



Insincere Flattery: Imitation and the Growth of the Novel*

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We live in an age of sequels, prequels, spin-offs, and rip-offs. Success invites repetition aimed at finding and maintaining special formulas to recreate the triumphs of the past. Not surprisingly, the victories tend to be defined more in commercial than in aesthetic terms. A recent collection of essays, entitled *Part Two: Reflections on the Sequel* and edited by Paul Budra and Betty A. Schellenberg, starts with Homer and ends with Hollywood, or more specifically—and fittingly—with *The Terminator*. My focus here will be on two early modern examples of the sequel, from Spain. Between 1599 and 1615, the writers Mateo Alemán and Miguel de Cervantes were players in literary dramas built around, respectively, picaresque narrative and *Don Quixote*. These dramas were important as defining moments in the lives and in the art of the two authors—important to a great extent because they blurred the distinction between life and art. Curiously, and most engagingly, the well-known appearance of a false second part of *Don Quixote*—wedged between Cervantes's two parts—was preceded by an analogous intrusion into Mateo Alemán's *Guzmán de Alfarache*. It

* This paper was written as the keynote address for the conference on "An Iberian Odyssey: One Thousand Years of Peninsular Literature and Culture," sponsored by the Department of Spanish and Portuguese of the University of New Mexico, February 17–18, 2000.

is the implications of this double set of “parallel lives” that I would like to explore.

Alemán’s *Guzmán de Alfarache* is divided into two parts, published in 1599 and 1604. Part One was an immediate bestseller, more successful, in fact than *Don Quixote* would be a few years later. A spurious continuation by Mateo Luján de Sayavedra appeared in 1602, and, despite its dubious quality, rode the wave of success, selling more copies than Alemán’s sequel. (See Whinnom and Ife.) Cervantes published Part One of *Don Quixote* in 1605. As he was completing Part Two, Alonso Fernández de Avellaneda—a pseudonymic code that has yet to be broken—entered the literary market with his second part. As one can imagine, the “legitimate” authors were none-too-pleased with this turn of events, this usurpation of authorial space. The ways in which Alemán and Cervantes respond to the “false” sequels affect not only the “authentic” continuations but also, I would submit, the development of the Western novel. As in the case of the texts themselves, the metaliterary meets the real; narrative plots enter the world, and vice versa. Life imitates art as art imitates life. The particular trajectories of *Guzmán de Alfarache* and *Don Quixote* move the novel forward. Paradoxically, what had to be the source of tremendous exasperation for Cervantes is the best thing that could have happened to the novel in a key moment of transition.

One could describe the drama to which I have been alluding as a play in three acts and an epilogue: the establishment of the picaresque genre, the adventure of *Guzmán de Alfarache* and its sequel, the adventure of *Don Quixote* and its sequel, and the future course of the novel, as influenced by these phenomena. I will incorporate that figurative play into this paper, which will attempt to look at the “big picture” of the novel, namely, at *the shift from satire to the novel* and *the shift from the novel to the metanovel*, which combines narrative and critique.

The picaresque mode finds a prototype in the anonymous 1554 narrative, *Lazarillo de Tormes*. Working against—*deconstructing*—idealistic fiction, *Lazarillo* features a first-person account of a marginal, unexemplary life. Unlike the characters in pastoral, chivalric, or sentimental romance, Lázaro grows physically and psychologically in the course of the narrative. There is a discernible causal structure, a clearly delineated relation between process and product. Asked to explain “the case”—essentially his status in society and the scandal that threatens him—Lázaro offers a response that is part autobiography, part social commentary, and part defense: in sum, a

consummately ironic success story. The unraveling of the conventions of idealism points narrative in new directions. Without various forms of idealism, there would be no picaresque narrative. The spiritual autobiography, the confession, the exemplary life, and the cult of the individual are the “constructs” from which the picaresque deconstruction takes its models. The picaresque *undoes* exemplarity by inverting the contextual scheme. Like the “mona vestida de seda” or the sow’s ear posing as a silk purse, the *pícaros* stand as emblems of substantive lack, of disenfranchisement, of ridicule. Their social negotiations and their discourse invite us to laugh at them, but they also make us aware of the process of self-fashioning, aware of the questioning of authority, and—most unexpectedly, perhaps—aware of the soul beneath the defensive posture. What begins as satire ends as something else. The *pícaro* is the victim of the reigning hierarchies, but society itself fares little better. On one level, the upstart is put in his—or her—place. On another, the cracks in the social foundation—hypocrisy, dishonesty, immorality, and so forth—are exposed. Lázaro, the secular casuist, claims to have climbed from the lower depths to a position within—albeit barely—mainstream society. Equally significantly, he argues that his behavior is no worse than that of his neighbors.

If I were asked to name what I consider to be the most remarkable and innovative aspect of picaresque narrative, I would say that it is the *dialectics of discourse* that informs the texts. A commanding authorial figure—Wayne Booth’s “implied author”—competes with the first-person narrator for control of the signifying systems—for control of the “last word.” While we cannot see the author, we can sense his presence. He is the puppeteer, and the *pícaro* is his puppet, which would make the ironic subversion of the discourse his strings. The implied author is master and superego; the *pícaro*, trickster and id. Antisocial conduct cannot be rewarded, according to the protocols of this time and place, but the subversion of the discourse is itself subverted by the centrality allotted to the *pícaro* and by the criticism aimed at a corrupt society. And by full-fledged picaresque subjects, complex and rounded characters, who manage to move beyond the literary ventriloquists who invent them.

At one of the earliest possible points in the evolution of the picaresque—the prologue to *Lazarillo de Tormes*—one can note a distinction between text and pretext, between a book in the marketplace and the explanation of a “case.” This is, of course, the distinction between the author and the narrator. Manipulation of the narrator’s discourse by the author ironically decodes and recodes the messages

of the text, but manipulation becomes a symbolic enterprise. The reader can feel the authority slipping away from Lázaro, and the narrative becomes an analogue of the social scenario, in which the lowly individual is defeated from the start, reined in and castigated by the powers above. The implied author is the fictional counterpart of the administrators of social law; he restores order by fighting transgression—and transgressors. But Lázaro and his successors write themselves into a history that has excluded them. They have points of view, backgrounds, experiences, and, inevitably, horrible luck. They are hardly *good* people, but we can observe that they are predetermined to misbehave. They could only be good by accepting their position at the bottom of the social ladder. They could only be good by being nonentities, which would also make them non-literary. They are fighting a battle for subjectivity, which they lose on one level but not on another. The world defeats them, while the texts grant them an ironic legitimacy.

Obviously, it takes a minimum of two texts to comprise a genre, or subgenre. *Lazarillo de Tormes* and *Guzmán de Alfarache*, published forty-five years apart (exactly fifty, if one counts the second part of *Guzmán*), feature pseudo-autobiographical narration by mature men who recount their lives—men who have sought upward mobility in a rigidly hierarchical and inflexible society. Their illusion of control on the social plane is mirrored by their illusion of control on the narrative plane. Their arguments, intended as defensive, are often incriminatory. *Guzmán de Alfarache* is about ten times the length of *Lazarillo de Tormes*. Guzmán's narrative alternates between episodes of transgression and so-called moralizing digressions, so that the reader must judge whether the sermons have been inserted in order to justify the low humor or whether the low humor has been inserted to make the sermons more palatable, that is, whether entertainment is at the service of edification, or vice versa. (Alemán seems to anticipate the polemics of interpretation by composing two prologues, the first to the vulgar public and the second to the discreet reader.) The brevity of *Lazarillo de Tormes* brings a type of elliptical complexity to the text. *Guzmán de Alfarache* operates in precisely the opposite fashion. The narrative is overdetermined; it presents opinions on all manner of things, and the anonymous author of *Lazarillo* is replaced by Mateo Alemán, who seems to have some difficulty differentiating his bitterness and anger from his character's.

The anonymity of *Lazarillo de Tormes* places the narrator against an abstract author and an indeterminate biographical context. The same cannot be said of Mateo Alemán or of Francisco de Quevedo, in the

case of *La vida del buscón* (translated by Alpert as *The Swindler*). Alemán and Quevedo—each in his own way—become rivals of their narrator/protagonists, by putting words into their mouths and by writing misfortune into their destinies. Quevedo is a nobleman who has no use and no sympathy for the roguish upstart Pablos, except as an object of scorn and as a vehicle for baroque linguistic flourishes, but Pablos is a rich creation nonetheless, with a psyche that is well worth examining. Critics—among them, Edwin Williamson—have noted that, despite the obstacles set before him, Pablos liberates himself from Quevedo's "coercive grasp." The relation between Guzmán and Alemán is quite different. The middle-class Alemán, like Pablos, is of Jewish stock, so the author's distancing of himself from his character is especially striking. Guzmán's probable father is presented—ostensibly by Guzmán—in derogatory, and antisemitic, terms. A substantial portion of the narrative deals with the protagonist's quest to find his paternal relatives in Italy—a dubious venture with less than satisfactory results. On the one hand, Alemán seems to want the reader to join him in mocking the protagonist. On the other, he allows the narrator to break the rules of decorum by "sermonizing" on topics that would appear to go beyond the scope of his story. The discourse of *Guzmán de Alfarache* extends the "dialectics of discourse" to include the subject positionings of the author as well as of the narrator. Not only can we perceive Alemán pulling Guzmán's strings, but we can recognize that the amorphous structure of the text—simultaneously autobiography and miscellany—provides a welcome—and, it must be emphasized, deflative—forum from which to complain of personal indignities. The air of push-and-pull—of protesting too much—produces the double, or dialogical, discourse highlighted by Mikhail Bakhtin in his studies of narrative. The picaresque may begin as satire for its own sake, but even in its initial manifestations the form progresses into deeper, more ambitious, and more ambiguous areas.

The movement from satire to the novel is enacted in the prologue to Part One of *Don Quixote*. As Daniel Eisenberg and other critics have argued, the prologue "clearly states" the objective of the book: "to destroy the base machinery of the romances of chivalry." This is correct, and the statement underscores the satirical nature—as well as the Counter Reformational thrust—of the text. What the approach fails to consider, however, is the context—and the staging—of the commentary. The prologue dramatizes the challenges to authority by the new print culture. The players are a fictionalized Cervantes and a "friend" who enters to advise him on the writing of a prologue. The resulting meta-prologue flaunts its divergence from precedents,

its newness. The tripling of the author—the historical Cervantes, the prologuist, and the alter ego—bespeaks an increased distance, or deferral, between event and expression, between raw material and historiography, between absolute and relative truth, and, intriguingly, between literary idealism and literary realism. Another allegory takes place early in the narrative, when Don Quixote returns home after his first sally. His niece, his housekeeper, the village priest, and the barber scrutinize his library and burn those books deemed offensive. The inquisitional imagery is unmistakable. The interlude is important also because Don Quixote chooses a squire—a servant and a dialogue partner—to accompany him on future sallies. Commentators have suggested that Cervantes had planned to write a short novel—a *novela ejemplar*—that satirized the romances of chivalry, but that he realized the potential for amplification. The return home furnishes the knight errant and the author a time for retooling, for moving beyond the original expectations.

Cervantes acknowledges the self-fashioning of picaresque narrative while expanding the field of reference. He appears to cede control to a corps of narrators and surrogate authors, and to alternate storytelling with metacommentary on the process of composition. The “something else” beyond satire is marked by variations on the themes of perspectivism, perception, and the limits of writing. The vision is realistic, but not in the sense of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century literary realism, because Cervantes “lays bare the devices of art” and because he values the place of literature as a visible presence within the world. Truth, history, madness, social identity, the interplay of past and present, acts of framing, modes of writing, and the consequences of reading are among the topics that he highlights, always in unique ways. The picaresque underscores the shaping of the self and circumstances of the protagonists—and the reshaping of their stories to conform to the narrators’ agendas. Cervantes takes this template and converts it into baroque art. This is Stage One of our scenario: the transit from satire to the novel and the incipient metanovel. Stage Two, motivated by several instances of malicious mischief, accentuates the reciprocity of life and art.

If *Lazarillo de Tormes* foregrounds the fictional defense, *Guzmán de Alfarache* finds its ruling temper in the dichotomy legitimacy-illegitimacy. “Bad blood” determines society’s treatment of Guzmán, who nonetheless pursues his kinsmen in Italy. He suffers unbearable humiliation in Genoa, whence he makes a hasty departure—embittered yet powerless before his fate. Legitimacy eludes him at

all levels, and it could be said that picaresque narrative illustrates how those in the margins attempt to compensate for the missing pedigree—and how institutional mechanisms thwart deviations from class protocol. *Don Quixote*, in turn, is a masterful exercise in double plotting, a combination of narrative adventures and adventures in narration. The knight worries equally about righting wrongs and slaying giants and about how chroniclers will record his exploits. He is concerned that his brave deeds may be bastardized when they make their way into print. In Chapter 9, the narrator—whose story has reached an impasse—discovers a manuscript in a marketplace in Toledo. When translated from the Arabic, the manuscript by the historian Cide Hamete Benengeli proves to continue the tale at exactly the point—in mid-battle—where the narrator had left off. That the staunch Spanish Christian Cervantes, who fought the infidels on the European battlefield and who suffered through five years of captivity in Algiers, should choose to place the “true history” of Don Quixote in the hands of an Arab historian, of a race known—among its enemies—as liars, cannot go unnoticed. The distance between unadulterated truth and truth deferred scarcely could be more evident, nor could the distance between the historical author and the fictional historian. Through Cide Hamete Benengeli, Cervantes adds a brilliant touch—one of thousands—to *Don Quixote*. Precociously and pre-poststructurally, he supplies a glaring mediating space between signifier and signified, wherein he calls attention to the processing of data by the reader, the spectator, the writer, the historian, and the individual citizen. Reality is not just “out there,” but formulated by the beholder—and subject to deformation.

The means by which Mateo Alemán distances himself from Guzmán de Alfarache and Cervantes distances himself from Cide Hamete Benengeli contribute to the irony and to the metaliterary (and socio-historical) depth of the texts. On numerous occasions, Alemán would seem to cross the line that represents detachment by blending his voice and his frustrations with Guzmán’s, but the professed Old Christian author above all wants to separate himself from the conspicuously New Christian character. Analogously, Cervantes’s invention of the Arab chronicler widens the gap between an absolute, idealized—and unrealizable—form of historiography and the fabrication that underlies every act of interpretation. Don Quixote is also a significant Other, a purely literary object, an object of ridicule, the antithesis of flesh-and-blood humanity. One could suppose that the distancing devices would be, if anything, more

pronounced in Part Two of each text, but that is not the case. The “false sequels” affect the “real” authors and their own continuations. Cervantes is able to study and to learn from Alemán’s response. Their novels take a detour, but the novel advances.

In 1602, there appeared in Valencia a *Second Part of the Life of the Pícaro Guzmán de Alfarache* by Mateo Luján de Sayavedra. The narrative continues Guzmán’s story in Rome and Naples, and then back to Spain, to Alcalá de Henares, Madrid, and Valencia. The protagonist undergoes further mortification, disastrous love intrigues, and time in jail, and finally he is sentenced to the galleys. Guzmán ends with an allusion to his escape from the galleys and with the promise of a third part. The text contains digressions, intercalated tales, and considerable padding, most notably perhaps in a long proof that the Spanish kings and queens descended from the Goths. The Luján sequel can by no means be considered a magnum opus, but it serves as catalyst for the crowning achievement of Mateo Alemán. There is speculation that Luján may have stolen part of Alemán’s manuscript. What is certain is that he entered a private and sacrosanct space within the realm of art. His intervention not only enrages Alemán but distracts him from the crafting of his own second part. When the “real” second part is published in 1604, its debt to the false sequel is unconcealed. Alemán’s personal response may be filled with venom, but his artistic response is ingenious, calculated, and effectively—and hyperbolically—vindictive. His second part includes an allegory of the literary theft—the robbery of Guzmán’s baggage—along with the killing off of a Guzmán imitator (named Sayavedra) and the exposure of the pseudonymous author, Juan Martí. (See McGrady 113–29 and Kartchner on the rendering of the theft.) Guzmán avenges the mistreatment by his Genoese relatives through an elaborate deception, and the intensity of his anger—and, one could surmise, his creator’s—is palpable. The element of injustice—present in Part One—arguably becomes the dominant motif of Part Two. Alemán reinscribes Guzmán’s victimization with an empathy that is missing from Part One. In fact, he misreads Part One—while accusing Luján/Martí of doing so—by stating that the usurper did not understand that he was endeavoring to portray a “perfect man,” as opposed to a scoundrel. Nevertheless, the competition between Guzmán and Sayavedra has no spiritual dimension and negligible moral impetus. The victor is the craftier, the fitter, the more picaresque, so to speak.

Alemán’s *Guzmán* concludes with the protagonist’s religious conversion. He is persecuted as a prisoner in the galleys, but he in-

forms his captain of a planned mutiny and is granted a pardon. Guzmán promises a third part, which never appears. In the end, God and his fellow men have come to the *pícaro*'s aid. He is redeemed, but he is not really good—not even noticeably better—and there is reason to be skeptical of his conversion. Since the third part does not materialize, there is no testing of the conversion within the story. The discourse, in contrast, is post-conversional, yet points more to rancor and to narrative unreliability than to a changed man. The spurious sequel forces Alemán to modify the story and its subject, and, in a sense, to defend what he previously has condemned. *Lazarillo de Tormes* projects an ironic and illusory success story, in which—despite the defensive posture—an implied author seems to want to alienate the reader from the narrator/protagonist. Alemán's attitude is a bit more mystifying. His brand of ventriloquism produces a barrier between narrator and author, yet constantly challenges the separation through extended commentaries and critiques that take Guzmán out of character. The intrusion of Juan Martí into the equation creates a bond between Alemán and Guzmán that further threatens internal consistency. Guzmán writes an autobiographical narrative in which he strays from the path of righteousness until the unannounced, unconfirmed conversion. The open form of the text allows Alemán the opportunity to leave his character dangling in the margins and to articulate his own opinions—however antisocial, however anti-establishment—by way of the social outcast. Although they have been termed “moralizing digressions,” the commentaries and interpolated stories of *Guzmán de Alfarache* cover a wide range of materials, some of them not remotely moralizing and some not easily reconciled within the narrative structure. *Guzmán* is Alemán's only fictional narrative, and the text becomes a forum that is personal, socio-political, and—thanks to Martí—metaliterary. I would like to try to answer two questions: What will have made *Guzmán de Alfarache* enormously popular in its time, and what is the significance of *Guzmán* in the history of the novel?

It seems logical to surmise that a major factor in the success of Alemán's narrative is its entertainment value. The lower-class subject as the object of humor will have had its appeal, in an atmosphere that has been compared to carnival or to saturnalian inversion, to the world turned upside-down. Misadventures and antisocial behavior can amuse the reader or listener, who also will take note of the order restored at the end (here, through the conversion). Alemán follows a tradition of negative exemplarity, which includes the fourteenth-century *Libro de buen amor*, whose didacticism stems from examples

to avoid rather than to heed. The satire leads into a "life," which then is transformed into a "double life" that merges the protagonist with the author, as metaphor and microcosm. Both are isolated individuals, in conflict with an all-powerful social system, whose correlative in the literary realm is the writer faced with the instruments of censorship. Like the author of *Lazarillo de Tormes*, Alemán subtly manipulates the reader, who can be *repulsed by* and who can *identify with* the narrator/protagonist. Since in 1599 there is no standard form for the novel, the author can design the work in the way that he sees fit, bearing in mind the classical concept of unity but free to interpret unity in a "modern" sense. The source of unity in *Guzmán* perhaps could be reduced to the psyche: a composite psyche that professes to find in the spiritual domain—through conversion—an inner peace that earthly justice cannot proffer. By the same token, access to the inner self—or selves—relates not only to psychological realism but also to the random order of thought in the interior monologue. The field of associations in *Guzmán de Alfarache* is impressively broad and impressively disjointed, driven by a metonymical force—the force of contiguity—that has been associated with the novel.

The success of *Guzmán* the novel has to do with transgression—in word and deed—diverting but never sanctioned. The Luján/Martí sequel pushes the historical Alemán into the foray. Justice, vengeance, and the struggles of the individual reach higher levels in the "true" second part, where the author's love-hate relationship with his character—his own identification and repulsion—grows. Guzmán's conversion opens the floodgates of ambiguity and provides a center ripe for deconstruction—as do, correspondingly, the focus on the *infanta* Margarita in Velázquez's *Meninas* and the illumination of Alonso Quijano in Part Two of Cervantes's *Don Quixote*. The more we sense the presence of Alemán in his narrative, the more metafictional *Guzmán de Alfarache* becomes—and, paradoxically, the more metahistorical. The inner workings of the novel are not divorced from history but are interdependent with events in the real world. *Guzmán de Alfarache* is suggestive, unpredictable, meaty, and deceptively open. In a sense, Alemán does not cope well with the invasive sequel, but the aggressive defense of his intellectual property energizes and frames the narrative. Cervantes can learn, positively and negatively, from his example.

Alonso Fernández de Avellaneda's continuation of *Don Quixote* may have been inspired by Cervantes's criticism of the theater of Lope de Vega in Chapter 48. Whatever his motives, Avellaneda wounds Cervantes with the timing of the sequel and with an *ad*

hominem attack—on his age, on his physical condition, and on his arrogance, among other factors. The tone and the mode of attack are anything but reverent. Avellaneda takes to heart a reference, in the last chapter of Part One, to Don Quixote and Sancho Panza's participation in jousting tournaments in Zaragoza, and much of the "false" second part takes place in that city. One could mention, briefly, that Avellaneda's sequel is less metafictional than its predecessor, that Don Quixote is less complex, that Sancho is less resourceful and less sensitive—particularly with respect to a new female character named Bárbara—and that the rhetorical scheme lacks the spark of the original. Don Quixote ends up in a mental asylum in Toledo. In contrast with Cide Hamete Benengeli, Avellaneda's Arab historian, Alisolán, is content to remain on the sidelines, in the margins of discourse.

Cervantes defends himself in the prologue to the 1615 *Quixote*, which concludes with a promise to leave Don Quixote dead and buried, in order to ward off further imitations. It is generally believed that Cervantes had written about two-thirds of the second part when the "false" sequel was published and that he did not make extensive revisions in these chapters. Crucial features of Part Two would, then, already have been in place before the appearance of Avellaneda's book: the incorporation of a critique of Part One, the response to critical commentary, the inclusion of characters who have read Part One and thus know the knight's *modus operandi*, an increasingly shrewd Sancho Panza, and the implicit rivalry between the "real" Don Quixote and his counterpart on the written page. The "other" second part does, however, disrupt the narrative flow, but in serendipitous ways. Cervantes's tongue-in-cheek "true history" is now the *true* history, or at least the true story (one and the same in Spanish, "la verdadera historia"), which makes Cide Hamete Benengeli the true historian and ally of the author. Don Quixote has the chance to visit a printing establishment and to leaf through Avellaneda's sequel. Cervantes undoes his own foreshadowing by rerouting Don Quixote and Sancho away from Zaragoza, but they do meet Don Álvaro Tarfe—an invention of Avellaneda—who certifies before a notary that the man who stands before him is the authentic Don Quixote. There are signs that Cervantes may have envisioned a third part, in which the knight and the squire remove themselves from the world of chivalry in order to enter the world of the pastoral, but Avellaneda's text animates him to seek closure. The moment of truth—the disillusionment—of Alonso Quijano is spiritually sound but somewhat inconsistent with what has preceded it.

At one end of Part Two we have a statement regarding literary exigency—the need to guard against imitation—and at the other a rejection of fantasy in favor of the divine. In the middle lie the real world and the “real” books, poised to divert and baffle us, and most assuredly to reconfigure themselves before our eyes.

From the opening of the text—the prologue to Part One, presumably written last, and Chapter 1, presumably written first—Cervantes offers new insights into the dialectics of reality and fiction and of history and poetry. The acquisition of Sancho Panza as a partner in dialogue functions as an analogue of the continuous dialogue with the literary and theoretical past. Cervantes anticipates Hayden White’s ground-breaking essay, “The Historical Text as Literary Artifact,” by setting forth “the literary text as historical artifact.” The fundamental dialectical play in *Don Quixote* may be the writer’s use of perspective and the reader’s skills at perception. While Avellaneda’s sequel shakes up an already volatile mixture of elements, Cervantes’s response to the intrusion is more “natural” than Alemán’s. Unlike Alemán, in the position of having to defend a *pícaro*, Cervantes does not have to invert his premises to speak of Don Quixote’s superiority over his rival. He expresses his personal disappointment only in the prologue, and wisely plots the defense in Part Two around Don Quixote rather than Cide Hamete. Although he makes the Arab historian more prominent in Part Two (see Mancing 182–209, esp. 196–97), Cervantes can speak through Don Quixote, and Don Quixote can speak on behalf of the “legitimate” author. All of Part Two deals with the reciprocity of world and text, and with the interchangeability of macrocosm and microcosm. Avellaneda spurs Cervantes to heighten the interrogation of the potential of the written word and its ties with questions of authority. The intertextual conflict—the desire to supersede precedent, which now encompasses chivalric romance, other genres, Part One, and the “false” Part Two—is synonymous with the creative impulse.

The spurious sequels to *Guzmán de Alfarache* and *Don Quixote* lead to a redirection of the “genuine” continuations. A search for closure results in problematic happy endings: revenge and conversion in *Guzmán* and an awakening from madness and a spiritual release in *Don Quixote*. Along with a series of hardships, failed marriages, punishment for crimes of various sorts, the ill-fated reunion of Guzmán with his mother, and the time in the galleys, Alemán inserts the allegory of the robbery, the revelation of the identity of the author, and the breakdown of Sayavedra, who leaps from a ship to his death crying, “I am the ghost of Guzmán de Alfarache.” Alemán exorcizes

a number of demons, but the process comes across as heavy-handed. Not only does the conversion raise doubts, but the voice and point of view of Guzmán—especially in the commentaries—are hard to differentiate from Alemán's. Still, *Guzmán de Alfarache* remains a novel of character, a harbinger of—and a guide to—psychological realism. Self-reflection and internalization in the picaresque are unstable yet basic steps toward the nuanced character studies that distinguish eighteenth- and nineteenth-century narratives. The later writers will refine the transference of the personal to the Other, and will move more comfortably from the author's space to the narrator's.

Cervantes approaches character—and most other aspects of narrative—through textuality, a synthesis of the structure of experience and literary design. His extreme self-consciousness, matched by Laurence Sterne in *Tristram Shandy*, substitutes metafiction for strict idealism and realism, and serves as a paradigm for the self-referentiality of modernism and postmodernism. *Don Quixote* capitalizes on the recourses of literature to go ever deeper into—and farther beyond—the text. Cervantes's determination to come to terms with Avellaneda's sequel enhances the interplay of themes in *Don Quixote*, among them truth, history, the imagination, and forms of representation. The publication of Part One places Don Quixote at the mercy of his historical self, the hero of a book, who robs him of his active nature and robs him, as well, of a reading public unfamiliar with his record. The readers within Part Two take over the directorial duties that once were within the purview of the knight errant. Thanks to the spurious Don Quixote, the "real" knight can defend himself with renewed vigor. The intersection of life and art has a seamless quality in Part Two, as exemplified in the sequence of episodes in Barcelona, where Don Quixote enters society, peruses Avellaneda's continuation, and encounters a Spanish-Moslem former neighbor whose tribulations are the stuff of history and of romance.

Harold Bloom's much-cited phrase, "the anxiety of influence," refers to the confrontation between the individual writer and the forebears who must be surpassed, and suppressed. Creation is emancipation from the shackles of tradition. In their first volumes, Alemán and Cervantes initiate a war against the intertext, but Luján/Martí and Avellaneda give them new animus, new ammunition, and new targets. When Sayavedra jumps overboard in *Guzmán de Alfarache* and when Don Álvaro Tarfe legally denounces the imposter in *Don Quixote*, the anxiety is reified. The novel as a genre exhibits a special kind of self-awareness, often manifested as reaction, rejoinder, or rebuttal. As the novel develops, it becomes its own

principal intertext, its own catalyst. *Guzmán de Alfarache* and *Don Quixote* prefigure these scenarios-to-come by facing their adversaries in print, in fiction. We of quixotic disposition revel in the precocity of the early modern Spanish writers, who are able to get to the heart of their characters and to the heart of theoretical matters. The notorious imitations may not be the sincerest form of flattery, but these thorns in the side of Alemán and Cervantes—and let me beg the pardon of the true poets among you—allow the narrative flowers to blossom. The muses and the anti-muses work in tandem, the first to provide inspiration and the second (again, *con perdón*) perspiration. From the anxiety of influence and the anguish of literary larceny comes the novel, armed to do battle with tradition and with itself.

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