



# **The Sacred Game: The Role of the Sacred in the Genesis of Modern Literary Fiction (Penn State Studies in Romance Literatures)**

*Cesáreo Bandera*

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The first full-fledged application of the sacrificial model to fiction from the Middle Ages to the modern era. Cesáreo Bandera contends that we badly misjudge our own historical situation if we believe that the sacred is something that can be left behind or ignored as utterly irrelevant. The Sacred Game argues that the sacred is all around us and its most characteristic manifestation is precisely the 'allergic' reaction and subsequent barrier it produces in our 'secular' sensitivity as soon as we come in contact with it. The Sacred Game examines the transition from the Middle Ages to the modern era from a Girardian perspective. It brings light to the weakening of the traditional association of literature with the sacred and its far-reaching consequences, and it studies the logic that governs the emergence of the most characteristic forms of modern fiction, the modern novel and the modern theater. Bandera emphasizes the unprecedented character of what happened to literary fiction during this transition. While the historical facts of the period are well known, Bandera presents them in a new light. The result is a new theory of literary fiction that challenges certain well-established approaches, in particular the nineteenth-century liberal romantic and Marxist approaches.

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