



Ingeniosa Invención: *Essays on Golden Age Spanish Literature for Geoffrey L. Stagg in Honor of his Eighty-fifth Birthday*. Ed. Ellen Anderson and Amy Williamsen. Newark, DE: Juan de la Cuesta, 1999. xx + 258 pp. ISBN: 0-936388-83-8.

Geoffrey L. Stagg is duly honored in this latest addition to the handsome "homenajes" series published by Juan de la Cuesta. The collection of essays edited by Ellen M. Anderson and Amy R. Williamsen contains some truly excellent contributions to Golden Age studies across the board. As most readers of this journal probably know, Stagg's research focuses on the Cervantine *œuvre*, and he served as an Associate Editor for *Cervantes* since the journal's inception until the date of publication of this *Festschrift* in celebration of his eighty-fifth birthday. However, the editors' introduction makes quite clear the fact that Stagg is nothing less than a Renaissance man—trained in both arms and letters—and this diversity is reflected through the fine selection of scholars and articles that make up this academic accolade.

In addition to sketching Stagg's academic career in their introduction to this homage, the editors also bring to light the human touch of this humanitarian. His diplomatic manner with his students, his very special relationship with his wife, and the couple's generous dinner parties with colleagues and students all paint an intimate portrait that gives a sense of wholeness to this academic tribute.

The volume itself is divided into four sections. The first section, titled "Comparative Contexts," contains three essays that "contribute to the understanding of Spanish Renaissance and Baroque works in the light of the classical letters and the Elizabethan literature Stagg knows and loves so well" (xvii). John J. Allen's "The Transformation of Satire in *Don Quixote*: 'Dine with Us as an Equal' in Juvenal and Cervantes" clearly captures the spirit of a bona fide homage. Allen explains his decision to revisit a case of satire previously explored in his renowned *Don Quixote: Hero or Fool*: "Geoffrey Stagg's work was a model of rigorous thoroughness for me in those years, as it has been since. It has seemed appropriate, therefore, in this brief note dedicated in gratitude to Stagg, to look again at a specific instance of satire highlighted in Part I of my earlier study, a passage with a clear classical antecedent, for me a likely source, and an interesting case of the transformation of satire along the lines suggested in Sheldon Sacks' study of Fielding" (3). The brief study ends with a sensitive explanation of why we read *Don Quixote*. Dian Fox's "What Happens in *Hamlet* and Spanish Golden Age Theater" presents a persuasive theological reading of *Hamlet* that is interlaced with less convincing comparative notes to Spain's Golden Age theater, which curiously silence contemporary Spanish criticism on the questions she discusses. Finally, Diana de Armas Wilson's "Defending 'Poor Poetry': Sidney, Cervantes, and the Prestige of Epic" analyzes the figure of poetry in Philip Sidney (godson and namesake of Spain's Felipe II) and Cervantes. Through an interesting dia-

logue with poststructuralist theorists like Barthes, Bakhtin, and Lacan, the author concludes “that Cervantes helped to deracinate Poetry out of an early modern culture of militancy and mimesis—the signifying world of Sidney and his continental subtexts—to relocate her, during her formative years, in a culture of invention and fantasy” (35). Cervantes’ craft is seen to be more “feminine” than Sidney’s, thus anticipating the reflections on literature that mark our postmodernity.

The volume’s second section is titled “Golden Age Contexts” and pays homage to Stagg’s vast range of intellectual interests and pursuits. The section opens with Edward H. Friedman’s perspicacious essay “Enemy Territory: The Frontiers of Gender in María de Zayas’s ‘El traidor contra su sangre’ and ‘Mal presagio casar lejos,’” which deftly tackles the ambiguities of gender in Zayas’s transfiguration of male-dominant language and literary conventions in order to underscore female sensibilities. Although this is one of the longest studies in the volume (26 pages of text), I must confess that I wanted to keep reading Friedman reading Zayas. Friedman shows how Zayas demystifies the literary topos of love and turns it into “a gender-inflected sign, a sign of difference (48), and he powerfully reads against Paul Julian Smith’s “(mis)reading” of “Mal presagio casar lejos,” contending that “the narrative movement... hinges on Doña Blanca’s resistance” (64), which is underscored by her emblematic burning of the bed. Howard Mancing’s valuable contribution for narratologists, “Embedded Narration in *Guzmán de Alfarache*,” focuses specifically on micro-narration. Mancing defines the interpolated story and the anecdote as two different forms of embedded narration and he proceeds to analyze their use in Alemán’s novel. The final study is Roger Gerald Moore’s “Quevedo: The Search for a Place to Stand,” whose underlying idea, the effect of editorial decisions on literary interpretation, is much more powerful than its resolution.

The third section, titled “Cervantes’ Works,” focuses on Cervantes’ longer prose fiction. Francisco López Estrada’s “‘Dissoluble ñudo’: Una compleja lección de *La Galatea*” continues a line of research initiated by Federico Sánchez y Escribano and followed up by Stagg in his early article on neo-Platonic love in *La Galatea*. López Estrada weighs the various philological and philosophical possibilities of reading the word “dissoluble,” concluding that “[e]l ñudo ha de ser *dis-soluble* (entendiendo por ‘indisoluble’), concierto de voluntades hasta la muerte y aspiración a la unidad” (134).

The four articles on *Don Quixote* in this section foster the meditations on Cervantes’ narrative craft for which Stagg was best known. Joseph R. Jones’s “The Baratañan Archipelago: Cheap Isle, Pourboire Isle, Chicanery Isle, Joker’s Isle” adroitly offers modern readers a philological “compass to help them navigate the treacherous waters of the Baratarian archipelago,” lest we “misinterpret some of the most amusing and moving passages of the work” (146). Antonio Martí Alanís’s “Los siete pecados capitales en *Don Quijote*: La Lujuria” seeks an accord between scholastic thought and the literary craft of

Cervantes, but the argument loses much in its presentation. James A. Parr's "Don Quixote: On the Preëminence of Formal Features" begins with the premise that we must focus on form and the telling of the tale, specifically on the tellers in the tale, if we wish "to understand and appreciate Cervantes as a contributor of consequence to the Western narrative tradition" (168). Like Allen's first essay in this volume, Parr unequivocally pays homage to Stagg: "Since the distinguished scholar honored by this collection is one of the more perceptive commentators on Cide Hamete, it seems appropriate to devote some space here to that curious creature" (176). His "deconstructive" analysis, while admittedly out of character, is remarkable. Lastly, in her essay "Luscinda y Cardenio: Autenticidad psíquica frente a inverosimilitud novelística," Helena Percas de Ponseti sees in the story of Luscinda and Cardenio "una de las más logradas revelaciones psicológicas salidas de la pluma de Cervantes" (184). Her study touches again on the question of the "dissoluble nudo," and her final judgment is quite convincing: "la expresión más alta del arte de Cervantes en esta historia está en la sutileza de la caracterización femenina asequible para el lector atento a las menudencias de la narración que iluminan los más recónditos sentimientos y emociones de Luscinda, prototipo de la hija obediente del siglo XVII, pero también prototipo de la mujer noble y fuerte de todos los tiempos, capaz de redimir al hombre débil mediante la constancia, la lealtad, la comprensión y, por encima de todo, el amor incondicional" (204).

The final two essays in this section, written by former students of Stagg, study aspects of the *Persiles*, thus reflecting "Professor Stagg's longtime interest in the chronology of Cervantes' composition and the effect of his Algerian captivity" (xviii). Stephen Harrison's "The Irony and the Purpose of the Title of Cervantes' *Los trabajos de Persiles, y Sigismunda, Historia Setentrional*" goes beyond Casaldueo's commentary on variations of the title and the term "septentrional" in order to discover that, "despite his plans to reorient the original romance towards his more modern conception of the novel, Cervantes finally sought to dictate that it be viewed within the context of the earlier tradition" (221-22). Finally, Ottmar Hegyi's "Algerian Babel Reflected in *Persiles*" examines the fictional portrayal of linguistic difference as cultural sign in the polyglot milieu of the *Persiles*, concluding that Cervantes' "experiences and his literary models mutually reinforce each other, resulting in that syncretism so frequent in the literature of certain periods, and typical of Cervantes" (238).

The fourth and final section, "Cervantes the Author," highlights "Professor Stagg's lifelong devotion to the figure of Cervantes, the writer, and to the bibliography of his life and works" (xviii). Daniel Eisenberg's "¿Por qué volvió Cervantes de Argel?" reads between the lines to put together the puzzle of Cervantes the man behind the pen. His well-written study is persuasive and argues that Cervantes returned to Spain in order to write. My colleague Tom Lathrop's brief essay, "The Fictional Cervantes," took me by surprise. My

initial reaction was “why is he going to such lengths to explain the difference between the historical Cervantes and the fictional one, since the only likely readers of a collection such as this will be professors and graduate students of literature?” But then we see the list of Cervantes scholars who have not been able to make this primordial distinction, some of whom have contributed to this collection of essays. Lathrop’s amusing note is clear and to the point, and it provides the fundamental tool for reading fiction. Alberto Sánchez’s “Nuevos planteamientos en la bibliografía cervantina” finishes off the collection of studies with “a subject dear to Professor Stagg’s heart” (xviii). Sánchez wades through and evaluates the sea of Cervantine scholarship and raises the question “de si es posible, e incluso recomendable, una aspiración hacia la exhaustividad en la esfera de la bibliografía cervantina, cada vez más copiosa” (264). His conclusions signal the future path for “una bibliografía cervantina general, que pueda ser útil y hasta indispensable para los filólogos e investigadores del futuro” (277-78).

The harmonic convergence that comprises this fine *Festschrift* mirrors the wide range of academic interests carried out by Geoffrey L. Stagg over his long and fruitful career. The contributions to Golden Age studies in general, and Cervantes studies in particular, make us want to go back and reread the works discussed in light of these analyses. And this is precisely the overriding goal of criticism.

Vincent Martin
University of Delaware