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Mariarosa Scaramuzza Vidoni. *I fantasmi di Cervantes*. Milan: Associazione Culturale Mimesis, 2002. 121 pp. ISBN: 88-84831-26-1.

This slim volume is primarily a concise and able review of a wide variety of psychoanalytic readings of the works of Miguel de Cervantes. The author, a professor of Spanish literature at the Università degli Studi di Milano, describes her contribution accurately as "a rapid synthesis," an outgrowth of a previous book reviewing recent currents in Cervantine criticism. She recommends "psychocriticism" not as the unique tool that will yield the last word on the meaning of a work, but as an "auxiliary instrument" to combine with other critical methods. She sees in it a means of entering the author's Imaginary, thanks to its utility in uncovering the pressures of desire that influence an individual author's particular construction of themes and motifs from those available in literary language, folklore, belief, and myth. Scaramuzza cautions at the outset against the danger of producing a reductive effect

through psychoanalytic readings that see an author's work primarily as a reflection of his or her neuroses and complexes, but she does not entirely avoid that trap. Although she cites a book and an article in which Henry Sullivan considers in depth the issue of just what one analyzes in psychoanalytic approaches to literature,¹ she shifts rather indiscriminately from attention to Cervantes himself and to the characters he created, without undertaking the kind of thoughtful attention to the justification for this dual focus or to its pitfalls to be found in studies by Paul Julian Smith,¹ Ruth El Saffar, Diana de Armas Wilson,² and other scholars of Spanish "Golden Age" literature who employ psychoanalytic theory. Acknowledging the diversity of schools of psychoanalysis, she proceeds by providing a very brief definition of the main tenets of the most popular schools as a preface to the readings of Cervantes produced by its followers. The treatments are not, however, ordered by schools or by chronology, but rather thematically.

In four chapters, "Sotto il testo del *Quijote*," "Il 'masochismo morale' nei personaggi cervantini," "Uomo e donna in Cervantes," and "Identità e scissione dell'io," she surveys a broad range of readings of Cervantes informed primarily or partially by psychoanalysis, beginning appropriately with Freud's own interest in the complex character of Don Quixote and in the analogy between the dialogue of "El coloquio de los perros" and psychoanalysis, and with Helen Deutsch, whom she signals as the author of the first brief psychoanalytic essay devoted to *Don Quijote*, published in 1934. Reviewing all the authors Scaramuzza covers would produce only a doubly reductive catalogue of her summaries, and I therefore mention only those to whom she devotes several pages. She returns throughout her volume to: Marthe Robert's definition of the basic family romances of the "foundling" and the "bastard"; Otto Rank's treatment of the double; René Girard's work on the triangulation of subject-mediator-object; Melanie Klein's object-relations focus on the mother-child dyad; the Jungian approach of Erich Neumann with his archetypal "Great Mother"; and, to a lesser extent, Giles Deleuze's work on sadomasochism and Lacanian psychoanalytic theory. Specifically Cervantine critics who merit her extended attention are Carroll Johnson and his ego-psychology theory of Don Quixote's mid-life crisis and defense

¹ *Grotesque Purgatory: A Study of Cervantes's Don Quixote, Part II* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State UP, 1996); "Don Quixote de la Mancha: Analyzable or Unanalyzable?" *Cervantes* 18.1 (1998): 4-23. 30 May 2004. <<http://www.h-net.org/~cervantes/csa/bcas98.htm>>

¹ *The Body Hispanic: Gender and Sexuality in Spanish and Spanish American Literature* (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1989).

² *Quixotic Desire: Psychoanalytic Perspectives on Cervantes* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1993).

against the sexual tension aroused by this niece; Louis Combet's study of the Cervantine oeuvre as a whole under the sign of a Deleuzian masochism; Ruth El Saffar's various Jungian and feminist readings of Cervantes; the combination of psychoanalytic insights and folkloric/popular sources of Maurice Chevalier and Maurice Molho, and Edmund Cros' blend of psychocriticism and sociocriticism. She also includes an impressive number of other critical studies, often in the copious footnotes to her survey. The last chapter—"Identity and the Divisions of the Subject"—goes beyond a survey of the literature in asserting her own interpretation of Cervantes's fiction. She reads "El licenciado Vidriera" through R. D. Laing's concept of "ontological insecurity," paying attention to the various metamorphoses in the *Persiles* and to Don Quixote's multiple name changes. She finds in such passages as his discourse on the Edad de Oro, the retreat to the Sierra Morena and the descent into the Cave of Montesinos a desire to return to the "Great Mother," figured negatively in the "Coloquio de los perros." Scaramuzza thereby concludes that almost all of Cervantes's characters are driven by an anxious search for identity, one rooted in the author's familial experience, but exaggerated by historical circumstances of the Spain in which he lived.

As should be evident, her coverage of the field of psychoanalytically-informed Cervantine criticism is thorough—attentive to work in Spain, France, the United States, and Italy—and up-to-date. She does not, however, mention the work of Julia Kristeva, despite its importance to several readings in recent collections that she does cite, the El Saffar/Wilson volume and that of Anne Cruz and Carroll Johnson.³ This is surprising, given Kristeva's combination of a semiotic and psychoanalytic theory, Scaramuzza's favorable disposition toward feminist psychoanalytic readings, and her avowed desire to combine attention to the literary text as such with psychoanalytic perceptions. With that exception, however, readers interested in situating themselves in the proliferating field of psychoanalytic criticism of Cervantes will find her study a useful and reliable point of entry.

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³ Anne J. Cruz and Carroll B. Johnson, eds., *Cervantes and His Postmodern Constituencies* (New York: Garland, 1999).