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Table of Contents

Articles and Talks

Why Cervantes in China?: Hyperreality and Cervantine Cultural encounters in Beijing 2016 (Tang Xianzu, Shakespeare, Cervantes, and Borges)

Juan Pablo Gil-Osle, Arizona State University.....3

Salvador Dalí's *Don Quixote*: High Art or Kitsch?

William Daniel Holcombe, Clemson University.....13

Mammoth Woolly Migrations: Transhumance, Extinction, and the Cervantine Shepherd

Margaret Marek, Illinois College.....27

Transcendental metagenre travelers: a background of the reception of Cervantes' *Don Quixote* in Spain and France

Vicente Pérez de León, University of Glasgow

Véronique Duché, University of Melbourne.....53

“ . . . And things that go bump in the night:” Narrative Deferral, the Supernatural, and the Metafictive Uncanny in *Don Quijote*

Christopher Weimer, Oklahoma State University.....74

La enseñanza y la aceptación de las obras de Cervantes en China desde métodos multidisciplinares

Zhang Jingting, Universidad de Estudios Internacionales de Shanghái.....94

“Yo sé quién soy:” La quijotización de Dulcinea y la dulcinización de Don Quijote en una película de Vicente Escrivá

María José Domínguez, Arizona State University.....114

21st-Century Quixotes: Interdisciplinary Approaches and Global Classrooms

Rogelio Miñana, Drexel University.....122

Program of the Conference at the University in Chicago Center in Beijing: “Cervantes in his 400th Anniversary in China.”

.....132

Book Reviews

David William Foster. Alexandre de Gusmão, *The Story of the Predestined Pilgrim and His Brother Reprobate, in Which, through a Mysterious Parable, Is Told the Felicitous Success of the One Saved and the Unfortunate Lot of the One Condemned*. Trans., with an introd. and Index by Christopher C. Lund. Tempe, AZ: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2016. Xxxv, 137 pp., plates

..... 139

Juan Pablo Gil-Osle. Barbara Fuchs, *The Poetics of Piracy: Emulating Spain in English Literature*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013. pp. 186. ISBN: 9780812244755

..... 142

Andrés F. Ruiz-Olaya. Franklin G.Y. Pease, *El mar peruano: mitos andinos y europeos*. Comp. Nicanor Domínguez Faura. Lima: Sociedad Geográfica de Lima, 2015

.....145

Transcendental Metagenre Travelers:
A Background of the Reception of Cervantes' *Don Quixote*
in Spain and France

Vicente Pérez de León,¹ University of Glasgow
Véronique Duché, University of Melbourne

Cervantes' works, particularly *Don Quixote*, with their essential role in world literature canon formation, have contributed to shape different theories and approaches through time, where the ultimate reasons of their success in European culture are explored. In order to contribute to this debate, this essay studies:

- a) the role of literary genres in the *Quixote*, focusing on their strategies to influence on readers, and,
- b) the potentiality of using the debate of the pre-eminence of literary genres in contrasted cultural contexts as a critical frame, in order to assess the background of readers' expectations, reception and transcendence of Cervantes' works in Spain and France.²

Among the studies on the ideological frame and reception of Cervantes' works, both the ones about this author's influence in a complex and non-uniform Spain, together with those focusing on how the acceptance of Cervantes' works has diachronically affected different cultural contexts, have contributed to create a dynamic and complex theoretical basis for the understanding of the author who revolutionized early modern narrative.

On the one hand, approaches with a focus on Cervantes' ideology include historical studies by representative critics such as Marcel Bataillon and Américo Castro, who have contributed to situate Cervantes in the context of Erasmism, thus emphasizing this author's progressive thought. On the other hand, approaches to the reception of Cervantes' works, such as Anthony Close's metacritical study in *The Romantic Approach to Don Quixote*, have proven that modern and contemporary perception of Cervantes is affected by ideological readings of both the novel and its author, as it has happened especially since the Romantic Era.

As an expansion of Maravall's idea about the existence of a continuum between courtly and popular spectacles in his *Theory of the Baroque*, I have recently explored how the expansion of the *comedia nueva*,

Transcendental Metagenre Travelers:
A Background of the Reception of
Cervantes' *Don Quixote* in Spain and France

the rebirth of the picaresque novel and the exuberance of Courtly celebrations during Philip III's reign (1598-1621) arose from a related political phenomenon in *Histéresis Creativa*. By the time that Cervantes published *Don Quixote*, 1605, the Spanish capital was Valladolid (1601-06), but the great efforts by Madrid to recuperate its central political influence would pay a year later. The return of the Court to Madrid was related to a culture of opportunism associated to an existing worldview being supported by Philip III. The Courtly culture promoted at his kingdom was transmitted and made present in all levels of society, facilitating the renaissance of picaresque, with its opportunistic "anti-system" morality, and related aesthetics. The newly appointed nobility by the King, chosen by the duke of Lerma, substituted the existing one faithful to Philip II, but the newcomers showed a strong urgency to being accepted and recognized among their aristocratic peers. Enhancing self-praising in extremely expensive ceremonies and public spectacles was necessary, both to confirm the validity of a new hegemonic power based on opportunism and historical manipulation (including, for instance, the falsification and hyperbolic view of ancestors in books sponsored by Lerma), and to try to shadow other traditional nobility values and lineages, many of them associated to successful heroic cases from the times of the Reconquista. The fall of Rodrigo de Calderón (1621) and the Duke of Lerma (1624), somewhat interrupted this ideological courtly trend, but not without leaving a cultural trace of literary and spectacular "bubbles," which when studied today, offers a significant metafictional context, which is present in Cervantes' literary works as well.

Cervantes and literary genres in Spain

When focusing on the sources of Cervantes' cultural background, which included his master of literary theory, drama, poetry, essay and narrative genres, respect for Aristotelian units, and awareness of current critical debates, among others, many questions arise on how specific textual sources were assimilated by this author.

On the one hand, Riley in his *Cervantes's Theory of the Novel and Don Quixote*, has addressed the most relevant issues related to the context of the origin of Cervantes' narrative, by exploring the ways his novels evolved from bucolic, picaresque and chivalric genres, among others, right before

the publication of *Don Quixote*. By approaching the narrative precedents of Cervantes' novel, Riley has contributed to theorize about his major literary ideological and aesthetic influences, concluding that, although there were specific genres and literary works which might have contributed to shaping Cervantes' narrative, specific cases with a predominant and definitive influence on Cervantes' style and narrative content are still not clearly identified.

On the other hand, in his historical texts on Cervantes' politics, *Utopia and Counterutopia in the Quixote*, and on Baroque theatre *La cultura del Barroco: análisis de una estructura histórica*, Maravall has contributed to shaping our contemporary vision of Cervantes' ideology as well. He concludes that many political ideas of his period are present in Cervantes' works, both in the *Quixote*, as the episodes of Sancho's island demonstrate, and in some relevant short dramas such as the *Election of the Majors of Daganzo* and *The Marvellous Puppets Show*. Cervantes' rejection to the "pureza de sangre" policy in these interludes shows how deeply this author was aware of the role of politics and ideology in his society as well. While Castro defends in his *El pensamiento de Cervantes* a perception of Cervantes as a progressive thinker, Maravall's study on the *Quixote*, where its main character is conceived as a reactionary subject, has contributed to confirm that same conclusion about the political ideology of Cervantes too.

Riley's exploration of Cervantes' awareness on the way genres operate in the literary world complements Castro's and Maravall's approaches, by considering that Cervantes' works being mostly progressive and inclusive is an essential part of his worldview. The combination of both critical trends contributes to our own focus on the areas of the *Quixote* where the author includes literary genres in a way in which informed readers can fully understand the manipulative ideological mechanisms shaping the main characters' worldview. Cervantes' novel contributes to this debate by showing the dangers of the confusion between reality and fiction present in the closed, limited worldview proposed in literary genres, which contributes to limit the free will of characters. As soon as the worldview embedded in literary genres affects the lives of the main characters of the *Quixote*, such as Grisóstomo, Cardenio, Ginés de Pasamonte, and Don Quixote, serious consequences follow.

The ways in which the main literary genres are presented in the *Quixote* in their picaresque, sentimental, chivalric and bucolic worldviews

Transcendental Metagenre Travelers:
A Background of the Reception of
Cervantes' *Don Quixote* in Spain and France

show that Cervantes' narrative was aimed to a very informed reader as well. Direct and indirect allusions to narrative literary genres, which comprise numerous publications of, for instance, chivalric novel series and sagas, become uniquely self-conscious in Cervantes' narrative. The perspective of some of the protagonists in Cervantes' novel relates to the use of their own voice about the nature of their commitment and belonging in the actual fictional genre universe, such as the case of Marcela (bucolic), Ginés de Pasamonte (picaresque), Cardenio (sentimental) and Don Quixote (chivalric). By understanding the implications of the presence of these characters' reflections on literary genres, especially when they openly speak on doubts about their identity in the literary tragedy associated to the limit of their literary genres, a new metafictional process is unveiled. In order to appreciate the narrative puzzle proposed by Cervantes, the receptor needs, not only to be familiar with the possibilities and limitations of the different genres present in works such as the *Quixote*, but also to have an extensive reading experience about the actual literary genres being discussed in Cervantes' works.

The four literary genres being explored in the *Quixote* had evolved to a higher literary sophistication in the European context for decades, being then used by Cervantes as essential literary devices' in a metafictional context. The voice of several of these main characters in their interaction, in the context of a metanarrative, contributes to achieving a unique sense of realism. By presenting two realities, the fictional one (based on the limits of literary genres) and the 'less fictional one' (the realistic world embedded within the actual narrative of the *Quixote*), the last one becomes automatically more realistic in the process, as if a literary *trompe l'oeil* was activated. The elevated literary habits expected from readers to understand that these literary tricks are confirmed, not only in Cervantes' reception in Spain, but also in other European cultures, where Cervantes' revolutionary literary approach was fully understood as well. In fact, the Cervantine use of the literary vs. real life dichotomy was 'contagious,' as is reflected in the reaction to the reception of his works by authors who, in the fashion of Sansón Carrasco and Avellaneda, pretended to gain fame by appropriating and have an impact in Don Quixote's story. The most renowned one, who introduced several short narratives in the main plot in the fashion of Cervantes as well, was Francois Filleau de Saint-Martin in his *Histoire de*

l'admirable Don Quixotte de la Manche (1677-1678; *History of the Admirable Don Quixote de La Mancha books 1 to 4; 1695, book 5*):

The sequel begins with an Arabic narrator named Zulema who reports that CHB was incorrect about the death of DQ and who claims to have investigated the activities of DQ and SP after their return home in MC's II, 73. DQ attempts to renounce everything relating to chivalry, SP takes on a more prominent role, Dorotea and a few other characters are re-introduced, and there are some embedded narratives (which actually make up the majority of the text). Filleau's sequel was very popular in France, and was translated to German within a year. (Mancing 295)

Among the potential precedents of the presence of self-conscious characters at the end of sixteenth century is the anonymous interlude *Entremés sin título de Godoy*. This unique literary work demonstrates that picaresque characters flourished, not only in narratives, but in theatrical works, and particularly in short drama, reaching a high level of sophistication and self-consciousness which reminds Cervantes' own:

Godoy: Las mujeres de mis prendas y calidad, siendo probes, no habían de nacer en el mundo. Dígalo por mí, que aunque tengo mucho linaje, por ser probe no hacen caso de mí [. . .] mis amores, que los tengo lindos, y son tres, sino que el uno de ellos es viejo y corcovado y yo no lo puedo ver más que al diablo, que le hiede la boca, y no sé cómo le eche de mi casa [...] Los otros dos los quiero más que a la lumbre de mis ojos, porque tienen partes para eso; son gentiles-hombres, valientes y de buena parentela; pues ¿oficios?, hasta ahí puede llegar. El uno es lacayo de un caballero muy principal y rico; y me dice mis amores que les quiere dar su amo librea. El otro es muy honrado y amigo de la honra, y no sabe que yo trato con el otro, y me parece que si tal supiere no me hablaría más; [...]. (Cotarelo, *Colección* 57)

Such as Godoy, Cervantes' self-conscious approach associated to his main characters allows them to have their own voice within the fiction they belong to. This metaliterary trend can be linked to the existing Catholic reformist and counter-reformist trend of allowing marginal beings to have a voice. The both aesthetic and ideological choice of allowing subaltern characters to express their social discontent, and even desire, by talking self-consciously about their role in their literary genres, and by extension it their

Transcendental Metagenre Travelers:
A Background of the Reception of
Cervantes' *Don Quixote* in Spain and France

society, only limited by their free will, has a precedent in the Renaissance masterpiece text, *La Celestina* (1499). Rojas' work anticipated in more than a century Cervantes' inclusion of these self-conscious marginal characters. Cervantes' narrative, not only follows this trend, but improves it by giving the independent voice to marginal characters within the actual closed world created within the narrative genres they choose to live in.

Cervantes conceived unique characters who are defined by the existential literary paradoxes they belong to. By being so attached to the literary genres of their choice, it is not easy to distinguish between reality and fiction anymore. Don Quixote, Grisóstomo, Ginés de Pasamonte and Cardenio can then be described as metagenre reality-fiction travelers. By exploring the "Cervantine moments" they generate, the highly demanding reading expectations associated to the level of sophistication required by their 'idle' readers will be fully understood. This literary process contributes to create a new critical frame to explore the reception of Cervantes' works, both in the Spanish and other European contexts, such as in French culture. In them, the background of the presence of related literary genres had an impact on readers and authors before the publication of the *Quixote* as well. Considering the wide circulation of bucolic, sentimental, chivalric and picaresque narratives, French receptors, such as their Spanish counterparts, were both able to understand Cervantes' metafictional games, and fully appreciate the literary sophistication associated to them, as the case of Francois Filleau de Saint-Martin probes.

Cervantes and literary Genres in France

Sixteenth century France was exceptionally prolific in a variety of literary genres, in particular, in regard to prose fiction. While the late Middle Ages mainly enjoyed Arthurian – be it "dérimages" of medieval romances, or new creations such as *Perceforest*, and Carolingian romances galvanized by the recent birth of printing, or allegoric novels, such as the *Roman de la rose*, all these three genres almost disappeared in the 1530s. By then, abundant new literary materials were published in translations, first from Latin and Italian, then from Spanish and Greek. While a wide range of prose fiction was, therefore, available to the reader's satisfaction, the reception of such texts tends to focus in reconciling the 'benefit and pleasure' of fiction.

Reading was often described in books' paratexts as a distraction after hard work, especially in the form of epistles offered to the patrons.

In a period of restored Antiquity fashion, a debate emerged in France about the new genre of the novel, which had not been described by Aristotle. This debate on the genre of the novel developed mainly around *Amadis*, a very successful narrative series in France, which anticipated *Don Quixote's* related metafictional issues. In the context of the wars of Religion and the subsequent crisis in the publishing world, the debate became more impassioned. However, after the Edict of Nantes (1598), the taste for fiction would be more and more developed, and the novel will flourish again in France.

Cervantes' masterpiece *Don Quixote* was rapidly disseminated in the Spanish speaking territories. The Brussels based printer Roger Velpius gave an (unauthorized³) edition in 1607, following the second Madrid original with corrections, and its second part was published in 1616 by Huberto Antonio. These editions circulated widely in Europe, and were used for the earliest translations into English, French, and Italian. The Hispanist, grammarian and lexicographer César Oudin made the first translation into French of the whole book (Paris, Jean Fouët, 1614),⁴ the second part of *Don Quixote* being translated by François de Rosset in 1618. However, *Don Quixote* had started his successful French career as early as 1608, with Nicolas Baudouin's translation of one of the intercalated stories (I, 24 and 24), "El Curioso impertinente," in a bilingual edition.⁵ The following year, two more excerpts were anonymously translated:⁶ parts of the Marcela and Grisóstomo episode (I, 12 and 13), and Don Quixote's speech on arms and letters (I, 38). It has to be noted that these self-contained narratives belong to different genres: a sentimental novel together with a pastoral tale and a rhetorical discourse. By reviewing the most popular literary genres in France at the time of Cervantes the analysis of the reception of Spanish literature in this culture will be facilitated.

The pastoral genre culminated in France with Honoré d'Urfé's twelve Books of *L'Astrée* (1607-1627), one of the most influential works in seventeenth century. It elaborated, in more than 5000 pages, the adventures of several shepherds and shepherdesses, whose main preoccupation was love. The background of the pastoral genre, well known and popular among the French readers, dates back to the first half of the sixteenth century, with the publication of Italian *Arcadia* by Jacopo Sannazar (ca 1480,

Transcendental Metagenre Travelers:
A Background of the Reception of
Cervantes' *Don Quixote* in Spain and France

first edited in 1504), which was translated by Jean Martin in 1544. Even though there was only one edition, the French version played an important role in French literary canon. The influence of the Iberian pastoral genre will be more successful, as Jorge Montemayor's presence in France demonstrates. Four translations of *Los siete libros de la Diana* (1559) were published before 1614, nourishing the reader with a strong taste for shepherds and nature.

The picaresque genre arrived early in France as well, just a few years after the publication of the first part of the *Lazarillo* (1554), which was translated anonymously and published in Lyon as early as 1560; a second Parisian edition followed. After four decades, an additional translation was published in Antwerp in 1598, which was a censored version edited together with a spurious second part of the novel in the same volume. A bilingual edition was published in 1601 too, attesting to the success of this genre. Moreover, a second picaresque novel was also translated following *Lazarillo*'s success. The first part of *Guzmán de Alfarache* by Mateo Alemán (1599) was rendered in French by Gabriel Chappuys just one year after its Spanish release. The *pícaro* character and his social satire will inspire many narrative writers during the 18th century.

Another literary genre, of Spanish origin, which was extremely valued by French readers was the sentimental (love feelings) narrative. Foreshadowed by the success of Boccaccio (*Elegia di Fiammetta* and *Filostrato* for instance) and Piccolomini (*De duobus amantibus*), the *novela sentimental* proved to be very successful in the first half of the 16th century. Diego de San Pedro and Juan de Flores had each of them two novels translated into French, added to the works of Pedro Manuel de Urrea and Juan de Segura, together with the anonymous *Questión de amor*. Particularly popular were *Cárcel de amor*, *Tractado de amores de Arnalte y Lucenda*, and *Grisel y Mirabella*, whose translations had a strong impact in the French Renaissance culture. Sometimes published in bilingual, trilingual, and even four-language editions, these short *novellas* were useful as pedagogical tools for learning languages. Originally translated from an Italian version, these texts were subsequently using Spanish originals when the skills of the translators improved. There was a passionate and avid reception for these erotico-chivalric adventures, although some *novelas* were not as successful: *Quexa y aviso contra amor*, *Penitencia de amor*, *Grimalte y Gradissa* were only published in their French version. In fact, the metafictional *Grimalte y Gradissa* was of

particular interest for Maurice Scève, its translator into French, who soon would be a major figure on the Lyonnaise literary scene.

The most successful Spanish literary genre in France was the chivalric. *Amadis de Gaule* being the first European best seller and its French version causing a real landslide in the publishing world. The *Amadis* mania remained for a decade (1540-1550), before it became controversial and finally declined. These kinds of chivalric sagas changed the reading habits, book formats, iconography, as well as the status of the novel in France. They facilitated a business enterprise, conforming a consortium of publishers and retailers ensuring the success of the series. Not only the chivalric (and erotic!) aspects of the novel were prized by the readers, but also the rhetorical parts, thanks to text selection collections such as the *Thresor des livres d'Amadis* (1559). This was a collection of the best speeches, soliloquies and letters, which became a handbook for courtiers. It had an original pedagogical purpose, being used to teach how to speak, particularly in romantic situations and contexts. Its success is owed to its translator Nicolas Herberay des Essarts, who offered a new approach to translation with his exceptional style for a book related to the Court of King Francis I of France. Paradoxically, the French *Amadis* series had more sequels than the Spanish original, and included new versions written by different authors – Italian as well as German –, to account for 24 books in total between 1540 and 1615. In spite of a strong rivalry with the Italian *Orlando Furioso*, *Amadis* contributed to create the necessary atmosphere for the translation of many other Spanish chivalric texts: *Palmerín de Inglaterra*, *Primaleon* and *Florando de Inglaterra*, among others.

In sum, French readers educated in Spanish taste were ready to welcome the French edition of the *Quixote*. Early translations of Cervantes' work prove that its reception was very much facilitated by the reading habits associated to literary genres, which had shaped the minds of French readers from the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries.

Metafictional Genre Travelers in the Quixote

Adding to the bucolic, picaresque, sentimental and chivalric literary genres explored in the previous section in the French cultural context, the actual presence of genre protagonists who reflect upon their presence in Cervantes' masterpiece will be explored in detail in this part:

Transcendental Metagenre Travelers:
A Background of the Reception of
Cervantes' *Don Quixote* in Spain and France

a) Bucolic metafictional genre travelers

Cervantes' approach to bucolic narratives in the *Quixote* confirms the elevated expectations this author had on his readers, contributing to understanding the sophistication of his literary proposal of a new literary genre based on an actual self-reflection on literary genres. Being an established aesthetic fashion in Spain, and present both in literature and art in Europe, the bucolic narrative genre was practiced by Cervantes himself in his first major publication, *La Galatea*. In chapter XII of the *Quixote*, Cervantes presents the story of the shepherdess Marcela within the context of a sudden change in the action. The switch of narrative perspectives, allows readers to experience how manipulative discourse works. The story is narrated by Grisóstomo's friends, other shepherds who are presenting the facts of his friend's suicide only from his point of view, when Marcela, until then the target of all the blaming of the shepherds' attacks, shows up in the story to tell her truth and then disappears in the forest after being protected by Don Quixote's particular sense of justice. This experimentation on the bucolic genre limits by playing with readers' expectations in the Marcela episode might have its origin in *Galatea*, where perspectives and reception of the story of the 'two best friends' and the 'killing shepherd' is similarly explored.⁷

The first transcendental metagenre traveler after Don Quixote himself is the passionate and unfortunate Grisóstomo, having troubles in making a difference between reality and fiction as well. He is an imaginary traveler between the fiction of life in La Mancha and the reality of his own bucolic universe by choice, to which he wants to belong in a "barataria" way, by just dressing up like a shepherd, living in the forest and loving Marcela. Cervantes' description of *tercia naturaleza* in *La Galatea* contributes to illuminate readers about this author's belief in art as a unique creative tool, not only able to imitate reality, but to create the effect about the possibility of being able to surpass it. Shepherd Elicio comments this reality based on 'artificio' when talking about the 'Valle de los Cipreses':

Aquí se ve en cualquiera sazón del año andar la risueña primavera con la hermosa Venus en hábito subcinto y amoroso, y Céfiro que la acompaña, con la madre Flora delante, esparciendo a manos

llenas varias y odoríferas flores. Y la industria de sus moradores ha hecho tanto, que la naturaleza, encorporada con el arte, es hecha artífice y connatural del arte, y de entrambas a dos se ha hecho una *tercia naturaleza*, a la cual no sabré dar nombre. (*Galatea* VI, 542)

Grisóstomo himself seems to be involved in this kind of unspeakable *tercia naturaleza* as well. His background at the University of Salamanca, with its famous magic cave, together with his studies in Astrology seem to have affected his common sense. He is behaving like a fictional shepherd, and living as if he was part of a bucolic narrative. Either by free will, by God's intervention, synchronicity, magic, or all of the above, he is able to find his matching fictional shepherdess Marcela in the forest. Following opposite motivations, Marcela uses the bucolic fiction and its landscapes to escape from a society which was punishing her beauty, by not letting her be unmarried and free. In the fashion on the bucolic narrative shepherds' debates, Grisóstomo's arguments are heard and understood by everyone, including the reader. But Marcela, who had been hidden in the forest until the speech praising the unfortunate Grisóstomo is over, will have the opportunity to tell the story of the death of Grisóstomo from her own point of view. She claims that she is not to blame for it because the rules of Catholic marriage say that she is not obliged to love him against her will. Personal freedom, in a real society, does not have to be necessarily affected by the fictionally established rules of the bucolic genre.

The punishment for Grisóstomo's metagenre transgression is capital. Such as in the case of the shepherd killer in *La Galatea*, some bucolic characters have taken their fictional dream too far. Killing or taking your own life due to living a utopia in the *tercia naturaleza* is exceptional in Cervantes' narrative. A traditional focus on the transgressive character of Marcela still allows readers to appreciate the existential tragedy of Grisóstomo as well, which makes sense as continuity with the rest of related characters trapped in their own transcendental metagenre travelling loops.

b) Picaresque metafictional genre travelers

Transcendental Metagenre Travelers:
A Background of the Reception of
Cervantes' *Don Quixote* in Spain and France

The transcendental picaresque metagenre traveler in the *Quixote* is Ginés de Pasamonte. Ginés' presence in the story is related to his statement about his choice between literary and non-literary existence:

[...] yo soy Ginés de Pasamonte, cuya vida está escrita por estos pulgares.

—Dice verdad —dijo el comisario—, que él mismo ha escrito su historia, que no hay más que desear, y deja empeñado el libro en la cárcel en doscientos reales.

—Y le pienso quitar —dijo Ginés—, si quedara en doscientos ducados.

—¿Tan bueno es? —dijo don Quijote.

—Es tan bueno —respondió Ginés—, que mal año para Lazarillo de Tormes y para todos cuantos de aquel género se han escrito o escribieren. Lo que le sé decir a usted es que trata verdades y que son verdades tan lindas y tan donosas que no pueden haber mentiras que se le igualen.

—¿Y cómo se intitula el libro? —preguntó don Quijote.

—La vida de Ginés de Pasamonte —respondió el mismo.

—¿Y está acabado? —preguntó don Quijote.

—¿Cómo puede estar acabado —respondió él—, si aún no está acabada mi vida? Lo que está escrito es desde mi nacimiento hasta el punto que esta última vez me han echado en galeras.

—Luego ¿otra vez habéis estado en ellas? —dijo don Quijote.

—Para servir a Dios y al rey, otra vez he estado cuatro años, y ya sé a qué sabe el bizcocho y el corbacho—respondió Ginés—; y no me pesa mucho de ir a ellas, porque allí tendré lugar de acabar mi libro, que me quedan muchas cosas que decir y en las galeras de España hay más sosiego de aquel que sería menester, aunque no es menester mucho más para lo que yo tengo de escribir, porque me lo sé de coro. (DQI)

Ginés is aware of the specificities of the picaresque genre, where criminal life has been commodified, and thus is the object of interest of readers who consume this literary genre in order to virtually experience the miseries and crimes associated to marginal life. Ginés presents himself as a *pícaro*-writer,

who does not mind going to galleys. He sees this setback as an opportunity to improve his fame, and then go up in the fictional world by adding new criminal experiences worth being retold and then ‘consumed’ by readers. The dialogue between both metagenre travellers, Don Quixote and Ginés, with a focus on picaresque narrative, becomes one of the most paradigmatic Cervantine moments.

c) Sentimental metafictional genre travelers

The story of Cardenio is part of an intercalated narrative which, through several flashbacks, intermingles in an encounter between the frustrated lover, Don Quixote and Sancho in Sierra Morena. Readers learn about Cardenio’s madness, both through his own words, and through Dorotea’s account of how Luscinda had married Cardenio’s best friend, Fernando, who had ‘stolen’ the young lady from Cardenio instead. This Shakespearean “double crossing” develops around the transformation of the aristocrat of the story, Fernando, from a traitor nobleman to a repented friend and husband. He ends up restoring Dorotea’s and his own honour by accepting her marriage offer at the inn. As in the case of Grisóstomo, Dorotea is aware of the literary genre she has been forced to belong to. In her particular case it is a sentimental novel where an incontinent and capricious aristocrat is at the origin of all subsequent actions. Dorotea, like Marcela, renounces to be part of an imposing hegemonic oppressive masculine world. The freedom of Sierra Morena is seen by these characters as a bucolic utopic literary space where they can hide away from the civilization. It is a passage, a window between their literary past and their long-desired realistic future. They have arrived to a perfect scenario in time and space where it is possible to find another character who has travelled from an undesired existence into the fictional action ruled by a related literary genre universe as well. As it happens with Don Quixote himself, they find their own place when escaping from their vulgar, oppressive and unfair destinies, by choosing not being “civilized.” While Dorotea travels from a simple rural life into the universe of the sentimental narrative plot originated in Fernando’s treason of his best friend, Cardenio’s madness and trauma manifests itself when talking about chivalric novels in presence of Don Quixote. The inn will become an improvised stage where the

Transcendental Metagenre Travelers:
A Background of the Reception of
Cervantes' *Don Quixote* in Spain and France

problems of all characters are resolved in a harmonic ending, with a double wedding: Cardenio and Luscinda, Dorotea and Fernando.

Related to the story of Cardenio, there are other narratives associated to the 'sentimental' fiction, but with both a Bizantine (The Captive) and Italian (The tale of ill-advised curiosity) flavor. Additional transcendental metagenre travelers in these two texts are Anselmo and Zoraida. In the first narrative, Anselmo pretends to become the "author" of his own sentimental novella. In the second case, Zoraida follows a hagiographic search for her own religious identity, which is facilitated by several apparitions of Virgin Mary or Lela Marién in her room. On the one hand, Anselmo's impertinence drives him into a social death when he decides to test his wife's fidelity, by exposing her female desire to the charms of his best friend Lotario. Anselmo travels through the metagenre of the Italian novella to explore, in the practice, what he thinks that, in theory, does need to be probed: his wife's fidelity to her marriage's vow. Zoraida, on the other hand, fictionally and transcendently transforms herself during her search for religious freedom in North Africa. She decides to change the story of her life and is inspired to choose and help Ruy in order to escape from Algiers and to marry him under their shared Catholic faith. Her cult to the image of Virgin Mary will take her to Spain, where she will be able to recreate her spiritual memories and her images in Churches and other places of Catholic cult (see Pérez de León "virtuous") at her will.

d) Chivalric metafictional genre travelers

The most relevant transcendental metagenre traveler in Cervantes' novel, which contributes to give a sense of unity to the whole narrative, is Don Quixote. The first chapters of the novel show his transition from his identity as a common Spanish hidalgo, Alonso Quijano, to his transformation as the main character of a chivalric novel. He then creates a refashioned historical narrative full of fantastic and hyperbolic situations, a universe where he wants to belong to. In a fascinating turn of events, he will become Alonso Quijano right before dying at the end of the second part of the novel. The metafictional transition, from Alonso Quijano to Don Quixote, and vice versa, after a dangerous fictional life of forced "adventures" in the context of a pacific and vulgar La Mancha, confirms

the self-awareness which features the rest of metafictional genre travel characters of this narrative.

Conclusion

Don Quixote: a metagenre narrative for informed readers

Cervantes shares his metaliterary ‘tricks’ and sophisticated literary ideas with his informed audience, by presenting several popular literary genres which are reflected upon by literary characters openly discussing literary issues in the actual metanarrative they belong to. The presence of the four characters who “travel” from fictional to metafictional realities - Grisóstomo, Marcela, Ginés de Pasamonte and Don Quijote – contributes to truly Cervantine moments. Some of them, like Grisóstomo, pay with their lives their challenge to God’s free will of appropriating fictional narrative contexts and pretending to force other characters to sharing his own worldview.

The cases of Marcela and Dorotea, independent women who choose to hide away from the masculinized, oppressing “narratives” where they have nothing to win, complement the worldview present in all literary genres explored by Cervantes, where a character can alternate between fictional and metafictional reality, but not without consequences. A sense of the transcendence of the different choices within the free will possibilities is associated to the ability of transit between fictional and ‘less-fictional’ worldviews.

All four transcendental metagenre travelers show how one’s life can be commodified and altered, so that it makes a great narrative, although it is not always in the main character’s own benefit. In the sentimental fiction of Cardenio, he is shown as a victim of a literary plot, where love and treason are hand in hand. In several other novellas present in the *Quixote*, characters pretend to affect the lives of others by pursuing a fixed idea, Anselmo, or even through a religious transformation, Zoraida. The first part of the *Quixote* contains a metafictional frame associated to the main character himself, who does not only contribute to give a sense of unity to the narrative, but also to present a theoretical frame for reading a special novel where characters escape from their vulgar lives at the Sirens’ song of fictional genres.

Transcendental Metagenre Travelers:
A Background of the Reception of
Cervantes' *Don Quixote* in Spain and France

Cervantes and Spanish literary genres reception in France

The reception of Spanish literature in early modern France has fluctuated, according to different political circumstances. The rivalry between the, by then, two most powerful western European kings, Francis I and Charles V, developed first over the Italian wars (1494-1559) and then affected Holy Roman Empire inheritance (1519). The French defeat at the battle of Pavia in 1525 led to the imprisonment of the French king in Spain, and Charles V forced him to sign the humiliating Treaty of Madrid. Although these circumstances were not in favor of an intellectual exchange between both countries, numerous Spanish works were published in France in the original language, and many translations flourished during the sixty-five years of Italian Wars. Ironically, during his prison time in Madrid, Francis I became acquainted with Spanish literature, preferring chivalric novels, which he enjoyed very much, even though he could not read Spanish, and needed a translator.

It has to be noted, however, that translating was not a scientific discipline at this time. French translators did not hesitate to manipulate the texts, rehabilitating the French position when needed and then denigrating the Spanish authors, even dismissing them. Nevertheless, after the Peace of Vervins (1598) a more favorable period for both countries followed. The double marriage of Louis XIII of France with Anne of Austria and Philip, Prince of Asturias, with Elizabeth of France in 1615, promoted a renewed taste for Spanish culture. This hispanophilic attitude will develop throughout the first half of the seventeenth century, and will definitively favor Cervantes' reception in France.

Building on pioneer studies by Bataillon, Bardou, and Crooks, critics such as Canavaggio, Cioranescu, Duché, Losada-Goya, Pérez-Espejo, and Teixeira Anacleto confirm that Spanish literature was notably influential in France during this period.⁸ Cioranescu confirms that Spanish was part of a new linguistic *quadrivium*, equal to with Italian or perhaps even better culturally placed. Many pedagogic texts (bilingual editions, grammars, dictionaries, and textbooks) were published, allowing a direct access to Spanish originals. Canavaggio's excellent survey of Cervantine's heritage and impact on Western culture pays a close attention to iconography as well. In sum, the presence and influence of literary genres such as the picaresque,

bucolic, sentimental and chivalric ones provided a necessary background to French readers. Familiar with adventures of knights and rogues, together with the love torments of shepherds and noble men, French receptors were able to pick up Cervantes' genius' literary genres games – even though originally *Don Quixote's* reception was originally burlesque, as Anthony Close probed.

By exploring the proposed metafictional use of literary genres in the first part of the *Quixote*, a more informed study of the reception of Cervantes' masterpiece, both Spain and France, can be achieved. Our current diachronic study in progress of each of the literary genres, namely, chivalric, sentimental, bucolic and picaresque:

a) from their original reception in Spain and France, to their evolution and influence as independent genres,

b) understanding the influence that Cervantes' masterpiece had through his particular use of the narrative genre traditions, and finally

c) by exploring the evolution of all four literary genres after Cervantes in Spanish and French cultures will contribute to a better understanding of the reception and impact on readers' habits of transcendental and pan-European influential authors such as Cervantes.

Transcendental Metagenre Travelers:
A Background of the Reception of
Cervantes' *Don Quixote* in Spain and France

¹ I am deeply grateful for the invaluable contribution of Prof. Duché to this essay, which includes both her elaboration of the “Cervantes and literary Genres in France” section, and her follow up discussion on the background and reception of Cervantes in France at the conclusion.

² Transcendence relates here to what Genette calls “transtextuality.” Cervantes’ works show their agency to be transcendent by their ability to create external links with other texts:

The object of poetics is not the singular text but, as maintained in *The Architext* and further developed in *Palimpsests*, “textual transcendence of the text”: “all that sets a text in a relationship, whether obvious or concealed, with other texts” (*Palimpsests* 1). This textual transcendence, also called “transtextuality,” takes the form of five types of relations, extending from the inclusion of one text in another (intertextuality) to the most abstract or implicit relation such as genre (architextuality) and including the critical relation (metatextuality), transformation of one text by another (hypertextuality, studied in *Palimpsests*) and the “intermediate zone” lying between texts and the surrounding social discourse (paratextuality, studied in *Paratexts*). (Pier 12)

The extensive and sophisticated use of paratexts by Cervantes can be read as a confirmation of the transcendental urgency present in his works:

The paratext marks out a preliminary space where readers are brought to the edge of the text, invited to enter it, and given important information about it — its title and genre, its author and the circumstances of its composition, its relationships to other texts and the appropriate methods for digesting or applying it. (Sherman 69)

³ Don Quixote himself is aware of these editions (see II, 3: “one edition was printed in Antwerp” says the bachelor Sanson Carrasco to Don Quixote, asking if there was a book about him).

⁴ Oudin’s translation was very successful, being republished many times.

⁵ *Le curieux impertinent en espagnol et en françois de la traduction de Baudouin*. Paris: Jean Richer, 1608.

⁶ *Homicidio de la Fidelidad y la Defensa del Honor. Le Meurtre de la Fidelité et la Défense de l'Honneur, où est racontée la triste et pitoyable aventure du berger Philidon et les raisons de la belle et chaste Marcelle, accusée de sa mort.* Paris: Jean Richer, 1609.

⁷ These embedded stories, with a byzantine flavor in an entangled plot, consist of main characters getting involved both in a love crime perpetrated by a shepherd, and in the separation of two friends, being the last one not very related to the bucolic genre (see further details in the chapter on *La Galatea* in Pérez de León *Cervantes y el cuarto misterio*).

⁸ These are only a few names, in a very long list of publications dealing with the influence of Cervantes and Spanish literature in early modern France.

Transcendental Metagenre Travelers:
A Background of the Reception of
Cervantes' *Don Quixote* in Spain and France

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