

## Renaissance and Reformation Renaissance et Réforme



### Gaylord, Mary Malcolm, and Fall 2015 participants in the Folger Institute seminar “Cervantes’ Fictions and the Early Modern Historical Imagination,” project creators. Bibliography of Cervantes Titles and Materials at the Folger. Other.

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Volume 43, numéro 4, automne 2020

Spaces of Power of the Spanish Nobility (1480–1715)  
Les espaces de pouvoir de la noblesse espagnole (1480–1715)

URI : <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1076837ar>  
DOI : <https://doi.org/10.33137/rr.v43i4.36393>

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Éditeur(s)

Iter Press

ISSN

0034-429X (imprimé)  
2293-7374 (numérique)

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Citer ce compte rendu

Vomero Santos, K. (2020). Compte rendu de [Gaylord, Mary Malcolm, and Fall 2015 participants in the Folger Institute seminar “Cervantes’ Fictions and the Early Modern Historical Imagination,” project creators. Bibliography of Cervantes Titles and Materials at the Folger. Other.] *Renaissance and Reformation / Renaissance et Réforme*, 43(4), 234–235.  
<https://doi.org/10.33137/rr.v43i4.36393>

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**Bibliography of Cervantes Titles and Materials at the Folger. Other.**

Washington, DC: Folger Shakespeare Library. Accessed 26 April 2020.

folgerpedia.folger.edu/Bibliography\_of\_Cervantes\_titles\_and\_materials\_at\_the\_Folger.

According to its headnote, the Folger Shakespeare Library’s Folgerpedia entry entitled “Bibliography of Cervantes Titles and Materials at the Folger” was “[i]nspired by the discoveries made by Mary Malcolm Gaylord’s Fall 2015 seminar, ‘Cervantes’ Fictions and the Early Modern Historical Imagination’ and “offers a list of pre-nineteenth-century Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra (1547–1616) titles and related materials held at the Folger Shakespeare Library.”<sup>1</sup> This bibliography, which features a wide range of Cervantine texts and their afterlives, demonstrates just how robust the Folger’s collection of Cervantes-related materials is, and offers a promising starting point for future transnational and comparative literary research. The present review aims to highlight these strengths while also identifying further possibilities for maximizing the fullest potential of the bibliography’s digital presentation and situation within the Folger’s broader digital environment.

The bibliography falls into three categories, which are organized by publication date: “Cervantes Titles,” “Translations,” and “Later Adaptations.” Beyond several editions, translations, and adaptations of *Don Quixote* in multiple languages, the Folger’s holdings include versions of other Cervantine texts such as *La Galatea*, *Los trabajos de Persiles y Sigismunda* (The travails of Persiles and Sigismunda), and the *Novelas ejemplares* (Exemplary novels). Noteworthy among the translations and adaptations are the 1640 English translation of a selection of the *Novelas ejemplares* done by the cleverly nicknamed Don Diego Puede Ser (James Mabbe, or May-be), and John Fletcher’s 1624 play *Rule a Wife and Have a Wife*, which borrowed its plot, in part, from Cervantes’s *novela* entitled *El casamiento engañoso* (The deceitful marriage).

The bibliography’s three organizational categories are certainly useful in establishing a relationship between Cervantes’s textual history and his afterlives,

1. The quotation is taken from the headnote on the bibliography’s home page. For the Fall 2015 seminar page, see [folgerpedia.folger.edu/Cervantes%27\\_Fictions\\_and\\_the\\_Early\\_Modern\\_Historical\\_Imagination\\_\(seminar\)](http://folgerpedia.folger.edu/Cervantes%27_Fictions_and_the_Early_Modern_Historical_Imagination_(seminar)).

but the static nature of this format makes it somewhat difficult to get a sense of an overall timeline or to see the dynamic interplay among texts, translations, and adaptations, especially for a writer like Cervantes whose writing is deeply and playfully invested in blurring the lines among originality, authorship, and translation. Unlike the compilers of a printed bibliography, the curators of this rich resource are in a position to make the most of the flexibility and space of a digital platform, which could be used to offer a number of categorical arrangements or to allow users to sort the entries according to date, title, or textual relationship.

Although the bibliographical entries are presented in an orderly and logical fashion, the irregularity of their formatting presents some additional challenges to users. While all items include relevant Folger call numbers, only some are hyperlinked directly to Hamnet, the Folger's online catalogue, adding an extra set of steps for a researcher interested in learning more about these texts. This is not just a matter of convenience, however. Even I, an experienced Folger researcher, had trouble locating some of these materials in the catalogue and ran into several dead ends. Entries that list Folger call numbers 230290 and 218915, for instance, return no results on Hamnet. The texts cannot be located by author or editor either. Such inconsistencies are an important reminder that online resources ought to be designed and tested with users in mind.

Given the range and number of Cervantine holdings included here, the Folger is clearly poised to foster scholarly interest in the textual history, reception, translation, and adaptation of this Spanish Golden Age giant. It is certainly encouraging to see an invitation for readers to "send newly discovered additions," but updating this bibliography—and others like it—in ways that streamline and maximize the potential of the Folger's digital network will require a substantial amount of labour and resources at the institutional level. In the knowledge that time and expertise are always at a premium, I sincerely hope that the Folger will see that such integration is a worthy investment as its staff uses the renovation "intermission" to update the catalogue and the materials requesting system. This would benefit scholars in residence as well as those accessing the Folger's rich collection from afar.

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