

CERVANTES, SANCHO PANZA, AND THE LITERARY WORLD OF *DON QUIXOTE*

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[Q]uiero que me agradezcas el conocimiento que tendrás del famoso Sancho Panza [. . .] en quien, a mi parecer, te doy cifradas todas las gracias escuderiles que en la caterva de los libros vanos de caballerías están esparcidas.

Don Quixote 1605, Prologue

THE prologuist of *Don Quixote* would like to be thanked for introducing us to Sancho Panza. This essay will argue that the converse is also true: We should extend heartfelt gratitude to the squire for allowing us to get to know the writer of the work. A reader who pays close attention to Sancho's words in the 1615 *Quixote* can learn a great deal about Miguel de Cervantes as well as the novelistic universe that he creates. Specifically, I contend that analyzing Sancho's conversations with Maese Pedro (both immediately before and after the puppet show) as well as the squire's commentary regarding the printer of the first part of *Don Quixote* will help us to understand more fully the novel's complex narration, the critical reception of the 1605 *Quixote*, and Cervantes's relationship with his readers. In addition, we will see that Sancho's multiple musings on the nature of narrative, as well as Cide Hamete Benengeli's explanation of the theft of the squire's donkey, can be read as deliberate attempts by Cervantes to defend his artistic freedom.

The title of this article purposely places the squire between his creator and the work in which he appears. Though Sancho has been studied from a variety of critical perspectives,¹ his function in the novel is most commonly associated with *what* the *Quixote* tells us rather than *how* it is told. Critics writing about the novel's narration have much to say about Cide Hamete Benengeli, the first author, the second author, the *morisco* translator, and even Don Quixote himself; rarely do they include Sancho in discussions of the novel's

construction.² This study will consider Sancho's importance both intratextually – as a character whose words lay bare the novel's narrative strategies – and extratextually – by reading the squire as a spokesperson for the author, telling us from within the novel what Cervantes himself would have us know about his literary craft. We will see that Sancho plays a fundamental role in answering a variety of questions including: How does Cervantes structure the narration of his novel?; How reliable is the information that the text offers?; and, What is Cervantes's response in the second part of the *Quixote* to those who have criticized the first part? Regarding Cervantes's attitude toward his work and its readers, Francisco Márquez Villanueva writes: "Cervantes no es [. . .] oscuro ni elusivo. No se complace en confundir ni desconcertar, sino que, por el contrario, ansía ser entendido y guarda sus tesoros para el lector culto y avisado" (148). I would maintain that "el lector culto y avisado" who keeps a focus on Sancho throughout the 1615 *Quixote* can learn a great deal about both Cervantes and the multifaceted narrative world that he fashions.

THE SQUIRE AND MAESE PEDRO: A QUESTION OF NARRATION

Maese Pedro, also known as Ginés de Pasamonte, Ginesillo de Parapilla (to the sergeant guarding him), Ginesillo de Paropillo (to an angry Don Quixote), and mase Pedro (to the innkeeper), changes roles as often as he changes names in the novel. The protean character first comes to the reader's attention when he is described by one of the guards accompanying the galley slaves as the most dangerous of all the prisoners. The text of the first part of the *Quixote* makes no mention of any words exchanged between Sancho and Ginés de Pasamonte, but the squire plays an important role in helping his master to liberate the galley slave and his fellow prisoners.³ Once freed from his chains, Pasamonte not only refuses to appear before Dulcinea in an act of gratitude for his liberation, as demanded by Don Quixote, but he is also responsible (as we learn much later) for the theft of Sancho's donkey.⁴ After making his escape, the one-time galley slave is not heard from again until he reappears well into the second part of the novel with a prophesying monkey, a puppet show, and the new identity of Maese Pedro.

In an insightful article entitled "El narrador en *Don Quijote*: El retablo de maese Pedro," George Haley examines both the interaction among the characters and the various narrative levels on display during the puppet show and comes to the conclusion that "[e]l retablo de Maese Pedro es, pues, una analogía de la novela vista en su totalidad" (285). In a similar manner, Sancho's discussions with Maese Pedro both before and after the puppet show mirror the narration of the novel as a whole. By echoing the narrative techniques on display in *Don Quixote*, the squire's interaction with the galley slave-turned-puppeteer serves as a microcosm of the work's intricate recount-

ing of the adventures of knight and squire. Whereas in the 1605 *Quixote* Sancho and Ginés de Pasamonte are most closely linked through the presence (and subsequent absence) of Sancho's donkey, in the novel's 1615 continuation a different, yet equally mysterious, animal brings together the two characters: Maese Pedro's monkey.

Sancho has been unable to believe his master's version of what occurred at the Cave of Montesinos and is hoping that the monkey with prophesying powers will be able to help clarify the situation.⁵ Desirous of learning the truth of his master's adventure, Sancho says to Don Quixote:

[Q]uerría [. . .] que vuestra merced dijese a maese Pedro preguntase a su mono si es verdad lo que a vuestra merced le pasó en la cueva de Montesinos, que yo para mí tengo, con perdón de vuestra merced, que todo fue embeleco y mentira, o por lo menos cosas soñadas. (II, 25; 844)

In order to fully understand the convoluted nature of Sancho's query, let us consider exactly how the squire is posing this indirect question and what specifically he is asking Don Quixote to do for him. Sancho, at the same time that he endeavors to learn the truth about what his master experienced, drafts for the reader a blueprint of the complex and layered structure of *Don Quixote*. In an imbedding of narrative levels reminiscent of the novel itself, Sancho is asking Don Quixote to ask Maese Pedro to ask his monkey if what Don Quixote claims happened in the Cave of Montesinos really occurred or not. The monkey will then tell Maese Pedro who will in turn tell Don Quixote and Sancho what the monkey has said.

As in the novel itself, there is no direct communication between one person (or monkey) and another, but rather a multi-layered chain of communication flowing from the information's source to its ultimate recipient. Sancho's words, which must pass through Don Quixote and Maese Pedro before reaching the monkey, resemble the words of Cide Hamete Benengeli, whose own expression is filtered through both the *morisco* translator and the second author before being accessed by the reader. Such an elaborate communicative process prompts one to wonder about the reliability of the message being transmitted. In the case of *Don Quixote* itself, Carroll Johnson aptly notes: "while repeatedly affirming that this text is true, a history, Cervantes places so many obstacles between the reader and the truth, in the form of this chain of problematic intermediaries, that it becomes impossible for us to know whether what we are reading is true or not" (81). In a similar manner, the squire's question to Maese Pedro's monkey begins an equally problematic exchange of information that defies easy deciphering.

Sancho's multi-staged manner of questioning the monkey is just the beginning of the ways in which this episode mirrors the design of the novel as a

whole. Once the squire has expressed his desire to learn what really happened, the text makes explicit the step-by-step process involved in both questioning the monkey and relating its response. In order best to analyze the entire chain of communication, let us consider the passage at length:

Don Quijote le comunicó [a maese Pedro] su pensamiento y le rogó preguntase luego a su mono le dijese si ciertas cosas que había pasado en la cueva de Montesinos habían sido soñadas o verdaderas, porque a él le parecía que tenían de todo. A lo que maese Pedro, sin responder palabra, volvió a traer el mono, y, puesto delante de don Quijote y Sancho dijo:

–Mirad, señor mono, que este caballero quiere saber si ciertas cosas que le pasaron en una cueva llamada de Montesinos, si fueron falsas, o verdaderas.

Y haciéndole la acostumbrada señal, el mono se le subió en el hombro izquierdo, y hablándole al parecer en el oído, dijo luego maese Pedro:

–El mono dice que parte de las cosas que vuesa merced vio o pasó en la dicha cueva son falsas, y parte verisimiles. (II, 25; 844-45)

The means of communication presented here vary as much as the participants in the dialogue, and exemplify the heterogeneous nature of the work's narration. While Sancho's query to Don Quixote is quoted directly in the text ("querría [. . .] que vuestra merced dijese . . ."), the knight's question to Maese Pedro is presented, instead, as part of the narration. Maese Pedro does not immediately respond to Don Quixote or Sancho but uses both words and a sign ("la acostumbrada señal") to communicate with his animal; the monkey then speaks, or at least *seems* ("al parecer") to speak. Ostensibly revealing his monkey's divination – and serving as a kind of translator from animal to human language – Maese Pedro continues this long and tortuous chain of communication by stating simply that the knight's version of the events was partly true and partly false.⁶

This communicative act has not run its full course until Sancho responds to what he has learned. The squire had predicted that his master's version of events was either entirely mistaken or simply a dream, and the monkey affirms that in fact some of the events were true; nevertheless, Sancho responds gleefully that he has been right all along in doubting his master.⁷ Thus, Cervantes's text not only problematizes the communicative act itself, showing it to be a drawn-out process unlikely to transmit reliable information, but it even questions the possibility of proper interpretation. As a result, the dialogue between Sancho and the monkey models, in miniature, many of the techniques used by Cervantes in the construction of his novel.⁸

The similarities between the monkey and Cide Hamete Benengeli manifest yet another parallel with the narration of *Don Quixote*. Though both are

depended upon as sources of information, the two narrators in question have little to recommend their reliability. On learning the identity of Don Quixote's chronicler in the market street in Toledo, the second author cautions: "Si a esta [la verdadera relación de la historia] se le puede poner alguna objeción cerca de su verdad, no podrá ser otra sino haber sido su autor arábigo, siendo muy propio de los de aquella nación ser mentirosos" (I, 9; 110).⁹ Like the work's narrator, the monkey hails from the territory of the Moors, for Maese Pedro bought the animal "de unos cristianos ya libres que venían de Berbería" (II, 27; 856). Though no one warns us about the possible unreliability of Maese Pedro's companion, the mere fact that the prophesy is revealed by a monkey (not to mention a Moorish one) obviously calls into question its truthfulness. Although we might easily doubt the squire's common sense when we see him trusting the simian divination, we readers are perhaps no less gullible when we put faith in the story that we are reading even after being informed of the dubious character of the work's Moorish narrator. In this episode, as throughout the novel, Cervantes challenges the reader to make sense out of a confusing situation replete with indeterminate significance.¹⁰

Not to be ignored, of course, is the ridiculous notion of communication with the monkey, a clever ruse employed by Maese Pedro who has trained the animal "que en haciéndole cierta señal se le subiese en el hombro y le murmurase, o lo pareciese, al oído" (II, 27; 856). The animal seems to communicate but really does not; the actual source of the information is Maese Pedro. Similarly, Cide Hamete Benengeli seems to be writing the text that we read when, in fact, Cervantes is doing the writing. One might even imagine the Moorish narrator sitting on the shoulder of Cervantes, much as the monkey sits on Ginés de Pasamonte's shoulder. Just as the monkey lacks the faculty of speech, Cide Hamete is mute as well (because he does not exist), yet both Moorish narrators are considered valuable informants endowed with remarkable insight into Don Quixote's adventures. Of course, the real puppeteer, hidden from our view, is the writer who has fashioned this ornate tapestry of narrative entanglement. Throughout this episode Cervantes seems to be reminding us to keep in mind Cide Hamete Benengeli's words in the chapter immediately preceding the one that we are discussing. When recounting the unbelievable aspects of Don Quixote's descent into the Cave of Montesinos, the Moorish narrator had advised: "Tú, letor, pues eres prudente, juzga lo que te pareciere, que yo no debo ni puedo más" (II, 24; 829).

Gustave Doré's depiction of Maese Pedro and his monkey (Figure 1), showing the animal off to one side with Sancho on the other and a number of people in between the two, fittingly represents the knotty narrative world of *Don Quixote*.¹¹ In the drawing as in the novel, a significant distance separates the sender from the receiver of the message. In *Don Quixote* the step-by-step communicative channel is presented as sequential in time, one character's question leading to a repetition of the inquiry by someone else. Doré shows us

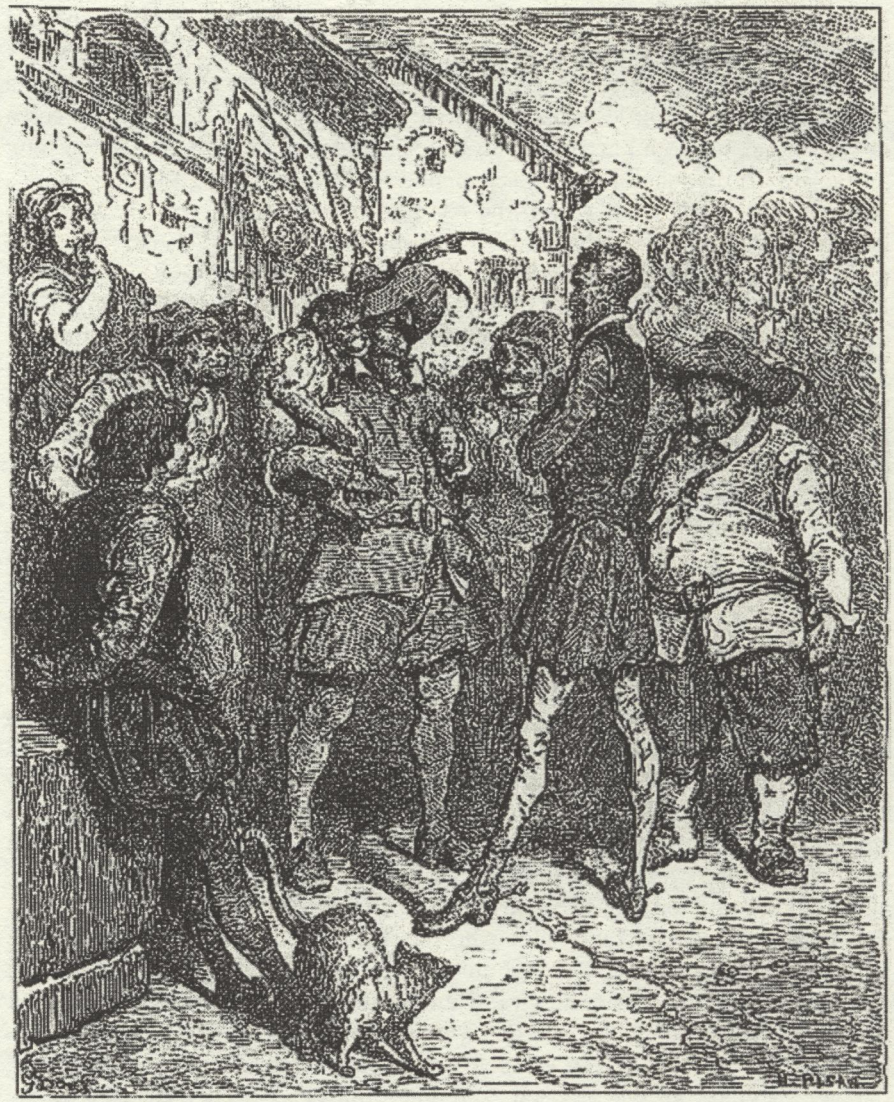


Figure 1. Maese Pedro and his prophesying monkey. (Gustave Doré)

the same deliberate process spatially, with Sancho's query destined to travel from right to left in the illustration (from squire to monkey) before the response wends its way back to the right again as the squire's question is finally answered. In the novel itself, Cide Hamete's text is read by the *morisco*

translator whose text in turn is read by the second author; likewise, each participant involved in passing on Sancho's question can hear what the previous link in the communicative chain has said. Looking beyond the center to the edges of Doré's rendition of the episode, we see that the artist has indeed followed Cervantes's lead, crowding the drawing with other characters, ones not directly involved in the interchanges but eagerly looking on and listening to the proceedings.¹²

Extending this comparison of novel and illustration, I would argue that the apprehensive feline whose curiosity has been aroused in Doré's drawing best exemplifies the reader of *Don Quixote*. Like the cat, we are watching and listening to Sancho, Don Quixote, Maese Pedro, and the monkey, but from a distinct vantage point; just as the cat is foregrounded, so too do we exist on a different plane from the characters of the novel. And like the leery cat, whose hair is raised and back is bowed in a sign of mistrust, we too are perplexed by what we are witnessing and hearing, unsure of what to make of it. Doré's feline stands (or crouches) as a fitting metaphor for the skeptical reader created by the labyrinthine narrative playfulness of *Don Quixote*.

Turning our attention back to the novel, immediately following the scene with the prophesying monkey is the ill-fated puppet show, a performance that concludes with yet another conversation between the squire and Maese Pedro. This time their dialogue embodies not narrative complexity, but rather the essential ambiguity that pervades Cervantes's novel. During the puppet show Sancho observes the action silently, following the story of Gaiferos and Melisendra but not joining in the animated conversation around him. When Don Quixote attacks and destroys not just the theatrical illusion but also the puppets themselves, causing Maese Pedro to lament the loss of his traveling show, the squire implores:

No llores, maese Pedro, ni te lamentes, que me quiebras el corazón, porque te hago saber que es mi señor don Quijote tan católico y escrupuloso cristiano, que si él cae en la cuenta de que te ha hecho algún agravio, te lo sabrá y te lo querrá pagar y satisfacer con muchas ventajas. (II, 26; 852)

The ambiguity of Sancho's statement resides in the word "si." Much like the prologuist's friend in the 1605 *Quixote* – who proposed that the work was simply "una invectiva contra los libros de caballerías," but began this assertion by qualifying, "si bien caigo en la cuenta" (17) – the squire also leaves room for doubt. Perhaps Sancho is saying: "If my master has done something wrong, *and he has*, then he will repay you." On the other hand, he could be saying: "If my master has done something wrong, *and that is for him to decide*, then he will repay you." Sancho's reading of the situation remains unclear, but when Don Quixote accepts responsibility for his actions, blaming enchanters for the

whole misunderstanding,¹³ Sancho takes on the task of helping the puppeteer value his losses.

What is the squire's opinion about what happened? Was his master simply behaving as a madman in a foolish misinterpretation of events? Or does Sancho believe Don Quixote's claim that evil enchanters were responsible? As with the words of the prologuist's friend, and, in fact, as occurs throughout the novel, there are no clear answers that will help the reader decide how best to interpret Sancho's statement. With the prophesying monkey the squire's words model the novel's tangled narrative layering; after the puppet show his observation reflects the work's inherent and pervasive ambiguity. In both cases Cervantes uses the squire, much as he does the work's multiple narrators and translator, to address one of the fundamental concerns of the novel: the problematic nature of the communicative act.

THE SQUIRE AND THE PRINTER: A QUESTION OF INTENTION

Having considered Sancho's importance to the narration of the novel, it is now time to examine what the squire can tell us about the relationship between Cervantes and his readers. I maintain that Sancho is used in the second part of his novel to defend the 1605 *Quixote*. Through the squire Cervantes directly speaks to the readers of the second part of his novel, taking the opportunity to address the issue of possible errors in the first part and justifying his creative freedom as an author. Moreover, I argue that Cervantes *purposely* includes yet another error when referring to the theft of Sancho's donkey, this time in the 1615 *Quixote*, and defends his right to do so by means of the voice of Cide Hamete Benengeli.

In the first edition of the first part of *Don Quixote*, published by Juan de la Cuesta in January of 1605, Sancho experiences a curious sequence of events that includes the loss of his donkey, which he claims has been stolen, followed by the animal's gradual reintroduction into the story with no explanation of either its previous disappearance or its subsequent reappearance.¹⁴ Contemporary readers noticed the confusing ontological status of the animal, and word of the narrative inconsistencies certainly made its way back to the author. Indeed, such was the concern over the problematic narration that the incongruous text was promptly emended.¹⁵ There remains considerable critical disagreement over who is responsible for authoring the two sections added to the new edition of the work. Some critics contend that they are most certainly the work of a different author, while others attribute them to Cervantes himself.¹⁶ Whether the new passages were written by Cervantes or not, the text of the 1615 *Quixote* clearly shows that the author was aware of the controversy.

Doubts about the theft of Sancho's donkey first become a topic of conversation in Chapter 3 of the second part of the novel when Sansón Carrasco

mentions to knight and squire what readers of the 1605 *Quixote* must have commented to Cervantes himself:

[A]lgunos han puesto falta y dolo en la memoria del autor, pues se le olvida de contar quién fue el ladrón que hurtó el rucio a Sancho, que allí no se declara, y solo se infiere de lo escrito que se le hurtaron, y de allí a poco le vemos a caballo sobre el mismo jumento, sin haber parecido. (II, 3; 655)

To Carrasco's question of how *Don Quixote's* author has Sancho riding his usual donkey after it has been stolen, with no explanation of the animal's reappearance, the squire slyly answers: "no sé qué responder, sino que el historiador se engañó, o ya sería descuido del impresor" (I, 4; 657).¹⁷

This discussion between Sansón Carrasco and Sancho deftly touches on practically all of the elements involved in reading and writing, from the text ("lo escrito") and its production (by the "impresor"); to the writer ("el autor" and "el historiador") and the act of writing ("contar" and "se declara"); to the reader (the "algunos" mentioned by Carrasco), the act of reading ("se infiere"), and even the reader's response ("han puesto falta y dolo en la memoria del autor").¹⁸ Cervantes's readers have questioned his ability as an author, and he decides to let Sancho respond to them, as a sort of "character response" to the initial "reader response." The very truthfulness of his narrative is at stake here, for Cervantes has been accused of violating verisimilitude in his writing.

Those readers of the work who take seriously the idea of laying the blame on the printer, who see Sancho's comment as a sincere attempt by Cervantes to deflect the criticism aimed at him by pointing an accusative finger elsewhere, miss the point entirely.¹⁹ Sancho's words are a joke by Cervantes, a winking invocation of "It's not my fault" designed to amuse the reading public (and assert his freedom to joke about possible mistakes). Perhaps Cervantes found inspiration in Valdés, a character in Juan de Valdés's *Diálogo de la lengua*, who, when giving his opinion of the author of *Amadís de Gaula*, says: "Quanto a la ortografía, no digo nada, porque la culpa se puede atribuir a los impresores y no al autor del libro" (47). In fact, the squire's comment to Sansón Carrasco is just the first of what becomes a kind of running joke throughout the 1615 *Quixote* involving printer errors and lost donkeys.²⁰

Though not with the patently risible remark regarding a possible "descuido del impresor," Cervantes does indeed make use of the squire to address possible reader complaints regarding the first part of his novel. The author's first step toward the serious task of vindicating himself from charges of shoddy writing begins in the very same conversation with Sansón Carrasco. The bachelor is curious to know not only about the stolen donkey, but also about the money that the squire found in the Sierra Morena. To Carrasco's question of what

Sancho did with the “cien escudos,” the squire replies: “Yo los gasté en pro de mi persona y de la de mi mujer y de mis hijos, y ellos han sido causa de que mi mujer lleve en paciencia los caminos y carreras que he andado sirviendo a mi señor don Quijote” (II, 4; 657). The 1605 *Quixote* never revealed what Sancho did with the money, hence Carrasco’s query in the second part of the novel. I read both the question and the squire’s response as a way for Cervantes to emphasize that there will always be untold aspects of stories; it is impossible to inform the reader of all the consequences of events that occur when telling a tale. Given the impertinence of the question about what the squire did with the “cien escudos,” Cervantes has Sancho reply with the most obvious answer possible: “I spent them.”

Another moment when the squire defends Cervantes occurs shortly after the puppet show. Having left the inn, knight and squire come across the two opposing squadrons involved in the braying incident. Among the many banners waving in the wind, one in particular catches the attention of Don Quixote. Huge letters declare: “No rebuznaron en balde / El uno y el otro alcalde.” The knight not only reads aloud what is written on the banner to his squire, “[d]ijole también que el que les había dado noticia de aquel caso se había errado en decir que dos regidores habían sido los que rebuznaron, pero que, según los versos del estandarte, no habían sido sino alcaldes” (II, 27; 857).

Like the readers of the 1605 *Quixote* when faced with the theft of Sancho’s donkey, the knight detects what he takes to be an inconsistency in a written text. Words seem not to match deeds, for what apparently were braying magistrates (according to the text of the banner), were explained to Don Quixote as braying aldermen. Given a disconnect between spoken and written words, the knight, unsurprisingly, puts faith in what he reads and considers untrue what he has been told. When Don Quixote explains to his squire his doubts about what he has been told, Sancho tellingly replies:

Señor, en eso no hay que reparar, que bien puede ser que los regidores que entonces rebuznaron viniesen con el tiempo a ser alcaldes de su pueblo, y, así, se pueden llamar con entrambos títulos; cuanto más que no hace al caso a la verdad de la historia ser los rebuznadores alcaldes o regidores, como ellos una por una hayan rebuznado, porque tan a pique está de rebuznar un alcalde como un regidor. (II, 27; 858)

In the first place, according to Sancho, there may be a way to reconcile the seemingly contradictory evidence; that someone “se había errado,” as maintained by Don Quixote, may not be the case at all. Moreover, the squire advises that, since “no hace al caso a la verdad de la historia,” it is not worth splitting hairs in an attempt to lay blame somewhere.

In this fleeting moment before the battle of the two villages, I see Sancho functioning as an apologist for Cervantes, telling the reader (both Don Quixote as the reader of the banner within the novel and the actual reader of the novel outside of it) not to be so punctilious regarding the written word. If the truth of the story is preserved, then minor discrepancies regarding its telling are of no consequence.

There is yet one more moment in the 1615 *Quixote* in which Cervantes takes the opportunity to defend himself. The author’s advocate in this instance is Cide Hamete Benengeli who, like Sancho before him, offers an explanation of the disappearance of the squire’s donkey. When the episode with the prophesying monkey is over and the puppet show has ended, the reader of the novel remains unaware of the true identity of Maese Pedro. After Sancho has paid the puppeteer and he and his master have returned to the Spanish byways to continue their chivalric adventures, the Moorish narrator decides that he will now uncover the mystery of Maese Pedro’s true nature. Making reference to the theft of Sancho’s donkey (surely one of the incidents in the first part of the novel most discussed by the characters and narrator in its continuation), Cide Hamete writes:

bien se acordará el que hubiere leído la primera parte desta historia de aquel Ginés de Pasamonte [. . .], a quien don Quijote llamaba ‘Ginesillo de Parapilla’, fue el que hurtó a Sancho Panza el rucio, que, por no haberse puesto el cómo ni el cuándo en la primera parte, por culpa de los impresores, ha dado en qué entender a muchos, que atribuían a poca memoria del autor la falta de emprenta. (II, 27; 855, emphasis mine)

Deftly instrumentalizing his narrator, Cervantes here cleverly responds to those who have criticized his handling of the theft of Sancho’s donkey in the first part of his work. By beginning with “bien se acordará el que hubiere leído la primera parte desta historia,” Cide Hamete is directly alluding to those who carefully examined the 1605 *Quixote*. He is telling querulous readers that the errors in the first part of the novel were the “culpa de los impresores.”

But the blaming of the printers, much as in the case of Sancho’s reference to their culpability, is simply a joke. Cervantes’s real response, the way in which he affirms his freedom to write in any way he pleases, resides in his description of the controversial theft. He points out that the thief of Sancho’s donkey was Ginés de Pasamonte, the prisoner that the careful reader will remember is the one “a quien don Quijote llamaba ‘Ginesillo de Parapilla.’” Nonetheless – and Cervantes knows exactly what he is writing here – the knight never named the galley slave “Ginesillo de Parapilla.” One of the guards called him that. Don Quixote himself called the prisoner a different variation of the name: “Ginesillo de Paropillo.”

The difference is a single letter that is changed twice in the name – “a” instead of “o” – but (as Cervantes might have predicted) it has not gone unremarked by readers of the novel. In his edition of *Don Quixote* published in 1836, Diego Clemencín comments on the name that Cide Hamete claims was used by the knight: “No fue Don Quijote quien en la primera parte dió este nombre á Ginés de Pasamonte, sino el comisario que le llevaba preso” (Vol. 5, 67).²¹ Clemencín is indeed correct; Cide Hamete has used the wrong name. But the larger issue, the point that I would like to call into question, is whether the incorrect letter should be rightly considered an error or not. I contend that Cervantes misnames the prisoner in his 1615 work *on purpose*. He knows that his work has many attentive readers; in fact, they are the very ones who complained about the confusing theft of Sancho’s donkey in the first place. Knowing that they will be reading carefully, and making mention of the very incident with which they have found fault, Cervantes deliberately has his narrator write the incorrect “Parapilla” instead of “Paropillo” as the name used by Don Quixote. With just one vowel, one intentional mistake, Cervantes yet again declares his freedom to create his work in any way he pleases.

While Sancho’s discussions with Maese Pedro reflect the narrative structure and ambiguity of the novel as a whole, Cervantes’s treatment of the theft of the squire’s donkey allows the author to make his claim to artistic freedom. In both cases, it is through Sancho Panza that Cervantes reveals aspects of both his novel and himself. The attentive reader of the second part of the novel comes to the conclusion that Sancho does play a fundamental role in helping us understand the *how* of *Don Quixote*. Indeed, it seems as if the squire could justifiably follow the prologist’s example by addressing himself to a reader of *Don Quixote* and saying: “quiero que me agradezcas el conocimiento que tendrás del famoso Miguel de Cervantes.”

NOTES

¹ In an effort to place the squire in an appropriate literary context, critics have searched for his precursors (Márquez Villanueva, Hendrix), studied his folkloric roots (Molho), and compared him to one likely model: Gandalín, Amadís de Gaula’s squire (Urbina). Others have focused on one of Sancho’s most notable traits – his use of proverbs (Burke, Mancing), or dealt with the squire in one specific moment – his trip to El Toboso (Barrick) or his governorship of the Ínsula Barataria (Allen, Socorro). Of course, a multitude of studies consider Sancho primarily in terms of his relationship with Don Quixote.

² James Parr’s valuable study of the novel’s complex narration, *‘Don Quixote’: An Anatomy of Subversive Discourse*, offers a detailed analysis of the many levels through which the knight’s story must pass before reaching the reader. However,

like others examining the writing strategies employed by Cervantes, Parr does not stress a connection between the figure of Sancho and the narration of the novel.

³ "Ayudó Sancho por su parte a la soltura de Ginés de Pasamonte, que fue el primero que saltó en la campaña libre y desembarazado" (I, 22; 245). All page numbers in citations from *Don Quixote* refer to the Francisco Rico edition.

⁴ Almost all of the scholarship linking Sancho to Ginés de Pasamonte/Maese Pedro focuses not on dialogue between the two, but rather on the confusing theft of the squire's donkey that occurs in the first part of the novel. Daniel Eisenberg and Tom Lathrop are among the critics who have studied the curious case of Sancho's disappearing donkey; I will take up this same issue in the second half of this study.

⁵ After Don Quixote recounts what he experienced in the cave, Sancho responds: "¿[E]s posible que tal hay en el mundo y que tengan en él tanta fuerza los encantadores y encantamientos, que hayan trocado el buen juicio de mi señor en una tan disparatada locura? ¡Oh señor, señor, por quien Dios es, que vuestra merced mire por sí y vuelva por su honra, y no dé crédito a esas vaciedades que le tienen menguado y descabalado el sentido!" (II, 23; 828).

⁶ A *morisco* is needed to translate the knight's adventures for the reader of the novel; here, Maese Pedro plays the role of translator who explains Don Quixote's experiences to Sancho.

⁷ "¿No lo decía yo –dijo Sancho– que no se me podía asentar que todo lo que vuesa merced, señor mío, ha dicho de los acontecimientos de la cueva era verdad, ni aun la mitad?" (II, 25; 845).

⁸ The narrative complexity of this episode proves a fitting example of Félix Martínez-Bonati's assertion that in *Don Quixote* the "literary forms become part of the subject matter of the work. The essence of literature as phenomenon is objectified" (65).

⁹ By questioning Cide Hamete Benengeli's veracity, Cervantes not only pokes fun at a cultural stereotype of the time, but also suggests that his novel's narration may be as unstable as its protagonist.

¹⁰ At this point in the text the reader remains unaware of Maese Pedro's true identity and his method of training the monkey. Like Sancho, then, we are left to do our best to interpret what is really going on here.

¹¹ The drawing is one of the 377 illustrations appearing in Gustave Doré's illustrated edition of *Don Quixote* published in France in 1863.

¹² The presence of characters following the action but not directly involved in it is a common feature of *Don Quixote*; Cervantes makes use of secondary characters as spectators most especially at the inn and in the castle of the Duke and Duchess. In the novel the onlookers in this episode with the monkey will soon be spectators of a more formalized presentation: Maese Pedro's puppet show.

¹³ Don Quixote's defense of his actions is quite clear: "[E]stos encantadores que me persiguen no hacen sino ponerme las figuras como ellas son delante de los ojos, y luego me las mudan y truecan en las que ellos quieren. Real y verdaderamente os digo, señores que me oís, que a mí me pareció todo lo que aquí ha pasado que pasaba al pie de la letra: que Melisendra era Melisendra, don Gaiferos don Gaiferos, Marsilio Marsilio, y Carlomagno Carlomagno" (II, 26; 852).

¹⁴ "The biggest 'error' in the whole of Part I is without doubt the mysterious robbery and return of Sancho's donkey. The readers of the first 1605 edition of the work suddenly found that Sancho's donkey was not only missing, but *stolen*, as he

blurts out in Chapter 25 [. . .] It would seem that somewhere in Chapter 25, as many have pointed out, the donkey was stolen. Later in Chapter 29, Sancho is mentioned as being on foot: 'Luego, subió don Quijote sobre Rocinante... quedándose Sancho a pie, donde de nuevo se le renovó la pérdida del rucio.' Then, after twelve chapters with no mention either of the lost or recovered donkey, little by little, the donkey reappears" (Lathrop xx, emphasis in original).

¹⁵ "In the second Cuesta edition of 1605, the one that included Portugal in its copyright area, we now read about the loss of the donkey in Chapter 23, and its recovery in Chapter 30" (Lathrop xxi).

¹⁶ Referring to the style of the first and longer of the passages, Eisenberg affirms: "[E]s punto menos que imposible que el trozo haya sido escrito por alguien que no fuera él [Cervantes]" (97). Tom Lathrop studies that very same passage and finds that the writer employs "hallar menos" where Cervantes always used "echar menos." He concludes that "the person who wrote that could not have been Cervantes" (xxi). Lathrop, in fact, not only disputes Cervantes's authorship of the emendations, but also makes a convincing case that the loss of Sancho's donkey, as well as the other seeming errors in the first part (including, for example, a number of inappropriate chapter titles) are deliberately included by Cervantes as yet further elements of his parody of chivalric literature (xvi-xxii).

¹⁷ As Francisco Rico (among others) has observed, in *Amar sin saber a quién* Lope de Vega mocks this excuse proffered by Cervantes. Limón, the *comedia's gracioso* who has lost his donkey, says: "Decidnos della, que hay hombre, / que hasta de una mula parda / saber el suceso aguarda, / la color, el talle y nombre, / o si no dirán que fue / olvido del escritor" (657).

¹⁸ "Los mismos descuidos de Cervantes, como el del famoso robo del rucio, son elementos de la novela, pues se discute sobre ellos, se justifican y se achacan al impresor, lo que es, novelísticamente, lo más desconcertante de todo: ¡en el *Quijote* se habla hasta del mismo impresor que lo imprimió!" (Riquer LXV).

¹⁹ Regarding "la sugerencia de que los defectos de la primera edición se explican por algún error del impresor," Daniel Eisenberg writes: "Creo que esta explicación es totalmente inaceptable. No dudo ni por un instante de que un impresor sea capaz de caer en tamaño error. Pero los errores de los impresores son de la clase que puede explicarse fácilmente como descuido —una línea que se salta, a veces una página que se omite. Ningún impresor eliminaría accidentalmente dos pasajes diferentes en dos capítulos tan separados uno del otro, y que tratan el mismo tema" (95).

²⁰ When the Duchess asks if Sancho's master is the Don Quixote whose story has been published, the squire replies: "El mismo es, señora [. . .] y aquel escudero suyo que anda o debe de andar en la tal historia, a quien llaman Sancho Panza, soy yo, si es que no me trocaron en la cuna, quiero decir, que me trocaron en la estampa" (II, 30; 876). In a later scene that I read in relation to the theft of his donkey, the squire is leaving the castle of the Duke and Duchess when Altisidora accuses him of having stolen her garters. When Altisidora finally admits that she is wearing the garters, stating "he caído en el descuido del que yendo sobre el asno le buscaba," the squire exclaims "¡Bonico soy yo para encubrir hurtos!" (II, 57; 1093).

²¹ In terms of the novel's reception, Clemencín's edition of *Don Quixote* (published from 1833-1839) is historically significant given that it was the most extensively commented critical edition of the work published to date. The critic's close reading of the novel is insightful, yet at times might be considered *too close*. His edition,

for instance, claims to uncover hundreds of what Clemencín considered errors in Cervantes's original text. Later critics are in almost universal agreement that the vast majority of the supposed "errors" found by Clemencín are in fact purposely included by Cervantes.

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