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April 22nd, 1970

Dear Professor Ferrater-Mora,

I am writing to you at the suggestion of Professor Juan Marichal of Harvard University, with whom I spoke yesterday. I should add that I am a teaching fellow in the Harvard English Department engaged upon my thesis at the present time, and my enquiry concerns the matter of my dissertation topic.

Briefly: I am concerning myself with the island motif in the literary imagination--as an archetype, a topographical metaphor--and one of the aspects I am exploring is the use of the island as a kind of ritual arena where man is face to face with elemental problems and basic conflicts, separated from the rest of mankind. It has been pointed out to me that Ortega uses the metaphor of the bullring in a similar manner; in particular, I am trying to track down a reference where the linear Christian quest, where obstacles are met and overcome, is compared to a more accurate description of life's struggle, with the image of man in a bullring facing the same problem (i.e. the bull) all his life. This may be a garbled version of what Ortega says or it may be a composite of his many references to this central metaphor in the Spanish consciousness. I am handicapped by my inability to read Spanish and my layman's knowledge of Ortega. I was wondering whether you might be able to help.

The reference-- if I should have sufficient justification to use it-- will be allusive and suggestive in nature within the context of my thesis. However, it is the kind of cross-cultural illumination I find ~~so~~ interesting to explore, even if I am not able to pursue it very far.

Yours sincerely,

*Roger Bowen*

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