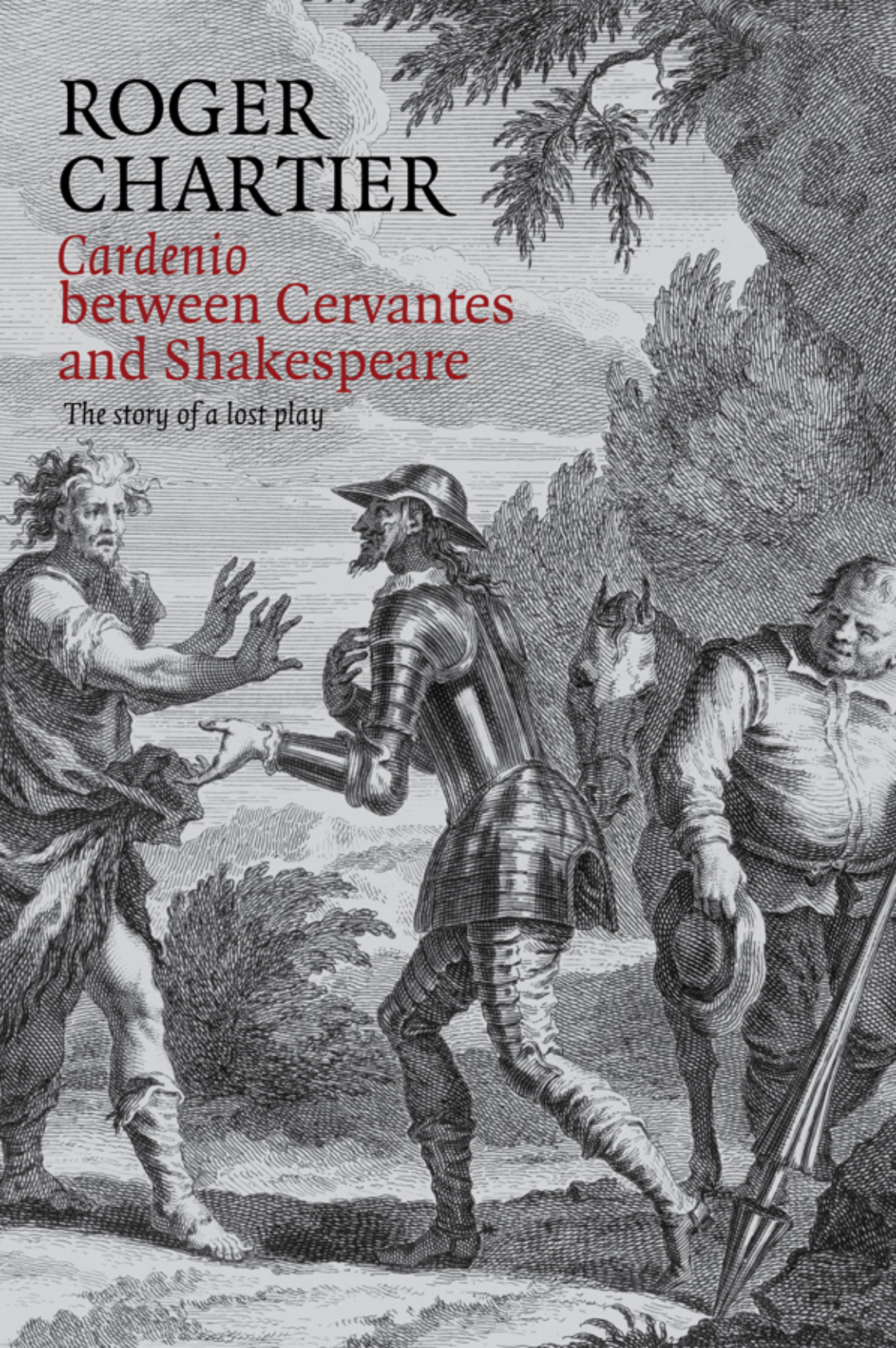


# ROGER CHARTIER

## Cardenio between Cervantes and Shakespeare

The story of a lost play





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The Story of a Lost Play

Roger Chartier

Translated by Janet Lloyd

polity

First published in French as *Cardenio entre Cervantes et Shakespeare*  
© Editions Gallimard, Paris, 2011

This English edition © Polity Press, 2013

Polity Press  
65 Bridge Street  
Cambridge CB2 1UR, UK

Polity Press  
350 Main Street  
Malden, MA 02148, USA

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ISBN-13: 978-0-7456-6184-1

ISBN-13: 978-0-7456-6185-8 (pb)

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Typeset in 10.5 on 12 pt Sabon  
by Toppan Best-set Premedia Limited  
Printed and bound in Great Britain by MPG Books Group Limited, Bodmin,  
Cornwall

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Figures 14–16: Early English Books Online (<http://eebo.chadwyck.com>).

# Introduction: Reading a Text That Does Not Exist

The theme of a manuscript discovered by chance, the writer of which is only a copyist or editor, has long haunted the imagination of authors and readers alike. Such was the fate of a story translated from Arabic about which the present book will have much to say. The story is that of Don Quixote of La Mancha, ‘written by Cide Hamete Benengeli, an Arab historian’. As is well known, the original author, the one who does not wish to remember the name of the village where the hidalgo lived, abruptly breaks off his account in chapter VIII of the book, at the point where the fight between Don Quixote and the Biscayan is about to begin. He does so on account of the dearth of documentation relating to the outcome of the battle and the later adventures of the knight errant. Frustrated in his reading and convinced that some sage has written of the further prowess of this knight, the ‘second author’, as the text puts it, sets out in quest of the end of the story. This he discovers in Toledo, in a manuscript written in Arabic, which he has translated by a ‘morisco aljamiado’, a converted Muslim who knows the Castilian language.<sup>1</sup> The account by the Arab historian can now be set out, embedded in the added commentaries of this ‘second author’, the first person to read the story translated into Spanish.

In the course of this narrative, the presence of books within the book blurs the frontiers between works that truly exist and others that are solely the fruit of Cervantes’ imagination. Such is the case in the inn run by Juan Palomeque, when the latter goes off to fetch from his room a little trunk forgotten there by some traveller. This contains two chivalric novels (*Don Ciriglio de Tracia* and *Felixmarte de Hircania*), one historical chronicle (*Historia del gran Capitán*

## 2 Introduction

Gonzalo Hernández de Córdoba) and ‘some papers written in a very fine hand’, which are the eight ‘pliegos’ or gatherings of the *Novella of the Curious Impertinent*. The curate later reads this aloud to his travelling companions (apart from Don Quixote, who is asleep), and we shall encounter it again in the course of the present enquiry.<sup>2</sup> Cervantes introduces multiple figures in the guise of authors (the ‘I’ who narrates the first eight chapters, the ‘I’ of the second author, who appears in chapter IX, the Arab historian Cide Hamete Benengali, the anonymous author of the *Novella of the Curious Impertinent* and others too. Likewise, in his own book he invents other forgotten or lost texts that are rediscovered by chance. He thus mobilizes, with particular force, a literary ploy of which he is certainly not the inventor<sup>3</sup> but which he invests with dizzying power.

Certain contemporary writers have borne this in mind and have, in their turn, mobilized certain procedures that can bring into existence books that are purely imaginary. Roberto Bolaño has put together a whole alarming library of such books in his *Nazi Literature in the Americas*.<sup>4</sup> In it, this Chilean writer cites, summarizes and comments on 210 titles, arranged in alphabetical order in his ‘Epilogue for monsters’. They range from A, a book by Zach Sodenstern, published in Los Angeles in 2013, to Juan Mendiluce’s *Youthful Ardor*, published in Buenos Aires in 1968.<sup>5</sup> Roberto Bolaño proposes a series of short biographies of the authors of the books listed in the ‘Epilogue’. Let us take two examples. The biography of Silvio Salvático, born in Buenos Aires in 1901, who died in that city in 1994, and who was the author of *Sad Eyes* published in 1929, is accompanied by the biographies of three other authors, all – fortunately – just as imaginary, under the heading ‘Forerunners and Figures of the Anti-Enlightenment’. The passage starts as follows:

As a young man Salvático advocated, among other things, the re-establishment of the Inquisition; corporal punishment in public; a permanent war against the Chileans, the Paraguayans, or the Bolivians as a kind of gymnastic for the nation; polygamy; the extermination of the Indians to prevent further contamination of the Argentinean race; curtailing the rights of any citizen with Jewish blood; a massive influx of migrants from Scandinavian countries in order to effect a progressive lightening of the skin color, darkened by years of promiscuity with the indigenous population; life-long writer’s grants; the abolition of tax on artists’ incomes; the creation of the largest air force in South America; the colonization of Antarctica; and the building of new cities in Patagonia. He was a soccer player and a Futurist.<sup>6</sup>

Zach Sodenstern (Los Angeles, 1962–2012), the author of *A*, for his part, belonged to the family of ‘science-fiction’ writers and was the successful author of the sagas of Gunther O’Connor and the Fourth Reich, in which the hero is Flip, ‘a mutant, stray German Shepherd [Alsatian dog] with telepathic powers and Nazi tendencies’. His novel *The Simbas* is a ‘surreptitious manifesto directed against African Americans, Jews and Hispanics that gave rise to diverse and contradictory interpretations’.<sup>7</sup> Roberto Bolaño has, on behalf of his readers, himself read these terrifying works which have existed only in his nightmares but the shadows of which have haunted the dictatorships of America and now threaten the future.

Another way of bringing into existence works that were never written is to imagine how very real authors might have composed them. This is what Ricardo Piglia did when he sketched in how Hemingway and Kafka would have told the story of *Cries and Whispers*, the origin of which is recalled by Bergman: ‘First I saw three women dressed in white, in a room in the clear light of dawn. They were very mysterious, moving about and whispering into one another’s ears, and I could not hear what they were saying. The scene haunted me for a whole year. In the end I realized that the three women were waiting for the death of a fourth, who was in the other room. They were taking it in turns to watch over her.’ As this Argentinian author saw it, Hemingway would have ‘recounted an ordinary conversation between the three women, without even mentioning that they had assembled to watch over one of their sisters, who was dying.’ Kafka, on the contrary, ‘would have told the story from the point of view of the woman who was dying and who could not bear hearing the deafening murmurs of her sisters who were whispering and talking about her in the next room.’<sup>8</sup> This is how texts are suggested that might have existed and whose continuation a reader might imagine for himself.

In the same essay, Ricardo Piglia repeats the experiment by imagining how Kafka and Borges would have written the story about Zhuang Zi told by Italo Calvino. It concerns a painter whose king asks him to draw a crab.<sup>9</sup> Zhuang Zi asks for five years’ grace, then for another five years, before picking up his paintbrush and, in a single gesture, drawing the most perfect crab ever seen. If Kafka had written the story, only on his deathbed would the painter have handed to the king a drawing that he had made many years ago, perfect in the eyes of everyone else but not in his. As for Borges, he would have turned the crab into a butterfly and would have written ‘Zhuang Zi dreamed that he was a man who had dreamed he was a butterfly and, when he awoke, did not know whether he was a man who had

#### 4 Introduction

dreamed he was a butterfly or a butterfly that was now dreaming of being a man.' Piglia then sketches in the plot of Borges' tale: 'Borges would have two stories and would now proceed to write an account of his own'<sup>10</sup> – an account that would attribute to Calvino's painter a similar dream, which Tchouang Tseu (another orthography for the philosopher also known as Master Zhuang) recounts in the Zhuangzi, one of the founding texts of Daoism.<sup>11</sup>

Borges, admired by both Bolaño and Piglia, decided to take action and resolved to write these texts that do not exist and that are attributed either to real enough writers who might well have written them or to authors just as imaginary as their works. This is how he proceeds in the 'Et cetera' part of his *A Universal History of Infamy*, which gathers together texts supposed to have been written by Swedenborg, extracts from the *One Thousand and One Nights* and from Richard Burton's *The Lake Regions of Equatorial Africa*, published in 1860, and, in the case of the famous text reprinted in *The Author*, 'On Exactitude in Science', which refers to a 'map of the Empire that was of the same scale as the Empire', along with an invented work by Suárez Miranda, *Viajes de varones prudentes* (*Travels of Praiseworthy Men*), purportedly published in Lerida in 1658.<sup>12</sup> In the *Author's Museum*, which collects together six texts, the supposed Suárez Miranda shares the paternity of those imitated or invented works with a Uruguayan poet, Juan Platero Haedo, the presumed author of the poem entitled 'Limits', Almotasim el-Mahgrebi, an Arab poet of the twelfth century, supposed to have composed the 'Quatrain' published in the appendix, Gaspar Camerarius, the author of a distich entitled 'The regret of Heraclitus', and H. Gering, a German scholar in one of whose works Borges is supposed to have found the poem addressed to Magnus Barford by the Irish King Muirchertach.<sup>13</sup> False authors and false titles bring to life works or fragments of works the existence of which is troubling to the reader, since, while they are attributed to writers real or fictitious, they are also texts by an author who obliterates the frontiers between authentic citations, pastiches and original creations.

The force of words can sometimes confer the force of a reality upon these fictitious books. In his *Autobiographical Essay*, Borges indicates that such was indeed the fate of *The Approach to Al-mu'tasim*, a novel purportedly published in Bombay and written by an Indian lawyer, Mir Bahadur Ali, on which he wrote a commentary that was published in *The History of Eternity* in 1935.<sup>14</sup> In describing it as 'at once a hoax and a pseudo-essay', Borges conferred upon this imaginary tale the weight of reality: 'Those who read "The Approach to Al-Mu'tasim" took it at face value, and one of my

friends even ordered a copy from London.’<sup>15</sup> This ‘friend’ convinced of the existence of the book was, as Borges himself stated, Bioy Casares.<sup>16</sup> According to the preface to the collection entitled *The Garden of Forking Paths*, published in Spanish in 1941, writing notes on imaginary books is the surest way to avoid ‘a laborious and impoverishing extravagance’ that inspires one to compose vast books, ‘to go on for five hundred pages developing an idea whose perfect oral exposition is possible in a few minutes’.<sup>17</sup> The proliferation of imaginary texts thus serves to rarefy useless and invasive writings.

Inventing texts that never existed but that could have been written is balanced by the opposite: the painful and powerful realization of the irremediable loss of works that have disappeared forever. Despite all the Byzantine rescues, Arabic translations and medieval copies that have passed down to us what has become the canonical corpus of Greek and Roman literature, antiquity constitutes a huge continent of lost texts. Luciano Canfora has established the laws that have ruled ‘the process of back-to-front selection’ which has cast into oblivion texts that we know of only because other texts mention them. The most extensive disappearances are characteristic of certain particular genres (for example, historiography, in which the ratio of preserved to lost texts may be as great as one to forty), the texts that are the most ancient, and fully integral works, for these are more vulnerable than abridged versions. The very attempt to safeguard texts may itself have contributed to losses, as is attested by the absence of certain preserved works, in particular historical ones and a certain number of ‘books’ (usually five) that corresponded to the same number of scrolls and that were all gathered together in the same codex of which no copy has survived. The extent of these losses, which must be even more numerous if we take into account texts that have vanished without trace, has prompted Luciano Canfora to remark gloomily, ‘The disappearance of such a great quantity of books, despite their wide diffusion within this immense geographical space [that of the Greek world and the Roman empire,] is an almost unique phenomenon in human civilization.’<sup>18</sup>

‘Almost unique’ – for Luciano Canfora reminds us that the tormented history of public libraries in the ancient world may not be the only cause of the disappearance of such an immense textual patrimony.<sup>19</sup> Another cause has been the deliberate destructions that recur throughout the course of history, as is shown by the example, both historical and legendary, of the Chinese emperor Qin Shi Huang Di who, in 213 BCE, ordered the burning of all the books that recorded the history of the millennia previous to his own reign. This was also the emperor who had the Great Wall of China constructed.

## 6 Introduction

The excessive nature of both these undertakings attracted the attention of Borges, who remarks, 'Burning books and erecting fortifications was the usual preoccupation of princes. Shih Huang Ti was unusual only in the scale on which he worked.'<sup>20</sup> China, seen as that 'great reservoir of utopias' by the Western world,<sup>21</sup> thus seems to present a twofold paradox: 'Perhaps Shih Huang Ti walled his empire because he knew it was fragile, and destroyed the books because he knew that they were sacred books (another name for books that teach what the whole universe and each man's conscience teaches).'<sup>22</sup> So the loss of the books is not so dramatic after all if, as the ancient metaphors put it,<sup>23</sup> the book of Nature or that of one's conscience teaches the very same truths as all those written words.

All the same, historians and philologists find it hard to resign themselves to knowing nothing, saying nothing, imagining nothing with regard to works of which they know only the titles and, in some cases, the names of their authors. For certain genres and in certain times, the situation is not so very different from that of the ancient world. That may be the case for the most popular of works (little books produced by the 'Bibliothèque bleue', English 'chapbooks', Spanish '*pliegos de cordel*'), ephemeral publications and school textbooks of which only a few copies remain, if any at all.<sup>24</sup> The same applies to the English theatre of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. With respect to the years 1576 to 1642, a comparison between the number of known titles as recorded in the *Annals of English Drama*, edited by Alfred Harbage, and that of existing texts, either in manuscript or printed, indicates that there is no textual trace of 60 per cent of the plays mentioned.<sup>25</sup>

And that is the case of the text whose mystery the present book will try to resolve. It was performed at the English court in the winter of 1612–13. Its title seems to have been *Cardenio*.<sup>26</sup>



## **Cardenio at Court: London, 1613**

Our story starts with an accounts register that refers to payments made by the Treasurer of the Chamber of the King of England. It is dated 20 May 1613 and mentions the payment of £93.6s.8d. to John Heminges, one of the actors and shareholders of the troupe the King's Men, officially known as Grooms of the Chamber, for the performances of fourteen plays presented in the course of the past weeks and months in the presence of 'the Princes Highnes the Lady Elizabeth [daughter of James I/VI] and the Prince Palatyne Elector [Frederick V, Elector Palatine]'. It lists '*Filaster, The Knott of Fooles, Much Adoe aboute Nothing, The Mayeds Tragedy, The Merry Dyvell of Edmonton, The Tempest, A Kinge and no Kinge, The Twins Tragedie, The Winters Tale, Sir John Falstaffe, The Moore of Venice, The Nobleman, Caesars Tragedye, Love lyes a bleedinge*'. There is no mention of the authors of these fourteen plays (actually thirteen, since *Love Lies a Bleeding* is another title for Beaumont and Fletcher's *Philaster*). Six of them, however, are easily attributable by a modern reader, for they are mentioned in 1623 in the First Folio volume in which the same John Heminges and his fellow actor Henry Condell collected, for the first time, the *Comedies, Histories, & Tragedies* of Shakespeare:<sup>1</sup> *The Tempest, Much Ado about Nothing* and *The Winter's Tale* among the comedies and *The Life and Death of Julius Caesar* and *Othello the Moore of Venice* among the tragedies, while 'Sir John Falstaff' may refer either to the comedy *The Merry Wives of Windsor* or to *The Second Part of King Henry IV*, in which case it would be the only 'history' in the list of the six plays definitely written by Shakespeare. That same 'warrant' dated 20 May 1613 orders that the payment of £60 be made to the same John Heminges

## 8 *Cardenio* at Court

for the six other plays also performed in the royal palace: 'A *badd beginininge* [sic] *makes a good endinge*, *The Capteyne*, *The Alcumist*, *Cardenno*, *The Hotspur*, and *Benedicte and Betteris*' (which may be *Much Ado about Nothing*).

A month and a half later, on 9 July 1613, the sum of £6.13s.4d. was paid to John Heminges and 'the rest of his fellows his Majesties servants and Players' for a play 'called Cardenna',<sup>2</sup> performed before the Duke of Savoy's ambassador, who was the guest of the English sovereign. This play with an unstable title, *Cardenno* or *Cardenna*, is the one surrounded by mystery that the present essay will seek to unravel.

Thanks to the payments made to the King's Men for the plays performed at court at the end of 1612 and the start of 1613, we know, if not the exact date of the performance, at least the circumstances surrounding it. The play was one of the spectacles staged in the course of the two festive cycles which, throughout Christian Europe, were periods of rejoicing and amusements: the first was the cycle of twelve days between Christmas Day and Epiphany, known in England as Twelfth Night or the Night of the Kings; the second was the Carnival period, which stretched from 2 February to 2 March. Intense theatrical activity in both courts and towns accompanied the festivities and customs that marked these two essential moments in the calendar. It was, for example, on one 2 February that John Manningham, a student at the Middle Temple, one of London's Inns of Court, went to see a performance of *Twelfth Night*.<sup>3</sup>

In England, in the winter of 1612–13, these regular circumstances were compounded by other, more exceptional ones. On 6 November 1612, Prince Henry, the eldest son of James I, died, and on 7 December he was buried in Westminster Cathedral. Then, on 14 February 1613, St Valentine's Day, James's eldest daughter, Elizabeth, married the Palatinate prince.<sup>4</sup> The festivities of the Twelve Days and those of Carnival were thus marked by both mourning and wedding joy.

Of all the twenty plays mentioned by the payment register of the King's Chamber on 20 May 1613, why take particular interest in 'Cardenno'? Clearly because this refers back to a book published by Edward Blount in 1612: *The History of the Valorous and Wittie Knight-Errant Don-Quixote of the Mancha*.<sup>5</sup> This book, whose author is not named,<sup>6</sup> is a translation by Thomas Shelton of the 'history' written by Cervantes, the first part of which (at this date, not yet actually the first part) had been published in late 1604 but dated 1605 by the publishing house of Juan de la Cuesta in Madrid.<sup>7</sup> One year after its publication, this inspired a play that was performed at the English court, for there can be no doubt that Cardenno is

Cardenio, the young Andalusian noble, born in Cordova, who, as a lover in despair, withdrew into the Sierra Moreno, where he lived as a savage, clothed in rags, leaping from rock to rock, with his face burnt by the sun. Don Quixote encounters him in chapter xxiii (in actual fact, chapter ix of Book III of Cervantes' work, published in 1605, which was divided into four parts) and in the following chapter he learns the young man's name and hears his story: 'My name is *Cardenio*, the place of my birth one of the best Cities in *Andaluzia*, my lineage noble, my parents rich and my misfortunes so great, as I thinke my parents have e'er this deplored.'<sup>8</sup> The misfortunes of Cardenio, the unhappy lover of Luscinda, who is betrayed by his friend Fernando, and the final happy denouement to the story provided a fine subject for a play at once tragic and comic, which was performed in a period of both grief and joy in the royal court of England.

### Spain in England

Thomas Shelton's translation of *Don Quixote* belongs to a double context, one both editorial and theatrical. Its publisher, Edward Blount, had, even before 1612, begun his catalogue of translations. In 1600 he had published *The Hospitall of incurable fooles* by Tomaso Garzoni, in 1603 Montaigne's *Essayes or morall, politike and militarie discourses* in the translation by John Florio (whose Italian-English dictionary, *A Worlde of Wordes*, he had published in 1598), in 1604 *The Naturall and Morall Historie of the East and West Indies* by Father José de Acosta, in 1607 the *Ars aulica* by Lorenzo Ducci, and in 1608 *Of Wisdome* by Pierre Charron. After *Don Quixote*, Blount pursued this publishing policy, producing translations of Luis de Granada (*The Sinners Guide*, 1614), of the *Guzman de Alfarache* by Mateo Alemán (*The Rogue*, 1622) and of Nicolas Faret (*The Honest Man*, 1632). He also published the Spanish and English grammar by César Oudin (1622) and the Spanish-English dictionary by Richard Perceval, revised and expanded by John Minsheu (1623).<sup>9</sup> In 1623, in collaboration with William Jaggard, John Smethwick and William Aspley, he was one of the four London booksellers to publish Shakespeare's Folio and the only one whose name is mentioned in the bottom line of the title-page: 'Printed by Isaac Jaggard and Ed. Blount. 1623'.<sup>10</sup> Shelton's translation thus found a place in the exceptional catalogue produced by the bookseller whom Gary Taylor dubbed 'England's foremost publisher' and its most 'important literary critic'.<sup>11</sup>

The second context is provided by the strong Spanish presence on the stages of London. This took a number of different forms.<sup>12</sup> First, the Spanish localization of dramatic action – for example, that of the first and most famous of Spanish plays, *The Spanish Tragedy*, by Thomas Kyd. This play, written between 1582 and February 1592, the date of its first known performance, and in all probability after 1585, became the object of a dispute between two members of the London community of booksellers and printers known as the Stationers' Company. Abell Jeffes, whose property it was, had published a first edition in 1592, of which no copies remain, but Edward White, violating the 'right in copy' of his colleague, then published the play later in that same year under the title *The Spanish Tragedie, Containing the lamentable end of Don Horatio and Bel-Imperia: with the pittiful death of olde Hieronimus*, claiming that the text was 'newly corrected and amended of such grosse faults as passed in the first impression'. The play was republished several times before 1612: in 1594 by Jeffes and White (reconciled following a fine imposed on White and the seizure of his 1592 edition), in 1599, in 1602 in an edition produced by Thomas Pavier, which contained 'new additions' (five passages that added a total of 320 lines), in 1603 and in 1610.

In 1605, the same Pavier published the text of a play announced on the title-page to be *The First-Part of Hieronimo. With the warres of Portugall, and the life and death of Don Andrea*. This *First-Part* may be a memorial reconstruction of a play written by Kyd before *The Spanish Tragedy*, which would therefore in fact be a continuation.<sup>13</sup> Even if that hypothesis is not accepted, and if the *First-Part of Hieronimo* was composed by Thomas Kyd or some other playwright, not before *The Spanish Tragedy* but after it, so as to cash in on its success,<sup>14</sup> there can be no doubt, according to the diary of the theatrical entrepreneur Philip Henslowe,<sup>15</sup> that the two plays were frequently presented, in fact as many as five times, one after the other, within the space of two consecutive days.

Along with *Titus Andronicus*, published in 1594, *The Spanish Tragedy* inaugurated the genre of 'revenge plays', inspired by Seneca, setting them in Iberian territories – that is to say, situating in a Catholic land an action forbidden to men and reserved solely for God by both Deuteronomy (32: 35) and the Epistle to the Romans (12: 19: 'Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord').<sup>16</sup> The play sets on stage three avengers: Andrea, treacherously killed by Balthazar, the son of the king of Portugal, whose ghost is accompanied by the allegorical figure of 'Revenge'; Bel-Imperia, the daughter of the duke of Castille and the niece of the king of Spain, who seeks revenge upon

that same Balthazar, the murderer of Andrea, whom she loved; and Hieronimo, the 'Knight Marshal of Spain', fired by a desire to punish Lorenzo, Bel-Imperia's brother, who has tortured and killed his son Horatio. As the title of the play indicates, the murderous and vengeful cruelties of the various characters are set by Kyd in a Spain whose military power and plots to strike down Queen Elizabeth were deeply feared in England in the 1580s. By setting the plot in Iberia, Kyd departs from the reality of contemporary history, given that, since 1582, Portugal had lost all sovereignty and found itself subject to the authority of the king of Castille and Aragon, which was exercised by a viceroy who, between 1585 and 1593, was the archduke of Austria, Philip II's nephew.

The tragedy opens with the military defeat of the king of Portugal, who now had to pay tribute to the king of Spain and was reduced to the rank of 'viceroy', a title that may have been suggested to Kyd by the contemporary situation of Portugal. But, in his play, the unity between the two nations that is proclaimed by the Spanish sovereign ('Spain is Portugal / and Portugal is Spain, we both are friends, / Tribute is paid and we enjoy our right')<sup>17</sup> is not yet the union of two crowns by a single sovereign. Rather, it is an unequal alliance that would, as the king of Spain proposes, be strengthened by a marriage between Bel-Imperia and Balthazar, whose eventual son could claim both kingdoms.

Whatever the form of its union with Portugal, Spain constituted a threat that needed to be removed. Hieronimo's acts of revenge in the last act of the tragedy, in the eyes of the English public, foretold the doom of a greatly feared and detested enemy. By proposing Balthazar, Lorenzo and Bel-Imperia as actors in a tragedy performed on the occasion of the royal wedding and the viceroy of Portugal's visit to the Spanish court, Hieronimo sets the murders and suicides with which the play culminates within the theatrical fiction played out in the theatre, thereby assuring it a fine future. The play performed before the two sovereigns, and presented by Hieronimo as an 'argument' taken from the 'chronicles of Spain', tells of the murder of a knight from Rhodes, Erastus (played by Lorenzo), committed by a 'bashaw' or pasha (played by Hieronimo himself) on the orders of the Sultan Soliman (Balthazar), who has fallen in love with Perseda (Bel-Imperia), who is the wife of the knight. Soliman is then assassinated by Perseda and, after that, the young woman and the pasha both commit suicide. Thomas Kyd may have found this double murder and double suicide in a tragic story told by Jacques Yver, translated into English in 1578,<sup>18</sup> then adapted in the play *Soliman and Persida*, published by Edward White in 1592.<sup>19</sup> But those murders

and suicides did not bring the series of violent deaths to an end. Hieronimo, abandoning his role as the pasha, kills the duke of Castille, who is the brother of the king of Spain and the father of Lorenzo and Bel-Imperia, and then kills himself. This last murder seems to set the seal on the sorry destiny of Spain, now blighted by a twofold curse: firstly the interruption of the dynastic succession, which is anxiously deplored by the king ('What age hath ever heard such monstrous deeds? My brother and the whole succeeding hope / That Spain expected after my decease! [...] I am the next, the nearest, last of all') and secondly the break in the unity with Portugal, which is mournfully confirmed by the viceroy of Portugal ('Spain hath no refuge for a Portingale').<sup>20</sup>

The tragic fate in store for Spain by the end of the tragedy stands in contrast to the happy destiny of England, whose victories in Iberian lands are recalled by the 'dumb show' or pantomime organized and explained by Hieronimo at the end of the first act, when the Portuguese ambassador is received by the Spanish king. One by one, three English heroes offer their emblazoned shields to the king of Spain. They are the duke of Gloucester, who, at the time of King Stephen and at the head of 25,000 men, imposed English sovereignty upon the king of Portugal (at that time a Saracen); the duke of Kent, who, at the time of King Richard, razed the walls of Lisbon to the ground and captured the king of Portugal, thereby acquiring the title of duke of York; and John of Gaunt, the duke of Lancaster, who, after invading Spain with a powerful army, took the king of Castille prisoner. The Portuguese ambassador draws the moral from this historical lesson: 'This is an argument for our viceroy: / That Spain may not insult for her success / Since English warriors likewise conquered Spain / And made them bow their knees to Albion.' The London public, for its part, was happy to applaud this patriotic praise for the high (even if mythical) deeds of English knights who had set out to conquer Portugal and Spain – a Spain whose dramatized king imagined by Kyd took pleasure in the spectacle of the defeats of his own people: 'Hieronimo, I drink to thee for this device, / which has pleased both the ambassador and me.'<sup>21</sup> The glorious past of England and the absurd blindness of the king of Spain helped to overcome the fears aroused by an enemy that was no doubt less powerful than he thought he was.

The same can be said of the second theme displayed on the London stages: the figure of such a foppish and cowardly Spaniard as is portrayed by Don Adriano de Armado, the tortuous poet who is the ridiculous lover and arrogant braggart set on stage in Shakespeare's *Love's Labours' Lost*, a quarto edition of which appeared in 1598,

the first of all the Shakespearean editions that mention the name of the playwright on the title-page.<sup>22</sup> The king of Navarre describes the Spanish gentleman as 'this child of fancy' with the following words: 'Our Court, you know, is haunted / With a refined traveller of Spain, / A man in all the world's new fashion planted, / that hath a mint of phrases in his brain' (I, i).<sup>23</sup> And Biron, one of the young courtiers, emphasizes this Spaniard's taste for new turns of language: 'Armado is a most illustrious wight / a man of fire-new words, fashion's own knight.' In subsequent scenes, the depiction of Armado is completed by Mote, his page ('You are a gentleman and a gamester, sir') and also by himself: he declares himself to be a soldier, a lover and a poet ('Assist me, some extratemporal god of rhyme, for I am sure I shall turn sonnet. Devise wit, write pen, for I am for whole volumes in folio' [I, ii]).

This quirk of his converts into poetic extravagance the warlike boastfulness of Armado, who is no more invincible than his king's Armada was in 1588. On two occasions a letter written by Armado is read aloud on stage: in the first, he addresses to the king a criticism of his rival, Costard, who, in contravention of the monarch's prohibition, has made advances to Jaquenetta, the peasant girl with whom he himself is in love (I, i); the second letter is one that he has written to Jaquenetta which is read aloud by Boyet, a nobleman in the service of the French princesses who have now arrived in the court of Navarre (IV, i). In both cases, the Hispanic stereotype is conveyed not by the use of Hispanic turns of phrase, but by an excessive use of images and metaphors, a plethora of obscure references, a bombastic and convoluted style and multiple repetitions organized in groups of three. For instance, the letter to Jaquenetta starts as follows: 'More fairer than fair, beautiful than beauteous, truer than truth itself, have commiseration on thy heroical vassal.' While Holophernes criticizes him for his way of leaving out certain letters in his pronunciation of words, letters which, as in Latin, need to be pronounced,<sup>24</sup> Don Armado speaks and writes an English that has the ring of a precious and emphatic version of Castilian.

Armado is a 'braggart', a 'boaster', as Biron describes him (IV, 2), which is another feature of a stereotyped portrait of a Spaniard. He rounds off his letter to Jaquenetta as follows: 'Thus dost thou hear the Nemean lion roar', which is a pathetic joke against himself, since the Nemean lion, likewise supposed to be invincible (as was the Armada), was, in fact, strangled by Hercules. Stripped of his military glory and the fear that this used to inspire, the Spaniard of comedy became a comical character by reason of his exuberance, his false bravado and his ludicrous attitude.



The amusing and derisory figure cut by the extravagant Armado serves as a reassuring counterpoint to the accusatory descriptions of the cruelties inflicted by the Spaniards upon the inhabitants of the New World, cruelties recalled as a warning against those that they might perpetrate against the Protestants. Such was the purpose of the translation published in 1583 of the *Brevissima relación de la destrucción de las Indias*, written by Las Casas and published in Seville in 1552. The English text, entitled *The Spanish Colonie*, was in fact a translation of a French translation by the French Protestant Jacques de Migrode, published in Antwerp in 1579.<sup>25</sup> In his introduction to his readers, the English translator returned to the original title, 'Spanish cruelties and tyrannies perpetrated in the West Indies, which are known as the New World', and likewise repeated its intention 'to serve as a Precedent and warning to the XII [*sic*] Provinces of the Lowe Countries'. This text laid the foundations for the black Spanish legend, in particular in its 1585 Latin translation, which was illustrated by seventeen engravings by Théodore de Bry.<sup>26</sup> This inspired the many pamphlets which, like the one published in London in 1591, stigmatized 'the damnable deeds, miserable murders and monstrous massacres of the cursed Spaniards'.<sup>27</sup>

First in wartime and subsequently, after the peace treaties signed in 1604 in London and in 1605 in Valladolid, to which the Earl of Nottingham travelled, accompanied by five hundred Englishmen,<sup>28</sup> Spain's reputation haunted the imagination of English authors and playwrights. In 1606, the bookseller Henry Rockytt published a play that was performed by a group of children known as the Children of St Paul. The play was entitled *Blurt Master-Constable, or the Spaniards Night-Walke* and attributed to Thomas Dekker.<sup>29</sup> This set on stage a character who bore the name of the first of the '*pícaros*': Lazarillo de Tormes. The first translation of the novel had been published by Abel Jeffes in 1586, with the title *The pleasant historie of Lazarillo de Tormes a Spaniard wherein is contained his marvellous deedes and life. With the strange adventures happened to him in the service of sundrie masters*. Ten years later, a translation of a continuation of *Lazarillo* appeared, the work of William Phiston: *The most pleasant and delectable historie of Lazarillo de Tormes, a Spanyard, and of his marvellous fortunes and adversities. The second part*. The play that appeared in 1602 probably found its Spanish protagonist in this second part, in which Lazarillo has become a soldier.

The Lazarillo of this comedy is closely related to Don Adriano de Armado. He says that he is called 'Lazarillo de Tormes in Castille, Cozen-germaine to the Spanish Adolentado' (first cousin to the officer general representing the king of Spain), claims to be 'servitor to God



Mars' and declares, 'I am a man of war and professe fighting.' But his proclaimed courage is denied by those who have witnessed his cowardice: 'This is the Spanish curtall that in the last battaile, fled twenty miles ere he lookt behinde him.' Nor is Lazarillo any more fortunate in his love life. Having gone to Venice in pursuit of the beauty of 'a most rare and divine creature', who is then brought low by her servant Pilcher to the rank of a 'most rascallie damn'd Curtizan', he is exposed as the ridiculous dupe of this Imperia.

Convinced that his bedchamber is haunted, when he hears 'the Spanish Pavin' his assumption is that the devil is visiting him ('The Spanish Pavin: I thought the devill coud not understand Spanish; but since thou art my countriman, ô thou tawnie Satan, I will dance after they pipe'). Whilst asleep, Lazarillo becomes the victim of all sorts of tricks that are played upon him: he falls into a trap and, awakening to find himself on a rubbish heap, believes that he has arrived in hell: 'I have beene to hell; and am scratched to death with Pusse-Cats.' At the end of the comedy, he announces his intention to depart to the Indies ('I will travaile on foot to the Indies for more golde'), to which the circumspect Hipolito replies, 'There be many of your Countrymen in Ireland Signior, travaile to them.' The character whom Dekker names Lazarillo bears little relation to the Castilian Lazarillo, but nevertheless is targeted by the comical denigration of the boastful and cowardly, vain and superstitious, pretentious and duped Spaniard of the same name.<sup>30</sup> And the use of that very name indicates that the heroes of Spanish fictions were familiar to English spectators and readers, who were amused by their multiple identities.

### ***Don Quixote* in translation**

It was within the context of this strong presence of Castilian literature that 1612 saw the publication of Thomas Shelton's translation of *Don Quixote*.<sup>31</sup> Even before its publication, allusions to the story of the knight errant had appeared in several plays.<sup>32</sup> The most famous of these was *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, attributed to Beaumont and Fletcher on the title-pages of the 1635 editions,<sup>33</sup> but considered by most modern editors to be written solely by Beaumont. This is somewhat paradoxical in view of the fact that, as published, the text of this play was the result of multiple collaborations that implicated the author or authors, the director of the company that performed it and the bookseller who revised and published it.<sup>34</sup> Even though the first quarto edition, which bore the name of no author, did not appear until 1613,<sup>35</sup> the play had probably been staged several years earlier