

Howard Mancing. *The Cervantes Encyclopedia*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2004. 2 vols.: xix + 415 pp, xix + 445 pp. ISBN: 0-313-32891-9 (set).

This project is the culmination of a lifetime of research about Cervantes and musings about his influence. The encyclopedia is intended for all readers—English- or Spanish-speaking—of any or all of Cervantes' works. It uses Spanish names for Spanish people (Carlos and not Charles), but typical "English" equivalents for people from other cultures (Herostratus instead of Eróstrato). Everything is cross-referenced (an asterisk before an item means that it is the cross-reference to look up), and there is a good Index at the end of Vol. II to resolve lingering problems. The pages are numbered consecutively, that is, Vol. I ends with p. 416 and Vol. II, begins with p. 417, thus eliminating any confusion about which volume a listing in the Index refers to.

At the outset, I will tell you that the work is immensely useful and really quite fascinating. You will find lots of things you never knew and even some things you never suspected.

If you were to make a list of the items the Encyclopedia should have, you would doubtless include, as Mancing does,

- 1) Entries for all the characters from all of Cervantes works together with where they appear, and maybe something about each one.
- 2) A brief squib about all of the historical, mythological, biblical, and literary personages mentioned.
- 3) Information about all authors and works mentioned in Cervantes' works.
- 4) Places and important things mentioned in Cervantes' works.

Isn't this listing ideal and comprehensive? Doesn't it cover all bases? Sure, it does, you might think. But this one does much more than a standard encyclopedia. For example, regarding the works themselves, aside from a brief commentary on all of Cervantes' works, plot summaries are also given chapter by chapter. If you want general information about *Ocho comedias...*, for example, you look under O, where you'll find a general introduction plus a nice bibliography. If you want to look up a specific play, *Pedro de Urdemalas*, for example, you look under P for the play itself, where you will find a synopsis act by act and a large bibliography, but also there are two other entries under that same name, one dealing with the folkloric personage with the same name and another dealing with a couple of lost plays by other authors bearing that title. These are some of the things you, or at least I, didn't even suspect.

Don Quijote's divided into three entries, one for the ensemble of both parts (with bibliography), and sections dealing with each part follow as separate entities. There are synopses for every chapter, occupying 42 pages of text. These detailed synopses are

potentially very useful for the novice. But sometimes the synopsis goes astray, resulting in confusion. At I,42, for example, the synopsis says that Ruy Pérez recited the two sonnets, but it was really the sonnet-writer's brother. For Chapter I,45, the synopsis says that votes were taken to decide the nature of the helmet, but really it was to decide about trappings of a horse versus a packsaddle of a donkey. For II,20, it says that the cook gave Sancho a whole chicken to eat, but the text says that it was "three chickens and two geese." Granted, these examples don't change the story line, and also granted, readers of this journal don't need the synopses, but the novice looking for help in understanding what he/she is about to read, will think his/her reading skills are very defective indeed if the Encyclopedia specifies one thing and their best guess construes something else.

Under authors mentioned, Mancing also included authors alluded to. I looked for was the oblique reference to Virgil, mentioned only as "el divino mantuano" in *Quijote*, I,13, and sure enough it was listed under "Virgil." Argensola, the playwright, is alluded to in *Quijote* I,48 but not named in the text, but is listed in the encyclopedia. This is good and thorough work.

The encyclopedia also lists concepts and terms important to understanding the life, times, and works of Cervantes, such as the chaos theory, chivalric themes, emblem, humanism, pastoral romance, and picaresque themes.

It also lists important theories and theorists of the novel, such as metafiction and perspectivism.

Then there are items related to Cervantine scholarship: *Anales Cervantinos*, Asociación de Cervantistas, The Cervantes Society of America.

In my view, the most intriguing part of the encyclopedia are the sections dealing with novelists and writers influenced by Cervantes and artists and musicians similarly inspired. Howard Mancing sees the influence of Cervantes lurking practically everywhere, and these influences are quite compelling. In Woody Allen? Sure, says the encyclopedia—metafictional aspects of *Don Quijote* are seen in *The Purple Rose of Cairo*. Jane Austin? Sure, in *Northanger Abbey*. You remember that one, right? Francisco de Ayala? Sure, in *El rapto*, whose principal character is a motorcycle-riding fellow named Vicente de la Roca! Balzac? Sure, he has plenty of quixotic characters. John Barth? Unquestionably. And Bécquer wrote a zarzuela called *La venta encantada* where Dorotea, Cardenio, and don Fernando all appear. We learn also that Saul Bellow's Moses Herzog is a Jewish intellectual don Quijote. And don't forget Dickens' *The Pickwick Papers*. Even Faulkner has compared some of his heroes to don Quijote. This barely scratches the surface of the wealth of information of this type contained in the encyclopedia.

In music, the popular Strauss *Don Quixote* is listed, as is Telemann's famous short opera about Camacho's wedding. But we also learn that Salieri wrote the music for *Don Chisciotto alle nozze de Gamace* and that Joaquín Rodrigo wrote a symphonic poem on the theme of "Ausencias de Dulcinea." I tried to look up Boismortier's comic ballet from 1743, "Don Quichotte chez la duchesse," but it was not to be found, and

understandably so.

Maybe the main point of this review is that these are volumes that shouldn't just be on your shelf waiting for you to look up some obscure reference, but rather they should be like the bag of potato chips that you reach into at random to see what wonderful tidbits of information are there. It may easily be that the things you never would think to look up are the most intriguing things you will savor. These volumes are much more interesting than the dry title of "Encyclopedia" would lead you to believe, the result of Howard Mancing's lifetime of dedication to Cervantes.

Tom Lathrop
University of Delaware
Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures
lathrop@udel.edu