



A Study of 'Don Quixote'

Review Author[s]:
Edward H. Friedman

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concerns provides new and challenging ways of interpreting the entire picaresque genre.

Bruno M. Damiani
The Catholic University of America

Andrews, Jr., Norwood. *The Case Against Camões.* New York, Berne: Peter Lang, 1988. 146 pp.

Attack and counterattack, suit and countersuit: Ezra Pound made his "case against Camões," faulting him, as well as his language and culture, on a number of accounts, and now Norwood Andrews, Jr. delivers his own case against Pound. Clearly the author believes that the best defense is a good offense, as his justification of the Portuguese poet is a scathing, though carefully-reasoned and well-documented frontal assault on the critic who "done him wrong." Focusing principally on chapter 10 of *The Spirit of Romance*, where Camões, as well as Portuguese language, literature, and culture in general are consistently maligned, Andrews spares no effort in his *exposé* of his subject's "guilt," as he puts it. He goes after Pound the man (not really that unexpected, given his less than likable persona), as well as Pound the critic, who is shown to be nothing less than a literary "fascist." As he delivers his case, however, the author does not fall into Pound's trap (or the trap into which Pound fell), avoiding the sort of "resplendent bombast" and "florid rhetoric" he ascribed to (or projected onto) Camões. Instead, Andrews mounts a methodical campaign in which there is none of the unsupported and unsupportable opinion-mongering that characterizes Pound's critique. In his discussion, the author evidences a wide-ranging command of Portuguese literature, together with a serviceable (if sometimes anecdotal) grasp of its ties and/or parallels to other national traditions. In support of his case, then, Andrews calls to witness American, British, Spanish, and even Italian literary figures, along with an array of contemporary critics on a series of relevant topics. Andrews also quotes extensively from Pound's poetry, to good effect. Through all this, the author's passion, both professional and personal, is clear, particularly in the list of graphically-unflattering epithets applied to Pound—from calculating "liar" to "hit-and-run" critic to "racist hatchetman"—all of which, within the context of Pound's treatment of Camões and things lusitanian, seems appropriate and not overstated. Andrews goes for his "pound" of flesh and more. But the real strength of his book is not any sort of name-calling, however righteous the cause might be. Rather, the author is able to beat Pound at his own game, turning the methodology by which he castigated Camões back on the critic himself. While unmasking his campaign of misinformation and disinformation, Andrews also shows, point for point, often with a sentence by sentence dissection of Pound's prose (and pose), how his critical assumptions (and presumptions) can be turned

around on writers he favored. A case in point is Lope de Vega, one of Pound's favorites, who without Andrews actually denigrating him in the least, is shown to suffer from many of the same "problems" as Camões. The discussion of "symptomatic" as opposed to "donative" poets is also enlightening, offering a telling example of just how "unidimensional," "prejudiced," self-serving, and ultimately meaningless Pound's system is—at least with regard to Camões. Along the way, Andrews also points out numerous errors in Pound's work (including some "schoolboy howlers" in which he takes great delight), but concludes that the critic did not belong to the long-standing "tradition of arrogant ignorance" of Portuguese culture holding sway at many levels of the non-Lusitanian world. Pound's work is not merely ill-informed or even wrong-headed, it is unabashedly bigoted and bad in a moral sense. Andrews suggests that Pound attacks Camões to create "Lebensraum" for poets he preferred. *The Case Against Camões* will surely create more space for Camões and the culture he represents within the Anglo-American realm from which Pound sought to exclude them.

Kevin S. Larsen
Brandeis University

Eisenberg, Daniel. *A Study of 'Don Quixote.'* Newark, Delaware: Juan de la Cuesta, 1987. xxiv + 317 pp.

Daniel Eisenberg brings a unique perspective to the study of *Don Quixote*. Together with a small group of colleagues in the profession, he is an avid reader of chivalric narrative. He is, as well, an avid reader of critical studies on Cervantes; he is aware of the polemics inspired by *Don Quixote*, and he offers what may be termed a directed reading of the text. One might further classify the endeavor as "neo-intentionalist," given that the critic attempts to set forth Cervantes's "goals in writing the book, what he thought it meant, and how he desired it to be read" (xiii). Several fundamental assumptions, based on a scrutiny of Cervantes's works, inform the analysis. Eisenberg contends that the identification of an author with a character is not fallacious at this point in literary history. With respect to the critique of the romances of chivalry, for example, the canon from Toledo is a reliable spokesman for Cervantes. Similarly, the irony of the *Quixote* is sufficiently clear that the reader can distinguish between those cases in which the author agrees with his characters' discourse and those in which he does not. To see the attack on chivalric romance as ironic is, for Eisenberg, the product of a modern bias toward directness, toward taking an author at his word. Cervantes appropriates a defective literary form and legitimizes it, makes it acceptable to detractors of escape fiction and false histories. His goals in the *Quixote*, as in his other works, are patriotic, moral, and Christian, at the service of truth.

Eisenberg further examines Cervantes's view of the romances by reconstructing, hypothetically, the "famoso *Bernardo*" to which the writer alludes in the dedication of the *Persiles*. This prose version of the exploits of Bernardo del Carpio would be the chivalric analogue of the epic *Persiles*. It would address the inadequacies of the romances by centering on an historical figure of Spanish descent. It would replace the wise enchanters of the false chronicles with Santiago, thus converting the supernatural into the miraculous, invented battles into a holy war. It would, at the same time, satisfy the objections raised by the canon and exemplify the ideal romance he envisions. The *Bernardo* would be Cervantes's chivalric romance; the *Quijote*, his "libro de caballerias burlesco," modeled in part on *Tirant lo Blanc* yet showing greater verisimilitude than any of its precedents.

Eisenberg's familiarity with the chivalric paradigm allows him to focus on the humor of *Don Quixote* as a distortion of the conventions of romance. The novel is indeed a "funny book," with Don Quixote representing humorous deeds and Sancho Panza humorous language. Eisenberg reminds contemporary readers that the 1605 *Quixote* was, for seventeenth-century readers, the superior text (and, for ten years, the only text). The distinction between the two parts has a bearing on discussion of the humor and, more comprehensively, of the structure of the novel. Cervantes wants to entertain his readers and, surpassing the authors of previous romances, to instruct them. He exposes the flaws of his models and corrects them, a topic which Eisenberg develops under the rubric of *provecho*. The testament to the novelist's success is the classic status enjoyed by the *Quixote*, a phenomenon the critic attributes to Cervantes's verbal artistry, skill at characterization, and realistic portrayal of the human condition, among other elements.

The book is divided into six chapters, complemented by an appendix that treats the influence of *Don Quixote* on the Romantic movement and by an extensive bibliography and indexes. As promised in the subtitle, the study contains "copious notes," which form an impressive supplement—a *libro de abajo*—for students of Cervantes. The writing is clear and authoritative, and the analyses bear the fruits of a (quixotic?) passion for letters. The interpretation moves from the historical (the position of the romance of chivalry in sixteenth-century Spain, for example) to the sublime (the description of the *Bernardo*). From a book that is rich in insights, one may not have the right to ask for more, but there are several areas which may call for further consideration. The placement of *Don Quixote* on the side of truth separates Cervantes's narrative from the sins of the romances, but Eisenberg's insistence on a religious message ("Distorting the truth is also an offense to God," 40) overlooks much of the humor and ironic self-

consciousness of the "true history." The study compares the author to fictional characters while largely ignoring the intrusive narrative personae of the text. Questions of perception and the nature of reality (167 ff.) perhaps need additional development, as does the thesis that the contradictions of the novel, particularly the protagonist's status in Part II, indicate that "Cervantes did not write the book he intended to write" and that in the unresolved conflicts art imitates life (202). These observations notwithstanding, Eisenberg's study of *Don Quixote* enriches the text and whets one's critical appetite. If in *Self-Consuming Artifacts* Stanley Fish makes a case for the "affective fallacy fallacy," Eisenberg seems to be a proponent of the "intentional fallacy fallacy." Cervantes is not an implied presence but the key player in the *Quixote* and the source of its meaning.

Edward H. Friedman
Arizona State University

Lope de Vega. *La bella malmaridada*. Edited by Donald McGrady and Suzanne Freeman. Charlottesville: Biblioteca Siglo de Oro, 1986. 206 pp.

La bella malmaridada, written in 1596, belongs to the early period of Lope de Vega's prolific dramatic production. This edition represents the first modern version of a work that until now has received little critical attention. The play, as the title readily announces, was inspired by the well-known *romance* of the same name. It is one of the earliest examples of Lope's exploitation of lyrical and epic traditions as source material for his plays. *La bella malmaridada* takes as its point of departure the first part of the *romance*: "La bella mal maridada / de las lindas que yo vi, / veote tan triste, enojada, / la verdad dila tu a mí. / Si has de tomar amores, / por otro no dejes a mí, / que a tu marido, señora, / con otras dueñas lo vi." The play's plot is basically a gloss on these lines. The central character is Lisbella, a beautiful and virtuous woman whose husband is repeatedly unfaithful to her and dishonors her by taking up with a prostitute, Casandra. In the ballad, the first-person voice belongs to an unidentified suitor who hopes to take advantage of *la bella's* marital woes. In Lope's play, this voice becomes embodied in the character Cipión, a noble who courts Lisbella. The similarities between play and poem end here, however. Whereas the *romance* strongly implies that the *bella* accepts the adulterous offer and—in some versions—will be punished for her transgression, the Lisbella of the play remains virtuous and is eventually reconciled with her wayward husband.

The introduction to the edition offers a brief analysis of the work and a very general consideration of the presence and influence of the *romance* in the play. The incorporation of the *romance* tradition into the *comedia* is a fascinating and complex topic. It is a pity that McGrady and Freeman chose