

PERCEPTIONS OF LITERARY OPINION
IN *DON QUIJOTE DE LA MANCHA*

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ABSTRACT

The thesis is based on the premise that an author who provides expressions of literary opinion by the characters in his fictional work will also include his own views among the others--explicitly, vicariously, or by demonstration. In *Don Quixote*, the purported attack on books of chivalry and the inclusion of poems and stories in variant styles provide justification for extensive commentaries on literary themes.

To distinguish Cervantes' views among the diverse literary opinions expressed, such commentaries are evaluated on the basis of the information provided by the author as to the background and interests of the speakers--the characters, chronicler or narrator. Specific qualities commended, condemned, or demonstrated are identified. Stories and serious poems inserted in the novel, and literary comment in Cervantes' *Galatea* and *Viaje del Parnaso*, are examined for corroboration or contradiction of the findings. Relevant opinions of several generations of twentieth-century critics are examined.

Conclusions summarize--for Fiction, Poetry and Drama--the features which satisfy the stated requirement to "delight and instruct" and those to be avoided. A degree of ambivalence, between certain literary precepts which Cervantes promotes in *Don Quixote* and those demonstrated in his work, is identified. Special requirements for History are noted. Whether or not, under the respectable guise of an attack on books of chivalry, Cervantes sought to elevate the public taste in literature--an endeavour as quixotic as any undertaken by his protagonist--he claimed due recognition from the literary world for his perceptions of literary values and his competence as a writer.

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INTRODUCTION

En la elaboración de esta novela...hay un sistemático, consciente y calculado propósito de combinar la invención creadora con la meditación crítica.¹

The enormous body of commentary written on *Don Quixote* includes relatively little as to what Cervantes discloses in the text regarding his own tastes and standards in literature. Many critics refer to the books of chivalry and to those passages in the novel in which they are discussed.

In these cases, the ambiguities in Cervantes' attitude to the heroic romances popular in the sixteenth century have been the main objects of wide-ranging critical speculation. The relative place that Cervantes occupied in the literary world of his day, the probable content of his library, and his possible creation of a theory of the novel, have also been matters of investigation and comment. All these critical views touch only fleetingly on the identification of Cervantes' personal likes and dislikes. This seems surprising, in view of the fact that the scope of literary opinion expressed, and the variety of genres included in the text, suggest that the author was prepared to convey his ideas on an extraordinarily wide field of interaction between writers and readers. Cervantes' opinions on Spanish literature of his time would constitute a significant commentary on the state of the arts in his country and, less directly, on the environment affecting creative work.

¹ Gilman, "Los inquisidores literarios de Cervantes" in *Actas del Tercer Congreso Internacional de Hispanistas* (1970), pp.3-4.

It is not difficult to find examples of authors, from antiquity to the present, who declare their own views on literary values in their fictional works (Plato, *Dialogues*; Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales*; Borges, *Ficciones*). It seems probable that Cervantes, by the inclusion of variant styles of literary composition and of discourse expressing literary judgements, has shown that he was not immune to such temptation. In this thesis, I propose to show that Cervantes' views may be distinguished among, or derived from, the opinions expressed by his characters and those stated by his several voices in *Don Quixote*. The findings will be checked against examples of his writings and the ideas of twentieth-century critics.

In *Don Quixote*, diverse characters, people of different backgrounds and social levels, declare appreciation or distaste for literary works and practices familiar to sixteenth-century Spain. Explicit and reasoned opinions constitute value judgements on the part of the speaker; other opinions may represent hearsay, personal prejudice or the conventional wisdom of certain sectors of society.

The novel also contains numerous poems and stories in a variety of genres, some of which are only marginally related to the main narrative. While it may be argued that the interpolation of extraneous material represents economical utilization of work on hand, the practice does serve to demonstrate the author's virtuosity and to provide examples against which to compare his critical statements. There are, moreover, many examples--in classical and Renaissance literature--of the use of such digressions.

The approach taken in this thesis to the identification of the literary qualities which Cervantes promotes in *Don Quixote*, and the

contemporary practices which he decries, is based on the following postulates:

- A. Authors who provide diverse opinions on literary topics in their works of fiction may be expected to include their own views, whether vicariously or otherwise.
- B. The relative validity of the statements made by the various characters in a work, or the extent to which they represent or differ from the views of the author, may be inferred from information provided in the text as to the background, interests, character and immediate motivation of the speaker.
- C. Literary material of different genres introduced into a text, other than in a burlesque vein, is directly indicative or suggestive of the author's tastes.²
- D. Literary values established by examination of one work should be verifiable in other texts written by the same author.

In Chapter I, specific statements of qualitative opinion on literary works and practices--in *Don Quixote*--are collected and reviewed. To facilitate evaluation, these are reported according to the speaker, for the individual characters and for Cervantes, including his friend of the prologue, narrators and chronicler. Information provided in the text concerning the origins, education, occupation, status, predilections and character of each source or opinion is recorded and the comments are

² I exclude burlesque material, since the author may employ deliberate technical error or exaggerated affectations of style in mocking sense.

evaluated accordingly. The principal literary qualities commended, and those condemned, are collated and charted.

In Chapter II, the diverse stories and serious poems interpolated in *Don Quixote* are examined for features demonstrating or at variance with the commended literary qualities identified in the novel.

In Chapter III, *Galatea* and *Viaje del Parnaso* are reviewed, similarly, for corroboration or contradiction of the commended qualities.

Chapter IV presents a range of relevant twentieth-century literary criticism touching on Cervantes' concepts of literary merit.

The Conclusion summarizes the patterns of preference--in literary values and practices--which Cervantes disclosed in *Don Quixote*, the degree to which examples of his own work are consistent with such patterns, and the relevant opinions expressed in the works of criticism listed in the Bibliography.

CHAPTER I Literary comment in *Don Quixote*

En sus obras se habla frecuentemente de libros:
de lo que contienen, de lo que deberían contener
y no contienen, cuáles leer y cómo escribir mejores.³

In this chapter, relevant statements and data from the text of *Don Quixote* are identified for evaluation, in consideration of the authority indicated for each source by the author. Some sources, inherently related by sector or by tenor of comment, are grouped for convenience. The results are consolidated into tables of positive and negative qualities to facilitate identification of areas of agreement and of difference.

The village priest, Pero Pérez

The origins of the village priest are unstated, although he is identified ironically by the narrator as "docto", having graduated from Sigüenza (I, 1, 37),⁴ one of the least prestigious universities of Spain. He is the governing figure in the enforced return, to his home, of the caged knight-errant--late in Part I of the novel.

Obviously familiar with the books of chivalry, since he argues with Don Quixote and the barber, Nicolás, as to the preeminence of the various chivalric heroes (I, 1, 37), the priest is entirely in agreement with Don Quixote's niece when she says, before her uncle's return from his first venture as a knight-errant, that such books should be burned (I, 5, 65):

³ Eisenberg, *Estudios cervantinos* (1991), p.11.

⁴ References for *Don Quijote de la Mancha* are to Volume, Chapter and Page of Martín de Riquer's edition (1955).

hence, the scrutiny of Don Quixote's library of more than one hundred books (I, 6, 66) by the priest and the barber, and the condemnation of all but a few to the flames. The priest is given much to say in literary matters, not only in his management of the examination and destruction of Don Quixote's library.

The first book considered in the scrutiny is the initial compilation, by Garci Rodríguez de Montalvo, of four earlier versions of tales of *Amadís de Gaula* (1508), later expanded into a long, imitative series. The barber, who rarely states a personal opinion, successfully opposes the priest's condemnation of this work, on the basis of having heard it said that it was the best-written in the genre (I, 6, 67). Later volumes of the *Amadís* series, some by other authors, are all delivered to Don Quixote's housekeeper for burning.

Other books condemned by the priest include Antonio de Torquemada's *Don Olivante de Laura* (1564), for its falsehoods and arrant nonsense; Melchor Ortega's *Florismarte de Hircania* (1556), for its stiff, dry style;⁵ the anonymous *El Caballero Platir* (1533), for lack of redeeming merit; and, despite its title, *El Caballero de la Cruz* (1521). López de Santa Catalina's *Espejo de Caballerías* (1533), a prose translation and adaptation of Boiardo's *Orlando innamorato* (1495), affords the priest an occasion for discourse on French and Italian works relating to the period of Charlemagne, such as Ariosto's *Orlando furioso* (1532). He maintains that only poems in their original language would be worth preserving (I, 6, 70) but, nonetheless, condemns the Spanish poems *Bernardo del Carpio* (1585) by Agustín Alonso, and *Roncesvalles* (1555) by Francisco Garrida Vicena.

⁵ Martín de Riquer notes that, in this work, the unassisted hero is described as putting to flight an army of one million, six hundred thousand combatants (I, 6, 69).

Returning to tales of chivalry, the priest condemns Francisco Vázquez's *Palmerín de Oliva* (1511), but keeps Francisco Moraes Cabral's *Palmerín de Inglaterra*, translated from the Portuguese by Luis Hurtado (1547), for its excellence, its clarity, circumspection in discourse, and well-contrived adventures (I, 6, 71), as well as for the legend of its more distinguished authorship, rumored to be the work of a king of Portugal.

He is prepared to have the rest of the books burned without further examination but the barber objects, saying that he has in hand the famous *Don Belianís* by Jerónimo Fernández. The priest concedes that this work, with some emendation, could be kept. He permits the barber to take home the several volumes of the work but insists that he is not to allow anyone else to read them.

While the housekeeper hastens to dispose of the remaining books, the barber picks up Johanot Martorell's *Historia del famoso caballero Tirante el Blanco* (1490; translated from the Catalan in 1511), which the priest takes excitedly, saying how much he had enjoyed it:

[H]e hallado en él un tesoro de contento y una mina de pasatiempos...por su estilo, es éste el mejor libro del mundo. (I, 6, 72)

He commends particularly the rational quotidian activities of the characters, a feature lacking in other books of the genre. He suggests that the barber take it to read.

Opening *La Diana* (1558) by Jorge de Montemayor, the priest declares it to be a work of great understanding, that such pastoral poems are harmless and do not deserve to be burned. Don Quixote's niece, however, is

concerned about her uncle turning into a shepherd or, even worse, a poet--a state she considers to be an infectious and incurable infirmity. The priest is inclined to agree but thinks that if the fanciful bits and much of the poetry were eliminated, leaving only the prose, the work would be acceptable:

[Q]ue se le quite todo aquello que trata de la sabia Felicia y de la agua encantada, y casi todo de los versos mayores, y quédesele en hora buena la prosa. (I, 6, 73)

Next considered are two versions of *La Diana, segunda del Salmantino*, (1564) by Alonso Pérez and Gil Polo, of which only the second is to be preserved, "como si fuera del mesmo Apolo" (I, 6, 74). Of *Los diez libros de Fortuna de amor* (1573) by Antonio de Lofraso, the priest says, admiringly, taking it for himself:

[T]an gracioso ni tan disparatado libro como ese no se ha compuesto...es el mejor y el más único de cuantos deste género han salido a la luz del mundo. (I, 6, 74)⁶

El Pastor de Iberia (1591) by Bernardo de la Vega, *Ninfas de Henares* (1587) by Bernardo González de Bobadilla, and *Desengaños de celos* (1586) by Bartolomé López de Enciso, are condemned without further comment. Luis Gálvez de Montalvo's *El Pastor de Fílida* (1582) is kept for its refined style and language, being termed "muy discreto y cortesano"(I, 6, 74).

⁶ This constitutes ironic comment on the priest's poor judgement or taste in endorsement of a discredited work, according to Riquer; (I, 6, 74, Note 28). Cervantes mocks the book and author in *Viaje del Parnaso*. (Cap.III v.247-54)

The priest states that Pedro de Padilla's *Tesoro de varias poesías* (1580) requires some weeding out of material of a gross character, but instructs the barber to keep it because the author is a friend, as is Gabriel López Maldonado, author of *El Cancionero* (1586) and much admired for other talents.

Coming to *La Galatea* (1585) of Miguel de Cervantes, whom the priest also claims as an old friend. He has no very high opinion of Cervantes' poetry, but he concedes the book to contain "algo de buena invención", although somewhat inconclusive or unfinished. He tells the barber to keep it private in his house until it is seen if the promised second part is more acceptable.

Of *La Araucana* (1569) by Alonso de Ercilla, *La Austriada* (1584) by Juan Rufo, and *El Monserrato* (1588) by Cristóbal de Virués, the priest is most laudatory, declaring that "estos tres libros...son los mejores que, en verso heroico, en lengua castellana están escritos" (I, 6, 75); these works are to be kept as the richest jewels of Spanish poetry.

Again wearying of the task, the priest wants the remainder of the books burned without examination. However, the barber is holding Luis Barahona de Soto's *Las lágrimas de Angélica* (1586), whose inadvertent burning would have caused the priest to weep, "porque su autor fue uno de los famosos poetas del mundo". Still, the rest of the books are sent to the flames.⁷

⁷ The narrator notes that among those burned without consideration were *La Carolea* (Jerónimo Sempere, 1560), *Leon de España* (Pedro de la Vecilla Castellanos, 1586) and *Los Hechos del Emperador* by Luis de Ávila, all of which might have been preserved had the priest seen them.

In a later episode, at the inn, the priest proposes that *Don Ciringilio de Francia* (1545) by Bernardo de Vargas and *Felixmarte de Hircania* (1556) by Melchor Ortega--among books left by a traveller and much enjoyed by patrons of the inn--be burned as vain and false (II, 32, 323). He insists that he could say "cosas acerca de lo que han de tener los libros de caballerías para ser buenos" but awaits a time "en que lo pueda comunicar con quien pueda remediallo" (I, 32, 325).⁸

The priest commends, as well-written, the *Novela del curioso impertinente*--included in *Don Quixote*--but finds the situation described, and the plot, unconvincing and incompatible with family relationships in Spanish society (I, 35, 371).

In discussion with the Canon of Toledo regarding books of chivalry, the priest blames their authors for not paying attention to "buen discurso, ni al arte y reglas por donde pudieran guiarse" (I, 48, 484).

He also expresses a long-standing complaint against the degenerate character of contemporary *comedias*, describing them as "espejos de disparates, ejemplos de necedades e imágenes de lascivia" and contrasting them unfavourably with the work and standards of Cicero, "espejo de la vida humana, ejemplo de las costumbres y imagen de la verdad" (I, 48, 486). He complains, further, of geographic dislocations in such plays, of absurd anachronisms and of public acceptance of gross errors; even plays on religious themes are marred by faulty understanding, to the shame of Spanish theatre, considering its great potential:

⁸ It seems most interesting that many of Cervantes' characters, including a number of those opposed to books of chivalry, have been keen readers and would-be writers of such literature, with ideas for its improvement.

[P]orque de haber oído la comedia artificiosa y bien ordenada, saldría el oyente alegre con las burlas, enseñado con las veras, admirado de los sucesos, discreto con las razones, advertido con los embustes, sagaz con los ejemplos, airado contra el vicio y enamorado de la virtud. (I, 48, 487)

The priest blames the alleged demands of the public, rather than the poets who had previously produced superior work:

[C]on tanta gala, con tanto donaire, con tan elegante verso, con tan buenas razones, con tan graves sentencias y, finalmente, tan llenas de elocución y alteza de estilo. (I, 48, 488)

He favors censorship prior to publication or production to impose higher standards, which should apply, as well, to books of chivalry. The concept of censorship which he proposes is illustrated by his comments regarding the desirable emendation of *La Diana* and *Tesoro de varias poesías* to remove fanciful and gross elements, and regarding the imposition of rules for the guidance of authors.

The evaluation of the opinions of the priest requires consideration of his indifferent education, as noted by Cervantes, who depicts him unsympathetically as an irresponsible destroyer of books, a self-assured meddler in the affairs of others, and an admirer of inferior work.⁹ The author cannot be considered as endorsing the judgement of the priest, whose tendency to parrot the opinions of the Canon of Toledo (I, 48, 486) confirms his subservience to authority. The somewhat less zealous and more rational approach of the Canon seems relatively enlightened and more

⁹ See Note 6, page 8, of the thesis.

authoritative. This is not to suggest, however, that all of the priest's opinions are to be set aside; most of Cervantes' characters share a very human mixture of sound judgement and personal bias, which readers must distinguish for themselves.

In his summary review of Don Quixote's library, the priest was prepared to burn *Los cuatro de Amadís de Gaula* because, as the first of a substantial series, it set the pattern for tales of chivalry in Spain. His accusations against the genre include the terms nonsensical, arrogant, dull and mendacious. While the complaints against the contemporary *comedias* for anachronisms and gross errors are of unquestionable validity, his concentration on moral issues may be attributed to his position and outlook. The few works which he commends--such as *Palmerín de Inglaterra* and *Tirante el Blanco*--are characterized as logical and decorous, with well-planned adventures, written realistically and with understanding of human relationships.

Some of these views are shared by other characters; others are contradicted. The priest's recommendation of censorship (actually existing at the time) is not, for example, repeated by the Canon or by others. The Canon agrees in his strong support of moral content in literature, but states that the inferior dramatic presentations are not the fault of the public but of ignorant or misguided producers (I, 48, 485). It seems significant, and perhaps prudent, that Cervantes should include this recommendation for censorship; however, he makes its source one of the least favoured characters. Cervantes consistently presents multiple viewpoints, ambiguities and inconsistencies in his writings, to be resolved by the reader.

The Canon of Toledo

While his background is unstated, the Canon's superior status in the Church gives his comments considerable authority even though, by his own admission, his self-expression is restricted by his office (I, 48, 484). He demonstrates thoughtful interest in literary matters.

In his discussion with Don Quixote, the Canon declares himself knowledgeable on books of chivalry (I, 47, 478). To the priest, he says that he considers them decadent and harmful, and that he had been unable to complete reading most of them, "que atienden solamente a deleitar, y no a enseñar" (I, 47, 481), in sharp contrast to fables of a Christian apologetic character. He claims that there can be neither beauty or harmony in the nonsense of incredible feats of arms; that even fiction requires a semblance of veracity, coherence, and proportion. He summarizes his objections as follows:

[S]on en estilo duros; en las hazañas, increíbles; en los amores, lascivios; en las cortesías, mal miradas; largos en las batallas, necios en las razones, disparatados en las viajes y, finalmente, ajenos de todo discreto artificio, y por esto dignos de ser desterrados de la república cristiana. (I, 47, 482)

He finds, in such books, one good possibility--a broad field for edifying literary exercise, "describiendo naufragios, tormentas, rencuentros y batallas, pintando un capitán valeroso con todas las partes que para ser tal se requieren" (I, 47, 482); the depiction of diverse characters, noble and base; of arts and sciences, statesmanship, and the qualities of great men. He believes that such elements, in restrained

style, ingeniously composed, adhering closely to truth, could create beauty and perfection, instruct and delight--in epic, lyrical, tragic or comic form (I, 47, 483).

As might be expected from so detailed a commentary, the Canon confesses that he had been tempted to write a book of chivalry along such lines but desisted, considering it incompatible with his position (I, 48, 484). In addition, he did not wish to be exposed to criticism by ignorant readers who prefer absurd extravagance.

Speaking of the productions of contemporary theatre, the Canon complains that the serious plays of the past have been replaced by nonsensical matter, "así las imaginadas como las de historia, todas o las más son conocidas disparates" (I, 48, 484). He had once argued with an actor regarding the prevalence of such inferior productions, which were claimed to represent the popular taste. He had pointed out that three tragedies, which were presented some time ago, were eminently successful and profitable, "que admiraron, alegraron y suspendieron a todos cuantos las oyeron, así simples como prudentes" (I, 48, 485). The actor recognized these as *La Isabella* (1581), *La Filis* and *La Alejandra* (all by Lupericio Leonardo de Argensola). The Canon had remarked, further, that serious plays presented in the past, such as Lope de Vega's *La ingratitud vengada*, Cervantes' *La Numancia* (1583), Gaspar de Aguilar's *El mercader amante*, and Francisco Agustín Tárrega's *La enemiga favorable* brought renown to their authors and profit to the producers; therefore, the Canon continues, "no está la falta en el vulgo, que pide disparates, sino en aquéllos que no saben representar otra cosa" (I, 48, 485).

The Canon tells Don Quixote that the books of chivalry are full of nonsense and falsehoods (I, 49, 493-94), fit only to be burned, as confirmed by their malign effect on Don Quixote's mind and the sad condition to which he has been reduced. In reply to the knight-errant's articulate defence of the veracity of his books, the Canon differentiates pointedly between history and fiction and, for historical figures, between truth and legend (I, 49, 498).

The Canon, who has been taken by some critics, including Riley and Eisenberg, as the voice of the author on literary matters, represents a sophisticated social and intellectual order. He sees the potential worth of books of high adventure in depicting the best of human qualities, but deplores the fantastic exaggeration in accounts of the deeds of heroes of chivalry, as well as the deficiencies in language and style of most examples of the genre. As a cleric, he emphasizes the need to promote Christian moral values in literature (I, 49, 494). Though dealing comprehensively with deficiency in literary qualities and credibility of content, his criticism of the books of chivalry is most concerned with their lack of positive didactic value--not just in a narrow moral sense but in their failure to live up to their potential for inspiration of readers through realistic examples of human conduct in tales of high endeavour.

The innkeeper Juan Palomeque, his daughter, and the servant Maritornes

At the other social extreme of that of the Canon, we encounter these three characters, all of whom are probably illiterate (I, 32, 321). Little is stated as to their backgrounds; the innkeeper is somewhat hasty and violent, associated with the Santa Hermandad, and most concerned--not

unnaturally--about the interests of his business; his daughter has a malicious sense of humour (witness the entrapping of Don Quixote I, 43, 447) and a romantic disposition; this inclination is shared by Maritornes, who is stated to be rather ill-favored and of loose morals.

Their acquaintance with literature is limited to hearing someone read aloud the books left at the inn by a vanished traveller. The books of chivalry have their appeal for all three, albeit for different reasons. Their interest in the tales of knight-errantry reflects the extension of the popularity of the genre, long favoured by the nobility, to unsophisticated members of society.

The innkeeper questions the priest's statement to the party at the inn that the books of chivalry had turned Don Quixote's mind. He says that he and many others had received great pleasure from hearing such books read in gatherings at the inn, "siempre hay algunos que saben leer...y rodeámonos de más de treinta, y estámosle escuchando con tanto gusto" (I, 32, 321). He particularly enjoys tales of combat. Maritornes emphasizes the appeal of the love scenes; the innkeeper's daughter says she does not care for the violent bits but is deeply moved by the pathetic lamentations of the knights when absent from their lady-loves (I, 32, 322). The comments of these three characters are limited to the appeal of distinct elements of content, rather than of literary features.

When the priest proposed that the books of chivalry be burned as vain and false (I, 32, 323), the innkeeper offered a historical work, *Historia del Gran Capitán Gonzalo Hernández de Córdoba, con la vida de Diego García de Paredes* (1580), to the fire instead. Other works found in the bag left

by a traveller include Cervantes' *Novela del curioso impertinente* (I, 33, 327) and *Novela de Rinconete y Cortadillo* (I, 47, 477). The author chooses to call attention to stories of his own which he considers worthy of note.

The opinions of the innkeeper, his daughter, and Maritornes provide realistic examples of the tastes of uncultured citizenry. Particularly telling is the innkeeper's rating of the knights-errant higher than the Gran Capitán, since their feats were incomparably more marvellous (I, 32, 324). The gatherings at the inn to hear someone read the tales of chivalry recall popular gatherings to hear public declamations of epic poems by *juglares* of an earlier time. The implied comparison emphasizes the universality and timelessness of the appeal of forms of literature that serve as relief and recreation, regardless of verisimilitude.

Sansón Carrasco, the student guide, Altisidora, and a musician

These diverse sources are grouped because their comments have a common focus, their negative views of specific features of content and practice in contemporary literary production.

Carrasco is the son of a villager; twenty-four years of age; a graduate of the University of Salamanca; intelligent but of a satirical, somewhat malicious turn of mind (II, 3, 558). The student who guides Don Quixote to the Cave of Montesinos is a self-styled humanist, reportedly fond of reading books of chivalry. He compiles and edits informative books, which are neither significant nor accurate in content, and writes burlesques of the classics. Altisidora is a young woman in the entourage of the Duchess. She is most active in the elaborate arrangements devised

for mocking Don Quixote and reacts vengefully to the knight's resistance to her blandishments. No background data is given for a musician who sang and played during Altisidora's procession.

In telling Don Quixote about the published account of the first part of the knight's adventures, entitled *El Ingenioso Hidalgo don Quijote de la Mancha*, Carrasco says, in words that echo the *Aprobación* of *Galatea* by Lucas Gracian de Antisco:

[L]a tal historia es del más gustoso y menos perjudicial entretenimiento que hasta ahora se haya visto, porque en toda ella no se descubre, ni por semejas, una palabra deshonesto ni un pensamiento menos que católico. (II, 3, 563)

Carrasco unleashes a bitter attack on envious literary critics, reminiscent of Sancho's complaint against the priest, "donde reina la envidia no puede vivir la virtud" (I, 47, 479):

Los hombres famosos por sus ingenios, los grandes poetas, los ilustres historiadores, siempre, o las más veces, son invidiados de aquellos que tienen por gusto y por particular entretenimiento juzgar los escritos ajenos, sin haber dado algunos propios a la luz del mundo...y así digo que es grandísimo el riesgo a que se pone el que imprime un libro, siendo de toda imposibilidad componerle tal, que satisfaga y contente a todos los que le leyeren. (II, 3, 563-64)

At the end of Part II, in the attempts of Don Quixote's neighbours to re-animate Alonso Quijano el Bueno during his final illness, Carrasco urges him to commence the pastoral life which he and Sancho had discussed as an alternative to knight-errantry. Carrasco had composed an eclogue for the

purpose--claimed to rival Sannazaro's *Arcadia* (II, 74, 1062)--but is unable to elicit a positive response from the ailing Don Quixote.

The student guide speaks with absurd satisfaction of his useless and irresponsible works (II, 22, 697); with their invented trivia and pretended erudition.

Altisidora, in her account of her temporary demise out of feigned unrequited love of Don Quixote, speaks of reaching the gates of Hell, where a dozen devils were playing, using books instead of balls, books full of wind and stuffed with trash. Among these was Avellaneda's continuation of the adventures of Don Quixote, harshly condemned by one of the devils as, "Tan malo, que si de propósito yo mismo me pusiera a hacerle peor, no acertara" (II, 70, 1043).

Justifying the inclusion of a verse by Garcilaso de la Vega in his own song on the supposedly sad fate of Altisidora, the poet-musician comments:

[Y]a entre los intonsos poetas de nuestra edad se usa
que cada uno escriba como quisiere, y hurta de quien
quisiere, venga o no venga a palo de su intento, y ya
no hay necesidad que canten o escriban que no se atribuye
a licencia poética. (II, 70, 1045)

He takes advantage of the contemporary mode of plagiarism, noting further that little care is taken regarding the suitability of the material appropriated or to the observance of traditional forms. Poetic licence is taken to justify any ignorant, foolish or presumptuous expression.

The views of Carrasco and the student guide suggest somewhat cynical juvenile mentalities. The literary projects of the student are examples of vacuous hack-work, the compiling of pretentious inanities. Carrasco's

mocking style serves as the vehicle for an attack against critics who presume to denigrate in others talents and skills which they themselves lack.

Altisidora's account of books as the playthings of devils suggests the proper fate of empty, trashy literature. While referring particularly to Avellaneda, it reinforces the criticism of works such as those of the student guide. The musician also describes irresponsible hack-work, careless mis-application of material stolen from others.

The comments of this group of characters are more polemical in style than those of the other characters, indicating emotional as well as critical content.

Don Diego de Miranda, el Caballero del Verde Gabán

Don Diego is a well-to-do, land-holding gentleman of good family, the owner of a large and well-appointed home, with a library of some six dozen books--some in Latin, none of chivalry. He involves himself in the recreations of the gentry: hunting, fishing and socializing. He is hospitable and, by his own declaration, charitable.

Hearing about the publication of the record of Don Quixote's feats as a knight-errant from the protagonist himself, Don Diego expresses his opposition to books of chivalry most tactfully:

¡Bendita sea el cielo!, que con esa historia...de sus altas y verdaderas caballerías, se habían puesto en olvido las innumerables de los fingidos caballeros andantes de que estaba lleno el mundo, tan en daño de las buenas costumbres y tan en perjuicio y descrédito de las buenas historias. (II, 16, 646-47)

Of his own reading, he says that he prefers works "que deleiten con el lenguaje y admiren y suspendan con la invención, puesto que hay muy pocos en España" (II, 16, 647). He is disappointed in his son who, after six years at Salamanca, is preoccupied with poetry instead of studying law. He cannot accept poetry as the principal occupation of a member of his family.

Representing the worthy, comfortably established gentry, Don Diego is completely respectable, well-informed and good-hearted, but utterly conventional in his ideas and interests. He values history and both serious and light literature but has no use for books of chivalry, which he considers mendacious and harmful. He deplores the rarity of good literature in Spain, books in which the sensible reader could enjoy fine language while marvelling at the subtle invention of the author.

Don Quixote, Alonso Quijano el Bueno

The hero of the novel is an hidalgo, of rural gentry (I, 21, 200), in an unnamed village of La Mancha. His education is unstated but he is clearly widely-read. Alonso Quijano is a respected, if somewhat impoverished, small landholder whose principal occupation--hunting--has been almost abandoned owing to his obsession for reading books of chivalry, in the acquisition of which he has been selling parts of his patrimony (I, 1, 36). He is good-hearted, if somewhat irascible; his good sense is subdued only while overcome by his obsession with knight-errantry, in whose historical validity he seems to have complete faith, and whose precepts he is ambitious to emulate. The fictional characters of tales of chivalry

appear to him to be as real as the heroes of history (I, 49, 496-97) and Cervantes declares him crazed on this topic, although eminently sensible on all others:

[S]olamente disparaba en tocándole en la caballería, y en los demás discursos mostraba tener claro y desenfadado entendimiento. (II, 43, 843)

Speaking of an ancient communal Golden Age, Don Quixote emphasizes the value of honest, straight-forward language:

Entonces se decoraban los concetos amorosos del alma simple y sencillamente del mismo modo y manera que ella los concebía, sin buscar artificioso rodeo de palabras para encarecerlos. (I, 11, 105)

This comment, although referring to the manners of a better time, may well be applied to conversation, public recitation in the oral tradition, or to written material. It is consistent with the corrective instructions given to the boy-narrator by both Don Quixote and Maese Pedro during the puppet show (II, 26, 731-732). However, on the many occasions in which Don Quixote recalls or invents passages in tales of chivalry, or apostrophizes Dulcinea, the language is elevated in style, "siendo de caballero andante, [la manera de expresarse] por fuerza había de ser grandilocua, alta, insigne, magnífica" (II, 3, 558).

In a discussion with Sansón Carrasco, Don Quixote declares that the basic requirements of literary composition are mature judgement and inventive imagination:

[P]ara componer historias y libros, de cualquier suerte que sean, es menester un gran juicio y un maduro entendimiento. Decir gracias y escribir donaires es de grandes ingenios. (II, 3, 563)

He refers admiringly to Garcilaso's Eclogue III (II, 8, 591), which reinforces his concept of Dulcinea, and he advises Don Diego de Miranda to influence his son's poetic interest toward moral values, "al modo de Horacio, donde reprehenda los vicios" (II, 16, 651). With young Lorenzo, he discourses learnedly on the requirements of the poetic gloss (II, 18, 666).

Don Quixote declares a long-standing interest in the theatre:

[P]orque todos son instrumentos de hacer un gran bien a la república, poniéndonos un espejo a cada paso delante, donde se veen al vivo las acciones de la vida humana. (II, 12, 617)

Later on, in the print-shop in Barcelona, he touches on the limitations of translation of literature:

[E]s como quien mira los tapices flamencos por el revés, que aunque se veen las figuras, son llenas de hilos que la escurecen. (II, 62, 998)

However, he commends Battista Guarini's *Pastor Fido*, as translated by Cristóbal de Figueroa (1602), and Torcuato Tasso's *Aminta*, translated by Juan de Jáuregui (1607), as essentially true to the originals (II, 62, 999).

The comments of Don Quixote on Avellaneda's spurious *Segunda Parte del Ingenioso Hidalgo don Quijote de la Mancha* refute the slurs on his character and constancy (II, 69, 967), as well as noting factual errors.

Since the author and a number of his characters commend the knight's sound judgement on all subjects other than those based on his complete faith in the truth of the books of chivalry, Don Quixote's comments on other literary subjects merit consideration as expressing ideas which Cervantes wanted on record. In his glowing account of the features of the Golden Age, as delivered to the uncomprehending goatherds, Don Quixote praises the use of simple direct language, without elaboration or circumlocution. His advice to the budding poet, Lorenzo de Miranda, recommends close attention to the exacting requirements of traditional literary forms and classical moral values, as well as practical consideration of the interests of his intended public.

His deathbed recantation, a rejection of the absurdities and deceits to be found in "los detestables libros de las caballerías" (II, 74, 1063), limited as it is to those specific features, may be considered a dramatic device, possibly expedient, rather than a final effort at literary criticism.

Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, the narrator, Cide Hamete Benengeli, the Moorish translator and the unidentified, possibly imaginary, friend in the Prologue, Part I

The origins and education of the author are unstated in the text; Cervantes identifies himself as an ex-soldier and writer, explorer of the annals of *La Mancha* (I, 2, 43) and finder of the chronicles--in Arabic--of

the historian Cide Hamete (I, 9, 93). He orders the translation and compiles the Spanish text. Cide Hamete, variously identified as a member of an untrustworthy race and as a scholarly and punctilious historian, is at once the chronicler of literary convention and one of several protective measures, distancing the author from the hazards of authorship.

The friend, "gracioso y bien entendido", provides Cervantes with a modest role in a dialogue with significant, if satirical, didactic and critical content. The author, and his friend as alter-ego, begin by identifying desired and objectionable literary practices. The Prologue is primarily a satire on the custom of pretentious embellishment of a new work with epigrams and laudatory passages purportedly written by distinguished persons, pseudo-erudite annotations, and philosophical and biblical references. It does include a strong recommendation from the author's friend for simplicity and clarity:

[A] la llana, con palabras insignificantes, honestas y bien colocadas, salga vuestra oración...dando a entender vuestros conceptos sin intricarlos y oscurecerlos. (I, Prologue, 25)

In his initial description of the protagonist's obsession with knight-errantry, the narrator mocks Don Quixote's admiration for elaborate locutions, with Feliciano de Silva's often quoted passage:

La razón de la sinrazón que a mi razón se hace,
de tal manera mi razón enloquece, que con razón
me quejo. (I, 1, 37)

In contrast, Don Quixote's example for the Canon of Toledo provides a model of simple dramatic imagery:

¿Y que apenas el caballero no ha acabado de oír la voz temerosa, cuando, sin entrar más en cuentas consigo, sin ponerse a considerar el peligro a que se pone, y aun sin despojarse de la pesadumbre de sus fuertes armas, encomiendose a Dios y a su señora se arroja en mitad del bullente lago, y...se halla entre unos floridos campos. (I, 50, 500)

The Prologue contains, as well, a typically ambiguous reference to the declared attack on the books of chivalry, "caballerescos libros, aborrecidos de tantos y alabados de muchos más" (I, Prologue, 25). Cervantes has his characters find much to commend, as well as to criticize, in the books. Still, the narrator says that the mind of Don Quixote, an addicted reader of such books, became clouded by "disparates imposibles" (I, 1, 38).

In discourse regarding the veracity of Cide Hamete, the narrator indulges in rhetorical commentary on the role of historians, demanding accuracy and impartiality:

[D]ebiendo ser los historiadores puntuales, verdaderos y no nada apasionados, y que ni el interés ni el miedo, el rencor ni la afición, no les hagan torcer del camino de la verdad, cuya madre es la historia, émula del tiempo, depósito de las acciones, testigo de lo pasado, ejemplo y aviso de lo presente, advertencia de lo porvenir. (I, 9, 95)

Cide Hamete's narration of events in precise detail is stated to be a model for professional improvement of historical writing:

[M]uy curioso y muy puntual en todas las cosas...con ser tan mínimas y tan rateras, no las quiso pasar en silencio; de donde podrán tomar ejemplo los historiadores graves, que nos cuentan las acciones tan corta y sucintamente...dejandose en el tintero...lo más sustancial de la obra. (I, 16, 146)

and even more eloquently, the clarity of his expositions are commended:

Pinta los pensamientos, descubre las intenciones, responde a las tácitas, aclara las dudas, resuelve los argumentos; finalmente, los átomos del más curioso deseo manifiesta. (II, 40, 822)

The narrator praises two authors of tales of chivalry for their carefully comprehensive accounts:

¡Bien haga mil veces el autor de *Tablante de Ricamonte* [1513] y aquél del otro libro donde se cuenta los hechos del conde Tomillas [*Enrique fi de Oliva*, 1498] y con que puntualidad lo describen todo! (I, 16, 146)

He refers to Don Quixote's books as "libros mentirosos" (I, 18, 165), yet speaks of the people of his era as requiring entertaining literature, as well as historical accuracy:

[E]sta nuestra edad, necesitada de alegres entretenimientos, no sólo de la dulzura de su verdadera historia, sino de los cuentos y episodios della que, en parte, no son menos agradables y artificiosos y verdaderos que la misma historia. (I, 23, 275)

In Part II of *Don Quixote*, there is a summary dismissal of Avellaneda's continuation of the story of Don Quixote as trash, in Altisadora's report of a devil's low opinion of the work, as well as a suggested negative public reaction to Avellaneda's version--in an enthusiastic onlooker's welcoming cries on Don Quixote's entry into Barcelona:

Bien sea venido, digo, el valeroso don Quijote de la Mancha: no el falso, no el ficticio, no el apócrifo que en falsas historias estos días nos han mostrado, sino el verdadero, el legal y el fiel que nos describió Cide Hamete Benengeli, flor de historiadores. (II, 41, 987)

Humour and hyperbole do not obscure the honour due to the true hero, nor the appreciation of superior literary merit in the work ascribed to Cide Hamete. Qualities recommended for the work of historians included precise accuracy, dispassionate impartiality, comprehensive detail, explanatory exposition, and unfailing veracity.

With some reservations regarding the comments attributed to Cide Hamete, the literary opinions expressed by the author's variant forms must be given enhanced authority. Cervantes delegates most criticisms of contemporary literary practices to his characters, but he expands his announced criticism of books of chivalry into a manifesto of literary values. The principal characteristics commended for fiction, poetry and drama are listed in Table I, with sources identified. Characteristics condemned are listed in Table II.

TABLE II

CHARACTERISTICS
CONDEMNED

CHARACTERS COMMENTING

| | <u>Priest</u> | <u>Canon</u> | <u>Innkeeper</u> <u>Daughter</u> <u>Maritornes</u> | <u>Carrasco</u> <u>Guide</u> <u>Altidora</u> <u>Musician</u> | <u>Don Diego</u> <u>Miranda</u> | <u>Don</u> <u>Quixote</u> | <u>Cervantes</u> <u>Narrator</u> <u>Cide Hamete</u> <u>Friend</u> <u>Translator</u> |
|-------------------------------|---------------|--------------|--|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------|---|
| <i>Lack of Entertainment</i> | | | | | | | |
| Dullness | x | x | | | | | |
| Pretentiousness | | | | x | | | |
| Prolixity | | x | | | | | x |
| <i>Lack of Verisimilitude</i> | | | | | | | |
| Mendacity | x | x | | | x | | |
| Anachronisms | x | | | | | | |
| Geographic absurdity | x | | | | | | |
| Fantastic exaggeration | x | x | | | x | | x |
| <i>Lack of Accessibility</i> | | | | | | | |
| Circumlocution | | x | | | | | |
| Pseudo-erudition | | | | x | | x | x |
| Poor translation | x | | | | | x | x |
| <i>Lack of Didactic value</i> | | | | | | | |
| Lasciviousness | x | x | | | | | |
| Lack of edifying content | | x | | x | x | | |

Condemned, in addition, were a number of prevalent practices in the literary world such as plagiarism, envious criticism, scurrilous personal attacks, and pandering to vulgar tastes.

Perceptions of worth and faults in literature are interwoven with the account of the adventures of Don Quixote. Critical comment--favourable or not, valid or doubtful--is distributed among characters according to their background and interests, and among the several voices of the author, consistent with their functions, to be interpreted according to the understanding of the *curiosos lectores*.

The erratic distribution of comment on literary characteristics, as observed in the Tables, reinforces the concept that each speaker represents a distinct critical position. Recognition of the constituency, the sectors of interest for which they speak, constitutes a significant indicator in determining the credit to be assigned to each comment, the authority to be granted to each speaker, and the degree to which they may reflect the ideas of Cervantes.

CHAPTER II Poems and stories in *Don Quixote*

[L]os estudios desta facultad [la poesía]...traen consigo
 ...provechos, como son enriquecer el poeta considerando
 su propria lengua...descubriendo la diversidad de
 conceptos agudos, graves, sotiles y levantados.⁹

The examples of varied literary forms which Cervantes includes in *Don Quixote* are examined in this chapter to establish how they may illustrate or modify the findings of the previous chapter. Primary attention is concentrated on what is disclosed of the literary preferences of the author in the works which he chooses to include in his novel.

Considering the poems of a serious character, one model commonly employed for popular song is the traditional *romance*. Examples, at various levels of sophistication in language, rhyme schemes, imagery and rhetorical devices, include fragments from the goat-herd Antorio's song, the plaint of a tormented lover seeking final resolution of his woes (I, 11, 107-109):

Donde no, desde aquí juro
 por el santo más bendito
 de no salir destas tierras
 sino para capuchino;

the first love song, "Marinero soy de amor", of the pretended muleteer, Don Luis (I, 43, 440):

⁹ Cervantes, *La Galatea*, edition of Schevill and Bonilla (1914).
 Prologue, p. xlviii.

¡Oh clara y luciente estrella,
 en cuya lumbre me apuro!
 Al punto que te me encubras,
 será de mi muerte el punto;

and Don Quixote's own composition (II, 46, 867), advising prudently moral behaviour and constancy in love:

Las doncellas recogidas
 que aspiran a ser casadas,
 la honestidad es la dote
 y voz de sus alabanzas.

Reviewing these romances, it can be confirmed that, while all demonstrate clarity of language and coherence, Don Luis adds a degree of elegance of expression, with imaginative concepts. Such elaboration as is evident in the *romances* appears to be within reasonable limits for the hyperbolic terms appropriate to lovers.

Another song form used is the *silva*, in which quatrains or sextets with alternating lines of seven and eleven syllables introduce a rhythm more varied than that of the *romance*. The *silva* is exemplified in the second song of Don Luis (I, 43, 442), on a lover's hopes; and Don Quixote's song (II, 68, 1032), on a lover's conmingled perceptions of life and death.¹⁰ Both songs exhibit clarity and coherence; Don Quixote's offering, not original with Cervantes, presents universal concerns with dramatic emphasis:

¹⁰ A poem by Pietro Bembo, translated from the Italian.

Así el vivir me mata,
 que la muerte me torna a dar la vida.
 ¡Oh condición no oída
 la que conmigo muerte y vida trata!

An interesting variation in poetic form is the *copla real*, which appears in a somewhat burlesqued version, with added *estribillo*, in Don Quixote's poem to Dulcinea (I, 26, 252-3); and in more traditional manner and form at a masque celebrating Camacho's wedding (II, 20, 683-4), where figures representing Cupid, Wealth, Poesy and Liberality declare their qualities and powers, witness Cupid's grandiose phrases:

Yo soy el dios poderoso
 en el aire y en la tierra
 y en el ancho mar undoso,
 y en quanto el abismo encierra
 en su báratro espantoso.

All of the above compositions, *romances*, *silvas*, and *coplas reales*, conform closely to traditional poetic forms. Less familiar is the Italian style of Grisostomo's song to Marcela (I, 14, 125-9), which consists of verses with sixteen lines of eleven syllables in a complex rhyme-scheme. The dark imagery employed by the despairing lover is dramatic:

¡Oh, en el reino de amor fieros tiranos
 celos! ponedme un hierro en estos manos.
 Dame, desdén, una torcida sogá.
 Mas, ¡ay de mí!, que, con cruel vitoria,
 vuestra memoria el sufrimiento ahoga.

This combination of simple language and imaginative concepts is an effective example of the stylistic elements commended by Cervantes.

Cardenio's song (I, 27, 261-2), a more contrived and less emotional lover's plaint, presents a complicated verse and line structures with sophisticated rhyme patterns, the *ovillejo*:

¿Quién mejorará mi suerte?
 La muerte.
 Y el bien de amor, ¿quién le alcanza?
 Mudanza.
 Y sus males, ¿quién los cura?
 Locura.
 De ese modo no es cordura
 querer curar la pasión
 cuando los remedios son
 muerte, mudanza y locura.

This poem illustrates Cervantes' concern with the avoidance of obscurity and elaborate terminology. However, he is ever ready with more august and even grandiloquent phrasing when it suits the occasion; for example, in Merlin's lengthy pronouncement (II, 35, 797-98), in which he declares his power and discloses the awesome authority for the measures that would relieve Dulcinea from enchantment:

[D]espués de haber revuelto cien mil libros
 desta mi ciencia endemoniada y torpe,
 vengo a dar el remedio.

The extravagance of the language, to match the Duke's elaborate mockery of Don Quixote, is consistent with the stated remedy, three thousand and three hundred lashes to be self-administered by Sancho. Cervantes demonstrates here, and repeatedly in the text, his command of the use of the archaic, elevated language of chivalry.

Lorenzo de Miranda's gloss on the uncertainty of Fortune and the unrelenting character of Time (II, 18, 666-8) is a traditional poetic exercise of refined construction, if uncertain effect. The rhetorical progressions in an expanded paraphrase under poetic rules represent skills highly commended by Don Quixote.

No quiero otro gusto o gloria,
otra palma o vencimiento
otro triunfo, otra vitoria,
sino volver al contento
que es pesar en mi memoria.

The development of the themes of the gloss has a simple, workmanlike quality and appropriate dignified restraint.

The poetic form appearing most frequently in the text is the sonnet, presumably the model most favoured by the author and by poets of his time. The Italian sonnet form was introduced into Spain in the fifteenth century and attained its highest standard of perfection, according to most critics, with Garcilaso de la Vega, early in the sixteenth century. Cervantes' admiration of Garcilaso is made explicit repeatedly in his works. Two examples: the shepherdess of the pretended Arcadia (II, 58, 958) tells Don Quixote that her group has been preparing presentations of the eclogues of Garcilaso and Camoes; and the musician in Altisidora's train plagiarized Garcilaso (II, 70, 1045).

In *Don Quixote*, Cervantes provides six examples of the sonnet treating serious topics: on the anxieties of a despairing lover (Cardenio, I, 23, 217); on the uncertainty of friendship (Cardenio, I, 27, 262); the two heroic poems, stated to be by Pedro de Aguilar, on the loss (in 1573) of

the Goleta and of a fort near Tunis (I, 40, 403-4); on courtly love (the Knight of the Wood, II, 12, 621); and on the fable of Pyramus and Thisbe (Lorenzo de Miranda, II, 18, 668). While a number of his other poems display some irregularities in rhythm and rhyme, Cervantes' sonnets are meticulously crafted in traditional form. The language, always clear if rarely lyrical, is well-suited to the individual themes and moods.

For the poetry in *Don Quixote*, compliance with qualities commended in Chapter I is summarized in Table III.

TABLE III

| CHARACTERISTICS COMMENDED | POETIC FORM | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-----------------|--------------|-------------------|----------------------|-----------------|------------------------|------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| | <u>Romance</u> | <u>Silva</u> | <u>Copla Real</u> | <u>Song</u> I, 14 | <u>Ovillejo</u> | <u>Gloss</u> II, 18 | <u>Declamation</u> II, 35 | <u>Sonnets</u> I, 23, 27 I, 40 II, 12 II, 18 | | | |
| <i>Entertainment</i> | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Inventiveness ¹¹ | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Artful plot | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Imaginative concepts | x ¹² | x | | x | x | x | x | | | | x |
| Suspense | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Language & style</i> | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Elegance | x | | x | | | x | | x | | x | |
| Clarity | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| <i>Verisimilitude</i> | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Credibility | x | x | x | | | x | | x | x | | |
| <i>Accessibility</i> | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Simplicity | x | x | x | x | x | x | | x | x | x | |
| Coherence | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| <i>Didactic value</i> | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Morality | | | | | | | | | | | x |
| Propriety | x | | | | | | | | | | |
| Dignity | x | | | | | x | x | x | x | | |
| Judgement | | | | | | | | x | | | |
| <i>Traditional rules & forms</i> | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | x | x | x | | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |

¹¹ For the relatively brief poems, no indications are recorded for plot or suspense.

¹² While the several *romances* are uneven in qualities, recognition is given for notable features in individual poems.

The stories introduced into the text--variously integrated with the sequence of adventures of Don Quixote and Sancho--have been the subject of typically discordant critical comment. They have been regarded as totally appropriate provision of variety, dramatic relief and suspense; alternatively, they have been criticized as irrelevant interpolations, detracting from the principal narrative; Carrasco touches on this concept:

Una de las tachas que ponen a la tal historia...es que el autor pone en ella una novela intitulada *El curioso impertinente*, no por mala ni por mal razonada, sino por no ser de aquel lugar, ni tiene que ver con la historia de su merced del señor don Quijote. (II, 3, 562)

While Cervantes appears to acknowledge the existence of unfavourable perceptions of his interpolated stories, it is obvious that he regarded *El curioso impertinente*, a totally independent narrative, as too good an example of his art to be left on the shelf.¹³ This exemplary tale, with a strong psychological bias, does include significant aspects which parallel basic themes in *Don Quixote*. The behaviour of Anselmo, like that of Don Quixote, demonstrates the way in which obsession subverts perceptions of reality. Critics have offered a bewildering variety of explanations for Anselmo's destructive course.¹⁴ An approach which seems more appropriate to the tone of the story, and to the information which the author provides, suggests that Anselmo--conscious of his licentious history--is not able to tolerate his perception of Camila's relative moral superiority. He becomes

¹³ Arguments for and against the inclusion of the story have been reviewed by Américo Castro, *El pensamiento de Cervantes* (1967 edition), pp.121-23.

¹⁴ Summarized by R. M. Flores, "Una posible protofábula a *El curioso impertinente* de Cervantes", in *Cervantes* 18 (1998), pp.134-43.

fixated on destroying her virtue to establish dominant status. Like Don Quixote, Anselmo returns to a recognition of reality when death is imminent.

Cervantes' technique of leaving interpretation open to the reader is amply demonstrated in *Don Quixote*. More explicitly demonstrated, in the Italianate tale *El curioso impertinente*, is the range of "characteristics commended"--the artful plot (its structure reminiscent of the theatre, with three phases-- the development of the scheme, the conversion of Camila and Lotario into lovers, and the dramatic dénouement of divine retribution), imaginative concepts, suspense, and unassuming elegance in language. Despite the priest's unfavourable comment regarding its unconvincing relationships in the context of Spanish family life (I, 35, 371), less biased readers would be inclined to grant it verisimilitude. The story is coherent, being stated and ordered with simplicity. It deals with ethical, as much as moral, considerations and does so with dignity and mature judgement. In trying to dissuade Anselmo from his scheme, Lotario says:

Dime, Anselmo, si el cielo, o la suerte buena, te hubiera hecho señor y legítimo poseedor de un finísimo diamante, de cuya bondad y quilates estuviesen satisfechos cuantos lapidarios le vieses...y tú mismo lo creyeses así, sin saber otra cosa en contrario, ¿sería justo que te viniese en deseo de tomar aquel diamante, y ponerle entre un yunque y un martillo, y allí, a pura fuerza de golpes y brazos, probar si es tan duro y tan fino como dicen? (I, 33, 335)

In the story of Grisóstomo and Marcela (I, 12-14, 110 ff), Cervantes confirms his departures from the classical pastoral model, with the presentation of human conflict disturbing the Arcadian ideal, plus argument

for feminine independence. The distressed lover is now deceased and the maiden eloquent in self-defence against imputations of cruelty:

[E]l verdadero amor...ha de ser voluntario, y no forzoso. Siendo esto así...¿por qué queréis que rinda mi voluntad por fuerza, obligada no más de que decís que me queréis bien? (I, 14, 130-31)

In this episode, as in *Galatea*, Cervantes introduces passion and violence into the artificial bucolic idyll. As an example of the genre, apart from his re-development of the traditional form, it displays adherence to applicable elements of the "characteristics commended" in literary production. With regard to verisimilitude, it is a fresh and realistic presentation of reasoned feminine independence in lieu of the tradition of capricious disdain.

Eugenio's story of Leandra (I, 51, 505 ff) is a more conventional sentimental tale, with pastoral background, of a young girl who is dazzled by the glamorous military style of Vicente de la Rosa, a showy deceiver, on his return to the village. She becomes infatuated, ignores her faithful rustic admirers and elopes with Vicente, only to be robbed and abandoned. A traditional moral is pointed when the disgraced Leandra is placed in a convent by her father; her village admirers seek consolation in a pastoral setting. This over-familiar theme is rescued by spare but eloquent and pictorially evocative narrative. The narrator of the story, one of the disappointed lovers, employs fresh satirical language in a description of the villain's pretentious displays:

Vino a nuestro pueblo un Vicente de la Rosa...
 vestido a la soldadesca, pintado con mil colores,
 lleno de mil dijes de cristal y sutiles cadenas de acero.

.....
 [E]ste bravo, este galán, este músico, este poeta. fue
 visto y mirado muchas veces de Leandra. (I, 51, 506-07)

In another tale in pastoral style, the disruption of the rich Camacho's wedding, (II, 20-21, 678 ff), a poorer rival, Basilio, acts out an ingenious scheme to prevent his beloved Quiteria from marrying the wealthy countryman. Cervantes weaves his plot around several sub-texts: the lavish liberality of Camacho's preparations; the artful devices of Basilio in his feigned suicide and consolatory marriage to Quiteria while seemingly dying; and the ultra-rational acceptance of the turn of events by Camacho. Some aspects of the story seem ethically unsound, unless "all is fair in love"; some stretch credibility, such as the mechanisms involved in Basilio's self-stabbing; but other "characteristics commended" appear satisfied. The mature dignity of Camacho's resignation adds an unusual human touch to a romantically acceptable ending.

The complex sentimental involvements of Cardenio, Luscinda, Don Fernando and Dorotea (I, 23-24, 222 ff; I, 27-29, 261 ff; I, 36. 371-80) are more effectively interwoven with the affairs of Don Quixote than the short story of *El curioso impertinente*. Despite the emotional extravagance of Cardenio and Luscinda, and ambiguity in the late reversion of Don Fernando to his connection to Dorotea, there is a structural coherence in their tangled love affairs. Because of her bold participation in the plot to convey Don Quixote homeward, Dorotea emerges as the most vivid character of the group, a fact to suggest that the hero's adventures interest the reader more than the unrelated elements of the interpolated story.

The moral correctness--in very conventional terms--of the contrived resolution, is less impressive than the effect of Cervantes' affirmation of the power of the form of words, unflinching throughout. The priest, referring to Don Quixote's ready acceptance of Dorotea as the Princess Micomicona, says:

¿no es cosa estraña ver con cuanta facilidad cree este desventurado hidalgo todas estas invenciones y mentiras, sólo porque llevan el estilo y modo de sus libros? (I, 30, 309)

The recurrent Moorish theme, in the stories of the captive (I, 39-41, 395 ff) and of Ricote and Ana Félix (II, 53, 929-936; II, 63, 1004-1009), carries with it historical and auto-biographical information from Cervantes' time as a soldier and captive, as well as touching on the delicate issue, under the Counter-Reformation, of freedom of expression. The story of the captive, Ruy Pérez de Viedma, and Zoraida--the young Moorish woman whose faith in the Virgin Mary, taught her by a Christian slave in her father's household, was the moving force in the escape--has two literary aspects. The first part of the captive's tale is essentially historical, reflecting Cervantes' first-hand knowledge of the harsh conditions of captivity and of the military actions of the time. It embodies the precepts which the author puts forward for the writing of history--veracity, impartiality, comprehensive detail and explanatory exposition--though with the captive, not the novel's narrator, as expositor. The heroism of the Christians is emphasized (Cervantes included) but the depiction of Moorish characters is notably even-handed. The second element of the story, the escape, tends to the theatrical in

invention, akin to the author's *comedias* on the Moorish theme, *Los tratos de Argel* (1580) and *Los baños de Argel* (1582 ?; post 1605 ?). The coherent and credible, if elaborate, plot is balanced by the realistic treatment of the interplay of diverse ideologies, as in the emotional pleading and argument between Zoraida and her father when he is to be abandoned.

The converging tales of Ana Félix and her father, Ricote, are strongly suggestive of ethical considerations. Cervantes does not preach, or even declare his views. The moriscos do not question the justice of their expulsion from Spain (Ricote goes so far as to commend the wisdom of the decree), yet the inherent presentation of the dangerous questions, in the Counter-Reformist environment of the time--of "freedom of conscience", and the disruption of human lives by ethnical and religious bias--is very plain. Sancho goes so far as to place loyalty merited by a neighbour above strict legality when he assures Ricote: "por mí no serás descubierto" (II, 54, 935).

Ana's story of her enforced departure from Spain and the circumstances of her return is, perhaps, the flimsiest of the interpolated material in the novel (II, 43, 1005-09). It lacks the historical features of the captive's account and it employs less probable contrivances, such as Ana's Christian lover pretending to be a woman to avoid the homosexual enthusiasms of the King of Algiers. The most redeeming features of this episode are the concise and expressive language and the sympathetic treatment of human problems created by the expulsion of the Moors.

For the stories in *Don Quixote*, demonstration of the qualities commended--and the presence of some qualities condemned--in Chapter I is summarized in Table IV.

TABLE IV

| CHARACTERISTICS COMMENDED | STORIES | | | |
|--|-------------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------------|
| | <u>Italianate</u> | <u>Pastoral</u> | <u>Moorish</u> | <u>Sentimental</u> |
| <i>Entertainment</i> | | | | |
| Inventiveness | | | | |
| Artful plot | x | x | x | |
| Imaginative concepts | x | x | x | |
| Suspense | x | | | |
| Language & style | | | | |
| Elegance | x | x | x | x |
| Clarity | x | x | x | x |
| <i>Verisimilitude</i> | | | | |
| Credibility | x | | x | x |
| <i>Accessibility</i> | | | | |
| Simplicity | x | x | x | |
| Coherence | x | x | x | x |
| <i>Didactic value</i> | | | | |
| Morality | x | | | x |
| Propriety | | | | x |
| Dignity | | x | x | |
| Judgement | x | x | | |
| <i>Traditional rules & forms</i> | | x | x | x |
| CHARACTERISTICS CONDEMNED | | | | |
| <i>Prolixity</i> | x | | | |
| <i>Lack of Verisimilitude</i> | | | x | |

CHAPTER III Galatea and *Viaje del Parnaso*

[N]o puede negarse que los estudios de esta facultad...traen consigo más que medianos prouechos, como son enriquecer el poeta considerando su propria lengua, y enseñorarse del artificio de la eloquencia que en ella cabe.¹⁵

These two works of Cervantes, *Galatea* and *Viaje del Parnaso*, were selected for review to establish whether the literary features identified in *Don Quixote* could be verified as consistent with concepts in Cervantes' other works that contain substantial comment on literature. Cervantes' earliest major work, *La Galatea*¹⁶ (1585), was a pastoral romance with significant departures from tradition. At the time, the pastoral genre was extremely popular in Spain; the author and many of his contemporaries were admirers of the eclogues of Garcilaso de la Vega and the poetry of Fray Luis de León,¹⁷ so that it might be expected that an attempt to win recognition from the literary community and the reading public should follow a popular pattern. The classical and Renaissance forms of the genre present amorous discourse of idealized and refined characters "living literature"¹⁸ in idyllic natural settings, abstracted from the real world. Into this calm bucolic picture, Cervantes introduces violent episodes of passion, deceit and vengeance, with tears and sighs mingled with "razones de filosofía" (Prólogo xlix). These tales of high drama in prose, of tumultuous

15 Cervantes, *La Galatea*, edition of Schevill and Bonilla, Vol.I (1914), Prólogo p.xlviii.

16 References to *Galatea* are identified by Book, page and line numbers of Schevill and Bonilla's edition (1914).

17 José Montero Reguera, "La *Galatea* y el *Persiles*", in *Cervantes* (1995), p.157.

18 Dominick Finello, "Shepherds at Play: Literary Conventions and Disguises" in *Cervantes and the Pastoral* (1986), p.115.

conflicts in human relationships, of love frustrated by authority, of jealousies, betrayal, and murder, are embellished with a liberal admixture of poems in the pastoral convention.

Colocada en la tradición pastoril, es de una novedad absoluta, que renueve el material de acarreo, al mismo tiempo que novela con aspectos de una realidad vedada por los canones.¹⁹

The poems are extremely varied, representing the melodious sufferings of lovesick shepherds: contests with verse riddles, glosses, poetic dialogues, games of *los propósitos*. The poetic forms include *octavas reales*, *villancicos*, *liras*, *redondinos*, *sextinas*, *coplas reales*, and sonnets. In Book IV, Lenio and Tirsi debate the nature of love, trading poems in a medieval, matched construction "question and answer" pattern. Cervantes offers ample evidence that he wishes to be considered versatile, as well as competent, as a poet. He would do so again, in *Don Quixote*, some twenty years later. In the poems of *Galatea*, the control of meter and verse forms illustrates technical competence:

Con mas facilidad contar pudiese
del mar los granos de la blanca arena,
y las estrellas de la octava esfera,
que no las ansias, el dolor, la pena
a qu'el fiero rigor de tu aspereza
sin hauerte ofendido, me condemna. (III, 167, 4-9)

The fact that none of Cervantes' poetry appears in either of the two anthologies edited by Pedro Espinosa (*Flores de poetas ilustres de España*,

¹⁹ J. B. Avalle-Arce, in his edition of *La Galatea* (1987), pp.xxix-xxx.

1605 and 1611) suggests that, despite Cervantes' declared enthusiasm, his verse was not highly regarded, even when his prose work had already gained an international reputation.

In *Galatea*, the songs and poems tend to maintain the traditional aesthetic themes of neo-platonic love. The ambivalence--the tension between violent circumstance and the bucolic scene, whose denizens are talented musically, articulate, and courtly in manner--constitutes an early indication of the author's much-noted inclination to contrasting ideas in his presentation of events. The Eclogue of Book III provides a striking contrast between pastoral and romance components of the work. So extreme is the differentiation between the traditional displays of "daños de amor" and the "reality" of seriously troubled lives, that Cervantes may be accused of mocking the rather competitive expressions of torment and self-pity.

The entertainment values of *Galatea* derive mainly from the intricate interwoven stories, a complex structure of plots marked by coincidence and heavily charged with emotion. The interplay of interrupted stories represents a technique which recurs in *Don Quixote*. Familiar devices, such as coincidence, confusions of identity, conflict with parental authority, and despairing attempts at suicide, provide justification for poetic expression of heightened sentiment in which the suffering of the speaker is prominent.

¡O venturoso para mi este día,
do puedo poner freno al triste llanto,
y alegrarme de aver dado mi vida
a quien darmela puede, o darme muerte! (I, 65, 31-34)

The introduction of realistic elements of violence into the affairs of migrants into the pastoral life may be regarded as an innovative departure from bucolic blandness for the genre. Suspense is achieved in the interruption and proliferation of narratives, and of the problems that interfere with the amatory desires of the characters. One major problem is Galatea's refusal to accept the role which the perceptions and interests of her pastoral admirers would impose on her, an independence eloquently expressed by Marcela in *Don Quixote*.

The language of *Galatea* is elevated, with more rhetorical style than bucolic rusticity. Cervantes constructs harmonies, not invariably successfully, of image, sonority and thought--to which a reader may react with delighted recognition--to create effects akin to what Santillana called "invenciones sutiles".

In Book VI, in perhaps the least successful invention of the work, the muse Caliope appears at the graveside of Meliso (Diego Hurtado de Mendoza?)²⁰ with her effusive tribute, comprehensive rather than discriminating, to some hundred poets contemporary with Cervantes. Caliope herself seems apologetic regarding the inadequacy and generality of her language. The fulsome flattery of literary lights, great and small, would appear to be a long-standing social custom. Since there are many similar passages in *Viaje del Parnaso*, the laudatory sequences will not be considered here as literary criticism.

The matter of verisimilitude is difficult to deal with in a genre that is artificial by convention, since satisfaction on this point must depend

²⁰ According to Mary Gaylord Randel (116-17), many of the characters represent historical persons.

on the expectation and understanding of the readers. As Castro has noted, "la novela pastoril es género idealista, conscientemente irreal."²¹ Therefore, what seems improbable today--such as (in Book I) Lisandro's pouring out the full tale of his affairs to a virtual stranger, Elicio, over the body of Carino (the victim of Lisandro's vengeance)--may then have been considered acceptable, an expedient convenient to author and reader; especially so, since the accessibility of the work would seem to be limited to an elite public that might appreciate its complex fabric and refined language and the talents of the author.

In conclusion, the didactic content of *La Galatea* is not prominent, leaning more to Stoic ethical concepts than to specifically Christian morality. An analogy to the question of verisimilitude may be noted in the stylized manners and ideas of the shepherds and shepherdesses, their conformance to conventions of the genre in expression despite their violence in action. The included poems, while carefully crafted, invariably clear and appropriate to the circumstances, cannot be termed inspired or inspiring. The individual story lines, like the language, are not in themselves obscure but lack a central focus and positive resolution.

In *Viaje del Parnaso*, Cervantes describes an imaginary voyage which reflects his long journey "in search of his proper place in the literature of his country".²² As author, narrator, and protagonist, he presents himself as a poet whose significant achievements have been insufficiently rewarded. In sustained *terza rima* and in satirical terms; Cervantes

²¹ Américo Castro, *El pensamiento de Cervantes* (1972 edition), p.179.

²² James Y. Gibson, Prologue to his translation of *Viaje del Parnaso* (1883), p.iii.

declares his critical perceptions of the state of Spanish letters, convinced of the superiority of his own literary values. His farewell to Madrid sets the tone:

Adiós, Madrid, adiós tu Prado y fuentes, ...
 Y a dos mil desvalidos pretendientes

 Adios, teatros públicos, honrados
 Por la ignorancia que ensalzada veo
 En cien mil disparates recitados. (I, 120-126)²³

Setting off to change his lamentable status, the lack of recognition of his work and the resultant poverty, Cervantes expresses his intent and aspirations with typical irony--he will go to Parnassus, taste the waters of the fountain of Aganipe, "y ser de allí adelante / poeta ilustre, o al menos magnífico" (I, 35-36). Rejecting an unsatisfying reality, he sets forth--like Don Quixote--on his quest.

Cervantes is well received at Cartagena, by Mercury, and is provided with transport to Parnassus in the god's fanciful ship constructed of poems in a great variety of forms. Mercury enlists him to aid Apollo to resist the onslaught of a rabble of twenty thousand bad poets.

Throughout the entertaining account of the whimsically imaginative and comic events of the journey, two recurring strains of criticism predominate. First, the author lists his grievances over broken promises linked to a hoped-for place in the augmented train--virtually a literary court--of the Viceroy at Naples, and the implications of his failure, at the assembly on Parnassus, to obtain a seat--which should have been due him

²³ References to *Viaje del Parnaso* are identified by Chapter and line number of the edition of Miguel Herrero García (1983).

considering the published works which he enumerates. Accordingly, Cervantes remains "en pie, que no hay asiento bueno / si el favor no le labra, o la riqueza" (IV, 95-96). Second, Cervantes expresses his views of the merits and faults of contemporary literature, directly and indirectly, in discussing or presenting diverse genres, topoi, and motifs. To all this he adds a degree of polemic attack on unfriends. The comments on authors, favourable and otherwise, are rendered doubtful by the sheer number of names involved--some one hundred and forty persons are mentioned--and the repetitive character of such comment, suggesting a continuation of the amiable social custom noted regarding Caliope's song in *Galatea*.

Both by example and by insistent specific commentary, in *Viaje del Parnaso* the author makes a plea for clear, precise and elegant language, even when dealing with gross subject matter. He opposes pretentiousness, obscurity, prolixity and circumlocution.

Verisimilitude in outright fantasy may be equated to recognizable allegory. Some connections, such as disguised personalities and topical allusions, may fade from view with time and distance, but *Viaje del Parnaso* has maintained its relevance to societal attitudes and literary values over the centuries. However artfully represented, with mythical figures, dreams, classical parallels, and parodies, Cervantes' critiques call for simplicity and coherence--and excoriate vainglory, pomposity and vulgarity. Didacticism is disguised in this mock epic of conscious literary art. There is little attention to propriety but strong support for the dignity due to merit and mature judgement. As in *Don Quixote*, Cervantes seems eager to sweep away trashy works, offering aesthetic and ethical standards based on the classical concepts and values of Aristotle and Horace, and on

the poetic techniques of Petrarch and Tasso, as interpreted by Spanish poets like Garcilaso de la Vega--if not to re-educate public taste, to convince the literary world of the fundamental soundness of his own views and his work. Cervantes' motivation would appear to be the moral indignation which, according to Juvenal, is the essential spur of poetry.

CHAPTER IV Review of relevant literary criticism.

That he [Cervantes] knew the fundamental [literary] doctrines of his epoch has been shown by Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo, Marcel Bataillon, Américo Castro, Martín de Riquer...and others. On the other hand, attempts to determine what his position was to then-contemporary doctrines have failed to produce even the rudiments of consensus. ²⁴

This review deals with twentieth-century critical commentary on the literary values propounded and demonstrated in *Don Quixote*. The major phases of literary criticism, in each of which one particular approach tends to dominate, reflect generational shifts in critical fashions on an international scale.

The changes in bias or emphasis from historical romanticism, to communications techniques and systems of meaning, to preoccupation with the properties and instruments of language and narrative, represent revision or transference of authority. The continuing search for a "scientific" basis for criticism carries with it an increasingly technical approach to works of art. The alternative critical approaches to literature, such as those based on dialectical materialism or on feminist orientation, have not enjoyed equivalent popularity or prominence.

As an example of the apparent urge to declare a "difference", there is the alteration in critical perception of Don Quixote himself--from the idea, dominant in the first part of the century, of a protagonist transformed by a heroic image of himself, to that of an egotistical butt of

²⁴ Martínez-Bonati, *"Don Quixote" and the Poetics of the Novel* (1992), p.21.

satire, ridiculously out of touch with reality,²⁵ a characterization more common in the middle years of the century.

However, the great diversity of critical opinion on Cervantes' work has more fundamental causes than literary fashion or ideological orientation. The ambiguities stemming from the author's consistent presentation of multiple points of view, his various voices, his complex mixtures of irony, satire, parody and pathos in discourse and narrative, form a reasonable basis for divergent perceptions and interpretations.

For the early years of the twentieth century, the predominant critical approach to *Don Quixote* was a historical romanticism exemplified in Américo Castro's influential work, *El pensamiento de Cervantes*. His approach may be considered a scholarly consolidation of the Romantic outlook, including the view that Cervantes expresses humanist yearning for a world less mundane and less corrupted by gross materialism.

Literary criticism published during that period tends to concentrate on interpretation of the significance of the major characters and the development of techniques of narration, but tells relatively little of Cervantes' values in literature. Unamuno, for example, enthuses over the principal characters of *Don Quixote*, as distinct from the author,²⁶ imbuing the novel with allegorical content and romantic national symbolism. He makes a characteristically subjective declaration, stating:

¿Qué me importa lo que Cervantes quiso o no quiso poner allí y lo que realmente puso? Lo vivo es lo que allí descubro. 27

²⁵ Allen, *Don Quixote: Hero or Fool?* (1969), p.74.

²⁶ Unamuno, *Vida de Don Quijote y Sancho* (1988 edition), p. 525.

²⁷ Unamuno, *Del sentimiento trágico de la vida* (1983 edition), p.304.

Relating the content of *Don Quixote* to the historical conditions of Cervantes' time, Unamuno sees reflections of his own social consciousness:

Cervantes...critica vicios y costumbres de su época
y enseña virtudes...aplicable también a los hombres
y estados de cualquier tiempo y lugar.²⁸

Such vices, customs and virtues may well include failings, practices and values in the literature of every period, as well as socio-economic and political considerations.

Casaldüero remarks on the emphasis given in *Don Quixote* to the discussion and evaluation of literature:

Es de notar que en el *Quijote*...no se leen unos versos
o se cuenta una historia, sin que inmediatamente
se pronuncia un juicio.²⁹

Nevertheless, scholars differ over the degree to which comments on literary matters, made by characters in the novel, express the views of the author. Moreover, reasoned exposition of the basis for judgement is notably lacking. Schevill accepts the opinions of virtually all of Cervantes' characters as representing the views of the author.³⁰ Morel-Fatio states, "Cervantes takes advantage of the characters to set forth certain cherished literary theories".³¹ Riley considers that the comments of the Canon and priest on books of chivalry may be taken as one portion of the author's

²⁸ Unamuno, *Vida de Don Quijote y Sancho* (1988 edition), p.33.

²⁹ Casaldüero, *Sentido y forma del Quijote* (1949), p.60.

³⁰ Schevill, *Cervantes* (1919), p.106.

³¹ Morel-Fatio, "Social and Historical Background " in *Cervantes Across the Centuries* (1947), p.124.

ideas.³² For the drama, specifically, he endorses the Canon's criticism of the anachronisms and geographic improbabilities, "se condena el abuso excesivo de las unidades de acción, tiempo y lugar".³³ Nevertheless, he recognizes that a pervasive ambiguity impedes the identification of Cervantes' thoughts:

Su propensión a ver las cosas de cualquier asunto, que halla cauce de expresión en su ironía equívoca y su preferencia por el diálogo crítico más que las afirmaciones directas, hacen que sea un problema delicado el fijar con precisión sus propias opiniones personales.³⁴

Bataillon distinguishes ideas of the author from those of his characters:

[D]ueño de sus fábulas, sin identificarse con ningún personaje convertido en narrador-moralizador, pero simpatizando con todas sus criaturas.³⁵

Gilman, while objecting to bias in criticism, "un tipo de crítica cuya violenta ceguera no distingue--o no quiere distinguir--entre la valoración literaria y la valoración moral," still takes specific judgements on books, as in the priest's scrutiny of Don Quixote's library, to be those of the author.³⁶ Allen maintains that the author's strategies of irony distinguish his views from the conflicting ideas of his characters, including his chronicler, Cide Hamete.³⁷ Eisenberg, noting the prevalence

³² Riley, "Teoría literaria" in *Suma Cervantina* (1973), p.304.

³³ Ibid., p.307.

³⁴ Ibid., p.293.

³⁵ Bataillon, "Relaciones literarias" in *Suma Cervantina* (1973), p.229.

³⁶ Gilman, "Los inquisidores literarios de Cervantes" in *Actas del Tercero Congreso Internacional de Hispanistas* (1970), pp.6-7.

³⁷ Allen, *Don Quixote: Hero or Fool Part II* (1979), p.110.

of literary discourse and opinion in *Don Quixote* and in other works of Cervantes,³⁸ takes the position that every character is a mouthpiece for the author unless otherwise indicated in the text.³⁹ His confidence in the reliability of the Canon's opinions is complete, yet he states that the books of chivalry are criticized as poor literature, not because they are morally dangerous.⁴⁰ Lewis-Smith, who regards the Canon as an "alter-ego" of Cervantes in his literary assessments, makes the point that the author's literary recommendations constitute an attempt to educate public taste.⁴¹

Flores examines the efficacy and limitations of certain critical techniques, proposing narratological methodology to overcome problems of perspectivism in approaching the text, and emphasizing the individual nature of each communicator and receiver of information.⁴² Consequently, he stresses the need to consider subjective influences on both the material communicated and the way in which it may be understood.⁴³ Parr, also basing his criticism on a narratological approach, indicates the importance of the reader's recognition of who is speaking, from what level of knowledge, and with what attitude to the circumstances.⁴⁴

Finello makes the point, as does Close, that it is the reader who must decide just who or what is being ridiculed in many of Cervantes'

³⁸ Eisenberg, *Estudios cervantinos* (1991), p.11.

³⁹ Eisenberg, *A Study of Don Quixote* (1993), Preface xv.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p.40.

⁴¹ Lewis-Smith, "Cervantes y los libros de caballería: Los gustos del público, el gusto cervantino y el propósito del *Quijote*" in *Insula* 538 (October 1991), pp.24-26.

⁴² Flores, "*Don Quijote de la Mancha: perspectivismo narrativo y perspectivismo crítico*" in *Revista Canadiense de Estudios Hispánicos*, Vol XXI,2 Invierno (1997), pp.273-93.

⁴³ Flores, "Don Quijote y su defensa del infante Andrés" in *Romance Notes* Vol.39 (1999), p.124.

⁴⁴ Parr, "Some narratological problems in *Don Quixote*" in *Studies in Honor of Donald W. Bleznick* (1995), p.127.

ironic passages. He maintains that, with a number of the characters imitating fiction, the opinions on literature of the speakers in *Don Quixote* are part of Cervantes' character delineation, not necessarily what the author thinks.⁴⁵

I had thought of the consideration of critical comment by chronological period as a device to reduce confusion, much like the convention of distinguishing between "hard" and "soft" critical approaches to *Don Quixote*, an established differentiation related to acceptance or rejection of the influences of romanticism or, perhaps simplistically, to admiring *Don Quixote* or considering him ridiculous. However, it would appear that revisions of critical approach, involving pretensions to science and new vocabularies, have failed to produce more profound insights or more unanimity in perception and interpretation.

The great divergence in critical opinions and interpretations creates difficulties in dealing with Cervantes' work. However, for the purposes of this thesis, attention will be concentrated on what the critics have to say regarding the specific features identified in Chapter II as primary concerns of Cervantes in literary matters. My review of secondary material will be presented thematically rather than chronologically under the following categories: Entertainment, Verisimilitude, Accessibility, Didactic Value, and Traditional Forms.

Entertainment

The appeal of *Don Quixote* as enjoyable reading is, arguably, universally recognized, although Cervantes' work has been termed

⁴⁵ Finello, *Pastoral Themes and Forms in Cervantes' Fiction* (1994), p.18.

conventional, vulgar and mediocre by some early critics.⁴⁶ Most commentators agree with the author's high opinion of his own inventive talent in offering compelling plots, imaginative concepts, and characters with whom the reader becomes increasingly engaged.⁴⁷ For example, Finello cites Don Quixote's brief spontaneous example of a tale of knight-errantry--the Knight of the Lake (I, 50, 499-501)--as a model of creative story telling, for its visual qualities, poetic intensity and imaginative concepts.⁴⁸ Casaldueiro identifies the same passage as an example of Cervantes' concept of style in a tale of knight errantry, evoking *admiratio* without extravagance or pedantry.⁴⁹

A most generally admired aspect of Cervantes' prose is the flexible and convincing adaptation of vocabulary and style to the great diversity of voices, from rustic to courtly, from underworld rogues to grandees of Spain. Navarro notes the inventiveness in lexical formation, as well as in plot-making:

Es un hecho...que otros lectores 'discretos y simples' de entonces [siglo XVII] admiran también en el *Quijote* el copioso lenguaje y la ingeniosa invención.⁵⁰

Unamuno so valued the language of *Don Quixote* that he considered it above the capabilities of Cervantes.⁵¹

⁴⁶ Cited by Carlos Varo, *Génesis y evolución del Quijote* (1968), p.82.

⁴⁷ In *Viaje del Parnaso*, Mercury calls him "raro inventor" (I, 223) and Cervantes says of himself, "Yo soy aquél que en la invención excede / A muchos" (IV, 28-29).

⁴⁸ Finello, *Cervantes: Essays on Literary and Social Polemics* (1998), p.73.

⁴⁹ Casaldueiro, *Sentido y forma del Quijote* (1949), p.187.

⁵⁰ Navarro, in the Introduction to his edition (1988) of Unamuno's *Vida de Don Quijote y Sancho* (1905), p.21.

⁵¹ Unamuno, *Vida de Don Quijote y Sancho* (1988 edition), p.525.

Hatzfeld comments on the attractiveness of the frequent use of elements of folklore--popular sayings, proverbs, phrases from legend and song--of colourful, graphic description, plus the avoidance of clichés and pomposity.⁵² He commends, while others oppose, the technique of narration involving interruptions and interpolations in story lines for relief, variety and suspense,⁵³ and remarks on the matching of language to the social level of individual speakers.

Castro praises the imaginative concepts of Cervantes' poetry, although he criticizes technical inconsistencies and a lack of lyric quality.⁵⁴ Riley also commends the poetry, for elevated and sonorous language, harmoniously ornamented and without affectation.⁵⁵

Schevill notes approvingly Cervantes' consistent ridicule of pretentiousness, but complains of the tedious, perfunctory, and scarcely objective praise of long lists of contemporary writers in *Galatea* and *Viaje del Parnaso*.⁵⁶ In full agreement, Morel-Fatio characterizes the "Canto de Caliope" in *Galatea* as "insipid, fulsome flattery in a shower of laudatory epithets, so promiscuous that they have no meaning."⁵⁷

Rosenblat enumerates the characteristics cherished by Cervantes for his language, as stated in *Don Quixote*: "alto, festivo, llano, claro, elegante, discreto"; and features condemned: "vulgar, oscuro, afectado." He concludes: "Su ideal era una lengua llana sin vulgaridad y una lengua culta sin afectación."⁵⁸ Rosenblat comments at some length on the figures of

52 Hatzfeld, *El Quijote como obra de arte del lenguaje* (1949), p.80.

53 Ibid., p.133.

54 Américo Castro, *El pensamiento de Cervantes* (1972 edition), p.173.

55 Riley, "Teoría literaria" in *Suma Cervantina* (1973), p.298.

56 Schevill, *Cervantes* (1919), pp. 98, 235, and 241.

57 Morel-Fatio, "Social and Historical Background" in *Cervantes across the Centuries* (1947), p.124.

58 Rosenblat, "La lengua de Cervantes" in *Suma Cervantina* (1973), pp.324-325.

speech employed and notes Don Quixote's almost pedantic insistence on proper usage and clear understanding of words, even to the frequent correction of others in conversation.

There is critical agreement on inventiveness and extraordinary command of language--idiom and cadence--in Cervantes' work. Little is said--with Rosenblat's comment above as an exception--about the author's standards for literary excellence.

Verisimilitude

The discussion of verisimilitude, prominent in *Don Quixote*, illustrates concern for poetic truth, a philosophical resolution of the validity of imaginative fiction against historical reality. The objective indicated is the augmentation of credibility in the fantastic and the introduction of the marvellous in stories based on real events. The Canon tells the priest:

Hanse de casar las fábulas mentirosas con el entendimiento de los que las leyeron...estas cosas no podía hacer el que huyere de la verosimilitud y la imitación. (I, 47, 482)

The Aristotelian literary precepts for poetry and fiction prevalent in Cervantes' time call for the avoidance of the miraculous and supernatural in favour of literature which imitates nature. This is the position taken by Bonilla y San Martín and Schevill.⁵⁹ Schevill criticizes inconsistencies in verisimilitude in the presentation of the story of

⁵⁹ Bonilla y San Martín, *Cervantes y su obra* (1916), p.88; Schevill, *Cervantes* (1919), p.106.

Cardenio and Don Fernando.⁶⁰ Cervantes makes it clear, however, that his concern is credibility, or acceptance, by avoiding offence to the reader's intelligence. The Canon comments, "tanto la mentira es mejor cuando más parece verdadera" (I, 47, 482) and, in *Viaje del Parnaso*, Cervantes concurs:

Que entonces la mentira satisface
cuando verdad parece, y está escrita
con gracia, que al discreto y simple aplace. (VI, 61-63)

Castro comments on the author's treatment of the ambiguous nature of "la verdad" and Cervantes' selection of harmony in the mind of the reader as the criterion of verisimilitude.⁶¹ Hatzfeld emphasizes the recurring conflict in the text between influences of the imagination and the experience of reality.⁶² Casaldueiro observes the very serious concern with which Cervantes views the quality of contemporary fiction, as the author confronts the deformation of his ideals--in *Don Quixote*.⁶³ According to Varo, the self-transformation of Don Quixote is achieved by rejection of those parts of reality which oppose or restrict human hunger for love and glory--seen as the universal basis for literature.⁶⁴

Allen suggests that the idea of verisimilitude is blurred by the uncertain nature ascribed to reality, but counts it among the values promoted by Cervantes.⁶⁵ Referring to the continuing influence of Erasmus

⁶⁰ Schevill, *Cervantes* (1919), p.241.

⁶¹ Castro, *El pensamiento de Cervantes* (1972 edition), pp.27 and 82.

⁶² Hatzfeld, "The Style of Don Quixote" in *Cervantes Across the Centuries* (1947), p.95.

⁶³ Casaldueiro, *Sentido y forma del Quijote* (1949), p.344.

⁶⁴ Varo, *Génesis y evolución del "Quijote"* (1968), p.406.

⁶⁵ Allen, *Don Quixote: Hero or Fool, Part II* (1979), pp. 45 and 53.

in the seventeenth century, despite the intense opposition of the Church, Fuentes sees a resistance to monolithic dogmatism in Cervantes' concepts of uncertainty or duality of truth and the illusionary character of appearances.⁶⁶ Eisenberg discusses verisimilitude as the basis for latitude in concepts, with the acceptance of marvels governed by reader receptiveness.⁶⁷ This point was made by Percas de Ponseti as well: "El lector constituye una variante en el grado de verosimilitud de la ficción literaria."⁶⁸ Williamson states that verisimilitude was a Renaissance requisite in literature, rather than an Aristotelian idea of mimesis. He notes that insistence on empirical possibility excludes the marvellous.⁶⁹ Riley considers that Cervantes believed "invention should not conflict with an intelligent man's apprehension of reality",⁷⁰ and that respect for probability renders the marvellous credible.

All of the above is consistent with the identification of two aspects of verisimilitude--historical probability (*podía ser*) and poetic ideal (*debe ser*),⁷¹ essentially in accord with Carrasco's exposition in *Don Quixote* (II, 3, 560).

Accessibility

Las obras de arte no son misterios sólo accesibles
a los iniciados, son expresiones de emociones comunes
y corrientes.⁷²

⁶⁶ Fuentes, *Cervantes o la crítica de la lectura* (1976), p.67.

⁶⁷ Eisenberg, *A Study of Don Quixote* (1987), p.105.

⁶⁸ Percas de Ponseti, *Cervantes y su concepto de arte, Tomo I* (1975), p.149.

⁶⁹ Williamson, *The Half-way House of Fiction* (1984), pp. 73 and 88.

⁷⁰ Riley, *Cervantes' Theory of the Novel* (1992), p.198.

⁷¹ Riley, "Teoría literaria" in *Suma Cervantina* (1973), pp.316-317.

⁷² Ramiro de Maeztu, quoted by Castro in *El pensamiento de Cervantes* (1972 edition), p.19.

Cervantes' concern that literature be attractive and accessible to simple readers, as well as to a sophisticated elite, is noted by Schevill, who remarks on the author's demand for simplicity and his ridicule of pedantry and pretentiousness.⁷³ Many critics register the latter point, but there is little comment on his claim that simplicity and coherence in the work, and the avoidance of elaboration, are essential to public acceptance and reader enjoyment. Allen does cite Cervantes' concern for craftsmanship, unity and coherence, plus the avoidance of pedantry and pseudo-scholarship.⁷⁴

Touching indirectly on the matter of elaboration, there is considerable critical comment on a related theme, the interruption of the principal narrative by subsidiary plots and the interpolation of other stories. Although common in classical and in Renaissance works,⁷⁵ and accepted by some critics as a legitimate introduction of variety and relief, the practice has been criticized by others as distracting elaboration to the degree that the supplementary material is not integrated fully into the main story line. Schevill and Unamuno would agree on this criticism,⁷⁶ particularly for *El curioso impertinente*. In contrast, Hatzfeld commends such techniques as suspension of a narrative and delayed identification of characters to heighten anticipation;⁷⁷ and Aguirre touches on the "sober relief" from comic incidents that is provided by

⁷³ Schevill, *Cervantes* (1919), p.171.

⁷⁴ Allen, *Don Quixote: Hero or Fool?* Part II (1979), p.45.

⁷⁵ For example, Ariosto's *Orlando furioso*, which is mentioned several times in *Don Quijote*.

⁷⁶ Schevill, *Cervantes* (1919), p.243.

Unamuno, *Vida de don Quijote y Sancho* (1988 edition), p.156.

⁷⁷ Hatzfeld, *El Quijote como obra de arte de lenguaje* (1949), p.133.

interspersed stories.⁷⁸ Finello also treats of the advantages of interrupted story spans and mingled story lines.⁷⁹

Riley notes the Canon's condemnation of the abuse of the unities of action, time and place in the books of chivalry; such abuse, says the Canon, is destructive of structural coherence.⁸⁰ Riley remarks:

La teoría literaria contemporánea había heredado de la Antigüedad y la Edad Media la noción de que las digresiones episódicas embellecían y daban grandeza a la obra... El embellecimiento literario le inquietaba [a Cervantes].⁸¹

Williamson objects to the "loose, disorganized and often wearily digressive material" of the Spanish tales of knight-errantry.⁸² He observes that Cervantes "did not share the Canon's despair of writing literature that would appeal to the general public without losing the esteem of the cultivated minority."⁸³

Didactic Value

The clerics' view of the instructive content appropriate to literature demands explicit Catholic concepts of morality. The Canon expects Christian apologetics (I, 47, 481). Cervantes tends to promote the ethical concepts of classical writers. Critics are, characteristically, far from unanimous as to the perceived depth and nature of his declared Catholic faith. That he favours "limpieza y decoro" and dignity in literature,

⁷⁸ Aguirre, *La obra narrativa de Cervantes* (1976), p.179.

⁷⁹ Finello, *Cervantes: Essays on Literary and Social Polemics* (1998), p.45.

⁸⁰ Riley, "Teoría literaria" in *Suma Cervantina* (1973), p.307.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p.314.

⁸² Williamson, *The Half-way House of Fiction* (1984), p.70.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p.78.

demonstrating mature understanding of the human condition and human aspirations, is explicit in *Don Quixote*.

Unamuno maintains that the author teaches classical concepts of virtue, while Castro sees in *Don Quixote* lessons for manners of life and for literature.⁸⁴ Castro recognizes the existence of didactic literary criticism as a prominent sub-text in the novel. He comments on the respect shown for literary tradition and for moral values in Don Quixote's advice to Don Diego de Miranda for the guidance of his son's poetic endeavours (II, 16, 651). He considers Cervantes' religious ideas closer to those of Erasmus than to those of the Council of Trent, suggesting that morality can be separated from theology, that an individual experiences the result of higher conduct ("cada uno es artífice de su ventura").⁸⁵

Morel-Fatio comments on the less-than-generous treatment accorded to churchmen and their ideas in *Don Quixote*. While the Canon, and even the priest--in Morel-Fatio's view--are depicted with respect, there is a distinct lack of sympathy for the Duke's cleric, for the hermit, and for the religious processions.⁸⁶ Varo touches on the discord in critical opinion regarding the religious orientation of Cervantes, citing Casaldueiro, who considered the author a conventional "contrarreformista", while Bataillon called him an "erasmista", an adherent of Christian humanism.⁸⁷ Varo perceives a social and moral object in the presentation of the ideals of knight-errantry,⁸⁸ citing one of Don Quixote's many professions of faith:

⁸⁴ Castro, *El pensamiento de Cervantes* (1972 edition), p.173.

⁸⁵ Ibid., pp. 82, 250, and 332.

⁸⁶ Morel-Fatio, "Social and Historical Background" in *Cervantes Across the Centuries* (1947), p.102.

⁸⁷ Varo, *Génesis y evolución del "Quijote"* (1968), p.91.

⁸⁸ Ibid., p.384.

[C]aballero soy,...aunque en mi alma tienen su propio asiento las tristezas, las degracias y las desventuras, no por eso se ha ahuyentado della la compasión que tengo de ajenas desdichas. (II, 12, 622)

Referring to *Viaje del Parnaso*, Bataillon notes a definite moral cast to Cervantes' criticism of the work of bad poets, "inmoral, licencioso ...hiriente", contrasted with the author's "amor...de la poesía...casta, no corrompida por la bajeza."⁸⁹ Eisenberg maintains, like Lewis-Smith, that in writing of the deficiencies of existing literature, Cervantes attempts to elevate public taste; specifically, to improve the readers' moral and literary standards.⁹⁰

On the matter of the priest's recommendation of censorship, Gilman is emphatic that Cervantes disagrees; yet he contends that, as the author states, the objective of the novel is to make the reader recognize the unfitness and danger to society of the degenerate books of chivalry and of popular contemporary theatre.⁹¹ Williamson identifies as didactic features in *Don Quixote* the insistence on unities of time and space in literature and the need for decorum, edification and moral utility.⁹² Redondo directs attention to the pervasiveness of the concept of justice presented in the novel, the recurring theme of defence against oppression.⁹³

The differences in perception and emphasis in the critics' views are greatest in this category, unconsciously mirroring the multiplicity of

⁸⁹ Bataillon, "Relaciones literarias" in *Suma cervantina* (1973), pp. 220 and 222.

⁹⁰ Eisenberg, *Estudios cervantinos* (1991), pp. 61 and 159.

⁹¹ Gilman, "Los inquisidores literarios de Cervantes" in *Actas del Tercer Congreso Internacional de Hispanistas* (1970), pp. 23 and 25.

⁹² Williamson, *The Half-way House of Fiction* (1984), p.73.

⁹³ Redondo, "El Quijote histórico-social" in *Cervantes* (1995), p.281.

viewpoints which Cervantes exploits so adeptly. Readers are left to synthesize the data according to their own formation and bias.

Traditional Forms

Cervantes combines an obvious respect for established literary rules and models with readiness to depart from convention, particularly in his prose. As Avalle-Arce and Riley put it: "Como siempre con Cervantes, la tradición literaria ha proveído modelos para superar, más que imitar."⁹⁴

The formal rules recommended in *Don Quixote* reflect the ideas of Aristotle's *Poetics*, and it has been suggested that Cervantes must have been familiar with Alonso López Pinciano's *Filosofía antigua poética* [1596].⁹⁵ Referring to the *Persiles*, Castro declares, "Es innegable que Cervantes aspiró a hacer...una obra conformada a los más estrictos cánones poéticos."⁹⁶ Bonilla y San Martín considers that the author regards poetry as a science, with explicit rules and requirements.⁹⁷ Varo includes adherence to traditional forms among the author's primary requirements for the guidance of writers.⁹⁸ Riley notes the significance of rules in Cervantes perception of literary forms: "El arte, claro está, era identificado con las «reglas»."⁹⁹

These critics recognize the importance which Cervantes gives to the concept that a writer's imaginative individualism finds expression within the constraints of accepted literary forms. While speculation is rife in most aspects of interpretation of the author's work, there seems minimal

⁹⁴ Avalle-Arce and Riley, "Don Quijote" in *Suma cervantina* (1973), p.50.

⁹⁵ Castro, *El pensamiento de Cervantes* (1972 edition), pp. 32 and 35.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p.42.

⁹⁷ Bonilla y San Martín, *Cervantes y su obra* (1916), p.93.

⁹⁸ Varo, *Génesis y evolución del "Quijote"* (1968), p.82.

⁹⁹ Riley, "Teoría literaria" in *Suma Cervantina* (1973), p.295.

consideration of the apparent inconsistency of such conservatism from the "inventor of the novel". Forcione does refer to a dichotomy in the Cervantes-Aristotle relationship of ideas: on one hand, the acceptance of rules and precepts of the classical ideal of literature and, on the other, the rejection of old patterns for the creative fantasy that distinguishes *Don Quixote*.¹⁰⁰

The principle areas of maximum agreement among critics on the literary commentaries in *Don Quixote* include Cervantes' positive interest in the quality of language and of imaginative invention, and his explicit condemnation of pretentious display.

A summation of Cervantes' own perceptions and concerns with regard to literature--as disclosed in *Don Quixote*--is discussed in the following chapter, and illustrated in Table V.

¹⁰⁰ Cited by Montero Reguera, *El Quijote y la crítica contemporánea* (1997), p.78.

CONCLUSION

Tú, lector, pues eres prudente, juzga lo que te pareciere.
(II, 24, 713)

Concentration on Cervantes' concerns with literature was intended to provide a single focus for this thesis. No pre-eminence of literary considerations over social or philosophic values to be found in *Don Quixote* is implied. Rather, recognition is given to the importance which the author accords to presenting perceptions of the literary arts, their objectives, and both positive and negative aspects of contemporary texts and practices. His ideas of what is worthwhile and what is to be deplored in the fiction, history, poetry and drama of his time--and of the way in which they are brought before the public--form a substantial component of his works.

In *Don Quixote*, it is consistently maintained that the aim of literature should be to entertain and instruct, "deleitar y enseñar", although readers and authorities may differ from the writer as to what is entertaining and what shall be taught. *Don Quixote* has been accepted as vastly entertaining--notwithstanding some few dissenters--throughout the world and across the centuries, but no comparable agreement has emerged on the didactic orientation or qualities of Cervantes' master-work. Despite the millions of words written in examination and interpretation of the narrative, and despite the significant number of sometimes conflicting literary opinions expressed in it by the author, his surrogates and his characters, identification of the precepts and tastes that governed his own writing remains ill-defined.

A basic premise of this thesis is that Cervantes' concepts of literary values may be derived, inductively, from the data provided in his text, from the comments made and the characterizations of the sources. Conclusions may then be based on a close reading of *Don Quixote* and consideration of expressed opinions in the light of what the author tells us about the individual speakers. I conclude that the major characters in the book speak for themselves--for who they are and the sector of society which they represent--in discussing the qualities of literary works. These diverse voices, whether stating individual interest, imbued doctrine, class prejudice, or thoughtful comment, present a cross-section of Spanish opinion. On the other hand, criticisms of contemporary practices in the literary world--such as plagiarism, pseudo-erudition, pretentious display of praise from supposed or invented authorities, triviality in content, and pandering to the lowest in public taste--may be considered valid reflections of Cervantes' concerns, even though he prudently distances himself by placing most of such criticism in the mouths of minor characters.

To review Cervantes' own perceptions and concerns with regard to literature, as disclosed in *Don Quixote*, a re-examination of the categories of qualities commended and those condemned is indicated. From Table I, it would appear that, in the category of Entertainment, the characteristics most commended are imaginative concepts and elegance of language; that credibility is the key to Verisimilitude; that simplicity fosters Accessibility; that considerations of morality, notably the lack of edifying material are of most concern for Didactic Value; and that the concern for Traditional Rules and Forms is perhaps less generally felt than

for other leading characteristics. Table II, dealing with literary characteristics condemned in *Don Quixote*, suggests pretentiousness as a primary fault; fantastic exaggeration as most damaging to Verisimilitude; circumlocution as interfering with Accessibility; and the lack of edifying content as limiting Didactic Value.

The weight of individual comments is subject to evaluation, in view of what is known of the speaker and the circumstances under which the comments are made. For example, when the priest is disposing of Don Quixote's library, his comments represent the views of a village cleric of indifferent education, in his conscious role as the moral and, perhaps, the intellectual and cultural authority for the community; whereas, when he is discussing literature with the Canon, his comments are most likely to conform to a position expected by an hierarchic and intellectual superior.

For this thesis, the evaluations of literary comments have been iterative processes, assigning varying levels of credit to the opinions recorded in Chapter I, resulting in differing weighting factors for the opinions of the commentators. For example, the detailed evaluation process gives the opinions of the Canon approximately twice the authority allowed to those of the priest. While the total detail is too laborious and repetitive for presentation in the thesis, one comparison may illustrate the process: In discussion of the *comedias*, the Canon states that the inferior contemporary dramatic productions are not the fault of the public (who had demonstrated ample support for better plays in the past), but the work of ignorant or misguided producers, including writers and actors. The priest, however, attributes the decadence of the theatre to depraved public taste and recommends censorship. In consideration of the data in the text

about these characters, their backgrounds, interests, status, and the circumstances under which the statement is made, differing credits (values between 1 and 10) are assigned to these statements. Overall, the ratios of the averaged credits determine the relative authority of the voices and the relative importance of the characteristics identified. The effect is illustrated in Table V.

TABLE V

| <u>CHARACTERISTICS COMMENDED</u> | | | <u>CHARACTERISTICS CONDEMNED</u> | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|------------|----------|
| | UNWEIGHTED ¹ | WEIGHTED ² | | UNWEIGHTED | WEIGHTED |
| <i>Entertainment</i> | | | | | |
| Inventiveness | | | | | |
| Artful plot | 3 | 8 | Dullness | 2 | 3 |
| Imaginative concepts | 7 | 14 | Pretentiousness | 2 | 5 |
| Suspense | 2 | 6 | Prolixity | 1 | 2 |
| Language and Style | | | | | |
| Elegance | 5 | 12 | | | |
| Clarity | 2 | 5 | | | |
| <i>Verisimilitude</i> | | | | | |
| Veracity | 1 | 1 | Mendacity | 3 | 5 |
| Credibility | 4 | 11 | Anachronisms | 1 | 1 |
| | | | Geographic absurdity | 1 | 1 |
| | | | Fantastic exaggeration | 4 | 9 |
| <i>Accessibility</i> | | | | | |
| Simplicity | 4 | 9 | Circumlocution | 3 | 9 |
| Coherence | 1 | 2 | Pseudo-erudition | 2 | 5 |
| | | | Poor translation | 2 | 4 |
| <i>Didactic Value</i> | | | | | |
| Morality | 4 | 10 | Lasciviousness | 2 | 3 |
| Propriety | 2 | 3 | Lack of edifying content | 3 | 3 |
| Dignity | 2 | 6 | | | |
| Judgement | 3 | 9 | | | |
| <i>Traditional Rules and Forms</i> | | | | | |
| Observance | 2 | 7 | | | |

¹ The unweighted values represent the simple sum of the numbers of commendations and condemnations of particular characteristics recorded in Tables I and II.

² Weighting factors for each character or group are derived from the ratios of numerical credits assigned to the literary opinions expressed in Chapter I of the thesis. These credits reflect the level of authority indicated by data which Cervantes provides regarding the speakers.

It may be noted that the leading literary characteristics of Table I and Table II remain leaders after the weighting process is applied. However, a number of secondary features register gains in relative status, by virtue of greater authority assigned to their proponents. A clearer picture now emerges in examination of the individual categories.

With regard to Entertainment, Cervantes writes: "Yo he dado, en *Don Quijote*, pasatiempo al pecho melancólico y mohíno."¹⁰¹ To accomplish this, he considers "la invención creadora" paramount. He maintains that the readers' enjoyment of suspense, surprise and wonder constitute a primary objective and essential function of literature. Cervantes' pride in his own inventiveness and imaginative flair is disclosed repeatedly in his works, emphasizing the essential character of intricacy of plot, variety in theme and style, and uncommon treatment of event and characterization. His approach is consistent with El Pinciano's contention that the poet should be new and rare in invention.

In the matter of language--the subject of much critical comment and admiration--he calls for clear, simple elegance and expressive sonorities. He decries both pedestrian dullness and pretentious elaboration. Cervantes delights in the archaic phrasing and oratorical rhetoric of the books of chivalry, even when he mocks their convoluted hyperbole. A much-discussed feature of artistry in language is Cervantes' sensitivity to vocabulary styles and cadences of speech among people of differing origins or social levels. In *Don Quijote*, Sancho Panza delivers peasant bluntness and the proverbs of popular wisdom; the Biscayan speaks a tortured Castilian; the utterances of the prisoners destined for the galleys are tinged with

¹⁰¹ Cervantes, *Viaje del Parnaso* (1983 edition, IV, 22-23), p.253.

thieves' cant; Marcela expresses herself with eloquence and refinement appropriate to pastoral convention; Carrasco speaks in a flawed scholarly idiom; Ruy Pérez de Viedma, escaped from Moorish captivity, salts his tale with Arabic words; while Don Quixote himself provides a treasure of chivalric phrase and manner. Beyond vocabulary and style, Cervantes' economical and evocative descriptive imagery enhances reader engagement and "delight".

The entertainment value of Cervantes' works--though not reader interest in his personality--is marred only by his recurring expression of bitter disappointment with the limited recognition and inadequate rewards which he experienced. Even when cast in humorous or ironic terms, the complaints often strike a jarring note. They can be accepted as the expressed motivation for writing *Viaje del Parnaso*, but his statement of resentment at exclusion from the Duke of Lerma's following, on the Duke's relocation to Naples, seems remote from the spirit he proposes for literary composition. The recommended avoidance of envious criticism and of personal attack would require that writers adopt constructive attitudes and professional courtesy.

Cervantes' presentation of entertainment as a principal function of fiction, poetry and drama makes it a catalyst for success in the other categories defined. To this, Cervantes adds a requirement for clarity with elegance in language, which he demonstrates with flexibility and freedom well beyond the classical conventions.

The treatment of Verisimilitude in *Don Quixote* is more doubtful. In discussion of truth and fantasy, Cervantes aligns himself with the most

authoritative and culturally prestigious literary standards of his time, espousing responsible treatment of "truth". Forcione states:

The ambivalence marking Cervantes' engagement with neo-Aristotelian literary theory may remain ultimately irreducible.¹⁰²

However, faced with the difficulty of reconciling literalism with effective artistry in fiction, Cervantes settles for the promotion of credibility, the avoidance of insult to reader intelligence.

A corollary effect is demonstrated in the apparent variability of standards of verisimilitude according to the accepted conventions of different literary genres. If the criterion for verisimilitude were reader tolerance, familiarity with the conventions of pastorals and books of chivalry might permit reader acceptance of material which, otherwise, would be considered artificial, extravagant and incredible. The apparent confusion is not resolved by examination of the means employed by Cervantes in *Don Quixote* to achieve plausibility by establishing familiarity. He may describe a situation from the differing points of view of several characters, or give it recognizable allegorical implications, an open-ended device whose effect would depend on the cultural backgrounds and bias of the readers. Riley touches on this theme:

Cervantes describió con la prosa narrativa que el arte es un especie de la ilusión en la que participa el lector, como un juego, con consciencia de su irrealdad.¹⁰³

¹⁰² Forcione, *Cervantes, Aristotle and the Persiles* (1970), p.339.

¹⁰³ Riley, "Teoría literaria" in *Suma cervantina* (1973), p.322.

Similarly, the belief that Don Quixote must be mad may permit the reader to accept his strange adventures and the flawed perceptions in which they originate.

There is an implied acceptance of influences of the Italian Renaissance, notably an admiration for the freer work of Ariosto, consistent with further ambivalence on the subject of verisimilitude. Cervantes declares support for the appearance of truth in fiction, the closer the better, while obviously revelling in the fantastic, in the "poetic truth" of strange events evoking *admiratio*. In Cervantes' writing, the appeal of the marvellous is manifest. Verisimilitude is adapted to the requirement to engage the imaginations of the readers in grasping "poetic truth", in spite of the uncertainties and distortions of human perceptions.

The concern with Accessibility reflects the author's confidence in the potential of literature to influence society. Hence, the importance of reaching the broadest public, and of clarity in ideas and expression, and of coherent development of theme--requirements with which Cervantes complies consistently, in both poetry and prose. Consideration of the expectations and interests of readers and audiences involves decision between the exploitation of vulgar tastes and the more responsible aim of encouragement and development of a discerning public with appropriate standards for literature. Less contentious is Cervantes' condemnation of pseudo-erudition, of deliberate obscurity, and of elaboration of language and pretentious display--features inhibiting reader and audience involvement.

Within the category of Didactic Values, morality emerges as a major concern. The priest and Canon both condemn lasciviousness in literature and the Canon emphasizes the potential lost for lack of edifying example:

Puede mostrar las astucias de Ulixes, la piedad de Eneas, la valentía de Aquiles, las desgracias de Héctor, las traiciones de Sinón. la amistad de Eurialio, la liberalidad de Alejandro, el valor de César, la clemencia y verdad de Trajano...la prudencia de Catón, y, finalmente, todas aquellas acciones que pueden hacer perfecto a un varon. (I, 47, 483)

Cervantes--through his narrator, and through Don Quixote in his sanest moments--also expresses strong support for moral themes, "reprehending vice" (II, 16, 651), although he refers more to the ethics of classical models than to the Christian apologetics favoured by the Canon. For a writer who seems to justify *Don Quixote* by putting forward the objective of extirpation of a pernicious literary genre to which the Church has been opposed, Cervantes has his characters find much to commend, as well as to criticize in the books.

Much of Cervantes' work has exemplary implications, including several of the stories within *Don Quixote*. Moreover, in the matter of contemporary behaviour, he argues for propriety and dignity in literature, deploring tendencies to scurrilous personal attacks. He praises the constructive display of mature judgement as an effective mode of literary didacticism.

In the observance of Traditional Rules and Forms, Cervantes' professions and performance illustrate a dichotomy similar to that noted for Verisimilitude. In *Don Quixote*, he consistently declares support for adherence to established literary modes. His poetry demonstrates the most careful adherence to such forms. Moreover, in his prose, he makes his works showcases of his versatility in composition in a variety of styles and genres, even when critical of their deficiencies. However, in abandoning the unities--or introducing innovative features in narrative development, he readily departs from tradition. Forcione remarks:

Cervantes is highly conscious of both the general and specific aspects of literary theorizing in the Renaissance and generally sympathetic with its aims...On the other hand he is suspicious about the burdens with which the critical movement saddled the creative artist...Consequently he does not hesitate...to assert openly his independence.¹⁰⁴

Comparison of the precepts favoured in the text of *Don Quixote* with the actual writing in this and other works of Cervantes confirms a degree of ambivalence. It would seem that his adherence to the more prestigious neo-Aristotelian literary standards of the time is not consistent. Cervantes celebrates classical concepts of literature, as represented by the precepts of Aristotle and the works of Virgil and Horace. He would have been familiar with the *Filosofía antigua poética* [1596] of Alonso López Pinciano. Yet, in spite of his repeated recommendation of observance of traditional rules and forms, he is creating, simultaneously, a new form of narrative--the prose novel--which he calls "prose epic".

Inherent in the literary commentaries is the recognition of profound mutual influences between literature and society and the power of entertainment for deeper purposes. In Gogol's *The Inspector General* (1836), the discredited mayor of a corrupt Russian provincial town turns angrily on the audience of the play, demanding: "What are you laughing at? You are laughing at yourselves!" Azaña wrote: "As the posterity of the *Quijote* we are debtors to it for part of our spiritual life: *somos criaturas cervantinas*."¹⁰⁵ Riley notes that Don Quixote (like Hamlet) has been a more powerful figure in the minds of people--for centuries--than countless historical personalities.¹⁰⁶ Amadís of Gaul has been described

¹⁰⁴ Forcione, *Cervantes, Aristotle and the Persiles* (1970), pp.106-07.

¹⁰⁵ Azaña, *Obras Completas Vol.I* (1966), p.1100.

¹⁰⁶ Riley, *Don Quixote* (1986), p.70.

as the definitive knight-errant, the source and pattern of the "code of honour" which governed generations of Spanish gentlemen.¹⁰⁷ As Eisenberg puts it, "la literatura nos enseña cómo vivir".¹⁰⁸

Cervantes' Don Quixote attempts to combine the chivalric ideal of protecting the oppressed with his ambition for personal fame. Cervantes himself--another addicted reader--devotes much of *Don Quixote* to identifying faults in existing literary works, contrasted with preferred characteristics and practices. He combines ambition for greater rewards, and for greater recognition in the literary world, with perceptions of a standard of literature that should restore Spanish letters to a worthier place in civilization.

¹⁰⁷ Menéndez y Pelayo, *Orígenes de la novela* (1943 edition) Vol.1, p.352.

¹⁰⁸ Eisenberg, *Cervantes y Don Quijote* (1993), p.39.

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