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Don Quixote, Man of Ink

An Honors Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for Honors in the department of Modern Languages.

By
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Under the mentorship of Dr. Mike McGrath

ABSTRACT

The story of *El ingenioso hidalgo Don Quixote de la Mancha* by Miguel de Cervantes is a novel that has transgressed throughout the years in the forefront of Hispanic literature. The story is a satire to most people, laughing about the idiocy of the books of knight-errantry. *Don Quixote* has been analyzed as such a comedy ever since its release, and this idea has affected the perspectives of everyone who has researched it before. However, an argument could be made that this is indeed not the only way that the novel can be seen. The idea that is purported in the following paper is that the novel is a complex analogy to how Cervantes was writing the story, with the main characters personifying parts of his psyche as he carried out the creative writing process. The story itself takes place within his mind, and through the manipulation of frame, he bares his mind for all readers to see on the page before them.

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The inner workings of an author's mind can never be fully determined or inferred, and thus many pieces of literary art are left to appreciate through interpretation and pictures that are painted with the experiences of the reader. It is even more difficult to see into the mind of an author who is long dead and unable to give testimony as to what their work truly meant to them in the first place. *El ingenioso hidalgo Don Quixote de la Mancha* (1605;1615), by Miguel de Cervantes (1547-1616), is widely regarded as one of the most influential works of literature ever., Consequently, it is the source of many interpretations. This paper poses yet another perspective with which to view Cervantes' masterpiece in terms of frame and metaphorical representation, specifically that the novel is autobiographical. It is not autobiographical in the sense that the story of Don Quixote tells the life of Miguel de Cervantes, but that it details much of the writing and thought process of Cervantes as he was writing it. The evidence contained herein has been gathered from the perspectives of many different authors and synthesized to the idea that Cervantes placed himself in his novel, using it as a way to guide his hand through a genre that he felt unfamiliar creating.

The concept started with a question: Why "La Mancha?" Was it just an arbitrarily chosen place, grabbed out of the air for no reason? Perhaps, but there were plenty of other regions in Spain to choose from as well. So, as with the majority of literary works, the analysis of this seemingly arbitrary choice evolved into an in-depth analysis of what significance it could have had. The idea was thus: What if "La Mancha" wasn't just an area in Spain? "La Mancha" is a region of Spain, but the word *mancha* is used to mean stain, or spot. In fact, in regards to ink, it can mean blot or mark. Throughout the novel, Don Quixote is referred to as a man of "La Mancha," and the idea that he was Manchegan was reinforced continuously. If "La Mancha" is not referring to the region of Spain, but actually to the ink with which Don Quixote flows across

the pages of his world, then this puts the world in which Don Quixote travels as “The ink mark.” Don Quixote, a man who traverses the blots of ink that Cervantes is placing on the paper as a world in which Don Quixote can frolic and imagine.

Cervantes has been known to make complex constructions through multiple layers of story, commonly referred to as change and manipulation of the “frame” of the story. Frame defines the boundaries within which the story takes place, like *The Great Gatsby* being told through the perspective of a side character after the events had happened. The usual occurrence is that frame makes stories take place within stories, often diving levels deeper down within the literature in order to produce this seamless transition from external story to internal story. Cervantes has a change of frame on multiple occasions within *Don Quixote*. One prime example has to do with the story of Cardenio, in which the young man tells his tale of woe and lost love. This is a surface example of frame manipulation, where a story is told within a story.

A more complex example of this technique within the novel is the overarching idea that a random stranger found the transcript of the novel on the ground somewhere, it was picked up and rewritten for the pleasure of the reader. The original writer of the tale was Cide Hamete Benengeli, and the man who picked up the story is unnamed., Both are products of Cervantes’ literary imagination. This is the introduction of a much wider frame in which everything contained in the story takes place. This wider frame has the reader believe that the story is being re-told through the lens of another writer who appears to be more critical of the chivalric literary genre than the well-armored protagonist of the novel. However, this frame gets broken later in the story, when Don Quixote learns, in Part II, that the story has been written. This puts Cide Hamete in the same frame as Don Quixote, as well as the man that presumably transcribes the entire tale. This development can be slightly jarring, because for a certain period of time, the

reader believes that in the world of the anonymous writer and Cide Hamete Benengeli, *Don Quixote* is a work of fiction. With the release of Part II, the apparent self-awareness of the knight that his story has been written and that the world around him has actually read the first book blur the lines of fiction and reality.

Cervantes manipulated the frame of his works more often than just in *Don Quixote*. There is another, much more obvious usage of frame in his stories *El casamiento engañoso*, and *El coloquio de los perros*. The first story is about two friends, an ensign named Campuzano and a licentiate named Peralta, who talk to each other about their lives because they haven't seen each other in quite some time. Campuzano goes into detail about his marriage to a woman who was only interested in his money, as well as his desire for similar riches himself. The two men spend nearly the entire novel with Campuzano referring to his life in the past tense, and telling a story outside of the time in which it occurred. This is another example of manipulated frame, similar to Cardenio's recounting of his tale with regard to his love and her marriage to another man.

The plot becomes more abstract at the end of the story. Campuzano insists that he heard dogs speaking to each other while he was sitting in his hospital bed, and begins to tell this tale. This situation begins the separate story known as *El coloquio de los perros*. Now, on the one hand, it is a simple frame just like the previous story, with Campuzano saying something in the past. However, interestingly, this story recycled the same world and frame as a previous story even though it had a new title. The outer frame for the story actually stretches into the story previous to it in the *Novelas ejemplares (1614)*: *El coloquio de los perros*. Another thing that's interesting about this story that might differentiate it from the previous is that it is actually written down and read as if it were its own entity. This story has two dogs who discuss the finer

things in life, having a philosophical discussion not expected of two animals who suddenly have the ability to talk.

In his article “Cervantes, Freud, and Psychoanalytic Narrative Theory,” E.C. Riley, much in agreement with Peralta within the story, proposes that the entire story takes place within Campuzano’s mind (Riley, 2005). Riley focuses heavily on the idea that Cervantes’ literature may have inspired Freud’s psychoanalytical narrative theory, and that the Spaniard initiated many introspective psychological practices. With this image of Cervantes in mind and the idea that perhaps he had a tendency for introspection and seeing a story within itself, it could very well be possible that the story of the two dogs did take place within the mind of Campuzano. This is a different type of frame; rather than the story being within another story, the story is also within the mind of one of the characters. This makes the mind as a frame of its own, very similar to the pages off which Campuzano reads the story that he wrote.

This idea, that the written word is really just an extension of the events that are carried out within the mind and that both serve a similarly effective creative medium, puts a heavy emphasis on the mental work that goes into creating a story. The story takes place both on the page and within one’s mind. This frame is twisted and shifting, not being broken quite like the example within *Don Quixote*, with the crashing together of the worlds that contained Cide Hamete Benengeli and the honorable knight, but rather bending to fit the abstract in with the real, and placing a story within a mind. It would be easy to forget, too, that all of this still takes place within the frame of the *Novelas ejemplares*, and also across two “separate stories” that are still contained within the same level of fiction, as well as within the same ink and paper that the reader holds.

The idea now is to apply this concept that the mind is the landscape for the origin of the story before it is placed onto paper, and the actions that occur within the imagination of a person reflect their thought processes and adventures through life. Cervantes uses frames within frames that also carry the frame of a different story, as well as the blatant breaking of a frame that was originally established. Could it also be possible that there is yet another frame that has been ignored? Perhaps this story is similar to *El coloquio de los perros* in that it has another frame in which it was generated before it was put to paper and went on to be one of the most celebrated works of literature in history. The story may truly be “de La Mancha,” and created by ink, and this is the playground through which Don Quixote’s visions and actions are realized, but the story originated somewhere else: within the mind of Cervantes.

Cervantes has been touted as a trickster and a joker to his contemporaries as well as to his readers; it would be reasonable that amongst all of the other tricks that the Spaniard played on his readers, there was one more: Similar to *El coloquio de los perros*, Cervantes plays a role like Campuzano. He is the vessel through which the story within his mind flowed. Much like how Campuzano and his “dream” merited separate stories inside the *Novelas ejemplares*, Cervantes believed that his mind and thoughts should exist on their own as well. Thus, he created his story to be told; his story of cynicism and a strange relationship with a genre far too popular for its own good. He wrote a story of himself within the frame of not only his own mind and neither in just the pages of a book. He wrote it through layers of writing, levels and levels of ink and paper, that clashed, broke, flowed, and focused with as much disparity as beauty.

The idea that the frame for the story has within it a self-awareness is the point of departure for the remaining pages of my study. Cervantes was writing a story, and in the context of the story, he analyzes his own writing technique and creative mind as he goes through the

process. He watches the story of his mind unfold on the paper he writes. His desires, his curtailings, his cynicism and his hopefulness. He gives them all life through the ink and through his thoughts, much as how Campuzano envisions his mind as two dogs, who communicate in a manner much like a modern psychological clinic. Even though the events have been transcribed to paper, Cervantes reminds the reader that it was originally all in the head of the authors: the one within the frame and the one in reality.

This gives rise to a very important concept: the fact that the two dogs are both within Campuzano. The dog that monologues his life story for the duration of *El coloquio de los perros* can only consist of part of Campuzano, because there is another dog in there, listening. While he does not say much, there must be a reason that the one talking dog did not talk to Campuzano in his fantasy tale, or simply talk to a wall. The other dog is there to perform the task of listening actively, without fear. It cannot see anything strange with the dog who suddenly talks that would ruin the monologuing dog's ability to rant. It must also be in a strange situation that explains why it is less surprised that there was a talking dog. It also makes the promise to give its life story the next day. While indeed only the one dog gets to relay his story to the readers through Campuzano's text, it is assumed that the second dog does indeed get his chance to talk, forming a dialogue. It is in this dialogue that the two dogs truly show aspects of the internal dialogue of people.

Riley calls this psychological phenomenon *doubling*. It suggests a division of personality, having multiple voices within one's head in order to reason through situations. It is a very common occurrence in people, though not all people are aware that it happens. He gives an in-depth explanation of the psychoanalytical reference being made here:

Cervantes's two linked novellas contain strong suggestions of “doubling”, which is as much as to say division of personality. Leaving aside Campuzano/Peralta, this is true of the dogs in two different ways. Each of them, as a dog-man, is a divided entity for a start, and as a pair of interlocutors in dialogue, they function in certain respects as one, as I shall show. The bond between them is tightened by the strong though unstated suggestion in the story that they are twin brothers. So each one separately and both of them together represent a concept which challenges the unity of self, as, of course, does Freudian psychoanalysis. For example: “Thus a dreamer in his relation to his dream-wishes can only be compared to an amalgamation of two separate people who are linked by some important common element.”

While that last quote does indeed have much in common with what Cervantes writes into Campuzano’s mind through his story, it is a quote from Freud. As stated, the doubling expresses the idea that both dogs are together one creature, one mind.

What’s more is that both of these dogs are representative not of some theoretical consciousness that Campuzano, a simple ensign in the military, invented all on his own. It is much more likely that these two dogs comprised Campuzano’s mind, and formed a dialogue within him while he was in his drugged state in the hospital. The author took his mind and put it on paper, not as a singular character parading through a world or having problems of his own, but rather as someone with whom to talk and to relate. This technique is not uncommon for Cervantes; Rudolph Schevill makes good note of this in his article “The Education and Culture of Cervantes:”

Most readers have generally been content to see in the knight and his squire a well paired couple, who on the whole represent mere symbols of an external duality, such as the

imaginary and the real, or the poetry and prose which exist in life without, whereas there is to be taken into consideration also the inner divergence of our personalities...

Cervantes was much inclined to create his characters in pairs, for example, Rinconete and Cortadillo, the two Berganza, the two dogs Cipion and Berganza, *the Two Damsels*, the two Spanish gentlemen in the novel *the Lady Cornelia*, the two student-vagabonds in *the Illustrious Kitchen-Maid*, "the two friends" of *Ill-advised Curiosity* and (should it be here?) many others which do not appear in the titles (Schevill, 1933).

Many of the other characters within the story only appear in pairs: the priest and the barber, the niece and the maid, and all of the many romantic couples that exist throughout the novel. Most importantly, however, is the immortal pair of the knight and his squire.

Sancho Panza and Don Quixote are certainly another example of doubling in Cervantes' work, creating two characters side by side in a story to complement one another. The perfect foils to each other; fantasy and reality, whim and need, optimism and skepticism. The concept in question now is whether or not these two characters are ever really separate. The argument is not that Sancho Panza never existed within the story; he was very much alive and well in the world of *Don Quixote*. In fact, much of the incidences in the story would likely have been made much worse had it not been for his being there to address the blunders and beatings in his master's stead on occasion. However, the two of them do not necessarily *represent* different beings, but different pieces of the same person (Schevill 25).

In this manner, they are much like the two dogs in *El coloquio de los perros*. The two of these men represent different pieces of the person that invented them; the two of them together comprise one whole, and they can hardly live without each other. Schevill makes mention of this in his article as well, stating that within each of us there are many, and that it is often this

dialogue of internal voices that draws us to a better future (Schevill 25). What parts do Don Quixote and Sancho make up within the mind of Cervantes? Looking at the personalities of the two pieces of the whole, Don Quixote would comprise the hopeful, optimistic, romantic, and creative portion of the mind. He epitomizes everything fantastic within the mind, the inner child that still plays in the imagination in order to amplify an otherwise boring life. He cavorts around in armor on a horse in search of adventure and mystery, ready for anything and everything even if his body is most definitely not prepared. This part of Cervantes is his inner adventurer, his inner high spirit.

Sancho Panza is representative of Cervantes' inner baseness. He seems to perceive that Don Quixote is much simpler than he looks. This is the part that never understood the books of chivalry, the part of Cervantes that remembered to pay his bills, the one who remembered to eat and sleep. This is the part of Cervantes that had cowardice and fright. The presence of Sancho was necessary to help Don Quixote come to his senses after each encounter. The other pairs likely also have a significance, but it is slightly less clear. It may be that they represent other people in Cervantes' life, or they may all be other parts of his mind in this world so pointedly constructed within him. Whichever it may be, it does not change the reasoning at hand: Don Quixote is a representation of the writing mind within Cervantes.

Upon closer inspection, Don Quixote truly does have many of the aspects of a writer's mind. It is a common trope that the writer sits alone in a room with pen and paper for extensive periods of time, doing nothing but inventing and writing. Forgetting to eat, forgetting to sleep, forgetting the simple things that help them survive in order to eke out a couple more minutes, hours, or days, thinking about their book to determine what could happen next. Within the story, there are several instances that before bedding down for the night, Sancho would offer Don

Quixote some food, which would promptly be refused: “porque, como está dicho, dio en sustentarse de sabrosas memorias” (Cervantes, 25). Don Quixote often refused to sleep as well. On several occasions, while sleeping under the stars, Don Quixote stayed awake for hours on end, thinking of Dulcinea (Cervantes, 30). As a prolific author, it is likely that the creative mind of Cervantes rarely slept. Even if his more desirous mind surrendered to rest and no longer was there to remind his creativity of the ludicrousness and over-extravagance of his thoughts, his creative mind continued to function. This process may represent something more along the lines of dreaming. If, at night, part of the mind does fall asleep and other parts stay awake, particularly the part that generates fantastical images, dreams may arise.

Sancho shows aspects of an average person, driven by the more carnal needs of humanity. Sancho needs sleep, food, and other usual means of sustenance. He has a higher tendency toward drink and more greed for money. Sancho considers all of the other necessities of staying alive much more than his counterpart, and he has to take care of Don Quixote in order to make sure he does not die. This scenario is similar to the internal dichotomy of someone who has a strong drive to write because a part of that person wants to do nothing but create and wait for the next moments of inspiration to hit. It leaves little time for responsibilities like paying bills or taking baths. However, somewhere in Cervantes’ mind lived a Sancho; something to remind him to do the things that were necessary for survival. The nights he stayed up late writing, for example, there must have been something in him that would remind him to go to sleep. When he did not earn money for work because he spent that time writing, some part of him knew that he couldn’t live without pay forever.

With this dichotomy established, and these mentalities in the forefront, their interactions take on a new meaning. Rather than friendly banter, it’s an internal struggle between following

his literary imagination and creative impulses as far as they go and realizing that none of it is doing anything more than putting ink on paper. As in the prologue of the story, it is visible that the true intent of this book was to make fun of the chivalric genre as a whole.

Sancho is the perfect candidate to do such a thing. He is a simple man, never having read one a book of chivalry in his life, seeing it played out in front of him for the first time.

Everything that Don Quixote does seems strange and extravagant. Sancho sees as bizarre and foreign the many clever tropes that Don Quixote performs in concordance with the rules of engagement contained within the chivalric texts. This interpretation displays the excessiveness of the books in a plainer manner, seeing the reaction of an “average” person to these events should they take place in real life. Now, through the lens that Sancho is Cervantes’ more plain and simple mind, this lines up precisely with the way that Cervantes sees so many of these texts.

But, then, why does Sancho follow Don Quixote on his quest? Why not simply laugh at him from afar like the rest of La Mancha? Because Don Quixote promised him riches, and anything so basic as material wealth is completely irresistible to Sancho’s character. This is the reason that Sancho goes along for the ride with Don Quixote. The logic contained in this interaction between Sancho and the chivalric tradition is simple enough to be carried out to the average reader. The buried connection within it, however, is that this mirrors the reasoning that Cervantes had for writing the book in the first place. With his creative mind alone, he would not have wanted to do the book. I think you are assuming too much in the following sentence. Don Quixote invites Sancho to accompany him because all of the knights of chivalry have a squire. You could say that Sancho represents the rational part of Cervantes’ mind, as well as a symbol of Cervantes’ basic needs (food, sleep, etc.). Somehow, he had to convince his rational side to join

him on the journey of completing the text, a way to convince his whole mind that this was a good idea, rather than just his inner writer. The easiest way to do it was simple: bribery.

He posited to himself, much like Don Quixote propositioned to Sancho, that should they sally forth in this manner, the two of them would become rich as kings. Sure, Don Quixote promised Sancho wealth he had never seen before like an island government all to himself, but the foundation of Cervantes' inner creative optimism was a desire to become a well-known writer. He failed as a playwright earlier in his career and must have hoped that his novel would sell enough that he would earn the acclaim he sought and would not have to work anymore. Maybe, since this was a chivalric text like those that were so popular at the time, he would finally produce a successful work that would truly bring himself enough money to retire to an easier job or fund his ability to be a writer. Just as Don Quixote had to appeal to Sancho in order to continue his journey, Cervantes' creativity and optimism had to appeal to his inner desire to be famous, and, consequently, must have motivated him to continue writing the text in the first place.

This creates an opening in the personification of Cervantes' mind in terms of his cynicism. Neither Don Quixote nor Sancho is particularly cynical. While Sancho starts off that way, he is soon convinced that some of his master's adventures are real and that the world of giants and enchanters really does exist. While Sancho is more simple and has a certain baseness, he is not the reasoning and rational portion of Cervantes' mind. This is not given its own character, but is rather distributed throughout the world in which they travel, in an ever permeating field of cynicism. In Part II, Sansón Carrasco takes the part of the cynic, working to bring down the continuation of the story in all of its ridiculous glory, but is more of an external force acting on the party of two rather than an integral part of the mind like Sancho and Don

Quixote. This distancing from the cynicism makes it seem like an uncontrollable force, much like doubt or fear. Cervantes depicts it as a part of the human mind more on the fringes, rather than a part of his own identity like his creativity or his base desires for things.

Another important personification in the story is within the damsel to whom Don Quixote swears all fealty: Dulcinea. In the frame that has been developed, with Don Quixote representing the creativity and writing mind of Cervantes, there must still be something that it praises and pleads to for intercession. Something to help him up when he is down, when he encounters writer's block, or doubts himself. In other words, an external force that can be a source of strength, almost as one prays to God himself, to give him the power to continue. For many writers, and other forms of artists as well, this entity is labelled "inspiration." It is a stroke of genius, or a sudden flowing feeling in which the creative form moves unimpeded of any sort of mortal requirement. It can carry someone out of the depths of doubt, and illuminate the mind to what must be done in order to further the artwork. Dulcinea represents this same inspiration.

While not in exact agreement, Miguel de Unamuno agrees that Dulcinea is a personification of an external force or a feeling which Don Quixote and Miguel de Cervantes are both trying to attain (Bloom, 2001). He argues that Dulcinea represents glory and that Don Quixote represents Cervantes' need for fame. While part of this argument is in agreement with the ideas of Don Quixote's autobiographical nature established in this paper, that Cervantes "dredge[d] him out of the depths of his own spirit," his perception of Dulcinea is pointedly different, referring to the bygone era of Spanish righteous glory that had fallen so far over the years. However, the idea that Dulcinea represents glory is in contrast to what is being stated here. Through the frames which have been created, and the ideas contained herein, it is still possible

that she represents glory, but it is more likely that she represents a stroke of inspiration, or a force of creative impetus.

There are several reasons for this argument to be made. One of them involves a history of Cervantes, also taken from Kensington's article on Cervantes' life (Keniston, 1970). In this account of Cervantes' life, it is mentioned that he spent a large amount of time in Italy. Greco-Roman mythology heavily influenced the Italian Renaissance, particularly in art and literature. One prime example of this influence is the *Parnassus*, a painting depicting a mountain on which resides Apollo, surrounded by the muses. The muses represent the creativity that every poet and artist has, and each one is the ruling lady over her domain. It is not uncommon to appeal to a muse in order to ask for assistance with the next step in creating whatever piece of art one is trying to generate. It is without a doubt that Cervantes is familiar with the piece of art, or at least the mountain, as he discusses this mystical place and the existence of the muses in *Viaje del Parnaso* (1614). In this famous artwork, and within the entire ancient Greco-Roman culture, artistic inspiration was depicted as a young woman who was a source of praise and inspiration.

This idea applies quite directly to Don Quixote's interactions with Dulcinea. Although she is not with Don Quixote, she is always on his mind and helps him take every step. Similarly, the muses do not directly interact with the poet, but they help the poet to move along. The muses send the poets sparks of inspiration, speak to them, and assist them in the writing by giving them the impetus to move forward. This is similar to how Don Quixote moves onward when he is caught up and injured. Nearly every time he is injured in some way, he calls out to Dulcinea in order to give himself the will to move on. Furthermore, Don Quixote has an unnaturally adrenaline-fueled ability to engage in fights, pleading for Dulcinea's intercession the entire time.

The ways that other characters interact with Dulcinea also supports the idea that she is inspiration incarnate. At one point, Sancho claims that Don Quixote need but follow him to see Dulcinea in person (Cervantes, 206). When they arrive, Don Quixote refuses to see anything other than the country wench whom Sancho has introduced to Don Quixote. Sancho, Cervantes' inner simpleton, does not understand the difference between the one maiden that Don Quixote imagines as Dulcinea and this woman that is currently traipsing out of the nearest city. Sancho knows the woman he introduces as Dulcinea is not really Dulcinea, but he has to provide a woman because earlier he tells Don Quixote that he had seen her. This episode is evidence of Sancho's cleverness. The more simple mind sees every idea, every little thing, as possible inspiration. It is the inner artist that can discern what is true inspiration and what is not. It is at the end of this encounter that Don Quixote laments and believes that his wonderful Dulcinea has come under some sort of spell and can no longer fully grant him her love because she is under a spell and does not recognize him. This is possibly Cervantes stating that, part-way through the second book, his inspiration to write it had died away some. This makes some sense; he had to accelerate his writing process through the second book in order to finish it before his death. It is possible that the idea of his mortality, as well as the time limit now imposed upon him, affected his relationship with his "muse." The fact that Dulcinea is "enchanted" the entire novel is the way this is represented.

Throughout the previous arguments, it has been repeatedly mentioned that Don Quixote is Cervantes' writing mind, his creativity. This identity manifests itself in more ways than just his lack of a need to eat and to sleep; Don Quixote is a writer. Not in the sense that he takes a pen to paper, but he brings Cervantes' pen to the paper to suit his own needs. He paints over his own reality to create a fantastical version of the world in which he lives. This traces back to the

concept of frame. Within the frame of the story, which is already complicated, Don Quixote writes yet another story within his own mind that he deems as superior to the current reality. He takes what has been written in ink around him, the world in which he lives, and re-writes it within his own mind. It is in this way that Don Quixote is essentially as much of a writer of this story as Cervantes.

Don Quixote traipses across the pages of his own story, re-imagining the world in which he lives. It is through Don Quixote that Cervantes actually performs the act of writing the chivalric-like book, because Don Quixote is his creative conduit. Something that, rationally, is a windmill standing tall in the middle of La Mancha is actually a giant to Don Quixote. Cervantes wants to poke fun at how ridiculous chivalry looks by writing it himself and imagining a writer in the place of Don Quixote. While these ideas may seem like conveniently aligning conjecture, there are moments that it correlates strikingly well.

One such instance is the incident at the first inn. As Don Quixote approaches the inn, he reimagines it as a castle, with dwarves trumpeting up high for his arrival. He strolls in and is treated well, mostly because the innkeeper assumes that he has money with him. The real issue is when Don Quixote begins to pray over his weapons during his night vigil to be knighted. A man walks over to him and moves some of his equipment, for which Don Quixote promptly strikes him in the head, severely injuring him, then repeating the process with a second carrier. Don Quixote implores Dulcinea for strength, and feels utterly empowered. Then, the carriers' friends and assorted other members of the inn begin to throw stones at Don Quixote from a distance. Don Quixote can do nothing to stop them. The innkeeper calls off the shenanigans and "knights" Don Quixote. He goes home to retrieve money and a squire to assist him in his journeys. This entire occurrence, traced top to bottom with the new frame that has been constructed, that the

story takes place within Cervantes' mind, appears to be a breakdown due to doubt. The outer frame would look something like this:

The first real adventure, the beginning of the book, the start of it all, and Cervantes has happily begun writing his tale of comedy and adventure. He writes the first encounter for his character and finds himself doubting his ability. He immediately shuts out such doubt, telling himself that he's better than this and that he will be able to do accomplish his goal and will not give in. He feels unstoppable for a short while, drunk off of the inspiration and excitement of the written task before him. Then, on the fringes of his mind, doubt lingers. It pecks at his creative engine, making it difficult to find the next point to write, hard to see where to go next. The inspiration turns rapidly to despair and doubt. He finds himself defeated, and the doubt fades to nagging wounds. He finds himself in no condition to continue writing his story; not simply for the sake of writing it. There needs to be more reason to continue. So, over the course of an indeterminate amount of time, he convinces himself that he has to write; he wants to criticize the genre, to participate in the literary world in a significant manner, and perhaps achieve some fame and earn money in order to compensate for the time spent on the book. Now he is ready to continue writing.

This parallel, drawn to demonstrate just where Don Quixote fits within Cervantes' mind, is not unreasonable. In the prologue, Cervantes expresses that he had serious doubts in publishing the book because it did not match the format of so many other books published at that time (Cervantes, 2). Throughout the dialogue that he has with his anonymous friend, he expresses what appears to be insecurity when it comes to the quality of his writing matching up to the standards that have been generated by the world. These insecurities would further explain the several times that Don Quixote has been beaten up and bruised. Similarly, on occasion

through the writing process, writer's block and doubt had an effect on him Don Quixote? to where he had to rest his creative engine for a period of time. In one instance, he "cures" his injuries and is able to proceed due to a horrible drink he imbibes, that also makes Sancho invariably ill. This episode could be compared to the life of Cervantes if he drank alcohol, which made his creative mind completely incapacitated for a while but he felt infinitely better once he sobered up. It's a stretch, but a theoretical comparison might be possible.

Another manner in which Don Quixote resembles the author of his own story is his tendency to be the first to act. The world can barely keep up with the actions Don Quixote takes. Everything in the world capitulates on the actions of this one man. Yes, this description is also the characteristic of a novel protagonist, but it has slightly more weight to it in *Don Quixote*. In a regular novel, the action within the story depends on the protagonist and wherever the story leads him or her. No one can accurately predict everything that is going to happen. However, in *Don Quixote*, it is seldom that even the reader can predict exactly when Don Quixote is going to invent a new fantastical story to lay over the world. Don Quixote has complete control over the action within his own world because, even though he rarely has any power to change anything, it is still his story, and he writes it however he wants to in order to act the way that he deems appropriate. Nothing outside of what was occurring with the knight was particularly important in the world. With this power in hand, Cervantes was able to insert his creativity into the story as a character.

Don Quixote represents this inner creativity and whim of Cervantes, and this representation carries with it a significant portion of his romanticism and idealism. The grand image of war and combat that Don Quixote has is shared by Cervantes in some ways. Ralph Hayward Kensington points out in his article, "The Significance of Cervantes," the many ways

that Cervantes was a similarly adventure-hunting man in his youth. He describes Cervantes' life up until his release from captivity as his "heroic days," and that after that he returns to a plainer life of idle living. This assessment is a fair statement; he spent a good amount of time in war and more in captivity, continually trying to escape in heroic efforts. Kensington continues his article with the question as to why Cervantes felt such a need to write the book. What was the purpose behind the writing? He argues that it is as plain as Cervantes makes it at the beginning of the first novel: he simply wants to poke fun at a genre that he believes has grown all too popular. He scorns the idea because he himself had been caught up in the whirlwind of fame, glory, and righteous combat when he was in his youth. Now that he is older, he realizes just how ridiculous it all seemed.

However, there is also the possibility that it is the exact opposite. Perhaps Cervantes looked back on his time in the military fondly, having enjoyed the years of righteous fervor more than any of the rest of his life. Instead of looking back on those days in scorn, some parts of him saw those days as the best days of his life. The inner man, who, looking into the past of the world, sees an era of righteous battle that far supersedes the current era in importance, morality, and interest. It is even stated in the same article, written by Kensington, that Cervantes believed that the moments he spent in that battle, being shot at and in the throes of war, were his proudest moments. This thinking is not his entire mind, though; there is a more basic portion of him, an inner cynic that says that the whole situation is preposterous and stupid, and he questions why anyone would see something as silly as going headfirst into battle, or gallivanting around on a horse in armor, as anything other than an accident waiting to happen. He wonders why anyone, especially someone at his age, would look back on the days of youthful, idiotic heroics with anything other than humor and criticism? Unamuno also supports this claim in the same article that

was mentioned previously (Bloom, 9). He explains that as people grow older or content, they look back on their youth and crave to feel alive again. *Tedium vitae* is something that Don Quixote suffered from in his small Manchegan hamlet, and, by extension, likely by Cervantes at the time of his writing the book. The realization of his mortality and its effects on his writing are supported again here.

These ideas are strewn across the landscape of Don Quixote. A prime example is the shepherd incident. The Knight takes a completely ordinary occurrence and turns it into something entirely fantastical, generates an entire battle sequence and story on the spot. This is much like how a writer creates something out of nothing, and as usual, Don Quixote uses this to make the ordinary into the extraordinary. Don Quixote wants so desperately to live in virtuous combat that he invents situations in which to insert himself to fulfill his need to do so. Sancho does not see the battle scene, only the sheep that are there, and the fact that his master is slaughtering someone else's animals. The inner warrior took over his mind and inserted him into the story that he had created in order to vanquish something evil in the name of God and his lady Dulcinea. Through the frames that have already been constructed, this translates to an inner conflict with Cervantes: he looks back at his past with longing, wishing again for the days in the war when he was able to fight for his people in a righteous and active manner. The idea of fighting the good fight is a romantic idea to him, and he misses it. These views are further propagated through Don Quixote in his monologue dedicated to the Golden Age that he so desires to return. Cervantes may have had a similar desire: a desire for simpler times, when wrongs could be righted in such an obvious manner as swinging a sword.

However, Cervantes has grown old. He's wiser, smarter, more cynical, and pointedly less capable as a warrior. He has to tell himself that this is no longer feasible; the days in the fight are

over, and the Golden Age has ended. This is the bitter reality in which his creative, romantic, idealist mind lives; the rest of his mind is in utter rebellion against it. This takes the place of not only Sancho, who represents the baseness, but of the entirety of the rest of the landscape. The entirety of the story takes place not only on the page, but within the mind of the author; the mind of the author was not welcoming to the voice in his head that screamed for glorious revival of knights-errant. The world pokes fun at this idiotic strand of idealism and creativity. It attacks and jokes and prods, the same way that Cervantes' mind laughs and cynically calls himself ridiculous for seeing such a value in the romantic ideals.

Cervantes says openly, in the introduction and the epilogue, that Don Quixote was created with the explicit purpose of making fun of knight-errantry and devaluing the grandiose visions that are being propagated throughout all of Spain. He says that they have grown much too popular. He never states, however, that he personally hates the genre. He does state, in this same epilogue, that Don Quixote was written for him as much as for everyone else, and that this was necessary to do. This necessity, while possibly being derived from Cervantes seeing the dissuading of the populous away from knight-errantry as "necessary," could just as easily be derived from his inner need to get this out of his system. He values the exact same sentiments of the Golden Age, and the grandiose virtuosity that it contained, as personified by the beloved Knight throughout the tale. To combat this longing, the rest of his mind makes fun of the idea; he calls the thoughts silly and sees them as melodramatic. A prime example of this coping mechanism is the fulling mills. A huge problem is coming, drama is ensuing, the great hero prepares for battle, but the climax has the rug pulled out from under it. There is no giant, no big enemy. Rather than feeding into the idea and giving the romanticism credence in any way by creating some sort of mythical creature, the monster is simply another type of mill.

The end of the novel also has evidence of this creative mind, this romanticism within Cervantes, being portrayed through Don Quixote. The prime reason for this parallel is because, at the end of this novel, Don Quixote comes to his senses and then dies. At the end of writing this novel, Cervantes come to terms with his internal desire to return to battle, and is laying this creative drive to generate a fantastical story to rest. He has done his time and realizes once and for all that he is done. However, ironically, the rest of his mind has grown quite used to the old man within him that always wanted to go back to war. He laments his loss of the desire to go out and do what he has longed to do for so long, the loss of his inner gallivanting lunatic. Just as anyone who looks inside to see a piece of them that they have had for so long suddenly be put to rest, it brings a certain type of grief. This grief is shared by Sancho Panza, or Cervantes' more base nature, who would wish that he could write more books of this nature to earn more money and who will miss how fun and enjoyable the adventures were, even if they were ludicrous. This end to Cervantes' creativity and impetus to write this story could only come at the end of the novel itself.

With a novel this popular and renowned, it is difficult to propose an idea that is new or original. Thousands of analytical eyes have reviewed these exact words and come up with thousands of different interpretations. Whether it is a simple comedy, politically poking fun at all of Spain, or an exploration of Cervantes' own soul and desires, there is no true way to determine. Maybe it is both. This Man of Ink, this lunatic that everyone has buried somewhere deep within, has finally been put to paper. It may have been intentional, or it may have been by chance, but this preposterous knight resonates with nearly everyone that reads about him, one way or another. When one resonates with Don Quixote, he or she also resonates with Cervantes and with

a part of the man within the man who has been touted as a trickster and also an artist of the highest renown.

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