FROM ROMANCE TO THE NOVEL:
A STUDY OF DON QUIXOTE
AND ITS ARTHURIAN ROMANCE BACKGROUND

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of the thesis is to study Don Quixote against the background of Arthurian romance in order to estimate its contribution to the transition from medieval romance to the modern novel, and to reappraise certain established interpretations of Cervantes's masterpiece.

Chapter 1 is a detailed analysis of the structure and symbolic meaning of Chrétien de Troyes' Le Chevalier au Lion, with additional consideration of the ideological premises and narrative treatment of courtly chivalry, the nature of irony, and the function of marvellous incidents. Certain general principles of romance narrative are derived from this analysis.

In Chapter 2 there is an examination of how the various narrative features of early romance change or survive in Amadís de Gaula and Las Sergas de Esplandían. There is also discussion of the problems arising from the unresolved conflict between the use of the marvellous and these romances' claim to historical authenticity.

The remaining chapters constitute a study of Don Quixote. Chapter 3 relates the difficulties of late Arthurian romance to the neo-Aristotelian aesthetic debates on verisimilitude and on artistic unity. There follows an analysis of the nature and narrative elaboration of Don Quixote's madness.

Chapter 4 studies aspects of irony in the Quixote and demonstrates how Cervantes employs irony as a basic strategy both in his attack on the Spanish romances and in his response to neo-Aristotelian aesthetics.
Chapter 5 examines the interplay of character and action in the main narrative and in the interpolated stories. It identifies the emergence of character as a principle of narrative unity and as an area of aesthetic interest which supersedes the traditional concerns of romance.
I declare that this thesis has been composed by me and that it is the result of my own work.

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INTRODUCTION

That a study of Don Quixote should be necessary might seem questionable given the enormous amount of interpretation to which it has already been subjected. But Don Quixote, in addition to its intrinsic qualities, exercises an enduring fascination for students of imaginative literature because of the special, if not unique, place it occupies in history. It represents in many ways a watershed in the transition from medieval narrative to that modern form of fiction which has come to be called the novel. It is with the nature of this transition, especially as it might manifest itself in the Quixote, that this thesis is for the most part concerned.

My interest in Don Quixote as a transitional and innovatory work has led me to concentrate my attention on the nature of its critique of chivalric romance, an approach which I feel is justified by Cervantes's repeated declaration that his work has no other aim than to demolish "la máquina mal fundada destos caballerescos libros". To this end, I have attempted to define the dominant conventions and narrative devices which constitute the "máquina" of Arthurian romance narrative by going back to its inception in the twelfth century with the first long romances of Chrétien de Troyes. Then I have sought to trace a process of degeneration which might explain why Cervantes felt the "máquina" of romance in his day to have been "mal fundada".

This perspective, I believe, allows for a better understanding of the consequences of Cervantes's satire for
the development of narrative fiction.

In my discussion of Arthurian romance, I have judged it preferable to concentrate on specific works rather than attempt a wider study, because an analysis of the way particular romances work can reveal more about the underpinnings of the romance mode of narrative and, therefore, about the objects of Cervantes's satire, than could an exhaustive compilation of motifs and topics from a large number of individual works. That it should be possible to speak of a romance mode of narrative I take as my point of departure for this study, especially after Northrop Frye's The Secular Scripture and John Stevens's Medieval Romance, both of which have guided my thinking on these matters. At the end of my first chapter I give an outline of the outstanding features of this mode.

I begin with a detailed study of Chrétien de Troyes' Le Chevalier au Lion. The reasons for selecting this particular romance are given in the first chapter. My reading of Chrétien has profited from the works of Reto R. Bezzola, Jean Frappier and Robert Guiette. In the case of Bezzola, I have borne in mind the criticisms of excessively allegorical readings which scholars like Jean Misrahi, Morton W. Bloomfield and Peter Haidu have directed against the "allegorical" school represented by D. W. Robertson Jr. In this regard, I have found Robert Guiette's essays of great value.

In Chapter 2 I attempt a survey of those aspects of the development of French Arthurian romance which were most
influential for the sub-genre of the sixteenth century Spanish romances of chivalry. Here I have followed Eugène Vinaver and Jean Frappier closely. The major part of this chapter, however, deals with *Amadís de Gaula* and *Las Sergas de Esplandián* which I have chosen for several reasons. The *Amadís* is the first of the indigenous Arthurian romances in Spain which is modelled on the French without being a mere translation or straightforward imitation. As such, it exhibits new forms of narrative technique and organisation. Furthermore, since it is a re-working by Garci Rodríguez de Montalvo of a medieval text, the extant *Amadís* of 1508 represents, better than any of its Spanish epigones, a transition from medieval to Renaissance forms of narrative. The *Esplandián*, for its part, was entirely the work of Montalvo who conceived it as a sequel to *Amadís de Gaula*. It relates the adventures of the even more exemplary son of Amadís. I thought it worth including as an illustration of the generic weaknesses and characteristic defects of the Spanish Renaissance romances. In the famous burning of Don Quixote's library, the *Amadís* is spared but the son of Amadís is unhesitatingly consigned to the flames.

The remaining chapters deal with *Don Quixote* proper. I have based my study on a detailed and, I hope, thorough reading of the text, while paying close heed to Cervantes's declared intentions both in his Prologues and in those passages of the novel which have been generally regarded as *bona fide* expressions of his views. I have also referred to issues in Renaissance aesthetics which previous scholars
have identified as having particular relevance to Cervantes's aesthetic concerns. For my discussion of Renaissance aesthetics I have drawn on established works on the subject such as Bernard Weinberg's *History of Literary Criticism in the Italian Renaissance*, E.C. Riley's *Cervantes's Theory of the Novel*, and Alban K. Forcione's *Cervantes, Aristotle and the 'Persiles'*. 

I wish to demonstrate that Cervantes was a conscious literary innovator and an experimental, working novelist. For it is in his exercise of the writer's craft that he was able to transcend the limitations and dilemmas of Renaissance theories of narrative fiction and establish the foundations of what was to become the modern novel.
CHAPTER ONE

EARLY ARTHURIAN ROMANCE:

CHRÉTIEN DE TROYES' LE CHEVALIER AU LION

Although the origins of the Matter of Britain remain lodged in the obscurities of Celtic myth and folklore, Arthurian romance narrative begins with Chrétien de Troyes and Marie de France in the latter half of the twelfth century.\(^1\) The earliest extant romance is Chrétien's \textit{Erec et Enide} composed around 1170.\(^2\) In their blending of Celtic mythical motifs with the amatory values of early Provençal poetry, Chrétien's romances constitute one of the major sources of a literary obsession which was to run through the whole of the later Middle Ages up to and beyond the sixteenth century. Arthurian literature undoubtedly owed its prodigious popularity to Chrétien's ability to fashion aesthetically satisfying narrative forms which celebrated the values of chivalry and courtly love current in the prosperous court circles of France.

These chivalric and courtly values became potent ideals throughout the later medieval period. They were the twin standards by which the nobility of various countries in successive centuries measured themselves in love and war. Even though practice hardly ever matched the ideals, the latter were individually acknowledged and propounded by poets and chroniclers alike. As Johan Huizinga has observed, in
in an age where the action of economic and social forces in the shaping of events was ignored or misunderstood, the laws of chivalry were useful means of making sense of history in however restricted or simplified a manner. Heroes could be praised, enemies condemned, and both natural and military disasters accounted for by referring to the moral scheme of chivalry. However, more often than not, chroniclers paid lip-service to the ideals of chivalry before proceeding to relate in the main body of their narrative incidents of appalling cruelty and treachery that flagrantly betrayed those very ideals.

This discrepancy between the recording of historical events and the spiritual ideals of the chivalric world is of considerable significance for the understanding of Arthurian romance. It shows up a conflict between actual experience and the interpretation of history. By modern standards the interpretation of human affairs according to the criteria of chivalry would exclude far too many decisive factors to satisfy our sense of historical reality. This also applies to the account of the world given by Arthurian romance. The preternatural elements - fairies, spells, magic rings and potions - make for a remote and improbable world, which can lead one easily enough to dismiss Arthurian romance as a naïve, "idealistic" prelude to a more "realistic", truthful literature. The question to ask oneself is why so much "reality" was excluded from the medieval view of the world. What prevented the medieval poet from noticing the discrepancy and adjusting his sights accordingly? The Arthurian world,
which to modern eyes appears immediately restricted and implausible, held sway over people's imagination for nearly four centuries. It would be absurd to hold that this long-enduring fascination with chivalry and the Matter of Britain was due to a widespread deception perpetrated by a conspiracy of poets.

Clearly we are dealing with a cultural estrangement wrought by the passing of time. If we dismiss the romances as false or simplistic we are misunderstanding them and under-valuing their artistic worth. For a long time scholars failed to make much sense of Chrétien's romances. W.S. Woods illustrates this problem:

"It is difficult to believe that Chrétien is incapable of writing clearly, for nothing is more lucid than his expositions. Nothing could be arranged with more care and order than this romance of Erec and Enide. Yet there remains this obscure motivation for the episodes and hence there results a vague uneasiness about the meaning of the poem. Apparently the answer does not lie within the plot elements, and one should look to the sens (i.e. the symbolic meaning) for a solution - or concede that the romances are just a series of loosely connected adventures with no overall meaning or thesis." 5

As Woods indicates, the romances will yield little meaning unless an effort is made to understand the author's motivation, the literary conventions he observes, and the symbolic patterns he uses.

(i) The ideological context

Medieval culture, in the words of Juri Lotman, "starts off from the fact that everything is significant". 6 Nothing
in the world is devoid of meaning because everything that exists has been designated a place and a function in God's Creation. The fundamental premise upon which medieval thought rests is that the universe has been created by a benevolent deity. From this follows the conviction that the universe must conform to a perfect design and an intelligible structure. If the latter is not immediately obvious it is because man's imperfections prevent him from perceiving it directly. To this extent the order of the universe is hidden from man. This idea divides the world into the visible and the invisible, the phenomenal surface and a subjacent order of reality. The world of matter is not an end in itself. As Marc Bloch says,

"In the eyes of all who were capable of reflection, the material world was scarcely more than a sort of mask behind which took place all the really important things; it seemed to them also a language, intended to express by signs a more profound reality. Since a tissue of appearances can offer but little interest in itself, the result of this view was that observation was generally neglected in favour of interpretation." 7

This Platonic attitude to the world held sway throughout the medieval period even though it was modified and transformed by the revival of Aristotle in the thirteenth century. However, in Chrétien de Troyes' own century, there was a particularly strong renewal of interest in Platonism in the form of the optimistic rationalism of the school of Chartres with its predilection for the Timaeus and the neo-Platonism of pseudo-Dionysius. 8 As M.-D. Chenu observes, the twelfth century can be seen as a turning point in
medieval civilization as a result of the changes that took place in the material conditions of life:

"Encouraged by the break-up of the feudal monopoly of the soil, by the economic and political emancipation of urban artisans organized into guilds and by the active mobility of men and goods in a market economy, the use and spread of new techniques of production and commerce profoundly altered not only the material side of life but also the modes of perception, sensibility, and representation that pertain to the life of the spirit."^9

This change predominantly took the form of an active interest in the workings of nature. The naturalistic sculpture of the late twelfth and early thirteenth century artisans testifies to this awakening:

"At first the craftsman's interest in nature was a confused one. Side by side with the fine carvings of oak leaves and hawthorne sprays, faithfully copied, tenderly arranged, the sculptor still created strange monsters, gargoyles, chimeras, legendary beasts. But the interest in nature steadily broadened and became more consuming."^10

In the philosophical realm, the masters of the school of Chartres were interested in observing Nature, its laws and cycles, the harmonious order of natural things which reflected the omnipotence of God. Such optimistic rationalism led to criticism of the marvels and fantasies which had fascinated men of earlier periods. Attempts were made to distinguish between preternatural or miraculous occurrences where natural laws are suspended by the Will of God, and the supernatural order of grace, properly speaking, which does not necessarily
intrude into the normal operations of nature.\textsuperscript{11}

This fascination with the world of nature was to meet opposition from the abbeys of Cîteaux and St Victor where the traditional attitude of the Fathers tended to prevail. According to this view, the world symbolized spiritual realities: man's condition, as Augustine had taught, was rooted in the events of sacred history, in the facts of original sin and redemption, it was impossible to arrive at any knowledge of his nature or destiny through the contemplation of the natural order.\textsuperscript{12} These two divergent attitudes to the world of nature were not always clearly distinct, they reflected, as Chenu observes, a tension which exists in Christian thought.\textsuperscript{13} The predominance of one or other was often due to a matter of personal emphasis or orientation in an age of great intellectual ferment and varied philosophical influences. However, in spite of these differences and antagonisms, the philosophical themes of Augustine's Platonism, according to Chenu, constituted the common property of theologians in the century:

"...all things comprised an order...; the key to this order was at once the distinction and the intimate relationship between the intelligible and the sense-perceptible worlds into which the universe was divided. True reality belonged to the intelligible world, which alone was unchanging and which alone, therefore, was true...God, author of this universe and this order, was the source of all reality and of all truth; as such he was transcendent, and it was his very transcendence which underlay his omnipresence. Man was composed of a body and a soul, and through these he entered into the two worlds. The soul, in itself, was one, substantial, reasonable and individual even when it was ruling a body... Man's dualism had implications for the ways and means by which he knew; the soul had two faces, one turned towards the intelligible world, the other toward the sense-perceptible world... Cultivation
of the interior life was the supreme goal of man's perfection and happiness, even if physical existence thereby became enigmatic, and even if man's openness to society and nature was thereby compromised. Evil was rooted in the original non-being of the creature; only the interchangeable Being was true and good; change, or becoming, was a defect in truth and goodness; this was equally true of man, for whom such evil in his will became sin." 14

Now this body of ideas rested on the fundamental premise of the division of life into the temporal order of nature and the transcendent order of divine truth. Moreover these two orders were felt to be related in obscure and mysterious ways,

"Masters in the schools, mystics, exegetes, students of nature, seculars, religious, writers and artists - these men of the twelfth century had in common with all other men of the Middle Ages the conviction that all natural or historical reality possessed a signification which transcended its crude reality and which a certain symbolic dimension of that reality would reveal to man's mind." 15

Such a symbolic mentality permeated all areas of human endeavour as men tried to comprehend the connections between the visible and the invisible. In the definition of Hugh of St Victor, "a symbol is a juxtaposition, that is, a coaption of visible forms brought forth to demonstrate some invisible matter." 16 The symbol was an instrument of truth clearly distinguishable from reasoning as a mode of cognition: "To bring symbolism into play was not to extend or supplement a previous act of the reason; it was to give primary expression to a reality which reason could not attain and which reason even afterwards, could not conceptualize." 17 Symbols, there-
fore, were a means by which the human mind could begin to grasp and articulate certain intimate relationships between the material and the transcendent, the accidental and the essential, the real and the ideal. The symbolic mentality was fostered by men's deep sense of mystery when contemplating both Nature and history.

God's transcendence could be revealed in Nature through the discovery of the vestigia of this presence with which His will had impregnated the physical universe. To understand these material symbols it was first necessary to recognize them and relate them to other phenomena. The basic principle in this process was what Michel Foucault calls "resemblance":

"It was resemblance that largely guided exegesis and the interpretation of texts, it was resemblance that organised the play of symbols, made possible knowledge of things visible and invisible and controlled the art of representing them. The universe was folded in upon itself: the earth echoing the sky, faces seeing themselves reflected in the stars, and plants holding within their stems secrets that were of use to man."  

This harmonious system would remain hidden unless man were able to read the signs and establish the significant connections between phenomena. Things possessed a material form and an ideal content and, according to Lotman, "... the medieval thinker meditated upon the relationship between what was material (the expression) and what was ideal (the content) in the sign." For example, the walnut was considered to hold the cure for ailments of the head. This knowledge could be
established because the walnut possesses signs of affinity with the human head: the furry skin covering the shell resembles the scalp, therefore this part of the walnut was thought to contain a cure for wounds of the pericranium. The kernel of the nut resembles the brain thus signifying its virtue as a cure for internal head troubles. The healing quality of the walnut, its virtue, is indicated to man by the particular material shape given to it by God. This means that the walnut, like any other object, has been assigned a specific place and value in the order of the world. The task of human investigation is to bring to the fore the framework which connects these constituent elements of the world by reducing the gap between visible phenomena and their underlying essential qualities.

Likewise, in human history there was to be found evidence of God's will in the symbolic meaning of events. If the symbols of nature were fixed and determined, existing as they did in an already created world, the symbols of history, corresponding to the sphere of man's free will and the operation of divine grace, participated in the developing plan of salvation:

"History, in contrast to nature, afforded a loftier matter, for it treated the free destinies of men as subsumed under the free will of God. However, precisely because this was what it treated, its literal content yielded an ulterior significance only on the supposition that temporal events possessed a coherence revealed through prophecy and imposed by the design of God, master of history - unless of course history, like the fables of the gods, were to have been treated as myth, a procedure which faith could not countenance."
Natural symbols, then, were susceptible of investigation, but the symbolic character of history was dependent on faith, free will and the refinement of spiritual insight.

The paramount vehicle of the sacred symbolism of history was the Bible where historical events were narrated on a literal, denotative level, but those same events nevertheless possessed other figurative levels which conveyed their spiritual or sacred character. According to the tradition of Patristic exegesis, sacred scripture could be read on four levels: (1) the "literal" or "historical" events; (2) the "allegorical," concealed beneath the literal, where the surface events could be related to other historical events which evinced a sacred meaning. For example, the conquest of Canaan foreshadowed the entry into the promised land, or Jerusalem prefigures the Church founded by Christ; (3) the "moral," which was that sense of the literal that served as a guide for the conduct of one's life; (4) the "anagogic," which referred to the spiritual or sacred truths pertaining to the eternal life, such as the release of the soul from sin to grace, or the redemption of man's fallen state through the sacrifice of Calvary. God therefore had imbued history with meanings which revealed the working of his divine plan: "Tropology operated in history because of the figurative dimensions enjoyed by things, by persons and events over and beyond the words, the littera, of the narrative." However, the figurative meanings in no way diminished the concrete reality of the historical events themselves. It was through the inspired and authoritative interpretation of these events that their
ulterior spiritual significance came to be revealed.

Similarly in other areas of symbolic interpretation, in nature, the liturgy, or even social life, Chenu observes,

"it was not by total abstraction that one proceeded; the symbolized reality remained concretely present and visible, for every symbol in a certain way contained the reality it expressed. But the relationship between symbol and thing symbolized, between type and anti-type, was qualitative; what released and determined the translatio of one's mind to the mystery was some quality through which the symbolic relationship was defined or rather experienced. Participation in the transcendent was not felt to be a matter of identity with it ("identity" was a term proper to conceptual logic); rather such participation was sensed through a dialectic of the similar-dissimilar within a "figure", within the co-existence of the sensible and the spiritual. The same act both fixed and freed the understanding, because the material symbol was preserved in its concrete density." \(^{25}\)

The symbolic mode, then, did not detract from the sensuous immediacy and concreteness of man's experience of either nature or history. It sought to penetrate beyond these primary perceptions in order to grasp their spiritual significance, without thereby invalidating either reality.

There is, consequently, a distinction to be made between symbolism and allegory. In symbolism, the material sign by its "dissimilar similitude" led one to perceive a spiritual reality, whereas allegory "was the analytical exploration of an idea which made use of details dissected and abstracted from an image with each detail having specific meaning"; symbolism starts from experience, constituting it in images or metaphors "which mediate mystery to us", allegory "starts with critical analysis and from it derives abstract thoughts which it ultimately employs in a didactic
presentation. In the final stage, explanation submerges signification." Thus symbolism would lead to allegory whenever the primary literal level was so subordinated to the secondary figurative levels that these latter took on a species of analytical intellectual autonomy.

(ii) Courtly chivalry and the Matter of Britain

The philosophical idealism which flowered in the twelfth century had its social and political counterparts in the new idealisms of chivalry and courtly love disseminated principally through the works of vernacular poets and romance writers. In that century, the aristocratic classes began to refine the barbarism of their forebears by cultivating the values of prowess, loyalty, trustworthiness, generosity, courtesy and, especially, a disinterested love of glory as a sole motive for taking up arms. These chivalric values soon fell under two powerful influences.

The Church attempted to give a more religious orientation to chivalry by adapting its ideals to Christian morality and by harmonizing the quest for glory with the Christian's search for salvation. More decisively, chivalry was to become closely interwoven with ideas of courtly love which owed their first appearance in France to the troubadours of the South. For these poets love was "the emotion produced by unrestrained adoration of a lady". It improved men's natures and enhanced the chivalric virtues. Sidney Painter writes: "A man would be a better knight if he loved - in
fact it was doubtful whether a man who did not adore a lady could be a true knight. By developing this idea that a noble could not be a perfect knight unless he loved a lady the troubadours laid the foundation of courtly chivalry".  

In northern France the ideology of *courtoisie* was propagated by writers such as Andreas Capellanus and Chrétien de Troyes, both of whom were attached to the court of Marie de Champagne. In these circles *courtoisie* became, as Winthrop Wetherbee has observed, a philosophical as well as a social ideal:

"Literary articulation of the ideal of *curialitas* often corresponds strikingly to the allegorizing of philosophical *sapientia* in school poetry. Indeed,... much of the creative energy of the early romancers seems to have been devoted to the creation of a poetic world, unified by rhetorical conventions and the ideals of *courtoisie*, a world with its own cosmology, its own quasi-sapiential hierarchies of meaning and value, its own mythical equivalents for the religious exaltations and historical dilemmas of twelfth century man."  

In the case of Chrétien de Troyes, the raw materials for the construction of the sort of ideal poetic world described by Wetherbee were taken largely from the Matter of Britain. Exactly how this Matter of Britain arrived in the courts of France is not altogether clear. Frappier sees two basic lines of transmission. The *Historia Regum Britanniae* by Geoffrey of Monmouth which appeared in 1136 was very widely believed to be true history although it is now known to be fictitious. There were several translations
of this history into the vernacular, of which the most popular was the Roman de Brut by the Norman clerk Wace which appeared in 1155 and was probably dedicated to Eleanor of Aquitane, the mother of Chrétien's patroness Marie de Champagne. However, as Frappier notes, neither the Historia Regum Britanniae nor the Roman de Brut can fully account for the particular subjects and adventures treated by the romance writers of the latter part of the twelfth century. Their function was rather to confer upon the Matter of Britain the authority and prestige of true history: "En réalité, Geoffrey et Wace ont servi surtout à conférer un semblant d'authenticité à la légende arthurienne. Ils en ont favorisé la renommée, en ont été les garants. Grâce à eux, Arthur pouvait figurer décemment dans les poèmes au même titre que Charlemagne et Alexandre."33

The other line of transmission must be sought in the popular stories and songs drawn from Celtic myth and folklore and disseminated in France in the late eleventh century by Breton troubadours after the Norman Conquest of England. Marie de France, Chrétien de Troyes, Thomas d'Angleterre and Béroul, who each composed a version of the Tristan legend, all refer to these "contes d'aventures" or "lais" (from the Irish laid meaning a piece of music, a song or a poem) sung by troubadours on their harps. In Frappier's view, this attests to the considerable development of the Matter of Britain in France outside the more learned tradition represented by the Historia Regum Britanniae and the Roman de Brut.34 In the hands of educated writers
like Chrétien and Marie de France these stories were transformed into lengthier and more sophisticated narratives "(Chrétien)....a dû faire passer la matière de Bretagne du stade du conte d'aventure, où la succession des épisodes reste lâche et dépourvue de cohérence psychologique, à celui du roman, que son génie a conçu comme l'union d'une matière, d'une conjointure et d'un sen." 35

These latter terms, matière, conjointure and sen, are taken from Chrétien's prologues to his romances Erec et Enide and Le Chevalier de la Charrette where the poet refers to the nature and purpose of his creative activity. In Erec he states that one should try to express oneself well and teach correctly. To this end he will make a well-ordered narrative ("une bele conjointure") out of a tale of adventures: "par là, on peut prouver et être certain, que n'est pas sage celui qui ne dévoile pas ce qu'il a de science, autant que Dieu lui en donne la grâce" (p.1). 36 The composition of a narrative becomes a duty for those who have the ability and skill and enjoy the grace of God. Later, in Le Chevalier de la Charrette, he develops these ideas in greater detail. He says that he received his material (matière) from his patroness Marie de Champagne and he will apply his efforts (paine) and skills (entencioun) to invest it (mettre) with meaning (sen). 37

The meanings of the three terms, matière, sen, and conjointure have been very much debated. 38 The most widely accepted interpretation is that of W.A. Nitze. The matière indisputably refers to Chrétien's source material. According
to Nitze, the *sen*, derived from the Latin *sensus*, is the meaning or interpretation (Nitze calls it "signification" or "interprétation"). But Nitze also shows that *sen* is related to other Latin words: *sapientia* and *scientia*, which had been employed in a similar context as Chrétien's *sen* by the authors of the earlier "Matière de Rome". Nitze concludes from this: "Néanmoins, et c'est peut-être ici Chrétien et Marie (de France) qui parlent le plus clairement, c'est une sagesse et une science données par Dieu, et de ces qualités dépendent le sens ou faculté d'interprétation que possède le poète." 39

Chrétien's romances are therefore conceived as re-workings or interpretations of material which he has inherited from other sources. Either it has been given to him by a patron, as in the case of *La Charrette*, or he has re-worked an old story, as in *Erec*, or he claims to have found a story in a book, as in *Cligès* and *Perceval*. However, the wisdom and artistic skills bestowed upon him by God are used to give this material a deep sense by ordering and arranging it in a pleasing manner ("bele conjointure"). As Jean Frappier points out, Chrétien "attribuait à la conjointure une valeur fonctionelle destinée qu'elle était dans sa pensée, non seulement à éclairer, mais encore à soutenir et animer le *sen* de l'oeuvre". 40

Because the material has been handed down, the poet lays no claim to the original invention of the characters or the action. Questions about the ontological status of
the story are superfluous. It is unnecessary to ask whether King Arthur and his knights actually existed or whether these adventures in fact took place, because they are deemed to exist prior to the composition of the romance itself in a general store of legends and historical tales. The writer does not feel compelled to prove in the process of telling his story that it has the status of true history. His working in the Arthurian tradition has placed his romance within the ambit of a collective historical patrimony. The individual poet like Chretien can claim to be doing no more than unravelling the spiritual implications of these allegedly historical events under the guidance of divine inspiration. Therefore the structure which Chretien gives to the romance is considered to possess a spiritual necessity; it is its "true" structure in so far as he has been granted the insight to "find" it in the inherited historical matter. Structure and sense coincide; by revealing that structure he also gives it value, in so far as he is uncovering the Christian order of experience which underlies the surface of human history. Poetic truth, then, coincides with or reflects spiritual truth.

In so christianizing, and thereby universalizing, the tales and legends of Celtic folklore, Chretien helped to generate a form of narrative which, according to W.P. Ker, launched the development of modern European literature: "No later change in the forms of fiction is more important than the
twelfth century revolution from which all later forms and constitutions of romance and novel are in some degree or other derived. It was this revolution, of which Chrétien was one of the first to take full advantage, that finally put an end to the old local and provincial restrictions of narrative." In Chrétien's romances, as we shall presently see, the supersession of folkloric localism was achieved by the poetic fusion in a symbolic narrative of three important elements: the neo-Platonist attitudes characteristic of the twelfth century renaissance in France, the widely influential value-system of chivalry and courtly love, and the historico-mythical Matter of Britain.

In order to concentrate my discussion of Chrétien's narrative art, I have chosen to analyse in detail Le Chevalier au Lion or Yvain, his most representative romance, and in Frappier's opinion, his masterpiece. Erec et Enide, probably the first romance he wrote, is similar in structure and theme to Le Chevalier au Lion; Cligès, also an early romance, is uncharacteristic because of the absence of marvellous elements. Le Chevalier de la Charrette was composed either before or at about the same time as Yvain, but it remained unfinished by Chrétien. Moreover, because of its adulterous subject matter, it is something of an anomaly in Chrétien's work, the result of a possibly uncongenial request by his patroness Marie de Champagne to re-work the story of Lancelot and Guinevere. Finally, the Conte du Graal too was not finished by Chrétien's hand. Le Chevalier au Lion, therefore, is the one Arthurian romance which Chrétien
completed in his maturity and which consequently can most fully reveal to us the fundamental principles of his art.\(^{45}\)

(iii) The romance of *Le Chevalier au Lion* or *Yvain*

(a) The preliminary adventure.

The romance opens with a reference to King Arthur whom Chrétien praises for his valour and "courtoisie". The King is holding Court at Carduel in Wales, celebrating the feast of Pentecost. After supper the knights and ladies tell each other stories or converse about the delights and torments of Love. However, nowadays, says Chrétien, Love has all too few loyal subjects, nearly everyone disregards Love's dictates to his own detriment. Those who in days gone by were the servants of Love "... y gagnaient un renom de courtoisie, de prouesse, de largesse et d'honneur" (p.1).\(^{46}\) These values have degenerated and consequently Love is only a "mot trompeur" because "ceux qui ne ressentent rien prétendent qu'ils aiment, mais ils mentent, et s'en vanter sans aucun droit, ce n'est que fable mensongère" (pp.1-2). Chrétien compares the worthwhile values of the Past with the perfidious Present where the outward behaviour of men, in word and deed, belies their real inward disposition. Chrétien then disowns the present generation and turns to the Court of King Arthur. The romance is therefore set in a cautionary, didactic framework. It will be a tale of pristine "courtoisie" which will show up the corruption of
That evening King Arthur retires early to his chamber. The Queen sits by his side until he falls asleep. Outside, a group of knights which includes Gauvain, Yvain and the sharp-tongued Keu, are listening to a story told by Calogrenant. The Queen, overhearing the story, leaves the King's side and discreetly approaches the group. Calogrenant is the only knight to jump to his feet immediately. Keu teases him for the alacrity of his response, accusing him of merely wanting to make a show of his "courtoisie" before the Queen so as to put the rest to shame. The Queen reproves Keu for his spiteful words and asks Calogrenant to continue his story. Calogrenant shrugs off Keu's remarks about his "courtoisie" thereby proving to all through his forbearance and civility that his "courtoisie" is indeed genuine. Significantly though, when he resumes his tale he prefices it with a warning to his audience to listen carefully:

"Prêtez-moi coeur et oreilles, car les mots sont entièrement perdus s'ils ne sont compris par le coeur. Il est des gens qui entendent une chose sans la comprendre, et cependant, y applaudissent; elle n'est pour eux qu'un bruit, dès lors que le coeur n'y comprend rien; aux oreilles viennent les mots, comme le vent qui vole sans y faire arrêt ni séjour, mais ils s'en éloignent bien vite si le coeur n'est assez vigilant pour être prêt à la saisie; car s'il peut, en les entendant, les saisir, les enfermer et les retenir, les oreilles sont alors le chemin et le conduit par où la voix s'en vient au coeur; et le coeur saisit dans le ventre la voix qui par l'oreille y entre. Celui donc qui veut me comprendre doit me livrer coeur et oreilles, car je ne veux parler de songe ni de fable ni de mensonge." (p.5; my emphasis).
After his brief exchange with Keu, Calogrenant urges a respect for words. It is not enough to hear the words to get at the truth of a story, one has to understand them with the heart, or the words in themselves will be so much idle noise. The truth is therefore in large part dependent on the listener's or the reader's ability to seek the deep sense of the words, to go beyond the mere surface. Listening or reading are consequently activities that require a proper moral disposition. Calogrenant recognises the fragility of language, its susceptibility to distortion by ill-will or a disrespectful attitude. The truth is found in a subtle balance of the surface texture of words and their deep meaning, an equilibrium which can all too easily be upset.

Calogrenant goes on to relate how seven years ago he roamed abroad in search of adventures and was directed to a magic fountain by a giant. The fountain was situated in the shade of a beautiful evergreen tree next to a small chapel. Beside the fountain there was a block of emerald hollowed out like a vase and supported by four sparkling rubies. From the tree there hung a bucket on a long chain which reached down to the cool bubbling water of the fountain. If the bucket were filled with water and emptied over the stone a terrible storm would ravage the surrounding countryside. Calogrenant arrived at the fountain and unhesitatingly committed the folly, as he admits, of unleashing the storm on the land. The heavens parted letting loose snow, hail and rain, lightning felled trees, and the knight was filled with terror. Suddenly the tempest abated and every leaf and branch of the beautiful
tree was filled with thousands of birds singing in wonderful harmony. Their song inspired in the knight a joy that was close to ecstasy. He then heard a thunderous sound which turned out to be a knight of fierce demeanour riding up. The latter angrily accused Calogrenant of having gravely offended him by unleashing the storm on his castle and territory. A fight ensued and the unknown knight unhorsed Calogrenant with a blow. The knight left him for dead and rode off. The hapless Calogrenant eventually returned whence he came, considering how foolish he had been to attempt such an adventure.

The story can be understood as a warning against a rash attitude to the seeking of honour through adventures. However, no sooner has Calogrenant finished than his cousin Yvain rebukes him for having kept the story from him. Yvain swears to avenge his humiliation. Keu then intervenes to tease Yvain for his impetuousness. Once again the Queen has to chide Keu for his sarcastic tongue. At this point the King emerges from his chamber and when he is told about the magic fountain he resolves to go to see it in the company of his knights. This decision greatly disappoints Yvain because he wants the honour of completing that adventure for himself. If he were to go to the fountain with the King and the other knights, Keu or Gauvain would doubtless be given first option to do battle with the guardian of the fountain.

Yvain leaves the Court secretly, makes his way to the fountain, and raises the storm. He then engages the guardian
Esclados le Roux and after a fierce fight wounds him seriously. Esclados turns tail and heads back to the castle, hotly pursued by Yvain who wants to obtain some token of his victory to show Keu and the others. Esclados enters his castle by a narrow passage which is guarded by a portcullis that slams shut like a guillotine. Yvain manages to get through this door just before it falls shut cutting his horse in two (p.25). By this time Esclados has escaped through another door and Yvain is trapped in a chamber that has no visible exit.

A beautiful damsel appears and informs Yvain that the injured Esclados has died and that his widow has ordered her men to find the adversary and kill him. In return for a past favour which Yvain had done her at King Arthur's court, the damsel Lunete offers Yvain a magic ring that makes the wearer invisible (pp.26-27). This helps Yvain to escape detection but when he sees the widow scratching and tearing at her flesh with grief, Yvain falls instantly in love with her and tries to rush up to restrain her. Lunete urges him not to be so rash:

"Prenez bien soin, si vous imaginez quelque folie, de ne pas la mettre à l'exécution. Le sage dissimule ses folles pensées et met en œuvre s'il peut son bon sens." (p.55; my emphases).

Again, Yvain's impetuousness almost leads him into folly. All the same, he is in a quandary. The dead knight is being buried, so Yvain cannot get proof ("gage probant")
of his victory, and to compound the problem, he has fallen in love with his enemy's widow, ("il aime l'être qui le hait le plus au monde" p.36). If he leaves the castle he will suffer the shame of not being credited for his adventure, but if he stays he will probably be executed by the lady he loves. Yvain nevertheless resolves to stay because he knows he should obey the will of Love. His problem now is to win the love of the widow and reconcile that with the exigencies of his public honour.

Chrétien has worked the plot into a very tight corner. How will Yvain's dilemma be resolved? Chrétien obviously delights in underlining the dilemma between Love and Honour:

"C'est que le retiennent Amour et Honte qui de deux côtés à la fois se présentent à lui: quel déshonneur s'il s'en va, jamais on ne croira qu'il ait accompli cet exploit; et d'autre part, si vif est son désir de pouvoir au moins regarder sa belle dame...que sa captivité lui est indifférente; il préfère mourir plutôt que de partir" (p.41).

The quandary puts Yvain in an impossible position - whichever way he acts he will face either dishonour or death. In the event, Lunete promises to deliver him from his predicament.

Lunete goes to her mistress Laudine and charges her with "folle conduite" (much as she had accused Yvain earlier of "folie"), for indulging her grief so totally that she is overlooking her duty to find a new guardian of her fountain.
Laudine replies that no better man than Esclados could possibly be found. Lunete offers to prove to her that there is such a knight. Her proof consists of presenting Laudine with the objective evidence of the duel:

"Deux chevaliers se sont mesurés en combat singulier, lequel, croyez-vous qui mieux vaille quand l'un des deux a vaincu l'autre? Pour moi je donne le prix au vainqueur. Et vous?" (p.45).

Laudine hesitates, and her reply is highly significant: "J'ai l'impression que tu me tends un piège, tu veux me prendre au mot" (p.45; my emphasis). Laudine knows that she has been given incontrovertible evidence of Yvain's superiority according to medieval law, where the result of a duel establishes God's will. To actually utter this self-evident truth would, however, commit her openly to a fact that in her state of grief she is not prepared to contemplate. Now it is Laudine's turn to be placed in a moral dilemma: if she refuses to recognize the result of the duel she will be putting her purely personal sorrow before the objective truth of the situation; however, if she publicly concedes that truth, and persists in her mourning, then her words will be in conflict with her private feelings, she will be openly defying the truth and compromising her integrity.

That night Laudine has a long debate with herself. She regrets her harsh words with Lunete and begins to consider the merits of Yvain, "selon la raison et un juste procès:
il n'a aucun tort envers elle" (p.47). She imagines Yvain standing trial before her and answering an interrogation in which he displays impeccable honesty:

"Ainsi se prouve-t-elle à elle même, selon la justice, le bon sens et la raison, qu'elle ne doit pas le haïr, et son jugement répond aux désirs de son cœur. Elle s'enflamme d'elle même, comme le feu qui fume et d'ou la flamme tout à coup jaillit, sans qu'on souffle dessus ni qu'on l'attise" (pp.47-48).

This episode is entirely alien to anything the reader will encounter in modern fiction. There is a strange charm about this picture of the grief-racked widow wrestling with her own passions and her moral judgement, finally conceding the truth that her husband's murderer is morally superior, and spontaneously falling in love with the victorious enemy. The process breaks all the rules of naturalistic writing and makes nonsense of psychological realism. Laudine interprets the results of the battle according to objective public criteria of reason and justice, and her decision to favour Yvain is regarded as a triumph of good sense over folly. Chrétien describes it as the reconciliation of the desires of the heart with her better judgement.

In terms of Calogrenant's prescription for good sense in an audience's response to stories, Laudine has forced herself to read the duel not only with her eyes but also with her heart. This alignment of eyes and heart has enabled her to understand the truth, and, as if to confirm and celebrate the coincidence of objective evidence and inward disposition, Laudine's heart flares up with love for Yvain. Both the response to literature and to
human affairs require the same moral attitude - the truth in both cases is accessible only if one sets aside passions and selfish indulgence, which cloud the reason and distort the evidence.

When Laudine accepts Yvain and decides to marry him, one side of the knight's dilemma has been resolved: the demands of Love are met. There remains the other side: the question of honour. Yvain still has to prove to Keu and the others that he has accomplished the adventure of the fountain in order to win the honour which accrues from such a feat. This part of the dilemma now has a straightforward solution. As the new defender of the fountain Yvain rides out to confront Keu who has been given permission to raise the storm by Arthur. Since Yvain is disguised, Keu fails to recognise him, and a fight ensues in which Yvain soon unseats Keu and takes his horse. When Yvain reveals his identity, Keu is overcome with shame and the other knights filled with joy. All then repair to Laudine's castle and celebrate the happy outcome of the whole episode.

We are now in a position to look at some of the principles on which this curious adventure is constructed. The episode is introduced by exalting certain values - "courtoisie", "vaillance", "bon sens" etc. - and decrying certain human defects, namely, "folie", impetuosity, scepticism and spitefulness (represented by the sarcastic Keu). The point of the Calogrenant section would therefore be to demonstrate not only how "folie" can lead one into trouble but also how it can be overcome by drawing lessons
from experience and acquiring "bon sens". When Yvain impetuously leaves the Court to seek the honour of completing the adventure of the magic fountain, he not only displays a tendency to "folie", but he also perpetrates a form of deception upon his fellows - the fact that he leaves alone and in secret amounts to an act of stealth. Yvain places his own search for glory above the public consensus of the community which is regulated by the authority of Arthur. The result of this individual decision would seem to be the dilemma which develops after Yvain kills Esclados. The victory embroils him in a situation where he cannot pursue his initial drive for glory without forgoing his equally stringent duty to obey the call of Love. This division in his interior life renders him powerless to present a public image of integrity; he cannot present himself back at Court nor approach Laudine directly. He is cowering in a trap like a mouse. 53

The interest of the story turns on the question of how Yvain's dilemma will be resolved. It ramifies into three levels. If we consider character and story alone, Yvain must win Laudine's love without losing face to Keu. When this requirement is translated onto the moral level, the problem is seen as the reconciliation of two conflicting pulls - that of passion and that of public honour - which will produce the desired equilibrium of "bon sens". Finally it becomes a purely technical difficulty of breaking an impasse in the narrative where the hero has been caught in a seeming dead-end.
Chretien resolves the threefold problem with unpredictable finesse. Since Yvain cannot on his own arrive at a happy conclusion to the adventure, Chretien transfers the initiative to Laudine, who must in some way be made to fall in love with Yvain and thereby break the deadlock. The quality of the story will depend on the manner in which this unlikely change of heart is achieved. Chretien proceeds to accomplish this by converting Laudine's grief into a moral failing: she allows her intense sorrow to cloud her judgement and disregards the self-evident verdict of the armed combat. Yvain's victory, according to chivalric convention, makes him superior to her dead husband. Since the result of the duel is the revelation of the will of God, Laudine's persistence in her hatred for Yvain amounts to the violation of an objectively manifest truth. Through the shrewd mediation of Lunete, Laudine's passions are slowly reconciled with her intellect; her "folie" is abandoned in favour of "bon sens", a moral change which is accompanied by an outburst of the spiritually redeeming fire of Love.

All this appears highly fanciful to the modern reader; everyday life is quite definitely not like that. However, one's doubts are disarmed by a tacit imaginative satisfaction with the outcome of the story. Even though modern requirements of psychologically plausible fiction are not fulfilled, the pleasure derived from the episode compensates for one's commonsense misgivings. How can this be so?

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it would have seemed trite and jejune. Chrétien, on the contrary, gives full rein to the audience's pessimism until no other end but disaster would appear to lie ahead. At the last minute, however, he wrests the story from a tragic outcome. Chrétien deliberately stakes his imagination against the difficulty of his material and his expertise wins him the gamble. As if to celebrate his elegant triumph he indulges in a further flirtation with irony. When Yvain is ushered by Lunete into the presence of his beloved Laudine, the victorious hero is reduced to a trembling slave before his feared mistress. The maidservant Lunete has to take him by the arm like a child and draw him closer to his lady, teasing him with the assurance that the lady will not bite (p.53). Chrétien smiles, as it were, at the knight's ironic situation. Yvain fully expects Laudine to be angry with him because he is not aware of the sudden change of heart that has come over the vengeful widow. The ensuing conversation is a relaxed and joyous enumeration of the duties of courtly lovers, a gentle release from the tensions of the recent crisis.

The success of the adventure is due to Chrétien's narrative sophistication. He has reasserted his control over his story by seeking an unexpected solution from within the set of conventions he is using. The positive irony is made possible by the manipulation of certain rules which the reader must accept if the thing is to work at all. In the first place, the nature of courtoisie must be understood, within the context of the romance, as a correspondence
between inward disposition (the heart) and outward action (the head); it is a moral analogue of Calogrenant's distinction between hearing and listening. Only then does Yvain's recklessness make sense as a moral failing which needs to be rectified. Secondly, Yvain's dilemma arises only if we acknowledge that knights must on the one hand heed the call of Love and still preserve their honour at all costs on the other. This produces the moral and narrative impasse. Finally, the impasse can only be broken by recourse to a third chivalric convention: that armed combat is an incontrovertible way of establishing the worth of a knight.

Chrétien's skill in playing with these conventions fuses the technical and moral levels of the romance. The narrative solution itself comes to possess moral value: the characters are seen to be enriched by their submission to a moral order imposed upon them by an authority higher than any individual will. The elements of the story are therefore organised round a conventionalized framework of chivalry and courtly love, their significance is derived from these conventions and not from verisimilitude or psychological plausibility. The romance articulates a logic of chivalric rules which endows the seemingly arbitrary adventures both with continuity and with sense.

The element of playful surprise in the resolution of the adventure is the basis of Chrétien's positive irony. All the conditions of irony exist: the blindness of the victim, the unexpected reversal of a situation, and the detachment
both of the ironist and the observer of the irony. The ironist puts before the victim (in this case Yvain himself) a certain state of affairs which the latter can only read literally without perceiving the deeper significance of the situation. This duality between appearances and deeper reality is exploited by Chrétien in order to draw his victim into a snare for the benefit of the audience who can appreciate the irony. The notion of irony entails a reversal of expectations, a sharp discrepancy between superficial and real meanings, and with Chrétien, the discrepancy is between the appearances of phenomena, the data of immediate experience, and the deeper truths of the spirit or of morality which underlie the visible surface of the world. Chrétien's irony is positive because these deeper realities, being spiritual or moral, are more beneficent than experience or instinct would have us believe. However, his irony nonetheless raises a smile because he exploits the element of surprise and ingenious trickery in his manipulation of the duality. Jean Frappier has noted that sometimes Chrétien "s'amuse en secret" and this amusement "accroît la saveur du récit":

"Une réflexion spirituelle, un «je crois», un «il me semble» en incise, quelques fantaisies verbales et jeux de mots indiquent son divertissement intime. Autant de sourires et de regards complices à l'adresse du lecteur."

Chrétien maintains an overview of his story - occasionally assuming the perspective of a historian whose judgement is circumscribed ("il me semble", "je crois") or of a moralist indulging in conceits and word-play to describe a particularly
intricate problem, or looking askance at the reader when his characters have been caught in an ironic trap. But Chrétien's "smile" is not subversive of the chivalric conventions because these form the basic material with which he structures his romance. His ironic "smile" indicates rather a satisfaction with his own skill, the detached enjoyment of the virtuoso whose very dexterity allows him to stand back and contemplate his own activity with amused relish.

(b) The main section of Yvain

The main section of the romance is constructed upon the same principles as the preliminary adventure discussed above. It is, in fact, an enlarged mirror-image of the introduction. The stability achieved by Yvain's marriage to Laudine comes under strain once again and actually collapses. Gauvain reminds Yvain of his duty to keep up his renown for prowess in spite of his newly married status. The marriage is by no means a token of spiritual maturity; it is still necessary to maintain the balance between private allegiance to his lady and public exercise of his chivalric virtues. Yvain therefore decides to embark upon a series of adventures with Gauvain. Laudine gives him her permission to leave her so long as he promises to return strictly within the year of his departure. If he should fail to keep the deadline her love for him will turn to hate.

Yvain, as it turns out, forgets his promise to Laudine although he accomplishes all his adventures with great glory.
One day a damsel appears before Arthur's Court and informs Yvain that his lady has totally repudiated her love for him. The healthy equilibrium between Love and Honour is shattered once more.60

Laudine's decision, again uncomplicated by psychological doubt, is absolute: she considers Yvain's purely formal infringement of the deadline as sufficient evidence of some internal slackness towards her; as if the objective rules of the code of courtly love provided her with definite signs of the veiled moods of her lover's heart.61

Yvain reacts to the news by going mad.62 He loses his memory and prowls naked in the forest "comme une brute privée de raison" (p.76). He remains in this brutal animal state for a long time until one day as he is asleep in the forest a lady and her maidservants happen upon him and eventually identify him by a scar. The lady tells her maidservant to apply a magic ointment supplied by Morgan la Fay. Yvain is restored to sanity but he is completely unable to understand how he came to be naked in the forest.

This is an important point. Yvain has absolutely no recollection of the past, his mind is a tabula rasa. Therefore, as Z.P. Zaddy rightly observes, Yvain's future adventures can in no sense be conceived of as a process of expiation for his neglect of Laudine even though it has been long taken as such by many commentators.63 Yvain simply cannot remember at this stage that he has ever offended Laudine. However, this loss of memory is a necessary precondition for his sanity, for as a knight he could not begin to function in
the knowledge that he has lost his lady's love through disloyalty. But there is another and more fundamental reason for Yvain's blank memory. If he embarks on adventures which do not refer back to his love for Laudine and which do not have expiation as their explicit purpose, he can regain his reputation independently of Laudine. If it were a question of restitution then the solution of the problem would rest exclusively in Laudine's hands, she would effectively become the sole arbiter of Yvain's moral destiny; the subject of the romance would be at bottom a question of settling amorous differences between individuals.

If this were the case, how would Laudine judge when and to what extent Yvain had repaid his debt to her? She cannot be the source of his forgiveness in her own right because their relationship is subsumed in a larger spiritual order. There must be an authoritative and objective standard by which Yvain's full spiritual rehabilitation can be measured, otherwise Laudine's previous, principled and categorical rejection of Yvain would become diluted by the mitigating conditions of a purely sentimental reconciliation. The absolute purity of the courtly ideal would be reduced to the relativistic mediocrity of a lukewarm accommodation.  

Still, it is plain that the romance can be brought to a satisfying aesthetic conclusion only by re-uniting Yvain with Laudine. As in the introductory adventure, Chretien once more sets himself an apparently impossible problem: the noble intransigence of Laudine's enforcement of the courtly
principle of obedience cannot be relaxed to accommodate Yvain's sufferings, but, without regaining Laudine's love, Yvain would inevitably remain in a trough of incurably uncivilized despair.

The rest of the romance represents the working-out of this fundamental problem, which again can be viewed on three levels. As regards the story, Yvain must be reconciled with Laudine. In moral terms, it involves Yvain's spiritual ascent to a new peak of chivalric virtue. And on a technical or compositional level, the reconciliation of the lovers must be effected without either infringing the chivalric scheme or arranging an absurdly facile ending.

The agency of supernatural powers symbolized by the use of the magic ointment restores the knight to his senses. This deus ex machina device and the fortuitous intervention of the lady and her damsels is the first of a series of occasions where a seemingly fortuitous occurrence is revealed as the product of a Providential agent which takes a hand in shaping the destiny of the hero. The ointment cures Yvain's madness but, by not restoring his memory, it allows him the peace of mind to embark on the business of becoming socialized by winning honour for its own sake, as a chivalric priority in its own right, regardless of the nature of his relations with Laudine.

This incident allows us to make certain observations about Chrétien's conception of the nature of the knight. For all its seriousness, Yvain's neglect of his duties towards Laudine must have been considered by Chrétien as being only a
circumstantial factor. Yvain's destiny is not irreparably compromised by Laudine's rejection. Beneath the collection of actions and gestures on the visible surface of life, there lies the true essence of a human being which, through the grace of God, will endure any disaster and recover from the deepest crisis. The winning of renown through combat is not therefore an "existentialist" enterprise avant la lettre, where the sum of a man's actions defines his identity, it is instead the fulfillment of the potentialities of his being. The next phase in Yvain's career will show that chivalry and courtly love are not ends in themselves, they are, in the final analysis, only means to the cardinal end of fulfilling a spiritual destiny.

The adventures which make up the romance are aspects of Yvain's journey towards this destiny: the knowledge of himself and the revelation of this to the whole of society. Yvain has to conquer evil decisively and establish his reputation for chivalry unequivocally. These two requirements are as necessary to the dénouement as the reunification with Laudine.

The main body of the romance is composed of six adventures in which Yvain fights and defeats his opponents. These six can be divided into two groups of four and two respectively. The first four are not interconnected causally, they are a chance sequence in time and place separated by clear breaks. This gives the impression of a random collection of events with no higher purpose than to demonstrate, repetitively and redundantly, the heroic nature of Yvain.
As W.S. Woods observed, if they are not placed within a symbolic structure of meaning they would appear capricious. However, if through a process of induction, one attempts to relate these disparate adventures to a developing symbolic understanding of Yvain's chivalric and spiritual career, then they begin to yield some significance.

Bearing in mind that at this stage Yvain has won and lost Laudine's love by neglecting his duty as a lover in order to pursue military prowess too wholeheartedly, and that, as a result, he has gone mad and been cut off from normal relations with civilized life, then upon the restoration of his faculties through the grace of God and the effects of the magic ointment, the next step in his development would be his re-entry into the socialized world of knighthood. The re-entering is signified by means of two adventures.

In the first, Yvain is asked to defend the lady who gave him the magic ointment, the Dame de Noroison against the ambitious Comte Aliers who is attacking her territory. Yvain defeats the count and is duly acclaimed for his valour. In addition to this he wins general recognition of the honour that has accrued to him: "Il eut donc l'honneur d'emmener le comte captif" (p.87). Since this is the first mention of honour after Yvain's madness, the adventure can be considered as Yvain's attainment of the first rung in the scale of regeneration. Moreover there is a particular detail which allows one to infer some added knowledge of Yvain's progress. After his feat Yvain asks the Dame de Noroison's permission to leave. The lady agrees but expresses her disappointment because she had hoped for him to stay to defend her land and become lord of all her possessions. As the careful reader will recognize,
this is a clear echo of Yvain's earlier encounter with Laudine where he did indeed stay to defend the magic fountain and take possession through marriage of her properties. This parallel situation both recalls Yvain's previous connection with Laudine to the reader (though not to Yvain himself) and, in some sense, situates or measures the knight's progress in the reconstruction of his fallen nature. Although Yvain cannot remember Laudine at this point, his rejection of the Dame de Noroison's offer would suggest that he is not content with mere public acclaim. The echo of his earlier marriage signals the stage he has reached in his spiritual journey; his determination to continue on his quest for adventures indicates that his mind is on higher things; honour and marriage are not the final goals of his quest. The adventure is self-contained; there are no direct references to earlier events, only echoes and possible similarities which lend significance to it by virtue of its place in the unfolding of the narrative.

The next adventure (pp.89-92) again occurs by chance. While he is riding through the forest, Yvain hears a great cry of pain. He discovers a lion being attacked by a large serpent with flames issuing from its mouth. Using the criterion that poisonous creatures are full of "felonic", Yvain decides to rescue the lion. After killing the serpent Yvain expects the lion to turn on him but instead it bows and genuflects before Yvain as a sign of its gratitude. The lion stays by Yvain's side and then kills a goat which Yvain cooks over a fire. That night while Yvain is asleep the lion has the "bon sens" to watch over the knight's horse (p.92).
Once again, the adventure is complete in itself, but there are several details which rebound symbolically off earlier occurrences to produce reverberations of significance. We may begin with the inescapable symbolic association of the serpent with evil. Yvain's deliverance of the lion from its clutches seems a straightforward conquest of evil. The lion's obeisance reminds one of Yvain's earlier submission to Laudine where he promised to comply with her wishes as was the duty of the courtly lover. This new incident would therefore appear to mark the re-establishment of Yvain in the spiritual hierarchy of the world, it measures the distance Yvain has put between himself and the animal world into which he had recently been plunged by his madness ("Il rôdait dans le bois depuis longtemps, comme une brute privée de raison", p.76). Moreover the fact that he cooks the meat of the goat killed by the lion is a significant improvement on his former practice ("A l'affût des bêtes dans la forêt, il les tue et se repaît de la venaison toute crue", p.76). There is a further possible symbolic interpretation. Julian Harris points out that the lion was frequently, though not automatically, taken as a symbol of Christ in the medieval Bestiaries, it could, therefore, represent the divine sanction and protection of Yvain. These symbolic possibilities undoubtedly exist although they only allow for reasonable speculation and not hard-and-fast exegesis. What seems to me beyond question is that the richness of symbolic resonance of this adventure and its recognisable religious dimension
(the "felonie" of the serpent; the lion as possible Christ-symbol) indicate that Yvain has entered a plane of action which can no longer be confined to the normal experience of the chivalric world. There are now new and deeper stirrings in the romance, as of a spiritual world gradually being roused from its quiescence.

Although these two adventures exist as independent units in the narrative sequence, they take on a larger significance, not by virtue of any definite symbolic features or a causal link with earlier or future adventures, but because they participate at a level other than that of the surface narration in a developing continuity of sense signalled by echoes and parallels with earlier incidents, a sense which is initiated by Chrétien's original posing of a moral and spiritual problem: how will Yvain regain his integrity when his nature has been split by an unreconciled conflict between public duty (honour) and private obligation (love)? These two adventures, and the others that follow, can be regarded as different, though not necessarily graded, phases in the process of the solution of this basic dilemma. As such their incidental details acquire a measure of symbolic value, the individual adventures become manifestations of the spiritual development of the hero. Thus the similarity between Yvain's victory over the Comte d'Aliers and his earlier defeat of Esclados le Roux can be considered as an indication that Yvain has attained the courtly level represented by that earlier adventure, but his decision to forgo marriage to the Dame de Noroison is a token of his
willingness to seek higher goals. The adventure with the lion then follows from this. Because it is more obviously preternatural than previous adventures and seems unmistakably to symbolize a triumph over evil, it suggests that the goals Yvain is pursuing through his feats of arms are spiritual. The two adventures are witness to a reality that underlies the text, they externalize the movement of a spiritual development which Yvain's lack of an inner reflective consciousness would otherwise conceal. On one level, the reader follows the narration of events, but he must incorporate the implications and suggestions of this first level in the articulation of another level of significance, the logic of the spiritual sense.

If we follow this procedure in reading the other adventures in the romance we will be in a better position to see the connections between incidents which on the surface appear puzzling. Yvain and the lion wander around the countryside for about a fortnight until Chance brings them to the magic fountain. It is only at this point that Yvain is struck suddenly by the re-awakened memory of his disloyalty to Laudine and he falls to the ground in a cataleptic fit. Chrétien now introduces one of the most curious incidents in the romance. The lion behaves in a strangely human manner. Believing its master to be dead, it is so overcome with grief that it is tempted to impale itself on Yvain's sword (pp.92-93). The effect of the suicidal lion is plainly comical. However, this very disproportion between its animal nature and its human reaction suggests to me that the lion is not a purely
naturalistic creation, that it possesses a symbolic dimension. Its suicide attempt is after all an exaggerated recurrence of its earlier human-like genuflection before Yvain. It is as if Chrétien were pointing to the distinction between the lion's natural and symbolic attributes by making the reader smile at the discrepancy. It is another example of Chrétien's positive irony: he seems to be teasing the reader by undermining literal, naturalistic premises about the lion in favour of symbolic readings. In this instance, bearing in mind that the lion represents Yvain's burgeoning spiritual life, the suicide attempt is a symbolic recall to the danger that Yvain's re-awakened memory of Laudine's wrath might plunge him once again into total despair, a form of spiritual suicide.\(^72\)

But even at this symbolic level the suicidal lion retains its comic value, because it is used to ridicule the spiritual absurdity of Yvain's short-sighted amorous despair. Chrétien uses the symbol of the lion, quite startlingly here, as an instrument of parody. But it is parody aimed not at belittling the lion itself, but at the potential folly of the knight's despair.

On regaining consciousness Yvain reproaches himself bitterly for having overstepped the deadline. However, in the midst of his lamentations he hears someone calling from the chapel next to the fountain.\(^73\) It is Lunete who has been imprisoned there by Laudine acting on the treacherous counsel of three advisers. The latter had accused Lunete of betraying Laudine when she persuaded her mistress to marry Yvain.
Since Lunete had been unable to find a knight to uphold her honour she is awaiting execution at the stake. Yvain promises to defend her in a duel the following day but asks her not to reveal his identity to anyone. The despairing hero has providentially been given a new mission, the crisis of renewed memory is over and he can continue on his chivalrous career and on the path of spiritual growth.

Yvain and the lion now leave the fountain and come to a castle whose lord is being terrorised by a giant called Harpin. The giant has captured six of the baron's sons and has already killed two of them. He now threatens to carry off the baron's beautiful daughter. Yvain kills Harpin in a fight but not without the providential intervention of his faithful lion. The significance of this adventure lies primarily in the nature of the defeated adversary. Harpin represents a perversion of Nature. He is given specific demonic associations (the crowd watching the duel refer to him as "le démon, le diable", (p.110). Moreover he is called a "monstre de cruauté et d'arrogance" (p.109) and, as Julian Harris observes, he can be considered an incarnation of pride and bravado, which are the opposite of the chivalric virtues of valour, temperance and good sense. If we take the adventure as a sign of a further progress in Yvain's spiritual perfection, the defeat of the giant represents the knight's victory over his own tempestuous rashness which led him into such deep waters in the introductory section of the romance.

Another purpose of the adventure may be discerned
in Yvain's instruction to the lord of the castle to send the daughter and her four brothers to their kinsman Gauvain so that they may give him an account of the adventure: "...car il méprise sa vaillance celui qui veut qu'elle reste inconnu" (p.113).

Yvain is now fully active in the spreading of his chivalric renown although, significantly, he still refuses to reveal his name. Instead he uses a surrogate identity: "Le Chevalier au Lion", an appellation which allows the chivalric qualities recently displayed publicly to be recognized without their being diminished by his identity prior to his uncivilized madness. 76

Yvain returns to challenge Lunete's detractors. 77 He disputes the truth of their accusations, and the matter is taken up on the field of battle. When Yvain appears to be losing ground against his three adversaries the faithful lion once more comes to his aid (pp.119-120). Yvain defeats the three knights who are subsequently burnt at the stake instead of Lunete. Even though he is badly wounded, Yvain refuses Laudine's invitation to stay at her castle:

"Dame, je ne pourrai rester ici tant que ma dame ne m'aura pardonné la rancune qu'elle éprouve contre moi. Alors seulement cesseront toutes mes épreuves" (p.121).

Laudine, who has been deeply impressed by the unknown knight's prowess, replies:

"J'en suis vraiment désolée et je n'estime guère courtoise la dame qui vous tient rigueur. Elle ne devrait pas interdir sa porte à un chevalier de votre valeur, à moins qu'il ne soit trop mal conduit envers elle" (p.121).
Yvain refuses to reveal his name to Laudine except to say that he is known as "Le Chevalier au Lion". Laudine expresses surprise that no one should have heard of such a valiant knight. When he leaves, Yvain once again exhorts Lunete, the maidservant, not to disclose his real identity.

The romance now undergoes an abrupt change of place and time (p.124). A totally new set of characters is introduced. Chrétien recounts how the Seigneur de la Noire-Épine has died and the elder of his two daughters has claimed the whole of the inheritance for herself. The younger daughter disputes this and declares that she will take her suit to Arthur's Court. This move is pre-empted by the elder daughter who arrives first at the Court and seeks Gauvain's promise to uphold her claim. Gauvain agrees on condition that he should remain strictly anonymous. The younger daughter cannot find any champion but she is determined not to surrender her suit. Arthur gives her forty days in which to find a champion. When the younger daughter hears of the reputation of the "Chevalier au Lion", she resolves to find him (p.127). She falls ill on her quest and sends another maiden to seek out Yvain. This maiden finally arrives at the castle of the baron whom Yvain has delivered from the giant Harpin. Her journey has been guided by Chance and helped by her fervent prayers to God (p.128). Next day she is directed to the magic fountain where she comes across Lunete who shows her the road to the castle where Yvain has been convalescing from his wounds (p.131). Finally she catches up with Yvain who agrees to defend the claim of the younger daughter (pp.132-134).
Chretien describes this quest for the "Chevalier au Lion" at a length which seems unwarranted for a seemingly unimportant aspect of the romance. But this lengthy account serves several purposes. It indicates, in the first place, that although the maiden's journey is so vulnerable to the whims of Chance, her prayers nevertheless lead her to the knight. Secondly, as the maiden follows the trail of Yvain's recent adventures she is in effect gathering up the reports of his exploits so that when she does find Yvain the reader will have been able to survey the extent of Yvain's newly-won renown.

However, before the "Chevalier au Lion's" duel with the anonymous Gauvain, Chretien interlaces a further adventure (pp.134-152). On the way back to Arthur's Court, Yvain and the maiden seek shelter for the night in a castle ominously called "de la Pire Aventure". Although he is warned off by the people of the village, he persists and enters the castle where he finds a large courtyard surrounded by a palisade in which three hundred poorly dressed and ill-fed damsels are spinning and weaving (p.136-137). One of the oppressed girls tells him that long ago the innocent young king of l'Ile-aux-Pucelles went abroad in search of adventures and came upon this castle where two creatures who were descended from a demon threatened him. Rather than fight them, the young king promised to send them thirty damsels every year for the rest of his life unless the two demons were defeated in battle by a virtuous opponent (pp.139-140).

Yvain then meets the lord of the castle (p.141). He is
richly dressed and has a daughter who is very beautiful and graceful. The lord welcomes him courteously and explains that a "diabolical" custom holds sway in the castle whereby all strangers must fight two demons. If he beats them the stranger will then marry the daughter, inherit the castle and all its lands. This offer recalls the similar benefits which accrued to Yvain after killing Esclados, as well as the Dame de Noroison's offer on Yvain's ridding her of the Comte d'Aliers. Yvain accepts the fight but declines the rewards. The lord angrily tells him to be quiet and insists that both the duel and its consequences are inescapable. Yvain relents since he has no choice in the matter: "J'irais donc à mon vif déplaisir, puisque je ne peux l'éviter" (p.145). Yvain engages the two demons and once again the lion comes to his aid when he appears to be losing. Yvain eventually kills them and there is general rejoicing. Yvain again resists the lord's repeated demands that he marry the daughter. When the three hundred damsels are set free they all praise Yvain's "courtoisie".

This is Yvain's "worst adventure" but it is also the one least connected with the principal train of events. Its meaning, however, can be deduced both from its details and from its context. Yvain's opponents are demons who operate a "diabolical" system whereby three hundred damsels are held in captivity as a result of an oath secured from a frightened young king. Moreover everyone who arrives at the castle is obliged willy-nilly to fight the demons for the hand of the beautiful daughter. This oppressive régime is
based upon oaths, promises and the arbitration of armed combat - much as the system of chivalry itself. However, the demons' rule is coercive because their subjects are unwilling to co-operate. In this crucial respect the system is a mirror-like inversion of chivalric values.

Chivalry is based on the freedom of the knight to choose his reasons for combat, and it is designed to protect women and the weak whose will is circumscribed, not to enslave them. However, because the order of chivalry is based on oaths and bonds and characterized by a clear code of conduct, it can occasionally be adhered to mechanically and unthinkingly, as a direct access to certainty and military glory. In this sense, it can become an enslaving system when used as an end in itself and not as the means to spiritual freedom. In the early part of the romance Yvain became the victim of a rash and unreflective approach to the laws of chivalry. He used them as a means to personal glory without seeing beyond to their function as aids to spiritual enlightenment. Viewed in this manner, the liberation of the three hundred damsels can be taken as a concrete manifestation of the freeing of Yvain's soul from the constrictions of a blind attachment to chivalric rules. The adventure as a whole celebrates the freedom that lies at the base of chivalry and which chivalry exists to enhance.

Yvain finally arrives at Arthur's Court with the younger sister to sort out the quarrel over the inheritance (p.153). Gauvain has left the Court a few days earlier to ensure his anonymity and returns with a different set of arms to champion the cause of the elder sister, even though it is obvious that she is in the wrong ("Le roi savait fort bien
que la perfide avait tort" (p.155). When the "Chevalier au lion" appears at the Court, the duel is arranged. The interest of the story at this point does not lie in the establishment of the rightness of the younger daughter's case - this is known well enough already - but in the apparently secondary matter of the hidden identities of the two combatants. Both are anonymous yet they are the best of friends and King Arthur's best knights. Chrétien savours the irony by speculating on the paradox of the situation. The two knights hold a deep love for each other and each would normally be prepared to die for his friend but, in these circumstances, Hatred appears more in evidence than Love, because each knight has only one desire - to inflict a mortal blow on his adversary and put him to public shame: "Par ma foi, c'est un vrai prodige de trouver réunis Amour et Haine mortelle" (p.157). The ferocity of the fighting displays all the signs of a genuine hatred, but behind these signs there is real love. Appearances have become so totally deceptive that they threaten to submerge and destroy the reality they conceal. A tragic outcome can only be averted if the illusory tricks of perception which lead to the travesty of genuine feelings are somehow dispelled. An objective indisputable standard of judgement is required. The fighting continues with increasing bitterness but neither manages to get the upper hand. As night approaches, Yvain suggests they have a break till daytime. He also confesses:

"Jamais de ma vie je n'ai engagé un combat dont j'ai eu tant à souffrir, ni rencontré un
Gauvain also admits to similar feelings and identifies himself. When Yvain reveals his own identity, the two knights dismount and embrace each other. The disclosure of identities produces general rejoicing, and when the elder sister inadvertently admits her guilt, she is forced to share the inheritance equitably.

The episode, as I have indicated, has been engineered to produce a potentially tragic situation where the combatants are friends but are locked in a fight to the death. Nevertheless it is significant that the disastrous distortion of appearances is corrected, not by any alien intervention, but by the very process in which they are engaged: the actual fighting opens each knight's eyes to his opponent's worth, and their equal virtues lead to a spontaneous, mutual abandonment of the senseless duel. The actual duel has served as a way of discovering their spiritual qualities; it becomes a means of knowledge which is confirmed by the revelation of their true identities. In the case of Yvain this revelation is climactically important. He can now appear openly under his former discredited name because he has proved to himself and to the Court that he has become Gauvain's equal in chivalry. His surrogate identity can be discarded once his inherent worth has flowered for all to see. The inner man, so to speak, can be reconciled with the outer, nominal identity without Yvain's suffering a shaming discrepancy between the two.
All is not yet settled. Yvain has still to get over the last but by now formal obstacle to his complete regeneration; he must still win back Laudine's affections. Nevertheless there is nothing by way of military prowess that he can perform in order to change his lady's heart. Therefore he resolves to do the little he can do at all, which is to plead for mercy. Yvain goes to his wife's magic fountain in order to "guerroyer à sa fontaine", that is, to provoke continual storms as a form of desperate protest or supplication (p.170).

As in the preliminary adventure Yvain is powerless to effect his own salvation. Laudine alone can provide a remedy. Once again, Lunete is recruited to the task of persuading Laudine. The manner of Chrétien's solving this problem is a masterpiece of narrative elegance; it reveals his profound mastery of the structural conventions of his romance.

Laudine is greatly distressed by the continual assaults on her fountain. Lunete suggests that she needs to appoint a new defender and that the most suitable candidate would be the mysterious "Chevalier au Lion" who defeated both the giant Harpin and the three traitors. However, it would first be necessary to help him regain the favour of his lady:

"Il faudrait d'abord lui jurer et garantir de faire l'impossible pour mettre un terme à sa disgrâce auprès de sa dame, disgrâce si rigoureuse qu'il en meurt de douleur et de chagrin" (p.172).

Laudine agrees, so Lunete produces a reliquary. Laudine kneels and swears solemnly that she will do her best to restore the anonymous knight to the favour of his
mistress. Chrétien comments: "Lunete l'a prise au jeu de la vérité le plus courtoisement du monde" (p. 173; my emphasis). Laudine little realizes that she has sworn herself to restoring Yvain to favour with herself, but if she now refuses to go ahead with this she will be guilty of perjury. Lunete's deception is shrewd and effective but it is "courtoise" and not malicious. Chrétien calls it a "game of truth", because its object is to rid Laudine of what threatens to become an obstinate blindness to Yvain's proven qualities. Because Laudine has set her mind against Yvain, Lunete is obliged to manoeuvre her into a position from which she can objectively appreciate Yvain's deserts without her pride or passion distorting her judgement. This Lunete does by playing off two axioms of chivalry: in the first place she gets Laudine to take a solemn oath, so that her decision will be irreversible, and secondly, she urges Laudine to acknowledge the verdict of Yvain's duels with the giant and the three treacherous advisers. Laudine is entrapped by these two inviolable commitments to respect the truth. When the identity of the "Chevalier au Lion" is revealed, Laudine's possible objections have already been disarmed, her persistence in refusing Yvain must now appear, even in her own eyes, as perverse self-indulgence.

The economy of this dénouement reveals the artistic control Chrétien exercises over his material. He draws out a thread left loose at a much earlier point in the narrative and uses it to sew up the whole. At the same time the game of truth conforms perfectly with the logic of the symbolic
sense of the romance. Yvain has in the last two adventures triumphed over his own nature and the forces of evil, and given public evidence of his spiritual worth in his duel against Gauvain. After this there was nothing further he could do to be reinstated in Laudine's affections. But Chrétien circumvents this final and most difficult impasse by his clever handling of the chivalric rules; the "game of truth" is proof that Chrétien's narrative manipulations are wedded to a profound understanding of the underlying moral and spiritual implications of such conventions. As a result, the diverse adventures fall into place as links in a narrative chain of meaning designed to represent the knight's trajectory towards the realisation of his full destiny.

(iv) The world of chivalry in Chrétien's romance

It is now possible to reconstruct the outlines of the chivalric world as presented by Chrétien from the above analysis of Le Chevalier au Lion. One of the main concerns of the romance, as I have attempted to show in my interpretation, is the conflict between the public duties of a knight and his private obligations to his lady. The introductory section, for example, describes the conflict between Yvain's anxiety to obtain proof of his victory over Esclados and his desire to win the love of Laudine. The knight's life is divided into two spheres - the public and the private.

The public world is dominated by Arthur, the king.
He is the source of authority and the representative of the chivalric values of valour and courtliness. At Arthur's Court there is a community of knights pledged to observe and practise the laws of chivalry. The individual knight owes obedience and loyalty to the king and he must cultivate the virtue of companionship ("compagnonage") with his fellows (e.g. Yvain and Gauvain). This virtue is a form of loyalty between comrades in arms but, at bottom, their relations are clearly contractual: knights respect each other's honour but if one should slight or offend another, as Keu does to Yvain for example, the injured party is entitled to seek redress. Individual honour is a prized but fragile possession. It can be seen as the public sign of a knight's essential qualities; the spiritual escutcheon of his virtue and integrity. Consequently any word or act that might bring into question the fittingness of that sign must be vigorously contested. But, at the same time, it is incumbent on the individual knight himself to keep his honour up to the mark or even to increase it either by embarking on adventures in which he may prove his prowess or by defending the weak and innocent against evil. Fame and renown result from the public recognition of the abundance of honour a knight has earned through his outstanding feats of valour.

In the private sphere, the lady plays a role analogous to that of the king. Not only is she a source of authority, she is in effect the fountain-head of energy and inspiration to which the knight gains access only by
submitting himself to her will. If the knight is disloyal he suffers a form of spiritual suicide, as is shown by Yvain's neglect of his promise to Laudine. Although women are for the most part passive they are a necessary ingredient of the chivalric world. A circuit of spiritual energy is set up between knight and lady. The knight is the active principle, performing feats of arms which win him honour, but his valour and virtue are nourished in large measure by the love of his lady. By obeying her will he shows his love for her, while the honour he acquires from his exploits is in turn remitted to her. In this way, the knight's valour and honour are a measure of the strength of his attachment to his lady.

The mutual dependence of knight and lady calls for perpetual vigilance. Both spheres - private and public - of a knight's life must be kept in delicate balance: too exclusive an indulgence in adventuring will distract the knight from his lady, while an excessive absorption in his love will lead to a perilous disengagement from his public duties, and ensuing dishonour for both. The ability to strike this balance depends of course on a sense of discernment which the knight acquires through a process of education through feats of arms. His passions and impulses are increasingly reconciled with an acute insight into the inherent value of a given situation, an insight which is obtained by submitting to God's will.

Combat is the principal activity in the life of the knight; it is his most effective medium of expression and
spiritual growth. He can prove his loyalty to the king and to his mistress, he can defend his honour and that of others weaker than himself, and he can participate actively in the work of God by fighting Evil. There is however another function of combat in Chrétien's romances: it is a way of establishing objective truth. If there is a judicial dispute, a doubt over the veracity of a statement, or an accusation believed to be false, then a duel is the most reliable means of deciding which party is in the right. It is not a question of might being right; combat reveals the will of God. The victor is on the side of truth because his victory must have been decided by God. It is but a short step from this to representing the victor as being morally and spiritually superior to his opponent. Combat can thus become a heuristic procedure whereby the essential worth of a knight is discovered (e.g. in the case of Yvain's duel with Gauvain). It affords access to intangible truths which normally remain either concealed by the distracting aspect of phenomena or else distorted by human malice.

Now the areas of human life which combat clarifies are, as we have seen with Yvain for example, significantly, those where the superficial aspects are most susceptible to manipulation or deception: the identity or character of a person, his intentions, the veracity of his words, the justice of his claims, those areas where evil or malice can intrude to obstruct the proper relation of intrinsic truth to its outward manifestation. In the chivalric world, identities can, of course be deceptive, words unreliable and justice
capable of perversion, but the knight can apply the laws of chivalry to right these abuses. The code of chivalry is a means of upholding an order of absolute ideals and standards; hence the importance of promises, bonds and pledges. These form the nuts and bolts of the chivalric system; they commit a man to his word, fasten his will to a determined line of action and allow no latitude for deception or change of heart. A reassuring transparency can thereby be obtained in the otherwise murky domain of language and intentionality - if someone should renege on his promise or betray his pledge, the truth can again be established by resorting to arms or seeking other transcendental signs of the divine will. Chrétien's romances describe how this chivalric order is threatened and eventually re-affirmed.

The threat can come in three forms: (1) In the first place it can emanate from an external source in the shape of an evil baron, a wicked giant or a demonic character. These are straightforward attacks which have to be repulsed (cf. Harpin or the Pire Aventure demons). (2) The second is more insidious because internal. It is caused by a flaw in the character or behaviour of the knight. For example, Yvain's rashness and self-absorption sets in motion the whole train of events which make up the romance. These adventures reveal Yvain's defective insight into the true nature of things, his lack of genuine "courtoisie". (3) The most dangerous threat of all is the mere passage of time. Since the order which chivalry seeks to maintain corresponds to God's design for the world, it possesses eternal validity. Time, being conceived as simple flux, is a potential destroyer
of that order; its indifferent flow can sweep away established truths, and erode the absolute standards by which men should live. The knight must stem the tide of time by constantly re-imposing the chivalric priorities on the present moment through the seeking of adventure. Knights actively challenge time by venturing into the large Unknown, prepared to confront whatever Chance may happen to throw in their path. The word "adventure" preserves its pristine etymological sense: knights place themselves in the maw of the future, exposing themselves to the advent of unpredictable occurrences which they will hew into the established shapes of the truth.

The recurring duty to affirm the eternal values in the face of evil or the passing of time accounts for the ever-present tension in the chivalric world. The knight must always be on his mettle and exercise a constant vigilance, he must avoid recréantise. The slightest relaxation could dim the brightness of his honour or allow evil to take root in the world. Consequently the chivalric world is perennially threatened with degeneration, a fatal falling from the ideal standards enjoined by God. It must be recalled that the romance of Yvain presupposes such degeneration. It refers the audience back to a Golden Age of chivalry unlike the corrupt present.

There is, however, nothing mechanical in the truth-revealing qualities of the code of chivalry in Chrétien's romance. Observing its laws does not of itself guarantee the knight the privilege of righteousness. Chivalry provides no easy short-cut to truth or spiritual maturity, it is a means to an end, a process of
education leading to the supreme virtue of "courtoisie". But the road itself is arduous and full of pitfalls, each adventure is a struggle to see more clearly, to allow the true identity of the knight to become increasingly visible in the temporal world. To this end, the knight must progressively slough off the attachments of his individual will and submit to a larger authority. In the first part of the romance Yvain has to abandon his wanton "folie" and yield to the demands of Love, while in the second part he must supersede that stage even and bow to the will of God. The sign that his efforts are being rewarded takes the form of the beneficent intervention of Providence in his affairs. Although the knight abandons himself to the whims of Chance, it becomes increasingly evident in the course of the romance that what appears to be Chance is in fact Providence, guiding the knight along a particular road. In Yvain's case Providence allows the damsel to administer the regenerative ointment; it later directs him to the magic fountain where he can rediscover the real tasks that lie ahead and so avert despair.

The knight must therefore bend his subjective impulses to God's will. The private, essential self must become one with its public identity in order to attain fully to "courtoisie". The chivalric code, in sum, is designed to harmonize the potential disjunction between the visible world and its true, hidden order. Differences have to be reconciled, discrepancies properly adjusted in order that the discrete elements of the phenomenal world shall fall into place and become consonant with the forms created by the divine will.
The marvellous in Chrétien's romances has been greatly rationalized and transformed from Celtic folklore and mythology. The *lais* of Marie de France for example remain closer to their mythic sources with their fairies, talking animals and human beings metamorphosed into animals.

As Lucienne Carasso-Bulow has shown, there are various degrees of the marvellous in Chrétien. She divides the marvellous into "lower" and "pure". The "lower" marvellous can be classified into three degrees: (1) the lowest is that of the Arthurian court, "the most realistic of the romances' worlds but nevertheless itself an ideal world of chivalry and courtly love"; (2) the marvellous of "intermediary zones like the forest or mysterious castles"; (3) "mysterious worlds possessing one or two elements that are clearly merveilleux". The "pure" marvellous "designates episodes, characters or worlds which have more than two clearly magical characteristics".

This categorisation of the different degrees of the marvellous is, I think, valid and interesting since it goes some way towards showing the subtlety and complexity of Chrétien's treatment of his mythic sources. A detailed listing of the specific elements under each category is not relevant to our present purpose. What is more pertinent is Carasso-Bulow's interpretation of this phenomenon. She sees this gradation of the marvellous as part and parcel of Chrétien's displacement of myths in a realistic direction, through devices of "compensation" and "counterbalancing"
which reduce and de-mystify magical phenomena. In her opinion Chrétien is a "rationalist" who "deflates" and "pokes fun at" the marvellous: "he doesn't take his material seriously, he debunks it". On the other hand, she shows that Chrétien often mystifies realistic episodes by deliberately introducing a mysterious atmosphere or fantastical details into it, thereby giving only an impression of realism. As a result she considers Chrétien to be deliberately ambiguous and elusive: he is "purposefully (sic) playful in his romances, especially with the merveilleux".

This "playfulness" makes Chrétien's romances in her view so elusive and relativistic that they become impossible to interpret. Chrétien "presents many conflicting ideas in a story and makes fun of everything. It is up to the reader to try to understand the underlying seriousness and the meaning of what he has presented. The ideal reader of Chrétien's works cannot help being baffled. He must know, however, that no single interpretation is the right one, no absolute lesson can be extracted from his works". I profoundly disagree with this judgement because I believe it to be based on anachronistic twentieth-century ideas of irony and ambiguity which overlook the double dimension in Chrétien's work, its presentation of the symbolic relationship between the real and the transcendent worlds.

Now the marvellous in Chrétien is, of course, subtly differentiated in various way. Jean Fourquet and Carasso-Bulow have observed that the "pure" marvellous where the mythical features are least de-mystified, such as the
Joie de la Cort episode in Erec et Enide, the Pire Aventure episode in Yvain or the land of Gorre in Lancelot, are usually manifestations of evil laws or customs whose power the hero overcomes. But the hero's victory does not entail, as Carasso-Bulow implies, the reduction of magic to a form of naturalism, it is not a debunking activity which exposes the marvellous as an illusion or as unnecessary mumbo-jumbo. The three hundred damsels in the Castle of the Pire Aventure do suffer, they are truly prisoners just as Mabonagrain is a real captive in the Joie de la Cort. Their liberation by the hero does not abolish or deny the reality of their previous condition. These episodes illustrate the rule of evil in the world, but the hero's victory is a serious triumph over those maleficent forces, not further evidence of Chrétien's scepticism about the preternatural.

In addition, there exist equally marvellous elements and episodes in the romances which reveal the power of good. In Yvain alone, there is the anthropomorphic lion, the magic fountain, the healing ointment, the magic ring. All of these are regenerative and providential, representing the influence of God's will in the affairs of men. Contrary to what Peter Haidu and Carasso-Bulow maintain, none of these elements is parodied. The significance of the lion I will discuss more fully below. As regards the magic fountain, if Chrétien does not repeatedly describe the entire process which follows the pouring of the water over the stone every time this occurs in the text, it is not, in my view, because he wishes to deflate its magical powers through comical abbreviation,
it must surely be due to a reluctance to bore the reader with tedious repetition. The fact that the Dame de Noroison's maidservant applies the whole bottle of ointment to Yvain's body is a charmingly sympathetic detail which shows her eagerness to revive the knight, it does not detract from the ointment's restorative efficacy, nor especially, from the importance of this regeneration in thematic or narrative terms. It is true that when Yvain is invisible while wearing his magic ring he escapes being killed but is nonetheless beaten up by his pursuers. The fact that the ring does not give him total immunity is not a parodic undermining of its powers so much as an indication to the reader that magic cannot wholly absolve the knight from moral responsibility for the impetuous "folie" which has put him there in the first place. In the specific instances of the magic ointment and the ring - both crucially important elements in the structure of the narrative - Chrétien does indeed condition the absolute power of magic, not to deny it categorically, but only to show how it cannot be relied upon mechanically as a panacea to replace human weakness or the consequences incurred by the exercise of free will in the conduct of the knight's life. These two incidents serve to show precisely how finely modulated is Chrétien's presentation of the marvellous in his romances.

Therefore, while agreeing that the marvellous in Chrétien appears in different forms and in varying degrees, I would maintain that there is a fundamental distinction to be made between marvels which are evil and those which are beneficent. The malignant marvellous, as we have seen, is
closer to the untransformed fairy-world of folklore with its enslaving spells and demonic figures. The beneficent marvellous on the other hand is more transparent and comprehensible; the lion and its serpent indirectly recall Christian symbols of good and evil, the fountain has clear regenerative powers, the ointment is obviously providential and is especially reminiscent of the action of grace, while the magic ring has an important and clearly defined narrative function. One can therefore distinguish between supernatural elements which are obscure and perverse, arising from some alien Satanic source, and other supernatural elements, no less irrational, but which, both by their effects and their similarity to the mysteries of Christianity, seem to evoke the presence of good. Thus in my view one must discriminate in Chrétien's romances between the "magical", which represents the dark forces of evil, manifesting themselves in distortions of nature such as giants or in penal laws which are grotesque reversals of the codes of courtly chivalry and other divinely instituted laws, and the "miraculous", which shows how the laws of nature can be suspended by the grace of God in order to guide the hero towards the conquest of evil and the fulfillment of his destiny.

Now while it is true that in the twelfth century men were more circumspect than in earlier periods in their approach to magic and the marvellous, it is a different matter altogether to suggest that Chrétien treats the marvellous in his romances as mere fiction or illusion. As we have seen, the Platonic rationalism and renewed interest
in nature of the School of Chartres was counterbalanced by a traditionally minded sacramental view of nature and of history in centres like St Victor and Cîteaux. As Chenu has shown, the two attitudes were not neatly distinguishable. Critics like Carasso-Bulow and Haidu tend to represent Chrétien as an exponent of extreme naturalistic rationalism distrustful of anything magical or preternatural, while conversely, others like Auerbach have seen the religious influence of Cîteaux on his work.

The question of how far Chrétien or his audience literally believed in the marvels of romance is probably insoluble. However, it seems that my distinction between the "magical" and the "miraculous" in the romances would plausibly conform with contemporary attitudes and beliefs. To believe in miracles or in the influence of Satan could not have been considered far-fetched even among intelligent Christian men of the twelfth century. Moreover, Chrétien sets his romances in the remote past and in distant Britain where many strange things must have seemed possible.

But, to my mind, what especially invalidates the arguments of critics like Carasso-Bulow and Haidu is that it is the marvellous features of the romances which arouse the most vivid and positive imaginative responses from the reader. The poetic force of the romances seem to lie precisely in those deliciously mysterious, unfathomable episodes drawn from folklore and legend. Moreover, the marvellous elements, as we have seen in our analysis, are principal conditioning factors, both in the structural articulation and in the elaboration of symbolic meaning, in
the narrative. It seems oddly wrong-headed to maintain that the very elements which give the romances their poetic charm, and which crucially determine their structural development, are simultaneously undermined and ridiculed by a medieval artist like Chrétien de Troyes. It remains to discuss therefore how these marvels work in the romances, how they can be made compatible both with the more realistic elements and with a non-relativistic interpretation of their meaning.

In my view the marvellous or unrealistic elements derived from mythical sources point to the symbolic dimension which supplements the action and the function of the courtly conventions. In other words the actual working of the code of courtly chivalry with its armed duels, its vows and promises, belongs in the first instance to the temporal or historical level of the romance, but there is a further symbolic level to the text, a second-order movement of sense to which the adventures, as entities, refer. This is the level of "deep sense", the _sen_, which, as I have tried to show, possesses a logic of its own special development and to which would belong the spiritual evolution of Yvain. At this level then, such incidents as the killing of the giant Harpin or the liberation of the three hundred damsels would have a symbolic value in the knight's spiritual evolution. The first incident would symbolize Yvain's triumph over his impetuous and arrogant temperament, while the second, coming at a later stage, would signify the liberation of Yvain's soul from the constraints of a mechanical observance of the purely outward forms of chivalry.
The relation between the temporal level and the spiritual level is indicated precisely by the non-realistic elements in the romance. These elements have their place in the temporal sphere but they are not presented as being entirely bound to it, their supernal features pierce the veil of the rational and everyday in order to suggest another dimension of reality.

Let us take the case of the lion. In many ways it is a perfectly ordinary lion - it hunts prey and actually scares people on various occasions. But Chrétien, as we have seen, exploits the lion's non-animal attributes in a comic vein. The lion is humanized in alarmingly odd ways - it genuflects before Yvain, follows him loyally, tries even to do itself away with his master's sword when Yvain has fallen into his catatonic state, and so forth. The lion often behaves in a fashion which strangely belies its animal nature. It is not entirely contained within the natural world. But if it is something more than a normal lion, what exactly does it represent? Julian Harris has suggested that it is a Christ-symbol because lions were identified as such in medieval Bestiaries. However, if we accept the lion as a form of allegorical representation of Christ what are we to make of its specifically "animal" behaviour and attributes - the killing of quarry, the ferocity that scares ordinary people? We run the risk of interpreting this apparent inconsistency as a covert parody of Christian symbology. Peter Haidu interprets the symbols in Yvain in just this way. In the specific case of Yvain's lion he
attempts to show that Chrétien presents it in three easily-identifiable "symbolic" or "allegorical" aspects: (1) as a symbol of an aspect of Christ, (2) as a symbol of the fierce Satanic lion, and (3) as the classical lion of Androcles and of Pyramus and Thisbe. Haidu contends that (1) and (2) are contradictory on a narrative level, at least in the eyes of the reader. He also says that (1) and (3) become contradictory if we oppose the pre-Christian lion, who caused the death of Pyramus and Thisbe, with the Christ-symbol:

"C'est-à-dire que si l'on prend dans les termes de la symbologie iconographique et typologique du haut moyen-âge, et qu'on veuille rendre compte de tous les éléments narratifs fournis par l'auteur, non d'une partie très restreinte, on aboutit à une contradiction foncière assez importante pour l'interprétation du roman entier" (p.71).

In so far as Haidu is criticising a reading in which the meaning of the lion is determined solely by its relation to a symbological tradition, he is correct to point out that the plurality of symbolic or allegorical associations does more to obscure its meaning than to clarify it. He is also right when he maintains that all the narrative conditions of the lion's textual presentation must be taken into account. But it does not follow that there is a vitiating contradiction between the lion of traditional symbology and Yvain's lion:

"Mais il est évident.... que ce lion n'existe comme renvoi littéraire que pour se muer rapidement d'abord en parodie animale et puis en farce répétée tout au long du roman et presque jusqu'à la fin. Au sens purement technique du mot, sans aucun velléité péjorative, ces développements représentent une dégradation frappante du symbole" (p.72).
It is true that the lion behaves like a real animal much of the time but it is by no means clear that this makes it farcical unless, of course, one is bringing certain fixed preconceptions to the reading of the text. Haidu's position can only be derived from an expectation of an inflexible symbolism as the unique repository of meaning in the romance. If we approach Chrétien by separating his romance into a fictional surface and an underlying meaning which can only be extracted by processing that surface through an inherited system of traditional symbology, then we shall either fail to account for all the symbols, or we shall arrive at Haidu's conclusion that the distance between traditional symbol and narrative actuality results in the farcical degeneration of symbolism. However, I would argue that Chrétien's symbols are deliberately devoid of hard-and-fast semantic definition; on the contrary, there are only a few elements in the narrative that possess a symbolic resonance by virtue of their preternatural attributes. Chrétien, it is true, does amuse himself and the reader by showing the fear that the lion induces in people. But this is not a parody of the lion, if anything it is a mild joke at the expense of the frightened populace. Again I would call this an example of positive irony where the populace are momentary victims of Chrétien's gentle irony precisely because they are unaware of the lion's special qualities. Chrétien is a sufficiently sophisticated artist to realise the comic potential of certain situations, he has an eye for realistic detail, but this cannot be taken as
a negation of a genuine symbolic movement in the romance as a whole. Chrétien's lion moves for the most part in the natural world but its association with the serpent and later its function as rescuer of Yvain gives it a symbolic value which suggests (and only suggests) that the natural world is suffused by the light of Providence. In short, what Haidu proves is that the techniques of scriptural exegesis are not adequate to interpret the work of Chrétien de Troyes, but he is, in my view, mistaken to conclude from this that Chrétien's intentions were therefore to subvert religious readings in favour of a surreptitious realism or gratuitous literary play.  

The action of the romance unfolds primarily on the temporal level, such elements as the lion exist both on this level and on another. The clearly non-animal aspects of the lion point to a second order of meaning which we have called the symbolic or spiritual level of the text. The lion's non-natural attributes are pointers to this other meaning. However, if the meaning of the romance cannot be confined to the temporal level, it is not contained fully on the symbolic level either - the lion cannot be taken as a definite symbol of Christ, for example. The symbolic values are not determined exclusively by reference to a system of symbolism that exists outside the romance, they are created internally, in large measure given textual significance by their participation in the narrative. This internal, contextual definition of symbols permits a more direct contact with the audience; symbolic meaning is not crucially dependent on learning, nor is the
romance a closed book to those uninitiated in symbological tradition. The latter will enhance understanding but not determine it.

The magic fountain is one of the major examples of the marvellous in the romance. As W.A. Nitze has observed, the defence of the fountain is also one of the central elements in the story. The magic fountain is Laudine's fountain and its defence comes to represent in the course of the narrative the defence of all Laudine's territories. Lunete repeatedly emphasises that Laudine cannot afford to leave the fountain unguarded for long otherwise any marauding stranger will wreak devastation upon her lands at his pleasure. Laudine's main aim throughout is to find a worthy knight to undertake the defence of her fountain. When her husband Esclados is defeated by Yvain she is forced to recognize that since the victor has been shown to be superior, she should marry him and make him the new guardian of the fountain. The fountain thus acquires a functional value as the symbol of Laudine's honour which would otherwise fall prey to every passing stranger. Consequently the choice of a guardian is a delicate task which involves a moral evaluation of the particular knight. Yvain has to be found worthy to defend it, and the privilege is granted only when he wins her love and eventually marries her. But the fountain, with its cool bubbling water, plainly represents a source of vitality, which reinvigorates Yvain. Therefore, by virtue of its mediation in the relationship between Yvain and
Laudine, the fountain becomes a symbol of woman's honour which is both highly vulnerable to attack but also wondrously life-enhancing when properly protected. It is, nevertheless, a localised symbol that is given significance by its textual situation, its place within the network of specific situations and relations between the characters. However, if we examine the magic fountain in its own right, as a unit of significance, we cannot arrive at any semantic fixity. If we look to the source we find that the bubbling fountain that causes sudden storms existed with many variations in popular tradition before the end of the twelfth century in Britain, Ireland and on the Continent. The motif springs from a long and widespread Celtic tradition with its roots in popular mythology. Louise B. Morgan suggests from a review of these myths that the fountain is "concerned ultimately with the protection of the tree-spirit, a fire-and-rain-making divinity, such as Frazer had shown the Arician Goddess to be". This, nevertheless, does not explain what Chrétien himself might have made of the meaning of this mythical motif. In addition to this, the pagan mythical roots, if anything, hinder the incorporation of the fountain into a Christian meaning.

If we analyse its qualities, all we can say is that certain effects are produced in response to a certain action. There are causal links between the pouring of the water over the emerald and the resultant sequence of storm - calm - chorus of birds. However, although these links are observed they remain mysterious, it is impossible to know why that sequence is unleashed by the initial action. Yvain's wonderment is
provoked by the appearance of a causal chain in Nature where normally there is none. The action of the magic fountain suggests the agency of some hidden intelligence beyond visible phenomena, even though the exact significance of that sequence of causality remains unknown. The fountain's magic lies in its tantalizing combination of suggested meaningfulness and ultimate inexplicability. The explanation of the fountain's working lies beyond our rational powers, it breaks the norms of nature and yet the sequence of events is an intimation of an ulterior meaning, an invisible web of hidden connections in the material world. In short, the lack of symbolic definition about the fountain bespeaks a mystery whose outer limits we can only dimly perceive and whose heart our reason cannot hope to penetrate.

How should one respond to these mysterious episodes? Chrétien himself provides an indication in the episode of the wild geese in the *Conte du Graal*. The unknown knight Perceval comes across the tents of King Arthur's Court. It had snowed that night and the ground was white. Before Perceval reaches the tents he sees a flock of wild geese pursued by a falcon. The falcon attacks one of the geese and it falls to the ground. By the time Perceval rides up to the spot the goose has flown away leaving three drops of blood on the snow. The spots of blood put Perceval in mind of his mistress, whose cheeks are red on a very white skin, and he falls into a trance of contemplation. The entranced knight is espied from Arthur's camp whence Sagremor le Déréglé and Keu are each sent in turn to bring him before
Arthur. In both cases, the knights show angry impatience with Perceval's unheeding silence and they attack him. Perceval defeats them both and relapses into his meditations. Finally Gauvain, the courteous, is sent to fetch him. By the time he gets there the sun has evaporated two of the drops of blood and the third is fading. Perceval emerges from his thoughts and Gauvain discreetly approaches him. Perceval explains that he could not leave the spot because the three drops of blood reminded him of his lady. Gauvain replies:

"Certes, sire, vous ne pensiez comme un vilain mais comme un doux et noble coeur. C'était bien rude folie que vouloir vous en déprendre."

Gauvain respects Perceval's meditation and accepts without inquiry the explanation that the red blood on the white snow reminded Perceval of his lady's cheeks.

Why should the chance appearance of an evanescent pattern in nature inspire in Perceval this long unbreakable trance? Is there a mystical significance in the number three or in the hunt of the geese by the falcon? The three drops of blood may evoke several associations but none can aspire to a dominant rôle. As in the case of the fountain, this incident stirs the reader's imagination with a sense of unfathomed meaning, the effect is that of an epiphany, a glimpse through the interstices of the natural world to a more profound reality. But just as neither Gauvain, Keu or Sagremor can rouse Perceval so the reader is unable to enter into the trance, he cannot know the contents of Perceval's meditations, he can only gaze upon the enraptured knight and respect the privacy of his insight,
for the insight itself is a spiritual truth which is not vouchsafed to all men, only to the deserving.

Similarly, the ecstasy Yvain experiences when he sees the working of the magic fountain cannot be explained or rationally described to the reader. The peculiar conjunction of disparate elements in the fountain and in the appearance of the three drops of blood are marks of a deeper reality, they indicate the locus of a mystery, but what it is they actually signify remains unknown except to the favoured knight.

Thus, the secondary symbolic level of meaning in the romance develops the logic of the deep spiritual sense of the hero's life. But the insight itself remains unrevealed, the reader cannot follow the knight's every step in his spiritual development, he can only be given signs. The symbolic level of the narrative is itself an outward notation for a truth that exists beyond the senses. This explains the lack of an internal consciousness in Yvain, we cannot pry into his mind as we can into that of a character in a modern novel. Yvain's interiority can only be communicated to us obliquely, through his external actions being organized into a symbolic order.

At the core of Chrétien's romance there is the silence of spiritual truth which, by definition, cannot be conveyed in the language of men. The surface of the text and the secondary symbolic meaning which the marvellous elements point to are ordered approximations to or ritualized evocations of something that surpasses reason and language. However, the very lack of symbolic fixity, that flutter of inexplicability produced by the interactions of surface and symbol, temporal world and spiritual significance, endows
the text with a frisson of mystery which arouses the curiosity of the reader. In the words of Robert Guiette:

"Le lecteur traversait le récit comme un homme traverse une région qui recèle pièges et embûches, métamorphoses et ambiguités. Il avançait comme un somnambule sans savoir ce qu'il cherchait. Il avait conscience que des présences encore demandaient à être reconnues, qu'il faudrait revenir sur ses pas, mais il était entraîné dans un mouvement qu'il n'aurait su contredire."

The reader is carried along by his mounting curiosity. No single symbol is comprehensible in itself because it forms part of the flow which one must follow in the quest for wholeness of meaning. The indeterminacy and even contradictoriness of the symbol prevents one from seeking its meaning by referring to a pre-established symbolic system outside the text. In fact Chrétien's symbols immerse one even further in the text so that the desire for meaning can only be satisfied by one's attempts to understand the structure of the whole, the sum of the partly-signifying episodes. But even if the symbolic structure of the romance is grasped, the actual content of its significance is still elusive. The reading has described a process of spiritual perfection, but the reader, even at the deepest level, has only apprehended the external forms of that development. Nevertheless, the wonderment evoked by the reading may be described as the aesthetic equivalent of the spiritual rewards of the glorified knight. The pleasure afforded by the text is a surrogate, a sign, of the as yet unattainable joys of spiritual wisdom.
(vi) **Generic features of romance.**

Love and adventure, as commentators agree, are the two major concerns of romance. Of the two, adventure is intrinsically more important because love in romance is always conceived as a form of adventure: the wished-for union of the sexes is never less than a hazardous, accident-strewn enterprise. The action is characterized by a string of trials, a long dangerous voyage, or a quest. Romance narrative focuses on the overcoming of a series of obstacles in order to discover something new, to reveal an arcane truth or to achieve some goal. As John Stevens points out, in romance there is always "a sense of baffled involvement in a mystery."

The perilous nature of these adventures ensures that the hero is noble, exemplary and often aristocratic. Again, because of this fundamental concern with adventure, the narrative interest lies in the manner of the hero's surmounting the obstacles in his path, in his courage and strength of will rather than in his emotions, motives or states of mind; the ability to conclude an adventure successfully is sufficient token of the hero's worth, there is consequently little need to delve further into his consciousness or psychology. Adventures, then, define characters, classifying them into simple moral categories of good and evil, courageous and cowardly, upright and base.

This defining quality of adventures makes them the principal source of meaning. Since the hero is judged
by his performance, his adventures acquire symbolic value. Different adventures may represent different levels of attainment, and their apparently discontinuous arrangement in the narrative gradually reveals a hitherto unsuspected necessity, they begin to display meaningful symbolic patterns.

Because significance inheres not in the psychology of characters but in the nature of the action, the narrative is shaped by coincidences, reversals, unexpected occurrences or marvellous events which break the bounds of everyday experience in order to disclose its underlying symbolic design. Symbolism and the marvellous are therefore cognate characteristics of romance. Nevertheless, why is adventure so fundamental to romance?

The notion of adventure involves a sense of the unknown and the unexpected; the "adventitious" cannot be foreseen and so represents a threat to the familiar and established order of things. Love and military adventure are the favourite spheres of action because they place men in extreme, unpredictable and possibly destructive situations, where mutilation, emotional disarray, shame, ridicule or, of course, death can be incurred. Through its arrangement of adventures, romance plays out a conflict between the hero and forces which are capable of destroying him. In overcoming these perils the hero is able to slough off inessentials and discover what is permanent and irreducible about himself; he preserves his integrity or realises his latent powers by dominating whatever accidents and eventualities may be thrown up by Evil or Chance.

Adventure, then, even in its most elementary form, is important because it postulates problems of identity and
and destiny. It is no accidental detail that in four out of five Chrétien romances the hero's identity is either hidden or unknown for about half the duration of the romance. The reader does not learn Lancelot's name until line 3676; Perceval is utterly anonymous, ignorant even of his own name, until line 3575; Yvain loses all sense of self during his period of madness in the wilderness and thereafter calls himself "Le Chevalier au Lion", a surrogate identity which he only finally discards when Laudine agrees to forgive him.108 The hero's achievement of a stable identity amounts to the fulfillment of his destiny.

Romance then recounts the vicissitudes of an individual hero confronting the evils of non-being. As such he is striving to exist on a plane beyond temporal contingency. As Erich Auerbach has observed:

"Except feats of arms and love, nothing can occur in the courtly world - and even these two are of a special sort: they are not occurrences or emotions which can be absent for a time; they are permanently connected with the person of the perfect knight, they are part of his definition, so that he cannot for one moment be without adventure in arms, nor for one moment without amorous entanglement. If he could, he would lose himself and no longer be a knight." 109

This priority continually to stave off the onslaughts of Time and Evil through love and adventure accounts for the intensity and remoteness of the romance world. It is a world which in Gillian Beer's phrase, "is sustained by its own inherent, often obsessive laws."110 In Arthurian romance these laws are those pertaining to the codes of chivalry and courtly love. By means of them, the hero comes
to appreciate and understand his destiny. They enshrine objective standards of absolute truth which, if adhered to, will lead the hero, via the shedding of false, distorting illusions about himself and the world, to the realization of the essence of his experience.\footnote{111}

Furthermore, as Northrop Frye has written, "Reality for romance is an order of existence most readily associated with identity. Identity means a good many things, but all its meanings in romance have some connection with a state of existence in which there is nothing to write about. It is existence before 'once upon a time', and subsequent to 'and they lived happily ever after'."\footnote{112}

The romance hero therefore aspires to a condition of absolute wholeness, an essential unity of being, which cannot be realized without effort in the temporal world, and which consequently points to a world beyond. More precisely, through the seeking of adventure and observance of a certain code, the romance hero aims to discover and to uphold ideal values latent in himself and in the world.\footnote{113}

Romance is therefore postulated on two levels, representing everyday mutable experience on the one hand and the unchanging world of ideals on the other. It can acknowledge the contradictions and perplexities of temporal experience, but in contrast to the modern novel, these existential difficulties are perceived to be susceptible of solution when properly related to another, transcendent order of reality. Through the mediation of symbols and marvels, romance creates a mysterious traffic between the material world and the spiritual; its heroes operate on that elusive borderline
between the two worlds, attempting to cross from one to the other through a prolonged inward trial symbolized often by the traversing of perilous regions like a forest, a wilderness or the sea.\(^{114}\)

Because romance is designed to reveal the presence of values and realities beyond the temporal world and explain their discovery through instruments of grace or Providence, the romance writer is able to play the rôle of God within the narrative.\(^{115}\) His structuring of the hero's experience, the design he traces for the action, need not conform with psychological plausibility or a verisimilar representation of time and space, the narrative possesses an imaginative logic of its own. Character is subordinate to action; the heroes of romance do not reveal a particularly individual experience nor an inward dimension to their lives.\(^{116}\)

Their motivation is restricted to a conventional principle, like the seeking of honour and fame through adventure, or a ruling passion like the courting of a particular lady. It is only through the organisation of their adventures that their outward acts come to possess symbolic meaning. The author's God-like freedom of creation allows the surface of the action to be heterogeneous, episodic, and discontinuous, and as such it resembles the bewildering disarray of immediate experience. Aesthetic unity is achieved at a secondary level which is accessible through the reader's recognition and interpretation of the symbols.
Now in Christian romance the truths and mysteries alluded to at this secondary level would inevitably be equivalent to those of the revealed religious tradition. Given the reader's previous familiarity with these truths the task of the romance-writer is to refresh and revivify them in the reader's mind by virtue of his narrative skills. The aesthetic emphasis would be placed upon the process by which these truths are revealed, a process which affords the reader the pleasure of recognizing previously known truths arrived at through oblique and unexpected imaginative by-ways. As a result, Christian romance, if not all romance, tends to confirm beliefs and reinforce ethical certainties; it is ultimately reassuring.\(^\text{117}\)

For precisely this reason, a law of diminishing aesthetic returns operates in romance. Since imaginative interest lies rather in the medium than in the message, the reader may eventually come to recognize or even anticipate the mechanisms of coincidence and reversal which produce the required happy endings. Once the conventions have been spotted, romance-writers must clearly proceed to try out different ones. There is consequently a tendency to obsolescence of conventions and topics with a corresponding propensity to sensationalise. As old devices become clichéd and worn out, further ways must be sought of enthralling the reader with additional twists and marvels. Romance, by its very nature and purpose, is a literary mode which is particularly vulnerable to parody.\(^\text{118}\) Nevertheless, the Middle Ages, with their belief in transcendence, their symbolic mentality
and Platonizing mysticism, propitiated the flowering
of romance as an intellectually respectable literary genre.
But in a culture where confidence in absolute truth and
spiritual transcendence has been lost, romance is relegated
to the category of sub-literature. Its symbolism decays into
mere fantasizing, its idealism becomes facile optimism, and,
by allowing the reader a limited escape from reality into
an irrational sphere of fantasy, its conventional happy
ending can turn into little more than a mechanical device
for reinforcing the comforting prejudices of its public
after the thrills and risks of sensationalist adventures
have been temporarily entertained.\(^{119}\) Arthurian romance
did indeed succumb to this process of degeneration, some
of whose causes and effects I propose to discuss in the
next chapter.
CHAPTER TWO

LATER ARTHURIAN ROMANCE:
AMADÍS DE GAULA AND LAS SERGAS DE ESPLANDIÁN

(i) Some observations on the Prose Lancelot.

The most important linear descendant of Chrétien's romance was the Vulgate Cycle in terms of influence and popularity.¹ This extremely lengthy cycle in prose is composed of five branches in its entirety: Estoire del Saint Graal, Estoire de Merlin, the Lancelot, Queste del Saint Graal, and La Mort Artu. The last three form a trilogy which is commonly known as the Prose Lancelot. The trilogy as a whole probably appeared between 1215 and 1230, the other two romances generally regarded as having been written later than the trilogy and not intended as part of the overall design. What is most striking about the three romances of the Prose Lancelot is that they are in many ways integrated by a network of analogies and forecasts even though they are plainly written by men of widely differing style and temperament. This phenomenon has produced various scholarly hypotheses to explain it. The theory that attributed its composition to a large number of authors was discredited by Ferdinand Lot who argued that the entire trilogy was composed by a single author in four or five years. But this theory, according to Frappier ('The Vulgate Cycle', p.316), cannot adequately explain the variations in style and preoccupations from one book to the next. He offers a "compromise solution": a single man, the
architect, conceived the trilogy and outlined the plan for the whole; this architect must then have written either the whole or a good part of the Lancelot followed by two different authors who wrote the Queste and the Mort keeping to the original plan. According to Loomis, "one may assume that all the authors of the cycle were tonsured and the little evidence we have suggests that they lived and wrote in Champagne or Burgundy". ²

Although these romances were therefore composed not long after Chrétien's time, they are quite different in form and spirit. To begin with they are much longer and involve many more central characters on a much broader canvas. Vinaver attributes this in part to the revival in the thirteenth century of the chronicle material of Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia Regum Britanniae dealing with the earlier history of Arthur's kingdom. ³ But he also believes that, although these writers had the same ultimate purpose as Chrétien, which was to elucidate the spiritual significance of their inherited Arthurian narrative matter, they did it less by the symbolic ordering of the action than by forging causal and rational links between previously unrelated themes and episodes. This shift in interest and method may be partly explained by the change of milieu from the courtly aristocratic circle of Chrétien to the religious atmosphere of the monastery, whose interest in orthodoxy and didactic clarity would have led to a desire to further christianize the mythic elements of romance and to render the stories more readily intelligible to a wider audience outside the aristocracy.
Eugène Vinaver has given an excellent example of this process at work in the Grail stories after Chrétien's Perceval. There are three motifs in Chrétien's unfinished original - the wounded king, a miraculous weapon, and a land laid waste - which are not linked in a coherent sequence. Perceval sees an old man in the castle and is later informed that it is the Fisher King who has been wounded in battle. Much later the reader is informed that Perceval's failure to ask the question expected of him has prolonged the king's agony and inflicted untold misery upon his land. The Wasteland theme proper only occurs in connection with one of Gawain's adventures when an anonymous character predicts that the kingdom of Logres will be laid waste by a mysterious lance. Chrétien's text makes absolutely no connection between this lance and the one Perceval saw in the Grail castle. However, in the First Continuation of Chrétien's unfinished version the new author connects the Wasteland and the maimed King by having Gawain find a weapon lying broken upon the body of a dead man. When he asks the right question, as Perceval signally failed to do earlier, the land regains part of its fertility. These three motifs recur in the Queste del Saint Graal, with a significant variant: the wounding of the king by the magic weapon does not cause the blight of the land, but Perceval's sister promises Galahad that the king will be cured when he should come to him. Thus a fourth motif is introduced - that of the curing of the maimed King by Galahad. It is in the Suite du Merlin (or the Huth Merlin) that the four motifs are combined into a single causal pattern: the weapon, the wounding, the blighted land and the blight removed by the healing of the wound.
Vinaver sees in this evolution the sign of a genius able, as he puts it, citing Valéry, "to grasp the value of what has already been found". Certainly the causal sequence makes the action much more comprehensible to the reader but it cannot be a foregone conclusion that this evident gain in intelligibility is necessarily an artistic improvement. At any rate it marks an interesting development from Chrétien's practice. In the First Continuation, the Queste, and the Suite du Merlin, the key emphasis is on restoration; either of the Wasteland, partially, in the Continuation, after Gawain has asked the right question; or the healing of the wound by Galahad in the Queste; or by a combination of the two in the Suite. The restoration is dependent on a specific action by one of the characters. In other words, the surface incidents of the story now respond to the actions of the knights, whereas in Yvain, as we have seen, incidents were by no means connected as directly and causally as this on the surface of the narrative but only at the secondary level of symbolic meaning. The causal sequence makes it easier for the reader to read moral significance directly into the action yet this entails a crucial shift in focus away from the underlying symbolic sense to the "historical" surface of the narrative. Once the surface events in a story become directly explicable in relation to the behaviour of the characters, there is the possibility that they may come to be seen as mere externalisations of the characters' moral life and the story interpreted as an allegory rather than a history.
By leaving much of the mythic material in its pristine state and uniting it only at a deeper level, Chrétien was able to maintain a distinction between the seemingly random, unmotivated events of the historico-mythic matièr and their real underlying meaning or sens. Once the heterogeneous, historico-mythical events are organised into a morally-motivated, causal sequence, such distinctions begin to be blurred, with far-reaching consequences which we shall presently discuss in detail.

Another important development after Chrétien which can be related to this increasing primacy of the surface of the narrative is the structural technique of entrelacement where episodes are interrupted by others which are in turn interrupted to resume earlier ones, thus weaving the separate themes and actions into a vast interlocking web which fits into a detailed time-scheme of days and hours. This technique, which is embryonic in Chrétien, is used systematically in the Vulgate Lancelot, the first of the trilogy and by far the longest. The enormous expansion of narrative material in terms of different adventures and characters would naturally have made the elaboration of a consistent and compact symbolic sense, as in Chrétien, difficult if not impossible. The action would therefore have to be connected on the surface while advancing some moral design. In spite of many faults such as Loomis has observed, the otiose episodes, the needless repetitions and digressions, the many unintegrated themes and actions - the technique
of interlacing does succeed in providing the romance with a supple, free-ranging structure which endows the actions with moral significance. In the words of Rosemond Tuve: "This web-structure has special possibilities of gradually discernible meaning as the woven pattern shows it is a pattern and takes shape. Hence it was a superbly invented instrument for conveying not only what we called the polyphonic nature of what is happening, but that which interested Spenser supremely, the fact that to human minds what happens 'means' something, is significant." According to Vinaver, "the whole history of meaning and form in romance is implied in this remark." From this last statement one can infer that romance seeks to invest history or human action with meaning and significance. This is, of course, eminently true of Chrétien's romances, as it is true of the Prose Lancelot, but what concerns us specially here is the difference between the two methods. Chrétien's symbolic meaning, as I have shown, was implicit in a secondary level of the text, whereas entrelacement, for all its subtlety, ultimately must organize incidents into a surface pattern of meaning which will convey to the reader of the vast narrative a more direct impression of the different characters' moral destinies. The "historical" and the "symbolic" planes of the narrative thus tend to fuse, the inevitable result being that the "historical" plane loses its superficial diversity and enigmatic heterogeneity as it becomes formalized into more immediately accessible symbolic patterns.
Such a narrative orientation could only lead to the progressive exposure of the distance between romance and historical realities, a problem that Chrétien largely sidestepped by not rationalizing the surface features and incidents of his inherited mythic material into readily recognisable patterns. The two remaining romances of the Vulgate trilogy represent different ways of accommodating the incipient problem of the separation of history and symbolic narrative. In the Queste the question of historicity becomes secondary to the moral designs of allegory, whereas in the Mort Artu the force of historical change is allowed to wreak its effects on Arthur's kingdom and destroy the very conventions upon which it was founded.

The Queste is believed to have been written by a monk of the flourishing Cistercian order, which would explain its mystical and ascetic concerns. Much of the action can be given an allegorical meaning, as Frappier describes:

"There are adumbrations of great scenes in the New Testament. The first appearance of the Grail in the hall at Camaalot is full of reminiscences of the first Pentecost. King Mordrain's address to Galaad echoes the 'Nunc dimittis' of Simeon. The Siege Perilous and the sword in the stone designates the new Messiah; a tourney between white knights and black allegorizes the conflict between the forces of good and evil. The strange voyages of the Breton contes are converted into journeys of the soul, and their significance is interpreted by visions."\(^9\)

The Grail itself becomes a symbol of grace and is described as a dish from which Christ ate the lamb at the Last Supper and a vessel containing the Host. Although there are still the Celtic trappings of Arthurian Romance—knights errant, damsels, duels—much of the mythic material has been
converted into the familiar currency of the Christian symbolic tradition.

This movement away from what Robert Guiette called Chrétien's "liberté du symbole" to allegory proper is another aspect of these monastic writers' attempt to render Arthurian romance more intelligible to a general audience. Chrétien's symbols, such as the magic fountain, the lion or the Grail platter, possessed a nimbus of imprecision which paradoxically deepened their impression on the imagination by the irreducibility of their significance to a single pattern of meaning. The monastic author of the Queste, however, begins to dispel this mysterious nimbus and achieves a greater clarity, a more acceptable rational outline of the previously enigmatic forms of the myth. Allegory admits of a greater certainty of explanation, it needs only, as Bezzola says, "une seule interprétation, exacte, limitée: elle est logique". The figures in allegory are clearer than in symbolism because they refer to a system of meaning which is antecedent and external to the text itself, or else they represent well-defined concepts. To read an allegory is to decipher the symbols in relation to the terms of another system, in this case the Christian doctrine of grace and salvation. Such an activity, however, entails a loss of the uniqueness and particularity of the symbols as specific presences in the romance because they become the correlatives of ideas whose validity has been established elsewhere. Allegorical meaning is not immanent, it is not created within the text as are the symbols in Chrétien's romances; instead, the reader grasps the allegorical meaning by referring the incidents and adventures to an anterior body of knowledge outside the text. From Chrétien's aesthetic
of symbolic discovery one passes to an aesthetic of allegorical recognition, where the initially bizarre surface of the action is like a veil which can be readily folded back to reveal an arrangement of familiar Christian verities. Paradoxically, this allegorical relationship between the text and Christian knowledge increases the extravagance and frequency of "marvellous" incidents in the Queste, as if the possibility of relating the text to an ulterior Christian meaning had released the author from the constraints of probability and allowed him to indulge in such marvels as floating stones, airborne sacred vessels, cloud-wrapped knights transported over long distances, colour-changing trees and so on.

The fact that these allegorical marvels distance the narrative from historical actuality is not in itself objectionable. However, a contradiction is inherent in the romance because of its fundamental claim to historical authenticity. The Queste is brought to an end as follows:

"When they had dined King Arthur summoned his clerks who were keeping a record of all the adventures undergone by the knights of his household. When Bors had related to them the adventures of the Holy Grail as witnessed by himself, they were written down and the record kept in the library at Salisbury, whence Master Walter Map extracted them in order to make his book of the Holy Grail for love of his lord King Henry who had the story translated from Latin into French." 12

With this claim to an eyewitness source, the romance rests on an ambiguity. On the one hand it attempts to establish itself as a chronicle, deriving its authority from an accurate report of the events as they actually happened, while on the other, it seeks to justify itself as an allegory.
where the action is a mere shell that holds a more substantial kernel of Christian truth. Each basis of truth is legitimate in itself but it is only when a single text founds its claim on both at one and the same time that confusion may arise and deception take root. If the *Queste* is history, what is one to make of the floating stone and other marvels? And if it is allegory, why claim that such extraordinary events actually occurred?

When one turns from the *Queste* to the *Mort Artu* the religious allegory yields to what Frappier called a "climate of Greek tragedy". Here is described Lancelot's relapse into adultery with Guinevere, the treachery of Arthur's bastard son Mordred, the mortal enmity between Gawain and Lancelot, Arthur's final battle at Salisbury Plain, his death, and the destruction of the kingdom of Logres. Such calamities, of course, spell the utter dissolution of the Arthurian romance world as it might have been conceived by Chrétien de Troyes. All the most fundamental premises seem to be systematically destroyed. As Eugène Vinaver says, there are four concurrent causes of the disintegration. In the first place, God has withdrawn his protection from Arthur's Court after the quest for the Holy Grail has ended, and this removes the lynchpin of the whole romance system. Secondly, the beneficent agency of Providence, which played such an important part in guiding the steps of the hero in *Yvain* for example, is here replaced by the vagaries of the Wheel of Fortune which swings against Arthur who, it is said, has risen too high in success and fame. Thirdly, there is a conflict between two loyalties, Lancelot's love of Guinevere and his obligations to Arthur and Gawain. Now in Chrétien, as we have seen, this is precisely the sort of conflict that the whole romance
was designed to resolve, but here in the Mort Artu it proves to be insoluble and the processes of romance rendered ineffective. Finally, Arthur is killed by his own son Mordred whom he had fathered in incest. Such a sin would have been inconceivable in Chrétien where Arthur was a pillar of moral authority, and where the faults of the knights were infractions of a subtle code rather than such heinous carnal extravagance as incest.

In two recent articles, R. Howard Bloch has tried to explain the unexpected dissolution of the kingdom of Logres by attributing it to the changing social and philosophical ethos of thirteenth century France.\(^\text{15}\) He argues that "Logres is, politically speaking, a model of the feudal world: a collection of independent states linked by ties of fealty, clannish loyalty to family and the right to private war. A system without distinction between private and public domains, Arthurian kingship relies judicially upon the archaic legal procedures of trial by battle and entrapment in flagrante delicto for resolution of the conflicts occurring naturally within every society."\(^\text{16}\) The two trials in the romance are concerned with the issue of intentional versus unintentional homicide. Bloch tries to demonstrate that feudal law did not distinguish between the two, it was concerned with criminal acts and not intentions, and it was through the judicial ordeal by combat, fire, water, etc., that divine intervention was solicited on the premise that God would not abandon the just man and would punish the guilty party with defeat. The trials consequently are used in the Mort
Artu to resolve complex questions of intentionality which are outside their real competence. As Bloch points out, "Lancelot's victorious support of a merely adequate cause against Mador and a patently indefensible one [within the terms of Arthurian judicial concepts] against Gauvain can only be interpreted as the triumph of might over right. The guilty parties in both formal actions escape prosecution; the injured fail to obtain redress... The immanence of divine judgement, the Deo judicio, no longer insures the triumph of divine right according to infallible criteria invisible to man and beyond his understanding." Thus in the Mort Artu another of the most crucial premises of chivalric romance - the convention that combat establishes intentions, identities, and other truths invisible to man - is also destroyed, leaving man to devise ways of establishing these truths without recourse to the divine will.

For Bloch, history catches up with the conventionalized, artificial world of Arthurian romance in La Mort le Roi Artu: "La Mort Artu represents, from this perspective, a declaration of bankruptcy of the most cherished values and institutions of the feudal world two centuries after the beginning of the end of feudalism in France." The romance world is opened out to the chill winds of historical actuality and it seems reasonable to view this fatal exposure, especially in the vehement finality of its tone, as the Church's deliberate attempt to undermine and destroy, from within, the seductive legends of Arthur and the profane distractions of courtly love and worldly chivalry. The romance
is concluded as follows:

"At this point Master Walter Map will end the story of Lancelot, because he has brought everything to a proper conclusion according to the way it happened; and he finishes his book here so completely that no one can afterwards add anything to the story that is not complete falsehood." 19

Once again the problem of the truth of the text arises. The author here seems anxious not just to finish the story but also to prevent anyone from taking it up again. In order to forestall a putative successor he has to claim in advance that any continuation will be false, and this he attempts to do by invoking the historical authenticity of his account, "according to the way it happened". This appeal to historical truth with the curious redundant emphasis on finishing the story "so completely" seems calculated to charge any continuator with the burden of having to prove to his reader that his account of the Arthurian world is not "complete falsehood". Thus the author of the Mort Artu thrusts the latent problem of historicity inescapably into the foreground of Arthurian romance. Henceforth writers of Arthurian romances would not be able to underwrite their texts with a claim to historical truth without being aware of a premeditated deception, yet if this convenient justification of historicity were removed from Arthurian romance, an immensely more complex problem would reveal itself: the nature of literary truth, or the need to justify the creation of narrative fiction.

Arthurian romance did not, of course, end with the Mort Artu. Subsequent writers persisted in claiming historical
status for their inventions or their reworkings of the Matter of Britain. But, while avoiding the fundamental problem, the writers in practice severed the connections between romance and historical realities, creating de facto a self-perpetuating, autonomous fictional domain based on a fraudulent historical claim and otherwise justified intermittently as a form of religious allegory. With such fragile underpinnings, and without a proper conception of fictional creation as a self-justifying activity, Arthurian romance made itself perennially vulnerable to serious moral and aesthetic criticism. Moreover, since it suffered from this aesthetic confusion at its very core, it was even further disabled to tackle the increasingly intractable formal problems discussed above: the need to unify the profusion of adventures in a coherent structure, the question of meaningfully integrating the inherited mythical material into the action, and the reconciliation of the profane values of courtly love and chivalry with the didactic requirements of Church orthodoxy. For more detailed discussion of these problems we shall proceed to Amadís de Gaula, the first of the sixteenth-century Spanish romances of chivalry, whose eponymous hero was to become the acknowledged mentor of Don Quixote.

(ii) The Structure of Amadís de Gaula

Arthurian literature was introduced into Spain in the late twelfth century. María Rosa Lida de Malkiel
attributes this in large part to a series of marriages between the house of Castile and the Anglo-Norman royalty of England. In addition to this, there was the influence of courtly love from the troubadour circles in Catalonia which had considerable contact with Provence. Arthurian stories took much longer to spread to a wider non-courtly public and it was only in the fourteenth century that translations from the Arthurian texts began to be made into the Iberian languages. There have survived in whole or in part a number of redactions and translations from the 'Pseudo-Boron' cycle consisting of the Estoire and the Queste del Saint Graal, a brief Mort Artu, and the Merlin and Suite du Merlin of the Huth version. The Spanish version of the Vulgate Lancelot has survived only in later and occasionally fragmentary redactions. There are also, according to Lida de Malkiel, two redactions of the French Prose Tristan, five lyrics in the Cancioneiro de Lisboa, two narrative ballads where Lancelot is the hero, and a third on the death of Tristan and Isolt.

These translations greatly influenced the composition of indigenous romances of chivalry in the peninsula. Amadís de Gaula, as scholars agree, is unmistakably modelled on the French romances. From the Vulgate Lancelot and the Tristan legend it takes the figure of a knight who secretly falls in love with a royal lady. There is also a great king whose knights are dedicated to chivalry, an evil enchanter Arcaлавus who is modelled on Merlin, and a good fairy Urganda who is descended from either Morgan La Fay or the Lady of the Lake. Bohigas Balaguer, furthermore, has shown that the core of the
plot of *Amadís* greatly resembles that of the Vulgate *Lancelot*: an unknown youth is accepted at the court of the king whom he serves loyally, but falls in love with his daughter or wife. There are two main vicissitudes in the course of the love affair; the knight rescues his lady from an abduction by an evil opponent, and the lady becomes jealous after a false report and rejects the knight who loses or comes close to losing his senses and lives in solitude. The knight conquers a marvellous abode - the Joyeuse Garde or Insola Firme - to which he takes his lady in time of peril.

R.J. Michels has also shown the influence of Chrétien's *Chevalier de la Charrette* in the wording of *Amadís*'s dedication to Oriana, which is modelled on *Lancelot*'s to Guinevere; furthermore, in the sequence of *Amadís*'s request to be knighted, the king's suggestion of a waiting period, and Oriana's effective intercession in his favour, there is a correspondence with the sequence in the *Charrette*. Moreover, although it has not to my knowledge previously been observed by scholars, some episodes of crucial importance in the *Amadís* are very reminiscent of Chrétien's *Yvain*. *Amadís*'s self-banishment to a wilderness and assumption of a pseudonym after having lost favour with Oriana, or the episode of the wicked counsellors who give King Lisuarte bad advice, are striking parallels to similar episodes in *Yvain*. Clearly, many if not most of the episodes in the *Amadís* are closely modelled on earlier French works in the Arthurian canon.

The dating of the original version of the *Amadís* presents enormous problems and it is well established that the version published in 1508 by Garci Ordóñez de Montalvo,
who in subsequent editions appears under his correct name Garci Rodríguez de Montalvo, was very much reworked from an earlier version or versions, of which there are traces in the extant Montalvo text. Scholars have attempted to reconstruct and date some of these earlier versions with limited results. \(^2\) It is best to take the broad details of E.B. Place's hypothesis:

(i) The original version X, dating probably from the latter half of the fourteenth century but possibly earlier. H. Thomas does not discount the possibility that the original story could have been written by the Portuguese Joham de Lobeira in the last half of the thirteenth century. According to Place, X would be the prototype of the extant Books I and II.

(ii) Y3, an addition by someone else to X, or a reworking of the earlier version. Rodríguez-Moñino has shown that the extant Book III is a much reduced version of Y3. This could be the earlier version which according to Lida de Malkiel ended with a tragic duel between Amadís and Esplandían.

(iii) Montalvo's extant Books I-IV of which III and IV would be a reworking of Y3 with I and II largely intact, at least in outline. Place shows that the language of IV reveals archaisms and occidentalisms which indicate that Montalvo was not inventing his own Book IV "sino refundiendo los muchos materiales sobrados de Y3".

(iv) Montalvo's Book V, Las Sergas de Esplandían, which he conceived and wrote himself but many of whose episodes are modelled on Y3. The fatal duel which formed the dénouement
of Y3 would, according to Place, correspond to the Esplandían chapters 28 and 29, although such an outcome is averted.

The upshot of scholarly investigation is that the extant books are the last version of a series that span a period of nearly a century and a half. Montalvo reworked a previous version, Y3 which was itself a revision and expansion of X, excising passages of which he did not approve and re-organising it into four parts to which he added a fifth, largely of his own invention, in order to supersede the profane values of worldly chivalry and courtly love in his original. This anti-Amadís bias is of course carried into the Amadís itself by his insertions of moralizing reflections and other interpolations and by interspersing throughout numerous references calculated to advertise his own forthcoming Esplandían.

Presumably because of these successive revisions, the Amadís we possess lacks an easily discernible structure. Critics mark certain points in the narrative which they surmise to be relics of previous endings which have been "opened out" by different authors. Thomas, for example, sees a natural ending in chapter 10 when Amadís discovers his true identity. He also believes that after the rescue of Oriana and Lisuarte and their reunion with Amadís and the other characters, another "opportunity of ending the story is avoided" (p.46). This too is the opinion of Grace Williams (p.127) and of Armando Durán, who considers the grand reunion in chapter 30 as a natural culmination of a series of partial reunions between the characters orchestrated through a technique of neat interlacing. Durán sees this evolution through postponement as a compositional principle in
the work (which he calls interlaced amplificatio) by which the author delays the dénouement indefinitely, and which leads to a progressive expansion of the story and its gradual dissolution into chaotic adventures linked "paratactically" as opposed to their original "hypotactic" connection. This decline into formlessness was also noted by Menéndez y Pelayo who saw in the first book an intensity of action with few interpolations, a coherence which is lost in the later books as the pace and variety of the incidents gives way to lengthier and more numerous discourses.

While I would agree that the work "opens out" and degenerates into a broad, undifferentiated mass of adventures, I believe that, in its initial stages at least, it possesses a structure which is not merely external and "hypotactic" as Durán's "interlaced amplificatio" would suggest, but in fact an internal moral structure linked through a form of causality. The Amadís is composed of a series of cyclical crises where the rotation of each cycle encompasses a successively wider field. The characteristic movement of a cycle is initiated by a crisis which disrupts the life of the hero or the kingdom. This is usually followed by a prophecy about the significance of the crisis and a much-veiled foretelling of its resolution. After various adventures, the crisis is settled through the efforts of the hero. Finally, another prophecy confirms the earlier prophecy and looks forward to the next crisis.

The first crisis concerns the identity of Amadís who is the natural son of King Periön of Gaul and Helisena, daughter of the King of Brittany. Amadís was conceived during a secret tryst and was born without his father Periön's
knowledge some time after the latter had left to pursue his adventures as a knight errant. Helisena puts the baby in an ark together with a parchment and a ring given her by Perión, and delivers him to the waters of a river. The box is found by the Scots nobleman Gandales who adopts and raises the infant. Since Amadís's name is not known he is called the Doncel del Mar. While he grows up in the court of King Languines of Scotland, the prophetess Urganda and a hermit foretell the Doncel's glorious future. Urganda exhorts Gandales to believe firmly that "todo acaescerácomo te lo digo" (I.2.30).26

The Doncel soon falls in love with Oriana the daughter of Lisuarte, King of Great Britain and we learn that this love is reciprocated although each is too shy to tell the other. However, Oriana persuades her father to knight the Doncel. The Doncel then leaves the court and completes several resounding adventures. Eventually he defeats King Abiés of Ireland who was at war with his unknown father, King Perión of Gaul. When the Doncel goes to Perión's court he gives his ring to a damsels who had lost hers, Perión sees this ring, which he had originally given, after their secret tryst, to Helisena, whom he has since married, as a token of his love. He therefore suspects his wife Helisena of having an affair with the Doncel. Perión grabs his sword and makes for the Queen's chamber to demand an explanation. The secret of the illegitimate baby and the ring emerges and Amadís comes into his own. The threat of internecine destruction is therefore avoided and the crisis is overcome. At this point Urganda
sends her emissary the Doncella de Denamarcha to remind King Perión of an early prophecy that Ireland would lose the flower of its knights when Perión should rediscover his lost son, thus giving significance to Amadís's otherwise unconnected defeat of King Abiés of Ireland.

The second cycle consists of a double crisis; one in the world of love, when Oriana is captured by the evil enchanter Arcaláus (which recalls the abduction of Guinevere in Chrétien's Lancelot), and the other in the world of public affairs, when King Lisuarte is captured by Barsinán a kinsman of Arcaláus. Amadís defeats Arcaláus and rescues Oriana and later plays a decisive rôle both in rescuing Lisuarte and in winning the battle against Barsinán. At the end of this cycle Amadís is declared the best knight in the world by way of fulfillment of Urganda's prophecy.

Amadís's reward for rescuing Oriana is his night of love with her in the forest. This event, rather paradoxically, triggers the third cycle. Amadís leaves the court with his brother Galaor and the knight Agrajes and decides to fulfil a promise he had made to the beautiful Briolanja that he would avenge her and help win back her lost kingdom. When Amadís sends a dwarf Durín back to the Court to collect a sword Briolanja had previously given him the dwarf believes this to imply that Amadís loves Briolanja and inadvertently reveals this to Oriana. When the second book opens, Amadís reaches the Insola Firme where he successfully completes a test that proves that he is the world's most loyal lover. However, immediately after this, he receives a
letter from Oriana rebuking him for his infidelity with Briolanja. Amadís, like Yvain before him, is driven by despair to abandon his friends and retire to the wilderness, feeling himself to be spiritually dead. A hermit he meets gives him the surrogate identity of Beltenebrós, which device again seems to have been modelled on Yvain's adoption of the pseudonymous title of "Le Chevalier au Lion" when out of favour with Laudine.

Amadís has a dream which the hermit interprets as an augury of better times ahead. This restores Amadís's morale and, under the identity of Beltenebrós, he wins many famous victories, meets Oriana secretly, and successfully completes with her a test of the loyalty of their love. In a final battle he comes to the aid of the beleaguered Lisuarte by revealing his true identity to the troops, thereby spurring them on to victory. Urganda then appears at the Court, confirms the loyalty of the lovers, and interprets the battle so as to show that, since Beltenebrós dealt the crucial blows, the victory is entirely owed to him. She now prophesies future developments in an involved allegorical dream which foreshadows the next cycle, caused by Amadís's unjust banishment from the Court by Lisuarte who has been misled by a group of envious knights.

At this point we should investigate more closely the nature of the crises which initiate the movements of the narrative. The cause of this fourth cycle is clearer than some of the earlier ones, and it provides a ready key to the others. This new crisis entails a misunderstanding, a failure to read certain signs correctly. Amadís is banished because the envy he inspires in some quarters provokes two knights to
give mendacious advice to Lisuarte about a conspiracy against him planned by Amadís. This once more recalls the treacherous counsellors in Yvain who persuaded Laudine to punish Lunete. Why does Lisuarte believe them? It is a failure of proper insight and wisdom, a form of culpable folly on his part. He accepts these accusations, "sin ver señales para que alguna fe dada le fuesse, de estoruar que se no turbasse y escure-sciesse todo aquello" (II.62.547). Lisuarte takes these allegations at their face value, trusting to appearances without asking further signs that might reveal the truth. As a result things become blurred and confused and a crisis ensues. But what actually gives rise to this act of folly is the envy of the courtiers. In other words, the crisis has the specific sin of envy at its root and it is this sin which puts the signs of truth in disarray. This fourth crisis therefore has a double cause, the external cause of the advisers' envy and the internal cause of Lisuarte's lack of insight.

The first crisis was provoked by the secrecy of Perión's pre-marital knowledge of Helisena which later led him to misread the real significance of the Doncel's ring. Similarly, Amadís's secret night with Oriana explains the dwarf's misconstruction of Amadís's wish to retrieve Briolanja's sword since he had no means of knowing about Amadís's secret commitment to Oriana. In both cases it is the secrecy which directly leads to someone mistaking appearances, misreading the true reality of things. Now this secrecy is necessary because, as the author explains in the case of Perión and Helisena, sexual intercourse outside wedlock was
punishable by death (I.1.21-2). But the question then arises, why should these worthy knights, Periôn and Amadís, commit such a heinous sin? The answer given by the author is unsatisfactory but, as will emerge later, rather revealing: it is God Himself who permits this to occur so as to serve his own inscrutable purpose ("Más aquel muy poderoso Señor, por permisión del qual todo esto passaua para su santo servuicio...." p.22). This has to serve the author as an explanation for a flagrant inconsistency in the portrayal of his characters; Amadís, an otherwise unimpeachable hero, commits a grave sin when he fulfils his love as reward for his earlier prowess. Quite clearly, the christianizing instincts of the author led him to try to reconcile the inherited profanity of love in Arthurian romance with the need to adhere to the Church's moral precepts by presenting the sin as a structural cause of the crisis while ascribing the contradiction rather neatly to the unknowable ways of the Almighty. To recapitulate, the cause of the crises in the Amadís can be attributed either to the direct attacks of evil forces such as Arcaláus, as in the second cycle, or to some form of sin perpetrated by the characters.

This crisis-pattern is not too dissimilar from Chrétien's in Yvain. However, there are certain important differences that indicate the cultural and intellectual distance which separates the two works. In Yvain the crisis was provoked by a moral failing too, but this was not so much the commission of a definite sin as an indulgence of the heart over the head, the sort of failure of judgement that Chrétien termed "folie" as opposed to "bon sens". The hero's
actions were dependent on contingent circumstances or on limited, subjective perspectives, his motives conditioned by a complex of moral and cultural factors which brought the story to an impasse. In Yvain the crisis is essentially internal to the life of the hero, usually presented in terms of a dilemma between the rival claims of love and honour; it follows a course of its own and the adventures represent the symbolic stages of its development. Chrétien's heroes are struggling towards a richer spiritual life by adjusting their wills to the laws of chivalry and courtly love in harmonious congruence with the will of God. By contrast the crises in the Amadís are incontrovertible violations of the laws of the Church; there is little interest in the personal, interior quest for virtue but rather an emphasis on a public ethic of sin, punishment and reward administered by the direct interventions of God and his delegates.

The world of Amadís is, as a result, less troubled by spiritual paradoxes and moral dilemmas than Chrétien's. However, in these early books Amadís's world is still divided, in the medieval Platonist manner, into the visible, temporal realm and the invisible, transcendent realm; the connections between the two, as in the French romances, are mediated by signs. But whereas in Chrétien the signs were not always immediately identifiable, in the Amadís they possess a lapidary fixity which makes them so recognisable that they could only be disregarded at one's peril. For the author of the Amadís there would appear to be no inherent problems in the world, no blurred edges, unless the signs are culpably misinterpreted or ignored. The features of good
and evil are severely etched on the surface of persons and things. For example, in II.61.524, Queen Madasima is said to be beautiful and she refuses to marry her defender and champion Ardán Canileo because he is ugly. Amadís sees this as sufficient reason to defend Madasima and relegate Ardán to the category of the morally inferior (pp.527-8). Similarly, it is remarked of Esplandián that he is "muy extraño en su donayre y hermosura, y no puede errar de buen caballero" (III.66.693). The young man's beauty unquestionably betokens chivalric virtue.

This mechanical interpretation of signs is evident in the application and observance of the chivalric code. Armed combat in Chrétien was a subtle cognitive medium. In Amadís de Gaula it is applied as a virtually automatic decoder of identities, motives and spiritual states. In Book I chapter 26, Amadís is in hot pursuit of a wicked knight when he is stopped by another knight who challenges him to reveal the motive for his haste; Amadís says he is too pressed to explain, so the knight engages him in battle; Amadís unhorses and badly wounds his adversary and then rides off on his original mission. A very similar incident occurs to Galaor in chapter 36 when he too is chasing Lisuarte's captors and is halted by a knight who claims that Galaor must be fleeing from some crime and should therefore declare the reason for his haste or engage in combat. In chapter 17 p.160, Amadís is challenged by the squire of an unknown knight: "Señor cauallero, no passęys más adelante si no otorgęys que es más fermosa la amiga de aquel cauallero, que al pino está acostado, que la
vuestra". Amadís replies: "Si Dios quisiere... tan gran mentira nunca otorgaré, si por fuerça no me lo haxen dezir o la vida no me quitan". Combat in the above examples is considered an adequate means of establishing someone's real motives and even an aesthetic truth. On another occasion it is used to determine an abstract, conceptual truth. In Book II chapter 46, p. 379, Amadís, who has received Oriana's rebukes for his alleged lack of fidelity, is broken-hearted and curses Love for not repaying his loyal service; out of the blue a strange knight appears singing the praises of Love who has made him fall for the peerless Oriana. Amadís is persuaded by his squire to challenge the quality of the knight's love and to assert that Love is treacherous. Amadís duly defeats him and says: "Cauallero, quanto en vos ganó amor y vos con él sea vuestro y suyo, que yo yrme quiero" (p. 384). The results of the battle register beyond dispute the truth of Amadís's claim.

The chivalric code in Amadís de Gaula functions as an unfailing guide to objective truth, a dependable turnstile between the material world and the world beyond the senses. This mechanistic character is perhaps best exemplified by the truth-revealing oracular tests which occur in the text - the Arch of Loyal Lovers and the Forbidden Chamber - the former to test the fidelity of the lovers and the latter to reveal the fairest woman in the world. The Arch and the Chamber function as machines which calibrate, with a nicety not given to human faculties, the quality of the characters' inner life or intangibles about the relative beauty and
fidelity of ladies, by producing signs issued by authoritative powers from the other world. Such tests do exist in Chrétien's romances but they do not have this automatic character, the hero has usually to enter into arduous and uncertain battle against a powerful adversary. By contrast, Amadís and Oriana are passively processed through halls and chambers until the verdict is given. The world of the Amadís is one of incontrovertible certainties and ready meanings, the order of things has been set out and it is periodically checked by a supervisory deity.

Hence the importance of prophecies and dreams in the structure of the narrative. Since the initially dense and enigmatic language of the prophecies is clarified for the reader as the action unfolds, the impression is created that all eventualities have been foreseen if not actually predetermined by the Almighty. The romance is as much an account of the intervention of supernatural forces in the world as it is an alleged record of historical events. As the narrator says about Amadís when he is in the depth of despair: "Contaremos en qué forma, quando más sin esperança, quando ya llegado al estrecho de la muerte, el Señor del mundo le cubrió milagrosamente el reparo" (II.48.397). The narrative is in effect a practical demonstration of the futility of human affairs when divorced from transcendent relations. Therefore, not only does the action bear out the prophecies and dreams, one often finds that a second prophecy retrospectively interprets the action in a magisterially executed quod erat demonstrandum. In other cases, the author prepares the ground for an event which will occur only much later. For example, in
Book I chapter 22, Amadís pledges himself to the service of Briolanja; the dwarf who accompanies him misunderstands this and assumes that Amadís is in love with her. This misunderstanding, the author tells us later, led Amadís to the point of a very cruel death, and in effect it leads to Oriana's jealousy and Amadís's retirement to the wilderness and his loss of identity. In this way the author supervises and marshals the action just as Providence regulates human affairs; the reader can only stand back and admire the way everything is accounted for.

Amadís de Gaula is structured as a series of revelations which peel away the layers of confusion thrown over the truth by sin; the structure of the romance is designed to clarify identities, motives, true relations and so on for the reader. Just as Urganda la Desconocida repeatedly exhorts the characters to believe "firmemente que todo acaecerá como te lo digo", so too the controlled, revelatory structure of the narrative invites the reader to trust in the beneficence of God's will in the course of history. Nevertheless the early Amadís as it survives in the extant Books I and II is still recognisably close to the French romances inasmuch as its structural organisation is designed to represent the transactions between the historical world and the supernatural. Although historical action predominates, the potential anarchy of adventures is harnessed by the cyclical patterns which are in turn explained by prophecies, dreams and oracular devices. As is the case with Chrétien's romances, the basic function of the early Amadís
is to show how the confusing appearances on the surface of the world in fact hide a meaningful, divinely-regulated reality. The marvellous elements operate as indicators of this underlying order. However, in Chrétien, the marvellous elements do not immediately possess a clear meaning, this latter depends upon the possibility of the reader seeing the manner in which the marvels relate to the structural whole. In the Amadís, on the other hand, the marvellous elements are devoid of mystery, they are immediately intelligible in relation to the characters and the plot. The strange, perplexing marvels in Chrétien only become fully symbolic once the overall narrative structure begins to emerge, but in the Amadís they hardly possess symbolic value at all, they are more like functional machines designed to impart transcendental information to the reader, or else they are transparent allegories like the monster Amadís slays in Book III chapter 73. In other words, whereas the marvellous in Chrétien is integrated into the very form of the romance, in the Amadís there is a fairly clear demarcation between the predominant "historical" action and intermittent manifestations of the supernatural. Such a division tends to highlight the latter as conventionalized oracular devices by contrast with the straightforward accounts of heroic derring-do. The conventionalization would not much matter if the text as a whole moved in the direction of allegory or ritual, if, that is, the text were acknowledged to be akin to a highly-stylized literary game which was not historically true but which used metaphorical conventions to evoke spiritual or moral values. This is very much how
chivalric practices, once having lost their historical actuality, developed in the later Middle Ages. According to Jacques Heers, it was only in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries that chivalric jousts and tournaments ceased to be the intensive and dangerous training sessions they had once been, to become highly conventionalized spectacles and ceremonies, just like banquets, pageants, hunting parties or other such festivities. These ceremonies were spectacular means of making manifest otherwise internal spiritual, moral or social values; a joust, a banquet, or a hunt was "une fête aristocratique qui souligne l'appartenance à une catégorie sociale et affirme hautement une valeur". Arthurian romance could equally be seen as yet another form of aesthetic ritual not directly relevant to historical reality. But after the Prose Lancelot, Arthurian romance came to possess a contradictory element inherent in its tradition: it based its claim to truth on its authenticity as history. The Amadís's emphasis on military action over the marvellous, its very marked polarisation of the two elements, tended to bring this contradiction well to the fore.

* * *

In addition to the intense aggravation of the traditional problem of historicity in Arthurian romance, Montalvo's revision of the Amadís also qualitatively changed the nature of its structure. The fourth crisis — initiated towards the end of Book II in chapter 62 when Lisuarte falls out with Amadís by heeding false advice from his courtiers —
is the last crisis in the romance with any sort of internal moral causation. Thenceforward all other crises are by-products of that fundamental rift between Lisuarte and Amadís, and no order or stability can come to the chivalric world until that separation is healed; the many vicissitudes and crises subsequent to chapter 62 are incidental to the basic conflict. Now the fourth crisis-cycle in the book encompasses the vast field of the whole of Books III and IV, whereas the previous three cycles, although of increasingly wider range, were contained in Books I and II. The abandonment of the crisis-pattern after Book II finally severs the already tenuous and partial symbolic connections between the temporal surface of the narrative and a spiritual order of things. This severance, which occurs from the end of Book II onwards, coincides with greater evidence of Montalvo's revising hand. His disruption of the traditional romance crisis-pattern finally produces the loss of that underlying, symbolic line of spiritual and moral reference, that deep sense, which was the key to narrative unity and symbolic meaning in early Arthurian romance.

The consequences of this disruption can be observed in Books III and IV. In the first place, the mainspring of the action no longer has an internal source in the moral life of the main characters; Lisuarte perversely refuses to see the signs of the truth and follows bad advice. However, the reasons for this rashness, in spite of its calamitous results, are not explained. It is suggested that it is in fact the result of a mysterious quirk of
Fortune apparently unrelated to his previous conduct or moral character. Subsequent to Lisuarte's rather inexplicable volte-face there remains no uncertainty as to the moral worth of any of the principal characters, their goodness or evil is well established and presupposed, none of them is engaged in any private conflict between love and honour, good sense and folly, or any of the traditional dilemmas which troubled earlier heroes of Arthurian romance. The incidents and adventures that follow seem therefore to be increasingly arbitrary and unmotivated. For example, Amadís's decision to embark on a five-year long quest for adventure in Germany, Bohemia and Constantinople in Book III has no direct or even symbolic connection with his relationship to Lisuarte or Oriana nor with any specific sense of chivalric mission as in Chrétien's romances. Moreover the further crises that ensue are caused by equally arbitrary external factors - either attacks by evil forces such as the Rey Arábigo or Arcaláus, or else by Amadís's responses to requests for help from beleaguered kings and princes in struggles against rivals. Because the characters' moral natures are now taken for granted, their objectives become predominantly political and territorial rather than spiritual: for example, the immediate result of Lisuarte's change of heart is his refusal of Amadís's request that he should allow Queen Madasima to marry Galvanes Sin Tierra with the island of Mongaça as dowry, thus provoking a great battle for the territory. Again, Amadís comes to possess the Insola Firme which he won in Book II and where he retires at strategic points in the narrative. More generally, the
hero's theatre of operations is prodigiously enlarged to include the entire surface of the known globe as he forms alliances and enmities with various kings and emperors. Lacking any chain of causality, the action becomes diffusely episodic and spatial; whatever sense of a qualitative, coherently sustained development the narrative may have possessed before the end of Book II is all but lost. Instead one has a purely quantitative momentum, a steady accumulation of adventures, battles, territories and characters. Evidence of the radical dislocation of its structure is the fact that this cumulative growth of the narrative leads nowhere after all. It contributes not a jot to the resolution of the initial Amadís-Lisuarte conflict. After the formation of great alliances and the amassing of huge forces, Amadís and his father Perión prepare to attack Lisuarte and his ally the Emperor of Rome (Book IV). Simultaneously Arcaláus and the Rey Arábigo assemble their own massive armies to take advantage of their enemies' internecine quarrel. Two days of fighting are followed by a truce, but before the battle is resumed the holy man Nasciano, at Oriana's instigation, informs Lisuarte that his daughter and Amadís are secretly wed and presents him with their son Esplandian. This revelation suddenly persuades Lisuarte to see sense at last and make peace with Amadís. The resolution of the basic crisis initiated in Book II has therefore no causal link with any of the multifarious adventures that have taken place throughout Books III and IV.

There is of course no reason why the romance could not have ended logically and coherently at the end of Book II when Amadís and Oriana are reunited and pass the Test of Loyal
Lovers. Clearly that ending must have been "opened out" by Montalvo in order to lay the ground for his *Sergas de Esplandián*. It is, at least, fitting that Esplandián should have become the providential family peacemaker instead of the murderer of his father as in one of the earlier versions, but his timely, if belated, intervention has not in any way been prepared for or heralded by the two long books of heterogeneous derring-do which precede it.

This structural degeneration significantly alters and complicates the task of the romance author and has important aesthetic repercussions. As the surface of the narrative is densely peopled with secondary characters and profuse in adventures taking place over a vast geographical area, it becomes well nigh impossible for the author to organize a consistent framework of symbolic meaning which would give unity and moral coherence to his story.

The narrative, therefore, is organized increasingly through the external interventions of the author. Pierce has noted how the *Amadís* still reveals traces of the *entrelacement* which is characteristic of the French Vulgate cycle. It is used some twenty times in Book I, it diminishes in Book II, and virtually disappears from Book III only to reappear in Book IV. Pierce suggests that this phenomenon strengthens the contention that Montalvo changed and adapted the material of Books II and III in order to expand the work into Book IV. This irregular use of *entrelacement* can be related to the appearance of prospective and retrospective devices first observed by Weber who noted their indebtedness to the traditional narrative
techniques of Spanish historiographical prose from Alfonso X onwards. Moreover Weber observed that the prospective and retrospective devices increase significantly in Books III and IV, that is to say, in those parts where Montalvo's refundición was most concentrated. Therefore, the medieval technique of entrelacement derived from Chrétien and the French romances is replaced by the more external Spanish historiographical devices in those parts where Montalvo has most extensively refashioned the early Amadís. For example, as Pierce notes, even as early as in Book I chapter 19, Amadís's vow to Arcaláus's wife, Montalvo tells us, will be fulfilled in Book IV. Such retrospective and prospective references are obviously designed by Montalvo to guide the reader through his extensive rifacimento, particularly after the causal crisis-structure lapses toward the end of Book II. As the crisis-pattern and the traditional structuring techniques of entrelacement are abandoned, it is understandable that forward and backward references should be resorted to as signposting devices much more frequently in the later books.

Yet another consequence of the lack of an inherent organic unity and the corresponding superficiality of the narrative is that the author must intervene to interpret the action for the reader in spiritual and moral terms. Hence the number of authorial asides and didactic commentaries on events. Once again the tendency is for these to increase in Books III and IV. Pierce notes five in Book I, six or so in Book II, nine in Book III and eleven in Book IV. In Book II chapter 62 which introduces the final crisis caused by Lisuarte's quarrels with Amadís it is significant that Montalvo should interrupt the narrative on no less than
three occasions in the same chapter to comment upon Lisuarte's folly in following bad counsel, and to exhort all Christian princes to choose good advisers. Such concentrated reiteration may well be explained by the fact that, as I suggested above, this final crisis arbitrarily postpones the union of Amadís with Oriana while revealing little real personal motivation on Lisuarte's part which could in some way justify his disastrously aberrant conduct.

Interestingly, Pierce, following Vinaver, states that the phenomenon of didactic commentary and explanatory observation is alien to the medieval romance practice of entrelacement which seeks rather to amplify and expand the narrative matter itself for its coherence. Montalvo's comments and authorial exclamations indicate that the narrative has begun to lose the capacity to generate by itself any higher moral or spiritual significance either through symbolism, allegory or structural organisation. The revised Amadís progresses from vestigially symbolic crisis-patterns in Books I and II to a situation in the later books where the action becomes virtually divorced from symbolic meaning. Consequently, pleasure and profit no longer coincide, they begin to exist on separate levels of narration. This division of the narrative into a plane of action and a plane of didactic commentary further exacerbates the problem of the status of fiction. It is evidence of the growing incapacity of the author to justify his fictional activity in its own right. Unable to find much intrinsic worth in the fictional narrative itself Montalvo must reinforce its credibility by claiming for it some equivalence with history, or attaching to it
orthodox Christian doctrines and exempla. This increasing lack of confidence in the value of imaginative fiction, which is so important for our understanding of the development of Arthurian romance, becomes much more pronounced in Montalvo's own attempt at the writing of a romance - Las Sergas de Esplandian.

(iii) History and fiction in Montalvo's revised Amadis and Las Sergas de Esplandian.

Montalvo, by taking up the primitive versions of Amadís and revising them, inserting moral commentaries and, especially, by adding to the books with a sequel of his own, inherits the whole catalogue of problems which Arthurian romance brings in its train from its earliest manifestations. I propose to examine, firstly, how he perceives his task and, secondly, how he attempts to resolve these problems within the text itself.

In the general inclusive Prologue\textsuperscript{36} to the four revised books of Amadís de Gaula and his fifth, Esplandian\textsuperscript{37} Montalvo introduces the question of the historical validity of chronicles and similar texts. He states that the touchstone of historical truth is what actually occurred, the authority of the eyewitness. But he goes on to say that many histories have been so embellished by writers that their veracity has been seriously compromised. There are other ostensibly historical texts, he says, which are not founded on the slightest shred of truth:
"Otros vuo de más baxa suerte que escriuieron, que no solamente no edificaron sus obras sobre algún cimiento de verdad, mas ni sobre el rastro della. Estos son los que compusieron las hystorias fengidas en que se hallan las cosas admirables fuera de la orden de natura, que más por nombre de patrañas que de crónicas con mucha razón deben de ser tenidas y llamadas" (p.9).

Having distinguished between "patrañas"and "crónicas", one would have expected Montalvo to have been partly on the road towards solving the old problem of distinguishing fiction from history but the distinction remains confused and even further obfuscated by Montalvo's own attempts to expound the issues involved. He asks what benefit the reader derives from accounts of great military feats which are either too out-of-the-ordinary to accord with his daily experiences or otherwise known to be fictional. His answer is that only those which are of exemplary moral value or which illustrate truths conducive to the reader's salvation are of any worth. From Montalvo's point of view there appears to be no ultimate difference between historical and fictional discourse. Since either can serve equally to promote the truths of the Faith, he turns his back on the problem and devalues both fiction and historical accuracy itself.

Nevertheless, when he comes to describe the nature of his enterprise, the old issues are revived once more. He writes that his faculties are not exalted enough to occupy themselves with themes that more able men have treated, so he will join those who have written on subjects of lesser substance. He has therefore confined himself to correcting the first three books of the Amadís and translating and amending the fourth, while adding Las Sergas de Esplandían.
"que hasta aquí no es en memoria de ninguno ser visto".

The reason for the Sergas' obscurity hitherto, we learn, is that it has for centuries lain in a stone tomb buried under a hermitage near Constantinople and was brought to Spain by a Hungarian merchant where it was deciphered by translators before reaching the public. Thus Montalvo abdicates responsibility for the one book of fiction he wrote himself and resorts to the old subterfuge of pretending that it is a historical document.38

One could argue that the very absurdity of the device could be a signal to the reader that the book is, of course, fiction. But Montalvo comes to the edge of irony without indulging in it. The ironist is always clear about his intention and detached from the object of his irony whereas Montalvo, as we shall see, is undecided as to whether he should persist in his dissimulation of the fiction or come clean to his readers about it. The passage might well appear ironic to the modern reader who views the book from outside the aesthetic conundrum. But Montalvo's discomfort becomes evident in the tortuous closing lines of the Prologue:

"Los quales cinco libros, como quiera que hasta aquí más por patrañas que por crónicas eran tenidos, son con las tales emiendas acompañados de tales enxemplos y doctrinas, que con justa causa se podrán comparar a los liúianos y febles saleros de corcho, que con tiras de oro y de plata son encarcelados y guarnecidos; porque así los cavalleros mancebos como los más ancianos hallen en ellos lo que a cada vno conuiene. E si por ventura en esta mal ordenada obra algún yerro paresciere de aquellos que en lo divino y lo humano son prohibidos, demando humildemente de ello perdón, pues que teniendo y creyendo yo firmemente todo lo que la Santa Yglesia tiene y manda, más la simple discreción que la obra fue dello causa" (pp.9-10).
The central issue of the historicity of the books is neatly evaded by claiming that, although they were generally held to be "patrañas", the emendations and added moral examples have enhanced their value, not by making them more historically accurate, but by embellishing and reinforcing them in the way a cork salt-cellar is adorned and strengthened by bands of gold and silver.

The image of the salt-cellar, on closer inspection, turns out to be more confusing than enlightening. How precisely is the fragile, lightweight substance of the fiction "reinforced" by the gold bands of doctrine? Does the fictional part have any intrinsic value? If not, Montalvo should have explained why it was necessary in the first place. In any case, the image fails to clear up the outstanding question of the distinction between "patrañas" and "crónicas"; have the moral examples bestowed on these reputed "patrañas" the dignity of "crónicas"? Montalvo eschews these questions and employs a well-worn topos of a relativism that hardly becomes a convinced didactic writer: every reader, young or old can find in it whatever suits him - "lo que a cada vno conuiene". Finally, he excuses himself for any doctrinal errors and establishes the authority of his work wholly on his faith in the teachings of the Church. Not only is the text itself unreliable, so is the author; the one unquestionable source of truth is Holy Mother Church.

This inconclusive hedging in the Prologue over the issues of historical truth and moral authority is carried over into the main body of the narrative proper. Montalvo's
aesthetic and moral uncertainties become a problem that grows and nags the narrator ever more insistently as the story unfolds. In the introductory sub-title to the books of the Amadís proper, Montalvo had claimed only to be correcting and emending the work of other authors; "corrigísole de los antiguos originales que estauan corruptos y mal compuestos en antigo estilo, por falta de los diferentes y malos escriptores." Accordingly, the narration of the story was conducted impersonally, using various devices which presented the action straightforwardly, without the intervention of any identifiable narrator other than an infrequently mentioned and utterly anonymous "autor". The First Book opens with a direct relation of events: "No muchos años después de la passión de nuestro redemptor y salvador Jesu xpo, que un rey cristiano en la pequeña Bretaña, por nombre llamado Garínter...." (I.11). Only in the second chapter does one find any acknowledged distance between the reader and the events described: "Partido el rey Perión de la pequeña Bretaña, como ya se vos contó...." (I.2.25). This is the first implicit mention of the existence of a narrator in the text. Later in the same chapter, there is a more precise reference: "El autor dexe de fablar desto y torna al donzel que Gandales criaaua" (I.2.28). Similarly, in the following chapter, when the scene changes, the "autor" is mentioned: "El autor aquí torna a contar del rey Perión..." (I.3.34). Otherwise the actual unfolding of events is attributed simply to "la Historia". The narrative relations in the early Amadís books are therefore clear and unequivocal; these are historical events once narrated by an "autor" and now being
presented to us in a written version edited and updated by Montalvo. What is even more interesting is that these narrative relations retain vestiges of an earlier narrative situation in an oral tradition. In these early chapters of the First Book, the reader is addressed directly as if he were listening to the tale being told him by word of mouth: "A esta sazón que las cosas passauan, como de suso auéys oydo reynaua en la Gran Bretaña vn rey llamado Falangriz..." (1.3.38). Again in 1.5.54: "Don Galaor, que con el hermitaño se criaua, como ya oystes..." And in 1.9.76: "Concertada la batalla entre el rey Abies y el Donzel del Mar, como hauéys oydo...". These conventionalized relics of an oral medium of story-telling hark back both to the recitals of Celtic folklore from which Arthurian romance sprang, and to narrative formulae of epic story-tellers.

But even as early as I.4.46, a different narrative order can be discerned. The "autor" intervenes in the narrative flow to apologize for the poverty of the style. This is ascribed to the youthful Amadís's amorous confusion, a state which ties the tongues of maturer men. Therefore the "autor" must be forgiven for not having recounted the episode "en más polidas palabras". In the same passage we come across a revealing reference to the act of reading: "y si al que lo leyere...". The true narrative situation is recognized here; we are not listening to a story-teller, we are on our own reading a book written by an author who could have chosen different words, a more elegant style to relate the same events. One's attention is drawn away from
the spontaneous flow of the narrative act and deflected to the mechanics of narration. The illusion of imaginative proximity to the action is eroded slightly by this reminder of the true state of affairs: the existence of several authors who wrote words on paper which the reader now holds in his hands. The relics of oral formulae within a written text highlight a contrast between the immediacy of vocal telling, the impact of hearing, and the more complex mediations of the written word, the absorption of reading.

Walter Ong has written that the power of the spoken word resides in its vibrant subjective quality; the listener knows who it is that is speaking because of his immediate sensory contact with him. Consequently, there is less need to resort to elaborate proofs of the veracity of what is being related. The authoritative directness of epic enunciation, remarked on by Erich Auerbach and Marthe Robert, lies, in large measure, in this power of the human voice. This plain declaratory confidence of the epic narrator excludes the possibility of irony in the story itself; "for the performer to encourage the intimacy of the audience at the expense of the story would amount to setting himself up as an author who uses the tradition merely to advance his own individually conceived ends." Tradition, not the individual, was the source of authority in oral narrative.

In Amadís de Gaula, the differences between the two modes of narration - the residual evidence of an epic oral immediacy, and the reflexive, self-conscious reportage of the written document - become increasingly marked as the romance
progresses. As the latter mode begins to dominate so do the problems of verification and historical authenticity become more acute. In the latter books of the Amadís, and in the Esplandián especially, when Montalvo is obliged to take fuller responsibility for the composition of the narrative, the problem of verification becomes an obliquely acknowledged but nonetheless central concern of the narrator.

As Montalvo intervenes more frequently in the narration it becomes evident that as a propagandist for the Catholic Monarchs' crusade against the Moors he is very keen to exalt the military and religious virtues of Amadís beyond even those for which he had already been celebrated by his earlier chroniclers. The first narrative evidence of this political propaganda would be the appearance of the Endriago - a hideous beast of unimaginable ferocity born of the incestuous union of an evil giant and his beautiful daughter. As such, the monster is an allegorical manifestation of infernal will, and Amadís engages it in battle and slays it in the likewise allegorically named Insola del Diablo. What interests us for present purposes are the methods Montalvo employs to impress this eventlastingly on the reader's mind. The basic principle he adopts is one of underlining, or of repetitious reportage. The first series of reports comes when Amadís's squire, Gandalfn, relates this feat to the King of Bohemia, Amadís's patron. He first asks that the maestro Elisabad should witness his oath on the Bible that his report will be true, so that it will enhance its credibility and guarantee the veracity of any written accounts.
When they see the dead Endriago they cannot believe their eyes, they are so incredulous they think they must be dreaming: "Y aunque cierto sabían que el cauallero de la Verde Espada lo avaluá mort, no les parecía sino que lo sienauan" (p.806).

The second series of reports begins in the following chapter when the Emperor of Constantinople receives a letter telling of the killing of the Endriago. He then asks the messenger to relate it to him by word of mouth: "el qual lo dixo enteramente, como aquel por quien todo passara seyendo presente" (p.309). Although the messenger was not actually present at the killing he can relate it as accurately as if he had been there. The Emperor of Constantinople goes several steps further. He orders painters to depict the Endriago:

"... lleuad con vos maestros que me trayan pintado el Endriago así como es, porque le mandaré hazer de metal, y el cauallero que con él se combatió así mesmo, de la grandeza y semejanza que ambos fueron. Y faré poner estas figuras en el mismo lugar donde la batalla passó y en vna gran tabla de cobre escriuir cómo fue y el nombre del cauallero...." (III.74.810).

In the first instance, these reports convey a touching confidence in the possibility of transmitting ocular testimony of certain events through writing without anything being lost in the process. In fact the act of setting it down on paper or metal is deemed to lend the account added credibility. But secondly, Montalvo's
insistence on repeated testimonies, his telling and retelling of events through several mouthpieces and documents, displays a particular fascination with the certification of allegedly historical events, much as if he were rehearsing the various ways of establishing certain accounts of events as being historically true. Montalvo betrays the reason for this concern when he makes Amadís say that his victory which has astounded so many people is alone attributable to the omnipotence of God: "A1 su gran poder no se puede comparar ninguna cosa, porque todo es permitido y guiado por su voluntad, y a El se deuen atribuyr todas las buenas cosas que en este mundo passan" (p.806). Even if the feat is so astounding that it seems more like a dream even to eyewitnesses, its apparent impossibility can be taken as a measure of God's power which will allow anything to happen, no matter how unbelievable. God's omnipotence becomes a sufficient justification for the fantastical tale of the Endriago. The author tries to combine the exigencies of historical verisimilitude with the imaginative freedom of allegory by appealing to the miraculous or, more accurately, by mobilising the reader's religious beliefs about the power of God to iron over essentially aesthetic difficulties. This is a device which, as we shall see, will become increasingly frequent with Montalvo.44

Now, the complex of proofs of this single adventure's historical authenticity has a hint of desperation about it, as if Montalvo were using these assorted proofs to shore up his narrative against an imagined onslaught of disbelief from his readers. His difficulty is, of course, to pretend that a plainly allegorical episode is historically true. He seems
unable to admit the fictionality of the story outright
and yet he cannot decide whether his story is to be presented
as exemplary history or as allegory.

This radical but unresolved ambiguity at the heart
of the narrative explains Montalvo's attempts to underwrite
the fiction with tokens of historical authenticity. In Book
IV chapter 97 for example, the recapitulation of the action
by one character to another occurs no less than 26 times
(see Pierce, p.54). The primary telling of some incidents
is not enough to carry its own self-validating weight so
the original account has occasionally to be buttressed by
further accounts, producing a proliferation of reports through
letters, chronicles, messengers and eyewitnesses, each
corroborating the other to such a degree that the original
events are processed through the winding circumlocutions of
a variety of narrators. It is as if the author wished to
reproduce the mechanics of corroboration by getting "outside"
his original account onto a new level, which he in turn
tries to supersede by yet another; layer upon layer of
fictional accounts are stacked upon each other in an apparent
attempt to break out of the condition of fictionality itself.

The wish to abolish fiction is most noticeable in
the Sergas de Esplandían. It is said to have been written:
"por la mano de aquel gran maestro Elisabat que muchos de
sus grandes hechos vió y oyó, como aquel que por el grande
amor que a su padre [i.e. Amadís] tenía, se quiso poner en tan
gran cuidado y por ver sus grandes hechos en armas y le socorrer
con sabiduría como lo hizo en muchas partes donde mal herido
fue" (sub-title, p.463).
By contrast, when Montalvo presented the Amadís de Gaula, he claimed then only to have corrected the "antiguos originales" written in archaic style by "los differentes escriptores". Now, in the book which he has actually invented himself, he omits to record his own part in the enterprise and names instead a character from the Amadís books as the narrator of the new chronicle. This represents a radically new departure from the romance tradition. Chrétien presented himself as the arranger and narrator of inherited stories, the anonymous thirteenth-century writers of the Prose Lancelot hid behind the collective narrative identity of Walter Map who remained outside the world of the characters, but here Montalvo effaces all mention of his own activity and uses a character from the earlier books to play the rôle of narrator. In the Esplandián, narration has become a rôle rather than a spontaneous act.

Although it would be tempting to see this as a stroke of genius by Montalvo who consciously invented a clever device that would subsequently assume such importance in narrative fiction, I think it would be more accurate to regard it as a fortuitous but consequential development from the problem we have seen Montalvo confronting in his revision of the Amadís: the maestro Elisabad is brought in as a supreme corroborative device, as it were. All previous internal narrators and eyewitness reporters are incorporated into a single authoritative eyewitness. The actual author Montalvo disappears behind the persona of an eyewitness narrator, Elisabad, the scribe who registered the oath of truthfulness.
of Gandalfn's account of Amadís's slaying of the allegorical Endriago in Book III.

The purpose of the device is to enhance still further the illusion of historicity and, through that, the moral authority of the text. This is well illustrated by the following passage:

"Aunque en las cosas de Amadís alguna duda con razón se podía poner, en las de este caballero [i.e. Esplandián] se debe tener más creencia; porque este maestro solamente lo que vio y supo de personas de fe quiso dejar en escrito" (18.427).

The reliability of the Esplandián is placed above that of the Amadís simply because the narrator was an eyewitness to the events. Montalvo attempts to conquer his moral and religious doubts about fictional narrative by using historical criteria of accuracy and documentation. The fraudulence of these claims is transparent because they are so self-defeating: if Elisabad was first encountered in the Amadís then it seems rather contradictory to question its veracity since it might well cast doubts on the historicity of Elisabad himself, and where would that then leave the Sergas de Esplandián?

Montalvo's efforts to overcome the fictional limits of the narrative serve only to multiply those very limits through paradoxes and contradictions. The ultimate effect is one of literary trompe-l'œil such as one encounters in the passage immediately preceding the above quotation. Here the reader witnesses the scene where Elisabad receives his authorial mandate from no less a figure than King Lisuarte:
"El Rey hubo mucho placer de lo que le dijeron y rogó al maestro Elisabat que, así aquello que los dos caballeros noveles habían dicho como todo lo que a Esplandián acaeció desde que de la Insula Firme se partió hasta entonces, lo pusiese en escripto. El Maestro le dijo que así lo haría, no solamente aquello mas todo lo otro que a su noticia viniese; y que él quería escribir su historia, porque de príncipe tan alto y famoso no se esperaban sino cosas muy extrañas y maravillosas. Pues así como oís fueron escriptas estas Sergas, llamadas de Esplandián, que quiere decir las proezas de Esplandián, que destos cuatro libros de Amadís salen por la mano de aquel tan buen hombre que, si no la verdad, otra cosa no escribiera" (18.427).

Elisabad's authority as eyewitness is enhanced still further by the King's authoritative request, which, because he too appeared in the Amadís, falls under the same suspicion as the exploits of Amadís. There is, however, an additional subterfuge involved in this scene. The reader is made witness to the occasion when Elisabad receives his orders from Lisuarte to write the book which he is presently reading thereby making the act of reading analogous to the act of witnessing; the ultimate illusion in the Sergas is that the reader can see with his own eyes that Elisabad is an authoritative and reliable eyewitness to the allegedly historical action. The eyewitness authenticity of the book is established in another scene within the body of the action; the narrative level is therefore folded into the main, narrated level of the text, and the distance between narration and action is speciously collapsed into a common dimension in an attempt to achieve an equal credibility for both.

Through such an exercise in reflexivity, Montalvo tries to abdicate responsibility for his creation altogether and disappear from the text. But his narrative disguise
becomes hard to maintain; the pretence of eyewitness narration reveals its serious shortcomings in a romance characterized by such a proliferation of incident that the prerequisite of ubiquity becomes strained beyond belief. Elisabad is made to trot the globe in order to keep pace with the tireless Esplandián's chivalric peregrinations. Since the narrator is just one character among others, he becomes vulnerable to an array of purely practical objections to the feasibility of his movements and actions or to the likelihood of certain occurrences. Once the narrator is required to be at or close to the scene of the action, the act of narration cannot be spontaneously assumed but has to find its justification in the witnessing; a pragmatic and functional consciousness is engendered in the very heart of the romance, and the sweep of an unquestioned, impersonal narration is hedged in by the hesitancy and limitations of the narrator's fictional persona. For example, although the old impersonal narrative formula which we encountered in the Prose Lancelot and the early Amadís: "Cuenta la Historia...", occurs in the Esplandián, it co-exists with a curious mutant of itself: "La historia os quiere contar por qué razón desta doncella Carmela... tanta mención ha hecho" (16.426). According to this, the history has acquired a will of its own to allay the reader's curiosity or to anticipate his doubts. This narrative formula also acknowledges, in a remarkably overt manner, the existence and participation of the reader in the story-telling process because it assumes the possibility of criticism and, therefore, the corresponding possibility of its own defectiveness in
communication. The narration has now lost its old self-assurance, it no longer rolls on carrying the reader aloft in its tide, rather it swirls and eddies around recurring obstacles.

These last are of two kinds. The first is an occasional concern with the plausibility of the action, while the second is an intermittent doubt as to the plausibility of the characters. One of the most striking examples of the first type occurs in Book III chapter 113 when Montalvo returns to the hermit Nasciano who had brought up Esplandían. The hermit learns of the rift between Amadís and Lisuarte and hears that Lisuarte plans to marry Oriana off with another instead of Amadís, a plan which would threaten the irreproachable Esplandían with permanent and canonical bastardy. It is hardly a fate which Montalvo, as a Catholic propagandist, would wish to inflict on his exemplary hero. However, what is interesting about the episode are precisely Montalvo's misgivings about the way he has handled it, and the excuses he uses to meet naturalistic doubts:

"Cuenta la hystoria que aquel santo hombre Nasciano que a Esplandián criara, como la tercera parte desta hystoria lo cuenta, estando en su hermita en aquella gran floresta que ya oystes, mas haufa de quarenta años; que según era el lugar muy esquiuo y apartado, pocas vezes yua allí ninguno, que él siempre tenfa sus prouisiones para gran tiempo; y no se sabe si por gracia de Dios y por las nuevas que dello pudo oyr supo como estos reyes y grandes señores estauan en tanto peligro y afruenta, así de sus personas como de todos aquellos que en su seruicio yauan ...." (IV.113.1119; my emphasis).

As my emphases show, Montalvo is pre-empting naturalistic criticism of the sort that would ask how Nasciano could have survived for over forty years without human contact
and, if so, how had news of the impending fracas reached him in his hermitage at so opportune a juncture. None of these questions is adequately answered but it is nevertheless worth noting that they occurred to Montalvo.

Two other examples of such mundane concerns can be found in Book IV Chapter 130. In the first place, Amadís and Grasandor leave the Insola de la Torre Bermeja "vn lunes por la mañana" (p.1291) and Amadís asks Nalfón, Queen Madasima's majordomo for a guide to the Peña de la Donzella Encantadora. When Nalfón offers to go himself Amadís politely declines:

"Amadís se lo gradesció y le dixo que no era menester que él dexasse lo que le auía mandado, que a él le bastaua solamente vna guía" (IV.130. 1291).

This courteous interchange on the need for a guide seems somehow rather banal and otiose for the hitherto intrepid hero who has scarcely reckoned in the past with the more practical requirements of risky expeditions such as guides. Once on the Peña, they come to a hermitage and find inside it a metal effigy wearing a crown and bearing in its arms a large golden tablet with large Greek letters on it:

"Amadís y Grasandor entraron en la hermita, sentáronse en vn poyo de piedra que en ella fallaron por descansar, y a cabo de vna pieça teuantáronse y fueron a ver la ymagen, que les parescía muy fermosa. Y miráronla gran rato y vieron las letras, y Amadís comenzó a leer; que en el tiempo que anduvo por Grecia aprendió ya quanto del lenguaje y de la letra griega, y mucho dello le mostró el maestro Elisabad quando por la mar yuan, y también le mostró el lenguaje de Alemania y de otras tierras, los cuales muy bien sabía, como aquel que era gran sabio en todas las artes y auía andado muchas provincias" (IV.130.1293; my emphases).
Here we have a wealth of circumstantial explanation. The heroes are understandably tired after climbing up to the hermitage, they take a breather on a convenient ledge, admire the statue, and Amadís reads the inscriptions. How can he read Greek? The answer is once again surprisingly plausible - he was taught by Elisabad in order to while away the time during those long sea-journeys he undertook between adventures. In fact not only did he learn Greek he also showed a marked flair for German and other languages.

Such passages are few and far between in the last books of the Amadís but they are indications of a change of imaginative pitch from the early books in so far as they bear the marks of an unease about the rôle of the chivalric hero and his relations to secular history. These two chapters I have quoted from can, in particular, be assumed to have been written directly by Montalvo because they each concern Esplandían in some way; in the first quoted passage the reference is clear and in the second passage the letters on the tablet are a prophecy which refers anonymously to Esplandían. Montalvo is here preparing the ground for Esplandían's first adventure in chapter I of the Sergas.

But even though a thoroughgoing preoccupation with verisimilitude is still remote it is quite definitely in the offing. In the Sergas de Esplandían Montalvo's naturalistic scruples assume a more serious form with implications that strike even deeper into the nature of imaginative fiction. In Las Sergas de Esplandían, chapter 3, one reads the following:
"Y porque en este ramo que desti historia sale que fue y es aplicado a este caballero [i.e. Esplandían] se hallarán en muchas partes razonamientos de muy buenes y católicas doctrinas por él dichas; y algunos, con muy gran causa, podrán decir: 'Pues siendo tan mozo, no cabía en él dar consejo de tan anciano; y debiendo ser, según su poca edad y mucha valentía, muy soberbio, darlo tan humilde; y con la soberbia valentía, debiendo ser muy cruel, ser tan piadoso.' Por cierto en alguna manera en tal decir y la tal sospecha con mucha razón podría haber lugar y creer que estas tan blandas y católicas palabras más quedan de aquél que su historia escribió, ornándola y aderezándola porque bien paresciese que de aquel a quien atribuidas fueron" (p.406).

Here Montalvo's doubts do appear to arise from naturalistic concerns. It seems implausible that one so young as Esplandían should be able to give such sound Catholic advice. Montalvo, curiously, even incorporates this hypothetical objection by a notional reader into his text, thereby, I would suggest, revealing the force of his misgivings. But of greater import even than these naturalistic scruples is Montalvo's logical inference that Esplandían's unrealistically mature advice might be taken as evidence that he is being manipulated by the author of the history rather than acting according to his "real" nature. By so doing, he implies a distinction between a "manipulated" character and an "independent" character. For a moment, it would seem, Montalvo contemplates the possibility that his flawless exemplary hero might after all appear to his reader as no more than a fictional robot.
This possibility is soon enough dismissed in the usual manner: Esplandián's wisdom is the fruit of the hermit Nasciano's saintly tutelage and, from this, all men should take example and deliver their own sons to the care and instruction of holy men. Although the disclaimer fails resoundingly to answer the question, Montalvo has preferred to paper over the problem with the ever-handly expedient of exemplariness rather than delve into it in any depth.

The problem raises its head once again in chapter 16 which is headed as follows: "En que se trata por qué la historia hace tanta mención desta doncella Carmela". The damsel Carmela was introduced a few chapters earlier as the maidservant of Lisuarte's enemy Queen Arcabona. She is also the daughter of the hermit who is sheltering Esplandián. When she returns to see her father at the hermitage she enters the room where Esplandián is sleeping hoping to kill him in revenge for his having earlier killed her masters. However, when she catches sight of Esplandián's beauty she is captivated and falls in love with him. Henceforth, she becomes his faithful servant, pledged to a chaste love for the saintly hero. By chapter 16 Montalvo is clearly ill at ease with the status of Carmela. She shows her devotion for the hero by running messages and serving generally as a shuttle between the two far-flung poles of the narrative. The fact that Lisuarte and Esplandián are so distant from each other is, of course, not by any means a new feature in romance. As we have seen in the case of Chrétien de Troyes, romance does
not observe the unities of time or place. Therefore Montalvo's need to invent Carmela as a device to cover these distances reveals a naturalistic conception of space within the narrative. News is not taken for granted, it has to be conveyed by somebody. The poetic imagination becomes somewhat constrained by the mechanics of distance.

But there is a difficulty of another order. Carmela's assiduous service as messenger must be explained in some way, she must be given a motive, however altruistic: "antes siempre estuvo en aquel mismo propósito, sirviendo e aguardando a aquél que más que a sí misma amaba, y durmiendo en su cama, sirviéndole a su mesa nunca de su presencia se partiendo" (16. 426). This motive, predictably, is a selfless Christian love. However, as the phrase "durmiendo en su cama" shows, this chaste love could easily be misconstrued by the reader, so Carmela's love must remain pure, especially since her affections for Esplandián might have intruded awkwardly in the relationship with Leonorina which will be introduced later in the story. To avoid this difficulty, Montalvo seems to have invented an entirely new episode three chapters later. Here a "fusta de la Gran Serpiente" appears and a damsel comes ashore bearing gifts of a set of arms and a horse from Urganda to Esplandián. On the arms there is a device of two crowns and in chapter 20 we are told, "la razón por qué en las armas venía la devise de coronas". The ostensible reason is that in Amadís Book III Leonorina gave Amadís two crowns, one for the fairest lady and one for the fairest damsel. Amadís kept one for Oriana as the fairest lady and placed the other on Leonorina's head. Now Urganda uses the device
of the two crowns as a portent of the imminent love between Leonorina and Esplandián. Whatever the intrinsic value of the episode, one of the major reasons for its appearance is that Montalvo wished to use the supernatural prophetic authority of Urganda to solve the purely technical problem of avoiding misunderstandings between the relationships of Esplandián, Leonorina and Carmela respectively, and thus lubricate the cumbersome machinery of the action.

As we shall see presently, this is by no means the only instance of Montalvo attempting to solve fundamental problems in the story by having recourse to the authority of Urganda and inventing an entirely new episode for scarcely any other reason than to get himself out of a technical or thematic quandary. He invented this episode to prevent any unseemly emotional conflicts between Carmela and Leonorina over Esplandián; Carmela in turn seems to owe her existence to a previous problem over the articulation of the action over long distances; and even the narrator himself, the all-seeing Elisabad, was enlisted to enhance the historicity of the work. In short, Montalvo's response to compositional difficulties or aesthetic doubts is to invent a new character or a new episode in the hope of dissimulating the problem. As a result, the Sergas de Esplandián becomes a sort of labyrinthine excrescence, with characters and incidents proliferating seemingly at random because of a growing incapacity on the part of the author to come to grips either with his work or with the nature of his creative activity. Montalvo, in seeking to establish the value of the work by claiming for it historical validity or religious authority,
has become involved in trying to disguise the fictional nature of his narrative at all costs. These subterfuges, of course, merely compound the problem by introducing further levels of fiction so that the initial effort to free the text from its condition of fictionality becomes entangled in an outgrowth of further fictional ramifications.

Towards the middle of the Sergas it becomes evident that Montalvo is tiring of this process. The chapters become shorter, more perfunctory, and less co-ordinated. From about chapter 50 onwards the narrative is atomized into small units containing one or two pieces of new information or action per chapter, isolated in encircling seas of authorial commentary. After a particularly absurd meeting between Esplandían and Leonorina in that lady's chamber where Esplandían lies chastely beside her all night, Montalvo finally announces to the reader in chapter 98 that he has had enough and that, having united his hero with his love, he was sorely tempted to put an end to his story for the following reasons: "Siendo ya mi ánimo y mi pluma cansados, y el juicio en gran flaqueza puesto, considerando el poco fruto que su trabajo alcanzar puede en esta simple y mal ordenada obra por ellos emendada..." (98.495). The passage is notable, not just for its uncanny evaluation of the book's worth, but also because for the first time Montalvo refers to himself in the first person, although the work purports to have been written by Elisabad. While it is true that Montalvo still prevaricates about his exact rôle — whether as real author or editor — this direct reference to himself is nevertheless a significant development in the romance. He
goes further and begins to narrate aspects of his own experience. He recounts that while he was in his chamber he was transported either in a dream or otherwise to a very high rock from where he described a small boat carrying a damsels heading towards him. The damsels announced that she had been ordered to take him to her mistress to answer certain questions. Montalvo is blindfolded and eventually finds himself inside a large and beautiful ship. At the far end of a large hall he sees a lady waited upon by four richly attired damsels. This lady upbraids Montalvo for being "un hombre simple sin letras, sin ciencia" and asks him what inspired him to attempt the emendation of such a noble book, "dejando y olvidando las cosas necesarias en que los hombres cuerdos se ocupan, te quisiste entrometer y ocupar en una ociosidad tan excusada" (98.496). Montalvo accepts that he has indeed erred and invites the appropriate punishment, even suggesting that the book be thrown to the flames. To this the lady replies that such an action will not be performed "porque sería para ti, no pena, más gloria en que ocultas fuesen todas tus simplezas" (98.497). This lady reveals herself to be no less a personage than Urganda la Desconocida and she orders Montalvo to stop writing until further notice from her. Montalvo then finds himself in that same spot in his room "donde antes había sido adormido o enhartado" (98.497).

The following chapter 99 describes how Montalvo received Urganda's orders to proceed with his writing:

"Pues que así fue que saliendo un día a caza como acostumbrado lo tengo, a la parte que del Castillejo se llama, que por ser la tierra tan pedregosa y recia de andar, en ella más que en ninguna otra parte de caza se halla; y allí llegado, hallé una lechuza, y aunque viento hacía, a ella mi falcón lancé" (99.497).

More details are furnished of Montalvo's personal life in this passage - a place-name, his taste for falconry, the nature of the terrain, even the state of the weather. These
hitherto unsuspected aspects of the narrative add a qualitatively new dimension to the romance, as if we had discovered a false bottom and were now penetrating through to another level, a different and more realistic world. No sooner are we in this new world of Montalvo's own personal life than he relates how he fell into a deep hole in the ground crawling with poisonous beasts where he was confronted by a fierce serpent. Shutting his eyes in terror, he opens them again to find that the serpent has vanished and Urganda herself is before his very eyes. Here we are back again in the, by now, all too familiar reality of the Arthurian world. Urganda leads the author through underground passages to show him strange sights which "tus ojos nunca vieron ni ver pudieran faltando yo de ser la intercessora" (99.498). She leads him to an opening and in the light he sees a beautiful fortress on a hill. He identifies the place as the Insola Firme "por aquellas señales mismas que en esta grande escriptura antes fueron mostradas" (99.498). Urganda then leads him to a chamber where he sees princes and princesses, kings and queens, sitting motionless on thrones. Montalvo identifies them as the principal characters in the novel - Amadís and Oriana, Esplandián and Leonorina, Carmela, Briolanja and others. Then Urganda asks Montalvo to pick the most beautiful lady and he rightly points to Briolanja. When asked to choose the most valiant knight Montalvo replies that, with the exception of Esplandián, whose efforts were solely directed towards the greater glory of God, such a knight is Don Florestán, Amadís's younger brother.
Urganda is greatly impressed with his perspicacity: "Aunque yo...por otros sepa ser verdad todo lo que has dicho, muy gran placer siente mi ánimo en lo oír de ti, que por lo que en lo pasado he visto creo no me dirás sino aquello que cierto es" (99.500). Montalvo's trustworthiness and soundness of judgement are thus endorsed by Urganda herself, who has been the intermediary between the temporal and the supernatural worlds in both the Amadís and the Esplandían. In this strange way Montalvo offers his reader transcendental guarantees of his bona fides as narrator, his credentials validated by no less an authority than the supreme fairy from within his own fiction.

Urganda then explains that these characters are under a spell to spare them the crude ignominy of death, much as Morgan la Fay had enchanted Arthur. When Montalvo asks whether they will return to their former lives and deeds she replies: "Mi buen amigo, cree verdaderamente que si el rey Artur sale a reinar, como dije, que estos saldrán con él y si no quedarán como los ves hasta su tiempo" (99.500). The non-committal reply is a convenient way of evading the issue of what to do with the main characters in the story. The ultimate decision is remitted to the higher authority of Morgan la Fay even by Urganda herself, thereby establishing a regressive hierarchy of authority in the romance which reaches far beyond the restricted purview of the author himself.

Not surprisingly, irony has been discerned in
These lines by critics. They do seem to display rather too brazen an awareness of the arbitrary implausibility of these ostensibly historical characters' lives. But once again I would argue that there is, strictly speaking, no irony here. The reference to Morgan La Fay is not designed to show up the artificiality of the romance but rather to put into suspension a problem that Montalvo cannot properly resolve: the necessity of having to end his story with the apotheosis of his faultless hero. If the novel were to end with the hero's death Montalvo would have to devise a conclusion that would in some way bring to significant fruition the otherwise erratic and repetitious crusades of Amadís and Esplandían. Having already, as has been hypothesised, dissolved the tragic ending of an earlier version of Amadís in order to exalt Esplandían above his father, Montalvo must have found it well beyond his self-confessedly puny creative powers to find a suitable demise for no less than two generations of the Amadís clan.

I am therefore inclined to see the famous chapters 98 and 99, not as evidence of literary maturity, but as a massive failure of imagination. They constitute the culmination of the process I have been describing in both Amadís and Esplandían. From the very start, Montalvo has been engaged in a laborious attempt to keep up an illusion of historicity in order to mitigate the implausibility of his fiction. But Montalvo becomes progressively less confident of his ability to sustain this illusion and so he begins to forestall and anticipate criticism within the romance itself by inventing eyewitness devices that might effect a compromise
between the traditional marvels of romance and the demands of verisimilitude. By placing his real self - the historical Garci Rodríguez de Montalvo living in Medina del Campo in the fifteenth century - on the same level as his characters, he stretches the eyewitness device to its furthest limit, where the historically proximate reality of his own life can retroactively extend to and influence the remote unreality of the fictional characters'.

These extreme methods of historical authentication are, of course, self-defeating. Montalvo casts himself as an adventitious witness to the reality of Urganda: he meets her maidservant, sails in her ship, visits the Insola Firme and even sees the Arch of Loyal Lovers. In this way the fantasy elements of the earlier books are ostensibly discovered and witnessed by the author. But at the same time the author's own reliability as a witness is eventually attested to by Urganda herself after putting him through the selection test. The first device is contradicted by the second and one can see why this must be so; although the text purports to be historical, like all Arthurian romance it ultimately seeks its own authority by virtue of its correspondence between the temporal world and the supernatural through the mediation of prophecies, truth-contests, duels and oracular spokesmen. In this episode, Montalvo resorts, in the first place, to criteria of verisimilitude (ocular testimony of Urganda's existence) but he then follows this up with romance criteria (Urganda's oracular knowledge). Rather than enhancing the historicity of the romance, the opposite effect is more
marked: the author's historical life becomes absorbed into the romance by having to comply with the supernal processes of romance tradition. The result is, of course, that the author, as well as the characters, finds himself in an ontological limbo — neither wholly historical nor wholly fictional. The two chapters are consequently situated hesitantly in some nebulous state between dream and delusion ("adormido o enhartado"). Not only has Montalvo exhausted all his verification techniques, he has also drained the fictive imagination of any possibility of self-justification. Ironically, the two chapters that should have contained the conclusive proof of the non-fictional nature of the story are implicitly admitted to be a species of indeterminate vision. The last attempt to abolish fictionality is capped by an involuntary recognition of the oneiric flimsiness of the entire romance.

When Montalvo resumes his story he addresses the problem of fiction in a different way. In chapter 102 Esplandián drives out the Turks from the city of Galacia. This is followed by an "Exclamación del autor" where he urges all Christian Kings to fight the Turk and sets up the Catholic Monarchs of Spain as the supreme example of this ideal. In this instance, the notion of exemplariness is a tenuous link between the already threadbare fiction of the heroic Esplandián and the historical reality of the Catholic Monarchs. Exemplariness acts as a form of reciprocal justification; it allows the fictional Esplandián a serious import while enshrining the praise of the Catholic Monarchs in the pseudo-glory of Esplandián's exploits.
In a subsequent episode, the relations between history and fiction are settled by a laughably simplistic notion of exemplariness. Chapters 157 to 160 relate the strange episode of Queen Calafia of California who leads both a regiment of belligerent women and a pack of griffins into battle against the Christians who are being besieged in Constantinople by the Turks. Calafia dispatches her griffins to devour those Christians defending the city from the battlements. The beasts, alas, fail to distinguish between Christian and Turk and fall upon both sides indiscriminately. This turn of events causes great consternation in the heathen ranks. The Californian queen commands the griffins to return to base forthwith by sounding a whistle, and the creatures comply with impressive alacrity.

Such a display of obedience moves the author to another "exclamation", this time addressed to all Christians. He urges them to forgo their blind, sinful ways and obey the Creator. He concludes his exhortation thus: "Pues si estas santas cosas dichas y tan verdaderas son huidas de nuestras memorias siquiera quedase en ellas ésta destos crueles grifos, fingida y compuesta, considerando que, siendo nacidos en lugares tan ásperos...viniesen a tanta obediencia" (159.541). Exemplariness here is virtually the sole justification for the appearance of the griffins; the whole of chapter 159 is devoted to the point that Christian readers should follow the example of the beasts. Montalvo is being perversely absurd here but, more significantly, he admits that the story of Queen Calafia and the griffins is fictitious ("fingida y compuesta") and that the real value of the episode is in the "exclamation" which expounds conventional Christian truths about the need to obey God and other pieties. What
is of even greater interest is that Montalvo intimates that these very pieties may too often be forgotten and that, consequently, the story of the griffins may serve as an aide-mémoire to forgetful Christians. Here then is a new and more accurate picture of Montalvo's aesthetic opinions: fiction is basically worthless and it is only insofar as it serves to remind readers of their Christian duty that it can be of any value or possess some truth; its only justification is its religious exemplariness.

In Montalvo's statement, however, there is an implied admission that fiction can often be more persuasive than straightforward Christian didacticism. But whatever constitutes that curious power remains unexamined, and this omission exacts its own price. The risible obedience of the griffins contaminates the didactic "exclamation" and reduces it to tasteless nonsense; fiction can clearly degrade or travesty the moral on occasions, an author cannot simply ignore it and concentrate on the moralising, for to make the latter effective the fiction has in some way to be convincing. Montalvo has driven himself through the tortuous narrative paths of his text only to conclude by confronting the problem of fiction.

Nevertheless, the Sergas de Esplandián, together with Montalvo's revision of the primitive Amadís, is of extraordinary interest and importance in any discussion of the development of narrative fiction from romance to the novel. For here, at the end of the fifteenth century, we encounter a man like Montalvo opening out, revising and writing a sequel to a medieval romance. In doing so he not
only introduces many of the aesthetic and ideological preoccupations of his own age into Arthurian romance, but also invents, sometimes with perverse ingenuity, certain narrative subterfuges which express the fundamental Renaissance concern with the conflict between history and fiction. Montalvo borrows historiographical narrative formulae, he increasingly makes use of eyewitness reports, and he even tries to efface his own activity as author in favour of the greater historical authoritativeness of an eyewitness character like Elisabad. By using a fictional character as an eyewitness narrator Montalvo initiates a revolutionary new mode of narration whose fuller ironic potentialities were later exploited by Cervantes in Cide Hamete Benengeli. Such a fictional eyewitness narrator did not exist either in medieval romance nor, according to Scholes and Kellogg, even in ancient Greek Romance, which openly admitted to its wholly fictional status. Justifications of fiction in terms of eyewitness accounts arise generally in the early Renaissance but Montalvo must be given the specific credit for having invented this device of the overall character-narrator as distinct from the author. Even so, he was later in chapters 98 and 99 of the Esplandian to undermine this new device with yet another narrative ploy when he introduced his own historical self into the romance world as a means of obtaining confirmation of his authorial probity from another character - Urganda la Desconocida. Although the absurdity of these reflexive techniques was to be satirized by Cervantes, the purpose behind such tergiversations was a serious one: what Montalvo is striving for and
failing to find with his restless apologetic inventiveness, is a formula for reconciling the creative freedom of the imagination with some universally acceptable standard of truth, like historical veracity, such as would justify the value of fiction.

In this, of course, he is no different from other late medieval or Renaissance authors. But even though lacking the creative exuberance of Ariosto, the ironic awareness of Chaucer or the theoretical intelligence of Tasso, Montalvo's adaptation of Arthurian romance was to be of great significance for the development of prose fiction. With the help of the printing press, the revised Amadís spawned the Spanish romances of chivalry which found favour throughout sixteenth century Europe. The Spanish Arthurian sub-genre inherited the basic flaw of its progenitor, namely a reluctance to admit its fictional nature despite its extravagant indulgence in fantasy. The basic contradiction of the sub-genre is best exemplified by the persistence in the Spanish romances of Montalvo's invention of an eyewitness historian in the unbelievable guise of a wise magician.

Other features of the Amadís - Esplandían formula also become generic: the absence of any organic structure, resulting in loose episodic narratives capable of being repeatedly opened out to form extensive "cycles" of generational sequels, e.g. Amadís Book VI about Florisando, son of Florestán, Books VII and VIII about Lisuarte of Greece, son of Esplandian, Book IX about Amadís of Greece, son of Lisuarte of Greece, and so on for another three books, or the extensive cycle of PalmerÍn and his successors; a rather mechanical quasi-automatic application
of the conventions of courtly chivalry; a facile, predictable optimism in the resolution of adventures; the absolute perfection of the hero with the consequent reliance on sheer diversity of incident rather than on internal moral crises to sustain the reader's interest; the use of didactic commentaries and authorial asides producing a separation of pleasure and profit in the narrative. These features of Spanish romances of chivalry inevitably attracted criticism from clerics, humanists and aestheticians. The religious moralists objected to romance's dangerous indulgence in affairs of the heart and its excessive glorification of swashbuckling prowess. Humanists were offended by its propensity to fantasy and its concomitant claim to historical authenticity. The aestheticians sought new ways of defending the art of poetry from the extravagant absurdities and unruly inventiveness of the Renaissance romance writers.
CHAPTER THREE

THE RESTORATION OF ROMANCE:

DON QUIXOTE’S MADNESS

(i) A Renaissance dilemma: the reconciliation of verisimilitude with the marvellous.

The aesthetic problems posed by Spanish romances of chivalry closely correspond to those which exercised aestheticians of the Italian Renaissance. The romance writers' attempts to justify their fantastical marvels with claims to historical truth, their difficulties in finding a unified structure for the epidodic variety of their narratives, their juxtaposition of sensational adventures or love-affairs and sober didactic asides, all served to fuel the arguments of Christian moralists and neo-Platonist humanists against the art of Poetry. Orthodox Christian writers condemned the profane escapism of secular writing while the neo-Platonists held that the poet as an imitator of the mere appearances of the world was a purveyor of falsehoods and corrupting fantasies.¹

Defenders of poetry sought therefore to construct a theory of art which would counter these criticisms. Such theories were based principally on interpretations of Aristotle's Poetics and, to a lesser extent, on Horace's Art of Poetry.² But as Bernard Weinberg points out, neo-Aristotelian aesthetics were largely based on distortions or misunderstandings of Aristotle.³ The most fundamental of
these misunderstandings was that of Aristotle's concept of mimesis. Aristotle had termed tragedy the imitation "of action and life". Since Aristotle's formulation was vague, Renaissance theorists were inclined to conceive of poetry as the imitation of an action in Nature or history. Poetic action should not exceed historical or empirical probability nor offend against reason. Aristotle's mimesis therefore crystallized into the concept of verisimilitude, which was seen to provide an effective check on the fantasizing of the romances by increasing the credibility of the poem in the eyes of the audience.

As regards the question of artistic unity, the Renaissance aestheticians were less successful in developing a coherent theory. Some theorists derived from Horace a conception of unity based on decorum: the different parts of the poem should be appropriate to one another and to the whole. But for Horatians and neo-Aristotelians alike, the Aristotelian notion of "unity of action" remained unclear. According to Weinberg:

"...for some of them - the best - it meant the close attachment of all the parts of the poem to the central plot; it was only the mechanism for achieving the close attachment that was lacking. For most of them, though, it meant no more than the possibility, for the reader or the critic, of explaining that all the parts vaguely belonged. Various refinements came from the ideas of the single hero, the single exploit, the single time, and the single place, each of which was erected into an independent unity. The fact that some of these could be considered as superior to unity of action as the organizing principle of the poem shows the extent to which Aristotle's concept was misunderstood. What was lacking, mainly, was an awareness of the fact that Aristotle had provided, in the ideas of necessity and probability, the very devices for unification that sixteenth-century theorists were so desperately seeking."
When it came to a consideration of the ends of poetry, the Renaissance theorists, in response to the strictures of Christian and neo-Platonist moralists, placed moral edification above pleasure; the poet should include philosophical reflections, proverbs or sententiae in his work in order to enhance its moral utility. This led many theorists to what Weinberg has called the rhetoricizing of poetic doctrine:

"The end of moral utility...was assimilated to the 'docere' and the 'movere' of classical rhetoric, while such indications as both Horace and Aristotle were made to supply the 'delectare'. This meant that the qualities of the poem were to be sought through the study of its effects upon an audience rather than within itself; the locus of the criteria was in the audience." 9

The shift of the criteria of poetic value from the work itself to the audience also holds true for the neo-Aristotelian concepts of verisimilitude and aesthetic unity. Poetic truth tended to be defined as that which audiences would be inclined to believe, while unity was conceived in terms of the reader's appreciation of the appropriateness of parts to the whole. 10 This change of emphasis from poet to audience can be attributed to the phenomenon which Robert Durling has identified in Renaissance epic: the erosion of a belief in the divine inspiration of the poet such as would admit the intrinsic poetic truth of the created object as distinct from its counterpart in history or experience. 11 Without a sense of being divinely inspired the poet is a man like any other, unable to find access to absolute or universal truth through his creative activity. His imagination must be considered a purely subjective faculty, and it becomes difficult for him
to impose a principle of unity or an objective order of truth in his work without having to tailor his imagination to match his public's notions of plausibility. The neo-Aristotelian concept of verisimilitude could in some degree replace belief in divine inspiration in so far as it provided a yardstick common to poet and public of what was likely to be true in a historical or naturalistic sense. But the concept of verisimilitude created problems for the neo-Aristotelians themselves. Paradoxically, the theorists also held that one of the most rewarding aesthetic pleasures was that of admiratio, the wonderment felt by audiences and readers in the revelation of the unknown or unexpected. Now the theoreticians recognized that by far the most successful means of evoking admiratio in a narrative was through the use of marvellous, scarcely believable episodes. They were therefore confronted with a theoretical dilemma: on the one hand they felt the need to curb the imagination through verisimilitude, while conceding on the other that it was through the marvellous that the greatest aesthetic pleasure was created. The reconciliation of verisimilitude with the marvellous, not surprisingly, became one of the major aesthetic preoccupations of the Renaissance.¹²

In this fundamental respect, Renaissance theorists and writers did not overcome the malaise afflicting the romances of chivalry. Montalvo, as I have shown earlier, had tried through various narrative subterfuges to justify the fantastical passages in the Amadís and the Esplandían. Most of these narrative devices attempted to pass off what was transparent fantasy as historical truth. Montalvo was
perpetuating a contradiction which had long been latent in romance, but he particularly exacerbated the conflict between historicity and fantasy by insisting on the device of the narrator as eyewitness. Now, however absurd this insistence on historical veracity might be, its aesthetic implications differ only in degree from those of neo-Aristotelian verisimilitude. At bottom, both of these strategies for the justification of fiction are born of the same tendency to confuse the aesthetic object with the real object: the Spanish romance writers had to pretend that their fantastical creations actually corresponded to real historical events, while the neo-Aristotelians held that poetic narratives were true in as much as they approximated to real actions in experience or history. This sort of confusion leads to the discomfiture and creative embarrassment of the poet. 13 Both the illusions of historicity and verisimilitude rest on the premise that poetic truth must ultimately be judged by some objective, clear-cut, extra-literary criterion, and such a requirement would clearly sap the poet's confidence in his own prerogative to organize his work according to a more personal, inwardly-conceived standard of truth.

This loss of confidence is exemplified by the Italian Renaissance quarrel over Ariosto and Tasso. 14 Ariosto, according to Durling, is one of the first poets to reject deliberately "the transcendental sanctions of narrative art". 15 He makes no pretence that his story is other than wholly fictitious and invented. He accepts and exploits the absolute
freedom this allows him to invent at will and assume a variety of rôles which are often mutually inconsistent. In other words Ariosto accepts his fallibility as a natural man and lays no special claim to higher powers, he makes a virtue of variety and remains faithful to the mutability of experience by feigning a type of "madness" and unreliability as narrator. According to Durling:

"to live without the intervention of the transcendental is to live in an incessant multiplicity of motion. Yet the final impression left by the Poet's changeability is not one of lack of control: rather it is a sense of sureness of the author's purposeful control of the appearances of his Narrator. Like Horace, by pretending to be insane and by acting out his insanity, he conveys a strong impression of his real sanity. He at least has the distinction among things clear in his mind. Therefore, in this sense the Poet (i.e. the author as revealed in the whole) is one who sees clearly and sharply the multiplicity of the universe and mirrors it in the microcosm of the poem".\(^{16}\)

With Ariosto the world of the poem is wholly subjective and pliable. Its value or truth can ultimately be justified by an analogy with God and his Creation. The Poet creates and rules his fictional world with the same authority as God in his regulation of the real world. But this total freedom carries with it the responsibility of reminding the reader of the artificiality of the poem, which Ariosto does by continually undercutting the substance of the fictional world with his irony. The poem is therefore built upon a dialectical play between the objective world of the characters and the subjectivity of the overall creation.

Ariosto copes with the verisimilitude-marvellous
problem by abandoning himself to the risks and responsibilities of total subjectivity. By contrast, Tasso sought to solve the problem of the verisimilitude-marvellous by attempting to strike a balance between the subjectivity of the artistic imagination and the alleged objectivity of experience. As Alban K. Forcione puts it:

"He therefore devised an elaborate system of distinguishing a legitimate marvellous from an illegitimate marvellous. The former is based on language, structural elements, variety in description and subject matter, great historical occurrence, and the Christian supernatural. The latter arises from uncontrollable multiplicity in subject matter and violations of the laws of empirical reality which have no causes in the Christian supernatural. Only the uneducated mind can experience pleasure in the illegitimate marvellous, and it is to such a mind that the absurdities of the romances appeal." 17

The problem was to accommodate the undeniable delights of the subjective vagaries of the poetic imagination without sacrificing the objectivity of empirical truth. Tasso was unable to arrive at a clear and steadfast aesthetic position on this question because, as he recognised, the two demands are fundamentally antagonistic if not mutually exclusive:

"The two natures of the marvellous and of verisimilitude...are very different, and different in such a way that they are almost contrary to each other; nonetheless each one of them is necessary in a poem, and the art of an excellent poet needs to be such as will bring them into harmony." 18

In this respect, the concept of the legitimate marvellous was a sort of unstable compromise between the narrowness of empiricism and the pleasurable licence of fantasy, an attempt to flout verisimilitude without, as it were, being caught out by the reader. 19

But neo-Aristotelian efforts to contain the marvellous within empirical bounds courted the danger of
throwing out the baby of idealism with the bathwater of fantasy.\textsuperscript{20} We have observed that in large part, their difficulties arose from an interpretation of Aristotle's concept of mimesis which was too narrowly empirical and which, consequently, tended to ignore "ideal types" and "higher realities".\textsuperscript{21} Although it is of course possible to distinguish between unbridled fantasy and an idealized conception of the world, if one's criterion of truth is sense-experience or empirical plausibility then the two are in principle indistinguishable. The erosion of the Renaissance poet's belief in divine inspiration and his uncertainty about the intrinsic value of his work deprived him of an objective non-empirical standard of poetic truth to share with his reader. Unlike Chrétien de Troyes, the Renaissance poet's mistrust of his spiritual insight makes it difficult to look beyond the empirical surface of the world to a transcendent order which could give unity and authority to his personal creation. According to Durling:

"The Renaissance fascination with the ancient epic and its general inability to produce epics of its own are of course danger signals, and the official culture of the Renaissance ultimately broke down when its inability to express men's changed sense of what was most significant in their experience became intolerable."\textsuperscript{22}

These signals of collapse are reflected in the theoretical struggles with the inter-related problems of verisimilitude-marvellous and unity-variety. Such debates are symptomatic of the more fundamental problem of reconciling the subjectivity of the individual artist's imagination with some form of objective, universal criterion of truth. Ariosto was content to turn his back on objectivity, but Tasso, who strove to adhere to
objective standards found himself stretching the criteria of empiricism in order to accommodate the subjective pleasures of fantasy and the marvellous.

A third solution of course was to force a rigid separation between the subjective and the objective, between the non-empirical and the empirical, while retaining both the pleasures of the marvellous and the aesthetic discipline required for intellectual and moral respectability. Cervantes from the beginning imposed this division in his novel simply by making his chivalric hero mad. Don Quixote's madness artificially separates the two elements of the subject-object deadlock only to examine each in sharper focus: on the one hand, the limitations of commonsense empiricism as a yardstick of truth, and on the other, the seductive dangers of non-empirical speculation. The former may well be a method of distinguishing between the subjective and the objective but it cannot go beyond the bewildering particulars of the phenomenal surface of the world, whereas the latter, with its consciousness of transcendent realities, may afford a sense of universal order and significance but will remain unable to sort out subjective aspirations from objective truths. The two sources of truth, as we have seen from our survey of Arthurian romance, are mutually exclusive. One cannot use sense-experience as a way to knowledge of transcendent realities because this latter can only come through revelation. At bottom, the aesthetic dilemma is simply an aspect of the more general conflict between empirical knowledge and revealed truth.

Don Quixote, therefore, is mad not only because
he believes in the fantasies of romance but also because he
refuses to have any truck with empiricism and will not
relinquish the premises upon which Arthurian romance
implicitly based its claim to truth, namely, a sense of
transcendence, a belief in divine inspiration, and a
confidence in the revelation of God's will to guide the
actions of men in the temporal, misleading world of contingent
phenomena. In the remainder of this chapter I shall consider
Don Quixote's career as an attempt to restore the world of
romance through classic chivalric methods. Analysis of
the novel along these lines will show to what a remarkable
degree Cervantes understood the premises and notions which
underlay the narrative processes of the romances he was
satirizing, and how ingeniously he fashioned these into a
consistent and evolving system from which to generate his
protagonist's thoughts, utterances and actions.

(ii) The nature of Don Quixote's madness.

All we are told about Don Quixote's madness is
that it was originally induced by excessive readings of
romances of chivalry which led him to believe that all
that was written in them was true. Cervantes fastens on
this simple cause for the madness and provides no further
explanations. As readers we can only speculate on other
causes but all we have to go by is that simple fact - Don
Quixote believed what he read in the romances. 23

The nature of that belief is something one can
investigate by taking up those clues and indications left by
Cervantes and ordering them into a coherent hypothesis.
We may start by observing that the knight's insanity was
not a sudden overnight affair, it took some time to develop
and assumed the form of an increasing and swelling obsession
with matters of chivalry, and a corresponding neglect of
his everyday chores and concerns (I.i.36). Cervantes
does not explain quite why the knight was so absorbed in the
romances but one can deduce that a major factor in the
madness was the attempt to grasp their meaning, or at least
find some sense in part of their language:

"Con estas razones perdía el pobre caballero
el juicio, y desvelábase por entenderlas y
desentrañarles el sentido, que no se lo
sacara ni las entendiera el mismo Aristóteles
si resucitara para sólo ello" (I.i.37).

In addition to this, Don Quixote seems to have spent a good
deal of his time and energy in efforts to work out certain
paradoxes, contradictions and problems posed by these books.
He wrestles with the problem of Don Belianís's wounds and
wonders how he could fail to have had his whole body covered
with scars; he often proposed to take up his pen and write
the continuation and provide an end to that "endless"
adventure, just as it is promised in the book. He also held
frequent debates with the local priest and the barber as to
the relative chivalric merits of Amadís, Palmerín de
Inglaterra, or Don Galaor. And so Don Quixote immersed
himself ("se enfrascó tanto") in his reading to such an
extent that his brain dried up ("se le secó el celebro")
and he came to lose his senses ("el juicio") and believe
that everything described in them actually happened.
The qualitative change from sanity to madness came about slowly as a result of a dogged attempt to penetrate and understand the romances. In other words, it would appear that the inherent, unresolved contradictions of the books of chivalry pushed Don Quixote beyond the critical point where madness begins. He was merely a more assiduous and compulsive reader than his erstwhile intellectual companions the village priest and the barber. Not only must he have been more zealous in trying to unravel the meaning of the language, he was also keener to puzzle out assertions of historical fact as in the question of Don Belianís's wounds, or to resolve the problems of authorship and the transmission of historical material when he was tempted to finish the novel al pie de la letra. In short, Don Quixote goes mad because he takes the romances of chivalry at their word; his exertions to understand the nature of truth in the romances push him into the madness of trying to live the old contradiction, inherent in romance, between historical veracity and the marvellous.

There is, nevertheless, a wide difference between accepting claims of historical authenticity in fiction and deciding to emulate the characters in a story. Logically, however, after having made the initial mistake of accepting that a romance is literally "true" in every respect, and given that these romances invite their readers to follow the example of the heroes, then Don Quixote's decision to become a hero of romance appears as an act of unerring moral consistency. To accept the author's claims to literal historicity entails accepting that what he describes has a
moral and spiritual validity too. Now the romances of chivalry portray a world where the adherence to a set of rules and procedures ensures the spiritual fulfillment of the hero and the maintenance of a divinely-regulated order in the world. To accept that this actually happened in history is to believe that these procedures are effective and necessary, and that the exhortations to virtuous imitation, the exemplary value of the actions, must also be heeded and imitated.

Therefore Don Quixote resolves to become a knight errant because he believes not only the historical claims of the novels but also their metaphysical and moral claims:

"... le pareció convenible y necesario, así para el aumento de su honra como para el servicio de su república, hacerse caballero andante, y irse por todo el mundo con sus armas y caballo a buscar las aventuras y a ejercitarse en todo aquello que él había leído que los caballeros andantes se ejercitaban..." (I.1.38).

Don Quixote takes the exemplariness of such as Montalvo in an absolutely literal way. If one is convinced of the benefits of chivalry the step from passive belief to action is both short and necessary.

As we have seen in relation to Chrétien de Troyes and Amadís de Gaula, the code of chivalry, as it functions in the romances, is a system ultimately by which a spiritual order is made to obtain in the physical world through the actions of the knights errant. The efforts of the knights are directed towards keeping at bay the positive external evil which constantly threatens, or guarding against any upset within their own lives of that delicate spiritual balance between public duty and private desires. The knights
struggle to maintain essences manifest on the contingent surface of the world against the perennial tendency for things to become so confused that appearances do not correspond to essential realities. For example in Amadís de Gaula, the forces of evil conspire to produce misunderstandings which will jeopardise the unshakeable love of Amadís for Oriana, or they will give wrong advice to King Lisuarte about Amadís's intentions and so instigate the near-disastrous banishment of Amadís from the Court. These misunderstandings constitute a threat to Amadís's true identity; they set up a false discrepancy between what Amadís is genuinely like (faithful lover, unswerving vassal) and what he appears to be like as a result of the distortions of the evil forces. Amadís is therefore obliged to go out either anonymously (as Beltenebrós et al.) or as an enemy of Lisuarte and restore the real state of affairs through his deeds. To win glory and fame is to establish, through action, one's true nature; it is to maintain the full crystalline correspondence between the knight's real character in the metaphysical sphere of essences, and his superficial identity in the temporal world.²⁵

Now Don Quixote's ideal is to restore this chivalric order of things. His aims, as expounded in his Golden Age Speech (I.xi.104-6), are as follows:-

(1) To restore justice to its "natural" terms, which can be interpreted as being a state where justice is not obscured by ulterior interests or prejudices but can operate in accordance with the spiritual merits
of a particular case, without coercion or force:

"La justicia se estaba en sus propios términos, sin que la osasen turbar ni ofender los del favor y los del interese, que tanto ahora la menoscaban, turban y persiguen. La ley de encaje aún no se había sentado en el entendimiento del juez, porque entonces no había que juzgar, ni quien fuese juzgado."

(2) To restore pure love so that no damsel would be forced either through coercion or cajolery into giving of her favours against her will. Love would then become the expression of a free spiritual attachment in a physical dimension as occurs with, say, Amadís and Oriana: "Las doncellas y la honestidad andaban, como tengo dicho, por dondequiera, sola y señora, sin temor que la ajena desenvoltura y lascivo intento le menoscabasen, y su perdición nacía de su gusto y propia voluntad."

(3) To restore fidelity and trustworthiness. The motives and intentions of each person would be manifest in their words and actions. No fraudulence, deception or malice, no flowery and dishonest flattery would interfere with the clarity of language and communication: "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. No había la fraude, el engaño ni la malicia mezcládose con verdad y llaneza."
To restore a sense of community. No separations or divisions would exist because men would not deceive or coerce each other: "... porque entonces los que en ella vivían ignoraban estas palabras de tuyo y mío. Eran en aquella santa edad todas las cosas comunes."

In all of these ideals Don Quixote is seeking to allow people to take possession of themselves fully and to transmit and receive their true selves without the veils of guile or other such impediments. It is of course no more than a utopian dream but Don Quixote is committed to resurrecting that lost order of which he has read in the books. He recognises, all the same, that the present time is an Iron Age, a terrible fallen period, but it is precisely to raise it to its pristine excellence that he has decided to embark on a career of chivalry:

"... andando más los tiempos y creciendo más la malicia, se instituyó la orden de los caballeros andantes para defender las doncellas, amparar las viudas y socorrer a los huérfanos y a los menesterosos" (I.xi.106).

The order of chivalry was instituted primarily in the recognition that human malice and the potential ravages of time were threatening the spiritual equilibrium of the Golden Age. It would seem to follow that the further slippage from the age of chivalry to the present Iron Age can only have been due to a turning away from chivalry. Therefore to observe the code of chivalry once again is the most effective means of regaining the lost state of affairs; it would halt the time-wrought course of degeneration,
countervail the depredations of human malice, and allow
the essential identities of persons and things to become
manifest in the temporal sphere once more.

The restoration of the age of chivalry would
require, as far as Don Quixote is concerned, the systematic
transformation of visible reality. For Don Quixote, who
in this is following a Platonist notion of long-standing
medieval vintage, the appearances of things do not necessar-
ily correspond to their true nature, the tissue of phenomena
which constitutes the visible world is not the "real"
Reality of true identities, essences and values; the Truth
is the order of things ordained by God as his design for the
world, and this is not readily evident on the surface of empirical
reality.26 Like all good knights errant Don Quixote wants
to make appearances accord with their real essences. But
whereas Yvain and Amadís were adopting a defensive posture
against evil and degeneration - they were "upholding" and
"maintaining" the order of chivalry - Don Quixote is
placed in the position of having to restore it
in a world where the rot is already so far advanced that
actual appearances are grossly unfaithful to their real
character. Don Quixote's endeavour then is to demonstrate
to other people that the surface of reality has degenerated,
that it is not as it appears to be but in fact something
else. In the detailed circumstances of his life, he has
to show that Alonso Quijano is in "reality" Don Quijote de la
Mancha, Aldonza Lorenzo the peasant girl is potentially or
in "essence" a peerless princess, and his old nag is, if appearances were not so deceptive, the noble Rocinante. It is important to note that Don Quixote does not suffer hallucinations, he sees reality as others do. The difference is that he believes things to be potentially superior to their actual appearances. His job then is to draw out this potential. As we shall see, the nub of Don Quixote's problem is to abolish this discrepancy between the actual and the potential, especially with regard to Dulcinea. Consequently, Don Quixote is forced to reject the visible world as deceptive or illusory and to declare an invisible, latent order as the true reality. For Don Quixote the truth is, alas, always normative, reality is what ought to be; in the present Age of Iron, what is, is a lie.

Not surprisingly, Don Quixote has to rely not on his commonsense or, worse still, on his sense-experience to ascertain truths but rather on the laws of chivalry. His language is strewn with normative set-phrases, - "ni puedo ni debo"; "deben de ser y son sin duda"; "conviene y es menester". More particularly, Don Quixote seems to believe that what happens in the books is the pattern of the true order of things. The highly conventionalized, if not hackneyed, structure of the Spanish romances of chivalry becomes the blueprint of the knight errant's ineluctable experience. In Part I, Chapter xxi, pp. 196-9, Don Quixote describes for Sancho the typical pattern of a chivalric romance, presenting it as a certain vision of their future if the prescribed chivalric steps are followed and the code of chivalry successfully put into operation.
The passage starts with the use of several verbs in the subjunctive mood after "para que..." and "cuando...". This subsequently changes to a predominantly future tense after "forzosamente ha de decir..." but the narrative becomes so continuously grounded in the relation of the incidents in futurity that this train of events acquires a species of inevitability, and the speculative nature of the early use of the subjunctive and future progressively takes on the force of prediction. With the entry of the "feo y pequeño enano" and the "fermosa dueña" at the top of page 198, the tense becomes intermittently present, and the alternation between present and future tenses continues until the sentence beginning "Vase desde allí a su aposento..." towards the bottom of page 198, from which point until the end of page 198 the tense is exclusively present until the final "será" which thereby assumes a touch of irony. Don Quixote imposes a gradual change of tense from the speculation of the subjunctive, through the prescriptions and predictions of futurity, to the actuality of the present tense. This descriptive actualisation of the patterns of romance is further exemplified in Don Quixote's use of the conjunction "y" in his descriptions of events. The sheer repetition of "y" lends it a force which is less the conjoining of two particular incidents than a deduction, a "therefore", a step arising out of the previous one with the necessity of a normative rule, a moral law. The structure of a chivalric plot comes to possess an intrinsic moral value for the mad knight.

In this speech, Don Quixote by his use of tenses and
the construction of his description gives us an exact verbal representation of the chivalric metamorphosis that he proposes to effect upon a degenerate world. The difference between what should be and what will be is negligible on this view; in fact so certain is the unfolding of events in time for the conscientious knight errant that temporal sequence is ultimately unimportant. This Don Quixote shows in his rebuke to Sancho on p. 307 (I.xxx). After Dorotea in the guise of princess Micomicona casts herself in the chivalric rôle of a king's daughter who has come to seek the famous knight who will kill the giant and restore her to her title and lands, Sancho, who is greedy for booty, urges Don Quixote to marry Micomicona rather than Dulcinea who, in any case, is not half as beautiful as Micomicona. Don Quixote is outraged and hits him saying:

"... y ¿ quién pensáis que ha ganado este reino y cortado la cabeza a este gigante y héchoos a vos marqués, que todo esto doy ya por hecho y por cosa pasada en cosa juzgada, si no es el valor de Dulcinea, tomando a mí brazo por instrumento de sus hazañas?" (I.xxx.307).

Don Quixote takes the future as done and therefore talks about it in the past tense when referring to the moral requirements of the present; past, present, and future become as one at the spiritual level, in the realm of essences and values. The fact that Dorotea's play-acting has confirmed for Don Quixote the fixity of the chivalric plot-system is enough for him to abolish the chronology of actions as purely contingent to the spiritual values that for him constitute the true and timeless Reality.28

However absurd these attitudes appear to us and, of course, Cervantes means us to think them absurd, they
nevertheless follow perfectly logically if one has previously accepted that the romances of chivalry are literally true.

Now the belief that the romances are true and that the age of chivalry should be restored are not in themselves the reasons for our interest as readers in Don Quixote's madness. The truly remarkable nature of the madness is due to a secondary error: Don Quixote's belief that he will be able to ride out and restore the age of chivalry himself. His whole enterprise is based upon the bald assertion that he is a knight errant. Consequently, the primary task in restoring romance boils down to one thing: the need to legitimize and validate this assertion that he is a knight errant. Once he can prove that he is a genuine knight errant the books will then be true and the chivalric pattern described above will indefectibly follow its predesigned trajectory.

For Don Quixote, then, the initial task must be to prove to himself and to others that his claim to be a knight errant has objective validity; he must try to escape from the vitiating circularity of: "I am a knight errant because I say so". This circularity threatens him at every crisis, and his adventures can be seen precisely as an attempt to avoid being pushed into naked assertions about his heroic identity or his chivalric vision that would enclose him in a circle of subjectivity, tangential to the real world. One such situation occurs after his first defeat when he falls off Rocinante and is beaten by a muleteer. When Pedro Alonso comes to his aid, Don Quixote take him for the Marquis of
Mantua or Rodrigo de Narváez. After Pedro Alonso says that he is neither and that Don Quixote himself is not Valdovinos or Abindarráez but the honourable hidalgo señor Quijana, the knight replies testily:

"Yo sé quién soy ... y sé que puedo ser no sólo los que he dicho sino todos los doce Pares de Francia, y aun todos los nueve de la Fama, pues a todos las hazañas que ellos todos juntos y cada uno por sí hicieron, se aventajarán las mías" (I.v.63-64).

Don Quixote, who is dazed and irritated by defeat, declares this defiantly and recklessly, as if he wished to counteract this palpable reverse by emphasising his real worth, his intrinsic value (as yet, alas, invisible) over and above the unfortunate contingencies of failure. The energy of his tone indicates a wish to stretch this assertion to a point where it would burst beyond superficial appearances and flow out into the open for all to see, thereby breaking down the barriers between essence and appearance which in a fallen world lead to such contretemps and misapprehensions. Since Don Quixote is convinced that he possesses in abundance all the intrinsic qualities of a knight errant, he becomes impatient when this patent truth is not immediately evident to others. The more chivalric truths fail to break through to the surface the more Don Quixote is persuaded that there must be some mischievous interference from enchanter's. On those occasions when the interference and ensuing confusion becomes too great, Don Quixote is content merely to assert his identity and chivalric vision as latent truths that will eventually emerge.

This process can best be observed in that difficult
and controversial passage where he talks about the true nature of Dulcinea (I.xxv.243-46). The passage starts with Don Quixote saying that Dulcinea can neither read nor write and that she has never received a letter from him because their love has always been platonic and based on infrequent but chaste exchanges of glances. He has scarcely seen her four times and of these she would only have noticed him on one occasion, such has been the modesty and seclusion ("recato y encerramiento") of her honest upbringing. It is clear that Don Quixote is fully apprised of Aldonza's real social station - he after all tells Sancho that her parents are Lorenzo Corchuelo and Aldonza Nogales - but he seems to misinterpret the signs of the situation. Aldonza's reserve is not due to chastity and shyness, more likely to imperviousness to or lack of interest in an old hidalgo giving her the eye. Although Don Quixote fully realises that she is the daughter of a peasant he interprets her actions and glances favourably to himself and believes that they denote qualities which transcend her natural circumstances to make her qualitatively a princess.

His duty in restoring the age of chivalry is to make this latent spiritual quality visible to all: Dulcinea then is not a figment of his imagination, she exists as Aldonza Lorenzo in a fallen state from which it is his duty gradually to rescue her. For Don Quixote, who claims to be a knight errant, her ideal condition can be restored through the agency of chivalry, so that Aldonza Lorenzo, who is at present a peasant, will eventually be elevated to a station which befits
her beauty and moral qualities. However, this process, for the time being and in the teeth of Sancho's gross empirical doubts, can only be roundly and subjectively asserted by the knight:

"Y así, bástame a mí pensar y creer que la buena de Aldonza Lorenzo es hermosa y honesta; y en lo del linaje importa poco, que no han de ir a hacer la información dél para darle algún hábito, y yo me hago cuenta que es la más alta princesa del mundo. Porque has de saber, Sancho, si no lo sabes, que dos cosas solas incitan a amar más que otras; que son la mucha hermosura y la buena fama; y estas dos cosas se hallan consumadamente en Dulcinea... lo que digo es así, sin que sobre ni falte nada, y pintola en mi imaginación como la deseo, así en la belleza como en la principalidad... Y diga cada uno lo que quisiere; que por si esto fuere reprehendido de los ignorantes, no seré castigado de los rigurosos." (I.xxv.246).30

This, of course, is addressed impatiently to Sancho as an "ignorante" who, as Don Quixote repeatedly emphasises, lacks all knowledge of chivalry. However, Don Quixote is confident that he will not be censured by the experts. He uses the case of love-poets to explain his point. They invent ideal ladies so that their skill as poets and their intrinsic worth as lovers will become manifest. In this respect they are like the knights errant who used their prowess in combat and their courage in adventures to display the quality of their love for their ladies. The poets and the knights use their skill in verse and in arms respectively for the same purpose, to show their true mettle to their sweethearts. But there is an important difference. The poets often invent their ladies ("los más se las fingen para dar subjeto a sus versos") so as to demonstrate that they are potentially capable of such noble feelings ("y porque los tengan por enamorados y por hombres que tienen valor para
serlo"). The knights of old courted real ladies and they used feats of arms as concrete tokens of their love. The difference between the two then is that the poets invent their subjects whereas the knights actually possessed a real subject whom they could address. Don Quixote accepts that he is at present caught between the two positions. Because he lives in a fallen Age of Iron where outward appearances do not correspond to inward values, his adoration of Aldonza could appear to "ignorantes" like Sancho, who cannot appreciate her potential spiritual qualities, to be a form of arbitrary invention like the poets'. But Don Quixote insists that he has not invented Dulcinea, who is the idealization of Aldonza; she undoubtedly exists but it is his task to embark upon the process of transforming her into her real condition. Don Quixote is like the knights in that he is addressing himself to a real subject, the peasant girl Aldonza Lorenzo, who, alas, does not superficially correspond to his chivalric specifications. Therefore Don Quixote concedes that to people like Sancho Dulcinea appears to be the product of his imagination, a creature of his desire. He admits here that without any concrete results or clearly acceptable chivalric successes, without, that is, establishing his chivalric vision objectively, he will be unable to distinguish between private wishes and reality. In his story about the rich widow infatuated with the uncouth young man, Don Quixote declares that he will use Aldonza for a particular purpose and a precise end: as the test-case of his chivalric restoration. At this stage he seems very clear about the nature of Aldonza; she appears
to be a peasant girl but is potentially a princess. His intention is to draw out that potential and make it visible to all and sundry. Thus he tells Sancho: "Así que, Sancho, por lo que yo quiero a Dulcinea del Toboso tanto vale como las más alta princesa de la tierra" (p.245). Don Quixote seems clearly aware of the circularity which threatens this project. His constant endeavour will be to prove that this conception of Dulcinea corresponds to an objective, independent reality, thereby distinguishing it from the subjective inventions of a poet. His major fear is that, as on this occasion, he will be forced back into futile declaration and assertion.

It is here of course that one arrives at one of Don Quixote's fundamental difficulties. He may well be right to think that the world is a fallen place and that his mission is to restore it to its pristine state by implementing the code of chivalry, but if the nature of the decadence is such that appearances are misleading, how will he know when and how to apply his chivalric methods? He would have to discover the real nature of a situation or the truth of another's actions and statements before he could act to bring it to the surface and make it evident to other people. Don Quixote does not readily distinguish between the code of chivalry as a means of discovering the truth, and the code as merely an illustrator of a truth that has already been firmly established. In his urgency to renew the world, these niceties are brushed aside and Don Quixote is tempted to declare the truth first and only then illustrate it through action.
With characteristic subtlety Cervantes portrays this small but crucial transition from a heuristic attitude towards chivalric truth to a proclamatory one in the episodes where Don Quixote tests his helmet. At the first attempt he tries its strength by hitting it with his sword. It breaks, of course, but he puts it together again and reinforces it with strips of iron "... de tal manera que él quedó satisfecho de su fortaleza y sin querer hacer nueva experiencia della, la diputó y tuvo por celada finísima de encaje" (I.i.39).

Having once tried an empirical test, Don Quixote assumes that the bars of iron will be sufficient reinforcement and holds it to be a finely wrought helmet. Don Quixote merely has to satisfy himself that he perceives the truth of a situation or the essential nature of an object for him to proclaim it and employ chivalric techniques to sustain that claim. Instead of using the laws of chivalry as a means of discovery, Don Quixote uses them to confirm his prior assertions about the nature of things.

This cavalier proclamatory attitude does not, however, last long. We shall presently see that in Part I, chapter xix, Don Quixote will freely acknowledge its limitations and the resultant tendency to error. Such an admission is not a sign of increasing sanity but rather a partial return to a heuristic use of chivalric procedures; it confirms for the knight the stubbornly degenerate nature of the reality that surrounds him. For Don Quixote, then, there is never any doubting the belief in underlying essences or the intrinsic validity of romance procedures. After a short-lived bout of recklessness, he soon adopts a cautious attitude,
for he will always be aware of the difficulty of proving to others that he is destined to become a hero of romance.

There are then two levels to Don Quixote's madness. In the first place, Don Quixote believes wholly and literally in the historical authenticity of the books of chivalry, in the efficacy of chivalric laws and in the latter's superiority over empirical evidence in the revelation of objective truth. But secondly, he assumes that he is qualified to be a knight errant and to restore the world of chivalry himself. The primary level is a passive form of madness, the substance of his beliefs about the world; the secondary level, which is active and militant, concerns his own identity and destiny as a romance hero. It is of the greatest importance to bear this distinction in mind because, as the novel progresses, Don Quixote will be forced increasingly to question the viability of his own particular heroic career as a knight errant. However, even though he is eventually obliged to renounce his activism, we shall see that he refuses adamantly to give up his belief in the validity of the world of chivalric romance and remains, therefore, at this substantive level, irrecoverably mad to the last.

But this of course does not mean that Don Quixote fails to change or develop as a character. He does indeed; but not in the way that critics have come to accept, namely through the piecemeal regaining of sanity after a process of self-doubt. Rather he changes only within the stubbornly unaltered bounds of his own chivalric obsession: he does no more than concede, grudgingly, that he may perhaps not have been called to succeed as a knight errant at that particular
moment in his career. In other words the novel shows only how Don Quixote is forced provisionally to postpone the secondary, active level of madness, leaving the primary, passive level wholly intact with all its fierce, pristine conviction. But even the secondary level is never fully abandoned. I hope to show that there is no textual evidence to support the view that Don Quixote is prepared even to consider renouncing his faith in his ultimate destiny as a chivalric hero.

It has become a commonplace of Quixote criticism to see the comedy and poignancy of the novel as deriving from the collisions of Don Quixote's hallucinatory madness with everyday reality, but as much fun and pathos are generated by Don Quixote's painful struggles to forge a heroic destiny for himself using a framework of ideas and practices taken with elaborate, surprising consistency from the canon of chivalric romance.33

(iii) Don Quixote's career in Part I.

In his first sally Don Quixote is fortunate to meet with favourable circumstances. His arrival at the inn coincides with the blowing of a pighorn which exactly matches his expectations and confirms his prior assumption that the inn is a castle. The good-humoured innkeeper and the two whores comply with his eccentric wishes and cushion him in his affirmations. Again, his success at dispersing the muleteers and other interferers during his vigil (I.iii.52), and his rescue of the unfortunate Andrés (I.iv) further reinforce
this attitude - he already knows the truth or at least he knows how to recognise and interpret chivalric signs. In the Andrés adventure he adjudges the nature of the sounds he hears: "Estas voces, sin duda, son de algún menesteroso o menesterosa que ha menester mi favor y ayuda" (p.55). He challenges Andrés's tormentor to pick up his lance and mount his horse for he will then demonstrate the cowardliness of his actions: "... yo, os haré conocer ser de cobardes lo que estáis haciendo" (p.55). Don Quixote threatens combat so as to make evident to the tormentor the moral nature of his actions on the assumption that, once having seen this, he will desist. For Don Quixote evil is a form of aberration or ignorance, it is sufficient to reveal the truth for everything to slot into its proper place.

Don Quixote, therefore, resorts to arms to uphold a declared truth. When he encounters the merchants of Toledo, he decides to imitate the romances of chivalry and chooses a particular mode of action. He declares Dulcinea to be the most beautiful woman in the world and when one of the merchants asks him to show her to them, Don Quixote indignantly replies that: "la importancia está que sin verla lo habéis de creer" (I.iv.59). This reply of course appears absurd both to the merchants and to the reader but it makes sense within a chivalric scheme of things. The merchant is asking for direct ocular proof, an empirical proof based on the nature of surface appearances, whereas Don Quixote, as a knight errant, knows that appearances in this Iron Age are especially misleading. He possesses, as he believes, a much more reliable method of proof in armed combat, as practised in
the books. The victor of the fight will have won because his particular assertion was the true one; with this form of proof, why rely on the precarious evidence of the senses? Combat, as we have seen in Arthurian romances, is a means of revealing truth in an otherwise confusing situation.

In the following adventure with the windmills, after his second sally, Don Quixote extends this declaratory attitude even further. When he proclaims the windmills to be giants, Cervantes leaves it open as to whether this mistake is due to an optical illusion, a hallucination, or some other distorted perception of his insanity. But the fact that Don Quixote perceives them as giants, declares them to be such to Sancho, and proceeds to act as if they were, illustrates that to an unprecedented degree he is founding his conception of truth upon his own chivalric interpretation of reality. In this case, as with the adventure of the flock of sheep, there is some phenomenological basis for Don Quixote's assertion. Windmills, from a distance, could be said to have the shape or silhouette of an oversized man waving his arms about:

"-¿Qué gigantes? - dijo Sancho Panza.

- Aquellos que allí ves - respondió su amo - de los brazos largos, que los suelen tener algunos de casi dos leguas" (I.viii.81).

And in the case of the sheep, the dust clouds and the sound of hooves could conceivably bring to mind, at least momentarily, a vision of two rival armies.

With Don Quixote, however, such flimsy sensory evidence is seized on and asserted as the truth. Anybody
could at first believe that windmills from a distance looked like giants, or flocks of sheep like charging armies, but one would normally look for further sensory evidence to check and substantiate that initial impression. But Don Quixote is content to work on initial impressions, provided they conform with chivalric precedents. If things appear to be giants or armies, if phenomena seem to correspond with the world of chivalry, then there must be a real connection sufficient to establish that as the truth. To seek further sensory or empirical evidence would be not only to put greater faith in the fragile senses than in the link between phenomena and books of chivalry, but in a sense it would also be self-contradictory, for once having taken the decision to believe the romances of chivalry, he is committing himself to rely on their authority rather than that of his sensory perceptions. Don Quixote is not looking to distinguish between real and illusory appearances, he is seeking the real nature, the noumenal essence of things behind appearances. For Don Quixote the world is not divided into real or false phenomena, true perceptions or illusions, all phenomena are potential signs of spiritual realities and it is incumbent upon him to discriminate between meaningful signs and non-meaningful ones; the distinction is not between illusion and reality but between intelligibility and non-intelligibility. This may explain why he acts on his intuition that the windmills are in reality giants with such alacrity, because for him the very fact that he can recognise a certain phenomenon in this fallen confused world as having a meaning within the romance scheme of things is to see that as an intelligible sign of the old degenerate order beneath the confused surface of
This principle of recognition is his yardstick of truth. On many occasions he moves from confused recognition to tentative affirmation to undoubting action. When he encounters the strange procession of friars of San Benito he says to Sancho:

"O yo me engaño, o ésta ha de ser la más famosa aventura que se haya visto; porque aquellos bultos negros que allí parecen deben de ser, y son, sin duda, algunos encantadores que llevan hurtada alguna princesa en aquel coche, y es menester deshacer este tuerto a todo mi poderío.

- Peor será esto que los molinos de viento - dijo Sancho -. Mire, señor, que aquellos son frailes de San Benito, y el coche debe de ser de alguna gente pasajera. Mire que digo que mire bien lo que hace no sea el diablo que le engañe.

- Ya te he dicho, Sancho - respondió Don Quijote - que sabes poco de achaque de aventuras; lo que yo digo es verdad, y ahora lo verás" (I.viii.85).

Cervantes presents the movement of Don Quixote's thought very accurately. The initial speculation of "deben de ser", the quick excited progression to "y son, sin duda" followed by the necessity for action. Don Quixote goes from recognition to proclamation to deep conviction (his reply to the protestations of the friars is: "Para conmigo no hay palabras blandas; que ya yo os conozco, fementida canalla") and then to prompt action. Sancho, of course, appeals to his master to look again, to see for himself, but Don Quixote again brushes him aside as a man ignorant in matters of chivalric adventures. Indeed Don Quixote reacts to Sancho's warning as to a challenge to prove the superiority of the chivalric system of cognition over that of the senses - "y ahora lo verás". Don Quixote goes into battle to sustain his epistemological assertion over Sancho's.
In this particular case Don Quixote at first seems to win a "victory" and vindicates his version of reality. Sancho has to agree and he rushes forward to strip the unhorsed friar of his habit as legitimate spoil of battle. Don Quixote then proceeds to implement the chivalric system by asking the liberated damsel to report this deed to his lady Dulcinea at El Toboso. So far as Don Quixote is concerned his proclamatory method seems well proven, correct and amply vindicated - he has "objectively" established his assertions about the romance nature of reality over those born of Sancho's empiricism.

But if on this occasion his proclamatory method is successful it is clear that he cannot always be assured of equal success, for the simple reason that he may not recognise the signs properly or may mistake the true nature of phenomena. The books can furnish him with precedents, analogous situations and illustrations of the way the system operates, but Don Quixote, being the sole interpreter of the signs and situations he actually encounters in La Mancha, has to rely rather riskily on his own subjective judgement - he has no means ultimately of distinguishing between correct interpretations and personal wishes - therefore every time he "recognizes" chivalric situations and proclaims them as such he has to go into action not just to fulfil his enterprise but also implicitly to test his assertions and declarations. For him adventures are not only "doing good" but also inescapably the "testing-out" of his theories. There is forever in Don Quixote's headlong rush into action an element of risk, the inbuilt possibility of a wrong inter-
pretation of the chivalric signs.

Such an occasion arises in the adventures of the encamisados (I.xix) when Don Quixote and Sancho encounter a torchlit procession of terrifying figures. Cervantes actually comments that it is "una aventura, que, sin artificio alguno, verdaderamente lo parecía" (p.171). Both Sancho and Don Quixote are terrified: "Esta, sin duda Sancho, debe de ser grandísima y peligrosísima aventura..." (p.171). It then occurred to Don Quixote, says the narrator, that this was a chivalric adventure: "Figurósele que la litera eran andas donde debía de ir algún mal ferido o muerto caballero cuya venganza a él solo estaba reservada" (p.172; my emphasis). Don Quixote then rides up and challenges the people to declare their identity and their business "... o bien para castigaros del mal que fecistes, o bien para vengaros del tuerto que vos hicieron" (p.172).

One of the encamisados attempts to ride on but Don Quixote detains him. This leads to a general fracas with Don Quixote hacking and beating all the encamisados. Sancho is forced to admire his master: "Sin duda éste mi amo es tan valiente y esforzado como él dice" (p.173). For Sancho, at least on this occasion, Don Quixote's actions are proof of the truth of his statements about his moral qualities.

Alonso López tells Don Quixote of his error and the latter apologises saying they should not have appeared as they did "... que propiamente semejábanes cosa mala y del otro mundo; y así, yo no pude dejar de cumplir con mi obligación acometiéndos ..."(p.174). Don Quixote admits he was mistaken only because their appearance was confusing since it
coincided falsely with chivalric signs. Don Quixote shows here his awareness of the dangers of his misreading the signs of romance realities.

The most curious aspect of this adventure is that Don Quixote feels he was obliged to intervene - "que no había sido en su mano dejar de haberlo hecho" (p.175). Don Quixote excludes the possibility that he may have no business interfering at all as is illustrated by his false antithesis: "o bien para castigaros... o bien para vengaros". He does not question the fact that he has to respond to any situation which he judges to have romance possibilities, all that has to be settled is what sort of chivalric action is required.

This false antithesis occurs elsewhere. We encountered it above in the Benedictine friars episode: "o yo me engaño o esta ha de ser la más famosa aventura que se haya visto..." (I.viii.85). Don Quixote's use of the antithesis does not allow for the possibility that the event might not constitute an adventure, he just concentrates on what sort of adventure it will turn out to be. Similarly when he says: "O yo sé poco o este castillo es encantado... (I.xvii.151) he does not ask himself whether the inn is a castle but only whether the castle is enchanted. Don Quixote reasons from unexamined assumptions - that the inn is a castle, that a chance encounter is an adventure - because any phenomenon which happens to remind him of chivalry is taken to be a sign of a latent romance reality. No matter how confused or equivocal these signs eventually become Don Quixote remains within the world of chivalric assumptions, reasoning, and rationalizing and persisting in his refusal
or inability to accept the evidence of his senses over and above his chivalric insights and preconceptions.

The most extreme of these instances is the episode of the enchanted Moor (I.xvii.152-4). Don Quixote and Sancho are recovering from the drubbing they have received from the muleteer in the previous chapter. Don Quixote then tells Sancho that the treasure of Maritornes' beauty must have been reserved for another and guarded by some enchanted Moor. At this point the cuadrillero enters and lights a candle. Sancho asks Don Quixote if that could be the enchanted Moor. Don Quixote replies that it cannot because those who are enchanted are invisible. The cuadrillero asks Don Quixote how he is feeling but unfortunately addresses him patronisingly as "buen hombre" which annoys Don Quixote who replies with an outraged insult. The cuadrillero then hits him over the head with his candlestick which provokes Sancho into saying that without a doubt ("sin duda") that must be the enchanted Moor, and Don Quixote replies:-

"Así es... y no hay que hacer caso destas cosas de encantamentos ni hay para qué tomar cólera ni enojo con ellas; que, como son invisibles y fantásticas, no hallaremos de quien vengarnos, aunque más lo procuremos" (I.xvii.153).

He then asks Sancho to fetch the "châtelain" and bring some ingredients to make the balsam of Fierabrás, "... que en verdad que creo que lo he menester ahora porque se me va mucha sangre de la herida que esta fantasma me ha dado" (I.xvii.153).

Not even the physical reality of pain and blood is sufficient to puncture Don Quixote's chivalric preconceptions. To the reader the explanation of these events as being the work of an enchanted Moor appears to be an extreme rational-
isation of a straightforward situation, but for Don Quixote, the chivalric explanations are immediately more persuasive and in some senses square perversely with his previous experience - "no hallaremos de quién vengarnos aunque más lo procuremos".

In Don Quixote's view the appearances of the world, fallen as it is, are made even more confusing by the mischief of the evil enchanters who are expressly confusing the chivalric signs in order to make his enterprise of restoration doubly difficult. As he says to Sancho who complains that the helmet of Mambrino is really a barber's basin:

"¿Que es posible que en cuanto ha que andas conmigo no has echado de ver que todas las cosas de los caballeros andantes parecen quimeras, necedades y desatinos, y que son todas hechas al revés? Y no porque sea ello así, sino porque andan entre nosotros siempre una caterva de encantadores que todas nuestras cosas mudan y truecan, y las vuelven según su gusto, y según tienen la gana de favorecernos o destruirlnos; y así, eso, que a ti te parece bacía de barbero, me parece a mí yelmo de Mambrino, y a otro le parecerá otra cosa" (I.xxv.239).

The effect, therefore, of the work of the enchanters is to make everything topsy-turvy and thereby produce an apparent relativism and perspectivism in the world of phenomena, but Don Quixote is quick to point out that it does not follow from this that there is not a single unified reality behind it all: the enchanters' intention is "hacer que parezca bacía a todos lo que real y verdaderamente es yelmo de Mambrino" (p.239).34

Here, once again, Don Quixote has been forced back by circumstances onto his basic chivalric premises, which he can only reiterate baldly without any objective proof that the basin really is, despite appearances, the helmet of Mambrino. Don
Quixote is in the very difficult position of claiming to be the sole perceiver of the truth; but of course, for the age of chivalry to be restored, the whole chivalric system must be made to work independently of his actions and claims. In the Sierra Morena Don Quixote attempts to set the chivalric system in motion by imitating the penance of Amadís or Roldán. The concept of imitation in this case takes on a particular meaning, it is a form of spiritual exercise. However, at bottom, Don Quixote is imitating Amadís in the hope that by acting like him he will eventually come to be like him. Since actions in the chivalric world betoken interior spiritual essences and moral values, by successfully imitating a chivalric hero one may come to possess similar qualities. In his imitation Don Quixote seems to be attempting to reproduce effectively in the present Iron Age a sequence of events, a chain of causality, which we have previously encountered in Yvain and Amadís.35

In both these romances the hero is cut off from the love of his lady; in the case of Yvain because he broke his promise to Laudine, and in the case of Amadís because of a misunderstanding which arose between him and Oriana. In each case the knight retires to a wilderness, mourns the loss of his love, and then eventually wins back the lady's love by acquiring glory and fame through a series of feats which demonstrate his real worth. The sequence can be broken down into the following essential components:-
mutual love. The lady "reads" love

sequence is a form of circuit of spiritual energy which is interrupted at point (B) but which is gradually reconnected when the lady, who is the source of the knight's energy, recognises the true worth of the hero and responds to his love again.

In the case of Don Quixote, however, he can only intervene at point (C) by declaring that he loves Dulcinea and then at best move to point (D), and acquire "fama". The crucial step is that between (D) and (E). Don Quixote may attempt to acquire fame but this must be recognised by Dulcinea and she must return his love. The purpose of Don Quixote's penance then is to invite this response from Dulcinea in an effort, not to restore the circuit, but merely to put one into operation. He therefore appeals to Sancho to watch his actions closely: "... toma bien en la memoria lo que aquí me verás hacer, para que lo cuentes y recites a la causa total de todo ello" (I.xxv.240). Here Don Quixote unwittingly exposes the flaw in his endeavour: Dulcinea is not the real cause of the proposed sequence of events, she has merely been declared to be such by him.

Sancho has already spotted the mistake and has pointed
out to Don Quixote that the other knights at least had a cause, a reason, for their suffering but what cause has Don Quixote to go mad? Don Quixote replies that whether there is a real cause or no is immaterial for his purposes, because "el toque está desatinar sin ocasión y dar a entender a mi dama que, si en seco hago esto, ¿qué hiciera en mojado?" (p.238). For Don Quixote the actual cause is not as important as getting through to Dulcinea, making her recognise him, and thereby eliciting some response from her.

Don Quixote is aware that (A) and (B) are absent from his proposed circuit; in other words, he has merely declared that he is in love, but if he can get a favourable reply from Dulcinea it will in effect provide him with an independent, objective token that his proclaimed love-service is indeed grounded in objective truth. Hence his concern to get Sancho to visit Dulcinea and describe his actions so that she can "read" the signs and respond.

The irony is that, so far at least as Don Quixote is concerned, the circuit does come into operation. The first sign of this is the fact that Dorotea in her disguise as the princess Micomicona claims to have come from afar to seek out Don Quixote de la Mancha whose fame has spread abroad (p.294). Don Quixote, at last, is seeing independent unsolicited evidence of his reputation spreading far afield as he desires and as it is prescribed in the books. For the first time another character has, without prompting, recognised Don Quixote for what he has declared himself to be.

Later when he questions Sancho about his meeting with Dulcinea, Sancho replies that it went well and reports
that Dulcinea wishes to see Don Quixote and that the Biscayan did in fact report to her although the galley slaves had not yet done so (I.xxxi.313). Don Quixote says: "Todo va bien hasta agora", and so great is his satisfaction that he disregards or rationalizes away the degrading details Sancho intersperses in his reports about Dulcinea's rustic ways, for these can be dismissed as the ignorant squire's mistakes and they count for very little against the most welcome news that Sancho has not only accepted Aldonza as the lady Dulcinea but that the girl has actually responded to his overtures in the manner of a chivalric princess. Her ideal potential now seems to be transpiring in actuality. The process of her transformation seems to be in train.

Now like Yvain or Amadís before him, Don Quixote appears to be deliciously torn, as all true knights should be, between two chivalric duties: "Por una parte, me acosa y fatiga el deseo de ver a mi señora, por otra me incita y llama la prometida fe y la gloria que he de alcanzar en esta empresa" (i.e. the killing of the giant who has usurped Princess Micomicona's rightful place) (I.xxxi.314). Sancho, who is lying, tries nervously to persuade him that he should perform the latter feat first. Don Quixote agrees because that would only increase his renown even more before meeting his lady.

After this episode Don Quixote is enthusiastic and very much more confident. It now seems to matter less to him that appearances are being mischievously turned upside down by enchanters because at last there are others who, it appears, share his chivalric vision and interests. When Sancho tries to tell him after the battle of the wineskins that Princess Micomicona
is really Dorotea, Don Quixote is puzzled until Dorotea assures him that "... la misma que ayer fui me soy hoy" (p.384). This satisfies Don Quixote who blames Sancho for sowing "disparates" in his head and confusing things. Then, after they have finished a meal Don Quixote is moved to say in wonderment:

"Verdaderamente, si bien se considera, señores míos, grandes e inauditas cosas ven los que profesan la orden de la andante caballería. Si no, ¿cuál de los vivientes habrá en el mundo que ahora por la puerta deste castillo entrará, y de la suerte que estamos nos viere, que juzgue y crea que nosotros somos quien somos? ¿Quién podrá decir que esta señora que está ami lado es la gran reina que todos sabemos, y que soy aquel Caballero de la Triste Figura que anda por ahí en boca de la fama? Ahora no hay que dudar, sino que esta arte y ejercicio excede a todas aquellas y aquellos que los hombres inventaron ..." (I.xxxvii.388).

Comforted by the assurance of talking to a gathering of chivalric cognoscenti, Don Quixote allows himself to express amazement at the marvels of a chivalry which permit the glories of the truth to be so camouflaged as to appear humdrum. Don Quixote concedes that only he and other educated people are privy to the truth, which in consequence has to be defended from travesty by enchanters or from misinterpretation by a cowardly, vulgar ignoramus like Sancho. But if in this episode Don Quixote is confident that others as well as he can see through both the inaccurate appearances of the Iron Age and the added confusion wrought by enchanters, he is soon enough reminded that not everybody shares this privileged insight. At the inn, the barber, from whom he had previously won the helmet of Mambrino and allowed Sancho to take the harness of his horse "con ligítima y licita posesión" (p.457), returns to reclaim his basin and packsaddle. Don Quixote, naturally, is opposed to this frontal assault on his account of reality, and turns to his cultivated companions to
declare whether the objects are the helmet of Mambrino and a harness, or a barber's basin and an ass's packsaddle. His appeal to Dorotea, Fernando, the priest and the other barber is based on his confidence that they too understand the workings of chivalry and perceive reality correctly. But Sancho realises the hazards of Don Quixote's approach; mere proclamations of the nature of reality will not suffice:

"- ¡Pardiez, señor - dijo Sancho -, si no tenemos otra prueba de nuestra intención que la que vuestra merced dice, tan bácia es el yelmo de Malino como el jaez deste buen hombre albarda!" (I.xliv.457).

Don Quixote allows that wicked enchanters may be travestying the forms of truth yet again, especially in this castle where, as he points out (p.459), he has previously suffered various enchantments, but he entrusts the final judgement to his companions for the following reason:-

"Quizá por no ser armados caballeros como yo lo soy, no tendrán que ver con vuestras mercedes los encantamientos deste lugar, y tendrán los entendimientos libres, y podrán juzgar de las cosas deste castillo como ellas son real y verdaderamente, y no como a mí me parecen" (I.xlv.460).

Now this statement is not an admission that one man's view is as good as another's. Don Quixote merely defers to the judgement of the other chivalric cognoscenti who are quite possibly unaffected by the enchantments of the castle and who may finally scotch the importunate claims of the wretched barber. As Sancho points out, Don Quixote has again been thrown back on mere self-assertion. However, since he has previously been gratified to find that Dorotea and the others appear to see reality his way, he tries to establish the chivalric view objectively by referring to their perceptions as a rhetorical concession to the doubts of "ignorantes" such
as Sancho and the barber.

When Dorotea and the others declare his version to be the correct one Don Quixote is confirmed in his beliefs and he magnanimously puts an end to the whole chaotic muddle:

"Finalmente, el rumor se apaciguó por entonces, la albarda se quedó por jaez hasta el día del juicio, y la báscia por yelmo y la venta por castillo en la imaginación de don Quijote" (I.xlv.463).

Don Quixote remains hermetically sealed within the circularity of his chivalric vision while the empirical truth of the situation is recalled when the priest secretly pays the wronged barber for the loss of his property (p.466). Both versions of reality remain tangential to and unaffected by each other.

The significance of this episode is not that Don Quixote makes concessions to other people's version of reality, he does not; it is rather that he accepts that armed combat may not be a universally recognized method of establishing truth thanks to the tricks of the evil enchanters. He will have, therefore, to find additional ways of securing his version of things. In this instance he appeals for corroboration to other chivalric "experts", in Part II he will seek other ways.

For the rest of Part I, however, he remains unable to emerge from subjective assertions and logical circularity. He reaches his lowest point when he is carried back home in the cage and finds himself arguing with Sancho about whether he is truly enchanted. His arguments are clever, and not without consistency: Don Quixote says he is a knight errant, he knows he cannot move, therefore, because he has never read that knights can be immobilised other than by enchantment, he must be enchanted (pp.474and 491-2). This reasoning is not defective in itself so long as one is agreed on the premise
that Don Quixote is a true knight errant and therefore subject
to the conditions of knight errantry such as they are portrayed
in the romances. If this is accepted, his arguments become
valid. However, since Sancho does not seem to accept it or at
least is sceptical of that premise, Don Quixote is again
forced back into plain assertions: "Yo sé y tengo para mí que
voy encantado, y esto me basta para la seguridad de mi conciencia"
(I.xlix.492). Consequently he is condemned merely to reiterate
his belief in his own intrinsic worth and in the books of
chivalry to the sceptical Canon:

"De mí sé decir que después que soy caballero andante
soy valiente, comedido, liberal, biencriado,
generoso, cortés, atrevido, blando, paciente,
sufridor de trabajos, de prisiones, de encantos...
(I.l.501).

This is all very well but he should be able to demonstrate
this fact and not merely affirm it. Don Quixote is very
much alive to the need to make these moral values shine forth
through heroic actions, and so:

"... pienso, por el valor de mi brazo, favoreciéndome
el cielo y no me siendo contraria la fortuna,
en pocos días verme rey de algún reino, adonde
pueda mostrar el agradecimiento y liberalidad que
mi pecho encierra" (I.l.501).

By the end of Part I Don Quixote is aware that his
enterprise to make spiritual values transpire on the surface
of the world is in jeopardy. He has been unable to restore the
chivalric system securely. Even his own moral qualities
remain half-submerged beneath the appearances wilfully dis-
torted by enchanters. Good intentions are not enough, they
have to be translated into effective chivalric action. As
he says himself: "... el agradecimiento que sólo consiste
en el deseo es cosa muerta, como es muerta la fe sin obras" (I.1.502).

To sum up, in Part I Don Quixote has tried to restore the world of romance by various classic means - armed combat, the seeking of adventure, the imitation of romance heroes, the veneration of a lady. So far, only his penance in Sierra Morena has produced hopeful signs that Aldonza is responding to him in her true romance character as Dulcinea. Increasingly, however, he has met with opposition from envious enchanters who not only thwart his plans but also encourage people ignorant in chivalric matters like Sancho to employ empirical arguments in order to challenge his assertions about romance. The knight attempts to stave off these arguments, even resorting to faulty reasoning at times. Nevertheless he is aware that such verbal defence is insufficient, other than as a rhetorical ploy to gain time until he can make the crucial transition from verbal declarations of belief to the concrete realities of action.

(iv) Don Quixote's career in Part II.

In Part II we shall see how Don Quixote becomes even more chary of verbal persuasion and seeks to head off opposition until his fortunes change and effective chivalric action becomes possible once again. At the beginning of Part I Don Quixote set out to transform the misleading appearances of the world into their ideal forms by resurrecting chivalric practices. Gradually, however, he was to learn that, superimposed upon this already confused reality, there was another stratum of confusion created by wicked enchanters which so
frustrated his intentions that he was rendered inactive and utterly incapable of demonstrating the hidden essences of which he spoke.

One major change in Part II is that Don Quixote is aware that it is not sufficient for him to proclaim the nature of reality because he will have to reckon with the active opposition of these ubiquitous enchanters. Moreover adventures in themselves will not be enough to demonstrate the underlying chivalric realities, for Don Quixote cannot any longer be sure that what he takes to be chivalric signs have not been deliberately placed there by enchanters to dupe him. In Part II, therefore, Don Quixote is more circumspect about chivalric proclamations, and he will concentrate more on seeking authoritative transcendental endorsements of his romance aspirations, the first of these, for example, being his journey to El Toboso to seek Dulcinea's blessing. In other words, the enchanters have forced Don Quixote to deflect his efforts away from directly restoring the age of chivalry towards a quest for supernatural proofs that he is destined to fulfil his task. He has been obliged to make a decisive shift, so to speak, from a proclamatory attitude to a more tentative, heuristic one. Nevertheless his lunatic self-absorption is exacerbated by the alleged enchantment of Dulcinea at the very start of Part II. Don Quixote is thenceforward more intensely preoccupied with her disenchantment than with anything else for the rest of the novel. But he never loses confidence in chivalric procedures, and refuses to compromise by resorting to empirical methods. Indeed, as we
shall see, Don Quixote spends much of his time in Part II still relentlessly attempting to combat the empiricism of Sancho and others, and trying to cast truth in genuine chivalric moulds. The greater incidence in Part II of dreams, oracles, prophecies and other supernatural paraphernalia rather than the "aventuras de encrucijadas" of Part I, shows, in my view, that Cervantes was striking deeper into the heart of the romance process with his parody. His irony is aimed now at the most basic premises of romance: that there is direct intercourse between the material and spiritual worlds, and that the destiny of the hero is guided by Providence. Without these assumptions, as we have seen in previous chapters, romance will founder in a chaos of destructive irony, intentional duplicity and linguistic indeterminacy.

At the start of his third sally Don Quixote decides to go to El Toboso to see Dulcinea. He is here implementing the decision he took in Sierra Morena, after Sancho returned from his embassy to her and confirmed that Aldonza was beginning to behave like a princess of romance:

"... allí tomaré la bendición y buena licencia de la sin par Dulcinea; con la cual licencia pienso y tengo por cierto de acabar y dar felice cima a toda peligrosa aventura, porque ninguna cosa desta vida hace más valiente a los caballeros andantes que verse favorecidos de sus damas" (II.viii.590).

The journey to see Dulcinea, according to Don Quixote, is virtually a prerequisite for the happy fulfillment of his enterprise. He must win her favour as a proper chivalric impetus to embark upon his adventures with courage and good spirits.

When they enter El Toboso, Don Quixote is eager to find where Dulcinea lives. But in the dark they fail to
come across anything that looks like a palace. Sancho grows nervous lest his master discover his lie, and asks him to be allowed to look for the palace on his own because, having only seen the place once before, he cannot quite remember where it is. After all, he says, even Don Quixote himself cannot find it even though he must have been there thousands of times. This taunt exasperates the knight:

"Tú me harás desesperar, Sancho - dijo don Quijote -. Ven acá, hereje: ¿no te he dicho mil veces que en todos los días de mi vida no he visto a la sin par Dulcinea, ni jamás atravesé los umbrales de su palacio, y que sólo estoy enamorado de oídas y de la gran fama que tiene de hermosa y discreta?" (I.ix.599).

Why does Don Quixote lose patience with Sancho here? Surely because the ignorant squire has still not grasped the basic point of the whole chivalric enterprise: Don Quixote had set out to transform Aldonza Lorenzo into her potential ideal self, the peerless Dulcinea. Sancho has previously claimed to have had an audience with Dulcinea, whereas he, Don Quixote, having seen the peasant girl Aldonza barely four times, has never actually set eyes on Aldonza transfigured into the lady Dulcinea. This is precisely what he has come to witness in El Toboso, and his use of the word "palacio" clearly indicates that he is referring to the regal Dulcinea as opposed to the rustic Aldonza. It follows therefore that his love for Dulcinea is not based on ocular evidence but on something that approximates to hearsay or renown, it relies as always on a form of inspired chivalric intuition that beneath her humble appearance Aldonza is really a beautiful princess. 40

Far from trying to confuse the issue, let alone lying, as some critics have suggested, Don Quixote is here scrupulously spelling out the truth of the matter to the obtuse Sancho, who nonetheless proceeds to take these serious questions
rather too flippantly when he says that "también fue de oídas la vista y la respuesta que le truje" (p.599). As usual, from Don Quixote's point of view, Sancho begins to play with words and lose sight of basic truths. To make matters worse, an omen cuts short these arguments; a voice singing a heroic ballad is suddenly heard and the knight interprets it as an adverse chivalric augury. But the peasant who was singing the ballad is a stranger to the town and is unable to tell them the whereabouts of Dulcinea's palace. Don Quixote is naturally disappointed and Sancho, sensing danger, tries a second time to get his master out of the village so that in pretending to carry out the search on his own he can gain time to think of something to cover up his deception.

Luis Rosales has interpreted the whole scene as indicating that the mad knight is deliberately seeking to be deceived so as not to have to face up to the implications of the non-existence of Dulcinea.41 I would agree that here Cervantes has mischievously given us just a hint that Don Quixote is possibly protecting himself from disappointment, especially when he waits for nightfall before entering the village. But in the context of the knight's initial eagerness to find the palace, his apprehensive sensitivity to the significance of the ballad, his understandable irritation and frustration over Sancho's defective recollection of the place, it is psychologically plausible that he should now prefer to give in to Sancho's repeated request that the search be left to him, especially since day is about to break and, in any case, it might seem unchivalrous to present
himself unannounced before Dulcinea without first doing her the courtesy of sending his squire to ask her permission for an audience. Rosales, I feel, greatly overstates the extent of Don Quixote's collusion with Sancho in order to hang upon this exaggeration the mistaken view that in Part II Don Quixote is wilfully credulous and deliberately predisposing himself to being deceived by others. The next chapter of the novel effectively disproves Rosales' "engaño buscado" hypothesis by demonstrating unequivocally that Don Quixote is not acting in bad faith over the problem of Dulcinea.

When Sancho returns from El Toboso and says that he has seen Dulcinea (p.605), Don Quixote naturally becomes excited and overjoyed. But Dulcinea turns out to be a peasant girl on an ass; Don Quixote is broken-hearted and says to Sancho with immense disappointment:

"Sancho, ¿qué te parece cuán mal quisto soy de encantadores? Y mira hasta dónde se estiende su malicia y la ojeriza que me tienen, pues me han querido privar del contento que pudiera darme ver en su ser a mi señora. En efecto, yo nací para ejemplo de desdichados, y para ser blanco y terrero donde tomen la mira y asienten las flechas de la mala fortuna" (II.x.608).

However, the interesting point is that here Don Quixote sees the girl as she is, and does not play along with Sancho by consolingly fooling himself into thinking that she looks like a princess. 42 Don Quixote is not play-acting here, his attempts at being a knight errant must clearly be genuine, not hopeful self-deception or make-believe. 43 He accepts the empirical reality, even though it is so wounding, because, unlike the windmills or flocks of sheep, he has not himself recognized and proclaimed the chivalric character of the peasant girl. Such a proclamation comes, paradoxically, from
Sancho, and its gross inconsistency with the style of the romances must have immediately alerted Don Quixote to the probability of further mischief from enchanters. But because Sancho insists that he can see her, Don Quixote concludes that Dulcinea must have been enchanted in such a way that only he sees her as a repulsive peasant whereas others see her as he knows her to be - a princess (p.607). Therefore Don Quixote is in the horrific position of depending faute de mieux upon Sancho to tell him about the real Dulcinea in circumstances where he himself has been prevented from seeing "... en su ser a mi señora" (p.608). Whereas previously he could instruct Sancho in the "achaque de caballería", now there is a reversal of rôles and Don Quixote has to rely on Sancho's word.44

Naturally enough Sancho begins to get it wrong. As in the earlier Sierra Morena episode, Don Quixote quizzes him on what Dulcinea looks like, and he begins to give provocatively inappropriate answers partly through malice and partly through incompetence. Don Quixote, for example, objects to Sancho's comparison of Dulcinea's eyes to pearls, saying that her eyes must be like emeralds with two celestial arches for eyebrows and the pearls should rather be transferred to her teeth because Sancho must surely have got her eyes mixed up with her teeth. To which Sancho archly replies: "Todo puede ser... porque también me turbó a mí su hermosura como a v.m. su fealdad" (p.611). Since Don Quixote is in the unfortunate and dangerous position of having to rely upon Sancho's sensory evidence to support his beliefs about Dulcinea, he directs his efforts to finding other more reputable, non-empirical corroborations of his chivalric vision. He suggests they
try an experiment ("una experiencia", p.611) to discover if the
knights and giants he defeats can see Dulcinea in her
true form. And so, after his victory over the Caballero
de los Espejos (II.xiv.639), he imposes on him the tradition-
al chivalric terms that he seek out and report to Dulcinea.
This time however he adds that Carrasco should return and
seek him (Don Quixote) out by following the trail of his
feats and report what happened in her presence (p.639).
This is a purely chivalric, non-empirical experiment designed
once more to elicit an independent response from his
lady.45 One should note here that Don Quixote tries at the
earliest opportunity to extricate his vision of Dulcinea
from its unsatisfactory dependence on Sancho's eyewitness
testimony.

The inability to see Aldonza in her true state as
Dulcinea was in effect a blow to the heart for Don Quixote.
He now becomes disillusioned and confused, having only
other people's assertions and alleged sensory evidence to
nourish his fundamental belief that Aldonza is really a
princess. For example, when Don Diego de Miranda's son,
Don Lorenzo, casts doubt on whether there are or have ever
been knights errant in the world, Don Quixote wearily replies
that he is mistaken but that he knows from experience that
it is impossible to prove this fact to sceptics:

"...y por parecerme a mí que si el cielo milagrosamente
no les da a entender la verdad de que los hubo y de que
los hay, cualquier trabajo que se tome ha de
ser en vano, como muchas veces me lo ha
mostrado la experiencia, no quiero detenerme
agora en sacar a v.m. del error que con los
muchos tiene" (II.xviii.665).

Don Quixote's weariness is of course a far cry from his
tireless enthusiasms during most of Part I but there are no
traces of actual doubt in him. He still considers Don Lorenzo's attitude to be an error and remains confident that his chivalric vision is correct. However, by this stage, he seems to be chary of argument or verbal persuasion; he must rely on more substantial verifications that will conform with chivalric tradition.

A suitable opportunity arises a few chapters later when Don Quixote boldly decides to explore the cave of Montesinos (II.xxii). The whole episode is shrouded in mystery if not actual mystification on the part of both the narrator and Don Quixote. Don Quixote emerges from the cave "desperezándose, bien como si de algún grave y profundo sueño despertara" (p.701). His relation of the experiences and visions that he saw there possesses all the characteristics of an hallucination or a dream: a jumble of associations, a mixture of distorting fantasy and realistic crudity, delusions of heroic grandeur and wish-fulfilment. The editor, following the strictest standards of historical rectitude, recommends that the chapter be taken as apocryphal by the reader because of its "impossibility and enormity". Don Quixote describes how he fell into a deep sleep while sitting on a ledge halfway down the cave and then awoke to find himself in a pleasant meadow in front of a castle where he is recognized and welcomed by Montesinos himself. The latter shows Don Quixote the enchanted figures of the place who include Durandarte and Belerma, characters from Spanish pseudo-Carolingian romance. But the centrepiece of the episode occurs when Montesinos shows him the enchanted Dulcinea who is
still in the guise of a peasant lass. Don Quixote resolves to disenchant her and all the other characters who are enchanted in that nether-world.

When Sancho hears this he is convinced that Don Quixote has invented the whole thing and is totally mad. Don Quixote refuses to listen: "como te conozco Sancho ... no hago caso de tus palabras". But Sancho appeals to him to renounce these vacuous fantasies. Don Quixote replies in the usual way: "... como no estás experimentado en las cosas del mundo, todas las cosas que tienen algo de dificultad te parecen imposibles" (p.712), and he insists that the truth of what he saw "ni admite réplica ni disputa". Don Quixote is now asserting against Sancho, Sancho's own earlier assertion about the enchantment of Dulcinea. Therefore there is a clash of assertions, where Don Quixote ironically finds himself defending Sancho's former claims that Dulcinea exists and is enchanted, which the squire now appears to reject and call a fantasy. The problem is how to get beyond rival assertions onto a more secure footing. Hence Don Quixote's quest for authoritative confirmation of his chivalric vision.

The importance of the Montesinos' Cave experience for Don Quixote is that he now knows of Dulcinea's enchantment from Montesinos, a more reputable romance source than Sancho, and furthermore, he has been given the welcome responsibility of disenchanting not only Dulcinea but all the other chivalric characters that reside in the Cave.

Subsequently Don Quixote will attempt to verify the Montesinos' Cave experience at any suitable opportunity.
When he comes across the divining monkey (p.725) he consents to Sancho's suggestion that he ask it about the Montesinos episode, "puesto que me ha de quedar un no sé qué de escrúpulo" (p.727). This incident is significant because the monkey is a kind of oracular source of truth and, as such, corresponds functionally to the sign-machines and prophetic devices of the romances. It is analogous, albeit in the impoverished chivalric world that Don Quixote inhabits, to the Urgandas and Arches of Loyal Lovers of the Amadís which were the channels by which the supernatural could communicate with the temporal world. But even on this occasion Don Quixote receives unsatisfactory, equivocal replies. The monkey, according to Maese Pedro, says that "parte de las cosas que vuestra merced vio, o pasó en la dicha cueva son falsas, y parte verísímales..." (p.727). Sancho, on hearing this, turns to Don Quixote and uses the monkey's words as proof that he was right all along. Don Quixote merely replies: "Los sucesos lo dirán Sancho ... que el tiempo, descubridor de todas las cosas, no se deja ninguna que no la saque a la luz del sol aunque esté escondida en los senos de la tierra" (p.728). Don Quixote's inability to get a straight answer from the monkey and Sancho's persistent scepticism about the Montesinos vision together underline even more sharply the difference between his life and that of a conventional knight errant. In romance, preternatural harbingers of divine wishes, oracles or adventures intervened periodically in the action in a wholly spontaneous manner. Urganda la Desconocida would appear in person or send one of her damsels to the terrestrial world in order to interpret the significance of events. Amadís or Yvain
would come across an adventure that served as a revelation of some spiritual or moral truth. But Don Quixote is condemned both in Parts I and II to a strenuous search for these revelatory tests and oracular sources. In Part II, as I have said, his efforts are almost entirely concentrated on his quest for authoritative springs of romance knowledge which will unequivocally inform him about the state of Dulcinea.

The significance of the Río Ebro adventure must be seen in this context. Don Quixote comes to its pleasant shores which inspire in him a thousand thoughts of love:

"Especially fue y vino en lo que había visto en la cueva de Montesinos; que, puesto que el mono de maese Pedro le había dicho que parte de aquellas cosas eran verdad y parte mentira, él se atenía más a las verdaderas que a las mentirosas, bien al revés de Sancho, que todas las tenía por la misma mentira" (II.xxix.749-50).

It is no wonder that when he sees the abandoned boat tied to a tree he should seize that as a sign of a spontaneous adventure, an opportunity offered by Providence to reveal some new and positive turn of events in his life:

"- Has de saber, Sancho, que este barco que aquí esta, derechamente y sin poder ser otra cosa en contrario, me está llamando y convidando a que entre en él, y vaya en él a dar socorro a algún caballero, o a otra necesitada y principal persona, que debe de estar puesta en alguna grande cuita; porque este es el estilo de los libros de las historias caballerescas y de los encantadores que en ellas se entremeten y platican" (II.xxix.750).

Although this prospective adventure may not be directly related to the solution of the conundrum of Montesinos' Cave or the enchantment of Dulcinea, it represents, in its unsolicited occurrence, a possibility that the chivalric
scheme might yet begin to take effect independently of Don Quixote's subjective wishes and claims. In such an event, a successful outcome would be the best guarantee so far in Part II that things will take a decisive turn for the better and the task of restoration be achieved.

When the adventure turns out badly, Don Quixote is fairly bewildered and distressed, but his rationalisation is wholly chivalric. He does not discard the idea that the adventure was spontaneously offered by some enchanter for a knight to fulfill; he thinks that either it must be reserved for another knight or a second enchanter is frustrating the designs of the former:

"Y en esta aventura se deben de haber encontrado dos valientes encantadores, y el uno estorba lo que el otro intenta: el uno me deparó el barco, y el otro dio conmigo al través. Dios lo remedie; que todo este mundo es máquinas y trazas, contrarias unas de otras. Yo no puedo más" (II.xxix.755).

Such is the perverse confusion the evil enchanters have wrought in the world that the restoration of chivalry, difficult enough in itself, now appears to have become impossible unless God himself directly intervenes. According to Don Quixote the world is an infernal machine of malicious ruses and cunning ploys against which he is increasingly powerless. More than ever he is in need of direct divine guidance such as his chivalric predecessors enjoyed in times of crisis. However, his "Yo no puedo más" is not the cry of despair it has been taken for, it is rather Don Quixote's understandable protest that if divine aid is not forthcoming he can do but his level best; in such adverse conditions, he
can do no more; what else could be expected of him?50

Relief of a sort arrives in the next chapter when he happens upon a hunt and meets the Duke and Duchess who will introduce him to a new and more wholly chivalric stage in his life.51 Little does he suspect, of course, that this agreeable chivalric reality is an even more devious machine of tricks and deceptions created expressly to fool him. Moreover, initially at least, things do not go altogether smoothly at the Duke's castle. The Duke and Duchess subject Don Quixote to the most searching interrogation about his conception of Dulcinea in the entire novel. They focus, in effect, on the very centre of his chivalric aspiration and confront him with his most fundamental assumptions.

By referring to the public reception of Part I of Don Quixote's "history", the Duchess introduces the question of the existence of Dulcinea, saying that one can infer: "que esta tal señora no es en el mundo, sino que es dama fantástica, que vuesa merced la engendró y parió en su entendimiento, y la pintó con todas aquellas gracias y perfecciones que quiso" (II.xxxii.776). Here the Duchess must have touched a raw nerve in Don Quixote for, as we have seen, his cardinal problem is to distinguish the reality of the romance world from his own private wishes. Therefore he cannot agree that he has invented Dulcinea. On the other hand, he has so far been unable to achieve convincingly that objective distinction between wishes and reality, and his attention in Part II has been directed precisely to seeking authoritative manifestations that this is possible in spite of
the enchanters. In consequence, Don Quixote's reply is meticulously honest. He admits his difficulties with a kind of resignation: "En eso hay mucho que decir... Dios sabe si hay Dulcinea o no en el mundo, o si es fantástica, o no es fantástica; y éstas no son de las cosas cuya averiguación se ha de llevar hasta el cabo" (II.xxxii.776). This reply echoes the one he gave to Don Diego de Miranda's sceptical son on the question of whether knights errant had ever existed. There Don Quixote had pointed out that no matter how much trouble one took to persuade sceptics it would all be in vain "si el cielo milagrosamente no les da a entender la verdad de que los hubo y de que los hay" (II.xviii.665). Similarly, on the question of the existence of Dulcinea, only God really knows whether she objectively exists, and it is not the sort of knowledge one can arrive at through importunate empirical investigation of what are, in any case, for Don Quixote, the illusory appearances of a degenerate world. In the last resort, chivalric knowledge is, like grace, a gift of God. This, however, does not mean that Don Quixote simply invented Dulcinea: "Ni yo engendré ni parí a mi señora, puesto que la contemplo como conviene que sea una dama que contenga en sí las partes que puedan hacerla famosa en todas las del mundo" (II.xxxii.777). Dulcinea exists outside Don Quixote's own mind as a perfect being whom he can contemplate, as an object to which he can direct his aspirations, just as in a different though kindred context a mystic might contemplate the Godhead without incurring the charge of solipsism or self-delusion.
Don Quixote ascribes to Dulcinea a series of superlative moral and spiritual qualities which merit this dedicated, selfless service. The list is rounded off thus: "... cortés por bien criada y, finalmente, alta por linaje, a cause que sobre la buena sangre resplandece y campea la hermosura con más grados de perfección que en las hermosas humildemente nacidas". He thereby states that Dulcinea is not humbly born but is in fact a lady of good birth and noble blood.

Now this assertion is, of course, problematical. It elicits from the Duke the expected objection that even though one may concede that Dulcinea del Toboso exists and is beautiful, she surely cannot be better born than classic chivalric princesses like Oriana, Alastraítea or Madásima. How can Don Quixote claim that Dulcinea, from the village of El Toboso in La Mancha, is superior to these other ladies? To this Don Quixote replies that: "Dulcinea tiene un jirón que la puede llevar a ser reina de corona y ceptro; que el merecimiento de una mujer hermosa y virtuosa a hacer mayores milagros se estiende, y, aunque no formalmente, virtualmente tiene en sí encerradas mayores venturas" (II.xxxii.777).

In other words Dulcinea's beauty and virtue confer spiritual qualities upon her which make her the equal of a queen. But this answer must surely conflict with the former claim that Dulcinea was actually a high-born princess. Don Quixote seems to be evading the fundamental issue: is Dulcinea actually a princess or does she merely deserve to be a princess? Is his vision of Dulcinea literal or metaphorical? If the former, then surely it could be tested empirically (yet Don Quixote maintains that this is not possible), but if the latter, then there would seem to
be little point in rejecting Sancho's insistence on having seen her thresh wheat.

Nevertheless, when the Duchess challenges him on this, Don Quixote launches into a lengthy rebuttal of Sancho's account. He begins by saying that the enchanter, having tried and failed to enchant him in countless ways, turned their attentions to Dulcinea and transfigured her into a peasant threshing wheat when Sancho was sent to see her. But the wheat was not in fact wheat but oriental pearls. As proof of this truth ("para prueba desta verdad", p.778) he adduces the fact that he was unable recently to find Dulcinea's palace in El Toboso and later, when Sancho saw her in her true state, he could himself only see her as a gross and hideous peasant. Now, since he is not susceptible to enchantment it follows ("según buen discurso") that it is she who has been transformed in order that, through her, his enemies might practise a terrible revenge upon him. These arguments should effectively rebut Sancho's false assertions: "Todo esto he dicho para que nadie repare en lo que Sancho dijo del cernido ni del ahecho de Dulcinea; que pues a mí me la mudaron, no es maravilla que a él se la cambiasen" (II.xxxii.779). Although Don Quixote gives a perversely clever twist to his proof by using his own experiences to refute Sancho's, and even though he is careful to observe the forms of logical propriety in his arguments, it is nevertheless plain that his eloquence cannot conceal some very real difficulties.

In the first place his arguments do not throw light on the crucial issue of Dulcinea's status - whether it is manifest, an empirically-ascertainable condition, or merely
virtual, a spiritual potentiality as yet unrecognized by
the world. Don Quixote, if anything, inclines to the latter
explanation. His long reply to the Duchess's question seems
to be inspired solely by a desire to counter Sancho's
provocative and humiliating suggestion that Dulcinea could
have been threshing wheat when he delivered the letter.
The reason for this is that Don Quixote wants to believe
that Aldonza had at the time already been transformed into
Dulcinea, thus providing evidence that his chivalric mission
was beginning to succeed. But even so there are problems
over the question of enchantment. His basic premise that
he is immune to enchantment is rather shaky: he admits that
he has suffered enchantments before but uses the fact that
he eventually escaped from them to argue that he cannot now
be enchanted again ("quiero creer que no ha de haber otro
[encantamiento] alguno que me empeza", p. 778). This is
more of a wish than a cast-iron deduction. He nevertheless
builds on it to say that both his inability to see Dulcinea's
palace and her appearance as a peasant lass are proof that
she must be enchanted. His argument is that since he
cannot be enchanted, his failure to perceive reality in
accordance with his expectations is an indication, not that
his perception is defective, but that reality is inaccurate.
And yet even at this stage, one finds contradictions: why does
Don Quixote reject Sancho's account of a rustic Dulcinea
seen when he took the letter to her from Sierra Morena if Don
Quixote himself was not present to verify it, but accepts
Sancho's vision of the regal Dulcinea in El Toboso when
he himself saw her as a peasant? We know that Don Quixote
does not necessarily go by the evidence of his senses but he seems here to base his arguments on Sancho's ocular evidence in the second case in order to discount the equally empirical testimony of Sancho's eyes in the first. The answer to these conundrums is, of course, that Don Quixote does not found his vision of truth on any form of empirical evidence whatsoever: his test is whether empirical reality meshes with chivalric reality. After all, the basis of his madness lies in his belief that the touchstone of truth is the code of chivalry as depicted in the romances. In this particular case, Sancho's first account is rejected because it undermines the otherwise gratifying testimony that Aldonza had been transformed into Dulcinea, while the second account is defended because it confirms this all-important transfiguration. Don Quixote's arguments only begin to make some sense if one reckons with this basic criterion of truth, and understands his overriding desire to establish Dulcinea's existence as being independent of his subjective assertions. Here, when he has been put on the spot by the Duke and Duchess, he tries his best to explain his ideas but without any confidence that he will persuade his interrogators. Thus his arguments may rest upon faulty or unexamined premises and proceed by defective deductions, false antitheses and unwarranted analogies but he compensates for this by his fascinating eloquence and dialectical wit.

The debate with the Duke and Duchess about the nature of Dulcinea is yet another failed attempt by Don Quixote to establish his chivalric point of view through
argument. But Don Quixote himself, as we know, is aware by this stage that chivalric truth cannot be demonstrated through verbal argument alone, it must be accompanied by practical proof in the form of a successful adventure or a supernatural sign. In the early days he was able to use a chivalric triumph such as his victory over the Benedictine friars (I.viii.85) to uphold his version of reality against Sancho's. In Part II, these victories and adventures are no longer vouchsafed him, and such signs as he receives from beyond, like the Cave of Montesinos vision or the Río Ebro adventure, are equivocal or controversial. He is therefore forced to retreat to a more elementary stage of his enterprise: he now has to establish that it is indeed he who has been selected to restore the age of chivalry and not another. Whereas he blithely assumed in Part I that he was competent to restore the system of chivalry, now in the middle of Part II, thanks to the enchanters who have corrupted the very source of his powers, he begins to fear that his efforts may be frustrated.

In the short term Don Quixote's fears are allayed somewhat unexpectedly by the elaborate chivalric farce mounted by the Duke to delude him. A cortège appears bearing some famous wizards of romance - Lirgandeo, Alquife, Arcaláus and Merlin (II.xxxiv.793-4). This last addresses Don Quixote directly and prophesies that Dulcinea will be disenchanted when Sancho inflicts 3,300 lashes on his buttocks (II.xxxv.798). Sancho is exhorted to accomplish this by "Dulcinea" herself who appears next to Merlin in
the carriage. Don Quixote is taken in and determines to have Sancho perform the task willy-nilly.

But if Don Quixote is presented with all these unsolicited signs of a romance reality, they get him no further in his actual project of restoration, which can only begin in earnest with the disenchantment of Dulcinea. In this respect, Don Quixote has been made entirely dependent upon Sancho, whom he now seems to regard with some resentment. For example, after allegedly flying through the heavens upon Clavileño, Sancho claims to have reached the "siete cabrillas" (II.xli.836) and even dismounted to play with them. This meets with general scepticism, not least from Don Quixote who haughtily assures the audience that this is impossible because they would have had to traverse the region of fire: "pues no nos asuramos, o Sancho miente, o Sancho sueña" (II.xli.836). Since Sancho's protestations and absurd explanations cut no ice with the Duke and Duchess, Don Quixote is delighted to find that Sancho is in a position identical to his own after he emerged from the Cave of Montesinos. With a kind of vindictive pleasure he is able to whisper in his squire's ear: "Sancho, pues vos queréis que os crea lo que habéis visto en el cielo, yo quiero que vos me creáis a mí lo que vi en la cueva de Montesinos. Y no os digo más" (II.xli.837). The terse exultancy of the last phrase indicates, in my opinion, that Don Quixote believes he has demonstrated to Sancho the ineffectiveness of verbal persuasion or even empirical assurances if one's audience is not predisposed to believe.

But Don Quixote's tactical advantage over Sancho is
shown to be ephemeral when Sancho is awarded an island to govern. In the advice of master to squire Don Quixote muses on the ironies of Fortune: "Yo, que en mi buena suerte te tenía librada la paga de tus servicios, me veo en los principios de aventajarme, y tú, antes de tiempo, contra la ley del razonable discurso, te vees premiado de tus deseos" (II.xlii.839). This ruefulness can again be observed in the adventure of the four statues of Saints George, Martin, James and Paul where he says: "Ellos conquistaron el cielo a fuerza de brazos, porque el cielo padece fuerza, y yo hasta agora no sé lo que conquisto a fuerza de mis trabajos; pero si mi Dulcinea del Toboso saliese de los que padece, mejorándose mi ventura y adobándose el juicio, podría ser que encaminase mis pasos por mejor camino del que llevo" (II.lviii.955).

However, this encounter is taken by Don Quixote as an omen that there will be a favourable turn in his fortunes: "Así que, Sancho, el haber encontrado con estas imágenes ha sido para mi felicísimo acontecimiento" (II.lviii.956).

The omen again is remarkably inaccurate. In his very next adventure, when he challenges a group of horsemen driving a herd of bulls to accept that the counterfeit nymphs of the mock Arcadia are the fairest ladies in the world, with the sole exception of Dulcinea, he is ignominiously unhorsed and trampled by the bulls. After this he is extremely heavy-hearted ("No comía don Quijote, de puro pesaroso...", p.963; "... llevado de sus imaginaciones, no se acordaba de llevar el pan a la boca...", p.964) and he bitterly bemoans the terrible Fortune which has had him suffer such
painful humiliation by bulls at the very point in his career where he should have been lauded and acclaimed. Don Quixote feels he is getting absolutely nowhere and that the only solution is to persuade Sancho to flagellate himself so as to disenchant Dulcinea once and for all.

With the Enchanted Head Don Quixote asks three questions: "Dime tó, el que respondes: ¿ fue verdad o fue sueño lo que cuento que me pasó en la cueva de Montesinos? Serán ciertos los azotes de Sancho mi escudero? Tendrá efecto el desencanto de Dulcinea?" (II.lxii.995). The Head replies: " - A lo de la cueva; hay mucho que decir: de todo tiene; los azotes de Sancho irán de espacio; el desencanto de Dulcinea llegará a debida ejecución." "No quiero saber mas - dijo Don Quijote -; que como yo vea a Dulcinea desencantada, haré cuenta que vienen de golpe todas las venturas que acertare a desear" (p.995). All Don Quixote wants to know is whether Dulcinea will be disenchantment and, since the magic head seems to confirm that this will happen, he is now much more sure that at some future date his desires will be realized - everything depends on Dulcinea of course.

And so Don Quixote remains secure in his chivalric vision. Dulcinea, the lynchpin of the entire system, is not irredeemably lost because Don Quixote now possesses both a method of disenchanting her and transcendental assurances that eventually she will be disenchanted. When, therefore, he is defeated by the Caballero de la Blanca Luna he adamantly refuses to concede that any other lady is more beautiful than the peerless Dulcinea, and this stand is equivalent to a
refusal to accept that the chivalric vision is in any way doomed - only temporarily frustrated by the work of evil enchaners. It is important to note that the "defeat" of Don Quixote at the hands of the Caballero de la Blanca Luna does not constitute the destruction of the chivalric world. If anything it is a confirmation of its laws. Sansón Carrasco has had to adopt Don Quixote's romance assumptions in order to bring him back home; that is to say, he has achieved this end only by playing according to chivalric rules. It is Sansón Carrasco who has had to acquiesce in the exigencies of Don Quixote's romance madness.

As Don Quixote returns home having promised to give up arms only for a year he may be disillusioned by the defeat - he is no longer the invincible romance hero of his earlier vision - but he is in no way "saner" than before. Moreover he can ascribe his defeat to Dulcinea's enchantment and the consequent confusion wrought by the enchaners in their conspiracy of envy to upset him. He places all his hopes for the restoration of chivalry on Dulcinea's disenchantment and will not lose faith in her nor yield in his despair to Altisidora's advances. He rebuffs these latter decisively with these words: "... yo nací para ser de Dulcinea del Toboso, y los hados, si los hubiera, me dedicaron para ella; y pensar que otra alguna hermosura ha de ocupar el lugar que en mi alma tiene es pensar lo imposible" (II.lxx.1044).

Later, when he is exhorting Sancho to whip himself so as to hasten the disenchantment of Dulcinea, he says: "Si
ella vuelve al ser perdido, que no es posible sino que vuelva, su desdicha habrá sido dicha, y mi vencimiento, felicísimo triunfo" (II.Ixxi.1048; my emphasis). Strangely enough, the meeting with Altisidora has revived his hopes about the disenchantment of Dulcinea. The parodic "death" and "resurrection" of the lovelorn Altisidora through the pinching and pricking of Sancho seems an indication to Don Quixote that his squire has special curative powers: "... da... muchas gracias al cielo por haber puesto tal virtud en tu persona, que con el martirio della desencantes los encantados y resucites los muertos" (II.lxix.1037). Not even when Altisidora herself, in a fit of pique, tells him that all that occurred was feigned ("Todo lo que habéis visto esta noche ha sido fingido", p.1044) does Don Quixote give up hope in Sancho's powers:

"Iba el vencido y asendereado don Quijote pensativo además por una parte, y muy alegre por otra. Causaba su tristeza el vencimiento; y la alegría, el considerar en la virtud de Sancho, como lo había mostrado en la resurrección de Altisidora, aunque con algún escrúpulo se persuadía a que la enamorada doncella fuese muerta de veras" (II.lxxi.1046).

Don Quixote wants to believe that Altisidora was truly resurrected but he has a nagging doubt which, as in the case of Sancho's governorship or his being trampled by the bulls, forces him to consider the discrepancy between his actual career and the traditional career of a knight errant. This discrepancy does not make him see "reality" any clearer, it only makes him wonder whether the enchanters'
power over his life will be broken. Don Quixote has come to learn that some apparently chivalric signs are just tricks laid by his envious enemies to delude him. He is nevertheless not deterred from agreeing to pay Sancho to beat himself. Sancho's resistance to this remedy quickly melts and Don Quixote is overjoyed (II.1xxi.1048).

When they come to an inn Don Quixote recognizes it as such and not as a castle. The narrator explains that "después que le vencieron, con más juicio en todas las cosas discurría, como agora se dirá" (II.1xxi.1050). This is the only occasion where Cervantes appears to state unequivocally that Don Quixote is becoming "saner", and it is of course the one indispensable textual anchor for critics who argue for the progressive sanity of Don Quixote in Part II. But not enough attention has been given to the subordinate clause: "como agora se dirá", which could only refer to the ensuing scene where Don Quixote and Sancho see two very badly executed paintings, one of the abduction of Helen of Troy and another of Dido and Aeneas. Don Quixote makes the following comment:

"- Estas dos señoras fueron desdichadísimas, por no haber nacido en esta edad, y yo sobre todos desdichado en no haber nacido en la suya: encontrará a estos señores, ni fuera abrasada Troya, ni Cartago destruida, pues con sólo que yo matara a Paris se escusaran tantas desgracias" (II.1xxi.1051).

With this statement Don Quixote reaffirms his madness in all its primitive magnificence. He certainly has not got an inch further than when it was reported of him in Part I that: "Diera él por dar una mano de coces al traidor de Ganalón, al ama que tenfa y aun a su sobrina de añadidura"
The prime source of Don Quixote's madness was precisely his literal belief in epics and romances, which is later coupled with his desire to imitate their heroic action. These beliefs and aspirations are as undiminished in their potency at the end of the book as at the beginning.55

However, at length, Sancho fulfills Merlin's stipulations for Dulcinea's disenchantment (or so Don Quixote happily thinks) and as they return home, Don Quixote looks at every woman that passes to see if it is the disenchanted Dulcinea, "teniendo por infalible no poder mentir las promesas de Merlín" (II.lxxii.1057). When they arrive within sight of their village Sancho falls to his knees and intones a mock-heroic address to their "deseada patria" to receive him "que vuelve... si no muy rico, muy bien azotado", and to open its arms to Don Quixote "que si viene vencido de los brazos ajenos viene vencedor de sí mismo". All this highflown, bombastic talk from his squire irritates Don Quixote who says: "Déjate desas sandeces... y vamos con pie derecho a entrar en nuestro lugar, donde daremos vado a nuestras imaginaciones, y la traza que en la pastoral vida pensamos ejercitar" (II.lxxii.1057). As they enter the village Don Quixote claims to notice two omens that bode ill for his chances of seeing Dulcinea again. To the last, it should be noted, he is seeking transcendental sources of truth that will guide his future. But Sancho dispels these fears and they enter the village where they meet the priest and Sansón Carrasco to whom Don Quixote communicates his
intention to observe to the letter his promise not to take up arms for a year, "bien así como caballero andante, obligado por la puntualidad y orden de la andante caballería" (II.lxxi.1059).

Incurrigible to the end, Don Quixote reaffirms the laws of chivalry and, when discussing the pastoral project with the priest and the bachelor, he insists that his favoured shepherdess will be: "... la sin par Dulcinea del Toboso, gloria destas riberas, adorno destos prados, sustento de la hermosura, nata de los donaires y, finalmente, sujeto sobre quien puede asentar bien toda alabanza, por hipérbole que sea" (II.lxxiii.1060). In this flight of panegyric Don Quixote seems merely to breathe new life into the old chivalric obsession, transmuted now, at least for a year, into pastoral form.

One should perhaps emphasise that not until his illness does Don Quixote even take one step outside the boundaries of the romance system; his pastoral project is but a temporary diversion, a "nueva locura" (p.1060), before he returns once again to the business of knight errantry. Don Quixote reverts to sanity for a brief moment before death, and this only after an obscure fatal fever which afflicts him suddenly "cuando él menos lo pensaba", and whose cause is uncertain even to the narrator: "o ya fuese de la melancolía que le causaba el verse vencido, o ya por la disposición del cielo, que así lo ordenaba, se le arraigó una calentura" (p.1062).

Don Quixote's cure is as sudden and unaccountable as
the onset of his madness. Just as it is impossible fully to explain the reasons why Alonso Quijano succumbed to the delusion that he was a knight errant, so too are the reasons for his emergence from it inexplicable; till the very end, however, he remained convinced that the restoration of the world of chivalry was possible, never once did he admit otherwise, or seek to compromise his adherence to the chivalric code by resorting to or accepting empirical methods of verification.

In my view the novel does not describe a progressive movement from chivalric madness to "sanity". Don Quixote always sees empirical phenomena as they appear unless they remind him of chivalric reality. He is aware that appearances are deceptive but wants to go beyond appearances to the essence of things. He never abandons the stubborn desire to persuade others of the efficacy of the code of chivalry, and never resorts to the self-contradiction of empirical proofs.

In Parts I and II, Don Quixote is obliged either by circumstances or by deception to fall back on subjective assertions. In Part II, especially, he is forced to return to first principles and to argue, reason and expostulate in order to overcome his inability to act successfully. The remarkable thing is that Don Quixote should persist through so much adversity in rigidly maintaining the validity of his chivalric vision, brooking no counter-argument and tirelessly searching for a breakthrough. One can only marvel at Don Quixote's incapacity to see the obvious. And here, I believe, one arrives precisely at the source of his fascination as a character. It would have been much easier for Cervantes to have made Don Quixote gradually "see" sense and return to sanity. The real challenge to Cervantes's wit and
creative powers was to make Don Quixote not see, to stretch his madness as far as possible without allowing it to pall on the reader. If Cervantes had been interested in gradually drawing his hero back towards sanity he could not have found a better occasion to effect such a change than when Don Quixote goes to visit the non-existent Dulcinea. This episode would have provided an excellent opportunity for rounding off the novel with a neat moral by dispelling the madman's illusions. Nevertheless, Cervantes places the episode at the very beginning of Part II and makes Don Quixote pursue the most difficult course open to him: that of believing what Sancho says about the gross peasant girl and spending the rest of the novel trying to unravel the problem on his own chivalric terms.

Cervantes puts Don Quixote in situations where it seems impossible that he should not realise his folly. Yet time and again he wriggles out of his corner and uses his remarkable rhetorical gifts to salvage his chivalric vision. The basic device used to seal himself off from reality is that of "enchantment". It is particularly in the handling of this device that one can best appreciate Cervantes's narrative mastery. Enchantment could easily have degenerated into an unconvincing, all-purpose excuse to disguise difficulties and evade problems. Cervantes, however, orchestrates it so subtly that he is able to wring fresh delights from it. As the novel progresses, the device of enchantment is developed from its initial use to rationalise defeat, through the multiple complications in the inn and
the humiliations of the cage, to its elevation in Part II into a major motivating theme with the enchantment of Dulcinea.

As a result of this placing of the enchantment of Dulcinea, the enchantment-device becomes a structural feature of the novel. We have seen how the fate that befalls Dulcinea convinced Don Quixote of the futility of argument and verbal persuasion to convert sceptics; chivalric knowledge can only be a revelation or a form of grace. In Part II, however, Don Quixote is regaled with unexpectedly profuse manifestations of chivalresque "reality" manufactured by other people. But by this stage he is well aware of the work of enchanters and is forewarned of the possibility of false chivalric signs being set deliberately by these enchanters to deceive him. Don Quixote therefore begins to look for his own authentic signs of the underlying chivalric reality as opposed to the false ones of the enchanters. A new dimension is thereby added to the novel with this sophisticated twist of the enchantment-device. In Part I, Don Quixote occasionally encountered a manufactured chivalresque scene and fell for it enthusiastically. The device is exploited fully when Don Quixote is with Dorotea/Micomicona, the priest and barber and the others, and remarks on the wonders of chivalry that will allow such noble chivalric personages to appear to the rest of the world in such banal everyday guises (I.xxxvii.388). Now in Part II Don Quixote reacts hesitatingly to the pseudo-chivalric deceptions. He seems to have acquired an unwonted reserve. He is partly gratified by them but also seems to keep his own counsel
after having undergone the disappointment of Dulcinea's enchantment and the tantalizing experience of Montesinos' Cave. One is led to suspect that in an intimate, private area of his mind he is quietly assessing the true value of this veritable *embarras de richesse* of chivalry lavished upon him by the Duke and others. The more sustained pseudo-chivalric reality provided in Part II to bait and guy Don Quixote is in some way scooped out and hollowed by the new-found introspection of the hero.\(^{57}\) Don Quixote is not now seeking to demonstrate the laws of chivalry to others but looking for his own signs that his mission will still be possible in spite of the enchanters.

Thus in Part II there are at least three levels of reality; firstly, the bedrock empirical reality upon which all the characters move, secondly, the artificial chivalric reality created by evil enchanters or the other characters and, thirdly, the "genuine" but elusive chivalric reality (glimpsed in the Cave of Montesinos) to which Don Quixote refers and to which the enchanted Dulcinea holds the key.\(^{58}\) On at least two occasions Don Quixote appears to be conscious of a possible discrepancy between these last two levels. When he gives advice to Sancho before the latter takes up the governorship he prefaces it by pointing to the tricks of Fortune which have bestowed upon the unworthy squire this signal favour while remaining so unyielding with regard to his own ceaseless striving (II.xlii.839). Again when he is trampled by bulls he reflects bitterly:
"Considerame impreso en historias, famoso en las armas, comedido en mis acciones, respetado de príncipes, solicitado de doncellas; al cabo al cabo, cuando esperaba palmas, triunfos y coronas, granjeadas y merecidas por mis valerosas hazañas, me he visto esta mañana pisado y acoceado y molido, de los pies de animales inmundos y soeces" (II.lxx.964).

These three strands in Part II, however, are only a narrative ploy by which Cervantes complicates and variegates the basic dialectic between Don Quixote's Platonizing thought and empirical reality.

(v) Don Quixote's undiminishig madness and the verisimilitude-marvellous dilemma.

To return to the problem of reconciling verisimilitude with the marvellous with which we opened the chapter. If Tasso and other Renaissance theorists had tried to get round the problem by introducing into the narrative as much fantasy as the reader's empirical sense would admit, then Cervantes in the Quixote does the exact opposite and uses the reader's empirical awareness precisely as a check upon and a chastisement of fantasy. When one reads Don Quixote one always knows the true bounds of reality. Appearances are not at all deceptive for the reader, the novel "contains plenty of mysteries and odd happenings, but all of them are rationally explained to the reader sooner or later."59 But if the marvellous must be subordinate to empirical reality in the Quixote, whence was the contemporary reader to derive his admiratio, that species of pleasure so esteemed by theorists and writers of the day and considered to be the fruit of the marvellous? Cervantes, as we have seen, uses
the knight's madness to separate the fantastical and the verisimilar into watertight compartments. But it is absolutely clear that he encourages the reader to laugh at Don Quixote by constantly ridiculing the knight, with astonishing cruelty at times. This might suggest that he was simply siding with the reader against Don Quixote and thereby accepting without reservations the principle of commonsense verisimilitude as a sufficient criterion of poetic truth. If this were so Cervantes would have been perpetuating the confusion between the aesthetic object and the real object common to both romance-writers and neo-Aristotelian theorists. In fact his scrupulous upholding of Don Quixote's madness in the teeth of all empirical and rational opposition indicates that he was unwilling to succumb totally to verisimilitude. A good deal of the comedy in the novel arises from this resilience of Don Quixote's. Had the comedy been confined to his mad collisions with reality, it would scarcely have risen above the level of slapstick and would soon have become tedious. But Cervantes is continually having to invent new explanations and rationalisations for the persistence of the chivalric madness, and this no doubt accounts for his having singled out "ingenioso" in the title of the book as the supreme quality which distinguishes the protagonist.

I have tried to demonstrate that the novel is constructed from an increasingly complex dialectic between the madman's fantasy and ordinary empirical assumptions. Both terms are balanced throughout: commonsense is never actually confounded but neither is it ever decisively triumphant over the knight's inspired madness. Moreover I
would argue that this dialectical balance was aesthetically necessary to overcome the Renaissance verisimilitude-marvellous dilemma. The traditional marvellous was sought for epic and romance in the exotic, the supernatural, the magical or the unknown because it was in these unfamiliar areas that the writer could pull tricks to overawe the reader and so produce admiratio. But this conception of the marvellous tended to conflict with verisimilitude. Tasso consequently attempted to "legitimize" the marvellous. Cervantes, by contrast, effectively re-defines it. He discovers a new source of admiratio by using his mad hero to produce aesthetic effects which would correspond functionally to those of the traditional marvellous. Cervantes's handling of the knight is profoundly ambiguous, indeed paradoxical: his madness is consistently mocked but it is used all the same to turn the tables on the reader. Cervantes himself refers to the dual nature of the reader's response to the madman: "... porque los sucesos de don Quijote, o se han de celebrar con admiración, o con risa" (II.xliv.850). Significantly, the order is admiratio first and then laughter.

From the vicissitudes of Don Quixote's madness then, Cervantes creates a form of admiratio to replace the marvels of romance. Now for the purposes of admiratio, the peripety and the anagnorisis were thought to be "two of the best means of ensuring pleasurable surprise". The peripety in Cervantes's time had come to mean little more than a vicissitude of fortune and, in my view, Cervantes, by spinning out Don Quixote's madness for as
long as possible against all the odds and without tedium, was able to provide the reader with the surprises, reversals and unsuspected discoveries through the orchestration of Don Quixote's irreconciliable madness. The mad knight's resilience in action, wit and argument "surprise" the reader's confident expectations. Don Quixote's chivalric pretensions, by all naturalistic reckoning, should have run out of steam well before his second sally and yet, without once offending the reader's alerted sense of verisimilitude, Cervantes extends the madness by constantly defying commonsense anticipations of Don Quixote's career. It is a tour de force of narrative wit, a form of imaginative oneupmanship.

Cervantes therefore encourages in the reader a heightened sensitivity to verisimilitude while retaining the pleasures of admiratio formerly derived from the marvellous but now located in the character of Don Quixote. But admiratio was largely an intellectual principle which aroused curiosity and was deemed consequently to be the beginning of knowledge. In Cervantes's time admiratio was achieved by challenging the intellect: "one prized the truth of the meaning more when one had to struggle to reach it". However, in spite of the reader's efforts to reach the meaning of the character of Don Quixote, the latter remains a paradox, his behaviour does not successfully follow the conventions for chivalric heroes nor is it motivated by any easily recognizable logic of "sanity". The fact that he refuses to become progressively "saner" as the novel develops makes him even more fascinating and
difficult for the reader to digest. Don Quixote emerges as an irreducible enigma that unsettles the cosy infallibilities of the reader's commonsense assumptions. Attention is consequently deflected from the transcendental and supernatural to an enigma situated entirely in the material world - a human character whose well-springs of action and feeling remain hidden from the all too complacent knowingness of the reader. In the next two chapters I propose to examine the consequences of this phenomenon.
(i) The 1605 Prologue and its aesthetic implications.

Nowhere better than in the Prologue to Part I of Don Quixote can one analyse Cervantes's own attitude to his reader. Addressed to the unoccupied reader it immediately broaches the problem of evaluating the results of his "estéril y mal cultivado ingenio". What else could it produce but some impoverished, capricious invention? He affects to recognize his incapacity to evaluate its true worth since a loving father is often blind to the faults of his son. Such a self-deprecating attitude should, of course, put the alert reader on his guard. It is the classic stance of the Socratic ironist, cunningly abasing himself the better to lull the presumptuous into self-betraying complacency. In the next sentence one senses the ironic trap being sprung: "Pero yo, que, aunque parezco padre, soy padrastro de don Quijote..." He is not, after all, the father but the step-father of Don Quixote, so presumably this renders him more capable of assessing the protagonist objectively. Certainly it allows him to depart from the traditional modesty topos habitually observed by other writers of pleading with the reader to forgive faults in the work. In fact, Cervantes grants the reader every right to judge the quality of the novel as he pleases:
"... no quiero irme con la corriente del uso, ni suplicarte casi con lágrimas en los ojos, como otros hacen, lector carísimo, que perdones o disimules las faltas que en éste mi hijo vieres, y ni eres su pariente ni su amigo, y tienes tu alma en tu cuerpo y tu libre albedrío como el más pintado, y estás en tu casa, donde eres señor della, como el rey de sus alcabalas, y sabes lo que comúnmente se dice, que debajo de mi manto, al rey mato" (p. 195; my emphasis).

Cervantes's generous invitation to the reader to evaluate the work as he pleases swells rhetorically in tones of unctuous good will, reaching a climax in the image of the self-sufficient reader, king-like in his authority to judge and dispose. But there would seem to be a sting in the tail of such generosity: the apparently all-knowing reader must also surely be acquainted with the common saying that "under my cloak I will kill the king." The word "king" here must be taken as a veiled reference to the reader who has just been invited by Cervantes to view himself as the sovereign judge of the text. This proverb, which evokes the cloak-and-dagger stealth of a regicide, following anti-climactically as it does on the highest pitch of a crescendo of flattering encouragement, represents a declaration of ironic intent by Cervantes: whatever regal authority the reader might arrogate to himself when evaluating the novel should be tempered by some degree of circumspection lest there be surprises in store which might upset overconfident judgements. The entreaties and special pleading to the reader by other authors, especially those of Spanish romances, are replaced here by an attitude which is dialectical and ironic. Cervantes implicitly posits a three-way relationship between author, reader and text which is fraught with ironic possibilities.
As a foretaste of things to come in the main narrative, Cervantes proceeds to engage his reader in some devious ironic banter. He protests that he had originally intended to present the novel without the conventional introductory paraphernalia of prologues, sonnets, epigrams and encomia such as grace other books. He graphically describes how he had been seeking to compose a suitable prologue for his novel and without making much headway until a friend came into the room and asked what was troubling him. In Cervantes's explanation of his difficulties we again experience the evasive obliquity of his irony.

He starts by playing down his talents once more, professing to be abashed by what the public ("el antiguo legislador que llaman vulgo") might say if they found such a paltry work ("seca como un esparto, ajena de invención, menguada de estilo, pobre de concetos y falta de toda erudición y doctrina") presented to them bereft of the customary trappings such as marginal commentaries and annotations or maxims from philosophers like Aristotle and Plato, chosen merely to amaze readers with the author's learning and eloquence. But in the sentences that follow one detects a degree of ironic criticism of such practices. Under the guise of admiring other authors' readiness to quote Sacred Scripture in their fictions, Cervantes pointedly recalls the somewhat suspect inaptness of such citations, as when, for example, an ecstatic lover is depicted by the author only to be followed immediately by "un sermoncico cristiano". Here one finds Cervantes attacking the sort of
indecorous juxtaposition of profane fantasy and sanctimonious didacticism which we have previously encountered in Montalvo’s *Esplandían*. The implications of Cervantes’s irony are that such didactic and erudite commentaries are little more than hypocritical ploys to placate the moralistic prejudices of some readers and, more than this, they reveal a streak of insecurity in authors who resort to such devices in order to puff up their own authority factitiously and so impress their public. Cervantes finds himself unable to supply these spurious marks of learning:

"... porque yo me hallo incapaz de remediarlas, por mi insuficiencia y pocas letras, y porque naturalmente soy poltrón y perezoso de andarme buscando autores que digan lo que yo me sé decir sin ellos" (p.21).

The passage ends with another unexpected ironic sting. His self-deprecation is suddenly converted into a sharp dismissal of the whole panoply of authoritative safeguards; he can very well say what he has to say without corroboration from anybody.5

The friend now slaps his forehead in amused exasperation and chides Cervantes for his obtuseness: how could a witty, intelligent and talented man like him be stumped by such a trivial obstacle? The difficulty can be easily avoided simply by inventing whatever sonnets, epigrams and encomia he likes and appending some grand-sounding name to them. As for citations from the Bible or from authors of Antiquity, all he need do is quote anything which comes to mind or which can be conveniently dug up and that will be that. When the friend gives various examples of commonplace
classical and biblical maxims, the Prologue turns into a malicious parody of the citation of authorities. A venerable and ancient literary tradition is overturned and mocked, demonstrating to the reader just how shallow and deceitful such impressive paraphernalia of propriety can be in the hands of dishonest writers.

One can now more readily appreciate the ironic purpose behind Cervantes's introduction of an imaginary interlocutor into his Prologue. His praise for Cervantes's talent gives the impression of an unsolicited, impartial judgement delivered by a third party, as if in reward for Cervantes's previous modesty in deferring to his reader. But additionally, the friend's cynical suggestion that Cervantes cobble together a list of authorities serves to highlight the exemplary honesty of Cervantes's own literary intentions when compared with the alleged deceitfulness of other writers.

Cervantes would like to come clean to his reader and present his fiction "monda y desnuda", so his companion blithely points out that he can have his cake and eat it too. An ironical stance would allow him to pay lip-service to tradition and still remain true to his purpose:

"Vengamos ahora a la citación de los autores que los otros libros tienen, que en el vuestro os faltan. El remedio que esto tiene es muy fácil, porque no habéis de hacer otra cosa que buscar un libro que los acote todos, desde la A hasta la Z, como vos decís. Pues ese mismo abecedario pondréis vos en vuestro libro; que puesto que a la clara se ve la mentira, por la poca necesidad que vos teníades de aprovecharos dellos, no importa nada; y quizá alguno habrá tan simple que crea que de todos os habéis aprovechado en la simple y sencilla historia vuestra; y cuando no sirva de otra cosa, por lo menos servirá aquel largo catálogo de autores a dar de improviso autoridad al libro" (p.24).
The transparently irrelevant alphabetical list of authorities affixed to the text is a trick which neatly illustrates the attitude the friend recommends Cervantes adopt before the reader: an ironical insincerity which will not fool the intelligent ("a la clara se ve la mentira") but which might take in simpletons or pedants. The friend agrees with Cervantes that since his novel is merely an invective against romances of chivalry it has no need of any corroborative machinery to encumber it, nor of any support from Aristotle, St Basil, or Cicero, nor should fantastical inventions ("fabulosos disparates") be confused with the exactitude of truth, astrological observations, geometrical calculations, rhetorical argumentation, or even preaching, which would only lead to a confusion of the human and the divine (p.24).

Now such an appraisal of the province of fiction is radically distinct from that of the writers of Arthurian romance. Not only does it situate fiction squarely in the realm of the human imagination without mention of divine inspiration, it clearly extricates it from other branches of knowledge and other departments of truth, especially the truths of religion. Cervantes will be left free to operate in a self-sufficient aesthetic context, absolved from the need to defer to or seek justification from other quarters. Clearly the friend can proclaim this marvellous creative freedom for Cervantes because Don Quixote, as he observes three times, has no higher aim than to discredit the absurd books of chivalry:
"En efecto, llevad la mira puesta a derribar la máquina mal fundada destos caballerescos libros, aborrecidos de tantos y alabados de muchos más; que si esto alcanzáseades, no habréfades alcanzado poco" (p.25).

The objective of debunking chivalric romance may appear limited, but if it were to be fulfilled it would be no mean achievement. It should be noted that the friend does not refer to a mere parody of the books of chivalry but to the overthrow of the entire machinery which is said to be "ill-founded"; that is to say, chivalric romance is an aesthetic system based on defective or incoherent premises. Cervantes's friend in fact offers positive advice on how to set about this task. From his comments one can extrapolate elements of an aesthetic theory which would correspond to the guide-lines followed by Cervantes in the composition of Don Quixote:

"Sólo tiene que aprovecharse de la imitación en lo que fuere escribiendo, que cuanto ella fuere más perfecta, tanto mejor será lo que se escribiere" (p.25).

Freed from direct concern with extraneous forms of truth, the author must attend only to "imitación" in whatever he might write. Now the word imitation here is vague but it has an unmistakable Aristotelian ring to it. Nevertheless it is important to note that Cervantes is talking about imitation in a way which differs from that of the neo-Aristotelians, as something independent of the reader's sense of verisimilitude. Good writing born of imitation, it implies, derives from the author's own continuous engagement with his subject-matter. Significantly, Cervantes chooses the progressive subjunctive form to describe the author's activity: "en lo
que fuere escribiendo"; which suggests an open-ended development, a striving after a truth perceived primarily by
by the author in the process of creation. This notion, which is revolutionary in terms of contemporary aesthetics, is reiterated a few lines on when the friend again says that the author has no need to go begging for maxims from philosophers or seek the counsels of Sacred Scripture,

"sino procurar que a la llana, con palabras insignificantes, honestas y bien colocadas, salga vuestra oración y perfodo sonoro y festivo, pintando en todo lo que alcanzardes y fuere posible, vuestra intención" (p.25).

Once again we encounter this Cervantine emphasis on the writer's efforts to "depict", not some historical action or everyday experience, but rather his own intentions. But even this activity of imaginative self-realization is not straightforward; it is a question of struggling to reach the fullest portrayal possible of his aesthetic purposes - and Cervantes again resorts to the subjunctive to express the uncertainty of its achievement ("lo que alcanzaríades y fuere posible").

Furthermore, the ultimate goal of this creative activity is twofold: to give pleasure to his public, and to win praise for his artistic skills, even from the most disobliging reader:

"Procurad también que, leyendo vuestra historia, el melancólico se mueva a risa, el risueño la acreciente, el simple no se enfade, el discreto se admire de la invención, el grave no la desprecie, ni el prudente deje de alabarla" (p.25).

Cervantes's friend once more makes a distinction between two classes of reader. In the first place there
are those who read the "historia" purely for amusement, without troubling to go much further into its artistic merits (these are "el melancólico", "el risueño" and "el simple"), and then those other more intelligent and morally responsible readers whom Cervantes should impress with the aesthetic qualities of the work (the "invención"). The first class are interested merely in laughter ("risa") and their interests are superficial, content merely with the accidents of the "historia", but the second class represent those who are more concerned with the aesthetic and moral substance of the novel, and their reactions, it is hoped, will be admiration (or, more strictly, admiratio) from the intelligent, respect from the serious-minded, and praise from the discerning.

From my reading of Cervantes's references to aesthetic principles in the 1605 Prologue, I would argue that these represent a crucial advance on certain important neo-Aristotelian ideas. In the first place Cervantes unmistakeably makes use of irony to reject even the pretence of support from extraneous authorities. But, more importantly, he uses irony to tease his readers and thereby assert his independence from their judgements. By doing this he significantly relocates the criteria of poetic values within the work itself and in the poet's handling of it. His irony is intended to divide the simple-minded reader, whom he will simply amuse or even take in, from the sophisticated, from whom he wants to compel admiration for his "invención". Secondly, by making pleasure and admiratio the explicit objectives of his novel, he alters the emphasis of the Renaissance theorists who, as we have seen, considered moral utility as the true end of poetry. In fact, Cervantes
openly rejects this, at least as far as Don Quixote is concerned; there will be no need of preaching, philosophising or other forms of didacticism in this particular work.

Finally he refers to "imitación", but notably in the context of the author's own activity in the writing of his narrative. Now here one can perceive the adumbration of a distinction between the naturalistic imitation of an action in the real world, and imitation in a different sense, as an attempt to create an internally coherent aesthetic action in imitation of a truth which need not directly correspond to experience or history. It was this distinction, it must be recalled, which the neo-Aristotelians omitted to make in their interpretation of Aristotle's mimesis. As Weinberg states:

"Aristotle's requirements of 'necessity' and 'probability' were thought to pertain, not to conditions of the action as represented, but to conditions of real actions chosen as the objects of imitation. That is, the action as an object in life must be verisimilar, probable, convincing, natural. In so far as the poem reflected 'verisimilitude' and 'probability' and the natural necessities of actions known to the audience, it would produce the impression of reality. It would be 'true' and not 'false'. Sixteenth century Aristotelians, on the whole, spoke of object and imitation in the same terms, seeking in the realities of character and of action a rebuttal to the charge of falseness."  

The neo-Aristotelian theorists' confusion of the real object and the aesthetic imitation in their definition of poetic truth was, as I have suggested in Chapter 3, the same basic error as that of the Spanish romance writers who wished to justify the truth of their fiction in terms of its historical truth. Both neo-Aristotelians and romance
authors were advocating that aesthetic actions, that poetic language itself, should somehow be taken to refer literally to real objects and real events. As Alban K. Forcione observes, the neo-Aristotelians' "interpretation of mimesis could not overcome a realist or naturalist tendency and an orientation toward external or objective truth rather than a more abstract truth. The result was that Renaissance mimetic theories succumbed to one of the 'troublesome implications of the mirror', its function as a literal reflector". Not the least of these troublesome implications is the restriction on the author's freedom to shape his work according to his own intentions. The artist must acknowledge the state of affairs in the real world, but he must also feel free to invent and order his creation as he sees fit. The neo-Aristotelian concept of verisimilitude and the rhetoricising of poetic doctrine, as Weinberg observes, tended to place the criteria of poetic truth with the reader rather than with the author. This contrasts strikingly with the advice Cervantes is given by his "friend"; that he should proceed "pintando, en todo lo que alcanzáredes y fuere posible, vuestra intención". Here we have the notions of imitation ("pintando") and authorial purpose ("vuestra intención") intimately connected: the object of imitation has as much to do with Cervantes's artistic intentions as with the external world. What such a connection between imitation and artistic intention implies is that Cervantes should avoid pretending that poetic language is literally true, that it is actually denotative of real
things, and establish instead what one might call a metaphorical relationship between his own fiction and real life.

A metaphor, of course, connects two objects which are not normally perceived to be similar in all respects, let alone equivalent. If one calls a man a mouse one is not suggesting that the two are identical, merely that they are similar in some respects. But, equally, one must appreciate that they are dissimilar in others. By analogy, art, although not identical to life, must be similar to it in some respects but also unlike it in others. Now what makes the aesthetic object unlike a real object is precisely the fact that it has been shaped by an artist's will. In literature it is the aesthetic intentions of the author which distinguish his writing from historical or denotative discourse. His words are not literally true, they enjoy a status similar to that of a metaphor in relation to the object of comparison. Even when an author writes in a naturalistic mode and not in an overtly symbolic or allegorical mode, he must still look to the intrinsic logic of his work as well as to the verisimilitude of its narrative surface. Poetic truth will result from the internal coherence, the organic necessity of his creation, precisely those concepts which Weinberg has shown to have been overlooked by the neo-Aristotelians. The superficial resemblance of a verisimilar narrative to real experience is not an absolute condition of its truth but rather, as Forcione says, a conventional device to gain credibility from the reader. Even a natural-
istic author must ultimately deflect his reader away from the apparently denotative or literal surface of his story to the appreciation of more recondite truths inherent in it, that is, in the aesthetic object itself.16

Now this passage from literal meanings to complex aesthetic meanings is less problematical in a symbolic or allegorical mode of writing. Chrétien de Troyes could circumvent the problem of identifying his romances with history, not just because he and his audience might genuinely have believed that they described real events enshrined in legend, but chiefly because the criterion of poetic truth was in any case not held to be that of verisimilitude. Chrétien's purpose was to reveal the spiritual truth, the "sen", of the story by fashioning a "bele conjointure" from its constituent elements. Poetic truth was conditional on the poet's revealing the necessary order of those events in the structure of his narrative. The ability to find this essential structure was considered by Chrétien to be a gift of God, the fruit of divine inspiration. Now, as I tried to show in Chapter 1, the superficial meanings lead to the symbolic sense through the mediation of marvellous elements. In fact it is precisely the non-naturalistic character of certain elements of the narrative which serves as a sign of their underlying symbolic significance. These marvellous elements entice the reader away from a historical or naturalistic frame of mind and direct his imagination towards more intangible truths. In the words of the knight Calogrenant, the audience must listen with their "hearts"
not with their "ears". For a symbolic writer like Chrétien, aesthetic action need not be made to correspond to historical action point for point, instead it should refer to a spiritual order of things beyond the senses and human reason; the aesthetic pleasure becomes a surrogate for spiritual joy, as I have shown in Chapter 1.

Cervantes, on the other hand, lays no claim whatever to divine inspiration. He must still nonetheless draw his reader away from a concern with naturalistic or historical verisimilitude so as to reveal the underlying aesthetic order of the work. The problem is to give the naturalistic story a clearly aesthetic status without indulging in fantasy or offending the reader's sense of verisimilitude. How, in short, to transcend the speciously denotative, historical surface of the narrative discourse without at the same time departing from verisimilitude or empirical plausibility?

Irony, in many respects, provides an escape from this dilemma. Like symbolism or allegory it is a dualistic form of expression, situating its real meaning somewhere other than on the literal surface of statement. As such it transcends the literal, without, as we shall see, referring the reader beyond the observable. In its most restricted rhetorical sense, irony occurs when a speaker says one thing and means the opposite. Analogously, in narrative drama or real life, irony occurs when a situation is assumed by a character to have a clear significance and that assumption is later contradicted by another set of events as perceived
by the other characters or by an observer. Both verbal and situational irony entail going beyond the surface of words or events and discovering an opposite meaning which is taken to be the true one because it corresponds to the real intentions of the speaker or to a truer pattern of events. In other words, irony is inseparable from the act of judging, and this capacity to judge is in turn dependent upon one's position in relation to the perpetrator of the irony or the ironic situation. For example, if one appreciates the underlying meaning one will be an observer of the irony otherwise one will have fallen victim to it. Irony produces a triangular relation of ironist - victim - observer and, since it is a question of seeing the hidden intention, these relations may very easily and rapidly change: the intended victim can turn the tables on the ironist if he notices the covert meaning and undercuts the latter so that the original ironist, secure in the stability of his intended meaning, will now fall prey to that newly-created layer of meaning which he, in turn, could subvert ironically and so on. Therefore, an ironist is not all-knowing or authoritative, he rejects his victim's views merely by sending out a negating signal which points to something outside the victim's range of reference or field of vision by way of a particular tone of voice, a wink, a gesture or just through the indication of a different context - anything that will suggest that the victim's views are unduly limited. The essential requisite for irony is that the ironist and observer should not remain on the
same level of discourse or communication as the victim. Unlike metaphor, which calls forth identities and similarities, a network of analogies that will tie in and unify several orders of reality, irony uncovers a diversity of incompatible intentions and warring discourses.

Metaphorical discourse, either in the form of symbolism or allegory, is eminently suited to a medieval world-view with its fundamental belief in the unity of God's Creation. Irony, if employed systematically, introduces the fragmentation of such a totality into an assortment of viewpoints based upon observable experience but perennially susceptible to undercutting. Whereas the symbolic or allegorical modes elicit marvels or surprises by revealing unsuspected connections and analogies in this world and the world beyond, the ironic mode reverses this emphasis and can produce "marvels" by demonstrating that the reader's assumptions about the world are contradicted by an alternative truth. Both the metaphorical and the ironic modes provide an escape from the literal level of the text by leading the reader away from the directly observable to appreciate an ulterior truth. But the crucial difference is that metaphor is an extension of the literal surface whereas irony undermines and contradicts it. Metaphor is positive while irony is negative, the former rests upon belief whereas the latter merely requires momentary assent.

This is not to rule out the possibility of a form of structural irony (other than rhetorical or dialectical irony) within a symbolic narrative. In Chapter 1, my
analysis demonstrated that Chrétien de Troyes was highly skilled in a type of structural or narrative irony as well as in the limited ironies of rhetoric. But, paradoxically, Chrétien's irony is positive because it operates by rejecting the victim's initial reading of surface phenomena as culpably circumscribed by sin or ambition, and then symbolically extending the literal surface to penetrate its true spiritual character, suggested in the secondary level of sense. The ironic victim's viewpoint was rejected as presumptuous or morally obtuse because it misinterpreted the literal; in contrast to this limited viewpoint, the author offered the true spiritual (symbolic or allegorical) interpretation of phenomena. Chrétien's irony is ancillary to his symbolism, it is merely the rejection of a partial interpretation as a prelude to another more authoritative spiritual account. Ultimately Chrétien can reject and poke fun at his characters' defective vision because he believes or, at least, has made the reader believe, that he, the author, possesses the key to the truth thanks to divine inspiration.

Now if metaphorical discourse reveals what lies beyond direct perception or, at any rate, what is not immediately obvious, irony, on the other hand, mocks the victim for not realising the true situation which is known to both ironist and observer. It is a form of punishment of those who are content with the literal meanings of words and situations and who fail to investigate further and spot the speciousness of surface. Irony, in short, occurs when
someone overlooks the covert designs of an ironist; it poses a particularized problem of intentionality, wholly explicable within the human ethical world, and does not, as in the case of symbolism or allegory, invite metaphysical or abstract explanations nor base itself upon special authority.  

I have argued earlier that the 1605 Prologue amounts to a declaration of ironic intent by Cervantes to his reader. I would add that this ironic stance is precisely what enables Cervantes to escape the Renaissance dilemma of reconciling verisimilitude with the freedom of the imagination, because irony, being a dualistic form of expression, allows for the narrative to be conducted on two levels - the literal, verisimilar level of the story, what Cervantes calls the "historia", and its underlying aesthetic order, the "invención". The connections between the two levels are not complementary, as in symbolic or allegorical narrative, but unexpected or contradictory, ironic in short. Don Quixote's career will on the literal level be simply the "history" of a madman's laughable clashes with everyday reality but, through Cervantes's imaginative organisation, they will be ironically transformed into a pattern of experience capable of drawing from the reader an unprecedented complex of feelings, ideas and intuitive responses, whose validity cannot be determined by considerations of historical authenticity or verisimilitude. At the literal level the reader's sense of verisimilitude will be satisfied; however, by articulating the narrative as a network of
ironic "surprises", the author can shift the reader's attention away from the fidelity of the story's representation of ordinary life to an appreciation of the imaginative order inherent in it. Instead of attempting at all costs to sustain the pretence that the narrative is a historical chronicle of real people and events, Cervantes's use of irony invites the perceptive reader to experience it as an aesthetic object in its own right.25

The placing of the enchantment of Dulcinea episode at the beginning of Part II provides an example of this ironic confounding of the reader's expectations. It would surely have made for a more morally reassuring climax to have put it at the end as the culminating scene of Don Quixote's disillusionment with chivalry. But it seems clear that Cervantes is not primarily interested in relating the chastening history of a madman's return to his senses. He is concerned rather to maintain the madness for as long as possible and in as uncongenial circumstances as he can imagine, for only then can his inventiveness and narrative artistry truly manifest themselves unembarrassed by the routine minutiae of pseudo-historical reference. The enchantment of Dulcinea episode is indeed one of the crucial points in the novel where interest is displaced from the relation of events in themselves to a level of imaginative transactions having little to do with either verisimilitude or fantasy. These transactions between the knight and his illusions or between the knight and his squire follow an intrinsic logic of their own, even though they are shaped by Cervantes's imagination. But they are
revealed gradually in a form which the reader would not have previously anticipated. In this respect, they stand in an ironical relation to the reader's commonsense assumptions about the world.

I described in Chapter 2 the aesthetic difficulties of late romance writers in terms of the blurring of the distinction that Chrétien de Troyes had maintained between the historical level of the narrative and its underlying symbolic sense. This confusion came about as a result of a growing preoccupation with historicity rather than with divine inspiration as a justification of fiction. As the romance writers concentrated increasingly on the allegedly historical status of the literal level of their narratives, the marvellous elements of the fiction lost their symbolic or allegorical dimension and came increasingly to be perceived, even by the writers themselves, as unwarranted fantasies. Hence the Renaissance dilemma about verisimilitude and the marvellous, and the ensuing problem of the artist's imaginative freedom. For if the writer must pretend to be a historian whose task it is to report events as they are witnessed by himself or others, will not his attempts to organize or interpret these events appear to be improper interference with history itself? According to what criteria, or by what special authority, can he justify his selection or ordering of the events in his narrative so as to escape the charge from a notional reader of arbitrary manipulation of or purely subjective judgements upon things "as they really happened"? In Chapter 2 I have shown how Montalvo was aware of just such objections by a notional
reader to his handling of the narrative. We shall see presently how these questions exercised Cervantes himself, and in precisely the above terms.

For a writer like Cervantes who does not claim to be divinely inspired but who wishes nevertheless to regain a measure of creative freedom, irony will enable him to wrest the initiative back from the reader and win acceptance of his right to order fictional material according to his aesthetic intentions. Furthermore, irony allows Cervantes to distance himself not only from the reader but also from the work itself; the latter will then appear to stand in its own right as a self-subsistent object and not as the arbitrary creation of an individual imagination.

In subsequent sections of this chapter I will discuss those aspects of the Quixote which throw light on Cervantes's handling of irony. In the first place I will show how Cervantes uses Don Quixote as the supreme vehicle for his attack on the confusion between real object and aesthetic object by converting such a blurring of the literal and the metaphorical into the primary basis of the knight's madness. Then I shall demonstrate how Cervantes introduces irony into Don Quixote's relations with Sancho and thereby increases his own creative freedom. Thirdly I will illustrate how the narrator makes use of irony while being aware of its destructive power. Finally I will discuss one of the principal methods by which Cervantes limits the power of the ironic narrator by distancing him both from the reader and the work.
(ii) The consequences of Don Quixote's belief in the literal truth of the romances.

In Chapter 3 I argued that there were two levels to Don Quixote's madness. The primary level is that of his belief in the literal truth of the romances, while the secondary level is his assumption that he is himself competent to restore the world of chivalry. I have already extensively analysed the problems that the secondary level of madness posed for Don Quixote, now I propose to examine the primary level in greater detail.

Don Quixote holds that the people and events described in the books of chivalry actually existed and genuinely occurred. He is unable to accept the non-denotative status of fictional discourse and insists that literary language is literally true. The most impressive example of the knight's error is found in his reply to the Canon of Toledo's contention that the people and events described in romances are wholly imaginary.

Don Quixote maintains that the detailed account of the heroes' lives and actions given in the romances is sufficient to recommend their historical truthfulness. But, more interestingly, he claims that the very vividness of the narrative, its ability to make the reader almost see in his mind's eye the characters and situations depicted, is conclusive proof of its authenticity as history. Don Quixote adduces as evidence the pleasure one gets from reading; by implication, the greater the pleasure derived the more
certain one can be of the denotative truth of the language. He does not restrict himself to abstract argument but illustrates his point by recounting a brief tale of a knight errant who jumps into a boiling lake when invited by a mysterious voice to discover the marvels submerged under its surface. Although at the beginning of his story Don Quixote recognizes the metaphorical nature of his tale (viz. his qualifying "como si díjésemos"; p.499) he emphasises the vivid actuality of this imaginary world by insisting on the verb "ver":

"Yáhay más que ver, después de haber visto esto, que ver salir por la puerta del castillo un buen número de doncellas, cuyos galanos y vistosos trajes, si yo me pusiese ahora a decirlos como las historias nos los cuentan, sería nunca acabar ....?" (I.1.500).

Moreover, his mode of narration accentuates the minutiae of time and space. It is interspersed with "allí", "aquí", "acullá" and characterized by such a frequent recurrence of the conjunction "y" that the action seems to take on a momentum of its own and sweep irresistibly towards its climax.

The euphoria generated by the actual narration of his own story causes Don Quixote to lose sight of the reason for telling it in the first place. He takes his argument as proven notwithstanding the fact that the basic issue of distinguishing between aesthetic pleasure and denotative truth has been completely by-passed:

"No quiero alargarme más en esto, pues dello se puede colegir que cualquiera parte que se lea de cualquiera historia de caballero andante ha de causar gusto y maravilla a cualquiera que la leyere" (I.1.501).

Even though the knight begs the question in telling the
story, Cervantes has given us a marvellous demonstration of the process by which romance addles the brains of the unfortunate hidalgo: the vivacity of the literary representation leads to a belief in the real existence of the thing represented, causing him to blur the fundamental distinction between aesthetic action and action in the real world.

But in addition to this elementary confusion, and as further proof of the truthfulness of the romances, Don Quixote attests to their power to transform the life and moral character of the reader if he should take to heart exhortations to follow the example of their heroes:

"De mí sé decir que después que soy caballero andante soy valiente, comedido, liberal, biencriado, generoso, cortés, atrevido, blando, paciente, sufridor de trabajos, de prisiones, de encantos" (I.1.501).

The language of the books of chivalry is therefore literally true; it refers to a genuine historical period, to real people and not least to a code of conduct which can effect remarkable moral and spiritual changes in the lives of its adherents. Claims to historical truth, vividness of narration and hortative didacticism combine in the romances of chivalry to drive at least one reader mad.

However, Don Quixote on an earlier occasion has observed that in the fallen world of the present Age of Iron literary language may seem false and high-flown because it appears not to correspond to the everyday aspect of things as perceived by the senses. This discrepancy, nevertheless, does not invalidate the denotative truth of the language of the romances for Don Quixote. On the contrary, it is the appearances of the world that are misleading, and his project is to
return to the language of the romances its referential validity in the actual world. Therefore, he says of Dulcinea that "... en ella se vienen a hacer verdaderos todos los imposibles y quiméricos atributos de belleza que los poetas dan a sus damas" (I.xiii.121). Dulcinea is the referent to which the seemingly false language of poetry points, and which it is his duty to render manifest in the world once again, thereby endowing literary discourse with denotative truth.

The restoration of the age of chivalry would therefore provide an incontrovertible sphere of objective truth to which the language of poetry and romance could refer without inviting disbelief or contempt. Nevertheless he concedes that the poet's words, nowadays, seem impossible and chimerical presumably because the objects to which they refer exceed all bounds of common experience. These words refer to realities that rarely, if ever, conform to the evidence of the senses. But the poet still employs his illusory words because he wishes to convey the worth and quality of his moral nature and sensibility. Don Quixote asks Sancho rhetorically whether he believes that all those Amariles, Filis, Silvas, Dianas, Galateas and Alidas were actually ladies of flesh and blood: "No, por cierto, sino que las más se las fingen, por dar sujeto a sus versos, y porque los tengan por enamorados y por hombres que tienen valor para serlo" (I.xxv.246). Writing poetry is a means by which a man can give external testimony to the interior worth of his soul. In this regard he is no different from a knight errant like Don Quixote: "Y así, bájame a mí pensar y creer que la buena de Aldonza
Lorenzo es hermosa y honesta" etc.

But if the poet merely invents his lady as a fictional peg to hang words which mirror his own spiritual complexion, Don Quixote refuses to accept that Dulcinea is a figment of his imagination; she is a genuine living creature for whom he is prepared to do and die, as he demonstrates consistently throughout the book to the bitter end. This attitude qualitatively distinguishes Don Quixote's words from the poets': the latter use language as outward signs of their own subjective condition whereas he acts upon his words, thereby committing himself to the objective validity of their referents. His programme of action is inspired of course by his literal belief in the language of the "metaphorical" romances; love-poetry may be a form of non-denotative language but the language of the romances refers to real people and real events. By taking both the alleged historicity and moral exhortations of the romances to heart Don Quixote imposes upon himself a view of language that is tied to action. For him words must be made to refer to the sort of spiritual and moral realities described in the romances if he is to be sure of his actions and of the nature of the world he is committed to restore. Just as his adventures are designed to uncover the essences of misleading contemporary phenomena, so must he translate the language of everyday life into its essential, incontrovertible meanings. Hence his abhorrence of the linguistic distortions perpetrated by Sancho or the "trocar de vocablos" of Pedro the goatherd (I.xii.111-12); to distort the forms of words is to impair their meanings or
cloud the clarity of their reference, it is to introduce confusion into a world ordered by God. By violating the forms of words as Sancho does on countless occasions, (e.g. "soberana"/"sobajada", "sobiese"/"asolviese", "fiscal"/"friscal", "cananeas"/"hacaneas") meanings dissolve or elide into one another to form a semantic soup of half-truths.

Don Quixote, by contrast, likes to make words and concepts as precise and clear-cut as possible. Like a scholastic thinker he loves to draw distinctions. He embarks on fairly lengthy disquisitions on the difference between the career of Arms and that of Letters (I.xxxviii.388), or between worldly Herostratian fame and chivalric renown (II.viii.592-4), liberty and confinement (II.lviii.952), or between the several forms of knighthood (II.xvii.680), or the two types of beauty (II.lviii.957). Each activity, condition, state or concept belongs to a unique and distinctive category.

This fondness for definition can, of course, with Don Quixote lead to absurd conclusions. After he is beaten up by the Yangüesans (I.xv) he rationalizes this by distinguishing between an "afrenta" and a "desgracia" (pp. 138-9). His misfortune is not an "afrenta" because,

"... no afrentan las heridas que se dan con los instrumentos que acaso se hallan en las manos; y esto está en la ley del duelo,escrito por palabras expresas: que si el zapatero de a otro con la horma que tiene en la mano, puesto que verdaderamente es de palo, no por eso se dirá que queda apaleado aquel a quien dio con ella" (I.xv.140).

For Don Quixote wounds can be distinguished generically according to their different essences; they have, it could
be said, a distinguishing mark which sorts them out into qualitatively different types of wound. What matters ultimately is not the wound itself but the nature of the wound as defined by certain criteria. The reader responds to this as to a piece of nonsensical sophistry, as does Sancho who replies caustically: "- No me dieron a mí lugar ... a que mirase en tanto". For him a thrashing is a thrashing, and there is no going beyond that to enquire into the distinctive essences of the different categories of a good beating.

But Don Quixote is in fact employing a mode of reasoning that has a long medieval pedigree: that of scholastic realism, which Cervantes here reduces to absurdity. For an extreme medieval realist these terminological distinctions would not be hair-splitting but valid reflections of the world of essences. Sancho's attitude effectively denies this world for the actuality of existence. For his master, on the other hand, essence precedes existence. In Sancho's eyes, there may be no difference between "apaleamiento", "afrenta", "desgracia" etc., they are all sufficient synonyms for the single painful experience; but Don Quixote classifies his painful experiences into different types, each with its own essential character.

In Part II chapter xxxii, Don Quixote again makes a distinction between "agravio" and "afrenta" after the churchman has insulted him at the Duke's table: "Las mujeres, los niños y los eclesiásticos, como no pueden defenderse aunque sean ofendidos, no pueden ser afrentados" (p.772).
He then proceeds to outline at length the difference between "agravios" and "afrentas", and concludes:

"... por las cuales razones yo no debo sentir, ni siento, las que aquel buen hombre me ha dicho; solo quisiera que esperara algún poco, para darle a entender en el error en que está en pensar y decir que ni ha habido, no los hay, caballeros andantes en el mundo; que sí lo tal oyera Amadís, o uno de los infinitos de su linaje, yo sé que no le fuera bien a su merced."

However, in spite of the sophistical niceties of Don Quixote's scholastic distinctions, Sancho cannot forget the actual insult, and so he adds:

"Eso juro yo bien ... cuchillada le hubieran dado, que le abrieran de arriba abajo como una granada, o como a un melón muy maduro. ¡Bonitos eran ellos para sufrir semejantes cosquillas!" (p. 773).

With this perspective it is perhaps easier to understand why Don Quixote took such time and effort to select names for himself, his horse and his lady. In the case of his horse he looked for a name that would be "alto, sonoro y significativo" and for his lady one that was "músico y peregrino y significativo". This concern for meaningfulness is central to Don Quixote's enterprise. When he changes the name of his horse or of Aldonza, the meaningfulness of the new name is crucial because it would denote a change of character, or, more strictly, the new name is designed to draw forth the true essence of the object which phenomenal appearances had hitherto concealed and led it to be called by a false name. This operation of re-naming is consequently directly analogous to the seeking of adventure. In the business of transforming the world into its essential forms, both are devices for
restoring that happy age of chivalry where appearances could be made to correspond to their invisible essences through chivalric action. Language becomes for Don Quixote an important means of reforming the Age of Iron. But, of course, in Don Quixote's case both activities, adventure-seeking and word-ordering, suffer from the same inherent weakness inasmuch as their validity has not been attested to either by an acceptable authority or by objective test. Don Quixote can change the names of things so as to make them reflect more faithfully their putative essences, but he must find a way of ensuring that these transformations are real and not fanciful.

Don Quixote's committed literalism, what we might call his verbal essentialism, becomes the target of much of Cervantes's irony. The knight tries to exclude figures and metaphors from language or attach rigid preconceived definitions to ambiguous situations in his efforts to reduce perplexing appearances to prescribed meanings. The episode of the galley slaves aptly reveals Don Quixote chivvying tropes into plain statements with the help of his sword.

"¿Cómo gente forzada? ...¿ Es posible que el rey haga fuerza a ninguna gente?

-No digo eso - respondió Sancho-, sino que es gente que por sus delitos va condenada a servir al rey en las galeras, de por fuerza.

-En resolución - replicó don Quijote-, como quiera que ello sea, esta gente, aunque los llevan, van de por fuerza y no de su voluntad ... Pues de esa manera ... aquí encaja la ejecución de mi oficio: desfacer fuerzas y socorrer y acudir a los miserables" (I.xxii.203).

The knight immediately fixes on the one word "fuerza"
whose true meaning he seeks in the chivalric code - "desfacer fuerzas" - and not by investigating the contingent particularities of each specific case so as to give "fuerza" its meaning in this context. This is comically illustrated by Cervantes when Don Quixote asks each prisoner the cause of his imprisonment. They each reply in euphemistic slang which Don Quixote very significantly cannot understand. One says that he has been punished "por enamorado", the other "por canario". Of course Don Quixote has to seek clarification; he cannot understand the meaning of the words because "enamorado" and "canario", although criminal slang, are quite clearly being used as metaphors which even the uninitiated would recognize if not perhaps fully understand. 29 Don Quixote, who is keen to see an orderliness in language, has to confess: "No lo entiendo" (p. 204): he is at a loss to transform the whole thing into intelligible chivalric terms. However, since he manifestly cannot cope with the moral complexities of each individual case (and his failure to recognize the ironical metaphors I think illustrates this), he forces a familiar chivalric interpretation on the situation:

"- De todo cuanto me habéis dicho, hermanos cariñosos, he sacado en limpio que, aunque os han castigado por vuestras culpas, las penas que vais a padecer no os dan mucho gusto, y que vais a ellas de muy mala gana y muy contra vuestra voluntad; y que podría ser que el poco ánimo que aquél tuvo en el tormento, la falta de dineros de este, el poco favor del otro y, finalmente, el torcido juicio del juez hubiese sido causa de vuestra perdiación, y de no haber salido con la justicia que de
vuestra parte tenfades. Todo lo cual se me representa a mí ahora en la memoria de manera que me está diciendo, persuadiendo y aun forzando, que muestre el efeto para que el Cielo me arrojó al mundo, y me hizo profesar en él la orden de caballería que profeso, y el voto que en ella hice de favorecer a los menesterosos y opresos de los mayores" (pp.209-10).

This, of course, is tantamount to an admission of confusion on Don Quixote's part. The reasons he gives for the captives' punishment are subsumed haphazardly, without regard for particular differences, under the categories of the chivalric code (note the ironic use of "forzando"). Don Quixote disregards all the niceties of the King's temporal justice in order to establish the higher claims of "natural" or chivalric justice. After releasing the galley-slaves from their royal shackles, he wants to press them into chivalric service by extracting from them a promise to report to Dulcinea. Cervantes seems here to be at his usual game of ironizing Don Quixote's over-simplifying chivalric zeal.

This adventure illustrates just how the rigidity of Don Quixote's concentration on the literal meaning of words leads him so disastrously to misinterpret situations and miss the very object he is aiming at. He religiously goes by the book when faced by complicated issues; any term or phrase he fancies has a chivalric ring will evoke a prescribed response, much as coincidental traces of romance reality are transmuted into full-scale adventures in his mind. Don Quixote reads what he fancies into situations,
projecting his preconceptions on to the everyday world. An example of this response is his attempt to help out Marcela in I.xiv. pp.125-34. Marcela, having delivered an eloquent and spirited defence of her rejection of Grisóstomo's importunate advances, strides off proudly into the hills. Some of the shepherds make as if to follow her whereupon Don Quixote reaches for his sword and warns them against doing so. His rather superfluous action is motivated by the feeling that: "... allí venía bien usar de su caballería, socorriendo a las doncellas menesterosas" (pp.132-3). Now Marcela, who has so splendidly taken care of herself by rejecting unwanted lovers, can only be described as a "doncella menesterosa" in a limited sense, as a single woman whose honour may be in need of traditional chivalric protection against attack (see Don Quixote's Golden Age speech). In wishing to attach Marcela to that traditional chivalric formula of the "doncella menesterosa", Don Quixote excludes all the other facets of the girl - her real intentions, her independent will - which make her much more complex than a storybook damsel in distress. But, more importantly, this elimination of significant nuances in favour of a single inflexible meaning prevents him from grasping the central truth of the situation: that Marcela is the victor and Grisóstomo, along with the other shepherds, is the victim, thereby reversing the usual chivalric pattern where the woman was virtually always the passive object of men's actions. Don Quixote seems unaware of the fact that an accumulation of nuances can sometimes be great
enough to outweigh and radically alter, if not actually contradict, the literal meaning.

Far from clarifying reality, such a fixation on the literal encloses Don Quixote in a vulnerable subjectivism which blinds him even to the most damaging attacks on his dignity and ideals. Even when his cherished lady Dulcinea is being savagely burlesqued by one of the Duke's servants, he is taken in because of his unwillingness or inability to register the tonal disparities which undermine the literal sense of the speech:

"Date, date en esas carnazas, bestión indomito, y saca de harón ese brío, que a sólo comer y más comer te inclina ... y sí por mí no quieres ablandarte ni reducirte a algún razonable término, hazlo por ese pobre caballero que a tu lado tienes: por tu amo, digo, de quien estoy viendo el alma, que la tiene atravesada en la garganta, no diez dedos de los labios, que no espera sino tu rígida o blanda repuesta, o para salirse por la boca, o para volverse al estómago.

Tentóse, oyendo esto, la garganta don Quijote, y dijo, volviéndose al duque:

- Por Dios, señor, que Dulcinea ha dicho la verdad: que aquí tengo el alma atravesada en la garganta, como una nuez de ballesta" (II.xxxv.800).

One has to laugh as Don Quixote plucks the literal meaning from a dense thicket of tonal ramifications and swallows the poisoned fruit of so much irony.30

This tendency to attach a literal denotative sense to language makes it particularly difficult for the knight to cope with the metaphorical nature of Art as it manifests itself in his everyday life. When Don Quixote comes across the actors of the Cortes de la Muerte he at first thinks he has found a new adventure. He halts them
in traditional chivalric fashion to root out their true identities:

"Carretero, cochero, o diablo, o lo que eres, no tardes en decirme quién eres, a dó vas y quién es la gente que llevas en tu carricoche, que más parece la barca de Carón que carreta de las que se usan" (II.xi.612).

Like a good knight errant he wants to get at the substance of this phenomenon and resolve the troublesome accidental ambiguities of its appearance. The driver obliges him by painstakingly spelling out his business and identifying the real people behind the actors' costumes. Although Don Quixote grasps this literal exposition of each actor's metaphorical alter ego he emphasizes the dangers of such wilful perversions of appearances:

"Por la fe de caballero andante ... que así como vi este carro imaginé que alguna grande aventura se me ofrecía; y ahora digo que es menester tocar las apariencias con la mano para dar lugar al desenganó" (II.xi.613).

Just when he seems to have grasped the nature of the theatrical metaphor, he unexpectedly runs into trouble with one of the clowns who causes him to be thrown off Rocinante. The metaphor now slips back into the literal, as the allegorical capital letter is particularized into lower case in the following exchange initiated by Sancho:

- Señor, el Diablo se ha llevado el rucio.
- ¿Qué diablo? - preguntó don Quijote.
- El de las vejigas - respondió Sancho.
- Pues yo le cobraré - replicó don Quijote -, si bien se encerrase con él en los más hondos y escuros calabozos del infierno" (II.xi.614).

Don Quixote now sees a real devil whom he will chase if necessary into Hell itself. Since he is uncertain as to
the real goings-on, he urges Sancho to turn away, "dejemos estas fantasmas y volvamos a buscar mejores y más calificadas aventuras" (p.616). He seems reluctant to accept these actors merely as actors: either their costumes must denote true identities, or else they must be phantoms, yet another trick by enchanters.

On a similar but more famous occasion, when Don Quixote settles down to watch Maese Pedro's puppet show, he appears at first to recognize the difference between the literal and the metaphorical. In fact, so carried away does he become by the dramatic action that he leaps to the rescue of the persecuted puppets and, having smashed the Moorish army single-handed, loudly extols the virtues of knight errantry. When apprised of his error, he apologizes and blames it as usual on the enchanters who change and controvert appearances:

"Real y verdaderamente os digo, señores que me ofí, que a mí me pareció todo lo que aquí ha pasado que pasaba al pie de la letra: que Melisendra era Melisendra, don Gaiferos don Gaiferos, Marsilio Marsilio, y Carlo Magno Carlo Magno" (II.xxvi.735).

He seems at this point to have admitted his mistake in taking the puppet show literally and agrees to compensate for the damage. As Maese Pedro reckons the cost and asks two reales and twelve maravedís for the broken-nosed and one-eyed Melisendra, Don Quixote consents, but nevertheless observes with wry satisfaction:

"- Aun ahi serfa el diablo ... si no estuviese Melisendra con su esposo, por lo menos, en la raya de Francia; porque el caballo en que iban, a mí me pareció que antes volaba que corría" (II.xxvi.735).

The irony suddenly startles us into realising that Don
Quixote still finds difficulty in appreciating the scenes as metaphorical. He is loath to concede that the puppet-play did not refer to any event in the real world, and clings instead to his conviction that Melisendra and Gaiferros did, after all, escape to France. Maese Pedro "que vio que don Quijote izquierdeaba y que volvía a su primer tema", rapidly changes his tune and declares that if the puppet is not Melisendra, it must be one of the damsels who served her, and correspondingly reduces his claim to sixty maravedís (p. 737).

Because Don Quixote's whole career is based primarily on his belief in the literal truth of the romances, he is not very well equipped to distinguish art from life or to accept the non-referential nature of metaphorical discourse. His difficulties with metaphor are brought to a head when the Duchess questions him about the status of Dulcinea in II.xxxii.: is she a princess in a literal or in a metaphorical sense? Don Quixote insists that he did not invent Dulcinea, and under pressure, is prepared only to say that she may not actually appear to be a princess but "aunque no formalmente, virtualmente tiene en sí encerradas mayores venturas" (p. 777). As in the cases of the actors of the Cortes de la Muerte and Melisendra and Gaiferros, Don Quixote will not readily accept even a symbolic status for the lady Dulcinea.

In all the examples discussed above Don Quixote becomes a victim of irony, not only because of his preconceived chivalric fixations, but also because he fails to look into other people's motives. He would like words to be
taken at their face value as if they were always bound to their ostensible referents regardless of the utterer's intentions. Don Quixote is trying to restore to language a condition to which it aspired and appeared to enjoy in romance, and which the chivalric code - with its truth-seeking duels, its system of pledges and inescapable obligations - was designed to support against the corrosions of Time or Evil, namely, language conceived as an unequivocal medium of communication which even in its metaphorical usages, in symbolic or allegorical discourse, would still denote some knowable if transcendent reality. In making Don Quixote the proponent of this utopian linguistic stability Cervantes demonstrates all the more effectively the opposite, the true, condition of language: its disconcerting malleability and its resultant capacity to conceal intentions and mislead. The remainder of this chapter will be largely devoted to a discussion of this ironic opposition to Don Quixote.

(iii) Don Quixote versus Sancho.

Because a good part of Don Quixote's enterprise involves sorting out concepts, fixing words to their literal meanings, respecting distinctions, and upholding stringent standards of decorum, his relations with Sancho are of great importance. From the beginning of their long relationship Cervantes establishes the fundamental difference between them. After Don Quixote is hurt in the adventure of the
windmills he tells Sancho that if he does not complain of the pain it is because knights errant are not supposed to do so (I.viii.83). Sancho for his part assures Don Quixote that he would complain of the slightest pain. That night Sancho sleeps while Don Quixote meditates on Dulcinea; at the break of day Sancho eats whereas Don Quixote "dio en sustenarse de sabrosas memorias" (p.84); Don Quixote regulates his behaviour by the laws of chivalry as he remembers them from the books but Sancho cannot even read or write; Don Quixote is an educated *hidalgo* interested in ideas and moral precepts, by contrast Sancho is an ignorant peasant who wholeheartedly follows his natural inclinations. This difference is, of course, one that Don Quixote recognizes and reaffirms as natural since it confirms the traditional distinction between knights errant and the rabble. But Don Quixote does not wish to leave things as they are, he has determined to make Sancho act in the manner of a squire. Although Sancho is not up to being a knight errant he cannot be allowed to remain in his benighted condition as a gross peasant. Don Quixote's aim is to educate Sancho so that he may take his rightful place in the reconstituted world of romance. He therefore instructs his servant not to intervene on his behalf against other knights because a squire must only defend himself against the low-born ("gente baja"). Sancho, however, replies that "en lo que tocare a defender mi persona no tendré mucha cuenta con esas leyes" (I.viii.85). Don Quixote agrees but insists that: "... en esto de ayudarme contra caballeros has de tener a raya tus naturales
impetus". Again, because he wants to subject Sancho's natural impulses to chivalric laws, Don Quixote, for example, invites him to celebrate the victory over the Biscayan by asking him to sit and eat with him as a singular privilege. Sancho declines because he is too hungry to bother with polite manners. Don Quixote insists and pulls Sancho down beside him, forcing the recalcitrant squire to cooperate in the chivalric operation willy-nilly.

If Sancho is disposed to cooperate with Don Quixote it is purely out of self-interest. After the victory over the Biscayan, Sancho asks his master for the promised island to govern but Don Quixote explains that "... Esta aventura y las a esta semeljantes no son aventuras de insulas, sino de encrucijadas" (I.x.97). Sancho is urged to be patient because other adventures will follow.

Not too long after this however the fickleness of Sancho's greed and the vicissitudes of circumstance will begin to controvert Don Quixote's chivalric experiments and jumble up the proper hierarchies. The first occasion arises when both knight and squire are lying on the ground after having been beaten up by the Yanguésans. Sancho notices the woeful discrepancies between the outcome of these adventures and Don Quixote's lofty accounts of them: "pero hay grande diferencia del ir caballero al ir atravesado como costal de basura" (I.xv.141). The realities of pain and failure are powerful enough, in Sancho's view, to reduce the proprieties of chivalric decorum to the level of rubbish.
This tendency grows when Sancho is subjected to his traumatic blanket-tossing. After this experience Sancho wants to return home but Don Quixote's reaction, typically, is to chide him both for his faint-heartedness and his ignorance of chivalric lore:

"-¡Que poco sabes, Sancho ... de achaque de caballerías! Calla y ten paciencia; que día vendrá donde veas por vista de ojos cuan honrosa cosa es andar en este ejercicio. Si no, dime ¿qué mejor contento puede haber en el mundo, o qué gusto puede igualarse al de vencer una batalla y al de triunfar de su enemigo? Ninguno sin duda alguna" (I.xviii.160).

But Sancho, not surprisingly, does have doubts, although this time his reply is less forthright:

"- Así debe de ser - respondió Sancho -, puesto que yo no lo sé; sólo sé que, después que somos caballeros andantes, o vuestra merced lo es (que yo no hay para qué me cuente en tan honroso número), jamás hemos vencido batalla alguna ...."  

Here he feigns agreement with Don Quixote's sentiments and conveys his feelings obliquely by appearing to acknowledge chivalric laws yet pointing to their failure. He sums up his feelings succinctly with the formula; "Así debe de ser puesto que yo no lo sé". It is a little gem of irony which crystallizes a new aspect of the relationship between master and servant: there is disagreement on some fundamental points but this cannot be openly expressed because of Don Quixote's imperviousness and the distance he imposes between them. Since the servant is obliged outwardly to conform with Don Quixote's views, he salvages his real feelings from total prostration by appearing to observe the rules while looking after his own interests.

Sancho's emerging sense of scepticism about Don
Quixote's enterprise and more especially, his ironic expression of this, evolves paradoxically from this distance Don Quixote imposes between them; Sancho's inability to have it out man-to-man with his crackpot master obliges him to look to more circuitous methods of communication when the need arises or a crisis is imminent. His relations with the knight change decisively and irreversibly in the adventure of the fulling mills (I.xx). Sancho is terrified when he hears the thunderous noises in the night but Don Quixote rejects his frightened appeals to desist from investigating their source and abandon the place. Sancho tries all manner of pleading and concludes by adopting chivalresque language: "Por un solo Dios, señor mío, que non se me faga tal desaguisado ..." (p.180). He urges Don Quixote at least to postpone the adventure until the morning, which according to the "science" he learned as a shepherd cannot be more than three hours away. When Don Quixote asks how he can tell this if there are no stars visible, Sancho replies that fear has many eyes but that, in any case, "... por buen discurso, bien se puede entender que hay poco de aquí al día". Not only does fear prompt Sancho to use chivalresque language, it makes him appeal to the laws of the "science" he knows, which in this case proceeds through reasoning alone without reference to sense-experience, much as Don Quixote's chivalric "science" is elaborated deductively by its own abstract laws of reasoning.

But when this fails and Don Quixote still persists, Sancho is forced into the unprecedented act of lying to his
master. He ties Rocinante’s legs and then turns to Don Quixote in a language which is a blend of would-be cultivation and irrepressible vulgarity:

"- Ea, señor, que el cielo, conmovido de mis lágrimas y plegarias, ha ordenado que no se pueda mover Rocinante; y si vos queréis porfiar, y espeolar, y dalle, será enojar a la Fortuna y dar coces, como dicen, contra el aguijon" (p.181).

Here he attempts both an erudite reference to Fortune and an appeal to the authority of proverbial tradition. This latter parallels Don Quixote’s own constant references to chivalric tradition although Sancho of course falls back on the only tradition he knows - that of popular proverbs and sayings. But Don Quixote, amazingly, succumbs to this line of argument and agrees to await the dawn. He relents because he is predisposed to believe the type of argument his squire puts forward. For Sancho it is a special triumph. He has learned to penetrate Don Quixote’s sphere of consciousness and has begun to acquire the knack of moulding his language and reasoning to advance his own interests.

What starts out merely as a need to communicate develops fortuitously, through a mixture of incompetence and wilfulness, into parody. As the night wears on Sancho needs to relieve himself, and even though he tries to dissemble this from Don Quixote, he cannot contain himself. Hearing Sancho, the knight enquires about the new sounds that have now been added to the original ones: "¿Qué rumor es ése, Sancho?" And Sancho archly replies: "No sé, señor ... Alguna cosa nueva debe de ser; que las aventuras y desventuras nunca comienzan por poco" (I.xx.185; my emphasis). Sancho’s
reply whimsically echoes the formula and style with which his master often greets new adventures ("Eso debe de ser, y es sin duda..."). The sounds he perpetrates are converted into a source of mystery, the promise of a new adventure or misadventure, precisely like those others Don Quixote is waiting to investigate. The text proceeds:

"Tornó otra vez a probar ventura, y sucedióle tan bien, que sin más ruido ni alborotó que el pasado, se halló libre de la carga que tanta pesadumbre le había dado" (I.xx.185).

Sancho's perilously troubled defecation perversely parallels the hazards of his master's chivalric adventures, not to mention the sounds of the fulling hammers, but it is his new-found artfulness which wilfully orchestrates his digestive travails both verbally and acoustically into a brief ironic travesty of adventure-seeking.

When Don Quixote realizes what has happened he becomes irritated and again imposes a proper distance between himself and Sancho, attributing the latter's lack of respect to "la mucha conversación que tengo contigo" (p.186). Don Quixote ascribes this deterioration in their relations to an excess of words, as if the vulgarities of his squire's speech were somehow sullying and thereby thwarting his chivalric mission.

When the noises in the night are finally discovered to be caused by a fulling mill, Don Quixote is at first dismayed. However, when he sees Sancho trying to hold back his amusement, he breaks into laughter himself which, of course, unleashes uncontrollable convulsions of mirth from
Sancho, who quickly indulges in a gleeful parody of his master's initial chivalric bravado:

"- Has de saber, ; oh Sancho amigo! que yo nací por querer del cielo en esta edad de hierro, para resucitar en ella la dorada, o de oro. Yo soy aquel para quien están guardados los peligros, las hazañas grandes, los valerosos hechos..." (p.188).

Don Quixote reacts to this furiously and hits Sancho with his lance, but a while later he admits the comic side of the matter. Even so he defends his outburst of censorious anger at Sancho's disrespect by making it clear that one should interpret situations circumspectly with an eye to how they may be maliciously distorted by others:

" - No niego yo - respondió don Quijote - , que lo que nos ha sucedido no sea cosa digna de risa; pero no es digna de contarse; que no son todas las personas tan discretas que sepan poner en su punto las cosas " (I.xx.189; my emphasis).

This statement is reminiscent of Calogrenant's admonition in Yvain to the listeners of his tale that people should use their hearts as well as their ears when they listen to a story. Here Don Quixote argues for a similar moral discrimination when evaluating experience - "poner en su punto las cosas". Not everything experience presents to us should be given equal importance, priorities should be established and respected if an effective scale of values is to be achieved. One is not entitled to put just any construction on experience, a moral effort must be made to decipher its proper significance. Although Don Quixote acknowledges that values and meanings can be abused or degraded, he believes this comes about only through ignorance or malice; regardless of these distortions
there exist true values which responsible persons should be able to discern. Since, moreover, not everybody can be trusted with this task, a special area of educated discourse and moral action is reserved for the deserving, rightful minority who will communicate the truth to the others.

Don Quixote's beliefs therefore lead to the notion of a qualitative distinction between the responsible, discerning élite and the undiscriminating mass. Sancho accepts this:

"Mas bien puede estar seguro que de aquí adelante no desplegue mis labios para hacer donaire de las cosas de vuestra merced, si no fuere para honrarle, como a mi amo y señor natural" (I.xx.190).

Don Quixote is well pleased with these sentiments and endorses them with some grandiloquence:

"- Desa manera - replicó don Quijote - vivirás sobre la haz de la tierra; porque, después de a los padres, a los amos se ha de respetar como si lo fuesen."

The momentary anarchy of the fulling mills episode is overcome and the paternalistic distance between master and servant restored. Hierarchical order, of a sort, reigns once again.

But it is worth taking a closer look at the basis of Don Quixote's paternalistic authority. He urges upon Sancho a respect for himself and for his words and actions because, it is implied, he alone can detect the proper meaning underlying experience and interpret it correctly. Sancho must take his cue from his master and conform to the criteria of the chivalric code. But where does his master get the ability to identify the correct meaning?
From his faith in the code of chivalry; his literal belief in the romances of chivalry constitutes the decisive source of Don Quixote's spiritual authority over Sancho, the fundamental reason why Sancho should obey and respect him as his natural master.

In terms of Don Quixote's enterprise to restore the age of chivalry, the values expressed in the books of chivalry are incarnate, on his own assertion, in the figure of Dulcinea - she is, as we have seen, the absent entity to which his words and actions refer. So it becomes progressively more important to Don Quixote that this invisible referent materialize in the novel for others to witness her independently of his own asseverations. Her apparition would effectively clinch Don Quixote's argument and fully vindicate his mission.

Ironically, but naturally, when the time approaches it falls to Sancho to be sent to see her with a letter and report back. This mission marks a watershed in the novel. When Sancho returns to Don Quixote, he is forced to lie about his meeting with Dulcinea, which never took place at all (I.xxx-xxxi). In his eagerness, Don Quixote supplies Sancho with what ought to have occurred according to the laws of chivalry. Sancho responds by consciously degrading this noble version with cruelly realistic details - he plays upon the literal meaning of "alta" and on the quality of Dulcinea's personal odours (p.312). But it is important to note that he pointedly refrains from altogether destroying the chivalric image of Dulcinea: he refers to her as "su merced de la señora Dulcinea", he says that Dulcinea wishes to see Don Quixote, that the Biscayan had been to pay homage to her, though not
as yet the galley-slaves (p.313). Sancho is clearly deriving malicious enjoyment from tantalizing Don Quixote - he does not present the knight with an entirely desired picture nor with a totally degraded one either - he teases his master by combining elements of the two and thereby savouring a form of covert power, an underhand control of the other's responses.

In other words, for the first time Don Quixote comes up not against reality (e.g. windmills), not against other people's version of reality (e.g. the barber's basin or Micomicona), but against a deliberately contrived travesty of reality designed both to satisfy and annoy him. Don Quixote is not, as with Dorotea-Micomicona, so much a victim of a well-intentioned lie as a victim of Sancho's ironic intentions. Sancho's words are more than lies, they are meant as secret amusement and mockery of his master. They are a covert expression of a power which is based upon the knowledge of the knight's fundamental weakness: Dulcinea does not exist, and Sancho knows this because his complete fabrication is believed by his mad master. Had he merely been interested in defensive lying, Sancho could have played along fully with Don Quixote's desires and presented him with an acceptable picture of the non-existent princess. But as it is, Sancho offers him some titbits and wantonly withdraws others, rendering his master, on this occasion at least, into a creature of his will.

The importance of this ironic relationship, which I shall discuss further in chapter 5, is that it creates
an additional layer of reference in the novel that is seemingly independent of any one character's total control. Sancho's deceptions inaugurate a new phase where there is a conscious and conscientious split between a character's real intentions and the surface meaning of his words and actions. It all stems from Sancho's panicky lie in the adventure of the fulling mills and it is taken up and embroidered by Dorotea as Micomicona and by the priest and barber. Finally, Sancho's ironic play with the existence of Dulcinea contaminates the very core of Don Quixote's chivalric world. From then on Don Quixote has to contend with a chivalric dimension which appears to accord with his expectations (albeit with some disturbing inconsistencies) but which in fact has been cunningly confected by Sancho and, increasingly, by other characters.

This factitious chivalric overlay increases in structural importance and ironic sophistication as the novel progresses, and in Part II it becomes an indispensable narrative feature with the so-called enchantment of Dulcinea and its far-reaching consequences in and beyond the Duke's castle. What this means is that Cervantes has come to rely on this illusory chivalric level, which coincides with Don Quixote's aspirations, as a fundamental device to give resonance and complexity to his narrative. It gives added dimension to the novel, endowing it with a phantom level of reference which affords an ironic escape from the literal surface of the narrative without recourse to chivalric symbology or metaphysical allegory.

When Don Quixote attempts to restore the age of
chivalry he is seeking to re-open access to that transcendent reality which in Chrétien's romances corresponds to the "deep sense", the symbolic level of the narrative which unifies and gives meaning to the surface incidents. In other words, Don Quixote attempts to make language and experience refer to the realm of essences and spiritual truths beyond the material surface of reality. However, all he succeeds in doing, given his inability to establish this sphere of reference independently of his assertions, is to conceive of a narrowly subjective and inflexible system of chivalry which constantly fails to encompass and assimilate the literal, "historical" plane of the story. His persistent efforts to organize literal meanings and everyday experiences so as to make them refer to transcendent realities as in romance, collapse ignominiously back into the merely empirical.

Sancho, on the other hand, does provide the narrative with an additional level when he fashions this deceptive chivalric layer from the material Don Quixote provides. His deceptions appear to lend Don Quixote's project a validity beyond itself and lead to the construction of a rather rickety superstructure of chivalric meaning beyond immediate experience. But Sancho only does this by giving his words two senses, by imposing an ironic duality in his own language between the surface and the real meaning. Sancho's duplicity introduces a secondary order of reality in the text, but this is a false bottom, as it were, which of course does not genuinely coincide with the deep transcendental order Don Quixote aspires to reach through his chivalric
practice. The knight's stubborn search for transcendence has only succeeded in forcing Sancho into an ironic strategy, thereby giving rise unwittingly to the wholly different problem of hidden intentions. In other words, whereas Don Quixote is looking for traces of romance reality, he should be looking for signs of covert intentions. The ironic interplay between Don Quixote and Sancho Panza which we have discussed here is an important aspect of Cervantes's solution of the narrative impasse which faced the Renaissance storyteller. This I characterized in an earlier section as the necessity to transcend the literal without indulging in absurd metaphors and allegories or departing from empirical accuracy. For Don Quixote, as we have seen on various occasions, there is no separation between the literal and the metaphorical, there is in fact no metaphor as such. As he declares over and over again, the phenomena described in romance literature, even though not directly perceptible in the fallen world, are nevertheless real and not in any way imaginary: Aldonza Lorenzo is one and the same as the princess Dulcinea whose high birth and physical beauty betoken her spiritual excellence. If there is a contradiction between Aldonza and Dulcinea, it is not one between a literal and a metaphorical existence, or even between the real and the ideal; it is a conflict between two versions of the literal, one corrupt and the other true. Don Quixote's task in restoring this age of chivalry amounts to the re-creation of the purity and transparency of the true literal surface of reality which as been travestied
by Time, human malice and evil enchanters) so that historical reality may again be read symbolically, as a sort of figura: the direct literal level of experience pointing effortlessly to its deep spiritual sense - Dulcinea's unclouded beauty revealing the signs of her great virtue to all and sundry. So Don Quixote's efforts are aimed at reforming the literal sense of historical reality in order to make its spiritual dimension more easily decipherable by other men, just as a medieval exegete would claim that the historical events in Scripture were literal signs of a deeper spiritual order.

Now, although the fictional elements of the romances of chivalry are literally true and not metaphorical for Don Quixote, for all the other characters they are indeed dubious metaphors or groundless fantasies which have no connection at all with everyday reality. As for Cervantes and the reader, sanity lies in being able to distinguish between the empirically ascertainable, and the capricious metaphors produced by the fictive imagination. However, Cervantes, as an artist, has to reconcile the imagination - his freedom to create - with the demands of observable fact. The solution, as we saw above, lies in the use of irony. Cervantes's creative dilemma is expressed through the ironic conflict between Don Quixote and Sancho Panza and, furthermore, it is incorporated structurally into the narrative by the elaboration of a counterfeit chivalric reality continually referred to by Sancho and the other characters. This false chivalric superstructure feeds Don Quixote's madness by
fostering in him the illusion that he is actually transforming the literal. At the same time, it provides a convenient ironic cover for the other characters under which they may hide their true intentions. The direct literal level of the text is refracted into different facets. Several planes are created on which the author's imagination can play: in Don Quixote's view there is the degenerate level of sense-experience, then the pristine level of romance reality, beyond which lies the transcendent order of spiritual life. For Sancho and the other characters there is the same basic level of sense-experience but, in addition to this, there is an artificial, parodic, romance reality under which lies the obscure welter of individual motive

Cervantes's imagination is free to create an interplay between these planes so long as he remains ultimately true to the "objective" plane of verisimilar reality common to Don Quixote, the other characters, author and reader. Unlike writers of allegory or romance, Cervantes's imagination
does not directly metamorphose the literal or the "historical", he allows his characters to attempt metaphorical transformations and only then develops the ironic complications which ensue. The aesthetic significance of the story is derived from the handling of the diverse and interlocking aspects of a conflict between human beings with their inevitable manipulations of language and experience.

When Sancho lies to Don Quixote or humours him in his chivalric fantasies, there is a decided divergence between his words and his true feelings. Sancho uses language as the ductile instrument of his desires and fears. He therefore becomes a potentially anarchic element within his master's chivalric enterprise by unsettling words in their proper relations with meaning. His ironical activity renders ineffective Don Quixote's struggles to preserve a sharply outlined profile for words and concepts, an immovable substantive structure of truth and moral values in the shifting manipulable world of human experience. Cervantes has therefore personified and dramatized in the Don Quixote - Sancho relationship some conflicts of very general and serious import; conflicts between literal and metaphorical usages, between symbolism and irony, and between authority and individual interest.

However, the introduction of irony into a narrative, without the ulterior control of symbolism, creates problems of a different order. Irony, as we have seen, can multiply into a potentially endless series of undercuttings as ironic meanings proliferate according to changing individual perspectives within a relativistic world. If the novelist
employs irony too intensively in his narrative the danger arises that he too may be swept into the ironic vortex and his own judgements and values will appear just as partial and inconsequential as the views of the characters. In a prevailingly ironic climate how can the author apportion blame, lay down the law, or reveal some inherent, objective order within his fictional world? How can he "poner en su punto las cosas"? If irony liberates the author's imagination from the constraints of the literal and verisimilar, it may nonetheless lead him to a crisis of authority within the text, reducing him to the highly subjective and relativistic perspectives that condition his characters. In the following sections I propose to look at the way in which Cervantes attempts to control his ironic narrative, and at the problems attendant on this activity.

(iv) The ironic author

I have so far confined myself to Sancho's ironic opposition to Don Quixote. Nevertheless Sancho's attitude is shared by many other characters, principally, in Part I, by Dorotea, the priest and barber, and later by Sansón Carrasco, the Duke and Duchess, and Altisidora in Part II. But the main accomplice in Sancho's duplicity and ironic undermining is unquestionably Cervantes himself, the ironic author. The most significant ironic adversities Don Quixote encounters, so to speak, come in the form of the tricks Cervantes plays on him. Cervantes employs a
great many ironic devices of varying magnitude and subtlety. Because of the manifold and elusive nature of irony itself, it becomes impossible to catalogue minutely each instance in the narrative, I therefore propose to discuss some major devices, especially those which have a fundamental, structural bearing on the novel.

The most obvious technique is, of course, that of flat contradiction. When Don Quixote (or for that matter some other character) says or does something, the narrator will contradict that statement or action by producing a contrary situation or statement. This, of course, is fairly close to the common definition of irony as the saying of one thing and meaning another. Cervantes twists words and situations to undermine Don Quixote, as in the windmills episode, that of the Yanguesans, the episode of the lion and as, indeed, in most of the straightforward "adventures" into which Don Quixote launches himself. The device is not much different from that employed in Greek drama where the hero is blind to certain events produced by an adverse Fate which will eventually frustrate his human striving and destroy him.

The adventure of the fulling mills which we have just considered, and the implications of Sancho's lie, however, place the ironic conflict on a different level: between two human beings and their divergent uses of language. This episode illustrates a new twist of the simple ironic device. Here one character (Sancho) utters a statement, X, but really means something else, Y. Another character (Don
Quixote) only grasps X whereas a third character (or the reader) can see both X and Y. The ironic victim (usually, but not exclusively, Don Quixote) grasps a single branch of the ironic duality and is, as a result, seen to be isolated and vulnerable in the one-sidedness of his perceptions. In this type of device the irony is generated by the interplay of human wills and intentions rather than by a clash between man and metaphysical agencies. It is strictly non-transcendental and non-metaphysical but, nonetheless, makes the novel exceedingly complex and, as we shall observe in due course, less amenable to exegesis.

But the significance of this variant on the basic ironic model is that the clash occurs between two characters, resulting in a misunderstanding where one is deliberately concealing some information from the other so as to exercise power or control over him. The ironic relations are here far more unstable than in the formula of tragic irony where the victim has no chance against forces beyond his human ken or control. Here the victim may be momentarily taken in, but since his opponent is also human, he is equally vulnerable to the subsequent manoeuvres of his victim. There is a greater likelihood of roles being reversed. The ironic confrontation is a human power struggle with the possibility of reciprocity, interaction and shifting relations.

Cervantes introduces further ironic variations into his narrative. The principle of adaptation is to fuse the two devices in different ways. For instance, he takes up a particular character's words and incorporates
them into his own narrative description thereby producing a discrepancy between the character's subjectivity and the narrative's objectivity. The following is a brief example: "Don Quijote se situó fuera de la venta a hacer la centinela del castillo" (I.xiii.439; my emphases). This device is frequently used and it is relatively straightforward, but it leads to a variant which is extremely fruitful for ironic play. Cervantes sometimes appropriates the discourses of two characters and plays them off within his own narrative discourse thereby not only preserving the original clash between the characters' motives, views and value-judgements, but introducing the further clash with the objectivity of the actual narration. For example, when the priest, the barber and Dorotea meet Sancho who has arrived back from seeing Don Quixote in Sierra Morena:

"Salieronle al encuentro y, preguntándole por don Quijote, les dijo cómo le había hallado desnudo en camisa, flaco, amarillo y muerto de hambre, y suspirando por su señora Dulcinea; y que puesto que le había dicho que ella le mandaba que saliese de aquel lugar y se fuese al del Toboso donde le quedaba esperando, había respondido que estaba determinado de no parecer ante su fermosura fasta que hubiese hecho faenas que le ficiesen digno de su gracia. Y que si aquello pasaba adelante, corriía peligro de no venir a ser emperador, como estaba obligado, ni aun arzobispo, que era lo menos que podía ser. Por eso, que mirasen lo que se había de hacer para sacarle de allí" (I.xxix.291).

Here Cervantes reports Sancho's own report on his visit to Don Quixote. The reader is not only informed of the actual conditions of Don Quixote's penance but also, through Sancho's comically inept distortion of Don Quixote's
archaic chivalric language, is able to appreciate the lunatic stubbornness of the knight. However, in addition to this, the reader can gauge something of Sancho's own interest in the matter. His anxiety about Don Quixote's not becoming an emperor or archbishop is conveyed by the syntactical construction of the penultimate sentence. Its varied and compressed arrangement of subordinate clauses imparts a cumulative, plaintive rhythm to the account, suggesting that Sancho urgently wishes to extract Don Quixote from the Sierra Morena so that he might all the quicker marry a king's daughter and give him an island to govern.

By setting off Don Quixote's discourse against Sancho's within the mainstream of his narrative, Cervantes is able to ironize both characters at once for different reasons. The narrative is not merely descriptive, nor does it merely report what the characters have said, it goes beyond reportage to adopt their verbal style and assimilate this into the description. It is a technique which foreshadows the style indirect libre in its flexibility and subtlety. It enjoys the best of two worlds since it retains the descriptive impartiality of the narrative while incorporating the subjective values of the characters. It is as if the narrator had stepped off his pedestal of historical detachment and descended into the embroiled world of his characters as a protean presence to don and then discard the rhythms and tonalities of his fictional creatures' speech.
But, of course, by appropriating his characters' discourses Cervantes can give them a value which they would not have if left standing in their own right. The narrator takes up a particular tone or rhythm and places it within a broader narrative framework thereby throwing into relief certain hidden qualities or at least ironically conditioning the significance of the original. An excellent example of this occurs in I.i.38 where Cervantes describes and explains Don Quixote's views on the romances:

"Decía él que el Cid Ruy Díaz había sido muy buen caballero pero que no tenía que ver con el Caballero de la Ardiente Espada que de solo un revés había partido por medio dos fieros y descomunales gigantes. Mejor estaba con Bernardo del Carpio, porque en Roncesvalles había muerto a Roldán el encantado, valiéndose de la industria de Hércules, cuando ahogó a Anteo, el hijo de la Tierra, entre los brazos ... Pero, sobre todos estaba bien con Reinaldos de Montalbán, y más cuando le veía salir de su castillo y robar cuantos topaba, y cuando en allende robó aquel ídolo de Mahoma que era todo de oro, según dice su historia. Diera él por dar una mano de coces al traidor de Ganalón, al ama que tenía y aun a su sobrina de añadidura."

The interest of this passage lies not so much in what it seems to be doing - i.e. reporting on what Don Quixote used to say about the world of the romances- but rather in its actual syntactical organisation: the manner in which clauses are conjoined or qualified, together with the tone and rhythms which result from such arrangements. The report's narrative equanimity is ruffled by the inflections of a more colloquial tone which suggest the argumentative quality of Don Quixote's own speech. Cervantes seems to be expressing the form of Don Quixote's feeling as well as
its actual content. However, because it is a report and not a literal transcript, a certain amount of apparently legitimate compression occurs; the second and third sentences convey a rather breathless compilation of heroic feats which manages to put across the opposite of what it intends: rather than inspiring admiration in the reader it invites ridicule. The third-person account thoroughly ironizes Don Quixote's feelings but without actually shedding its mask of objectivity. The mechanisms of irony are so well stowed beneath the surface that they rely only on the minimal discrepancies between the reported words and their narrative setting to jar the reader into noticing the irony. Once the ironic signals have been recognized, the narrative yields up messages which differ substantially from the overt statements. Don Quixote's enthusiasm now appears as an absurd obsession; his presumably richly detailed arguments, his taste for erudite references and measured comparisons, are squeezed in the narrative into a manic pseudo-logical zeal; his lofty sense of history is transformed by the use of a temporal adverb ("cuando"), a change of tense (from "veía" to "robó"), and the seemingly innocuous insertion of a demonstrative adjective ("aquel ídolo"), into a strange chimera existing only within his own fractured mind. In the last sentence the underswell of Don Quixote's emotions rises uncontrollably to the surface; with the phrase "... y aun su sobrina de añadidura" we capture the immense frustration of the home-bound hidalgo who would give anything to rid himself of the nagging of housekeeper and niece and leap bodily into the life of the romances.
Cervantes's insidious narrative technique allows him to steal behind the character's own consciousness to reveal secret pockets of motivation of which even Don Quixote himself seems unaware.

However, the intensification of this very ironic technique of assimilating various styles and voices to the main narrative is, of course, potentially anarchic. The ironic author can mingle qualitatively different types of discourse in an indecorous mishmash by releasing them from their conventional moorings and propelling them into unseemly relations with an alien discourse. By unsettling various narratives styles or levels of literary diction, Cervantes is perversely able to construct entire scenes whose comic energy is drawn from just such an indiscriminate miscegenation of words, concepts and values. As we shall see from the extended example below, Cervantes's comic exhilaration is nevertheless occasionally punctuated by glances at the underlying issues of poetic truth and authorial responsibility for the selection and ordering of material. But even these references to serious issues are compromised and conditioned by the all-absorbing irreverence of the ironic narrative.

In I.xvi.146, the kitchen-maid Maritornes has given her word to the muleteer that she will visit him that night: "Y cuéntase desta buena moza que jàmas dio semejantes palabras que no la cumpliese, aunque las diese en monte y sin testigo alguno, porque presumía de muy hidalga ...". Here is Cervantes beginning to equivocate on the subject of
keeping one's promise - a virtue which is not only the hallmark of hidalguía but also one of the cornerstones of chivalry and courtly love. On this occasion, however, fidelity is displayed in a very dubious context indeed. The scene switches to the guests' dormitory where Don Quixote, Sancho and the muleteer have settled down for the night. Suddenly Cervantes's scruples as editor of the "history" obtrude in the narrative. The reason for the muleteer's current prominence in the history, he says, may well be explained by the fact that he was known by and is even said to have been a kinsman of Cide Hamete's ... "fuera de que Cide Hamete Benengeli fue historiador muy curioso y muy puntual en todas las cosas, y échase bien de ver, pues, las que quedan referidas, con ser tan mínimas y tan rateras, no las quiso pasar en silencio" (p.146; my emphasis). Benengeli's devotion to historical truth is such that he cannot but include these miserable details, unlike other "historiadores graves" who are so concise and selective in their narratives that they leave in their inkwells "lo más sustancial de la obra". So: "¡Bien haya mil veces el autor de Tablante de Ricamonte, y aquel del otro libro donde se cuenta los hechos del conde Tomillas, y con qué puntualidad lo describen todo!" Now Cervantes has shifted the equivocal virtue of "puntualidad" to the historian. Does "puntualidad" mean that the historian should be like Benengeli and chronicle every detail for the sake of documentary truth and so risk giving cause to prurience, or does it mean that he should be selective and try to
"poner en su punto las cosas" and in so doing possibly omit "lo más sustancial de la obra"? Must one pass over in silence things that actually happened because they fail to accord with one's moral principles, or should one include every single detail?

The transference of the word "puntual" from the unseemly ethos of Maritornes and her muleteer to that of Cide Hamete's allegedly historical narrative not only poses the fundamental problem of moral authority in imaginative fiction, it ironizes and, in a sense, mocks the whole neo-Aristotelian debate on the differences between historical and poetic truth. Cervantes seems to be saying, at least in this passage, that just as we all know what lies behind Maritornes's "punctuality", we know too what motivates people to write or read about love-affairs, stories about kitchen-maids and lustful muleteers. Despite all the roundabout efforts by chivalric authors at moral rationalisation, it is sheer salaciousness which they largely offer to their readers in the guise of historical comprehensiveness.

On the face of it, Cervantes is only making fun of romance story-tellers who clothe their meretricious intentions with high-minded rhetoric, but he has nevertheless touched upon a serious problem for any narrative writer: the difference between poetic and historical truth. If the writer is concerned with historical truth alone he may well invoke this principle in order to include all manner of scurrilous material under the pretence of documentary thoroughness or truthfulness to life. However,
and this is the sly point Cervantes is really making, even if a writer claims to be guided by impeccable moral principles, by a high sense of poetic truth, he could still indulge in titillation so long as he dressed his subject-matter in an acceptable moralistic package. Beyond theories of poetic or historical truth, Cervantes would seem to be implying, there lies the fundamental problem of the author's genuine moral disposition. Questions of poetic truth will remain insoluble unless imaginative literature be illuminated by some transcendent power or inner moral conscience. Without a sense of inspiration — a belief in creative writing as an essentially spiritual activity liable to manifold distortions in the absence of divine guidance — there can be no effective means of ensuring moral probity in fiction.

But equally, it follows that the notion of artistic inspiration entails the idea of reading as a moral activity: the reader must approach the work in the right spirit, as Chrétien de Troyes' Calogrenant warned, otherwise an author is helpless to safeguard the truth of his creation from malicious distortion by his readers. Ultimately, both writing and its reception become questions of faith. The writer must genuinely believe that he is inspired, and the audience must also have faith in the authority of the author, as in sacred or mythical literature, in epic recitation, and even, I would venture, in early Arthurian romance. However, difficulties arise when the author loses the confidence of his audience; how
then will he be able to persuade them of the intrinsic value of his creation? Such, precisely, was the problem encountered by Montalvo and the writers of Spanish romances. The perpetual necessity to justify their right to create fictions spawned the endless narrative convolutions and absurdities Cervantes parodied in his novel. These romance authors were continually beset by the task of proving the validity of their inventions and falling prey to accusations of subjective circularity much as the unfortunate Don Quixote is forever trapped in circular proclamations of romance truth. If in the figure of Don Quixote Cervantes embodies the dilemma facing an author writing fiction without a sense of being divinely inspired, in the Maritornes episode, he explores the slippery perils of writing in a wholly secular context where language is the all too malleable medium of concealed and suspect motives.

Having raised these weighty issues Cervantes leaves them hanging fire as the narrative presses on: "Digo, pues, que después de haber visitado el harriero a su recua y dádole el segundo pienso, se tendió en sus enjalmas y se dio a esperar a su puntualísima Maritornes" (p.146). Here at least is one quality the good kitchen-maid shares with her tirelessly inquisitive historian. The word "puntual", now transferred back to its former context, undergoes a further ironic twist, for the superlative that now admiringly enhances Maritornes's exemplary reliability also captures, in the circumstances, the
lecherous self-congratulation of the waiting muleteer. In addition to revealing the état d'âme of the muleteer, the well-placed superlative short-circuits the potentially endless debate about moral responsibility in literature and converts the entire question into a comic issue.

Comedy gathers apace as the narrative spirals through successive phases of irony. While Don Quixote lies awake in his bed he persuades himself that Maritornes is the châtelain's daughter who has pledged herself to come secretly to his chamber that night and lie with him. This sets him worrying about how he will resist her temptations. Maritornes does indeed enter stealthily at this point "to keep faith" with the muleteer. When Don Quixote hears her he grabs her arm and forces her down on to his bed whereupon he proceeds to protest his unyielding devotion to the peerless Dulcinea. In the gloom of the dormitory the muleteer (I.xvi.148-9) begins to suspect his "puntualísima" Maritornes of having wantonly defected to Don Quixote's bed. He creeps up to investigate "celoso de que la asturiana le hubiese faltado la palabra por otro" (p.148; my emphasis). When he notices that she is struggling to extricate herself from Don Quixote's clutches, "enarbolo el brazo en alto y descargo tan terrible puñada sobre las estrechas quijadas del enamorado caballero" (pp.148-9; my emphases). Later, when Maritornes is locked in combat with Sancho, the muleteer, "viendo ... cual andaba su dama, dejando a don Quijote, acudió a dalle el socorro necesario". (p.149; my emphases). I have emphasised those words and phrases which for me transform the muleteer, in
a further fantastical twist to the earlier equivocations on the notion of "puntualidad", into a grotesquely punctilious knight errant rescuing his damsel from dishonour.

Cervantes crosses the two styles as he describes the misunderstanding. Don Quixote's chivalric world becomes attached to the lustful harriero's, whereas the love-lorn knight is in turn painfully absorbed into the sordid affair of Maritornes and her muleteer.

These are not the only ironic fluctuations in the scene. When Maritornes is liberated by her champion, she hears the innkeeper approach to investigate the rumpus, and flees in terror to Sancho's bed: "... todo medrosica y alborotada se acogió a la cama de Sancho Panza, que aún dormía, y allí se acurruchó y se hizo un ovillo" (p;149). This picture of coy vulnerability is soon shattered by the landlord's arrival: "-¿ Adónde estás, puta? A buen seguro que son tus cosas éstas."

In the narrative discourse the simple kitchenmaid becomes verbally refracted by the diverse treatment she receives from Don Quixote, the muleteer, the innkeeper, Sancho and the narrator, into several incompatible guises: she is "fermosa doncella" and "diosa de la hermosura" for Don Quixote, but only a "coima" for the muleteer, although his subsequent zeal in rescuing her so as to salvage his outraged self-respect seems to transform her in the narrator's words into an ironic "dama". In her own self-defensive estimation she appears retiring and vulnerable: "medrosica", "alborotada" "se acurruchó y se hizo un ovillo", "
yet a moment later she is to the innkeeper no more than a hardboiled "puta". Finally, for Sancho, whose sleep she interrupts, she is a "pesadilla" which he tries to fight off. Each person calls Maritornes by a different word and this word depends not on a perspectivist trick but either on the designs they have on her or on the way she affects them. Depending on their motives or intentions, each character has a different name or conception of Maritornes. Cervantes manufactures a farcical situation where the conflicting intentions of the characters distort Maritornes into something other than her real self. Language in this turbulent ironic episode becomes flexible and even flirtatious in its changeability, it appears to have lost its respect for the anchored meanings and fixed references of Don Quixote's ideal romance discourse. Through a series of coincidences, overlapping actions, and violent cross-purposes, the situation becomes progressively more confusing and more unreal until the whole scene degenerates into a chaos of flying fists and concatenated blows:—

"Y así como suele decirse: el gato al rato, el rato a la cuerda, la cuerda al palo, daba el harriero a Sancho, Sancho a la moza, la moza a él, el ventero a la moza, y todos menudeaban con tanta prisa, que no se daban punto de reposo; y fue lo bueno que al ventero se le apagó el candil, y, como quedaron a escuras, dabanse tan sin compasión todos a bulto, que a doquiera que ponían la mano no dejaban cosa sana" (p.149).

Such a thorough breakdown of order and sense is, of course, the result of the narrator's crazy piling-up of ironies, one leading to another at such a speed that the whole thing becomes a whirligig of non-sense, a semantic nightmare for the likes of Don Quixote.
In passages like the above, one must guard against ascribing to Cervantes an anachronistic advocacy of moral, linguistic or epistemological relativism. What has occurred in this episode is that the author has used irony so intensively that he has produced a farce. The characters give the impression of having been arbitrarily manoeuvred and therefore manipulated by an excessively despotic author. The ensuing farce demonstrates the need for some limitation of ironic play if the narrative is to generate a sense of intrinsic order and acquire a serious moral complexion. But in this regard, an author must know, in the words of Don Quixote himself, how to assign things to their rightful place: "poner en su punto las cosas". If, as I stated earlier, Cervantes's ironic narrative is the ally of Sancho against Don Quixote, it serves only to underline, in moments like the above, the capacity of irony to destroy the sort of moral discrimination and authority which Don Quixote craves, and which the writer of fiction would ideally require in order to escape from subjective indulgence and resolve fully the question of poetic truth.

(v) The reader as ironic victim.

The Maritornes episode suggests that Cervantes was sensitive to the destructiveness of irony. It remains to discuss how he achieves aesthetic objectivity and order in the novel. In what follows I will argue that there is a basic ironic phenomenon which can be considered one of the
cornerstones of this narrative objectivity.

This phenomenon begins as a variation on the simple ironic model described earlier. However, instead of the ironic contradiction being deliberately produced by another character in the novel (say Sancho in the fulling mills episode), or by an ironic clash between two or more characters being assimilated into Cervantes's own narrative discourse (e.g. the fracas at the inn), the ironic discrepancy is produced within the character's own discourse or behaviour. In other words, the clash occurs internally without reference to external events, other characters, or even the narrator. The surface meaning of the character's statements or actions is ironized by an incongruity which springs from inside the character's speech and behaviour itself.

For example, after the humiliating stoning by the shepherds and the mutual defilement of master and servant, Don Quixote, in a pathetic tone of resignation, utters words of encouragement to Sancho on the theme of God's Providence:

"Dios, que es proveedor de todas las cosas, no nos ha de faltar, y más andando tan en su servicio como andamos, pues no falta a los mosquitos del aire, ni a los gusanillos de la tierra, ni a los renacuajos del agua; y es tan piadoso, que hace salir su sol sobre los buenos y los malos, y llueve sobre los injustos y justos" (I.xviii.168).

The sentiments are without a doubt noble and pious but they are vitiated somewhat by the would-be hero's comparison of himself with mosquitoes, worms and tadpoles as the other beneficiaries of the Lord's bounty. It is as if Don Quixote were insensitive to the way in which this jarring of sentiment and form of expression tends to mar
the otherwise edifying rhetoric.

As various critics have shown, Don Quixote's insensitivity to the grossly indecorous tone or detail is especially evident in the Cave of Montesinos episode (II.xxii-xxiii). It will be recalled that this episode represents one of the sublime moments of the knight's experience where he claims to have witnessed a genuine romance world in which he had been hailed as the eventual liberator of Dulcinea and other romance or ballad figures. Nevertheless, even in his own account of the affair, where one might have supposed that he would exercise full control over the style of his report to Sancho and the humanist scholar, Don Quixote innocently reveals certain embarrassing facts. The lady Belerma, for instance, is described as being:

"cejijunta y la nariz algo chata; la boca grande, pero colorados los labios; los dientes, que tal vez los descubría, mostraban ser ralos y no bien puestos, aunque eran blancos como unas peladas almendras; traía en las manos un lienzo delgado, y entre él, a lo que pude divisar, un corazón de carnemomía, según venía seco y amojamado" (p.707).

This latter is Durandarte's heart which Montesinos had cut out after the battle of Roncesvaux to take to Belerma. According to Montesinos, the heart had been salted at the first opportunity "porque no oliese mal, y fuese, si no fresco, a lo menos amojamado, a la presencia de la señora Belerma" (pp.705-6). Don Quixote also reports having seen the enchanted Dulcinea and having been approached by one of her companions who had asked him to lend his lady six
reales. Don Quixote, alas, had only four reales on him at the time (p.711). The knight seems blithely unaware of the subversively burlesque effect of all these ridiculous details upon the high seriousness of the situation.

A.J. Close has given various other examples of this phenomenon, which he terms "stylistic gaffes", in Don Quixote's references to Dulcinea. Two of Close's examples are: "Llore, o cante, Altisidora; desesperese Madama por quien me aporrerearon en el castillo del moro encantado; que yo tengo de ser de Dulcinea, cocido o asado, limpio, bien criado y honesto, a pesar de todas las potestades hechiceras de la tierra" (II.xliv.857).

"No le mana, canalla infame ... no le mana, digo, eso que decís, sino ámbar y algalia entre algodones; y no es tuerta ni corcovada, sino más derecha que un huso de Guadarrama" (I.iv.60).

Even though one can enter the qualification that in both these examples, and in the others Close cites, Don Quixote is reacting in anger to some provocative remark by another character about Dulcinea, his language does reveal an insensitivity to decorum, very much as if his indignation had upset his chivalric composure. In these instances Don Quixote's unawareness of the ironical disparity between the sentiment he wishes to convey and his manner of actually expressing it is an extension of that tendency to concentrate on the literal meaning of somebody else's words which we have discussed in an earlier section of this chapter. Close is correct to see these "stylistic gaffes" as devices by which
Cervantes adds to the comic treatment of Don Quixote by "undercutting his pose as perfect chivalric lover".\textsuperscript{38}

But these discrepancies in the knight's speech, I believe, are related to ironies in his behaviour. Don Quixote occasionally acts in ways which belie one's expectations of the disinterested courtesy which he aims to emulate. For example, it is rather surprising to find Don Quixote, who is usually so chivalrous and even punctilious, forcing Sancho to sit down to a meal with him and the goat-herds in order to demonstrate his magnanimity by bestowing such a privilege upon his squire (I.xi.104). Similarly, he grabs hold of Maritornes in the dormitory at the inn and forces her to listen to his reluctant rejection of her alleged amorous advances (I.xvi.147). On another occasion he too readily agrees with Sancho that he should defeat the giant oppressing Micomicona before going to see Dulcinea, even though the latter would appear to have been his most pressing desire (I.xxi.316). Again, in the middle of the absurd ructions at the inn, Don Quixote turns down Maritornes's appeals for help against genuine aggressors by citing his inability to engage in combat with low-born persons (I.xiv.455). When he arrives at El Toboso with Sancho to seek out Dulcinea's palace, he agrees, at Sancho's bidding, to retire to a wood and allow his squire to seek out Dulcinea's house the next day, after their joint efforts that evening have proved fruitless (II.ix.600). Later, he justifies his abandonment of Sancho to the angry villagers of the braying contest by saying that it was the judicious retreat of the
brave man, examples of which abound in the histories (II.xxviii.745). On all these occasions Don Quixote acts in a manner which calls into question the sincerity of his claim to be a chivalric knight or lover as much as his stylistic gaffes do at other times. In the first two examples above, Don Quixote wants to impose chivalric formulae upon reluctant partners; in the others he appears to resort to a chivalric rule to explain away awkward developments or to avoid unpromising circumstances.

Similarly, when we take a closer look at the "stylistic gaffes" we find that these also derive from Don Quixote's obsessive concentration on what is relevant to his chivalric preconceptions to the exclusion of other contingent details which might impair the functioning of his prejudices. When the Condesa de Trifaldi implores Don Quixote to help her, she uses an absurdly high number of superlatives in her address. Sancho immediately responds by parodying her. Don Quixote, ignoring Sancho's mockery, solemnly offers his services and assures her that since he is committed to aiding the needy: "... no habeis menester, señora captar benevolencias ni buscar preámbulos, sino a la llana y sin rodeos, decir vuestros males" (II.xxxviii.814). Where Sancho immediately spots the tone of parody in Trifaldi's request, Don Quixote, anxious as he is for adventures, takes the superlatives as an index of the urgency of the Condesa's plight. He is as tone-deaf here as when he identifies himself with mosquitoes and tadpoles or when he recites his grief-stricken poem on the absence of Dulcinea (I.xxvi.252-3).
Don Quixote either ignores or overlooks - one cannot be quite sure - the way in which meanings can be ironically contaminated and upset by the wrong tone, phrase or other discordant element. He fastens on to what he sees as relevant to chivalry and shrugs off other details. Furthermore, since he is the only person to recognize these chivalric relics in the fallen world, his activity is threatened with total subjectivity. He badly needs to distinguish between his wishes and chivalric truths. The inconsistencies in his behaviour serve to highlight that very problem: it is difficult to know if such decisions and choices are determined by a clear sense of chivalric obligation or if they are calculated withdrawals from unfavourable situations. The distinction between objective duty and covert self-interest is fudged by the all-encompassing subjectivity which subsumes both actions and statements.

In this sense, the stylistic gaffes and behavioural inconsistencies are related devices of "internal" irony intended equally by Cervantes to make his protagonist unpredictable for the reader. Using Don Quixote's self-sealing subjectivity as a shield, Cervantes gently ironizes the reader's expectations and prevents him from reducing the character to a type. The knight's normally impetuous chivalric actions sometimes appear to be shot through with hints of a canny sense of self-preservation, while his often eloquent and measured speeches are occasionally fissured by ironic dissonances which belie the dominant impression of moral seriousness or rational control.
The two devices of internal irony give a subtle twist to the mad/sane paradox. In the previous chapter I pointed out that Cervantes elicited *admiratio* by extending Don Quixote's madness beyond the reader's naturalistic expectations. This entailed making Don Quixote capable of reasoning his way out of tight spots; in other words, allowing Don Quixote a measure of ingenuity and wisdom as a counter-weight to the extravagant lunacy of his actions. The reader shares Don Diego de Miranda's "admiración" at Don Quixote's "hechos y sus palabras" (II.xvii.659). Like the reader, Don Diego "ya le tenía por cuerdo y ya por loco, porque lo que hablaba era concertado, elegante y bien dicho, y lo que hacía, disparatecido, temerario y tonto" (p.659). By and large Don Quixote appears sane when he speaks and utterly mad when he acts. But it is worth observing that the stylistic gaffes sometimes sabotage the coherence of Don Quixote's speech, while the inconsistencies of behaviour introduce a hint of self-interested deliberation into his professedly altruistic chivalric actions; the two devices blur the dividing-line between the apparently well-compartmentalized sanity and madness.

These gaffes and quirks unquestionably occur in the text; they appear with enough frequency to indicate that Cervantes used them for consciously ironic purposes. Not much attention, however, has been paid to them by critics and I believe this is simply because they rather inconveniently cut across the neat mad/sane division. The stylistic gaffes suggest that even when Don Quixote
appears lucid or rational, he is in fact as irredeemably mad as ever, much like the loco de Sevilla (II.i.544-7), and this rather spoils any reading that views Don Quixote's madness as the inspired vision of a champion of the Ideal or even that of a saint. But the behavioural ironies, conversely, by pointing to some element of self-interested calculation in his behaviour, equally upset views of Don Quixote as an impetuous madman rushing headlong into action.

In my view one can to some extent explain the mad/sane problem and, more especially, the further problem of the "stylistic gaffes" and "behavioural quirks" contained within the former, by seeing Don Quixote as an anachronistic medieval realist, a "verbal essentialist", who not only refuses to accept the de facto separation between sense-experience and ideal realities, words and things, but also dedicates his life to restoring their putative unity as attested to by the romances of chivalry. His major difficulty is that, faute de mieux, he can only look for traces of that unified reality in the fallen world. Having no one but himself as a guide, he is forever exposed to error and cannot properly distinguish between his own wishes and the truth. In many circumstances, as a result, he sees what he wants to see and disregards the rest. He grows insensitive to irony, deaf to tonal dissonances and blind to self-contradictions. Similarly, he shies away from situations that may pose real difficulties because he is incapable of distinguishing between his arbitrary decisions and his chivalric obligations, between what it suits him to do and
what is required of him according to chivalric precedent.

But whatever one may think of this hypothesis, it would seem to me that the effect of the stylistic gaffes and behavioural quirks is to make Don Quixote especially hard to interpret consistently, even if only to dismiss him as a lunatic. Nevertheless, why should Cervantes so clearly wish to make Don Quixote appear sane at times? Initially, no doubt, it must have arisen as a purely functional need to keep the reader fascinated by the ingenuity of the character. Don Quixote's inability to distinguish between the literal and the metaphorical in fact parallels the reader's "credulity", qua reader, when responding to the absolute metaphor of fiction. Having established this partial analogy between character and reader, Cervantes extends it beyond this into areas where the contemporary reader would have found himself in absolute agreement with the knight. For example, after the Arms and Letters speech (I.xxxviii), the priest tells Don Quixote: "que tenía mucha razón en todo cuanto había dicho en favor de las armas, y que él, aunque letrado y graduado, estaba de su mismo parecer" (p.394).

In Part II, these instances occur with greater frequency: when Don Quixote converses with the Caballero del Verde Gabán, with don Lorenzo, with Basilio when he replies with dignified and moving eloquence to the ecclesiastic's abuse at the Duke's castle, or gives impeccable advice to Sancho. One must conclude that Cervantes used such passages to ironize the reader by eliciting from him genuine admiration and respect for a character who was all along downright mad. Thus Cervantes was clearly interested in occasionally coaxing from the
reader a degree of intellectual and moral identification with the mad knight which would temper the overwhelming tendency to laugh at him dismissively. Because of this growing ambiguity of response, most readers have found that Don Quixote's very madness strikes a chord of sympathetic feeling within them. In my opinion, Cervantes clearly aimed at this sort of reaction through the mad/sane paradox without in any way wishing to reduce the impact of the character's utter lunacy.

However, why should the mad/sane paradox be at all disturbing? My view is that the reader comes to recognize that Don Quixote's mad faith represents an obscure challenge to his own serious beliefs. If Don Quixote's problem is essentially that he can find no other convincing authority to underwrite his beliefs than the romances of chivalry, the reader must eventually intuit that what distinguishes Don Quixote from himself is the mere fact that he takes his own authorities to be more reliable than Don Quixote's. Moreover, as Don Quixote disconcertingly suggests to the Canon, all Christian belief rests upon the authority of one book, which is its own self-sufficient guarantee of truth. The Christian position, in the last resort, is circular: the Bible is true because it proclaims itself to be true.

Now Don Quixote believes the claims of the romances to be literally true. This is by no means the whole story. Cervantes's ironical attack on Don Quixote rests on an appeal to the reader's experience against the authority of the romances. But is not this ironic movement the very
shadow of an attack on the authority of Scripture itself through an appeal to experience and commonsense? In other words, the reader laughs at Don Quixote because his absurd beliefs deny the obvious perceptions of the senses. Nevertheless, in formulating his attack on these grounds, the reader is also aware that he cannot provide an alternative, based upon sense-experience, to Don Quixote's faith. The reader is invited to use his sense-experience to debunk but not to build. As I pointed out in the introductory section to this chapter, irony shows up the invalidity of the victim's views, but it does not offer an alternative coherent enough to replace what it is destroying. Hence the touch of sobriety in ironic laughter, as the observer partially realises the value of what he is being invited to mock. When reading the novel, the realisation, for the contemporary reader at least, is that he too may base his life upon some assumptions or authorities which are conceivably vulnerable to the sort of irony that undermined Don Quixote. Just as irony compromises the authority of the uninspired author, so too can it be used to undermine the reader's own approach to the text.

An important function of the mad/sane paradox then is to draw the reader as ironic observer into the rôle of potential ironic victim by hollowing out his laughter as he senses that his own position may bear unsuspected parallels with the madman's. Cervantes obviously intended the reader to laugh at Don Quixote right to the very end since the knight remains utterly mad until his final illness. Yet
the reader is dimly conscious, through the laughter, that he may be undermining a cherished aspect of himself.
For in the risible figure of Don Quixote, one can discern, bounded in by an uncrossable moat of madness, as it were, a fastness of faith that rests upon foundations which are affectingly analogous to those of all belief. Ironically, many readers, in effect, may find themselves jeering at a grotesquely distorted image of their own particular structure of belief, or at least, of their susceptibility to the enchantments of fiction.

We can now better appreciate how Cervantes in large part used the mad/sane distinction to endow Don Quixote with an ambiguous symbolic function: in one respect the knight can be regarded as representing the subjective circular attitude of an author who claims the wisdom and authority to assign things to their proper place ("poner en su punto las cosas") by virtue of transcendental inspiration; but, alternatively, he represents par excellence the credibility of the reader of fiction and beyond that, the reader's susceptibility to the authority of the written word when erecting structures of belief. To this extent Don Quixote, and Sancho by association, could be interpreted as symbolic figures, perhaps even as semi-allegorical types. However, the existence of occasional stylistic gaffes and behavioural ironies ironically subverts the mad/sane distinction itself. The stylistic gaffes compromise the authoritativeness of many of Don Quixote's apparently sane intervals, and the ironies of behaviour introduce a suspicion of cunning even in the heat of his maddest chivalric moments. Therefore, neither of
Don Quixote's possible symbolic functions - either as representative of ideal, if misplaced, spiritual authority, or as the exemplary embodiment of credulity - can be consistently realized by the reader. In the last resort such symbolic or quasi-allegorical readings of the novel are confronted with the fundamental question of the specific springs of the knight's actions: Don Quixote, by every normal criterion is clearly mad, but what is it that moves him exactly? One's curiosity about the character is stirred but never fully satisfied. Cervantes's irony, since it suggests symbolic interpretations only to disappoint them, succeeds in shaping a literary character who seems to exist irreplaceably on his own enigmatic terms, whose uniqueness makes him appear human. It is in this individualisation of Don Quixote through stylistic gaffes and behavioural ironies that one discovers the source of that self-subsistent objectivity in secular narrative fiction which distinguishes it from the manipulated creation of an author's imagination.

(vi) Recapitulation

This reduction of the reader to the rôle of potential ironic victim sets the conditions for a new form of narrative equilibrium. We have seen that the problem for the author in using irony systematically was that the narrative could get out of hand and degenerate into absolute relativism or farce, thereby compromising the moral authority of its creator in the eyes of the reader. Cervantes, however,
draws the reader into the ironic world by creating the mad/sane paradox, the stylistic gaffes and behavioural ironies. In effect Cervantes obliges the reader to examine his own aesthetic responses critically and undermines interpretative preconceptions with regard to the text. The narrative difficulties of the chivalric writers are transformed; the author is no longer in thrall to established notions of verisimilitude or poetic truth. Cervantes freely admits to his lack of inspiration ("mal cultivado ingenio", etc.) and challenges the reader to judge the work as he thinks best, reserving for himself the right to spring all manner of surprises ("debajo de mi manto, al rey mato"). A kind of equality is achieved between author and reader, with the text becoming the ground for their ironic confrontation: the author renounces any a priori moral authority and seeks only to engage the reader's intelligence and sensibility, while the reader in turn must explore the author's intentions through the text. Because of these reciprocal relations, Cervantes is not absolutely free to indulge in fantasy, he will have to strike a balance between his imagination and the reader's in the elaboration of his narrative. In these circumstances, it becomes necessary to persuade the reader that the fiction possesses a measure of objective truth without having recourse to a theory of divine inspiration or appealing to the authority of established dogma. Cervantes uses irony to prevent any interpretation of his central characters in wholly abstract symbolic or allegorical terms. The particularized relationship between Don Quixote
and Sancho Panza becomes the mechanism by which Cervantes creates a sense of organic necessity in the narrative, which need not develop according to some externally-imposed logic, as in allegory, but from an internal dynamic generated by the specific interactions of master and servant. In the following chapter I shall examine this internal dynamic process in greater detail.
CHAPTER FIVE

TOWARDS THE MODERN NOVEL

We have seen how in the romances of chivalry the writer's imaginative freedom was so great that it became counter-productive. It ceased to command intellectual respect: the absolute freedom merely led to ever more paltry and overblown absurdities. On the other hand, as A.K. Forcione has persuasively demonstrated, the concept of verisimilitude - the neo-Aristotelian antidote to these fanciful concoctions - was largely a restrictive imposition on the creative writer.¹ In any case, the real challenge for the narrative writer was not to deceive the reader into believing that the fictional world was historically true or empirically possible, but to find genuinely objective material that could be worked through by his creative imagination and so find release from the monotony of arbitrary invention. Much has been written about Cervantes's triumphant assertion of his creative freedom but I think there is a tendency to overlook the fact that the authors of the romances he satirized enjoyed, if anything, too much freedom of this kind. It is perhaps opportune at this stage to reverse the emphasis by examining the discipline to which Cervantes submitted his imagination in the composition of his novel.²

It has been suggested that Cervantes puts distance between himself and his fictional world by the use of intermediary narrators, the fictional character-narrator
Benengeli, the multiplication of narrative frames with all sorts of interruptions and cross-references between them, or the ploy of the author as casual editor or unreliable historian. However, these devices are, at best, trompe l'oeil effects and cannot be taken as serious narrative techniques; they are jokes which are part and parcel of Cervantes's general satire on the romances. None of those devices is original to Cervantes since we saw them in embryo in Montalvo's re-working of the original Amadis. According to our analysis in Chapter 2, all these features are precisely what we might call the narrative débris which resulted from Montalvo's creative efforts to justify the truth of the Esplandián - the promotion of a fictional character Elisabad to the rôle of narrator, the systematic pretence of historicity, the proliferation of eye-witness narrators and reporters, the interruption of the narrative to relate incidents from the author's real life only to be followed by an encounter with several of his fictional characters, the interpolation of the author's comments and asides, and anachronistic references to the contemporary Catholic Monarchs. Cervantes's own ironic adoption and parodic exaggeration of these characteristics, although of great literary interest and subsequent influence, must surely be seen as a way of mocking late romance authors with their legacy of futile ploys designed to achieve the impossible - to persuade the reader that the obviously invented was literally true. It seems unreasonable to suppose that Cervantes should have wished to plunder that particular box of tricks in order to solve genuine problems
of objectivity and poetic truth on similar terms as Montalvo and the other romance writers. On the contrary, in the very first sentence of the Quixote Cervantes dissociates himself from his romance predecessors by admitting to the wholly fictitious nature of the work ("En lugar de la Mancha de cuyo nombre no quiero acordarme") so that all subsequent references to historicity and eye-witness truth can be taken automatically as ironic feints designed to shake the solemn conventions of verisimilitude and deride all authorial claims to historical veracity.\(^5\) Cervantes, as he openly declared in the 1605 Prologue, is in effect defiantly mocking the expectations of those readers nurtured in romance by showing precisely how little he cares for or needs devices like the fictional narrator or multiple frames of narration to achieve poetic truth. These reflexive devices are simply aspects of Cervantes's parody of the romance writers' attempts to disguise their failure to find an inherent objectivity in their writing which could justify the value of fiction. It seems mistaken therefore to seek a serious principle of authorial detachment in those reflexive features of Don Quixote which are largely the parodic replication of the major symptoms of the aesthetic disease Cervantes was setting out to cure.

In order to restore an intrinsic value to fiction it was necessary to create a narrative free from arbitrary manipulation - a mere assembly of puppets bobbing to a set routine - by directing the imagination towards an object with which it could fruitfully engage. In short, it
was a question of making fiction proof against the whimsical sway of the writer's will.

(i) The interpolated stories in the *Quixote*

Before turning to discuss how Cervantes attempts this objectivity in *Don Quixote* as a whole, I will consider the interpolated stories for their comparative brevity in themselves and the light they may throw upon Cervantes's aesthetic intentions. The stories I will study are the following:

**Part I**
- (A) Marcela and Grisóstomo
- (B) Cardenio and Luscinda
- (C) Dorotea and Fernando
- (D) the Captive and Zoraida
- (E) Don Luis and Clara
- (F) Leandra.

**Part II**
- (W) Camacho's wedding
- (X) Doña Rodríguez's daughter and Tosilos
- (Y) Claudia Gerónima
- (Z) Ana Félix and Don Gregorio.6

When considered collectively it is immediately evident that they have a great deal in common; they are all variations on the single theme of romantic love.7 In addition to this they run to a narrative formula with restricted permutations of a stock pattern: there is actual or potential love between a man and a woman which encounters an obstacle that is either superseded, whereupon marriage ensues, or else frustrated, leading invariably to death, madness or, in the case of the woman, entry into a convent. Variations can occur both in the nature of the relations between the sexes and in the type of obstacle before them but these are fairly limited. Feelings between protagonists are either mutual:
The obstacles consist usually of one or a combination of the following:

- objections by the woman's father: (B) (D) (E) (F) (W);
- competition from another real or potential lover: (B) (C) (F) (W);
- difference of religion or social class: (B) (C) (D) (F) (W) (X) (Z);
- justified or unwarranted jealousy: (Y);
- and in the case of (A) unrequited love is itself a sufficient obstacle. As regards the character of the principals, once again, they can by and large be sorted out into active or passive since the plot is usually initiated or dominated by one of the partners. Thus there are passive men (Grisóstomo, Cardenio, the Cautivo, Camacho, Don Vicente in (Y), Don Gregorio) and active women (Marcela, Dorotea, Zoraida, Claudia Gerónima, Ana Félix); or passive women (Luscinda, Clara, Leandra, Quiteria) and active men (Fernando, Luis, Vicente in (F), Basilio, Tosilos).

Finally, the manner of overcoming the obstacle or not is, as we shall see in due course, by far the most common way of varying the formula, but even here there are recognizably conventional elements such as transvestism or other disguises: (C) (E) (D) (F) (X) (Y) (Z); deceptions: (C) (D) (F) (W) (Y); or some form of chase, flight, elopement or abduction: (B) (C) (D) (E) (F) (Y) (Z).
The stories, therefore, ring the changes on a basic pattern. They are neither allegorical nor naturalistic nor are they centred on the characters as such. Since the number of primary elements is clearly very limited it is to the plot combinations and the solutions of the single problem posed by the action that one must look in order to derive aesthetic pleasure. They can in fact be regarded as conventional narrative exercises designed to allow the author to display his wit and ingenuity in the handling of the action. In fact they reveal a close kinship with romance processes. The narrative situation is similar in both cases: the author is firmly in the saddle as the confident manager of his characters whom he subordinates to a cardinal idea or theme and guides through various permutations of conventional obstacles and themes towards a conventional ending. But with these interpolated tales in the Quixote we have the paradox of a series of stories generically related to romance forming part of an overall narrative which specifically claims to be anti-romance.

Now it would be contradictory for Cervantes to risk impairing the "illusion of reality", if such was the ambience he wished to create for Don Quixote and Sancho, by grafting on to it highly stylized stories that bore a perceptible resemblance to the very object of his parody. He would either want to camouflage their artificiality or ironize them if only for the sake of consistency. It is evident nevertheless that Cervantes enjoyed these stories and was adept at telling them, so it is unlikely that he should have
wanted to destroy them through vigorous parody as was his professed purpose with the books of chivalry. The answer, I wish to argue, is that Cervantes sought the best of both worlds with his interpolated tales; on the one hand, to retain and exploit their charm but, on the other, to suggest or even to expose their limitations. Although apparently so well-executed and wittily conventional, these love-stories can also be viewed as yet another example of Cervantes's general endeavour to explore the nature of narrative.

In the majority of these stories Cervantes points to their conventional procedures and artificial resolutions by contrasting them ironically with the more prosaic world Don Quixote inhabits. It is by looking at the manner of their grafting on to the main body of the narrative, by the visibility of their sutures, as it were, that one can judge Cervantes's ironic intentions.

(a) The interpolated stories of Part I.

For example, Marcela's story (A) is introduced by Pedro, a companion of the goatherds to whom Don Quixote has just delivered his speech on the Golden Age with its exposition of his chivalric aims, one of which is to restore to helpless virgins the right to walk the countryside safe from the lechery of men (I.xi.105-6). Pedro relates the case of the shepherdess Marcela and her dead lover Grisóstomo at the behest of Don Quixote. Marcela had left home and chosen to roam abroad while inexplicably
rejecting the solicitations of many rich and fine young men including Grisóstomo. Thus the somewhat utopian Golden Age ideal of free-wandering damsels uttered recently by the mad knight seems to have transpired literally in the very next episode. Furthermore, Don Quixote that night meditates on Dulcinea "a imitación de los amantes de Marcela" (I:x.i.115) whereas the commonsensical Sancho "se acomodó entre Rocinante y su jumento, y durmió, no como enamorado desfavorecido sino como hombre molido a coces". The vulgar squire contracts out not only of Don Quixote's amorous world but of the love-lorn shepherd's too. The next day Don Quixote meets Vivaldo who is on his way to Grisóstomo's funeral. They converse about the profession of knight errantry and about Dulcinea in whom, Don Quixote claims, "se vienen a hacer verdaderos todos los imposibles y quiméricos atributos de belleza que los poetas dan a sus damas" (I.xiii.121). Their dialogue is interrupted by the arrival of Grisóstomo's funeral procession. The dead shepherd's poetic valediction to Marcela is read out. It is a florid, almost bombastic piece, employing conventional conceits ("Tú, que en tantas sin razones muestras / la razón que me fuerza a que la haga / a la cansada vida que aborrezco") and even at one climactic point indulging in one of those "chimerial and impossible" hyperboles that Don Quixote had claimed poets rhetorically attribute to their ladies ("el cielo claro de tus bellos ojos"). The despair of the poem culminates in a conventional rhetorical invitation to death which, since Grisóstomo actually died, seems to lend the piece a paradoxical, documentary authenticity. However, the reader of the poem claims that its insistence on Marcela's lack of feeling conflicts with her actual reputation for diffidence and goodness. Grisóstomo's friend Ambrosio explains this
contradiction ("como aquél que sabía bien los más escondidos pensamientos de su amigo") by saying that the valedictory poem was written when Grisóstomo had voluntarily exiled himself from Marcela's company so that her absence would alleviate his torment, but that "como al enamorado ausente no hay cosa que no le fatigue ni temor que no le dé alcance, así le fatigaban a Grisóstomo los celos imaginados y las sospechas temidas como si fueran verdaderas" (I.xiv.129). According to Ambrosio, then, the poem is in fact the product of Grisóstomo's paranoid fantasy rather than a truthful description of Marcela's character.

At this point, just as Grisóstomo's grave is being dug, Marcela herself appears and provokes a rather contradictory outburst of accusations of cruelty from Ambrosio. She then replies with a long speech in which she accuses Grisóstomo and her other suitors of a kind of suicidal presumption: "Y si los deseos se sustentan con esperanzas, no habiendo yo dado alguna a Grisóstomo ni a otro alguno, en fin, de ninguno dellos, bien se puede decir que antes le mató su porfía que mi crueldad" (I.xiv.131). Rejecting all blame, she turns away and leaves the assembled mourners. Don Quixote then reaches for his sword to leap to the rather unnecessary defence of this capable damsel whom he will persist in viewing as a "doncella menesterosa" according to chivalric dogma. Merely by asserting her will, Marcela dismisses the whole incident as an unnecessary chimera engendered gratuitously and irrationally by the stubborn Grisóstomo. She resists her forcible insertion by Grisóstomo as the unyielding mistress
of courtly love into the conventional frame of a love-story, or by Don Quixote into the equally conventional chivalric category of distressed damsel, even if it is only to continue in her semi-quirkotic, Arcadian pastime of tending herds of goats and holding innocent conversation with maidens from the surrounding villages.

Despite the decisiveness of Marcela's departure and the obvious finality of Grisóstomo's death there is a curious inconclusiveness about the story, a sense of undischarged energy, as if nothing had effectively occurred. It cannot be entirely explained by regret for Grisóstomo's futile death because he has after all brought that fate upon himself. It is more a feeling of an unkept promise: all the requisite properties of a drama of unrequited love have been assembled and at the anticipated climax the leading lady walks off because she has not consented to play such a rôle in the first place. The story seems constructed expressly to dissatisfy the reader by initially arousing all the normal expectations of a tale of unrequited love and then at the point of dénouement folding it back upon itself to reveal the arbitrariness of the assumptions that sustain it.

It should be noted that Cervantes has brilliantly achieved this attack on literary conventions not through direct parody but by creating a character like Grisóstomo who obsessively imposes the conventions of a love-story upon his own life and, despite having failed to obtain the assent
of the crucial participant in the project, kills himself. The outcome of Grisóstomo's fantasies in its practical effects coincides with the expected resolution of a pastoral "cuestión de amor" without, however, meeting the latter's conventional requirements. Grisóstomo's love-story is not entirely pointless, since he at least died for his passion, but it does not entirely satisfy in an orthodox pastoral manner because it falls short of connecting with the object of its attentions on terms that would fulfil generic requirements.

The entire story turns upon Marcela's absolute refusal to cooperate in the action and rhetoric of a love-story, not even to the extent of allowing herself to be cast in the rôle of the aloof mistress of courtly love. This "surprise" or peripety is produced by two interrelated factors - Marcela's decision and the angle from which the story is presented. The decision causes an effective reversal because we have been led up to the dénouement without being shown a glimpse of either the living Grisóstomo or Marcela. We are forced to be recipients of a story recounted from the particular perspective of Pedro who is in turn a passive recipient of a version of those events from another source. The whole movement of the story is from second-hand reporting to the actuality of Marcela's surprising decision. Cervantes has concentrated on the dénouement and eschewed direct presentation of its beginnings and development, thereby heightening the impact of Marcela's speech.
But the frustration of the reader's expectations is caused by yet another factor: after the speech in which Marcela explains that she never encouraged Grisóstomo or any other suitor and prefers instead to remain a free-ranging tender of goats, the abruptness of her departure renews the reader's curiosity about the motives for such behaviour. Marcela's speech is highlighted as the pivot of the entire tale, and it effectively dispels all the conventional illusions adhering to Grisóstomo's suicide, nevertheless it whets the appetite for a fuller explanation of Marcela's character. Why does she shun men? Why does she persist in roaming the countryside dressed as a shepherdess? These enquiries are cut short by her departure, and the very impossibility of their being answered only adds to the strangeness and peculiar resonance of the story. Marcela so upstages Grisóstomo that the centre-piece of the tale—the suicide and funeral—stands exposed as unreal and pathological. The tale's centre of gravity has shifted to the nature of Marcela's character, yet the reader's impulsion towards her is arrested by her abrupt disappearance. The effect is to force the reader's interest beyond the actual ending so as to make the story both closed and open-ended at the same time.

The episode rests on a further paradox. Cervantes attacks literary artificiality by making arbitrary pastoral conventions collide against a purposive will. Nevertheless, the consequences of the collision indicate a corresponding arbitrariness in Marcela's behaviour; she
has rejected her courtly/pastoral suitors in the name of free will, which she then proceeds to indulge in another form of pastoral activity. Is she therefore as deluded in her way as Grisostomo? One is left with an impression of the contrariness of human motives, of the way people project images on to each other without grasping the other's true self. Marcela rightly refuses to be type-cast but she nonetheless fails to emerge either as a more plausible character herself, or one wholly absolved from the taint of pastoral artifice. The story reveals an ironic disproportion between the conventions of pastoral and courtly love and the real complexity of human motives.

Marcela's story can be taken as a blueprint for most of the other interpolated love-stories in the book. On a formal level there is the deferred dénouement, the focus on the ending of the tale rather than on its unfolding. This structural emphasis is of great significance for our hypothesis that Cervantes was exploring narrative possibilities in these stories. For it is in the way that a story is resolved that one is best able to judge how well the author has disguised his freedom to manipulate the subject-matter: the greater the reliance on coincidence, fortuitous occurrences, deus ex machina devices, the more arbitrary and artificial the story will appear. In the other interpolated tales, moreover, one can observe these highly suggestive tensions between the implicit complexity of individual motives and conventional plot-design, both in the manner of their presentation within the main narrative and, most particularly, in their resolutions.
The next four stories - the two interlocking ones of Cardenio-Luscinda (B) and Fernando-Dorotea (C), the Captive's tale (D) and that of Don Luis and Doña Clara (E) - are also presented in such a way as to heighten the impact of their dénouements by introducing them all after the main action is over. The incidents are reported by the characters and, as with Marcella's story, the reader is allowed directly to witness only the nature of their resolutions. One's attention is thereby concentrated very particularly on the endings, and this focus is sharpened even further by the grouping of these four tales, each following the other in accelerating succession, under the one roof of the inn where Don Quixote is staying.

The organisation of such a convergence relies on coincidences which Cervantes does nothing to hide and not a little to underline. The first spectacular coincidence is that of the arrival of Fernando and Luscinda at the inn where they are each recognized by their respective paramours. Cervantes insists on the extraordinary character of this meeting:

"También don Fernando conoció luego a Cardenio, y todos tres, Luscinda, Cardenio y Dorotea, quedaron mudos y suspensos, casi sin saber lo que les había acontecido.

Callaban todos y mirabanse todos: Dorotea a don Fernando, don Fernando a Cardenio, Cardenio a Luscinda y Luscinda a Cardenio" (I.xxxvi.374).

The very deliberate stylistic threading of all these names into a close chain exaggerates the exceptional nature of the occurrence. The characters themselves lose
no time in remarking on it. Luscinda says: "Notad cómo el cielo, por desusados y a nosotros encubiertos caminos, me ha puesto a mi verdadero esposo delante" (p.374; my emphases). Luscinda attributes this marvellously coincidental reunion to the unfathomable designs of "el cielo". References to the mysterious and miraculous workings of "el cielo" rapidly increase as the two inter-related stories approach their common climax.

In her eloquent entreaty of Don Fernando, Dorotea reminds him of how he had promised to marry her with "el cielo" as witness: "Y testigo el cielo, a quien tú llamaste por testigo de lo que me prometías" (I.xxxvi.376). Now Don Fernando is implored by all present to free Luscinda and take Dorotea for his wife. He relents accepting the ways of "el cielo": - "Si el piadoso cielo gusta y quiere que ya tengas algún descanso ..." (p.377). However, when don Fernando sees Luscinda fall into the arms of Cardenio he is shaken ("admirándose de tan no visto suceso") and characteristically reaches for his sword. Dorotea tries to restrain him by throwing herself at his feet, embracing his knees, kissing them, holding them tightly and weeping copiously: "¿Qué es lo que piensas hacer, único refugio mío, en este tan impensado trance? ... Mira si te estará bien, o te será posible deshacer lo que el cielo ha hecho ..." (p.377).

These entreaties are taken up by the assembled company who warn Don Fernando that although these events may appear fortuitous they are in fact the will of "el cielo":
"Que considerase que, no acaso, como parecía, sino con particular providencia del cielo, se habían todos juntado en lugar donde menos ninguno pensaba" (p.378; my emphases).

The priest urges Fernando to respect the bond between Luscinda and Cardenio, "permitiendo que... los dos gozasen el bien que el cielo ya les había concedido" (p.378).

Now Don Fernando succumbs to this concerted pressure and he accepts the dictates of "el cielo", declaring Dorotea to be the lady of his heart. More surprisingly, he explains his refractory behaviour by reference yet again to the unknowable hand of "el cielo":

"... y si hasta aquí no he dado muestras de lo que digo, (i.e. that Dorotea is his true love) quizá ha sido por orden del cielo, para que viendo yo en vos la fe con que me amáis, os sepa estimar en lo que merecéis" (p.379).

There seems to be an element of casuistry here - perhaps a fleeting insight into the possible cynicism of Don Fernando? He next expresses the hope that Luscinda and Cardenio may live together for many years: "que yo rogaré al cielo que me los deje vivir con mi Dorotea". There follows a scene of general weeping.

This insistence on "el cielo" is important for our discussion of authorial manipulation. The double tale could well be considered wholly orthodox, no less morally, in its exaltation of the power of faith and the action of Providence, than aesthetically, in its attempts to elicit admiratio for a "tan no visto suceso" from its readers. However, in my opinion, Cervantes's treatment of the story precludes an entirely solemn interpretation. The actual narration of the dénouement is compressed into reported speech of inordinately long periods constructed from qualifying clauses sewn
together by insistent and repetitive relatives and conjunctions as in pp.378-80. The effect of this technique is to impart a rather perfunctory quality to the narrative; the narrator's tone is that of someone hurrying through a set procedure more from a need to observe certain formal proprieties than out of any intrinsic conviction. It is a technique of tonal subversion which, as we have seen in Chapter 4, Cervantes employs to ironize Don Quixote and some other characters. Here it is used to recount the double resolution as succinctly and briefly as possible and to tie in the various loose ends. For example, in order to explain why Luscinda is still a virgin and fit for Cardenio's hand we are referred to a typically artificial romance device - a letter secreted on her person which declares the constancy of her love for Cardenio. This tonal discord is yet another example of that favourite Cervantine trick of making narrative presentation ironically undermine overt content without, however, fully destroying it.

Allied to the tonal irony, there is the author's dwelling on the effects of such an excessively coincidental meeting on the characters' emotions, the gusto with which he describes the multiple sighings, fainting fits, impassioned supplications, intermittent prostrations, collective weeping and other unmistakable symptoms of ripe melodrama. The marvellous implausibility of the situation is often underlined: "tan no visto suceso", "impensado trance", "tan trabados y desesperados negocios". Cervantes clearly wishes to exaggerate the unlikelihood of these events, their exceptional remoteness from everyday life.
Furthermore, the invariable use of the term "el cielo" to justify coincidences, improbable changes of heart, even rather perversely to explain Don Fernando's initial obduracy in refusing Dorotea, is significant precisely because it is such a very non-commital term. It is neither specifically Christian, nor Classical, the reference never once being explicitly to God, Providence, Fate or Fortune nor to any combination of these. In narrative terms the function of "el cielo" is that of a metaphysical agent, an unspecified demiurge invoked all too conveniently whenever there is a striking departure from verisimilitude. Cervantes appears to be paying lip-service to the Christian notion of Divine Providence while signalling ironically that "el cielo" is little more than a lubricant of the plot, an anodyne formula to lend a light camouflage to the arbitrary manipulations of the author. For confirmation of such a hypothesis one can quote the last part of the long closing sentence of Chapter xxxvi: "... y que así, acompañados de silencio y de lágrimas, habían llegado a aquella venta, que para él era haber llegado al cielo, donde se rematan y tienen fin todas las desventuras de la tierra" (p.380). The "cielo" which has featured so prominently in the articulation of this fairly improbable double tale, and which is the happy place where all earthly misfortunes end, is located by Don Fernando in the very inn which houses Don Quixote who, for his part, firmly believes it to be an enchanted castle.
At the beginning of the next chapter all the characters persist in their state of wonderment and happiness, with Don Fernando still giving thanks "al cielo por ... haberle sacado de aquel intricado laberinto" (p.381). The priest congratulates everyone:

"Todo lo ponía en su punto el cura, como discreto, y a cada uno daba el parabién del bien alcanzado; pero quien más jubilaba y se contentaba era la ventera, por la promesa que Cardenio y el cura le habían hecho de pagárle todos los daños e intereses que por cuenta de don Quijote le hubiesen venido" (p.381).

Ironically, the happiness of the characters congregated in the putative heaven is topped only by the jubilation of the innkeeper's wife after having extracted a promise of compensation for the damage caused by the mad knight when he took her inn to be a haunted castle. As the double tale eventually flows back into the main narrative it mingle with the ironic world Don Quixote moves in, and Cervantes makes sure that the effects are not lost on the reader.

In the very same chapter xxxvii, the next story, the Captive's, is introduced with the arrival of two strangers dressed in Moorish fashion. The veiled woman is eventually asked to uncover her face, revealing her great beauty:

"... y así, se lo quitó, y descubrió un rostro tan hermoso, que Dorotea la tuvo por más hermosa que a Luscinda, y Luscinda por más hermosa que a Dorotea, y todos los circunstantes conocieron que si alguno se podía igualar al de las dos, era el de la mora, y aun hubo algunos que le aventajaron en alguna cosa" (I.xxxviii.387).

Apart from this slightly malicious treatment of the rival merits of the three beauties, Cervantes introduces the Captive's tale straightforwardly after Don Quixote's remarkably sane Arms and Letters speech. The Captive narrates the
story without any hint of irony. However, as with the other tales, the movement is from reported action in the past to the actuality of the present. It is when the deferred dénouement is about to be resolved at the inn that traces of irony show up once more.

Just as the Captive finishes his story a coach draws up outside the inn and the judge arrives with his beautiful daughter Doña Clara. This time Cervantes makes much heavier weather of the girl's beauty:

"Trafa de la mano a una doncella ... tan bizarra, tan hermosa y tan gallarda, que a todos puso en admiración su vista; de suerte que, a no haber visto a Dorotea y a Luscinda y Zoraida, que en la venta estaban, creyeran que otra tal hermosura como la desta doncella dificilmente pudiera hallarse" (I.xlii.434).

Now it is Don Quixote himself who, after inviting the judge to enter and "espaciarse en este castillo", extravagantly praises the new beauty:

"Entre vuestra merced, digo, en este paraíso; que aquí hallará estrellas y soles que acompañen el cielo que vuestra merced trae consigo: aquí hallará las armas en su punto y la hermosura en su estremo" (p.434).

The roadside inn which Don Quixote believes to be a castle, and Don Fernando recently likened to heaven, is rhetorically transformed into a paradise, a firmament spangled with stars and suns. The judge is left bemused and speechless, incapable of much other than to admire the assembly of beauties already gathered in the inn:

"... y sin hallar ningunas [palabras] con que respondelle, se tornó a admirar de nuevo cuando vio delante de sí a Luscinda, Dorotea y a Zoraida. ... Pero don Fernando, Cardenio y el cura le hicieron más llanos y más cortesanos ofrecimientos. En efecto, el señor oidor entró confuso, así de lo que veía como de lo que escuchaba, y las hermosas de la venta dieron la bien llegada a la hermosa doncella" (p.435).
Even stranger things lie in store for the judge. By yet a further marvellous coincidence he is none other than the long-lost brother of the Captive. When they are finally revealed as such to each other, amidst scenes of general weeping, the narrator quickly sums up the results:

"-- Las palabras que entrambos hermanos se dijeron, los sentimientos que mostraron, apenas creo que puedan pensarse, cuando más escribirse. Allí en breves razones, se dieron cuenta de sus sucesos; allí mostraron puesta en su punto la buena amistad de dos hermanos; allí abrazó el oidor a Zoraida; allí la ofreció su hacienda; allí hizo que la abrazase su hija; allí la cristiana hermosa y la mora hermosísima renovaron las lágrimas de todos.

Allí don Quijote estaba atento, sin hablar palabra, considerando estos tan extraños sucesos, atribuyéndolos todos a quimeras de la andante caballería" (I.xlii.438-9).

So extraordinary are these events that even the mad Don Quixote is inclined to think that they are fantasies. With the hammering repetition of "allí" - a very similar but more obviously comic hammering of "allí"s occurs only a few pages later on p.448, when Don Quixote is protesting at having his hand caught in a loop by Maritornes - the narrative again acquires that weary tone of unavoidable formal routine which we detected at the close of the previous tale in similar circumstances of melodrama. 16

Nor is this yet the end of the affair. After they are all bedded down for the night with Don Quixote standing guard ("don Quijote se situó fuera de la venta a hacer la centinela del castillo", p.439) a beautiful voice is heard singing outside. It belongs to a young muleteer who turns out to be Don Luis, the shy but devoted lover of the judge's daughter. Doña Clara proceeds to tell the others
the background to this strange appearance of the disguised boy. Once again the dénouement is deferred as the action is intercut by several absurd adventures, namely Don Quixote's being strung up by the hand outside the inn, and a series of coincidental arrivals in quick succession: the arrival of Don Luis's father's servants in search of the boy (p.448), the arrival of the barber to reclaim his basin (p.456), the arrival of three cuadrilleros; the narrative energy thus accumulated finally breaks into the farcical "caos, máquina y laberinto de cosas" (p.462) which recalls the Field of Agramante for Don Quixote. But the Don Luis - Doña Clara story cannot be said to have a resolution properly speaking; Don Fernando's authority is sufficient to reassure the servants who have come for the lad, and three of them are sent back to inform the father. Little doubt is left in one's mind that the outcome will be happy. Cervantes's elliptical, almost perfunctory, manner of rounding off the story is pertinent to our discussion. By forgoing a definitive ending while leaving the reader somehow sure of a felicitous outcome, he throws into relief, by default as it were, the force of the reader's expectations within that type of tale: the children of well-born parents need fear no formal obstacles to the fulfillment of their love. The Don Luis - Doña Clara story is so slight that it could not have stood on its own; it exists as a corollary to the other stories, a thumbnail sketch of the elementary features of that type of plot. Inserted into that accelerating sequence of arrivals at the inn, its non-resolution placed inconspicuously
between the climactic farce of the general dust-up reminiscent of the Field of Agramante and the cuadrilleros' equally chaotic attempt to arrest Don Quixote, this little representative story marks the absorption of the romantic love-plot into the ironic anti-romance vortex of the main narrative of Part I. Contrary to Raymond Immerwahr's opinion that with the insertion of these stories into the novel, "a highly imaginative literary world becomes a credible actuality; romance and reality are synthesized", I would argue that this contact with the world of Don Quixote continually threatens to expose the implausibility of their romance devices.17

Moreover, these implausibilities are thrown into relief, as in the Marcela story, by a tantalising incompleteness of characterisation. In this regard, I have to dissent too from Francisco Márquez Villanueva's opinion that: "Las novelas de la venta son un ejemplo perfecto de la técnica cervantina de aplicarse integralmente al estudio y estructuración del carácter y nada más que el carácter".18 In the first place Luscinda and Cardenio are little more than insignificant pawns in a narrative game where Dorotea and Fernando are the moving spirits. It is true that Dorotea, as Márquez Villanueva says, "no es ningún peón en el despliegue de un teorema". She is in fact the most fully drawn character in the double tale - her sensibility is portrayed with delightful subtlety by Cervantes, but I would nevertheless argue that she is prevented by the nature of the action and the dénouement from developing into a fully-fledged character in the modern sense.
In spite of her bold pursuit of Don Fernando to vindicate her rights, she finally achieves her aim not through any direct efforts of her own but thanks only to a quirky coincidence occasioned, as we have seen, by "el cielo". Moreover her destiny is further dependent upon the inclinations of Don Fernando. This, of course, is fair enough as it goes but Don Fernando's change of heart is so sudden a volte face that it cannot adequately be reconciled with psychological consistency. Don Fernando's pivotal decision, due to the abrupt enlightenment by "el cielo" and the quality of his blood ("en fin como alimentado con ilustre sangre", p.378), ultimately stunts the development of Dorotea, who is too suddenly subsumed in a mechanical and melodramatic dénouement.

Again, as Márquez Villanueva and Spitzer have observed, in the Captive's story which follows hard on the heels of the above, the motivation of one of the two principal characters, Zoraida, is teasingly inconsistent, if not contradictory. On the surface, her motive for wanting to escape with the Captive is irreproachable - her devotion to the Blessed Virgin (Leila Marién) has inspired in her a wish to convert to Christianity. But her actual behaviour, especially towards her gentle and loving Moorish father, shows her to be deceitful, scheming and hard-hearted. In typical Cervantine fashion the overt theme - in this instance, the exaltation of the Christian life above the Moslem - is ironically undermined by the evidence of the narrative. The girl appears as a cold fanatic with possible ulterior motives who is prepared to be joined to the hapless Captive in a
marriage which seems devoid of much mutual love or passion. The highly orthodox Tridentine theme of conversion therefore dissolves into a perplexing ambiguity which is revolutionary not only in ideological import but also in aesthetic implication, since it suggests an unresolved and troubled destiny for the couple beyond the mechanical conclusiveness of the happy ending required of romance and provided by what Márquez Villanueva (p. 122) calls the "anagnorisis archiconvencional del hermano ovid".  

In all the stories we have discussed so far, there are tensions between the embryonic autonomy and complexity of characters and a narrative machinery cognate with romance which strains towards highly melodramatic endings which are in turn qualified by ironic details and paradoxical implications.

The problem is to decide whether these tensions are accidental or deliberate, the result of aesthetic miscalculations or of covert parody.

I would argue that the ironic undermining of these romance-type stories in Part I must be the result of a conscious artistic choice by Cervantes for the following reasons:

(1) The narrative presentation and setting show unmistakeable signs of premeditation. There is the concentration through deferred dénouements of the reader's attention on the resolutions of the stories in every case, together with an undisguised reliance upon stock melodramatic effects, coincidences, the thinly-veiled machinations of "el cielo", and implications which call into question the conventional optimism of the endings.
(2) The very entwining of the destinies of Dorotea and Fernando with those of Luscinda and Cardenio, their dovetailing into the Captive's tale, leading immediately into the trite and significantly unfinished story of Don Luis and Doña Clara, all of which reach their rapidly successive climaxes under the one roof, which also happens to house Don Quixote, the robbed barber and the cuadrilleros, seems calculated to produce a cumulative narrative momentum converging on the farcical rumpus reminiscent of the Field of Agramante. Both individually and in their collective organisation, the stories all about on irony or farce when they come into contact with the main narrative.

(3) The narrative tone in which some of these highly coincidental and melodramatic dénouements are recounted is identical to some of the ironic tonal effects of compression, repetition or disproportion which Cervantes employs elsewhere to ridicule Don Quixote or other characters (cf. my Chapter 4).

(4) All these tales are explicitly related by Don Quixote himself or another character to the fantasies and implausibilities of the romances of chivalry. I would conclude, then, that Cervantes chose to present and order the interpolated tales in such a way as to indicate as far as possible their lack of plausibility without actually invalidating through direct parody their capacity to evoke orthodox admiratio.
The interpolated tale which comes closest to overt parody is, as Immerwahr (p.134) and Javier Herrero (p.294) also point out, that of the shepherdess Leandra. Coming at the end of Part I, it contains echoes of all the other preceding tales. Leandra is the daughter of a rich peasant (like Dorotea) she has no mother (like Marcela) and she spurns the love of Anselmo and Eugenio (again like Marcela). These two (like Grisóstomo and Cardenio) suffer an access of amorous madness which drives them to dress up as goatherds. Leandra (like Dorotea with Fernando) falls in love with a soldier Vicente and (like Zoraida with the Captive) elopes with him in the hope of going to foreign lands. The elopement comes to possess more of the practical characteristics of an abduction (as in the case of Luscinda) when Leandra is found abandoned and robbed on a mountainside (in a shift but, like Luscinda, quite intact). Her fate is similar to Luscinda's - she enters a nunnery. Her reclusion does not prevent the local swains from getting themselves up as goatherds to roam about the countryside (like those others in the Marcela story) weeping for her love. It would appear that for this final tale in Part I Cervantes has assembled most of the conventional elements which exist in different permutations in the other tales and fashioned them into a composite story which verges on open parody and which is again likened to the romances of chivalry. In the first instance, Leandra's story is placed immediately after the lengthy discussion between Don Quixote and the Canon of Toledo on the poetic truth of the romances. It is introduced
by a surprisingly cultivated goatherd Eugenio who offers
to tell them the Leandra story in order to illustrate the
unlikely paradox that goatherds are in fact educated people:
"para que creáis esta verdad y la toquéis con la mano"
(I.1.504). To this Don Quixote replies: "Por ver que tiene
este caso un no sé qué de sombra de aventura de caballería,
yo, por mi parte, os oiré, hermano ... " (p.504). Eugenio
finishes his tale, lamenting Leandra's reclusion in a
monastery, whereupon Don Quixote offers to release her from
it, much as Don Fernando forcibly sprang Luscinda from her
nunnery in the earlier story.

The goatherd is puzzled both by Don Quixote's
words and by his outlandish appearance. When apprised by the
barber of the latter's identity and mission he replies:

"Eso me semeja ... a lo que se lee en los
libros de caballeros andantes, que hacían todo
eso que de este hombre vuestra merced dice;
puesto que para mí tengo, o que vuestra merced
se burla, o que este gentilhombre debe de tener
cacillos los aposentos de la cabeza" (I.ii.511).

Naturally enraged by this imputation, Don Quixote strikes
him with a loaf of bread thereby provoking yet another
ridiculous brawl.

(b) The interpolated stories of Part II

Turning now to the interpolated love-stories in
Part II, all four of them have a deferred dénouement
but, unlike those in Part I, they are not - except for the
Tosilos story which is part and parcel of the goings-on at
the ducal palace - ironically undermined in the manner of
their grafting on to the main narrative. In this respect they appear to be more "natural", less obviously artificial or separate from the world of Don Quixote, in accordance with Cervantes's own declared purpose in chapter xlv of Part II: "Y así en esta segunda parte no quiso ingerir novelas sueltas ni pegadizas, sino algunos episodios que lo pareciesen, nacidos de los mismos sucesos que la verdad ofrece" (p.851). But if ironic disparities between the conventional love-stories and the verisimilar mainstream narrative are virtually non-existent in Part II, the ironic tensions between complexity of character and literary convention still remain, albeit more discreetly indicated by Cervantes.

In the Basilio story Cervantes again employs the technique of the delayed ending, with the background to the story being related by a character as a prelude to the enaction of the dénouement. In this case the dénouement is the result of a hoax played by Basilio, the poor but steadfast lover of the beautiful Quiteria, who is on the point of being married off by her parents to the rich Camacho. It clearly belongs to the same romantic genre as the stories in Part I. The particular thematic conflict is the familiar one between true love and a marriage of convenience. But the manner of surmounting the obstacle to true love is singularly artificial here - Basilio pretends to stab himself on Quiteria's wedding day and forces the others to allow her to marry him before he expires. This done he leaps up and claims his wife. People think it is
a miracle but he triumphantly explains that it is only artifice; the stabbing was a carefully prepared practical trick. The cheated Camacho accepts the result of the ruse after a short-lived outburst of anger and the lavish wedding feast proceeds regardless once Quiteria and her new groom have left the scene.

There are few if any ironic reverberations other than the obvious one in this story. But certain difficulties can be discerned on closer inspection. For example if we study Don Quixote's reactions to the story, we can discover certain telling inconsistencies. When Don Quixote is first told of Quiteria's imminent marriage to Camacho and her father's rejection of Basilio as a suitable husband, he supports the rights of fathers to marry off their daughters in a lucid and well-reasoned speech which contrasts with Sancho's emotional support for Basilio (p.673). However, after the trick, when Camacho and his men set upon Basilio in their rage, Don Quixote takes up his arms and orders them to stop. The knight argues, again very lucidly, that in love as in war all manner of subterfuge is legitimate in order to achieve one's end (pp.692-3). Surprisingly, his ferocity persuades the men to desist from their attack. Basilio and Quiteria then depart taking Don Quixote with them "estimándole por hombre de valor y de pelo en pecho" (p.693). One might conclude that the moral of the story is that true love should triumph, in spite of Don Quixote's earlier opinions to the contrary. But Don Quixote next advises Basilio, once again in a well-reasoned speech which
earns Sancho's spontaneous admiration, that he should strive to become wealthy in order to keep his girl. In this way he rather detracts from Basilio's position as the champion of true love and restores much of the right to the defeated Camacho. Moreover this advice rather qualifies the "happy ever after" romance ending by, again as in the Captive's story, suggesting that troubles may lie ahead for the lovers should the husband not prove to be sufficiently adept at getting rich.

As a result of this last speech of Don Quixote's the story fails to cut much ice at the level of the theme. Cervantes paradoxically uses Don Quixote in one of his "sane" spells to neutralize the conflict between true love and material interest which the suicide trick had appeared to resolve in favour of the former. This irresolution of the theme is compounded by the indecisiveness of the characters. Quiteria is totally passive, submitting to her father's wishes without reported opposition and later showing little enthusiasm for her designated rôle as a heroine of true love. More extraordinary still is Camacho's reaction to the preposterous and dishonouring hoax. His understandable anger is quickly doused by, of all things, the mad knight's comminations, and beyond that, he displays unbelievable forbearance when he decides to proceed with the junketings. Every thematic or temperamental awkwardness is smoothed over, throwing the suicide trick into sharp relief as the single salient feature of the story. It is very much as if the whole tale had been composed merely to
highlight Basilio's ruse - a peripety which seems a cynical sop to a readership avid for spectacular forms of highly artificial admiratio. As one might expect, true love triumphs, but thanks only to the combination of two rather unlikely factors - Basilio's mechanical trick and Don Quixote's braggadocio. Once again the required happy ending seems deliberately drained of credibility so as to expose underlying conflicts which remain unresolved.23

If Basilio's story represents an extreme of authorial manipulation, with its subordination of theme, character and moral coherence to an absurdly mechanical peripety, the Tosilos story shows more directly Cervantes's concern with the relations between plausible characterisation and generic conventions. The interest of this story lies in the way in which the plot of the conventional love-story is so masterfully crossed with such devices of chivalric literature as enchantment and trial by combat. The artificial limitations of both literary traditions are ironically played off against the free action of individual characters. The opposition between manipulated events and individual motivation is superbly conveyed through an array of ironic contrasts.

The story initially emerges as a surprise, when the ridiculous duenna Doña Rodríguez requests Don Quixote to help her resolve a genuine problem. Her daughter has been dishonoured by a rich peasant's son but the Duke refuses to do anything about it because the peasant often lends him money. Doña Rodríguez asks Don Quixote to challenge the
peasant's son to a duel in order to uphold the honour of her daughter. Cervantes has cleverly combined the two genres by getting his characters to attempt to resolve a typical problem of the romantic novella by means of a classic technique from the chivalric canon. The Duke, seeing the comical possibilities of the situation, decides to extract more fun from Don Quixote and the duenna and orders his lackey Tosilos to disguise himself as the rich peasant's son. However, the Duke's plans break down when Tosilos suddenly falls in love with the duenna's daughter as he is on the point of charging at Don Quixote on the field of battle. The improbability of Tosilos's access of love for the maiden is here unmistakably exaggerated by Cervantes with his burlesque account of the activities of Eros ("el niño ceguezuelo") who it is said was loath to waste the opportunity of conquering a lackey's heart and therefore pierced it with an arrow: ... "y pudolo hacer bien al seguro, porque el Amor es invisible, y entra y sale por do quiere, sin que nadie le pida cuenta de sus hechos" (p. 945).

Cervantes again uses a metaphysical agent (overtly Classical here because of the clear parodical intent rather than the ambiguity of "el cielo") to extricate the characters' genuine feelings from the Duke's machinations. These are exposed when Tosilos raises his visor and the imposture is detected by Doña Rodríguez. By a further comical twist, the full revelation of the Duke's schemes is neatly avoided when Don Quixote perversely uses his favourite notion of enchantment to explain away the puzzling substitution of
Tosilos for the real culprit. The Duke decides to lock up Tosilos for a fortnight to see if the "enchantment" wears off. But again, his plans are thwarted when the duenna's daughter decides she will in any case marry Tosilos and live happily ever after. Having apparently resolved the story as happily as it deserves to be in romance, Don Quixote goes off to Barcelona. However, there follows an epilogue much later when Tosilos appears unexpectedly during Don Quixote and Sancho's journey back (II.lxvi.1022). The lackey announces that the episode actually ended with his receiving a hundred lashes from the Duke, the duenna's return to to Castile, and her daughter's entry into a convent.

Although the story is concluded in partial accordance with the rules of the genre, the manner of its conception and elaboration has prised it out of the moulds of convention. From the start the reader has been made aware of the delusion involved in the duenna's enlistment of the mad knight's services and of the latter's inability to alter the basic obstacles to a happy outcome - the fact of the Duke's power and his totally self-interested refusal to right the injustice. One immediately sees Don Quixote and the duenna for what they are - ridiculous upholders, in the best traditions of chivalry or courtly love, of absolute principles which are destined to founder on the bedrock of social realities. The story ends with the recognition of harsh social facts which render literary conventions futile and untrue - in ironic contrast to Basilio's story, no concessions are made to sentimentality or to optimistic
illusions. However, the ironic structuring of the story, while never flinching from the unpleasant reality of the Duke's power, obliquely illustrates its limitations; absolute social power does not necessarily entail total manipulation of individuals either. There is here a more overt recognition of the manifold ways in which self-interested motives, feelings, private illusions and conflicting ideals contribute to the difficulties of human intercourse. The typical procedures of the novella are no more adequate to dealing with these difficulties than are Don Quixote's chivalric romances.

The story of Claudia Gerônima (II.1x.) is again based on the interplay between characterisation and convention. The dénouement is also detached from the narration of the background. Claudia Gerônima believes that her lover Don Vicente has gone off with another woman, she follows him and shoots him. She then seeks out Roque Guinart and asks him to protect her father and herself from Don Vicente's family's revenge. Roque and the others go to the scene and discover the dying Vicente. He claims that Claudia has misconstrued his motives through her blind jealousy and insists that he was never unfaithful. He even offers to marry her before he dies. Claudia bitterly laments her impetuousness, and after his death goes off to a convent.

This story bears similarities with Marcela's in Part I in that its resolution points to a negation of the conventional impetus which produced it in the first place. Claudia acts on impulse in accordance with the established a priori patterns of a typical story of a lover's revenge,
without stopping to examine either her motives or her lover's, "sin ponerme a dar quejas ni a ofr disculpas" (p. 977). Had she just begun to do so the tragedy would have been avoided and the story could conceivably have developed along unprecedented lines as an investigation into the real motives for her jealousy. However, it remains significant that the way Cervantes has constructed the story self-consciously draws attention to its generic constraints and implies the possibility of an alternative destiny for its characters.

The last of the interpolated stories, Ana Félix's (II. lxii, lxv), distinguishes itself by being the only genuinely open-ended of the collection. Unlike the Clara story in Part I its inconclusiveness is not a form of narrative shorthand or elliptical brevity but is rooted instead in the very nature of its subject-matter. It is unresolved, I suggest, because Cervantes either did not know how or did not dare to bring it to a fitting close.

On the surface it again falls within the same genre as the others and uses traditional devices for its development - transvestism, coincidences and elopement. But I would argue that in spite of all these features, the story is unfinished because it cannot be concluded within the terms of the literary tradition from which it springs. In the first place the obstacle the lovers encounter falls well outside conventional bounds. Had it been based on infidelity, unrequited affection, social or religious incompatability, all these would have been comfortably overcome from within
the resources of the genre. However, Ana Félix and Don Gregorio come from rich families, they are united in a true and steadfast love, and even though Ana is of Morisco background it is categorically stated that she is a firm and convinced Christian. What stands between them is an inescapable historical reality - Philip III's edict expelling all Moriscos from Spain in 1609. The conflict is between private rights and the anonymous world of public affairs, between personal convictions and racial or cultural identity.

The motif of inversion runs strongly throughout. Ana is discovered accidentally disguised as a man in Turkish clothes and is about to be executed when her beauty earns her the indulgence of her captors who agree to listen to her story. She tells of how she was forced into exile with her family in spite of her sincere Christian faith and was followed to Oran by Don Gregorio, disguised as a girl. She left him there, in constant danger of being discovered and seduced by the pederastic Turks, in order to return to Spain to dig up some money buried near her home town. The transpositions and inversions are cultural, racial, geographical and even sexual. The lovers are driven to deny their true identities in their desire to stay together and surmount the massive historical barrier erected between them by the institutional authority of the State. Not only are their respective positions highly precarious, the only hope of their reverting to their stable and real identities - a destiny which is indispensable to the deepest requirements
of romance - is if they can somehow swim against the swiftly rising tide of history.

Cervantes has written the story in such a way as to elicit great sympathy for Ana. The reader unequivocally wants there to be a happy ending but when Don Gregorio returns from Oran the whole story is abandoned without any indication as to how it will be resolved. But how, we may ask, could Cervantes have ended it? There are three possibilities, each beset by insuperable difficulties.

(1) If the lovers had married without permission Cervantes would have been putting private passion above public duty and the story would have become dangerously subversive given the historical context.

(2) However, if they had definitely been forbidden to marry, the reader would have been disappointed and the story, as it is presented, would have become a tragedy clearly caused by Philip III's edict. Again, this would have been fraught with danger because the reader's dismay could have been construed as implying criticism of the royal policy of expatriating Moriscos.

(3) The only likely solution would have been a compromise, by which the lovers could have been granted permission to marry legally. This would have entailed making an exception of Ana Félix among her fellow Moriscos, and that would obviously have required adducing reasons to explain such a singular dispensation. Since Ana is already a
convinced Christian and a loyal lover there would seem to be no other decisive qualities she would have required to deserve a royal pardon, unless of course her own affirmations as to the strength of her faith or the truth of her love were to be put to the test in order to ascertain infallibly whether her true intentions correspond to her professed feelings. Such incontrovertible tests of real motivation are obviously impossible outside romance fiction (viz. the Arch of Loyal Lovers in the Amadís) so that the basic problem postulated by the story is how the individual can avoid being trapped within impersonal categories which have no regard for his private wishes or genuine beliefs. Cervantes here brought the conventional love-story dangerously up to date, pushing it to the uttermost limits of its possibilities where to proceed beyond stereotypes of race, religion, culture and social station, would have inevitably opened the Pandora's Box of individual intentions, passions, and irreconcilable divisions of identity.

Cervantes must have chosen to provoke those unanswered questions because he precluded the only solution open to him in this type of tale, and one he had already used, albeit with a measure of scepticism, in the Captive's Tale in Part I, namely that of conversion. Here that solution is ruled out
from the start by Ana Félix's pre-existent Christian faith. The remedy for the lovers' plight lies well beyond anybody's control. As a result, the transvestism central to the action ceases to be a well-worn narrative expedient of the genre and crystallizes with unexpected poetic force into a poignantly contemporary symbol of that intimate violence inflicted upon the individual by the impersonal and alienating forces of an Absolutist State.

In Ana Félix's story Cervantes deliberately emasculates the genre of the Italianate/Moorish love-story by constructing the tale in such a way as to expose its inability to treat certain intractable human problems. The only way forward to the happy ending hoped for by the reader would have involved forcing the lovers to surmount the historical obstacle through a *deus ex machina* device typical of romance. Here Cervantes refrains from doing so and leaves the story significantly open-ended, implying that the author himself is not free to impose a conclusion which falls short of the truth; even in the nominally free world of imaginative fiction, not all problems should be susceptible of solution.

If we consider the interpolated stories of Parts I and II as a series, it is striking to observe how, from the utopian pastoral setting of the Marcela story in Part I Cervantes moves in Part II towards stories set in his own contemporary reality like that of Claudia Gerónima, which is linked with the historical brigand Roque Guinart, or of Ana Félix, which is set in the context of the expulsion of the Moriscos. Related to this phenomenon, there is a more
crucial difference between the stories of Parts I and II. In spite of the ironies and underhand parody, all the stories in Part I are articulated in accordance with mechanisms derived from the Italianate *novella*; its conventions form the ground of the characters' real experience, at least within the visible bounds of the stories themselves. But in Part II, all four stories demonstrate how these very conventions and procedures are either delusions produced by the fantasy of characters like Doña Rodríguez or Claudia Gerónima, or else improbable and ineffectual as in the cases of Basilio and Ana Félix respectively. Although these stories are still cognate with the genre of the Italianate *novella* their functioning exposes their inadequacy as narrative vehicles capable of expressing or dealing with certain conflicts inherent in individual experience. Cervantes's intermittent ironic sniping at the genre in Part I has developed into a sophisticated subversion of its foundations in Part II, where the stories are so arranged as to reveal a progressive sapping of generic resources culminating in the unresolved, open-ended tale of Ana Félix.²⁶ The stories of Part I and Basilio's are susceptible of being read on two levels: either in a manner blessedly innocent of irony, for the traditional pleasure of *admiratio* they provide, or with a certain ironic awareness of their literary artificiality. In Part II this ambiguity is brought much further into the open and promoted to the thematic level as an opposition between the characters' illusions or aspirations and the
recalcitrance of their actual circumstances.

By virtue of their deliberate omissions, ironic qualifications and suggestive inconclusiveness, the interpolated stories begin negatively to trace an area of reality, namely the inward life of the characters, their motives, passions and states of mind, which is incapable of being explored in terms of traditional generic procedures. The stories of Claudia Geronima and Ana Félix, especially, seem to herald the need for a narrative medium which would articulate individualized experience or even the interior lives of characters - Claudia Geronima's obsessive jealousy for example, or Ana Félix's fears and frustrations - forms of experience which would otherwise be stifled or constrained by the limited conventional permutations of the Italianate novella.

From my analysis of the interpolated tales, I would conclude that in the course of his creative engagement with the aesthetic problems which beset Renaissance writers of fiction - problems of reconciling verisimilitude and the marvellous, distinguishing between poetic truth and whimsical fantasy, combining a unified narrative structure with incidental variety - Cervantes found himself drawn into the exploration of the correlations between character and action in a practical search for a narrative framework that would best express the intercourse of characters freed from the absolute exigencies of the a priori thematic schemes or fixed mechanisms of established genres. I have attempted to show how the interpolated stories suggest that Cervantes was looking to overcome these generic insufficiencies
mainly in the direction of the portrayal of individual experience. If such was his aesthetic project, it is clear that the principal prerequisite would have been the self-effacement of the author, the concealment of his \textit{deus ex machina} manipulations of the action in favour of the characters' own activity. In short, I would contend that Cervantes's attempts to achieve aesthetic distance and objectivity are linked to the creation of the illusion of the characters' objective independence of the author's will.

(ii) Character and action in the main narrative.

Turning to the question of how Cervantes achieves aesthetic distance in the main narrative I shall concentrate on the relationship between character and action as it manifests itself in the development of the novel. In Chapter 4 I argued that Don Quixote becomes independent of the reader's expectations by virtue of his madness, especially as it matures into the mad/sane paradox, stylistic gaffes and so on. Now I hope to demonstrate that Don Quixote and Sancho also disengage themselves from their creator's absolute control. Cervantes becomes, if not exactly the ironic victim of his creatures, at least subject to a logic imposed on him by his protagonists.

As I have said earlier, the truly difficult challenge to Cervantes's creative powers must have been the prolongation of Don Quixote's madness, since this was the one source of \textit{admiratio} capable of replacing the exotic marvels of late romance. It is in his efforts to maintain the knight's madness,
I believe that Cervantes discovers the objective problem that will provide a discipline sufficient to rescue him from the quagmire of manipulation that engulfed the chivalric authors. In the opening chapters of the novel it is evident that Cervantes conceived Don Quixote as little more than a stooge whose absurd chivalric illusions can be flatly contradicted by reality. There is a certain tit-for-tat quality in the early clashes between Don Quixote and the real world: he appears simply to want to replace everyday things directly by chivalric realities - his old nag by the charger Rocinante, Aldonza Lorenzo by Dulcinea, the inn by a castle, the prostitutes by princesses, his own colloquial speech by the archaic nobility of literary diction - but the humdrum order of things naturally hits back. Such an ironic formula, however, has a short lifespan, and if the parody is not itself to decline into the sequential tedium of the romances, the parodist will soon either have to find satisfactory variations or cure his character's madness and end the tale.

If we look more closely at the earliest adventures in the novel we find that Cervantes modulates the interactions between Don Quixote and reality so as to guard against an all too easy collapse of his chivalric illusions. Don Quixote is nourished in his ideas by fortunate coincidences (e.g. the blowing of a swineherd's horn as he approaches the inn which he takes to be a castle) or by the good humour of the innkeeper and the prostitutes. His first adventures with the disrupters of his vigil or the liberation
of the boy Andrés can likewise be counted fortuitous successes, but how long can Cervantes stave off the reverse which should inevitably come if Don Quixote's madness is not actually to flout plausibility and appear to get away with restoring the chivalric world? How, in a nutshell, will he cope with the need to rationalise disillusionment? If Don Quixote is to suffer a serious setback he will either have to abandon his illusions or attempt to justify them. But if he does rationalise them a new factor will be introduced. He can no longer be an impetuous, headstrong madman since he will now be faced with an admitted contradiction which will have to be resolved within his system of chivalric preconceptions. The character will have acquired the germ of a reflective consciousness, a more complex form of madness.

Cervantes's handling of the first humiliating defeat illustrates the problem. Don Quixote falls from his horse as he prepares to attack the merchants of Toledo and is then beaten up by a muleteer. When he recovers, his first attempt to safeguard his self-esteem is to seek some passage from the books of chivalry which he can imitate in order to smooth over the defeat. This, as yet, is a form of escapist delusion where Don Quixote tries actually to dissolve his identity into that of romance heroes such as Valdovinos and the Marqués de Mantua. When his neighbour Pedro Alonso appears, such tactics become less feasible although Don Quixote counters Alonso's factual reminder of his true identity with absurd, solipsistic bluster (viz.
the "yo sé quien soy" speech, p.63). However, on arriving at the village he is forced to come out of this defensive head-in-the-sand attitude and offer a more convincing chivalric rationalisation: he blames his horse and calls for Urganda to come and minister to his wounds (p.65). Here at least is a more sophisticated excuse, since it represents a balance between some cognizance of what actually happened and a blind persistence in the world of chivalry.

Don Quixote's second reverse, the burning of his library by the priest and the barber, marks an important advance in the technique of rationalisation. When his housekeeper explains to him that it was an enchanter who spirited the books away, she provides not just any excuse but a specifically chivalric one which the knight can elaborate upon and fit conveniently into his own obsessions by assuming it is the sage Frestón, the magician - narrator of Don Belianís de Grecia who has spirited his books away. Two very important "escalating factors" are involved here: the as yet embryonic but fertile concept of enchantment, and the idea of other sane characters fostering Don Quixote's illusions, knowingly or otherwise, by providing him with excuses that will conform with the chivalric world. A plausible framework has been found which will allow Don Quixote's imagination more latitude to weave unsuspected ironic patterns between the polarized realities of his actual existence and the world of chivalry. Now that Don Quixote has been provided with the
potential for thinking, arguing and rationalising, he needs a regular interlocutor who can act both as a receptive audience and as a foil. Cervantes introduces Sancho, and again keeps well within the limits of the chivalric tradition by making him the knight's squire. These new arrangements are seen at work in the adventure of the windmills where Don Quixote now announces his interpretation of reality, Sancho contradicts that, and the knight rides into the attack in order to justify his assertions. When he is defeated he cannot any longer defensively attempt a withdrawal into solipsism because he has to confront Sancho. Instead, he mitigates his ignominy by having recourse to some impressive chivalric explanation.

In sustaining the madness, then, Cervantes imposes three basic constraints on the totally free exercise of his imagination. In the first place he must respect the reader's notions of verisimilitude; he obviously cannot allow Don Quixote to get away with his mad schemes. Secondly, and by contrast, he must ensure that Don Quixote does not depart from his observance of chivalric rules. This he can turn to good account by incorporating further elements from the romances to deepen his satire. The third constraint is his need to keep the reader amused when playing off the first two. In effect, this means endowing Don Quixote with a knack for ingenious rationalisation which will continuously provoke laughter or admiratio in the reader. All three form a triangle of pressures, as it were, with which Cervantes has to reckon as he expands his narrative;
they are three constants, the basic limits which hedge in his creative freedom.

But, in addition, there is an axis on a horizontal plane along which the action moves sequentially and for whose movement one should also seek some objective motor that would distinguish it from the mere succession of adventures characteristic of Spanish romance. In other words there will have to be a coherent evolution of the actions of the characters as opposed to the routine episodic randomness of the later romances. Again this poses the problem of authorial distance in an especially acute form. For if the criterion of verisimilitude requires that the narrative be plausibly life-like then it will be difficult to decide how far the author can order it into meaningful patterns, that is, "poner en su punto las cosas", without contravening the reader's sense of the formlessness of life's flowing. If the action is too stylized it will tend to appear abstract and symbolical, a quasi-allegorical vehicle for the author's ideas, and the old narrative features of romance will threaten to re-emerge. An anti-romance narrative must therefore generate significance without giving the impression that this has been arbitrarily imposed by the author. As I argued in Chapter 4, Cervantes's solution is to have the characters themselves interpret the action as it affects them. The structure of the narrative will evolve organically through the characters rather than be determined by a pre-established design.

In romance the adventures and their organisation
produce the underlying meanings, the characters themselves being for the most part embodiments of an idea or a simple cluster of moral attributes. But in Don Quixote the brunt of interpretation, such as it is, falls on the characters themselves. They gradually come to acquire a sort of independence as they build up behind them a significant body of actions, affirmations and opinions, a sum of "experience", so to speak, whose momentum is great enough to compel Cervantes to follow its own natural course when conceiving the next stage of the narrative. Obviously the more intense the interaction between the characters the more complex the author's job of supplying them with new incidents will become but, equally, the more effective will be his self-effacement through the independent activity of the characters' personalities. The process is one of the author sensing the state of play between the characters at any particular stage, and using his ingenuity to build upon that within the guidelines set by their previous experience.

In the particular case of Don Quixote and Sancho, for example, the primary requirement to preserve Don Quixote's insanity against the overwhelming claims of reality leads eventually to the invention of Sancho. But when creating Sancho, Cervantes would have had to face the choice of making him either mad or sane. If mad, he could not be more than the undifferentiated echo of his master's ravings, but if sane, how could he be induced to follow and obey a transparent fool? It is a problem of credible motivation, and Sancho is initially made gullible, greedy
and respectful to his superiors. As the narrative evolves, however, Cervantes comes to rely increasingly on Sancho as an ironic counter-weight to Don Quixote. The squire passes comments and criticisms on the madman's behaviour until at last he begins to exercise a degree of power over his master in the fulling mill episode. As Sancho's ironic mentality blossoms, the main narrative thread turns into a form of changing power-struggle between master and servant which may engender subsidiary themes but which remains, as we have extensively analysed in Chapter 3, the vertebra of the novel. The advantage Sancho gained at the fulling mill is somewhat offset by Don Quixote's winning of Mambrino's helmet and especially so by the ensuing speech on the career of the knight errant (I.xxi.196-200) which stirs the squire to renewed enthusiasm for the material benefits of chivalry and puts him in thrall to his master's effusive imagination. Once again, as a counterbalance to the peasant's ironic cunning Cervantes enhances Don Quixote's positive intellectual and moral qualities and from there gradually develops this tendency into the all-important mad/sane paradox.

Although the narrative becomes conditioned by the characters' previous behaviour, this is by no means a hindrance to invention, rather it is a spur to the writer, opening new avenues of development for his imagination. At each stage fresh problems emerge which can only be resolved by Cervantes's understanding of the implications of the actions of his characters until their careers become a sort of autonomous, objective source of narrative problems, a means to knowledge and insight for the author himself who, so to speak, creates
in order to discover.

The independence of the characters is therefore central to the question of authorial distance. Cervantes, I suggest, discovered the requisite imaginative discipline by creating a mad character about whom he could have had few preconceptions, whose motives and moral qualities could not have been clear to him at the beginning, who seems to have been conceived initially as a cardboard joke-figure to parody the absurd romances, but who nevertheless imposed the terms of his own comic development on his creator, who in turn was inspired enough to sense that it was in the defiant prolongation of the lunacy that success lay. I consider the Quixote to be the result of an intuitive probing of narrative possibilities, an inspired orchestration of character and situation in a tentative creation of a new type of fiction. The rest of this chapter will be devoted to a discussion of the ways in which Cervantes attempts narrative formulae which could accommodate the action of seemingly independent characters.

I propose, therefore, to analyse the development of the novel on these assumptions, distinguishing between "external patterning", that is, narrative action which is clearly imposed more or less arbitrarily by the author upon the characters, and "internal evolution", or narrative action that develops causally from within the motives or behaviour of the characters. These terms can be further illustrated by Northrop Frye's distinction between an "and then" narrative which is typical of romance with its
succession of discontinuous adventures, and the groping towards a realist "hence" narrative where the story-line is subordinated to an inherent logic of character and motive. 30

(a) Character and action in Part I

The action in the first part can be readily divided into a sequence of discontinuous episodes when Don Quixote is on the road and static set-pieces when the main characters are gathered in one place, usually an inn. The single adventure is of course the basic unit of romance narrative and where these predominate in Don Quixote one can say that Cervantes has not superseded the fundamental structural element of the books of chivalry. Therefore what matters for our discussion is to examine how Cervantes has tried to develop away from the linear succession of episodes to a more complex, causally-connected form of narrative. The occurrence of static set-pieces, however, is not in itself an index of plot because, as we shall see, it often relies upon a mere complication of story, on intensive "external patterning" and not on the "internal evolution" of relationships between characters.

The early sections of Part I are for the most part episodic except for the chapters where Don Quixote prepares for his first sally and which describe his stay at the inn. But this sojourn at an inn is only the occasion for incidents which cannot be distinguished from the others on the road since both are concerned with the direct collision of Don Quixote's illusions with reality. The initial evidence of causal action in the form of some extended interplay
between different characters' actions and intentions comes at Juan Palomeque's inn (I.xvi-ii.143-59) with the misunderstandings arising from Maritornes's assignation with the muleteer. As I have treated this at some length earlier, it suffices to say here that Cervantes creates a situation of conflicting motives and expectations which takes the narrative beyond the linear episodic sequence of romance. However, his use of coincidences and chance interventions speeds up the action well beyond plot, pushing it into farce and eventually into violent slapstick (pp.145-53). Although highly successful in its comic effect this set-piece is still derived from excessive author-imposed patterning; the characters' motives are not treated with any intrinsic seriousness and the misunderstandings arise from perversely crossed wires, as it were, rather than from any significant motivational conflict.

After the farcical interlude at the inn, three adventures follow: the attack on the flocks of sheep, the encounter with the dead body, and the fulling mills episode. It is with this latter that there is some advance towards plot when relations between Don Quixote and Sancho Panza take an ironic turn. Sancho learns how to deceive his master while pretending to bow to his authority. As I have said earlier, Sancho's lie introduces a new dimension to the novel and a very clear break with romance in so far as one of the protagonists becomes more or less committed to disguising his genuine intentions from the other. There are two further discrete episodes: the winning of
Mambrino's helmet and the liberation of the galley slaves. After these adventures Don Quixote goes up into the Sierra Morena and a more complicated interaction between the characters ensues. This new phase in the narrative is accompanied by a very marked decrease in the "crossroad adventures" but more significantly by the virtual disappearance of any bodily aggression on the knight. With the exception of Maritornes stringing him up from a window or the brawls of the "Field of Agramante" at the inn and with the goatherds, Don Quixote escapes direct physical humiliation. We can conclude, then, that as a correlative to the movement towards the plot of a "hence" narrative there is an abandonment of the crudities of slapstick in favour of more subtle forms of literary attack through irony and wit.

The intensification of the action in the direction of plot begins with Don Quixote's decision to send a letter to Dulcinea. This in itself constitutes an advance since it shows the knight beginning to act upon the consequences of his delusions. Furthermore, Don Quixote's decision has repercussions upon Sancho's behaviour. It obliges him to further deceive and ironize his master and leads him eventually to join the priest, the barber and Dorotea in a conspiracy against the knight. Following this there is an incident which provides a precedent for a new type of structural development in the novel. I refer to the second encounter with Andrés, the boy Don Quixote had saved from his cruel master in chapter iv. Andrés now
complains that Don Quixote's interventions on his behalf had no effect whatsoever and, worse still, earned him a more severe punishment. Don Quixote must face up to the adverse consequences of a chivalrous act which at the time had appeared to be entirely successful. This is rather different from a straightforward "defeat" as in the adventures of the windmills or of the flocks of sheep. It forces upon Don Quixote's own consciousness the fact that he is the victim of a deception perpetrated by Juan Haldudo; he must recognize himself as an ironic victim, and this draws him willy-nilly into the ambit of equivocal human relations. For the first time Don Quixote does not attempt to justify himself, instead we are afforded a glimpse beneath the surface into the state of his emotions; we are told that he was "corridísimo" (p.319). In narrative terms the incident establishes a principle of what we may call "ironic recurrence".

When they all return to Juan Palomeque's inn the main action is submerged by the successive interpolated stories which are not directly related to Don Quixote. The central narrative thread is taken up after the Doña Clara story with a second example of the principle of ironic recurrence. The barber from whom Don Quixote stole the basin in chapter xxi returns to claim it. Again Don Quixote has to face up to the consequences of his assertions and actions. The ensuing wrangle involves all the characters in varying degree, the majority of them trying to ironize both Don Quixote and the simple barber at one and the
same time. Because the reader is always aware of the irreconcilable distinction between Don Quixote's fantasy and the real facts of the matter, the dispute remains ironically implausible, a rather malicious manipulation of a madman and a simpleton by the sane characters and, beyond them, by the author himself. It is no surprise, therefore, that the situation degenerates rapidly into slapstick when Don Quixote loses his temper and hits an impudent cuadrillero with his lance. As in the earlier episode with Maritornes and her lover at the inn (I.xvi.149) all the characters become embroiled in a farcical affray which ends as abruptly and arbitrarily as it started, with Don Quixote calling a halt by recalling the discord at the Field of Agramante in the Orlando Furioso.

Close on this fracas, comes the third ironic recurrence. One of the cuadrilleros recognises Don Quixote as the man who set the galley slaves free and attempts to arrest him. Don Quixote justifies his action with the galley slaves by haughtily lecturing the cuadrillero on the rights of a knight errant who is above the laws of man by virtue of his divine calling (I.xlv.465). Eventually the cuadrilleros are persuaded by the priest's explanation of Don Quixote's madness to let him go. This last ironic recurrence, it is important to note, has an effect opposite to the preceding ones. In the previous two examples Don Quixote was forced to countenance the deceptive world of men, but here it is his chivalric madness which permits him to
draw back from the entanglements of human intercourse, thanks of course to the protective tolerance of the other characters.

On the one hand, the effect of irony is most often to propel Don Quixote towards a confrontation with the real world, but on the other, he is occasionally allowed to extricate himself from reality through some form of ingenious rationalisation or through the indulgence of others, this too producing irony. This latter form of irony arises from the need to sustain Don Quixote's madness by preventing it from succumbing to the claims of the real world. Thus Part I draws to a close with Don Quixote allowing himself to be bound and locked up in a cage by persuading himself that he has been enchanted. Cervantes does not fail to exploit the ironies implicit in Don Quixote's perverse passivity by having him insist against Sancho's objections that he is in fact enchanted and not a mere captive.

However, from the point of view of the development of character and plot, Cervantes's two-way irony has both advantages and limitations. In its positive aspect it enables Cervantes to move towards plot by portraying the mutable relations between the different characters and giving the reader some insight into the motives and intentions which inform their behaviour. But, on the two occasions when character interaction is at its most intense and climactic, namely the Maritornes fracas in chapter xvi and the Field of Agramante episode in chapter xlv, the narrative soon degenerates into slapstick and farce. When looking for
reasons for this phenomenon one becomes aware of the crucial limitation of Cervantes's irony in Part I. As we have seen in Chapter 3, in order to proceed with the novel Cervantes must maintain Don Quixote's madness, therefore the knight must be allowed to disentangle himself from any situation which will force him radically to examine his chivalric premises or to reveal his motives. This can only be achieved by continually making an exception of Don Quixote among the sane characters: whenever he is put on the spot he is allowed to slip out of it through some witty rationalisation or through the toleration of others. Thus in order to continue with the novel at all Cervantes is forced to eschew the serious and sustained motivational complications of plot either by reverting to episodic action or by careering forward into farce. Because of the peculiar nature of Don Quixote's madness, Cervantes has been unable in Part I to achieve a form of narrative which could sustain the interaction of several characters while avoiding dissolution into farce. Authorial irony remains to a large extent erratic, striking unpredictably at the various characters in a manner which is tentative and perhaps even occasionally capricious.

However this diffuse ironic activity towards the end of Part I does succeed in producing the semblance of a coherent relationship between two characters who become prey to an unforeseeable destiny. The reason why the relationship between Don Quixote and Sancho alone can evolve beyond the confines of comedy and farce is that none of the other characters in Part I respects the madman enough to allow
him any proper consideration. Don Quixote, to the priest and barber, to Dorotea and Don Fernando, or to Maritornes and the innkeeper for that matter, is little more than a fool to be mocked or baited. Only the gullible Sancho, through fear of his master's displeasure or occasional admiration for his superior intelligence, is sufficiently in awe of the mad knight to entertain serious relations with him. It is Sancho's genuine fear of Don Quixote's reaction, either at the fulling mills or upon his return from his embassy to Dulcinea, which leads him into the calculated irony and duplicity which so deeply complicates their relationship.

In Part II, as we shall see, the fuller flowering of the mad/sane paradox allows other characters like Don Diego de Miranda, Don Lorenzo or Doña Rodríguez to treat Don Quixote with respect. Their contact with him, however, is cut short by the nature of the knight's nomadic inclinations. To sum up, Cervantes in Part I does not decisively supersede the discontinuous episodes of romance. The set-pieces subside into farce and it is mainly through the several ironic recurrences and the knitting-together of the Quixote-Sancho relationship that characterisation is enriched and some progress is made towards the causal interweavings of plot.  

(b) Character and action in Part II

Some critics have observed a qualitative difference between
the first and second Parts of the novel. Part II has been considered generally more complex and organic than Part I and several reasons have been advanced for this development. The most popular seems to be the view that Don Quixote enters into a more social world leaving the arid byways of La Mancha and accepting the hospitality of various characters. Related to this explanation is the judgement that the knight is not so much mad in Part II as vulnerable to the deceptions of others. A further explanation is that Don Quixote now refers himself to Part I rather than to chivalry.

Although readily accepting that a greater narrative integration has been achieved in Part II, I would argue that the current explanations for this phenomenon are either inadequate or incorrect. Don Quixote does indeed spend time under more people's roofs than in Part I but he also spends a considerable time on the road. Even though there is an appreciable decrease in the number of isolated "crossroad" adventures the episodic principle is by no means abandoned. The narrative is still constructed from single adventures sewn together, mostly sequentially, except for the alternation of episodes between the account of Sancho's governorship and Don Quixote's misfortunes at the ducal palace. Most particularly, I would dissent from Luis Rosales' belief that Don Quixote is credulous rather than mad. Such a distinction is specious because the two terms are not in any way opposed. An essential aspect of Don Quixote's madness is his credulity - his blind belief in the books of chivalry - and, in any case, he has been gulled by others
at least since Part I chapter iii when the innkeeper pretends to knight him after his vigil at the inn. Moreover Don Quixote's madness cannot diminish in Part II because, as I have argued previously, it is the very fuel of the narrative without which it would soon stall and break down.

The most plausible explanation is Madariaga's hypothesis that Don Quixote is assailed by doubts as to the validity of his enterprise.35 I would agree that Don Quixote succumbs to certain misgivings about his chivalric project (and this is surely the key to a greater narrative complexity than in Part I) but I cannot go along with Madariaga's opinion that these doubts take the form of an empirical undermining of his idealistic chivalric premises and therefore represent an incipient health-bringing realism. In my view Madariaga has recognized the phenomenon which produces the narrative complexity but has neither defined it accurately nor explained its presence and development satisfactorily.

The narrative cohesion of Part II can best be explained by studying the state of play between the two protagonists, since this relationship has by the end of Part I become the only major channel along which the novel can develop towards plot. At this point Sancho is coming to enjoy a certain degree of ironic influence over Don Quixote and this breeds enough confidence in his own hold upon reality to enable him to persist in arguing with his caged master about the enchantment of which the
latter claims to be a victim. In spite of Don Quixote's repeated attempts in Part I to put distance between himself and his irritatingly ignorant squire, Sancho has become an antagonist with whom the knight will have to contend on an increasingly equal footing in Part II.

This, broadly speaking, is the situation just before the start of the third sally. We must next examine how Cervantes establishes sufficient motivation in Don Quixote and Sancho to propel them through the length of the second Part. The trigger is Sansén Carrasco's report of the existence of Part I. News of a book about their exploits produces curiosity in Don Quixote and a sense of self-importance in Sancho. Their enthusiasm is renewed and their appetite is whetted for a further sally. As it is, Don Quixote needs precious little encouragement, but Sancho, never having been fully absorbed by the chivalric madness, requires more of an impetus.

The impetus is provided by the cunning Carrasco. Sancho has been dragging his feet and, having been nagged on this matter by his practically-minded wife Teresa, proceeds to quibble with Don Quixote over a salary for his services as a squire. The former master loftily recoils from such base transactions and rejects Sancho. However, Carrasco comes forward to offer his services and Sancho, not wishing the bachelor to upstage him, is stung into accepting his old rôle alongside the mad knight.

These devices are sufficient to get the pair back on the road on the same terms as in Part I but rather
more substantial motivation is needed to sustain their renewed companionship. It is here that Cervantes achieved his master-stroke. Taking up the logical thread of Don Quixote's career, he sends off the deluded pair in the direction of El Toboso in search of an audience with Dulcinea. Although such a move arises naturally out of Don Quixote's chivalric thinking, it is fraught with innumerable dangers for the author. It is a narrative decision which reveals immense creative audacity. Dulcinea does not exist at all except in Don Quixote's imagination and Sancho has lied through his teeth to his master about having seen her. For the author to make the characters deliberately set out to visit the lady is to invite a crisis and work himself into a very tight corner indeed. Cervantes seems bent on a course which can only lead to the madman's discovering the gaping emptiness of his chivalric dream, not to mention the low mendacity of his trusted servant. And yet, out of this distinctly perverse and unpromising start, he derives the energy to launch Part II.

Cervantes achieves this simply by allowing Sancho to aggravate the deception of his master, for it is in the nature of this deception that one finds the seeds of Don Quixote's new motivation. Sancho Panza tries to save his own skin by persuading Don Quixote that a repellent peasant girl on an ass is Dulcinea enchanted. Although wounded to the very core, Don Quixote's illusions are not altogether destroyed. It is at this point, when he is cheated out of his most fervent aspirations, that Don Quixote's character
attains unequivocal pathos. By contrast to the false and mocking rhetoric of Sancho and the gross exclamations of the peasant girl, Don Quixote is dumbfounded and pensive for a good while, opening his mouth only to utter words of such noble cadence and conceptual elegance that all traces of authorial mockery melt away: "Levántate Sancho - dijo a este punto don Quijote - ; que ya veo que la Fortuna, de mi mal no harta, tiene tomados los caminos todos por donde pueda venir algun contento a esta alma mezquina que tengo en las carnes ..." (II.x.607). Even so, Sancho gloatingly teases his stricken master when he tries to help the putative Dulcinea back on to her ass. The mad knight says nothing and merely follows the receding trio of peasants with his eyes, turning to Sancho only when they are no longer visible, to utter: "Sancho, ¿qué te parece cuán mal quisto soy de encantadores? Y mira hasta dónde se estiende su malicia y la ojeriza que me tienen, pues me han querido privar del contento que pudiera darme ver en su ser a mi señora..." (p.608).

The enchantment of Dulcinea is the climactic turning point in the novel because it produces the definitive detachment of the protagonist's feelings from the external action; in so doing it creates the space for an inner life which puts the knight beyond the reach of other characters. Don Quixote's awareness of his tragic blindness (expressed with infinite wistfulness in the words "Y ;que no viese yo todo eso, Sancho!", p.609) means that it is Sancho not he who is now the sole perceiver of true chivalric phenomena. Moreover there is a critical difference here between Sancho's
deception and, say, Dorotea's deception involving the princess Micomicona in Part I. Micomicona is a positive, welcome confirmation of Don Quixote's prejudices, but the enchanted Dulcinea is not only the disappointment of his most fundamental hope, it suggests that he has been cut off from access to the chivalric world. It therefore internalizes his own relations with that world. Chivalric reality has acquired a disconcerting independence from him; no longer can he confidently interpret the everyday world in chivalric terms: he must instead re-establish proper contact with it by breaking the enchanters' maleficent hold over him, regardless of other people's actions.

The next chapter, xi, shows Don Quixote crestfallen and brooding:

"Pensativo además iba don Quijote por su camino adelante, considerando la mala burla que le habían hecho los encantadores volviendo a su señora Dulcinea en la mala figura de la aldeana, y no imaginaba qué remedio tendría para volverla a su ser primero ..." (p.670; my emphasis).

Having assumed from Sancho's earlier reports that Aldonza had been successfully transfigured into Dulcinea, he now believes that she has been changed into a travesty of even her former state as a handsome peasant girl. Here, then, is Don Quixote's new motive that will drive him forward - the need to find ways of disenchanting Dulcinea. Dulcinea's condition alters the nature of the knight's enterprise; if in Part I he was single-mindedly bent on changing the world, now he realizes he can do little to further that aim without previously transforming his lady, the source of all his chivalric energy,
back to her pristine glory. This single objective will override all others. As a result, he becomes curiously detached from other characters and often impervious to events around him, as if he had discovered a private responsibility to himself and to his lady that took precedence over any other consideration or distraction.\(^36\)

Don Quixote's new inwardness confers upon him a curious immunity to mockery or irony, even when this emanates from the author himself. For example in the passage that runs on from the above quotation:

"... y estos pensamientos le llevaban tan fuera de sí, que, sin sentirlo, soltó las riendas a Rocinante, el cual, sintiendo la libertad que se le daba, a cada paso se detenía a pacer la verde yerba de que aquellos campos abundaban" (p.610).

Even though the irony is clearly aimed at Don Quixote, it fails to engulf him, serving rather to deepen the impression of his morbid self-absorption, his "embelesamiento", and even to enhance his moral standing in the reader's eyes.

The pointed contrast between the sad, inward-looking knight and the mockingly deceptive world outside is the key to the structural change which occurs in Part II.\(^37\) From now on the episodic narrative will carry a suggestion of the existence of an inner dimension not exactly coincident with it; external events will begin to cast oblique shadows as if it were, providing the reader with intimations of an obscure undercurrent of inward life flowing beneath the surface events of the story.\(^38\) This disjunction between outward action and a partly submerged dimension of feelings and motives is thoroughly exploited by Cervantes. Don Quixote's
chivalric fortunes will occasionally appear to be on the rise but there will remain an undertow of equivocation to call success into question; in Part I Don Quixote's morale is directly correlated with the vicissitudes of his adventures but in Part II there emerges a critical divergence between the two.39

Sancho's behaviour must also henceforth be carefully modulated by Cervantes. In Sancho there had always been a necessary split between a credulous side, laced with greed, that kept him loyal to his mad master, and a more fractious, sceptical side that threatened to disrupt the partnership. Towards the end of Part I the conflict within Sancho's character came to be contained, if not reconciled, by his growing ironic attitude toward Don Quixote. Now Sancho gains unprecedented control over his master's chivalric vocation. With his lie about the enchantment of Dulcinea, his power is great enough in fact to destroy that vocation if he so wished. There is not a little piquancy in a relationship where the intricate chivalric world envisaged by Don Quixote's bookish imagination in Part I hangs on a slender thread held in the uncouth hands of Sancho Panza. Clearly Don Quixote's position at this juncture is profoundly ambiguous and ironic. The enchantment of Dulcinea has sunk him in a private pool of fears and forebodings which on the one hand partly disentangles him from the external action, but which on the other, makes him more vulnerable than ever before to fatal undermining from Sancho.

The progress of the narrative therefore depends as
much on Cervantes’s handling of Sancho as of Don Quixote himself. A breakdown is avoided by developing Sancho’s avaricious and gullible side. He is too naïve to see through promises of an island to govern and, moreover, as we shall presently observe, he is still occasionally moved by his master’s undoubted intellectual and moral qualities. This last tactic is indeed the cornerstone of Cervantes’s strategy in dealing with Sancho. Although the squire is fully aware of the ultimate hollowness of Don Quixote’s vision he must nevertheless be prevented from exposing it. As a result, situations are created where Sancho’s apprehensions of the truth will be controverted or confounded, thereby allowing for a more complex interaction of the two characters and the further elaboration of the plot subjacent to the external story-line.

The narrative in Part II is still based on an episodic principle which expresses the interaction of Don Quixote’s chivalric ideas and the real world but, in addition to this, as a result of the enchantment of Dulcinea, the mad knight will also be motivated by a desire to disenchant his lady. The intimate problems relating to this private goal will remain the common concern of Don Quixote and his squire, no other character becomes seriously engaged in this paramount undertaking. The organic development of this vein of argument, discussion and feeling on and around the subject of Dulcinea shapes their relationship and provides a continuity which compensates for the heterogeneity of incident in their public careers. In fact, the implications of some episodes
will be consciously referred to the two characters to the question of Dulcinea, thereby increasing the exclusiveness of their relationship.

Most of the adventures that follow will have an ambiguous significance. Superficially they will often appear to be victories but even when not wholly favourable it will still be possible for Don Quixote to save face and preserve his honour. For example, in the adventure of the Carros de la Muerte Don Quixote is unclear as to what is really going on but even though his attempts to engage the actors in combat come to nothing he can at least console himself that these were persons of inferior status whom a knight errant could not in any case contemplate fighting. His encounter with the Caballero de los Espejos must be counted a resounding victory. The reader, however, is clearly reminded of its precariousness particularly when Sancho insists that the defeated knight is in fact Sansón Carrasco. Don Quixote replies to this by pointing out that if enchanters had previously blinded him to Dulcinea's beauty it is not surprising that, foreseeing his victory, they should also have created the delusion that the Caballero de los Espejos was Carrasco in order to rob him of the glory he deserves: "Pero, con todo esto, me consuelo; porque, en fin, en cualquiera forma que haya sido, he quedado vencedor de mi enemigo" (II.xvi.644). Despite the confusion of appearances, it is the intrinsic worth of his action that counts. Sancho does not pursue the matter "por no decir alguna palabra que descubriese su embuste" [about Dulcinea].
The adventure with the lions is reckoned a success by Don Quixote but once again only in an *inward* sense. Although the beasts refuse to respond, Don Quixote insists to Sancho that he has undeniably displayed tremendous courage and this in itself constitutes a moral victory over the enchanters: "¿Qué te parece desto, Sancho?... ¿Hay encantos que valgan contra la verdadera valentía? Bien podrán los encantadores quitarme la ventura; pero el esfuerzo y el ánimo, será imposible" (II.xvii.659).

Both the victory over the Caballero de los Espejos and the adventure of the lions demonstrate Don Quixote's own awareness of the duality in his career between the public sphere, where his actions may have a controversial impact, and an interior, private sphere where their true chivalric worth resides. Although it is Sancho whom Don Quixote now primarily wishes to persuade of the validity of the latter sphere, his address to Don Diego de Miranda also acknowledges this double dimension in an unprecedented way:

"¿Quién duda, señor don Diego de Miranda, que vuestra merced no me tenga en su opinión por un hombre disparatado y loco? Y no sería mucho que así fuese, porque mis obras no pueden dar testimonio de otra cosa. Pues, con todo esto, quiero que vuestra merced advierta que no soy tan loco ni tan menguado como debía de haberle parecido" (II.xvii.660).

Don Quixote is now prepared to acknowledge that if he is to follow the laws of chivalry conscientiously he will appear mad to an external observer. It is in the transcendent realm of ideal values, where Dulcinea's beauty remains forever untarnished, that his true sanity would transpire.

Dulcinea is clearly never far from his thoughts.
The earthenware pots from El Toboso outside Don Diego's house remind him of his lady who is so sadly enchanted and transformed: "... y suspirando, y sin mirar lo que decía, ni delante de quién estaba, dijo: - ¡oh dulces prendas, por mi mal halladas, dulces y alegres cuando Dios quería! Oh tobosescas tinajas, que me habéis traído a la memoria la dulce prenda de mi mayor amargura!" (II.xviii.662). So great is his anguish over her enchantment that he is carried away, oblivious of his surroundings and circumstances, utterly absorbed by his own inner priorities.

The Montesinos Cave episode provides further evidence of the knight's interior life. He dedicates the adventure to Dulcinea "sólo porque conozca el mundo que sí tú me favoreces, no habrá imposible a quien yo no acometa y acabe" (II.xxii.700). Don Quixote's description of his experiences affords the reader his only direct view into the character's mind and sensibility. The dream/vision is a masterly recreation of the mad knight's fears and longings. There are strong elements of wish-fulfillment in his recognition by Montesinos, contrasted with recurring images of loss and frustration as evidenced in the behaviour of Durandarte or Belerma. But if these aspects of the vision are burlesqued by Cervantes through internal ironies which escape Don Quixote's notice, the confrontation with the enchanted Dulcinea, in spite of the anti-climactic banality of her handmaid's request for six reales, retains an element of sobering pathos, given the reader's appreciation of Don Quixote's touching naïveté in having so profoundly absorbed Sancho's cruel lie. No
amount of burlesque can fully travesty or negate the
sincerity of the madman's feelings for Dulcinea nor blind
the reader to the inherent poignancy of the situation.
Paradoxically, the burlesque elements enhance the moral
stature of Don Quixote, particularly when Sancho learns of
the apparition of Dulcinea, privately scoffs at his master,
and then attempts to persuade him to deny the validity of
this supreme experience.

The Montesinos Cave episode, moreover, serves to
infuse fresh life into the question of the enchanted
Dulcinea. Not only does it renew Don Quixote's determina-
tion to disenchant her, it correspondingly increases
Sancho's anxiety to prevent his master from discovering his
deception. Despite its controversial nature it is a
positive experience from the knight's point of view.
Having had his chivalric identity confirmed by characters
from the romance world, who have additionally charged him
with the responsibility for disenchanting his lady, he
is able to wrest some of the initiative from Sancho, who is
consequently forced into an awkward, defensive posture,
arguing against the reality of the experience yet unwilling
to press his arguments too far for fear of exposing his
original lie. As Sancho's lie acquires an impetus of its
own, Cervantes is able to strike an ironic balance between
the two characters. The Montesinos episode provides for
a new tactical formula which insures Don Quixote against the
total destruction of his illusions by his squire. The
argument about the Montesinos vision will crop up continually
in the novel, mostly as a private reference between knight and servant when everything otherwise is parody and burlesque. For other characters, those "adventures", such as the encounter with Maese Pedro's divining monkey or, much later, the ride on Clavileño, are nothing more than tricks and nonsense, but for Don Quixote and Sancho there is much more at stake, since these episodes may have a critical bearing on the one unresolved issue between them which will determine the innermost direction and quality of their lives.

When they encounter Maese Pedro and the divining monkey, Sancho, seeing an opportunity to reveal the truth of the Montesinos Cave episode without compromising himself directly, encourages Don Quixote to ask about the experience. The answer is suitably equivocal: "El mono dice que parte de las cosas que vuesa merced vio, o pasó, en la dicha cueva son falsas, y parte verisímiles ..." (II.xxv.727). Sancho finds some corroboration for his arguments here while Don Quixote can reply that time will tell.

The next few incidents largely maintain the upward thrust of Don Quixote's external career: although his attack on the puppets is a ghastly mistake, he dismisses it as another trick of the enchanters and persists in believing that Melisendrea and her husband must have crossed the frontier into France (II.xxvi.735-6). It is Sancho alone who suffers a drubbing at the hands of the angry villagers after the braying adventure, Don Quixote prudently retires to a safe distance, thereby reinforcing
in the reader suspicions of his caniness and possible ulterior motives (II.xxvii. 744). After his beating Sancho understandably wants to draw his salary and return home but Don Quixote easily shames him into accepting that he is an ignorant ass and should follow him if he wants his island (II.xxviii.748). Slowly Don Quixote's spirits revive and by the time he comes to the Ebro he is filled with joy and rapt in amorous thoughts. He then sees a boat which he takes to be the happy omen of an imminent chivalric adventure (II.xxix.749-50). Again his hopes are frustrated but at least he does not meet with catastrophe. He manages to salvage his dignity by means of a classic chivalric excuse "Para otro caballero debe de estar guardada y reservada esta aventura" (II.xxix.755).

But his greatest triumph comes when he meets the Duke and Duchess. In spite of his ignominious fall from his horse (II.xxx.759) as he approaches the Duke, he will be given a hero's welcome when he enters the castle. All his hopes seem possible, chivalric romance and lived experience become gloriously fused in accordance with the prescribed pattern of a knight errant's career: " ... y aquél fue el primer día que de todo en todo conocíó y creyó ser caballero andante verdadero, y no fantástico, viéndose tratar del mismo modo que él había leído se trataban los tales caballeros en los pasados siglos" (II.xxxi. 762).

His renewed optimism and the generous recognition of his chivalric identity by the Duke and Duchess enable him
to dispose of the ecclesiastic's churlish insults with an eloquent equanimity that earns him a cheer even from Sancho (II.xxxii.769-71).

The madman's star so far seems definitely on the rise. During a hunt, enchanters and demons appear bearing news of the way in which Dulcinea may be disenchanted (II.xxxiv-v). Merlin predicts that the disenchantment will come about when Sancho inflicts 3,300 lashes on himself. Sancho understandably declines such a distinction and even when Dulcinea herself appears he refuses to consent to this remedy. Finally, after much persuasion by Merlin, the Duke and the Duchess (Don Quixote has significantly remained silent in the background, presumably struck dumb with awe from the shock of having seen the purported Dulcinea) Sancho relents and his master bestows a thousand kisses on him in gratitude.

Nevertheless, this pageant and Merlin's prediction must be taken, in my view, as the absolute climax of Don Quixote's fortunes and the culmination of his development as a character. The aesthetic results, we shall see, are very ambivalent. Though it supplies Don Quixote with what he wants - a concrete remedy for Dulcinea's enchantment - the actual method of disenchantment confirms his dependence on Sancho. This humiliation is compounded later when Sancho is taken off to govern an island leaving his master behind in the castle empty-handed. At the high point of his career Don Quixote is robbed of the prize which must follow his reception to a great lord's castle according to the
anticipated pattern laid down by the books and recapitulated in his speech in Part I chapter xxi. With cruel irony, it is his ignoble squire who is undeservedly honoured. Don Quixote's fortunes have now been reversed and his external chivalric career, which had shown such promise of late, has not come to much at all.

Even though Merlin's prescription for the disenchantment of Dulcinea by Sancho has unquestionable comic value, its effect on the relationship between the two protagonists is radically disabling. In the first place, it robs Don Quixote of the one motivating force which had sustained him so well in Part II precisely by disengaging him from direct dependence on the vicissitudes of the episodic action. After Merlin's prophecy, the knight is forced to look outwards to a trivial mechanical solution to his problems, his ability to pursue his chivalric vision is seriously impaired, leaving him in a position of virtual impotence before the cruelties of the other characters. On the narrative plane, the ironic balance between the protagonists which the Montesinos Cave controversy had provided is gravely threatened. With the initiative now decisively on Sancho's side, his power to destroy Don Quixote has been fully restored. The knight can do little but wait until the squire consents to flagellate himself, but equally, Sancho can at any time refuse this absurd self-laceration and let the cat out of the bag about Dulcinea. There are few resources left by this stage in Don Quixote as a character to forestall or counteract
such a disastrous eventuality.

Not surprisingly, Cervantes separates the two companions at this juncture: Sancho is sent off to Barataria and Don Quixote remains at the palace. The narrative divides into a Sancho-strand and a Quixote-strand which are interlaced in alternate, self-contained chapters. But the bifurcation of the novel, due partly to the necessity of protecting Don Quixote's illusions from Sancho's ironic knowledge, obviously disrupts the course of their relationship and, given that this has so far been the only channel for the organic development of a "hence" narrative, occasions a relapse into the narrative practices of romance. The interweaving of chapters is itself a symptom of the external narrative structuring typical of romance; the action, especially at Barataria, becomes atomized and sequential; there is even a series of letters between the principal characters - Sancho, Don Quixote, the Duke, the Duchess and even Sancho's wife - reminiscent of that tiresome correspondence between Amadís and Lisuarte used by Montalvo in the Amadís Book IV to pad out his story and delay its unwieldy climax. Having parted his protagonists, Cervantes can proceed only by feeding Sancho with new adventures while keeping up interest in the deflated Don Quixote with well-tried techniques of direct mockery.

It is highly significant at this stage, namely at the beginning of chapter xliv, that Cervantes, for the first time in the entire novel, stands back from the act of narration to comment seriously upon the creative and aesthetic problems he has been facing during its compos-
ition. He writes that Cide Hamete laments having undertaken, "una historia tan seca y tan limitada como ésta de don Quijote, por parecerle que siempre habfa de hablar del y de Sancho, sin osar estenderse a otras digresiones y episodios más graves y más entretenidos; y decfa que el ir siempre atenido el entendimiento, la mano y la pluma a escribir de un solo sujeto y hablar por las bocas de pocas personas era un trabajo incomportable, cuyo fruto no redundaba en el de su autor, y que por huir deste inconveniente habfa usado en la primera parte del artificio de algunas novelas, como fueron las del Curioso impertinente y la del Capitán cautivo, que están como separadas de la historia, puesto que las demás que allí se cuentan son casos sucedidos al mismo don Quijote, que no podían dejar de escribirse" (II.xliv.848).

Many of the contemporary aesthetic problems about unity and variety, the difference between historical and poetic truth, or between verisimilitude and the marvellous, are touched on in this authorial aside, which demonstrates, I believe, that Cervantes was writing his novel with them in mind. The fact that he should have spoken out in these terms at this particular point in the novel can be adduced as textual evidence to support my analysis so far and to corroborate the hypothesis that not only did the originality of the narrative lie in the unravelling of the implications of the Don Quixote - Sancho Panza relationship, but also that this relationship had virtually exhausted itself by this stage.
Cervantes calls the story dry and limited specifically because he feels ("por parecerle") that he has to concentrate upon Don Quixote and Sancho Panza and he dare not (note the use of "osar") extend beyond these to other disgressions and episodes. Here, clearly, Cervantes expresses his intention of developing the relationship between the characters and avoiding as much external episodic patterning as possible. But the effort of concentrating his intelligence ("entendimiento") and artistic skill ("la mano y la pluma") on a single subject proves almost unbearable, since it requires speaking through only a handful of characters. This is especially unrewarding because the benefits of such labours may well not redound to the credit of the author. The passage is a rather piquant protest by Cervantes against the very effectiveness of those techniques of character-autonomy and authorial self-effacement which he has been pioneering in order to enhance the unity and plausibility of the narrative; the more successful these techniques become the more "independent" and "realistic" the characters will appear, with the dismaying result that his very skill will eclipse the writer's talent. The temptation the author faces then is to remind the reader of his artistic qualities, to lay bare the artfulness and ingenuity that go into creating narrative fiction. Cervantes confesses to having perhaps succumbed too readily to this tendency in Part I, with the interpolated tales. He implies that this "showing off" can only be taken so far because, if excessive, it will become self-defeating, it will detract from the coherence of the
main narrative. Therefore, even in Part I, he had to adhere to the discipline of presenting incidents as necessary and true by virtue of their relevance to Don Quixote's experience ("cosas sucedidas al mismo don Quijote, que no podían dejar de escribirse").

Cervantes goes on to say that in Part II he had tried to reinforce this principle of narrative unity and poetic truth by cutting down on digressions and other matters which did not spring naturally from the main action. Because of this tightened discipline, and the even greater unobtrusiveness of the author which it entails, he openly requests the reader not to underestimate his artistry, and asks that he should be praised not so much for what he has written but for his restraint in not having indulged his imagination and skills much more freely:

"Y así, en esta segunda parte no quiso ingerir novelas sueltas ni pegadizas, sino algunos episodios que lo pareciesen, nacidos de los mismos sucesos que la verdad ofrece, y aun éstos, limitadamente y con solas las palabras que bastan a declararlos; y pues se contiene y cierra en los estrechos límites de la narración, teniendo habilidad, suficiencia y entendimiento para tratar del universo todo, pide no se desprecie su trabajo, y se le den alabanzas, no por lo que escribe, sino por lo que ha dejado de escribir" (II.xliv.849).

This last statement contains a very important and revolutionary conception of the task of the creative writer which is radically opposed to contemporary ideas about the nature of artistic activity. Cervantes's professed dedication to self-restraint explicitly runs counter to Renaissance attitudes to artistic creativity where abundance and variety were signs of imaginative vigour and where the ability to encompass "the whole universe" in the microcosm of a work
of art was the supreme goal of the artist.\textsuperscript{41}

Such expansive and heroic aesthetic ideals lay behind attempts to revive the epic of Antiquity during the Renaissance, but even in the theories of Tasso and the neo-Aristotelians, the view that topical variety and a wide-ranging imagination were indispensable aesthetic values was a fundamental assumption. The criteria of unity and verisimilitude, as we have seen, were fairly elastic standards used to check tendencies to structural chaos or rein in the impulse to over-indulge in fantasy but they were not intended to limit the poet's ability to display his manifold skills nor hamper his freedom to traverse as wide and varied a terrain as his imagination and learning would allow.\textsuperscript{42} What is new here is Cervantes's avowed concern to find narrative unity and a form of poetic truth by deliberately restricting his creative scope to evolving a chain of relations between only a few characters, a chain whose linkages would be determined ultimately by a logic of relevance to the experience of the characters. There is more here than his familiar parodic lip-service to historical verisimilitude. A curious note of plaintiveness can be detected in his admission that this cleaving to the "truth" is often an uncomfortable struggle against recalcitrant material, a "trabajo incomportable" which is especially thankless for being necessarily so self-concealing. The passage represents a serious declaration of aesthetic purpose. It is Cervantes's most direct statement of his wish to attain to a form of creative objectivity and poetic truth, not by indulging his imagination in fantasy or allegory, but by submitting it to the wearying discipline of making the action internally coherent,
respecting the logic of his characters and trying to fashion an organic, inherently plausible narrative that would add up to more than the sum of the author's creative whims and fancies. This attitude of imaginative abnegation in the pursuit of objectivity and truth in fiction represents Cervantes's decisive advance, within the context of Renaissance narrative, towards the realism of the modern novel.

The authorial aside at the beginning of chapter xliv is the most forthright declaration in the Quixote of Cervantes's awareness of himself as a literary innovator contending with the aesthetic problems of his age. Nevertheless, it is a personal swan-song, in so far as it comes at the end of the narrative's evolution towards the plot-form of the modern novel. It may well owe its inclusion at all to Cervantes's realisation that, having arrived at an impasse, he would thenceforward be forced into a more arbitrary, external patterning of the narrative and a comparatively cruder handling of the characters. His apology would then cover not just the interpolated stories of Part I but also, as Martín de Riquer suggests in his editorial footnote (p.849), the coming episodes during which Don Quixote is separated from Sancho.

If Sancho eclipses Don Quixote as a generator of narrative interest after chapter xliv this is because there remains in him more potential for development as a character. Since their arrival at the ducal palace, the squire enjoys as much if not more of the limelight than his master. In Barataria, where Sancho takes the stage in his own right, Cervantes taps his comparatively greater reserves of vitality by employing
an ironic device similar to the mad/sane paradox he had previously used to develop Don Quixote's character. The split in Sancho between credulous bumpkin and cunning peasant is now exploited to surprise the reader: the foolish, deluded squire turns the tables on his deceivers by passing unexpectedly wise judgements on public affairs. Governor Sancho at Barataria exhibits qualities far superior to his previous performance; his governorship represents, as it were, a capital transfer of wit from bankrupt master to arriviste servant.43

By contrast, Cervantes's treatment of Don Quixote is indecisive. The knight's reduction to passivity allows only two, antithetical approaches to his character. With his chivalric career in suspension there remain the hints of his inner turmoil which could be emphasised to produce pathos. On the other hand, his helplessness could be presented as a consequence of his folly and remorselessly mocked. Cervantes vacillates between empathy and parody but understandably fails to achieve a synthesis of the two attitudes.

Almost immediately after Sancho's departure Don Quixote is inconsolably dispirited:

"Cuéntase, pues, que apenas se hubo partido Sancho, cuando don Quijote sintió su soledad; y si le fuera posible revocarle la comisión y quitarle el gobierno, lo hiciera. Conoció la duquesa su melancolía, y preguntóle que de qué estaba triste; que si era por la ausencia de Sancho, que escuderos y doncellas había en su casa, que le servirían muy a satisfacción de su deseo. - Verdad es, señora, mía - respondió don Quijote - , que siento la ausencia de Sancho; pero no es ésta la causa principal que me hace parecer que estoy triste, y de los muchos ofrecimientos que Vuestra Excelencia me hace solamente acepto y escojo el de la voluntad con que se me hacen, y en los demás, suplico a Vuestra Excelencia que dentro de mi aposento consienta y permita que yo solo sea el que me sirva" (II.xliv.850-1).
The main cause of Don Quixote's sadness is not his squire's absence, but by implication, the condition of his lady Dulcinea. His melancholy, reinforced by a wish to be alone, shows how Cervantes could have proceeded to cultivate the knight's reclusive interiority. The tendency towards compassion for Don Quixote's plight is further evinced in the lamentations over his laddered stockings, which become a token of material indigence and spiritual desolation (p.853). But the good knight's lamentations are taken up by Cide Hamete and soon undermined by parodic exaggeration (p.853). This increases with the appearance of Altisidora singing a burlesque serenade to the forlorn lover (p.856).

When our attention is next drawn to the troubled Don Quixote in chapter xlvi it is to witness a new humiliation at the hands of the Duke and Duchess. This time, however, it is intended as "una burla más risueña que dañosa" (p.866). The knight has asked for a lute to be delivered to his room and when night falls he sits by his window and sings a song reminding Altisidora of his loyalty to Dulcinea. The song itself invites sympathy for Don Quixote. It is significant that this song is coherently composed, with no sign of those internal, ironic lapses of taste which marred his earlier poem to Dulcinea in Part I.xxvi.

But towards the end of his song the languidly romantic atmosphere of music and love in a nocturnal garden is rudely interrupted by an infernal clanging of bells and a shower of cats dropped from the floor above. Several of the cats get into Don Quixote's room and the unfortunate hidalgo is severely scratched in the face. The outcome of
the "burla" exceeds even the Duke and Duchess's intentions:

"Los duques le dejaron sosegar, y se fueron, pesarosos del mal suceso de la burla; pero no creyeron que tan pesada y costosa le saliera a don Quijote aquella aventura, que le costó cinco días de encerramiento y de cama" (II.xlvi.869).

The Duke and Duchess's regrets over this practical joke turned sour reflect the ambivalence of Cervantes's attitude towards Don Quixote at this point. Much has been done to evoke the pathos of the character only to have it suddenly overwhelmed by renewed comic ferocity. It is as if Cervantes could not allow much rein to Don Quixote to reveal the more sober, suffering aspects of his situation without pulling him up short and castigating his chivalric madness. A new and ominous element has appeared for the first time in the whole of Part II; Don Quixote is subjected to the sort of physical brutality from which he had been spared since going up into the Sierra Morena in Part I, xxiii.

It will be remembered that the Sierra Morena episode had inaugurated a shift from sequential adventures to a more subtly modulated narrative form largely shaped by the dialogue and wit of the relationship between Don Quixote and Sancho. Now, only three chapters after the narrative bifurcation which paralyzes this central relationship, Cervantes again has recourse to physical knockabout as a laughter-raising expedient. Henceforward the knight's inner life will be increasingly masked from view as he once more becomes a mere figure of fun, a butt of cruelty and mockery.

Returning now to Sancho's governorship, it is
here that the novel receives an injection of new vigour as opposed to the recrudescence of Cervantes's direct parody of the mad knight. The unsuspected depths to Sancho's character uncovered in Barataria provoke renewed admiratio in the reader; the surprise of encountering a peasant who is able to govern wisely despite his lowly birth and deficient education. The powerful attraction of this paradox exercises a distinct pull away from the by now routine parody of Don Quixote at the Duke's castle. In his new rôle Sancho threatens to upstage his master and steal the show. This is as it should be, following the logic of their relationship; Sancho's superior ironic awareness has corroded the bases of Don Quixote's authority and allowed him an ascendancy over his master which he appears to be quite competent to maintain.

But, shortly after giving Sancho his head, Cervantes withdraws the privilege of power before the peasant governor is able to press his claims on the island any further. Had the squire been allowed to rule for much longer the whole emphasis of the novel would have critically shifted from an attack on romance literature to the much more sensitive and possibly subversive question of the fitness of peasants to govern. The literary attack on the influence of romance could have spilled over into a much less innocuous subversion of other more tangible forms of authority, with implications that Cervantes may not have wished to confront. The spectre of such a usurpation of power is raised but not actualized.
Sancho's governorship has, after all, issued from the matrix of Don Quixote's chivalric illusions; in spite of its political and social connotations, it is still woefully dependent upon the real power of the Duke.

However, the illusoriness of peasant's power does not diminish the authorial problem of relieving him of it. If he were to be driven from office, the question of his right to govern, no matter how controversial or even repugnant, would unavoidably be raised. Cervantes side-steps this difficulty by subjecting Sancho to a violent attack by unknown assailants in order to show up his military ineptitude and encourage him thereby to renounce his island of his own accord. Now this voluntary renunciation of power is hailed by the author as a further manifestation of the peasant's wisdom and humility in realising his true station in society (II.liii.925-8). Precisely because Sancho's departure from office is explicitly presented as a triumph of moral awareness, when it is compared to Don Quixote's wrong-headed persistence in chivalric delusion, this self-knowledge can only further enhance the squire's status as a more mature and authentic character. How can Cervantes, if he is to re-integrate his narrative, then reunite the protagonists without having a servant who not only has the knowledge to destroy his master's illusions but is alleged to be more fully in possession of his real capabilities to boot? There is no possibility of raising Don Quixote to the same degree of self-knowledge as Sancho other than by restoring him to sanity. Without this organic development of the knight's
character the author has little option but to intervene directly and impose a symbolic relegation of Sancho to his former subsidiary position in relation to his master.

Sancho's fall into the deep hole on his way back to join Don Quixote performs just such a narrative function (II.lv.). Whereas previously the novel has been conspicuously free from any pointedly symbolic or didactic intent, Sancho's fall, which parallels Don Quixote's hallucinatory descent into the Cave of Montesinos, reveals the hand of the author at work. As J.B. Avalle-Arce and E.C. Riley have remarked: "la aventura paralela de la caída de Sancho en la sima es quizá la única del libro que de la impresión - por lo menos una impresión tan fuerte - de haber sido introducida sólo por razones simbólicas. No es que el suceso sea imposible, sino que tiene aire de ser un acontecimiento fortuito que se justifica como símbolo de la caída de los grandes desde la cumbre de la Fortuna, como parangón con la cueva de Montesinos, y como modo de restablecer simbólicamente la dependencia que tiene Sancho de su amo - pues es don Quijote, que por casualidad anda de paseo, quien le saca de su apuro."46

But, paradoxically, this symbolic incident attests to the objective independence of the characters' relationship from Cervantes. In spite of this overt manipulation of the narrative Cervantes cannot reverse the process he had set in train at the fulling mills in Part I.xx when Sancho first deceived his master. Sancho has gradually won through to a fuller perception of the nature of his circum-
stances whereas Don Quixote is still awaiting the miraculous outcome of his servant's absurd self-flagellation. Only three chapters after Sancho's fall into the cave, the knight himself expresses his frustration. On coming across the images of the militant saints of the Church, Don Quixote reflects on the contrast between their successful, divine missions and his seemingly futile project to transform the world: "Ellos conquistaron el cielo a fuerza de brazos, porque el cielo padece fuerza, y yo hasta agora no sé lo que conquisto a fuerza de mis trabajos". Nevertheless he persists in his delusions and trusts that if Dulcinea could be disenchantied, his luck improve and his wits be sharpened," podrfa ser que encaminase mis pasos por mejor camino del que llevo". To this the knowing Sancho adds ironically: "Dios lo oiga y el pecado sea sordo" (II.lviii. 955). The objective relations between master and servant cannot be disguised for long. Sancho will in effect retain the upper hand so long as he enjoys an ironic awareness and a grasp of his real situation which are clearly superior to his master's.

In this latter part of the novel Cervantes is therefore faced with an aesthetic dilemma. Of the two protagonists, Sancho has become the richer and more interesting character whereas Don Quixote's potential for further development is all but spent. The logic of the relationship would dictate that Sancho prevail over his master's chivalric delusions and confront him with the bald facts of their situation, otherwise the partnership must be artificially maintained under the old dispensation in terms of the master's ostensible authority over the servant. Cervantes,
for reasons which we shall go into later, opts for this latter course. What I propose to demonstrate at this point is how these tensions between the objective and the merely formal narrative relations between the protagonists manifest themselves in the novel.

In the case of Sancho, Cervantes's efforts to contain his growing vitality vacillate between direct physical humiliation, such as that of the Sima episode, and the more subtle method of making the character meekly accept his subordinate position as a mark of his new-found wisdom and moral stature. As examples of the former, one can point to the recommendation that Sancho be pricked and beaten by the servants of the Duke's household as a way of restoring Altisidora to health (lxix.1036-8); or to the rather gratuitous drubbing Sancho receives on board the galley (lxiii.1001-2) where he is tossed from one end of the ship to the other in a more cruel version of the blanket-tossing he underwent in Part I.xvii.

As evidence of the alleged moral value of Sancho's acquiescence in his inferior social station, the expropriated governor tells the Morisco Ricote that all he has gained from his experience is: "el haber conocido que no soy bueno para gobernar sino es un hato de ganado" (II.1iv.934). Later, when he recounts his Sima experience to the Duke and Duchess he says that: "a no depararme el cielo a mi señor don Quijote, allí me quedara hasta la fin del mundo" (II.1v.942). The hand of Cervantes (disguised once again as the providence of "el cielo") has intervened to reinforce Sancho's conviction that he was divinely destined to be the knight's servant:
"Así que, mis señores duque y duquesa, aquí está vuestro gobernador Sancho Panza, que ha granjeado en sólo diez días que ha tenido el gobierno a conocer que no se le ha de dar nada por ser gobernador, no que de una isla, sino de todo el mundo; y con este presupuesto, besando a vuestras mercedes los pies, imitando al juego de los muchachos, que dicen "Salta tú, y dámela tú", doy un salto del gobierno, y me paso al servicio de mi señor don Quijote; que, en fin, en él, aunque como el pan con sobresalto, hámame, a lo menos; y para mí, como yo esté harto, eso me hace que sea de zanahorias que de perdices" (II.lv.942).

Similar sentiments are expressed to Don Antonio Moreno (II.lxii.989).

Nevertheless, not too long after these benign professions of humility and self-denial, Sancho begins unequivocally to reassert his will to power, as it were. The first questions he puts to the Enchanted Head are the following: "¿Por ventura, cabeza, tendré otro gobierno? ¿Saldré de la estrechez de escudero? ¿Volveré a ver a mi mujer y a mis hijos?" (II.lxii.995). A little later the narrator says that, Sancho, "aunque aborrece el ser gobernador, como queda dicho, todavía deseaba volver a mandar y a ser obedecido; que esta mala ventura trae consigo el mando, aunque sea de burlas" (II.lxiii.1001). Sancho even dares to usurp Don Quixote's authority when they are asked by two labourers to settle a dispute: "Y a mí, que ha pocos días que salí de ser gobernador, y juez, como todo el mundo sabe, toca averiguar estas dudas y dar parecer en todo pleito" (II.lxvi.1020). Significantly, Don Quixote here is too troubled to bother with the labourers' problems: "Responde en buen hora ... Sancho amigo; que yo no estoy para dar migas a un gato, según traigo alborotado y trastornado el juicio."

The two labourers, whose dispute Sancho cleverly resolves,
refer to both master and servant as "señores", and are particularly struck by the servant's "discreción":
"Yo apostaré que si van a estudiar a Salamanca, que a un tris han de venir a ser alcaldes de corte; que todo es burla, sino estudiar y más estudiar, y tener favor y ventura; y cuando menos se piensa el hombre, se halla con una vara en la mano o con una mitra en la cabeza" (II.lxvi.1021).

Sancho, once more, is regarded as possessing the necessary qualities for political authority and leadership. It is as if Cervantes had found it necessary to fall back and capitalize on Sancho's recently discovered qualities and had virtually given up on the mad knight as a source of wit and comic energy.

In fact Cervantes, in spite of some attempts to curtail Sancho's assertiveness, does allow himself to hint at the actual shift in literary interest and imaginative resources from master to servant without altogether upsetting the formal balance of their relationship. It is interesting to look at this tension more closely as it manifests itself in the text. One of the signs of Sancho's independence of Don Quixote's authority is the condescension with which he begins to treat his master, as when he exclaims to the maidens of the counterfeit Arcadia that nobody could tell that his master was a madman after hearing him speak so wisely. Don Quixote is insulted: "¿Quién te mete a ti en mis cosas, y en averiguar si soy discreto o majadero? Calla y no me repliques, sino ensilla, si está desensillado Rocinante" (II.lviii.961). The new relations become more
evident as soon as the knight attempts to consolidate his crumbling authority over his squire. It quickly disintegrates when he threatens to beat Sancho with his own hands in order to hasten the disenchantment of Dulcinea. Sancho jumps on his master, wrestles him to the ground, and places his foot on his chest. Don Quixote exclaims: "¿Cómo, traidor? ¿Contra tu amo y señor natural te desmandas? ¿Con quién te da tu pan te atreves?" This is the one occasion in the novel where Sancho brings into the open the real nature of his dealings with the knight, established as long ago as the fulling mills episode. As in that earlier episode Don Quixote talks of his being Sancho's "amo y señor natural" but Sancho now does not bother even to disguise his feelings with irony. He plainly states: "Niquito rey, ni pongo rey... sino ayúdome a mí, que soy mi señor" (II.1x.972-3).

After this crystal-clear assertion of the sovereignty of his individual will, Sancho begins covertly but unequivocally to extricate himself from the trammels of Don Quixote's chivalric lunacy. It is possible to plot the emergence of a curt, ironical indifference on Sancho's part to the persistent preoccupations of his deluded master. However, before proceeding with our examination, it is necessary to mention Madariaga's account of the "quixotification" and "rise" of Sancho in relation to the knight. Madariaga's interpretation of this phenomenon is, I believe, in part erroneous and in part incomplete. Sancho is said to
become "quixotified" because, in addition to his "concrete illusion" to govern an island, the hitherto materialistic squire "va poco a poco sintiendo el sueñuelo de satisfacciones menos materiales" (p.168), especially as regards his pride in having become a literary hero on the success of Part I. In the course of Part II, says Madariaga, Sancho feels himself increasingly to be the equal of Don Quixote. Cervantes reveals the squire's vanity and self-importance "aligerando el peso de su alma positiva con algo del espíritu quimérico que mueve a la de su señor" (p.173). Thus, according to Madariaga, the fortunes of master and servant are neatly inter-crossed; the squire's ascent from "reality" to "illusion" intersects the knight's descent from "illusion" to "reality" (p.176).

Now I have already demonstrated in Chapter 3 that Don Quixote does not descend from illusion to reality at all, instead he remains hopelessly absorbed in his chivalric obsession. Similarly, I wish now to show that Sancho does not succumb to illusion, much less to any illusion which resembles his master's and might therefore deserve the term "quixotic". It is exactly the reverse. Sancho's ironic dismissal of his master's ideas becomes so decisive that towards the end he reveals himself to be more emphatically realistic and self-interested than ever before. As far as Madariaga's explanation of Sancho's rising confidence is concerned, it is based largely on the belief that Sancho feels great self-importance when charged by Merlin with the disenchantment of Dulcinea, and when he is obliged to "resurrect" Altisidora. As we shall see, in
neither of these cases is Sancho taken in, his "ascent" is based on far more concrete and utterly realistic reasons than mere vanity or literary self-congratulation.

I would identify four phases in Sancho's dissociation from Don Quixote's lunatic concerns after the latter's defeat at the hands of the Caballero de la Blanca Luna, pace Madariaga's opinion that "el detalle y modo de esta derrota no tienen especial importancia" (p.231). In the first phase, Cervantes vacillates between depicting Sancho in the usual way as susceptible still to Don Quixote's chivalric promises, or revealing him, on the other hand, as clear-sighted about the madness:

"Sancho, todo triste, todo apesarado, no sabía qué decirse ni qué hacerse: parecía que todo aquel suceso pasaba en sueños y que todo aquella máquina era cosa de encantamiento. Veía a su señor rendido y obligado a no tomar armas en un año; imaginaba la luz de la gloria de sus hazañas escurecida, las esperanzas de sus nuevas promesas deshechas como se deshace el humo con el viento" (II.lxiv.1013).

To this extent Sancho appears to be gullible, but the passage continues: "Temía si quedaría o no contredo Rocinante, o deslocado su amo; que no fuera poca Ventura si deslocado quedara" (my emphasis). After Don Quixote has spent six days in bed repining at his defeat, Sancho urges him to go back to their home village "y dejémonos de andar buscando aventuras por tierras y lugares que no sabemos" (II.lxv.1015). In order to encourage his master in this direction he now pretends that it is he, the squire, who has lost most from the débacle since his hopes of becoming a count were conditional upon his master becoming a king, "y así vienen a volverse en humo mis esperanzas." The rather grandiloquent
ring of this last phrase (which significantly replicates the narrator's comment quoted above), added to Sancho's deference to his master's regal ambitions, smack of tongue-in-cheek indulgence of the mad knight's fantasies. Yet Don Quixote takes Sancho seriously by declaring that in a year he will return to his adventuring and conquer a kingdom. Sancho now resorts to ironic agreement not so much to hide his true feelings as to spare his master's: "Dios lo oiga... y el pecado sea sordo, que siempre he oído decir que más vale buena esperanza que ruin posesión" (II.lxv.1015-6). Sancho's disaffection from Don Quixote's ambitions is revealed more directly when the knight, after being told of the arrival of Don Gregorio, expresses a wish that he might have been fit enough to cross over to Barbary to liberate Gregorio and all other Christian captives single-handed. Sancho replies: "Déjese deso, señor... viva la gallina, aunque con su pepita; que hoy por ti y mañana por mí; y en estas cosas de encuentros y porrazos no hay tomarles tiento alguno, pues el que hoy cae puede levantarse mañana, si no es que se quiera estar en la cama; quiero decir que se deje desmayar, sin cobrar nuevos bríos para nuevas pendencias" (II.lxv.1016).

The next phase is marked by the beginning of the journey homewards. Having already shown his lack of interest in further chivalric adventures, Sancho now becomes dismissive and even cynical about other important aspects of the knight's madness. Successively in this phase, we shall witness him dissociating himself from the notion of enchantment, from the utopian farce of pastoral, from Don Quixote's pedagogical pretensions, and from the rhetoric and conventions of courtly love-service.

When they encounter the lackey Tosilos who brings a
missive from the Duke, Don Quixote refuses to believe that it is the same person who he assumed had been allowed to marry the duenna Rodríguez's daughter in chapter lvi. He rationalizes this anomaly, as one would expect, by calling it an enchantment. Sancho will have none of that and insists that the messenger really is Tosilos. Adding insult to injury, the squire has the gall to accept the lackey's offer of food and drink. Sancho, moreover, readily agrees with Tosilos that the knight is mad: "Bien lo veo yo, y bien se lo digo a él; pero ¿qué aprovecha? Y más agora que va rematado, porque va vencido del Caballero de la Blanca Luna" (II.lxvi. 1023). He has not, in fact, confronted Don Quixote openly about the madness but he tells Tosilos otherwise presumably to excuse himself for the embarrassment of continuing to serve an obvious lunatic. It is interesting to note in passing that, according to Sancho, Don Quixote is madder than ever after his defeat. As further evidence of the squire's rejection of the notion of enchantment, he replies to Don Quixote's request that he start whipping himself: "Señor ... si va a decir la verdad, yo no me puedo persuadir que los azotes de mis posaderas tengan que ver con los desencantos de los encantados, que es como si dijésemos: 'Si os duele la cabeza, untaos las rodillas'" (II.xlvii.1024).

A little later Don Quixote begins to entertain ideas about creating a pastoral idyll. Sancho humours him in this but is not above a touch of malice when he suggests that Sansón Carrasco and the barber might wish to become shepherds too, "y aun quiera Dios no le venga en voluntad al
cura de entrar también en el aprisco, según es de alegre y amigo de holgarse" (II.lxvii.1025). But the knight is impervious to Sancho's raillery and continues enthusiastically to extol the delights of pastoral. The squire plays his master along with growing relish yet it takes just one ironic remark to puncture the illusoriness of the idyllic dream: Sancho voices the fear that his pretty daughter Sanchica might fall prey to the base desires of the other shepherds - "no querría que fuese por lana y volviese trasquilada" - and, following this piquant popular saying, he unleashes a string of other proverbs until Don Quixote has to ask him to desist. In reply Sancho impudently points out that the knight often resorts to proverbs himself and should not therefore be calling the kettle black (II.lxvii.1027-8). In the very next chapter Sancho is again to be found challenging his master's right to castigate him for his use of proverbs. Don Quixote rather patronisingly congratulates Sancho for a well-turned speech and adds: "por donde vengo a conocer ser verdad el refrán que tú algunas veces sueles decir: 'No con quien naces sino con quien paces'" (II.lxviii.1030). But this attempt of Don Quixote's to take the credit for Sancho's eloquence is firmly rejected by the squire: "¿Ah, pesía tal ... señor nuestro amo! No soy yo ahora el que ensarta refranes."

Following this, the pair are trampled by a herd of pigs while asleep. Sancho reacts angrily and asks his master for his sword to avenge himself by killing some of the beasts. Don Quixote instead launches into a lament: "Déjalos estar, amigo; que esta afrenta es pena de mi pecado, y justo castigo del cielo es que a un caballero
andante vencido le coman adivas, y le piquen avispas y le hollen puercos" (II.lxviii.1031). Sancho replies sardonically: "También debe de ser castigo del cielo que a los escuderos de los caballeros vencidos los puntenc moscas, los coman piojos y les embista la hambre." Thus is Don Quixote's pious chivalric claptrap about "el cielo" angrily deflated by Sancho's hard-headed cynicism, to which is added an outright rejection of any sense of shared fate between knight and squire: "p ero ¿ qué tienen que ver los Panzas con los Quijotes?" By way of consolation Don Quixote proposes to vent his sorrows in a madrigal. Sancho is unyielding: "A mí me parece... que los pensamientos que dan lugar a hacer coplas no deben de ser muchos. Vuesa merced coplee cuanto quisiere, que yo dormiré cuanto pudiere". The knight proceeds regardless to sing a song of love and weep over Dulcinea, but his squire has already cruelly exposed the amorous plaint for the arbitrary, mannered convention it is.

Sancho's rejection of the forms of chivalry and courtly love is also evident in his reaction to Altisidora's renewed mockery of Don Quixote. When the damsel spitefully taunts the knight for having believed that she could truly have died of unrequited love for him, Sancho remarks: "Eso creo yo muy bien... que esto del morirse los enamorados es cosa de risa: bien lo pueden ellos decir; pero hacer, créalo Judas" (II.lxx.1044). And when Altisidora leaves the room after having insulted Don Quixote yet again, Sancho calls after her: "Mándote yo... pobre doncella, mándote, digo, mala ventura, pues las has habido con un alma de
esparto y con un corazón de encina. ¡A fee que si las hubieras conmigo, que otro gallo te cantara!" (II.lxx.1046). In other words, Sancho is making it quite clear that, not being mad like his master, he would not himself stand for any courtly love nonsense from Altisidora.

In the third phase the squire, having now expressed his utter indifference to Don Quixote's chivalric concerns in a variety of small but maliciously telling ways, begins to turn his master's perverse obstinacy in delusion to his own material advantage. It starts with Sancho resenting the fact that he had been unable to extract the six shirts promised him by Altisidora for having "resurrected" her. He protests to his master: "no quiero creer que me haya dado el cielo la virtud que tengo para que yo la comunique con otros de bóbilis bóbilis" (II.lxxi.1047). Don Quixote then offers to pay Sancho if he whips himself for the sake of Dulcinea: "A cuyos ofrecimientos abrió Sancho los ojos y las orejas de un palmo y dio consentimiento en su corazón a azotarse de buena gana" (my emphasis). Having settled a price to his taste, he consents and remarks: "entraré en mi casa rico y contento, aunque bien azotado" (p.1048). 49

Sancho begins by flagellating himself but soon enough "el socarrón dejó de dárselos en las espaldas, y daba en los árboles, con unos suspiros de cuando en cuanto, que parecía que con cada uno dellos se le arrancaba el alma" (p.1049). The squire's cynicism and duplicity is barely restrained; even when Don Quixote takes pity on him he is still capable of exploiting the knight's generous
nature by asking him for his cloak to cover himself, or by replying with knowing ambivalence when the solicitous Don Quixote asks him whether he prefers to flog himself in the inn or in the open air: "Pardiez, señor... que para lo que yo pienso darme, eso se me da en casa que en el campo; pero con todo eso, querría que fuese entre árboles, que parecen que me acompañan y me ayudan a llevar mi trabajo maravillosamente" (p.1051). The squire is, moreover, quite prepared to milk his master for all he is worth, for when Don Quixote suggests he leave off lashing himself until they get back to their village Sancho insists that he would like to get it over with as soon as possible, a bird in the hand being, after all, worth two in the bush ("el pájaro en la mano que el buitre volando", p.1051).

The fourth and final phase is that which follows the completion of the number of lashes prescribed by Merlin. Now Sancho has become thoroughly self-satisfied and openly patronizing to his master. When they reach their village he falls to his knees and intones a mock panegyric to the returning heroes: "Abre los ojos deseada patria, y mira que vuelve a ti Sancho Panza tu hijo, si no muy rico, muy bien azotado. Abre los brazos y recibe también tu hijo don Quijote, que si viene vencido de los brazos ajenos viene vencedor de sí mismo" (p.1056). Since Sancho, of course, has not been whipping himself, his parallel praise of Don Quixote's conquest of his own nature ("vencedor de sí mismo") is inevitably charged with irony. Don Quixote senses this and replies: "Déjate desas sandeces".
As they enter the village, Don Quixote is overcome with foreboding at the bad auguries he sees around him but Sancho assumes control of the situation, and, as E.C. Riley has recently demonstrated, takes it upon himself to break the spell of the omens: "He aquí, señor, rompidos y desbaratados estos agüeros" (II.lxxiii.1058). Finally, his first words to his wife are: "Dineros traigo, que es lo que importa, ganados por mi industria, y sin daño de nadie" (p.1059). This last phrase betrays, if not exactly callousness, at least a gross insensitivity to Don Quixote's feelings. Even when his former master is on his deathbed, Sancho, quite disregarding his master's new-found sanity, tries patronizingly, if rather indecorously, to encourage the old hidalgo to take up the absurd search for Dulcinea once again: "quizá tras de alguna mata hallaremos a la señora doña Dulcinea desencantada, que no haya más que ver" (II.lxxiv.1065).

Don Quixote, for his part, shows signs of grudgingly recognizing his own loss of authority over his squire. When, on their way out of Barcelona, they pass the spot where his defeat took place, Don Quixote laments his fate. Sancho consoles him by self-righteously offering his master the moral lessons derived from his own recent experience as governor: "Tan de valientes corazones es, señor mío, tener sufrimiento en las desgracias como alegría en las prosperidades; y esto lo juzgo por mí mismo, que si cuando era gobernador estaba alegre, agora que soy escudero de a pie, no estoy triste" (II.lxvi.1018-9). Don Quixote is surprised by the wisdom of this advice ("no sé quién te lo enseña"), and proceeds to refer to himself disparagingly as an "escudero
pedestre", and to his squire as "amigo Sancho".

Surprisingly, Don Quixote now finds himself having to remind Sancho of his formal position as a servant. When trying to persuade him to flog himself the knight urges his squire to recall "la obligación que te corre de ayudar a mi señora, que lo es tuya, pues tu eres mío" (II.lxvii.1025). But a moment later, as they discuss plans for their pastoral idyll, he again refers to him as "Sancho amigo" (p.1026).

Next morning he is once more to be found reminding Sancho of his duties and abjectly pleading with him to disenchant Dulcinea: "De buenos criados es conllevar las penas de sus señores y sentir sus sentimientos, por el bien parecer siquiera... Levántate, por tu vida, y desviate algún trecho de aquí, y con buen ánimo y denuedo agradecido date trescientos o cuatrocientos azotes a buena cuenta de los del desencanto de Dulcinea; y esto rogando te lo suplico; que no quiero venir contigo a los brazos como la otra vez, porque sé que los tienes pesados" (II.lxviii.1029; my emphases). Sancho refuses to comply with his master's request and so, on the next occasion, Don Quixote stoops to offering him money for this supreme favour (II.lxxi.1047). The ambitious Sancho eagerly responds to this financial inducement, for which kindness Don Quixote is heartily grateful:"¡Oh Sancho bendito! ¡Oh Sancho amable... y cuán obligados hemos de quedar Dulcinea y yo a servirte todos los días que el cielo nos diere de vida!" (p.1048).

The wheel has indeed turned full circle when we find Don Quixote, in his despair, offering to place himself
and Dulcinea at the service of Sancho for the rest of his days. The squire now holds all the cards and Don Quixote's mission to restore the world of chivalry has come to depend utterly on the good grace and ironic tolerance of his servant.

The knight's waning self-assurance is not, as so many critics have argued, a sign of increasing sanity but largely a function of Sancho's burgeoning confidence. If Cervantes' difficulty with Sancho is to check his capacity to steal the limelight from his master, his problem with Don Quixote, conversely, is to prevent him from becoming tedious. Again one can detect a certain vacillation in the treatment of the knight. In so far as he is still mad he must remain a figure of fun, but the parody of Don Quixote has reached its limit. His absurd madness has by now been thoroughly attacked from every conceivable angle and direction. To compensate for this exhaustion of chivalric parody, Cervantes intermittently resorts to the paradox of the mad knight's flashes of wisdom (li.910-2; lviii.953-7; lxii.998-9) and to reminders of his inner life (lix.963-4; lx.972; lxi.1000; lxv.1015; lxvii.1023; lxx.1039; lxxi.1046). Yet neither of these strategies is developed sufficiently to counterbalance Sancho's new interest as a character in his own right, and with good reason, for such a development would require some fundamental modification of the nature of the knight's madness and this, I will argue presently, is, in principle, an impossibility.

Since Don Quixote, after Merlin's prophecy, remains frozen in his attitudes, the relationship between the
protagonists cannot make any significant progress and the narrative consequently declines into diffuse heterogeneous episodes, characterized by repetitive devices, padding, and scenes of unnecessary cruelty to the madman.

The episode of the counterfeit Arcadia serves very little purpose other than to introduce the horribly brutal and gratuitous trampling of the chivalrous old gentleman by a herd of bulls. Don Quixote's snap decision to visit Barcelona instead of Zaragoza is not so much testimony to the character's autonomy as to his master's capricious jibe at the plagiarist Avellaneda.

As it turns out, the journey to Barcelona and the sojourn there do not seem to have much point. Mostly the narrative is filled out with the adventures of Roque Guinart, Claudia Gerónima and Ana Félix. Don Quixote and Sancho Panza are received by Don Antonio Moreno into his house much as Don Diego de Miranda had done earlier. But unlike Don Diego de Miranda, Moreno emulates the Duke in choosing to play tricks on the mad knight. These are either appallingly childish, such as pinning a notice of his identity on Don Quixote's back so as to invite the populace to jeer at the bewildered knight in the street, or, as in the case of the Enchanted Head, clearly modelled on Maese Pedro's divining monkey.

Don Quixote's sojourn at Barcelona is otherwise occupied with sightseeing. He visits a printing-press and is taken on a trip aboard a galley where he witnesses the dénouement of Ana Félix's story. As Martín de Riquer has observed, the knight's participation in the action markedly
decreases in Barcelona. Rather than seeing this with Riquer as a sign of his increasing sanity I would say that Don Quixote's passivity is due to the fact that with the Don Quixote - Sancho relationship more or less at a standstill, there is little Cervantes can do with the knight which he has not already tried before. The only remaining adventure which could break the deadlock is the one Cervantes has been putting off: the knight's final and inescapable confrontation with the crisis of his chivalric identity.

The time has clearly come to wind up the novel. Cervantes handles this ingeniously with a beautifully timed ironic recurrence. Sansón Carrasco again appears, disguised as the Caballero de la Blanca Luna and defeats Don Quixote in a chivalric duel. As a penalty for his defeat, the mad knight is made to promise to return home and give up arms for a year. There is an impressive narrative economy in this device - it performs the indispensable function of compelling Don Quixote to return to his village. But because it also observes the conventions of chivalric practice to the letter, the knight is spared the trauma of a sudden and total collapse of his illusions. Even in defeat Don Quixote refuses to renounce the primacy of Dulcinea's beauty in the world:

"Don Quijote, molido y aturdido, sin alzarse la visera, como si hablara dentro de una tumba, con voz debilitada y enferma dijo:- Dulcinea del Toboso es la más hermosa mujer del mundo, y yo el más desdichado caballero de la tierra, y no es bien que mi flaqueza defraude esta verdad. Aprieta, caballero, la lanza, y quítame la vida, pues me has quitado la honra" (II.lxiv.1012).
The knight's loyalty to his lady is captured in a descriptive detail whose poignancy transforms it into a poetic emblem of his long and troubled passion: the prostrate knight speaks without raising his visor, his words rise from within his shuttered helmet as from the depths of a tomb. The image elegantly captures the tragic blindness of his chivalric vision, which remains stubbornly impervious to the claims of a degraded reality even in the face of death itself.

The poetic force released by this image once again illustrates the creative dilemma Cervantes has been facing. Don Quixote's potential nobility and pathos as a character reside in his unswerving commitment to Dulcinea and to the chivalric reformation of the world. For all that, his vision is intrinsically absurd, and a point has been reached, furthermore, where it could be easily destroyed. If this were to occur, Don Quixote would be unable to survive the destruction and retain his interest and dignity as a character. But alternatively, if the action were to be further prolonged there would arise a glaring disproportion between the increasing triteness of the surface incidents and the latent tragic grandeur of the knight.

It comes therefore as no surprise that the journey home is again full of weary devices and remodelling of former incidents. Tosilos reappears (II.lxvi.1022), and reveals that he has after all been punished, a result which parallels the fate of the boy Andrés (I.iv.). Don Quixote is again needlessly unhorsed and trampled, this time by pigs (II.lxviii. 1031-2). There is another interlude at the Duke's castle the sole point of which is to parody the already ridiculous remedy for breaking the spell on Dulcinea. Now it is the
counterfeit damsel Altisidora who must be restored to health by the pinching and pricking of the luckless Sancho (lxix.1036), presumably, as both in the Sima episode and his rough handling on the galley, in order to downgrade the squire even further. In the next chapter (II.1xx), Don Quixote is made to repulse the importunate advances of Altisidora yet again, thus reiterating his earlier rebuff in chapter xlv, and bringing to mind his rejection of Maritornes in the early stage of Part I. Finally, when they encounter Don Alvaro Tarfe at the inn (II.lxxii), the sheer illusionistic absurdity of the meeting strips away the remaining vestiges of their credibility as independent characters and unmasks them clearly as pawns in their master's literary attack on an irritating rival.

It is only as Don Quixote approaches his native village and concentrates once more on the vexed problem of Dulcinea that his inward suffering, from which we have been distracted by the recent episodic effervescence of the narrative, is allowed to rise to the surface once again. Sancho has completed the prescribed number of beatings and Don Quixote scrutinizes every woman on the road to see if she might be the transfigured Dulcinea. On their way towards the village, he touchingly seizes on random signs of ill-omen. As the terrible truth gradually insinuates itself upon him, his composure begins to crack: "Malum signum! Malum signum! Libre huye; galgos la siguen; Dulcinea no parece!" (II.lxxiii.1057). The fractured syntax and mesmerized repetition breach Don Quixote's stoic chivalric dignity and
allow us to perceive once again certain traces of inward suffering. The character fleetingly regains some of his suggestive complexity, like an ember achieving a final burst of incandescence before its definitive extinction.

The actual transition to sanity, however, comes by way of a mysterious illness which affords only a brief interval of lucidity before death. The madness passes as suddenly and as inexplicably as it had first struck, leaving Don Quixote's critical passage to self-knowledge tersely unexamined. The reader, for his part, is denied that final insight into the well-springs of the knight's behaviour which seemed to have been promised him all along by the mad/sane paradox. Lacking the possibility of fuller understanding of the character of Don Quixote, one is left with an enigmatic, tantalizing figure, who remains mad until his deathbed but who displays astonishing wisdom, nobility and even canniness in the unfolding of his strange enterprise.

In this respect Cervantes has not created the sort of character that could be expected of a Realist or psychological novel; there is very little scope for the reader to speculate with any degree of certainty or profundity on the interior life of Don Quixote. The mad/sane paradox and the phenomenon of the character's introversion encourage in the reader an expectation of a more satisfying account of Don Quixote's madness than the, by now, jejune reason that he believed in the literal truth of the romances. By the middle of Part II Don Quixote has undergone too much suffering and shown far too many signs of intelligence and wit for that
initial reason to remain convincing. Yet Cervantes seems unable to transcend the basis of the madness by allowing the knight's sufferings to bring him to greater awareness of self. Don Quixote's character remains blocked at the mad/sane paradox and thereafter begins to wither on the vine. An explanation for the impossibility of the knight's evolution towards self-knowledge can be had in the very nature of the madness itself. The only way to sanity is for the knight to perceive his basic intellectual mistake of believing in the literal truth of the romances. But any incident, however trivial, which allowed him to realise this fundamental error would immediately bring him to his senses in a flash. There can be no half-measures or piece-meal self-discovery. After all, either Don Quixote believes in the romances, in which case he is mad, or he does not, in which case he is sane. Moreover, since all the poetic vitality and tragic resonance of Don Quixote has been achieved through his heroic, long-suffering dedication to his mad chivalric dreams, the unavoidably sudden reversion to sanity could only spell his annihilation as a character. For Don Quixote sanity and death are two sides of the same coin. Cervantes could only have opted between persisting with elaborate efforts to keep up the chivalric illusion or permitting a sudden insight which would bring down the whole house of cards.

Now this dilemma, which produces the impasse in chapter xliiv, arises inescapably from the very origins of Don Quixote's narrative existence. Initially Don Quixote
is an invention of seemingly limited potential: a thinly-sketched anti-type created specifically to parody the knight errant of the romances. His madness, consequently, is merely a literary convenience with absolutely no psychological or emotional implications beyond Cervantes's wish to ridicule the purely logical confusion implicit in the fictional romances' loud protestations of historical authenticity. However, for narrative reasons the character is elaborated by Cervantes in the manner I have described above as he enters into a curious ironic liaison with Sancho. In order to sustain that relationship beyond the reader's commonsensical expectations, the mad/sane paradox comes into being: Don Quixote is capable of surprising us by his occasional intervals of wit and wisdom. By the beginning of Part II he seems to have further acquired the capacity to suffer privately in some inaccessible area of his soul. This illusion of inferiority creates an additional complication of the narrative which can in turn only be enriched by admitting the reader more deeply into the implied complex of motives beneath his "mad" activity on the surface. But at precisely this point it becomes impossible to proceed any further because a vitiating contradiction reveals itself: since Don Quixote is born as the fictional embodiment of an abstract literary purpose, his madness is quite impersonal and totally arbitrary, originating in Cervantes's decision to satirize the absurdities of chivalric romance. But the more the character becomes independent from the author, the more the reader's
interest focuses on him in his own right, and all the more will the madness appear to spring from some inner psychological source specific to his identity and experience. It is this contradiction between the author's general satirical intentions against the romances of chivalry and the gradual emergence of his character's uniquely individual personality which finally leads to an insurmountable narrative deadlock.

In the final analysis, the madness which provided Cervantes with the means to transcend not only romance narrative but also some of the aesthetic problems of his time prevents him from carrying his character beyond the threshold of psychological realism. The madness continually and arbitrarily short-circuits any sustained, intelligible relations between Don Quixote and the real world: he is impelled towards it by his transforming zeal but repeatedly draws back and insulates himself from possible alterations to his chivalric subjectivism that might result from such contact. Although inevitable, this ironic to-ing and fro-ing frustrates the development of a consistently reflective consciousness in the character.

Nevertheless Cervantes turns the hermetic madness to best account precisely by exploiting its unyielding, timeless intensity in order to isolate certain themes from their immediate contemporary setting and intimate their consequences in the long term. Even though his array of ironic devices to prolong the madness has been effectively exhausted by the end of chapter xliiv, Cervantes is still able to draw the fullest consequences from the sophisticatedly
ironic narrative machine he has put together. In the Duke's castle, the relationship between Don Quixote and Sancho Panza, which holds the life-blood of the novel, at last arrives at its logical climax. Within the bounds of their eccentric relationship, each character attains to a decisive destiny. Sancho has gained his promised island while the knight becomes abjectly dependent on his squire for a release from the dead-end in which he languishes. This overturning of their positions is the ultimate and most damaging travesty of chivalric romance. What is, in its premises, an aristocratic mode of literature, incarnate in Don Quixote, has suffered a rude democratisation at the hands of the peasant Sancho whose bad faith, duplicity and ironic vigour - all of them, as we have seen, traditional enemies of the romance hero - have succeeded in bringing low the heroic ideals of the knight errant.

This parodic democratisation of the aristocratic world of chivalry has been accomplished through a strategy of irony which undermines the knight's pretensions ultimately to derive temporal authority from a divine source. The ethical certainties and absolute values of the chivalric code are corroded, human relations deprived of incontrovertible rules by which to resolve differences or frame reliable moral judgements, and the romance world variously exposed to the depredations of concealed motives, veiled self-interest and ironic scheming. However, Don Quixote and Sancho have been living in a world which is merely tolerated and unquestionably
artificial, hedged in, as it is, by madness. Their reversed destines are valid only within those confines but otherwise they are totally illusory given that their careers have been a hollow sham with no apparent impact on the true state of affairs.

For Cervantes to have validated Sancho's subversion of Don Quixote's aristocratic authority or actualized his usurpation of the Duke's rule in Barataria would have amounted to a falsification of contemporary historical possibilities: the reader is never left in any doubt as to the reality of the Duke's power. But the madness, nonetheless, is a refracting medium, a sort of prism which deflects direct perception of historical reality and produces an oddly-angled but prophetic vision of more far-reaching truths.

(iii) The objective development of character and the achievement of poetic truth.

Of the myriad ironies generated by the interaction of Don Quixote's improbable chivalric madness with everyday reality, the greatest lies in Cervantes's use of this interaction to create an autonomous fictional organism through which his imagination could discover and express truths that transcended the bounds of the strictly historical circumstances of his time. For by means of the knight's artificially intense lunacy one can make out, as through a telescope, the coming demise of the spiritual optimism of the Middle Ages and the advent of the modern predicaments of moral authority and individual consciousness. The madman's
relations with Sancho, even though they largely ebb and flow around intrinsically absurd issues such as the existence of Dulcinea, describe nonetheless a process in which authority based upon spiritual and moral foundations is eroded by the material interests of individuals. Furthermore, Don Quixote's enterprise - his quest for a new identity and a self-willed destiny, his struggle to assert personal ideals and values in the teeth of collective scepticism or empirical objections, his desire to master his circumstances and change the world - may be altogether risible and indeed reactionary in actual content, but it anticipates the functional patterns of experience of a modern literary hero. In other words, Don Quixote's mad dream of absolute ideals is totally absurd and posited on calamitously erroneous assumptions; there is no doubt that Cervantes thoroughly satirizes this attempt to put the clock back to an utopian Golden Age. But on the other hand, it is, to say the least, unlikely that Cervantes himself, as a devout Counter-Reformation Catholic, would have viewed the world in wholly relativist or ironically perspectivist terms. How then could he have eschewed an orthodox, didactic account of Christian experience to create a hero whose problems strike one as being so archetypally modern?

This question, which has bedevilled Cervantine criticism and produced such diverse speculation on Cervantes's political and religious beliefs, must be answered, I believe, not by reconstructing Cervante's actual ideology from his fiction - an ultimately futile task - but by examining as best one can the imaginative logic of character and action in the
novel itself. In my view, an answer can be found in Cervantes's handling of Don Quixote's madness. As I have been consistently arguing, the real aesthetic originality of the Quixote consists in the narrative wit with which Cervantes sustains and prolongs the knight's madness to the very end in defiance of his reader's expectations. This narrative priority produces a new form of admiratio, but it also triggers an objective dynamic of development which carries, not only the reader, but the author himself along an uncharted trajectory: from the single parodic figure of the knight to the anomalous interacting couple of protagonists, followed by the emergence of irony in the squire, which in turn invites the countervailing intervals of wisdom in the master, and gradually, through the complication of their ironic relations, produces the enchantment of Dulcinea, the resultant introverted suffering of the madman, and the corresponding rise in confidence of his servant. The end-result of this process - the almost tragic defeat of the knight and the triumph of the crass, ironical squire - need not in the least reflect Cervantes's conscious beliefs about the world. This objective development of character is brought about by a series of purely artistic decisions which are internal to the narrative itself, so that the functional objective of prolonging the madness fortuitously creates a rift between the author's presumed Tridentine orthodoxy and a mode of narrative which appears to vindicate moral relativism and ironical duplicity.
However, the dynamic of the protagonists' relationship eventually reaches an impasse as indicated, I believe, in Part II chapter xlix by Cervantes himself. The absurdity of the hero's chivalric mania blocks his path to self-awareness whereas there is no equivalent impediment to encumber his squire. Don Quixote's madness, the very element which set in train the essentially modern process of character-development, becomes self-defeating. In effect, Cervantes is confronted with a narrative situation where he is unable to explore the interior life of his character any further because of the inescapable necessity to mock his lunacy. Only if the madness were to be dispelled could the latent pathos and nobility of Don Quixote be unequivocally expressed. Cervantes therefore returns his hero to his village and rids him of his madness after a sudden illness. But Don Quixote's reintegration into the sane world of Counter-Reformation Spain marks his death as the mad prototype of the struggling modern hero. Having recovered his senses, the old hidalgo can be allowed to experience the orthodox desengaño of Tridentine literature, albeit as a bolt from the blue, and accordingly, he calls for a priest to confess the sins which led to his aberrations. The peculiarly moving scene of Don Quixote's recantation and death owes its pathos in large part, I believe, to the fact that the reader is at last able to release those reserves of sympathy for the suffering character which had been necessarily repressed so long as his chivalric obsession held sway over him and repeatedly reduced him to a mere object of ridicule.
But if Don Quixote's recovery of sanity before his death recalls him to the truths of Catholic doctrine it is his unremitting madness which enabled his creator to advance beyond the aesthetic problems of his day. For it allowed Cervantes sufficient ironic detachment to achieve a new type of necessity in his narrative and so create an organic aesthetic action which may not have directly reflected any plausible state of affairs in the contemporary historical world but which nevertheless raised issues and articulated forms of experience which are immeasurably more convincing than the allegedly historical romances of chivalry.
CONCLUSION

The general aim of this thesis was to interpret Don Quixote as a work which, in debunking romance, heralds a new mode of narrative fiction.

In my analysis of Yvain, I have sought to illustrate how Chrétien de Troyes transformed Celtic myths into a symbolic narrative articulated according to conventions of courtly chivalry and based broadly on the premises of medieval Platonic idealism. In the process of the French romances' evolution into sixteenth century Spanish romances of chivalry, their symbolic structure was eroded, and the resultant preoccupation with historical truth as a means of justifying fiction, came to the fore.

Largely in response to the intellectual and aesthetic deficiencies of the romances, neo-Aristotelian aestheticians evolved the principles of verisimilitude and unity. Verisimilitude, however, like the late romance "illusion of historicity" itself, was based on the confusion between aesthetic action and historical action in the everyday world. Neo-Aristotelian notions of artistic unity remained vague because no clear principle of organic necessity had been successfully formulated. In both cases, difficulties arose as a result of what Bernard Weinberg has identified as the "rhetoricising" of poetry: the predominant neo-Aristotelian tendency to regard poetry as a medium whose purpose was to move and persuade an audience. The response of the audience
was of greater interest to the theorists than the inner creative priorities of the artist's imagination.

Alban K. Forcione has persuasively demonstrated Cervantes's ambivalence towards neo-Aristotelian aesthetics both in the Quixote and in the Persiles. In the Quixote, however, I would argue that there is a decisively important advance on neo-Aristotelian ideas, brought about by the narrative logic of Cervantes's parody of the romances. Don Quixote's witty, undiminishing madness produces a new formula for admiratio which enables Cervantes to overcome the Renaissance dilemma of reconciling verisimilitude with the marvellous. The Quixote-Sancho relationship, especially as it develops in Part II, lays the foundations for independent characterization and thus provides a principle of organic necessity which supersedes neo-Aristotelian or neo-Horatian notions of unity as the decorous fitting-together of the disparate parts of a narrative.

This break with romance narrative formulae and neo-Classical aesthetics is effected through Cervantes's irony. In the 1605 Prologue, Cervantes's ironical stance towards his reader reverses in practice the rhetorical and ethical bias in favour of the audience which characterized neo-Classical poetic theory. In its stead, Cervantes introduces a complex, ironic relationship between the author, the reader and the fiction:—

(a) author — reader.

Although Cervantes lays no claim either to divine
inspiration or special authority, he nevertheless reserves for himself the right to spring ironic surprises on the reader by undermining the latter's moral or aesthetic expectations with regard to the handling of character and action. Cervantes's purpose is that the reader should appreciate the work as an aesthetic object, for its excellence as an "invención".

(b) reader - fiction.

The narrative becomes a source of ironic reversals and discoveries for the reader, who cannot fall back on received ideas for its interpretation, and who is therefore prevented from indulging in conventional moralizing or in symbolic exegesis. The reader's response, according to Cervantes himself, will be either "admiration" or "risa".

(c) author - fiction.

Cervantes avoids excessive manipulation of the action by individualizing Don Quixote through the mad/sane paradox and certain techniques of internal irony, and by developing from this a logic of characterization which assumes an objective autonomy in the course of the narrative. This inherent objectivity prevents Cervantes himself from intervening arbitrarily in the action without impairing the coherence of the fiction. It is just such intervention which gives rise, towards the end of Part II, to the aesthetic difficulties I have analysed in Chapter 5.
The ironic relations created by Cervantes in the Quixote significantly transform the traditional conception of poetic truth. In Classical and neo-Classical theory poetic truth was held to derive from the portrayal of things as they ought to be, in contrast to historical truth which portrays things as they are. Yet if an author is unable to invoke special authority, the normative force of his imagination is inevitably weakened, and poetic truth becomes difficult to distinguish from historical truth. Hence the neo-Aristotelian concern with verisimilitude or the attempts by Renaissance writers to justify fiction by feigning historical authenticity or, failing that, by emphasizing its moral exemplariness.

Through his ironic treatment of the mendacious Moorish historian Cide Hamete, Cervantes avoids identifying his fiction with history, but he also explicitly renounces in the 1605 Prologue any superior authoritatively in relation to his reader. An ambiguous position such as this might appear to deprive the creative imagination of any value higher than fantasy or arbitrary subjectivism. Cervantes, however, discovers an aesthetic strategy which restores freedom and power to the artistic imagination without restricting it to the direct reflection of things as they immediately present themselves to everyday experience. His subtle, ironic orchestration of character and action enables him to outmanoeuvre the reader's imagination and disarm rational objections to the intrinsic truthfulness
of the fiction. As a result, poetic truth becomes contingent on the reader's experiencing in the fiction a convincing imaginative affinity with its creator.

The proprietary pride in "mi verdadero don Quijote" which Cervantes expresses at the end of the novel aptly illustrates this new conception of poetic truth. The narrator Cide Hamete urges his pen to proclaim:

"Para mí sola nació don Quijote, y yo para él; él supo obrar y yo escribir; solos los dos somos para en uno, a despecho y pesar del escritor fingido y tordesillesco que se atrevió, o sé ha de atrever, a escribir con pluma de avestruz grósera y mal deliñada las hazañas de mi valeroso caballero, porque no es carga de sus hombros ni asunto de su resfriado ingenio" (II.lxxiv.1068).

The plagiarist Avellaneda cannot appropriate Don Quixote for himself because his wit is not equal to the task of recounting the knight's feats. The passage goes on to warn that, since Don Quixote is dead and buried, no-one should continue to parody the exploits of knights errant, for they have been sufficiently discredited by the adventures which Don Quixote performed "tan a gusto y benepláctico de las gentes a cuya noticia llegaron, así en estos como en los extraños reinos". The authenticity of Don Quixote, therefore, depends as much on the unique wit of his creator as on the pleasure and approval with which the fiction has been received by the public.

The Quixote shows Cervantes to be a writer well versed in, but not governed by, the issues of Renaissance aesthetics. Yet even though the novel is first and foremost
a satire on the absurd Spanish romances, its comic qualities should not be allowed to obscure the extent to which Cervantes understood the premises upon which romance rested. Romance is based on a serious view of the world, on a set of values and conventions, a conception of the hero and of the import of his adventures which, although they may have become distorted and traduced in the work of lesser practitioners, are far from ridiculous in themselves. I have attempted to demonstrate at some length how Cervantes was highly aware of the pedigree of Don Quixote's beliefs. Indeed, Cervantes's elaboration of the knight's madness is remarkably faithful to the procedures and conventions of Arthurian romance fiction. But he made the premises of Don Quixote's madness appear absurd to the reader by having the knight believe literally the Spanish romances' fraudulent claims to historical truth and, furthermore, having him arrogate to himself the ability to actualize a romance view of the world on his own authority. Comedy in the Quixote arises not from direct mockery of romance ideals but from the hero's patent inadequacy to realize them given that they have been imbibed at the degenerate source of the Spanish Arthurian sub-genre.

Underlying the lunacy of Don Quixote's actions then, there is a core of ideals and values which form a significant part of the cultural legacy of medieval Europe. As Cervantes deepens his satire, he draws upon this underlayer of romance idealism; but the fact that it is the
mad knight who is the channel of its expression confers upon it a curiously resonant ambivalence: the idealism itself becomes contaminated by the crazy antics of the madman, while the latter's madness is in turn tempered by the nobility of its original influences. The result is highly paradoxical. The attack on the absurd romances is thoroughly effective yet it subsumes in its comprehensiveness much of what constitutes the common patrimony of Cervantes's and his reader's own culture. What begins as straight satire develops into paradox and irony as Cervantes unravels the implications of Don Quixote's lunatic idealism.

In view of the present vexed state of Quixote criticism, it is as well to define more closely the source of these paradoxical and ironical feelings which the novel impresses upon the reader. Don Quixote presents us with a paradox because what it appears to propose at first, namely, that the knight's aspirations must be rejected as absurd and therefore simply comical, comes to be perceived as only partially true, since the ideals and values that inform the madness are not obviously ridiculous. The perception of this basic paradox leads, in turn, to a sense of irony. The discrepancy between Don Quixote's ideals and his unjustifiably insane conduct presents to the reader an extreme example of a radical disjunction between ends and means. But the appreciation of this disjunction becomes ironic because Cervantes begins to foster in the reader sympathetic feelings towards the knight which contradict the initially uncomplicated attitude
of comic dismissal. Nevertheless, and this is the point I should like to stress, Cervantes's unabating mockery of the madman throughout the entire novel makes it impossible for the reader to overcome the growing contradiction in his response to the character. In his inability to achieve an integrated response, the reader can observe himself to be in the classic position of an ironic victim: the division of his sympathies "blinds" him to that objective perspective from which the contradiction might finally dissolve and allow him to regain a sense of integrity.

Furthermore, Cervantes himself, as I have shown in Chapter 5, does not escape the ironic contradiction. The logic of characterization articulated in the narrative may dictate an increase in sympathy for the knight, but the originally futile madness cannot be correspondingly repudiated. The narrative priority of prolonging the character's existence undermines the comic basis on which his madness was conceived. Thus Cervantes is progressively obliged to present the knight both as a comic figure and an object of pathos. The fascinating vitality of the novel has its source in this inherent and irreconcilable contradiction.

A good part of the critical controversy which currently surrounds the Quixote is the outcome of the various attempts to explain the complex paradoxical and ironic effects generated in the novel either by reducing their impact or by accentuating them in unwarrantedly
modern ways. The main schools of Quixote criticism strive for some integrity of response or interpretation that might mitigate the fundamental contradiction inherent in the narrative. By and large, the rival schools base their interpretations on certain aspects of the many-faceted novel while overlooking others.

Advocates of the "Funny Book" interpretation regard the novel as didactic, the purpose of Cervantes's satire being the chastisement of Don Quixote's pride and folly. Such a view entails both a devaluation of Don Quixote's sympathetic moral nobility, and an under-estimation of Cervantes's very acute appreciation of the implications of the knight's idealizing romance madness. There seems to be as little reason to denounce the mad hidalgo's quest for chivalric glory as there would be to castigate Chrétien de Troyes' knights or, indeed, Racine's tragic heroes for their concern with "renom" and "gloire". In Don Quixote's case the end is entirely blameless but the means are clearly insufficient, since they are based on a single intellectual mistake which amounts to madness. Incompetence is not in itself a moral issue; a lack of awareness of one's own incompetence may well be, but Cervantes has pre-empted the possibility of moral judgement on Don Quixote's intellectual mistake by making the hidalgo not bad but simply mad. Critics are often tempted to moralize about Don Quixote's madness because, by so reducing its irreconcilability, it becomes more readily comprehensible. Hence the many attempts to find signs of Don Quixote's growing sanity or moral responsibility (the two are often identified); as if the mad knight's virtue must be measured by his readiness to accept the evidence of his
senses. The "Funny Book" school's moralistic bias makes for a coherent interpretation by assimilating the paradoxical character to a moral scheme, but at the expense of attenuating the impact of the mad/sane paradox and other ironies. The greater interpretative coherence entails a distinct loss of the novel's imaginative power.

It is precisely the mad/sane paradox which accounts for the Romantic school's glorification of Don Quixote, and their corresponding disregard of Cervantes's unrelenting mockery of the knight. Romantic critics tend to underplay the force of opposition to Don Quixote in order to make his madness philosophically respectable. But the mad knight's idealism cannot be made to represent the general idealist mind without seriously distorting the text. For all that Don Quixote's madness contains significant vestiges of the Platonic idealism intrinsic to Arthurian romance, it is comical because based on the crass, unjustifiable error of believing that the fictional discourse of the romances is literally true. The Romantic approach aspires to a consistent reading of the novel on the basis of some allegorical scheme in which Don Quixote represents "idealism" and other characters represent "realism". In the process of this allegorical reading, the many internal ironies which undermine the mad/sane paradox itself are overlooked. In general, Don Quixote's behaviour and his relations with Sancho are so full of subtle twists and turns that they preclude coherent symbolization. It is the idiosyncratic specificity
of Don Quixote's and Sancho's characters which leads the narrative beyond neat allegorical oppositions towards a form of characterization that heralds the modern novel. Nevertheless, pace the "Funny Book" school, I hope to have shown that there does exist in the text an objective basis for the reader's identification with the madman, even though Romantic critics have grossly exaggerated it. The irony produced by this identification cannot be straightforwardly universalized into a conflict between two equally tenable points of view. It is generated by the perversely irrefrangible nature of Don Quixote's madness in the teeth of commonsense and experience. Only as a consequence of this lunatic imperviousness, in so far as his madness leads the knight actually to suffer, can the reader begin to appreciate the irony of such a radical dislocation of ends and means, feeling and form. At this textually-specific level, it is legitimate to progress towards more general analogies irradiating from the ironic image of a character hopelessly divided against himself for reasons which lie beyond his insanely limited purview.

The third major school, the Perspectivist, explains the paradoxes of the Quixote by exaggerating them in yet another way. Perspectivist critics associate the ironies created by Don Quixote's madness within his fictional world with the comic play of the unreliable narrators or the parodic "reflexivity" of the multi-layered text, and then take all these ironies together as evidence of Cervantes's moral and even epistemological relativism. These two aspects
of the novel should, however, be distinguished. The multiple narrators and reflexive devices are a malicious parody of the subterfuges employed in the Spanish romances to validate poetic truth in terms of historical veracity. On the other hand, the ironies created by Don Quixote's dealings with other characters have little to do with perspectivism and everything with leg-pulling, deception and conflicts of interest between individuals. As for the contradiction which emerges between Don Quixote as fool and as a figure of pathos, the Perspectivists actually diminish its poignancy by regarding the madness as little more than one of several points of view in a reality presumed to be as baffling as a hall of mirrors. To suggest that Cervantes may have held such a view about the nature of reality is, I believe, an anachronism.

The modernity of the Quixote derives from a different source. Its origins are to be found in the internal contradiction between pathos and parody that arises out of the dynamic of the anti-romance satire itself. I have shown how Cervantes, particularly in Part II, parodies those narrative devices which in romance conventionally signify the mediation of grace and Providence in human affairs. The absence of any divine intervention in the world of Don Quixote cuts the characters adrift in a flux of contingent meanings, deceptions, ironic subversion and irresolvable conflicts. In short, the characters cannot achieve the stable
identity or absolute destiny of an epic or romance hero. In reducing the narrative procedures of romance to absurdity, Cervantes was equally eroding the ideological framework which underpins romance and enables it to generate meaning. Inevitably, a different way of looking at the world, a new ideological outlook, is foreshadowed in the process of parody, if only by default. The question is to decide how far Cervantes may have been aware of the ideological consequences of his attack on the romances of chivalry.

In the absence of documentary evidence of Cervantes's beliefs, and given the difficulties of reconstructing his ideology from his imaginative fiction, it is hazardous to venture anything other than a tentative hypothesis to explain why a Spanish writer, who may well have been a highly orthodox Counter-Reformation Catholic, should have written a narrative that remains quite remarkably modern. Without going into the question of how much Cervantes's personal experience influenced his conception and elaboration of the Quixote, it is still possible, I believe, to demonstrate Cervantes's appreciation of the interdependence of ideology and narrative form.

Don Quixote is a novel which everywhere bears the marks not only of improvisation but of conscious literary experimentation. Not even the interpolated tales, modelled on the Italianate novella or on the pastoral genre, remain unaffected by the anti-romance thrust of the main narrative. The variety of tone, style and narrative organisation of the different stories reveals Cervantes's experimental vigour, especially in his efforts to create novel effects of
admiratio by either eliminating or exaggerating deus ex machina devices, and by cultivating subtly ironic tensions between literary artifice and empirical plausibility. The aesthetic experimentalism of the interpolated tales and of the Quixote as a whole, together with the ironic declarations in the 1605 Prologue, point to a central concern: the exploration of the aesthetic and moral consequences of the author's abdication of authority and inspiration in his creative activity.

This fundamental concern is especially evident in the twinned Novelas ejemplares: El casamiento engañoso and El coloquio de los perros which are believed to have been written concurrently with Part II of Don Quixote. Both stories evince virtually total disillusionment with the deceitfulness and moral abasement of human society. It is significant, however, that neither story exhibits any sign of direct authorial commentary on the action or of any supernatural mechanism of divine retribution. In El casamiento the "punishment" of the protagonist takes the form of syphilis, but this does not produce moral regeneration. The status of the second story depends on the questionable sincerity of the protagonist of the first, since the riddle which promises to reveal the true identities of the talking dogs remains unsolved and is reduced to absurdity. The signal lack of any authoritative source of spiritual or moral knowledge in the Coloquio accounts both for its indeterminate status and its lack of organic structure. The story
takes the form of an unfinished dialogue between the dogs Cipi6n and Berganza in which the latter recounts a series of experiences, while the former offers criticisms and comments on the conduct of the narrative. The moral chaos described in the story would seem to be the correlative of the highly relativistic point of view of the narrator, who lacks the spiritual insight which might impose significant order upon his experiences. It is only at the end of the Coloquio that the dog Cipi6n affirms his belief in the existence of absolute values and a transcendent reality beyond the moral anarchy which surrounds them:

"La virtud y el buen entendimiento siempre es una y siempre es uno: desnudo o vestido, solo o acompañado. Bien es verdad que puede padecer acerca de la estimación de las gentes; mas no en la realidad verdadera de lo que merece y vale."

Such a declaration of faith would not have been out of place had it come from a convinced Christian or, indeed, from Don Quixote himself, but here it is made by a talking dog whose very faculty of speech is in any case the unresolved enigma upon which the story itself is based.

The parallel between the idealistic faith of the talking dog, encapsulated in the dubious experience of a self-confessed conman, and that of the old hidalgo, hermetically sealed in his romance madness, eloquently indicates the extent to which Cervantes, whatever his actual religious beliefs, was able to conceive of a world hopelessly severed from transcendent realities. But if the contingent human world of the Coloquio lacks aesthetic unity, in the
Quixote Cervantes found a principle of objectivity in the organic development of character which was to allow for a more coherent structuring of post-romance narrative.

The Quixote then looks forward to the modern novel both in form and content. Not only did Cervantes discredit the narrative machinery of romance, he also succeeded in overcoming the major dilemmas of Renaissance fiction. Moreover, in the egregiously absurd adventures of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza he created a marvellously evocative and prophetic dramatization of the process by which men lose faith in a transcendent reality without reconciling themselves to the consequences of that loss.
ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations have been used both in the Notes and in the Bibliography:-

AC  Anales Cervantinos
BBMP Boletín de la Biblioteca Menéndez y Pelayo
BHisp Bulletin Hispanique
BHS Bulletin of Hispanic Studies
BRAE Boletín de la Real Academia Española
CL Comparative Literature
FMLS Forum for Modern Language Studies
HR Hispanic Review
JHP Journal of Hispanic Philology
KRQ Kentucky Romance Quarterly
MHRA Modern Humanities Research Association
MLJ Modern Language Journal
MLN Modern Language Notes
MLR Modern Language Review
MPh Modern Philology
NRFH Nueva Revista de Filología Hispánica
PMLA Publications of the Modern Language Association of America
RFE Revista de Filología Española
RHisp Revue Hispanique
RHM Revista Hispánica Moderna
RN Romance Notes
RPh Romance Philology
RR Romance Review
TLS Times Literary Supplement

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APPENDIX

NOTES TO THE TEXT

CHAPTER ONE

12. See Chenu, pp.55 and 47.
15. Chenu, p.102.
16. Quoted in Chenu, p.103.
17. Chenu, p.103.
20. Lotman, p.1214.
21. Example used by Foucault, p.27.
Chenu, p.116.  
Chenu, pp. 139-140 and footnote, p.140.  
Chenu, p.144. See also Huizinga, p.197.  
See Painter, p.110.  
Painter, p.112.  
Painter, pp.113-114.  
See Jean Frappier, Chrétien de Troyes, pp.23-61.  
Frappier, Chrétien de Troyes, p.36.  
Frappier, Chrétien de Troyes, p.40.  
Frappier, Chrétien de Troyes, p.58.  
Nitze, p.21.  
W.P. Ker, p.349.  
See Frappier, Etude, p.12: "Cet équilibre dans la diversité, allié à une composition très adroite, explique et justifie l'opinion souvent exprimée que l'Yvain est le chef-d'œuvre de Chrétien."  
For a review of the question of the dating of Chrétien's romances, see Frappier, Etude, pp.11-16, and Chrétien de Troyes, p.12.
44 See Frappier, *Étude*, p.17.
45 Frappier, *Étude*, p.17, writes: "En outre, Yvain est, avec Erec, le roman de Chrétien qui donne le plus une impression de liberté créatrice". John Stevens, p.72, writes that "... it is the most complex in interest and baffling in tone, I think, of all."
46 All quotations are from *Le Chevalier au Lion* (Yvain), translated into modern French by Claude Buridant and Jean Trotin (Paris, 1972). Page references to this edition are given in the text.
48 Keu is an unsympathetic character in French romances according to Jean Frappier, *Étude*, pp.138-140, whereas Gauvain is a model of prowess and "courtoisie", pp.140-146.
49 For Daniel M. Murtaugh, *'Oir et entandre: Figuralism and Narrative Structure in Chrétien's Yvain'*, *RR*, LXIV (1973), 161-174, Calogrenant's distinction between hearing and understanding suggests that Chrétien was freely adapting the technique of *figura* from biblical exegesis whereby lesser events are explained as foreshadowing one great event. In the Bible this great event is the Incarnation, in *Yvain* it is the winning of the lady of the fountain. In my view, Murtaugh's figural interpretation is cogent and interesting but it is partial since it does not fully explain the basic structural motivation of the various adventures in *Yvain*.
50 Alfred Adler, *'Sovereignty in Chrétien's Yvain'*, *PMLA*, XLII (1947), 281-305, sees Yvain's trip as being motivated by pride. I prefer to see it, with Frappier, *Étude*, p.29, as a result of "une fougue héroïque", an impetuous desire for glory, which is, after all, one of the main goals of courtly chivalry.
51 Lunete has a motive for helping Yvain. Both Roger Pensom, *'Rapports du Symbole et de la Narration dans Yvain et dans La Mort Artu'*, Romania, XCIV (1973), 398-407, and Jean Fourquet, *'Le rapport entre l'oeuvre et la source*
Chez Chrétien de Troyes et le problème des sources bretonnes' RPh, IX (1955), 289-312, have stressed that Chrétien's characters do not act arbitrarily. However, this psychological coherence of the characters, in my opinion, is not the mainspring of the action, nor does it make Chrétien a "romancier psychologue" as Frappier says, Étude, p.161.

Although the duel between Yvain and Esclados is not strictly speaking, judicial it clearly has similar results to the trial by combat. According to R. Howard Bloch, Medieval French Literature and Law (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1977), "the judicial duel belongs to the series of ordeals common to any primitive sense of justice in which legal process remains indistinguishable from divine process, human will from godly will, positive law from divine law" (p.18). The objective revelation of divine will through Yvain's victory over Esclados provides the best explanation of Laudine's surprising volte-face which no amount of psychological rationalisation (e.g. see Frappier, Étude, pp.149-153) can account for. No other critic seems to have pointed to this explanation in medieval law; it also throws a good deal of light on why Laudine privately conducts that curious imaginary trial where Yvain is interrogated and found to be in the right, which insight becomes the basis of her decision to marry him.

Chrétien uses the image of a mouse-trap when describing Yvain's physical entrapment between the two portcullises (11.913-5). See C.R.B. Combellack, 'The Entrapment of Yvain', Medieval Studies, XXXVII (1975), 524-530. This image is not, I feel, intended as a parody of the romance hero, it is a passing descriptive simile which obliquely captures Yvain's objective moral situation at that particular juncture. Z.P. Zaddy, 'The Structure of Chrétien's "Yvain"', MLR, LXV (1970), 523-540, warns against the "assumption that the hero of a medieval romance must at all times be a dignified figure exempt from any human weakness ... Chrétien at least is prepared to offer us a hero who can act as ordinary
morts all too often do" (pp.536-7).

54 Peter Haidu, Lion-Queue-Coupée: l'écart symbolique chez Chrétienn de Troyes (Geneva, 1972), pp.41-43, considers this detail a parody of the chivalric hero Yvain. However, I believe it is only Chrétienn's gentle raillery of Yvain who is understandably, and rather engagingly, unaware of Laudine's volte-face at this point.


56 Frappier, Chrétienn de Troyes, p.229.

57 There has been much debate about the structure of Yvain. Some critics see it as essentially bipartite, cf. Reto R. Bezzola, Le sens de l'aventure et de l'amour (Paris, 1947); others as tripartite, cf. Joseph H. Reason, An Inquiry into the Structural Style and Originality of Chrestien's "Yvain" (Washington D.C., 1958); Z.P. Zaddy, pp.523-40; and Robert G. Cook, 'The Structure of Romance in Chrestien's Erec and Yvain', MPH, LXXI (1973-4), 128-43. A much earlier critic even divided the romance into five parts, cf. Wendelin Foerster, Kristian von Troyes: Wörterbuch zu seinen sämtlichen Werken (Halle, 1914), pp.98-99. As Robert G. Cook, p.128, points out, there is a certain arbitrariness about such schemes, the important thing is to grasp the narrative shape and movement of the romance and relate that to the meaning, the sen.

58 This is to avoid falling into "recréantise", an uxorious laxity which redounds to the discredit of both partners. This occurs to Erec and Enide after their marriage, hence both Enide's dismay and her accompanying Erec on his quest for glory. For a full discussion of the significance of "recréantise" in Erec, see Bezzola, pp. 140-46.

59 Several critics have shown the thematic and structural parallels between Yvain and Erec: Bezzola, Zaddy, Cook and Frappier, Chrétienn de Troyes.
C.R.B. Combellack in 'Yvain's Guilt', *Studies in Philology*, LXVIII (1971), 10-25, rightly argues against moralistic critics like Adler and Julian Harris, 'The Rôle of the Lion in Chrétien de Troyes' *Yvain*', *PMLA*, LXIV (1949), 1143-1163, that there is no sin of pride attached to Yvain's decision to part from Laudine to seek adventures; he was simply following his chivalric duty and is justly praised for it by Arthur and Gawain. However, Combellack minimizes the impact of Yvain's forgetfulness after the year is up and significantly overlooks the knight's period of madness and de-socialisation. The extremity of Yvain's reaction, his loss of memory and the subsequent despair of being accepted by Laudine in spite of his newly-won renown, suggest that his forgetfulness was a grave and disabling infringement of the code of courtly chivalry. Combellack tends to see the romance as no more than a love-story played in accordance with the rules of a code (p.23). This is true as far as it goes but this view ignores the moral and spiritual implications of courtly chivalry and therefore cannot satisfactorily explain other important structural and symbolic features of the romance.

Frappier, *Etude*, pp.153-4, tries to give a psychological explanation of Laudine's decision, seeing her as proud, impetuous and temperamental. In my view these character defects explain her later persistence in refusing Yvain but not her decision at this point. She merely observes the code to the letter. After all, her cleaving to objective courtly rules is precisely what allowed her to fall for Yvain earlier; now she does the same but in reverse.

Frappier, *Etude* p.69, n.1, points out that Chrétien was the original inventor of the love-madness theme in Arthurian romance and that of the hermit in the forest. The cognate 'mabinogi' of *Owein* shows neither.
See Zaddy, pp.534-8.

In my view this is the most compelling reason for Yvain's blank memory. No other critic seems to have considered the full thematic and structural significance of this phenomenon. Although Zaddy and Combellack have shown that there is no conscious expiation on Yvain's part, they have not properly explained the raison d'être either of the love-madness or the memory-loss after the former is healed.

The magic ointment was given to the Dame de Noroison by Morgan La Fay whom Frappier, Étude, p.106, considers to be "la fée guérisseuse" for Chrétien. R.S. Loomis, Arthurian Tradition and Chrétien de Troyes (New York, 1949) sees the Dame de Noroison as the rationalized figure of Morgan herself.

Zaddy, pp.538-9, has convincingly argued that the adventures in this second phase cannot be interpreted as a straightforward graded ascent towards spiritual wisdom and the expiation of guilt, in terms of their magnitude or obviously increasing moral importance, as Reason, pp.40-1, J. Harris, Adler and Norris J. Lacey, 'Organic Structure of Yvain's Expiation', RR, LXI (1970), 79-84, have done. However, it does not follow that the various adventures have no coherent symbolic or thematic significance beyond the love-story as Zaddy, p.532, and Combellack, 'Yvain's Guilt' (passim) argue. All Yvain's exploits, even the fight against the giant Harpin and the Pire Aventure, have relevant symbolic meaning, signalled in the text itself, and related to the central problem of resolving the conflict between love and honour.

This dual aspect of the romance - Yvain's need to rebuild his honour quite independently of his winning back of Laudine - explains why some of his adventures, like the duel against Harpin or the Pire Aventure, are not known by Laudine. Critics like Zaddy and Combellack, while criticizing the "expiation of guilt" school of thought (see above note), still see the reunification with Laudine as Yvain's only goal and any adventure not
overtly connected with this as irrelevant. Their views arise precisely because they interpret the romance exclusively as a love-story.


69 The grateful lion is generally considered to have been derived from the old motif of Androcles and his lion but modified here by the introduction of the new element of the serpent, cf. Frappier, Étude, pp. 108-9. W.W. Ryding, 'Narrative Structure, Free Association and Chrétien's Lion', Symposium, XXIII (1969), 160-3, sees the serpent as representing "animal ingratitude" and derived as a motif from Petrus Alfonsum's Disciplina Clericalis which was translated into French at about the time Chrétien must have been working on Yvain (pp.161-2).

In addition to this, it must be said that the serpent is very much a Christian symbol of the Devil, for example, in Genesis and in traditional iconography of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin.

70 Harris, pp.1143-1163.

71 Other symbolic functions have been ascribed to the lion. D.M. Murtaugh, p.170, sees the lion as an externalized figure of Yvain's own, as yet unfulfilled, nobility. Norris J. Lacy, 'Yvain's Evolution and the Rôle of the Lion', RN, XII (1970), 198-202, rejects Harris's view of the lion as a Christ-symbol (see above note) and interprets it as a symbol of selfless knighthood, superior to Gauvain's worldly chivalry, and towards which Yvain must evolve. Nevertheless he states that "there should not be a sole or basic symbolic interpretation", (p.202), a view with which I agree and discuss later in the chapter.

72 Frappier Étude, p.109, n. 3, notes that the suicidal lion is Chrétien's elaboration of Androcles' grateful lion, a detail which does not appear in the 'mabinogi' of Owein. W.W. Ryding sees, in the "relaxed audacity" of this elaboration on sources, an "ironic tonality"
in Chrétien's treatment of the marvellous which foreshadows Chaucer and Ariosto. In seeing the suicidal lion as a way of Chrétien's referring symbolically to the underlying spiritual sense of the romance through a form of "positive irony", I believe one can better explain the meaning and function of this puzzlingly comical detail.

73 Zaddy, p.530, rightly points out that it is despair which prevents Yvain from seeking a reconciliation with Laudine at this point. I would add that Laudine's original threat that her love would turn to hate if Yvain missed the dead-line allowed Yvain absolutely no hope of taking the initiative for a reconciliation with his wife. This could only depend on the intervention of other agents, as we shall presently see.

74 The fact that the baron is Gauvain's uncle is not accidental. I would agree with Norris J. Lacy, 'Organic Structure of Yvain's Expiation', pp.81-82, that in this latter part of the romance Yvain's feats of arms are set in counterpoint to Gauvain's until their climactic duel. Murtaugh, p.170, observes that each battle Yvain fights from this point on, except for that of the Pire Aventure, is "predicated upon the absence or unavailability of Gawain".

75 Harris, p.1148.

76 Bezzola, p.47, has shown that the hero's incognito in Perceval and Le Chevalier de la Charrette is not just a device for suspense but also has symbolic value. In a similar way, Yvain's surrogate identity has both structural and symbolic significance. Frappier sees this device as original to Chrétien (Etude, p.64).
This is an example of entrelacement which also occurs later when the episode of the Pire Aventure is inserted in the adventure of the two sisters. Frappier, Étude, pp.63-4, claims that Chrétien invented this structural technique which attains its full development in the following century and especially in the Prose Lancelot. Entrelacement is not to be found in the "chansons de geste", in Wace, nor in the Matter of Rome.

Murtaugh, p.172, observes: "We thus have, at full gallop, a recapitulation of all the adventures of Yvain since he left the lady of Noroison and of all the reasons he will succeed in the eventual return to Laudine prefigured in that earlier episode."

Murtaugh, p.173, comments: "[The damsels']... plight is the result of a lady's man's ineptitude in the martial arts, the very unbalance of the knightly character of which Gawain had warned Yvain when he called him away to tournaments."

Yvain's reconciliation with Laudine does not depend on the number of exploits he performs. As Zaddy, p.536, points out, Laudine is unaware of Yvain's last two adventures. Although unremarked by Zaddy or any other critic, this fact shows that the reconciliation is not the exclusive concern of the romance, it is only one of twin goals, the other being the establishment of Yvain as a perfect knight on a plane higher than that of his previous achievements.

The thematic and aesthetic value of Lunete's "jeu de la vérité" seems to have been unappreciated by critics. For example, E. Peter Nolan in 'Mythopoetic Evolution: Chrétien de Troyes' Erec et Enide, Cligès and Yvain', Symposium, XXV (1971), 139-61 (p. 155), finds it "peculiar" that Lunete should tell "little white lies"
to Laudine at the climax of the romance. For Frappier, *Étude*, p.157, Lunete "trouve un plaisir d'artiste à ourdir ses ruses et à corser le spectacle pour son propre divertissement". From the context, Frappier infers that "le jeu de la vérité" was a society game practised in court circles (p.57, n.1). However, I believe this to be too literal a reading which gives this game an unwarranted documentary value as an actual social custom and consequently overlooks both the originality of Chrétien's imagination and the deeper implications of Lunete's ruse.

82 See Jean Fourquet, pp.298-312, and R.S. Loomis, Arthurian Tradition and Chrétien de Troyes.


84 Carasso-Bulow, pp.36-58.

85 Carasso-Bulow, pp.123-125 and 143.

86 Carasso-Bulow, pp.35-36.

87 Carasso-Bulow, p.144.

88 Carasso-Bulow, p.144.


90 See Haidu, *Lion-Queue-Coupée*: on the lion, pp.57-73; the ring, pp.28-29; and Carasso-Bulow: on the lion, pp.116-118; the fountain, pp.128-9; the ointment, p.119; the ring, p.121.

91 John Stevens, pp.100-101, uses similar terms as these but in a different way. He divides the marvellous into three categories: the mysterious, i.e. unmotivated occurrences; the magical, i.e. the marvellous controlled by man such as magic rings and ointments; and the miraculous, i.e. the marvellous controlled by God. He does not, however, make the distinction between those marvels emanating from a good source and those from an evil one.


However, see Maxwell S. Luria, 'The Storm-making Spring and the Meaning of Chrétien's *Yvain*', *Studies in Philology*, LXIV (1967), 564-585, who interprets the fountain as "*fons vitae* of Scripture which exegetes associate with Christ and the Church" (p.578). My view is that of Robert Guiette, 'Lecteur de roman, lecteur de symbole' in *Questions de Littérature, Romanica Gandensia*, VIII (Ghent, 1960), p.51: "On pourrait se demander si, à devenir allégoriques par le fait des érudits à prendre une signification précise, les moments les plus subtilement poétiques ne perdent pas une part de leur vertu réelle, de leur charme et de leur saveur."

John Stevens, p.110, makes a similar point: "In so far as the marvels of romance do not simply pander to the fantasies of their heroes and readers or, on a loftier plane, image forth their moral struggles and courtly aspirations - that is, insofar as the marvels have an objective reality - they present the reality of an experience, haunting, mysterious and powerful."


I shall discuss romance in general terms because, as Northrop Frye points out in The Secular Scripture (Cambridge, Mass., and London, 1976), p.4, "... the conventions of prose romance show little change over the course of centuries, and conservatism of this kind is the mark of a stable genre".

Gillian Beer, p.3, nevertheless observes that adventure may sometimes take over entirely from love. Stevens, p.20, includes among the recurrent motifs of romance, "the presentation of the heroine" who inspires an "amor de lonh", or love from afar, in the hero. Frye, p.24, writes that "the central element of romance is a love story" but also stresses the primacy of adventure (passim). See also Erich Auerbach, pp.140-1.

Stevens, p.21.

Stevens, p.20, identifies as two of the recurrent motifs of romance, the hero's "sense of a vocation", and "the essential isolation of the hero and his experience". See also Frye, p.67.

See Auerbach, p.135: "The very essence of the knight's ideal of manhood is called forth by adventure", and Frye, p.50: "The popularity of romance has much to do with its simplifying of moral facts." See also Beer, pp. 3 and 10.

Auerbach, p.135, warns against taking adventure as merely "accidental", it is central to the meaning of the knight's existence.

Bezzola, p.47, argues that the incognito of Chrétien's heroes possesses symbolic value.

Auerbach, p.140.
Beer, p.3.

Stevens, p.16, writes: "Romance as a genre ... is characterized by conventions, motifs, archetypes, which have been created in order to express the experiences [of love, honour, terror, adoration] in their essential nature."

Northrop Frye, p.54.

Auerbach, p.134, writes: "The values (of courtly chivalry) ... are all directed toward a personal and absolute ideal - absolute both in reference to ideal realization and in reference to the absence of any earthly and practical purpose." Stevens, p.21, observes that the "particular interests" of romance are idealistic: "Shelley's telling phrase 'beautiful idealisms of moral excellence' ... goes a long way to suggest the combination of aesthetic and spiritual qualities realized in the greatest romances of the Middle Ages, and of later times".

Frye, p.49, however, identifies four levels in romance: - the heavenly, the Edenic, the everyday, and the demonic (pp.97-98). Nevertheless, the fundamental distinction is surely between the everyday world and the supernatural. The latter can, of course, be further sub-divided into various categories of the ideal and the demonic, or, in the terms I have previously used, the miraculous and the magical (See p. 70 and note 91 above).

See Frye, p.107: "There is often a god behind the action of a romance who expresses his will by some kind of oracle or prophecy which speaks of the ultimate outcome as predetermined ... A god of this type is clearly a projection of the author himself, and as such, he is placed outside the action."
Frye, p.47: "In realism the attempt is normally to keep the action horizontal, using a technique of causality in which the characters are prior to the plot ... Romance is more usually "sensational", that is, it moves from one discontinuous episode to another, describing things that happen to characters, for the most part externally."

In non-Christian romance the contact with non-realistic worlds can be unsettling and even subversive, but, as Gillian Beer says, "the comfort of being told a story mingles with aesthetic elation. Part of the delight of romance is that we know we are not required to live full-time in its ideal worlds ... Because romance shows us the ideal it is implicitly instructive as well as escapist" (p.9). This combination of instruction and escapism expresses, according to Beer, "the conserving and crystallizing function of romance" (p.78).

Frye, p.39, asserts that realistic fiction is "essentially parody-romance".

Both Beer, pp.12-13, and Frye, pp.161-188, emphasize the "revolutionary" potential of romance; its capacity to present myths, fulfil wishes or provoke nightmares. But in debased or popular romance these possibilities are rendered harmless or nugatory by their very remoteness from the everyday world. In such romances the aesthetic experience is either self-evidently wish-fulfilling or a form of temporary exorcism of irrational fears. As Beer says of Richardson's Pamela: "Revolution is one function of the romance. But when the revolutionary situation is past, readers come to interpret the text nostalgically" (p.13).
CHAPTER TWO

4 Vinaver, pp.53-67.
5 But see Albert Wilder Thompson, 'Additions to Chrétien's Perceval - Prologues and Continuations' in Loomis, Arthurian Literature, pp.206-207 (p.216), where he warns against assuming that continuators were making arbitrary changes on their own initiative: "Chrétien mentioned a book as a source, and others may have known the same book."
8 Frappier, 'The Vulgate Cycle', p.304.
9 'Symbolisme et sénégiance au Moyen Age' in Questions de Littérature, pp.33-60 (p.48).
10 Le sens de l'aventure et de l'amour, p.8.
12 Frappier, 'The Vulgate Cycle', p.311.
13 Vinaver, p.89.

16 Bloch, Orbis Litterarum, p.19.

17 Bloch, Orbis Litterarum, p.19.

18 Bloch, MLR, p.54.


22 Sir Henry Thomas, Spanish and Portuguese Romances of Chivalry (Cambridge, 1920), pp.41-63; E.B. Place, '¿ Montalvo, autor o refundidor del Amadís IV y V?' in Homenaje a A. Rodríguez-Moñino, II (Madrid, 1966), pp.77-80; A. Rodríguez-Moñino, 'El primer manuscrito del Amadís de Gaula', BRAE, XXXVI (1956), 199-216; Lida de Malkiel, 'El desenlace del Amadís primitivo'.
See José Amezcua, 'La oposición de Montalvo al mundo del Amadís de Gaula', NRFH, XXI (1968) 320-337; Samuel Gili Gaya first showed this anti-chivalry tendency in the Esplandián, 'Las sergas de Esplandián como crítica de la caballería bretona', BBMP, XXIII (1947), 103-111.

Armando Durán, Estructura y técnicas de la novela sentimental y caballeresca (Madrid, 1973), pp.133-134.


All textual references to Amadís de Gaula, Book I-IV are from the edition by E.B. Place (Madrid, 1959-71).


Frida Weber de Kurlat, 'Estructura novelesca del Amadís de Gaula', Revista de Literaturas Modernas, V (1967), 29-54, after showing how "external" and "explicit" is Montalvo's narrative technique, argues that it creates a "crescendo cuantitativo", a narrative rhythm of convergence and divergence in the novel (pp.51-3). However, this narrative organisation, in so far as it is external, differs from the internal symbolic coherence of a Chrétien de Troyes romance.

Frank Pierce, Amadís de Gaula, Twayne World Authors Series (Boston, 1976), pp.46-56.

Pierce, p.55.

Weber, pp.45-47.

Weber, p.44.

Pierce, p.51.

Pierce, pp.56-72.

Pierce, p.56.

References to the Prologue are from the E.B. Place edition.
All textual references to the *Sergas de Esplandían* are from the edition by Pascual de Gayangos, *Biblioteca de Autores Españoles*, vol. XL (Madrid, 1857), pp.403-561.


Erich Auerbach, 'Odysseus' Scar' in *Mimesis*, pp.3-23 (p.13-14).


See E.B. Place, 'Fictional Evolution', p.528.

Montalvo was indeed one of the first to introduce this narrative subterfuge into Spanish romance. There is one previous instance of it in the Epilogue to *Oliveros de Castilla* published in 1499. This was a translation of the French *Le Livre d'Oliver de Castille et d'Artus Dalgarbe*, published in 1482. This Spanish Epilogue does not, however, exist in the French original.

Scholes and Kellogg, *The Nature of Narrative*, p.244, observe that "we do not find in Greek romance the author-narrator claiming to have been an eyewitness to or participant in the events he is narrating, and founding his authority on his own testimony".

See F.G. Olmedo, S.J., *El Amadís y el Quijote* (Madrid, 1948), p.26, where Urganda's reply to the question about the enchantment of the characters is seen as evidence that "se burló donosamente el buen regidor de los que tomaban en serio las ficciones caballerescas". Similarly, María Rosa
Lida de Malkiel sees evidence of "socarronería" in Urganda's reply and an "actitud humorística que el autor guarda hacia sus personajes" in 'Dos huellas del Esplandián en el Quijote y el Persiles', RPh, IX (1955), 156-62 (pp.157-8). Neither critic explains, firstly, why such humour only appears towards the end of the fifth book of Amadís and, secondly, how such subversive techniques can be reconciled with Montalvo's all-too-serious didacticism. Finally, neither critic attempts to see chapters 98 and 99 in the evolving context of Montalvo's activity as revisor of the Amadís.

47 See Antonio Prieto, Morfología de la Novela (Barcelona, 1975), p.235: "La resurrección argumental de Amadís por parte de Montalvo (respecto a la muerte del primitivo), era también la resurrección (y conversión de los viejos romans en libros de caballerías y, en este orden, cobra sentido romper la estructura medieval del primitivo Amadís, que se cerraba con su muerte a manos de Esplandián, para re-nacerlo en una nueva sociedad que lo pensará siempre vivo."

This judgement, with which I broadly agree, rests on the hypothesis of Lida de Malkiel in 'El desenlace del Amadís primitivo' (see my note 21 above).

48 Lida de Malkiel sees chapters 98 and 99 as a serious foreshadowing of Don Quixote: "El autor se asoma en la novela barajando los planos de realidad y ficción para criticar irónicamente su propio libro o los antecedentes de su libro;"Dos huellas ..."', p.157. She looks at these chapters in retrospect from the heights of Don Quixote and sees irony, whereas I prefer to look at them from the perspective of medieval romance. Montalvo indeed pioneered the distinction between real author and character-narrator in order to enhance the illusion of historicity by claiming the authority of eyewitness. But it was
Cervantes's genius that recognized and systematically exploited the ironic possibilities of such a narrative subterfuge.

49 Scholes and Kellogg, p.252, observe that the Renaissance writer of fiction "was much more disposed to found his authority on devices imitative of the writers of established empirical prose narrative - the historians". For further discussion of the Renaissance concern with fiction and history, see William Nelson, pp.38-55.

50 See Scholes and Kellogg, p.251, "as had happened in the ancient world, narrative artists began, at the close of the Middle Ages, to substitute for the authority of traditional narrative, the authority of the eyewitness, the histor, or the creator".

51 See Thomas for an extensive account of the development of the Spanish romances and their dissemination throughout Europe.

52 For example, some subsequent magician-historians were Alquife, husband to Urganda, who narrates Books VII and IX of the Amadís cycle and Lirgandeo, the chronicler of the deeds of the Caballero del Febo. The real authors of these works styled themselves "proof-correctors" or "translators". Even when they wished to criticize rivals they still kept up their narrative personae, as if they dared not dispel the illusion of the eyewitness narrator (See Thomas, pp.68-75).

CHAPTER THREE


4 "Tragedy is essentially an imitation not of persons but of action and life, of happiness and misery. All human happiness or misery takes the form of action; the end for which we live is a certain kind of activity, not a quality", Aristotle on the *Art of Poetry*, translated by Ingram Bywater (Oxford, 1920), p. 37.


8 See Weinberg, vol. II, p. 804; William Nelson (*Fact or Fiction*, pp. 60-62) lists the ways in which Renaissance writers sought to justify their fictions: (1) by exemplary interpretation, (2) by allegorical interpretation, (3) by the inclusion of sentences and sayings of philosophers, (4) by the use of witty phrases and arguments, (5) by purveying useful information about combats, dances, castles, architecture, hunting, foreign lands and peoples, essays of moral philosophy. In all these cases the actual fiction is clearly subordinate to its moral or informative utility.


10 See Weinberg, vol. II, p. 806: "The great vague canon of 'unity' also took a rhetorical turn ... it came to mean little more than an appropriateness of all the parts to one another, ultimately their conformity to type and tradition." These rhetoricizing tendencies, Weinberg adds, were resisted by some theorists like Bartolomeo
Maranta in the early sixteenth century and Francesco Buonamici in the later part of it, "but by and large the habits of rhetorical analysis - so well entrenched for so long a time - were victorious over any attempts to develop fresh habits of poetical analysis."

11 See Robert Durling, *The Figure of the Poet in Renaissance Epic* (Cambridge, Mass., 1965), p.9: "The epic, when revived in the Renaissance, increasingly revealed the centrality of its fundamental convention, the inspired Narrator. It became less and less feasible to assume the pose of an inspired poet unless your subject was religious."


13 A sign of this embarrassment is the "playfulness" and "reflexivity" characteristic of Renaissance fiction described by William Nelson in chapters IV and V of *Fact or Fiction*. For example, Nelson writes of Spenser in the *Faerie Queene* that "he is quite aware, and wants the reader to be quite aware, that the tale is merely a tale and an improbable one too. Hence the note of parody and burlesque which deliberately breaks into the narrative enchantment" (p.90).


15 Durling, p.122.

16 Durling, pp. 175-176.


Tasso was inclined to allow the "Christian marvellous", the wonders of far-off countries, the mysteries of magic and other such phenomena, so long as they did not too much offend the reader's sense of naturalistic probability. Forcione quotes a passage from the Discorsi dell'arte poetica e del poema eroico, edited by L. Poma (Bari, 1964), pp.110-111: "He (the poet) should not be too unrestrained in feigning things that are impossible, monstrous, prodigious, and unbecoming ... but he should consider the power of the art of magic and that of nature itself as if enclosed within certain limits and restricted by certain laws, and he should consider the ancient and old wonders, and the occasions of the marvellous occurrences, the miracles, and the prodigies, as well as the diversity of religions and the seriousness of the persons involved; and he should try to increase as much as he can our faith in the marvellous phenomenon without diminishing our pleasure in it."

As Riley, Cervantes's Theory of the Novel, p.198, has observed, the problem of idealisation was "really more crucial to the novel than that posed by fantasy. This problem springs from the potential discrepancy between the ideal and the possible - a discrepancy that was simply disregarded in the concept of verisimilitude inherited from Antiquity."

See Forcione, p.31.

Durling, p.9.

However, see Otis H. Green, 'El Ingenioso Hidalgo' in The Literary Mind of Medieval and Renaissance Spain (Lexington, 1970), pp.171-184, who attempts to situate Don Quixote's madness in contemporary medical-psychological terms, namely those of Huarte de San Juan's
Examen de Ingenios (1575).

24 All textual references are to Martín de Riquer's edition of Don Quijote de la Mancha (Barcelona, 1968). These references have been checked against the edition by John Jay Allen (Madrid, 1977).

25 Glory and fame in Arthurian romance, as we have seen, were tokens of excellence, hence the duty incumbent upon the hero to increase his renown through adventure. It seems odd to find modern critics chastising Don Quixote's miserable attempts to win glory as "boastful vanity" or even "the sin of pride". See A.A. Parker 'El concepto de la verdad en Don Quijote', RFE, XXXII (1948), 287-304, and John J. Allen, Don Quixote: Hero or Fool? (Gainesville, Florida, 1969), p.84, respectively.

26 See my chapter 1, pp.

27 There is a tendency to assume, implicitly or otherwise, that Don Quixote is prey to hallucinatory delusions or, at least, that he loses sight altogether of the way other people perceive reality. Unamuno in Vida de Don Quijote y Sancho, eleventh edition, Coleccion Austral (Madrid, 1958) makes a virtue of the knight's delusions. In the episode of the windmills, for example, Unamuno clearly takes Don Quixote to be hallucinating: "Don Quijote los tomó por desaforados gigantes" (p.43), but proceeds to castigate Sancho and the ordinary reader for not suffering the same glorious delusion. Joaquín Casalduero, Sentido y forma del Quijote (Madrid, 1949) writes more ambiguously: "la realidad del presente tiene que ser captada con otra forma de imaginación", and then talks of Don Quixote "transforming reality" to accord with illusions or ideals of beauty and justice (pp.50-53, 66-67, et passim). For Casalduero, Don Quixote's
transformations of reality would seem to be midway between delusions and wilful distortions. My view is that Don Quixote is trying to go beyond the superficial evidence of his senses in order to demonstrate to others the essence of things. Even at his most naively enthusiastic, as when he arrives at the first inn (I.ii.43-44), the knight acknowledges empirical reality and only then begins to visualize the ideal reality latent beneath appearance. The formula is as follows: "luego que vio la venta se le representó que era un castillo" (p.43; my emphasis). According to my reading, whenever Don Quixote is obliged to recognize that his chivalric interpretations are wrong, he can admit his mistake without prejudice to his basic assumptions about the essential reality of the world. If he were suffering delusions or wilfully distorting appearances, any such admission would vitiate his chivalric enterprise irreparably, or expose him as a fraud. Luis Rosales, Cervantes y la Libertad (Madrid, 1960), vol. II, believes that in Part I Don Quixote is "seeing visions" (p.159), and that in Part II he finds for the first time a contradiction between sense-experience and these visions: "la fe del caballero se contradice con la visión de sus sentidos" (p.117). To explain this alleged discrepancy Rosales argues that in Part II "don Quijote no es un loco, es un crédulo" (p.65, n.164). But is he more or less credulous in Part II than when he believed Dorotea to be Micomica in Part I? Gonzalo Torrente Ballester in El Quijote como juego (Madrid, 1975), argues that the knight sees reality as it is, like Sancho and the narrator (pp.121-146), but explains Don Quixote's behaviour as a form of deliberate play-acting (pp.94-99). Following Rosales, Torrente Ballester believes that the knight is aware of Sancho's deceptions (p.76).
In this Don Quixote demonstrates his deep understanding of the ultimate purpose of romance. It will be recalled that according to Northrop Frye, The Secular Scripture, p. 54, "reality for romance is an order of existence most readily associated with the word identity. Identity means a good many things, but all its meanings in romance have some connection with a state of existence in which there is nothing to write about. It is existence before 'once upon a time', and subsequent to 'and they lived happily ever after'. What happens in between are adventures, or collisions with external circumstances, and the return to identity is a release from the tyranny of these circumstances."

Here my interpretation differs radically in emphasis from that of Américo Castro for whom Don Quixote represents a heroic, quasi-existentialist character who stubbornly wills his own form of being in spite of circumstances. The knight's career is seen as "un saberse estar siendo"; see 'La estructura del "Quijote", in Hacia Cervantes, third revised edition (Madrid, 1967), p. 322. Although Don Quixote starts out with great confidence it seems to me that he soon becomes aware of the risks and dangers of his enterprise, and adopts an attitude of trial and error in his approach to adventures, a stance which is not staunchly assertive but exploratory, open to correction if need be. Equally, my conception of Don Quixote is a far cry from Unamuno's "admirable Caballero de la Fe" (Vida de Don Quijote y Sancho, p. 35).

Critics have tended to gloss over this vital distinction between Aldonza and Dulcinea which Don Quixote makes here. For example, Unamuno, Vida de Don Quijote y Sancho, p. 25, and Salvador de Madariaga, in Guía del lector del "Quijote", third edition (Buenos Aires, 1947), p. 140,
see Dulcinea as the embodiment of "la Gloria", and Casalduero, *Sentido y forma del Quijote*, as an "ideal dream" (p.36), plucked at will from base reality (p.123). For these critics, and many others after them, Dulcinea is a fully realized ideal in Don Quixote's imagination from the start. By overlooking the textually-ascertainable fact that the knight wishes to set in train a process of idealisation (see, for instance, Casalduero, pp.122-123), Dulcinea has come to be taken as an arbitrary figment of Don Quixote's mind, destined to be eroded by experience (see, for example, Madariaga, pp.134-141). It will be appreciated in due course that I reverse this interpretation exactly: Don Quixote recognizes the difference between the humble Aldonza and Dulcinea, he eventually is led to believe by Sancho's flattering lies that her chivalric transformation is taking effect in Part I, and only then in Part II, as a result of a further deception by Sancho, does he begin to fear that the already idealized Aldonza has been hideously disfigured by envious enchanters. In short, even in Don Quixote's view, the transformation of Aldonza into Dulcinea is a delicate business, vulnerable to setbacks and misunderstandings.

31 Without distinguishing between surface appearances and underlying essences, which Don Quixote sees as his duty to reconcile, the knight's attitude to Dulcinea cannot be adequately explained other than as a delusion, or worse still, a conscious deception which would seriously conflict with his ethical nobility on so many other occasions. A.J. Close in 'Don Quixote's Love for Dulcinea: A Study of Cervantine Irony', *BHS*, L (1973), 237-255, gets into this difficulty when he says that
the knight's speech about Dulcinea (I.xxv.246), which I quoted earlier, is the "... only place in which he admits the gap between reality and his idealization of it. He is brought to this admission because his image of Dulcinea partly involves the deliberate falsification of fact. He may indeed see windmills as giants, he knows in some sense that Dulcinea is not a princess" (p.248). Don Quixote always insists that Aldonza is a princess but he freely admits that this truth (i.e. the ideal alter ego Dulcinea) is, as yet, not evident to everyone.

32 Madariaga is the critic who has most fully articulated this interpretation. For him, Don Quixote is privately assailed by "la íntima conciencia de que todo era ilusión" (p.134) and that "durante toda su heroica vida Don Quijote llevará en su alma esta duda, este enemigo interior, el más formidable de cuantos combatió, el que acabó por vencerle y quitarle el gusto de vivir". There is, in fact, no textual evidence whatsoever for this view, as I will demonstrate in the course of this chapter. Don Quixote was defeated by the brute force of Sansón Carrasco got up as the Knight of the White Moon. Nevertheless, Madariaga's notion of the "enemigo interior" has become enshrined in critical orthodoxy: Don Quixote's development is invariably seen as the gradual surrender to empirical fact. Thus, for example, the account of the novel in J.B. Avalle-Arce and E.C. Riley's Suma cervantina (London, 1973), pp.47-79. J.J. Allen in Don Quixote: Hero or Fool? believes that the knight takes "increasing cognizance of reality" (p.43) and sees this as a beneficent process leading to wisdom and saintliness on his death-bed.

33 Don Quixote's reasoning and his refusal to accept empirical evidence strike us as mad. But this should not obscure the fact that he bases his beliefs and
arguments on a traditional body of ideas and practices taken from romance literature. This body of ideas is not inherently ridiculous, as I have tried to show in chapters 1 and 2; it was engendered by a fusion of medieval Platonism and courtly chivalry in Arthurian romance. Cervantes merely shows that a direct and militant application of these notions to everyday life amounts to a form of madness. If we ignore this distinction between substance and implementation, Don Quixote's ideas become not just erroneous or mad but immoral and culpable. A.J. Close moralizes about Don Quixote's madness in just this way. For example, in his article 'Don Quixote's Sophistry and Wisdom, BHS, LV (1978), 103-113, Close regards Don Quixote's assertion about knights errant: "Somos ministros de Dios en la tierra" (I.xiii.118), as "sweeping audacity" and "boastfulness". This judgement I feel is misplaced because it is based on a misunderstanding of Don Quixote's ideas. From a romance point of view, Don Quixote is innocently defining one of the basic functions of a knight errant to the sceptical Vivaldo. Moreover, I am attempting to show from the text that Don Quixote himself is aware of the difficulties he will face when he tries to prove to others that he is a real knight.

This reference to the helmet of Mambrino and the later controversy over its real nature (I.xliiv-xl.v. 456-463) form the germ which has allowed the growth of a Perspectivist school of Quixote criticism. As A.J. Close points out in his The Romantic Approach to Don Quixote (Cambridge, 1978), it was Ortega y Gasset in Meditaciones del Quijote (Madrid, 1914) who, starting from his own philosophical perspective, launched the interpretation of the novel as a celebration of multiple perspectives on reality. This line was pursued by Américo Castro in El pensamiento de Cervantes (Madrid, 1925), who wrote: "Si hay en Cervantes una preocupación general, previa a las demás, es la de cómo sea la realidad objetiva" (p.79). Leo Spitzer, concurring
enthusiastically with this opinion in his essay 'Perspectivismo lingüístico en El Quijote' in Lingüística e historia literaria (Madrid, 1955), pp. 161-225, sought to base it on linguistic and stylistic features of the novel, and concluded that "las cosas se representan no por lo que son en sí, sino sólo en cuanto objeto de nuestro lenguaje o de nuestro pensamiento; y ello implica en el narrador romper la representación en dos puntos de vista" (p.195). Only God, according to Spitzer, is situated above the perspectivism of language (p.201). This Perspectivist view has powerfully influenced other critics such as Angel del Río, 'El equivoco del Quijote', HR, XXVII (1959), 200-221, and Manuel Durán, La ambigüedad en el Quijote (Xalapa, 1960). More recently, Helena Percas de Ponseti in Cervantes y su concepto del Arte, 2 vols. (Madrid, 1975), sees perspectivism as a basic aesthetic principle in the novel, to the extent of arguing that Cervantes allows each reader the freedom to choose between different and even incompatible perspectives on objective reality (pp.179-180). There has been a reaction to the Perspectivist school. A.A. Parker in 'El concepto de la verdad en Don Quijote', p.304, argues that reality as portrayed in the novel is rational and unambiguous. Erich Auerbach, Mimesis, p.347, and Oscar Mandel 'The Function of the Norm in Don Quixote', MPH, LV (1957), 154-163, see "well-founded" and "average reality", respectively, as a corrective to subjective viewpoints in the novel. Others, such as P.E. Russell, 'Don Quixote as a Funny Book', MLR, LXIV (1969), 312-326, and A.J. Close, The Romantic Approach to Don Quixote and 'Don Quixote's Love for Dulcinea', regard Perspectivist interpretations, along with other allegedly epistemological problems in the novel, as anachronistic.
The critical situation has become very vexed and has occasioned notable changes of opinion, namely Américo Castro's rejection in Hacia Cervantes, p.384, of his earlier perspectivism. Also R.L. Predmore, whose half-hearted anti-perspectivism in 'El problema de la realidad en el Quijote', NRFH, VII (1953), 489-498, was further weakened in El mundo del Quijote (Madrid, 1958), pp.77-112, where he showed how greatly Cervantes relishes his characters' conjectural vacillations when perceiving reality. There have been attempts to reconcile the two positions. J.J. Allen's interpretation in Don Quixote: Hero or Fool? is based on "ethical perspectives" through which Cervantes leads the reader and Don Quixote to an awareness of objective reality and ensuing sanity. E.C. Riley in Cervantes's Theory of the Novel, while stating that "the Quixote is a novel of multiple perspectives" (p.39), also emphasizes the importance of verisimilitude for Cervantes as an aesthetic principle which calls for "mysteries" to be "rationally explained to the reader sooner or later" (p.187). This approach begins to resolve the Perspectivist muddle by accounting for "perspectivism" not as an inherent epistemological problem in the novel but as an aspect of Cervantes's delight in the interplay of literature and life. Perspectivist confusion can be further avoided if one examines both text and context more carefully. It is Don Quixote not Cervantes himself who believes that empirical reality is unreliable, and this for the simple reason that he wishes to prove through chivalric methods that ordinary appearances misleadingly conceal the essence of things. The attitude of other characters is robustly empirical. However,
Cervantes understandably varies this opposition between Don Quixote's romance vision and ordinary perceptions of reality in many subtle ways and for clearly comic ends, as in the Mambrino case. Another aspect of this is the narrator's occasional tongue-in-cheek complicity with Don Quixote in his problematical approach to phenomena (e.g. inns, windmills, flocks of sheep).

35 See Chapter 1, pp. 39, 50, 57 and Chapter 2, pp. 110-111.

36 It should be clear from the text that the upshot of this helmet of Mambrino passage is by no means the fragmentation of reality into two equally valid perspectives, as Spitzer suggests in 'Perspectivismo lingüístico en el Quijote', p. 195. Sancho's neologism "baciylmo" (I.xliv.458) is purely personal and ironic, it humours his master without renouncing empirical sense altogether. Spitzer, however, sees it as an occasion where Cervantes "se libera de las limitaciones del lenguaje" (p. 199).

37 For a fuller account of Don Quixote's faulty argumentation and reasoning see Close, 'Don Quixote's Sophistry and Wisdom'.

38 Luis Rosales, Cervantes y la Libertad, p. 65, n. 164. Knud Togeby in La estructura del Quijote, edited and translated into Spanish by Antonio Rodríguez Almodóvar (Seville, 1977), pp. 113-115, and Avalle-Arce and Riley, Suma cervantina, p. 67, argue that Don Quixote sees things as they really are in Part II - inns are not "transformed in his imagination" into castles; with the exception of the Río Ebro adventure, "acepta las apariencias como son" (Avalle-Arce and Riley, p. 67). This is adduced as evidence of his progress towards sanity. However, I have been
trying to show that it is inaccurate to say that Don Quixote ever saw appearances other than as they were, he merely rejected them as false or degraded whenever they did not conform to chivalric expectations. His enterprise was to restore the correspondence between degenerate appearances and true essences. In Part II the fact that inns are not taken to be castles indicates a change of emphasis or direction in his madness: from the confident proclamatory attitude of early Part I Don Quixote gradually adopts a more tentative and complex approach - but thanks largely to the confusion he believes to have been sown by envious enchanters. This reason for the change reveals him to be still quite insane.

39 In chapter 2, I observed how Eugène Vinaver and R. Howard Bloch attributed the chaos and destruction depicted in the Mort Artu to the withdrawal of divine guidance and the failure of judicial combat respectively. Arthurian romance is posited on the premise that there are channels through which God regulates the affairs of men. In the Quixote these transcendental channels are totally blocked, and in the following chapters I will discuss how Cervantes describes and explores the consequences.

40 Don Quixote's claim "que sólo estoy enamorado de ofdas de la gran fama que tiene de hermosa" is obviously an attempt to rationalize his lack of empirical evidence for the existence of Dulcinea by resorting to the venerable chivalric notion of "amor de lonh" or love from afar, which John Stevens, Medieval Romance, p.20, shows to be intimately associated with the romance heroine who is presented as "distant, mysterious, desirable, inaccessible and beautiful".
See Rosales, vol. II, pp. 93-101. The "engaño buscado" hypothesis ultimately rests on Rosales' view that in Part I Don Quixote is confident about his "visions" whereas in Part II he seeks some form of empirical evidence of the existence of Dulcinea and can therefore only be disappointed when he is deceived. As a result, Don Quixote colludes with Sancho in creating the "myth" of Dulcinea and forgetting Aldonza (on this latter point, see my note below).

Rosales does not, I feel, satisfactorily explain this phenomenon. Rather than face up to the consequences of his "engaño buscado" hypothesis by admitting an element of bad faith in the knight if he allows himself to be deceived, Rosales distinguishes between Dulcinea as an unimportant element in Part I, "una caricatura del ideal caballeresco" whom Cervantes mocks, and Dulcinea who, after Don Quixote's self-deception becomes "el símbolo de la amada ideal" (p.118), the product of Don Quixote's "fe creadora". Not only does this distinction not stand up to textual corroboration - Dulcinea is equally a chivalric caricature in Part II - it seems to rest on a contradiction between deception and good faith. Rosales further distinguishes between the knight's deluded "quijotismo" and his "quijanismo" after the "engaño buscado". This greater nobility is due to the fact that Don Quixote has painfully to "share" the Dulcinea myth with others like Sancho and the Duke and Duchess: Don Quixote "necesita ser hombre, comunicarse, derramarse y compartir su amor igual que se comparten el pan y el vino. Necesita creer comunitariamente, y Sancho, terrenal y bondadoso, va a servirle de Cirineo" (p.187). This view hardly accords with the mocking, ironical Sancho of Part II.
Unlike Rosales, who refuses to see any bad faith in Don Quixote, Mark Van Doren in Don Quixote's Profession (New York, 1958), sees the knight's real vocation as that of actor. But surely if Don Quixote were only play-acting, he would have found it most convenient at this point to pretend that he did see Dulcinea as Sancho described her? If he had not been genuinely convinced of the moral necessity to restore the world of chivalry he would scarcely have accepted the reality of the degraded Dulcinea with all its fatal implications. Furthermore, the fact that he does not transform what he sees here would seem to reinforce my point that he always accepts empirical reality as it is, except when he suspects that it will match some chivalric presupposition. His problem now is to test his own and Sancho's conflicting ocular evidence by resorting to traditional sources of chivalric knowledge, i.e. adventures and oracles.

Madariaga interprets this scene as the point where the knight's descent from "illusion" to "reality" intersects the squire's ascent from "reality" to "illusion" (pp.175-176), and he goes on to develop his views of the "Sanchification" of Don Quixote and the "Quixotification" of Sancho. While I agree that there is an intercrossing of destinies I would contend that Madariaga's account of it is fundamentally erroneous. Don Quixote's alleged pact with "las exigencias materiales" (p.177) does not compromise his idealizing madness, which consists in not giving priority to empirical methods of verification over romance methods. Sancho never understands the true nature of this enterprise. His "ilusión concreta" (p.168) of governing an island is quite simply due to peasant ignorance coupled with a naïve but very real ambition for power and wealth. The squire's ambitions may be excessive but they are not intrinsically futile
as are his master's aspirations to restore the ideal world of romance. Nevertheless, it is true that Don Quixote comes to depend rather on Sancho, but for the specific reason that it is the squire who is said to hold the key to the disenchantment of Dulcinea.

There is an illustrious chivalric precedent for this "experiment" which the knight proposes to undertake. It will be recalled that in Yvain, in the case of the two sisters, the younger seeks out "Le Chevalier au Lion" by following the trail of his exploits until she catches up with him. See my chapter 1.

There is, however, at least one notable precedent in Part I for Don Quixote's weariness and impatience with sceptics when he addresses one of the cuadrilleros in xlvi, p. 478: "¿Por dicha vuestras mercedes, señores caballeros, son versados y perictos en esto de la caballería andante? Porque si lo son, comunicaré con ellos mis desgracias; y si no, no hay para qué me canse en decillas."

For fuller discussions of the Montesinos Cave episode see Madariaga, pp.193-204; Forcione, pp.137-146; Percas de Ponseti, vol.II,pp.407-447; and Riley, 'Metamorphosis, Myth and Dream in the Cave of Montesinos' (forthcoming article).

Percas de Ponseti, vol.II, pp.448-583, gives a very full account of the romance sources which may have inspired the Montesinos Cave episode. However, for our purposes, Lida de Malkiel's article, 'Dos huellas del Esplandián en el Quijote y el Persiles', where she shows the similarities between chapters 98 and 99 of the Esplandián and Montesinos Cave, is of particular interest. In addition to the similarities she observes,
there is another, ironically inverted, parallel. As I pointed out in my chapter 2, Montalvo abruptly interrupted the romance world in order to plunge us into the world of his own "real" experience, just as Don Quixote here interrupts the "real" world in order to enter into what he alleges is the world of romance. Furthermore, Montalvo used the "real" world to bolster the credibility of his romance world whereas Don Quixote attempts to use his oneiric experience of the romance world to validate his activity in the "real" world.

49 Rosales, vol. II, p. 66, n. 164, and Avalle-Arce and Riley in Suma cervantina, p. 67, believing Don Quixote to see empirical reality more clearly in Part II, regard this Río Ebro adventure as unique because it alone recalls the adventures of Part I where the knight "transformed" everyday reality in his mind. However, I would say it is wholly consistent with the new direction of Don Quixote's madness in Part II where he is now seeking supernatural or oracular signs which will enable him to break the maleficent hold of enchanters over him. The very unexpectedness of a tethered boat appears to him to be an omen of good fortune, a sign from heaven that his luck has changed. Therefore he acquires enough confidence from this sign to revert to the more direct chivalric action of Part I.

50 Madariaga, p. 218, calls it "un típico desmayo de la voluntad". Avalle-Arce and Riley, Suma cervantina, p. 57, n. 22, regard it as a "rendición verbal". But Don Quixote is merely regretting that the evil enchanters still have influence over him. As early as Part I, xiii, p. 119, he had explained to Vivaldo that knights errant achieve glory through their efforts but adds that "si a los que a tal grado subieron les faltaran encantadores y sabios que los ayudaran, que ellos quedaran bien defraudados de sus deseos y bien engañados de sus esperanzas". Even at the outset of his career Don Quixote was able to conceive of failure if the help of good enchanters were not forthcoming.
The narrator remarks that "aquél fue el primer día que de todo en todo conocí y creyó ser caballero andante verdadero y no fantástico, viéndose tratar del mismo modo que él había leído se trataban los tales caballeros en los pasados siglos" (II.xxxi.762). His reception by the Duke and Duchess conforms exactly to his chivalric expectations and this is the first time in Part II ("el primer día") that he has been able to find evidence that he is succeeding in extricating himself from the circularity of subjective assertions about his chivalric destiny. His reception according to the correct chivalric specifications leads him to believe that his status is beginning to have objective validity at last, in spite of Dulcinea's enchantment.

A.J. Close, 'Don Quixote's Love for Dulcinea', pp.251-252, concludes, after discussing the knight's interrogation by the Duke and Duchess, that Cervantes sees the madman's love "as a comic sham and his defensive reasonings as absurd sophistry and both together as undermining his pose as perfect chivalric lover". Close arrives at this conclusion because "the tacitly admitted premise of [Don Quixote's] answers is that his mistress is low-born. It seems clear enough, therefore, that Don Quixote still mentally identifies Dulcinea with Aldonza Lorenzo. If this were not so he would surely have no need to be so apologetic about her rank". Close goes on to say that the "Romantic thesis" upheld by Menéndez Pidal, Mia Gerhardt, Rosales and others "that Don Quixote forgets Aldonza in Part II, cannot be sustained". Close is obviously right to suspect that Don Quixote has not forgotten Aldonza for Dulcinea in Part II. According to my interpretation, he always "mentally identifies" Dulcinea with Aldonza (see my notes 30 and 31 above) and only by bearing this in mind can one understand the nature of his references to Dulcinea in his
various speeches to Sancho, Vivaldo, the Duke and Duchess and so on. The knight is "apologetic" about Dulcinea's rank here, not because he is simply a fraud or a "comic sham", as Close would have it, but because the Duke and Duchess have put him on the spot by "imfortunately" badgering him for some empirical evidence that Aldonza is a princess. Now Don Quixote, as I have tried to show, will have no truck with empirical proofs (viz. Merchants of Toledo adventure, I.iv), he is striving to restore the ideal world of chivalry through romance methods. In Part II, the enchanters, having polluted the very source of his chivalric energy, have reduced the knight to a state where even verbal argument, as he himself recognizes, fails to persuade. Therefore Don Quixote is in a defensive position, and his reasoning, on careful analysis, is faulty, but it is hardly "absurd sophistry", designed to mislead his audience. Don Quixote is clearly stalling until such time as Fortune will allow him to recover his true chivalric form.

53 See Gethin Hughes, 'The Cave of Montesinos: Don Quixote's interpretation and Dulcinea's disenchantment', BHS, LIV (1977), 107-113, for a detailed interpretation of the effect of this financial bargain on Don Quixote's attitude to Dulcinea.

54 See, for example, Togeby, p. 115, and J.J. Allen, Don Quixote: Hero or Fool?, pp.43-44.

55 Martín de Riquer in Aproximación al Quijote (Barcelona, 1967), pp.162-168, makes the point that towards the end of Part II Don Quixote comes across "real" bandits and "real" war against the Turks and that even though these are just the sort of adventures he would have read about in the books of chivalry, he remains a
passive spectator. Riquer sees Don Quixote's diffidence when confronted with the "reality" of courage and heroism as a sign that the end is nigh for him. Moreno Baez in Reflexiones sobre el Quijote (Madrid, 1968), pp.46-47, takes this as a sign of Don Quixote's "desengaño" and therefore part of his progressive return to sanity. By contrast, Avalle-Arce and Riley in Suma cervantina, p.73, show how Don Quixote does in fact attempt to intervene in "real" adventures more often in Part II than in Part I. They arrive at a view that is directly the reverse of Riquer's: "Con todo, se ve que cuanto menos loco está don Quijote más caso hace de las aventuras verdaderas. Existe una lógica correlación entre su estado mental que va cambiando y los episodios externos". The extent of the knight's intervention in "real" adventures is clearly not a reliable index of his mental health, it would seem rather to be an aspect of Cervantes's self-confessed problem of integrating extraneous episodes satisfactorily into the main narrative. This I shall discuss in chapter 5.

The tendency of so many critics to see the progress of the knight's career as a gradual acceptance of empirical reality has its source in a wish to find a straightforward moral development in the novel whereby mental and moral health can be directly equated with empirical or commonsensical perceptions of reality. The best example of this tendency is J.J. Allen's interpretation in Don Quixote: Hero or Fool?

By introspection I do not wish to suggest that Don Quixote is prey to the sort of self-doubt ascribed to him by Madariaga, Allen, Moreno Baez and others, who believe that the knight is inwardly questioning the
validity of his chivalric illusions as empirical reality gets the better of him. The "doubt", such as it is, is between the "false" signs of the enchanters and the "true" chivalric ones. I give a thorough account of this "introspection" and its aesthetic implications in chapter 5.

58 There are, of course, in addition to this, three versions of Don Quixote's history/story: his own idealized version, Benengeli's account, and the "false" history of Avellaneda. See Riley, 'Three Versions of Don Quixote', MLR, LXVIII (1973), 807-819. I am referring here to the three levels of 'reality' within the context of Don Quixote's life, of which the knight is aware, and to which he addresses himself in his endeavour to restore the world of chivalry in spite of enchanters.


60 P.E. Russell and A.J. Close have rightly stressed the fact that the Quixote is a "funny book", but in doing so they imply a straightforward Cervantine collusion with the reader's commonsense as a corrective to the knight's madness. However, they overlook the operation of the knight's madness in overturning the reader's expectations and assumptions. This counter-vailing thrust of Cervantes's comedy is of the utmost aesthetic importance as I shall demonstrate in subsequent chapters.

63 Riley, Cervantes's Theory of the Novel, p.91.
D.C. Muecke in *Irony*, pp.14-15, gives a usefully concise account of the early meanings of irony, especially in its Socratic mode: "'Eironeia' is first recorded in Plato's *Republic*. Applied to Socrates by one of his victims, it seems to have meant something like 'a smooth, low-down way of taking people in'. For Demosthenes an 'eiron' was one who evaded his responsibilities as a citizen by pretending unfitness. For Theophrastus an 'eiron' was evasive and non-committal, concealing his enmities, pretending friendship, misrepresenting his acts, never giving a straight answer ... For Cicero, 'ironia' does not have the abusive meanings of the Greek word. In his usage it is either a rhetorical figure or the wholly admirable 'urbane pretence' of a Socrates, irony as a pervasive habit of discourse ... To these two meanings of irony recognized by Cicero, the rhetorician Quintilian added an intermediary one, irony as the elaboration of a figure of speech into an entire argument, the elaboration of some such irony as 'That was very intelligent of you!' into Erasmus's *In Praise of Folly*.

In my view, J.B. Avalle-Arce in *Don Quijote como forma de vida* (Valencia, 1976), pp.29-31, gives an erroneous interpretation of this phrase by relating it, not to the immediately preceding statement that a father is blind to the faults of his son because of the love he bears him, but rather to the earlier statement: "no he podido yo contravenir al orden de naturaleza; que en ella cada cosa engendra su .. semejante".
Avalle-Arce, therefore, parallels Alonso Quijano's transformation of himself into Don Quixote with Cervantes's transformation of his "sterile imagination" into the marvel of the Quixote; since the tired mind of Cervantes could not have fathered the Quixote without "contravening the order of nature", it follows that he can only be its step-father. However, if we examine the actual text more closely we can see that Cervantes's irony is much less elaborate. The "padre/padrastro" distinction is wholly tongue-in-cheek, not a way of referring proudly to his marvellous creation at all, but rather the first steps in an ironical strategy designed to "absolve" the reader from any sense of obligation in evaluating the quality of the novel.

3 Eleanor S. O'Kane in *Refrenes y frases proverbiales españoles de la Edad Media*, Anejo II, BRAE (Madrid, 1959), gives two examples of this proverb: (1) "So mi manto al rey mato" from Seniloquium, 441 (1450-1500), Biblioteca Nacional MS 19.343; (2) "Debajo de mi manto al rey mato" from A. Galante 'Proverbes judéo-espagnoles', RHisp IX (1902). A.A. Parker in *The Humour of Spanish Proverbs*, Diamante Series XIII (London, 1963), p. 16, interprets this proverb as meaning "the assertion of independence", "the refusal to cringe" or "every man is his own master: in the inviolability of his own personality he can rise above political or economic oppression".

4 It may strike some as odd that Cervantes himself nowhere uses the word "ironía" to describe a technique which I will argue is so pervasive in his novel as to be a central aesthetic principle. The reason for this is that in his time such a word would have been confined to its restricted rhetorical sense as a trope whereby one thing is said when the opposite is meant. Muecke in *Irony*, pp.15-17, observes that "the word 'irony' does not appear in English until 1502 and did not come into general use until the early eighteenth century". However, English colloquial usage expressed the ironic mode in various ways: to fleer, flout, gibe, jeer, mock, scoff, scorn, taunt. Muecke
adds that "by the middle of the eighteenth century the concept of irony in England, and, as far as I know in other European countries, had scarcely evolved, in its broad outlines, beyond the point already reached in Quintilian ... In 1748 Fielding used the word 'irony' with reference to the satiric strategy he practised of inventing a foolish character who would ineptly support and so unconsciously condemn views Fielding wished to condemn. But this kind of irony, as old in practice as the Socratic dialogues and Lucian's Sale of Lives and familiar as it is to every playgoer and novel-reader, has yet to be given a generally accepted name". See also G.G. Sedgewick, Of Irony, Especially in Drama (Toronto, 1948), and Norman Knox, The Word Irony and Its Context, 1500-1755 (Durham, N.C., 1961). When one refers to Cervantine "irony", therefore, one is giving a literary name to a technique, mode or narrative stance of ancient pedigree which had not at the time been precisely labelled. This might explain why Cervantes's declaration of ironic intent is couched in the form of an old proverb which expresses with great vividness the basic relations inherent in all irony. I know of no study of the history of the word "ironía" in the Spanish language.

5 Américo Castro in 'Los prólogos al Quijote', Hacia Cervantes, acutely observes that Cervantes used "ironía metódica" to "isolate" the elements of individual human consciousness, what he calls "el limpio destello del 'darse cuenta' humano", from the ancient lumber of myths and conventions (p.293), and he goes on (pp.293-297) to outline "los momentos esenciales del proceso de ironización que un día culminará en el Quijote". The particularizing functions of irony, according to Castro, allow Cervantes to treat the "circumstances and existential necessities" of individual characters:"Se borran los confines
entre lo verosímil y lo fantaseado, entre lo razonado y lo sentido. Todo descansa sobre una bien fundada 'razón de estar' ... Pero tan sorprendente innovación no habría sido posible sin la ironía, sin separar en lo que se dice, lo que realmente se piensa de lo aparentemente dicho” (p.297). In this particular instance in the Prologue Cervantes is clearly asserting his right to invent freely, and I feel Castro is entirely correct to see in Cervantes's ironical rejection of traditional authorities the necessary starting-point for his portrayal of individual characters. I shall deal more fully with this phenomenon in later sections of this chapter and in the next.

6 By inventing this imaginary friend Cervantes casts himself in the Prologue as a literary character, he acquires an apparently objective persona which does not exactly correspond to his real self. For this reason Jean Canavaggio in 'Cervantes en primera persona', JHP, II (1977), 35-45, sees the use of the first person in these Cervantine prologues as constituting a personal myth which foreshadows the type of "I" employed in modern autobiography.

7 Critics like P.E. Russell, 'Don Quixote as a Funny Book', or A.J. Close, The Romantic Approach to Don Quixote, in large part base their criticism of those interpreters of the Quixote who, they allege, read too many unwarrantedly "serious" philosophical themes into the novel, on the argument that Cervantes himself claimed to be doing no more than satirizing the romances. Nevertheless, the phrase "mal fundada máquina" suggests that Cervantes was aiming to attack and overhaul the entire aesthetic foundation of the genre. As Cervantes himself points out here, such a task has implications which extend far beyond the writing of a "funny book". However, I
would readily concede that too many critics hitherto have speculatively "over-philosophized" about the novel, with scant regard for the actual text.

8 Américo Castro in 'Los prólogos al Quijote', Hacia Cervantes, pp.270-271, emphasizes the importance of these two passages I have quoted here and accords them a similar interpretation to mine. As regards the first-quoted passage about imitation, he says it is meant "para que no incurramos en el candor, aún frecuente, de tomar la obra de arte como un trasunto de lo que se ve o de lo que realmente sucede". The next passage, which he calls a "sentencia esencial", expresses the following: "Lo que el artista ha de imitar, por consiguiente, no es lo que está ahí (sea tortilla o trapacerías), sino su designio creador, su intención, dice Cervantes, aquello que estéis en trance de crear poetamente en vuestro ánimo."


10 See Chapter 3, pp. 164-165.

11 Forcione, p.46.


13 Max Black, 'Metaphor' in Philosophy Looks at the Arts, edited by Joseph Margolis (New York, 1962), pp.218-234 (p.234),writes that metaphor relates two terms in three ways: by "substitution", by "comparison", or by "interaction", where the secondary meaning acts as a filter on the literal and creates a new meaning. The literal is "seen through" the metaphorical expression, or it is "projected upon" the field of the subsidiary subject. It is this last type of metaphor which, I would argue, represents most faithfully art's relationship to life, for as Black points out (p.234), "substitution-metaphors and comparison-metaphors can be replaced by
literal translations ... But 'interaction-metaphors' are not expendable. Their mode of operation requires the reader to use a system of implications ... as a means for selecting, emphasizing, and organizing relations in a different field. This use of a 'subsidiary subject' to foster insight into a 'principal subject' is a distinctive intellectual operation ... demanding simultaneous awareness of both subjects but not reducible to any comparison between the two".

14 Richard Wollheim, *Art and its Objects* (Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1970), expresses this relationship between art and life as follows: "It has been said, with reason, that the crux or core of art may be recognized in some effect as simple as the completely satisfying progression from a cobbled street to the smooth base of a building that grows upward from it. Here, then, we have the dependence of art on life. But, whereas in ordinary life, or in everyday perception, such projections may go unchecked, or they need be controlled only be practical considerations, in art there is a further constraining influence of greater authority, in the person of the artist who has made or moulded the work of art according to his own inner demands. It is the imprint of these demands upon the work that we must respect, if we are to retain the aesthetic attitude. The artist has built an arena, within which we are free, but whose boundaries we must not overstep" (pp.117-118).

Roger Scruton in *Art and Imagination* (London, 1974), pp.205-207, summarizes the similarities between representation in painting and in literature by saying that "in understanding a piece of literature as a representation we may suspend our judgement of its literal truth; we appreciate it not as a means for conveying information, but rather as a vehicle of thought in whatever form. The thought involved in appreciation of literature is, characteristically, 'unasserted', but this does not mean that truth is irrelevant to aesthetic interest". Thus truth could well, he adds, merely refer to what a poem says or to the truthfulness of depiction, "but in none of these cases is truth the object of appreciation: if it were such then the content of the work could be phrased in some abstract way, and one's interest would not outlive the perception of its truth. An interest in truth alone must treat all works of literature as documentaries, in the manner of 'socialist realism'". Furthermore, "representation in literature is like representation in painting in that it is partly dependent upon the author's intentions". The disclosing of an author's intentions is dependent upon the reader's "understanding of the conventions through which intention is focused", for example, through devices such as irony. "It is through such discrete revelations of intention that literary styles develop, and it is through the development of style that literature becomes capable of representing at a stroke what the common reader would take a lifetime to observe."
However, there is a traditional view established by Connop Thirlwall in a classic article entitled 'On the Irony of Sophocles', *The Philological Museum*, II (1833), which holds that irony is inherent in certain situations. Thirlwall gives the example of a judge hearing the litigants in a lawsuit argue a case where both sides of the question are equally convincing. He concludes that "... the irony lies, not in the demeanour of the judge, but is deeply embedded in the case itself, which seems to favour each of the litigants but really eludes them both" (p.48). Thus irony would appear to be an objective phenomenon. However, I believe this conclusion to be mistaken. The irony here arises not from the case itself but from the position of the judge in relation to it. As Thirlwall himself puts it, the case "seems to favour each of the litigants", - this is the subjective impression of the judge - but nevertheless the judge is somehow also aware that it "really eludes them both". Therefore the judge experiences a sense of irony from his own realisation that his subjective impression of an impasse is in fact contradicted by the objective truth of the case which happens to elude both him and the litigants. The judge, therefore, feels himself to be as much the victim of irony as the litigants themselves, because he can sense his own ironic "blindness" to the real facts of the matter. It is as if the judge felt that he was being made the victim of an irony perpetrated by an unknown ironist who prevents him from perceiving things as they really are. Therefore, I would contend that irony is subjective and dependent on one's position vis-à-vis the situation.
A.R. Thompson, *The Dry Mock: A Study of Irony in Drama* (Berkeley, California, 1948), p. 28, says that there are three points of view towards an irony: that of the person being ironical and rejoicing in the discomfiture caused, that of the victim, and that of the spectator who sees both sides. Thompson further distinguishes between comic irony, where the spectator takes the side of the ironist, and tragic irony, where he is on the side of the victim. However, I would add that in certain situations (e.g. that of the judge in Thirlwall's example in note 17 above) an ironic victim can also be the spectator of the irony so long as he assumes that he is being attacked by an unknown or implicit ironist.

This sort of fluctuating ironic relationship can also occur in literary texts, as Wayne C. Booth, *A Rhetoric of Irony* (Chicago, 1974), p. 240, points out: "The author - in so far as we can discover him, and he is often very remote indeed - refuses to declare himself, however subtly, for any stable proposition, even the opposite of whichever proposition his irony vigorously denies. The only sure affirmation is that negation that begins all the ironic play: 'this affirmation must be rejected', leaving the possibility ... that since the universe (or at least the universe of discourse) is inherently absurd, all statements are subject to ironic undermining. No statement can really 'mean what it says'."

D.C. Muecke, *The Compass of Irony* (London, 1969), pp. 57-58, observes that Quintilian believed that irony becomes evident either by the delivery, the character of the speaker, or the nature of the subject. If any one of these is out of keeping with the words it at once becomes clear that the intention of the speaker is other than what he actually says. Muecke accepts
this but says that any two of these conditions must apply because an apparently ironic delivery could be the result of ineptitude. He suggests that irony is produced when we perceive a contradiction between a writer or speaker's opinions and the "whole context" within which it is presented.

Elements of unexpected contradiction or calculated reversal are crucial for irony. A.R. Thompson, p.52, usefully distinguishes between irony, paradox and parody. Parody, being the verbal equivalent of caricature, stresses not contradiction but exaggeration; the contrast is between an object and its exaggeration, not its opposite. Paradox says and means the opposite of the expected, whereas irony says the expected and means the opposite. An ironist attacks a folly or an evil but offers no substitute, while a person who uses paradox tries to win us over, he does not merely wish to ridicule our views.

Wayne C. Booth, A Rhetoric of Irony, p.23, distinguishes irony from other figures of speech such as metaphor and, by extension, allegory or fable, by observing that for the reader of metaphor "the essential process, as most critics have stressed, is addition or multiplication, not subtraction".

Irony approximates to an intuition - it "strikes" us, we "sense" it. One does not go in search of irony nor does one have to struggle to perceive it, for, if one has to do this the impact of the irony will have been lost and, most likely, one will have been its victim rather than a mere observer. Wayne Booth, A Rhetoric of Irony, p. 51, remarks that it is difficult to explain how and why we can recognize irony with so much certainty: "irony ... often produces a much higher degree of confidence than literal statement." Of course,
one can always reject the validity of an irony but this only after weighing up the issue retrospectively, that is, after one has already appreciated the irony for what it is worth.

24 Ironic meaning is highly particularized because it emerges as a function of a specific literal meaning, i.e. in order to contradict the latter. One can, however, "universalize" the principle of irony and so arrive at "general", "philosophical", or "cosmic" irony where ironic undermining is seen to be so pervasive as to exclude the possibility of a coherent, absolute view of the world. To quote Muecke, The Compass of Irony, p.122: "Subjectively, General Irony lies in our response to what we see, truly or falsely, as fundamental contradictions or paradoxes in life, contradictions that strike us not simply as puzzles - this would result only in trivial ironies - but as predicaments, many of which have forced men into a realization of their essential and terrifying loneliness in relation to others or to the universe at large."

25 See Roger Scruton, p.207: "'Representation' has a place in literature comparable to its place in painting, even though it arises in a different way; what representation gives to the spectator of art is in each case the same. In each case representation is a property rooted in intention, and realized in forms that have a degree of inter-subjective regularity - a recognizable visual aspect, and the agreed structures of English syntax. In both cases the central core of representation is 'intensional', divorced from reference. This is a natural consequence of the fact that our interest in art is not an interest in literal truth."
According to Bertrand Russell, *History of Western Philosophy*, 2nd edition (London, 1961), p.209, Greek philosophers and medieval scholastics attached more importance to deduction as a source of knowledge than modern philosophers do: "The defects of the scholastic method are those that inevitably result from laying stress on 'dialectic'. These defects are: indifference to facts and science, belief in reasoning in matters which only observation can decide, and an undue emphasis on verbal distinctions and subtleties. These defects we had occasion to mention in connection with Plato, but in the scholastics they exist in a much more extreme form" (p.428).

The debate between medieval realists and nominalists centred on the status that should be accorded to "universals". Proper names designated individual entities, "particulars", but words such as "man", "cow", "dog" which designated whole groups or species of particulars, were therefore "universals". The question then arose over whether these universals denoted real things or were merely words. If universals were real entities, was the generic essence of "man", say, distinguishable from the particular essence of an individual man? If so, how could one find a "principle of individuation" to differentiate between the particular essences of unique individuals within a genus or species? The problem of universals was a consequence of Aristotelian refinement of Plato's theory of forms. According to Bertrand Russell, p.175: "Aristotle's metaphysics, roughly speaking, may be described as Plato diluted by commonsense." See also Bertrand Russell, pp.141-143, 175-177, 210-211, 428-430, 458.

See Spitzer, p.173: "En el Nuevo Testamento aparece
una tendencia que ejercerá gran influjo en la caballería medieval: el cambio de nombre subsiguiente al bautismo será imitado en el cambio de nombre que sufre el caballero novel. En todos estos nombres sagrados (o sacramentales) la etimología desempeña un papel primordialísimo, por la razón de que el significado verdadero (originario) puede revelar verdades eternas latentes en las palabras."

29 Spitzer, p.194, interpreta esta escena de esta manera: "Cuando oye Don Quijote la expresión cantor referida a los galeotes, pregunta candidamente... '¿Por músicos y cantores van también a galeras?' Así la interpretación literal de la expresión sirve para poner de relieve el color macabro e irónico de su empleo metafórico ... Asistimos aquí al azoramiento de Don Quijote empeñado en entender las palabras en su sentido estricto. Podemos acaso ver insinuada una censura contra Don Quijote por su manera excesivamente literal de entender el lenguaje; pero ello contribuiría también a la crítica de la ambigüedad del lenguaje humano. Cervantes por su parte se contenta con sólo sugerir el problema lingüístico sin desarrollarlo dialécticamente."

30 Other examples of this Quixotic blindness to blatant parody are: the consolation he derives from the barber's ridiculous, burlesque prophecy that he will marry Dulcinea (I.xlvi.472-473), and the fact that he takes seriously Altisidora's absurd song in II.lvii. 949-951.
Spitzer, p.178, makes a similar point: "Así debemos concluir que, mientras para el mundo medieval los procedimientos de polionomasia y polietimología importaban para el conocimiento de la obra de Dios en el mundo, Cervantes empleaba los mismos procedimientos con la finalidad de revelar la multivalencia de que están dotadas las palabras para las distintas mentes humanas." However, this leads Spitzer to his Perspectivist interpretation of the Quixote whereas I would argue that Cervantes is interested to show how individuals can conceal their real intentions through irony and deceit. In my view, then, Cervantes sees the use of language in primarily moral rather than metaphysical or epistemological terms.

Carlos Varo, Génesis y evolución del "Quijote" (Madrid, 1968), also sees in the fulling mills episode an example of Sancho's malice and irony: "Hemos notado ya otras veces las respuestas tan intencionadas de Panza, su habilidad en aprovechar las palabras del interlocutor para ironizar con socarronería. Esta capacidad supone una inteligencia despierta" (p.211). However, Varo does not develop a discussion of the implications of Sancho's ironic intelligence such as I am attempting here and later in Chapter 5.

In Scriptural exegesis the figura was an event or thing in history which pre-figured a later historical event, e.g. the deliverance of the Jews from Egypt pre-figured the deliverance of mankind from sin by Christ's sacrifice on the Cross. But these events equally referred to spiritual realities insofar as they genuinely denoted the liberation of the soul from the bondage of sin. In other words, the figura was a form of "existential" allegory imbuing history with spiritual meaning. See Jean Pépin, Dante et la Tradition de l'Allégorie, pp.45-51, and A.C. Charity, Events and Their After-Life (Cambridge, 1966), pp.1-9.
By the phrase "ironic author" I mean to focus attention on Cervantes's use of ironic devices in constructing his narrative and handling the characters and relations between them. I am making a distinction, therefore, between the "ironic author" and Cervantes's narrative personae, either as editor of the novel, the fictional narrator Cide Hamete, or any of the other narrative intermediaries. This latter aspect has been extensively studied; see Geoffrey Stagg, 'El sabio Cid Hamete Venengeli', BHS, XXXIII (1956), 218-225; Richard L. Predmore, El mundo del Quijote, pp. 17-21 and 102-112; E.C. Riley, Cervantes's Theory of the Novel, pp. 205-212; Bruce W. Wardropper, 'Don Quixote: Story or History?', MPH, LXIII (1965), 1-11; George Haley, 'The Narrator in Don Quijote: Maese Pedro's Puppet Show', MLN, LXXX (1965), 145-165; Ruth El Saffar, 'The Function of the Fictional Narrator in Don Quijote', MLN, LXXXIII (1968), 164-177; Alban K. Forcione, Cervantes, Aristotle and the 'Persiles', pp. 131-166; J.J. Allen, 'The Narrators, The Reader and Don Quijote' MLN, XCI (1976), 201-212; R.B. Tate, 'Who wrote Don Quixote?', Vida Hispánica, XXV (1977).

See also E.C. Riley's forthcoming article, 'Anticipaciones en el Quijote del estilo indirecto libre', III Congreso de la Asociación Internacional de Hispanistas (Salamanca, 1971).

37 See 'Don Quixote's Love for Dulcinea', p.253.
38 Close, 'Don Quixote's Love for Dulcinea', p.252.
CHAPTER FIVE

1 Forcione, pp. 131-166, is surely right to stress Cervantes's ridiculing of neo-Aristotelian dogma, principally through Cide Hamete Benengeli: "The Moorish historian-author repeatedly scrutinizes his creation according to the most fashionable literary theories of the day, but his introduction of literary principles is always accompanied by mystifications, sophistry, evasions, and equivocations of one sort or another. In the resultant play we witness a consistent parodistic dismissal of the value of the theories invoked, specifically those concerning verisimilitude, decorum, poetic truth, and historical truth" (pp.164-165). However, it is clear that Cide Hamete is used equally as a device for parodying the historical scruples of Spanish romance narrators. Cervantes's parody is, therefore, twofold: directed against the restrictions of the neo-Aristotelians but also against the licence of the romance-writers.

2 Spitzer, pp.215-216, writes: "El verdadero héroe de la novela lo es Cervantes en persona, el artista que combina un arte de crítica y de ilusión conforme a su libérrima voluntad. Desde el instante en que abrimos el libro hasta el momento en que lo cerramos, sentimos que hay allí un poder invisible y omnipotente que nos lleva adonde y como quiere." However, I would argue that this notion of freedom is more applicable to Ariosto and the Spanish romance-writers than to Cervantes. Forcione explicitly links Cervantes with Ariosto: "Although Cervantes appropriates specific arguments from classicists who defended the romanzi,
he does not share their purpose of reconciling Ariosto and Aristotle any more than he shares Ariosto's intention of depicting for the reader the most distant reaches of the fantasy. He uses their arguments to turn reason back on reason and because Ariosto was for him the great exemplar of artistic freedom" (p. 345). Forcione, therefore, qualifies Spitzer's position when he says that Cervantes did not intend, like Ariosto, to give full rein to fantasy. But if Cervantes rejected the restrictions of neo-Aristotelian verisimilitude yet did not exert his full artistic freedom, what were the constraints he placed on his imagination? Forcione concludes that Cervantes is ambivalent towards neo-Aristotelian classicism not just because he was aware of its limitations, not simply because "the sic-et-non characteristic of his critique of experience generates an argument for both sides of the specific literary controversies - i.e., reason-emotion, edification-pleasure, culto-vulgo, the verisimilar - the marvellous, unity-variety, Tasso-Ariosto ... It is rather that classicism, in asking the right questions about the artistic undertaking, was ... somewhat short-sighted in looking for the answers" (p.343). Forcione goes on to argue that for Cervantes, "the principles of decorum, verisimilitude, unity and exemplarity were convenient guideposts for creative activity, but the area which they circumscribed was very narrow. Beyond such limits the vast province which Montaigne had called 'experience' lay excluded from artistic exploitation - the fluid interplay between real human beings as well as the inner realm of subjectivity, the blend of imagination and reality which makes every man an individual world. Cervantes chose to make experience the subject of his art, and he was
acutely conscious of the revolutionary character of such an undertaking" (pp.343-344). As will become evident in this chapter, I entirely agree with Forcione that Cervantes is concerned with exploiting "experience" in his art, and that in the Quixote, as Forcione puts it, "we observe a process which we could describe as the birth struggle of the modern novel, a drama of disengagement as the new literary form breaks free from the strictures which ages had created" (p.344). But what is this process, what are the characteristics of the new literary form? The nub of the problem, I believe, is as follows: if Cervantes was breaking free both from neo-Aristotelian strictures and the Spanish romances' fraudulent claims to historical truth on the one hand, and yet reluctant to indulge totally in fantasy like Ariosto on the other, what then was the discipline to which he submitted his creative activity? In other words, how was he to structure "experience" with the detachment and objectivity necessary to avoid that imaginative arbitrariness indistinguishable from fantasy? I would argue that neo-Aristotelian verisimilitude was inadequate not just because it was excessively restrictive but, more importantly, because, as Weinberg points out, it was misconceived. Like the romance-writers' claims to historical truth, neo-Aristotelian verisimilitude too readily equated the aesthetic object with the real object in everyday or historical experience. But if Cervantes wished to distinguish between the two there still would have remained the question of detachment and objectivity in the creation of the aesthetic object itself. This is precisely the problem I wish to discuss in this chapter. Forcione's
ambivalence on this fundamental issue leads him to subscribe to the view of Cervantine perspectivism and relativism expounded by Ortega, Castro, Casalduero and Spitzer (p.343). Forcione writes: "What is true? What is false? Cervantes' works are full of characters who are preoccupied with truth ..." (p.340), and he later adds: "The classical example of Cervantes' perspectivism is of course the barber's basin, which can represent 'un real de a ocho como un maravedí' for Sancho, a necessary tool of the trade for its owner, a warrior's helmet for Don Quixote, and in the hands of the artist an instrument functioning in the statement of a sad truth about existence" (p.341). Now, as I have demonstrated earlier (see Chapter 3, note 34) this Perspectivist interpretation is not borne out by the text itself. It is significant that Forcione, like Spitzer (pp.223-225) should want to qualify his Perspectivist interpretation by adding that Cervantes does not attempt "to undermine religion, conventional morality, and the established order of the state ... Cervantes knew that there are certain truths and certain values beyond question" (p.341). But this last affirmation is not compatible in my view with the epistemological relativism ascribed earlier to Cervantes. If he was a convinced Catholic and patriot, he would surely have sought to reconcile in his art his alleged perspectivism with his religious faith. The Perspectivist school has not yet, I feel, produced an adequate explanation for this apparent inconsistency.

3 Michael Bell, 'The Structure of Don Quixote', Essays in Criticism, XVIII (1968), 241-257, sees the "first large strategic movement of the whole novel" in the detaching of Don Quixote from the fictional frame in which he is presented in Part I. He gives other minor examples of how the character achieves "extra-contextual existence",
especially as regards Don Quixote's awareness of a potential book about himself. This last aspect of the novel had been thoroughly discussed by E.C. Riley in *Cervantes's Theory of the Novel*, pp.200-220, and more specifically elaborated in 'Three Versions of Don Quixote'. Mia I. Gerhardt in *Don Quijote, la vie et les livres* (Amsterdam, 1955) and E.C. Riley have shown the significance of Cide Hamete and other narrative intermediaries in the novel (see Riley, 'The Fictitious-Authorship Device' in *Cervantes's Theory of the Novel*, pp.205-212). Riley relates this device to the pseudo-authors of the romances and to Montalvo's Maestro Elisabad. He points out that Cervantes is "very careful to show that it is a deception" (p.205). This fact, of course, distinguishes Cervantes from romance-authors. In Riley's view the narrative intermediaries and different versions of the novel are devices for achieving authorial detachment "by erecting mirrors that will reflect the sides hidden from view" and so, as in the use of mirrors by Italian Renaissance painters or Velasquez, produce "a curiously heightened effect of reality" (p.220). However, I will attempt to show in this chapter that there is another less subjective and illusionistic method by which Cervantes achieves detachment, and I would suggest that this latter method is more crucial than the trompe l'oeil mirror-effects for the development of the modern novel.

Ruth El Saffar has elaborated on the fictitious-authorship device, upon which E.C. Riley had focused critical attention, by treating it as the major, and seriously handled, principle of authorial distance and control in 'The Function of the Fictional Narrator in Don Quijote', *MLN*, LXXXIII (1968), 164-177. The presence of Cide Hamete and other narrators in the novel is taken
to be a representation of a struggle by the author to achieve control over his fiction and avoid being absorbed by it as yet another character. "In Don Quixote each fictional narrator points beyond himself to another by whom he is controlled when he loses control of his own narrative or dramatic fabrication. Therefore, the further up we go on that scale the less we know - we know nothing about the ultimate author" (p.175).

5 Marfa Rosa de Malkiel in '"De cuyo nombre no quiero acordarme', RFE, I (1939), 167-171, sees this formula as following in the narrative tradition of popular stories. For Leo Spitzer, p.215, it is an example of Cervantes's self-conscious assertion of artistic freedom.

6 I am excluding El curioso impertinente because it is presented within the novel specifically as a work of fiction, even though, of course, it belongs to the same genre as the other interpolated tales. I wish to focus on the way these other tales are integrated into the main narrative. For discussion of the 'pertinence' of El curioso see Bruce W. Wardropper, 'The Pertinence of El curioso impertinente', PMLA, LXXII (1957), 587-600; Julián Marias, 'La pertinencia del Curioso impertinente', Obras completas, III (Madrid, 1959), 306-311; Vicente Gaos 'El Quijote y las novelas interpoladas', Temas y problemas de literatura española (Madrid, 1959), pp.107-118; E.C. Riley, 'Episodio, novela y aventura en Don Quijote', AC, V (1955-56), 209-230; J.B. Avalle-Arce, Deslindes cervantinos, pp.121-161.

7 Although the interpolated tales vary superficially from pastoral and Moorish settings to those of contemporary Spanish life, they share the narrative formulae derived
from Italian novellieri like Boccaccio, Bandello and Giraldi Cinthio, and, more remotely, from native sources prior to the fifteenth century, represented variously by the stories in Pedro Alfonso's *Disciplina Clericalis*, books of oriental tales translated and imitated in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and especially, by the stories in Don Juan Manuel's *Conde Lucanor*, the works of Ramón Lull, and the Arcipreste de Talavera. See M. Menéndez y Pelayo, *Orígenes de la novela* (Madrid, 1943) III, pp.3-217, and Augustín G. de Ameza y Mayo, *Cervantes creador de la novela corta española* (Madrid, 1956), I.2, pp.396-465, who also refers to the widespread taste in sixteenth century Spain for the "género sentimental" represented by the longer narratives about romantic lovers of Diego de San Pedro, Juan de Flores, and, of course, *La Celestina*.

Américo Castro in 'La estructura del Quijote', *Hacia Cervantes*, p.303, emphasizes the conventionality of the stories then in vogue in Italy and Spain: "La novedad de todas ellas - incluyendo las ficciones al modo oriental - consistía en la ingenua manera de combinar los eternos estímulos del vivir humano: amar, aborrecer, vencer los obstáculos interpuestos entre los propósitos y sus metas, entregarse al juego delicioso del ensueño, todo ello vertido en moldes o marcos que mantenían el relato sin enlace con la experiencia actual e inmediata del autor y de los lectores."

Thomas Mann in 'Voyage with Don Quixote' in *Cervantes: A Collection of Critical Essays*, edited by Lowry Nelson, Jr. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1969) pp.49-72, commented: "I cannot but shake my head over the single tales scattered through it, so extravagantly sentimental they are, so precisely in the style and taste of the very productions that the poet had set himself to mock. He crams his hosts of readers full to their hearts' content
with the very diet from which he would wean them - a pleasant cure! In those idylls he resigns his earlier rôle, as though to say that if the age wanted that sort of thing he could give it them, yes, even be a master at it" (p.56).


Inventosch, 'Cervantes and Courtly Love ...', pp. 67-68, maintains against Avalle-Arce that Cervantes is not here upholding "real" peasant wisdom against the artificiality of dressed-up shepherds because the "false" shepherdess Marcela does provide the "truth" of the matter. However, Inventosch accounts for this Cervantine paradox by referring to Spitzer's Perspectivism. My view is that Cervantes is playing with the reader by deliberately creating irresolvable tensions between notions of artificiality and naturalism.

Américo Castro in 'Los prólogos al Quijote', Hacia Cervantes, pp. 274-290, argued that the source of Cervantes's interest in independent, individualized characters was "la erótica pastoril" because it was in pastoral where, for the first time, literary character was portrayed "como una singularidad estrictamente humana, como expresión de un 'dentro de sí'" (p. 276) without subordination to symbolism or other transcendental connections. However, I would argue that this may have been true as a starting-point, but in Marcela's story and the other pastoral episodes of the Quixote Cervantes attacks the very premises of the genre. I find it difficult to accept Castro's contention that "Cervantes no ironiza lo pastoril ni lo toma en broma en el Quijote, aunque bien fácil le hubiera sido proyectar cualquier penumbra sobre Marcela - un alma de armiño, presuntuosa de su albura" (p. 281). Cervantes, as I hope to have shown, does just this.

Northrop Frye in The Secular Scripture, pp. 46-47, writes: "Nineteenth century writers of romance, or of fiction which is close to romance in its technique, sometimes speak in their prefaces and elsewhere of the greater 'liberty' that they feel entitled to take. By liberty they mean a greater designing power, especially in
their plot structures ... In displaced or realistic fiction the author tries to avoid coincidence. That is, he tries to conceal his design, pretending that things are happening out of inherent probability."

15 In my Chapter 4, section iv, I identify some basic ironic devices employed by Cervantes to undermine the overt statements and sentiments of his characters and reveal hidden motives or contradictory impressions.

16 See I.xliii.448:

"Allí fue el desear de la espada de Amadís, contra quien no tenía fuerza encantamento alguno; allí fue el maldecir de su fortuna; allí fue el exagerar la falta que haría en el mundo su presencia el tiempo que allí estuviese encantado, que sin duda alguna se había creído que lo estaba; allí el acordarse de nuevo de su querida Dulcinea del Toboso; allí fue el llamar a su buen escudero Sancho Panza, que, sepultado en sueño y tendido sobre el albarda de su jumento, no se acordaba en aquel instante de la madre que lo había parido; allí llamó a los sabios Lirgandeo y Alquife, que le ayudasen; allí invocó a su buena amiga Urganda que le socorriese, y, finalmente, allí le tomó la mañana, tan desesperado y confuso, que bramaba como un toro" (my emphases).


18 Francisco Márquez Villanueva, Personajes y temas del Quijote (Madrid, 1975), p.33.

19 Madariaga, Guía del lector del "Quijote", showed with what psychological insight Dorotea, and also Cardenio, are portrayed (pp.85-104 and 105-120 respectively). América Castro 'La estructura del Quijote', Hacia Cervantes, pp.309-310, argued that though Dorotea begins "siendo un personaje estático de narración pastoral ... el tipo abstracto se individualiza". Márquez Villanueva, pp. 15-75, argues along similar lines and distinguishes characters like
Dorotea or Cardenio from those in the *Heptameron* of Marguerite de Navarre (p.75). Márquez Villanueva points out that the reason for this is *"por efecto del desplazamiento, que en Cervantes se consuma para siempre, del foco narrativo de la fábula a los personajes"*. I would, of course, entirely concur with this idea but I am attempting here a study of the experimental nature of this displacement; it could not have happened overnight, after all. In the case of Dorotea we do not have an entirely independent character; she is too subordinated to an improbable plot-design and, furthermore, her character is revealed for the most part through oratio recta speeches. Now this rhetorical exposition of character is more typical of romance than of the novel. We have encountered such monologues, for example, uttered by Laudine or Yvain in *Le Chevalier au Lion* or by Amadís and Esplandián. As Scholes and Kellogg, *The Nature of Narrative*, p.188, point out: "We can observe that the monologues tend to be rhetorical in what we call romance, and psychological in what we call realistic narrative. This distinction is, in fact, as crucial and basic as any which can be made to distinguish the two forms." Dorotea and Cardenio, I would argue, do not fully evolve beyond romance characterization.

20 Márquez Villanueva, pp.126-134 and p.129, n.58. See also Leo Spitzer, pp.210-213.

21 It will be recalled that, according to Northrop Frye, *The Secular Scripture*, p.54, reality in romance is connected with "existence before 'once upon a time', and subsequent to 'and they lived happily ever after'" , whereas illusion for romance is the alienation caused by temporal vicissitudes and collisions with external circumstances. "Most romances end happily, with a
return to the state of identity, and begin with a
departure from it ... This means that most romances
exhibit a cyclical movement of descent into a night
world and a return to the idyllic world, or to some
symbol of it like marriage".

22 Immerwahr, p.135, comments: "In the 'Bodas de
Camacho' true love triumphs over mercenary interest,
but only by Resorting to a crude fraud."

23 That the dénouement makes little sense either in
traditional generic terms, much less in realistic
terms, is very well illustrated by Thomas Mann in
'Voyage with Don Quixote', pp.59-60, where Mann
protests at the immorality of the deceitful Basilio's
winning of Quiterfa: "Is this really fair? The suicide
scene is painted with complete seriousness and tragic
emphasis. The emotions of horror roused not only in
the other actors but in the reader as well are quite
unequivocal. Yet in the end the whole thing dissolves
in laughter and betrays itself as a farce and travesty.
It is not a little annoying. The question is: are such
practical mystifications really suitable for art — for
art as we understand it?" Mann further notes that it
is in the Greek or Byzantine romances that such highly
artificial devices for producing admiratio are to be
found. He points out that specifically in Achilles
Tatius's History of Leucippe and Cleitophon of the
second century A.D., there is a scene which almost exactly
foreshadows Basilio's trick. Stanislav Zimic has followed
up Mann's reference and in 'El "engaño a los ojos" en
las bodas de Camacho del "Quijote"', PMLA, LV (1972),
881-886, argues that whereas in Tatius the device is used
to astonish the reader with an extraordinary event,
with Cervantes it acquires a deeper significance, "elevándose a la preocupante meditación sobre el múltiple aspecto de la realidad" (p.885). Thus Zimic accounts for Mann's puzzlement over this scene by referring to Spitzer's Perspectivism. However, since I reject perspectivism as a serious preoccupation in the Quixote, I am inclined towards another explanation. Zimic observes that Cervantes must have known full well that in Basilio's mock death, it is the reader who is "más burlado" (p.881). Here I fully agree with Zimic. In my view Cervantes is indulging in a sly subversion of the narrative devices of the novella by choosing from a Greek romance a patently artificial device for creating admiratio and placing it in the "real" world of Don Quixote as the centre-piece of the story. He therefore goes as far as possible in the direction of open parody, exaggerating and virtually exposing the essential arbitrariness of the mechanisms which govern the romance-type love-stories of his time, without, however, permitting the reader to accept it conveniently as explicit parody. A superb tension between artificiality and verisimilitude is thereby generated.

24 For a full discussion of Philip III's policy towards the Moriscos and Cervantes's possible political opinions and fictional treatment of the problem, see Márquez Villanueva, pp.229-335.

25 Márquez Villanueva, pp.330-331, comments: "En cuanto a la propia historia de Ana Félix es preciso observar su desarrollo conforme a líneas muy convencionales, con claras resonancias de aquellos temas de cautiverio argelino que Cervantes gustó de llevar a su teatro en otra época ... La historia de Ana Félix no responde
sino de modo muy secundario al conocido motivo del paso repentino de la desesperación a la felicidad. Su verdadero y más terrible nudo queda aún por desatar y es muy dudoso que pueda serlo nunca, pues tanto Ricote como su hija siguen siendo reos del decreto de expulsión... El obstáculo legal o de justicia humana permanece en pie y tan alto personaje como el Virrey de Cataluña carece de atribuciones para derogarlo."

26 I have described the process by which Cervantes has, in a progressive series, "opened out" the conventional endings of these quasi-romance stories which are either pastoral or Italianate in their original inspiration. Carlos Blanco Aguinaga in 'Cervantes y la picaresca. Notas sobre dos tipos de realismo', NRFH, XI (1957), 313-342, has shown how Cervantes's "realism" is distinct from picaresque "realism" precisely because of a similar opening-out of the closed moralistic plot-patterns of traditional picaresque. In my discussion of these interpolated tales I hope to have illustrated Cervantes's gradual development in the Quixote towards this open-ended form.

27 Américo Castro in "La estructura del Quijote", Hacia Cervantes, pp.307-317, pointed out the structural importance of the relationship between individualized characters, especially as they react to internal and external factors. For him the meandering pattern of the novel's structure was a reflection of the vicissitudes of the characters' lives. Knud Togeby, La estructura del Quijote, p. 50, agrees with Castro that "la vida está simbolizada por un camino que tiene, al igual que ella, altibajos, detenciones y obstáculos". Nevertheless, Togeby remarks: "Pero Castro no discute la dirección del camino ni el orden o la interrelación de las influencias interiores y exteriores." Togeby then refers to
Casalduero's opinion in *Sentido y forma del Quijote* that the novel has a circular structure but qualifies this by saying that Casalduero "establece la idea de una arquitectura in extremis, si no exagerada" (p.51). Togeby believes that the compositional thread of the novel is provided by Rocinante's wanderings which in Part I zig-zag along a wide circular movement. In Part II, Togeby sees this circular movement becoming linear as Don Quixote disentangles himself from the circles of madness and progresses towards sanity (pp.57-102). Critics like Togeby and Casalduero have responded to Castro's insistence on the structural importance of character and action in the *Quixote* by attempting to extrapolate an inherent compositional design in the novel which would denote a more or less premeditated harmonious order. This has been broadly the approach of other critics like E. Moreno Báez, 'Arquitectura del Quijote', RFE, XXXII (1948), 269-285; F. Maldonado de Guevara, 'Apuntes para la fijación de las estructuras esenciales en el Quijote', AC, I (1951), 133-231; H. Hatzfeld, *El "Quijote" como obra de arte del lenguaje*, 2nd edition (Madrid, 1966), pp.7-34 and 111-130; A.A. Parker, 'Fielding and the Structure of *Don Quixote*', BHS, XXXIII (1956), 1-16; Edmund de Chasca, 'Algunos aspectos del ritmo y del movimiento narrativo del Quijote', RFE, XLVII (1964), 287-307.

But América Castro, while not entirely rejecting this critical interest in the design and composition of the *Quixote*, argued in 'Cervantes y el "Quijote" a nueva luz', *Cervantes y los casticismos españoles* (Madrid, 1974), pp. 54-60, that, in contrast to Togeby's approach, "el Quijote, más bien que de una 'composición', surgió de una 'disposición', de la cual su formal dinamismo fue la consecuencia" (p.60). My own position with regard to the "composition" of the *Quixote* is exactly
that of Castro's. However, in this chapter I wish to discuss and analyse the nature of its "formal dynamism" about which Castro, in fact, said little.

28 See Torrente Ballester, El Quijote como juego, p.121: "Se hace imprescindible recurrir aquí a la idea, tantas veces enunciada, de que don Quijote no es un personaje concebido de una pieza, sino que se desarrolla como tal personaje a lo largo de la novela. Se toma esta idea, pero en modo alguno en sentido psicológico, que es el más corriente, sino en el de que el autor incrementa los datos y complica la estructura interna del personaje (la relación de las piezas que lo integran) a medida que situaciones hasta entonces no vistas lo exigen o permiten" (my emphases). The purely technical variations in my view eventually lead to the impression of psychological depth.

29 Torrente Ballester, El Quijote como juego, p.89, writes that "la presencia de Sancho descarta el monólogo e impone el diálogo". He takes Cervantes's model to be León Hebreo's Diálogos de amor. The dialogues between the knight and his squire have been studied by Manuel Criado de Val, 'Don Quijote como diálogo', AC; V (1955-56), 183-208. Neither of these critics has studied the full development and implications of Sancho's ironic mentality, nor have those other critics who have examined Sancho's character development. This latter has been seen in terms of Madariaga's "quijotización" of Sancho (Gua del lector del Quijote, pp.165-176). See Dámaso Alonso, 'Sancho-Quijote, Sancho-Sancho', Homenaje a Cervantes (Valencia, 1950) II, 55-63; Fernando Sainz, 'Don Quijote educador de Sancho', Hispania, XXXIV (1951), 363-365; Victor Oelschläger, 'Sancho's Zest for the Quest', Hispania, XXXV (1952), 18-24; H.R. Romero Flores, Biografía de Sancho Panza, filósofo de la sensatez (Barcelona, 1952); John A. Moore, 'The Idealism

30 See Northrop Frye, pp. 47-48. "In realism the attempt is normally to keep the action horizontal, using a technique of causality in which the characters are prior to the plot in which the problem is normally: 'given these characters, what will happen?' Romance is more usually 'sensational', that is, it moves from one discontinuous episode to another, describing things that happen to characters, for the most part, externally. We may speak of these two types of narrative as the 'hence' narrative and the 'and then' narrative. Most realistic fiction, down to about the middle of the nineteenth century, achieved some compromise between the two, but after the rise of a more ironic type of naturalism the 'hence' narrative gained greatly in prestige, much of which it still retains."

Northrop Frye, p.48, refers to the use of "logic" in a "hence" narrative: "We often use the word 'logic' to mean the continuity of an emotional drive, as when a man despairing of justice in this life is forced by 'logic' to believe in another one. The literary critic deals only with rhetoric, and one of the functions of rhetoric is to present an illusion of logic and causality."
Avalle-Arce and Riley in *Suma cervantina*, pp. 62-65, refer to the "organización interna" or "desarrollo orgánico" of the novel which they see as consisting of the interaction between Don Quixote and Sancho, and their relationship to the external circumstances: "A través de la novela hay una vinculación de causas y efectos y como una red de anticipaciones y reminiscencias ... Al considerar la obra en conjunto, vemos los nexos como partes fijas, sincrónicas, de la estructura. Al leerla, se nos presenta bajo un aspecto diacrónico, como partes que funcionan en un proceso de germinación y desarrollo" (p.63). This distinction between synchronism/diachronism is a move towards overcoming the architectural/dynamic dichotomy which has characterized discussion of the composition of the Quixote (see my note 27 above). My preference is for the dynamic, diachronic aspect of Don Quixote, and, accordingly, I wish to focus my analysis on the differences between external patterning of the action and the elements of causality in the narrative. Thus, although I agree that there are connections, anticipations and reminiscences, I wish to examine the dynamic effects of these features upon the evolution of character and action. For example I use the term "ironic recurrence" instead of "nexus" for Don Quixote's second encounter with Andrés because this encounter generates a new form of reflective consciousness in the knight; it is more than a static reminiscence, it is the germ of the knight's interiority, which will assume such narrative importance in Part II.
32 See Joaquín Casalduero, *Sentido y forma del Quijote*, pp. 210-214, e.g.: "El bosque y la venta son sustituidos por el salón" (p. 211); Togeby, p. 100: "En la Primera parte domina el camino con las aventuras imprevistas que tienen lugar en él. En la segunda, la acción se vincula preferentemente a las paradas y a las estancias prolongadas, lo cual se corresponde más a menudo con una intriga organizada"; Michael Bell, 'The Structure of Don Quixote', p. 252; Avalle-Arce and Riley, *Suma cervantina*, p. 68.


36 This change in Don Quixote is of great significance. As Scholes and Kellogg, pp. 168-169, point out: "Change is an aspect of a mimetic approach to characterization. Development is really a moral motif which functions much like mythic pattern or the extent to which character can be explained for its own sake."

37 Don Quixote in Part II is still very much Cervantes's ironic victim, but the comic irony of Part I has become a species of tragic irony. A.R. Thompson in *The Dry Mock: A Study of Irony in Drama*, p. 28, differentiates comic irony, where the spectator takes
the side of the attacker, from tragic irony, where he is on the side of the victim. The enchantment of Dulcinea directs the reader's sympathies towards Don Quixote although Cervantes's continued mockery of the knight prevents the full identification which is necessary for tragic irony. To this extent I would agree with J.J. Allen's contention that there is a re-orientation of the reader's sympathies towards Don Quixote in Part II (Don Quixote: Hero or Fool?, pp.42-51) but I cannot agree with his interpretation of this phenomenon in terms of Cervantes's "ethical orientation" of the reader, Don Quixote's "increasing cognizance of reality", and so on.

38 Scholes and Kellog, pp.170-204, stress the importance of the interiority of characters in the novel-form: "The most essential element in characterization is this inward life. The less of it we have, the more the narrative elements such as plot (Scholes and Kellogg use this term to mean "action alone, with the minimum possible reference to character", see p.208), commentary, description, allusion, and rhetoric must contribute to the work. A successful narrative need not emphasize the inward life and present it in detail; but it must be prepared to compensate with other elements if it is to remain an object of interest to men. The Greek romances compensated with involved plotting, vivid description, and ornate rhetoric; and so did their English and French imitators of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries" (p.171).

39 R.L. Predmore, p.45, considers Don Quixote to be more successful on balance in Part II than in Part I; Togeby, p.98, calls Part II "el libro de las victorias" as opposed to Part I "el de las derrotas"; J.J. Allen,
Don Quixote: Hero or Fool?, p.45, writes "it is also significant that over two hundred pages of Part II pass without Don Quixote having suffered a single defeat", and adds that when he suffers his first reverse in the Río Ebro the reader rebels against Cide Hamete's comment that the knight returned to a life of beasts. Allen shows how there is a "shift from physical to spiritual strength" early on in Part II (p.44), but does not mention the knight's interiority nor does he correlate this shift with Don Quixote's victories.

Scholes and Kellogg, p.176, observe that dreams are a device used in early narrative to reveal mental process and provide motivation. For example, "Aeneas' motivation in leaving Dido is presented in terms of a dream sent to him by the gods to remind him of his destiny", and they add that dreams "are wonderfully suited to characterization which is poised between the mythic and mimetic". Now Cervantes uses the Montesinos Cave experience to consolidate Don Quixote's motivation, but his presentation and treatment of the dream are astonishingly modern. Don Quixote's experience in the Cave is not straightforwardly a dream, much less one sent to him by the gods, it is so riddled with ironic details that it re-creates the sense of a subliminal "stream of consciousness". Scholes and Kellogg refer to the problem for modern novelists of expressing the sub-conscious, and they cite Joyce and Lawrence in this connection. With regard to Lawrence, they write: "The problem he poses is how to release in fiction that non-verbal, under-level of consciousness. George Eliot, with no assistance from Freud, had been aware that even in prayer there is often a level of the psyche hidden by a person from himself. This awareness is one of the major distinctions between the modern and the ancient conceptions
of character." Cervantes was clearly aware of that level of the psyche which is concealed from the subject. In the Montesinos Cave episode he has created a superb narrative model for the revelation of subconscious motives and drives. For a more detailed discussion of this episode see, for example, Madariaga, pp. 193-204 and Gerald Brenan, 'Cervantes', pp. 22-26.

41 Cervantes's attitude here contrasts strikingly with the praise accorded to the romances by the Canon of Toledo (I.xlvii) for the opportunities they allowed the writer to display his knowledge and inventiveness over a wide range of subjects. As Riley, Cervantes's Theory of the Novel, p. 117, points out, "such catalogues are common features of Italian works of poetic theory, where the 'wide and spacious field' of the heroic poem is filled by theorists with identical or similar variegated items". In the Renaissance, the highest example of imaginative richness and variety was Ariosto's Orlando Furioso, and the sixteenth century polemic to which it gave rise centred on the possibility of reconciling its marvels and multiplicity of incidents with Aristotelian precepts. As Riley observes, the Canon of Toledo's views recall the words of Torquato Tasso in Del poema eroico, II, 64, where he says that the epic poet may describe, "tempests, fires, sea voyages, countries and particular places; he may indulge in descriptions of battles by land and sea, of assaults on cities, the disposition of an army and the manner of its quartering" (Riley, p. 117). Forcione, p. 35, remarks that "the love of the marvellous was probably the dominant characteristic of Tasso's artistic sensibilities", and Tasso recommended variety in description as a source of admiratio. Forcione notes that Tasso celebrated "the unified variety in the poetic microcosm and exaltation
of the poet in accordance with the neo-Platonic notion of the poet as creator of a new cosmos" (p.37).

42 As Riley, Cervantes's Theory of the Novel, pp.117-118, observes, Tasso (and El Pinciano in Spain) became involved in the problem of reconciling variety with the need for a single action in order to avoid structural chaos. The Canon of Toledo used the notion of a web (tela) which would weave together the variegated strands of the action (Riley, p.118). The neo-Aristotelian attempts to combine unity and variety are paralleled by Tasso's efforts to distinguish between legitimate and illegitimate marvels (see Forcione, pp.30-43).

43 See Agustin Redondo, 'Tradición carnavalesca y creación literaria del personaje de Sancho Panza al episodio de la Isula Barataria en el "Quijote"', BHisp, LXX (1978), 39-70. Redondo sees political significance in Sancho's triumph at Barataria. He demonstrates Sancho's affinities with the representative Carnival-figure of popular tradition and argues that since Carnival was a festival which permitted a symbolic overturning of the real power-relations in society, Cervantes is using the Carnival-figure of Sancho at Barataria to criticise the ruling classes under the guise of comedy.

44 Moreno Baez in 'Arquitectura del "Quijote"' remarked of Don Quixote's treatment at the Duke's castle: "Las burlas que a111 le hacen exceden, por su número, de los límites del buen gusto y de la discreción y llegan a resultarnos un poco pesadas" (pp. 274-275). I would say that their tedium results from causes more profound than mere numerical excess.

45 The question of political government can be considered a subsidiary but important theme in the Quixote, arising from Don Quixote's very endeavour to reform the world.
It is overtly touched on in his Golden Age speech (I.xi.104-106), his speech on Arms and Letters (I. xxxvii-xxxviii.388-394), his rebuke to the ecclesiastic (II.xxxii.769-771), his advice on governorship to Sancho (II.xlii-xlili.839-845), and, as here, in the episode of Barataria. José Antonio Maravall in Utopía y contrautopía en el Quijote (Santiago de Compostela, 1976), has made a lengthy study of this aspect of the novel. In general terms, he argues that Don Quixote is a representative of political authority based on medieval notions of military prowess and moral leadership in an age where the mobile "economía de dineros" had rendered such an ideology ridiculously obsolete. By contrast, Sancho's interval as governor of Barataria is considered by Maravall as denoting Cervantes's qualified acceptance of the "utopia" of natural government deriving from the contemporary idea that authority could be exercised by any individual who based his policies on the lumen rationis to which every man, however humble, can lay claim. Although Maravall's study is interesting and illuminating, I think it is fraught with the difficulties attendant on any attempt to derive personal opinions from a writer's imaginative fiction. For example, Maravall makes no reference to the dynamic of the Quixote-Sancho relationship nor to the narrative fact that Sancho surrenders his governorship and is ostensibly praised by the author for doing so. Does this last phenomenon then indicate that Cervantes was for or against Sancho's right to govern? The question is further complicated, as we shall presently see, because Sancho does not fully renounce his ambition for wealth and power.

46 See Suma cervantina, p.71.
That Sancho's voluntary renunciation of power betokens his achievement of wisdom and moral nobility has become established critical orthodoxy, most recently and fully expressed by J.J. Allen in 'The Governorship of Sancho and Don Quijote's Chivalric Career', RHM, XXXVIII (1974-75), 141-152. Nevertheless, Madariaga, while being one of the original proponents of the view that Sancho nobly renounced vain ambitions, p.210, observed that the squire does not relinquish his sense of being worthy to govern, and even added that "las condiciones impuestas por Merlín para el desencanto de Dulcinea realzan ya su personalidad, haciendo en cierto punto a Don Quijote siervo de su buena voluntad". However, Madariaga did not pursue this reference to Don Quixote's subservience to his squire other than to observe a certain triumphalism in Sancho's return to his village: "Sancho sintió en su corazón el impulso lírico de la victoria. Traía dineros. Había sido gobernador. Tenía la virtud de desencantar y volver la vida a las doncellas. Era famoso" (p.232).

But even here Madariaga retains the view that Sancho is still taken with Don Quixote's chivalric world in so far as the squire is said to feel pride in his ability to disenchant Dulcinea and Altisidora. Sancho, in my view, has seen these "powers" for what they are. He is disabused at the end. Most critics, after Madariaga, accept that in the latter half of Part II Don Quixote and Sancho have achieved a sort of equality in their relationship, but none has gone so far as to suggest that Sancho has thrown off the influence of his master's chivalric madness through his growing ironic awareness and self-confidence.
Gethin Hughes, 'The Cave of Montesinos: Don Quixote's interpretation and Dulcinea's disenchantment', pp. 107-113, remarks of this episode: "This moment represents for me, much more than does Don Quixote's defeat at the hands of the Knight of the Moon, the defeat of all that Don Quixote stood for ... What cannot be overcome is the fact that Dulcinea's disenchantment eventually has to be purchased" (p. 111). He further refers to Sancho's statement on returning home: "Dineros traigo que es lo que importa", and comments "where money has, in fact, helped to destroy Don Quixote's world, it is, for Sancho, a sign of triumph in the world" (p.112). I concur with Hughes' view of Sancho's victory, even though he limits himself to the specifically pecuniary aspect of this ascendancy and does not fully explore either its dynamic or its wider ramifications.

See Riley, 'Symbolism in Don Quixote', Part II, chapter 73', JHP, III (1979), 161-174, for an extensive analysis of this episode.

See Martín de Riquer, Aproximación al Quijote, pp. 162-168.
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