

Portland State University

PDXScholar

Special Collections: Oregon Public Speakers

Special Collections and University Archives

10-23-1979

"Carnival in Romans (Lecture 2)"

Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie

Follow this and additional works at: <https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/orspeakers>



Part of the [European History Commons](#), and the [European Languages and Societies Commons](#)

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

Recommended Citation

Ladurie, Emmanuel Le Roy, "'Carnival in Romans (Lecture 2)'" (1979). *Special Collections: Oregon Public Speakers*. 200.

<https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/orspeakers/200>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access. It has been accepted for inclusion in Special Collections: Oregon Public Speakers by an authorized administrator of PDXScholar. Please contact us if we can make this document more accessible: pdxscholar@pdx.edu.

Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie
"Carnival in Romans" (Lecture 2)
October 23, 1979
Portland State University

Portland State University Library Special Collections & University Archives
Oregon Public Speakers Collection
<http://archives.pdx.edu/ds/psu/11455>
Transcribed by Carolee Harrison, Nov.-December 2021

PSU Library Special Collections and University Archives presents these recordings as part of the historical record. They reflect the recollections and opinions of the individual speakers and are not intended to be representative of the views of Portland State University. They may contain language, ideas, or stereotypes that are offensive to others.

MICHAEL REARDON: ...in the series of Morden lectures for this year, and again, we'd like to express our gratitude to Burke and Alice Ann Morden for their generosity and their donation and their founding of this lecture series in memory of their son Keith Morden. This the third in the series of Morden lectures, and last night, Professor Le Roy Ladurie gave us an overview of some of what he believed to be significant developments in 20th-century and very contemporary French historiography. This evening, he's going to turn to his own work, specifically to his forthcoming book—at least forthcoming in English—*Carnival in Romans*, and discuss some of the background of his writing and of the particular interpretation that he provides in that work.

Last night, I mentioned to you, if you were here, some of the ways in which Professor Le Roy Ladurie relates to the general development of the tradition of the Annales school of history in the twentieth century. I thought tonight I might call to your attention that Professor Le Roy Ladurie, as Lawrence Stone has said again recently, is also one of the emerging significant intellectual figures in contemporary Paris. As Professor Stone points out and says in his own words that Professor Le Roy Ladurie operates out of two great power bases: the Collège de France and the École des Hautes Etudes, and that he has access to some of the great foundations of the French press: *Le Monde*, *L'Express*, *Le Nouvel Observateur*, and is frequent in his appearance on French television. I have also heard, in fact, that Professor Le Roy Ladurie from time to time in his television appearances comments, particularly after he visits the United States, on the American character. [laughter] A somewhat latter-day De Tocqueville, I imagine. I hope, from his visit to the Pacific Northwest, that Professor Le Roy Ladurie will find something to interest and indeed titillate his French audience... [laughter] as his American audience has been increasingly titillated by the dung heaps of Montailou.

So tonight, we will hear Professor Le Roy Ladurie address himself to one of his more recent works, and again, I give you our guest speaker. [applause]

EMMANUEL LE ROY LADURIE: So I'm going to speak about a book that maybe is already published, at least in New York, which is not too far from Portland... and I would say [...], I think, when I'm in New York. This book is about... it's a monograph, *monographie* in French, a monograph about a revolt in a French southern city called Romans. Romans [...] a revolt in 1580 against taxes; the interest of this particular revolt is that it was accompanied with symbolic actions during Carnival. That's why the title of the book is *Carnival in Romans*. [...] by the party of craftsmen, poor, [...] rights by the party of the bourgeoisie, of the rich, with a final massacre of some leaders of the craftsmen's party by the rich. I was always fascinated by this story, which I discovered twenty years ago at the same time when I saw the American movie called *West Side Story*, which was—I don't know if young people have seen it, also, if it is out of fashion here now—but it was about some gang of young Puerto Ricans and [...] dancing, singing in the streets of New York and having a fight, and it was a little bit of the same story. So, having some leisure recently, I wrote this book by visiting the archives of the city of Romans. I will try to extract some... I would not dare to say "philosophy" of this book.

It is said that this book is about what we could call folklore or the use of folklorish codes in this mixture of festival and revolt, which was a Carnival of Romans in February 1580. I use the word "folklore" without undue connotation which could be either disparaging or beautifying as regards this work. I simply mean since in France the expression "It is folklore" is disparaging, it is used by students about some politics that they find stupid. They say, "It's folklore," "*C'est de folklore*." I think it comes from the Sorbonne, professors of the Sorbonne who felt folklore and folkloric studies was a stupid thing, and so the adjective "folkloric" is disparaging. But actually it is that folklore studies are quite interesting and varied.

I mean by "folklore" popular traditions, and I think this Carnival in Romans was linked with those traditions in many ways as regards their own internal structure, whether plebian or bourgeois structure. We were first confronted with the problem of brotherhoods. Those brotherhoods were in charge of organizing the different social strata or groups of the city, or also neighborhoods, each for itself. I will briefly refer to four of those brotherhoods. For the elite, Saint Mathieu and another which was called "good government" or "bad government," "*bonne gouverne*" or "*mal gouverne*," and for craftsmen and for peasants there were also two other brotherhoods, Saint Blaise and the Brotherhood of the Holy Spirit. There were other brotherhoods in Romans, but they were not important for this particular revolt.

The Saint Mathieu brotherhood in Romans was a very select gathering of people representative of the upper crust or beautiful people of the local society. It had its own chapel in an urban monastery; it had forty or fifty members, all relatively wealthy or well-off merchants. It coincided more or less with the municipal elite which controlled the town hall. It had been set under the patronage of Saint Mathieu, since this apostle was originally a tax-gatherer of publicans who specialized in finance and tax issues. This brotherhood actually used to recruit salt merchants. Salt was already at the time one of the big businesses of this region. It came from the Camargue, Southern Rhone salt marshes by way of the Rhone on boats, went toward the northeast toward Romans, [...] Switzerland. Salt business was a state monopoly, like some forests in Oregon; it was called a salt tax or [...]. Saint Mathieu brothers were more

or less linked with state power and finances. The fees for membership in this brotherhood were much higher than the ones that were due in a more democratic organization of small drafters and carders like the Saint Blaise brotherhood. Saint Mathieu brotherhood had religious and social welfare functions like celebrating an annual mass on the day of the saint's festival and distributing or giving out alms to the poor.

Another brotherhood was "good government, bad government," "*mal gouverne*" or "*bonne gouverne*." I could call it "bad government," it was kind of [...] it was active in some of the parades in the Romans Carnival, you find the same kind of organization that was called the abbé, monastery or cheerful abbé of bad government in many Southern French cities. See Natalie Davis' recent book on the subject. It recruited among young males, bachelors or married, from 18 to 38 years old. Thirty-eight was still considered young; they were [...] over thirty or something like that. It was led by a farcical abbot, a local notable who could be even forty years old. This so-called abbé had both Christian and Dionysiac roles; it was concerned with Lent, Carnival, with spring as a general phenomenon in May—that was the Maypole—concerned also with power, municipal power, with love, and organization of marriages. It organized dances for Christmas, Carnival, May period, was also a military organization which arranged military parades with the bourgeois youth militia of the city, this militia being a kind of gilded youth and armored youth. So the "bad government" brotherhood could function as a repressive police, a kind of national guard on a city [...].

This "cheerful abbé" of this bad government had sovereignty in marriages; it was financed by a tax that was levied on each marriage inside the city, especially on marriages which involved one spouse who was not a native from the city. The receipts or returns that were obtained by this marriage tax were assigned to the repairs of town hall, carrying the stone and plaster, paying for the mess and bills, etc. That exemplified, of course, the novel links between bad government and municipal power. The militants of bad government were also members of the Saint Mathieu brotherhood and of the town council. They were recruited from young or less young adults of the top families of the city of Romans. It may have been that the treasurer of bad government was also one of the consuls of the city, of the mayors. The symbolic content of this bad government organization reached its highest point during the month of May. The Maypole or May tree was emblematical, an emblem of the bad government trinity that I've always referred to, of spring, power, and love. The so-called monks, farcical monks, of bad government's cheerful abbé in May used to plan the Maypole paid for by bad government. They fastened to this pole the box tree, which symbolizes eternal greenness, and the [...] festival of Palm Sunday. At the summit of the pole, they attached a young pine tree or fir tree, which was also eternally green. This May, with all this greening, embodied the annual spring renewal of vegetation, but it was also a political tree. Even now in Southern France when you are elected as a municipal councilor, your fellow citizens plant a tri-colored Maypole in front of your house. Circa 1580, the annual May tree planted by bad government in the marketplace of Romans had four coats of arms on itself, coats of arms of the French king, of the province, of the city, of bad government itself.

Now, May and bad government was not only vegetation and politics, it was also love, courtship, with offerings of taffeta scarves to the most beautiful and distinguished women of the city. Carnival is a time

for short affairs; May was a great period for romantic love. From love, you logically shift to marriage. As I have told, bad government puts a tax on all the city marriages; it touches off rough music or charivari against marriages of foreigners or widowers in Romans. Bad government, each year, establishes a list of newlywed people of the last 12 months in order to assess a tax on them proportionally to their supposed wealth. Carnival is a time to draw up the annual balance sheet of full marriages of the year, since Lent, which is going to fall on Carnival, coincides with the temporary interruption of the celebration of marriages. So, bad government is also linked with the parish churches where marriages were celebrated. Bad government was erected like a phallic and most comic and serious Maypole in the center of the whole process of fertility inside the city, whether it is vegetable, conjugal, or political and municipal fertility.

Bad government [...] Dionysiac frenzies of sexual reproduction, but it controlled them through the values both Apollonian or [...] of law and order. It repressed with laughter, sometimes with bloody laughter, the profound eruptions of anarchy. It was easy to understand why this comical abbé had strongly participated in the anti-plebian and murderous offensive of the 1580 Carnival by the notables. Bad government, who was heckling rough music, was a trick to re-establish good government with law and order. After 1580 and the crushing of the revolt, bad government was more and more called “good government” in the Romans archives. Ambrosio Lorenzetti has already depicted that perfectly in his fresco on bad government and good government in the town hall of Pisa, 1337-1339, where rural nature and urban culture were defeating the [...] instincts of popular disorder in the first painting of European landscape.

Those two bourgeois associations, Saint Mathieu and bad government, were totally contrasted with the two plebian organizations or brotherhoods. One is more oriented toward craftsmen, Saint Blaise; the other one toward peasant city-dwellers, the Holy Spirit. Saint Blaise, as a saint, is a character which is together agricultural—he protects harvests and flocks—medical—he cures [...], sexual-conjugal, he gets girls married. Relating to craft, he is the patron saint of carders and drapers; again, Saint Mathieu, patron saint of financiers. If Saint Blaise is patron saint of carders and drapers, it's because of the time of his martyrdom. His body was lacerated by cards, that is to say, carding brushes for the textile industry. This is a brotherhood in Romans with maybe 90 members, male independent craftsmen who will work on a family basis and sometimes may employ one wage-earner. We are very far from General Motors with these kind of small companies. They are in the dependency of big merchants, who supply them with wool and recover the cloth when the cloth has been made. But this dependency on merchants does not imply political subservience at all. On the contrary, the Saint Blaise brotherhood gathers masters but also simple workmen who are in the textile jobs.

It is in charge of organizing the professional festivals of drapers, with dancing balls, candles, violins, ringing of church bells for the reception of new masters. It seems that those dances, which implied traditional [...] dances, coincided with rough music against rich notables in February 1580 in Romans. The Saint Blaise brotherhood is also a [...] abbé, like bad government. It's directed by an abbot, a fancy abbot of course, but as a craftsman abbé it conflicted with bad government which is an abbé for the power elite of the city of Romans taken as a whole. The Saint Blaise brotherhood also nominates a

captain for its military parade of February third, the day of the saint's festival, and also a king for the triumph of its so-called kingdom on the same day. King, captain, abbot—that is to say, the three main characters of the classical kingdom—is typical of southern French festivals.

The other protagonist of the lower-class movement in Romans is the brotherhood of *Saint Esprit*—Holy Spirit. While bad government is concerned with marriage problems, Holy Spirit, as the third person of the Trinity, as a brotherhood tends to work on death and also for the spiritual rebirth of the individual. This rebirth is embodied by the sacrament of confirmation, which provides the person who receives it with the gifts of the Holy Spirit, those gifts being parallel to the gifts of food that this brotherhood distributes to its members for the common banquet of Whitsuntide. The Holy Spirit brotherhood is concerned with death; actually, among its membership, it includes dead people, the recent dead of Romans, who are personally represented by poor living people of Romans. So the dead can, in this way, almost directly participate in these brotherhood festivals. They can dance and have dinners with living members, and they can belong to the lower-class community of Romans and participate in class struggles. This was quite normal with people who were very concerned with ghosts and with souls' salvation.

However religious this organization may seem to be, it was a lay brotherhood which elected its lay chiefs. It gathered the craftsmen and basically the peasant city dwellers of Romans. It emphasized the archaic and carnal bonds which unified together the plebian groups of Romans, and which had insured, through the past centuries, the continuity of the Romanesque people. It embodied the mob versus the elite. The two organizations—Holy Spirit, mob, and bad government, elite—faced each other angrily for the carnival, especially in 1580. Both of them are also important in May: one for the Maypole and the other one for the celebration of Whitsuntide. This festival, as everybody knows, refers to the descent of the Holy Spirit transformed into fire tongues on the heads of the apostles and of the faithful congregation. I must remind you that as soon as the thirteenth century, some of the Holy Spirit brotherhood in southern France for instance had been the ferment of an urban agitation which was altogether community-oriented, craftsmen-oriented, popular, and even revolutionary. And this action had been placed under the patronage of the Holy Spirit, which certainly, among the three persons of the Trinity, is the most collectivist and futuristic one, because it is apocalyptic.

Everything considered, the Dauphiné phenomena of 1580, a part of a kind of open museum of all the forms of social organization that the German sociologists of the year 1880s have taken pleasure in discovering, among them abstract collectivities, group of domination or cooperation—*Herrschaft* or *Genossenschaft*—associations, corporate groups in contact with Romans and more generally with the 1580 Dauphiné, you find first those great abstract collectivities such as the churches, Protestant and Catholic, and the Paris monarchical state which is represented on the spot by his civil servants and officers, and even momentarily by Catherine de Medici, who is there on an official grand tour in 1579. You can also see the charismatic league of Bund (in German) that links together the urban pleban and the village peasants around a popular leader like [...], a local leader who enjoys a great prestige. In the city of Romans itself, you encounter the contrast that German sociologists have so strongly emphasized between associations that impose a domination or *Herrschaft* (in German) and the outside people are

beneath themselves, [...] underneath, an association of cooperation, *Genossenschaft*, the unity of which is democratically cemented with the assistance of all their members on an equalitarian basis. We are very far and away from what would be supposedly a non-organized mob. Bad government, for instance, which ensures a kind of police control on all city marriages under the leadership of the richest and brightest young people, is an organization for *Herrschaft* domination. It expresses the supremacy of the young or less-young power elite over some essential aspects of all urban activities. On the other hand, a handicraft brotherhood like Saint Blaise or Holy Spirit have more cooperative features of *Genossenschaft* cooperation. They organized a given occupational group such as drapers or carders; they don't have a general leadership at all in the whole urban collectivity. In spite of their functional divergence, those organizations are included in the general category of corporate associations or social groups. Those typological considerations may seem to you to be infected by pedantic totemism; however, they are not irrelevant for a clearer understanding of this episode.

The more strictly Carnival type that [...] the permutation of the prices of all food items in [...] originate from bad government and by and large from the bourgeois or elite organization of the city. That may appear surprising, since those organizations are supposed to embody law and order for the notables. Local dominations and hierarchies. But it's predictable. If you want to put farcically a complete society upside-down, topsy-turvy, a good thing is to have experiences of this society in its vertical and hierarchic structure, in its upstanding position of normal times. The rites of inversion that emanate from an association which is oriented toward domination have functioned to generate conservatism, integration, hierarchy, as [...] like Turner have said. They emphasize the momentary inversion of Carnival days in order to deny in an even more efficient way turning the long term of ordinary time of non-Carnival weeks and months. Finally, inversion is counter-revolutionary. On the other hand, popular lower-class associations which have to do with cooperation or *Genossenschaft* in craftsmen's [...] have organized during the public rejoicing or merrymaking of February 1580, some actions that are symbolic, folklorish, and, if you like, broadly Carnival-like. But those actions are oriented towards fights, simulated aggression, confrontation, class struggles. They have made almost no use of the theme of inversion. In an environment that was quite different, in May '68, the more serious people—maybe the working-class unions—were not put in... were not having action of inversion, while the students who were more prone to symbolic action used this kind of procedure.

Besides brotherhoods, which are both corporate and Catholic or religious, we should also mention the kingdoms—*royanage* or *royaume* in French. We encounter them at the time of the first Carnival revolt in Dauphiné in 1579, and most of all 1580. Five kingdoms of sheep, cock/rooster, eagle, hare, capon, and partridge, all animals. In this city, like elsewhere in southern France, those kingdoms were linked with some rites. The festival of ascent, of Blaise, or at least a religious celebration, a mass, linked also with an occupation brotherhood, with a [...] abbé. Plus, they organized a foot race or a horse race, plus the murder of an animal which amounts to a test of who is the most skillful among the hunters for the beheading of a rooster, of a sheep, etc. There is also the enthronement of kings and queens and certain officials of the so-called royal court, burlesque episodes, scandalous dances, a great ball and banquet. Those are only local examples in Romans of a more widespread and perfectly codified practice. Kingdom festivals can be found in a huge area in southern France. The first kingdom I've mentioned in this way

was at the end of the fourteenth century, in Avignon, maybe Italian-influenced, for the local epiphany of Twelfth Night, festival of kings. Then from this festival of kings of Twelfth Night, it has migrated to other festivals in the year religious cycle. Kingdoms in this area are very popular in the sixteenth century from 1500 onwards and will continue thereafter until now. They imply the following elements: first, a religious nucleus, which is central; celebration of the festival of Ascent of the Virgin, the [...] being linked to some parish cult, to the community religious festival, to the local chapel, or to a miraculous fountain, etc. Second, election of a king, of a queen, or other court officers that are half-serious, half-farcical—those royal offices may be the more or less fictitious prize for the winner of the foot race, but actually those offices are bought by auction by the candidates, by the highest bidder in the parish church itself. Those buyers in this way give money to the church, or they give corn, or wax for candles, etc. So you see how Carnival is linked with Catholic culture, not, as one says, with the remnants of some pagan memories, although this could be discussed too.

The social groups from which those kingdoms originated are occupational brotherhoods or village communities or youth associations. Kingdom also implies some game activity, like hunting, killing an animal, races, dances, balls, banquets, emphasis on love, farces, [...]. The king of the festival kingdom is generous, especially to the parish church, but he has also a religious connotation; he is sacred under the [...] of the priest in the church; he is a symbolic lover for his queen, a king of lovers. He is also political by imitation of French royalty. He can assume a function of political leadership in a revolt or in a [...]. The Romans Carnival has greatly used the formula of festival kingdoms. By and large, the Catholic culture of Renaissance southern France has been wonderfully able to blend the sacred and the secular, the religion and the burlesque. The festival kingdom is a social tool; it enables the lower class, like unions today, to make audible their voices and their satires, and to articulate their social demands. In normal time, lower-class political and plebian aspirations are repressed, but they can find their way of expressing themselves through the sacred ceremonies of festival days. The dangerous subconscious of the lower group becomes momentarily structured in the solemn and formalized institution of festival kingdom. Durkheim and Freud are holding hands, mutually, in a synthesis of savage explosion and regulated festival.

Beyond the brotherhood and so-called kingdom, one should try, however, to eliminate the general problem of winter festivals, especially of festivals before Lent, that is to say, carnivals. We have to raise the issue of how Romans carnivals, inside the framework inside the framework of comparative history, carnival like you have in southern France, neighboring Italy, [...], Switzerland, even Germany, since the German speaking in Switzerland is not very remote from the place I am studying. Carnival [...] in comparison with the fasting and preaching of Lent function as a logical prelude, as a preliminary antithesis. Contrary to what some people could think, Carnival does not have to be considered as a strictly pagan phenomenon, but rather as a pagan-cum-Catholic episode. After all, in the U.S., it is a more or less Catholic city like New Orleans that has an important Carnival, or Trinidad or Rio de Janeiro or other places. Let me explain my viewpoint. Lent, at the origin, Lent in the fifth century A.D. Christian church was a period of the year when the catechumens, that is to say the ex-pagans but not yet Christians, the people in-between, the young or adult converts to Christianity, receiving [...] and doctrine and discipline before baptism, was supposed to withdraw, fast, make penances, and pray in order to

prepare themselves ascetically to receive baptism at Easter immediately after Lent. So Easter is after. Lent is in between; Carnival is before. Van Gennep has illuminated those three stages in his *Rites of Passage* with the distinction between pre-liminal (Carnival), liminal (Lent), and post-liminal (Easter) periods. Victor Turner has also mentioned this work of Van Gennep. I may state that not only the catechumens but also the whole Christian people associated to practice fasting and ascetic prayer during the time of Lent.

So, under those circumstances, what is Carnival? In my opinion, this is a time when the pagans, who would soon become catechumens, and thereafter will be baptized Christians at Easter, are still pagans. In the last day of Carnival, or before the Lent period, that is to say on Shrove Tuesday, just before Ash Wednesday, which enters Lent, which marks the beginning of Lent, they bury their pagan lives exactly the same way as a bachelor buries his bachelor life before getting married. He drinks a lot, eats well, possibly sees for the last time his previous girlfriends, etc., before becoming strictly monogamous. As regards Carnival and Lent, since it is a yearly cycle of conversion and reconversion, the Christian people who each year are going to be, so to speak, reconverted, freely and willingly associate themselves in the first stage with those pagan ceremonies which are perfectly integrated with the regular Catholic time just between Advent and Christmas on the one hand and Lent, Easter, and Whitsuntide on the other. So there is no contradiction, except dialectical, between Carnival and Lent, since Carnival is pagan in its calendar essence but may be spiced with Catholic rites like a mass or a festival of Ascent. Carnival, as a pre-Lent and anti-Lent period, is most remote in an antithetic way from the ascetic values of Lent Christianity, the same way that bacon or sausage is opposed to fish or codfish. Lent emphasizes fasting, food abstinence, sometimes sex abstinence. It involves during the Middle Ages a truce of God against the daily ordinary practice of wars. On the contrary, Carnival underlines the importance of scenes—greedy and bawdy scenes. One eats very much meat, one drinks wine, has banquets. It is also marked with fits of sexual outbursts and with warriors' activities, like in 1580 Romans, [...] dances of the poor, military parades of the rich.

In these respects, and with the dialectical approach that I have referred to, Carnival probably integrates and reproduces some rites that have existed before Christianity during the pagan winter festivals, those festivals that have been amalgamated through popular Christianity in the first millennium A.D. at the time of countryside Christianization in a period of a fantastic cultural crossbreeding. I am referring, for instance, to the inversions of Saturnalia, of the animal masquerades and [...] of Lupercalia, to riding the donkey, etc. As usual, crossbreeding creates integrated structures. Christianity is a religion of sin. It's very normal that it was able to digest those pagan rites, that it was able to fully assimilate the sinful delights of Carnival even though it similarly... ex... how do you say? ...atones for those delights when Lent is coming. [...]

Dauphiné Carnival has functioned for a long time as a festival of the end of the year of changing to a new year. The year, in certain points during the Middle Ages and sometimes still in the sixteenth century, used to start on the 25th of March, Annunciation Day. So Carnival is one of the periods that marks the end of an annual cycle and the beginning of a new one. Anthropologists like Van Gennep, Leach, and Turner have given interesting models of those festivals for ending and starting all over again

of a cyclical time, in contrast with one-way-oriented indefinite time such as you find in theoretical Christianity, in the Bible, Marxism, eschatological ideologies of progress, of redemption, of doomsday, and finally, by and large, among our fellow historians. For Leach and Van Gennep, time in traditional societies is swinging a pendulum, even though official Christianity emphasizes a one-way history. But afterward, real Christianity is based on the cyclical and yearly time of the festival calendar of the year. So that's all right with us. For Leach, time normally flows during the year, then drives backward in the reverse during festival time, and finally starts again in the right direction during the year or season that is going to follow the festival. This alternative model coincides with the image and experience of traditional human beings. Alternation between day and night, life and death, etc. A year festival implies a first time, A., pre-liminal that marks separation from normal life and from the past year. A second moment, B., liminal, which corresponds with the crossing of the threshold. It is a time of condition or marginality, the moment when time goes back, flows in the reverse. Then a third moment, C., post-liminal, is re-integration or re-incorporation to day-to-day life and time until the next yearly or seasonal alternation. According to Leach, this threefold chronology is also Carnival-like. A. is masquerade; B. is inversion; C. is formalities. Masquerade, first, is separation from day-to-day life, entering behind masks, entering the sacred and fictitious world of festival. The inversion phase, B., indicates that now we are in the real transitional process of the festival, between two doors, between entrance and exit. The human group is now head over heels, ass over tip. It is an instance of divine community, communion or orgasm between the revelers or roisterers. Finally, the formalities, C., are no longer characterised by masked and sneered faces, but by top hats and dinner jackets and tuxedos. This coincides with re-entering the atmosphere, re-entering normal life, with entrance into the C. phase which is most repressive and regressive. Under other circumstances, this threefold procedure can sometimes be reversed. A marriage, for instance, can start with formalities of tuxedos and be finished with a ball, orgy, and masquerades. Finally, Leach emphasized the alternative swinging or rocking see-saw that goes from life to death from the beginning to the end of the official year, then from death to life during the short resurrection time of Carnival, going out from the ice of winter.

Leach's analysis is all right with Romans 1580 and other European carnivals. In Romans, we first have a masquerade of dances, brooms, flails, and symbols of death. Then you go to the wonderful world of rich kingdoms in the land of milk and honey, the reverse world where good wine is cheap and rotten herring is very expensive. Finally, the military parades of the [...] kingdom correspond with Leach's C. phase or formalities, when one re-enters the world of law and order. Generally speaking, this threefold [...] may be recognized in many of our carnivals. Masked collections of money, of eggs, etc. in the beginning, A.; setting up a Carnival dummy in the middle period who distributes ham and sausages for free, B.; finally, a solemn tribunal shoots or [...] this dummy as a scapegoat for community's sins, C. Then we can go to the sadness of Lent.

However, Leach's analysis is not sufficient. In February, or at the latest in March, Carnival marks the beginning of a possible end of winter, which is important in a civilization in which humans are close to nature. Here, you have the important character of Candlemas bear, and I must say, in spite of what my good friends Stone, Duby, and others have said, that the Candlemas bear is not an invention of folklorists of the 19th century and that we have texts that indicate its existence in the 16th century. On

February the second, the Candlemas bear comes out of the cave where it was hibernating. It looks at the sky. If it is cloudy, it decides that winter is finished; if the sky is blue, the cold winter is supposed to continue during forty days. In the second [...], the bear enters back its cave, and will continue his hibernating during some weeks. You find the Candlemas bear in the Alps and Pyrenees. In Ireland it is replaced by the hedgehog of St. Brigid, February the first; in Pennsylvania in the U.S. as you know by the groundhog of February the second or third, which was probably adopted by the colonists from Europe in conformity with their previous old [...] tradition on hibernating local animals. In the Pyrenees, the masked bear of Candlemas steals sheep, is a wild sexual trickster who puts his blackened paws in the honey of hives and in the sweaters of girls. In Romans 1580, Poumier, a revolt leader, disguises himself as a bear at Candlemas Day, and it is not sufficient to say, as Duby has said, that it was because the winter was cold. It's like the people who have said that the Aztec were cannibals because they needed meat.

Both for seasonal and... the bear is both for seasonal and mythological prediction, and for political, aggressive confrontation. Some of his supporters may think of stroking or raping the notable ladies of the city. The leader in Romans thinks more seriously of taking over local power. This fecund bear is a political animal. Carnival time is not only a calendar and seasonal phenomenon; it also distributes fertility, agricultural and sexual fertility. It prepares good crops and good pregnancies. Our dancers of the Saint Blaise imitate the agricultural gestures of using flails and rakes to prepare the winter seed and to mimic the killing of the rich. See Hemingway, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, for a similar scene. Little children in Romans and elsewhere who are manipulated by the wealthy party brandish firebrands and torches that will symbolically exterminate rats, moles, and insects which could damage the harvest. So the same symbol is directed against the biological enemies that could damage the harvest, and again the social and political enemies, the poor, who are accused to harm the interests of rich men. Carnival rites in France in the Old Regime are full of [...] rites that are in charge of expelling the scourges which could be detrimental to agriculture. The concept of fecundating Carnival and fecundating winter festivals has been developed by scholars like Dumézil and Tosky. According to them, the masks that are worn by young people for Carnival, or for your Halloween, are in fact devils and the souls of the dead. They circulate around us; they can damage the crop that will come after winter... or before winter. They can also damage the interests of the notables. They have to be placated; that is why one gives gifts to them and you give candy or apples (with sometimes razor blades)... [laughter] to Halloween masked children. As a matter of fact, the dead are symbolically dancing among the living ones in the agrarian masquerades of Romans in February 1580, and they demand their fair share of wealth with the macabre, rough music of bells. To understand that, you don't have to imagine remote pagan survival. The cult of the dead and the fear of ghosts is part and parcel of popular Christianity still during the Renaissance period.

Carnival is both agricultural and social. The problem is generally to embody and expel pagan sin and evil: agricultural enemies of crops, but also social enemies of certain groups in the community, whether those groups are rich or poor. Expelling social evil is simply satire. Satire is always with us. It is [...] in all our Renaissance and post-Renaissance carnivals in northern and southern France, Switzerland, Italy, etc. Swiss history, for instance, is marked with political carnivals or political and religious carnivals. They

attacked the rich people in the 14th century. The pope, at the beginning of Reformation; Napoleon III in the 19th century, etc. In northern and southern France, the will and judgement of the Carnival dummy provides an opportunity for making known all the usuries, misdemeanors, and cuckold-making of the whole year. In Bordeaux around 1650 during the great Ormay revolt, the Carnival dummy of Mazarin is solemnly decapitated. In Provence, winter carnivals during the French Revolution are Saturnalia, directed against the monarchic order, against the king as pig and the queen as she-goat. Rome and Montpellier carnivals in the 16th and 18th century, with an unpleasant behavior, attacked the local Jews.

Of course, satire does not necessarily imply violence at all. In Romans 1580, bloody violence has been artificially introduced inside the Carnival process thanks to an ambush organized by the judge [...], leader of the notables. But as regards satire, it is a constant, it is constant in all carnivals and also, to a lesser extent, in other winter and summer festivals. Expelling evil of sin from nature is a unanimous task of [...], a symbolic use of torches against moles, of Candlemas candles against storms and lightning, are universally accepted techniques for dealing with those natural problems.

Now, as regards social evils, there are necessarily divergences of opinion. Evil for the craftsman can be the tax on meat and flour, which makes daily food more expensive. On the other hand, this tax is a good thing for the notables or municipal elite, since it finances their government. From another viewpoint, the spirit of revolt is positive for the plebians and negative for the patricians. As soon as the carnival stops being purely agrarian; as soon as it runs to articulate demands of social groups, it implies social conflict. We have seen that it deals with cyclical time, but it also describes neighborhood, which socially may hate each other, and so it becomes of description of urban space, which is necessarily conflictual. You can even have, like in Romans and elsewhere, organization of two separate carnivals: the one of poor people and the one of rich people, or two Maypoles, etc. This binary opposition can even converge with the mythical and cyclical function of Carnival that I have already referred to. The symbolic fights of tournaments that oppose two social groups, rich and poor, or two factions of the nobility, or two ethnic groups, British against Scottish or Moors against Christians, can be harmonized with the internal struggle between two seasonal entities: Lent against Carnival, fish against pig, summer against winter. All that is inserted into a system of thought which remains pre-Copernican, where cosmical time and social time are still totally mixed in an inextricable way, a mental structure where anthropocentrism subordinates the human microorganism to the environmental and circular macrocosm. Symbolic systems like Carnival express both physical and social realities and their mutual relationship [...].

However, even in this respect which tries to unify city and universe, cosmos and polis, binarism is not always relevant. Italian peasants in their Carnival parades don't depict only two seasons, summer versus winter, but the twelve planets or the twelve months of the year, like on the [...] of cathedrals. In Romans in 1580, one numbers five kingdoms [...] are fighting with each other. Sheep, eagle, rooster, hare, capon, partridge. They embody different neighborhoods, brotherhoods, [...] abbés or social classes or age groups of the city, etc.

During the following centuries, the Romans Carnival will preserve its unique and multiple appeal. In 1840, for instance, there will not be only five kingdoms like in 1580, but twenty singing groups which

sing satirical and bacchanalian songs, possibly against each other. So the Romans Carnival is not a simple duel of position between rich and poor, young people and old people, etc., but like in Lyons and Italy, it is a kind of poetic, total, and aggressive description of a society of neighborhoods, occupations, age groups, the youth, the males, etc. That is why, as a description of time and space, Carnival is quite featured for participating in procedures of social change. It should not be represented as simply a kind of expression of instincts by inversion during some day and then coming back to normal time. These social changes may be a bit slow by our contemporary standards, which are very demanding, by the way. But it is still very real in cities which are successively affected by Renaissance, Reformation, Counter-Reformation, etc. It is a way of saying that Carnival is not only a dualistic, farcical, and purely momentary inversion of society, an inversion that would finally be destined to justify the world as it is. A conservative inversion. Carnival is basically an instrument of knowledge, poetical, lyrical, and epic knowledge for the groups with all their complexity and mutual confrontation. So it is an instrument, a tool of action throughout some possible social progress and sometimes toward sheer reactionary change, as is the case with anti-Semitic carnivals.

For this conflictual and dynamic description, the organizers of the Romans Carnival have used several symbolic procedures. Their constituency has understood them very well. The symbolism of food has been proposed by the rich in a farcical price list, as [...] spices and good wines symbolize the rich and conspicuous consumption while rotten and stinking food embody the poor. More unanimous and original is the use of living animals as social symbols: bear, ass, capon, hare, and sheep are the poor; eagle, rooster, partridge for the rich. This is an opposition between poor versus rich, castrated (the capon) versus non-castrated, terrestrial fauna versus celestial fauna, lower groups versus upper groups. Italian carnivals, in the Carnival-like will of some animal, capon or turkey, use the organs of this animal as social symbols. Stomach for the priests, sex for women, head for lawyers, etc. Or the contrast is between pig and codfish, Carnival versus Lent. In Romans, the animal or the organs are used like a code that enables the protagonists to conceptually describe their society. The animal is also a scapegoat. It confirms the unity of the particular social groups which it symbolizes, and by which it is eaten in a community banquet. Its meat becomes the red flag and the unifying sign of a given group. The symbol, as Victor Turner has said, is both knowledge and action, representation and function. Popular thought is spontaneously nominalist and it is more fitted for manipulating objects like the Maypole or a rooster than for utilizing abstract concepts like class struggle or reformism. The strategists among the Romans notables have used the symbolic objects in a clever way as political weapons against the craftsmen. Symbol is as important as program in this political and folklorish festival which is called Carnival in Romans.

Shall we refer to symbols of the rich and symbols of the poor? Actually, even though there is some factual division such as this one, it is always possible to exchange a symbol with your [...]. In Romans 1580 the [...] parade which amounts to saying to your [...] that his wife is in the habit of beating him up, is used by the poor in order to make fun of the rich. On the other hand, disguising oneself into a Swiss soldier is an intimidating trick used by the notables. But in Lyons of the same time, both [...] parade and Swiss soldiers belonged to the same working-class side of the general [...] carnival. So symbols are exchangeable. They are simply part of a general structure that is more important than their individual

and material content. However, there is a general division of southern French festivals in moments of disorder and then moments of order. Where the partridge, in Romans, the partridge kingdom (order) succeeded to the sheep kingdom (disorder). Even the fire is divided. The torches of Candlemas seem to belong to the craftsmen while the Shrove Tuesday torches are brandished by children who are manipulated by the rich. On the plebian side in Romans, the symbolic practice of satire is obvious. The craftsmen have no time to carry in the street a Carnival dummy in order to mock their enemies, since this dummy amounts to Shrove Tuesday folklore and on Shrove Tuesday the leaders of the poor were already killed.

But they had enough time to use other tricks before Shrove Tuesday, like brandishing flames to mime or mimic the preparation of [...] spring seed, and also mimic the symbolic killing of wealthy people. They have put on mourning [...] to bury the past year and to cannibalize their social enemies, the notables. Each of those rites is located both at the mythical level—seeds, calendar, ghosts—and at the political level—class struggle. Abstract concepts are replaced by actors that can be easily understood by the people. The same ambiguity is used for the sword dance that ritualizes warriors' confrontation in Romans 1580 for Saint Blaise's Day. Sword dance is widespread in many parts of Europe; it involves a circular concept of space and time with seasonal whirling, a rite of agricultural fertility, [...] for good harvest, a dangerous initiation of young men, and finally, an emphasis on class struggle, since sword dance is explicitly directed against bad lords. In our 1580 Carnival, of course, at the time of sword dance, the first two meanings, calendar and fertility, are much less important than the last two ones, symbolic violence and social conflict. The dance ensures the craftsman is associated with instruments of noise and political cacophony such as bells and drums. Those are tools for rough music against the upper classes.

Against that, the carnival of the rich in 1580 Romans uses hyperbolic formalities. They organize the great parades of the [...] kingdom and party, military and pseudo-religious parades of kings, high clergy, army, powerful justice that prepares Shrove Tuesday judgement. The kingdom of craftsmen and urban peasants used to preach a kind of regression: a return to underneath or infra-values to land or soil agriculture, death, cacophonous noise, symbolism of [...] and cannibalizing violence. The processional pageants of the elite are a warriors' parade but also are democratic and celebrating collectivity. Instead of regression, they emphasize a systematic projection towards the upper regions of sky and society, toward superior symbols and flying birds. Superstructure is put forward against infrastructure; surreal against underreal, iron pot against earthen jar. Two different notions of justice are fighting against each other. Very logically, during Lent after the rebels have been crushed, an exemplary but very real show of punishment, torture, and hanging against the craftsmen leaders will be organized by the notables' party and by official judiciary authority. This is Carnival judgement made serious. The carnival of Romans 1580 has used all the [...] traditions of the city that have been enforced locally since the dramatic mystery plays and peasant plays of the end of the Middle Ages.

I have already said that inversion was then used—even though they are very significant in Carnival structure—are basically used by the rich in 1580 Romans as a trick to make fun of the poor. The [...] inversion rites don't have the absolutely essential political meaning that is sometimes attributed to

them by some author or ethnologist. Those inversion rites will become more important in the 17th century when Occitane literature will emphasize the Carnival momentary entrance in the Eldorado land of milk and honey, which is a wonderful reverse of real, difficult life.

So, through these dramatic episodes, it seems to me that multiple meanings of Carnival appear more clearly. It's basically a religious phenomenon, a pagan episode which logically and chronologically prepares the Christian purification by Lent—the purification of Lent asceticism. Carnival has also a calendar value as a rite of passage which through masquerades, inversion, and formalities, helps to accomplish the transition from one year to the following one; it pushes time with a shoulder. It is [...] and fertility-oriented. As a matter of fact it stimulates fertility of fields, and also of women who have to be seduced by courtesy rites before they become fertile mothers. It plays to expel sin and evil as a thing of the past, and becomes in this manner an instrument of class struggle, since it is impossible in Romans 1580, as elsewhere, to find a definition of social evil and sin which would be mutually acceptable for both rich and poor, notables and craftsmen, merchants and simple carders. So this Romans Carnival of 1580 will be finished by ambush and murder.

[applause]

REARDON: If you turn the lights up and we can see, we can have questions. Thank you.

[audience member asks question in background, off microphone]

LE ROY LADURIE: [responding] Yes. That's linked with political power, yes. That's... in northern France there are plants for the May [...] symbolism of love. That is, they plant them at the windows of... they used to plant them at the windows of girls. But in southern France it's more now linked with politics, with power, with local power.

[audience member asks question in background]

LE ROY LADURIE: They are both the same organization that was called “bad government” and “good government.” Bonne gouverne... mal gouverne ou bonne gouverne. Because it was actually an organization—of course, folkloric and to some extent religious, although farcical—which was organized to maintain law and order. So that was “good government.” And it was the members who were young people of the elite. On the other hand, it expressed itself through jokes and farces and aggressions, so it was “bad government.” So bad government—that is, joke, violent joke—was a way to maintain good government—that is, law and order.

[audience member responds]

LE ROY LADURIE: The peasants. First, in those cities of southern France you have a big peasant population inside the walls, maybe 20% of the population were either farmers or agricultural workers that were working in vineyards outside the city, went out of the doors every morning to work in the

countryside. The equivalent of *métro boulotadeur*... I don't know how you say that... people who are working very far, having long transportation, working transportation. Second, the villages around the city were involved in a peasant revolt, but I have not dealt with that; it's also in my book, but it would have been too long. There was a peasant revolt all around the city, and the danger was that the peasants would enter the city and plunder the houses of the wealthy and also the poor.

[audience member asks question off-microphone]

LE ROY LADURIE: Oh, I think they were everywhere in Catholic countries. As you know, in the Rhine valley they are still very active; in northern France they are still... even in Belgium they have beautiful carnivals. I think Carnival is part of any Catholic culture, and also orthodox—East Mediterranean orthodox culture. It's only Protestantism, by imposing Lent during the whole year... [laughter] that has suppressed Carnival. But if you want a resurrection of Carnival, you have to have a resurrection of Lent. That's what I am going to say to Pope John Paul. [laughter] Because you cannot have a Carnival without Lent after. No pig without fish, you know.

[audience member asks question off-microphone]

LE ROY LADURIE: Well, because there was an intersection of a revolt and a carnival, which happens often, but generally with much less details and not such a wealth of details and symbolic actions. So in this case, really, there has been a kind of Shakespearean quality—not of my writing, of course—but of the actions of people. There is a long narrative that has been written by the man who organized the massacre of the poor, so it is not very objective, but it is full of... he is a kind of impresario of the rich, and it was a report, a narrative that was sent to the palace of [...] to justify himself, and the results are a shorter narrative with much less talent, but allows to control and sometimes to rectify some lies that are in the longer narrative and are very rich archives of social stratification, on brotherhoods too, and on municipal liberation. So it made possible a case study.

[audience member continues]

LE ROY LADURIE: In the carnival, not so many, but in the peasant revolt, much more. That is, in the carnival there was essentially symbolic violence, so at the end there were maybe, I don't know, ten or twenty people that were killed in action, and then another ten were tortured and hanged in the judiciary procedures. But the peasant revolt caused many deaths and was repressed in a very violent way. There was more than one thousand dead or maybe more than that.

[audience asks another question]

LE ROY LADURIE: In this city, there was a state structure, but there were four social groups. There were some nobles, but basically the first estate was composed by landowners, jurists, lawyers; wealthy people who had rents from land. The second group was merchants; the third group was craftsmen; and the fourth group was peasants. But of course, there was also a division between laborers [...] The official

structure and the real structure doesn't coincide completely. But still there was a division between estates, but not the [...] estates which are relevant and the political and national level. Not in a city where the bourgeoisie is the dominating class.

[audience member continues]

LE ROY LADURIE: There was expression of equality by the low specialists when they wanted the nobles to pay taxes in this province of Dauphiné. In Romans itself, it was more—as far as we know—more brutal; the rich accused the poor that they wanted to kill them and take their wives, etc., but maybe it was just slandering. There does not seem to be, among the craftsmen, a specific ideology of equality. If you're looking for ideology of equality, you'll find it among the low, the bourgeoisie... the bourgeois with some low training and wanted to be equal to the noble. But they respect, however, the estate structure; they don't want to abolish the division between nobility and the third estate, simply make the third estate as a body equal to the nobility as a body.

[audience member asks question off-microphone]

LE ROY LADURIE: We really don't know well, but as far as I can judge, the carnival has remained... was always forbidden and was always alive, very alive until the nineteenth century. It seems to have disappeared around 1860 and still... and completely disappeared around 1930 or 1940. I repeat, as long as you have a strong tradition of Lent, you have Carnival, because people have to have some fun before Lent. So I don't think... the repression could stop during some times the festivities, but I imagine rapidly it has been restored. Because Carnival is not necessarily violence and revolt; it is simply, as I said, satire, and a way of articulating some demands that the rich... they may be offended, but they didn't have to repress that so much except in times of violent crisis like that.

But now, Carnival and in the city has been replaced by rugby. [laughter]

REARDON: Again, I'd like to thank our guest who has been with us for these two evenings, and we'll look forward to the publication of this work.

LE ROY LADURIE: Thank you.

[applause; program ends]