



Pero Perez the Priest and His Comment on Tirant lo Blanch

Daniel Eisenberg

MLN, Volume 88, Issue 2, Hispanic Issue (Mar., 1973), 321-330.

Your use of the JSTOR database indicates your acceptance of JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use. A copy of JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use is available at <http://www.jstor.org/about/terms.html>, by contacting JSTOR at jstor-info@umich.edu, or by calling JSTOR at (888)388-3574, (734)998-9101 or (FAX) (734)998-9113. No part of a JSTOR transmission may be copied, downloaded, stored, further transmitted, transferred, distributed, altered, or otherwise used, in any form or by any means, except: (1) one stored electronic and one paper copy of any article solely for your personal, non-commercial use, or (2) with prior written permission of JSTOR and the publisher of the article or other text.

Each copy of any part of a JSTOR transmission must contain the same copyright notice that appears on the screen or printed page of such transmission.

MLN is published by Johns Hopkins University Press. Please contact the publisher for further permissions regarding the use of this work. Publisher contact information may be obtained at <http://www.jstor.org/journals/jhup.html>.

MLN

©1973 Johns Hopkins University Press

JSTOR and the JSTOR logo are trademarks of JSTOR, and are Registered in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. For more information on JSTOR contact jstor-info@umich.edu.

©2001 JSTOR

gives no reasons for his date, but as a *terminus ad quem* it fits the very little that we know of Ferruz. The early date of this reference is, however, not its most significant feature. More important is the evidence it seems to provide that in the late fourteenth century *LBA* was so well known that Ferruz could rely on his readers to see the point without any need to mention the book or author by name.¹⁹

Westfield College
University of London

A. D. DEYERMOND

Pero Pérez the Priest and His Comment on *Tirant lo Blanch* *

The statement concerning *Tirant lo Blanch* found in Chapter 6 of the *Quijote* should, by any reasonable standard, by now be a dead issue. Since Diego Clemencín first labelled this single paragraph as "el pasaje más oscuro del *Quijote*," almost a century and a half have gone by, and 14 articles, excluding this one, have been devoted specifically to it,¹ as well

¹⁹ I am grateful to Dr. G. B. Gybbon-Monypenny, Professor Ian Michael, Mrs. Gail Phillips, and Dr. Roger M. Walker for their helpful comments on this article.

* This paper was read at the Twenty-fifth Annual Kentucky Foreign Language Conference, April 28, 1972.

¹ Bernardo Sanvisenti, "Il passo più oscuro del *Chisciotte*," *RFE*, 9 (1922), 58-62; H. H. Arnold, "The Most Difficult Passage of *Don Quijote*," *MLN*, 50 (1935), 182-85; Augusto Centeno, "Sobre el pasaje del *Quijote* referente a *Tirant lo Blanch*," *MLN*, 50 (1935), 375-78; Heikki Impiwaara, "'La portentosa memoria de Cervantes,'" *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen*, 37 (1936), 42-45; Martín de Riquer, "'Echar a galeras' y el pasaje más oscuro del *Quijote*," *RFE*, 27 (1943), 82-86, later amplified in the introduction to his edition of the *Tirant* (Barcelona: Selecta, 1947), pp. *186-*194; Manuel de Montoliú, "El juicio de Cervantes sobre el *Tirant lo Blanch*," *BRAE*, 29 (1949), 263-77; Francisco Maldonado de Guevara, "El dolo como potencia estética," *CHA*, No. 7 (1949), 27-55, also in *ACerv*, 1 (1951), 133-57 and in his *Lo fictivo y lo antífictivo en el pensamiento de S. Ignacio de Loyola y otros ensayos* (Granada, 1954), pp. 61-108; less rigorously still in "Martorell y Cervantes," *ACerv*, 4 (1954), 322-26; Margaret Bates, "Cervantes' Criticism of *Tirant lo Blanch*," *HR*, 21 (1953), 142-44; W. T. McCreedy, "Cervantes and the Caballero Fonseca," *MLN*, 73 (1958), 33-35; Giuseppe Sansone, "Ancora del giudizio di Cervantes sul *Tirant lo Blanch*," *Studi mediolatini e volgari*, 8 (1960), 235-53; G. B. Palacín Iglesias, "El pasaje más oscuro del *Quijote*," *Duquesne Hispanic Review*, 3 (1964), 1-18; later, briefly, in his *En torno al Quijote*, 2nd edition (Madrid: Leira, 1965), p. 159, n. 1—a book I have read with the greatest of pleasure; the answer of Margaret Bates to Palacín, "Cervantes and Martorell," *HR*, 35

as a multitude of treatments of it within larger studies.² Yet, astonishing as it may seem, there has been virtually no agreement on the questions raised about the passage: whether it was intended as praise or censure of the *Tirant*, the motives for such praise or censure, whether the words mean what they seem to mean,³ and whether the text may be trusted.⁴ Without

(1967), 365-66. My thanks to Robert Flores for calling my attention to the article of Octovio Díaz-Valenzuela, "Sobre el pasaje más oscuro del *Quijote*," *Hispania*, 16 (1933), 149-53.

² The following have come to my attention: the note of Clemencín; Juan Calderón, *Cervantes vindicado* . . . (Madrid, 1854), pp. 19-27 (rejected with sarcasm by Menéndez Pelayo); Pascual de Gayangos, "Discurso preliminar" in *BAE*, 40 (Madrid, 1857 and reprints), pp. xli-xlvii; Juan Eugenio Hartzenbusch, *Las 1633 notas . . . a la primera edición de El ingenioso hidalgo* (Barcelona, 1874), which I have known only through Menéndez Pelayo; Amenodoro Urdaneta, *Cervantes y la crítica* (Caracas, 1878), p. 526; Menéndez Pelayo, *Orígenes de la novela*, second "edición nacional" (Madrid: C.S.I.C., 1962), I, 392-94, and III, 119; Joseph A. Vaeth, *Tirant lo Blanch. A Study of its Authorship, Principal Sources and Historical Setting* (New York: Columbia, 1918), p. 2, n. 1; Sir Henry Thomas, *Spanish and Portuguese Romances of Chivalry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1920), p. 39; Homero Serís, "La reaparición del *Tirant lo Blanch* de 1497," in *Homenaje a Menéndez Pidal* (Madrid, 1925), III, 57; Rufo Mendizábal, "Más notas para el *Quijote*," *RFE*, 12 (1925), 180; F. Rodríguez Marín, "El pasaje más oscuro del *Quijote*," Appendix XI to his "nueva edición crítica" of the *Quijote* (Madrid: Atlas, 1949), 179-87 (he transcribes there his earlier note in the "Clásicos Castellanos" edition); Rudolf Schevill and Adolfo Bonilla, eds., *Don Quijote*, I (Madrid, 1928), 454-55; Luis Astrana Marín, in his "estudio crítico" for the "Cuarto Centenario" edition of the *Quijote*, published in 1947, second (?) edition (Madrid: Castilla, 1966), pp. lxxxii-lxxxiv; Miguel Herrero García, "Dos apostillas a Cervantes," *RABM*, 4^a Época, 56 (1950), 141-42; Arturo Marasso, *Cervantes. La invención del Quijote* (Buenos Aires: Hachette, 1954) (cited by Rubens, without giving a page number); E. F. Rubens, *Sobre el Capítulo VI de la Primera Parte del Quijote*, Cuadernos del Sur (Bahía Blanca: Universidad Nacional del Sur, Instituto de Humanidades, n. d. [1959]), pp. 35-37, n. 13 (he also cites the prologue of Federico de Onís to the edition of the *Quijote* in "Clásicos Jackson," which has not been available to me); Frank Pierce, "The Role of Sex in the *Tirant lo Blanc*," *Estudis Romanics*, 10 (1962), 292; Martha M. Alfonso, "Influencia de la literatura catalana en *Don Quijote de la Mancha*," *Estudios Lulianus*, 10 (1966), 111; E. C. Riley, *Teoría de la novela en Cervantes*, trans. Carlos Sahagún (Madrid: Taurus, 1966), pp. 48-52 and 145; Sylvia Roubaud, "Chevalier contre chein: L'Étrange Duel du *Tirant lo Blanc*," *Mélanges de la Casa de Velázquez*, 6 (1970), 131.

³ Juan Calderón, Riquer, and Sansone, in particular, have attempted to explain the passage through what can only be called distortion of the meaning of the words in it; Riquer has been refuted by Montoliú and Sansone, but he has twice said that despite criticism he still holds the same opinion (in his edition of the *Quijote* of Avellaneda [Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1972], III, 13, l. 8, n., and in his "Cervantes y la caballerescas" chapter in the forthcoming *Suma cervantina* volume [London: Tamesis, 1973]).

⁴ Various nineteenth-century editors and critics, among them Menéndez Pelayo, sought to give the sentence coherence removing the negation; Arnold proposed

being able to evaluate individually each of the interpretations proposed, this paper attempts to present additional evidence leading to an interpretation which is in harmony with the text as it stands, and with the normal meaning of the words and expressions in the passage.

I would like to pause briefly to read the paragraph to you. After deciding to dispose of the remaining romances of chivalry without further examination, "por tomar muchos juntos," one fell on the floor, and it turned out to be *Tirante el Blanco*. The passage continues as follows:

—¡Válame Dios!—dijo el Cura, dando una gran voz—. ¡Que aquí esté *Tirante el Blanco*! Dádmele acá, compadre; que hago cuenta que he hallado en él un tesoro de contento y una mina de pasatiempos. Aquí está don Quirieleisón de Montalbán, valeroso caballero, y su hermano Tomás de Montalbán, y el caballero Fonseca, con la batalla que el valiente de Tirante hizo con el alano, y las agudezas de la doncella Placerdemivida, con los amores y embustes de la viuda Reposada, y la señora Emperatriz, enamorada de Hipólito su escudero. Dígoos verdad, señor compadre, que, por su estilo, es éste el mejor libro del mundo: aquí comen los caballeros, y duermen, y mueren en sus camas, y hacen testamento antes de su muerte, con estas cosas de que todos los demás libros deste género carecen. Con todo eso, os digo que merecía el que le compuso, pues no hizo tantas necedades de industria, que le echaran a galeras por todos los días de su vida. Llévadle a casa y leedle, y veréis que es verdad cuanto dél os he dicho.

The problem which has received so much comment is the apparent inconsistency between the priest's enthusiasm for the book, and the condemnation of the author to the galleys.

I think that this passage can be understood properly only by examining the personality of the character whose words we hear: Pero Pérez, the priest who carries out the "escrutinio"—or rather, destruction—of Don Quijote's library, following the suggestion of the housekeeper that the books be burned. Pérez is one of the most significant among the minor characters of Part I of the *Quijote*. He is usually mentioned in the same breath as his friend and companion the barber, but the priest is by far the more important of the two, and, especially at the beginning, dominates his companion in a manner not unlike that in which Don Quijote dominates Sancho. It is the priest, for example, who initiates the expedition to return Don Quijote to his village, and it is he who discusses literature with the canon from Toledo. It is not until the conclusion of Part I that the barber initiates a conversation or expresses an independent point of view.⁵

making the central statement a question, a suggestion that was refuted by Centeno. More recently, Sansone has also attempted to reinterpret the passage by changing the punctuation.

⁵ I would not wish to take the Don Quijote-Sancho priest-barber parallel too

The priest is a particularly intriguing figure since, although there is a great deal to laugh at in Part I, usually accepted as the more humorous of the two parts, the priest is one of the few characters who are funny by intent, rather than involuntarily.⁶ He is, from the very beginning, presented as a humorous character, since he was a graduate of the University of Sigüenza. Clemencín, in a note which Rodríguez Marín did not see fit to reproduce, pointed out that because of its intellectual level, even to name this university was humorous; Cervantes drives the humor home by slyly observing that the priest was an "hombre docto." It is, in fact, the priest who in view of his knowledge of romances of chivalry, suggests the extremely comical, although logical, disguise as a damsel in distress by which to trick Don Quijote into returning to his village. It is the priest who baits Don Quijote by mentioning the *galeotes* who had been freed, rumor had it, by "algún hombre sin alma y sin conciencia" (I, 29). It is the priest who would have Sancho worry about his master becoming an *arzobispo andante*; it is the barber who allays his fears (I, 26).

This, then, is the person who takes it upon himself to examine the contents of Don Quijote's library, and who delivers in the process of the examination a series of most remarkable literary judgments, though perhaps not so remarkable as the fact that they have been repeatedly taken as completely serious.⁷ There are 27 titles commented on specifically; out of the more than 300 books which Don Quijote had in his library (I, 24); three others are also mentioned which were not found in it. The priest, who insists on at least reading the titles of the books before burning them, selects 16, or more than half, as worthy of salvation (of which more later);

far, but certainly the barber becomes more like the priest as Part I progresses, although the corresponding change in the priest does not occur. They have both read romances of chivalry, as we can tell from Chapter I, 1, but the priest is much more familiar with them, as well as better educated in general. As Don Quijote is a knight, and single, so the priest also practices a demanding profession with a high social standing, and is celibate.

⁶ We can also mention the people Don Quijote meets on his *primera salida*, and, of course, the *galeotes*, "gente que recibe gusto de hacer y decir bellaquernas."

⁷ By Riquer and Montoliu, for example; also William E. Purser, *Palmerin of England. Some Remarks on this Romance and on the Controversy Concerning its Authorship* (Dublin, 1904), p. 204: "No one will deny that he [the priest] is merely the channel through which Cervantes expresses his own views"; Stephen Gilman, "Los inquisidores literarios de Cervantes," *Actas del Tercer Congreso Internacional de Hispanistas* (México, 1970), p. 6: "los juicios que expresan [the priest and the barber] son los de Cervantes." In this paper, without wishing to accept some of his more general remarks, much less his affirmation that Cervantes wrote the *Quijote* to criticize the drama of the time, Gilman has made a real contribution by calling attention to the religious imagery in the examination and condemnation, which explains the personification of various of the books.

if Don Quijote's shouts had not interrupted the process, very little would have been burned.

In only a few cases does the priest give any meaningful justification for his decision to destroy a book, and even then we can see his sense of humor at work. He says of *Felixmarte de Hircania* that its style is hard and dry, which is meaningful enough, yet quite irrelevant to the book's content, moral or otherwise, and to its potential for contributing to Don Quijote's madness. On the other hand, *Olivante de Laura* is condemned because of its content, yet it is not clear how the priest would have a romance of chivalry be other than *mentiroso*, or fictional; in any event, the book may be *disparatado*, but why does he call it *arrogante*? His criticism of Feliciano de Silva's works are understandable,⁸ but he illustrates his disapproval with a most unusual image: he would, to be able to destroy these books, burn his father as well, *if his father were a knight-errant*.

With the remaining books condemned to the flames, except for three pastoral novels and the chivalric romance *Platir*, which are condemned without explanation, he abandons subtlety and makes a humorous remark, in two cases a pun: such as, that the novel of Gil Polo should be preserved as if it were of Apollo.

Of the books which are saved, many receive their reprieve only with a condition attached. The *Diana* of Montemayor must undergo major surgery; the *Tesoro de varias poesias* requires some excisions. Perhaps we are to understand that pages must be ripped out, but I fail to see how *Belianis de Grecia* could conceivably cure itself, no matter how long a time is allowed it. Similarly, humor can be the only reason for ordering all the books about "estas cosas de Francia" to be placed in a dry well, as if they contained something poisonous that could not be allowed indoors (as *Belianis* can, if no one reads it), nor left on the ground, for fear an animal might eat it.

There is little consistency to be found in the priest's comments, but we can deduce, parenthetically, the following with regard to his literary tastes: first, he has a sense of the history of literature, and will condemn the *Amadis* for giving the romances of chivalry birth, while pardoning the *Diana* of Montemayor in part because it started the pastoral novel in Spain. Secondly, the priest likes to see good language. He censures the language of Feliciano de Silva and that of *Felixmarte de Hircania*, as well as the translations of Ariosto; on the other hand, he commends the language of *Palmerin de Inglaterra*. Finally, the priest is not much interested in lyric poetry. Not only do Darinel's eclogues displease him, but López Maldonado's could also be a bit shorter; the *Diana* of Montemayor must have its major verse removed, and the *Tesoro de varias poesias* is too long, as well

⁸ Except that we do not know what displeased him about Queen Pintiquinestra.

as in need of some purification. Even the verses of Cervantes himself do not satisfy him.⁹

Besides *Tirant lo Blanch*, there are two other books about which the priest is particularly enthusiastic. His comments on one of them, *Palmerin de Inglaterra*, have been discussed in an excellent book-length study, and we need not speak of them here; however, his comments on the second, Antonio de Lofraso's *Los diez libros de Fortuna de amor*, are very much to the point. If one would still believe that the priest's ambiguous judgments are to be taken as those of Cervantes—that we are to take him seriously when he calls Turpin a true historian and Ariosto a Christian poet—his comments on Lofraso prove decisively that the books the priest is enthusiastic about would not necessarily receive Cervantes' praise.

I would like to read his comment on Lofraso:

—Por las órdenes que recibí—dijo el Cura—que desde que Apolo fue Apolo, y las musas musas, y los poetas poetas, tan gracioso ni tan disparatado libro como ése no se ha compuesto, y que, por su camino, es el mejor y el más único de cuantos deste género han salido a la luz del mundo; y el que no le ha leído puede hacer cuenta que no ha leído jamás cosa de gusto. Dádmelo acá, compadre; que precio más haberle hallado que si me dieran una sotana de raja de Florencia.

We know what Cervantes' true opinion of Lofraso was, since in the *Viaje del Parnaso*, the bitterest of satire is applied to him: it is proposed that he, as the most expendable on the literary boat, be thrown to the waves, to enable the boat to pass between Scylla and Caribdis. It should be no surprise, then, that the priest is enthusiastic about Lofraso's book not because it is well written, but because it is funny and ridiculous, or, in his words, *gracioso* and *disparatado*. This is the sense¹⁰ in which it is "el más único de cuantos deste género han salido a la luz del mundo." It is because it is such a bad pastoral novel that the humor-loving priest is going to take it home with him, in order to laugh at it.¹¹

And so we finally arrive at the work which is the focus of our discussion, *Tirant lo Blanch*, a book which certainly would be no better known than the other romances of chivalry were it not for the passage we are examining. I would like to pause before discussing the priest's statement to mention briefly the most common interpretation of Cervantes' attitude

⁹ "Más versado en desdichas que en versos" can be taken as a comment on Cervantes' poetry, as well as on his life.

¹⁰ *Por su camino* supports the interpretation that *por su estilo* in the comment on the *Tirant* means "in its own way," and has nothing to do with Martorell's use of language.

¹¹ Palacín, Rodríguez Marín, and Montolú all mention Lofraso, although they do not all draw this conclusion from the passage. That the novel of Lofraso was in fact a very inferior work is confirmed by Juan Bautista Avallé-Arce, *La novela pastoril española* (Madrid: Revista de Occidente, 1959), pp. 148-55.

toward the *Tirant*, that of Menéndez Pelayo. Menéndez Pelayo's position, briefly paraphrased, is that Cervantes realized that the realistic nature of the *Tirant* was a valuable contribution, but that he felt obliged to censure the book because of its obscenities and licentious scenes. Realism no longer inspires the reverence in the literary world that it did in the preceding century, and I think that modern Cervantine criticism would resist the picture of a Cervantes enamoured of realism in its varied forms and opposed to the usual literary modes of his time, which were not realistic in the sense which that word normally has today. Without being able to enter here into an indeed complicated and controversial area, I would merely remind you that while Cervantes wrote *La Gitanilla*, he also wrote *El amante liberal*; that while he wrote *Rinconete y Cortadillo*, he also wrote *Las dos doncellas*; that he considered his *Persiles*—scarcely a "realistic" work—superior to his *Quijote*, and that at the end of his life he was working on Part II of the *Galatea*, and the *Semanas del jardín*, which from its title alone must have resembled the idealized world of Boccaccio or of *Los cigarrales de Toledo*.

With regard to the second part of Cervantes' alleged attitude, that he was censuring the *Tirant* for its immorality, there is a great deal that could be said. First of all, the *Tirant* is not a particularly dirty book,¹² and its "obscenities" are confined to a small section; it seems to me absurd to call it, in the words of Francisco Maldonado, "una apoteosis del erotismo,"¹³ or to say, as Rodríguez Marín does, that "*La lozana andaluza*, con ser lo que sabemos, no le echa el pie delante más que en una escena."¹⁴ Secondly, Cervantes is being quite inconsistent in singling out the *Tirant*, as various other romances also have licentious elements, which he never mentions.¹⁵ But most important, I think that in the *Quijote* alone there are too many explicit or implied sexual references for us to accept its author as a Victorian prude, and I mean more than the scabrous episodes associated with the *aventura de los batanes* (I, 20), and Don Quijote's imprisonment in the cage (I, 48), or the delightful semantic discussion of the term "hideputa" (II, 13). Don Quijote himself calls the office of *alcahuete* a necessary and important one, and Otis Green feels he speaks

¹² I hope that Frank Pierce would agree with this statement, for although, in his article cited in n. 2, he says that the sexual element in the *Tirant* is "pervasive," he admits that it is restricted to the parts dealing with the court of Constantinople. He is more concerned with the type of presentation—natural and accepting—rather than the quantity of sexual scenes.

It should be noted that the emphasis on the sexuality of the *Tirant* began in an attempt to find an explanation for the *necedades* the priest finds in it, other than the one given below.

¹³ "Martorell," 322.

¹⁴ *Don Quijote*, ed. cit., IX, 186.

¹⁵ This is particularly true in the case of Feliciano de Silva's works, which I hope to discuss in the near future.

for Cervantes.¹⁶ There are, in Part I, several women whose virtue is open to question (as is Aldonza Lorenzo's; see I, 25) or nonexistent (Maritornes, la Tolosa). Sexual lust is what moves the muleteer to seek Maritornes, bringing on the hilarious scene in the inn; in the equine world, it brings on the adventure with the *yangüeses*, contributes to Maritornes' trick on Don Quijote, and is a concern of the Caballero del Verde Gabán (II, 16). There are explicit, yet casual references to homosexuality in the *Historia del Cautivo*¹⁷ and in the tale of Ana Félix, Ricote's daughter (II, 63). And beyond this, there are other references of such questionable taste that I hesitate to mention them in public.¹⁸

¹⁶ "Don Quijote and the *Alcahuete*," in *Estudios dedicados a James Homer Herriott* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1966), pp. 109-16, reprinted in *The Literary Mind of Medieval and Renaissance Spain* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1970), pp. 193-200.

¹⁷ III, 188, ll. 2-3 of Rodríguez Marín's edition, cited above: "le quiso tanto, que fue uno de los más regalados garzones suyos." *Garzón* in an Arabic context meant "un sodomita mantenido por un señor árabe" (Haedo, cited by Corominas).

¹⁸ Sancho's etymology of Ptolomeo (II, 29), a scatological reference in Teresa Panza's letter to her husband (II, 52), an allusion to menstruation (II, 23), and no doubt others I have missed.

I said "in the *Quijote* alone," because I am sure that a systematic survey of the Cervantine corpus would turn up many more sexual allusions. There is a constant sexual undertone to *El celoso extremeño* (and *El uiejo celoso*), there are references to syphilis in *El casamiento engañoso*, and various types of sexual allusions in *El coloquio de los perros*. (My thanks to Ruth El Saffar for a stimulating discussion of this topic.)

In his introduction to *Tirante el Blanco*, I (Barcelona: Asociación de Bibliófilos de Barcelona, 1947), li-iii, and almost verbatim in his *Aproximación al Quijote*, pp. 68-69, Riquer maintains that Cervantes criticized the romances of chivalry as a genre as "incitadores de la sensualidad." He cites three passages in support of this allegation, two of which are spoken by the canon from Toledo, whose identification with Cervantes is in any event not to be taken for granted (see Alban Forcione, *Cervantes, Aristotle, and the Persiles* [Princeton, 1970]). The first of the quotations ("¿Qué haremos de la facilidad con que una reina o emperatriz heredera se conduce en los brazos de un amante y no conocido caballero?") was cited by the canon as an example of lack of verosimilitude, not of licentiousness; in the second, the canon compares them to the Milesian fables, then goes to explain that he means by this that they lack a moral lesson, not that they are obscene, as Riquer tries to show from other texts. The final quotation Riquer uses to prove his point is spoken by the Caballero del Verde Gabán, who says that knights-errant were "en daño de las buenas costumbres," an extremely vague comment that by no means need refer to sensuality.

Although not mentioned in this context by Riquer, others have seen Cervantes as criticizing the *Celestina* for its licentious elements, in the comment of Donoso, "libro en mi opinión divino / si encubriera más lo humano" (D. W. McPheeters, "Cervantes' Verses on *La Celestina*," *Romance Notes*, 4 [1963], 136-38; Pierre Ullman, "The Burlesque Poems which Frame the *Quijote*, *ACer*, 9 [1961-62, publ. 1965], 220-23). I would venture the opinion that to see these lines as

Having said all this, we can return to the priest's statement. The key, to my mind, to understanding this passage is that the priest says the *Tirant* is full of *necedades*, idiocies, and by saying "tantas necedades" he makes it clear that he is referring to the details he has just given. In a chivalric context, the book is ridiculous. We see a knight fight with a dog, and an empress in love with a squire; there is also the merry widow, a figure completely alien to the chivalric world, in the person of Reposada, whose sexual desires lead to her suicide. Knights die of old age—a dishonorable death¹⁹—taking the precaution of making a will before. Finally, even the names knights have are ridiculous: Kirieleisón de Montalbán, which Cervantes must have understood as a ludicrous attempt to create a Greek-sounding name (like "Polifebo"), such as many other knights in the Spanish romances had, and whose association with the famous Montalbán family was doubly funny, and the knight Fonseca, an insignificant character who could only have caught Cervantes' eye because of his name. Because of its very familiarity, we find nothing noteworthy in the name Fonseca, but it is an unwritten rule of the Spanish romances of chivalry that the characters in them never have Hispanic names, so much so that it would seem a hilarious blooper for one to appear, above all, as a Greek.²⁰

In short, the book is "un tesoro de contento y una mina de pasatiempos" because of details like these which the priest found in it. If it had been Martorell's purpose to write a humorous or farcical book—that is, if he had in fact written these idiocies "de industria"—he would not deserve any punishment. It is because he attempted to write a serious romance of chivalry, and failed so badly, that he should be sent to the galleys.

Of course, this is only the opinion of a country priest of a mediocre education, and is not to be taken literally, or perhaps even figuratively,

referring to sex reflects our modern prejudices, and that by "lo humano" Cervantes meant the whole spectrum of human passions presented in Rojas' work.

It is noteworthy that Cervantes never criticized Avellaneda for his greater crudity in these matters.

¹⁹ At Don Quijote's death, the *escribano* said that "nunca había leído en ningún libro de caballerías que algún caballero andante hubiese muerto en su lecho tan sosegadamente y tan cristiano como don Quijote." It is unclear to me whether this is meant as praise or ridicule of Don Quijote.

²⁰ This does not mean that Fonseca is the most unusual name in the *Tirant*, nor that there were not chivalric figures, such as Bernardo del Carpio, who had Spanish names. But within the context of the sixteenth-century Castilian romance of chivalry (and Cervantes had no way of knowing that the *Tirant* was not such a work), the appearance of any Spanish element is striking. Following the lead of the *Amadís*, the books had neither a Spanish setting nor Spanish characters, and though occasionally a Spanish knight might turn up at a tournament, he would have a fantastic name, undistinguishable from those of the other knights. This is the case even in those books whose titles would lead one to believe otherwise: *Cristalián de España*, *Rosión de Castilla*, *Florando de Castilla*.

as expressing Cervantes' true opinion; no doubt Cervantes would not have really sent Martorell to the galleys, any more than he would have really placed the books dealing with the *matière de France* in a dry well. What should be clear, is that there is in this passage no praise of *Tirant lo Blanch*, on the part of Cervantes,²¹ or of anyone else.

DANIEL EISENBERG

*The City College
City University of New York*

Melisendra's Mishap in Maese Pedro's Puppet Show

Among the most interesting and illuminating contributions made in recent years to our understanding of *Don Quijote*, especially as this involves the establishment of the complex relations between author, reader, and characters, is George Haley's article on "The Narrator in *Don Quijote*." Professor Haley demonstrates convincingly that "Maese Pedro's puppet show is . . . an analogue to the novel as a whole, not merely because the burlesque legend that Maese Pedro re-creates with puppets is a *reductio ad absurdum* of the same chivalric material that Cervantes burlesques through his characters, but also because it reproduces on a miniature scale the same basic relationships among storyteller, story and audience that are discernible in the novel's overall scheme."¹ I should like here to focus on another facet of Cervantes' achievement in the representation of this little play within the novel, and to attempt a modest extension of Haley's analysis to include a further point of analogy with the novel as a whole.

Haley's unraveling of the complex relations between Maese Pedro, his narrator the "trujamán," and his spectator Don Quijote, establishes the parallel between the puppet show and the novel as a whole:

²¹The other, briefer allusions to the *Tirant* in *Don Quijote* are no more indicative of a favorable attitude on the part of Cervantes. Aside from the list in Don Quijote's speech at the beginning of I, 20, the description in I, 13, "el nunca como se debe alabado Tirante el Blanco," is ambiguous, and the adjectives *acomodado* and *manual* used to describe him in II, 1 are frankly insulting, despite Riquer's attempt in a note to his edition of the *Quijote*, 6th ed. (Barcelona: Juventud, 1969), II, 548, to explain them away. *Acomodado*, in the *Diccionario de Autoridades*, is "el que es muy amigo del descanso, regalo y conveniencias"; *manual*, citing this very passage as its example, is "el hombre que tiene el genio dócil, y es muy fácil en hacer quanto le mandan."

¹George Haley, "The Narrator in *Don Quijote*: Maese Pedro's Puppet Show," *Modern Language Notes*, 80 (1965), 148. Subsequent references appear in parentheses in the text.