

Title of Proposed Talk: Francisco Goya: Witness to Satan's Rise
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The name Francisco Goya (1746-1828) is rightly acclaimed as one of the greatest European painters. He is normally regarded as the last of the Old Masters, but his work was forward looking enough to exert a powerful influence on the work of modern artists such as Manet, Picasso, and countless others. This presentation hopes to show that his name also deserves to be included among the artistic prophets of mimetic desire. Goya's work, like that of Shakespeare, Cervantes, Dostoevsky, and Proust discloses to us the dynamics of mimetic rivalry in both its integrating and disintegrating modes.

This presentation will begin with a few preliminary remarks pertaining to his life and times, and then proceed to a consideration of his artistic work. From the very beginning of his professional career, Goya manifests a keen interest in themes closely related to mimesis, especially violent unanimity, which Girard has referred to as the "Satanic communion." His careful and varied depictions of bullfights, for example, take on new significance when considered in conjunction with his *Great He-Goat* and other minor works where collective unity is placed in a primitive religious context familiar to Girardians. Other notable works from his early career including *Yard with Lunatics* and *Colossus* further reveal a developing awareness of the dynamics of mimesis.

In the last ten years of his life Goya executed what are known as the "Black Paintings", so called both for their dark palette and dark subject matter. As Goya's mood intensifies in his final years, so too does his treatment of mimetic themes. His *Men Dueling with Cudgels* is a powerful depiction of the violence of mimetic doubles. *The Burial of the Sardine* is a chilling depiction of the "holiday-gone-wrong" and the advent of a sacrificial crisis. In what may be his most famous work, *The Third of May, 1808*, Goya depicts the grim resolution of the sacrificial crisis in the violent unity of an execution squad gathered around its single victim. This victim, in turn, bears an uncanny resemblance to a depiction of Christ that Goya provides in his *Christ on the Mount of Olives*.

These images, I contend, taken together in proper sequence, provide not only copious "grist for the Girardian mill," but a fairly well detailed account of what Girard has called "the mimetic cycle."