

“displacement of erotic love . . . her libido” (225).

In short, Wilson shows her reader that we are to praise the Cervantine female for her resilience and sense of humor, rather than pity her as a helpless social adornment. *Allegories of Love* is a fundamental work on a variety of levels. Not only does this study offer an innovative and refreshing analysis of the *Persiles*, but Wilson also succeeds in advancing our understanding of Cervantes’s enormously complex writing technique in general, all the while putting herself above whatever the latest vogue in literary criticism may be to craft an ecletically sophisticated brand of textual analysis.

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EL SAFFAR, RUTH ANTHONY and DIANA DE ARMAS WILSON, eds. *Quixotic Desire: Psychoanalytic Perspectives on Cervantes*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1993. xv + 332 pp.

From the tentative beginnings in Salvador de Madariaga’s pioneering *Guía del lector del Quijote, ensayo psicológico* (1926), Cervantine criticism has felt the inevitable impact of the Freudian revolution. The marriage of Cervantine studies and psychoanalytic criticism has been a troubled one however; the critical traditions of genre studies, literary history, as well as humanist philosophy, ethics and aesthetics have ceded little ground in the mainstream to the paradigms of self hood expounded by Freud, Jung and Lacan. Hence the significance of *Quixotic Desire*. For the first time alternative readings of Cervantes’s

corpus are consolidated in one monumental volume, elaborating in a mature and erudite collection of fifteen essays what its editors call "a common vision of Cervantine consciousness" (17). Contributions include essays by León Grinberg and Juan Francisco Rodríguez, Anthony J. Cascardi, Diana de Armas Wilson, Carroll B. Johnson, Anne J. Cruz, Mary Malcolm Gaylord, Ruth Anthony El Saffar, Carlos Feal, Eduardo González, Paul Julian Smith, Maurice Molho, Mary S. Gossy, Andrew Bush and María Antonia Garcés, with a foreword by Max Hernández and an introduction by the collection's editors.

In constructing the vision of Cervantine consciousness, most contributors demonstrate an extraordinary fluency in the vocabularies of Freudian and post-Freudian theory, which demands of the reader a more than pedestrian familiarity with the constructs of *desire* and *lack*. At the center of these constructs is what Anthony J. Cascardi refers to in his essay, "The Archaeology of Desire," as "the disruptive nature of desire" (55) as it appears and hides in the text. The scrutiny of this collection of essays, therefore, is not directed to what is manifestly said in the text, a procedure which attempts to normalize and control desire, but rather, as the editors argue, it "'displac[es] attention from what is presented to what remains hidden" (2). To that end, the collection appears to march audaciously off from the positivism of formalist criticism and traditional literary history, the principle locus for detractors of psychoanalysis as a valid interpretive paradigm, assuming, as Max Hernández notes in the Foreword, "the quixotic task of fighting canonical readings and hierarchical systems of all sorts . . ." (xiii). The tone of these essays is not, as Hernández's metaphor might suggest, wholly confrontational. In fact, the contributions to this collection may provide a new critical window onto the remarkable depth of Cervantine

perspectivismo, by returning psychoanalysis unabashedly, as the editors argue, to "its origins in literature" (3).

One such primal moment is explicitly historical. The collection's first essay, "Cervantes as Cultural Ancestor of Freud," by psychoanalysts León Grinberg and Juan Francisco Rodríguez, examines Freud's first contact with the Cervantine canon, *The Colloquy of the Dogs*, a piece of shared reading of young Sigmund Freud and a boyhood friend Silberstein. In Cervantes's staging of dialogue between the colloquy's canine interlocutors, Cipión and Berganza, Grinberg and Rodríguez see "the seeds of psychoanalysis," that is, a "prototype . . . of the psychoanalytic situation" (31). Freud formed a secret society with his young friend, maintaining correspondence with Silberstein in a broken, yet nonetheless charming Spanish. A few years later, on the eve of his period of great productivity and the birth of psychoanalysis, Freud, bored with the study of brain anatomy, returns to Cervantes, this time to *Don Quixote*.

Another primal moment is implicitly philosophical. Richard Rorty, in his book *Contingency, irony and solidarity*, has argued that it was through Freud that: ". . . it became possible to see a new vocabulary not as something which was supposed to replace all vocabularies, something which claimed to represent reality, but simply as one more vocabulary, one more human project, one person's chosen metaphoric" (39). It is the play of these vocabularies, facilitated by what Rorty describes as Freud's de-divinization of the self and the world, that makes possible an appreciation of "the power of redescribing, the power of language to make new and different things possible and important," "an expanding repertoire of alternative descriptions rather than the One Right Description" (40). It is in this "repertoire of

alternative descriptions" that the essays in *Quixote Desire* are grounded; what El Saffar and Wilson view as Freud's "legacy of openness."

What does this "openness" afford the critic, otherwise foreclosed presumably by analysis of plot, character and narrator? First of all, it is a glimpse at the "de-divinized" space left open by Freud's pruning of Kant's Reason and Christianity's God; it is a glimpse at the Other, in whose absence the self (albeit the individual or the historically conditioned collective self) fashions its fictions and creates its "literature" of identity. As the editors of *Quixotic Desire* argue, this Other is "both source and the end of pulsions of desire" (3) and drives "the material generally analyzed according to plot, character, narrator, sequence, closure, or levels of discourse" (2).

The Other likewise drives our own critical endeavors. Openness, as Carroll B. Johnson argues in his contribution to the collection, "Cervantes and the Unconscious," is a window to our own "psychic economy" (88): "As I read the text, the text is simultaneously reading me" (83). Johnson's approach is suggestive, as it calls upon us to recognize, as critics, our contingency with *desire*. Anne Cruz, for example, in her contribution, "Mirroring Others: A Lacanian reading of the *Letrados* in *Don Quixote*," asserts that "Cervantes's criticism of the *letrados* points to his frustration and concern over Spain's lack of moral and intellectual leadership, as well as his wariness of all systems of knowledge." Her assertion could betray her own sublimation of "distrust" of the conventional reading of the *letrados* as "mouthpieces of conservative ethical values" which her Lacanian reading challenges (94). Paul Julian Smith's assertion, in his "*The Captive's Tale: Race, Text, Gender*," that "the relative freedom" with which the renegade moves "between Christian and Muslim lands . . . suggests trouble in reproduction" (230-31), could

point to his own quite successful negotiation of the geographic contingencies of the gay and straight worlds: "we cannot elude those determinants . . . which go to make up our subject position; but neither are we confined to them or imprisoned by them" (235). Even El Saffar, whose untimely death has robbed Cervantine studies of a major critical force, appears to depart through her participation as co-editor of this collection from her rather traditional-minded reaction to earlier attempts to map Cervantine desire, most notably her harsh criticism of the paradigm of Cervantine masochism proposed by Louis Combet's *Cervantès ou les incertitudes du désir* (1981).

To sum up, *Quixotic Desire* offers us a "new vocabulary" with which to read Cervantes's works, to challenge the canonical readings and to ponder our own (critical and human) *lack* and *desire*. It provokes on all levels of our own psyche, as members of the academy, as critics, as ego poets "blindly impressed" with our loss of the Other.

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