

## DON QUIXOTE AMONG THE SARACENS

### A Clash of Civilizations and Literary Genres

The fictional Don Quixote was constantly defeated in his knightly adventures. In writing Quixote's story, however, Miguel Cervantes succeeded in a different kind of quest – the creation of a modern novel that 'conquers' and assimilates countless literary genres. *Don Quixote among the Saracens* considers how Cervantes' work reflects the clash of civilizations and anxieties towards cultural pluralism that permeated Golden Age Spain.

Frederick A. de Armas unravels an essential mystery of one of world literature's best known figures: why Quixote sets out to revive knight errantry, and why he comes to feel at home only among the Moorish 'Saracens,' a people whom Quixote feared at the beginning of the novel. De Armas also reveals Quixote's inner conflicts as both a Christian who vows to battle the infidel, and as a secret Saracen sympathizer. While delving into genre theory, *Don Quixote among the Saracens* adds a new dimension to our understandings of Spain's multicultural history.

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FREDERICK A. DE ARMAS

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A Clash of Civilizations  
and Literary Genres

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## Preface

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This book grew out of a happy misunderstanding. When Julio Hans Jensen asked me to attend a symposium on genre at the University of Copenhagen, he mentioned that the papers would be published in the *Revue Romaine*. Rather than consulting the journal, I set out to write an essay on questions of genre in *Don Quixote*. This was a topic I wanted to consider further since, in my previous book, *Quixotic Frescoes*, I had broached the topic but could not develop it as the book's focus was the art of memory, Italian art, and ekphrasis. I was delighted to finish the Copenhagen essay long before the deadline. When I sent it to Julio Jensen, he wrote a very apologetic note reminding me that the journal only published in the romance languages and that my essay was in English. Would I mind translating it? After thinking about it for some time, I felt that what I had written was best left in English. I took the months that remained to write quite a different piece in Spanish for the symposium and the journal, one that foregrounded Virgil's misplacement in Cervantes' novel. The English article, I set aside. I was tempted to publish it in a journal, but the more I read it, the more I noticed that there was much more I wanted to include – so much, that the five sections in the essay soon became so lengthy that they turned into chapters.

I was never able to make it to Copenhagen. A small accident kept me at home, and kept me writing. When the fourth chapter soon became too long, I divided it into four additional chapters. And, as I was finishing the seventh chapter, a curious use of the *Orlando furioso* in chapter 45 of Cervantes' novel led me to puzzle out a mystery. The solution comes out of the text's invitation in chapter 22 to become a detective, to follow the thread that can allow us to navigate the labyrinth

of converging genres and come out with an answer. In addition to the confluence of genres, there is no greater labyrinth in the text than the mind of our gentleman from La Mancha. Genre and character, then, impelled me to recreate a scene that could answer a number of questions about the novel. Once I glimpsed the mystery, all the previous chapters had to be revised to include this second thread of argument. All these mishaps have led to this book that deals with a knight whose journey is filled with accidental happenings. These accidents lead him this way and that, just as the narrative takes on and discards different genres. The way Cervantes uses countless genres metamorphosing them into something novel, and even turning them against each other, is one of the many reasons *Don Quixote* is an unforgettable novel. Here, the Virgilian epic of the victors might be placed against Lucan's epic of the defeated; the marvellous excesses in Ariosto's *Orlando furioso* can be juxtaposed to an episode from Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata* where, attempting to restrain the marvellous, the author is carried away by the narrative; the violence of the *Belianís de Grecia* is pitted against the concepts of Feliciano de Silva's chivalric texts. Chivalry can be furthered by the Greek romances; the clustering of Italian *novelle* can resemble the interlacing of romance; theatrical techniques can irrupt at any point, as tragedy and comedy are contrasted; Ovidian metamorphoses are everywhere, as well as names and tales from mythographical manuals. Other forms of prose are constantly contaminating the narrative: emblematic literature, hagiography, medical manuals, manuals of oratory, technical treatises, etc. Each instance deserves a detailed study. But that is far beyond the range of this book. What interests me most is how the narrative seems to defy different genres as the knight moves 'through' them. At a time when Cervantes' novel is viewed as a modern and even a postmodern novel, it is appropriate to look back, to analyse how Cervantes' work originated out of clashes of genre, many of which are of no importance to the contemporary reader. It is also important, I think, to show how the territories of genre become part of the empire of the novel; and how Don Quixote rides on, a ghostly memory of Emperor Charles V and his son Philip.

While studying the generic clashes, the imitation and parody of so many texts, I came across, quite unexpectedly, a hidden element, a secret that is, as noted above, partially revealed through the uses of the *Orlando furioso*. It is the mystery of Don Quixote's relations to the Moorish culture of Spain, an anxiety that hides a kind of maurophilia, and perhaps even more. The book's title, *Don Quixote among the Saracens*, re-

flects one of the names given to the Muslims through the Middle Ages and even into the seventeenth century. Ariosto refers to the Islamic enemy that is laying siege to Paris as Saracens, some say, because the name referred to all Muslims and particularly to those from Sicily and southern Italy. However, he could have been reflecting its use during the times of Charlemagne, where it meant anyone who was not Christian and was thus interchangeable with 'pagan.' In Spain, the term Saracen was used for the invading Moors from Africa as early as the eighth century. Many Christian invectives were attached to this word. Thirteen years before the publication of *Don Quixote*, for example, Petro de la Cavalleria and Martino Alfonso Vivaldo composed their *Tractatus Zelus Christi contra Iudaeos Saracenos et Infideles* (1592). My usage of the term acknowledges its historical roots. While in classical times it was a neutral term to refer to a people who lived far away from what early Europeans conceived as the centres of power, it could still mean that Saracens were but one of many types of barbarians. Later, it became a word applied to the enemies of Christianity. Even today, the expression 'sarracina' refers to a confusing contest or quarrel. In many ways, this is how Cervantes takes the episode at the inn. It includes a series of confusing altercations. Although Cervantes refrains from mentioning the word, he turns to imitate Ariosto's episode with many confusing quarrels in order to show that peace can be achieved by abiding among the Saracens. Thus, in Cervantes' novel a hybrid status is lauded as a site for harmony. In many ways, my hope is to rescue the term and foreground its connotations as a threatened Other. Indeed, I recently read an editorial by Lluís Bassets in the Spanish newspaper *El País* that was entitled 'El Cid se lanza contra los sarracenos' [The Cid Fights against the Saracens]. The essay was a complaint against policies by Nicolas Sarkozy and Berlusconi who are intent on excluding foreigners from their countries, and particularly on expelling the gypsies (2010, 13). What I am trying to show in this book is that the Saracen/Other has to be faced within ourselves. The struggle is one for tolerance, one that acknowledges and makes room for different cultures and civilizations, for different expressions of the self.

It is my contention, then, that *Don Quixote* is at first anxious and then at home among the Saracens. Why so? This, then, is an essential mystery that hides among the clashes in the novel. The clashes of genre and the knight's imaginings conceal a clash of civilizations and the anxieties that they produce. In this and many other ways, Cervantes' novel, although looking at the past, echoes today's clashes of civilizations as

described by Samuel Huntington and many others. And since my own study functions often through allusion, I would point out that I use Huntington's provocative and useful notion of a clash of civilizations in a nuanced way that will be explained in chapter 1. And just because I take up the phrase 'clashes of civilizations' does not mean that I accept many of Huntington's other arguments.

The book is divided into ten chapters. The first serves as introduction, setting the scene. The second chapter looks at the foundations to the chivalric world that are laid in chapter 1 of *Don Quixote*. This construction is aided by Pythagorean numerology, onomastics, and a number of quaternities such as Empedocles' elements, the four humours that balance the physiology, the four qualities, and the four seasons. At the same time, parody of the romances undercuts, among others, the naming of the knight and his lady. This parody turns polemical when it hints of a mystery that involves both the knight's ancestry and the lady's lineage. These anxieties propel the gentleman to leave his home, imagining himself emperor of Trebizond – and a new Charles V. In other words, he wishes to live in a simpler world (as portrayed in chivalric romances) where Trebizond was a Christian empire that could prevail against the 'infidels'; or he can at least live in a recent past where there was the hope of a Christian *Dominus mundi* who would bring peace to the world. Chapter 3 takes up the remaining seven chapters of the first part of the novel. Here, diverse generic forms will come into play, such as hagiography, the picaresque, treatises on religious conversion, and technological manuals. But all are subservient to the chivalric and its parody as well as to the Pythagorean buttressing of narrative. The shadow of the ghostly emperor Charles V will haunt the text from its beginning since the original name of the gentleman from La Mancha is Quijada or jaw, thus pointing to the protruding Habsburg jaw of Charles V and his successor Philip II. Hidden within Pythagorean harmonies, a mysterious subtext continues to emerge as the knight 'mistakes' crosses and clerics as enemies. Chapter 4 turns to the second part of *Don Quixote* (chapters 9–14). Here pastoral paradoxically points to epic, while the intrusion of an Arabic narrator attempts to destabilize a narrative which is now buttressed by epic possibilities. And a woman is seen appropriating epic devices to counter accusations against her. A clash of epics requires the abandonment of the pastoral land in search of a new start. Epic possibilities are again reasserted in the third part of the novel (chapters 15–22). These eight chapters are the subject of our chapter 5, as they reroute a narrative that had become

too complex back into the linear and chivalric mode. The chivalric is buttressed by the Carolingian cycle and the Italian romances while it is destabilized by parody and, to a lesser extent, by the 'author,' Cide Hamete Benengeli. The French and Italian models provide two magical objects, the balsam of Fierabrás and Mambrino's helmet. While the first becomes a dangerous heterodox *ensalmo*, a curative process often used by *conversos* and *moriscos*, the second emboldens the knight with the allure of invincibility and the daring of a Moorish enchantment. Together, these two objects haunt the knight with anxieties regarding his ancestry and his lady's lineage. At the same time, parodic episodes contain numerous allusions to Virgil's *Aeneid*. It soon becomes apparent that the narrative is not following the foundational and imperial epic. Although coming closer to the epic of the defeated, the episodic narrative eventually reaches an impasse when the knight decides to free the galley slaves. Is he the ghost of an ancient emperor restoring his descendant's sense of justice? Or is he impelled by Moorish/Jewish magic? Whatever the answer, Don Quixote becomes, in the words of Roberto González Echevarría, a 'fugitive from justice' (2005, 54). The epic of the defeated defeats the knight by turning him into a fugitive. At this narrative impasse, represented by Sierra Morena, the gentleman from La Mancha must find a new way ahead. The road is unstable, as neither the knight nor the commissary who leads the galley slaves can hold up their swords. Traversing these pillars, the chivalric pair comes up with a labyrinth.

Cervantes' novel does not establish a break here. Dividing it into four parts, Cervantes begins the last section of his novel in chapter 28. I begin it in chapter 23 and subdivide this lengthy fourth segment into three parts, each representing a different mystery. Chapter 6 tracks Don Quixote as he moves deeper into Sierra Morena and encounters a number of unexplained clues. This chapter shows how knight and squire beckon the reader to become involved, to become a detective, as the chivalric pair move from the mystery of the portmanteau, to the mystery of the dead mule, to the mystery of Cardenio. Clues become essential in this quasi-detective fiction. While Sancho begins as an excellent detective, Don Quixote slowly surpasses him. The topographical labyrinth is thus linked to a series of threads or clues that the characters must follow to solve the mystery. However, once Cardenio becomes the suspect and tells his story of how he went mad because of unrequited love, Don Quixote abandons all interest in sleuthing. After all, he has found his new calling, that of a knight in love. However, the search for clues

calls for the discovery of hidden mysteries in the text as the shimmering visions of dromedary, Minotaur, and dragon impel readers to search for the constructions of monstrous otherness. Chapter 7 describes the mystery of the labyrinth. It shows Don Quixote alone in the mountains doing penance for his lady, while new narratives sprout all around him. Works that resemble Italian *novelle* become clustered in what appears as fragments from Greek or even Italian romances. In this section the knight loses much of his protagonism and voice as others around him recount their tales, act out their problems, and search for solutions. The tales of Cardenio and Dorotea, Fernando and Luscinda, Anselmo and Camila fill these pages. Their amorous endeavours bring humidity and variety to a dry and linear narrative. At the same time, Don Quixote becomes drier and more melancholy as he remains in the mountains. While other genres surface around him, he does not forget his own generic path, trying to decide if he will imitate the romances of chivalry (*Amadís de Gaula*) or the Italian romances (*Orlando furioso*). Although he decides on the former, some elements of the latter will contaminate his actions. These events further derange his mind and dry up his body. They also include keys to the main mystery this book explores, including a heterodox rosary and a needless penitence.

Chapter 8 finds Don Quixote at the inn. He has already tried to regain protagonism by interrupting the tale of the *Curioso impertinente*. He now tries again with the speech of Arms and Letters. It is followed by a tale that is still not completed, but seeks a denouement at the inn. It is the Captive's Tale, one where Spain's struggle with Moorish culture is at its very centre. Mysteries of naming resurface in this story as the name Zoraida/María can be taken as clues to clashes of genres and civilizations. The tale is never resolved, and neither is the following one, that of Luis and Clara, where the epic figure of Virgil's helmsman, Palinurus, is transformed into a lover. Chapter 9 shows how Don Quixote finally regains his voice. As all is discord at the inn, he decides to invoke a passage from the Italian romances, from *Orlando furioso*, the discord at Agramante's camp during the Saracen's siege of Paris. Although the knight is successful and peace is regained, we are left to wonder why he would choose a scene at the Saracens' camp to depict Christians. This is no trick from the narrator, since it is Don Quixote who comes up with the analogy in order to insert the helmet of Mambrino among the objects of discord. This parody of canto 27 in the *Orlando* allows us to rethink much of what the knight has done. If he is indeed a ghostly remnant of the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, he seems to choose

the wrong side of the battle here. A review of a number of previous episodes in light of this one provides a theory as to the well-hidden mystery in the text. Indeed, the novel has prepared us to attempt to solve such a mystery with the detections of knight and squire and the many twists of narrative that follow. An active reader may then come up with a possible solution to this central clue. Once all is well at the inn, the narrative again takes on a linear and chivalric direction. Chapter 10, then, discusses the fifth segment of the novel (chapters 47–52). Here the chivalric is buttressed by astrology and magic. The trip home recalls Charles V's journey to Yuste after he abdicates the crown in favour of his son Philip II. Under the influence of Saturn, Don Quixote is led home. And this is as it should be since Saturn at this time was seen as a planet of delays, frustrations, incarceration, and even death. It is also a planet associated with the non-Christian Other. The protean nature of the knight is again revealed: a Saracen secret sympathizer, a gentleman who fears a *converso* ancestry, a lover who doubts his lady's lineage, and a Christian knight who vows to battle the infidel.

Although consulting both Diego Clemencín's erudite nineteenth-century edition and Francisco Rico's monumental recent edition of *Don Quixote*, I am citing from the text I use in my classes, Luis Andrés Murillo's edition of 1978. I do so because I am most familiar with its pages. When citing Don Quixote I first provide the Spanish, followed by Charles Jarvis's English translation in Oxford World's Classics. English translations from other Spanish texts are my own. Works from other languages appear only in English translation.

I would like to thank Julio Hans Jensen and all the participants at the University of Copenhagen workshop. I owe a particular debt of gratitude to my colleague Thomas Pavel, who read not only the Spanish essay for Copenhagen, but also the one that became the basis for this book. He and I have co-taught *Don Quixote* and many of the dialogues that ensued impinge upon my text. I would also like to thank Martha Roth, Dean of Humanities at the University of Chicago, for awarding me a research leave so that I could write this book. I was able to complete the final research on this book at the Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas in Madrid with the aid of their Salvador de Madariaga program. To my colleagues at Chicago, who have been patient with my monomania and have provided counsel and conversation, I am in their debt: Ryan Giles, Armando Maggi, and many others. To many Cervantistas who have provided new insights or conversed with me on these subjects at conferences or at campus talks I give thanks. If

I begin naming, this will become endless, but perhaps a few names will stand for the many: María Antonia Garcés, Juan Pablo Gil-Oslé, Roberto González Echevarría, Luciano García Lorenzo, Ignacio López-Aleman, Thomas Lathrop, Charles Presberg, Steven Wagschal, and Christopher Weimer. The memory of Daniel L. Heiple, Carroll Johnson, and Edward Dudley is evoked throughout these pages. I also want to express my gratitude to the two anonymous readers of the manuscript. I appreciate their detailed and insightful suggestions. To my research and course assistants at the University of Chicago, Jesús Botello, Carmela Matza, and James Nemiroff, I owe a great debt of gratitude. In particular, I would like to thank Felipe Rojas for his help in assembling and editing this book. I would like to express my appreciation to the editors of *Cervantes* and the *Revue Romaine* for allowing me to include material from my essays in these journals. And, my thanks to the University of Toronto Press for allowing me to repeat, verbatim at times, some of the genre discussions that appeared in *Quixotic Frescoes*. These genre discussions, concealed in a work about ekphrasis, are now expanded to foreground the parodic tone, and the clashes among different forms. They are also interlaced with the 'mystery' of the text.



# 1 Pillars of Genre / Ghosts of Empire: An Introduction

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The ‘invention’ of the novel resulted from the re-fashioning of literary genres already in place, and Don Quixote stands in relation to the origin of the novel not as the invention of something radically new, but as the uncovering of new possibilities for the combination of elements that pre-existed it.

– Anthony Cascardi, *The Cambridge Companion to Cervantes*

We know that Henry James’s secret . . . resides precisely in the existence of a secret, of an absent and absolute cause, as well as in the effort to plumb this secret, to render the absent present . . . We might go further and say that in order for this ever-absent cause to become present, it *must* be a ghost.

– Tzvetan Todorov, *The Poetics of Prose*

At the very ends of the world, where the sun sets, lie the paradisiacal gardens of the Hesperides, where three maidens, daughters of Atlas, tended to the tree with the golden apples. One of them was called Erythea. She gave her name to a little island situated just south of Hispania very near to what is today Cádiz, then Gades.<sup>1</sup> The island, some said, was home to Geryon and it was there, according to Seneca, that Hercules was sent to steal his cattle.<sup>2</sup> To be able to reach this remote place, Hercules had to break a mountain chain that stood in his path.<sup>3</sup> The remnants became two huge rocks separated by a new watery path, an opening through which the waters of Oceanus flowed. These are the Straits of Gibraltar, and guarding the path to Oceanus are the Pillars of Hercules, be they promontories on either side of the straits, or an island

*Image removed at the request of the rights holder*

1.1 Spanish nobles lead a riderless horse with the motto of Emperor Charles V *Plus ultra* in the funerary procession held in Brussels in 1558. Watercolour in a book printed by Plantin-Moretus in Brussels. Location: Bibliothèque Municipale, Besançon, France. Art Resource, NY.

in its midst.<sup>4</sup> The pillars served as a warning to sailors not to venture beyond. Alternately, they protected the Mediterranean from the monsters and floods at the edge of the world.<sup>5</sup>

Centuries passed and Hispania was no longer at the end of the world – it was becoming the centre of European power, and it was about to welcome a Habsburg ruler into its midst. The future emperor, Charles V, went to Barcelona where he met with the Order of the Golden Fleece in 1519. There he displayed as his device the columns of Hercules, but now with a different meaning.<sup>6</sup> Indeed, on the back of Charles's seat in the choir at the cathedral there is a heraldic painting by Juan de Borgoña with the columns of Hercules (Rosenthal 1971, 209).<sup>7</sup> From that point on, Charles's emblem would use a banderole that beckoned the traveller or adventurer: *Plus ultra* or *Plus oultre*, go beyond. After all, the dangerous edge of the world had led to a New World filled with

wonders. In his new empire the sun never set and the golden apples of the Hesperides had been transformed into gold bullion that flowed back to Hispania in fleets that came to Cádiz and whose treasures were counted in Seville. The columns of Hercules thus became a symbol for one of the largest and wealthiest empires the world had ever known. As Marie Tanner affirms: 'Charles's emblem was to become Europe's most enduring symbol in the bid for universal theocratic monarchy' (1993, 155).<sup>8</sup> Even though the empire was divided at his death, funeral processions still embraced the notion of going beyond. At the Brussels commemoration, Spanish nobles led a riderless horse with the motto of the emperor, *Plus ultra*. Philip II would never abandon his father's idea of empire, wanting to become emperor of the Indies.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, his empire reached from Buenos Aires to what would be the southern United States: 'With the absorption of Portugal, Philip's authority now reached also into India, Indonesia, and China. The empire, so extensive as to stagger the imagination, was the biggest ever known in history' (Kamen 1997, 244). Although Philip reigned for about half a century, his final days were plagued with 'disaster and defeat' (1997, 312). Like his father, the glories of empire proved elusive in the end – his Quixotic quest, although in many ways triumphant, was a partial failure. It is no wonder that Cervantes penned his novel not long after Philip's demise. Twice had a Habsburg with a large deformed jaw led them to war and expansionism and twice, although untold lands were conquered, much was also lost.<sup>10</sup>

In his review of a book by José Ángel Ascunce Arrieta, Salvador J. Fajardo claims that linking Cervantes' novel to the Habsburgs is nothing new, although it makes sense to continue to invoke it since both Charles V and Philip II used chivalry to advance their agenda:

In 1549, when the Emperor Charles introduced his son Philip to the courts of Europe as hereditary Prince, he did so as a 'Perfect Christian Knight,' and many of the triumphal entries and ceremonies featured the Prince as well as a 'Valiant Knight of Christendom.' Such pageantry was emblematic of the aspirations and grandiose fantasy that drove the politics of the Habsburgs, in the defense and propagation of Catholicism, through endless wars that exhausted the treasury and the country . . . (2002, 547)<sup>11</sup>

Although I also take up the Habsburgs, this book seeks to show that the geography of empire is implicated in the journeys of narrative. My point is that Cervantes, when he tracked the journey of Don Quixote,

was carefully implementing Charles's motto, *Plus ultra*, a concept endorsed by his son Philip. Whenever the narrative comes to an impasse, due to genre conflict, the weight of parody, or exhaustion, to what I will call metaphorically the Pillars of Hercules, the knight is allowed to go beyond. One of the main reasons for this shifting of narrative has been pinpointed by Thomas Pavel. Since the work takes aim at books of chivalry, it cannot go on with this parody forever. Something has to give: 'Left as the only ingredient of a long-winded narrative, Quixote's eagerness to act as a knight-errant might soon have become tedious. And to keep Quixote's story at the size of a novella would have meant to miss a crucial element of chivalric novels, whose protagonists endlessly roam around the world' (Pavel, in press). Thus, the novel quickly moves into other genres, to give it a feeling of amplitude. The restricted geography of the novel is contrasted with the proliferation of conquered genres. A note of warning: there are so many territories of genre 'conquered' by the narrative that only some can be pinpointed. Of some of these territories I can only give a general inkling, while acknowledging that they are vast and complex.

Furthermore, these fields of genre, like the unknown lands beyond the Pillars, hide enigmas that the text seeks to both cover and unveil. As this book moves through the genres, a particular secret that is as connected to the knight as to the territories he encounters will begin to emerge. Indeed, the Pillars themselves embody the secret – only one of them is in Spain. The second is often located in the Atlas Mountains in North Africa. While Charles V was able to conquer Tunis, the African pillar stood defiant, as a sign of otherness in relation to Spain – for the novel goes beyond European and Western civilization. As Samuel P. Huntington states: 'Civilization is the broadest cultural entity . . . Civilizations have no clear-cut borders and no precise beginning and endings' (1996, 43). Although the concept of civilization as a broad cultural entity is a much debated one, and the very division of history into specific civilizations such as the Hindu and the Sinic or Chinese has often been questioned, it is still the case that historians can look at cultural entities that last a very long time, such as the ones mentioned above. When discussing civilizations Fernand Braudel states: 'The vocabulary of the social sciences, scarcely permits decisive definitions' (1994, 3). At the same time, humanists and social scientists must use the term while acknowledging its many historical connotations, starting with the debut in print of the term 'civilization' in 1756. While at first it was a term opposed to barbarism, in the nineteenth century it began to be used in the plural and

assumed a very different meaning. So, to return to Samuel Huntington, while I do not agree with a number of his ideas, I do believe that the broad strokes with which he constructs different civilizations is a useful notion with the proviso that we acknowledge that we must not label individuals and groups on the basis of one or two distinctive characteristics.<sup>12</sup> Rather we must embrace the complexity of human identity and cultural interaction.

It is fascinating to note that both Christianity and Islam, although they emerged as religions, became the basis for two very different civilizations. As Braudel notes: 'As Christianity inherited from the Roman empire of which it was a prolongation, so Islam instantly took hold of the Near East, perhaps the world's oldest crossroads of civilized humanity. The consequences were immense. Muslim civilization made its own a series of ancient geographical obligations, urban patterns, institutions, habits, rituals and age-old approaches to faith and to life itself' (1994, 41). Thus, somewhere between the mythical creation of the columns of Hercules and the advent of the Spanish Habsburgs, a new civilization also came into being: 'Originating in the Arabian peninsula in the seventh century A.D., Islam rapidly spread across north Africa and the Iberian peninsula and also eastward into central Asia, the Subcontinent, and Southeast Asia' (Huntington 1996, 45). For Huntington, fourteen hundred years of history have demonstrated the continuing clashes between Islam and the West (1996, 209). It must, of course, be noted, that no civilization is homogeneous and static. Each is made up of different cultures and it is always changing and evolving. The 'clash' of cultures that Huntington proposes ignores other interactions that were more complex, dynamic, sometimes cooperative, and more socially ambiguous than the dualistic oppositions encouraged by his approach. It also sets aside the notion that a civilization that stands as an Other is often used to unite a people through simplistic slogans of enmity or what Lluís Basset, discussing our present circumstances, calls 'la apremiante necesidad de un enemigo de gran envargadura, capaz de polarizar y movilizar a las decaídas sociedades occidentales' [the urgent need to find a great enemy, capable of polarizing and mobilizing the decaying western societies (2010, 130)]. While Huntington emphasizes the clash of civilizations, such confrontations are tempered in this book by underlining places and periods of coexistence, mutuality, and even understanding. It is also buffered by the Jewish and *converso* presence in Golden Age Spain and in Cervantes' novel. How does this group fit within the clash of civilizations? While

two civilizations seem to oppose each other, the Jews stand in the middle, their culture becoming an Other to both. Turning to the subject of this book, we may wonder, for example, why the Christian knight's preoccupations with the Moors and Saracens are at times shadowed by the Jewish question.

Given that Spain encompassed a strong Islamic component for over seven hundred years of its history (711–1492), and that Habsburg Spain became the centre for Western expansionism in the sixteenth century, it would make sense that the *plus ultra* which is being studied as a literary trope in this book is also 'contaminated' by clashes and conciliations with Islam. Cervantes was particularly aware of such moments since he was held captive in Algiers for five years. There he was faced with a society very different from his own, one that incarcerated him but one that was far more open. There he would have witnessed how renegades were able to quickly climb in society. This would contrast with his own experience at home where *moriscos* (converted Moors) were always suspect and were eventually expelled from Spain. In Algiers as well as in other North African ports, the language of trade (as well as that of lawless piracy) opened new spaces. It would be fitting to claim that Algiers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was a much more cosmopolitan city than Madrid. Indeed, Cervantes' novel foregrounds the clash of civilizations as both a literary clash and a nuanced negotiation: the Arabic narrator seems to have very little esteem for his subject, a would-be Christian knight. At the same time, his image and his ideology fluctuate, as he appears at times to be writing as a Christian. This fluctuation may well echo the openness of Algiers, where Muslims, Christians, and renegades lived together. Indeed, renegades would often turn back to their former religion when returning home, thus increasing contamination over clash. And Algiers was not alone in its hybridity. As Maria Antonia Garces states: 'In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the frontiers, although clearly demarcated, were fluid and permeable in every direction, especially so for those who had multiple identities such as the Jews, the Moriscos and the renegades from different points of the Mediterranean' (2002, 74). Cide Hamete represents both the clash of civilizations and the ability of different peoples to abide together in relative peace. He is both the enemy of the Christian knight and a figure that fuses and confuses cultures and civilizations. As will be seen later, Don Quixote can also be viewed in this manner, as a figure that can abide among the Other. But let us return for the moment to the knight's metaphorical conquests of genre.

Common wisdom has it that *Don Quixote* includes within its pages a number of different forms of prose narrative. Cervantes' interest in collecting different forms and genres may be due to the fact that collectionism was rising throughout Europe. The aristocracy would create cabinets of curiosities, or adorn their palaces with the best works of art. This was considered a mark of distinction. Cervantes, then, uses collectionism within one text: he displays Don Quixote's library and he also moves through a series of genres, combining and changing them. By transforming the objects displayed he comes up with something totally new. Such is Cervantes' metamorphic ability that today, even though books of chivalry are not read, his work remains one of the greatest classics of literature, not just in the West but throughout the world. Thus, chivalric texts are constantly collected in the novel, be it as books in the knight's library or as episodes throughout the novel. The novel serves as a parody of this genre, which many have asserted had almost disappeared by the time Cervantes penned it. This is actually not quite true – recent discoveries have shown that such novels continued to be written, albeit remaining in manuscript. Furthermore, they were used for courtly spectacles. Thus, in collecting the chivalric, Cervantes is being doubly fashionable (and not at all out of fashion as some would contend). His book appropriates both the collectionist propensity of the upper classes and the uses of chivalry as a playful mode to assert authority. By turning these into carnivalesque episodes, Cervantes' text both asserts and questions fashions and authority.

A second type of fiction that he utilized was the picaresque. In Cervantes' novel, the character of Ginés de Pasamonte embodies this genre. Ginés is writing an account of his picaresque deeds, claiming: 'Es tan bueno . . . que mal año para *Lazarillo de Tormes* y para todos cuanto de aquel género se han escrito o escribieren' [So good . . . that woe to *Lazarillo de Tormes* and to all that have written or shall write in that way] (1978, 1.22.271; 1998, 169). Although he points to the *Lazarillo*, his tale seems closer to the *Guzmán de Alfarache*, where the picaresque protagonist composes his tale as a galley slave much like Ginés. The many allusions to the picaresque in Cervantes' novel could well be the subject of a book – moving from the picaresque innkeeper who knights Don Quixote to the strange theft of Sancho's beast.<sup>13</sup> While the chivalric represents a longing for idealized chivalric-aristocratic values, thus looking at the past, the picaresque points to the present and the future. It reflects a society where traditional hierarchies are put under pressure with the rise of individualism and with the development of a bourgeoisie

that did not have aristocratic privileges. As Richard Bjornson asserts: 'The situation was rendered more complex by the fact that the nascent bourgeoisie of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Spain was largely composed of *conversos* (converts to Catholicism) with Jewish ancestors. Permanently alienated from the Jewish culture which they had abjured, as well as from the Christian one in which they had to live, these *conversos* could hardly escape an awareness of their own compromised identity, even if they succeeded in passing as Old Christians' (1977, 17–18). For Bjornson, the picaresque rises from this anxiety and many of its authors are *conversos* – and so are their protagonists. As such, the *pícaro* stands in contradistinction to the idealized knights of romances and even to the more impoverished but still noble *hidalgos*. But the picaresque, although it may have been born out of bourgeois and *converso* writers, also focuses on the poor and their plight. Anne J. Cruz clearly pinpoints and expands the subject of the picaresque: 'In a country where homogeneity was desired at any price such marginalized subalterns as the poor, criminals, *conversos*, *moriscos* and prostitutes shifted easily into the position of the Other, filling the void left by the leper' (1999, xvi). These novels, then, were written as a critique of social mores and as failed attempts at reform. They may not have been received as such: 'The authors' critical thrust is nevertheless thwarted when the public, in order to insulate itself against social change, converts the *pícaro* to the risible category of the clown . . . transformed into the liminal position of scapegoat through the symbolic unconscious of the new nation-state' (1999, xvi). From the start, then, Cervantes creates a clash of genres: the backwards looking and aristocratic chivalric vs the forward-gazing, critical, and polemical picaresque. This clash of genres reverberates with a clash of cultures and civilizations since the pure-blood Christian knight contrasts with the tainted *pícaro* whose ancestors may belong to a civilization that was warring with the West, Islam.

Some critics have seen traces of the sentimental novel in Cardenio's episode, where the crazed lover wanders among the crags and forests of Sierra Morena much as a savage, an allegory for Desire, roams the depths of Sierra Morena in Diego de San Pedro's *Cárcel de amor*.<sup>14</sup> Indeed, as Marina Brownlee reminds us, 'Grimalte, Panfilo and Arnalte become wild men as a result of their total alienation from society and its language' (1990, 211). In Cervantes, Don Quixote's penitence takes place in the kind of forbidding landscape common to the sentimental. For Brownlee, such places reflect 'the inability of the individual to control his environment through language' (1990, 212). We may consider



whether Don Quixote, after the adventure with the galley slaves, has come to realize that he can no longer impose his verbal visions on the quotidian world. While the sentimental delights in wild and forbidding landscapes, the pastoral (thus its name) depicts idealized nature, the quintessence of perfection. The pastoral novel, a genre also taken up by Cervantes in *La Galatea*, pops up in many Cervantine narrative spaces, from the tale of Marcela and Grisóstomo to an imagined Arcadia. And yet, pastoral is often said to flourish at times when cultures are in crisis. Indeed, Don Quixote's pastoral will be imagined by an Arab, thus foregrounding that Spain was far from being a peaceful pleasure in this period. To these genres must be added the Byzantine or Greek novel, which may be gleaned, amid other genres, in the cluster of love stories that gather around Sierra Morena. And these tales that we might imagine as clustering into Greek novels, if seen individually recall the Italian *novella*. The reader can certainly find a foremost descendant of this form in the tale of the *Curioso impertinente*. There are many other genres through which the knight gallops. Celestinesque elements are foregrounded starting with the preliminary verses that claim that *Celestina* is a 'libro en mi opinión, divi[no] / si encubriera más lo huma[no]' [would be, in my opinion, a divine book if it would cover human (flaws)] (1978, 1.65). Some of its elements later reappear in one of the tales told by one of the galley slaves, etc. This book will foreground some of these genres, and introduce many others as well. While the novels of chivalry, the Italian romances, the Greek romances, the Italianate *novelle*, the imperial epic, the epic of the defeated, the pastoral novel, the sentimental novel, and other territories of genre will be traversed, others will remain outside the scope of this brief study. Theatre, farce, fables, and the rhetoric of speech-making may be named but will wait for others to further develop them.

Cervantes divides his novel into four parts, but I argue that it can be better divided into five segments and will thus point to four or even five moments when the 1605 *Don Quixote* reaches the end of a particular narrative thread; by changing course so as to be able to surmount the barrier, new discoveries are made as the narrative is allowed to go beyond its generic limits.<sup>15</sup> Perhaps it is this ability to surpass these blockages that allowed the modern novel to come into existence. And perhaps we can even see Cervantes' knight as a ghostly incarnation riding the horse that carried the motto *Plus ultra* at Charles V's funeral procession in Brussels.<sup>16</sup> Charles V, like Don Quixote, suffered a deep melancholy, a humour that attracted ghosts and visions. In Titian's

paintings of the emperor, his yellowed constitution is often hidden with a golden light so as to preserve decorum. Don Quixote, on the other hand, is often referred to as having a yellow constitution, a mark of melancholy (De Armas 2006, 131–2). While some have claimed that Charles suffered from melancholy for many years (at least since 1545), Robert Burton prefers to view it as a mark of old age in people who ‘had great employment’ (1938, 183). When melancholy takes hold of such people, they abandon their worldly pursuits ‘and leave off as Charles the Fifth did to King Philip, resign up all on a sudden. They are overcome with melancholy in an instant’ (1938, 183). In other words, Burton marks the onslaught of melancholy to the time right before 1556, when Charles abdicated the crown and left for a secluded monastery at Yuste. It is at Yuste that the once-emperor became more and more ghostly: ‘As his infirmities increased, his prayers grew longer, and his penances more severe . . . Restless and sleepless, ghost like, he would roam the corridors of the convent’ (Stirling 1851, 533; Franklin 1961, 467). Don Quixote, then, resembles this ghostly emperor in his last days. Even more so since the knight rides long after Charles’s demise and fills his travels with strange visions. Studying Herman Melville’s *Benito Cereno*, H. Bruce Franklin compares the main character to Charles V and concludes that, like the emperor after he abdicates, he becomes ‘the symbolic ghost of all power’ (1961, 463). Like Cereno, Don Quixote is a ghost of power. But rather than retiring from the world, he enters the world and seeks power through melancholy visions. The emptiness of this pursuit, I argue, makes him into a ghost of all power. Charles’s power is only a ghostly illusion in Cervantes’ knight. He is a ghost haunted by visions which are trapped in a text – a text which, in turn, is supposed to have been written by an enchanter. The power does not belong to the knight. It belongs to the ghostly writer who sends him to conquer genres rather than lands.

Don Quixote’s road, always interrupted by the excess, by the limits of parody or exhaustion of possibilities, may also recall the Roman *cursus publicus*, the Roman roads used to relay messages to all corners of the empire. Perhaps the roads taken by our imperious knight also send messages – messages of genre choices that can be deciphered. Some thirty years ago, Derrida seemed to announce the death of the study of genre through deconstruction: ‘It is precisely a principle of contamination, a law of impurity, a parasitical economy’ (1980, 59). But today, critics such as Ralph Cohen, Joseph Farrell, Alastair Fowler, and Thomas Pavel have taken up with new intensity the analysis of genre.<sup>17</sup>