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The Quixotic Picaresque: Tricksters, Modernity, and Otherness in the Transatlantic Novel, or the Intertextual Rhizome of Lazarillo, Don Quijote, Huck Finn, and The Reivers

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THE QUIXOTIC PICARESQUE: TRICKSTERS, MODERNITY, AND OTHERNESS IN
THE TRANSATLANTIC NOVEL, OR THE INTERTEXTUAL RHIZOME OF *LAZARILLO*,
DON QUIJOTE, *HUCK FINN*, AND *THE REIVERS*

by

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DEDICATION

To my family: Mom, Dad, Zeek, Chloe, Kenny, Koppel, Aunt Diane, Aunt Jan, Uncle Patrick, and Aunt Ginger. Thank you for everything. That is all.

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Thank you, Dr. Francisco Sánchez and Dr. Robert Brinkmeyer, for advising me in the completion of this project. This thesis would not be possible without your support. It has been a pleasure working with both of you and I look forward to the prospect of continuing to do so in the future. Additionally, thank you to all of those professors who have ever entertained my usually sprawling and farfetched ideas and listened with a smile whether feigned or sincere, you, too, are a part of this essay in one way or another. Furthermore, Dr. Desmond Harding, Dr. María Chouza-Calo, Dr. Bill Wandless, and Prof. Robert Fanning, I would not be where I am today without your guidance in my undergraduate years, so thank you for seeing something in me that I often had trouble seeing in myself.

ABSTRACT

The Quixotic Picaresque is a conflation of the narrative modes exhibited in *Lazarillo de Tormes* and Miguel de Cervantes' *Don Quijote de la Mancha*. This study examines these early modern Spanish novels and their American reincarnations, namely Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* and William Faulkner's *The Reivers*. Accordingly, this essay explores the correlation between Spain's transition from feudalism to a modern mercantile society and the United States' transition from an agrarian society based in slavery to a modern industrial nation within the cultural contexts of the four aforementioned novels. These novels make up part of the intertextual rhizome in World Literature that I will refer to as the Quixotic Picaresque, in which a series of trickster figures undertake performative acts of deception, particularly the masking tradition of Carnival, in order to endure the hardships of modernity. However, whereas most tricksters tend to be solely focused on pragmatic individual objectives, quixotic pícaros maintain a sense of idealism that leads them to consider the Other and thus act in the name of communal prosperity. These selfless tricksters metatheatrically parody the generic social conventions in which they reside in order to subvert the hegemony that seeks to oppress and marginalize them and fellow members of their communities. In performing a multiplicity of identities and social roles, these quixotic pícaros contribute to the opacity of modern multicultural nation states, and thus, disrupt all social hierarchies leading to the regeneration of the public body—a more utopian world.

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“La más discreta figura de la comedia es la del bobo, porque no lo ha de ser el que quiere dar a entender que es simple.”

[“The most perceptive character in a play is the fool, because the man who wishes to seem simple cannot possibly be a simpleton.”]

—Miguel de Cervantes

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The world is an infinite polyphony, not a cacophony, but rather a symphony of Otherness. Across the vast expanses of the globe, all of human History and its cultural production resonate in, a simultaneously harmonious and dissonant, conversation—in contact—with one another. The world is a “rhizome,” an enmeshed root system inevitably related (in the sense of Édouard Glissant’s *Poetics of Relation*) in all its totality. In theorizing “Relation,” Glissant draws on Giles Deleuze and Felix Guattari’s concept of “the rhizome, ” in which they observe a Western tendency to create hierarchies via tree-like patterns of thought; accordingly, the duo is a proponent of rhizomatic thought, “which connects any point to any other point...[for] the rhizome is an antigenealogy. It is...antimemory. The rhizome operates by variation, expansion, conquest, capture, offshoots” (1458). These principles extend from life to the imagined reality that is literature. In World Literature, texts, both written and oral, enter into a boundless dialogue that spans the entirety of the spatiotemporal field known as Earth. One might simply dub this phenomenon intertextuality. Some texts participate in this grand polyphony more overtly than others; nonetheless, all are indeed one infinitesimal part of a larger whole. Of course, writers and orators influence each other, however, there also exists a continuous confluence of pathos, ethos, and logos in Art. Although they blur the lines of influence and confluence, the anonymously written *Lazarillo de Tormes*, Miguel de Cervantes’ *Don Quijote*, Mark Twain’s *Huckleberry Finn*, and William

Faulkner's *The Reivers* are all entangled with one another—bridging different times and places—nonetheless, reverberating as a node in the rhizome of intertextuality. This confluence of literary phenomenon, which I will refer to as the Quixotic Picaresque, provides the most fruitful method for investigating the tensions between the marginalized individual, community, and the modern state. Through the parallel critical lenses of Mikhail Bakhtin's "Dialogism" and Henry Louis Gates, Jr.'s "Signifyin(g)," this study will unearth the Quixotic Picaresque in Relation to various reincarnations of the folkloric trickster in the modern novel. Let us briefly examine the relationship between these four novels before glossing the theoretical framework that will serve as their accompaniment.

Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra's *El ingenioso hidalgo don Quijote de la Mancha* is a seminal work of World Literature. Cervantes' novel possesses a true universality within its text. *Don Quijote* is about a man on a journey, albeit a visionary and impractical journey. And yet, despite the starry-eyed vision of Don Quijote, the novel has resounded around the globe and connected with readers in very real ways. Although Cervantes' *magnum opus* is concerned with the fantastical imaginings of a madman, it is an early work of literary realism. Contemporaneity and the quotidian are at the heart of Cervantes' work, and Don Quijote is the Everyman in whom readers see something of themselves. Don Quijote's idealized worldview resonates with anyone who has a shred of hope, not for Utopia, as that is too strong a word, but simply for a better world in which Good triumphs Evil. Nevertheless, not everyone is able to sincerely relate to Don Quijote's exceeding idealism, particularly those who have not had the social advantages that Quijote has had. Although Don Quijote aspires for class ascension, he certainly starts off better than many of his own time and others, as he is a "hidalgo," the lowest rung of

early modern Spanish nobility. Sancho Panza, who at first serves the madman under false pretenses and later becomes his true friend, is a peasant in an unforgiving feudal society. Accordingly, Sancho is not in a position to have the same sort of lofty dreams as his counterpart; rather, he is a pragmatist and an opportunist who relies on his common sense philosophy to get by in the world. Though Sancho joins in on Quijote's adventures in hopes of being rewarded with an insular governorship, his reasons for accepting have little to do with social prestige and everything to do with money. Sancho aspires to garner wealth and return to la Mancha in order to provide for his family. Sancho, then, is also an Everyman, albeit one with more realistic objectives than the knight errant. Whereas Quijote undertakes his adventure in the name of all that is Good and Just in the world, Sancho's vision is much simpler (i.e. pragmatic), as he only wants to bring about Goodness for his family, his community.

While Sancho Panza is not exactly a "pícaro," his way of seeing the world, his pragmatic and opportunistic perspective is much more in line with the protagonists of picaresque narratives than the idealistic perspective of Don Quijote. Pícaros are people whom have not been allotted hardly any advantage in life; instead, they are the marginalized, the oppressed, and the forgotten. The word pícaro can be best translated into English as rascal or rogue, and this is indeed what these types of characters are perceived as by hegemonic society. However, in consideration of their social stratum, it is no surprise that these characters resort to thievery, deception, trickery, and other morally relative acts along with their sharp wits in order to survive the harsh modern world. Correlatively, like Sancho, pícaros are pragmatic and opportunistic in their way of life; they take advantage of others and situations in order to ensure their own survival.

Predominantly, the picaresque mode aims at asserting the first-person narrator's individuality in a modern society that condemns such persons to the margins; this is particularly, true for the first picaresque, the anonymously written *La vida de Lazarillo de Tormes y de sus fortunas y adversidades*, although Lazarillo also displays selflessness by acting in communal interests. Conversely, Francisco de Quevedo's *El Buscón*. makes a mockery of the genre, thus seeking to usurp the pícaro's individuality and maintain his or her marginality. Due to the pessimism of *El Buscón*, it is at odds with the optimistic (i.e. quixotic) nature of *Quijote*. Contrarily, in spite of the severe hardships faced by the eponymous protagonist of the narrative, *Lazarillo de Tormes* tends to display a more idealistic vision of society. Lazarillo's aspirations for social mobility are housed in his spatial mobility. Lazarillo leaves his destitute origins in his native Salamanca behind in search of a better life elsewhere, and ultimately ends up as the town-crier of Toledo. Lazarillo is able to make a life for himself as an individual (with a family) rather than a mere royal subject of sixteenth-century Spain's feudalism.

Although *Lazarillo de Tormes* and *Don Quijote* are quite distinct in terms of structure and level of complexity, their narrative trajectories both attempt to arrive at more or less the same goal; that is to say, *Lazarillo* and *Quijote* alike are primarily focused on the theme of social mobility. While Cervantes' novel is lengthy and told from a third-person point of view and *Lazarillo* is a short first-person narrated proto-novel, both share the goal of asserting the rights of the individual in modern society. This is of course more apparent in *Lazarillo*, as readers encounter a first hand account of key episodes in the protagonist's life; nonetheless, via parody and satire, *Quijote* is aimed at subverting the prevailing socioideological rhetoric of its contemporaneous moment, a

rhetoric that preserves the highly stratified society of early modern Spain. The two works are episodic in their construction and take place along the roads, in the inns, and within, as well as on the fringes of, various Spanish cities. Due to these similarities, the disparate narrative modes are often obfuscated. As Walter L. Reed asserts, “these two earliest manifestation of the European novel have sometimes been conflated with one another by later novelists and have even been confused with one another by modern critics” (71). Indeed, outside of Hispanic literary studies, Cervantes’ *Don Quijote* has a tendency to be erroneously dubbed a picaresque novel. While the novel does contain elements of the picaresque—Cervantes even incorporates “una novela ejemplar picaresca” with the tale of “la vida” of gallows’ slave, Ginés Pasamonte—*Don Quijote* is so much more, as the author weaves in various other literary forms (sonnets, pastoral novels, oral cultures, etc.) into the whole of his text. Nevertheless, while critics have inaccurately conflated the two novelistic modes, successive novelists have creatively conflated the two modes to create an entirely new one, the Quixotic Picaresque.

It is precisely this conflation of the two aforementioned modes, the Quixotic Picaresque, that is to be developed in this essay. The influence (confluence) of *Don Quijote* and *Lazarillo* transcends national traditions and surfaces in much of European fiction—for instance, *Gil Blas*, *Tom Jones*, *Joseph Andrews*, *Moll Flanders*, *The Female Quixote*, *Female Quixoticism*, *Madame Bovary*, *Tristram Shandy*, *The Idiot*, *Confessions of Felix Krull*, and so forth all have roots in the Spanish literary tradition—nevertheless, I am particularly concerned with American reincarnations of the Quixotic Picaresque. Mark Twain’s *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is a clear reiteration of this conflated narrative mode. Twain read *Don Quijote* in 1860 and was struck by the resemblances

between Tom and Quijote, particularly their love for reading (Walter Blair 118). As he wrote in an 1869 letter to a friend, “[Tom] was another Don Quixote, and his library of shams as honored, as valid, and as faithfully studied and believed as Quijote’s” (qtd. in Blair 119). As Huck relays to the reader about the generic rules for “play[ing] robber,” Tom Sawyer told him, “if [he] warn’t so ignorant, but had read a book called ‘Don Quixote,’ [he] would know without asking. He said it was all done by enchantment” (Twain 16). This phenomenon continues into the narrative reality even when the boys’ imaginative games cease, as Huck and Jim are “enchanted” countless times throughout the novel. Nevertheless, unlike Cervantes’ novel, *Huckleberry Finn* is told from the first-person point of view, thus also likening it to the narrative mode of the picaresque. Furthermore, Huck is very much a pícaro; he is orphaned, lives on the margins of “sivilization,” and survives by his social astuteness and knowledge of the natural world (i.e. his rugged individualism). As such, Twain’s novel is undoubtedly a blend of *Lazarillo* and *Quijote*, and just as its predecessors, it, too, retains the issue of social mobility at its core, as Huck (a poor white) and Jim (a black slave) both seek to liberate themselves from the constraints that antebellum American society has imposed on them. Huck and Jim accomplish this feat by taking on the roles of Lazarillo, Don Quijote, Sancho Panza and others. Time and time again, Huck and Jim evade their pursuers through deceptive metatheatrical performances and other acts of trickery, or in Cervantine terms, “encantar” (i.e. enchantment). Additionally, Huck suffers a crisis of conscience, and thus engages in the moral relativism typical of the pícaro, as he breaks with social norms in order to help, who will by novel’s end become, his true friend, Jim. Hence, Huck’s picaresque ways are aligned with those of Lazarillo, rather than Pablos of

El Buscón, as he exhibits a sense of selflessness in his invocation of the trickster. Huck's deception is for the Good of the community, as his goal is to help Jim reunite with his family. Thus, Huck is quixotic at heart, as his ideals clash with the hegemonic society of which he is a part.

Twain's influence on American literature is pioneering and lasting, and William Faulkner is perhaps his most akin successor. Faulkner, like Twain, writes in the vein of American folklore and humor, and although the majority of his work may seem more morbid than funny, his last novel *The Reivers* is certainly comic. Faulkner famously expressed his reverence for *Don Quijote*, claiming that he read Cervantes' novel "every year, as some do the bible;" as he recalled, he would read "one scene...just as [one would] meet and talk to a friend for a few minutes" (*The Paris Review*). Montserrat Ginés has written an excellent study on the confluence of Cervantine thought with American fiction entitled *The Southern Inheritors of Don Quixote*. However, Ginés virtually ignores *The Reivers*, instead she primarily pays attention to *The Sound and the Fury* and *Go Down, Moses*. There is a real reluctance in circles of literary criticism to delve into Faulkner's late works and this is especially true for *The Reivers*. Despite critics' overwhelming dismissal of the novel, it is a work that unquestionably merits further study. It seems that the comic aspects of *The Reivers* along with its relatively straightforward narration and arguably light-hearted nature have caused such critical apprehension; nevertheless, the work is anything but deficient in philosophical and moral depth, and because it, too, is a Quixotic Picaresque, it may be Faulkner's most universal tale.

The themes of social and spatial mobility are central to *The Reivers*. Similar to *Huck Finn* and in line with the picaresque mode, Faulkner's novel is also presented from a first-person point of view. *The Reivers* is subtitled, "A Reminiscence," and accordingly, it is a retrospective tale told from grandfather to grandson. Circa 1960, in his old age, Lucius Priest looks back to his youth with fondness as well as moral understanding and relates the oral history of a few formative episodes in his childhood that occurred shortly after the turn of the century. Nonetheless, Lucius is highly conscious of the social changes that have transpired since he was a mere boy of eleven, and although he seeks to teach his grandson about Good, Evil, and the inner workings of life, he is aware that his wisdom may be more applicable to the past. As a grandfather, Lucius notes the incommensurability of his worldview with the impending future; in this sense, Faulkner's novel is prophetic, as it seems to envisage the eventual progress eminent in the social turmoil of the 1960's. Thus, he is aware that the aristocratic ways of the Old South with which he is partially ingrained will be futile and outdated in future American society. In his interactions with Ned McCaslin and Boon Hogganbeck, two marginalized mixed-race characters in the world of Yoknapatawpha (embodiments of Otherness), Lucius learns a way of living quite different from that handed down to him by his own grandfather. While Boss Priest imparts the idealism of the Old South in Lucius' fecund mind, Ned and Boon teach him the way of the trickster. Concomitantly, Lucius is the personification of the quixotic pícaro, as he holds onto his idealism but undertakes acts of trickery in order to benefit his community. Like Huck Finn's quixotic act of helping Jim and his family, Lucius, too, altruistically aids Ned in family matters. Accordingly, Lucius' advice to his

own grandson is that moral relativism and social adaptability, not the chivalrous ways of the old order, are the keys to prevailing in modern multiethnic American society.

1.1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Bakhtin's philosophy of hermeneutics is essential to this study. Bakhtin conceives of language, and furthermore the very nature of life, to be "dialogical." In "dialogism" all language "is understood, as a part of a greater whole—there is constant interaction between meanings, all of which have the potential of conditioning others" (*Dialogic* 426). Bakhtin perceives the world as polyphonic, that is to say, multi-voiced, and Bakhtinian thought focuses especially on the utterance. Bakhtin believes that when one speaks a word or phrase, that utterance is in dialogue with all language and meaning; accordingly, speech, or writing for that matter, is understood via its dialogic relationship with the totality of Otherness. In other words, one is constantly conversing with the "heteroglossia," that is the matrix of "conditions—social, historical, meteorological, physiological—that will insure that a word uttered in that place and at that time will have a meaning different than it would have under any other conditions" (*Dialogic* 428), of speakers from past and present, not to mention the interlocutors before their very eyes. In our polyphonic world, each utterance creates an image of language that is severed from its speaker and exists as one mere piece of the vast array of heteroglossia.

The novel, or "novelness," is central to dialogism, as Bakhtin finds that the history of hermeneutics based on poetics seeks to conform narratives to a particular genre (i.e. the organizational structures of perception and representation) while prosaics elucidate the limits of the languages of quotidian life as well as those of Art. That is not to say that prose's purpose is to transcribe everyday speech, but rather illuminate the

image of language hidden by each secluded utterance in ordinary life. As Bakhtin writes, “the novel parodies other genres...it exposes the conventionality of their forms and their language” (*Dialogic* 5). Therefore, parody is crucial to Bakhtinian thought because it brings the mechanisms of a particular genre to light, that is to say that the way in which a genre functions is revealed by its parody’s otherness. The genre and its parody exist as two language-images in dialogue with one another, thereby constituting each other’s form. Concomitantly, Bakhtin’s dialogism is a precursor to what is later conceived as the theory of intertextuality, and Michael Holquist supports this claim; as he states, “novels are overwhelmingly intertextual, constantly referring, within themselves, to other works outside them...[and] simultaneously manifest inter-textuality in their display of the enormous variety of discourses used in different historical periods and by disparate social classes” (88). For Bakhtin, then, the novel, like Carnival, is a means for recognizing Otherness. In Carnival, bodies are “intercorporeal” much in the same way that the novel, in all its materiality, is intertextual (Holquist 89), and the carnivalesque is indeed coursing through the rhizome of novels that constitute the Quixotic Picaresque.

Don Quijote certainly engages in intertextuality, as parody is at the core of Cervantes’ literary objective. Furthermore, it is the folkloric tradition of carnivalesque parody, elaborated by Bakhtin in *Rabelais and His World*, that Cervantes draws on most extensively, even highlighting the materiality of his own novel in various ways, such as incorporating “El Cide Hamete Benengeli” into the fabric of the text. Don Quijote is a voracious reader, in fact, to such an extent that he becomes mad after his brain shrivels up from consuming too many “novelas de caballería.” The chivalric romance that Quijote dwells on time after time is *Amadís de Gaula*, and Cervantes’ novel does indeed parody it

as well as others in the course of his text; moreover, Cervantes also parodies the picaresque mode, *Lazarillo* in particular, along with other genres as well. In this manner, Cervantes seeks to disrupt the literary sphere of his contemporaneous moment through his subversion of the socioideological rhetoric imposed on the public (“el vulgo”) in the hegemonic cultural production of Spanish officialdom and Lope de Vega and his followers. In invoking parody and entering in to dialogue with other texts across time and space, *Quijote* is polyphonic and thus inherently intertextual.

In many ways, *Huckleberry Finn* is a parody of *Don Quijote* and the picaresque mode and can therefore also be considered polyphonic and intertextual. Tom Sawyer’s insistence that Huck would better understand “play[ing] robber” had he read *Don Quijote* is explicit allusion to Cervantes’ novel. Akin to the ways in which Don Quijote perceives his reality as if it were occurring between the covers of a chivalric romance, Tom has a tendency to revel in his fantasies; however, whereas as Don Quijote imagines himself as a knight errant, Tom pretends to be a robber, a pirate, and more. It is Tom’s adherence to the generic conventions of prison novels that causes him to urge Jim to free himself from bondage just as it is done in the stories he has read. Huck, contrary to Tom, is not much of an idealist; rather, he perceives reality through his pragmatic worldview and rugged individualism typical of the American Frontier spirit. Thus, whereas Tom wants to go through a series of unnecessary steps to free Jim, Huck takes a much more common sense approach. Correlatively, the conflicting ideologies of Huck and Tom are a recapitulation of those of Sancho Panza and Don Quijote respectively. In addition, similar to Cervantes’ reliance on the grotesque, carnivalesque, and other forms of popular folklore of his era, Twain relies on the folklore of his own times, that of Old Southwest humor and African-

American culture, in order to evoke laughter. These disparate literary and oral traditions coalesce as the heteroglossia that Twain dialogues with in the polyphonic novel that is *Huckleberry Finn*.

While Faulkner does not blatantly state his intertextual relations with *Don Quijote* or *Huckleberry Finn*, *The Reivers* is indubitably in a dialogic relationship with its predecessors. Faulkner's final novel is modeled after Twain's masterpiece, that is to say, *The Reivers*, too, is a Quixotic Picaresque. With this in mind, Faulkner's text interacts with the heteroglossia circulating in the world's grand polyphony, which includes the voices of *Lazarillo*, *Quijote*, and *Huck Finn*. Moreover, Faulkner also works in the folkloric traditions of the American Old Southwest as well as Carnival. Accordingly, these four novels are in dialogue with one another in the intertextual rhizome of World Literature. Nonetheless, despite this confluence, *Huckleberry Finn* and *The Reivers* (along with other works by both their respective authors) have been at the center of a controversy in recent years. Many critics believe that Twain and Faulkner alike portray blacks in the abhorrent American tradition of minstrelsy. While there may be some validity to these claims, I believe it is fruitful to investigate these two author's depictions of black characters in consideration of the confluence of the picaresque and African-American trickster traditions. Whereas Twain and Faulkner's intertextual connections to the picaresque may be more readily apparent, nevertheless, I seek to argue that *Huck Finn* and *The Reivers* also dialogue with the trickster figure and the literary tradition, of what Gates has described as, "Signifyin(g)" in African-American culture.

Although Twain and Faulkner alike are white, they were both often in contact with black culture from a young age. In fact, Twain listened to stories from a black man

known as Uncle Dan'l, and as Gretchen Martin notes, "was not exposed to a gifted storyteller but also to an oral tradition that was typically restricted to black listeners...profoundly influenc[ing] his work as an adult" (129). Analogously, Faulkner was raised in large part by his "Mammy" Caroline Barr; as his daughter later noted, "Mammy Callie was probably the most important person in his life as a child" (qtd. in Jay Parini 19). With this in mind, one can posit that Faulkner likely had some, if limited, knowledge of the African-American oral tradition ingrained in him as a boy. In the vast polyphony of World Literature, then, Twain and Faulkner enter into intertextual dialogue not only with the Spanish literature of "el Siglo de Oro," but with that of the Signifyin(g) tradition as well. Gates asserts that literature derivative of "the Signifying Monkey" tradition, is intrinsically intertextual, especially in consideration of the fact that "intertextuality represents a process of repetition and revision, by definition" (66). Signifyin(g) is an oral and written form of mockery in the African-American literary tradition; those who Signify ridicule, that is, insultingly laugh at (parody) other people and texts with polysemic language that is ripe with a multiplicity of significations. By his own admission, Gates confesses that arriving at a definition of "Signifyin(g) is a rather difficult task. Nevertheless, he attempts to summarize it as such, "Signifyin(g)...is the figurative difference between the literal and the metaphorical, between surface and latent meaning...Signifyin(g) presupposes an 'encoded' intention to say one thing but to mean quite another" (89). Bakhtin calls this "parodic stylization," which occurs when "the intentions of the representing discourse are at odds with the intentions of the represented discourse" (*Dialogic* 364). In fact, Gates draws heavily on Bakhtin's notion of "double-voiced" language in his development of African-American Signification. It is primarily

Bakhtin's elaboration of "parodic narration and the hidden, or internal, polemic" that interests Gates; as he suggests, "Signifyin(g)...is fundamentally related to Bakhtin's definitions of parody [also pastiche] and hidden polemic" (120). And as Gates extrapolates on this point further, "when one text signifies upon another text, by tropological revision or repetition and difference, the double-voiced utterance allows us to chart discrete formal relationships in Afro-American literary history. Signifyin(g), then, is a metaphor for textual revision" (96). All this is to say, that parody and mockery, the essential literary features of *Don Quijote* is also at the crux of Signifyin(g). Correspondingly, this study intends to unearth the confluence of these two respective traditions in the intertextual rhizome of *Quijote*, *Lazarillo*, *Huck Finn*, and *The Reivers*.

The pícaro endures the hardships of his or her predicament through his social perspicacity. The pícaro's identity is fluid, protean; he or she makes practice of moral relativism, acting in a particular manner in accordance with whichever situation currently faced. Bakhtin defines the hero of the picaresque as such, "he [or she] stands beyond defense and accusation, beyond glorification or exposure, he knows neither repentance nor self-justification, he is not implicated in any norm, requirement, ideal; he is not...consistent." Bakhtin continues, "the hero of picaresque novels is faithful to nothing, he betrays everything—but he is nevertheless true to himself, to his *own* orientation, which scorns pathos and is full of skepticism" [original emphasis] (*Dialogic* 408). In other words, the pícaro resides outside the bounds of all socioideological rhetoric, committed to only him or herself; he or she seeks to assert his or her individuality in a society that continually looks to subjugate them. Francisco J. Sánchez and Nicholas Spadaccini elaborate on the social and economic adversities the pícaro, and *Lazarillo* in

particular, confronts; as they propose, “the questions of poverty and marginality are...related to phenomena that are normally associated with modernity (the individual subject, the idea of progress and socioeconomic growth, the emergence of the state and its institutions, and so on). [And] *Lazarillo de Tormes* is part of a wide-ranging debate on the discourse of marginality in Spain and Europe” (296). Sánchez and Spadaccini bring the importance of the picaresque into the present moment, contending, “if picaresque narratives...may still appeal to us today, it is precisely because they reveal a deep doubt at the heart of modernity” (304). The pícaro thus navigates the modern world, despite the hegemonic culture that oppresses him or her, by making use of his or her pragmatic and opportunistic wits, often performing their identity in a chameleonic, or protean, fashion. This notion is just as true in Twain and Faulkner’s time (as well as today) as it was in Spain’s Siglo de Oro. *Don Quijote* is concerned with utopia, both retrospective and prospective utopias; however, Cervantes suggests that ideal societies are simply that (i.e. ideal), and thus unattainable. *Huck Finn* and *The Reivers* similarly engages with the theme of utopia, particularly that of the American Frontier, the maiden wilderness that is marred by the forces of modernity, industrialization. Thus, many of the white upper class characters of both Twain’s and Faulkner’s fictive universes retreat into the past, whereas those on the lower rungs, the picaresque figures of their respective novels, look to the future relying on their trickster ways to survive in imperfect and unjust societies.

The trickster figure of the African-American tradition and the pícaro are exceptionally similar in nature. In fact, I would argue that the pícaro, with its mythological folkloric roots (Giancarlo Maiorino xii), is simply a postmedieval extension of the archetypal trickster, considering that this figure has been around as long as the

written word (Gilgamesh and Odysseus are tricksters of sorts). The Signifying Monkey as well as other figures (such as Brer Rabbit) in African (and its diasporic) mythology are indeed tricksters, and have shaped the written and oral African-American tradition. As Gates avers, “th[e] topos that recurs throughout black oral narrative traditions and contains a primal scene of instruction from the act of interpretation is that of the divine trickster figure of Yoruba mythology, Esu-Elegbara” (5). Furthermore, “the metaphor of a double-voiced Esu-Elgbara corresponds to the double-voiced nature of the Signifyin(g) utterance” (Gates 96). With these points in mind, the traditions of the trickster figure and Signifyin(g) in African-American literature indeed are confluent with the Euro-American picaresque as both hail from the same archetype. Carl Jung speaks to the infinite iterations of the archetypal trickster, averring, “in picaresque tales, in carnivals, and revels, in magic rites of healing, in man’s religious fears and exaltations [and I would add, in literature, too] the trickster haunts the mythology of all ages, sometimes in quite unmistakable form, sometimes in strangely modulated guise” (140). Correspondingly, Gates puts forth some of the qualities associated with the trickster figure, and though this is not an exhaustive list, some of these elements can certainly be observed in the figure of the pícaro (and the picaresque mode) as well: “individuality, satire, parody, irony, magic, indeterminacy, open-endedness, ambiguity, sexuality, chance, uncertainty, disruption and reconciliation, betrayal and loyalty, closure and disclosure, encasement and rapture” (7). Accordingly, Lazarillo is a trickster just as Jim Baker and Ned McCaslin are pícaros and vice versa. Furthermore, while I would normally hesitate to deem Don Quijote and Sancho Panza as pícaros, they both embody the trickster figure in some episodes, and thus also share some traits characteristic of the pícaro. In regards to the world of Carnival

in *Quijote*, especially metatheatrical parody (burlesque) and the regenerative nature of the grotesque “bodily lower stratum,” the trickster is without a doubt congruent; as Harold Scheub affirms, “the trickster’s world has as constants destruction and re-creation; hence, the emphasis on the phallus, the emphasis on deception, disguise, and illusion... Consider also his theatrical nature, and the nature of the performance that frames his antics ultimately” (31-2). Performance is unquestionably quintessential to *Don Quijote*, but moreover, taking into account Bakhtin’s profession that via “degradation,” “the fundamental trend of Cervantes’ parodies is a ‘coming down to earth,’ a contact with the reproductive and generating power of the other and of the body” (*Rabelais* 22), Scheub’s portrait of the trickster is strikingly redolent.

In his famous essay, “Change the Joke and Slip the Yoke,” in which he offers a response to Stanley Edgar Hyman’s claims regarding the relationship between “Negro American literature and Negro American folklore” (45), Ralph Ellison explores the folkloric roots of the African-American trickster and blackface minstrelsy in the American novel, proposing that the “joke at the center of American identity” is the masked joker, a disguise, whose core figure is the “smart man playing dumb” [a term Ellison borrows from Hyman] (54). However, Ellison views this essential American motif as problematic, as he finds that the racist tradition of minstrelsy, particularly the abject depiction of African-Americans via blackface mask, hails from it. Ellison seeks to demonstrate that the modern African-American novel stems from white writers, like Twain and others, rather than black folklore, which he believes to be a distant tradition; as he states, “I knew the trickster Ulysses just as early as I knew the wily rabbit of Negro American lore, and I could easily imagine myself a pint-sized Ulysses but hardly a

rabbit” (58). Ellison perceives there to be an inherent “danger” in the archetype of the trickster, as “no one seems to know he-she-its true name, because he-she-it is protean with changes of pace, location, and identity” (46). Accordingly, Ellison aims to solidify the black man’s (or woman’s) identity in a pre-Civil Rights society in which African-Americans were denied such individual liberties. Ellison believes that “in the Anglo-Saxon branch of American folklore,” of which blackface minstrelsy is a major facet, “the Negro is reduced to a negative sign that usually appears in a comedy of the grotesque” (48). Ellison’s statement here is valid, however, the type of grotesque comedy to which he refers is not that of Carnival, but rather what Bakhtin calls the “Romantic grotesque,” which lacks the regenerative nature of the carnivalesque. Carnival is antithetical to individuality, instead it is about the renewal of community through laughter; it is a leveling of social stratification and a reunification of the public body.

Ellison takes issue with Hyman specifically for asserting that the trope of the “smart man playing dumb” is essentially an African-American tradition. Conversely, Ellison puts forth, “actually it is a role which Negroes share with other Americans, and it might be more ‘Yankee’ than anything else” (54). Again, to reiterate, Ellison’s point is that “masking” is the “joke” at the crux of American collective consciousness; in his words, “masking is a play upon possibility and ours is a society in which possibilities are many. When American life is most American it is apt to be most theatrical” (54). Theatricality and identity performance are key aspects of the Quixotic Picaresque. Each of the novels under current investigation incorporates these motifs into their respective texts. The pícaro is certainly a performer; he tells lies and deceives in order to succeed in a world that is out to keep him or her down. Don Quijote and Sancho Panza “enchant”

one another as well as others in acts of performance, at times, even going along with a lie that they clearly recognize as false (e.g. the episode of la cueva de Montesinos). Huck Finn disguises himself as a young girl and Jim disguises himself as a fugitive slave, as well as a “sick Arab.” And finally, Ned McCaslin wears the mask of the “smart man playing dumb.” All of these intertextual acts of performance are undertaken in order to deceive, for morally relative reasons that is. Bakhtin avows that in the folk culture of Carnival, “the mask is connected with the joy of change and reincarnation, with gay relativity and with the merry negation of uniformity and similarity; it rejects conformity to oneself” (*Rabelais* 39-40). With this in mind, the site where Ellison’s concept of the mask and the carnivalesque mask diverge becomes evident. Ellison observes the de-individualization of the mask to be degrading, nonetheless, “degradation” is precisely what brings the ideal back into the sphere of the material, the regeneration of the Carnival. Bakhtin continues his development of the carnivalesque mask accordingly, “such manifestations as parodies, caricatures, grimaces, eccentric postures, and comic gestures are per se derived from the mask. It reveals the essence of the grotesque” (*Rabelais* 40). However, on the other hand, in the “Romantic” form of the grotesque, which has lost its carnivalesque spirit, the mask “is stripped of its original richness and acquires other meanings alien to its primitive nature... The Romantic mask loses almost entirely its regenerating and renewing element and acquires a somber hue” (*Rabelais* 40). The mask associated with Romantic grotesque is the source of blackface minstrelsy. Concomitantly, accounting for Twain’s and Faulkner’s confluence with *Lazarillo* and *Don Quijote*, which are steeped in the folkloric tradition of Carnival, the mask worn by Jim and Ned respectively are not that of minstrelsy, but that of the carnivalesque.

While Ellison is certainly warranted in scrutinizing the characterization of Jim in *Huck Finn*, it seems to me that he mistakes Twain's evocation of the trickster-pícaro for minstrelsy. That is to say, Jim, and for that matter, also Ned, do not wear the blackface mask, but rather the mask of Carnival. Scheub attests to the African folkloric trickster's performative and theatrical nature; as he contends, "the trickster is a master at masquerade... At the heart of [trickster] stories are the trickster and the dupe... [The trickster] disguises himself or in some way convinces his dupe that he is what he is not. In that forged identity, he cheats the dupe" (24). Nevertheless, the trickster can also become the tricked, just as is evident when Sancho utilizes Don Quijote's methods of enchantment to represent "una campesina" as Quijote's ladylove, Dulcinea. Scheub confirms this role reversal, "the trickster himself may be a victim of a tables-turned motif, so that he who is a master at deception frequently becomes the dupe" (24). In other words, the masterful trickster, or pícaro (i.e. "rogue") can also be turned into a fool. However, the trickster's status as fool is transient and liminal at best. This calls to mind the epigraph of this essay: "La más discreta figura de la comedia es la del bobo, porque no lo ha de ser el que quiere dar a entender que es simple" (Cervantes 458) ["The most perceptive character in a play is the fool, because the man who wishes to seem simple cannot possibly be a simpleton"] (Edith Grossman 479). Here, the great American joke of the "smart man playing dumb" is saliently congruent with Cervantes' imperative. The rogue and the fool have appeared side by side since the inception of the modern novel; as Bakhtin affirms, "together with the image of the rogue (and often fusing with him) there appears the image of the *fool*—either of an actual simpleton or the image of the mask of a rogue" (*Dialogic* 402). The novel parodies the pathos of the high genres, officialdom, and

conventionality through “the gay deception of the rogue,” and as Bakhtin continues, “between the rogue and the fool there emerges, as a unique coupling of the two, the image of the clown. He is a rogue who dons the mask of a fool in order to motivate distortions and shufflings of languages and labels, thus unmasking them by not understanding them” (*Dialogic* 404-05). Correlatively, in Twain’s and Faulkner’s respective novels, Jim and Ned take on the performative role of the carnivalesque clown, tricksters who engage in Signifyin(g), who laughingly mock other members of the public body, but who are also mocked and laughed at in return. Nevertheless, Jim and Ned alike constantly maintain their social mastery, and remain one step ahead of the hegemonic actors that seek to oppress them.

Lazarillo and *Don Quijote* are embedded in the Humanist discourse of sixteenth and seventeenth-century Spain as the state transitioned from a feudal to a modern society. Congruently, Twain is concerned with investigating the tensions that arise in the United States’ transition from an antebellum agrarian slave society to postbellum modern America. Throughout his Yoknapatawpha corpus, Faulkner also focuses on the South’s agrarian past in confrontation with the encroachment of the industrial United States. Furthermore, in *The Reivers*, Faulkner anticipates the immense social change that will occur as America moves from the Jim Crow South to the Civil Rights era of the 1960’s. Correspondingly, these four novels in the intertextual rhizome of the Quixotic Picaresque, deal with the individual’s place in each respective transitional society. The quixotic pícaro thus relies on his performative trickster acts of representation to navigate the hegemonic forces of modernity. In this vein, the Quixotic Picaresque reveals the exceedingly idealistic, that is, utopian, vision of modern nation-building on both sides of

the Atlantic—in the New World and Old—and its ultimate futility to truly create, what Plato calls, a “Just State.” It is Faulkner who most comprehensively grasps the far-reaching consequences of modernity in the European and American continents alike, and with this in mind, he sets out to put the whole world into his “little postage stamp of native soil,” Yoknapatawpha County.

The Martiniquais critic and philosopher Glissant is fascinated with Faulkner’s work. Glissant’s primary contribution to literary criticism is his *Poetics of Relation*. In another of his studies, *Faulkner, Mississippi*, Glissant examines Faulkner’s Yoknapatawpha corpus through the lens of “Relation.” Glissant urges his readers to view culture and history not as “totalitarian roots” that plant themselves firmly, creating hegemonic footholds, but rather as part of an “enmeshed root system,” a “rhizome.” For Glissant, “rhizomatic thought” is at the core of a poetics of Relation, however, he extrapolates on his predecessors’ concepts of “expansion” and “conquest,” through a meditation on “errantry.” Glissant pushes back against the type of errantry undertaken in the name of conquest, “arrow-like nomadism,” instead advocating for a “circular nomadism” in which one encounters all of “Otherness.” As Glissant asserts, “one who is errant (who is no longer traveler, discoverer, or conqueror) strives to know the totality of the world yet already knows he will never accomplish this—and knows that this precisely where the threatened beauty of the world resides” (*Poetics* 20). This quote of course brings to mind el caballero andante, Don Quijote, as Glissant draws his readers’ attention to the quixotic, that is, the incommensurable yet enchanting, nature of Relation. In such a poetics, “each and every identity is extended through a relationship with the Other,” a rhizome of Otherness in all its totality (*Poetics* 11). Nevertheless, coming into contact

with this totality is an impossible feat, regardless the errant one ventures out as a circular nomad dialoguing with Otherness. In this way, the Other resists universalization.

After colonialism, during the establishing of the state, most nations have coalesced around a notion of “power—the totalitarian drive of a single, unique root—rather than around a fundamental relationship with the other,” which is vital to Glissant’s Relation (*Poetics* 14). The nation-state, like the root, is monolithic. It imposes a totalitarian (i.e. hegemonic) vision on its citizens and requires these often quite disparate peoples to conform or face exile. Glissant views the commonality between errantry and exile as being these two concepts’ absence of roots. For Glissant, whereas the root is totalitarian, that is singular and intolerant, the rhizome, though it preserves the notion of “rootedness,” is pluralistic—it is tolerant and thereby allows for multiplicity. As Glissant claims, in Faulkner’s work “about digging up roots in the South... the root begins to act like a rhizome; there is no basis for certainty” (*Poetics* 21). Glissant argues that since the European Conquest of the so-called, New World, the establishing of Western civilization has ultimately been a “quest for totality.” This quest has passed through a series of stages: “the thinking of territory and self,” “the thinking of voyage and other,” and “the thinking of errantry and totality” (*Poetics* 18). The first phase exemplifies the conquerors desire for personal adventure and discovering new land, while the second conveys the aim of conquering Otherness. While the first two are undertaken in the manner of arrowlike nomadism, the third exhibits a circular nomadism and has only begun taking place since the founding of the New World has reached its inevitable end. This third phase of errantry is a dialectical poetics of Relation, which does not seek to discover new lands or conquer other peoples, but merely seeks to understand the Other in the context of totality.

However, as Glissant states, “totality’s imaginary allows the detours that lead away from anything totalitarian” (*Poetics* 18). In other words, this type of errantry does not aspire to set roots, uproot the errant being, as identity ceases to reside entirely within the root and exist in Relation as well. Hence a poetics of Relation seeks to come into contact with Otherness without universalizing the Other.

A poetics of Relation is indeed embedded in Faulkner’s Yoknapatawpha corpus in a very material, that is to say, corporeal, sense. Glissant’s is primarily concerned with Creolization in (former-)plantation societies; accordingly, considering that the US South is part of the larger Caribbean world, Faulkner’s insistence on the theme of miscegenation in his fictional county of Mississippi speaks directly to Glissant’s concerns. Perhaps Charles Bon (*Absalom, Absalom!*) is the most obvious personification of Relation in Faulkner’s work; however, in *The Reivers*, Boon and Ned also hail from very “opaque” (a Glissantian term) origins. The characters of Yoknapatawpha, and especially those of the McCaslin-Priest line, are irrevocably ensnared with one another in the rhizome of Otherness. Faulkner, in the tiny universe he has created, unearths this totality, like a knight errant tilting at windmills, though a textual revision based in parody and Signifyin(g); thereby he nomadically circulates through the intertextual rhizome of the pícaro, the trickster, and *Quijote*, and by extension the confluence of African-American and carnivalesque folklore. In doing so, Faulkner does not claim to fully understand African-Americans; nonetheless, he does attempt to portray his black characters in all their human complexity, and this is especially true in the case of his Quixotic Picaresque, *The Reivers*, in which he finally relinquishes the past and welcomes the inevitable future.

CHAPTER 2

THE FIRST NOVEL: *LAZARILLO DE TORMES* AND EARLY MODERN SPAIN

Picaresque narratives are told from a retrospective point of view; the narrator reflects on his or her past life and interprets the hardships they have endured in relation with their life as it stands presently. The picaresque mode is presented as autobiography and thus distorts the line of fiction and non-fiction. As Anthony N. Zahareas contends, “the first-person narrative is a continuous process of interaction between the subject as narrator and the narrated events, what historians call the unending confrontation between present and past, between raw personal experiences and their interpretation” (132). Accordingly, one must be cautious in accepting all that they read in such a tale as completely veracious, as the pícaro has a tendency to be an unreliable narrator and skew the verisimilitude of his story. The pícaro is a complex narrator; when he or she scribes his or her story, they have often given up their past social transgressions and have conformed to a more socially accepted way of living, and have turned to a life of letters. However, as a man (or woman) of letters, the pícaro turned narrator is an artist, that is to say, a master of artifice who constructs his or her story as he or she desires, either concealing and-or exaggerating the truth of their “*vida pasada*.” In the picaresque mode, as Zahareas relays, “the narrators accept responsibility and blame [for all their wrongdoings]; they often become aloof by looking upon their previous selves as humorously foolish. The attempt is to purge oneself now of errors committed in the past”

(139). While the pícaro has tricked, lied, stolen, etc. in previous times in order to achieve their hopes of class ascension, upon writing their life story, he or she appears to have given up such past indiscretions and kowtowed to social norms. Nonetheless, there does seem to be some sense of regret in the pícaro, thus his or her narrative is often confessional in nature; as Zahareas notes, “a pícaro can intervene in his deviant past only as the writer of that past deviance.” This is why the autobiographical form is vital to the pícaro, as Zahareas continues, it relates “how the narrator became a social offender...and why at a crucial turning point in his [or her] life he [or she] decided to write about these social offenses” (141). In the picaresque mode, “history is treated pragmatically, the crucial events recollected occur twice: the first time as real, the second time as literary, that is, it puts the past in the service of the present” (Zahareas 144). With this in mind, although the narrative is a fictional first-person autobiography, the picaresque mode is intrinsically polyphonic, and this dialogical nature is best exemplified by World Literature’s first novel, *Lazarillo de Tormes*.

Due to the fact that *Lazarillo* was published anonymously because of its heretical content, it is difficult to know how much of the narrative is fact or fiction. *Lazarillo* is the first picaresque, put into print in 1554, and since its conception it has served as a model for subsequent writers who have wished to either conform to or subvert the genre. Like most picaresque narratives, *Lazarillo* begins his tale at the very beginning and thus relates the conditions of his birth and childhood, as he writes, “pues Vuestra Merced escribe se le escriba y relate el caso muy por extenso, parecióme no tomalle por el medio, sino del principio, porque se tenga entera noticia de mi persona” (Anonymous 10-11) [“Your Honour has written to me to ask me to tell him my story in some detail so I think I’d

better start at the beginning, not in the middle, so that you may know all about me”] (Michael Alpert 24). Interestingly, Lazarillo has been asked by an official to write his tale; accordingly, the story has two distinct audiences, one embedded within the narrative to whom the script is addressed, while the other is the reader. This narrative feature reiterates the dialogical nature of the work. In combination with the polyphony of Lazarillo’s first-person account and the dialogue that ensues between past and present, the heteroglot text is illuminated via Bakhtinian readings, especially when one takes into account Holquist’s clarification of dialogism; as he suggests, “in dialogism, literature is seen as an activity that plays an important role in defining relations between individuals and society” (86), and that point becomes clear in *Lazarillo de Tormes*.

Lazarillo is born into a life of destitution on the margins of Salamanca in the region of the River Tormes; more precisely, as he narrates, “con verdad me puedo decir nascido en el río” (Anonymous 14) [“I can say in fact that I was born on the river”] (Alpert 25). Alexander Blackburn indicates an interesting point in this regard, stating, “the very name Lazarillo de Tormes parodies its devaluated world: Lazarus the beggar, son of dishonored parents, derives noble pedigree from elemental rootlessness, a river” (12). And as Blackburn later continues, “Lazarillo’s blurring the details of his birth and assigning himself a mythical origin in the river strike a more or less conventional motif of heroic literature” (35). Blackburn analyzes *Lazarillo* within the folkloric myth of the trickster in particular, and it is the eponymous narrator’s rootless—or as Glissant would call them, “opaque”—origins that compliment his flexible protean identity, that which is typical of the trickster figure. Correspondingly, Lazarillo becomes a wanderer—a “circular nomad” in Glissantian terms—and it is only in the midst of his episodic

journeys from master to master, when he has the capacity for movement that he is able to transcend his social class. Lazarillo, then, and many of the pícaros that succeed him, as Blackburn puts forth, are “the trickster hero of folklore recreated as the lonely individual cut off from, though yearning for, community and love” (25). After Lazarillo becomes an orphan, he is left alienated, longing to belong to a community. In order to attain a communal sense of belonging, Lazarillo must first realize his individual subjectivity, even though this means adapting his identity like a chameleon to the social circumstances he confronts in each “fortunate” or “adverse” episode of the novel. After arriving at a higher rung in the social ladder through his picaresque ways, Lazarillo is then able to relinquish his individuality, that is to say, commit an act of self-sacrifice, and re-integrate himself into society by settling down with a wife in the community of Toledo.

The earliest formative event that occurs in his childhood is the detainment and consequent death of his biological father when Lazarillo was merely eight years old. As he writes, “achacaron a mi padre [de robar]...por lo cual fue preso, y confesó y no negó, y padesció persecución por justicia. Espero en Dios que está en la gloria” (Anonymous 14) [“they caught my father [stealing]... So they arrested him, and he confessed, denied nothing and was punished by law. I hope to God he’s in heaven”] (Alpert 25). Although the reader only receives a glimpse of his story, Lazarillo’s father is himself something of a pícaro, and thus, the boy learns the ways of moral relativism from a young age. Tom Lewis and Francisco J. Sánchez describe the pícaro’s morally relative perspective on society as such, “society does not function on the basis of moral standards officially proclaimed in aristocratic ideology, but rather by means of self-affirmation—that is, the search for economic advantages at any price and a relativization of notions such as

‘virtud’ and ‘honor’ in light of individual circumstances” (xiii). In addition to Lazarillo’s father, his mother also displays a sense of pragmatism in her efforts to endure her unfortunate predicament. Again, as Lazarillo writes, “mi viuda madre, como sin marido...metióse a guisar de comer a ciertos estudiantes, y lavaba la ropa a ciertos mozos de caballos del Comendador de la Magdalena, de manera que fue frecuentando las caballerizas” (Anonymous 15) [“my widowed mother...[as] she had no husband...started to cook meals for students and to wash clothes for the stable-boys of the Comendador de la Magdalena. So she hung about the stables...” (Alpert 25). Although the narrator’s intimations are subtle, Lazarillo implies that his mother is a prostitute. The name-drop of Magdalena (perhaps the world’s most famous prostitute) clearly hints this to indeed be the case. Additionally, Zaide, Lazarillo’s eventual stepfather even refers to the boy as “hideputa” (Anonymous 17), that is, “son of a whore.” Accordingly, Lazarillo’s rough upbringing is obvious and shapes the course of his later life.

Lazarillo’s mother undertakes such morally relative acts in order to provide for her family, as well as climb the social ladder. As Lazarillo relates, her motives are to “arrimarse a los buenos, por ser uno dellos” (Anonymous 15) [“mix with respectable people so that she could become one of them”] (Alpert 25). In doing so, she meets Zaide, a Moorish (i.e. black) man who becomes the family’s provider; however, in the extremely stratified society of early modern Spain, having a relationship with a Moor would normally be looked down upon. Accordingly, the fact that Zaide becomes the head of the household demonstrates the severely impoverished social predicament of Lazarillo and his family. Nevertheless, Lazarillo expresses surprisingly humanist sentiments about his black stepfather and eventual black half-brother considering the latent racism against

Moors in post-Inquisition Spain. Lazarillo narrates an illuminating anecdote here: “acuérdome que estando el negro de mi padraastro trebajando con el mozuelo, como el niño vía a mi madre y a mí blancos y a él no, huía dél, con miedo, para mi madre, y, señalando con el dedo, decía: ¡Madre, coco!” (Anonymous 17) [“I remember my black stepfather playing with [my half-brother] one day and the child saw that my mother and I were white and he wasn’t. He was scared and ran to my mother and pointed to the black man and said: ‘Mummy, bogeyman!’”] (Alpert 26). In this episode, Lazarillo details a child’s first contact with Otherness and is struck that his reaction is fear. He reflects profoundly on this moment in his narrative, writing, “Yo, aunque bien mochacho, noté aquella palabra de mi hermanico y dije entre mí: ‘Cuántos debe de haber en el mundo que huyen de otros porque no se veen a sí mesmos!’” (Anonymous 18) [“Although I was only a boy, I thought a lot about what my little brother had said and asked myself: ‘How many people must there be in the world who run away from others in fright because they can’t see themselves?’”] (Alpert 26). In this instance, the reader observes the point made by Zahareas that the autobiographical form of the picaresque leads to its double-voiced nature. Certainly, here, Lazarillo did not have these thoughts as a boy of eight, but rather is reimagining the past in the present moment of writing his life story. Regardless, Lazarillo’s tolerance and empathy for Otherness is remarkable for his contemporaneous moment. By the narrative’s end, in spite of the fact that he is now much better off than before, one can deduce that Lazarillo’s experiences as a marginalized individual have imparted in him a greater sense of compassion for others who have suffered at the hands of the hegemonic Spanish state.

Eventually the Spanish state oppresses Lazarillo's family to such an extent that the boy is left to fend for himself. His stepfather is caught stealing and thus severely whipped, and "a [su] madre pusieron pena por justicia, sobre el acostumbrado centenario, que ...no entrase ni al lastimado Zaide en la suya acogiese" (Anonymous 20) ["the court sentenced [his] mother, not just to the usual hundred lashes, but never...to have Zaide in her house after his flogging [again]"] (Alpert 26). Accordingly, Lazarillo's mother is forced to work as a servant in an inn and is unable to care both her two sons; as such, Lazarillo becomes an orphan, and hence, must take on a feudalistic apprenticeship as the seer for an old blind man that possesses trickster-like characteristics. Lazarillo's social mobility is dependent upon his ability for spatial mobility; accordingly, although Lazarillo is obligated to leave his home, in the end it comes as a blessing in disguise. However, it is from his blind master that Lazarillo learns the pícaro's art of trickery, as he writes in reference to the blind man, "desde que Dios crió el mundo, ninguno formó más astuto ni sagaz...sacaba él grandes provechos con las artes que digo, y ganaba más en un mes que cien ciegos en un año" (Anonymous 25, 27) ["this world never saw anyone more astute or cunning... He made a lot of money from [his] tricks and earned more in one month than a hundred blind men usually do in a whole year"] (Alpert 28). However, this blind man is only the first of a string of cruel masters that nearly starve Lazarillo to death due to their extreme stinginess; therefore, Lazarillo devises his own tricks in order to eat and survive.

His most elaborate scheme occurs when under the watch of his second master, a Catholic priest, and it is in this episode that *Lazarillo* is most critical of the religious state that was early modern Spain. Lazarillo portrays this priest as incredibly greedy; whereas

Lazarillo is given a ration of one onion every four days, the priest eats cheese, bacon, and bread regularly, and is so fastidious he even keeps the bread locked in a chest. On the brink of death, Lazarillo receives a stroke of good luck when a tinker comes to the door one day. Lazarillo pretends to have lost the key to the chest, and after a few trials, the tinker indeed finds a key that just so happens to open the lock. Lazarillo trades the key for a loaf of bread and waits a day to be safe before he devours a loaf the next. However, the priest begins to take notice a shortage, so Lazarillo begins plotting a way to feed himself without the priest catching on to his tricks. Lazarillo observes that the “arquetón es viejo y grande y roto por algunas partes, aunque pequeños agujeros. Puédese pensar que ratones, entrando en él, hacen daño a este pan” (Anonymous 59) [“chest is big and old and broken here and there, though the holes are small. [The priest] might think that the mice have got in and eaten his bread”] (Alpert 42). Sure enough, as Lazarillo recalls, the priest later questioningly remarked to him, “¡Mira, mira, qué persecución ha venido aquesta noche por nuestro pan.’ Yo híceme muy maravillado, preguntándole qué sería. — ¡Qué ha de ser!—dijo él—. Ratones” (Anonymous 60) [“Look what happened to our bread last.’ I pretended to be very surprised and asked him what it could be. ‘What can it be?’ he said. ‘Mice!’”] (Alpert 43). In this instance, Lazarillo reveals himself as master of artifice, he represents reality deceptively in order to trick the pitiless priest to ensure his survival. Such trickster acts of (mis)representation are exactly what Lazarillo relies upon to endure the social injustice in feudal Spain throughout his younger years, however, when Lazarillo no longer faces the threat of hunger, he begins to reform his ways.

Eventually, Lazarillo becomes Lázaro as he comes in to a position of relative comfort under the occupation of town-crier of Toledo. It is at this stage in his life, that he

reflects on his devious past in prose, and as he declares, “alcan[cé] lo que procuré, que fue un oficio real, viendo que no hay nadie que merde, sino los que le tienen. En el cual el día de hoy vivo y resido a servicio de Dios y de Vuestra Merced” (Anonymous 128-29) [“I got into the Civil Service! I realized that you can’t get on unless you are in a government job. I’ve still go it today and I live in the service of God and Your Honour”] (Alpert 77). Lazarillo again comes under ostensible good luck when the “Archpriest of St. Salvador’s” in Toledo arranges a marriage between him and his maid. Lazarillo is content with his marriage and relative success as he now has a job and the Archpriest treats him exceptionally well by giving him a bushel of corn each year. Nevertheless, it is implied that the Archpriest may have had ulterior motives cloaked in his kindness. Lazarillo begins to suspect infidelity from his wife, as rumors circulate around town that she and the Archpriest are engaged in an affair, which may have even resulted in pregnancy. When Lazarillo addresses his concerns to the Archpriest, his wife becomes enraged; thus, in order to placate her and sustain the good reputation of the Archpriest, the trio comes to an agreement. As Lazarillo writes, “con juramento que le hice de nunca más en mi vida mentalle nada de aquello, y que yo holgaba y había por bien de que ella entrase y saliese, de noche y de día, pues estaba bien seguro de su bondad” (Anonymous 134) [“I had to swear that so long as I lived, I’d never mention a word about it and that I was happy and satisfied that she went in and out of his house at any time of night or day as I was confident about her faithfulness”] (Alpert 79). Upon the narrative’s end, the reader observes that Lazarillo pragmatism and opportunism prevails, as he lives a lie as a cuckold, and perhaps will even father a bastard. Nevertheless, Lazarillo’s motives are not entirely self-serving; rather, he goes along with this fallacy, self-maiming, in order to

preserve his communal connections. Correspondingly, the pícaro (i.e. rogue) plays the fool, and thus wears the mask of folkloric clown. In this vein, Lazarillo achieves his individual rights while simultaneously reintegrating himself into society. By keeping mum and threatening to kill any man who dare further tarnish the reputation of his wife, Lazarillo stabilizes the artifice of Modernity that which is manifested microcosmically in his narrative as Toledo society. Lazarillo, thereby, collapses the dichotomy of individualism and communalism with his act of self-sacrifice. In this vein, *Lazarillo de Tormes* is notably distinct from other picaresque narratives which tend adhere to the ideology of one polar extreme. As such, *Lazarillo* is rather idealistic, one might even say, quixotic.

Lazarillo is a timeless tale. In some sense it is mythological, yet, still contemporaneous, as his story has been recapitulated and reshaped in various forms over the (nearly) five hundred years since its initial publication. In large part, the novel's fundamentality is due to the protagonist's archetypal nature, and it is after the archetype of the trickster that *Lazarillo* and other picaresque narratives are modeled. Blackburn confirms this claim; as he posits, "Lazarillo...is one of the permutations of trickster myth, perhaps the most primitive of all archetypes...the trickster myth helps to explain why the picaresque novel has had a continuous life in various cultures over more than four centuries" (13). In spite of the fact that *Lazarillo*'s origins are mythological in scope, because the anonymous novel was written in the intermediary between Spanish feudalism and Modernity, it is a quintessentially modern work that treats the sociopolitical conditions of subjectivity. Due to the oppressive forces of modernity, Lazarillo and other pícaros alike are obligated to practice moral relativism. As Lewis and Sánchez contend,

“the awareness of moral relativism indeed may constitute one of the first moments of the production of a modern subject... At the same time as individual self-interest begins to provide the primary context within which to assess ideas and values, however, the emerging subjects of modernity also discover their absolute submission to the state” (xiv). Although Lazarillo must go from master to master working as an indentured servant of sorts in early modern Spain’s feudalistic society, by novel’s end he does become a man who is able to survive via individual means. But because Lazarillo must submit to the state, in the act of self-interest as well as communal benefit, he allows himself to become a cuckold, and thereby shatters social norms regarding morality. Nevertheless, although Lazarillo claims to have given up his ways of trickery and deception, in permitting the ménage a trois to occur, he again is reverting back to his picaresque ways of lying, even threatening those who gossip about the affair with their lives. With this in mind, Lazarillo’s reliability as a narrator comes into question, as he is not as transformed as he had led the reader, (including “Vuestra Merced”) on to believe. Accordingly, the competing discourses associated with the individual and the state respectively are in a dialogical relationship with one another in the mind of Lazarillo. These distinct discourses, along with Lazarillo’s perceptions of his past and present, constitute the heteroglossia with which he formulates his own morally relative subjectivity. Blackburn echoes this point, “the essential morality of the picaresque novels is contained in the manner in which individual and society reflect each other... If society is morally astray, then the individual may go morally astray, and vice versa” (21). That is to say, Lazarillo, who lives in a morally corrupt society, has no choice but to be *morally corrupt* himself in order to survive.

As the precursor to the modern novel, the picaresque genre, and *Lazarillo de Tormes* especially, is paradigmatic in the history of Western, and even World, Literature. *Lazarillo* and the picaresque are particularly adept in examining the tensions between individualism and communalism in the context of modernity. As a fictive autobiographical form, the picaresque illustrates the individual's status whether alienated from, or re-integrated into, the community within the modern state, while simultaneously asserting the pícaro's right, and thus also usurping that of the hegemonic ruling class, to define his or her own subjectivity. Of course, for the pícaro, this means that he or she may indeed have to perform his or her identity in a protean fashion, like that of the mythological trickster of the folkloric tradition, and thus allow a certain fluidity to his or her own subjectivity. While *Lazarillo* details such phenomena in sixteenth-century Spain's waning era of feudalism, Twain's and Faulkner's respective (quixotic) picaresque narratives treat much of the same themes, albeit in the context of the United States as they transition from an antebellum slave society to a modern industrial world. Yet, *Huck Finn* and *The Reivers* are not merely picaresque, but quixotic as well, and so we must delve into the inner workings of the father of the modern novel's *Don Quijote*, in order to fully appreciate these American reincarnations of The Quixotic Picaresque.

CHAPTER 3

FOUNDATIONS OF THE MODERN NOVEL: MIGUEL DE CERVANTES' *DON QUIJOTE DE LA MANCHA*

Don Quijote and Sancho Panza reside in the world of Carnival. In his study, *Rabelais and His World*, Mikhail Bakhtin, for the most part, focuses on the folkloric aspects of the works of French writer, François Rabelais, nevertheless, Bakhtin observes many of the same aspects in Cervantes' *Don Quijote de la Mancha*. Moreover, in *The Dialogic Imagination*, Bakhtin details the rise of the novel, as it is known today, with the simultaneous fall of the epic; as he states, “[c]ompared with [the high genres], the novel appears to be from an alien species. It gets on poorly with other genres. It fights for its own hegemony in literature, wherever it triumphs, the other older genres go into decline” (4). Of course, as the founder of the modern novel as Bakhtin suggests, Cervantes was of the utmost importance in this historical literary process. The manner in which Cervantes subverts the epic genre, particularly the epic of the Greco-Roman tradition, takes the form of parody; with *Quijote*, Cervantes parodies las novelas de caballería that were popular reading material during his life: the onset of the Renaissance (*Dialogic* 384). For Bakhtin, laughter, perhaps the most vital element of Carnival, denigrates the epic (*Dialogic* 23). In medieval times, during Carnival, there did not exist anyone, not governors, kings, or any other official who was not subject to the public’s laughter. Carnival was not merely a spectacle, as the people lived, in the most unadulterated sense, the festivities; it was a celebration of reality—materiality—without end. Bakhtin reflects

on this point here, “Carnival is not a spectacle seen by the people; they live in it, and everyone participates because its very idea embraces all the people” (*Rabelais* 7). Moreover, the laughter of the people brings the ideal world back down to the material world, or perhaps better said, the corporeal; that is to say, the parodic burlesque humor of Carnival paints reality (or fiction as both are one in *Quijote*) in reverse. Accordingly, during the times of Carnival, a peasant can become a governor, like Sancho, a poor man can become a knight, like Alonso Quijano (i.e. Don Quijote himself), and even windmills can become giants, as one clearly witnesses in Cervantes’ novel. Additionally, apart from fiction, in the reality of Carnival, a failed playwright and amputee can become a great novelist by interrupting the rigid literary sphere of his own historical moment, as Cervantes did with *Quijote*.

Considering the materiality of art, the carnivalesque world described by Bakhtin can be related with the theatrical and metafictional elements of Cervantes’ novel; nevertheless, the apocryphal *Quijote* scribed by the illusive Alonso Fernández de Avellaneda is also relevant to the narrative course Part II of Cervantes’ *Quijote* runs. In spite of his aspirations to be a central figure of the Spanish literary sphere in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, as a marginalized person in his own society, Cervantes did not experience any recognition prior to the publication of Part I of his *magnum opus* (Alberta Wilson Server and John Ester Keller v). Nonetheless, Part I was an immediate success and its publication even garnered the unwanted attention of Avellaneda. The enmity between Cervantes and Avellaneda is a thoroughly investigated topic, still there have been very few credible discoveries regarding exactly who this man (or woman, who knows?) was and why he was so offended by Cervantes’ achievements.

In any case, it seems that the false *Quijote* spurred on the metafictional elements that Cervantes relied upon to respond to the harsh critiques of this mysterious palimpsestic literary thief. Avellaneda makes a serious and threatening indictment against Cervantes in the prologue to his version of *Quijote*:

[Cervantes] tomó por tales el ofender a mí, particularmente, a quien tan justamente celebran las naciones más extranjeras y la nuestra debe tanto, por haber entretenido honestísima y fecundamente tantos años los teatros de España con estupendas e innumerables comedias, con el rigor del arte que pide el mundo y con la seguridad y limpieza que de un ministro del Santo Oficio debe esperar. (196) [[Cervantes] took [the “method”] of offending me, one so justly praised by the most distant nations, one to whom our nation owes so much because of his having for so many years decorously and richly entertained the theaters of Spain with innumerable stupendous plays, with the artistic strictness the world demands and with the assurance and purity to be expected from a minister of the Holy Office. (Server and Keller 3)

It is obvious with this quote that Avellaneda is a fervent follower of Lope de Vega and his literary circle, yet another writer with whom Cervantes had many quarrels. After the success of Cervantes' Part I, Avellaneda was in collusion with Lope de Vega's cronies and this group tried to contain Cervantes to the margins of the Spanish literary sphere. As George Mariscal affirms, “[t]he emergent concept of subjectivity as the product of individual will which was being generated by the discourses of virtue and deeds... was judged to be subversive by a culture founded on the maintenance of aristocratic and

clerical privilege” (169). Concomitantly, this official literary group sought to impose its cultural hegemony on the public. Rather than passively accept Avellaneda and the aristocracy’s threat, Cervantes changed the plot (likely near its completion) of Part II in order to usurp the validity of the apocryphal work of this authorial impostor.

Although Cervantes implements the carnivalesque tradition more overtly in Part I of *Quijote*, specifically before his public dispute with Avellaneda, the folkloric humor of Carnival also appears in Part II, but in a manner more concentrated on the materiality of literature—books. That is to say, Cervantes incorporates the metafictional aspects of his novel in the form of carnivalesque parody in order to disrupt the objectives shared between Lope de Vega, Avellaneda, and Spanish officialdom. This aforementioned official literary group, with Lope de Vega as its catalyst, produced an immense amount of theatrical plays in order to appease public taste, that of el vulgo, and in this mode, imposed its socioideological rhetoric surreptitiously on the masses. Nicholas Spadaccini describes the distinctions between the public (reader) desired by Lope de Vega and Cervantes respectively, “mientras Lope promueve un teatro orientado hacia la recepción ‘masiva’...Cervantes propone desplazar su obra dramática tardía hacia la esfera privada de la lectura, lejos del ‘vulgo’ consumidor del corral, hacia un lector avisado que sabe distanciarse de los mecanismos ilusionistas del teatro que está de moda” [“while Lope promotes theater for mass consumption...Cervantes seeks to move his drama to the private sphere of the reader, far from the consumer playpen of ‘el vulgo,’ toward an attentive reader who knows how to distance him or herself from the illusory mechanisms of popular theater”] [my translation] (1053). Because of this, in the prologue to Part II of *Quijote*, Cervantes searches for “un lector discreto” (a discrete reader) in place of “un

lector ilustre” (a reader distinguished by his popular taste) as is apparent in the following lines:

Válame Dios, y con cuánta gana debes de estar esperando ahora, lector ilustre, o quier plebeyo, este prólogo, creyendo hallar en él venganzas, riñas, y vituperios del segundo *Don Quijote*... Pues en verdad que no te he dar este contento... Pero no me pasa por el pensamiento—castíguele su pecado. (433) [Lord save me, how impatiently you must be waiting for this prologue, illustrious or perhaps plebian reader, believing you will find in it reprisals, quarrels, and vituperations hurled at the author of the second *Don Quixote*... But the truth is I will not give you that pleasure...but the thought has not even entered my mind: let his sin be his punishment.]

(Grossman 455)

Cervantes perceived el vulgo, that is the consumer masses of Lope de Vega’s (and the likes) hegemonic cultural production, as a monstrous mob incapable of recognizing the mechanisms with which the official literary group imposed its socioideology on unaware citizens, the same citizens who were unable to recognize Cervantes’ tactics of subversion.

Nevertheless, the state’s imposed rhetoric is constructed with (for the discrete reader) obvious generic conventions; thus, such generic constructs are open to parody.

Avellaneda’s work and the theater of Lope de Vega are monological in nature, whereas Cervantes’ *Quijote* is polyphonic (i.e. dialogical). Accordingly, Lope de Vega and his circle aspire to achieve the incontestability of the “high genres” similar to the Greco-Roman epic with their monolithic art. As Bakhtin states,

All genres in 'high' literature (that is, the literature of ruling social groups) harmoniously reinforce each other...the whole of literature conceived as a totality of genres, becomes an organic unity of the highest order. But it is characteristic of the novel that it never enters into this whole, it does not participate in any harmony of the genres." (*Dialogic* 4)

Rather than participating in "a harmony of the genres," the novel, including Cervantes' *Quijote* of course, parodies and mocks in a burlesque fashion the generic conventions of the so-called "high genres."

Upon discerning the repetitive structures of the theatrical plays of Lope de Vega crafted to appease the tastes of el vulgo, Cervantes implements parody in order to reveal such structures through a dialogic juxtaposition of Otherness with the narrative of his *Quijote*. Cervantes sought to modify the collective consciousness of the literary sphere by representing, to the contrary of the distant and unattainable past (the mythic times) of the high genres, contemporaneity—the common people and their quotidian life but as a parody of las novelas de caballería, that is to say, in the form of a heroic narrative (the bathos of the mock epic). Likewise, Bakhtin contends, "[c]ontemporaneity...was a subject of representation only in the low genres. Most importantly, it was the basic subject matter in that broadest and richest of realms, the common people's creative culture of laughter" (*Dialogic* 20). For all these reasons, Cervantes searched for a discrete reader who could read slowly, outside of the influence of officialdom in a private space where one could be overcome with carnivalesque laughter but outside the intimidating influence of state socioideology, as was the case in medieval times. Spadaccini identifies this point, "el 'lector mío' imaginado por Cervantes se define por capacidad de entender

un proyecto epistemológico, en contraposición al ‘*vulgo*,’ aquel conjunto de lectores predecibles incapaces de distinguir entre voces y establecer conexiones entre los diferentes discursos en la novela [original emphasis]” [“the ‘reader’ Cervantes imagines is defined by his capacity to his epistemological project, contrary to ‘el vulgo,’ that group of predictable readers incapable of distinguishing between voices and establishing connections between different discourse in the novel”] [my translation] (1046).

Cervantes’ method echoes the carnivalesque spirit that Bakhtin identifies.

In instances of the carnivalesque, laughter is not intended to be maliciously mocking, rather it renders the world and all its inhabitants into a grand burlesque in which everybody participates and celebrates the liberty inherent in renewal and regeneration. As James Iffland proposes, Cervantine laughter, “emite resonancias liberadores y contestatarias. Es un a risa que disipa el agobio representado por la autoridad social y cultural y que incluso se traduce en un ataque jocoso contra ésta” [“emits rebellious and liberating resonances. It is laughter that dissipates the burden represented by social and cultural authority and indeed manifests itself in a funny attack against such authority”] [my translation] (40-1). Iffland’s description of carnivalesque laughter’s subversion of hegemonic officialdom is congruent with that developed by Bakhtin. As Bakhtin declares, “[Carnival] has a universal spirit; it is...the world’s revival and renewal, in which all take part... It was most clearly expressed and experienced in the Roman Saturnalias...[the] return of Saturn’s golden age upon earth” (Rabelais 8). Don Quijote wishes to return to the era of Saturnalias (i.e. utopia) and thereby evokes the Age of Gold,

“¡Dichosa edad y siglos dichosos aquellos a quien los antiguos [como Hesíodo en *Trabajos y días*] pusieron nombre de Dorados; y no porque en ellos el oro, que en esta nuestra edad de hierro tanto se estima, se estima, se alcanzase en aquella venturosa sin fatiga alguna, sino porque entonces los que en ella vivían ignoraban estas dos palabras de tuyo y mío!”
(Cervantes 79) [“Fortunate the age and fortunate the times called golden by the ancients, and not because gold, which in this our age of iron is so highly esteemed, could be found then with no effort, but because those who lived in that time did not know the two words *thine* and *mine*”]
[original emphasis] (Grossman 76).

In this scene taken from Part I of *Quijote*, Quijote is speaking to a group of shepherds, relishing in the simple beauty of acorns, and romantically reflecting on the pastoral, remembering the Age of Gold when “[t]odo era paz entonces, todo amistad, todo concordia” (Cervantes 79) [“all was peace, friendship, and harmony”] (Grossman 76). It is here that Cervantes is mocking in a burlesque fashion—parodying—the pastoral novels of the Middle Ages, yet another incontestable high genre, which were just as popular as las novelas de caballería, because of their romanticized vision of the past, an ideal but intangible time. Despite the universal resound of Cervantes’ *Quijote*, the novel has particular resonance within the context of its own conception. Thus, to fully appreciate Cervantes’ genius and the inner workings of parody and satire throughout the novel, one must hold an understanding of the sociopolitical environment in which it was conceived: the brink of Humanism.

The theme of utopia is central to Cervantes' *Quijote*; however, Cervantes treats utopia in his novel in a multivalent fashion. While many may be inclined to merge the mentalities of Don Quijote and Cervantes, José Antonio Maravall suggests readers should do otherwise. Cervantes' irony is pervasive throughout the text; surely, the author does not mean to put forth that Spain ought to return to a society in which knights roam the terrain undertaking chivalrous acts in the name of the Church, or to the simplicity of the idyllic pastoral life of shepherds, as achieving either retrograde utopia is an infeasible aspiration. Instead, Cervantes is satirizing such utopian visions. In his book, *Utopia and Counterutopia in the "Quijote,"* Maravall associates the term "heroism" with the "morals of traditional [i.e. pre-Humanist] society" (24). Accordingly, in the transition to a modern society shaped by Humanist thought, "the unavoidable failure of the heroic ideal" becomes implanted in the collective consciousness of the body politic (24). With this in mind, Maravall asserts that *Quijote* "was born of this feeling: breaking with the archaic style of books of chivalry...it portrays the bitter and serene lamentation of an obsolescent social sector over a new epoch which denies the hero his place in it" (24).

Correspondingly, Don Quijote is a man out of place and out of time; to the other characters that he encounters along the roads of early seventeenth-century Spain, he seems like an entirely deranged person. His physical attire, his speech, and his overall demeanor all add to this perception; he is the embodiment of outdated chivalrous ideals in the modern (contemporaneous) times. Don Quijote's heroic idealism is thus unsuited for early seventeenth-century Spain; as such, his utopian vision, that of knightly adventures and the pastoral is also an outdated and unsuited vision of society.

Bakhtin parallels Maravall's position when he asserts that Cervantes, and the carnivalesque more generally, bring the ideal world, that is, Utopia, back "down to earth" (*Rabelais* 22), the corporeal world. Cervantes underscores this point in his novel as can be seen in the following lines in which Quijote does a series of cartwheels while not wearing any pants: "desnudándose con toda priesa los calzones, quedó en carnes y en pañales, y luego, sin más ni más, dio dos zapatetas en el aire y dos tumbas la cabeza abajo y los pies en alto, descubriendo cosas" (198) ["hastily he pulled off his breeches and was left wearing only his skin and shirttails, and then, without further ado, he kicked his heels trice, turned two cartwheels with his head down and his feet in the air, and revealed certain things"] (Grossman 204). In this cartwheel scene, Cervantes is invoking what Iffland, borrowing an anthropological term, calls "la inversión simbólica," that is, "symbolic inversion;" as he affirms, "la inversión simbólica [es] la tendencia de rebajar todo lo alto, de todo lo exaltado y respetado, para poner en su lugar todo lo inferior, lo humilde, etc." ["symbolic inversion [is] the tendency to lower all that is high, all that is exalted and respected, in order to put in its place all that is inferior, humble, etc."] [my translation] (59). After all, perhaps Don Quijote is not as crazy as he seems; as Bakhtin avers, "madness [la locura] is inherent to all grotesque forms, because madness makes men look at the world with different eyes... In folk grotesque, madness is a parody of official reason" (*Rabelais* 38). It is obvious here that Don Quijote sees the world in reverse as is typical of Carnival, but it is not so obvious as to whether he is truly crazy or not.

Another example of the world turned upside down takes the shape of the idealized campesina Dulcinea del Toboso. In Part I, Don Quijote describes Dulcinea accordingly,

“su hermosura, sobrehumana, pues en ella se vienen a hacer verdaderos todos los imposibles y quiméricos atributos de belleza que los poetas dan a sus damas: que sus cabellos son oro...sus cejas arcos del cielo, sus ojos soles...perlas sus dientes [etc.]” (Cervantes 93) [her beauty is supernatural, for in it one finds the reality of all the impossible and chimerical aspects of beauty which poets attribute to their ladies: her tresses are gold...her eyebrows the arches of heaven, her eyes suns...her teeth pearls [etc.]]” (Grossman 91). However, in Part II, Sancho enchants Dulcinea and portrays her to Don Quijote in a grotesque form, as in reality, she is simply a poor laborer from the Spanish countryside. Upon seeing her, Don Quijote exclaims, “Pues yo te digo, Sancho amigo...que son borricos, o borricas, como yo soy don Quijote y tú Sancho Panza” (Cervantes 496) [“Well, I can tell you, friend Sancho...that it is as true that they are jackasses, or jennies, as it is that I am Don Quixote and you Sancho Panza”] (Grossman 517). Furthermore, Cervantes portrays Don Quijote’s idealized conception of Dulcinea returning to material reality as such, “don Quijote...miraba con ojos desencajados y vista turbada a la que Sancho llamaba reina y señora, y...no descubría en ella sino una moza aldeana y no de muy bien rostro, porque era carirrendonda y chata” (496) [“Don Quixote...looked, with startled eyes and confused vision, at the person Sancho was calling queen and lady, and...could see nothing except a Peasant girl, and one not especially attractive, since she was round-faced and snob-nosed”] (Grossman 518). It is in this scene that Sancho parodies, via doing just as he was taught, utilizing the same narrative mechanisms of “encantar” as Quijote to claim that windmills are giants, a flock of sheep a royal army, prostitutes ladies, etc., and in this same way Sancho “enchants” Dulcinea. Despite the fact that Dulcinea is truly a homely village woman, in the

carnavalesque world in which Don Quijote is constantly pursued by “encantadores malignos,” una campesina can also be a princess, as the distance between the respective ideal and corporeal realms collapse. Similarly, the grotesque body, and particularly the bodily lower stratum, is a distinctive feature of the carnivalesque folkloric humor of medieval times, and as Bakhtin alerts to his readers, Cervantes integrates this element of laughter into his novel.

Although the body is one of the themes most fundamental to Cervantes’ novel, he personifies the body in a distinct manner compared to many modern authors who work in the grotesque tradition; Cervantes’ grotesque fiction stems from the folkloric tradition of Carnival. It is important to note that in times of Carnival, the body belongs to the public, the community; it is a focal point for communal laughter. Bakhtin clarifies this assertion:

the grotesque body is not separated from the rest of the world.

It...transgresses its own limits. The stress is laid on those parts of the body that are open to the outside world, that is, the parts through which the world enters the body or emerges from it...[for example] the open mouth, the genital organs, the breasts, the phallus, the potbelly, the nose, [etc.].

The body discloses its essence as a principle of growth which exceeds its own limits only in copulation, pregnancy, childbirth, the throes of death, eating, drinking, or defecation. (*Rabelais* 26)

Don Quijote’s genitals and buttocks, that is, his lower bodily stratum, show up quite blatantly in the aforementioned cartwheel scene, and it is in this episode and others that Quijote’s grotesque body becomes a topic for laughter. Sancho embodies the grotesque in

relation to “those parts of the body that are open to the outside world” (*Rabelais* 26) in a completely humane and universal moment of laughter, his fear-induced act of defecation:

parece ser...que Sancho hubiese cenada algunas cosas lenitivas, o fuese cosa natural, que es lo que más se debe creer... Pues pensar de no hacer lo que tenía gana, tampoco era posible, y así que hizo...fue soltar la mano derecha, que tenía asida al arzón trasero...se soltó la lazada corrediza con que los calzones se sostenían...y echó al aire entrambas posaderas, que no eran muy pequeñas... y comenzó a apretar los dientes y a encoger los hombros, recogiendo en sí el aliento todo cuanto podía... vino a hacer un poco de ruido... (Cervantes 144-45) [it seems that...Sancho had eaten something laxative for supper, or because it was in the natural order of things—which is the most credible... But not doing what he desired to do was not possible, either, so what he did was to free his right hand, which was clutching the back of the saddle, and with it...he loosened the slip knot that was the only thing holding up his breeches...stuck out his buttocks, which were not very small...he began to clench his teeth and hunch his shoulders, holding his breath as much as he could...he finally made a little sound” (Grossman 148).

Although Don Quijote responds to the repugnant sounds and smells created by Sancho in a burlesque manner, the knight errant’s mind is stuck in the ideal (frankly a world in which feces are non-existent), Cervantes calls his readers’ attention to the fact that defecation is “una cosa natural,” even something to laugh at, but certainly nothing to hide. Bakhtin reconfirms this position here, “[t]he people’s laughter which characterized

all forms of grotesque realism from immemorial times was linked with the bodily lower stratum. Laughter degrades and materializes... [and] the absolute lower stratum is always laughing” (*Rabelais* 20, 22). Correspondingly, Cervantes invokes the folkloric tradition of the grotesque when he represents Sancho’s buttocks and defecation; thereby Sancho’s body is reintegrated into the public (universal) body of Carnival.

Cervantes’ work is a continuation of the literary phenomenon that Bakhtin deems “grotesque realism.” *Quijote* does indeed implement the grotesque elements of the folkloric tradition, but at the same time, Bakhtin declares that the body in Cervantes’ novel contains a binary nature. In other words, the material body in *Quijote* is undergoing a change in what it is dividing; this division is especially prevalent in the episodes of “los duques,” and with no one more so than “la duquesa” herself. Anne J. Cruz extrapolates on what has been called “the crisis of the aristocracy” in the episodes of los duques. Cruz suggests that all of the ideal traits of feminine characters are captured in the superficial artifice of “la duquesa:” “belleza, juventud, vivacidad y valentía,” i.e. “beauty, youth, vivacity, and courage” [my translation] (370). Nevertheless, la duquesa, in her luxurious and private “hacienda,” is hiding her true corporeal, and by extension, moral, traits. In effect, she is trying to isolate her individual body from that of the public body of folklore; this can be observed in the following lines:

“¿Vee vuesa merced, señor don Quijote, la hermosura de mi señora la duquesa...aquellas dos mejillas de leche y de carmín, que en la una tiene el sol y en la otra la luna, y aquella gallardía con que va pisando y aun despreciando el suelo, que no parece sino que va derramando salud donde pasa? Pues sepa vuesa merced que lo puede agradecer primero a Dios, y

luego a dos fuentes que tiene en las dos piernas, por donde se desagua todo el mal humor de quien dicen los médicos que está llena.” (Cervantes 725) [“Señor Don Quixote, has your grace seen the beauty of my lady the duchess...her two cheeks of milk and carmine, the sun glowing on one and the moon on the other, and the elegance with which she treads, even scorns, the ground, so that it looks as if she were scattering health and well-being wherever she goes? Well, your grace should know that for this she can thank God, first of all, and then the two [abscesses] she has on her legs, which drain the bad humors that the doctors say fill her body” (Grossman 721).

In relation with this divulcation of her true body, that is, her actual material body not the idealized version she attempts to present on the surface, Cruz comments, “[I]a señal física del cuerpo llegado y purulento de [ella], escondida entre sus lujosas ropas, apunta a la corrupción social de la época y a la pérdida de poder que iba sufriendo la nobleza” [the physical sign of her festering body, hidden beneath her luxurious clothing, points to the social corruption of the era and the nobility’s loss of power”] [my translation] (371).

Even so, while I agree that Cervantes is engaging with “the crisis of the aristocracy,” it seems to me, that his subversion of the upper echelons of society comes about through carnivalesque laughter. That is, “las dos fuentes” “the two abscesses” that are oozing pus are symbolic of Carnival. Here, although la duquesa is attempting to contain her exuding materiality, what she perceives to be her individual private body (a thought derivative of the bourgeois and aristocratic mentality), in the world of Carnival, her corpus is exceeding its own limits and returning to the public, universal, body, that of the common

people. Bakhtin elaborates on the occurrence of this phenomenon in Renaissance literature:

the peculiar drama of the material bodily principle in Renaissance literature...[is] the breaking away of the body from the single procreating earth, the breaking away from the collective, growing, and continually renewed body of the people with which it had been linked in folk culture...[Nevertheless, bodies] transgress the limits of their isolation. The private and universal [are] still blended in a contradictory unit...bodies and objects begin to acquire a private, individual nature; they are rendered petty and homely and become immovable parts of private life, the goal egoistic lust and possession. This is no longer the positive, regenerating and renewing lower stratum, but a blunt and deathly obstacle to ideal aspirations. (*Rabelais* 23)

Despite her tendency to obfuscate her true corporeal nature with elegantly distracting clothing, la duquesa does not have nearly as much control of her body as she does of her private hacienda, as her maid takes on the role of carnivalesque “burlador” and reveals to Don Quijote (the public) the secrets hidden beneath her dame’s fine wardrobe.

Nonetheless, further along in the text, los duques, whom are bored with the idleness of the aristocracy, create a grand spectacle, that is to say, they do not participate (live) in the festivities of Carnival, rather they put on a play in their private realm (ostensibly extracted from the universal, the common), which aims to cruelly mock Don Quijote and Sancho. In other words, while los duques do indeed mask themselves, the mask they wear is not of that of the carnivalesque spirit associated with the public body, but rather one of

aristocratic privacy. However, on another level of narration, Cervantes invokes carnivalesque laughter from his readers in a burlesque treatment of los duques and the aristocratic class. As Cruz states, “[los duques] deseando entretenerse a costillas ajenas...revelara la actitud de Cervantes ante este sector inútil de la aristocracia” [that los duques desire to entertain themselves at the expense of others...reveals Cervantes’ attitude toward this useless sector of the aristocracy”] [my translation] (372). That is to say, Cervantes clearly has no sympathy for the aristocratic class, who act cruelly in their idle boredom.

The most searing mockery enacted by los duques is the instance in which they cause Sancho to believe that he has reached his aspiration of social mobility (as promised to him by his Don), that of becoming a governor of “la ínsula Barataria.” Los duques do indeed appear to invoke the principles of Carnival by turning the world upside down in putting “un campesino pobre” in the position of insular governor, as in early modern Spain such social mobility was entirely impossible; in effect, the true intentions of los duques is masked in what appears to be the carnivalesque spirit. Nevertheless, because los duques do not truly partake in the festivities of Carnival, but rather isolate themselves in their realm of privacy and cruelly laugh at Sancho, not with Sancho and the rest of the public body. In this vein, Mariscal describes los duques as such, “what the ducal pair exemplifies...is a highly intensified desire to manipulate for no other reason than personal diversion... In these two characters Cervantes raises the issues of power, control, and the subjects ability to resist manipulation in unexpected ways” (192). Accordingly, the episode of “la ínsula Barataria” is nothing more than a spectacle (with a generic structure of a theatrical play, and thus is subsumed by the all-encompassing

structure of the novel) created for the private pleasure of los duques; certainly it is not of the universal mode of Carnival. Mariscal elaborates on the purpose of spectacle, like that desired by the undiscerning “vulgo,” “spectacle...became a mass form of wonder insofar as it sought to astonish large groups of people, reduce them to momentary passivity, and ultimately subjugate them” (192). Thus, Lope de Vega’s theater of spectacle was an institutional vehicle aimed at imposing the official literary circle’s hegemonic socioideology on the public sphere. With this in mind, Luis R. Corteguera contends, “just as Sancho cannot imagine his wife as a queen, others cannot see him as a governor. It is an odd image meant to elicit laughter, and, as such, becomes the inspiration for the hoax carried out...[by] the Duke and Duchess... [However,] Sancho gets his island and governs it better than even he could have imagined” (262). Corteguera continues with this theme, asking his readers to scrutinize the unforeseen success of Sancho’s insular governorship; as he states, “by encouraging his readers to laugh at Governor Sancho Panza, Cervantes intended them to reconsider the nature of good rulers and good government” (262). Whereas Don Quijote envisions a regressive utopia, that is, one which upholds the past as ideal, the common sense wisdom of government Sancho stems from the proverbs and sayings of everyday people, and this fact suggests that contemporary man (or woman), in this case a poor peasant, is the ideal ruler, which again turns the world upside down. Bakhtin outlines Cervantes’ objective in employing Sancho, as representative of contemporaneity, juxtaposed with the regressive utopian ideology of Don Quijote. As he relates, “Sancho’s role in relation to Don Quijote can be compared to the role of medieval parodies versus high ideology and cult, to the role of the clown versus serious ceremonial” (*Rabelais* 22). Bakhtin’s proposition here demonstrates

burlesque parody's function of bringing the socioideology of officialdom into the world of Carnival, and as has been mentioned previously, the world of officialdom and Lope de Vega's literary circle, are in cahoots; accordingly, Cervantes' parodic novel is aimed at subverting the literary sphere of his own times, in part, with folkloric humor.

While Sancho is the "fool," in Bakhtinian terms, of los duques' grand private spectacle of the governorship of la ínsula Barataria, in other instances of the novel, and perhaps most notably in the closing episodes of Part I, he takes on the role of the "clown" (i.e. the fusion of the fool and the "rogue"). In these scenes, the reader observes Sancho wearing the mask of the carnivalesque clown, that is, the "smart man playing dumb." Accordingly, it is here that Sancho relies on deceptive tactics typical of the trickster figure in order to "disenchant" Don Quijote. Don Quijote has been "encantado" by the Priest, the Barber, and their cohort, all whom are donning masks that cause Don Quijote to believe they are demons. Sancho, who bears witness to these acts of deception and is the only one "en su mesmo juicio y en su mesma figura" (Cervantes 379) ["in his right mind, and not pretending to be someone else"] (Grossman 403), decides to let the charade go on for a moment's time. This masked group of tricksters imprisons Don Quijote in a cage, and the Barber, pretending to be some disembodied all-knowing voice makes a prophecy to keep Quijote locked up. As the Barber bellows, "no te dé afincamiento la prisión en que vas... La cual se acabará cuando el furibundo león manchado con la blanca poloma tobasina yoguieren en uno" (Cervantes 380) ["Grieve not at thy imprisonment...this will come to an end when the wrathful Manchegan lion shall be joined with the white Tobosan dove"] (Grossman 404). The Barber, the Priest, and their troupe exploit Don Quijote's confusion of appearances and reality, and via parodic

representation recreate the generic conventions associated with the artifice of “enchantment.” For these reason, the Barber prophesizes in the romantic diction of las novelas de caballería. Nonetheless, Sancho eventually becomes suspicious that the Barber and the Priest may hold malignant intentions. Accordingly, he attempts to tell Don Quijote the truth frankly, however, when common sense fails, he takes on the role of the clown—the smart man playing dumb—in order to disenchant his master.

Because Don Quijote has never read anything in las novelas de caballería about a knight errant jailed in a cage and being led through a procession, he is baffled by his current circumstances. Nevertheless, Don Quijote writes this off, believing that because he is a “nuevo caballero en el mundo” (Cervantes 381) [“new knight in the world”] (Grossman 406), and thus is destined for a different path. Still, he asks the opinion of his squire, and Sancho replies, “No sé yo lo que me parece...por no ser tan leído como vuestra merced en las escrituras andantes. Pero, con todo eso, osaría afirmar y jurar que estas visiones...que no son del todo católicas” (Cervantes 381) [“I don’t know what I think...since I’m not as well read as your grace in errant writing, but even so, I’d say and even swear that these phantoms...are not entirely Catholic”] (Grossman 406). By “Catholic,” Sancho simply means “kosher” (i.e. legitimate) as it is used in English today. Although he strays from absolutes, Sancho is well aware of the deception taking place; yet, he attempts to reason with the mad man that is Don Quijote on his own terms. In other words, Sancho plays dumb, “self-maims (Ellison’s term),” and goes along with the fantastical imaginings of his master in order to trick him into seeing the Priest and the Barber’s artifice. Sancho, invoking the carnivalesque spirit, returns the ideal to the material, the corporeal. Specifically, Sancho asks Don Quijote if he has “venido gana y

voluntad de hacer ‘aguas mayores o menores, como suele decirse’ (Cervantes 394) [“had the desire and will to pass what they call major and minor waters”] (Grossman 420). In the vernacular language of “el campo,” Sancho inquires if Don Quijote needs to urinate or defecate. In consideration of Bakhtin’s concept of the bodily lower stratum, Sancho is clearly drawing on the folkloric tradition of Carnival in reminding Don Quijote of his humanity. Sancho reasons, again in terms that Don Quijote will understand, “se viene a sacar que los que no comen, ni beben, ni duermen, ni hacen las obras naturales que yo digo, estos tales están encantados, pero no aquellos que tienen la gana que vuestra merced tiene” (Cervantes 395) [“you can conclude that people who don’t eat, or drink, or sleep, or do the natural things I’ve mentioned are enchanted, but not people who want to do what your grace wants to do”] (Grossman 421). Sancho speaks with the Priest and asks permission to free his master so that he may, in order to avoid a horrible stench, evacuate his bowels away from the cage; as Cervantes writes, “don Quijote, se apartó con Sancho en remota parte, de donde vino más aliviado” (396) [“Don Quixote moved away with Sancho to a remote spot and returned much relieved”] (Grossman 423). In these episodes, Sancho plays the carnivalesque clown, a trickster who feigns ignorance at Don Quijote’s illusions, and thereby disenchants his master and unmask the Barber and the Priest. Sancho collapses the divide between the ideal and corporeal by evoking laughter in the reader with his defecatory humor.

Narrating in a multi-vocal manner, Cervantes parodies the officialdom of the early modern Spain by juxtaposing myriad voices in dialogue with one another between the covers of *Don Quijote*. Some of these voices hail from a past time and others the contemporaneous moment; there are commonsensical and nonsensical voices, those of

the peasant class as well as royalty. In this vast polyphony of dialogism evident in Cervantes' novel, Carnival disintegrates social hierarchies, and the public body exists as a rhizome of Otherness. Drawing on Bakhtin's theory as laid out in *The Dialogic Imagination*, Vibha Maurya seeks to exclaim that Cervantes' *Quijote* is a polyphonic novel. During Cervantes' era, the official literary circle was also aligned with the Church as any concept of a secular society had yet to take hold—more or less, the Church, the ruling class, as well as the hegemonic literary sphere, were all united. In consideration of this fact, Maurya notes, “the rise in the circulation of printed texts was posing serious problems for the church [and government], which was trying to prevent ‘its faithfuls’ from reading them either by condemning them or by imposing on them a hard censorship” (29). For these reasons, Cervantes needed to tread lightly, with severe caution, when usurping this adversarial official literary circle. Likewise, Maurya also confirms this fact, “the ‘possible truth’ or the ought to be doctrine [i.e. hegemonic socioideology] was being used to set a norm for literary works as well” (29), as was the case indeed with Lope de Vega's theater. Maurya continues, “in the name of harmony [(i.e. verisimilitude) the state] argued...fantasy should correspond with the ‘truth,’ thus, the characters and discourse of a text should set examples of virtue and not of indignant persons or statements of history” (29-30). In accordance with this, Cervantes portrays Don Quijote's madness in a rather ambivalent fashion, and as such, at times the knight errant appears to be a heroic genius and at others a complete buffoon (like Sancho he too is a carnivalesque clown). In development of her assertion that *Quijote* is a polyphonic novel, Maurya indicates,

Cervantes...considered it essential to liberate his characters from his own clutches... [Accordingly] the reality of the hero and the external everyday life shift from the authorial world and are grounded into the character's field of vision... This way the characters' discourse is also created by the author so that it looks as 'someone else's discourse, the world of the character himself.' (32,34,35)

Correspondingly, Cervantes conceals his intentions to usurp by obscuring the authority of his novel, which is created via the polyphony of *Quijote*, in his implementation of metafiction.

Due to the fact that the fictional Cervantes, who actually shows up as a character in Chapter 9 of Part I, is merely the “transcriber” of *Don Quijote*, as the real author is the Moor El Cide Hamete Benengeli, the polyphonic novel is enmeshed with voices of Otherness. Considering that Cervantes the character only translates Benengeli's manuscript with the help of a Morisco (a former Muslim who converted to Christianity), it is quite ironic that the most famous Spanish work ever *written* is scribed by an Arabic man. Spadaccini draws out the dialogical nature of *Quijote*; as he avers, “la estructura dialógica de la novela, en contraposición al monologismo de los libros de caballería y de pastores...[son] textos criticados (deconstruidos) dentro de la misma novela” [“the dialogic structure of *Quijote*, contrary to the monologism of knightly romances and pastoral novels are texts criticized (deconstructed) within the same novel”] [my translation] (1049). Borrowing another term from Bakhtin's philosophy of dialogism, “the language-image,” it is safe to declare that Don Quijote, Sancho, and all of the characters of the novel, exist as “language-images” separate from Cervantes' authorial

agency. According to Spadaccini, “los textos autocríticos de Cervantes confrontan dialécticamente la experiencia vital del lector, rechazando así el tipo de manipulación ideológica ‘promovido’ por aquellos artefactos culturales, como las nuevas comedias, destinados al consumo ‘masivo’” [“Cervantes’ self-critical texts dialectically confront the vital experience of the reader, thus rejecting the type of ideological manipulation ‘promoted’ by those cultural artifacts, like new comedies, directed at the consumer ‘masses’” [my translation] (1051). Thus, the Otherness of each “language-image” converses (in the dialogic sense) with one another in the text; the burlesque mockery (or parody) reveals the Other and the totality of Otherness to the public body, to the world of Carnival.

Although he did not receive the warranted critical attention at the start of his career, Cervantes, as the founder of the modern novel and a literary genius, forever changed the literary sphere, not only in Spain but for all the Western canon. The innovations of Cervantes’ *Quijote*, like those of the modern novel described by Bakhtin, combine the high genres with the low, the ideal with the corporeal, the beautiful with the grotesque, etc. The radical nature of the novel, and especially in *Quijote*, is its method of incorporating various styles into one codex in order to parody and thereby reveal the narrative structures of any and every genre, even the generic conventions of reality, as “all the world’s a stage,” in Shakespeare’s words. Cervantes not only changed the format of the novel, but also the type of people who consume literature; he sought un lector discreto, who can read at his or her own speed, who was not easily duped by Lope de Vega and the tastes of “el vulgo.” Nevertheless, for his discrete readers, Cervantes divulges the generic mechanisms of Lope de Vega’s theatrical plays which push the

official literary circle's socioideological agenda, that is to say, the hegemonic culture of early seventeenth-century Spain. In place of perpetuating the rigid rhetoric characteristic of the Western high genres, Cervantes evokes the folkloric tradition of Carnival. At the nucleus of this tradition, is carnivalesque laughter which is rooted in the grotesque and parody, that of regeneration and revival, not that of aristocratic idleness, the malign private enjoyment of the upper classes. More than anything else, Cervantes sought a discrete reader to laugh with, not at, the world.

CHAPTER 4

A QUIXOTIC PÍCARO: MARK TWAIN'S *THE ADVENTURES OF HUCKLEBERRY FINN*

Like Cervantes, Mark Twain similarly satirizes utopian visions of past societies, in the case of *Huckleberry Finn*, it is the (alleged) land of the free, the antebellum United States that receives his focus. Because Twain's novel parodies the governmental constructs and state doctrines of slave-holding America, it converses in depth with what is the principle founding document for all Western nations, Plato's *The Republic*, which itself tries to erect a utopian society. At one point in the novel, Huck laments, "I wish we could hear of a country that's out of kings" (Twain 125), and in this way intimates a utopian vision of a society in which the public body exists without social hierarchies, much like that of Carnival. *The Republic* is concerned with defining the Just Soul, and goes about doing so by universalizing the theme of Justice in an allegory of the "Ideal State." In his discussion of the hierarchy of forms, the Ancient Greek thinker centers his argument on the distinction between Truth and representation. Reminding ourselves of Shakespeare's lines "All the world's a stage, / And all the men and women merely players," I would argue that Identity, in the sense of platonic forms, is not some attainable fundamental Truth, but rather a performance (representation), that is to say, we perform our identities within the generic conventions of society. In Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Huck and Jim (a former slave) do the same, but in accordance with the genre of Southern antebellum slave societies, and are exceptionally shrewd in their

abilities of subversion by performing their identities in a protean, or shape-shifting, fashion. This capacity for multivalent self-representation is in direct conflict with Plato's notion of forms; as he puts forth in Book X of his *Republic*, "although the petulant part of us is rich in a variety of representable possibilities, the intelligent and calm side of our characters is pretty well constant and unchanging" (74). Here, Plato is proposing that we have an essential self (i.e. an identity) that is entangled with our social class, but time after time, the characters of *Huckleberry Finn* expose this proposition as fallacy, troubling the notion that identity and class are idealistic forms, implying these concepts are mere mental artifice.

In his differentiation between forms and representations, Plato portrays an ideal republic governed by "philosopher-kings." Plato is suspicious of literature's social use, and furthermore, believes it may even pose a threat to social order; hence, he aims to ban poets, and all false representers of reality: painters, musicians, and artists (the liars) from his republic, as he holds philosophers to be the men most near Truth. In fact, Plato asserts that these men of the highest social order, a position they are of course born into, ought to be the "Guardians" who are charged with ruling over his Just State. In Plato's republic, the caste system is static; like the Guardians, the Slaves are predestined to their respective social position, the dregs of society, and despite all, they are unable to realize class ascension. Plato's idealism thus becomes proto-fascist state ideology and provides Twain with an opportunity for comedic subversion in his biting satire of the sordid antebellum American South; in this vein, social stratification, as well as social mobility, is central to *Huckleberry Finn*.

Huckleberry Finn is an intertextual reincarnation of *Don Quijote*. Accordingly, Twain locates many of his own themes in the same quixotic trope of appearance versus reality, or Truth versus fiction that stems from Plato's hierarchy of forms. As Ginés informs us, "Twain was well acquainted with Cervantes' work, particularly with *Don Quixote*" (15). In the composition of his *magnum opus*, Twain structured his story as a conflation of *Quijote* and the picaresque; although Twain's novel troubles the nature of reality like Cervantes', it is a first-person narrative reminiscent of *Lazarillo de Tormes*. Despite the fact that the autobiographical form is often regarded as the most veracious form of representation due to the ostensible fact that the author has complete agency over his own story, Twain reveals this belief to be entirely false. In fact, Huck's narrative is analogous to Lazarillo's in the sense that it, too, details the eponymous protagonist's interpretation of past events after undergoing a critical moral transformation. Moreover, like Lazarillo with his "rootless" origins on el río Tormes that lead him to wander, Huck is also a nomadic orphan whose social mobility (as well as that of Jim) is dependent upon the Mississippi River. Analogous to los pícaros (or in Twainese: "rascallions"), of Spain's Siglo de Oro, Huck Finn is an impoverished outcast who relies on his social astuteness and moral flexibility to survive the unjust world that was the antebellum South. Moreover, he is the personification of the American Frontier spirit, which is chock full of pragmatism and opportunism, as contrasted with the Southern aristocratic traditions characteristic of Tom Sawyer. The dichotomy between the two characters is an intertextual reiteration of the binary of the real and the ideal in *Quijote*. As Ginés confirms, "the dialogue between Tom and Huck is a constant re-creation of the exchanges between Don Quixote and Sancho Panza" (30). It is in this way that Twain explores the

ideal and the real—the material—thereby engaging with the philosophical inquiries on Truth and representation pondered by Plato in *The Republic*.

Huck and Jim alike possess a protean ability to disguise themselves whenever convenient or necessary. Throughout the narrative, Huck, as well as Jim, represents himself in a variety of socially constructed identities. As Elaine Mensh and Harry Mensh contend, “Huck, who forever picks up and moves on, is a master creator of identities” (57). For instance, at one point in Twain’s novel, Huck disguises himself as a girl, and even fakes his own death, via representation, in order to start anew and evade his ill-intentioned father. In doing so, Huck does not seek a new self-identity, but rather he learns to perform a multiplicity of identities in order to hold the strategic high ground in social interactions. However, he is only able to achieve this after killing off his former self, that is, his socially constructed identity as a poor rural white orphan. As Daniel G. Hoffman suggests, Huck and Jim’s “quest depended upon their freedom of movement—of both spatial movement and social mobility. Freedom to die in each identity, freedom to be reborn anew in another” (436). This quote exemplifies a clear parallel to the pícaro’s, especially Lazarillo’s, social predicament in early modern Spain. In Plato’s Just State, one could not simply metamorphose from plebe to Guardian or vice versa; as such, identities were fixed and established from birth. Nevertheless, Huck and Jim represent themselves with an array of different identities, and these self-representations are trickster-like metatheatrical performances, which engender opportunities for social mobility via morally relative acts of deception. However, in his novel, Twain places platonic philosophy at the crux of Western morality, and consequently obfuscates the ostensibly noble foundations of the United States, which in fact are rooted in slavery.

Huckleberry Finn is a story about an orphaned child (typical of the picaresque mode) who retreats from society and survives by means of his perspicacious knowledge of the Mississippi River and its surrounding wilderness. The Widow Douglas, Huck's foster parent, tries her best to "sivilize" the somewhat feral child, but he much prefers the ways of his father: life in the woods away from the silly civil conventions of town life. Western Modernity is a long-time-coming consequence of Platonism. Despite its prominence in our canon, *The Republic* is a rather enigmatic text; often Plato's argument seems to collapse in on itself. Plato's philosophy investigates the tension between appearances and reality; Cervantes takes up this same issue in *Don Quijote*, as does Mark Twain even later in *Huck Finn*. In his argument against representations, the philosopher, ironically, attempts to prove his point (seemingly unsuspectingly) through representations by simply evoking an allegorical state to define Truth and Justice. If this somewhat slapdash allegory of the Just State lies at the foundations of Western civilization, then like a poem, Western society is an artifice, and like all representations, it too is twice removed from Truth. As Plato himself puts forth, "a representer knows nothing of value about the things he represents; representation is a kind of game, and shouldn't be taken seriously" (71). Thus, the question must be asked: Is Plato aware that his philosophical argument is not a divine evocation of Truth, but merely a representation of an Ideal State, one highly riddled with metaphor?

With this question in mind, Twain juxtaposes the ideology of the Confederate States of America with the quixotic idealism of *The Republic*, revealing both as mere artifice, works of fiction if you will, representations, not truths nor forms. This contradiction is most evidently embodied in Tom Sawyer; as Judith Fetterley

demonstrates, “Tom’s obsession with rules becomes the index to his unreality,” (443) as Tom is insistent on “doing things the right way...[he] is constantly revealed as acting out of adherence to a strict code of right and wrong” (446). Yet, Tom’s code, like the chivalric code of Don Quijote, or the US code of Justice, or even that of Plato’s republic, is sourced in language; representation. Don Quijote interpreted reality as if it were a *novela de caballería*, whereas Sawyer imagines his life as taking place in the novels of pirates and robbers. Tom’s idealized hermeneutics of the world, leave Huck somewhat flabbergasted when Tom demands they must free the wrongly imprisoned Jim in the same way that he has seen it accomplished in fictional representations of prison scenes from these novels; for example, among other tasks, Tom requires Jim to write a prison diary and scrawl the number of days he has spent in captivity on the wall, two tasks that are undertaken solely for the sake of aesthetics (*l’art pour l’art*), and which are quite difficult for an illiterate former slave to perform. Huck’s more pragmatic understanding of reality, similar to the practical wisdom of Sancho Panza, leaves him wanting to take a short cut and simply skip Tom’s nonsensical steps, but he nonetheless takes part in his interactive performance. Tom’s willingness to stick to his moral compass, as flawed as it may be, is a rather quixotic endeavor in nature, and it parallels the social values of the slave-holding aristocratic South. Fetterley draws our attention to this analogue, arguing that through a burlesque of “the code...of Southern chivalry and honor... Mark Twain is exposing the hypocrisy of the Southern way of life in which murder is legitimized as justice and in which black men are castrated and lynched in the name of...honor” (450). Twain divulges the fallacies of his own society through satire and parody thereby befogging utopian visions of the Old South much in the same way that Cervantes mocks

utopian Golden Age thought. In Western society, Plato's *Republic* is the impetus for imagining any such utopia; consequently, being disillusioned with their own societies, Cervantes and Twain alike bring this foundational Western philosophy, and thus all of modernity, under direct scrutiny in their respective works.

Huck, in spite of his paradigmatic rugged individualism, is rather passive in his reception of state ideology; this is evident from the onset of the novel, as Huck's beliefs are clearly shaped by his surrounding sociopolitical environment. Although Huck is an orphan, his father, who is known as Pap, is a rather important figure in the novel, and in fact, Pap is the one who most ardently imparts the ideology of the slave-holding South on Huck's impressionable young mind. Pap is a crude and uncultured man, the ugly ramifications of a fundamentally oppressive belief system personified, and regardless of the fact that he is responsible for Huck's cultivation of impressive survival skills, he is pragmatic and opportunistic to a fault, as he is an alcoholic who comes back into Huck's life only to try and rob him. Huck's conception of morality is clearly influenced by Pap's attitude towards the encroaching Union Government, along with the fact that his upbringing took place in a slave society, causing him to be conflicted about helping Jim obtain his freedom. Pap expresses his cynical and narrow-minded, yet not uncommon, vision of the United States to Huck in an abhorrent racist diatribe: "this is a wonderful government... There was a free nigger... They said he could *vote*...what is the country a-coming to?...when they told me there was a state in this country where they'd let [a] nigger vote, I drewed out. I says I'll never vote agin" (26-7). In this scene, not only does Pap disclose his own rigidly prejudiced opinion about the social status of African-Americans, but his views also mirror the communal ideas of the Southern society; Pap's

words “I drew out,” are a sure allusion to the South’s secession from the Union, the catalyst of the impending Civil War, and thus reflect his society’s larger collective consciousness.

Notwithstanding the ideological impositions placed on Huck, which, in part, teach him his sense of rugged individualism so typical of the Frontier spirit, he does hold onto the slightest touch of idealism, which he unearths in his empathy for Jim. Ginés avers, “Huck’s quixoticism lies...at the core of his moral stance. When he refuses to hand Jim over to his persecutors, when he turns a deaf ear, not only to the heavily prejudiced society he lives in, but also to his own biased conscience, he performs a most genuine quixotic act” (32). Hence, although Huck exemplifies the Sancho-like values of the American Frontier, he straddles two ways of life, fracturing his moral code and leading him to re-imagine his own sense of morality, thereby muddying platonic notions about idealism. Early on in the novel, Twain portrays Huck as being quite distressed by his legally unethical acts in which he helps Jim liberate himself from bondage; as Huck writes, “[Jim] *was* most free—and who was to blame for it? Why, *me*. I couldn’t get that out of my conscience” [original emphasis] (73). In this instance, we see Huck wrestle with his own moral code; he is still plagued with the rigid thought of the antebellum South, as he has yet to experience true empathy for Jim. Instead, Huck’s conscience festers because he feels as if he has stolen, or at least aided in the theft of, Miss Watson’s property; thus, Huck’s sympathies lie in achieving social justice for Miss Watson, as defined by law (an artifice), rather than in the humanity of his enslaved acquaintance, Jim. Nevertheless, we witness a major transformation in Huck’s mentality when, after spending a great deal of time together, he begins to view Jim as a fellow human being

rather than mere property. Accordingly, Huck rebels against the Christian and legal ideology with which he has been indoctrinated, and exclaims to himself, “All right, then, I’ll go to hell” (Twain 169), voicing his decision to help Jim evade the bonds of slavery, though it may be an unlawful, and even immoral, act according to the code of his own society.

Despite its inability to grasp any real claims at truth, the artifice of Western civilization, and the Great American Experiment in particular, has had direly unjust repercussions for countless individuals, especially the enslaved. Along with the imposition of state ideology on the public body, came the imposition of identity on individual bodies. In *Huckleberry Finn*, Jim is an African American slave, a social status that he was of course born into, that is to say, his identity was constructed and forced upon him by Southern society. In accordance with the platonic thought of Southern collective consciousness, Jim’s identity is that of Slave (i.e. the form), however, Twain reveals Jim’s identity simply to be an artifice or social construct (i.e. a representation) imposed on him from birth by the oppressive nation state that was the Confederacy. In this context, the words of the Declaration of Independence, too, are revealed to be artifice; the lines “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness” certainly meant little, if anything, to an enslaved African-American like Jim in the antebellum South. Here the gap between appearances and reality becomes quite obvious. Social classes, which are enmeshed with one’s identity, are idealistic forms, and much in the same way that there exists a hierarchy of forms, there too exists a hierarchy of class in the United States, likely

nowhere else more so than in the slave-holding South. Nonetheless, those who are keenly attuned to the genre of their particular society, like Huck and Jim, have the ability to manipulate social scenes and other actors in the metatheatrical performance that is life.

During their river odyssey, Huck and Jim encounter the Duke and the King, who resemble los duques, not to mention the Barber and the Priest, of *Don Quijote*. Both characters are master manipulators, metatheatrical representers (trickster of sorts), but nonetheless with ill intentions. Analogous to Sancho's capacity to see through the deceptive artifice erected by the Priest and the Barber as mentioned in the previous section, Huck is not the slightest bit fooled by the spectacle that the Duke and the King perform. Huck, in his roguish ways, plays the fool and in doing so puts on the carnivalesque mask of the clown. In other words, like Jim, Huck, too, is a smart man playing dumb and he takes on this role in an act of pragmatism typical of the picaresque trickster. As he recounts, "it didn't take me long to make up my mind that these liars warn't no kings nor dukes... If they wanted us to call them kings and dukes, I hadn't no objections, 'long as I could keep peace in the family" (Twain 102). Huck continues in this vein, stating, "if I never learnt nothing else out of pap, I learnt that the best way to get along with his kind of people is to let them have their own way" (Twain 102). Huck, astutely conscious of social intricacies, pragmatically permits the lies of the Duke and the King in order to avoid confrontation; nonetheless, Huck remains a step ahead of these theatrical tricksters. Regarding the Duke and the King, Huck narrates, "they asked us considerable many questions... was Jim a runaway nigger? Says I—'Goodness sakes, would a runaway nigger run *south*?' [original emphasis] (Twain 102). In this instance, Huck reasons with the Duke and King relying on the common sense philosophy, much

like Sancho Panza, typical of his contemporaneous time and place. Furthermore, Martin asserts that in this scene, Huck exhibits that “he has learned the art of signifying;” she continues, “because a runaway [i.e. Jim] is indeed running south, the tone of incredulity,” compels the Duke and the King to believe his deception. Moreover, Martin claims that in his time on the Mississippi, Huck displays a “shift from utilizing physical signs to a more sophisticated manipulation of appearances and linguistic devices...tools Huck learns from Jim [i.e. Gates’ theory Signifyin(g)]” (141). Beyond Huck’s speech, Martin also notes the intertextuality of *Huckleberry Finn*, claiming that Twain’s novel Signifies on the African-American literary tradition of the slave narrative, a genre which in many ways parallels the autobiographical-trickster mode of the picaresque.

The Duke is a trickster as well, but unlike Huck and Jim, he is entirely selfish. He acts in opportunistic and pragmatic fashion by relying on his experience as a job printer to devise a plan for the crew of outcasts to travel up and down the Mississippi without having issues with local authorities. Upon realizing that they must find a way to disguise Jim, the Duke forges an apocryphal document mimicking a fugitive slave handbill in order accomplish this task. Jim is (mis)represented as a captured fugitive slave; the Duke explains the premise of this metatheatrical performance accordingly, “[w]henver we see anybody coming, we can tie Jim hand and foot with a rope, and lay him in the wigwam and show this handbill and say we captured him up the river” (Twain 109). On this performance, Fetterley notes that “[Huck’s] posture as Jim’s owner is, ironically, a disguise he adopts to keep Jim free” (449). In this regard, Jim is in some sense reduced to a sign and signifies an array of desired meanings appropriate, in Aristotelian terms, to the generic conventions demanded by a particular social situation. Ellison proposes that Jim’s

racial identity as a performer is not nearly as significant as the white characters' use of blackface mask, whose "function was to veil the humanity of Negroes thus reduced to a sign" (49). Here, in a moment of foreshadow, the Duke effectively conceals his plans to stuff his pockets by tricking Huck and Jim. Huck plays along at first, much like Sancho when Don Quijote is imprisoned, however, he later becomes the fool at the hands of the Duke. Jim's humanity is reduced to a sign in order to exploit state-imposed rigid social constructions of identity, ensuring Jim's freedom until it is economically convenient for him to do otherwise. The troupe of representers trick others, as well as one another, as they unwittingly slip in and out of the extended metatheatrical performance. The Duke is a scorched-earth capitalist (like Flem Snopes) who takes advantage of others via picaresque means, however, unlike Lazarillo (as well as Huck and Jim) he does not do so for the benefit of the community, but only for his own selfish gains when he and the King sell Jim back into bondage.

The Duke is able deceitfully sell Jim, yet again, by taking advantage of his technical knowledge of job printing. Huck returns to the raft, after the Duke misleadingly led him to a nearby village, to find Jim missing. He becomes distraught and decides to look for Jim along the roads, where he eventually runs into a boy. After Huck inquires about "a strange nigger dressed, so and so," the boy admits he had seen one, and retorts, "he's a runaway nigger, and they've got him. Was you looking for him?" (Twain 167). Cautiously, Huck tells a white lie, "you bet I ain't! I run across him in the woods...and he said if I hollered he'd cut my livers out—and told me to lay down and stay where I was... Been there ever since; afeard to come out" (Twain 167). In this scene, Huck parodies stereotypical representations of antebellum African-Americans, acting as the smart man

playing dumb (in this case as a bigot) in order to veil his true intentions of freeing Jim. Regarding this scene, Mensh and Mensh contend, “Huck has demonstrated yet another way of masking identity: instead of offering a false vita, he presents a defining worldview, one proclaiming that he, a stranger, is trustworthy because his beliefs are [similar to the boy’s]” (85). Still conflicted about the norms of Southern slave society, Huck at first begins to feel remorse for “stealing a poor old woman’s nigger” (Twain 168); however, he suddenly suffers a crisis of conscience and is reminded of Jim’s humanity. As he recalls, “I couldn’t seem to strike no places to harden me against him, but only the other kind... I was the best friend old Jim had ever had in the world, and the *only* one he’s got now” [original emphasis] (Twain 169). Whereas Huck deceives for Good, the Duke does quite the opposite. Huck posits to the boy that perhaps there has been a mistake, but he reassures Huck that Jim’s capture is indeed “straight as a string, I see the handbill myself” (Twain 167). While the Duke caused Huck and Jim to believe the handbill would be a means of keeping Jim free, Huck now discovers the deceptive artifice of the Duke and King’s clandestine performance. Accordingly, the Duke and the King are tricksters reminiscent of los duques of *Quijote*, who merely deceive for private aims. Conversely, Huck and Jim are quixotic pícaros who lie for the good of the community, and thus parallel the archetypal characters of Lazarillo, Sancho Panza, and Don Quijote (sometimes as a conflation of all three figures in one).

Huck’s conscience, his internal voice, dialogues with the heteroglot polyphony of socioideological rhetoric circulating in antebellum America in the course of Twain’s novel. Although Huck does share pragmatic, opportunistic, and trickster traits akin to his pap, the Duke, and the King he ultimately repudiates their version of morality and

empathetically aligns himself with Jim's worldview, one in which it is acceptable to tell white lies for the communal Good. Ellison has trouble envisioning Jim as a trickster; as he elaborates, "writing at a time when blackfaced minstrel was still popular... Twain fitted Jim into the outlines of the minstrel tradition, and it is from behind this stereotype mask that we see Jim's dignity and human capacity... emerge" (50). *Huck Finn*, despite its status as an American classic, has not evaded controversy due to charges of minstrel characterization. In Ellison's view, Jim's identity is portrayed in blackface, and thus he is not fully fleshed out, that is, humanized, but merely functions as a type of foil (a sign) whose sole purpose is to ratify Huck's righteousness.

On the other hand, Martin, writing over fifty years later, believes Jim to be "representative of the trickster figure featured in black folklore" (130). In describing Jim, Martin notes, "the trickster's most important agenda is survival, which is Jim's driving force throughout the novel, yet...[his] survival is not exclusively self-serving but motivated by his goal to...safeguard his family" (130). In this light, Jim parallels Lazarillo; furthermore, he fits the model of the quixotic pícaro, that is, a selfless trickster focused not only on his own survival but that of his community as well. Accordingly Martin sees a strong resemblance between the figure of "wily" Brer Rabbit and Jim's character; thereby, she believes Twain to be working in the oral trickster tradition of black folklore as opposed to minstrelsy (130). Nevertheless, Huck and Jim both disguise—mask—themselves as females at different points in Twain's novel; however, this mask is not that of blackface, but rather a fusion of the masks associated with both the folkloric trickster of African-American culture and the carnivalesque clown. Correlatively, transvestitism is a prominent literary phenomenon of Cervantes' novel, and

in addition, the same phenomenon can also be observed as common practice in many cultures of the African Diaspora (Luiz Mott 80). Thus one notices an intriguing intertextual confluence of both African-American folklore as well as that of the carnivalesque *Quijote*.

After a few days on the lam drifting along the River, Huck becomes restless and decides to go into a nearby town in order to find out whether or not word of his disappearance has gotten around. However, Jim is concerned that Huck might be recognized by the townsfolk and thus suggests that he dress as a young girl in order to camouflage himself. As Huck narrates, “[Jim] studied it over and said, couldn’t I put on some them old things and dress up like a girl? That was a good notion, too. So we shortened one of the calico gowns and I turned my trowser-legs to my knees and got into it” (Twain 47). In this episode, Jim displays incredible intelligence and insight in helping Huck mask himself. Throughout his time spent with Jim, Huck learns the ways of the trickster (in this case Brer Rabbit) and thus becomes remarkably perspicacious in his ability to navigate a plethora of social situations. Near the end of the novel, Huck, again, practices transvestitism, however, this time he and Jim both represent their identities chameleonically. In this later instance, it is not Jim who masterminds the artifice, but rather the bookish Tom Sawyer. Tom, having read *Don Quijote* himself, likely acquires the trick of disguising his comrades as females from his contact with deceptive metatheatrical representations in Cervantes’ novel. Tom describes his plan accordingly, “I’ll stuff Jim’s clothes full of straw and lay it on his bed to represent his mother in disguise, and Jim’ll take Aunt Sally’s gown off of me and wear it, and we’ll evade together” (Twain 211). Whereas Jim has learned to treat his identity in a protean fashion

from the African-American folkloric tradition of the trickster, Tom's knowledge of the same trick stems from his extensive readings. Concomitantly, the rhizomatic intertextuality intrinsic to *Huckleberry Finn* spans an array of literary and oral traditions, as the dialogism of Twain's novel extensively explores Otherness.

Through their performances of metatheatrical *mimesis*, Huck and Jim engage in a type of trickery that resembles the ways of el pícaro; in Cervantine terms, the two characters take on the role of "encantadores" and perform a type of "enchantment" on those they encounter along the Mississippi River. Plato sought to ban poets from his Just State because he feared their deceiving words would affect, or enchant, people with such great emotion that their behavior would be reduced to irrationality. As he states, "[the poet] destroys the rational part [of the mind] by feeding up this other part [i.e. the affect], and this is equivalent to someone destroying the more civilized members of a community by presenting ruffians with political power" (76). This is exactly what we witness in some of Twain's characters, such as Tom, the Duke, and to some extent, even Huck, whom all at one point in the novel, play the role of master over Jim's role of slave. In consideration of this, surely Plato would also have sought to prohibit actors, who in his eyes (mis)represent Truth in artifice, from his Just State. Accordingly, *Huckleberry Finn* would have no place in Plato's republic, as Huck and Jim perform these quixotic "encantos" to usurp the generic conventions of their society and trick others into unwittingly playing a role in their interactive performance. Of course, Plato would view this type of socially disruptive (because it portrays the possibility of social mobility) literature as intrinsically dangerous to his Just State. Huck and Jim do not persuade the other characters they come across to join their adventures via Aristotelian rhetoric, but

rather through a bewitching with representation, that is to say, deception, at its core. The fact remains, for marginalized members of society, picaresque and trickster means are the only means of surviving the disparities of Modernity.

Tricksteresque (please forgive the neologism) acts of (mis)representation, like those performed by Huck and Jim, exemplify the causes of Plato's fear and suspicion of literature, leading to his rationale for proposing the censorship of poetry, or *poiësis*, that is to say, "invention," in his Just State. Plato alludes to these concerns in Book X, stating, "[o]ur mind obviously contains the potential for every single kind of confusion... It's because illusory painting [and all other forms of representation] aim at this affliction in our natures that it can only be described as sorcery; and the same goes for conjuring and all trickery" (71-2). Plato prompts his audience to ponder if there are "occasions and situations when telling lies is helpful," and he ultimately suggests that because "it is not in the nature of deities or gods to deceive" then it also ought not be in the nature of man (51). Plato continues this argument, confirming his belief that Truth and gods are of a singular form, as he states, "the gods are not shape-shifting wizards and do not mislead us by lying in what they say or do" (52). Correspondingly, it ought to be quite obvious as to why Huck and Jim's abilities of protean (or chameleonic) self-representation in social performance are such a threat to Plato's Just State, as they disrupt the ideal form that is social hierarchy.

Although Plato advocates against representation and lies in general, he does offer a qualification with his proclamations, proposing that the republic's "rulers...can lie for the good of the community, when...necessary. No one else, however, should have anything to do with lying" (55). In Plato's philosophy, the Just State has the right to lie

for the benefit of the people; considering that the United States is a nation built on slave labor and oppression, the ever-vital question thus becomes: for whom are these lies beneficial? Surely not the oppressed. On the other hand, the white lies of Huck and Jim, both who are embodiments of the Everyman, ultimately do indeed bring about communal Good, a possibility that Plato would find utterly unfathomable. Reminding ourselves of Huck and Jim's social status, the fact that the two are able to achieve such Goodness through what Plato would deem morally relative means of trickery dismantles the Greek philosopher's monolithic (hegemonic) claims on Truth, and thus puts into question our ideals of Justice as they are conceptualized presently. After reading Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn*, we are left to entirely reconsider our own morality in conjunction with the disconcerting philosophical and historical foundations of the United States, and furthermore, all Western civilization—Modernity. We are left to question what we know and accept as Truth—the differences between appearances and reality.

CHAPTER 5

A PICARESQUE QUIJOTE: WILLIAM FAULKNER'S *THE REIVERS* AND YOKNAPATAWPHA

It ought to go without saying that *Don Quijote* permeates nearly all of Western literature, and especially so in the United States; Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is the most clear instantiation of this intertextual phenomenon. Nevertheless, Cervantes' impact surfaces in much of Faulkner's work as well; in fact, the Mississippian shares more with Spain's Siglo de Oro than most likely realize, especially when considering that he composed his final novel, *The Reivers*, as a picaresque. However, to simply deem *The Reivers* a picaresque is to mischaracterize the novel, as it also hinges on the paradigmatic quixotic motif of the ideal versus the material. Accordingly, *The Reivers*, like *Huckleberry Finn*, is an American reincarnation of *Don Quijote* and the picaresque mode, a Quixotic Picaresque. While pícaros tend to possess an adaptable morality and are often forced to put their own self-interests over that of others due to their precarious social situation, what makes the pícaros of *Huckleberry Finn* and *The Reivers* exceptional is their quixotic (i.e. exceedingly idealistic) nature, which leads them to consider, and act in, the interests of their respective communities. Faulkner, in *The Reivers*, displays particular empathy for the Other and demonstrates how the methods of the quixotic pícaro, the performative masking trickster, are the most apt for enduring the oppressive forces of modernity in pre-Civil Rights American society.

The Yoknapatawpha corpus has been examined extensively; nevertheless, “The Golden Book of Jefferson and Yoknapatawpha County in Mississippi” has not drawn nearly as much critical attention due to its comparatively light-hearted nature, as most delve into Faulkner looking for the macabre, the tragic, and the grotesque, and while the grotesque is certainly a major facet of *The Reivers*, it strays from the remarkably ominous tone of the rest of Faulkner’s work. In some sense, *The Reivers*, like *Tom Sawyer*, presents itself as nostalgic children’s literature, however, that is not to suggest that Faulkner’s finale is lacking in philosophical depth. Rather, *The Reivers* harkens back to Yoknapatawpha’s Golden Age much in the same way that *Quijote* dwells on the Classical Age, critiquing utopian visions of the past through carnivalesque laughter. At the heart of Cervantes’ *Quijote* is the elusive distinction between fact and fiction, reality and fantasy. Cervantes underscores these motifs through the metafictional aspects of his novel. His insistence of fictional layers of authorship brings the credibility of the entire story into question thereby perpetuating the real versus the ideal, fact versus fiction. While Ginés briefly calls her reader’s attention to the links between *Quijote* and Faulkner’s final novel, she, like many other critics, finds *The Reivers* to be simply “benevolent,” stating, “[it stays] faithful to the plot of the chivalric romance” (87). Nevertheless, this exclamation is fallacious, as *The Reivers* simultaneously draws on both the Cervantine tradition and the picaresque mode as exemplified by *Lazarillo*. In fact, Faulkner’s final novel is a Quixotic Picaresque. As such, his dialogical first-person narrative similarly scrutinizes the veracity of authorship and discrepancies inherent to artistic representation while simultaneously parodying the heroism of the Old South and acquiescing to the roguishness of modernity.

Due to their origins in a feudalistic sociopolitical environment, *Lazarillo* and *Don Quijote* alike are concerned with social mobility. *Lazarillo* experiences a wealth of hardships at the hands of a series of masters, but ultimately, becomes a self-sustaining businessman, albeit at the expense of becoming a cuckold; and while *Quijote* longs to climb the social ladder from “un hidalgo” to a “don,” his counterpart, Sancho Panza, holds his own aspirations of becoming an insular governor. Both of these preeminent works are episodic and much of their action takes place on the roads. As is the case with *Quijote* and many sixteenth and early modern Spanish picaresque narratives, Faulkner’s Quixotic Picaresque, and really the entire Yoknapatawpha repertoire, investigates the divide between urban and rural spaces; accordingly, the road, and thus the automobile, is of the utmost significance in *The Reivers*. This trio of “reivers” (an archaic word for raiders) that steal Boss’ (Lucius’ grandfather’s) Winton Flyer and head from the relatively rural Jefferson, though the town often functions as the metropole of the County, to the cosmopolitan Memphis. This dichotomy between the urban and the rural, or the industrial and the agrarian, is played out time and time again in *The Reivers* and the rest of Faulkner’s work. Ginés supports this assertion, claiming, “Faulkner’s fictional world portrays...a clash between the values of society rooted in tradition and those brought about by industrial capitalism” (73). In his first Yoknapatawpha novel, *Flags in the Dust*, the paradigmatic symbol of industrialization takes the form of the airplane which causes Bayard Sartoris’ death. In *Go Down Moses*, the railroad destroys “Big Bottom” (the surrounding wilderness) and thereby functions as the symbol of modern industry, which is perceived as an eminent threat to the traditional ways of the Old South. In Faulkner’s final work, perhaps the most obvious iteration of this motif is manifested in the Winton

Flyer. Bayard's plane, the railroad, and Boss' automobile are all manifestations of the possibility for social mobility brought about by the modern world, a possibility that is frankly nonexistent in the Old South of Lucius Quintus Carothers McCaslin (the patriarch of the McCaslin-Priest lineage).

Although she largely disregards the novel in question, Ginés offers a compelling study of Cervantes' confluence with Southern literature and pays special attention to Faulkner. However, by focusing principally on Faulkner's white upper-class characters, Ginés does not adequately explore Sancho's connections to the lower classes of Yoknapatawpha. The Snopeses, Jason Compson, Otis, and the "mud-farmer" among others all embody Sancho's opportunism, pragmatism, and materialism, rather than the idealism of Don Quixote. The Snopeses are the paradigmatic extreme of Sancho's common sense philosophy, a philosophy that puts one's self-interest over the Good of the community; but this pragmatism even fails Sancho, who as an insular governor becomes intoxicated with power until he is cruelly mocked (i.e. not in the carnivalesque spirit) by los duques. As we will see, in *The Reivers*, Otis and the "mud-farmer" are symbolic of Sancho's philosophy; Otis looks to exploit his aunt Everbe by charging men for a glimpse of her naked body through a peephole, while the mud-farmer cultivates a bog just for poor souls to get stuck in, so that he can pull them out with a team of mules, but all at a steep cost of course. These are the forces of modernity, the rampant scorched-earth form of capitalism, that Faulkner is most vehement in railing against in his ironic and grotesque treatment of Snopesian rogues. Nevertheless, he looks more favorably upon quixotic pícaros like Lucius Priest, Boon Hogganbeck, and Ned McCaslin.

Pícaros are outsiders, social outcasts; this is overtly apparent in the characters of Lazarillo and Huck Finn alike. While Lucius is not himself an outsider—to quite the contrary he is a (white) member of a reputable Jefferson family—the formative life events he relates in his tale are learned via his experiences with two socially marginalized characters, Boon and Ned. Boon possesses many features typical of the pícaro; like Lazarillo and Huck Finn, his origins are opaque, as he was practically an orphan. Furthermore, Boon is described as childlike, mischievous, and impulsive, yet also heroic, as he exhibits a sense of rugged individualism—the frontier spirit characteristic of Huck Finn. Ned’s status as an outsider is more complex; he is an African-American man, and although he bears the name McCaslin, he works as a servant for the Priests, and yet he is still considered “kin.” In many ways, the porosity of Ned’s identity is reminiscent of that of Lucas Beauchamp in *Go Down, Moses*, as the parallel characters navigate the color line with remarkable dexterity. At different times in the novel, through a protean ability to act in accordance with the conventions of Jefferson society, Ned is able to embody the social role of both blacks and whites. In addition to their picaresque qualities, Lucius, Boon, and Ned also hold onto some sense of idealism, making them quixotic in characterization as well. In short, they are quixotic pícaros.

Faulkner’s picaresque is subtitled “A Reminiscence,” as the first line of the novel reads “Grandfather said:” (3), and the entire narrative that follows recounts Lucius’ own tale of the pivotal point in his childhood. Lucius, now an old man and intensely aware of the rifts between past, present, and future, looks back on the olden days and relates his transition from boyhood to manhood to his own grandson circa 1960. In this vein, elderly Lucius, recalls his childhood as a sort of Golden Age of chivalric grandeur, much in the

same way that Don Quijote hearkens back to the time of “los caballeros andantes” and pastoral shepherds. Yet, old man Lucius does not uphold the Old South as an utopia like Hesiod’s Age of Gold, rather he is keenly conscious that while the past may have been ideal for the white aristocratic classes, for enslaved African-Americans and oppressed First Peoples it certainly was anything but. Near the end of his life, Lucius recognizes the vast social changes that have taken place since he was eleven years old; accordingly, in his oral history, he intermittently interjects some jarring anachronisms demonstrating his awareness of the differences between his own times and the contemporaneous moment. In other words, *The Reivers* is a polyphonic novel, and Lucius’ first-person picaresque narrative is dialogic, that is to say, double-voiced, like that of *Lazarillo*.

The reader encounters the perspective of Lucius as a child as well as in old age and thus is witness to his moral transformation. Although Boss has instilled in Lucius the ideals of the Old South, he nonetheless learns the art of the trickster—the quixotic pícaro—from Boon and Ned while acquiring life lessons from other characters as well. Lucius offers his grandson an anecdotal piece of advice early in the narrative, and later on the reader unearths the origins of this hand-me-down imperative. Recalling the past, elderly Lucius recognizes the generational differences between he and his grandson. As he instructs,

you were born too late to be acquainted with mules and so comprehend the[ir] startling [stubbornness]... I rate mules second only to rats in intelligence, the mule followed in order by cats, dogs, and horses last—assuming of course that you accept my definition of intelligence: which is the ability to cope with environment... The rat of course I rate first. He

lives in your house...eats what you eat...you cannot get rid of him; were he not a cannibal, he would long since have inherited the earth...The mule I rate second. But only second because you can make him work for you. But that too only within his own rigid self-set regulations...Free of the obligations of ancestry and the responsibilities of posterity, he has conquered not only life but death too and hence is immortal...still free, still coping. (*The Reivers* 121)

Such interjections exemplify the dialogic nature of Lucius' autobiographical narrative, that which is typical of the picaresque mode. Lucius' definition of intelligence stems from his sense of rugged individualism. He despises rats (the Snopeses) who exploit others for selfish gains, whereas conversely, he admires the mule's rootlessness and its ability to endure. In old age, Lucius' philosophy is polyphonic; it is an amalgamation of voices, a philosophy shaped by Otherness. As the reader learns in due course, the source of Lucius' folk wisdom is a tale he heard as a child from Uncle Parsham, an African-American man who watches over him for an evening while Boon and Ned are detained by the villainous Butch, "the law." As Uncle Parsham inculcates in young Lucius,

A mule aint like a horse. When a horse gets a wrong notion in his head, all you got to do is swap him another one for it... A mule is different. He can hold two notions at the same time and the way to change one of them is to act like you believe he thought of changing it first. He'll know different, because mules have got sense. But a mule is a gentleman too, and when you act courteous and respectful at him...he'll act courteous and respectful back at you. (*The Reivers* 245)

Uncle Parsham's common sense wisdom draws on the popular culture of turn of the twentieth-century rural Mississippi analogously to the way in which Sancho's folk philosophy draws on that of early modern Spain. In these parallel perspectives, pragmatism, opportunism, and communal compromise are key elements. As can be realized from the dialogue between grandpa Lucius and Uncle Parsham's words, though the rat may be the most intelligent, it is pragmatic to a fault, utterly shrewd and merciless; contrarily, the mule, as opposed to the foolish horse, is still highly intelligent but also willing to compromise. The mule goes along with the generic conventions of his social role, that is to say, the mule is a smart man playing dumb. While the mule lets the master think he is in control, in all reality, the mule is always one step ahead. The mule exhibits a quixotic pragmatism akin to the picaresque ways of Lazarillo, a moral relativism that considers the Other.

Instilled with this dialogic philosophy, Lucius is not entirely a pícaro, nor is he an idealist knight; he evades the trap in which many other quixotic characters of Yoknapatawpha, such as Ike McCaslin, Quentin Compson, Gavin Stevens, and others, become ensnared. In *Go Down, Moses* for instance, Ike seeks to shirk social responsibility and retreat to a life lived in the wilderness, a wish which is rather redolent of *Huckleberry Finn*, nevertheless, as is evident in "Delta Autumn," Ike's repudiation is not so successful, as society, and particularly that of the (emblematically modern) North, encroaches on his utopia, his idealized vision of the natural world, when a drastic consequence of the past arrives in the present. This consequence is embodied in the mixed-race granddaughter of Tennie's Jim, with whom Roth Edmonds has sexual relations. The reader sees Ike in a different light when she accusingly questions his

morality, “Old man...have you lived so long and forgotten so much that you dont remember anything you ever knew or felt or even heard about love?”” (*Go Down* 346). Despite his attempted relinquishment and self-ostracism, Uncle Ike still becomes infected with the racist socioideology of the Old South. Furthermore, Gavin Stevens analogously fails in his chivalric feats. As the white Jefferson Lawyer who, in the titular chapter of *Go Down, Moses*, collaborates with both the black and white sides of Jefferson society in order to help Mollie Beauchamp bring her dead grandson’s body home from Chicago. Although he has decent intentions, he shows an inability to truly empathize. In spite of Gavin’s knightly attempts to help Mollie, at story’s end, he runs out of her house as a dialogue between the old black woman and her family takes on a resonance beyond Gavin’s understanding when the Negro Spiritual, “Go Down, Moses,” is recreated audibly in his mind, and its pathic expression of suffering causes him to panic from unfamiliarity. Here, Gavin succumbs to an overwhelming sense of discomfort and flees the scene without understanding the Other any more so than he had when he taken on his communal task. Although Stevens nobly intends to help Mollie bring home the body of her grandson Butch, his efforts are futile at best. Stevens’ story resonates with the rest of the novel, as its quintessence is concerned with the relinquishment of individual and social responsibility. Thadious M. Davis brings up this central theme to *Go Down, Moses*, stating, “the individuals of the community cannot strip themselves of their collective guilt or interdependency, but they can act according to the old verities of the human heart” (243). Contrarily, in *The Reivers*, Lucius, Boon, and Ned collapse the dichotomy between idealism and pragmatism in their personifications of the quixotic

pícaro, as they unselfishly deceive for the Good of the community (their extended family).

A major aspect of the carnivalesque is the disintegration of all class distinction—the regeneration of the public body. While Faulkner’s carnivalesque rendering of Yoknapatawpha is not as overt as the upside down depiction of Spain in the *Quijote* of Cervantes, *The Reivers*, nonetheless, does mock (“burlar”) the Golden Age of Jefferson’s aristocratic society. The purpose of the carnivalesque, as initiated in the works of Rabelais and continued in Cervantes is to bring the private realm of officialdom (the hegemonic class) back into the public body, where it can be subjected to the folkloric burlesque of the peasantry. In the carnivalesque, the public body is not merely a metaphor, as corporality is vital to the renewal that comes about through parody; for this reason, the grotesque treatment of bodies is integral to both Rabelais and Cervantes. For Bakhtin, the vulgar parodic language of medieval market culture brings about the regeneration of the public body by way of a grotesque degradation, and this occurs through the treatment of the bodily lower stratum: genitalia, reproductive organs, and gastrointestinal parts. Perhaps some of the most obvious instances of this component of the grotesque are apparent in scenes involving feces and the act of defecation. In *Don Quijote*, we examined the notorious episode in which Sancho becomes so frightened that he messes his pants, producing a smell that leaves Quijote disgusted, yet also removes him from his idealized world and returns him back down to earth. In *The Reivers*, laughter is also prominent, as Ned’s recurring “Hee hee hee,” is in the same vein as Sancho’s “carnavalesque spirit.”

Whereas Rabelais and Cervantes are rather blatant in their regenerative descriptions of the bodily lower stratum, Faulkner holds onto his sense of Southern gentility, nonetheless, he too invokes the grotesque buttocks in a scene in which Ned expels flatus. As Lucius and Boon are driving along, “suddenly Boon [says], What’s that smell? Was it you? But before [Lucius] could deny it,” Boon pulls over and checks the rear of the automobile, where he surprisingly finds Ned (*The Reivers* 69). Here, Ned’s flatulence evokes the crucial carnivalesque laughter and sets the reivers out on their regenerative adventure to Memphis. While many may be tempted to view this scene as childish humor like that of Twain in *Tom Sawyer*, this would be a misconception; instead of drawing a few cheap laughs, this comedy serves a much more specific purpose, as Faulkner is channeling the grotesque elements of the carnivalesque, and in his novel, the reivers do quite literally return to earth. Although they possess a cutting-edge piece of modern machinery with the automobile, the Flyer’s industrial power is no match for mother Earth, as Lucius, Boon, and Ned get mired in a bog along their way. This bog is man-made by one of the rats of Faulkner’s universe, the mud-farmer who charges a steep fine to tow folks out of the muck. However, typical of Boon’s American frontier spirit, his pragmatism, he suggests they try to get the vehicle unstuck first. In this episode, Lucius, Boon, and Ned are initiated into the rite of Carnival via their experience with the materiality of Earth and the corporeality of all life; as Faulkner writes,

the peaceful quiet, remote, sylvan, almost primeval setting of ooze and slime and jungle growth and heat in which the very mules themselves, peacefully swishing and stamping at the teeming infinitesimal invisible myriad life...were not only unalien but in fact curiously appropriate...the

automobile: the expensive useless mechanical toy rated in power and strength by the dozens of horses, yet held helpless and impotent in the almost infantile clutch of a few inches of the temporary confederation of...earth and water...and the three of us, three forked identical and now unrecognizable mud-colored creatures (*The Reivers* 87)

In this passage, one can clearly observe the destratification of class and regeneration of the public body when Lucius, Boon, Ned, and even the mules, are reintegrated into the material realm, the Earth, as the trio becomes uniform—one. Moreover, the forces of modernity (the mechanical artifice of industry manifested in Boss' Winton Flyer) become defunct and nature prevails. Nevertheless, the rat-like mud-farmer (who is comparable to the King and the Duke of *Huck Finn*, not to mention the duques of *Quijote*) remains up on his porch in the private realm, untouched by earthly renewal, waiting to take advantage of others. He is Snopesian, entirely self-serving, the rogue at its extreme.

Despite that Faulkner's sense of humor is certainly on display in the majority of his works, albeit often subtly, *The Reivers* differs from that of the rest of the Yoknapatawpha corpus. Bakhtin observes a split between two types of grotesque fictions, and while many of the Yoknapatawpha novels engage in the humor of what Bakhtin calls "the romantic grotesque," that of *The Reivers* more closely adheres to the laughter typical of the carnivalesque spirit. Ryuichi Yamaguchi supports these claims, as he states, one can "locate Faulkner's humor in the vein of the Old Southwest humor and, more generally the carnivalesque" (11). In the words of Brannon Costello, unscrupulous critics have generally perceived Faulkner's picaresque as "a nostalgic victory lap" through Yoknapatawpha, glorifying the idealism of the Old South's aristocratic class (92).

Nevertheless, such critics have miscomprehended his humor, as he calls his readers' attention to the material, the corporeal, typical of carnivalesque folklore; but moreover, as Hans Bungert proposes, "Faulkner's folk humor abounds with situations of the trickster tricked, episodes of trade and swapping, and tall tales" (143), all of which are also key elements in the American humor proliferated by Twain. On their Memphis adventure, Lucius goes through the rites of manhood as guided by the somewhat misguided Boon. In Memphis, Boon and Lucius spend the evening in a brothel and it is there that Lucius learns about the birds and the bees, so to speak, but also engages in a whorehouse brawl, a scene that clearly stems straight from the folkloric humor of the Old South(west) but also exemplifies heroic ideals.

During the reivers' night in Memphis, Lucius sleeps in the same room as Otis, the nephew of Boon's love interest, the prostitute Miss Corrie. Lucius and Otis are polar opposites; whereas Lucius is chivalric and idealistic (quixotic), Otis is an extremely pragmatic and opportunistic rogue, in other words, a rat. He laments, "it aint fair that it's just women can make money pugnuckling while all a man can do is just try to snatch onto a little of it while it's passing by" (*The Reivers* 154). Pugnuckling is vernacular for prostitution. Selling one's own body is an act of pragmatic rugged individualism undertaken in order to survive the hardships of modernity. Nevertheless, inspired by Lucius' innocence, Miss Corrie eventually reforms herself and reverts to her past identity as Everbe Corinthia of Kiblett, Arkansas. To the contrary, Otis is unrelenting; he even seeks to take advantage of his own relative in the name of self-interests, his prospects of "get[ting] a auger and bor[ing] a peephole through [the floor]" and charging voyeurs to glimpse the spectacle of his aunt's naked body. Keeping in mind los duques of *Quijote*,

Otis, too, conceals himself in the private realm, his upstairs quarters, and makes a spectacle of unsuspecting others. Lucius is intensely irked by Otis' exploitative behavior, his repudiation of chivalric (gentlemanly) ideals, and thus, decides to act in the name of honor on behalf of Everbe. Furthermore, due to his idealized conception of ladies, much like Don Quijote's romanticized vision of Dulcinea, Lucius struggles to come to terms with Everbe's profession. In this instance, the ideals of the Old South, embodied by Boss, Uncle Ike, and others, have been vehemently indoctrinated in young Lucius. In result, he fights like a knight for Everbe; as he remembers, "I was hitting, clawing, kicking...at Otis and the procuress both: the demon child who debased her privacy and the witch who debauched her innocence...[and] all who had participated in her debasement" (*The Reivers* 157). Although Lucius is merely quarrelling with another boy, he recalls this brawl as a fight against Evil; in this way, he is like Don Quijote taking on giants. However, as readers later learn, Lucius experiences a character transformation much like Huck; hence, ultimately he strays from the rigid socioideology of Southern aristocracy and comes to see the possibility for Good in the morally relative ways of Boon and Ned.

In *Faulkner, Mississippi*, Glissant contends that Faulkner's work is plagued by some of the same issues of black characterization that Ellison and others have pointed out in *Huck Finn*. As Glissant argues, "Faulkner's depiction of Blacks is 'rural.' It claims no perspective or verisimilitude... Descriptions of Blacks cannot be other than immobile: Blacks are permanency itself" (*Mississippi* 59). Nevertheless, Ellison disagrees, finding Faulkner's portrayal of African-Americans to be exemplary; as he avers, "[Faulkner] has been more willing perhaps than any other artist to start with the stereotype, accept it as true, and then seek out the human truth which hides it. Perhaps his is the example for our

writers to follow” (43). Rider’s characterization in “Pantaloon in Black” perhaps stands as Faulkner’s most nuanced portrait of an African-American. “Pantaloon” is an enigma in *Go Down, Moses*, and really the whole of the Yoknapatawpha corpus. Rider, the protagonist of the story is not a McCaslin, his only real connection to the family seems to be that he lives on their land, and his own narrative is much more opaquely entangled with the rest of the collection. While Glissant’s assertion might hold up for some of Faulkner’s earlier works, “Pantaloon” protrudes from the rest of the corpus because it is one of the few instances in the Mississippian’s oeuvre in which he captures black characters in all their human complexity. In Part I of the story, after Rider’s wife (Mannie) dies, readers encounter one of the most powerfully poignant expressions of mourning in World Literature. Aware of “the will of [his] bone and flesh to remain alive” (*Go Down* 137), Rider enacts a clandestine plan in order to quickly join his wife in the afterlife without physically taking his own life. Specifically, Rider drinks a jug of “bust-skull white-mule whiskey,” returns to the mill where he works, and slashes the throat of the white overseer (Birdsong) who for years has been cheating he and his coworkers out of their hard-earned money with a crooked game of craps. In doing so, Rider knows that the generic conventions of Jim Crow Southern society require that the Birdsong family lynch him; however, this is his goal, that is, to be reunited with Mannie in death. Accordingly, by killing the mill overseer he realizes his own interests of suicide and simultaneously ends Birdsong’s exploitation of the African-American community—a most quixotic act. Nonetheless, it is interpreted by Yoknapatawpha’s hegemonic class, personified here by the sheriff and his deputy, through the skewed lens of minstrelsy.

In Part II of “Pantaloon,” Rider’s heart-wrenching narrative is undermined by the cruel and bigoted humor of the sheriff, his wife, and the deputy as they mockingly gossip about his final moments. The two white men imagine Rider along the same lines as the generic conventions of the minstrel (intriguingly similar to the way in which Don Quijote interprets his reality as if it were una novela de caballería), their only means of understanding blacks. Claudia Orenstein notes the effect of minstrelsy on American collective consciousness, asserting, “with its simple-minded, somewhat grotesque, comic characters, the minstrel show popularized and perpetuated derogatory black stereotypes that haunted the African-American community through the Civil Rights era” (438). The whites of “Pantaloon” conceptualize the Other in line with the stereotypes of such a tradition, as can be observed in the deputy’s ignorant statement: “them damn niggers...they aint human. They look like a man and they walk on their hind legs... can talk and you can understand them... But when it comes to the normal human feelings...they might just as well be a damn herd of wild buffaloes” (*Go Down* 149-50). Faulkner certainly does not condone these words; rather this scene is highly ironic in divulging the prejudices of Yoknapatawpha whites, which brings to mind the story’s title. Orenstein points out the parallels between minstrelsy and Commedia dell’Arte, putting forth, “minstrel shows...shared significant features with Commedia dell’Arte, including the use of popular humor... The minstrel’s clownish make-up and attire...resembled the Commedia dell’Arte masks” (439). In a sense, minstrelsy warped the spirit of Commedia dell’Arte just as the Romantic grotesque warped Carnival. Pantalone (i.e. the Pantaloon) in this Italian theatrical tradition, which indeed is also sourced in the folk culture of Carnival, is what Scheub calls the “dupe,” the one who is tricked, in other words, the

fool. Conversely, as a rogue, Rider takes on the role of fool, and thus, becomes the carnivalesque clown. While Rider seems like a fool to the bigoted sheriff and his deputy, in all actuality, through performance, Rider tricks the hegemonic class, represented here by the Birdsong family, into lynching him. Rider, knowing that small towns talk, decides to die heroically (at least among blacks if not whites), rather than as a suicidal coward. The sheriff and his deputy paint the protagonist with the blackface mask; however, in Part I Faulkner teaches readers to see through the artifice of this mask, revealing Rider's humanity. Rider may wear the blackface mask, but he does so in order to deceive and accomplish his objective. Ironically, he is more in line with Harlequin or Brighella of Commedia dell'Arte (i.e. the trickster) than he is with Pantalone. The figure of the Pantaloon is merely imposed on Rider by the hegemonic class, nevertheless, he dons this mask, that of the smart man playing dumb, in order to commit suicide by cop, or in this case, by socially sanctioned violence (i.e. lynching) and thus, die with honor.

Comparable to Ellison's view that Jim functions as a sign in *Huck Finn*, Glissant believes blacks serve a specific purpose in Faulkner's universe, that of "witness" to America's original sins of slavery and extermination of First Peoples. Thus, according to Glissant, "the Faulknerian genius...instinctively chooses to treat Blacks as if they had opaque, impenetrable minds" (*Mississippi* 70). However, having already seen Rider's fully fleshed-out humanity, we know this to be false. In *The Reivers*, readers discover another example of a highly nuanced African-American character embodied in Ned, who also wears the mask of the carnivalesque clown, the smart man playing dumb. Despite his sweeping claims about Faulkner's depiction of blacks, Glissant, like most critics, virtually ignores *The Reivers*. Contrarily, Walter Taylor, in his address to the 1986

Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha Conference entitled “How to Change the Joke without Slipping the Yoke,” does examine *The Reivers*. However, in drawing on Ellison’s ideas regarding *Huck Finn*, Taylor argues that Ned, like Jim, is also portrayed in the minstrel tradition. As Taylor puts forth, “Ned McCaslin is the epitome of the masking joker...he glides, chameleonlike, through a repertoire of roles, the most important of which is identified by Lucius as ‘Uncle Remus’” (118). In opposition, I see Ned as Brer Rabbit, a trickster, who plays the role of minstrel among others in order to carry along his scheme. Additionally, while Taylor argues that Ned is unaware of his “self-maiming,” that is, that the joke is on him, I entirely disagree. Taylor suggests that Ned’s malapropisms, such as when he calls sardines, “sour deans,” demonstrate his ignorance (119); however, I believe these malapropisms to merely be a performance, that is to say, Ned is much wiser than Taylor gives him credit for. Ned’s perspicacity enables him to realize which side of the color line works in his advantage in any particular social situation; accordingly, his shape-shifting role-play is not of the minstrel tradition, but rather that of the trickster and congruently the quixotic pícaro.

At the crux of the plot of *The Reivers* is Ned’s elaborate plan to help his relative Bobo Beauchamp, who then by extension is also related to the McCaslin-Priest line. Although Ned’s scheme is not revealed until the finale, the reader eventually discerns that he had ulterior motives in coming along to Memphis. While Boon and Lucius are settling into Miss Reba’s brothel for the evening, Ned trades Boss’ Winton Flyer for Lightning—the Rocinante-like racehorse that will not run. When Lucius and Boon discover that Boss’ car is in fact missing, they are in utter disbelief. Boon commands, “go get that horse. Where does the man live?,” and Ned, wearing the mask of the fool, plays dumb in his

response: “which man?... What you want with him?” (*The Reivers* 118). Ned divulges little by little snippets of his scheme; as he tells Boon, “Let him [the man] alone. We dont want him yet. We wont need him until after the race... What we gonter do is win back that automobile” (*The Reivers* 118-9). When Lucius and Boon question Ned’s reasons for taking on such an impossible task, he tells a white lie and (mis)represents his true intentions of assisting Bobo, instead he claims, “naturally [Boss] wouldn’t mind owning the horse back too, long as he’s already got the automobile” (*The Reivers* 119). It all seems like a rather farfetched plan, yet Ned is known around Yoknapatawpha for his legendary skills in breaking mules. Accordingly, Ned figures that he will have no problem making a stubborn horse run, as he retains the same folk wisdom about horses as Uncle Parsham: “when a horse gets a wrong notion in his head, all you got to do is swap him another one for it” (*The Reivers* 245). Upon determining that Lightning has an especial affinity for sardines (“sour deans”), Ned clandestinely coaxes the horse with this treat on race day. Incredibly, most everything goes according to plan; still, in a moment of premonition, Ned decides to bet on another horse, though he keeps this decision a secret. Unfortunately, for young Lucius, Lightning loses the last heat of the race, and thus, unaware of Ned’s pay out, he feels as if he has lost and failed his grandfather. Nevertheless, Lucius ultimately is gratified, as at the end of the novel, Ned exposes his virtuosic artifice of deception and the reader learns that the grand scheme was undertaken in order to pay off a Memphis loan shark (another Snopesian capitalist rat) who had Bobo in his vices. With this desire to help his family (community), Ned is without a doubt another idealist trickster, a quixotic pícaro.

When all has been settled, Boss reproachfully asks Ned to explain himself. In this scene, the reader learns that Bobo was forced to steal the horse under pressure from the loan shark; as Lucius describes the predicament, “the horse less than half a mile away, practically asking to be stolen; and the white man who knew it and who had given Bobo an ultimatum” (*The Reivers* 291). So, Ned decided to devise an artifice of (mis)representation, his intelligent plan that purposefully hinges on the confusion of appearances and reality. Nonetheless, even when Ned ostensibly reveals all to Boss at the end, an lector discreto will identify the unreliability of Ned’s narrative within Lucius’ larger polyphonic autobiographical account. Surrounded by white men who want answers, Ned again dons the carnivalesque mask of the clown in order to use the color line to his advantage. When Ned is asked, “suppose you had failed to make [the horse] run, and lost him too. What about Bobo then?,” he replies frankly, “that would have been Bobo’s lookout... It wasn’t me advised him to give up Mississippi cotton farming and take up Memphis frolicking and gambling for a living” (*The Reivers* 293). The white men of the hegemonic aristocratic class approve of this retort and even offer Ned a “toddy,” a remarkable gesture considering the social stratification of the times. Ned is exceptionally adept in telling Boss and the other aristocrats exactly what they want to hear; as he appeases, “young folks...they dont hear good. Anyhow, they got to learn for themselves that roguishness dont pay. Maybe Bobo learnt it this time” (*The Reivers* 294). Considering that Ned enacted this prolonged deceptive scheme via roguish (i.e. picaresque) means of trickery, his statement is peppered with irony. Ned quite literally says one thing and yet means another. Here, Ned evokes the trickster art of Signifyin(g), as he plays into the expectations of the hegemonic class by parodying their gentlemanly

code of honor when he pretends to repudiate his roguishness, the ways of the pícaro. However, when Ned asserts, “roguishness dont pay” he invokes the polysemia of this assertion. In other words, Ned signifies that trickery only leads to trouble, but on another level of meaning, he Signifies quite the opposite, as the reader can clearly see that Ned’s quixotically picaresque acts of deception have brought about communal prosperity.

In the closing pages of the novel, it is Boon who is the most immediate symbol of such communal prosperity. As Glissant affirms, *The Reivers* “has as its objective to settle Boon in [Yoknapatawpha] county’s future” (*Mississippi* 245), and this future does indeed appear to be, not quite utopian, but certainly brighter than the past. As such, Faulkner leaves the reader on a happy note, as Everbe has given up prostitution forever and married Boon. Moreover, the newlywed couple has just birthed a son whom they have chosen to name “Lucius Priest Hogganbeck” (*The Reivers* 305). Glissant views Boon, with his opaque origins in miscegenation, as the character who most embodies Relation, the rhizome of Otherness entangled with Yoknapatawpha’s history and future; as he suggests, “[Boon] married a bighearted prostitute, and knew a transparent paternity, perhaps the first in the county: the birth of a son... linking the wilderness to the city, the great families to the new people, the natives to the immigrants, and the totality to the totality” (*Mississippi* 217). In this vein, Boon represents the epitome of the modern individual, a quixotic pícaro who is well equipped to endure the oppressive forces of modernity in multiethnic America. He has shown communal compromise by looking beyond social class and wedding a former prostitute, a previously unfathomable notion; thereby, Boon furthers the multicultural prosperity of the community. Glissant also calls our attention to the vitality of multiplicity in the New World, as he proposes, the reader

“discover[s] that what is bastard, mixed, ordinary, or even reprehensible in Boon is the very thing which, in the long run, endures and enlightens” (*Mississippi* 217). Indeed Boon does enlighten Lucius, but Glissant is wrong to discredit Ned’s influence on the young man and thus the future of Yoknapatawpha. As Lucius relates to his grandson, “Ned had carried the load alone, held back the flood, shored up the crumbling levee with whatever tools he could reach” (*The Reivers* 304). In other words, Ned endured for not only his own survival, but for the prosperity of the community as well. In relaying his philosophy composed of Otherness to his own descendant, old man Lucius perpetuates the way of the quixotic pícaro. Furthermore, one can imagine that his grandson will pass along a parallel philosophy...and so on, and so on, the rhizome continues into infinity.

The reivers (Ned, Boon, and Lucius) neither fully embody Don Quijote nor Sancho, rather their comportment resides somewhere between those of the two archetypal characters; they are a trio of pícaros and thus engage in a type of moral relativism. This is especially true with Ned, who artfully navigates the black-white color line throughout the novel. Ned, much like Huck Finn, must partake in acts of trickery, that is, a series of cons, for the Good of the community. Like a pícaro, he is a pragmatist in his acts of deception, but considering his social position, such deception is a necessary “evil.” Nevertheless, Ned still embodies some aspects of Don Quijote, as his scheme was not for his own materialistic self-benefit (e.g the Snopeses), but rather to help the community, specifically Bobo. In this sense, Ned too is an idealist and thus strongly resembles Huck Finn, as although Huck does not comply with the fantastical imaginings of Tom Sawyer, his aspirations are highly quixotic. Ned’s quixoticism is confluent with that of Huck and Jim. In consideration of these McCaslin-Priest hand-me-down words: “your outside is

just what you live in, sleep in, and has little connection with who you are and even less with what you do” (*The Reivers* 304), those who are able to perform their identity like a pícaro, in the protean fashion of a trickster, by telling white lies only when necessary, will be most astute in navigating modern multiethnic American life. Ultimately the quixotic pícaro will be the catalyst to engender the regenerative transformation of modern society, and it is Lucius who carries this folk wisdom onwards. At the end of *The Reivers*, and thus the finale of his massive literary career, Faulkner suggests the generation of Lucius’ grandson (regardless of race, gender, and class), those who will come to know a life of circular nomadism, who errantly seek to encounter the totality of Otherness, will be the impetus for the United States’ prosperous multicultural future.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

In the West, the hands of the hegemonic classes have cultivated modernity. As a result, those of lower social status have been marginalized and conscripted to a particular social role. This rings true in both early modern Spain and the twentieth-century United States, as the akin nations are consequences of larger Western civilization, which holds Plato's ideal of the (un)Just State at its core. Plato's Republic advocates for oppression; correspondingly, feudalism in sixteenth and seventeenth-century Spain is a manifestation of such oppression, as is América's (i.e. the American hemisphere's) foundations in slavery and the extermination of indigenous peoples in the New World. Whether in the context of the world's first novel *Lazarillo de Tormes*, the all-encompassing *Don Quijote*, the American classic *Huckleberry Finn*, or Faulkner's underappreciated last work *The Reivers*, one can witness individuals who rely on means of trickery (metatheatrical deception) in order to navigate the intricate socioideological constructs of their respective modern nation states. Nevertheless, despite their perspicacious capacity for manipulation, such individuals are not wholly self-serving; rather, they often deceptively subvert the hegemonic classes in an attempt to rejuvenate the public body, thus wiping away all class distinction. This is the way of the quixotic pícaro, the rogue who plays the fool by wearing the carnivalesque mask of the clown, and thereby ensures the prosperity of his or her community. In a sense, the quixotic pícaro is timeless—mythological—as the trickster figure from a range of folkloric traditions serves as its archetype; yet, the

quixotic pícaro also embodies the Everyman of contemporaneity as he or she endures the injustices of modernity. We have unearthed this confluence in *Lazarillo*, *Don Quijote*, *Huck Finn*, and *The Reivers*, however, the intertextual rhizome of the Quixotic Picaresque transcends national and spatiotemporal boundaries. Correlatively, this phenomenon is evident in many other works in the vast and continuous history of World Literature, and although our definition of the Quixotic Picaresque must become more fluid, each of the following novels discussed exemplifies the individual trickster's concern for the Other, his or her ideal of communal prosperity.

Firstly, while Twain and Faulkner both are concerned with European conquest of the New World's effect on Native Americans, the issue of slavery exists at the foreground of their respective works. On the other hand, Thomas Berger's 1964 novel, *Little Big Man*, is another Quixotic Picaresque that is predominantly focused on the relationship between Euro-Americans and First Peoples. Berger's work takes place in the mythic American Wild West of Wyatt Earp, Buffalo Bill, and General Custer among other historical actors, and recounts the life story of Jack Crabb, who as a young boy was captured by the Cheyenne Tribe of the Great Plains region. The story is also told from the first-person perspective, and is represented as an interview (i.e. oral history) between the now ostensibly senile 121-year-old Crabb and an academic anthropologist who shapes the narrative. Although Crabb was born a white man, he becomes accustomed to and comfortable with Native society; however, like Jim and Ned, he takes on social roles from both sides of the indigenous-white color line, so to speak. Via donning various masks throughout the novel, such as those of a Native, a cowboy, a muleskinner, and more, Jack attempts to save both his white and his Cheyenne families from the Battle of

Little Big Horn. Berger's novel is strikingly redolent of John Tanner's 1830 autobiography, *The Falcon*, which although it is a factual account, is written in the picaresque mode. Interestingly, akin to Crabb's story, Tanner does not retain complete authorial agency over his own captivity narrative, as *The Falcon* was written with the aid of a Sault Ste. Marie translator who constructed the narrative in the picaresque mode. This fact further aligns *The Falcon* with the authorial obfuscation of the Quixotic Picaresque.

Jim Harrison's 1990 Michigan novella, "Brown Dog," also perpetuates the pan-American Quixotic Picaresque in the context of Native and Euro-American relations. The titular character (yes, Brown Dog) is a man of opaque—rootless—origins; nonetheless, readers discover that his ancestors likely hail from an indigenous Scandinavian tribe of what is modern-day Finland, as historically there is a large Finnish population in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Brown Dog, though, takes advantage of his ambiguous complexion and pretends to be a Chippewa in order to woo a girl. Brown Dog's love interest, Shelly, is an anthropology student at the University of Michigan (and in fact, she is the one who convinces the protagonist to write his autobiographical narrative, and furthermore edits its contents for veracity) who is fascinated by Native Americans and their respective cultures. Brown Dog claims to be a Chippewa, even though he is quite uncertain of his actual ancestral origins, and shows Shelly the site of his "ancestors" sacred burial ground simply for the prospect of having sex with her. Moreover, Brown Dog is a master (mis)representer of reality who practices the metatheatrical trickster art of enchantment in order to endure. Specifically, he crafts an artificial Chippewa chant on the spot in order to disenchant Shelly's hippy cousin who believes she has communicated

with the spirit world. With “Brown Dog,” Harrison, who was greatly influenced by Twain and Faulkner alike, creates what is perhaps the most faithful American reincarnation of earlier Quixotic Picaresques. Still, it is not only white male authors who invoke this intertextual rhizome. In consideration of the parallels between the autobiographical forms of the slave narrative and the picaresque mode, in conjunction with the folkloric tradition of the trickster, works written by black authors in the twentieth-century United States are confluent with Quixotic Picaresque as well. In fact, despite his polemical views on the trickster figure in African-American literature as presented in “Change the Joke, Slip the Yoke,” Ralph Ellison’s *Invisible Man*, not to mention Richard Wright’s *Black Boy*, can also be examined as another offshoot—tributary—of this immense confluence in World Literature.

Nevertheless, in addition to its transatlantic nature, the Quixotic Picaresque also crosses cultural and national borders within various parts of the American hemisphere (i.e. América). For instance, the seventeenth-century historical account, *Los infortunios de Alonso Ramírez*, tells the story of the eponymous Puerto Rican protagonist whom English sailors force into a life of piracy. Accordingly, Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora’s work attests to the longevity of this intertextual rhizome’s enmeshment with hemispheric American fiction. Additionally, José Joaquín Fernández de Lizardi’s 1816 novel (published in its complete form in 1831) on the Mexican War of Independence, *El periquillo sarniento*, is yet another example. Interestingly, *El periquillo*, has particular resonance in the United States, as it was translated and edited by Katherine Anne Porter as *The Itching Parrot* in 1942. Lizardi’s work is often considered the first Latin American novel, and due to the sociopolitical environment of its conception, it again demonstrates

the Quixotic Picaresque's concern for the individual in the transition from an agrarian to a modern society. Within this vast intertextual rhizome, Lizardi's seminal piece of Mexican literature can be connected to more recent works of other writers in his own country. Such is the case of Luis Zapata with his 1979 novel, *El vampiro de la colonia roma* (published in English as *Adonis Garcia*), in which the protagonist recalls his picaresque past as gay male prostitute on the streets of México City to an interviewer with whom he quarrels with over the authorial agency of his own narrative. Nonetheless, reincarnations of the Quixotic Picaresque do not simply exist within Spanish and English language texts, but also surface in Portuguese, as Mário de Andrade explores the role of the protean Afro-Brazilian folkloric trickster in the modern society of São Paulo with his 1928 novel *Macunaíma*. Undoubtedly, further reincarnations exist across all space and time.

The Quixotic Picaresque nomadically circulates through the infinite intertextual rhizome that is World Literature, as this confluent narrative mode is peculiarly universal. Correspondingly, it effectively reveals the morally relative means by which marginalized individuals survive in a myriad of oppressive modern societies. Despite every social burden these individuals face, the communal idealism of the quixotic pícaro provokes him or her to always act in consideration of the Other. This selfless trickster tells white lies for Good, that is to say, the prosperity, of not only his or her own community, but also the entangled whole of humanity. The quixotic pícaro (i.e. the exceedingly idealistic trickster), then, errantly comes into contact with the totality of Otherness and seeks to understand, while simultaneously evading the trap of universalizing, the Other. In performing a multiplicity of identities and social roles, the

quixotic pícaro contributes to the opacity of modern multicultural nation states. Such opacity, that is, the absence of definitive roots and the obfuscation of appearances and reality, disrupts all social hierarchies and cultural hegemony, leading to the possibility of the regeneration of the public body—a hope for a more utopian world. This is the Quixotic Picaresque.

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