosophy and positive science, which constitute the integrating axis of Western thought experienced a radical revolution. Among them, the principle of absolute self-certainty shifted from the theo-centric model, in which certainty was granted by the experience of faith and the immediate religious self-perception as a sinner in need of redemptive grace, to the *subjectium* as an empirico-transcendental Self, who ultimately will need to prove rationally to himself his own, and even God's, existence. This transcendental Self, a world-independent and self-sufficient monad, as principle of absolute self-certainty is definitively brought to Western thinking up by R. Descartes in his *Meditations*.

5.7. Cervantes, El Quixote, and the 'Copernican Revolution' of Modernity

Speaking to himself, attempting to reach a distinct definition of himself as a step to access an even more essential definition, Descartes says:

> I close my eyes now, I cover my ears, I will make no use of the senses ... I will try to slowly know me better and become more familiar with myself. I am a thing that thinks, i.e. who doubts, affirms, denies, knows a few things, ignores many others, loves, hates, wants, does not want, and also imagines and feels....[803]

Descartes departs here from a first experience of himself as "thinking thing" according to different modes. Descartes cannot but perceive himself as a *thing*, that is, as a presence that thinks and can access itself through the process of thinking. The thinking self

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[803] Descartes, "Third Meditation. On God: that He exists," in René Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy*, trans. Donald A. Cress, third edition (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1993), 24.

apprehends first itself, and through this thinking becomes *evident to itself*, therefore doubting, affirming, denying, knowing, and ignoring become specific functions of thought process in itself. To doubt means here the impossibility to reach a reliable onto-epistemological certainty of the object that appears before the eyes; ignorance is defined as the awareness of the lack of knowledge. The focal point of this thinking is the judgment itself as a locus in which the truth of beings is disclosed or concealed. In this way, Descartes, moves in the field of pure subjectivity transcendental to the empirical senses and comes to the perception of himself as *res cogitans*. The *res cogitans* is conceived as a self-enclosed and autonomous locus of subjectivity which contains the *a priori* categories of pure thought and of representation of things themselves as subjective constructs. It follows naturally that it is impossible for the source of the cognitive certainty of the *res cogitans* to be located outside himself. Otherwise, the *res cogitans* as *pure subjectivity* would be completely deprived of its ontological autonomy. The truth of things must now be the result of the operations of these subjective *a priori* categories of knowledge. Even the world is reduced to a *res extensa* – pure space, the 'objective' dimension. Subject and object essentially never touch each other. And most surely, subject's self-certainty has nothing to do with his surrounding world; it can be acquired only through the pure world-detached operation of thinking. The reality of things must be sought in the interiority of consciousness as itself a being with its own categories and procedural determinations. These trascendental categories form the interior phenomenology of pure subjectivity.[804]

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[804] Some centuries later, these categories are developed by Edmund Husserl in his notions notion of "formal ontology" as formal *Mathesis Universalis* and "Transcendental as intentional Being constituted in pure consciousness." See Edmund Husserl, *Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology* (London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1967), 175-7. The cornerstone of this phenomenology is, form the subject's perspective, the act of epistemological *epochē*, and form the "object's" side, the interpretation of consciousness as a being itself: "In these studies, we go so far as is needed to furnish the full insight at which we have been aiming, to wit, *that Consciousness in itself has a being ot its own which in its absolute*

396

While the chivalric individual gave self-attestation through his courage, love, and loyalty according to Hegel,[805] now, in contrast, the Cartesian individual will attest to himself through the rational mechanisms of his own self-sufficient, i.e. transcendental subjectivity: "Of course, in this my first knowledge there is nothing that assures me its true, if not the clear and distinct perception of what I say, so I think I can establish a general rule, that all the things we conceive very clearly and distinctly are true."[806] The knightly courage is replaced by the methodical thinking; the courtly love morphs into the mathematical understanding of distinct individualities (God, men) and things, and the relationship between them generally; and romantic loyalty to the lord yields before the rational loyalty to the truth of things themselves. For now, the traditional heroic knight is dead.

In this context, Cervantes's irony in *Don Quixote* is rather more tragic than merely sarcastic. The essential mood of the work is the nostalgia brought about by the tragic loss. Its critical strength consists precisely of this puzzling conundrum of concurrent nostalgic affirmation and tragic supersession of chivalry. Thus, while King Arthur continues his path towards a further deification and the likelihood of his messianic return is still considered in

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uniqueness of nature remains unaffected by the phenomenological disconnexion." Edmund Husserl, *Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology*, ibid., 113. For the immediate source of these quotations, see Inti A. Yanes-Fernandez, "Byzantine Sacred Arts as Therapeutic Way: A Medieval *Pharmakon* for the Cyberman," The International Journal of Religion and Spirituality in Society 7, no. 4 (2017): 1-16. doi:10.18848/2154-8633/CGP/v07i04/1-16.

[805] "Yet if we ask what then at this new stage is the human breast in its inwardness full of, [we reply that] the content is concerned only with subjective infinite self-relation; the subject is only full of himself by being inherently infinite individuality; he does not need the importance or further concrete development of an inherently objective substantial content of interests, aims, and actions. But, in more detail, there are especially three feelings which in the person rise to this infinity: subjective honour, love, and fidelity." G. F. W. Hegel, "Chivalry," in *Hegel's Aesthetics. Lectures on Fine Arts*, ed. T. M. Knox Vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 553.

[806] Descartes, op. cit., ibid.

many parts of Wales and Brittany as an eschatological dogma, El Cid establishes himself as a loyal vassal deprived of messianic transcendence. He remains totally isolated in his own exploits as a prophetical foreshadowing of the fate reserved to most of posterior Spanish literature – at least until the poetic renasaince of the 19th-20th centuries: realistic verisimilitude, lack at symbolico-allegorical dimension, and absence of aesthetic connections with the romantic mysticism of Celtic-English traditions.

5.8. Essential Moments of King Arthur's Mythopoeia

Thus, King Arthur's mythopoetic phenomenology consists of three essential moments: (1) mythopoeia of historical materials, (2) mystico-religious allegorization of the mythical material, (3) simultaneous crystallization of an earthly (political) and transcendental (eschatological) identity. The eschatological consciousness that brackets world and history and focuses on the eternal constitutes here the common factor. In contrast, El Cid of *PMC* basically responds to, (1) the realistic exaltation of the warrior within the framework of what we call here a "demythicized and demystified chivalry;" (2) the social reaction of a low-rank nobility that having acquired land-based privileges aspires now to obtain social acknowledgment by high nobility,[807] and, (3) the construction of a Christian hero-warrior linked to the process of Reconquest, Christianization, and Castilianization, a process that commenced in the 8th century in the Asturian Kingdom and spead throughout the Peninsula with the unification of the Kingdoms of Castilla and León.

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[807] Regarding to this process, Claude Marks explains that: "In the Christian world, knighthood became distinct in many ways from feudalism, with its strict hierarchy, and had its own ethical standards, which were not always identical with those of the Church. The knights were members of a military aristocracy recruited in a more or less democratic fashion, and were accepted on the basis of courage, intelligence and other personal qualities rather than for considerations of social class." See Pilgrims, Heretics, and Lovers…, op. cit., 38.

5.9. The End of Chivalry in Spain and Britain

If we compare the development of chivalric literature in England and Spain, we see at roughly the same age two outstanding epoch-closuring books: Sir Malory's *Le Morte d'Arthur* and Miguel de Cervantes's *Don Quixote de la Mancha*. In different ways, these works constitute a *Summa* of a golden epoch for Chivalry both in Spain and England. Both were written by men not only well-versed in the art of war but warriors themselves. Yet, each book constitutes each other's negation. *Le Morte d'Arthur* is not the tragico-ironical negation of the chivalric past from which it sprang. On the contrary, it constitutes its exaltation and final glorification in the most perfect incarnation of its essence: King Arthur. It is at the same time *telos*, historical self-consciousness, and apotheosis. The fact that the book took its name after its last chapter, which is centered on Arthur's death, can be deceiving if one fails to understand that 'death' means in Malory's ideosphere rather 'deifying transition' and 'preparedness for the eschatological return.' In this sense, King Arthur transcends –though this is just one of his multiple shapes– the liminal border of ethno-identitary constructions and becomes a prototype of mystic chivalry and spiritual *telos*. Regarding this R. J. Stewart says: "In his [Arthur's] wounded state, his passage to the Fortunate Isles with Merlin and Taliesin, his long rest upon a golden bed under the care of Morgen, Arthur is a potent symbol of both the land and the human psyche or spirit."[808] It is true that Malory seems to believe that many people, especially Britons, still expects Arthur's messianic return: *Hic iacet Arthurus, rex quondam, rexque futurus*. But Malory himself is at least a humble admirer of the British hero-warrior and recognizes in him the

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[808] R. J. Stewart, *Merlin: The Prophetic Vision and The Mystic Life* (London: Arkana Penguin Group, 1994), 425.

full realization of an entire culture. In Don Quixote's case, as known, the circumstance is very much different. Chivalry is in decay, there is no place any longer for chivalric virtues, such as self-sacrifice, sense of universal justice and bucolic experience of being in the world in essential harmony with one's place in it. This faded chivalric glory seems to be cause of laugh and cruel derision and persiflage during the whole book. The 'decay' is so deep and irreversible that the only way to keep alive the old spirit is the shadow of madness. The knight must be 'mad' indeed, i.e. essentially unable of fit in with the state of being –nre self-consciousness, social changes and institutions, and epistemological shift–, to be *authentically* himself. In the world-epoch of fled gods and the closure to the sacred as radical malignancy, madness is a sign –a paradoxical and scandalous sign– of apophatic spiritual *salus*. Others, such as Hörderlin and Nietzsche, will be thrown to the same experience of paradoxical salvation into the dark light of this most peculiar insanity, where somehow 'losing the reason' stands for 'gaining the soul' by rescuing it –even at the highest price– from the frivolous scientifico-technological rationality of Industrial Revolution and bourgeois Modernity.

Indeed, under the fashion of the burlesque, Cervantes alongside his hero seems to mourn an epoch already vanished and hands down to us an authentic tragedy. It is this tragic mood instead of comedy that feeds and sustains this work from within: *Don Quixote* is a sarcastic epic prose that deeply echoes a cultural tragedy, but *PMC* is not. *Don Quixote* is by far the greatest tragic epic composition of Spanish literature written in prose, it is the *epos* of a fallen glory that still refuses to accept its inevitable destiny. This tragic condition pervades the whole narrative only to reappear as the essence of the novel just when Don Quixote recovers his mental *cordura*, i.e. when he obliviates both his epic vocation and his

soteriological urge. Don Quixote lives in madness as eschatological –symbolico-allegorical– reconciliation between world and Transcendence. Yet as a fallen hero Alonso dies miserable, after returning to a world where justice, love, and self-sacrifice obviously are just causes of derision and disdain.

The epic essentially seeks the exaltation of the hero and his exploits. Furthermore, epic compositions regularly emerge in religious contexts, and therefore are considered inspired texts by its own author (or authors). Thus, Homer's *Iliad* begins with an invocation to Athena. From that moment on, it is the godess who speaks, not the bard. In *Beowulf*, the evocation of the noble lineage of a glorious past serves as starting point. It is only within the mystical atmosphere of a sacred temporality that the real meaning of Beowulf's being and deeds can be disclosed. Thus, the primary goal of epic literature is to praise the hero by telling his story and admiring his deeds in the liminal chronotope of gods' and men's interception. The chronicle, on the contrary, primarily seeks to inform, i.e. to convey to the audience a determined amount of facts. This conveying of facts can be amplified by means of aesthetico-artistic resources, but the foremost goal is not as much extoling the hero and his deeds as transmitting a historical account. Therefore, the chronicle is an inextricable part of the historical narrative but not necessarily of epic compositions. It is precisely for this reason that in the Greek-Roman tradition the epic conflated elements of historical narratives and was considered by Aristotle even superior than history: "Διὸ καὶ φιλοσοφώτερον καὶ σπουδαιότερον ποίησις ἱστορίας ἐστίν."[809] In fact, history springs out as an independent genre from epic narrative as a narrative itself, which is clearly indicated in its own name. Montaner Frutos points out that, "No en vano,

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[809] See note 739.

la poesía homérica desempeñó un papel modélico y modelador respecto de la primera

historiografía griega, como los clasicistas se han encargado de evidenciar."[810] Cicero could

have been thinking of the historiographical epics of the kind of *Iliad*, *Odyssey*, and later

Aeneid when he defined history as narrative speech, in terms of: "uero testis temporum, lux

ueritatis, uita memoriae, magistra uitae, nuntia uetustatis…."[811] Such a genre combination,

which placed epic on the pinnacle of literary creation during classic and medieval ages,

was surpassed only by philosophy. In this sense, many neoaristotelian scholars saw history

itself as narrative speech, and interpreted history and historiographical epics according to

Aristotle's ontological principles of form and matter. Montaner Frutos notes that, "la

reflexión hilemorfista puesta al frente del *Pelayo* de Pinciano por 'un amigo del autor', que

reformula el planteamiento aristotélico en los siguientes términos: 'el cual [*sc*. Poema], así

como los demás poemas heroicos perfectos, es compuesto de materia, que es la verdad

histórica, y de forma, que es la *verosimilitud* inventiva'."[812] Yet the inner distinction

between chronicle or historiographical discourse and epic appeared again as a consequence

of the reaction of Renaisance authors, such as Agrippa of Nettesheim, who radically

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[810] Alberto Montaner Frutos, "Épica, historicidad, historificación," in Juan-Carlos Conde López y Amaranta Saguar (eds.), *El Poema de mio Cid y la épica medieval castellana: Nuevas aproximaciones críticas* (London: Department of Hispanic Studies, Queen Mary, University of London, 2015): 17-53, 18.
 (Papers of the Medieval Hispanic Research Seminar, 75; Publications of the Magdalen Iberian Medieval Studies Seminar, 3).

[811] See "De oratore," II, in *M. Tulli Ciceronis Rhetorica, tomus I: Libros de oratore tres continens*, ed. A. S. Wilkins, Scriptorium classicorum bibliotheca Oxoniensis (Oxoni: E typographeo Clarendoniano, 1972). 37.

[812] Alberto Montaner Frutos, "Épica, historicidad, historificación," op. cit., 19. Also, in his *Philosophía antigua poética*, Pinciano attempts to give a definition of poetry according to form, style, and purpose: "para una difinición buena, basta que tenga género y diferencia, como materia y forma, sin que entre en ella la final causa. […] La obra que fuere imitación en lenguaje, será poema en rigor lógico. Y el que enseñare y deleitare (porque estos dos son sus fines) será bueno y el que no, malo." See Alonso López Pinciano, *Philosophía antigua poética*, ed. José Rico Verdú (Madrid: Fundación José Antonio de Castro, 1998), 113. For a study of Pinciano's poetics see Marina Mestre Zaragozá, "La *Philosophía antigua poética* de Alonso López Pinciano, un nuevo estatus para la prosa de ficción," in *Criticón* 120-121 (2014): 57-71.

distinguished poetry from history considering the latter as a form of science. Epic could then certainly excel as poetry –and specially bound up with the new notion of nation-state –but it came to be completely unacceptable as historiographical account.[813] This paradigm shift is the reason why during both the Renaisance and later the 18th and 19th centuries of Illustration and Positivism, "la épica pasará de considerarse la reina de las manifestaciones literarias … a serlo como una forma primitiva y poco rigurosa del discurso histórico, una suerte de *prisca historia* o protohistoriografía."[814] In *PMC*, the historiographical calling seems to hold sway over the epic exaltation, though the latter is undoutedly present. The fact that the whole composition praises El Cid's patience with Alfonso VII and the thoughtful moderation and prudence of his acts cannot be denied. Yet for instance, in *De belli* primarily Procopius gives an account of Justinian's wars, but this does not prevent him from loudly extoling Belisarius's courage and military skills. Likewise, in his *Arcana historia* Procopius's primary intention–as the title clearly indicates– is to present a *historiographical account* of the decay and fall of Justian, Theodora, and Belisarius. Notwithstanding his historiographical will, Procopius also offers a wide-ranging variety of judgements, profanities, and insults against the emperor, his wife, and his greatest *archistrategos*. Thus, this convergence of epic and history in the medieval literary consciousness poses a special difficulty to reach an assesment of the *PMC*'s genre. For now, suffice it to say that in the *PMC* the systematic realism, the hero's submission to the institutionalized justice system of Courts, the perfect junction between vassalage and

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[813] See Agrippa of Nettesheim, *De incertidumbre et uanitate scientiarum*, in Montaner Frutos, "Épica, historicidad, historificación," op. cit., 21.

[814] Montaner Frutos, "Épica, historicidad, historificación," op. cit., 20.

bondage after his reconciliation with Alfonso, and the narrator's willingness to particularize both characters and events within the framework of the most acceptable verisimilitude, incline the balance towards the historiographical aspect.

5.10. Epic Sources and the Cidian Matter: Contrast to the Arthurian Matter

The development of these primary sources (*HR*, *CC*, *CEA*, and *MR*) into a complete epic corpus was severed by a shift of circumstances. While the raw materials for Arthur's later shape-shifting into a cross-cultural synthesis are clearly found already in Celtic cultural imaginary around the 4th and 5th centuries, El Cid's epic sources, if eventually put together as a consolidated body, would constitute the Spanish analogy of the Welsh *Mabinogion*. We do not refer to the multiple iconosystems impacting El Cid's iconeme during its years of gestation, but to the likelihood of the existence of concrete early texts prior to *HR*, *CC*, *CEA*, and *MR* such as Nunnius's mention of the *dux bellorum*, or the Arthur of *Y Gododdin* [815] and *Preiddeu Annwn*,[816] in which some Rodericus, perhaps under a different name, emerges in a more prototypal mythological environment. Surely, the *HR* and *CC* constitute very early examples, but in those cases, there is no doubt that *that Rodericus* is clearly El Cid. An earlier prototype might exist, in the sense of a figure that for its features must be linked to the later Cid, but the connection may be still obscure and problematic. That figure would mean for El Cid's iconeme exactly what Aurelius Ambrosius, the *dux bellorum*, god Brad, and Riothamus mean for King Arthur.

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[815] "He fed black ravens on the rampart of a fortress /Though he was no Arthur / Among the powerful ones in battle / In the front rank, Gwawrddur was a palisade." See *Y Gododdin. Britain's Oldest Heroic Poem*, ed. A.O.H. Jarman, The Welsh Classics, vol. 3 (Llandysul: Gomer Press, 1988), 64.

[816] "And when we went with Arthur, / brilliant difficulty, / except seven none rose up / from the Fortress of Mead-Drunkenness." See *Preiddeu Annwn: The Spoils of Annwn*, trans. Sara Higley, in *The Camelot Project*, accessed 05/15/2017, http://d.lib.rochester.edu/camelot/text/preiddeu-annwn#peir.

5.11. Epic Hero, Spanish Realism, and Transcendence

The epic hero is essentially untouchable and distant: even in this world he is other-worldly. At some point, epic hero-warriors prove themselves to dwell beyond a strictly human horizon. They are either demi-divine beings since the beginning (Hercules, Achilles), or they become deified through their exploits and deeds in different ways (King Arthur). This never occurred with El Cid. The epic factor is drawn out and dismissed for the sake of the transfiguration of the hero into a realistic Christian warrior, a paradigm of vassalage, directly involved in the Reconquista. In Spain, the Christian imaginary needed a heroic figure who would respond to a more realistic profile. They sought historical-biographical accounts rather than prototypal epic narratives. The reason for this might be that, unlike the formation of a totally transcultural England, the Spanish Catholic kings were in position to win the war and impose a Castilian model to the whole Peninsula. In general, idealized prototypical heroes are needed only when the possibilities of autonomous cultural survival are minimal –e.g. an independent Wales–, or in time of hopelessness. One idealizes something only when one proves unable to deal with –and hold sway over– it.

The reason why Arthur follows a fast path towards his prototypal idealization is that during several centuries after the collapse of the Roman rule in Britain (5th century), none of the politico-cultural actors was able to claim a certain victory and, therefore, to impose its preeminence over the rest. King Arthur appears linked to two essential cultural utopias since the beginning, i.e. the effective Christianization of Britain and the achievement of a long-lasting transcultural integration. At some point, it was *for all* (Welsh, Anglo-Normand, English, Saxons, Juts) equally necessary to create a superhuman

hero-warrior innerly familiar with the supernatural element and, hence, able to incarnate not only the possibility of an abstract peace but also of a concrete ethno-identitary synthesis. For his part, El Cid preserves his epic origin in his iconemic memory, yet the leading role in the stage of politico-cultural unification will become gradually reserved only to the Christian Castilian kings. Thus, El Cid's epic content repeatedly emerges during his paradigmatopoeia and his Benedictine epigonal hagiopoeia; yet in none of these stages this epic content is either preeminent or long-lasting. The lack of epic mythemic integrity along with the variability of his iconemic profile –specially concerning his relationship with the kings– end up morphing El Cid into a postepic figure with hagiographic nuances in which the identity between vassalage and bondage to his *señor natural* banishes, and so the Spanish knight becomes an obedient knight-vassal deprived of his original, cultural privilege of being a distant, arbitrary, and self-ruled hero, in other words, of being, like Arthur, *properly* epic.

5.12. General Conclusions

El Cid and King Arthur as mythemes/iconemes develop in a functional correspondence with the Christianization of Britain and the Iberian Peninsula and the establishment of national monarchies. This functional relation is formally the same for both King Arthur's and El Cid's myth-making as hegemonic myths (Table 6). 'Functional relation' means here that: (1) there are functional correspondences between these gradual cultural processes and the concrete shape-taking of the myths, (2) this formal-functional relation could be common to all 'hegemonic myths' as subspecies of myths in general, and, (C) only by understanding these relations as a function – i.e. a form of dynamic correspondences (A⇔B, pre-images⇔images, F:F-1) and not just as a 'cause-effect'

406

diachronicity, it is possible to fully understand the raison d'être of the mythopoetic shape-shifting of El Cid and King Arthur. Therefore, it is possible to formulate the functionality of these myths in the relation(r): r= {(1,4), (2,5), (3,6)}, when 4,5,6 are images of pre-images 1,2,3, and constitute, as domain B, the range of domain A.

El Cid's functional relations as hegemonic myth:	Epic Self-Consciousness ⇔ Epic Prototype	Castilian Order ⇔ Good-Vassal Paradigm	Benedictine Expansion ⇔ Epigonal Hagiopoeia
King Arthur's functional relations as hegemonic myth:	Pre-/Proto-Christian Self-Consciousness ⇔ Welsh Paradigm as folk-hero	Universal Christianization ⇔ Prototype as Messiah-King	Monarchical Consolidation ⇔ English Paradigm as Prophet-King

Table 6: Functional Relations as Hegemonic Myths.

The systematic description of the mythopoeia and shape-shifting of King Arthur and El Cid as hegemonic myths in functional relations with cultural and socio-political processes, along with their complex phenomenology, constitutes the essential contribution of the present work to the Cidian-Arthurian studies. Yet it is also our hope that the conclusion, that these functional relations and complex phenomenology take place via complex intericonic and intertextual transactions largely determined by the impact of Byzantine religious, military, and political iconico-literary paradigms, can contribute to the fill the gap still existing in the Cidian-Arthurian scholarship between Byzantium and the worlds of King Arthur and El Cid.

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