

and the stage (television is omitted) is similar to touring a museum of contemporary art with an expert guide, who necessarily moves rapidly, works largely with generalizations, combines historical and critical comments, and sometimes offers quick evaluations. Though there are obvious dangers in such a "tour," in general Mandel offers a very handy collection of brief but judicious critical judgments. Naturally readers will worry about some omissions and inclusions, and about some possible inaccuracies and misjudgments. From my point of view, Mandel's desire to survey contemporary German literature causes him to deviate at times too much from Group 47 itself: for instance, a number of pages are allotted to Rolf Hochhuth, who has had no association with the Group; and the most lengthy comments on a single author are those on Paul Celan, who obviously interests Mandel but who read at a single Group meeting. Or to note the type of small omission which all readers will probably discover, Mandel refers, without enthusiasm, to what he implies is Jakob Lind's only novel, *Landscape in Concrete*; unfortunately, Lind did publish a successor, the virtually unreadable *Ergo* (1967; *Eine bessere Welt*, 1966). Given some of the material that Mandel is forced to observe, it is not at all surprising that he sometimes drops the neutral tone of much modern criticism. In one important case his personal viewpoint may or should annoy many readers; not only does he distrust "avant-gardism," but he concludes his chapter on "the radio play" with this extraordinary pronouncement: "Experimentation, in my vocabulary, means unsuccessful art." Indeed! And what would happen to art if many people used such an absurd "vocabulary"? To turn to something within the realm of good sense, I believe that Mandel's chapter on fiction is the best of the surveys in the volume; in this case the Group itself remains clearly in view as the individual artists parade by. After noticing the work of Richter and Alfred Andersch, Mandel comments in chronological order on a number of Group prize winners, as well as several other more or less well-known figures: Heinrich Böll (prize, 1951), Ilse Aichinger (1952), Adriaan Morriën (1954), Martin Walser (1955), Günter Grass (1958), Uwe Johnson, Peter Handke, Hubert Fichte, Peter Bichsel (1965), Jürgen Becker (1967), Ingeborg Bachmann (1953, for poetry), Jakob Lind, and Tadeusz Nowakowski. The book concludes with a very

useful appendix: a chronological list of the thirty meetings of the Group (month, year, place indicated), a list of the two hundred authors who have read at the meetings, identification of the ten prize winners (to the above, add Günter Eich, 1950, and Johannes Bobrowski, 1962), and a "Selected Bibliography" divided into several sections (that on "Individual Authors" nearly ignores articles and therefore is much too selective).

If one does not go to the book expecting detailed criticism of individual works of literature and if one adds a few demurrers, *Group 47: The Reflected Intellect* lives up to the claim of Harry T. Moore, the general editor of the Crosscurrents series—"a first-rate work of literary history illuminated by first-rate criticism." Perhaps for a good while to come Mandel's book will remain the best source of information about the phenomenal Group 47.

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RUTH S. EL SAFFAR

Novel to Romance: A Study of Cervantes's Novelas ejemplares
Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1974. Pp. 189. \$9.50.

The *Novelas ejemplares* (1613) of Miguel de Cervantes have been divided, traditionally, into two groups: the idealistic or Italianate novels (written early) and the realistic or national novels (written late). Between these two extremes there is a buffer zone in which idealism is tinged with realism. This is usually referred to as Cervantes's period of transition (for a summary of this traditional criticism see J. L. Alborg, *Historia de la literatura española* [Madrid: Gredos, 1967] II, 91-119). The situation seems remarkably simple, yet, in actual fact, it is not, for there are many unsolved (and perhaps insoluble) problems to be taken into account. There is, for example, no established chronological order for the twelve tales which combine to form the exemplary novels; further, it is almost certain that the order in which they appear in the 1613 edition has little to do with the order in which they were

written. Again, the word "exemplary" is ambiguous, to say the least, and no satisfactory meaning has been brought forward for it. Finally, the traditional position is based on the traditional idea that the "realistic" novels are the best ones, and that the "idealistic" tales are necessarily inferior to (and thus earlier than) them. According to this interpretation, as Cervantes progressed, so he abandoned the idealistic, Italianate style in favor of the realistic, national one that he was helping to create.

Ruth El Saffar shows that the position outlined in the preceding paragraph is a precarious one. She does so by reversing the idea that Cervantes progressed from the ideal to the real, and by suggesting that, in fact, the opposite was true: he advanced from the real to the ideal. Her thesis is a reasonable one. The only novels that can be dated with any certainty are "Rinconete y Cortadillo" and "El celoso extremeño" both of which appear in the *Compilación de curiosidades españolas* (circa 1604) of Francisco Porrás de la Cámara. Thus, there is nothing in the chronology to refute the argument. In terms of Cervantes's life, 1604 may be considered a "late" date; however, in terms of his major literary publications, and hence of his artistic development, it may be considered "early." (The dates of publication of Cervantes's major works follow: *Don Quijote I*, 1605; *Novelas ejemplares*, 1613; *Viaje del Parnaso*, 1614; *Ocho comedias y ocho entremeses nuevos*, 1965; *Don Quijote II*, 1615; *Los trabajos de Persiles y Sigismunda*, 1917.)

For Ruth El Saffar, then, the idealistic novels are not early; they are late. Further, they are not Italianate at all, but rather Byzantine. Hence they are comparable to Cervantes's last published work, the *Persiles* (published posthumously in 1617). Professor El Saffar arrives at the above conclusion by means of a detailed study of (a) the role of the narrator in the novels; and (b) their exemplary nature. For her, the protagonists "in the late works . . . are exemplary in their acceptance of their given role in life and in their devotion to a transcendent reality. In the early works, on the other hand, the main characters try to remake their lives. They reject the circumstances into which they have been born and show no faith in

any reality beyond the one they perceive" (p. 13). As far as narrative technique is concerned, as Cervantes became more skilled in the art of narration, so his control of the narrative voice (and hence of the story itself) grew stronger and stronger.

The initial premises are established in Chapter I. Professor El Saffar then examines the *Novelas ejemplares* in great detail and in the following order: early novels: "Rinconete y Cortadillo," "El celoso extremeño," and "El licenciado Vidriera" (Chapter II); transitional novels: "El casamiento enganoso," "El coloquio de los perros," "La gitanilla," and "La ilustre fregona" (Chapters III and IV); the later novels: "Las dos doncellas," "La señora Cornelia," and "La fuerza de la sangre" (Chapter V); and the last-written novels: "El amante liberal," and "La española inglesa" (Chapter VI). It is curious that Amezcua, who also divides the *Novelas ejemplares* into three epochs according to the psychological development of the characters, reverses this order, placing "El amante liberal," "Las dos doncellas," and "La señora Cornelia" into the first period, whilst "Rinconete y Cortadillo," "El licenciado Vidriera," and "El coloquio de los perros" appear in the last one (see Alborg, *Historia* . . . , II, 96).

Professor El Saffar's examination of each novel is thorough, the bibliography which accompanies each study is quite comprehensive, and most major problems are discussed with regard to each story. The whole problem of the chronology of the *Novelas ejemplares* is again dealt with in the appendix (pp. 169-177), and here one finds a summary of most of the major works on the subject.

In conclusion, Professor El Saffar's work *Novel to Romance* is a valuable, well-documented study. Perhaps its chief worth lies in the fact that it encourages both reader and specialist to pay more attention to the hitherto much neglected idealistic novels. *Novel to Romance* is a work that cannot be ignored, for it will play a prominent role in future studies on the *Novelas ejemplares*.

Roger Moore