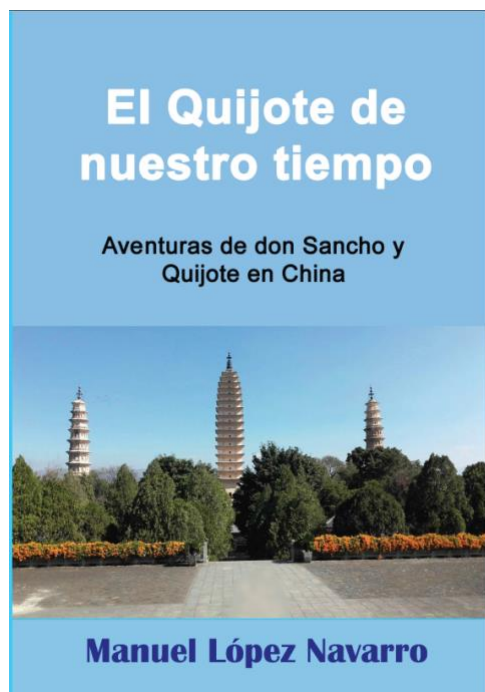


REVIEW: LÓPEZ NAVARRO, M: THE QUIXOTE OF OUR TIME.

**RESEÑA: LÓPEZ NAVARRO, M: EL QUIJOTE DE
NUESTRO TIEMPO.**

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DATA SHEET:

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AUTHOR: LÓPEZ NAVARRO, MANUEL.

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Resumen

Manuel López Navarro, gran experto en el ámbito de la inspección educativa, da protagonismo a la figura del inspector, una que tanto se había olvidado y arrinconado en las novelas. De prosa ágil y atractiva, el libro plantea un nuevo escenario cervantino con don Quijote y Sancho quienes se intercambian los roles en el mundo contemporáneo.

Palabras clave: inspector de educación, novela, supervisión, protagonista, Quijote.

Abstract

Manuel López Navarro, an expert in the field of educational inspection, gives prominence to the figure of the inspector, one that had been so much forgotten in novels. With agile and attractive prose, the book presents a new Cervantine scenario with Don Quixote and Sancho who exchange roles in the contemporary world.

Keywords: education inspector, novel, supervision, protagonist, Quixote.

We can search in current Spanish literature, also in the less recent, and we would not find any reference to education inspectors, neither as main characters nor as secondary ones. Why is this absence, this vacuum of the figure of the education inspector in narrative works? Perhaps it is because of social ignorance of their function, or because of the discretion in the performance of their mission, because they generally have to carry out their tasks of educational supervision and control of the operation of the centers with the least possible stridency.

Be that as it may, as in the media, education inspectors do not seem to exist for everyday society, especially if the years of school concern are behind us. Do inspectors appear in works of fiction? Yes, many, whether police, commissioners, detectives or police officers. Of education? No trace in the novels.

In order to make a statement in favour of Education and education inspectors, nothing better than someone who knows the work of inspectors inside out, a recently retired education inspector, teacher, secondary school teacher, inspector for more than twenty years and trainer of future inspectors. I am referring to Manuel López Navarro, who can be considered a great expert in the professional field of educational inspection.

In the development of an old project, he has carried out the writing of a "Quixote", emulating and paying homage to Cervantes' work, but making the two protagonists jump to the contemporary world, imagining what would be the evolution of the educated nobleman, although with a disturbed mind, and the illiterate villain, although clever, in today's world. This imagination has led him to invert the roles of both protagonists, in a novel that is not only interesting, but also monumental, with agile and attractive prose that engages the reader, not in vain we are talking about someone who has read Don Quixote so many times that he can't even remember how many.

In his construction of the characters, this author-inspector concludes that a Sancho in our times, a friend of personal relationships and clever in material matters, would do very well today, especially if he already enjoys a good position and knowledge to carry

out business, deals, commercial negotiations... He could even be a successful businessman, that is to say, he could already be in his "barbarian island", governing his possessions with the shrewdness with which he elucidated in Cervantes' work the traps with which the Duke's relatives hoped to make a fool of him.

And Don Quixote? Today he would be an academically trained character, not very skilled in social relations, lucid, but with fixed and demanding ideas, which would not make it easy for him to cope comfortably in the unreasonable environment that can prevail in everyday life and in the motivations and behaviours of many people. There is such a fine thread between sanity and the mental construction of particular worlds that, in some cases, withdrawing into one's inner spaces can be a good mental health exercise.

Well, to form the protagonist couple, the successful businessman, Don Sancho, not very educated, who wants to expand business in China, hires someone who complements him, enough degrees, languages and knowledge of that country: an education inspector whom he does not know personally, but of whom he has been given good references.

With this background, it remained to place the two characters in an appropriate setting for the adventures they could run today, because La Mancha has become somewhat small in this global world of ours. So, it would be a matter of taking a big leap, to the other part of the world, and what better than in China, with its ancient culture, its charm, so much history and so much present right now. So, the two protagonists go to China, to travel around it, to tell things about it, to enjoy themselves as tourists and to suffer some incidents, events that they can later tell about on their return, adventures, after all.

All this and much more is contained in the book we present today, entitled *EL QUIJOTE DE NUESTRO TIEMPO (THE QUIXOTE OF OUR TIME)*, with the inspection playing a leading role both because of the authorship of the novel, which is 738 pages long, and because one of the two main characters, although he plays the modern squire of the

rich businessman, Don Sancho, is an inspector of education, contributing his vision and his educational knowledge in the conversations and debates that punctuate the novel about the state of education both in Spain and in China. We can finally see the figure of an inspector starring in a novel, and not just any novel, but a modern Quixote, with many reminiscences of Cervantes' brilliant work.

If Sancho, Don Sancho, is introduced as a businessman, it is clear who is the new Quixote in this novel, but this is not revealed in the first chapters, it is necessary to go deeper in the reading for him to receive his "baptism" as such. We encourage you to enjoy this narrative work, with the adventures of this singular couple and their many conversations about the divine and the human, with the historical and tourist explanations of this wonderful country, so unknown in Spain, with the confrontation of points of view of both characters. And, as a tribute to Cervantes' work, some short novels are also included in the development of these adventures in China, "Chinese tales" in the style of the pastoral novels that appear in Don Quixote, stories told by Chinese characters whose protagonists are characters from ancient China, both emperors and concubines, peasants, villagers and some somewhat sinister characters, as those who immerse themselves in the reading will discover.

In short, a highly recommended work, which puts the spotlight on the education inspectors, presents with familiarity a country as beautiful and different as China, and has another noble function aimed at the reader: to make him think with that trail of dialogues between the two protagonists, and that, to make us think, is not a minor objective. It is time to enjoy reading.

A critical reading that makes us think about this profession, so worthy and sometimes so little considered, but always necessary... and now that the old ships and their men have left, and new ships and new men have taken the watch, they should know that in this implacable sea they can only sail with heart and firmness.

NOTE: the book *El Quijote de nuestro tiempo* is published on Amazon. It can be searched in the book department, by title or by author, and can be ordered for home delivery, in paper format, soft cover.