

Canon Fodder: A Study of *Don Quijote*

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The two parts of Cervantes' *Don Quijote* are separated not only by time, being published ten years apart, but also in mood and atmosphere as well as by a more serious outlook on various problems of life (breakdown in human relationships, lack of self-control or loss of trust in the others) or on the socio-economic issues such as poverty, lawlessness, the decadence of aristocracy, etc. The paper will illustrate these differences by starting with the analysis of various aspects of the respective prologues that, actually, announce the changes in perspective from a playful, funny tone in Part 1 to a more serious one in Part 2. These changes also suggest a shift in Cervantes' historical situation and other life-changes that marked him and his view on himself, on the society and on humanity. The analysis will be continued on various other characters and tales to suggest that the story of *Don Quijote* is a journey in space, a play, as well as involvement, consideration, the importance of play on reality and refusal to give up playing.

Keywords: *Don Quijote*; Part 1; Part 2; Prologue; irony; parody; comedy; autobiography; art; reality; the picaresque; play.

*Sancho . . . said . . . : "Lady, where there's music there can be no mischief."
"Nor where there are lights and brightness," replied the Duchess.
To which Sancho answered: "Flame may give light and bonfires brightness, as we can
see, but they may very well scorch us. But music is always
a sign of feasting and merriment."
"That remains to be seen," said Don Quijote . . .
(Cervantes, Part 2, chapter 34, 1958: 699)*

There's no continuity between the two installments of *Don Quijote* that were published ten years apart – Part 1 in 1605 and Part 2 in 1615. Similar episodes appearing in both parts are often distinguished by the radical differences of context and atmosphere. Though in its concluding chapters the mood of Part 1 approaches that of Part 2, the two installments are separated by a quantum jump that closes off the world and order of the first from those of the second.

Cervantes's attention to the serious problems of life is clearly more intense and unremitting in Part 2. By "serious problems" I don't mean pratfalls, broken ribs, and missing teeth, which are scattered throughout Part 2 as well as Part 1. Rather I mean hurt feelings and insecurity; the failure of trust and communication; the breakdown in human relations occasioned by bad faith, lack of self-control, and loss of respect for self and others. At the socio-political level, these serious problems are connected in Part 2 with poverty, lawlessness, war, the decadence of a bored and idle aristocracy, and the eviction of the Moors from Spain.

Since the differences between the two parts are compactly illustrated in their respective prologues, I'll begin by comparing them. Most of the first prologue is given over to poking fun at the pedantry and elaborate fanfare with which authors of the time decked out their books: son-

nets, epigrams, eulogies; marginal glosses; the liberal citation of biblical and classical texts; the lip-service paid to authority; the extravagant display of useless learning. Cervantes pretends that while he is despairing over his inability to write a proper prologue, a friend comes in “unexpectedly” and saves him by suggesting a simple expedient: “If you can’t get anyone to write commendatory verses, write them yourself and palm them off on someone else.” Here he cites two outlandish candidates, Prester John and the emperor of Trebizond (1958: 27). He continues:

As for citing in the margins, all you have to do is throw in a few pat phrases or bits of Latin that you know by heart, and someone is sure to take you for a scholar. To make footnotes possible, work some footnoteworthy references into the text. If you want to refer to authors who will lend authority to your work, simply find a book that cites them all from A to Z, beginning, of course, with Aristotle. But finally, since you’re only writing an invective against books of chivalry, why not forget about this apparatus? Just make sure you write well and clearly, and entertain your readers. (28-30)

All this is pure nonsense, distilled from high spirits and play. The author, as he presents himself, couldn’t care less whether you take him seriously or not, whether you believe such an episode occurred or such a friend existed. Like the pompous front matter he ridicules, these prefatory games are not important, and the implication is that a worthy book is its own advertisement. This of course assumes a certain degree of confidence in the reading public. But such an assumption of confidence was tonally present from the opening words addressed to the Idle Reader, “desocupado lector”¹. Cervantes is confident in the reader’s ability to catch the tone, to enjoy the mock-arrogant nose-thumbing directed not only at pedants and authors but also at readers and himself.

He is also confident that his readers will not be offended, that they share with him the healthy sense of independence and detachment which makes him proclaim himself indifferent to criticism:

I [...] won’t [...] implore you [...] to pardon or ignore the faults you see in this child of mine, for you are neither his kin nor his friend, and you have a soul in your body and a will as free as anyone’s, and you are in your own house, where you are lord and [...]. you know the old saying: under my cloak a fig for the king – all of which exempts and frees you from every respect and obligation; and so you can say anything you want about this story without fear of being abused for a bad opinion or rewarded for a good one. (25)

This is a holiday tone, a Mardi Gras tone: author and reader are about to enter a play-world where, for the time being, anything goes and where – since we all know he is only playing – he can say anything he wants and can safely work off his aggressions, grievances, and excess energies.

Such playful confidence in the author’s relationships with the reader argues a basic sense of security that is founded on trust and good will. I dwell on this because it is what we will not find in Part 2 and its prologue. There, all the bitterness stored up through a long career of frustration discharges itself, and this leads to another important difference. In the second prologue, the author stands before us not only as a writer but also as the man Cervantes in his historical situation. In the first prologue and in Part 1, he presents himself exclusively in the role of author, and his constricting personal conditions go unmentioned.

The following passage from the first prologue may seem to belie this assertion: “what could my sterile and ill-cultivated genius beget but the story of a lean, shrivelled, whimsical child, full of varied fancies that no one else has ever imagined – much like one engendered in prison, where every discomfort has its seat and every dismal sound its habitation?” (25). The autobiographical

¹ “Desocupado”: idle, not working, bored, lounging at ease, waiting to be entertained.

note is sounded in the reference to prison, but it is faint – fainter because voiced as a simile, but not so faint as to keep scholars from assuming that Part 1 was written in prison. In the next sentence, the author’s mind recoils from his unhappy thought: “Calm, a quiet place, the pleasantness of the fields, the serenity of the skies, the murmuring of streams and the tranquility of the spirit, play a great part in making the most barren muses bear fruit” (25). This image will reappear again and again in the first part. It is the idyllic or pastoral landscape, and it will be the scene of most of Quijote’s adventures. But here it is only expressed as a wish, a statement contrary to fact.

With the opening lines of the second prologue we enter a very different world and we confront a changed author who crawls all over his poor reader:

God bless me, how eagerly you must now be awaiting this prologue, illustrious, or maybe plebeian reader, in the expectation of finding in it vengeance, wranglings and railings against the author of the second *Don Quijote* [the spurious imitation based on Part 1 and published in 1614] . . . But, in truth, I’m not going to give you that satisfaction, for though injuries awaken anger in the meekest hearts, in mine the rule must admit of an exception. You would like me to call him ass, fool and bully; but I haven’t even a thought of doing so. Let his sin be his punishment. (467)

From the first word, the speaker harangues and duels with the reader, and gropes for the proper tone and posture. The situation is further confused by the introduction of specific autobiographical detail. In the first prologue the author lightly and quickly skirted the allusions to his personal history. He addressed us as an author discussing literary problems. Though his tongue was in his cheek, and though his “friend’s” visit may have been pure invention, all our doubts about his motives in the first prologue were resolved by the easiness of his address and by his rapport with the reader. In Part 2, however, we are disturbed by the intrusion of unpleasant personal history and by the spectacle of the author struggling awkwardly to cope with it.

What we see happening here happens throughout Part 2: the dark and problematic contemporary world infiltrates the novel. It threatens author and hero alike, and leads both to periodic losses of control that become more serious as the novel draws to a close. Symbolic of this new mood is the fact that many more episodes in Part 2 than in Part 1 take place at dusk or nighttime, and depend on darkness for plot complications as well as for atmosphere.

Other details of the second Proem contribute to the new climate of Part 2. The distinction between noble and plebeian reader seems hardly worth mentioning, yet it is insistently noted throughout the book. Don Quijote lectures Sancho on social reality and the class structure, while the conversations of Sancho and Teresa center on the practical implications of this topic. In chapter 2, Quijote imitates the author in displaying a new sensitivity toward his public image: “tell me, Sancho my friend, what do they say about me in the village? What opinion do the common people have of me? What do the gentry and the knights think of me?” (483). And Sancho tells him that he is now accused of being not only upward mobile but also stark raving mad.

The most powerful example of social difference occurs in chapter 52. There, the Duke, Duchess, and their retinue (including Don Quijote) open and read a letter to Sancho from his wife, Teresa. Written with moving simplicity, the letter conveys a vivid sense of village life:

This year there are no olives, and there is not a drop of vinegar to be found in the whole village. A company of soldiers passed through here, and took three local girls away with them. I will not tell you their names, for they may come back; and they will be sure to find men to marry them, with all their blemishes [. . .]. Sanchica is making bone-lace; she earns eight clear maravedis a day [...] to help towards her wedding portion. But now that she is a governor’s daughter you will give her a dowry without her working for it. The fountain in the market place has dried up [...]. I await an answer to this and a decision about my going to Court; and with this, may God preserve you more years than me—or as many, for I don’t want to leave you in this world without me. (810)

The courtiers respond to Teresa's letter with mixed applause and laughter. By this time in the novel, we have come to dislike the rarefied play atmosphere of the castle, with its idle, oversophisticated and often nasty jesters amusing themselves at the expense of their victims. Here they get their thrills reading about the problems of peasant life as if it were on another planet.

Instead of the fictional friend of the first prologue, in Prologue 2 we confront an actual plagiarist and a vague but menacing background of envy and detraction. The author's insecurity is felt even in relation to his readers: "How eagerly you must be waiting for some juicy public squabble to keep you entertained" – waiting not for the author's next book but for his next lawsuit. Works of fiction in the first two pages of the second prologue are all mentioned in the context of personal history. The very existence of a spurious Don Quijote confuses make-believe with lying and slander. And when he berates the author of the false *Don Quijote*, Cervantes turns up the volume with a crescendo of self-righteousness: "What I can't help resenting is that he upbraids me for being old and crippled, as if it were in my power to stop the passage of time, or as if the loss of my hand had taken place in some tavern, and not on the greatest occasion which any age, past, present, or future, ever saw or can ever hope to see. If my wounds do not shine in the eyes of such as look on them, they are at least respected by those who know where they were acquired [...]" (467). And so on for another fifteen or twenty lines, after which he says, "You'll agree, I think, that I'm showing great restraint and keeping well within the bounds of modesty" (468), in not heaping more abuse on the author of the spurious *Quijote*.

This is all both funny and sad, and it is sad partly because of what comes through in spite of his tone: he has been truly hurt by life. To the scars of time, frailty, war, and bad luck he can add betrayal, loss of faith, and a growing sense of alienation. Lepanto was his golden age of chivalry, and life has been running down ever since.

It does not matter whether my remarks refer to the author behind his book or to the character in the prologue, since the character now includes the author, and since these remarks will be just as applicable to Don Quijote. We see the author diminishing his own power and adding tarnish to his projected image, while, at the same time, he improves the image of his protagonist. Author and hero draw closer together in the second part, and many obviously Cervantine sentiments are uttered by Quijote. Paradoxically this makes the character more independent of his author – independent in the sense that Quijote appears to be more puzzling to Cervantes, capable of unexpected responses, and even, on occasion, not fully understood. The status of his experience in the cave of Montesinos, for example, remains ambiguous to the very end.

We come now to the most puzzling section of the second prologue, the two anecdotes about madmen and dogs. The first is about a madman whose custom it was to pump dogs up with air. When he made the dog round as a ball he gave it two slaps on the belly "and let it go, saying to the bystanders—and there were always plenty: 'Your worships perhaps think that it's an easy thing to pump up a dog?'" The reader is asked to tell this story to the author of the false Don Quijote, and to point the moral with this question: "Does your worship think it's an easy thing to write a book?" (468).

This anecdote is conspicuous for its irrelevance: the paranoid irrelevance of the madman's response to being watched, but also the irrelevance of the tale to the message, whatever the message is. In fact, the anecdote misfires and ends up targeting Cervantes, since he is the most likely candidate for the role of the madman. Therefore he tries again, and tells the one about the madman who went around dropping rocks on dogs until he was beaten to a pulp by the owner of a pointer. After this "he called all the dogs he met pointers, whether they were mastiffs or curs; and so he never dropped his stone on one again. Maybe the same thing may happen to this storyteller" (482).

The application is a little less forced, it hits the right target, and, in addition, this madman has made a quixotic adjustment to reality. But both fables are far-fetched. It is as if the bitterness of the author's spirit breaks through the role he is uneasily sustaining before his readers, those staring bystanders of whom he is so painfully aware. The bitterness and failure of control appear

both in his manner of telling and in the morbid jokes themselves. They offer glimpses of senseless cruelty, of madness in the form of radical alienation, and finally of madness as a coping mechanism.

One of the most telling moments in the early stages of the novel is Don Quijote's naming of his horse. Wikipedia gives an excellent account of this event:

Rocín in Spanish means a work horse or low-quality horse, but can also mean an illiterate or rough man. There are similar words in French (*roussin; rosse*), Portuguese (*rocim*), and Italian (*ronzino*). The etymology is uncertain.

The name is a complex pun. In Spanish, *ante* has several meanings and can function as a standalone word as well as a suffix. One meaning is "before" or "previously". Another is "in front of". As a suffix, *-ante* in Spanish is adverbial; *rocicante* refers to functioning as, or being, a *rocín*. "Rocicante", then, follows Cervantes' pattern using ambiguous, multivalent words, common throughout the novel.

Rocicante's name, then, signifies his change in status from the "old nag" of before to the "foremost" steed. As Cervantes describes Don Quijote's choice of name: *nombre a su parecer alto, sonoro y significativo de lo que había sido cuando fue rocín, antes de lo que ahora era, que era antes y primero de todos los rocines del mundo*—"a name, to his thinking, lofty, sonorous, and significant of his condition as a hack before he became what he now was, the first and foremost of all the hacks in the world." (Wikipedia.com, *Rocicante*)

In chapter 1, Cervantes describes Don Quijote's careful naming of his steed: "Four days were spent in thinking what name to give him, because (as he said to himself) it was not right that a horse belonging to a knight so famous, and one with such merits of his own, should be without some distinctive name, and he strove to adapt it so as to indicate what he had been before belonging to a knight-errant, and what he then was."

Essentially, then, the choice of that pathetic mount combines with the ritual of naming it to guarantee that Don Quijote will never be able to blind himself to the truth of his newly chosen condition – to the choice of a life devoted to the perpetual imminence and danger of loss of control. The cluster of themes and attitudes that flow from this choice dominates the whole of Part 2. At the risk of conveying the false impression that Part 2 is entirely black, unrelieved by any of the bright or light moments that may be found there, I'll cite some examples of this cluster.

In chapter 1, when the priest and barber test the hero's sanity, the assured friendship of the first Part is threatened by a new sensitivity in Quijote, one that borders on suspiciousness. He is unwilling to divulge his latest chivalric panacea because "it might reach the ears of the Lords of Council" and someone else "would get the thanks and reward for my pain." The barber then shares another madman story that, he says, "I'm itching to tell." It's much too long for its message, which is that although Quijote has lucid intervals these are mere deceptive oases in a desert of lunacy. Quijote gets the point only too well, and his resentment leads to a moment of strain in their relationship: "Really, Don Quijote," said the barber, "that wasn't why I told you the tale. I meant well by it, so help me God, and your worship shouldn't take offense." "I know best whether I take offense or not," replied Don Quijote" (478).

The barber's tale deals with a madman who knows very well how to play sane, and who almost succeeds in getting himself released by using logical and persuasive arguments. The obvious message is the difficulty of distinguishing between madness and sanity, the difficulty of judging human behavior and of knowing who or what to believe in so unreliable and unpredictable a world. Who's to be trusted? Whose word is true? What is truth? By what standard can you judge clearly and unambiguously whether others are acting in good will and good faith, and whether they can be depended on to continue acting that way?

If these things are in doubt, then people will have to test each other more carefully. If good

faith cannot be taken for granted, the arts of persuasion and theater will have to be put into play, and also more devious arts, like spying and eavesdropping. “‘I’d be very glad to know,’ said the barber in chapter 2, ‘what [Sancho and Quijote] are talking about now.’ ‘His niece and the house-keeper will tell us afterwards, I promise you,’ replied the priest, ‘for they aren’t the sort to refrain from listening,’” that is, from eavesdropping (482).

On the other side, the Quijote of Part 2 feels that he has to control his image more carefully. At one point he worries “that Sancho would blurt out a whole pack of mischievous nonsense and touch on matters not wholly to his credit.” In chapter 3 he has doubts about his biographer: “He imagined that some sage, either friendly or hostile, had given his adventures to the Press by magic art; if a friend, to magnify and extol them [...] if an enemy, to annihilate them. [...] it bothered him to think that its author was a Moor. [...] He could hope for no truth from Moors, since they are all cheats, forgers and schemers” (485). Here again, falsehood, fantasy, fiction, and actuality converge in a paralyzing *mélange*.

The uncertainty of human motives appears most clearly in the behavior of the bachelor Sampson, who lives in Don Quijote’s village and is a graduate of Salamanca University. Sampson had “a round face, a flat nose, a big mouth,” and a penchant for mischief (486). Nevertheless, he became the Knight of the Mirrors mainly to help cure Don Quijote. The trouble is, he also wanted to play at being a knight, so that, when Quijote knocks him off his horse, Sampson loses both his good intentions and his cool: “‘It would be folly,’ he says, ‘to suppose that I’ll go back home before I’ve thrashed Don Quijote. And it won’t be the desire to restore him to his senses that will drive me after him. What I want is revenge, for my ribs really hurt, and the pain won’t allow me a more charitable purpose’” (561). Cervantes had earlier supplied a motivating cause that could account for Sampson’s behavior: “‘The bachelor,’ he writes, ‘was not very big in body, although his name was Sampson. His intelligence was keen, but his color was poor’” (486).

At the social level, the thin line between madness and sanity is shown in such events as the Breughel-like episode of the braying villagers (Part 2, chapter 22). But its most sinister form is explored in the extended treatment of the Duke and Duchess. If they begin their games with Quijote in the same spirit as that displayed by the congenial characters of Part 1, their good intentions are soon corrupted. There isn’t time to delineate the process of degeneration Cervantes sketches out, but I’ll briefly mention two problems.

First, the Duke and Duchess cannot control their servants, who have wills of their own and continually turn the jests awry, either through mischief, anger, or cruelty. At times – especially with Sancho on the isle – their attitude toward the protagonists is that of wanton boys to flies. Second, the Duke and Duchess cannot control themselves. They let the play go on too long. It grows obsessive. What began as the idle diversion of the rich relieving their boredom becomes decadence and even madness. So at last, in chapter 70 of Part 2, Cervantes quotes his Moorish author as saying that “the mockers were as mad as their victims, and the Duke and Duchess came within a hair’s breadth of appearing fools themselves for taking such pains to play tricks on a pair of fools” (914).

Turning now from this world to its author, there are three or four places at which Cervantes seems deliberately to confuse the various levels of fiction and actuality. Most noteworthy is the famous episode in chapter 72, when a character from the spurious version of Don Quijote (attributed to someone named Avellaneda) appears and tells the hero about his encounter with the other Don Quijote. I think this hallucinating adventure is meant to suggest that the author is himself losing control of the distinctions he carefully observed in Part 1. Whether real or not, this world now possesses the author so completely that it has grown independent of him and become his master.

Toward the end of the novel the experience begins to move with the rhythms of nature, to grow ripe, to wax and wane and grow rotten. There is a new urgency to conclude, as Don Quijote is propelled hurriedly through a series of brief adventures, pushed by the inexorable force of disillusion toward the only remaining escape. Finally, at the very end, Cervantes shows that he –

the author – has to disengage himself from his intense involvement with his hero. He has to break the transference because the imaginary world and its hero have too powerful a hold on him. This process began in the prologue to Part 2, and it comes to a climax at the very end of the book when the author concludes with a number of odd and jarring and grotesque jokes that follow hot on the moving death of the hero.

The beginning of Part 2 looks back toward the world of Part 1, and the concluding episodes of Part 1 move toward the world of Part 2, but the two worlds never join. The difference between serious play and playing obsessively entails, among other things, a basic difference between two modes of “realism.” Part 1 is controlled by the conventional, sociological, and literary realism of the comic genre. Its “real people” are typical figures of the middle and lower classes (innkeepers, whores, simple laborers and rustics, boors, thieves, etc.). But the atmosphere of Part 2 is permeated by the existential and social realism of contemporary life in a world of insecure and untrustworthy people, a world in which the facts of poverty and hunger compete for attention with the narcissistic decadence and boredom of court life. When episodes from Part 1 are echoed in this context, the very predictability that originally marked them reinforces our feeling that in Part 2 patterns of expectation are set up only to be frustrated or turned awry.

Let’s ask to what extent Quijote speaks accurately when he describes his chivalric motive in ethical terms, and when he speaks of the great hardships he endures. The episode of the whipped boy, the adventure with a corpse, and the freeing of the prisoners are sufficient proof of what many critics have stressed: that the primary value of Quijote’s chivalry is its nuisance value. As Erich Auerbach remarks, everything he does when possessed by his *idée fixe* “is completely senseless, and it’s so incompatible with the existing world that it produces only comic confusion there” (1953: 345). The hardships he suffers are blows to his head and body, not – as in Part 2 – to his feelings.

In Part 2 he is capable of seeing chivalry as a symbolic posture, not only as a literal game. He knows that the posture has real strength in a world where everything is ambiguous and unclear. The simplifications of conventional ideals, of rituals, of morality-plays, and so forth, preserve fundamental truths and values from the shadows that beset the world of Part 2. But in Part 1 Quijote does not feel himself imposed on by the world. He has no ulterior purposes, no plan but to follow where fortune and his nag, Rocinante, lead. His questing is recreative and gratuitous. The essence of adventure on the road and in the inns is that it is temporary and casual. When travelers come together to enjoy a holiday, they do not expect to spend their lives together, and so the ease and good will of their relationship is increased by their freedom from the fear of involvement.

Real intimacy is replaced in the fictional world of Part I by good faith and good will. The characters whom Quijote confronts are mainly of two sorts: those who get angry or impatient with him and are liable to work him over, and those who – more intelligent and cultivated – are amused by him and join his game. He is never in serious danger from any of them. From the former he is subject to pranks and blows, mainly harmless mischief. But the others are almost always patient, understanding, and courteous. If he makes great demands on the good will of others, the author so controls the atmosphere as to guarantee that Quijote will not be let down. Part 1 is full of patient and sympathetic listeners who respect each other’s viewpoints and help each other out.

At the second inn, where all the happy endings occur, Quijote’s power is at its peak. There he’s the true Lord of Misrule, at once the butt of the joke and the organizing center of a game that everyone plays his way. In this sense, the configurations in Part 1 are primarily centripetal: people gather together ethically and socially as well as physically. Part 2 is centrifugal, for there the games people play draw them apart from each other.

At first glance, and especially in the early sections of Part 1, Cervantes is at pains – or mock-pains – to detach himself from Quijote. He places him in ridiculous situations that puncture his chivalric fancies. Occasionally he calls him an idiot. Often he helps his characters trip Quijote up,

and joins them in laughing at the outcome. But I think the relationship is really more complicated.

It is obvious that Cervantes enjoys the idiom of chivalry as much as his characters do. Though they make fun of Quijote, they can be drawn into serious and heated debate over the literary or ethical qualities of *Amadis of Gaul*. On a few occasions, notably at the end of the eighth and ninth chapters, in describing the fight with the Basque, Cervantes allows himself a serious and luxuriant description of the conflict, a description that simply cannot be dismissed as parody. His attitude is similar to those who participate in the book-burning. The priest and barber turn it into a bull-session on chivalry. If Cervantes “burns” books of chivalry by making fun of them, he also uses his parody as an excuse to indulge his own passion – only consider how many pages of chivalric discussion readers have to wade through. Quijote serves his author less as a puppet than as a scapegoat. In mocking him, Cervantes to some extent mocks himself, and once he is shown that he thinks this is all childish nonsense, he is free to go on playing at it.

He also sustains his equipoise in Part 1 by another method. Erich Auerbach has noticed that in the captive’s tale “Zoraida’s behavior toward her father becomes a moral problem which we can’t help pondering; but Cervantes tells the story without giving a hint of his thoughts on the subject” (356). This exemplifies a recurrent pattern, in which realistically observed situations are followed by unrealistic resolutions or framed in a context of unreality. The author presents, but does not comment on, a number of instances of morally questionable or ambiguous behavior. He lets us see the example and then shows himself turning away from its problematic aspects, as if he is ignoring or evading them. The problems are thus present-as-excluded: since this is fiction rather than fantasy, they must be noted and recognized; but since it is fiction rather than actuality, they can be wrapped up in the expected manner. To admit life’s problems and then sidestep them or force them conspicuously toward the happy ending is to suggest that such resolutions only occur in art, where the author is in control. This method may be pursued lightheartedly, as it is throughout most of Part 1, or it may carry the more negative implication that art, with its controlled and controllable order, is an escape from life’s dark wilderness. The negative implications begin to strain against the comic form toward the end of Part 1, and they explode that form in Part 2.

The first significant instance of the pattern occurs in the episode of the lovelorn shepherd’s death (chapters 12 through 14). The dead shepherd is a poet named Chrysostom, or Golden-mouth. His despairing verses, which open chapter 14, display the two intertwined forms of narcissism conventional in this sort of literature: first, he is less interested in the actual woman, Marcela, than in her effect on him and his image of her, and second, he is no more interested in the actual process of love than in the writing of intricate verses about love.

Two comments that follow the recitation of his verses make these points: 1. “Chrysostom’s song pleased its hearers, though the one who read it [Vivaldo] said that it did not seem to him to conform to the account he had heard of Marcela’s modesty and goodness.” 2. “Chrysostom was tormented by imaginary jealousies and suspicions, as fearful as if they were real” (1958: 97-98).

Even though it actually happens in the fictional world, the shepherd’s death cannot be taken seriously because it is so old and tired a literary topic. And this is how Cervantes presents it. All the characters look forward to the burial as they would to a literary song or theatrical spectacle. It will be a diversion to help pass travelling time and relieve boredom. So Quijote responds to the goatherd who tells the sad story: “It is a very good story, and you are telling it with a good deal of grace” (84). Its literary unreality is further stressed by the way in which the episode emerges. It is anticipated in chapter 11 by another conventional June-moon ballad sung by a young goatherd who is not singing about his own love but simply performing for Don Quijote in order to show that “even in the mountains and woods there are people who know something about music” (87).

The story of Chrysostom is then reported by a second goatherd, though the effect is so clearly that of reading a pastoral romance that the fiction of reporting is paper-thin. By the time the actual corpse and cruel lady confront the characters, a seamless continuity has been established be-

tween the world of literary fantasy that Cervantes criticizes throughout the novel, and the ostensibly real or realistic world within which his characters move. This is only one of a number of instances in which characters are introduced in tales, at one remove from us, before they appear in person. Conventional and literary themes are always established as such before penetrating the actual novel world. The shepherd's death is not in fact the center of the episode's seriousness. Another theme connects it to the tale of foolish curiosity, the stories of Cardenio and Dorothea, and the love of Quijote for Dulcinea.

In Chapter 14 Marcela dramatically appears on a cliff above the grave and delivers a long stern speech that gives the lie to centuries of sighing and dying sonneteers. It is not my fault, she says: "beauty in a modest woman is like distant fire or a sharp sword; the fire won't burn and the sword won't cut the man who doesn't come near them. [...] I am the distant fire and the far-off sword. [...] If desires are nourished on hope, as I never gave any to Chrysostom or to anyone else, it may not justly be said that any man's end was my doing, since it was his persistence rather than my cruelty that killed him" (2003: 99).

Though Marcela's speech is admired by some of the onlookers, and though it is an accurate indictment of the narcissism of literary love, she seems too aggressive and uncompromising. Her general aversion to men is extreme. She has nothing to say about the shepherd's death except that it was his own fault. Cervantes does not insist on it here, but there is a difference between saying, "beauty is like a distant fire or a sharp sword," and "I am the distant fire and the sharp sword." Beauty is an ideal abstracted by the mind, and Marcela identifies herself with this pure essence. She assumes the unreal role created for her by the frustrated male imagination. She plays a version of Dulcinea who – as Don Quijote very well knows – does not exist. In so doing, she steps into a region of fantasy in which – to quote the motto of the poet Marot – "la mort n'y mord", death has no bite because life is not real.

Life becomes more real eight chapters later (Part 1 chapter 22), when Don Quijote frees Gines de Pasamonte and the other galley slaves. Here, before Cervantes removes his hero to the isolated security of the Sierra Morena, he brings him directly up against those realities of the social order that betray the inadequacy of Quijote's simple humanity and simplistic justice: the unromantic aspects of the sovereign's rule, the enemies a king must deal with in a very different kind of warfare, the hardships and possible excesses of the penal system, the existence of habitual criminals who make the system as necessary as it is brutal, the perhaps unavoidable failure of the system to discriminate among degrees of criminal intention.

Once again although these themes are present, they are kept in the background, and Cervantes centers our attention on another episode of tale-telling: Quijote's curiosity is not satisfied by the brusque statement of one of the guards that the convicts "were galley-slaves belonging to His Majesty on the way to the galleys. Such is the truth of the matter and there's no more to say" (1958: 172). Not in THIS book! When Quijote persists, a second guard shows admirable flexibility: "although we have with us here the copies and certificates of the sentences on each of these wretches, there's no time to take them out and read them. But your worship may come and ask the prisoners themselves, and they may tell you, if they please—and they will, for they not only enjoy *acting* the villain, they like boasting about it afterwards too" (172).

Quijote's presence catalyzes the recreative dimension of this experience. The convicts and even the guards are encouraged to bracket out everything but their picaresque enjoyment of the immediate moment. Quijote takes the prisoners at face value, and makes the episode a kind of holiday from the ordinary perspective imposed by the concern for justice and the common good. Of the six rogues he questions, the first, third, and fifth display a real sense of criminal style, a jaunty flair for self-presentation evinced both by their rhetorical flourishes and by their attitude toward the second convict: he was "too melancholy and dejected to answer a word" (165) because he had confessed on the rack and he is therefore in disrepute with the others for having failed to live up to the code.

Where these three convicts are rakishly unrepentant, the fourth, a venerable pimp, has chosen

to play and believe another role. He is all hurt innocence and he bewails his fate. He was shamed and imprisoned for doing something that made people happy – “I never thought I was doing any harm. All I wanted was for everyone to have a good time” (175). Quijote had just noted that an efficient ministry of pimping might well perform a vital service in a world where “there are no wizards [...] capable of affecting or compelling the affections” (2003: 166-67). When he tells the officers that if they do not release the prisoners he will use force to free them, one of them tells him to “be on your way, and straighten that basin you’re wearing on your head” (170), whereupon Quijote charges him and knock him down and wounds him with his lance.

The first five convicts are amateurs when compared to Gines de Pasamonte, who “had committed more crimes than all the others put together, and who was so bold and desperate a criminal that even though he was chained in that way they were not sure of him, but feared he might escape” (1958: 175-76). Unlike the others, who are happy to talk about themselves and make the most of the casual diversion offered by Quijote, Gines will give nothing away free and is much more jealous of his image. “You weary me,” he tells Quijote, “with your prying into other men’s lives. But if you want to know about mine, I am Gines de Pasamonte, and I have written my life with these very fingers.” And he goes on to boast that his autobiography is so good “that Lazarillo de Tormes will have to look out, and so will everything in that style that has ever been written or ever will be. One thing I can promise you, is that it is all the truth, and such well-written, entertaining truth that there is no fiction that can compare with it” (176). Yet the truth of picaresque is entirely different from “the truth of the matter” contained in “the copies and certificates of the sentences,” and summed up by Sancho earlier: “justice – that is the King himself – is doing no wrong or outrage to such people, but only punishing them for their crimes” (171).

When Quijote frees the prisoners the incident loses its recreative tone. “Pasamonte was certain from Don Quijote’s crazy action in giving them their liberty that he was not right in the head” (180), and this leads him to set his comrades to stoning and stripping their liberator. At one point the action becomes hostile in the gratuitous manner characteristic of the malicious servants of the Duke and Duchess in Part II: the moment Quijote was knocked to the ground the fifth prisoner “leapt on him, and seizing the basin from his head, brought it down three or four times on his shoulders, and as many more on the ground, till it was almost smashed to pieces” (180). Stripped of the armor won in the previous chapter, exposed suddenly to another side of the picaresque spirit, Quijote’s holiday is momentarily threatened by ingratitude: he was “much distressed at finding himself so vilely treated by the very men for whom he had done so much,” and he therefore follows Sancho into their mountain retreat (181). This is the first time he had been unhorsed for doing someone a good turn, so that the outcome has an edge of bitterness to it.

But this outcome is peculiar for other reasons: Cervantes suggests that, while the prisoners are glad to be free, they are not only surprised by Quijote’s action but forced out of a situation that was not entirely unpleasant to them. The repartee among the prisoners, and between the prisoners and the guards, reveals a relatively advanced stage of social accommodation. Within the constraints imposed by their different conditions, they are clearly at home with each other: they seem to understand these constraints better than Quijote, and to allow for them. The guards enjoy, and even appear proud of, the prisoners’ wit. Gines and the sergeant goad each other in a verbal war-game they have obviously been playing for some time; Gines unfettered aims at but does not shoot the guards, although he knows they will report the escape to the highway patrol.

When Quijote interferes, he destroys a well-defined social microcosm the members of which tacitly adhere to certain rules and act certain roles generated by the structure of this particular group. They enjoy playing the parts of “the prisoner,” “the guard,” “the outcast,” “the rogue,” “the unjustly punished.” In this respect the convicts no less than the guards accept the code of the society against which they have offended, and they have established their own special code of behavior within its boundaries. This code prescribes recognized ways to gain freedom, and Quijote’s act violates their sense of propriety. To ask them, as Quijote does, to put themselves in the way of being caught is like asking for “pears from an elm-tree,” for just as their code makes

them reluctant to be liberated in an unseemly manner, so it precludes their giving themselves up voluntarily.

A further problem for the prisoners is implied by Pasamonte's earlier remark that he is "not greatly grieved at going" to the galleys, "for I shall have a chance there to finish my book. I have a lot more to say, and in the Spanish galleys there is more leisure than I require" (177). Gines speaks of the galleys as one speaks of a contemplative retreat from the life of action. A creature of picaresque habit, he seems to value the alternations of criminal activity and penal repose that give his life an orderly rhythm. Beyond that, we might feel in the prisoners' attitude the force of the familiar paradox that imprisonment is the effect, therefore the symbol, of freedom from care and withdrawal from responsibility. On their merry way to the galleys, the prisoners share with Quijote the mood of Mardi Gras, but his unexpected action curtails their holiday.

Cervantes sustains his holiday atmosphere against the threat he poses to it when he renders at closer range the complex claims and realities of social order and justice. Quijote's illegal act, his misguided romanticism and humanity, provide the simple frame of the episode. But the apparently digressive features with which the episode is filled out articulate in three dimensions and in fine detail the subtle tissue of relations that bind the men to each other and to society in its civil, cultural, and legal aspects. Quijote's more abstract offense is oddly reflected in his dispersal of the congenial company of guards and convicts. This social sample functions as a kind of test group, and the test reveals that Don Quijote had better be removed to higher, safer, lonelier ground.

The relation between the worlds of fiction and fantasy is given a more dialectical structure in the interwoven episodes of the foolish curiosity and Cardenio. The foolish curiosity is Anselmo's. He tries to do to his wife, Camilla, what Marcela does to herself in the episode I just outlined. He enlists his friend Lothario to test Camilla's chastity by trying to seduce her.

From the beginning, Anselmo speaks of Camilla not merely as his wife but as the embodiment of his ideal, The Perfect Wife, and then, perversely, he sets out to test her: "Is my wife Camilla as good and perfect as I think? I can't be sure of her truth until I submit her to an ordeal that will prove her purity "as fire shows the purity of gold". According to Anselmo's nutty theory, "a woman is good only in proportion to her temptations" (299), and he sets out to prove that Camilla is not so good. He plays out this sick game until all three characters are caught and destroyed.

Cervantes's involved plotting reaches a climax in the scene in which Anselmo hides in a closet and watches Camilla (who knows he is watching) as she leaps to stab Lothario. She performs this act with an intensity and ferocity that made even Lothario "uncertain whether her demonstrations were false or true" (313). Her feigning is real to the extent that she still has some self-respect and feeling for Anselmo. While under the scrutiny of her husband she gives vent to an element of real hatred for Lothario and herself.

Turning now to Cardenio, when we first meet him his madness is realistic enough to be the most serious and troubling thing so far encountered. The episode begins once more as a third-person narrative, and with an evocation of the scorned-lover cliché in its most literary form (chapter 23). This only makes the contrast more startling because Cardenio's madness is so brilliantly and convincingly portrayed. Though he is and remains a sympathetic figure when sane, that figure is wreathed in problems. We never learn, for example, whether he and Lucinda were secretly married before the ceremony with Ferdinand or whether it was simply Lucinda's ruse to avoid marrying Ferdinand.

Subsequent events prove that Cardenio was unable to trust Lucinda, that he lacked the courage to confront Ferdinand, and that it was easier for him to withdraw into a state of jealousy and self-pity while laying all the blame on others. With regard to Dorothea and Ferdinand, we're encouraged to entertain doubts about the ease with which Ferdinand, a stereotypical dastard, is transformed and forgiven. We're also encouraged to wonder about Dorothea's surrender to Ferdinand and about her tendency to protest too much that her yielding had been legitimized by private marriage. All these happily-ended stories cast long shadows of anxiety.

In the series of flights from reality, Cardenio's is less extreme than Chrysostom's but more than Quijote's or Dorothea's. Rather than risk finding out what really happened between Lucinda and Ferdinand, he devised a more lurid scenario influenced by stock literary situations—a scenario in which he cast himself as the insulted and injured hero. He then withdrew into the sparsely inhabited Sierra Morena, and into the cork tree, where his dark fantasy could burgeon unhampered by the interference of reality or other people. A cork tree also marks Chrysostom's grave, and in Don Quijote's tribute to the golden age (chapter 11), cork trees provided the bark with which the first men housed themselves in that idyllic time when "all was peace [...], all amity, all concord." The cork tree thus seems to represent a point of withdrawal from what Quijote in that speech called "this detestable age of ours," a point at which the pleasure principle is very close to attaining its goal, the nirvana of death, or of pastoral Utopia, or of total self-enclosure and isolation from the pain-giving world.

From this point Cardenio gradually recovers and returns to the world. His re-entry is assisted first by the friendly goatherds who help him survive, but who aren't sufficiently cultivated to understand his situation; then by Don Quijote, his first auditor, who fails him because he has his own obsession; then by the priest and barber, who fulfill more adequately the clinical role of attentive listeners; finally, of course, by Dorothea, who supplies the missing facts. Cardenio's improvement is signified by a change in activity, from writing his troubles out as poems to telling them in a story, and by a change in his understanding of his plight. These two are connected: the poems reveal him disclaiming responsibility by willing himself into helplessness. He hyperbolizes and savors his woe in genuinely bad verses. The sonnet found by Don Quijote concludes with a crash: "Soon I must die, of that I can be sure; / when the cause of the sickness is unknown / only a miracle can find the cure" (176).

Cardenio is an endlessly reliable source of poor poetry. Before he tells the priest and barber his story, they hear him singing a song in which he converts himself to a plaything of external forces:

What makes all my joy to wane?
 Disdain.
 And who prolongs this misery??
 Jealousy.
 And who assails and tears my patience?
 Absence.
 And therefore in my deep-felt sorrow,
 I see no cure on the morrow,
 For I am killed by hope in vain,
 absence, jealousy, and disdain. (215)

The very conventions and devices of this sort of doggerel encourage his self-deceiving narcissism: he may project his feelings and conditions into personifications that afflict him from the outside, and he may draw out his obsessively fixated or arrested state by repetition and elegant variation. The thrust of the impulse embodied in verse is towards total loss of control and consciousness: "wherein lies the cure for sadness? / Madness." But the method of expression is painfully controlled.

When Cardenio begins to tell his story to the priest and barber he still talks in the same way, and the talk continues his pleasurable plan to disempower himself and reach rock bottom:

I myself am aware that the strength of my misery is so intense, and drives me to such distraction, that I am powerless to resist it and am turning to stone, void of all knowledge and feeling. This I realize when I am shown the evidence of the deeds I have done under the mastery of these terrible fits. Then I can only vainly and fruitlessly curse my fate. . . . When you have heard it [my story], you will perhaps spare yourselves the trouble of trying to offer consolation for an inconsolable sorrow. (226-27)

The change to clearer awareness begins to emerge a little more than halfway through his account when, during an apostrophe to memory, his language betrays not only the volitional basis of his “helplessness” but also the extent to which he tries to arrange or doctor his view of the facts. “To what purpose do you recall to me the incomparable beauty of my beloved enemy? Wouldn’t it be better, cruel memory, to picture to me what she did next so that, under the stress of so flagrant an injury I may strive, if not to avenge it, at least to lose my life?” (232).

A few paragraphs later Cardenio introduces his recital of the climactic moment with a description which reaches toward that goal: “It only remains for me to describe my state of mind when I saw in that one Yes my hopes deceived, Lucinda’s word and promise broken, and myself for ever powerless to recover all that I had lost in that one instant. I was resourceless. Heaven, it seemed, had abandoned me” and “earth had become my enemy” (233).

In the recital he reflects with great clarity the conjectural and rationalizing turns of thought by which he deceived himself, and toward the end, although he still asserts his helplessness and dependence on heaven, he recognizes his own culpability: “I feel no strength or virtue in myself to fetch my body out of this pass into which I have elected to bring it of my own accord” (235).

The same sense of shared responsibility informs his closing remarks. But in his ringing and slightly ridiculous peroration we can also discern another motive: “She elected by her fickleness to make my perdition permanent, and I choose to comply with her wishes and achieve my final destruction. And it shall be an example to future generations that I alone have lacked what other wretches have in abundance. There is comfort for them in the impossibility of consolation. But for me this is the cause of greater afflictions and evils, which I truly think will not end even with my death” (236).

Cardenio enjoys telling his tale, playing his role, staging himself. His tale-telling is a form of repetition-compulsion and his pleasure in replaying the event has a therapeutic side to it. As a cure for sadness, telling his story to others replaces the less viable alternatives of the cork tree, the narcissistic sonnets, and madness, and we are expected to note the relation of therapeutic value to increased aesthetic detachment. Distance from and control of self, image, and story develop together. His portrayal of himself as a character is more self-conscious toward the end, and while he continues to affirm his refusal to be consoled, he does so with full awareness that the refusal is chosen rather than fated. He can acknowledge that his mind is controlled by himself, not by love, disdain, and absence.

Aesthetic detachment in this context means two things. First, in re-creating the experience he comes to view it from the outside as an observer, and second, his interest in story-telling per se seems to displace the original compulsion to transfer his animus from Ferdinand to every new situation. Cervantes indicates this displacement by showing a change in Cardenio’s attitude toward his story. When he is about to try it out on Don Quijote, he lays down the following conditions:

If you want me to explain to you [...]. the immensity of my misfortunes in a few words, you must promise not to interrupt the thread of my sad tale with any question or remark; for the moment you do so, my narrative will end. [...]. This warning I give you because I want to get quickly through the story of my misfortunes. For to recall them to mind is only to add to them; and the less you question me the more quickly I’ll come to the end of my tale. Yet I won’t leave out anything of importance, because I want to satisfy your curiosity completely. (193)

Thus he takes the occasion of Quijote’s interruption to revert to madness. But by the time he has told the priest and barber a large part of the narrative, he seems to have warmed up to his work: “Don’t grow weary, friends, of hearing these digressions of mine; for my grief cannot be told succinctly and methodically, since every circumstance of it seems to me to deserve a long discourse.” To which the priest wearily replied that not only were they not weary of his tale, they were glad to hear details that could not be passed over in silence and that deserved the same attention as the main thread of the story” (232).

It is after this exchange, in the concluding portion of his story, that Cardenio's detachment and control are most evident. All that remains is the external resolution of his problem, which is guaranteed immediately after when Dorothea arrives and tells her side of the story.

In the brilliantly managed goatherd's tale of Leandra and her lovers (chapter 51), Cervantes recapitulates some of the leading motifs of Part 1 in a cynical and sour vein. Leandra is a false Marcela who robs her father, falls for and runs off with a braggart soldier, but insists against the evidence that she has retained her virginity, and finally ends up in a nunnery. The rogue who carries her off is a picaresque rascal in command of the skills possessed by more romantic heroes: he's a musician and poet who brags of his exploits against the Turks. This allusive and literary quality only intensifies the effect of encroachment by life, and by its seamier aspects as seen through the eyes of the narrator, Eugenio, a disenchanting goatherd who is one of Leandra's chief suitors. The category, "disenchanted goatherd," is itself something of a lark.

Eugenio's opening description revives once again the theme of the debilitating influence of literature's golden images. His excessive praise of the young Leandra betrays an unrealistic view of woman that not even a Camilla, much less a Leandra, could actualize; a view that is almost certainly guaranteed to produce subsequent disaffection in her viewers. In the following sentences, the goatherd shows himself primarily interested in her beauty and her value as an object: "Her father's greatest fortune in his own eyes was the possession of a daughter of such consummate beauty, charm, and virtue, that everyone who knew her, or even set eyes on her, was amazed. The fame of her loveliness began to spread [...], people [...] would come to see her from all parts, as if she were a rare sight or a wonder-working image. [...]. Her beauty, together with her father's wealth, led many [...] to ask for her hand" (445-46).

From this ornate and conventional style, the goatherd shifts to a very different descriptive idiom that realistically renders the small-town atmosphere: "There came to our town Vicente de la Roca, the son of a poor local farmer. He had returned from Italy and other places where he'd been soldiering and he used to sit on a bench in our market-place, and there he would keep us all open-mouthed, hanging on the exploits he described to us" (446-47).

But the conclusion of the affair is as outlandishly literary in situation as it is in style. After the disgraced Leandra is put away, all her suitors take to the country to mourn her absence – "so many that this place seems to have become the pastoral Arcadia, for it's so crammed with shepherds and sheep-folds that there's not a corner in it where you won't hear someone howling out the fair Leandra's name. [...]. All disparage her and all adore her; and [...] some complain of her disdain without ever seen her or spoken to her" (449). But unlike Marcela, Leandra is literally absent, and her absence is constrained but temporary. Her father shut her up "In the hope that time would off some part of the disgrace" (449), and the goatherd remarks that "in this tragedy, the end is still unresolved, though clearly, it's bound to be disastrous" (446).

As Cervantes handles the episode, elements of the various genres we have previously encountered in the novel are reduced to the scale of small-town intrigue. Leandra and Vicente de la Roca are the stuff out of which such literature is made, while Eugenio and his rival exemplify the plight and motivation of those who make it. So, at least, Cervantes would have us believe at this particular moment late in Part 1.

His mastery of tone and atmosphere is consummately displayed by the way he allows the narrator to characterize himself. Eugenio resorts to the quixotic defense too late – after the fact – and his carefully nurtured bitterness, mixed with aggressive self-deception, contributes as much to the tale's unpleasant flavor as the fact that Leandra is hardly worth the trouble. Consider, for example, how Eugenio describes the return of "the fickle Leandra" who was found "in a mountain cave, clad only in her shift," and who yet affirmed "that the soldier had not robbed her of her honor, though he had taken everything else she had before going off and leaving her in the cave; a fact which astonished everyone afresh" (448):

It was difficult to believe in the youth's self-restraint, but she vouched for it with such persistence as partly to console her disconsolate father, who set no store by the valuables they had taken so long as his daughter was left in possession of that jewel which, once lost, is beyond all hope of recovery.[...]. Leandra's youth served as some excuse for her wickedness, at least for those who had nothing to gain from proving her good or bad. But those who knew her intelligence and considerable shrewdness attributed her fault not to ignorance, but to frivolity and the failings natural to womankind, who are generally ill-balanced and unsteady. (448-49)

The ancient technique of blanket condemnation both justifies and resolves such mixed feelings as Eugenio harbors: he can indulge his passion for an unworthy object and at the same time assign her failings (and his failure) to the inferior nature of woman.

Anselmo's plaintive art and the goatherd's generalized disaffection are classic instances of unsuccessful flight from experience; the experience remains unmastered and continues to obsess the mind even in the spurious fastness of its aesthetic or "philosophic" retreat. In the unpleasantly ambiguous quality of Leandra's affair and behavior, and in Eugenio's response, Cervantes once again allows us a brief glimpse of the tenebrous and disenchanted atmosphere that will permeate Part 2. But Eugenio's is of course a caricature of that disenchantment, and the author reasserts the comic perspective of holiday that dominates Part 1.

The device of story-telling is the major formal motif of Part 1 and the most important factor in sustaining the holiday atmosphere. It lets Cervantes both assert and control the more problematic features of experience. His characters in Part 1 for the most part tell and hear about events after the worst is over, or else they read about them in stories. The structure of the story-telling situation is employed with its full range of implications. It has the symposial function of bringing people together and providing entertainment. However unhappy the story may be in whole or in part, it contributes to the social harmony, the recreative atmosphere, of tellers and listeners. The other side of this, exemplified by Cardenio, is that "talking it out" is essentially a social function which demands the active sympathy and willing cooperation of such auditors as the priest and barber, who not only divert themselves but also give Cardenio their undivided attention.

The tacit but essential precondition to this is a securely ordered world that contains people who are sufficiently humane and disengaged – or at least unthreatened – to sympathize and help; a world in which, for example, we may smile at even while appreciating such minor vanities as the warm-hearted priest's willingness to offer advice, consolation, and critical opinion whenever he possibly can. Altruism is encouraged by self-delight, by freedom from care, and by the mild boredom that security guarantees. Part 1 as a whole is bathed in the light of its prologue, controlled throughout by the absolute and benign power, the self-delighting presence and freedom, of its author, whose confidence in his auditors allows him to indulge his elfin impulses at our expense as well as his. Sancho's concluding speech sums up this general sense of freedom and well-being:

There's nothing so pleasant in the world for an honest man as to be squire to a knight errant who seeks adventures. It's true that most of them you finds don't turn out as much to your liking as you could wish, for out of every hundred you meet ninety-nine generally turn out cross and unlucky. I know it by experience, for I've come off blanket-tossed from some and bruised from others. But, for all that, it's a nice thing to be looking out for incidents, crossing mountains, searching woods, climbing rocks, visiting castles, and lodging in inns at your pleasure, with the devil a farthing to pay. (457)

What ultimately validates this holiday world is the background of the everyday world. Whether this is a darker world, as in Part 2, or merely a duller world, as in Part 1, it cannot be magically wished away. The symbiosis between storyteller and auditors extends to Cervantes and us. He knows he will not engage our truer sympathies or cooperation, if he misconstrues the power of

the novelist as that of the enchanter. For someone who tells tales about the real world, this amounts to being a liar, an Arab historian whose motives and veracity cannot be trusted. The enchanter may be immune to ordinary hazards, may circle the universe in thought and act, but typically he is an exile from humanity who fears direct contact with other people. In many respects he is like the picaresque hero: his mind is his own place, his home is therefore everywhere and nowhere—he has no home, no village, no family, no cares (*curae*) to belong to, be away from, and return to.

To return home in this sense is to honor the reality principle as we have it in Part 1. People travel from home – take literal or mental cruises, vacations, and holidays – when, in Robert Frost’s phrase, they’re “weary of considerations.” “Considerations” is a lovely word to express the normal but intricate network of responsibilities by which people are rooted home (or, as they may feel, imprisoned). It embraces attentive thought, looking at or worrying about problems, taking things into account, having regard for other people, and it also means payments, remunerations for services. Consideration is no mere holiday love or friendship. Involvements among travelers at an inn may be rich, warm, and intense, but they are always framed within the limiting awareness of the casual and temporary. They are zones through which we pass or pause for “breathers” and “spells.” But consideration is love, or care, or at least concern, inseparable from labor, tedium, drought, poverty, and sufferance. It is the tendency of Quijote’s housekeeper and niece. And it is the feeling briefly but tellingly embodied in the responses of Sancho’s wife on his return: “As soon as she saw Sancho her first question was about his donkey,” and her second was whether he had any profit to show for his squireship: “Have you brought me a skirt? Or some pretty shoes for the children?”, and a moment later, “I have been most sad and sorrowful all the ages you have been away” (456). It is to this strong sense of home that Cervantes returns *us*, but not Sancho or Quijote, at the end of Part 1.

During the concluding episodes, Cervantes expresses the tension between play and actuality in terms of this theme. His narrative reveals not only the author’s continuing enjoyment of his play world, but also his awareness that this enjoyment may be protracted beyond the limit of “lawful recreation,” may in fact become a quixotic refusal to stop playing and return home.

In chapter 46, Don Ferdinand and the priest have just settled the bill and pacified the highway patrol when Quijote longs for new trouble: “Don Quijote, then, seeing himself free and quit of all quarrels, both his squire’s and his own, thought it would be well to continue the journey he had begun, and complete the great adventure for which he had been called and chosen” (412). This impulse leads to the episode of the cart, which is devised by Quijote’s friends in order to break up the party “and allow the priest and barber to bear him off and try to get him cured of his madness at home” (415-16). This motive reappears a number of times in different forms so that the urge to go home presses against Quijote’s reluctance to stop playing, presses also against the delays generated by the author’s reluctance to stop playing and by his urge to introduce new characters and complications.

The desire to wind things up produces a marked acceleration of narrative rhythm in the final pages of Part 1, accompanied by a growing sense of strain, weariness, or irritability in the characters. The goatherd’s tale of Leandra is noticeably shorter than all those which it follows and echoes. He hesitates before telling it – “if it doesn’t bore you, gentlemen, and you will lend me your attention for a little, I’ll tell you a true tale” (444-45). Quijote responds to the tale with a phrase that begs off even as it promises to help: “were I in the position to be able to embark on any adventure, I would immediately set about bringing yours to a happy conclusion” (452). The subsequent fight between Quijote and the goatherd, though it remains within the limits of slapstick, is on the verge of getting out of hand, and the onlookers’ enjoyment is faintly touched by sadism. Quijote calls for a truce and the goatherd accedes chiefly because he “was now tired of pummelling and being pummelled” (452). Sancho has been getting very nervous for his master’s safety during these incidents, and finally convinces him to give it up after the somewhat unpleasant encounter with the penitents: “Let’s return to our village with these men who wish you well, and

then we'll plan another expedition.' 'You're right, Sancho,' replied Don Quijote. 'It will be prudent to wait till the malign influence of the stars has passed over us'" (455). But it is clear that Cervantes is not going to be able to keep his two heroes home for very long, and Part 1 ends with an extravaganza of reluctant disengagement that returns in tone to the high spirits and genial irony of the prologue. Sancho incorrigibly looks forward to the next sally, and we learn that time will confirm Quijote's housekeeper and niece in their fears that when he "felt a little better they would find him missing once more" (457). The author has no recourse but to detach himself from this nonsense. Though he "has anxiously and diligently inquired after Don Quijote's exploits on his third expedition, he has been able to discover no account of them, at least from any authentic documents." He has heard a rumor, however, "that the third time Don Quijote left his home he went to Saragossa."

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