

definitely roguish and the tone of their speech is mocking, gay, and witty. A second trait is fantasy. While it is true that nearly all indigenist novels can be classified within Socialist Realism, it can be said that this one also belongs to Magical Realism, that peculiar mixing of the real and the fantastic that has been the pride and joy of the Spanish-American fiction writers for the last three decades. In this Scorzan novel, clouds and rivers immobilize themselves in mourning for the massacred highlanders. And Inca rebels of the colonial past visit the market of Yanacochoa to alternate with the rebels of modern times.

An interesting plot of human conflicts, remarkable stylistic abilities put to intelligent use, and a translation of high quality make this tale a very good introduction to the problems that the Andean people of Peru are facing today and will no doubt continue to face in the near future.

Aryeh Wineman

*Mystic Tales from the Zohar*

Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1997. Pp. 179. \$34.95

Reviewed by Mordecai Roshwald

One fundamental difference between the world of imagination of Judaism and that of Hellenic civilization and its later offshoots is the unrestrained fantasy of the latter and the relatively rigorous discipline of the former. The world of the Greek gods, with their quarrels, intrigues, and escapades, cannot have a counterpart in the strict moral atmosphere of Israelite monotheism. It is not surprising, therefore, that European literature borrowed from Greek mythology far beyond its involvement with the biblical literature.

Yet, Judaic culture, though self-restricted to its holy scriptures, found an outlet for the popular imagination in the rabbinical homiletic literature, known by the Hebrew term *Midrash*. Evolving over centuries, it embellished the biblical tales with fantastic tales and added a universe of myth and legend, woven not only round the biblical figures, but also related to various later sages and dedicated scholars. The origins of this creation go back some two thousand years and reach at least to the Hassidic tales, which were opened to the outer world by the work of Martin Buber.

One prominent expression of the religious fantasy can be found in the book of *Zohar*, the central work of Jewish mysticism, known under the name of *Kabbalah*. This arcane work, written in Aramaic probably in the thirteenth century, exhibits an expanse of myth, which a reader of the Old Testament could hardly suspect. God Himself is perceived as manifesting His Being in ten aspects or emanations, each with its own characteristic. This plurality contains a potential for drama and diversity within the doctrine of strict monotheism. To

this must be added the presence of various angels, with specific functions, the acknowledgment of the force of evil, and the struggle resulting from the confrontation of such powers, with man being involved and touched by all this.

Yet, the *Zohar* has remained an arcane work, even to Judaic scholars, who shied away from mysticism—not a part of the mainstream of Judaism. The situation has changed, to some extent, due to the work of Gershom Scholem and his disciples, in the last half century or so. The present volume is a noteworthy contribution to the endeavor to make the *Zohar* known to a wider circle of readers. Moreover, Aryeh Wineman, who modestly presents himself as translator and commentator, approaches the text from a distinctive modern perspective, in culling from the text stories and looking at them from a literary point of view.

Aryeh Wineman, who studied Jewish theology as well as Hebrew literature and officiates as a rabbi, has accomplished a first-rate work, by presenting the stories, analyzing each of them, and relating every one to the context of Judaic thought and belief, while explaining the distinctive mode of Midrashic and Kabbalistic thinking. Moreover, he looks for extra-Judaic sources for comparisons and possible influences, or mutual influences, on the Kabbalistic stories, and his search includes Christian, Moslem, and other cultures. The book opens with an excellent introductory essay.

While the stories of the *Zohar* seem to give free rein to the imagination and fantasy of the Jewish religious-national genius, they still exhibit a sense of connection to the mainstream of Judaism and show the mark of discipline dictated by Jewish belief and tradition. The connection is formally expressed by the tendency to relate the story to a biblical verse or verses, in a manner characteristic of Midrashic homilies. The discipline is dictated by certain fundamental tenets of belief and commitment. Whatever the story, it is focused, in the last resort, on moral and religious issues. It may affirm the centrality of the study of the *Torah*, the teaching and the law of God, or explore the way of eschatological redemption, or set an example of piety and devotion, or delve into the prospect of the annihilation of evil and the attainment of immortality. Thus, the stories, while deemed as fiction by the literary critic, remain firmly in the realm of religious and moral reflection.

Though the eight stories included in this volume cannot be reproduced here, one of them may well be summarized to exemplify their distinctive nature (143ff.). It is a story about Rabbi Yose of Peki'in (a village in Galilee) who, having died, is brought back to life by the tears and ardent prayers of his little son. The son argues with God, adducing arguments from the Bible, and finally the righteous of the Academy of High "rose before the Holy King" and moved Him to resurrect Rabbi Yose and add twenty-two years to his life. One factor which mollified God was the boy's readiness to offer his life for his father. The years

gained by the resurrected sage are dedicated to the study of *Torah*, in which the boy actively participates.

The tale—while, as a story, displaying the elements of crisis, filial devotion, and salvation—reveals the characteristics of religious piety and the mythical elements of popular imagination. In accordance with the Jewish ethos, life is of importance not only for its own sake, but as an opportunity for the study of *Torah* and for righteous conduct. The motif of filial sacrifice shows a possible link to the sacrifice of Isaac—a biblical reference. The mystical presentation of the departed righteous studying *Torah* in a divine academy reflects a picture of a harmonious cosmos, in spite of the vicissitudes of earthly existence. Thus, the drama of confrontation of love and death, the former gaining the upper hand, a familiar pattern in literature, is enacted against the background of a religious belief in harmony, perfection, and bliss, which are the portion of the righteous.

The book is produced very well, with consistently correct transcriptions of Hebrew words, and a glossary of relevant terms. It is embellished by papercuts by Diane Palley.

Lawrence B. Gamache and Phyllis Perrakis, eds.

*D.H. Lawrence: The Cosmic Adventure*

Nepean: Borealis Press, 1996. Pp. 290. CAN \$18.00

Reviewed by Camille R. La Bossière

It was Lawrence's "quest within himself and in the world he wandered for much of his life," as the editors of this nicely produced volume remark by way of introduction, "to renew a sense of place in this world and in the cosmos that would justify living passionately and fully as beings composed of flesh and blood, mind and spirit" (vii). And certainly, taken as a whole, the sixteen essays collected here do express more than a little "something" of the "breadth and depth" of Lawrence's understanding and "awareness" through their "study of his works, his life, and his relationships to others in his time and after who were of like mind or who were driven by equally profound values" (vii). Comparative studies of Lawrence with Hardy (H. M. Daleski), Anaïs Nin (Jane Eblen Keller), Lawrence Durrell (Carol Pierce), and Tennessee Williams (M. Elizabeth Sargent) enhance our contextual understanding of his achievement; essays on matters of domestic violence (Mark Spilka), feminism (Paul Delany), literary success and gender (Holly Laird), clinical and social psychology (James C. Cowan; Ginette Katz-Roy), and physical illness (Wayne Templeton) invite a more acute sense of Lawrencean bodiment; and a series of studies ranging in subject from rhetoric (Joan Douglas Peters; George J. Zytaruk) and comparative religion (Kaien Kitazaki), to editorial history (John Henry Raleigh) and literary theory (Michael