

Fashioning Identities in “El licenciado Vidriera”¹

ELAINE BUNN

The fundamental question presents itself and never seems to get properly answered: what is the reader to think of the protagonist?

Wilson 169.



decisive episode within Cervantes' *novela ejemplar* “El licenciado Vidriera” reveals both the power of perceived translucency—an unclothed state more profound than nakedness—and the overarching role of clothing in reflecting unconscious needs. In the episode's triggering hallucinatory sequence, two mysterious and nameless women—a *dama de todo rumbo y manejo* and her Moorish accomplice—offer a love-potion concocted from a quince to a shy university student. The potion fails to induce desire and instead brings on a panic attack in the

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young man who appears, in fact, to be terrified of sexual intimacy. Falling into a coma, he eventually awakes believing he is made of glass and requires protective clothing. Later, covered in an amorphous long-skirted garment and carrying a stick as shield and buffer, he entertains with quips and wit a curious and slowly but surely solicitous public. The attentive listeners are convinced that his delirious condition makes him a wise and clever man. His epithetical name which gives the title to the work is a totally de-personalized one—a combination of academic title (*licenciado*) and *vidriera*, a metaphorical and transparent space divest of corporeality. The name is also, as George Shipley observes, not his invention but rather the moniker applied by his interlocutors. This fact highlights a consistent aspect of personality—his reactive and passive relationships with others that will mark his identity. Shipley draws our attention as well to the Royal Academy's *Diccionario de la lengua española*, that for "licenciado vidriera" offers the following: "persona excesivamente delicada y tímida" ("Vidriera's Blather" 50; 50 n. 2). This definition does, however, totally ignore the acerbic wit, high-mindedness, and obvious eccentricities of the mad philosopher. Having devoted a large part of the *novela* to the meandering philosopher, his "cure" seems inordinately incidental. The narrator reports without detail that a Hieronymite friar with special powers cured him of the delusion of fragility.

There is a biography that comes before and continues on beyond the strange episode, making "El licenciado Vidriera" a coming-of-age narrative that relates an unevenly-paced life story of a liminal character. As an eager adolescent he refuses to reveal his real surname but calls himself "Tomás Rodaja" and then, later, Tomás Rueda.² Stages in his life are marked by changes in place, position, and apparel, and extend from adolescence at age eleven, to young adulthood in his twenties. Serendipitous encounters, such as those with the friar or the shady women, shape Tomás's identity and destiny, and bring about changes in occupation from idle peasant boy to page/university student, to quasi

² Steps in psychological development proposed by Jung in "The Stages of Life" (*Structure* 387–404) have been elaborated and modified by his disciples Eric Neuman, Michael Fordham, and especially Edward Etinger (Ulanov 66 n. 71).

soldier, to straw-covered body-made-of-glass deluded philosopher, to lawyer and, finally, to fully compliant soldier. All of the identities are simultaneously accompanied by clothing changes which seem to confirm his progression. Tomás’s clothing or perceived lack of it (as Vidriera) will, as suggested earlier, offer clues to his conscious and unconscious condition.

This episode which gives the story its title is mysterious and strangely unyielding at first: no names are given to its participants, no motivation or specific dialogue is recounted, and the few facts, including the love potion, seem totally incongruous with the serious intellectual profile of the protagonist developed up to that point. Actually, there is about the scene a oneiric quality, albeit a nightmarish one, that suggests the symbolism of the unconscious and a reading that deploys theories of personality. The episode’s uncanniness belies an eruption of repressed and unspoken matter, and the delusion that ensues is the protagonist’s response to its threatening revelation. The strange and marginal women challenge him to acknowledge a part of himself that he had previously been able to repress systematically, excluding it from consciousness. The narrator displaces language from expressions of nuance and desire by his relentless emphasis on mundane biographical details. Stated consistently, for example, are facts: the age of the protagonist at various stages, the length of his stays in places, the circumstances of his initial introduction to other characters, their professions, and *what he and/or they are wearing*.

Clothing in real life as well as in fiction can be a indicator of social class, gender, occupation, and status. Affectively, attire can attract, seduce, bedazzle, or—their opposites—repulse, reveal, and/or deceive. In addition, being dressed, or the act of changing or exchanging clothes, can situate the dresser or dressed in relationships with others with whom he or she negotiates or forfeits agency and subjectivity. Likewise, there are in this *novela* instances in which clothing and the changing of clothing supply clues to those puzzling choices and behaviors of the protagonist. Edward C. Whitmont, a disciple of Jung, observed that excessive changes of clothing might show excessive identification with the social and collective role shown by clothing, and, thus, a limited

knowledge of one's own personality (157–58). This clothing-dependent self is corroborated in “El licenciado Vidriera” by the significance attached to the *persona* or social role indicated by clothes (the title's reference to an academic title and the strange absence of corporeality), the changing of clothes, and Tomás's stubborn resistance to commitment. The young man's successful academic pursuits as well as his eccentric mad philosopher behavior make his narrative most commonly thought of as an “intellectual biography” (Friedman 57, Casa, Avalor-Arce). He stands at the center of a classic Cervantine debate between *armas* and *letras*. He seems more closely affiliated with the conceptual and academic than the sensual. He is asocial, eccentric, frigid, cerebral; one critic even found characteristics of autism (Puig 76–78). While polar tensions are critical to psychic health, according to Jung, and psychological theory has to base itself on the principal of opposition (Jung 61), Ana Ulanov concludes, in *The Feminine in Jungian Psychology*, that if one side is excessively emphasized (as in the case of Tomás), one can suffer irrational obsessions (27). Eros or its Latin equivalent “Amor” is a masculine deity but, for Jung, Eros is a symbolic concept of the feminine (Ulanov 27). I prefer to establish here the relation between “logos” as the striving for an assertion of individual separateness (Whitmont 174) with the etymology of logos—speech, words, reason—appropriately associated with the masculinist discourse of the protagonist. These binary pairs—eros and logos, feminine and masculine, and also south and north—are useful to our analysis, but they should be understood as “vectors” rather than fixed and exclusive categories.³

Certainly, the masculinist discourse—talk of ambition, search for knowledge, philosophizing, soldiering, traveling, and such—situates Tomás in the public world of men and action. He inhabits three worlds of patriarchy: agriculture, academia, and the military. He is continually *uniformed*. The private, sensual, erotic, affective world then is hidden and surfaces only indirectly. This feminine discourse is a veiled one, disclosing itself linguistically, indirectly, intuitively, and through the unconscious. Tomás lives

³ These concepts are used in a similar fashion by Porfirio Sánchez.

uneasily in the push and pull of these discourses, until he literally becomes a window between them.

In the following pages we will study the links between the major issues of this extensive narrative sequence: resistance to sexual intimacy, madness as a consequence of confrontation, and the attention to body coverings including the improvised protective clothing for Tomás's glass body as well as to the more formal clothing worn before and after. From the crisis and its context we can look beyond to his recovery and death (communicated by the narrator) as a fully grown man fighting as a soldier in a distant part of the Empire. Tomás's struggle is with the content of his unconscious and continual repression of sexuality that will work to inhibit a satisfactory maturation. The psychic interlude and the protagonist's "cure" allow a more aware and integrated personality to meet the following stages of his life fearlessly.

Jung's approach to understanding the psyche and neurosis and the refinements of theorists who followed can be usefully deployed to grapple with the textual enigmas and hone the shadows of the narrative. The growth and development of the eleven-year-old boy who calls himself Tomás Rodaja will be lightly yoked to Jung's understanding of growth as the ego's movement toward adaptation and individuation. The latter may be translated as "coming to selfhood" or "self-realization" (Jung 173). In his *Symbolic Quest*, Whitmont asserts: "Life is [the] story of the self-realization of the unconscious. Everything in the unconscious seeks outward manifestation, and the personality too desires to evolve out of its unconscious conditions to experience itself as a whole" (265). The invitation to evoke Jung's theories is, of course, the character's dramatic encounter with the poisoned quince described above which rather than producing an erotic and desirous effect, induces a catatonic swoon and, later, the delusion of a glass body. Afterward, as the mad Licentiate he lives a period of time on the street as a peripatetic wise man who engages (when closely studied) in empty pseudo-philosophical dialogue, called both "blather" and "garbage" recently in George Shipley's meticulous study of the discourse during this period of the protagonist's life.

In fact, the circumstances of the critical episode are baffling

and not consistent with the serious intellectual profile of Tomás Rodaja/Rueda that had been developing before the strange encounter with the *dama de todo rumbo y manejo* and her female Moorish accomplice. On the other hand, the eruption is not that unexpected but rather inevitable if the reader has been alert to the unspoken, the barely suggested protagonist's neurosis. For example, he consistently identifies with and advances patriarchal and masculine values and represses the affective, the feminine, and his own sexuality. These strange women challenge him to acknowledge that part of himself that up to that point he had been able to exclude from consciousness and systematically repress. The portentous episode can be then interpreted as a psychic allegory or, in Jungian terms, the grappling with his shadow projection that confronts Tomás and is all that he has refused to admit to consciousness. Whitmont explains Jung's theory: "the term *shadow* refers to that part of the personality which has been repressed for the sake of the ego ideal. Since everything unconscious is projected, we encounter the shadow in projection—in our view of 'the other fellow.' As a figure in dreams or fantasies the shadow represents the personal unconscious" (160).⁴ This theory will be elaborated later in this study in a more detailed analysis of the critical episode. Keeping in mind, however, the analytical lens that we are applying we begin with the protagonist's first appearance.

Farmer's Duds.

From the beginning there is about the young Tomás an intriguing solitariness. The young country boy is asleep in an emblematic pose under a tree in a bucolic setting. A pair of students and their servants see him and out of *curiosity* (a word frequently associated with sexual matters in "El curioso impertinente" and used to describe Loaysa in "El celoso extremeño") awaken him from this unconscious and metaphoric sleep. His chronological age corresponds to the patriarchal stage according to Jung's theory. What he experiences in that moment is an awakening to his

⁴ Whitmont's book updates and is based on C. G. Jung's understanding of the psyche and the dynamics of the unconscious. It is the principal source informing the present study.

conscious life from an unconscious dream, a differentiation of the ego or consciousness and the early construction of a cooperative relationship between the ego and unconsciousness (Ulanov 66 n. 3).

What is witnessed in the narrative is the beginning of the young man's separation from the world of the mother into the archetypal male world and the law of the male. Tomás's first words reveal his assertiveness and conscious adaptation to the social, collective, and masculine norm: he desires fame through study and believes progressively that anything is within reach: "yo he oído decir que de los hombres se hacen los obispos" (33), the same aphorism recalled by the Duchess in speaking to Sancho: "nadie nace enseñado, y de los hombres se hacen los obispos, que no de las piedras" (*Don Quijote* II, 33). He wishes to be the author of his own biography, withholding the real name of his parents and origin until he feels worthy of them—"ni el [nombre] della [la patria] ni el de mis padres sabrá ninguno hasta que yo pueda honrarlos a ellos y a ella" (43)—, and he invents for himself a name, Tomás Rodaja. Those promised biographical facts of name and birthplace are, in fact, never divulged, leaving the reader always watching an intentionally constructed character. What little is known about Tomás is most likely inferred from his clothing. For example, why did these students approach a sleeping peasant boy? Could it be that the scene suggests seduction? The traces of pastoral evident in the solitary field and the nearby river, together with the tree under which the attractive boy is sleeping, probably in the numinous midday sun, all convey an intimacy of which Tomás seems unaware but which attracts the students irresistibly. Could there have been something about the disposition of his clothing or his posture that suggested availability as well as his status as field hand (*labrador*)?⁵

We might visualize Tomás reclining against a tree trunk with the branches of the tree bending over him and forming a rounded shape in the form of a circle. This is repeated in the names he

⁵ Visualizing this character was suggested to me by Janis A. Tomlinson and Marcia Welles' article on "Picturing the Picaresque," in which an analysis of the disposition of figures and other details of Murillo's *Four Figures on a Step* fleshes out textual interpretation.

gives himself, Rueda or Rodaja, suggesting a formal analogy with the wheel or the primordial uroboros, which in *Art and the Creative Unconscious*, Eric Neuman describes as “the circular snake eating its tail...and circling round itself begetting and bearing its male and female at once” (9).⁶ He adds, it is a “symbol by which to represent the early psychic state in which consciousness is not yet separate from the unconscious, with all the decisive psychic consequences that this situation embraces for the relation of the ego to the unconscious and of man to the world” (10). The feminine resides in the unconscious and it is clear that Tomás’s identification with it is certainly not acknowledged consciously.

“Le vistieron de negro.”

On a conscious level, Tomás rejects or does not acknowledge the feminine which, according to Ulanov, is an expected response in this patriarchal stage (69). When the students take him along to Salamanca, “le vistieron de negro,” this “robing” which his masters benevolently carry out situates Tomás as the recipient, a position that he occupies repeatedly when in the company of others. The ritual of robing acknowledges not only Tomás’s official entry into the academic world, but it is also a sign of the generosity, affection, and bonding among the three young men. Their confidence in him is rewarded by his fidelity, punctuality, and diligence and his status improves ostensibly from servant to friend. The young man flourishes in this male company for eight years until they take him (“lleváronse consigo a Tomás”) south to Málaga where they have their family homes. Tomás’s reluctance to stay very long in the southern city—site of sun, sensuousness, and dalliance—, and his desire to return almost immediately to the safety of the intellectual center, Salamanca, is another example of his avoidance of both commitment and of the sensorial. The nature of the relationship among the young men is difficult to ascertain and highly suggestive. There is clear affection, seen by their generosity and admiration of him but Tomás is not of

⁶ Various linguistic and symbolic meanings have been proposed for Tomás’s fluid surname. I propose another consistent with Jungian theory. Neumann comments on the shape found in Leonardo’s da Vinci’s paintings which he interprets as the presence of the mother archetype in the painter’s psyche (10).

their social class, and in a nation so zealous about maintaining status and station it is unlikely that he would be so easily treated as their equal. In addition, a curious bonus is given Tomás as he leaves for Salamanca, enough money for him to live for three years. What might have constituted the nature of the bond that developed during those mysterious years together to merit such a reward?

Dressed to kill.

Having left his student-master, Tomás's second important encounter occurs during his trip north from Málaga. This time it is a chance meeting with Capitán Diego Valdivia, who will become the significant other as recruiter, advisor, friend, comrade-in-arms and, by means of implication and suggestion, perhaps, his intimate partner. The Capitán's fancy traveling clothes ("vestido bizarramente de camino") probably attracted the attention of Tomás, as Carmen Bernis shows these clothes were meant to do (88–90). Distinctly flamboyant with its display of colors and plumage, the off-duty apparel of the soldier was unrestricted by sumptuary laws and was used as a recruiting strategy. It could also be a costume of seduction, as recalled in the episode of the *soldado fanfarrón*, Don Vicente de la Roca/Rosa, who beguiles Leandra with his outfits in *Don Quijote* I, 51. In addition, John H. Weiger asserts an erotic function in use of multicolored fabric in *Don Quijote* (52). The almost instantaneous friendship between Tomás and the Capitán seems precipitous and, like others of the protagonist's relationships, not easily categorized. The Capitán merits special attention as the only character other than the protagonist with a personal name, Diego de Valdivia (suggesting life and vitality). His attempt to recruit Tomás is framed as a seduction as he recounts the pleasures and sensuousness of Italy so tantalizingly that Tomás's resistance and ultimate surrender are expressed in the discourse of a spiritual struggle of a sinner: "la discreción...comenzó a titubear y la voluntad a aficionarse a aquella vida" (45). The narrator meanwhile reminds the reader of the grim and life-threatening realities of a soldier's life (reasserting the masculine also in its display as *armas*) and tapping the unconscious fears of the young man.

Tomás, mindful of his early ambition to acquire fame and honor but guarding his independence and, perhaps, his fears, agrees to accompany Valdivia, but as observer, not participant. The language and images conjured up by the offer as well as the reply seem domestic, even erotic (the same discourse of temptation as in the initial invitation), rather than official and military: "le ofrecía su mesa y aun...su bandera, porque su alférez la había de dejar presto" (45). Tomás responds "que era contento de irse con él a Italia; pero había de ser condición no se había de sentar debajo de bandera.... 'Más quiero ir suelto que obligado,'" he adds (46). The flag offer and refusal could be construed as a phallic exchange, consistent with Tomás's apparent resistance to intimacy and perhaps, imbedded in his refusal is a fear of the soldier's life and the immanence of death. Again, this is a non-normative relationship that is full of innuendos. In the young man's preference to be independent and not abuse the privileges that the Capitán generously offers, the latter responds sarcastically and somewhat insightfully that Tomás's excessive scruples are like those of a cleric (implying celibate and female) and not those of a soldier. This, of course, recalls Tomás's earlier claim (taken literally) that his ambition might be that of bishop. These scruples extend to his rejection of the other offers as well. In any case, he renounces his former life when he exchanges the student garb for the dandy quasi-civilian clothes of the off duty soldier. Like Capitán Valdivia, Tomás is also *de papagayo* (literally, 'dressed as a parrot'), an object of attention, of desire perhaps; and approximating the seductive quality of female dress. He accompanies the soldier as a no-strings-attached comrade (*camarada*) in a highly suggestive and eroticized interaction.

As planned, Tomás separates himself from the troops in Italy to begin his precise and methodical trip through Italy and Flanders. The curious observer pays attention mainly to the cleanliness and order of the cities, and finds special interest in the artifacts, landscapes and buildings; he never mentions any human acquaintance or contact with others. On the contrary, he condemns everything human, sensual, and that which appears dirty or ugly. For example, he has a bad opinion of the libertine soldiers on the road to Genoa and earlier was afraid of the storms at

sea. Ruth El Saffar found that water in the works of Cervantes is related to the presence and influence of woman and that it always contains an aspect of the feminine archetype ("Fiction" 4). This fear of shipwreck relates to the symbolic value of the sea, which can imply fear of the female matrix and of sexuality. Tomás is also reluctant to try the wines of the Genovese barman in spite of, or perhaps because of, the amusing, sensual, and almost obscene description that he gives to them. In an attempt to stimulate desire and profit, no doubt, the imaginative barman personifies the wines by describing them in mostly feminine nouns: *suavidad, valor, fuerza, generosidad, grandeza, dulzura, apacibilidad, rusticidad*. Among the types of Spanish wines that "pudo tener en sus bodegas el mismo Baco" (48), the Italian mentions "la Membrilla." It of course recalls the sexual implications derived from the meanings of *membrillo*, the poisoned quince that will be the cause of Tomás's future crisis. Nevertheless, here he steadfastly refuses to yield to the temptation.

The trip clearly shows the neurosis of the young man and his compulsive behavior. His will is more rigid and inflexible, and the idea he has of himself seems inflated. He is eager to remove himself from the worldly temptations of Italy, and is as unresponsive to the soldiers' pleas for him to stay, just as he was inured to the barman's tantalizing description of the wines.

Tomás's choice of books to accompany him in his travels also form part of the subtle feminine presence: the *Horas de Nuestra Señora* and an unglossed edition of Garcilaso de la Vega's love poetry. The women who are the muses and objects of devotion in these two selections are idealized, remote, and inaccessible. Like Tomás they are also the figures who inspire devotion. The affection and friendship that both the students and the Capitán feel for Tomás is evident in the support particularly financial that he receives from the former perhaps from the Capitán as well. The source of Tomás's later income is never clear nor does he complain of lack of funds until he has returned to the capital to practice law, cured of the delusion. Consequently, he is ignored as sane but uninteresting by the former enthusiasts.

In black again.

In spite of his ostensible popularity as a student, Tomás resists all forms of intimacy and social relations; in the critical episode with the only women (certainly of ill-repute) of the story it is possible that his companions were testing, perhaps teasingly, his sexuality. The moment represents such a challenge to his acute repression that his denial and resistance produce unconsciousness followed by hallucination. When the young man is presented with the poisoned quince, the *membrillo*, it is a clear sexual symbol. The shape of the fruit (round with a visible outside crease paralleling the core) as well as its etymological root (*membrum*) is bivalent: suggesting the male genitals and the labia/vagina of the female (Redondo and Rochon, Sieber).⁷ The sign is equivocal but the psychic value is equal. His paroxysm or simulated death and later alienation from his own body are a direct result of his refusal to confront this threatening sexuality. The *dama de todo rumbo y manejo*, nameless in spite of her tremendous power and influence in the narrative, presses for sexual relations and/or marriage. Her female accomplice, likewise anonymous, is Moorish and embodies all the features of the despised “other” (witch, magician, procuress?). The few details about this *dama*—her self-assurance, her willfulness and insistence—are *his* characteristics as well. In addition, like him, she has traveled to Italy and Flanders. Like him, they are outsiders, travelers, even consorts. They are libidinous, he is rigidly scrupulous; if they are Eros, Tomás is logos. They are the seductive Eves who offer the forbidden fruit. These also liminal figures represent his shadow, his personal unconscious threatening to reveal itself. Their archetypes are those women who seduce and kill: Medusa, Circe, and Carbides; his, the Peter Pan figure who does not want or can not accept the responsibilities of male adulthood.⁸ It is useful to con-

⁷ Redondo has gathered many symbolic meanings of *membrillo*, including the following: “Le lexicographe [Covarrubias] note en effet que, pour certains, ce mot viendrait d’un diminutif de *membrum* à cause de la ressemblance que la plupart des fruits de cette espèce ont ‘avec l’organe génital de l’homme et de la femme.’ Il était donc le support tout indiqué d’un sortilège d’amour” (*Visages* 37).

⁸ In his chapter titled “Poison Damsels and Other Ladies,” Wolfgang Lederer speaks of “the demon woman [who] is a mythological type, and papers either as

sider the young Tomás a Jungian *puer aeternus* archetype—the eternal companion or brother—and follow the stages of his development, which are clearly contingent on his personal encounters with others and their protection, and also marked by almost ritualistic clothing changes.

Tomás's physical reaction to the poisonous love potion is to shake violently and, then, fall into a coma (similar to the frequent fainting spells of Golden-Age fictional women in distress, including *Don Quijote's* Dorotea and Luscinda). Once awake, he feels acutely vulnerable and announces that, unlike other men, he is made of glass (un-bodied). This appears to be a desperate strategy to maintain his physical autonomy and distance from others. When others embrace him to prove his corporeality, Tomás temporarily loses consciousness (again) to disengage from the intimacy. The image of body as glass suggests the metaphor used to signal the fragility of a woman's virginity (thus, her honor) and to the site of possible breakage—the hymen.⁹ Certainly, there is a striking visual likeness between the young man of glass covered up to his neck in the straw bed or ensconced in the straw of his traveling basket, and the general area of the vagina—the site of threatening female sexuality.¹⁰

Once awake, he feels acutely vulnerable, and succeeds in protecting his body (his chastity, perhaps) through a strategy of virtue: he believes he is made of glass from head to toe. Of course, the alignment of this image with the early Spanish literary convention is obvious. The hymen, easily broken, and likewise the family honor, so easily imperiled by that fracture, make glass the most frequent metaphor for honor. In his resting place amid straw and in his traveling casket also in straw, Tomás becomes the vagina, the site of threatening female sexuality. The clothing that he is given ("*le dieron*") is comparable to that of a

the companion of the enemy, or as the seductress of the hero; she sleeps with him—or promises to—and kill him" (58).

⁹ According to Singer, in "*El casamiento engañoso*," among other works, there is a noticeable disdain for women: "Infinitas veces insiste en el tema de que la mujer es de vidrio" (28).

¹⁰ Ulanov asserts that the "basket" is a metaphor traditionally associated with the female (158).

monk or hermit. Its purpose is to safeguard the glass body now rendered shapeless and androgynous by his apparel, a non-binding dark tunic and a big shirt tied with a cotton cord belt, and he is barefoot like a penitent or celibate friar.

In this guise, Tomás encounters a dirty, hostile, and deceitful world, and he presents himself as opinionated, hypercritical, and authoritarian. The children pursue him throwing stones, recalling the Biblical woman who was thus punished for her dissolute life. With deceitful and unfaithful women he is particularly intransigent. What he sees and the people and problems that he encounters are himself, a side that he has elided by repression.¹¹ This results in an inflated and autoerotic state of being. The stick that he carries to maintain distance and protect himself is also an instrument of isolation and can be identified, like the flag mentioned earlier, as phallic. The flag was rejected because it represented commitment and physical approximation to the Capitán and his men; the staff, on the other hand, is a cherished instrument of self-preservation and useful as a threat to others. It is a phallus of protection, authority, domination, and hierarchy.

The robed friar who dressed Tomás as a lawyer.

After two years, Tomás's madness is cured by a Hieronymite friar. The gentleman's fame for curing mutes is ironic, considering that the mad Licentiate never ceased talking. However, it is perfectly consistent with the long and dramatic projection that Tomás has been engaged in confronting: so much emerging and previously repressed psychic material—the silenced matter. Facing and acknowledging this repressed matter and bringing it to a conscious level is, in fact, "the cure." The friar is part of the now positive shadow and of the psychic projection of the young man, functioning as an archetype of the *senex*, a "old wise man," the archetype with which Tomás at an early stage had wanted to identify, the figure of the bishop. Whitmont points out that the

¹¹ Ulanov says: "Our first contact with our shadow is usually through projecting it on to others; we see qualities we do not recognize in ourselves as belonging only to them" (33). Heiple (19) believes censorship is responsible for the lack of irreverent jokes and that the protagonist defends clerics and religion." I believe, however, that it is the same rigid morality, now exaggerated, of the protagonist.

positive shadow appears when the subject identifies with his/her negative qualities and has repressed the positive ones (160). No doubt the young man recognizes in this celibate member of the order of St. Jerome a part of himself and/or a type with whom he wants to identify and had wanted to when at age eleven he considered becoming a bishop. This becomes a more satisfactory explanation after consulting Jacobus de Voragine's *Golden Legend*, which states that Saint Jerome was known as a wise man and judge of speech, who made many enemies among the clergy by reprimanding them for their lascivious ways. Jerome also withdrew from society to the wilderness, where he fought off sexual thoughts and proclaimed proudly his virginity. He was then boastful of his hyper-religiosity and of his celibacy. This principled rigidity and seeming imperviousness to the temptations of the flesh describe Tomás as much as St. Jerome, the namesake of the priest's religious order.

In any case the "cure," which may have been a kind of exorcism, is successful. The recovery of sanity brings about a change of clothes, and Tomás is again the passive object of a new identity, that of lawyer (*letrado*), indicated by the new frock the Hieronymite provided ("le vistió como letrado," 73), and he returns to the Court.¹²

As a court lawyer Tomás is a failure. The disclosure that his income is both important and inadequate signals a change from his former dependence on the good will of others. In addition to his penury, no one, having been entertained by the madman he was earlier, is interested in the sane judgment of a highly intelligent young man. However, Tomás finds a solution more personally satisfying and one in which he is the decision-maker and the agent of change. He himself sheds the lawyer's robe for the fancy dress of a soldier, and heads for Flanders to join Captain Valdivia. He will later change to battle gear, the narrator recounts, and acquire fame fighting by his friend's side. Could this comrade,

¹² Juan Huarte de San Juan describes the profession of *letrado* ("a letra dado") thus: "quiere decir hombre que no tiene libertad de opinar conforme a su entendimiento, sino que ha de seguir la composición de la letra" (468). This position, then, is not transformative. It is also cerebral and intellectual but not creative nor imaginative (468).

whose name evokes life or “vida,” signal a new life for Tomás, a satisfactory one in the company of men, sexually engaged or not? This is a partnership, a camaraderie that will never achieve nor acknowledge the norm of marriage and children, so praised and idealized in Cervantes’ other *novelas*. In any case, from now on he pursues a life not dependent on others but fully realized as an integrated personality—at least a character with agency and not fearful.

Ruth El Saffar believed that Cervantes’ later characters reached narrative unity, equilibrium, and personal integration, but only with a complementary other. Clearly, in Cervantes’ stories the “other” is part of the binary pair. Here, however, there is a destabilizing of the performative aspects of gender. In this story, the travels and travails of the protagonist are experienced alone or in the company of men. There is no woman pursued or presented as an agreeable and marriageable mate, rather one whose presence threatened and who might have been imaginary in any case. Through the protagonist Tomás, the author seems to contest the normative plot and resolution, and therefore opens up a space for the enactment of polyvalent sexualities and genders, and their struggle for representation.¹³

There is yet another subversion of expectations. Neither Tomás nor the narrator ever discloses the protagonist’s real name, the name of his father, nor his place of birth promised at his fictional birth. Perhaps he had not yet reached the status and honor that he sought and might have won later fighting in Flanders, but the narrator does not say. On the other hand, the silence might be due to a mature rejection of the traditional norms of evaluating self-worth and acknowledging personal success. As for Tomás, he is finally the author of his own autonomous, decisive biography.

Department of Spanish
Drew University

¹³ *Persiles y Sigismunda*, Cervantes’ last novel, which shows best the reconciliation of the author’s divided world of fiction, has a title which is composed of a masculine and feminine name (El Saffar, “Fiction” 35–49). A gender duality is also suggested in the title “El licenciado Vidriera.”

Madison, NJ 07904
ebunn@drew.edu

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