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is an appreciation of Víctor Erice's *El espíritu de la colmena*. A prologue to Isabel Vilar's pictorial catalogue shows the full range of Savater's poetic talents as he transmutes shapes, colors, textures, and moods into an evocative verbal tapestry.

A good number of these essays were delivered as lectures, two of which are an elucidation of Santayana's notion of esthetics. We are reminded that "la barbarie, para Santayana, no es la incapacidad de disfrutar de la belleza, sino la disparatada exigencia de creer que debe ser disfrutada como un valor separado, único y trascendente" (p. 46). A tribute to Octavio Paz entitled "Perplejidad y responsabilidad del intelectual" confirms the image of Savater as a politically circumspect social critic. Thus, he writes: "Ni mesías ni corazón delator del desorden: el intelectual es, en cambio, el ciudadano cuyo examen público y razonado de las palabras vigentes y de las evidencias históricas ayuda a los demás a ejercerse civilmente" (p. 212).

Two pieces on Diderot discuss the more personal qualities of a man of ideas. The first, called amusingly "Irse de ideas," exploits a sexual metaphor to describe the Frenchman's unconventional forms of thought. The second, drawing on Diderot's letters to Sophie Volland, celebrates the happy fusion of eros and intellect that marked their relationship.

Three articles on drug abuse conclude with the unremarkable observation that "el peligro público que determinadas drogas representan como factores de impulso a la delincuencia no se debe a los productos tóxicos en sí mismos, sino a la prohibición que pesa sobre ellos" (p. 149). There are also essays on the legacy of Greek culture, the Scotland of R. L. Stevenson, the wisdom of Kafka, and the apocalyptic nature of video games.

With the exception of the title essay, there is hardly anything in this collection dealing with Spanish literature. What, then, are the instructions to forget the "Quijote"? As the reader might well suspect, the answer consists of a paradoxical strategy reminiscent of the story of Columbus and the egg. To forget the "Quijote" one must read it again and dispel the romantic cloud that envelops an essentially comic figure. Very simple instructions, indeed, for a rather complicated task.

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Maimonides. *Essays and Texts. 850th Anniversary.* By Norman Roth. Madison: Hispanic Seminary of Medieval Studies, 1985. 169 pages.

One of Spain's most paradoxical "achievements" has been to have provided many other countries and lands some of its most distinguished chil-

dren: exile, voluntary or involuntary, has in the course of history scattered far and wide some of the best minds of different generations. While we are most familiar with the national ravages and the personal agonies resulting from the exoduses of the modern period, more than one great Spaniard of the medieval period died far from his always beloved ancestral homeland. The exile and eventual fate of the largely faceless and nameless masses of both Jews and Muslims has left cultural artifacts of varying degrees of perceived importance for Hispano-medievalists. The volume under consideration here is devoted to the life and works of an individual who, the author argues, should rightly be considered among the handful of Spain's most prominent and influential philosophers, Moses b. Maimon, better known as Maimonides. As Roth notes in the final essay of the collection, "The great irony of history, for the man who all his life took pride in being a 'Spaniard,' was that medieval Christians referred to him as 'Moysees Aegyptius'—Moses of Egypt—a title which he never himself used" (p. 147). No less ironic is the widespread neglect of this phenomenally influential and accomplished philosopher, this other Moses of the Jews, a neglect which Roth both continually laments and details and which he attempts to begin to remedy with this collection of essays most of which are edited and annotated versions of talks given at different symposia in 1985, the 850th anniversary of Maimonides' birth.

Since Roth is unabashedly didactic, wishing to improve what he ably shows to be a disgraceful ignorance and neglect of an essential medieval author, his talks-turned-essays are successful in both interesting the uninitiated reader in the subject matter and in providing ample guidance for further reading. Roth has admirably avoided two of the possible pitfalls of committing talks to print: he has preserved the casual clarity which makes a good talk an educational experience for the listener/reader, but he has also provided the critical apparatus necessary for the audience, or that part of it which has been captivated, to continue reading in the field. While he respects the readers' intelligence Roth also (correctly) assumes that he is unlikely to know very much at all about Maimonides and is correspondingly informative even about the most rudimentary biographical and bibliographic facts. The notes accompanying each separate paper are further supplemented with a number of specialized bibliographies.

Because the individual papers were delivered on different occasions and to different audiences there is inevitable repetition, but on the other hand the essays also provide different, important foci and, because of that repetition, each one can stand on its own. Thus, there is a little something here for almost everyone. The first essay, "Maimonides' Impact on World Culture" (preceded by an Introduction, written for the volume, which includes a valuable outline of all of Maimonides' work and the translations available), and the last two, "Maimonides and Spanish Scholarship" and "Maimonides as Spaniard: National Consciousness of a Medieval Jew," are of interest to any medievalist and any Hispanist and would also serve as

useful, brief, and clear expositions for classroom use. Comparably, Roth's new translations of a handful of important passages from a number of Maimonides' greatly varied works make accessible snippets of enticing reading to the general reader and the student alike. (Hispano-medievalists will certainly enjoy reading his "Categories of Speech" in which Maimonides uses the Hebrew *muwashshahāt* as an example in his discussion of the proper and improper uses of language.) There are three essays and one book-review/essay in the volume that are likely to be of greatest usefulness to scholars with special interest in several other fields: philosophy ("Knowledge of God and God's Knowledge"), Arabic ("Maimonides and Some Muslim Sources"), Hebrew ("Maimonides on Hebrew Language and Poetry"), and Talmudic law and scholarship (his review of the *Introduction to the Code of Maimonides*). But these too are accessible, by and large, to a more general reader sufficiently interested in the subject matter, and they all provide any number of valuable insights, as well as considerable general information. Again, the detailed notes and wealth of information about available bibliography, both general and specialized, are always there to encourage the reader to go on. (One must lament, however, Roth's use of the old bibliographical format which does not give us the publisher.)

It is revealing to note that the volume has been dedicated by Professor Roth to his students. The volume itself is clearly intended to teach us about a Spaniard we know all too little about. Roth argues quite cogently that had Maimonides been anything other than an Andalusian, heir to the wealth of advanced and richly varied cultural traditions that surrounded and dazzled a Cordoban of the twelfth century, he might have been little more than a brilliant Talmudic scholar, of importance in later history only to rabbinic scholars. Instead, this son of what he would call, from exile, "the glorious land" (a term usually reserved for Palestine!) reached a stature which neither medieval nor Hispanic scholarship has yet actively acknowledged. Roth's essays should serve as an important point of departure for a return of the wealth of profoundly influential works of this versatile philosopher to the canon of medieval European studies from which it has been by and large exiled for far too long.

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The Imagery of the "Libro de Buen Amor." By Gail Phillips. Madison: Hispanic Seminary of Medieval Studies, 1983. iii+290 pages.

There is a larger notion around this cache of little inventories and collations: that the selection and stimuli of a particular set of images bring buoyancy to the *Libro de buen amor* and are the crux of its art.