

Sancho Panza and the Ethical/Moral Norm in *Don Quixote*

Sancho Pança e a norma ética/moral em Dom Quixote

48

Howard Mancing*
Purdue University - USA

ABSTRACT: This article examines the character of Sancho Panza in Cervantes's *Don Quixote*. The argument is that Sancho emerges as the personification of the work's ethical and moral norm. The method is to identify specific textual clues that support this idea. For example, Sancho most respects Don Quixote and does not mock or dehumanize him. This is signaled textually by the phrase "Sólo Sancho...", ("Only Sancho...") and by the fact that he is the only character in the work who is described as having a *buen natural*, an innate goodness. This stands out in contrast to other characters, such as the local priest and barber, Dorotea, and the Canon of Toledo, who play tricks at his expense, laugh openly at him, and treat him like a dog. In Part II of the novel Sancho is the protagonist; he speaks most often and is most admirable.

KEYWORDS: Sancho Panza. Cervantes. Norm. Ethics. Moral.

* Doutor em Letras pela Florida State Universty - FSU (USA).

RESUMO: Este artigo analisa o personagem cervantino Sancho Pança. O argumento é de que Sancho emerge como a personificação da norma ética e moral da obra. O método empregado é a identificação de pistas textuais específicas que apoiam essa ideia. Por exemplo, Sancho respeita Dom Quixote e não zomba dele ou o desumaniza. Isso é sinalizado textualmente pela frase “*solo Sancho...*,” (“somente Sancho...,”) e pelo fato de que ele é o único personagem na obra que é descrito como tendo um *buen natural* (uma bondade inata). Tal fato se destaca quando em contraste com outros personagens, como o padre local e o barbeiro, Doroteia, e o Cônego de Toledo, que pregam peças à sua custa, riem abertamente dele e o tratam como um cão. Na Parte II do romance Sancho é o protagonista; ele fala com mais frequência e é mais admirável.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Sancho Pança. Cervantes. Norma. Ética. Moral.

I

Ethics and morals are concepts that deal with matters of right and wrong. They are related but with a different emphasis: Ethics tends to refer to social obligations or duties, while morals deal with personal codes of conduct. Ideally, one’s moral code is consistent with society’s ethical norms, but, as we all know only too well, that is not always the case. In what is known as *normative ethics*, the goal is to achieve the habits and duties that best respect the rights and feelings of others. This aspect of ethical theory has tended to receive less attention from male philosophers such as Kant, Locke, and Bentham, all of whom tend to stress systematic and rule-governed duties and obligations in fields such as property rights and business contracts. Of course there is also a long tradition of philosophy that deals with ethics in a way that anticipates the view that I will develop. Examples include Kant’s affirmation that persons should be seen as ends and not as means; Buber’s I-Thou relationships; Bakhtin’s sympathetic understanding; and more. These approaches anticipate and provide the background for the philosophers I will be referring to in this essay.

It is in the late-twentieth-century relatively new field of feminist philosophy, as exemplified by the works of writers like Nell Noddings, Lorraine Code, and

others, that we find a refreshingly different approach based on women's traditional roles in society, roles that deal with love, respect, nurture, care, empathy, and support. These approaches tend to be less rule-driven and more spontaneous and contextual. They recognize that the moral agent is part of the situation and that what is the right thing to do in order to care for and respect others is determined largely by the circumstances in which the event takes place. Noddings summarizes the point very succinctly: "To act as one-caring, then, is to act with special regard for the particular person in a concrete situation" (1984, p. 24).

Code develops these ideas as well as anyone; she has, for example, written, "knowledge is always *relative to* (a perspective *on*, a standpoint *in*) specifiable circumstances" (1984, p. 54). For her, knowing is something done by unique, situated individuals and always means being sensitive to the feelings of others. She proposes that this paradigm of knowledge is not an abstract model based on knowledge of facts, but a model based on the way we know other people, which inevitably takes place in social contexts: "Yet the socially located, critically dialogical nature of this reoriented epistemological project preserves a realist commitment which ensures that it will not slide into subjectivism" (p. 30). Code also writes of "empathetic" understanding (p. 91-92; p. 120-143): knowing with feeling, with concern for the dignity and feelings of other people. These feelings are not governed by an abstract set of rules that are supposed to be valid in all circumstances, but are a matter of doing what is right for others in specific contexts.

Probably the best-known ethical norm is the Golden Rule: *Do unto others as you would have others do unto you*. It is a simple rule, but it is complicated by the fact of its being context-dependent, and perhaps because of this it is frequently ignored. For example, I am sure that no one living in the sixteenth or seventeenth century in Spain would want to be humiliated and laughed by being tossed in a blanket like a dog during carnival, as is Sancho in I, 17, of

Don Quixote. The same is true of being tripped by a supposed friend so that the person you are fighting with can get the advantage over you, as is Don Quixote in I, 52. In both of these cases the butts of the *burlas* (practical jokes) – Sancho and Don Quixote – are described as being treated like dogs. They are dehumanized, brutalized, and treated more as objects than living, feeling human beings. The actions of the insensitive, playful, malicious mule drivers who had their fun with Sancho are far from being consistent any ethical or moral standard such as the Golden Rule. Those of the mean-spirited religious figures and law officers who laugh at Don Quixote and put his life at risk are even more hypocritical and cruel. In general, the social world we see represented in many Spanish picaresque novels and other kinds of literature, where *burlas*, *engaños* (deceits), and *mentiras* (lies) are all common, reflect a general absence of a moral or ethical sense of life.

In this essay I would like to propose that as Cervantes was writing *Don Quixote* he slowly developed the figure of Sancho Panza as the representative of the novel's moral and ethical norm; it is a norm of respect and concern, of love and caring. By the end of the first part of the novel (1605), it becomes clear that Sancho is different from most of the other characters and that, for Cervantes, he comes to stand as the moral and ethical standard by which the reader is expected to judge those characters. In the second part of the novel (1615), Sancho is consistently both the most important character, surpassing Don Quixote himself in this respect, and very clearly stands as the most positive figure in the entire novel.

II

The idea of some sort of norm in Cervantes's novel dates from a classic essay by Oscar Mandel published in 1958: "The Function of the Norm in *Don Quixote*". Mandel divides readers of the novel into two groups: the "soft"

critics, who see Don Quixote as a noble figure, misunderstood by society at large, and the “hard” critics, who read the novel primarily as a comic work and who laugh at the protagonist because he deviates from society’s ethical norm. Mandel proposes that it is the secondary characters as a group – the priest, the barber, the Canon of Toledo, Don Diego de Miranda, the Duke and Duchess, and others – who provide the ethical standard for the readers’ understanding of the character of Don Quixote. I do not agree with Mandel’s reading in many details, but his idea of locating an ethical standard in *Don Quixote* (and in fiction in general) is sound. But, to begin, I want to examine the structure of the first part of Cervantes’s novel in order to set the stage for a close look at Sancho’s role late in that book.

Part I of *Don Quixote* (1605) is often misread and misrepresented, even by many of its most careful commentators. It is a commonplace to affirm that only in Part II (1615) do the major characters begin to change: Don Quixote becomes more realistic and disillusioned (*desengañado*), he is manipulated by other characters, both his physical strength and his spirit decline. Meanwhile, Sancho Panza becomes more idealistic and philosophical, he takes greater control of the action, he grows into his roles as squire and governor¹. The major impetus for this understanding of the novel was the central thesis of the influential book by Salvador de Madariaga, *Guía del lector del “Quijote”* the famous “sanchification” of Don Quixote and the “quixotization” of Sancho. Madariaga traced the mutual influence of the two characters on each other to the early chapters of Part II. Most Cervantes critics who have discussed ways in which the two characters evolve tend to distinguish between what they do and say in Part I, and what they do and say in Part II².

¹ Or, a variant on this theme, it is thought that the change takes place between the two parts and that by the start of Part II Don Quixote and Sancho are different from what they were in Part I. A modern representative of this position is David Quint when he mentions in passing “this change in the character of Don Quijote between the two installments of the novel” (2003, p. 130).

² One example is John Jay Allen, in his classic book *Don Quixote: Hero or Fool?* (1969 [1979], 2 v.); see the new *Remixed* edition of the books (2008).

But, as I attempted to show over three decades ago³, that simply is not the case, as the crucial beginnings of the changes in Don Quixote and Sancho occur in the second half of Part I, and not between the two parts or early in Part II. The first installment of the novel is divided into two nearly equal halves: chapters 1-25 and chapters 26-52. In the first half, Don Quixote is clearly the dominant figure, initiating the action and making other characters respond to what he does. But beginning with chapter 26, when the priest, Pero Pérez, and the barber, Maese Nicolás, reappear in the story, Don Quixote is largely relegated to secondary status. Here the more romantic or idealistic embedded fictions about Cardenio and the other characters related to him, the *Curioso impertinente*, and the story told by Ruy Pérez de Viedma about his captivity in and escape from Algiers occupy the reader's interest for a long time (especially chapters 24-41). Most of the time during these chapters, Don Quixote is either asleep or little more than a bystander. What takes place is determined by the priest, Dorotea, and other characters, rather than by Don Quixote himself. Except for a few scenes, the knight-errant's secondary status continues as the Captive's brother, the young lovers Clara and Luis, and others continue to occupy center stage (most of chapters 42-44). In chapter 46 the priest and barber, with the help of others present at the inn, "enchant" Don Quixote in order to place him in a cage and return him to his home. It is during these final chapters that we begin to see clearly how Sancho Panza distinguishes himself from most of the rest of the others and, I suggest, implicitly embodies an ethical norm.

III

The first reference to Sancho Panza is when Don Quixote goes to recruit a neighbor to be his squire: "un labrador vecino suyo, hombre de bien (si es que

³ See my *Chivalric World* (MANCING, 1982), especially p. 118-26.

este título se puede dar al que es pobre), pero de muy poca sal en la mollera” (I, 7, 163)⁴. From the start, Sancho is presented, and is perceived by the reader, as a comic, rustic stereotype. In fact, one of the major trends in critical approaches to Sancho Panza as a character – the most significant rival to Madariaga’s “quixotization” theory and its variants – places heavy, usually exclusive, emphasis on him as a comic figure of one sort or another. A number of Cervantes scholars have focused primarily on the origins of Sancho in a series of comic types from Renaissance culture and literature: the wise fool (Close, “Wise Fool”), folklore (Molho), carnival (Redondo), the squire from the romances of chivalry (Urbina), and other literary sources (Hendrix, Márquez Villanueva), and so forth.

All of these studies focus primarily – almost exclusively – on the comic aspects of Sancho’s character, even if many of them also take note of the fact that our peasant-squire is more complicated than any of these source-types tend to be. Thus, these critics contribute substantially to the hard reading of the novel that stresses the comic nature of the novel, and that often denies the validity of any other understanding of Cervantes’s work. For them, Sancho is basically a fool, a buffoon, a simpleton, an ignoramus, a grotesque figure, a parody, a burlesque – always and only comic. Generally, this approach falls within the hard critical strain that understands *Don Quixote* as a “funny book”⁵ largely a burlesque, characterized above all by a series of *burlas*.

The most important modern critical work on the subject is that of Anthony Close, *Cervantes and the Comic Mind of His Age*. Close defines *burlas* as “practical jokes, clever deceptions, ludicrous mishaps” and adds that they are

⁴ This and all subsequent citations from *Don Quixote* are from the edition of John Jay Allen (CERVANTES, 2005). Parenthetical documentation indicates part, chapter, and page.

⁵ The phrase “funny book” comes from P. E. Russell’s classic article of that title (1969). The most sustained, and most influential, study that takes this approach is Anthony Close’s *Romantic Approach* (1977).

“the backbone of incident in all comic fiction of the age” (2000, p. 17)⁶. In fact, these supposedly comic jokes are often gratuitously violent and cruel by modern standards. The degree to which the muleteers who toss Sancho in a blanket and the representatives of the church and the law who laugh at Don Quixote represent the “backbone of incident” in the novel, they do in fact personify, as proposed by Mandel, the social norm of the time.

For the most part, Sancho plays his comic role fairly consistently throughout the majority of the first part of the novel, although his cleverness and native intelligence are also evident early on⁷. He takes on an increasingly interesting personality as he points out reality to his master, makes Don Quixote laugh from time to time, begins to utter the folk proverbs for which he is so famous, and becomes more self-confident as a squire to a knight-errant. But during all this time, he remains primarily a comic figure and is always subservient to Don Quixote.

Eduardo Urbina (1991), one of the hardest of the hard critics cited above, traces in a particularly perceptive manner three phases of development of Sancho in the first part of the novel. Sancho starts out ignorant of the make-up of the chivalric world of Don Quixote, and the first 22 chapters are basically his apprenticeship in the trade. After the great series of comic adventures that make up chapters 15-22 of the novel, the knight and squire enter the Sierra Morena, and a new phase begins in the development of Sancho. There are two major factors in the consolidation of his character in chapters 23-31: first, Sancho learns the secret behind the identity of Dulcinea, and, second, he is separated from Don Quixote and has to manage

⁶ On the one hand, Close consistently shows that, by his standards, Cervantes’s *burlas* are of the same nature as those of other writers of the time, and on the other that “Cervantes deliberately distances himself from the writers around him and the traditions which he and they follow” (2000, p. 72).

⁷ Sancho shows evidence of some extraordinary intellectual acumen and rhetorical ability as early as I, 20. See Mancing in *Chivalric World* (1982, p. 73-78).

for himself. According to Urbina, by the time Dorotea enters the scene and when the party of Quixote, Sancho, the priest, the barber, Dorotea, and Cardenio arrive at the inn of Juan Palomeque (I, 32), Sancho's character is basically complete. In the remainder of the 1605 *Quixote*, proposes Urbina, Sancho fades into the background and is little more than a mere spectator to the events that take place there. Overall, Urbina's thesis is that by the end of Part I Sancho is a completely developed character, fully ready to take on the more important role he will carry out in the second part of the novel.

While I might quibble with a few details of the trajectory Urbina traces for Sancho, I think he is basically correct in his assessment of the development of the squire's character. Where I think he goes profoundly wrong, however, is in his reading of the final chapters of the novel. Sancho Panza, I suggest, is much more than a bystander at this point. By the time the novel is nearing an end, in the scenes at the inn of Juan Palomeque (I, 32-46) and the return home (I, 47-52), Sancho clearly sets himself apart from other characters, especially in his relationship to Don Quixote. It is here, I believe, that he emerges as the ethical norm by distinguishing himself from those characters who lie to, laugh at, humiliate, and manipulate Don Quixote. John J. Allen is perhaps the Cervantes scholar who first and most importantly showed that it is the context in which things happen that has a profound impact on the reader: "Juxtaposition of events [and, I would add, characters] in context is consistently the principal method by which Cervantes directs the reader's sympathies and ethical judgments" (*Remixed*, 2008, p. 65).

Anthony Close's summary comments on how *burlas* functioned in most of the fiction of Cervantes's time is worth citing:

The trickster's wit is his legitimation; that, and risible conceit, age, or credulity of the victim. The latter, as in primitive ritual, is treated as scapegoat: the butt of injurious derision, which is essentially of a communal nature. That is, the trickster's triumph over the victim is applauded by the whole community represented,

in the first instance, by the spectators of the hoax or the narrator's audience, whose expressions of delighted appreciation are the hoax's habitual accompaniment (apud MANCING, 1982, p. 330).

In the case of the men who have fun and laugh during Sancho's blanketing, and in that of those who laugh with delight at Don Quixote's beating by the goatherd, the *burlas* are indeed appreciated by the participants and the audience. There is only one exception: Sancho. The key to seeing how Sancho separates himself from all the other characters in the specific contexts of the novel is the phrase *Sólo Sancho*: "Only Sancho".

IV

The first mention that Sancho is going to be different from the other characters actually occurs before the traveling group reaches the inn, as Dorotea realizes that Don Quixote is an object of derision by others, except for one person: "Dorotea, que era discreta y de gran donaire, como quien ya sabía el menguado humor de don Quijote y que todos hacían burla dél, *sino Sancho Panza ...*" (I, 30, 419; emphasis added). Later, at the inn, while Don Quixote is asleep, the complicated love affairs of Cardenio and Luscinda, Don Fernando and Dorotea, are worked out and everyone is rejoicing, Sancho realizes that the supposed princess in distress has been lying and pretending, that she is simply an ordinary lady named Dorotea: "*Sólo Sancho*, como ya se ha dicho, era el afligido, el desventurado y el triste" (I, 37, 507; emphasis added). Sancho attempts to explain to Don Quixote what is going on, but the clever Dorotea manages to convince the deceived knight that she is still the same princess she always was.

Later, after Ruy Pérez tells his story of love and escape from captivity and then is reunited with his brother, everyone in the inn seems to be very pleased, except, again, Sancho: "*Sólo Sancho Panza* se desesperaba con la

tardanza del recogimiento, y sólo él se acomodó mejor que todos ...” (I, 42, 571; emphasis added). Then, when the priest and barber dress up as enchanters and inform Don Quixote that he is under enchantment, Sancho sees clearly who they are: “Sólo Sancho, de todos los presentes, estaba en su mesmo juicio y en su mesma figura; el cual, aunque le faltaba bien poco para tener la mesma enfermedad de su amo, no dejó de conocer quién eran todas aquellas contrahechas figuras...” (I, 46, 608; emphasis added). Sancho decides not to say anything at this time about the fact that his master’s best friends are now lying to him, but, as we will see, he will indeed speak up during the journey back to their village.

Sancho Panza does not fade into the background in these final chapters; rather, he is the most honest and decent person in the inn, the one individual who is not laughing at and deceiving Don Quixote. During this stay at the inn, the helpless and hapless Don Quixote is asleep, stands by and watches, and is duped by Dorotea and others, but Sancho is more aware and more vitally involved in events than ever. As the perceptive Juan Carlos Rodríguez has noted, “hay un halo muy fuerte de tristeza en este final de la historia de Don Quijote en la venta” (2003, p. 206). And he elaborates: “Y así nos hallamos en el final de la historia, donde el único que parece tener vida es Sancho” (p. 209). The opinion of R. M. Flores is similar when he notes that in these chapters “Sancho’s good sense and love for his master become more evident” (1982, p. 135)⁸. The final chapters of Part I show Sancho as the only person who cares for Don Quixote and treats him decently. He is the only character who consistently exhibits an ethics of care, a morality based on respect and love. For all the other characters – as for P. E. Russell (1969) and other hard

⁸ Flores also notes that “Sancho’s sense of humor and his good sense show palpably from the very beginning and remain unchanged, though obviously not constant, throughout the novel” (1982, p. 137). Urbina (1991) is better than Flores – who insists repeatedly that “Sancho is basically the same complex character from beginning to end” (p. 151) – in tracing the development of Sancho as a character, but, overall, Flores’s work, while not without some glaring faults, remains probably as the best book-length study of Sancho Panza.

critics – the knight is simply a comic fool, butt of the jokes and *burlas*, who is worthy of nothing more than their laughter.

But if it is in the inn scenes of chapters 32-46 that Sancho begins to emerge, it is the journey home in chapters 47-52 that we see even more clearly that Sancho represents an ethical norm that is radically different from that of others in the novel. When the Canon of Toledo joins the traveling group and asks questions about the man in the cage, the priest explains that Don Quixote is an enchanted knight-errant. But at this point the frustrated and desperate Sancho intervenes with what I have previously called his “quixotic defense” of his master (MANCING, 1982, p. 106). One should not underestimate the daring nature of Sancho’s intervention at this point. He himself is aware of what he is doing – challenging the integrity of an ordained priest by calling him a liar and charging that he is acting out of envy:

- Ahora, señores, quiérenme bien o quiérenme mal por lo que dijere, el caso de ello es que así va encantado mi señor don Quijote como mi madre. ...
Y volviéndose a mirar al cura, prosiguió diciendo:
- ¡Ah, señor cura, señor cura! ¿Pensaba vuestra merced que no le conozco, y pensará que yo no calo y adivino adónde se encaminan estos nuevos encantamientos? Pues sepa que le conozco, por más que se encubra el rostro, y sepa que le entiendo, por más que disimule sus embustes. En fin, donde reina la envidia no puede vivir la virtud, ni adonde hay escaseza la liberalidad (I, 47, 616).

Embarrassed by Sancho’s assault with the truth, Maese Nicolás ushers Sancho aside as Pero Pérez engages the Canon on a discussion of the romances of chivalry that have driven Don Quixote mad. The barber, writes the narrator, does this “porque no descubriese con *sus simplicidades* lo que él y el cura tanto procuraban encubrir” (I, 47, 617; emphasis added). But the truth is that to accuse a respected priest of lying, and to attribute his motive to envy, is not any sort of *simplicidad*; it is a powerful and valiant accusation. The

impact of that power becomes even greater when we realize that it is a simple, uneducated peasant, and a very strong and respectful believer in and supporter of the Church, who is accusing nothing less than an ordained priest, the spokesperson for that Church, of base envy. It is the sort of thing that could get one excommunicated – or worse. It is a brave and daring act of love that could have a very high price to pay. The narrator and many of the characters often use terms like *simple*, *necio*, and *tonto* to describe Sancho throughout the novel. Although these terms ring true in certain occasions, the perceptive reader knows better, knows that Sancho is often the voice of reality, truth, and the ethical norm.

Later, in the final chapter of the novel, another important scene takes place, a scene that definitively establishes Sancho as the incarnation of the book's highest ethical and moral standards. When Don Quixote and the goatherd Eugenio get into a fight, which begins when Don Quixote takes offence at Eugenio's comment that he must be mad and (in a very unchivalric act) hurls a loaf of hard-crust bread at the goatherd, bloodying his nose. Eugenio reacts by attempting to strangle Don Quixote, but Sancho intervenes to separate the two antagonists and thus to prevent his master's possible serious injury or even death. Don Quixote then gets the upper hand in the struggle, and Eugenio tries to grab a knife, apparently planning to stab his opponent. At this point the priest and the Canon intervene to avoid bloodshed and, at the same time, the barber also steps in and trips Don Quixote so that the goatherd can pummel him mercilessly. All the while, Sancho is restrained by one of the Canon's servants and can do nothing to prevent his master's beating.

While the knight is being thoroughly trounced by Eugenio, the illustrious crowd – consisting of Don Quixote's two best friends, the priest and the barber; the important Church official from Toledo and his servants; and the *cuadrilleros* (law officers) accompanying the group – all enjoy the scene:

Reventaban de risa el canónigo y el cura, saltaban los cuadrilleros de gozo, zuzaban los unos y los otros, como hacen a los perros cuando en pendencia están trabados; *sólo Sancho Panza* se desesperaba, porque no se podía desasir de un criado del canónigo, que le estorbaba que a su amo no ayudase (I, 52, 653; emphasis added).

Only Sancho Panza feels both empathy and sympathy for Don Quixote; only Sancho defends him; only Sancho treats him with decency and respect; only Sancho does not laugh. Only Sancho, I submit, represents the ethical norm at this point in the novel⁹.

V

In the 1615 second part of the novel, Sancho Panza, rather than Don Quixote, is the true protagonist. After spending a quiet month at home, Don Quixote has no plans to make another chivalric sally. But the pressure of other characters, including Sancho, and the fact that the Muslim historian who has published the first book of his adventures has promised to write a sequel, leave him little recourse but to set out again. Throughout the second part of the novel Don Quixote is a reluctant knight, always perceiving reality as it is

⁹ See my fuller discussion of Sancho's role in these final chapters of *Chivalric World* (1982, p. 103-112). When I wrote that analysis I had not noticed the importance of the phrase *sólo Sancho* in the final section of the novel. The phrase also occurs once earlier than in the scenes discussed here (I, 13, 215) but without the significance it has in the passages discussed. In Part II the phrase appears a couple of times, but, again, they are not so significant. When Quixote and Sancho depart from the wedding feast of Camacho, only Sancho is upset to leave (II, 21, 209). Later, during the hunt for the wild boar (II, 34, 319), only Sancho is frightened and tries to climb a tree. Noteworthy, also, is an example of the same sort of phrase at a significant moment very near the end of Cervantes's posthumous romance, *Persiles y Sigismunda*. The peerless beauty Auristela (Sigismunda) is poisoned by a jealous rival and loses all her beauty, and, as a result, the Duke of Nemurs, who has pursued her throughout the story, becomes disillusioned and departs, thus exposing the superficiality of his interest only in her physical beauty, failing to recognize her moral beauty. But the one suitor who proves his unswerving loyalty and love is Periandro (Persiles), the ethical and moral standard in the book, as well as the paragon of male beauty and valor: "*Sólo Periandro era el sólo firme, sólo el enamorado, sólo aquel que con intrépido pecho se oponía a la contraria fortuna y a la misma muerte, que en la de Auristela le amenazaba*" (p. 699; emphasis added).

presented to him and never willfully making any of his characteristic transformations of what he sees, frequently manipulated and deceived by others (including Sancho). Sancho, meanwhile, takes increasing control of the action and eventually becomes an exemplary governor of his *ínsula*. Significantly, Sancho actually speaks more frequently than any other character, including Don Quixote, in this second book¹⁰.

It is not possible to trace in detail Sancho's trajectory through the 1615 *Quixote* in the limits of an essay like this, but I would like to call attention to a few highlights. Before they take to the road again, as he talks with his master and the bachelor Sansón Carrasco, Sancho speaks eloquently and at some length (his longest utterance in this part of the novel) about his motives: "Yo, señor Sansón, no pienso granjear fama de valiente, sino del mejor y más leal escudero que jamás sirvió a caballero andante" (II, 4, 64). Sansón's reply to Sancho that he has spoken "como un catedrático" (II, 4, 65), although probably spoken with no small note of sarcasm, is in effect a recognition of the peasant squire's new self-confidence and an acknowledgment that he is more than a comic fool.

When Basilio interrupts the wedding of Camacho and Quiteria and apparently commits suicide for love, Sancho is the only one who seems to notice that something is wrong: "Para estar tan herido este mancebo – dijo a este punto Sancho Panza –, mucho habla" (II, 21, 207). And in fact Basilio's self-inflicted and apparently fatal stab wound is a trick that enables him to marry his beloved Quiteria. It is Sancho who sees through and mocks the pedantry of the humanist scholar who acts as their guide on the way to the Cave of Montesinos (II, 22). Sancho defends Don Quixote when others only want to laugh at him, as when he speaks with the frivolous Duchess:

¹⁰ Sancho speaks 551 times to Don Quixote's 508 (MANCING, 1982, p. 130). This is in contrast to the first book where Don Quixote speaks 427 times to Sancho's 277 (p. 28).

Pero ésta fue mi suerte, y ésta mi malandanza; no puedo más; seguirle tengo: somos de un mismo lugar, he comido su pan, *quíerole bien*, es agradecido, dieme sus pollinos y, *sobre todo*, yo soy *fiel*, y así, es imposible que nos pueda apartar otro suceso que el de la pala y azadón (II, 33, 312; emphasis added).

This is Sancho's finest statement of his relationship with his master and again illustrates how he stands out in relation to other characters.

When the malicious Countess Trifaldi mocks Don Quixote and Sancho in a speech characterized by the exaggerated and sometimes ungrammatical superlative suffix (*-ísimo*), Sancho speaks up before anyone else and parodies her comic speech, outdoing her in the comic use of the suffix, culminating in the absurd verb-form *quisieridísimis* (II, 38, 357). During the supposed magical ride with Don Quixote on the flying horse Clavileño, it is Sancho who notes that they can hardly have ascended very far into the heavens since they can still hear the voices of those on the ground (II, 41, 368) and then mocks the tricksters by claiming to have had an adventure among the stars during the ride (II, 41, 372-373). It is Sancho who notes that the face of the Duke's majordomo bears an uncanny resemblance to the supposed Countess Trifaldi (II, 44, 387-388) – and in fact it was this employee of the Duke who dressed in drag for the farce.

Undoubtedly the most impressive example of Sancho as the most ethical person in the novel comes during his tenure as governor of the *ínsula* (island) Barataria, an elaborate ruse set up by the Duke and his majordomo in order to be able to laugh at Sancho's stupidity and naiveté (II, 45-53). It is one of the high points in the entire novel when the governorship promised by Don Quixote in I, 7, actually materializes – even if it is by means of the idle Duke rather than as a result of the generosity of an ultimately victorious and famous Don Quixote. But that Sancho should go on to become an exemplary ruler, smarter, more perceptive, and more generous than those attempting to

make fun of him, is an outcome that few, if any, readers ever expected to take place. Sancho amazes his supposed tricksters with his judgments (II 45, 404) and his elegant speech (II, 49, 430); and he promulgates a series of popular laws (II, 51, 460). Even the Duke's majordomo, who has organized many of the tricks played on Governor Sancho has to admit that the squire has turned the tables on everyone else: "Cada día se veen coas novas en el mundo; las burlas se vuelven en veras y los burladores se hallan burlados" (II, 49, 432). When the final *burla*, the supposed invasion of the island during which the mock governor is both humiliated and physically mistreated, takes place, Sancho realizes that the tricks will never end and resigns his commission, stating that he prefers to return to old freedom, ironically, as a servant (II, 53, 474). His tricksters, regretting the excess of their actions, watch him ride away, "admirados, así de sus razones como de su determinación tan resoluta y tan discreta" (II, 53, 476).

When Don Quixote attempts to force Sancho to lash himself in order to disenchant Dulcinea (another *burla* perpetrated by the Duke and Duchess), Sancho defends himself, trips Don Quixote and pins him down. In response to Quixote's charge that Sancho dares to rebel against his natural superior, Sancho responds, "Ni quito rey, ni pongo rey, sino ayúdome a mí, que soy mi señor" (II, 60, 528). This self-affirmation is a high point in Sancho's moral trajectory. But, typical of Cervantes's unerring sense of timing and rhythm, as soon as Sancho makes this supreme expression of self-reliance, he wanders off a short distance and is frightened to find himself among the dangling legs of some bandits who have been hanged from the trees. Trembling with fear, he calls out to Don Quixote for help, and, of course, his master, whom he has just defeated in a kind of singular (if not knightly) combat, comes to his rescue (II, 60, 528).

Near the end of the novel, Sansón Carrasco, dressed as the Caballero de la Blanca Luna, and seeking revenge for his earlier defeat at Don Quixote's

hands, unhorses Don Quixote and makes him promise to return home for one year. All those present—including the aristocratic Don Antonio Moreno, who has been acting as host to the knight and squire during their visit to Barcelona, the other assembled nobles, and the region’s viceroy — are disappointed to see the figure they had been making fun of and whose madness they expected to continue to enjoy forced to return home defeated. The only exception is Sancho: “Sancho, todo triste, todo apesinado, no sabía qué decirse ni qué hacerse: parecía que todo aquel suceso pasaba en sueños y que toda aquella máquina era cosa de encantamento” (II, 64, 573). The narrator does not write *sólo Sancho* here, but the phrase would never have been more apt. In the very final chapter of the book, the Sancho who sheds tears at Don Quixote’s bedside as his master lies dying, again stands out in contrast to his other supposed friends, the priest, the barber, and, especially Sansón, who writes a comic epitaph when the actual death takes place.

VI

Just as *sólo Sancho* is the key phrase in the final chapters of the 1605 novel that point to Sancho as the ethical norm for the book, there is another phrase in the 1615 sequel that again singles him out as being different, in an entirely positive way, from others. On two occasions Don Quixote notes that Sancho has a *buen natural*, an innate goodness — “instinctive decency” in Close’s definition (*Comic Mind*, 2000, p. 37). The first time this happens is during the wedding ceremony of Camacho the Rich. Sancho waxes eloquent about the universality and inevitability of death, and Don Quixote is impressed: “Dígote, Sancho que si como *tienes buen natural* y discreción¹¹, pudieras tomar un

¹¹ *Discreción* is another term that often suggests intellectual and/or ethical qualities of discernment, as when Cervantes praises the discretion of readers who are critical of the romances of chivalry; see the book by Margaret Bates (1945). But sometimes Cervantes also uses the term suggest cleverness, smugness, and/or a self-satisfied sense of superiority, as when it is used to describe malicious, joking characters such as Vivaldo, Dorotea, or Sansón

púlpito en la mano e irte por ese mundo predicando lindezas” (II, 20, 202; emphasis added). Although there is a hint of sarcasm in Quixote’s remarks (“predicando lindezas”), the complement comes across overall as sincere.

Then, in an even more important passage, after Don Quixote’s advice to his squire when he is about to become a governor, Sancho offers to renounce the appointment if Don Quixote does not believe that he is up to the job. Don Quixote’s response is: “Por Dios, Sancho, que por solas estas últimas razones que has dicho juzgo que mereces ser gobernador de mil ínsulas: *buen natural tienes*, sin el cual no hay ciencia que valga” (II, 43, 385; emphasis added). Sancho is the only character in the entire novel who is ever said to have a *buen natural*. The significance of this is that the phrase is only used by Cervantes with reference to positive characters; he never uses it ironically¹². In his *Novelas ejemplares*, the phrase is used with four characters, two young women, a young boy, and a dog: 1) Preciosa, protagonist of “La gitanilla” (1983, I, 85); 2) Rinconete, in “Rinconete y Cortadillo” (I, 239); 3) Isabel, protagonist of “La española inglesa” (I, 244); and 4) Berganza, the talking dog who relates his life history in “Coloquio de los perros” (II, 313). These characters are all presented as good and decent by their very nature, and the telling phrase *buen natural* calls attention explicitly and unerringly to that fact¹³.

Carrasco. In this context, with reference to Sancho and pared with *buen natural*, I understand it in the more positive sense.

¹² Cervantes, of course, is not the only writer to use the term *buen natural*. But everything depends on context. For example, when Mateo Alemán’s morally degenerate pícaro Guzmán de Alfarache boastfully uses the term twice to describe himself (2003, p. 317; p. 330) the effect is entirely different.

¹³ There are, of course, other characters whose natural goodness might qualify them for this description also, but *buen natural* is not explicitly used to describe any of them. Such characters would include, I suggest, Marcela, Doña Clara, and Don Quixote’s niece Antonia, from *Don Quixote*, as well as others from the *Novelas ejemplares* and Cervantes’s other works. It is interesting to note that a disproportionately high percentage of women characters fall into this category. As an additional detail of more than casual curiosity, it is worth noting that Preciosa (from “La gitanilla”) and Doña Clara (from *Don Quixote*, I, 42-45) both mention the date of their birth, September 29, the only characters in the works of Cervantes who do

In the second part of the novel, Sancho speaks intelligently, defends his master, is the most perceptive and critical character in the novel, sees through the tricks and lies of other characters, achieves his ambition to become a governor, but then renounces that office, grows in self-confidence and self-reliance, returns home in triumph, and lives on past the final pages of the book. The 1615 *Don Quixote* is Sancho's story, much more than it is Don Quixote's. Sancho develops steadily and consistently throughout the two parts of the novel, and this is first apparent, as I have described above, in the final chapters of the 1605 novel, where the phrase *sólo Sancho* sets him apart from everyone else as the moral and ethical standard.

Lest I be misinterpreted, I do not in any way intend to imply that Sancho is some sort of saint or artificial model of goodness in a wicked world. Throughout the novel, including the second volume, Sancho is at times incredulous, duped and laughed at by others, inattentive, careless, indifferent, and even cruel. He is indeed the source of much of the humor throughout *Don Quixote*. What is important to stress, however, is that Sancho should not be relegated to some sort of binary status: because he is funny, he cannot be serious; because he becomes quixotized he cannot be funny. To reduce him to the status of a wise fool or the parody of a squire, and not to acknowledge that he is also so much more than that, is a serious error. Sancho is a (fictional version of a) real human being, and as such he is inconsistent and frustratingly difficult to understand at times. Part of the extraordinary creative genius of Cervantes is to have created complex, compelling characters who demand our respect and admiration, even as we laugh at – and with – them.

so. Cervantes himself was probably born on September 29, Michaelmas, or Saint Michael's day, in 1547.

VII

Early in this essay I wrote that I thought that Cervantes intended Sancho to be perceived as the representative of the ethical norm in the novel. I am sure that some readers will assume that I am committing an intentional fallacy, that I believe that what the author intends is the definitive – the only correct – meaning of the work, that I am committing the sin of treating literary characters – after all, nothing but words or signs – as real human beings, and that I am ignorant of the basic tenets of structuralist narratology that has been dominant in recent decades. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

Throughout this essay I ground my comments theoretically in what I refer to as *cognitive narratology*, an approach to fictional narration based on concepts found in today's most recent and most sophisticated embodied cognitive science. Since space is limited, it is not possible to describe this approach in any detail. But one key feature of cognitive narratology is what is known as Theory of Mind. This is the folk psychological assumption that (in real life) we recognize our own thoughts, beliefs, desires, hopes, feelings, and emotions, and that we assume a similar 'belief-desire' psychology in other people. Sanjida O'Connell describes Theory of Mind as:

The mechanism we use to understand what is going on in other people's heads. How we react to one another socially is the most important aspect of our lives. Without an understanding of what people think, what they want and what they believe about the world, it is impossible to operate in any society. Theory of Mind is the name given to this understanding of others. It is the basic necessity of humanity and is understood the same way the world over (1997, p. 2)¹⁴.

¹⁴ The bibliography on Theory of Mind is very large and growing. For starters, in addition to the book by O'Connell (1997), I suggest that interested readers consult Baron-Cohen (1995), Dunbar (2004), Iacoboni (2008), and Tomasello (1999), all in the References.

At every moment of our lives, we make assumptions about what other people are thinking, we have what may informally be called a theory about how their minds, and ours, work.

Recently, the concept of Theory of Mind has become an integral feature of cutting-edge literary theorists and critics who ground their work in contemporary cognitive science. First and foremost among these literary scholars is Lisa Zunshine, whose *Why We Read Fiction: Theory of Mind and the Novel* (2006) is the first book-length study of fictional characters grounded in theory-of-mind psychology. It is Zunshine's thesis that without a Theory of Mind we would not be able to understand what is going on in literature, particularly the novel:

As a sustained representation of numerous interacting minds, the novel feeds the powerful, representation-hungry complex of cognitive adaptations whose very condition of being is a constant social simulation delivered either by direct interactions with other people or by imaginary approximation of such interactions (2006, p. 10).

Treating literary characters, along with authors and narrators, *as if* they were real people (they are not, of course, but we think and write of them *as if* they were) is a necessary pre-requisite for the understanding of any literary text. Recent work by a number of other cognitive literary scholars also makes it clear that understanding, talking about, and writing about literary characters as though they were flesh-and-blood human beings with beliefs, desires, and other emotions is at the heart of the literary enterprise¹⁵.

So it is that, using my Theory of Mind, I can attempt to understand Sancho Panza's motivation when he becomes desperate and distraught during the

¹⁵ In addition to the book by Zunshine (2006), see those of Bortolussi and Dixon (2003), Keen (2007), Leverage et al. (2011), Palmer (2004), and Vermeule (2010) all in the References.

events in the final chapters of the 1605 *Quixote*, when he bravely attacks the motives of his local priest, Pero Pérez, and during the time that he rules self-confidently as governor of an island. By the same token, I can make assumptions about what Cervantes was thinking when he wrote about his fictional character Sancho Panza. And I believe that the textual evidence I have presented, particularly the crucial use of the terms *sólo Sancho* and *buen natural*, supports my understanding of the author's work. Sancho Panza represents, better than anyone else, a true ethic and morality of respect, love, and care, and thus becomes the sole exemplar of a genuine ethical norm in *Don Quixote*¹⁶.

References:

- ALEMÁN, Mateo. *Guzmán de Alfarache*. Edición de José María Micó. Madrid: Cátedra, 2007 (1987). v. 1.
- ALLEN, John J. *Don Quixote: Hero or Fool?* Gainesville: University of Florida, 1969 (1979). 2 v.
- ALLEN, John J. *Don Quixote: Hero or Fool? Remixed*. Newark: Juan de la Cuesta, 2008.
- BARON-COHEN, Simon. *Mindblindness: An Essay on Autism and Theory of Mind*. Cambridge: MIT, 1995.
- BATES, Margaret. "*Discreción*" in *the Works of Cervantes*. Washington, DC: Catholic University of America, 1945.
- BORTOLUSSI, Marisa; DIXON, Peter. *Psychonarratology: Foundations for the Empirical Study of Literary Response*. Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2003.
- CERVANTES, Miguel de. *Don Quijote de la Mancha*. 25. ed. Edición de John Jay Allen. Madrid: Cátedra, 2005. 2 v.

¹⁶ This essay is a very greatly expanded version of one titled "Sancho Panza et la norme éthique" (2010), written by invitation and strictly limited in length. I thank Paulo Dutra for his invitation to present the full version here.

- CERVANTES, Miguel de. *Los trabajos de Persiles y Sigismunda*. Edición de Carlos Romero Muñoz. Madrid: Cátedra, 1997.
- CERVANTES, Miguel de. *Novelas ejemplares*. Edición de Harry Sieber. Madrid: Cátedra, 1983. 2 v.
- CLOSE, Anthony. Sancho Panza: Wise Fool. *Modern Language Review*, p. 344-57, 1973.
- CLOSE, Anthony. *Cervantes and the Comic Mind of His Age*. Oxford: Oxford University, 2000.
- CLOSE, Anthony. *The Romantic Approach to "Don Quixote"*. Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1977.
- CODE, Lorraine. *Rhetorical Spaces: Essays on Gendered Locations*. New York: Routledge, 1995.
- DUNBAR, Robin. *The Human Story: A New History of Mankind's Evolution*. London: Faber and Faber, 2004.
- FLORES, R. M. *Sancho Panza Through Three Hundred Seventy-five Years of Continuations, Imitations, and Criticism, 1605-1980*. Newark: Juan de la Cuesta, 1982.
- HENDRIX, William S. Sancho Panza and the Comic Types of the Sixteenth Century. In: HOMENAJE ofrecido a Menéndez Pidal: miscelánea de estudios lingüísticos, literarios e históricos. Madrid: Hernando, 1925. v. 2, p. 485-94.
- IACOBONI, Marco. *Mirroring People: The New Science of How We Connect with Others*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2008.
- KEEN, Suzanne. *Empathy and the Novel*. Oxford: Oxford University, 2007.
- LEVERAGE, Paula; MANCING, Howard; SCHWEICKERT, Richard; WILLIAM, Jennifer Marston (Org.). *Theory of Mind and Literature*. West Lafayette: Purdue University, 2011.
- MADARIAGA, Salvador de. *Guía del lector del "Quijote": Ensayo psicológico sobre el "Quijote"*. Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1926.
- MANCING, Howard. Sancho Panza et la norme éthique. *Europe 979-980 Special Issue on Cervantes*. Edition by Jean-Raymond Fanlo. 2010. p. 76-87.
- MANCING, Howard. *The Chivalric World of Don Quijote: Style, Structure, and Narrative Technique*. Colombia: University of Missouri, 1982.
- MANDEL, Oscar. The Function of the Norm in *Don Quixote*. *Modern Philology*, v. 55, n. 3, p. 154-163, 1958.
- MÁRQUEZ VILLANUEVA, Francisco. La génesis literaria de Sancho Panza. *Anales Cervantinos*, v. 7, p. 123-155, 1957.
- MOLHO, Mauricio. Raíz folklórica de Sancho Panza. In: _____. *Cervantes: raíces folklóricas*. Madrid: Gredos, 1976. p. 271-336.

- NODDINGS, Nel. *Caring, A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education*. Berkeley: University of California, 1984.
- O'CONNELL, Sanjida. *Mindreading: An Investigation into How We Learn to Love and Lie*. New York: Doubleday, 1997.
- PALMER, Alan. *Fictional Minds*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 2004.
- QUINT, David. *Cervantes's Novel of Modern Times: A New Reading of "Don Quijote"*. Princeton: Princeton University, 2003.
- REDONDO, Agustín. Tradición carnavalesca y creación literaria: Del personaje de Sancho Panza al episodio de la ínsula Barataria en el "Quijote". *Bulletin Hispanique*, v. 80, p. 39-70, 1978.
- RODRÍGUEZ, Juan Carlos. *El escritor que compró su propio libro: Para leer el "Quijote"*. Barcelona: Debate, 2003.
- RUSSELL, P. E. *Don Quixote as a Funny Book*. *Modern Language Review*, v. 64, n. 2, p. 312-326, 1969.
- TOMASELLO, Michael. *The Cultural Origins of Human Cognition*. Cambridge: Harvard University, 1999.
- URBINA, Eduardo. *El sin par Sancho Panza: Parodia y creación*. Barcelona: Anthropos, 1991.
- VERMEULE, Blakey. *Why Do We Care about Literary Characters?* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 2010.
- ZUNSHINE, Lisa. *Why We Read Fiction: Theory of Mind and the Novel*. Columbus: Ohio State University, 2006.

Recebido em: 19 de outubro de 2015
Aprovado em: 02 de dezembro de 2015