

“MONTALVO’S *CAPÍTULOS QUE SE LE OLVIDARON A CERVANTES*: THE RE-
INVENTION OF DON QUIXOTE THROUGH ECUADORIAN EYES”

A Thesis

Presented to

The Honors Tutorial College

Ohio University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for Graduation

from the Honors Tutorial College

with the degree of

Bachelor of Arts in English

by

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May 2014

Montalvo's *Capítulos que se le olvidaron a Cervantes*: The Re-Invention of Don Quixote through Ecuadorian Eyes

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to my thesis advisors, Dr. David Burton and Dr. Eric Lemay, for skillfully and patiently guiding me throughout this rewarding intellectual process and for putting up with my over-optimistic deadlines.

To the Muses—Annie Sand and Amy Brighter—for providing much needed chocolate, hugs, and laughter at 127 North Congress.

To my family—for their steadfast encouragement and support from the time I pretended to read my first newspaper in Spanish as a six-year old until I didn't need to pretend anymore.

To my teammates and coach—especially to Kara Brinkmann for her continual motivation, even up until the eleventh hour, and to Julie Lechner for not only showing me the beauty of “control F” and page breaks, but also for being such a wonderful crossword buddy.

To Margie and Kathy—for all of their cheerful smiles and stories in the HTC house—and to Carey Snyder for her astute academic advice and mentorship.

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

To facilitate ease for the non-Spanish speaking readership, all of the in-text references are in English, with my own efforts and the immense translation help from Dr. Burton. Montalvo's original Spanish appears in footnotes.

Introduction

From exile to literary achievement, underdog to celebrity, Juan Montalvo and Miguel de Cervantes have become some of the best known writers of their respective countries, Ecuador and Spain. Cervantes's *Don Quixote*, a charming story about a madman pretending to be a knight, has captured the hearts of children and adults for over four hundred years. It has become one of the most imitated stories, inspiring hundreds of poems, sonnets, novels, plays, and film adaptations. To describe this imitative phenomenon, in his article "Cervantes and the Modern Latin American Narrative," Roberto González Echevarría, a leading Quixote scholar from Yale University, writes:

It is significant that while the universality of Don Quixote as a figure would presumably make him easy to be authored and re-authored by anyone—Avellaneda was the first—as he would be more part of the tradition than of any individual talent, Cervantes' character has not been rewritten nearly as many times as, say, Don Juan. Why? Because if seen from within literature the most universal figure Cervantes created was not so much Don Quixote as the narrator of Don Quixote, and he has been rewritten every time a novel is authored. (7)

As González Echeverría notes, most authors set out to use the familiar narrative framework for their own agendas rather than to create a perfect imitation. Juan Montalvo, a nineteenth century Ecuadorian essayist, is yet another author who tried his hand at imitating the captivating story and masterful prose of Cervantes in his novel *Capítulos que se le olvidaron a Cervantes* (Chapters that Cervantes Forgot). Prompted by his extensive classicist training and longing for the Golden Age of Spain, Montalvo expresses a desire to preserve a pure Castilian Spanish, unmarred by his

Latin American cohorts—the twelfth chapter of his *Buscapíe*¹ even amounts to a grammatical treatise on the correct use of the Spanish subjunctive. From an aesthetic perspective, Montalvo enjoyed poring over extensive notes about Cervantes and his *Don Quixote*, but in his *Buscapíe* he also expresses a clear longing for a return to the essence of the idealized grandeur of the Spanish Golden Age. The author of *El Arte de la Prosa de Juan Montalvo* (The Art and Prose of Juan Montalvo), Enrique Anderson Imbert, points to a passage in *Capítulos* where Montalvo talks about the art of imitating the “purity, euphoniousness, numerosidad, and abundancia”² of foregone famous writers. Imbert assesses that “Montalvo admired even the ashes of the already added poetic language. He picked them out of the urns and spilled them over into his prose. He believed that the ash serves as a fertilizer. Up to this point he often mimicked the language of the literary Spanish past and came to tell personal anecdotes speaking in the character of Don Quixote.”³

Implicitly and explicitly, Montalvo’s reasons for writing his novel are threefold: he acts as an adoring fan paying homage to his idol, Cervantes, through an imitation of his prose; on some level, Montalvo wants to *be* the character of Don Quixote, drawing comparisons between himself and the good-hearted knight out to make changes in his world; he also overlays his own voice over the narrative, creating a palimpsest.

¹ The *Buscapíe* comprises the twelve introductory chapters into a foreword for his *Capítulos*. Originally, these chapters were published at the end of his previous political work *Los Siete Tratados* (The Seven Treatises) in 1882. These chapters provide much of Montalvo’s philosophical and metaphysical insight into a wide array of topics, from the purpose of laughter to his reasons for undergoing such a project.

² Bien está que no hablemos como esos antiguos en un todo; mas la pureza, la eufonía, la numerosidad, la abundancia, busquémoslas, imitémoslas (*El Arte de la Prosa de Juan Montalvo* 56).

³ Montalvo admiraba aun las cenizas del ya adido lenguaje poético. Las recogía en urnas; las volcaba luego a su prosa. Creía que la ceniza sirve de abono. Hasta tal punto remedaba la lengua del pasado literario español que al contar anécdotas personales llegó a presentarse hablando como un personaje del *Quijote* (*El Arte* 56).

Recognizing that much of Cervantes's charm derived from his humor, Montalvo sought to infuse comedy into his work. In his *Buscapé*, the foreword to *Capítulos que se le olvidaron a Cervantes* (Chapters that Cervantes Forgot), Montalvo says: "I do not say that Cervantes is not a master of many good long laughs; but in the laughs of this divine statuary of laughter there is a certain sincerity and fascination."⁴ Embedded within hilarious scenes, enhanced by clever dialogue and hyperbole, Montalvo's imitation offers sobering advice for Ecuadorian citizens and a stark exposition of the corruption rampant within the Catholic hierarchy and political system.

To provide some historical context of Cervantes's 17th century Spain, we can turn to the novel *Fictions of Identity* by Elaine K. Ginsberg who writes: "Given the various pressures of centralization, imperial ambition, and religious dissidence, the construction of national identity in early modern Spain was an enterprise fraught with difficulties...As Philip II's monarchy aligned itself with Counter-Reformation orthodoxy, the elaboration of national myth based on a 'pure' Christianity took on greater urgency" (1). As the religious fervor swept the nation, citizens were either swept into the formation of the nation-state or suffered exclusion. A very accurate summary of Montalvo's context is produced if Gabriel García Moreno and Catholicism are swapped into Ginsberg's above statement. In 19th century Ecuador, political tyrants were adept at manipulating through legislative loopholes to bring about a strict Catholic form of governance. Both *Don Quixote* and *Capítulos que se le*

⁴ No digo que Cervantes no sea dueño de carcajadas muchas y muy altas y muy largas; pero en las de este divino estatuero de la risa hay tal sinceridad y embeleso, ue no sentimos la vergüenza de habernos reído como destripaterrones, sino despues de habernos saboreado con el espeso almibar que chorea de sus sales (*Capítulos que se le olvidaron a Cervantes* 129).

olvidaron a Cervantes are formidably shaped by the highly nationalistic and religious movements in which they were written and present similar themes, such as hypocrisy, which will be explored in this thesis in greater detail.

To understand the complex relationship between Montalvo's Catholic background and yet his disdain for the role of Catholicism within Ecuador, the reader must understand a particular definition and history of "anti-clericalism." In *Anticlericalism: A Brief History*, José Sanchez provides an authoritative definition upon which I rely:

In the broadest sense, anticlericalism can be defined as opposition to the power of the clergy. Conversely, the possession or use of power by the clergy can in the same sense be called clericalism. Most definitions of anticlericalism are stated in negative terms, i.e., opposition to clericalism. C.A. Whittuck's definition of clericalism is one of the earliest and best: "Clericalism is the outcome of a professional bias or rather of a perverted esprit de corps, prompting the clergy to make an immoderate, or illicit, use of their legitimate privileges for the benefit of their own class. (7)

Anticlericalism is an umbrella term that describes the clergy's turn from acceptable Catholic practice to "illicit," often exploitative behavior that could range from taking bribes to forging deals that rewarded them with abundant wealth. This term encompasses myriad subdefinitions that can further be broken down into such categories as antisacerdotalism—which specifically targets priests—or antiauthoritarian-legalism, in which advocates concern themselves "with attitudes towards the basic questions of authority, progress, human nature, values, and the institutional structure of the Church" (*Brief History* 10). Proponents criticize the clergy's stress on the overwhelming importance of things spiritual and eternal and "emphasize the value of things secular and temporal" (10).

Montalvo best fits this narrower subdefinition based on his zealous advocacy for the separation of church and state and an overall less intrusive governmental approach in daily life. Enrique Anderson Imbert judiciously summarizes Montalvo's unmistakable anticlericalist agenda as such: Montalvo "was so indignant because of the alliance of the Church with tyrannical powers and because of fanaticism, ignorance, and corruption of the priests in his land, that he came to separate himself from the practices of a believer: 'When can one be Catholic with similar guardians of Catholicism?'"⁵ Montalvo's works implicate that clerics were opposed to "rationalism, epistemological idealism, feminism, socialism, naturalism, and even the nonreligious aspects of liberalism."⁶ As a leading liberal and intellectual, Montalvo was part of the group of Catholics before the conservative reaction of Pope Pius IX⁷ and was attuned to all of these social terms. Montalvo's anticlericalism may not be as absolute as it has always been supposed, because next to his terrible onslaught of criticisms are instances of respectful exaltation, a theme that Enrique Anderson Imbert also notes. Because Montalvo was a devout Catholic, his anticlericalism was not intended to be irreligious but is better characterized by a kind of "civil anticlericalism" (anticlericalismo civil), in which he advocated the separation of church from state politics and wrote against the clergy than in favor of them because "it was owed to the

⁵ Tan indignado estaba por la alianza de la Iglesia con los poderes tiránicos y por el fanatismo, ignorancia y corrupción de los curas de su tierra, que llegó a apartarse de las prácticas de creyente: "¿A qué hora ha de poder uno ser católico con semejantes guardians del catolicismo?" (*El Arte* 93).

⁶ Estaba demasiado comprometido con la tradición para ser consecuente con sus dudas—rechazó, por ejemplo, a Renan—y a fuer de católico se opuso al racionalismo, al idealismo gnoseológico, al feminismo, al socialismo, al naturalismo, y aun a los aspectos irreligiosos del liberalismo (*El Arte* 93).

⁷ Montalvo, pues, perteneció espiritualmente a esa generación de católicos liberales anterior a la reacción conservadora de Pío IX (*El Arte* 93).

statistic that the number of corrupt priests was greater than the virtuous.”⁸ (92). In the *Perpetual Dictatorship* Montalvo makes this position clear: in our politics, religion doesn’t play a part... We differ only in that which is relative to political and social principles” (qtd in Imbert 92).⁹

These sorts of misunderstandings may exist around Juan Montalvo because scholarship surrounding his life and publications is limited. Roberto Agramonte’s forty-eight-page article titled “Cervantes y Montalvo” is the longest, most substantive scholarship devoted exclusively to Montalvo’s *Capítulos*. Maria Ochoa Shivapour is another leading expert, whose article, “Don Quijote en América: una reescritura decimónica” (Don Quixote in America: A Nineteenth Century Re-Writing) adds a smart, succinct overview of the major targets of Montalvo’s commentary in his *Capítulos*. Enrique Anderson Imbert’s “El Arte de la Prosa en Juan Montalvo” (Montalvo’s Art and Prose) provides a necessary analysis of different aesthetic strategies the writer uses throughout all of his different works. Most other critics divert attention to his politically charged pamphlets and works, such as *Las Catilinarías* (The Catilinarian) and *Los Siete Tratados* (The Seven Treatises). It is amidst this critical backdrop, where *Capítulos* is largely ignored and underrepresented, that I hope my analysis will show that Montalvo’s brilliant use of satire, which effectively conveys his larger social themes of anticlericalism and hypocrisy that immortalize his works

⁸ Su anticlericalismo no fue tan absoluto como se ha supuesto: al lado de sus terribles arremetidas están sus páginas respetuosas y aun de exaltación. No era un anticlericalismo irreligioso, sino civil; y si escribió más contra el clero que a favor se debió al hecho estadístico de que era mayor el número de curas corruptos que el de virtuosos (*El Arte* 92).

⁹ ...en nuestra política no entra para nada la religión. La religión es común para todos: no diferimos sino en lo tocante a los principios políticos y sociales.

through a familiar Spanish myth, brings his work to the forefront of literary attention for its aesthetic value.

Chapter one will provide a political overview of nineteenth-century Ecuador, because Montalvo's works are engaged with the political and religious measures geared towards the creation of a centralized nation united by Catholicism. Chapter two will provide background about the inception and subsequent critical reception of *Don Quixote de la Mancha* and its transformation into a myth. Biographical parallels will be emphasized between Cervantes and Montalvo to illustrate a similarity in the influence of religion on the formation of their nation-states at the same time their respective government covered up abuses and catastrophes with lies and feigned pretenses of grandeur and security. This friction created an odd shift in the societal values of both cultures between an increasing presence of organized religion and a parallel shift in the cultures' insincere societal values and hypocrisy. From these contexts, both authors target hypocrisy using a satiric mode, although Montalvo does so to a much greater extent. Chapter three will argue against the current of Montalvo scholarship, which asserts that *Capítulos que se le olvidaron a Cervantes* is straightforwardly didactic. Instead, I will show that in addition to the many virtuous and moralistic speeches from Montalvo's Quixote, Montalvo draws deliberate biblical associations to transform his character into a Christ-like paragon, a vehicle for religious expression of idealized Catholicism, and a symbol for uncorrupted purity. His purpose for doing this, however, will emerge after reading chapter four. Chapter four delves into specific examples of anti-clericalism rife in the pages of the text.

Throughout his novel, Montalvo creates a cleverly elaborate juxtaposition between virtue and vice, good and evil, embodied by Don Quixote and clerical figures, respectively. This strategy converges upon a grander humoristic yet urgent goal—to expose the ills of the Catholic hierarchy and other unjust practices. Chapters three and four deliberately tease out the nuanced satire of each type of episode to illuminate Montalvo's artistic technique. Otherwise, a casual reader might overlook Montalvo's investment to creatively craft and sustain a novel-length contrast to exaggerate the purity and impurity of these figures.

Fundamentally, Montalvo was an intellectual who fought to spread his idea of justice—of separation between the church, freedom of expression, and basic rights—through appealing works of fiction and nonfiction. Montalvo transforms Cervantes's Don Quixote from a madman to a biblically virtuous figure in order to immortalize his anti-clerical humor and social commentary. My argument aims to rescue Montalvo's cleverly funny work from earlier arguments that fail to realize its full comedic potential. I show that he is a timeless social commentator because of his ability to make us think about larger topics such as hypocrisy and our duty to keep our governments and religious institutions accountable.

“La pluma lo mató”: Montalvo’s Political Context

The adjective “inimitable” is charged with a lofty meaning, connoting a certain timeless and untouchable transcendence. The well-known Cervantes biographer, Melveena McKendrick, uses such a descriptor for *Don Quixote*, Miguel de Cervantes’s most famous work: “it allowed the emerging novel form, groping as it was for shape and identity, to obey the imperative dictated by Europe’s psychological and philosophical mood, while at the same time displaying an inimitable literary character of its own” (230). Fast forward more than two centuries, Juan Montalvo, a notable Ecuadorian essayist, would feel inspired to imitate *Don Quixote* even though he also calls it “inimitable.” From a quick glance it seems that the authors bear little connection, but after examining their texts and biographies the similarities emerge naturally, almost effortlessly. To provide a greater contextualization for *Capítulos que se le olvidaron a Cervantes*, a closer examination of the national fabric of nineteenth century Ecuadorian politics and religion is needed.

Nineteenth century Ecuador was cleanly divided into two extreme political sides—Conservatives and Liberals—fighting a bitterly contentious battle to take command and implement their favored policies. Conservatives were led by José Modesto Espinosa and Juan León Mera while “liberals found their moralistic leader and most effective literary spokesman in Juan Montalvo” (Spindler 53). Critics and biographers shower Juan Montalvo with praise and note his immense impact upon the political landscape, citing him as among Ecuador’s most famous writers. Since his works are usually forceful, highly opinionated responses to inflammatory political

leaders and legislation, his writings almost perfectly coincide with a chronicle of Ecuadorian politics. Throughout his lifetime he founded more than six literary and political magazines and published more than six longer essays and numerous other pamphlets. He takes the literal and metaphorical expression of “the power of the pen” to greater heights. One of his publications is believed to have united a conspiracy effort to fell the ruthless dictator, Gabriel García Moreno, leading Santiago Argüello to assess that “by means of Montalvo’s splendid Spanish prose” the world beheld “the autopsy of an infected cadaver made with the edge of a golden bistoury” (108). Balancing on a fulcrum between obligatory mandates to follow restrictive state-sponsored policies and the objective to rip them apart, Montalvo used his prolific periodicals and narratives as platforms to voice his many criticisms against leaders who played unfairly and undemocratically.

Because Montalvo spent much of his life criticizing two tyrants, Gabriel García Moreno and Ignacio de Veintemilla, in *El Cosmopolita* (The Cosmopolitan) and *Las Catilinarias* (The Catilinarian), two of his works that usually garner the most attention, it is important to understand the priorities and personalities of these two Presidents. Both Moreno and Montalvo possessed a keen knack for polemical writings, but Moreno expressed a much different vision for Ecuador’s future in his publications of *El Zurriago* (The Whip) and *El Vengador* (The Avenger). Despite their disagreements on how best to reform Ecuador, Montalvo and Moreno shared similar clout, intelligence, and singularity of mind. For instance, when Moreno pursued his scientific studies in France he allegedly read the *The Universal History of the Catholic*

Church, amounting to 27,000 pages in three volumes; when Montalvo decided to write *Capítulos*, he similarly scrutinized all of Cervantes's notes and hundreds of documents. Moreno and Montalvo were equally ambitious and assertive, creating much head-butting and a deep rivalry.

Striving to use Catholicism as a vehicle for unification and moral reform, Moreno would successfully find loopholes to exploit his presidential powers. His first major legislative step towards this end came about when he squashed all voices from his political assembly in 1861 to pass a constitution which implemented a highly centralized government. Frank MacDonald Spindler, in his book *Nineteenth Century Ecuador: A Historical Introduction*, includes a chilling, pithy statement about the President's political view that "liberty and equality were synonyms for anarchy" (58), revealing the extent to which Moreno's Ecuador had diverged from democracy. At the top of Moreno's agenda was an elevation of status and presence of the Catholic Church, since he believed it to be the "government's duty to defend the church and to cause it to be respected" (59).

One year later, in 1862, a Concordat was agreed upon between Ecuador and the Vatican, which proved to be one of the greatest cornerstone ecclesiastical policies of Ecuador's history and Moreno's deliberate attempt to yoke the government and Catholic organizations into an indissoluble bond. The Concordat was cemented with signatures from Cardinal Antonelli, the papal Secretary of State, and José Ignacio Ordóñez, the first bishop of Riobamba and later Archbishop of Quito. In a mere twenty-two articles, Moreno and his cronies managed to consolidate almost complete

control in the hands of the state. The first article of the Concordat confirmed the legal establishment of the Roman Catholic Church in Ecuador and prohibited any “dissident cult or any society condemned by the church” (67). It was mandated that no instruction contrary to the Catholic religion would be tolerated within the schoolrooms of its young, impressionable minds. Since Moreno intuited that the legislation would fail without the support of his government officials, he ignored all opposition and single-handedly declared its legitimacy. To prevent any reciprocal combative action, Moreno adroitly navigated the political system to ensure he was well-feared.

As a long, mounting list of grievances bedeviled his blood-stained rule, where even his own mother could not prevent him from killing a man in cold-blood, Moreno’s reputation quickly grew into one of a merciless ruler. With a perfect storm of dangerously expanded powers, a new Concordat to reinforce his Catholic-centered vision, a complete desensitization and disregard for democratic political procedure, and a lock-down of the presidential palace, he was a fiendish force to be reckoned with. A quote from the then American Ambassador, Frederick Hassaurek, provides an excellent albeit Western overview of Moreno’s character:

He is, undoubtedly, a mixture of strange elements. He is very ambitious, and as intolerant in religious matters, as vindictive against political opponents. He is an honest, but not a liberal-minded man; he wants to do right in his own way; but he is cruel against those who dare to differ from him in opinion. He is a man of strong passions, and will govern absolutely, looking on the members of his cabinet as on his clerks, not his constitutional advisers. But his efforts, aside from the persecutions of his antagonists, are well-meant, although sometimes badly directed; and if he succeeds in his main object, the building of roads from the coast through the now almost impassable interior, the blessings thereby conferred on the country, will be so great, that his political sins will be pardoned. (60)

Living under such a tyrant, Ecuador would experience a regressive deprivation of basic human rights that Montalvo would faithfully fight to regain and re-establish. During a brief respite from Moreno's intensive censorship when an interim ruler stepped in, Montalvo could publish "*El Cosmpolita*" and "*El Joven Liberal*" (The Young Liberal). These periodicals sought to "oppose García Moreno and the Conservatives, and actively [campaign] for his own election to the House of Deputies as a representative for Pichincha province" (Spindler 75). Liberals wanted to attack "Ecuador's historical problems of race, religion, and regionalism, using religion itself as its chief weapon in the battle" (77). Within an interlocking web of different factors, religion became the "swing" component that was perceived to be the glue holding the nation together yet also its most divisive poison. Liberals wanted to de-regulate and de-emphasize the church's influence on state matters, but notched another dismal defeat when Conservatives managed to pass the newer Constitution of 1869. Known as the "Black Charter"—and amongst liberals as the "Charter of Slavery to the Vatican"—the new legislation ensured that the Catholic Church and its teachings were now compelled to serve the needs of the state (79).

Religion had always held great influence on daily life in Ecuador, but with the passage of these mandates it soon grew into a divisive equatorial line demarcating indigenous populations from more urban, culturally Catholic centers. Rural areas especially came under special scrutiny and were the first of Moreno's targets because the inhabitants resisted his state policies, which conflicted with and even threatened the practices of their indigenous religions. Adherence to the Roman Catholic Church,

the now-official religion of the republic, determined citizenship and was protected by the civil authority. As a result of all of these simple, direct mandates, Conservative leaders hoped to engender unanimous conformity to the national church. True to form, Moreno's unethical usurpation of power and tight leash precluded a democratic election even though he probably would have been "the last man to receive the popular vote" (79). Some biographers have tried to temper his reputation with his more positive legacy of building a national road, numerous schools, and heading public works projects, but Moreno's singularity of mind to exert control through the Catholic Church overshadows these efforts. One anecdote tells of a guard asking the president about his identity and Moreno's response: "I want to save Religion and the Fatherland!" to which the sentinel responded, "Long live García Moreno!" (76). Moreno's intense conformist and imperialistic efforts came at the expense of undermining the richly diverse indigenous populations that epitomized the rich cultural heritage of Ecuador.

Reins in hand, Moreno's policy changes reverberated throughout the capital in Quito. First, religion took on a greater force in domestic affairs to promote morality and faith. For instance, the president dressed in his insignia of office to play the role of Christ in the Good Friday procession. The intersection between Moreno's political views and Catholicism was now on display in a public spectacle, and it is no coincidence he chose to play Jesus Christ—Christianity's most sacred and worshipped figure. Other attempts were made to create a merged culture of church and nation. For example, an episcopal decree in 1873 required every cathedral to erect an altar with an

inscription dedicated to the newly declared patron and protector of the nation, the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and to honor a festival on the Church's calendar. The church also took on the role as the nation's censor and primary educator. On the one hand, the church condemned and burned works, urging the liberals to remark that the Garcian administration was "erecting the Inquisition once again" (81); on the other, they were granted widespread teaching positions and gained more visible exposure.

Paradoxically, literary tolerance tightened at the same time that the number of schools more than doubled. Although the United States minister called Moreno "oppressive and tyrannical to such an extent as not to be endurable" (95), his Catholic policies earned him a duplicitous reputation as the "Regenerator of the Nation" and "Invincible Defender of the Catholic Faith" (91).

As Moreno's Catholic extremism took its foothold, Montalvo made sure to disseminate his forceful and clear-cut opposition. On October 2nd, 1874, Montalvo released a twenty-four page polemic, "*La Dictadura Perpetua*" (The Perpetual Dictatorship), which, according to Roberto Andrade, mobilized support to bring about Moreno's assassination on August 6th, 1875. Montalvo railed against the "scum of the monasteries of Italy, Spain, and other places" that ruled within his nation's schools and bemoaned that his country had been reduced to "purely a convent matter." As a steadfast supporter of the freedom of the press and denouncer of censorship, he wrote to his editors, "Undeceive yourselves...in the breast of fanaticism only ignorance develops; in that of hypocrisy, crime" (Spindler 86). As long as clerical censorship ruled supreme, Montalvo felt that Ecuador could not achieve "moral progress." His

writings were so virulent that an anonymous person responded with a pamphlet titled “*Don Juan Montalvo y la verdad contra él*” (Don Juan Montalvo and the Truth Opposing Him). Pointedly, the author calls Montalvo a hypocritical, impious Christian man whose actions did not match his words—the very vice that Montalvo condemned.

With the assassination of Moreno, Montalvo declared from his exile in Ipiales, Colombia: “No doubt my ideas took root; it was not Rayo’s steel, it is my pen that killed him!” His exclamation would be shortened to one of Ecuador’s famous one-liners: “My pen killed him!” (La pluma lo mató). Naturally, reactions from conservatives and liberals differed dramatically. Garcian supporters called Montalvo’s outburst “diabolic pride,” while such Americans as the Nicaraguan poet Santiago Argüello summarized, “In that expression there is something Olympian...It was not a cry of jubilee for the death of a man—it was a sacred hymn for the birth of a nation” (89). Even today, Ecuador reveres Eloy Alfaro and Juan Montalvo as the ‘Sword and the Pen’ of Ecuadorian liberalism (83).

Taking advantage of the calm after Moreno’s absence in 1876, General Ignacio de Veintemilla led the liberal charge to overturn the 1869 “Black Charter of the Vatican.” Once he gained more power, however, Veintemilla lost sight of his ideology and settled for a disappointing compromise, The Concordat of 1882, which did very little to assuage the conservatism of the 1869 Charter. Disappointed by Veintemilla’s betrayal of his purported liberal values, Montalvo was enraged. He published “Boletín de la Paz: El ejemplo es oro” (Bulletin of Peace: the Golden

Example), a short bulletin expressing a “concern for peace, his doubt of the justice of Veintimilla’s revolt, and...a growing anxiety over the interjection of the religious problem into the matter” (101). Montalvo’s disgust for the general’s betrayal of liberal ideology— to appease conservative supporters for his own political gain— converges upon a larger theme that unites all of his works: hypocrisy. It crops up as one of the most salient themes throughout *Capítulos que se le olvidaron a Cervantes*.

Montalvo’s next explosive publications, *El Regenerador* (The Regenerator) and *El Espectador* (The Spectator), were published after the Ambato Convention met on May 31st, 1878, to draw up a ninth constitution that would dismantle torture, the death penalty, as well as eliminate Catholicism as a prerequisite for citizenship. Even though it was a small triumph for liberalism, Montalvo was still dissatisfied with the unjust corruption of the expanding powers of his political leaders. He wrote that “the Executive Power dictates laws by means of twenty jaws which it opens and shuts” and “we have insinuated from the beginning that Veintimilla would not wish to subject himself to the Constitution and laws, even when he orders them made at his whim” (105). As pressure mounted, Montalvo went into voluntary exile in France, where he would continue to write and remain his death.

From his home in France he then published *Las Catilinas*, two sets of six pamphlets that hyperbolized facts about Veintemilla to berate his vices in a large ad hominem attack. Veintemilla is depicted as “having committed all of the seven deadly sins...[and violating] each one of the Ten Commandments, especially against murder and stealing” (110). Montalvo recurs to these moralistic themes in the fifth Catilinaria

to discuss gambling, drunkenness, concupiscence, and sloth— “vices which the president is said to have practiced” (110). Montalvo also resorts to this hyperbolic attack in *Capítulos que se le olvidaron a Cervantes*, which will be examined further in Chapter Four. Spindler considers Montalvo a masterful satirist, especially when he calls him an “Ecuadorian Cicero” (111). Even Veintemilla’s desperate riposte singles out Montalvo: “I have done nothing except save the Republic from Montalvo and the Radicals” (111). Spindler aptly labels one of his chapter headings “Victims of Satire,” which paints an accurate picture of Montalvo as predator and Moreno and Veintimilla, among others, as his prey. Montalvo’s resounding battle cry and entreaty to his fellow people became, “Ecuadorians, go, reconquer your honor, and die, if it is necessary!” (108).

Montalvo has been overly criticized for his bland didacticism, but this could also be interpreted as an attempt to counterbalance the proselytizing message from Moreno and Veintemilla. Throughout his life, Montalvo never involved himself *directly* in the assassination of Moreno or other violent acts, but preferred to work behind the safety of his publications. Backed by Eloy Alfaro’s generous funding, Montalvo provided the intellectual work of the operation to bring about his idea of justice—basic human rights and separation of church and state. As Enrique Anderson Imbert asserts, to comprehend Montalvo’s significance it is necessary to understand the public for which he was writing: “Almost all his work stemmed from that, from the fight against the evils in Ecuador, that were the evils of our America: anarchy, military strongmen, the fanatic will of power of the clergy, the ignorance of the

masses, despotism, administrative corruption, vulgarity, poverty, violence, degradation.”¹⁰ He entered the scene during one of Ecuador’s greatest efforts to unify the nation under Catholic centralization. The crisis over how best to implement Catholicism into Ecuadorian life created a politics of illusory appearances that shrouded its underlying corruption. For his efforts, the scholar Benjamin Carrion calls him “This don Juann of Insurgency, this don Juan Montalvo, loud voice of American thought, a long and persistent shout condemning tyrannies”¹¹, where the term “tyranny” applied not just to the political but also the religious context. In a sense, Montalvo used his pen as a dragnet to dig up and expose the dirty political and religious rottenness of Ecuadorian political life, a mission that he set out—fiercely—to accomplish in his literary work.

¹⁰ Casi toda su obra arrancó de allí, de la lucha contra los males del Ecuador, que eran los males de nuestra América: la anarquía, el caudillismo military, la fanática voluntad de poder del clero, la ignorancia de las muchedumbres, el despotismo, la corrupción administrative, la chabacanería, la injusticia, la pobreza, la violencia, la degradación (*El Arte* 66).

¹¹ este don Juan de la Insurgencia, este don Juan Montalvo, voz ancha del pensamiento Americano, largo y persistente grito de condenación a las tiranías (*El pensamiento vivo de Montalvo* 16).

“Bien así la esencia como la forma, pura imitación”: The Legacy of Don Quixote and Satire

Miguel de Cervantes aspired to be a great poet or dramatist, but little did he know that one of his last works to be published would bring him more fame than all of his previous ones combined. Prominent Cervantes biographer, Melveena McKendrick, writes about *Don Quixote*:

In its own day it attracted a great deal of attention and was widely read; but with time it has achieved a life and a vitality entirely its own, becoming one of those works that is rediscovered afresh by each age and found by successive generations to respond fully to their own perceptions and sensibilities, their own apprehension of reality. Like Don Juan and Faust, Don Quixote has become a myth figure, a shifting symbol of something easy to recognize but difficult to define, that its creator would hardly have recognized in some of its guises (McKendrick 5).

By the time *Don Quixote* had arrived in Latin America, it had already become a treasured story in Spain and was soon converted into a widely-known myth. In a moment of inspiration, sitting outside his window and looking at the mundane life below his window, Montalvo decided to honor Cervantes and add to the myth. From his exiled home in Ipiales, Colombia, after a long involvement in the maelstrom of political upheaval and numerous politicized and anti-clerical publications, Montalvo slowed down and decided to write a novel. In these moments, his innate admiration of Don Quixote, the adventurous knight, rose to the surface. As Spindler cites in his short biography of Montalvo, the writer “[believed] that a man must possess something of Don Quijote in his make-up in order to retain the esteem and love of his fellow man” (109). Montalvo yearned to *be* the dauntless character, to embody his very spirit of well-intentioned Christian virtue, companionship, honor and general likability. From

an aesthetic perspective, Montalvo felt inspired to imitate Cervantes's beautiful prose because he was also a classicist who sought to preserve a pure Castilian language unspoiled by Latin American slang. After publishing one chapter in this vein of imitation, Montalvo felt encouraged by the accolades from role model and friend, Colombian writer José María Samper, and wrote fifty-nine more chapters. Concerned that his previous publications were not worthy of literary fame, a fervent, almost desperate urgency came over him, because, as Roberto Agramonte writes, "while he had not published the *Capítulos*, he could not rise to the ranks of a literary celebrity."¹² In five months, he finished the project. His turn to narrative prose represents an unexpected notch on the previously smooth line of exclusively political publications. Whether it was Montalvo's egocentric pull to become immortalized, his touching homage for his beloved role model, or a divine spark of which the Romantics speak, the posthumous publication of *Capítulos* in 1895 would make available a beautiful compilation of thoughtful prose overlaid onto a widely beloved Spanish story. During a time when censorship tightened, he relied upon the well-known story of *Don Quixote* to disseminate his own compendium of thoughts on morality, justice, and hopes for Ecuador. As one of only three narrative works and his only novel, *Capítulos* seamlessly integrates a brilliant political message into elegant prose, creating a masterpiece of richly diverse components that merit close attention. To understand Montalvo's aesthetic and literary inheritance, one must first take a step back to the original *Don Quixote* and its seventeenth century context.

¹² En Ipiales solía decir Montalvo que mientras no publicase los Capítulos que se le olvidaron a Cervantes, no alcanzara celebridad de literato (*Cervantes y Montalvo* 4).

The publication *Don Quixote de la Mancha*, which would stagger the world with its attractively ingenious narrative and endearing humor, was written by a low-profile man named Miguel de Cervantes who happened to live some of his “most dramatic years in a very dramatic period of Spain’s history” (McKendrick 11). He fought at the battle of Lepanto in 1571, which turned the tide against the Turks in the Mediterranean and would be the last historic victory before the wave of crushing defeat that resulted from the Spanish Armada in 1588 and the subsequent blow to Spain’s national pride. Having been captured in the battle, he would then be enslaved for five years in Algiers, a notable pirate city, and devise schemes to escape prison, win ransom, and return home to his family. After an exciting military history, which left him with the use of only his right hand, he was denied a post abroad in the Americas and was then relegated to the tedious work of collecting military provisions for the Crown. And yet, through all this quotidian employment, his primary lifeblood and driving force was his writings.

Cervantes’s formal training included an education which familiarized him with classical writings, although it was cut short because of his entrance into the military. Scholars are unsure whether he studied philosophy at the Universidad de Salamanca, but records clearly indicate that he was a beloved pupil of Juan López de Hoyos when he was about to turn twenty-one. He also helped “teach grammar and arithmetic and at the same time furthered his own knowledge of Latin and Latin literature—Ovid, Cicero, Virgil, Seneca, Catullus, and Horace” (McKendrick 31). During this phase, Cervantes felt free to explore different literary styles and themes.

His entrance into the military sharply interrupted his literary life but would provide fodder for his later works. After the Battle of Lepanto, when Cervantes was taken to an Algerian prison, he began to go crazy in his desperation to escape. As his plans grew more outlandish, Cervantes began to lose his grip on reality, similar to his later character Don Quixote. Yet, he also developed an attitude of great resilience and fortitude that Melveena McKendrick attributes to “the repeated escape attempts, the resistance to intimidation and threats of torture, and the constant support for his fellow captives” that reveal “a character of unusual initiative, stamina and energy” (88).

While he was stuck in sordid incarceration, back home his native Spain was undergoing a similarly vile decline. The inflationary effects of an eightfold price increase widened the gap between rich and poor while at the same time the population grew, creating a large demographic change. When Cervantes’s ransom was finally secured and he returned home, his freedom was perhaps the only good thing amidst a hapless, downtrodden atmosphere. Sensing the downturn of his country and looking for a way out, in 1582 he applied for a position in the New World but was rejected with a single piece of advice to the effect of “you’ll find something here.” If he had traveled to Latin America, however, he would have probably never written *Don Quixote*. Finally coming to terms with his terrifying memories from the war, Cervantes tried his hand at the pastoral genre and three years later published *La Galatea*, which McKendrick purports to be his “necessary exorcism of the past, a healing journey away from the worst in life into the best, an examination, after seeing how low man can sink, of how high he may reach” (99). The text reveals his

familiarity with Neoplatonist theory, Ciceronian rhetoric, and the pastoral genre; Montalvo shared a similarly extensive classical training. Soon after this publication he directed his attention to writing plays with a style that would dominate Spanish theater for another hundred years, full of a certain freedom from the classical precepts like decorum and the sacred unities of time and place.

Unhappy with the quality of other plays being produced, Cervantes peppered his work with opinions on what good literature should be. Literary trends were increasingly commercialized and pigeonholed into simple formulas for entertainment, because audiences had low literacy rates. McKendrick argues that if Cervantes's priest in *Don Quixote* can "indeed be taken as [Cervantes's] mouthpiece," then he felt a "form of centralized aesthetic censorship would prevent bad plays from being performed and thus raise the quality of dramatic workmanship" (107). The more that Cervantes hobnobbed with other writers in wealthy literary salons such as Imitatoria Academy, the more he could be a part of a literary world for which he longed but was denied because of military obligations and a ransom mishap.

Briefly thereafter, however, Cervantes was once again obliged to serve the needs of the Crown and put his literary life on pause. His assignment to collect wheat from the small town Ecija began a long process that McKendrick aptly sums up: "tedium, trouble, and frustration" (119). Situated between his sympathies for the poor townspeople and an official duty to collect provisions, such a taxing job eventually plunged him into debt, unemployment, and excommunication. He was able to regain a similar position as a tax collector for the Crown, and in 1588 he was back on his feet

in Seville, constantly “journeying on muleback along bad roads in winter...[staying] in wayside inns,” which “afforded him rich insights into human life and character which were to prove invaluable later on” (128).

After a miscommunication in which the Crown accused Cervantes of miscounting provisions he was imprisoned in Seville, where he would conceive of the idea of *Don Quixote*. He claimed that his hero, “dried-up, wizened, fanciful, and abounding with thoughts never imagined by anyone else,” was “conceived in prison, where every discomfort has its being and every pitiful noise its existence” (175). What started as five short chapters of parody would later turn into a full-length, two-part novel that would entertain readers and engage critics for hundreds of years. Even the biographer herself wonders if it was a “spiritual crisis from which he emerged ready to countenance a renewed life of literary activity” or a certain “optimism that learned to triumph over pessimism” (177) that led him to such a project.

On a broader scale, similar to nineteenth-century Ecuador, Spain toyed with measures for imposing a central Catholic presence. Efforts were put on hold because in 1597 the Spanish state descended into despair, thrust into an “an economic, military, political, and above all, psychological crisis of grave proportions” (181) worsened by plague and failed harvests. McKendrick’s description of the changing economic structure and ancillary social values shows the extent to which Spain was forced to navigate unfamiliar and uncomfortable territory:

As the rich grew richer and the poor became destitute, Castilian society, seeking escape from a truth too hard to bear, became increasingly a society of outward display, of purchased honors and meaningless posturing, of hollow values with little relevance to reality. It was a society in which religious

orthodoxy and intellectual containment marched hand in hand with social hypocrisy and laxity of manners; where self-delusion rubbed shoulder with insecurity, disillusion, fatalism, and cynicism; where, in the face of a starving population, the cult of racial purity became the source of idleness and an excuse for inaction. (182)

Her analysis shows the sudden transformation in societal values brought about by economic desperation and disillusionment with the promises of improvement from the government. The bleak landscapes of Ecuador and Spain at these low points are not dissimilar; while Ecuador was consumed by a brutish political overhaul, Spain crumbled into a pile of feigned social structures and governed appearances. Cervantes lived through an age that saw “faith, order, and structure [as] the necessary conditions for a stable...society” (183), but was able to surpass this restrictive intellectual climate to “write something not only aesthetically exciting but [of] timeless human relevance” (183). Cervantes probes the depths of human psychology, which no doubt contributes to this accomplishment, but I argue Montalvo also achieves the same end by portraying the oppressive external governance in which human beings must live and work. Why is the ending in Cervantes so poignantly striking when Don Quixote unwraps the thin gauze of his imagination to bare the raw, suffering human underneath? Why does Montalvo’s Quixote affirm that only his ignorance can be ended in the tomb, leaving a bitter taste of a dark realization in the reader’s mouth? McKendrick suggests that the “realism of disillusion arguably inspires greater and more lasting literary artifacts than from the idealism of hope” (183). Both works end with a similar feeling of lost hope, perhaps mimicking the dismal reality of the contexts in which they were written or offering their readers a lesson in resilience and fighting for change.

Cervantes and Montalvo stumbled upon two of their most enduring works later in life as “literary accidents” (to borrow a term from McKendrick). Born in 1547 in Alcalá de Henares, Cervantes did not publish the second part of *Don Quixote* until 1615, when he was sixty-eight; Montalvo was born in Ambato, Ecuador on April 13th, 1832, but did not begin writing *Capítulos* until he was exiled to Colombia as a middle-aged man and did not live to see its posthumous publication. Both men worked tirelessly to improve the living and working conditions in their respective countries of Spain and Ecuador through a combination of literary intervention and political involvement, while sharing a sense of disillusionment and harsh disdain for the hypocrisy and hollowness of their respective nation’s false fronts and declining values. The Victorian era critic, John Ruskin, believed that a major theme of Cervantes’s work was that the “chivalric ideal takes no cognizance of reality” to which McKendrick adds that the “disillusion of *Don Quixote* is the effect, not the cause, of the crisis in Spanish confidence at the turn of the century” (212). Both authors lived through critical transition periods that peaked at centrist nationalistic highs, only to collapse into the lows of lost confidence and distrust. To explore the fascinating lives of these two men is to uncover a similar richness in their writings, fluctuating from belief to disbelief. Their works do not express complete faith or pessimism, but rather a mixed array of the two, expressing a complexity of opinion that might otherwise have been limited without this scope and breadth of their experience.

The historical contexts in which both men wrote, in which societal values underwent marked changes as a result of either a declining national power or a

Catholic revolution, no doubt inspired a turn to write about ethics and honesty. For Cervantes, some might chalk some monologues about sincerity up to a satiric imitation of chivalric tales, but for Montalvo, it is a way to undeceive his fellow Ecuadorians by exposing the poor morality of its clerical members and politicians. Key points in the text provide some clues to their goals. For example, McKendrick points out one of the aims in Cervantes's prologue: "In short you must aim at demolishing the ill-founded edifice of those chivalric romances, abominated by so many and praised by so many more; and if you achieve all this you will have achieved not a little" (qtd. in Cervantes 214). It is easy to catch his fervor in ripping apart chivalric romances, but the phrase "ill-founded edifice" broadens his scope from criticizing one single literary genre to the repressive walls of *any* "ill-founded" entity. Montalvo takes up the same duty when he attacks the people and institutions that he finds are "ill-founded" and hypocritical. Both authors also use their characters to express freely their personal opinions. Fed up with the banality of the literary marketplace, Cervantes's Don Quixote discusses his views on what constitutes good literature; Montalvo uses Don Quixote as a mouthpiece to convey a more politicized agenda. Both authors thematically infuse honest, sincere thoughts into their characters' encounters with hollow hypocrisy.

While Montalvo has been explicitly criticized for his moralistic passages, no critic has rebuked Cervantes with a similarly severe shortcoming. McKendrick acknowledges, however, that he is "more overtly moralist than most of his contemporaries," because, while the surface layer of humor delights and entertains, its

underlying bedrock cannot be “construed as inconsistent with a deeply moral and responsible attitude to life in the truest Christian sense” (183). At least from McKendrick’s perspective, Cervantes is not a “spiritual or social revolutionary” who gets wrapped up in the “great metaphysical issues of life,” but rather is “the most genuinely experimental, imaginatively and technically, and the least tied in his writings—either in acceptance or in social opposition—to the psychosocial, religious patterns that are definably of his own time” (183). These claims are noble and praiseworthy but downplay the fact that Cervantes does discuss metaphysical issues. For instance, his two characters called “Necessity” and “Opportunity” in the play *The Slave of Algiers* caused him to boast that he was “the first to introduce ‘moral figures’ into the secular theater” (110). McKendrick notes that the fast-paced, action-packed storyline, which was most likely based on his experiences in Algiers, appealed to the Spaniards probably as much as it did in the popular play *Numancia*. The latter play details the travails of Iberian citizens, who hurled themselves from the city walls in a suicidal display rather than hand it over to the Romans. In the penultimate chapter of *Capítulos*, when Don Quixote and Sancho stumble upon ancient ruins, Don Quixote pensively says: “Nobody knew where Numancia was. Our descendants will make the same reflections, from now until two or three thousand years, when in their melancholy they will contemplate the vestiges of cities that today are alive and robust.”¹³ For both men *Numancia* was an inspiration; Cervantes felt compelled to

¹³ ¿Qué mucho si de Itálica no quedan sino estos vestigios trabajados por el tiempo, que desaparecerán a su vez? De Sagunto sobra menos, y nadie sabe dónde fue Numancia. Nuestros descendientes harán las mismas reflexiones, de aquí a dos o tres mil años, cuando en su melancolia contemplen los vestigios de las ciudades hoy vivas y robustas (*Capítulos* 492).

write a play of equal importance, while Montalvo uses it allusively to prod his readers into thoughtful reflection about the brevity of time and eventual decay.

Both Cervantes and Montalvo were raised in a decidedly Catholic culture and discuss morality frequently, but the development of and adherence to their religious beliefs plays out to varying extents in their texts according to their different agendas. McKendrick assesses that Cervantes was “as true a son of the Church as he was fervent a patriot,” and while he was “in no sense a fanatic, nor showing any excessive reverence for the Church establishment itself, his beliefs and prejudices were the standard ones of the Spain of his day” (124). Cervantes shows religious expressions through his characters the Canon and the Priest, who are enlivened with good-natured personalities and smart opinions on drama and literature. He also shows great pride in a familial tie to an Inquisition official, and his praise for a Jesuit education in his exemplary tale *The Dogs’ Colloquy*. In the famous scene where Don Quixote says, “We have come up against the church, Sancho,” McKendrick argues that it would be a disservice to construe this as “anything other than that the pair have bumped into the building in the dark” (124).

Montalvo was also well-schooled in Catholic doctrine. If his lengthy moralistic passages are any indication, was personally concerned with behaving in a Christian manner, but unlike Cervantes, whose sweeping social commentary about hypocrisy applied to society as a whole, Montalvo developed a deep resentment for and targeted the hypocrisy and burdensome powers of the Catholic Church. Montalvo seems to have been highly schooled in Catholic doctrine and shows great familiarity with the

psalms allegedly written by King David. Montalvo reached his height of moralistic and polemical writing in 1883 when he published *Los Siete Tratados*, following the success of *Las Catilinas*. It earned a spot on the list of prohibited books in Ecuador and a furious letter and denouncement from the Archbishop of Quito. As to be expected, Montalvo replied with an equally impassioned response called “Mercurial Eclesiástica” (A Clyster for a Cleric), which is an unabashedly anti-clerical piece. Ruben Darío writes about these thirty brief chapters: “It is terrifying to see how this powerful prince of style makes his proud charger gallop through the arid plains of the Archbishop’s Pastoral Letter. Montalvo has entirely destroyed it” (125). Spindler notes that as the Ecuadorian once wielded the “formidable whip of the Catilinas,” so now he brandished the “sword of the Archangel,” causing a “mitre and a crozier”—two major clerical adornments that symbolically represent the clergy as a collective group—to descend into Hell (125). His earlier work preys on political leaders, but neither did the clergy escape his talons. To clarify, Montalvo was very familiar with Catholicism and praised its virtuosity, but scorned the leaders of that movement—the clergy—for subverting the admirable values of the religion with their wanton and hypocritical behavior.

Since religion, specifically Catholicism, was used as an instrument to centralize the nations of Spain and Ecuador, Montalvo concentrates his criticisms not only on the hypocrisy of the clergy but also on political leaders while Cervantes comments upon the general turn in Spanish societal values from sincerity to insincerity. To best present these themes, Cervantes and Montalvo used satire to their

advantage to capture best the attention of their audiences. Through Cervantes's experiences working directly with the Crown and rubbing shoulders with government officials, he grew increasingly disillusioned with Spain's use of a mounting nationalism to cover up its failures. Striking a satiric chord, after the Pyrrhic aftermath of the Armada's defeat, he wrote a poem about the "fervor and loyal protestations of confidence in the brave sword of Catholicism" (136). Cervantes grew disillusioned with the hypocrisy of false appearances touted by King Philip II's orders to erect gilded statues in honor of the battle of Lepanto, while at the same time the stability of the nation gradually disintegrated. He took the opportunity to crush the "vain strutting of the nation" and "grotesquely ornate and pompous obsequies" with a parody that has become one of the best known and quoted sonnets in the Spanish language (185). His usual straightforward, respectful patriotism was stripped away to assume a "complex, fractured existence" (170) that grew increasingly aware of the hollowness of his nation's promises and pompous grandeur. The harsh reality of the actual state of affairs sank in when he landed in exchequer's prison for supposedly miscounting provisions. From naval battle to dirt roads to the cold cells of prison, Cervantes truly observed a panorama of Spanish society and its different coteries of interesting people. The success of his career-catalyzing sonnet might have also shown the public's appreciation for someone who could keep Spain accountable by exposing its deceit. Mckendrick smartly concludes that this combination of Cervantes's reckless naïveté for joining the Crown and his harsh enlightenment added a "clarity to his vision and an edge to his pen which, while never pitiless or cruel and rarely mocking, will remain

steadfast and uncompromising, transforming his writing from something ephemeral and exclusively of its time into something of lasting value” (173). Cervantes uses subtle humor to balance “the folly of man with an affirmation of right values and behavior,” pairing chivalric parody with his vision of what literature should be. His sense of humor is “wry, often deflating but never sardonic, which saved his artistic vision from pessimism and, we feel, his own life from despair” (173). Likewise, Montalvo did not simply berate the clergy and Ecuador’s rulers but also offered positive, idealistic visions. Montalvo’s work may appear pessimistic at times, but is better perceived as a late-in-life coming to terms with the idea that corruption may always persist and avoid total elimination, but fighters are needed to keep it in check.

In her book *Cervantes and the Burlesque Sonnet*, Adrienne Laskier Martin illuminates Cervantes’s preoccupation with this theme of hypocrisy. In a chapter in *Don Quixote* titled “Concerning how the priest and the barber carried out their plan, along with other matters worthy of being recounted in this great history,” the motley crew hears the words floating in the air from a sorrowful singer nearby:

Most sacred friendship who, with rapid wings,
 while your mere semblance stayed here on the ground,
 flew, full of joy, up to the vaults of heaven
 to mingle with the blessed in paradise,
 and there on high, you show us, when you wish,
 fair harmony concealed behind a veil
 through which, at times, there gleams a fervent zeal
 to do good works that ne’er yield ought but ill.
 Leave heaven, friendship, or no more allow
 deceit to don the livery of your house
 and use it to destroy an earnest will;
 If you take not your semblance from deceit,
 the world will soon return to its first strife,
 the chaos and dark disquiet of discord (Grossman 216).

Grossman's translation is saturated with such words and phrases as "semblance," "concealed behind a veil, "deceit" and "to do good works that ne'er yield ought but ill." It is not coincidental that these words, sung by an unnamed character in the countryside nearby, are wedged within a chapter where the barber and the priest devise and implement an elaborate plan to deceive Don Quixote by adorning themselves with costumes and new identities. Their narrative enactment of a pretend story with the intent to deceive Don Quixote dramatizes the very message of hypocrisy pronounced by the songster. This example from *Don Quixote* speaks to the overarching theme of hypocrisy entwined in Spain's societal values, while Montalvo's criticisms more narrowly target the governmental deceit and the mis-appropriation of religion in the service of its aims.

To properly convey these larger themes of hypocrisy and general social commentary, both Montalvo and Cervantes use humor yet rely on different strategies to maximize their comic effect. In his article "Don Quixote as a Funny Book," P.E. Russell says:

I daresay that, even today, readers of the book would admit that such an approach may be permissible, even if normally eschewed by serious critics. It can hardly be denied that a great deal of it *is* concerned with describing tricks and hoaxes, with making sport of the protagonist, his squire, and many other characters—all this with the object of occasioning that boisterous laughter from the spectators which Cervantes so frequently describes. To produce laughter of this kind was, of course, all part of the author's intention as set out in the prologue to Part I: reading the tale, he tells us, the melancholic is to be made to laugh and he whose disposition is naturally merry is to be made to laugh louder (312).

In addition to cataloguing different satiric strategies, Russell points to E.M. Wilson's comments that suggests "we are wrong when we underrate—as I think many modern

readers do—the humorous side of the misadventures of Quixote and his Squire” (315). Cervantes’s humor is also brilliant because it blurs the divide between sanity and madness, commenting upon a larger theme of the mental complexity of human nature. Sixteenth-century Italian dramatist Gian Giorgio Trissino’s “list of mirth-provoking subjects is perhaps more immediately relevant to Quixote criticism; it includes an ugly or distorted face, an inept physical action, a silly word (one remembers that constant stress on Sancho’s malapropisms which modern readers find so tiresome), and, more surprisingly, a rough hand, a wine of unpleaant taste, or a rose with an unpleasant odor” (321). Montalvo does not employ the trope of madness-sanity to the same extent as Cervantes, with only peripheral mentions as part of his imitation, but does use some of the strategies noted by Trissino. Both Cervantes and Montalvo offer scenes that alternate between light and dark-hearted humor, switching from playful banter to sardonic mockery. In *Quijote y Maestro*, a biographical novel about Juan Montalvo’s life and works, Darío C. Guevara helpfully delineates the similarities and differences between the satiric approaches of Cervantes and Montalvo:

Cervantes’s sword was a deep and philosophical mocking irony; Montalvo’s is irony made from the fire of Prometheus’s hands. Cervantes taught by pleasing, he propagated healthy maxims in laughter, he made fun of vices and swept with the perverse of human society; from which it happens that his soul enjoys eternal light and his memory is perpetually blessed. Montalvo also teaches the cult of virtue and the hatred of vices, pleasing with his style, laughing with irony or satire and burning the vices with the flames of Plautus, Cervantes and Moliere, in the courageous work of knocking down bad customs and the deep-rooted abuses of force.¹⁴

¹⁴ La espada de Cervantes fué la ironía burlesca, profunda, filosófica; la de Montalvo, es la ironía hecha de fuego en manos de Prometeo. Cervantes enseñó deleitando, propagó las sanas máximas riendo, escarneció a los vicios y barrió con los pervertidos de la sociedad humana; de donde viene a suceder que su alma disfruta de luz eternal, y su memoria se halla perpetuamente bendecida. Montalvo también

His use of the verb “incinerate” accurately describes the forceful power behind Montalvo’s words. The reader will readily notice Montalvo’s eclectic style, in which he meshes together “juxtapositions, intercalations, logical developments, ornamentation, [and] poetic digressions”¹⁵ to move the narrative forward while weaving in his own thoughts and opinions. Enrique Anderson Imbert asserts that there is vivacity and vigor within Montalvo’s prose, but his works feel more like isolated exercises than one unified narrative theme, which use allegories and parables rather than unified stories, an art that he probably learned from classical writers such as Plutarch and Lucian.¹⁶ Both authors were equally well-versed in classical training and may have borrowed satirical elements from the great authors. In Montalvo’s case, he was heavily influenced by a wide network of authors including Chateaubriand, Homer, Virgil, Dante, Montaigne, Tasso, Milton, Bossuet, Montesquieu, and the writers of the Bible among others.¹⁷ Enrique Anderson Imbert acknowledges that while Montalvo’s ideas may not have been entirely original, he was at least a lucid essayist who loved to play with the musical richness and plasticity of language.¹⁸ Montalvo threads his clever playfulness of words throughout the novel to contrast his heavier, incinerating

enseña el culto a las virtudes y el odio a los vicios, deleitando con el estilo, riendo con la ironía o la sátira e incinerando los vicios con las llamas de Plauto, Cervantes y Molière, en la esforzada tarea de derrocar las malas costumbres y los arraigados abusos de la fuerza (*Quijote y Maestro* 241).

¹⁵ juxtaposiciones, intercalaciones, desarrollos lógicos, adornos, digresiones poéticas (*El Arte* 121-3)

¹⁶ Hay en las mejores ficciones de Montalvo vigor, agilidad en los trazos, movimiento, vivacidad en la evocación; pero son más bien ejercicios aislados de una capacidad narrativa que no llegó a desenvolverse por entero, “episodios” de sus Tratados, sucedidos al servicio de un tema de discurso, alegorías o parabras, no cuentos con unidad que valgan por sí mismos...había aprendido este arte en los clásicos, desde Plutarco y Luciano en adelante (*El Arte* 103).

¹⁷ ahora bien, si uno tira del hilo-Chateaubriand, lo que sale es toda una red de autores: los de la Biblia, Homero, Virgilio, Dante, Montaigne, Tasso, Milton, Bossuet, Montesquieu (*El arte* 86)

¹⁸ la riqueza musical y plástica de lenguaje (*El Arte* 98).

satire so that he can explore meaningful themes while maintaining a light-hearted note of comedy.

Given the biographical similarities of both authors' exiles and their respective contexts of nation-state formation closely tied to the centralization of Catholicism, Montalvo and Cervantes were enabled to discuss more profound themes—such as hypocrisy and individual freedoms—in a humorous, likable mode. If they shared one major goal— to ascend Mount Parnassus from their immortal literary fame¹⁹ and stature—they have certainly achieved this through thoughtful yet spirited satires.

¹⁹ A mountain that was sacred to Apollo and the Corycian nymphs, and according to Greek mythology, the home of the Muses.

“Sin moral no puede haber religión”: Re-examining Religiosity and Moralism

The majority of Montalvo scholarship relegates *Capítulos* to a moralistic plane, but I offer a competing interpretation that steers the conversation towards a consideration of morality IN Montalvo's work as a subset of greater religious concern. In Montalvo's political pamphlet “The Perpetual Dictator,” he declares: “it is false that religion and morality are very different things, as they say to those who live in error. Without morals, religion cannot be: the great authors teach that morality is the Foundation of true religion. Morality without religion would be a futile fiction created by malice in order to deceive men” (qtd. in Imbert 95).²⁰ Morality, then, is perceived to be in indivisible conjunction with religion, expanding his Don Quixote's role beyond a mouthpiece for morality into a religious figure. This added dimension unclasps morality from the current binding of Montalvo scholarship and frames a different interpretation for *Capítulos* and Don Quixote as a Christ-like figure.

Eric Ziolkowski describes this phenomenon Don Quixote's religious transformation in his book *The Sanctification of Don Quixote*, where he selectively analyzes recharacterizations of Don Quixote in *Joseph Andrews*, *The Idiot*, and *Monsignor Quixote*. His purpose for choosing these works is because of “their textual and contextual link to *Don Quixote* [and] different religious views through protagonists who, like Don Quixote, continually come into conflict with society as a result of their ideals, illusions, simplicity, compassion, and innocence, and [contention]

²⁰ Es falso por otra parte que la religión y la moral sean cosas *muy diferentes*, como dicen los que viven del error. Sin moral no puede haber religión: antes, por el contrario, lo que y oleo cada día en los grandes autores es que la moral es el fundamento de la religión verdadera. Sin la moral la religion vendría a ser una vana ficción creada por la malicia con el fin de engañar a los hombres (PD, I, 366-7).

with a major problem or crisis facing his own religion” (3). Ziolkowski firmly believes that these amount to the “three most significant cases of the knight’s sanctification in fiction” (4), but since he only analyzes works translated into English he misses out on a large corpus of Spanish literature that shares all of these similarities—namely, Montalvo’s *Capítulos*. Ziolkowski argues that the works he analyzes “sanctify their quixotic heroes in the only way appropriate to their secular contexts: by combining the highest virtues exemplified by Jesus and exalted by the Christian religion, with the figure of a religious paragon whose beliefs, actions, and words make him seem quixotic... by virtue of their discrepancy with the predominantly profane or secular currents of the modern West” (7). Similarly, Montalvo uses allegories, parables, and other modes to paint the complex Christ-like (and always already moralistic) portraiture of his Quixote, one who flies in the face of “profane” and hypocritical clerics and political leaders. Ziolkowski’s ultimate claim is that Don Quixote’s religious transformation “[reflects] the struggle of religious faith and ideals in the increasiginly secular modern west” (8).

I will argue that Montalvo’s *Capítulos* modifies this claim so Don Quixote becomes an idealistic paragon of virtue in an increasingly hypocritical and oppressively church-state ruled nineteenth century Ecuador. In my analysis, Montalvo purposefully (and effectively) structures his novel in such a way so that in almost every scene, his Christian-like Don Quixote acts as a foil to the immoral clergy. Rather than copy the violent and un-altruistic traits from Cervantes’s Don Quixote, which would dismantle the cleverness of his anticlerical commentary, Montalvo veers

off to amplify his character's heroism and probity through associative biblical imagery so that his critiques, principally anti-clerical and political in nature, can emerge.

However, my claim does not coincide with the dominant critical view.

Montalvo critic Marcela Ochoa Shivapour provides a leading voice among critics who claim that *Capítulos* is saturated with overt moralism. To make her case she argues in her article "Juan Montalvo: una reescritura del Quijote en América" that a prominent difference between Cervantes and Montalvo is that in *Capítulos*, "chivalric adventures are postponed after the moral and idiomatic precepts we find on each page" (Ochoa Shivapour 55).²¹ Her criticism, to a certain extent, is judicious. Montalvo includes certain syrupy moralistic passages:

Pure and clean pride does not oppose modesty, does nothing but defend us from humility that, if it is not Christian humility, is called vileness. Pride is a certain knowledge of its own importance, a desire to correspond to Nature or the Creator, with a bearing worthy of its favors. Going beyond certain terms, pride is arrogance: maintained in a certain way, it is a gift of the heart and spirit. Pride placed in the boundary of virtues and vices, brings to it only the best men, those capable of great things. When these are good works, they are called virtues; bad, crimes. (*Capítulos* 377)²²

The distinction between virtue and vice reduces these lines to a kind of moral treatise urging readers to think about the dangers of pride extending beyond the spiritual realm.

Ochoa Shivapour's statement is obvious given Montalvo's direct statement in his

²¹ La diferencia está en que las aventuras caballerescas quedan postergadas tras la moral y los preceptos idiomáticos que encontramos en cada página (*Una reescritura* 55).

²² El orgullo puro y limpio no se opone a la modestia, no hace sino defendernos contra la humildad que, si no es la Cristiana, se llama bajeza. El orgullo es un cierto conocimiento de la importancia propia, es deseo de corresponder a la naturaleza o al Criador, con un porte digno de sus favores. Traspasados ciertos términos, el orgullo es soberbia; mantenido en cierto grado, es una prenda del corazón y el espíritu. Puesto el orgullo en el lindero de las virtudes y los vicios, no llegan a él sino los hombres superiores, los capaces de las grandes cosas. Cuando éstas son obras del bien, se llaman virtudes; cuando del mal, crímenes.

Buscapíe: “I have composed a moral course.”²³

A second criticism that Ochoa Shivapour makes of Montalvo is to note his “many digressions and personal opinions, all said in the pure classical style and governed by the Spanish Golden Age canon.”²⁴ In agreement with this statement, Imbert acknowledges that Montalvo was not preoccupied with the narrative action and adventure but with the speeches he puts into the mouth of Don Quixote.²⁵ (Ochoa Shivapour makes no mention, however, of a similar phenomenon occurring in *Don Quixote de la Mancha* when Cervantes adds thinly veiled autobiographical threads and opinionated remarks about a wide array of topics. *Don Quixote* has been called one of the “the most surprising and original of the pedagogies,”²⁶ especially considering an overarching theme is “enseñar deleitando” (to instruct by delighting). Rather than celebrate Montalvo, Ochoa Shivapour’s argument criticizes one author for didacticism but fails to realize its presence in the other. She distills some of Montalvo’s main social critiques, such as those of the clergy and judicial system, and argues that his ultimate intention is to “denounce and correct the evils that corrupt society.”²⁷ Her

²³ Ha compuesto un curso de moral (*Capítulos* 113).

²⁴ En el libro del ecuatoriano figuran innumerables digresiones y opiniones personales del autor, todas dichas en el más puro estilo clásico y regidas por el canon del Siglo de Oro español (*Una reescritura* 106).

²⁵ Montalvo no tenía interés por lo que va a ocurrir; y Montalvo no tenía interés en la acción, sino en el discurso. Aun en los Capítulos que se le olvidaron a Cervantes, que son una novela, lo que se salva son los ensayos intercalados o puestos en boca de don Quijote (*Una reescritura* 104).

²⁶ habla del amor y la pedagogía que se va desarrollando en ellos: [Sancho] es el primero y mayor triunfo del ingenioso hidalgo; es la estatura moral que van labrando sus manos en material tosca y rudísima, a la cual comunica el soplo de la inmortalidad. Don Quijote se educa a sí propio, educa a Sancho, y el libro entero es una pedagogía en acción, la más sorprendente y original de las pedagogías, la conquista del ideal por un loco y por un rústico (*Cultura Literaria* 113)

²⁷ El otro énfasis que hay en el libro está puesto en la moralidad. La crítica social de Montalvo se abre a diferentes instancias, que van desde el clero hasta la justicia—como en la picaresca—y tiene el propósito de denunciar y sanear los males que corrompen a la sociedad, relegando las aventuras de don Quijote y su fiel escudero Sancho Panza a un Segundo o tercer plano. (*Una reescritura* 106).

idea is plausible to a certain extent, because it is likely that Montalvo's distrust of government and hatred of hypocrisy might have inspired him to use his celebrity status as a way to disseminate a literary behavioral manual for misguided citizens, fitting well with his maxim, "Ecuadorians, go, reconquer your honor!" But Ochoa Shivapour offers no other evidence for her claim except the passing assumption that these moralistic passages denounce society.

Ochoa Shivapour's observations of Montalvo's moralism are not uncommon. In *The Cervantes Encyclopedia*, edited by Howard Mancing, the concise summary of *Capítulos* includes these lines:

Capítulos has sometimes been called the most perfect imitation or continuation of Cervantes's novel, especially for its stylistic perfection. In comparison with other truly bad nineteenth-century Spanish American sequels and imitations of DQ (Alberdi, Irisarri, Otero y Pimentel), Montalvo's novel-essay is both an interesting document of its time and still a readable and enjoyable work of fine prose. Yet the work's positive effects are undercut by its cold didacticism, condescending attitude, reactionary cultural elitism, and complete lack of originality. (490)

These reductive statements and mention of "cold didacticism," combined with Ochoa Shivapour's reduction of Montalvo's moralism to a denouncement of society are limited. First, both Ochoa Shivapour and Mancing miss out on Montalvo's clever anticlerical and linguistic humor, in addition to all of the subtle, mind-tickling jokes—for instance, from a woman who won't tell her age to Sancho's plan to sell forest insects for profit. Ochoa Shivapour and Mancing demand an unfair expectation of Montalvo to live up to Cervantes's equally entertaining and original knightly adventures. Temporally removed from the seventeenth century, Montalvo does not

share the same concern to write for an audience who will feast on a mockery of knightly romances; in fact, the novel admittedly lacks any highly original knightly exploits. What Montalvo does accomplish, however, is to combine creativity and prose to paint hilarious encounters twinged with clerical and judicial commentary. Ultimately, Montalvo does not debase but rather enhances Cervantes's character because he uses Don Quixote to popularize and immortalize his political thoughts, proving that a single character can be tweaked to convey real, meaningful political ideas in very different social and political contexts.

While these critics charge *Capítulos* with weighty didacticism, another critic, Enrique Anderson Imbert, believes it is precisely this added level of depth that is laudable and enhances *Capítulos*. For example, Imbert argues that Montalvo was inspired by more than just a desire to play with the language of Cervantes but also attend to his *thought*. Interpreting the two halves of Don Quixote—the ridiculous, the heroic— as one large moral symbol, Montalvo felt that “this moral person” was a “sublime embodiment of truth and virtue in the form of cartoon... of all times and all peoples...this moral person.”²⁸ Unsurprisingly, such a reading aligns well with the era of Romanticism beginning in the late eighteenth century in which “the predominant attitude among readers toward Don Quixote changed from ridicule to veneration...[and] in Harry Levin’s words, ‘discussed and revalued on the same plane of moral seriousness as Prometheus or Antigone’” (*The Sanctification of Don Quixote* 3). Within *Capítulos que se le olvidaron a Cervantes*, the term ‘moral’ appears fifteen

²⁸ El don Quijote simbólico, esa encarnación sublime de la verdad y la virtud en forma de caricatura, este don Quijote es de todos los tiempos y todos los pueblos, y bienvenido será adonde llegue, alta y Hermosa, esta persona moral” (*El Arte* 105).

times, while it does not show up once in Cervantes. This vocabulary of ‘morality’ unique to Montalvo reinforces his fascination and interpretation of Don Quixote as such an honorable, genuinely good person. Montalvo even criticizes Avellaneda on the grounds that his novel is in “bad taste and error” because it is “bland...without wit” and lacks “decorum, because the virtues of the hero are ridiculed.”²⁹ Because Montalvo did not just copy the exterior of Cervantes, including traits of the characters, humour, language, and adventures, but rather adds a moralistic depth that Montalvo felt contributed to the “thought” of Cervantes, Imbert calls Montalvo the “anti-Avellaneda.”³⁰ Ochoa Shivapour adds that “Montalvo drives his book towards the didactic side much more than towards the comic or satirical vein. It’s precisely this last aspect for which he criticizes Avellaneda’s Quijote, and sustains that the latter, having grossly exploited the trope of mockery and the guffaw, only manages to debase Cervantes’s character.”³¹ Ochoa Shivapour, in my view, has misinterpreted Montalvo’s text and relied upon it for her own evidence. Montalvo certainly scorns the guffaw as “brutish,” but he also acknowledges the difference between this type and the “cultured laughter...of princes and poets...there is a difference.”³² He derides Avellaneda on the grounds that he writes for a cheap laugh but praises the subtle laughter of Cervantes deepened by substantive thought: “The writer whose ability achieves a masterpiece in maintaining readers in perpetual, invisible laughter, is a

²⁹ sin decoro, porque las virtudes del héroe están escarnecidas; sin gracejo, por insulsa, es el tributo que los grandes escritores suelen pagar al mal gusto y al error (*El Arte* 106).

³⁰ Así, Montalvo es el anti-Avellaneda (*El Arte* 105).

³¹ Montalvo conduce su libro hacia el lado didáctico mucho más que hacia la veta cómica o satírica. Es precisamente este último aspecto lo que le critica al Quijote de Avellaneda, y sostiene que éste, al haber explotado la burla y la carcajada tropo y bruta, solo consigue envilecer al personaje cervantino (*Una reescritura* 104).

³² La risa culta, risa de príncipes y poetas, a la risa del albardán, alguna diferencia va (*Capítulos* 128).

great writer.”³³ Thus, Montalvo does feel free to add humoristic elements but ensures that they are done in good taste according to his criteria.

It is this criteria that allows for a fuller account of Montalvo’s complex protagonist. Montalvo’s Quixote sermonizes and is praised for his Christ-like behavior and knowledge of Catholic doctrine. In an episode where Don Quixote heroically prevents a man from axing down trees, he is depicted as trumping the authority of the Bishop and revering a tree that is symbolic of the foundational myth of Abraham. At the outset, the scene appears to be a silly, nonsensical adventure, but the many biblical references imbue the trees with serious religious holiness. Using eloquent persuasion, Don Quixote implores the man to stop harming a beautiful cypress tree. Coincidentally, a bishop passes by on his way to his diocese in Madrid and stops to talk. Through their dialogue, he is immediately impressed: “the biblical form used by Don Quixote appeared good to the bishop, and hitting the nail on the head and playing along with him, he manifested his open displeasure to that great outrage, and joined him to emphasize the wickedness of the man who had wanted to kill those beautiful giants of creation.”³⁴ The praise from the bishop is significant because Don Quixote quickly ascends to the role of a persuasive advisor with equal standing and influence as the most powerful person in the Catholic hierarchy. The text

³³ Escritor cuya habilidad alcanza la obra maestro de mantener a los lectores en perpetua risa invisible, es gran escritor (*Capítulos* 128).

³⁴ ¿Ve aquí ilustrísima esta pequeña selva cuyos árboles verdeoscuros se encumbran en forma de pirámides y derraman sobre el suelo esta densa y provocativa sombra? En verdad le digo que no iba a quedar rama sobre rama, porque este desalmado los echaba a tierra, si no llevo yo aquí para librarlos de su hacha destructora.’ La forma bíblica usada por Don Quijote le pareció bien al obispo, y dando en el hito, y por llevarle el genio, manifestó que le displacía mucho aquel desaguizado, y se unió a él para encaracer el desalmamiento de quien así había querido matar esos hermosos gigantes de la creación (*Capítulos* 277).

says that Don Quixote “liberated” (librarlos) the trees from the destructive axe of a “soulless” man, reinforcing the spiritual motives behind his salvific rescue. In a discussion with the bishop, Don Quixote remarks that the gentiles “were more pious than us,” because they venerated sacred forests and felt a certain “religiosity” in their soul. He also refers to the forest of Delphos and Dodona as “temples.”³⁵ His language conjures up the biblical imagery of the gentiles and mystical sites in Ancient Greece where oracles were called upon to tell of future events. Harkening back to a more ancient time to bolster one’s argument is a rhetorical strategy also used by the gospel writers themselves. When Don Quixote evokes the religiosity of the Gentiles, the non-Jews in the Hebrew Bible, he embodies the essence of the Gospels and becomes another oral author and bearer of its message.

When the bishop derides Don Quixote for alluding to the gentiles and urges him to remember the “patriarchs of the ancient law,” of Abraham and his planting of the cypress tree, his words instantly evoke religious associations. In his book, *Jerusalem and its environs; or the Holy City as it was and is*, William King Tweedie offers some insight into this cypress tree legend:

A cypress-tree was planted on the spot [of the Convent of the Cross in Jerusalem] by Abraham; it was carefully watered by Lot, but at last cut down by Solomon to serve as a beam of the Temple. Yet, do what they might, the workmen could not make that beam fit any portion of the structure, and it was accordingly discarded. In due time, however, and after it had existed some two thousand years, Pontius Pilate needed a beam for the cross, and the tree which Abraham planted now served the purpose! The hole in which that wonderful cypress once grew is still shown under the high altar (187).

³⁵ Tengo para mí, dijo a su vez Don Quijote, que los gentiles eran en muchas ocasiones más piadosos que nosotros: esa veneración por los bosques sagrados, manifiesta un mundo de religiosidad en su alma. El bosque de Delfos, la selva de Dodona, eran templos para ellos (*Capítulos 277*).

Given this information, Don Quixote is more than an environmentalist— he is a fighter for the preservation of a biblically important legacy. If the bishop is taken as Montalvo's mouthpiece, then he is acutely aware of this history because he calls the tree "a prodigious and rightful thing destined for the Divinity."³⁶ True to this theological exhortation, Don Quixote confirms that trees are objects that "fill one with respect and semi-religious love."³⁷ The specific discourse about the patriarchal planting of the cypress tree shows that Don Quixote is an admirer and preserver of Christianity and one of its symbolic disciples.

Befitting a disciple who preserves a founding biblical myth, the narrator alludes to Don Quixote's humble, gracious nature: "Only the delicate man kneels before Parnassus whose soul is continuously awake, marveling at the works of the Omnipotent, and impassioning himself to give thanks for Nature."³⁸ The adjective "awake" refers to Don Quixote's soul that incites a greater mystical, spiritual realization of divine love and appreciation. Throughout this scene, Don Quixote proves he is not only a theological rival of the bishop but also a vehicle for introducing a Christianized message of preserving sacred space for an important biblical legend.

Moving between roles as a disciple and Christian spokesman admired by the bishop, Don Quixote also acts as a Christ-like teacher when he orders Sancho to be

³⁶ No alegue vuesa merced la autoridad de los gentiles; los patriarcas de la ley Antigua rendían honores casi divinos a los árboles. Abraham plantó un ciprés, un cedro y un pino, los cuales por obra del cielo se incorporaron en uno solo; de suerte ese árbol fue mirado como un prodigio y cosa verdaderamente destinada para la Divinidad; y así, se le cortó para el templo de Salomón (*Capítulos* 279).

³⁷ Un árbol que ha recibido lentamente la virtud misteriosa de los siglos, junto con la recondite sustancia de la tierra, es objeto que infunde respeto y amor casi-religioso (*Capítulos* 277).

³⁸ No se arrodilla ante el Parnaso sino el hombre delicado cuyo numen le tiene despierto de continuo, maravillándole con las obras del Omnipotente, apasionándole a las gracias de la naturaleza (*Capítulos* 278).

generous and kind to a beggar. With a “worn-out voice, dying from hunger,” a blind man sitting next to his dog at the base of the tree exclaims: “By the five stigmata wounds of Jesus Christ and the Pains of Holy Mary... a charity for this poor blind man!”³⁹ Immediately all of the blood runs to Sancho’s heels because, even though he knows “the words could not be more Catholic,” he always distrusts unpopulated places. Don Quixote seizes this moment as a prime opportunity to do a charitable act, reasoning that “the occasion to do good is always a good omen.”⁴⁰ Whereas Sancho demonstrates immediate distrustfulness, Don Quixote shows more faith in the man and commands Sancho to provide him with fifteen days of food since, “acts of mercy are loans that we make to the Lord.” Since Sancho is concerned with the practicality of leaving these godforsaken plains without food, he disobeys.⁴¹ In response to Sancho’s recalcitrance, Don Quixote calls upon Biblical law to persuade him: “Give what you can to this blind man; God’s law commands nothing else; but what you give, give it from the heart. Without good will there is no charity: those that are forced to give work for the devil; those who give out of pride are condemned.”⁴² His words draw parallels to 2 Corinthians 9:7: “Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, *so let him give*; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver” (*King*

³⁹ Por las cinco llagas de Nuestro Señor Jesucristo y los Dolores de María Santísima, dijo por ahí una voz cascada y muerta de hambre, una caridad a este pobre ciego!” A Sancho Panza se le fue la sangre a los zancajos: las palabras no podían ser más católicas; pero en nada confiaba cuando se hallaba en semejantes despoblados (*Capítulos* 424).

⁴⁰ la ocasion de hacer un bien es siempre un buen agüero: las obras de misericordia son préstamos que hacemos al Señor. Abre esas alforjas y provee para quince días a este desdichado (*Capítulos* 424).

⁴¹ Si de hoy a mañana no salimos de estos andurriales, en Dios y en mi anima que tengamos nosotros mismos que hacer de ciegos (*Capítulos* 424).

⁴² Da lo que puedas a este ciego; no manda otra cosa la ley de Dios; pero lo que des, dalo de corazón. Sin Buena voluntad, no hay caridad: los que dan por fuerza, labran para el demonio; los que por orgullo, están condenados (*Capítulos* 424).

James Version).⁴³ In response to Don Quixote's biblical call to be charitable, Sancho complains and says that "your grace controls my thoughts, and condemns me for them like a conflicted and confessed sinner."⁴⁴ Sancho bemoans his lowly position of a sinner standing next to a more righteous mentor. Don Quixote elevates Sancho's stinginess to a religious crime, insinuating that as a sinner he will "have paved the way to be a convict."⁴⁵

As the scene progresses, Don Quixote's speech about generosity begins to better resemble something from the Ten Commandments rather than mere commonplace advice. Don Quixote says, "We have to formulate, sign and finish a contract of those who are born of these principles: I give so that you give, I give so that you act; I act so that you give, I act so that you act; and let this good blind person serve to us as witness."⁴⁶ The phrase echoes the sentiments of the "Golden Rule," or to treat others as one wants to be treated. Don Quixote instructs Sancho to be liberal with the food he offers the blind man according to the "letras divinas" (divine letters), which is a reference to the Christian scripture. He reminds his disciple that "alms-giving is a credential for God" and is good documentation of who "has done a lot."⁴⁷

⁴³ I have relied upon the online King James Version, which can be located here: <http://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/2-Corinthians-9-7/>).

⁴⁴ Vuesa merced me fiscaliza los pensamientos, y me condena por ellos como a picador conflictivo y confeso (*Capítulos* 425).

⁴⁵ Si eres conflictivo, serás también conflexo: si eres confeso simplemente, picador de ti, te habrás de allanar a ser convicto (*Capítulos* 425).

⁴⁶ Hemos de formular, firmar y acabar un contrato de los que nacen de estos principios: Doy para que des, doy para que hagas; hago para que des, hago para que hagas; y sírvanos de testigo este buen ciego. Tú das el no decir expression proverbial, adagio o cosa que huela a refrán, ni en artículo de muerte, aun cuando sepas que has de entregar el alma al diablo (*Capítulos* 427).

⁴⁷ Lo que das al pobre, no lo echas en el agua: semilla es que produce en abundancia. O más bien, en el agua lo echas; pero, según las divinas letras, allá abajo, cuando menos acuerdes, lo volverás a coger... La limosna es credencial para con el Señor, documento de que El hace mucho caso (*Capítulos* 428).

To be snarky Sancho asks what will happen if he gives all his bread away so that his children do not have any. Don Quixote's replies: "I know also that in this axiom the misers and egoists foment their stinginess. Your children will belong to Judas; if they think it bad because you help a destitute person."⁴⁸ His advice to give all that he owns is similar to the Parable of the Widow in Mark 12:41-44, which is about a woman who donates her entire livelihood, which amounts to two coins. Even though Don Quixote does not reach into the saddle bags to act generously himself, he advises Sancho as an instructive mentor.

Montalvo's Quixote scolds Sancho's nonsensical proverbs, in imitation of the familiar trope in Cervantes, but his language takes on a legalistic and salvific dimension. Don Quixote suggests that he cannot wait for the day when Sancho wears the "codal stick,"⁴⁹ which is an object that hangs around a person's neck as a sign of public penance. Using vocabulary such as 'salvar' (to save), Sancho's proverbs turn him into a sinner needing to be schooled by Don Quixote to find *salvation*. Sancho even admits that if he is on the brink of condemnation, he will save as many as necessary so that he will be saved.⁵⁰ Don Quixote replies: "When your sins get you to that critical moment, you say them...but not so many or so dangerous that because of them you fall into divine anger."⁵¹ Cervantes's Quixote does not use the same language of force and salvation in regards to correcting Sancho's botched grammar,

⁴⁸ sé también que en este axioma hacen pie los avarientos y egoístas para fomentar su tacañería. Tus hijos serán de Judas; si llevan a mal que socorras con un pan al indigente (*Capítulos* 428).

⁴⁹ ¿Oh, y cuándo será el día que yo te vea con el palo codal, arrepentido de tus refranes? (*Capítulos* 426).

⁵⁰ si mi alma viniere a verse en peligro de condenación, he de echar cuantos refranes fuere menester para salvarla (*Capítulos* 427).

⁵¹ Cuando tus pecados te llevaren a ese trance, los dirás, repuso Don Quijote; pero no tantos ni tan escabrosos que a causa de ellos recaigas en la cólera divina (*Capítulos* 427).

suggesting that Montalvo's Quixote is more concerned with punishment for sins, which he equates to Sancho's proverbs.

Acting out of compassion, Montalvo's Don Quixote also uses Catholic theology to help others. In a chapter titled "The grand adventure of the three penitents, and others of less assumption," Don Quixote and Sancho stumble upon three hapless travelers. The text reads, "And as if everything occurred to *give meaning* to his profession, it happened that three men came up to them, not on foot but on all-fours" (emphasis added).⁵² To appreciate the religious undertones of this phrase, one must first compare it to a scene from Chapter Eight, Part I in the original *Don Quixote* when Don Quixote reveals the meaning of his profession. When asked to define the meaning of knights errant, Don Quixote answers with the historical formation of King Arthur's Round Table and its expansion of the order of chivalry:

through many different parts of the world, and among its members, famous and known for their great deeds, were the valiant Amadís of Gaul....and in our own time we have almost seen and communicated with and heard the invincible and valiant knight Don Belianís of Greece. This, then, gentlemen, is what it means to be a knight errant, and the order of chivalry is just as I have said, and in it, as I have also said, I though a sinner, have taken my vows, professing exactly what was professed by the knights I have mentioned. (Grossman 88)

For Cervantes's Quixote, the "meaning" of the knightly profession is derived from a perfect imitation of sixteenth-century chivalric heroes and a solemn vow to secure one's honorable knighthood. Montalvo's Quixote, on the other hand, draws meaning from his evangelical attempt to spread Catholic doctrine and to save people not simply

⁵² Como si todo ocurriera para dar asunto a su profesión, sucedió que por ahí se viniesen acercando tres personas, no de pies como racionales, sino a modo de cuadrúpedos (*Capítulos* 213).

from mortal danger but danger in the religious sense.

Instead of jumping to conclusions and ignoring these men, as Sancho might suggest, Don Quixote engages them in theological dialogue. For example, instantly Sancho's distrust leads him to believe that these men are feigning their invalid condition to steal their food. Sancho asks permission to kill them, but the withered man persuades Don Quixote that their cause is genuine: "Have piety, my brothers: we are not rogues nor invalids with motives, but rather good Catholic people who have vowed to drag ourselves to a sanctuary five leagues from here."⁵³ The first question Don Quixote asks them is: "Do you find yourselves in the purgative or illuminative way?"⁵⁴ His question unexpectedly shifts the conversation to Catholic theology and the three different states of Christian perfection.⁵⁵ Since these men are journeying towards spiritual atonement, the reader assumes that this would be an easy question for them to answer. The response from the penitent man (el penitente), however, is hilarious: "What ways are those?"⁵⁶ By now it is clear that these men are ignorant of Catholic theology and crawl on all fours in an attempt to steal their supplies. But Don Quixote, remaining oblivious, tries to help these men on their path of spiritual development and describes the purgative way as the "first state of the soul that wants

⁵³ Tengan piedad, hermanos, dijo el difunto: no somos pícaros ni inválidos de industria, sino gente de bien y católico, que hemos hecho voto de ir arrastrándonos a un santuario a cinco leguas de aquí (*Capítulos* 214).

⁵⁴ ¿Os hallábades en la vía purgative o en la iluminativa? (*Capítulos* 214).

⁵⁵ The purgative way refers to beginners who struggle to control their passions and temptations, and in their continual war to mitigate and avoid sin, rely on the primary armor of the abnegation of one's will, conformity to God, and prayer. The illuminative way describes people who still fall prey to venial sins but have largely curbed their passions, are more enlightened to spiritual and virtuous practices, and better practice recollection, the attention of the thoughts and emotions. As the name implies, the unitive way is the classification for people who have attained Divine virtue and form a union with God in perfect love. They are freed from temporal distractions and enjoy great peace and inner simplicity.

⁵⁶ ¿Qué vías son esas? (*Capítulos* 215).

to achieve perfection through tears, beating of the breast, and disciplines”; the man’s comical response is that he is “a little bit more” (215)⁵⁷ than that. Don Quixote then moves to describing the illuminative way, or the “second state of the soul that seeks perfection, and is occupied in loving and serving God, profoundly concerned with oneself. The man indicates that he is beyond that too. Awed that he is face to face with a man who has achieved perfection, Don Quixote declares: “You are in the unitive way: this is the final state of the soul, that passing through the first two, have made, in a certain way, a possessive act of divine holiness, and you have come to be one with the blessed and the angels.”⁵⁸ The man confirms that indeed, all of the penitents have obtained this final, perfect stage.

Making the scene even funnier, Montalvo’s creative linguistic invention of the noun form “gateador,” from the verb form ‘gatear,’ (“to crawl”) makes it so the lying man is called a “santo gateador” (saintly crawler). Reinforcing Don Quixote’s moral upperhand, spatially the knight stands erect while the hypocritical penitent men slimily crawl on all-fours in a more bestial and lowly position. To contrast with Don Quixote’s sincere agape love, Montalvo makes these men look like buffoons with their disingenuous, hypocritical pretenses of penance. Here Montalvo shows his playful manipulation of language for a purely humoristic effect.

Don Quixote does not remain unaware of their scheme, however, because

⁵⁷ algo más señor

⁵⁸ La purgativa, respondió don Quijote, es el primer estado del alma que desea llegar a la perfección por medio de lágrimas, golpes de pecho y disciplinas...la vía iluminativa es el segundo estado del alma que desea llegar a la perfección, y se ocupa en amar y servir a Dios, profundamente metida dentro de sí misma...vuestra vía era la unitiva, el último estado del alma, que pasando por los dos primeros, ha hecho, en cierto modo, acto posesivo de la beatitud divina, y ha venido a ser una misma cosa con los bienaventurados y los ángeles (*Capítulos* 215).

eventually he realizes their ploy and imagines them to be three protagonists from the literary epic poem *El Monserrate de Capitan* by Cristóbal de Virués.⁵⁹ He envisions the men as assassins or pirates, dragging themselves on four legs from Rome to Cataluña, or scoundrels climbing to the convent located on a mountaintop in Barcelona to share their stories and spoils. When he realizes their lie, Don Quixote unleashes a diatribe against their hypocrisy:

God is the highest, the holiest: honor Him with decorum, adore Him with majesty. That which vilifies His work does not please Him, that which stupefies Him irritates Him. The man of eminent virtue is one who loves Him with something like celestial pride; pride that is nothing more than a conviction of his own excellence. To unite oneself to the Infinite by light, to feel in his own affections, to look for Him with good works, this is being a saint. But we Spaniards are of such a nature that, like a little friar over there tells us that we are working for the soul, without a hat we are going to hell on our knees (*Capítulos* 216).⁶⁰

Don Quixote's discourse elevates him to assume a God-like role that passes judgment on a lowly sinner. Don Quixote is appalled that someone could "labor for a soul" by walking on all fours, suggesting that outward display is not indicative of inward virtue. Throughout the scene, it is clear that Don Quixote has been transformed into a vehicle for religious expression.

To heighten Don Quixote's honorable stature, Montalvo makes associative comparisons between his character and two prominent biblical figures, King David

⁵⁹ He was a 16th century Spanish dramatist and poet who also fought at Lepanto and is best known for *El Monserrate* (1587), an epic about the legendary founding of the monastery at Monserrate. The poem was well received in its time and had the honor of being praised by Cervantes, and of being reprinted in 1601 (<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/630207/Cristobal-de-Virues>).

⁶⁰ Dios es altísimo, santísimo: hónrale con decoro, adorable con majestad. El hombre de virtud eminente es el que le ama con uno como orgullo celestial; orgullo que no es sino convencimiento de su propia excelencia. Unirse al Infinito por la luz, sentirle en los afectos propios, buscarle con las buenas obras, esto es ser santo. Pero somos de condición los españoles, que, como un frailecico por ahí nos diga que labramos para el alma, sin sombrero nos vamos al infierno, andando de rodillas.

and the Apostle Paul. Seated around the table at Doña Engracia's house, Don Quixote begins the conversation of how he won his own kingdom by "killing the emperor and his captains with my own hand, and subduing those that I had the right to great life."⁶¹ This seems like unsatisfactory evidence for the claim that Don Quixote is Christ-like, but his boasts resemble the conquerer's mentality of other famous biblical figures. In response to Don Alejo's inquiry about how many people he has killed, Don Quixote tangentially mentions the feats of King Arthur and Bradamante, a heroine from Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, but evades giving a numerical answer: "by another law, everything flows in the orbit of chivalry, and the arms of knights errant enclose the secrets that are miracles for those that don't profess to follow them."⁶² A calm, religious man chimes in with a voice of wisdom: "There is not an untruthful thing in the allusions of the honorable Don Quixote: we see in sacred letters that when King David returned to teach a lesson to the Philistines, the children of Israel, crowned with roses, dancing around him singing harmoniously: 'Saul has killed a thousand soldiers! David ten thousand!'"⁶³ The man's alludes to I Samuel 7-8, which describes the Philistine's invasion of Israel's territory, Samuel's sacrificial lamb, and the subsequent end of the Philistine attacks. The direct comparison between Don Quixote and David is unsurprising given Montalvo's open appreciation for the Psalms and the King whom

⁶¹ mi negocio estará en ganarlo yo solo, matando con mi mano al emperador y sus capitanes, y sojuzgando a los que yo tuviere a bien el otorgar la vida (*Capítulos* 321).

⁶² Obras son estas inhacederas para vuestas Mercedes que viven entre flores, sabe Dios si bajo el prestigio de las Musas: todo corre por otro término en la órbita de la caballería, y las armas de los andantes encierran secretos que son milagros para los que no profesan el seguirlas (*Capítulos* 322).

⁶³ No hay cosa inverosímil en las alusiones del honrado Don Quijote, dijo a su vez un religioso de manso continente que estaba al lado de Doña Engracia: vemos en las sagradas letras que cuando el rey David volvía de escarmentar a los filisteos, las hijas de Israel, coronadas de rosas, danzaban a su alrededor cantando a contrapunto: ¡Saúl ha matado mil guerreros! ¡David diez mil! (*Capítulos* 322).

he believed to be their author. In the first issue of *El Regenerado* (The Regenerator) in 1876 he writes, “These [psalms] are in my memory; and since I have not stopped repeating them morning and night, to them I owe without the doubt the bread of seven years of exile and forgetfulness. Those who want to be saved from hunger should repeat from memory the verses of David [Psalm 23]” (qtd in Cátedra footnotes 322). He even calls the psalms “the grandest monument of sacred literature” and says “Job is the poet of pain; David is the one of happiness and joy, of gratitude and triumph” (qtd in Cátedra 322).⁶⁴ Despite Montalvo’s personal influence for including a Davidian reference, the allusion also carries great weight because it likens Don Quixote to another “golden age” figure among the ancients. In the introduction of *David’s Secret Demons: Messiah, Murderer, Traitor, King*, Baruch Halpern says:

He flees into exile, is transformed into a mandit, then mercenary, statesman, leader, king, victor, conqueror, and ruler....In basing his relationships on personal and political foundations, in banishing supernatural intervention and sometimes even instruction from the arena of social activity, David is a consummate revolutionary. Subtly but repeatedly, he sets traditional assumptions and practices on their ear. The great genius of his portrayal is not merely that it is convincing: it is that his nature, his individuality, drives his behavior at every crucial juncture in the story. David is not just the first human in literature, he is the first true individual, the first modern human (5-6).

This passage shows the extent to which King David is elevated to the status of a Golden Age biblical figure. As if to add to Halpern’s description, Don Quixote calls King David the “good Hebrew King” with his “benign type” and “sanctity of character.” He exclaims, “what a marvel that another less-stout man could have killed

⁶⁴ Me los puse en la memoria; y como ni noche ni mañana he dejado de repetirlos desde entonces, a ellos les debo sin duda el pan de siete años de destierro y olvido. Los que quieran estar a salvo del hambre, repitan de corazón los versos de David. Job es el poeta del dolor; David el de la felicidad y la alegría, de la gratitude y el amor triunfante.

fifteen or twenty thousand, Philistines or not, and forcefully entered Cairo and Babylon?”⁶⁵ The rhetorical question amounts to awed praise, suggesting that Don Quixote exalts David as his role model rather than Amadís de Gaula, the idol of Cervantes’s Quixote. This represents a focal shift from a centerpiece from Cervantes’s knightly satire to Montalvo’s priority to center his work around truthful biblical themes. Don Quixote’s repetitive praise of the King also draws an association between Don Quixote and his role model, eliciting a picture of a powerful, honorable, and well-loved king of great individuality and resilience.

After making an association between Don Quixote and King David, Montalvo draws a parallel between Don Quixote and Paul’s role in spreading Christianity. Don Alejo begins to prophesy that over time Don Quixote will “bring the light” to a fictitious country called Ansén. Located on the Asian continent because of a “powerful enchanter...it lies unknown in the middle of a dense fog that is surrounded by an impenetrable wall.”⁶⁶ The priest adds that “from this fog will emerge the noises and songs of pride from the people, by which those that hear them will come into understanding from an unknown nation inhabiting this mysterious land.”⁶⁷ The chaplain appropriately heightens the scene with descriptions of the dangerous fast-

⁶⁵ Si aquel buen rey hebreo, con toda su índole benigna y la santidad de su carácter, mató diez mil personas, ¿qué maravilla que otro menos sufrido mate quince o veinte mil, sean o no filisteos, y entre por fuerza de armas en el Cairo y Babilonia (*Capítulos* 323).

⁶⁶ Si las estrellas no me engañan, leo claramente en ellas que, con el transcurso del tiempo, Don Quijote de la Mancha ha de sacar a la luz del mundo aquel vasto país Ansén, que por efecto de un poderoso encanto yace desconocido en medio de una niebla espesa que le circuncie cual muralla impenetrable (*Capítulos* 324).

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flowing river surrounding the city that only a dauntless mariner could navigate.⁶⁸ Don Alejo adds, “For no other reason is Don Quixote called nebulous, because from that cloud he must take out that and he must submit it to the faith of Jesus Christ, baptizing it and afterwards, conquering it.”⁶⁹ At this point, debate for the interpretation of the analogy is less ambiguous—Don Quixote rises to the role of a Christian vanquisher who spreads the faith of Jesus Christ and baptizes its people. Now Don Quixote is construed as a Pauline figure diligently disseminating Christian doctrine to remote, fiercely guarded countries. To use a term from Eric Ziolkowki’s article “The Sanctification of Don Quixote: From Hidalgo to Priest,” Don Quixote has unequivocally become a “vehicle of religious transformation,” expanding his role beyond that of a simple Christian to a leading evangelist. In fact, Don Quixote agrees with Don Alejo and confirms that he has converted many pagans to Christians: “It is very common in chivalry to turn conquered pagans into Catholics, when they do not cut off their heads.”⁷⁰

The previous example illustrates Don Quixote’s evangelism on the scale of a whole nation, but the spectrum narrows to the conversión of one person during an intimate conversation with Sancho. Comically, the text says that when they stumble upon a thick forest as they’re out walking under a starry sky, Sancho “on his part did

⁶⁸ de esa niebla salen voces de gente, cantos de gallo, relinchos y otros ruidos, por donde los que los oyen vienen en conocimiento de que una nación ignorada habita esa tierra misteriosa. Nunca y nadie ha podido llegar a esa comarca con salir, como sale, de aquella densidad un caudaloso río, por el cual un denodado marino pudiera aventurarse a contracorriente.

⁶⁹ No por otra cosa se llama nebuloso señor Don Quijote, repuso Don Alejo, sino porque de esa nube ha de sacar esa nación y la ha de reducir a la fe de Jesucristo, bautizándola después de vencerla (*Capítulos* 324).

⁷⁰ Esto ha sucedido muchas veces, dijo Don Quijote, y es muy común en la caballería volver católicos a los paganos vencidos, cuando no se les corta la cabeza (*Capítulos* 324).

not have a very Catholic eye, from a hit on his face with which one of the branches greeted him very attentively.”⁷¹ Sancho says: “I say nothing, master, except that I am dying of fear and that I am going to entrust my whole heart to our Lord, Jesus Christ.”⁷² Don Quixote’s response is very telling of his Christian theology:

You remember St. Barbara while the thunderstorm lasts... but it has not even been an hour that you entrusted yourself to all the devils of hell, and now you are going to entrust yourself to Jesus Christ. When you actually put yourself in God’s hands, be certain that He offers them to you; but if you give yourself to His mercy only out of fear, then your pleas will fall on deaf ears: His will does not yield itself to a drop of honey, nor do you endear yourself to Him with pretended glibness. He sees in the middle of darkness, hears the silence, investigates your entrails and gets the true intention out of you. If you play the angel while the danger lasts, and return to your old ways, you will be the Portuguese man that offered up his donkey as a sacrifice until he got across the river (*Capítulos* 431).⁷³

In essence, Don Quixote scolds Sancho to stop being a fickle hypocrite; he should only take such a sacred vow when he is sincere. In addition, he says Sancho must enter into a state of grace for such a religious transformation to occur: “If you are not in a state of grace...all prayer is too much; for a year, you will go with a cross on your back without Jesus giving you signs of having heard you. You will not be able to think today of a more beneficial thing than in getting a little farther, and like someone who

⁷¹ Sancho Panza traía por su parte el un ojo no tan católico, de un pasagonzalo (*Capítulos* 431).

⁷² No digo nada, señor, sino que me estoy muriendo de miedo y que voy a encomendarme de todo corazón a Nuestro Señor Jesucristo (*Capítulos* 431).

⁷³ Te acuerdas de Santa Barbara mientras dura la tronada... no hace una hora que te encomendaste a todos los diablos del infierno, y ahora te vas a encomendar a Jesucristo. Cuando de veras te pones en manos de Dios, ten por cierto que El te las alarga; pero si te acoges a su misericordia tan solamente urgido por el miedo, tus plegarias caen en vacío: su voluntad no se rinde a una dedada de miel, ni a El se le enquillotra con marrullerías fingidas. El ve en medio de la oscuridad, oye el silencio, te escudriña las entrañas y te saca viva la intención. Si haces la seráfica en tanto que dura el peligro, y vuelvas a las andadas, serás el portugués que le hacía ofrenda de su burro hasta cuando pasaba el río.

says nothing, I'll scratch your back if you scratch mine."⁷⁴ When Sancho responds with a string of refrains that grammatically grate on Don Quixote's ears, he yells and insults him by comparing him to Judas and the Pharisees, biblical paradigms of betrayal and hypocrisy: "With these refrains of Judas you have to put an end to a bad public, obliging His Majesty to issue a royal order in which they are prohibited throughout his realm. Cursed are you, and your descendants, Sancho Pharisee, may I see you go begging for alms! You have put your soul on your back, and from behind your fierce, inextricable proverbs you will rise to greater ones."⁷⁵ His two biblical pejoratives steep the discourse within the tradition of good and evil cosmology, and even place its two representatives, Don Quixote and Sancho, standing next to each other. Even though Cervante's Quixote finds myriad ways to disgrace Sancho, he does not use these two biblical terms to the extent that Montalvo does. Don Quixote and Sancho hear a noise coming from somewhere. In the morning, the interchange between Don Quixote and Sancho takes place as follows:

Are these your prayers, Sancho? Upon opening my eyes, sir, I say what comes first to my mind, and I take it for granted that I am entrusting myself to God. – So when you wake up entrusting yourself to the Devil, replied Don Quixote, you take it for granted that you are entrusting yourself to God? No, sir, I don't entrust myself to the devil except when the day is advanced; in the morning my soul is fresh, my understanding, clear, anger doesn't dare come out of its cave,

⁷⁴ Si no estás en estado de gracia... toda oración es por demás; irás un año con la cruz a cuestras sin que el Señor de señales de haberte oído. No podrás pensar hoy en cosa de más provecho que en hacerte un poco allá, y como quien no dice nada, darte una Buena mano a buena cuenta (*Capítulos* 432).

⁷⁵ Con estos refranes de Judas has de hacer al fin un mal público, obligando a Su Majestad a dar una pragmática por la cual se los prohíba en todo el reino. ¡Maldito seas tú, y lo sea toda tu descendencia, Sancho fariseo, y que yo te vea pidiendo limosna! Te has echado el alma a la espalda, y por detrás de tus feroces inextricables refranes te subes a mayores (*Capítulos* 433).

because the freshness and innocence of the morning are repugnant to it (434).
⁷⁶

This passage shows the fickleness of Sancho's spirit because in response to Don Quixote's question he says that in the morning he is fresher of spirit and more willing to trust God. All of these passages create an interchange that is similar to a Catholic conversion narrative, suggesting further that Don Quixote is a type of Catholic evangelist.

Not only do Montalvo's allusions sanctify Don Quixote, but the characters also speak with biblical language. Interestingly, the characters make reference to "el Criador" ("the Creator), which only appears once in *Don Quijote* but shows up more frequently in *Capítulos*. The one substantive mention of the Creator in Cervantes occurs as such:

But when Don Quixote saw that his helmet had been broken, he thought he would go mad, and placing his hand on his sword and lifting his eyes to heaven, he said: 'I make a vow to the Creator of all things, and to the four Holy Gospels in the fullness of all their writing, that I shall lead the life led by the great Marquis of Mantua when he swore to avenge the death of his nephew Valdovinos, which was to eat no bread at the table, nor to lie with his wife, and other things which I do not remember (Grossman 73).

Cervantes's Quixote makes an invocation to God, similar to when Montalvo's Sancho wakes up from a peaceful night's sleep, described by the morning birds "chirping as a way of greeting the Creator."⁷⁷ Both authors use exaggerated, beautiful descriptions of nature as found in chivalric romances and pastoral novels, but only

⁷⁶ ...¿Son éstas tus plegarias, Sancho? Al abrir los ojos, señor, dijo lo que hallo de pronto en mi memoria, y hago cuenta que me encomiendo a Dios. --¿Así pues, cuando amaneces dándote al demonio, replicó Don Quijote, haces cuenta que a Dios te encomiendas? --Eso no, señor, al diablo no me doy sino bien entrado el día: de mañana tengo fresca el alma, claro el entendimiento, y la cólera no se atreve a salir de su caverna, porque la frescura y la inocencia de la madrugada se le oponen

⁷⁷ gorjeando a modo de saludar al Criador (*Capítulos* 433).

Montalvo goes further to add religious overtones. Another reference to the Creator occurs in the first chapter of Montalvo's *Buscapié*:

Yet if as thinkers we remove the coarse and vicious part from the human species, it remains incomplete: the pole of evil is a necessary resistance in our nature; and without tending towards a sacrilegious disorder, the wise person knows it is not possible to say: In this way, man would have been better. Everything the philosopher does to show us that we are vile and that we could be more worthy of the Creator, is to delineate the imaginary man. Such is Don Quixote: it almost happens that this sublime madman does not cry when he sits down at the table, like another Isidoro Alejandrino (*Capítulos* 93).⁷⁸

Moving past biblical allusions and biblical language, Montalvo's Quixote *actively* practices the Catholic ritual of prayer. In the original *Quijote*, the verb 'to pray' (rezar) and all of its conjugated forms only appear twice. Of these references, only one applies directly to Don Quixote when he says: "Well, then to work: let the actions of Amadís come to mind and show me where I must begin to imitate them. I already know that for the most part he prayed and commended himself to God, but what shall I use for a rosary, since I do not have one?" (Grossman 206). "Then he thought of what he could do, and he tore a long strip from his shirttails and tied eleven knots in it, one larger than the rest, and this served as his rosary during the time he was there, when he said a million Ave Marías."⁷⁹ Since Don Quixote was greatly troubled at not finding a hermit nearby who would hear his confession and console him, he spent his time

⁷⁸ Empero si a fuer de pensadores le quitamos a la humana especie su parte tosca y viciosa, queda descabalada: el polo del mal es contrarresto necesario en nuestra naturaleza; y sin propender a un sacrilegio trastorno, al sabio mismo no le es dable decir: "Así hubiera sido mejor el hombre." Todo lo que hace el filósofo para mostrarnos que somos ruines y que pudiéramos ser más dignos del Criador, es delinear el hombre imaginario. Tal es Don Quijote: en poco está que este loco sublime no derrame lágrimas al sentarse á la mesa, cual otro Isidoro Alejandrino.

⁷⁹ This phrase was considered irreverent, and in the second edition it was replaced by "And for a rosary he took some large galls from a cork tree, which he strung together and used as prayer beads."

walking through the meadow, writing and scratching on the tree trunks and in the fine sand many verses, all of them suited to his sorrow and some of them praising Dulcinea. Curiously, Montalvo must have noticed the lack of religiosity in Cervantes because his text says: “Cide Hamete does not tell if Don Quixote prayed during his escapades as a knight errant.”⁸⁰ To compensate for the lack of evidence in Cervantes’s version for whether Don Quixote prayed during his adventures or not, Montalvo takes the liberty to fill in the gaps and assert that it must have been *so* obvious for the knight to pray that Cide Hamete overlooked any mention of it. Translated literally, “por lo sabido” means “taken for granted,” which is a phrase that the narrator uses to explain its omission, because “the good knight was Christian before everything, and knew that knights had been indefatigable prayers, masters and experts of the rosary.”⁸¹ This simple sentence reveals Montalvo’s obsession for remaining faithful to the original version while ensuring that his character dutifully prays: “Seated on the bed, Don Quixote mumbled his Hail Mary’s when a very tall friar, having gone through the chapel with heavy steps, entered with a lamp in his hand and went near Don Quixote and said “Peace be with you.”⁸² Both men exchange a Catholic greeting ritual which will mark one of the rare scenes when a friar does not abuse a religious practice.

In addition to occupying other lofty roles, Don Quixote also leisurely discusses theological matters as if he were an armchair theologian. When Sancho mistakes the

⁸⁰ Cide Hamete no cuenta si Don Quijote rezaba en la Carrera de las aventuras: lo omitió por sabido (*Capítulos* 254).

⁸¹ como el bueno del hidalgo era cristiano ante todo, y sabía que los caballeros andantes habían sido infatigables rezadores, maestros y peritos en el negocio del rosario (*Capítulos* 254).

⁸² Sentado en la cama Don Quijote, mascullaba sus avemarías, cuando un fraile altísimo calada la capilla, grave el paso, entró y se acercó a él con una lámpara en la mano. “Pacem meam de vobis, dijo

nonexistent word “esprucu” for “escrúpulo” (scruple), it gives Don Quixote an opportunity to philosophize about sin. Settling into his donkey’s saddle, Sancho asks: “your grace is an expert on what they call sins?”⁸³ Admitting his imperfections, Don Quixote responds, “In committing them?...I am a sinner before God.”⁸⁴ Perhaps feeling relieved that he is not alone in his impure thoughts, Sancho declares, “I leave an esprucu that was eating the insides of my soul”⁸⁵. Don Quixote assures him that “escrúpulo” (scruple) is the word he’s looking for and plays along with his mistake: “In this case, you can quiet your conscience, because I am certain that I can remove it from the entrails of your soul, and from even farther inside, since yours is composed of so many departments. But if that esprucu is an insect, snake, or other evil being that has attached itself to your soul, I will not be able to rescue you from your affliction.”⁸⁶ Relieving Sancho’s doubt, Don Quixote comforts him with the knowledge that scruples can be assuaged but ‘esprucus’ or villainous insects cannot be removed. Don Quixote calms Sancho by saying that having misgivings or doubts is a normal human reaction that can be mitigated. Trying to understand this concept better, Sancho asks if scruple is what one “experiences when one is not sure if he has acted good or bad.”⁸⁷ Don Quixote illustrates his point using the example of stealing plunder from the king, especially given that Sancho considered helping himself to the king’s money: “Keep in mind that I never do anything like one who steals: if I attack the mules, it would be

⁸³ ¿vuesa merced es perito en esto que llaman pecados, señor Don Quijote? (*Capítulos* 286).

⁸⁴ ¿En el cometerlos?... pecador soy yo a Dios (*Capítulos* 286).

⁸⁵ yo salga de un esprucu que me está carcomiendo las entrañas del alma (*Capítulos* 286).

⁸⁶ En este caso, puedes acallar la conciencia, cierto de que yo te lo quito de las entrañas del alma, y aun de más adentro, si la tuya se compone de muchos departamentos. Mas si ese esprucu es algún insecto, aspid, culebra u otro ente maléfico que se te ha adherido al alma, no me será dable sacarte de tu cuita (*Capítulos* 286).

⁸⁷ experimenta cuando no acierta a saber si ha obrado bien o mal (*Capítulos* 286).

a Christian thing, without bad intention or damage to another.”⁸⁸ If Don Quixote is Montalvo’s spokesman, then the passage alludes to the debate about intention as a good determiner of morality. Sancho turns again to Don Quixote as a theological expert and source of authority, to which Don Quixote responds with a philosophical air and appropriate advice.

Assuming a variety of different roles, Don Quixote ranges from an armchair theologian to an engager of Catholic ritual to a spokesman for biblical passages to a proselytizing apostolic figure to sharing similarities with Paul and David and even a bishop’s advisor. Even though Don Quixote speaks about morality, as Ochoa Shivapour has suggested, she fails to realize that Montalvo goes even farther to sanctify his Quixote as a vehicle for religious transformation to set up an amplified satire for his social commentary to shine through. For Montalvo, morality is more expansive because it is essentially religious in nature.

⁸⁸ Tenga presente que yo jamás hago nada como quien roba: si acometo a las acémilas, hubiera sido a lo cristiano, sin mala intención ni daño de tercero (*Capítulos* 286).

“En nuestra política no entra para nada la religión”: Montalvo’s Anticlericalism and the Exposure of Hypocrisy

With the same force with which Cervantes proposes to satirize chivalric romances, Montalvo ridicules clergy and their supposed devoted adherence to Catholic doctrine. As a proponent for greater individual freedoms and less governmental intervention, Montalvo was deeply troubled by the Catholic Church’s increasing interference and a civil authority that served this end through wayward means. As José Miguel Oviedo observes, Montalvo “considered religion and dictatorship as almost indistinguishable, and in this way he contributed to the anticlerical tradition that developed in 19th-century Latin America” (Encyclopedia of the Essay 573). Not surprisingly, then, excepting the narrative allusions to political irresponsibility, friars become the continual butt of his overt and subtle jokes. Montalvo’s targeted group comes under special scrutiny in the nineteenth chapter, harmlessly titled “Where things are accounted for that only Sancho concluded as adventure.”⁸⁹

Montalvo borrows a similar strategy from *Las Catilinarias* when he hyperbolizes and condemns a long list of Veintemilla’s vices in one of the most anti-clerical chapters in *Capítulos*. One of Sancho’s simple questions unfolds to an increasingly unabashed and vicious critique of friars’ vices. Montalvo creates a noteworthy list and brings them to life through hyperbolic caricatures of ten fictitious friars, each representing a different vice. It is as if Montalvo were creating an illustrated portrait of his prioritized seven deadly sins. Sancho’s first question to Don Quixote is to confirm whether the men they have just seen are Franciscan friars or not:

⁸⁹ Donde se da cuenta de cosas que sólo para Sancho Panza concluyeron como Aventura (Capítulos 287).

“Suppose, your grace, that they are only some good Franciscans, and tell me where to attack them so you won’t be excommunicated. Either I have pataracts in my eyes, or the giants that are coming here are the friars as I have mentioned.”⁹⁰ Don Quixote corrects Sancho’s incorrect use of ‘pataratas’ as ‘cataratas’ (cataracts) and agrees that his squire might see everything in reverse: “Pray that you do have cataracts in your eyes so that you do not see everything in reverse. You are right, Sancho, for either I know little about friars, or these are indeed Franciscans.”⁹¹

Since this scene is an allusion to chapter eight in Part I of *Don Quijote*, it is interesting to see what meaningful differences arise. After Don Quixote charges towards windmills that he mistakes for giants, he attacks a Benedictine friar passing by in a coach. In Cervantes, Don Quixote attacks the friars in spite of Sancho’s admonitions (“consider what you’re doing—don’t let the devil deceive you”); in Montalvo’s version Sancho and Don Quixote are more sanctified because, despite their violent threats, they never act on them. To make the connection between these scenes unmistakably clear, Montalvo’s narrator alludes to the Benedictine friars from Cervantes: “As luck would have it the knight took the pedestrians for what they really were, and they did not suffer that of the Benedictines with whom our Don Quixote did what the histories tell. The three were priests of a calm and grave appearance.”⁹² The

⁹⁰ Suponga vuesa merced...que no son sino unos buenos religiosos de San Francisco, y dígame por dónde les embiste que no quede excomulgado. O tengo pataratas en los ojos, o los gigantes que aquí llegan no son sino los frailecitos que he dicho (*Capítulos* 287).

⁹¹ “pluguiese al cielo que tuvieras cataratas en los ojos, para que no vieses las cosas al revés. Lo que es ahora estás en lo justo, Sancho; pues o sé poco de frailes, o éstos son en efecto unos de san Francisco” (*Capítulos* 287).

⁹² Quiso la suerte de los viandantes que el caballero los tomase por lo que eran en verdad, y éstos no corrieron la de los monjes benitos con quienes nuestro hidalgo hizo lo que cuentan las historias. Eran los que venían tres sacerdotes de reposado y grave aspecto (*Capítulos* 287).

motif of ‘appearance versus reality’ which underpins *Don Quixote de la Mancha* also occurs in Montalvo, but in this instance Don Quixote and Sancho are undeceived by their eyes because they took the pedestrians “for what they really were.” Because Montalvo wants to ensure that the incredibly hyperbolic descriptions of disfigured friars that follow are unmistakably clear and true, the narrator takes careful measure to say that the pair does not suffer from a skewed vision of reality,

The satire begins with an in depth description of the physically unattractive and distorted appearances of the friars, suggesting that they possess an external appearance to represent appropriately their inwardly disfigured and villainous morals. One friar is described as having a red bulky face (*cara abultada y sanguínea*) that swallows up his eyes (*los ojos comidos*), white eyebrows (*las cejas blancas*) and purple lips (*los labios morados*) that point to his old age and insobriety, a short neck (*el cuello corto*), broad shoulders (*hombros anchos*), and tiny legs (*piernas diminutas*). In one highly-charged sentence, Montalvo clearly criticizes the inactive, lazy lifestyle of old friars who eat and drink to excess without doing any physical labor and whose huge shoulders and spindly legs look monstrously disproportioned. Father Justo, who also serves as their tour guide (“*el cicerone*”), continues to take Don Quixote and Sancho on a tour through the convent and liberally comments upon the physical appearance and defining characteristics of each friar. It appears not to be a coincidence that his name, Justo, is synonymous with such words as “fair,” “just,” “right,” and “exact,” because he is the one exposing the ills of the place. The first friar he points out is Emerencio Caspicada, “whose feet could not touch each other because the horse

was as big as he was. Put next to the Giralda, one cannot tell which is the tower and which is the friar.”⁹³ To describe the friar’s obesity Father Justo compares his girth to la Giralda, the tall bell tower of the Gothic cathedral in Seville, Spain.

To further exaggerate the friars’ laziness, Father Justo tells Don Quixote and Sancho that “the new provincial has granted a week of relaxation, and I am going with part of the community to one of our possessions, where spread out can rest our choristers and novices.”⁹⁴ It is quite humorous that the friars should be awarded another week off from their already unproductive labors and possess multiple get-away locations for some traditional relaxation.

To make a grand statement about the ineptitude of friars, Father Justo mentions that to officiate at Christmas Eve mass Father Emerencio takes a rooster and “crams it and its feathers and all into a box, and its comb is offered for the good of his ancestors.”⁹⁵ To fully appreciate the joke, one must first understand that “la misa de gallo,” (Mass of the Rooster) is the mass celebrated at midnight on Christmas Eve when the rooster first crows. What emerges is a hilarious image of Father Emerencio sacrificing a rooster and offerings its comb, the red fleshy part on top of the bird’s head, to his ancestors because the friar has grossly, and literally, misunderstood the ritual. Montalvo underscores their ignorance and the absurdity of botching a holy ritual when it is their duty to perform such tasks.

Montalvo continues to lambaste the low intelligence of the friars through the

⁹³ este religioso cuyos pies van a toca no toca, con ser su caballo tan grande como él mismo. Puesto al lado de la Giralda, no se sabe cuál es la torre y cuál es la padre (*Capítulos* 289).

⁹⁴ el nuevo provincial ha otorgado una semana de huelga, y voy con parte de la comunidad a una de nuestras posesiones, donde tomen descanso y se esparzan mis coristas y novicios (*Capítulos* 288).

⁹⁵ se lo embaúla con plumas y todo, y la cresta la ofrece por el bien de sus antepasados (*Capítulos* 289).

next victim, Damián Arévalo, who is the genius of the convent (“lumbera”) and philosopher without equal (“sin par”) that “corrects badly written letters with erudition and self-assurance.”⁹⁶ The striking juxtaposition of high diction about the friar’s intelligence as a “lumbera” and critic “sin par” and his actual work of doing the thoughtless task of correcting spelling mistakes forces the reader to laugh. Father Justo admits that he is responsible for having “censured a certain scribbler, but it has been according to all the rules of the art. If your grace saw the tildes that fool puts on the ñ’s, you would crack up with laughter.”⁹⁷ Father Justo’s covert editing of Father Damián’s work reveals several ideas: first, the subpar work of a friar performing an already simplistic task, and second, the rest of the congregation’s blindness to his actual incompetence by applauding his brilliance. Montalvo similarly believes the clergy are a group of stupid, disillusioned men who overstate, undeservedly, their knowledge and abilities. These themes coincide with Montalvo’s wider beliefs of 19th century anti-clericalism. He also couples these affronts with a secondary criticism that these Latin American friars bastardize the pure Castilian language through their pathetic, incorrect usage.

Montalvo’s next move is to criticize the friars’ overindulgent alcoholic behavior. Father Justo informs his attentive audience about Father Frolo whom “we have put to saying mass without wine for two months, and eight more will pass before he says it with wine. When he must pour the wine into the chalice, he drinks it from

⁹⁶ Corrige las pes y las tes mal hechas, con erudición y desenfado (*Capítulos* 289).

⁹⁷ No niego que haya censurado yo a cierto escritoruelo, pero ha sido según todas las reglas del arte. Si viera vuesa merced las tildes que les pone a las eñes ese tonto, se destornillara de risa (*Capítulos* 289).

the cruet.”⁹⁸ Wine, normally reserved for the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, must be withheld from Father Frollo for fear that his intoxication will de-sacralize this most sacred of a priest’s duties. Usually, friars are lauded for their ascetic self-restraint, but Father Frollo is different. He is so obsessed with alcohol that he cannot wait for the wine to be poured into the chalice but must slurp it straight from the altar cruet. In just two sentences, Montalvo not only criticizes this friar’s alcoholism but also shows how their lack of restraint can corrupt the convent.

Moving from easily observable vices such as overindulgence and ineptitude, Father Justo points out friars who commit sins less obvious to the outside eye. Father Justo describes Father Deidacio with his “face of a Paschal lamb” (con su cara de cordero pascual) and his nickname of the “invisible one” because of the “skill and subtlety with which he slips between cracks, and scrutinizes the smallest corners of the convent cells, and leaves without leaving a trace of how many sweets the nuns and women he confesses send to the him.”⁹⁹ If he is able to earn affections from his female counterparts in the form of sweets, this implies illicit behavior. Even his nickname and subtle, sly movements resemble a sneaky villain creeping about the convent unnoticed. Father Deidacio defends himself against Father Justo’s unfair assessment with the noble claim that “fearing for the health of my superiors, I remove this temptation [of these delicious gifts] from their eyes, so that when an urge overcomes them it will not

⁹⁸ hace dos meses le tenemos diciendo misa en seco, y transcurrirán ocho sin que la diga en mojado. Cuando ha de trasegar el vino al caliz, se lo bebe en las vinajeras (*Capítulos* 289).

⁹⁹ llamado entre nosotros, *el invisible*, a causa de la maña y sutileza con que se cuela rendijas adentro, y escudriña los menores rincones de la celda abacial, y sale sin dejar ni clavo ni estaca en la pared de cuantas golosinas envían al padre sus hijas de confesión y las monjas (*Capítulos* 290).

be fitting for the order to have acephalism.”¹⁰⁰ His sacrifice is comical, just like a daughter who eats the rest of the chocolate cake to save her family from high cholesterol. His reference to acephalism, the absence of the head (as in some monsters), further hyperbolizes the image; the reader can picture a group of gathered friars gobbling up assorted sweets like indiscriminate, hungry demons. Father Justo then sarcastically calls Deidacio the “guardian angel of the convent” (*el ángel de la guarda de sus superiores*) because when impoverished people come to the convent to receive food he sneaks some for himself. Smuggling food is an act of selfishness that neither accords with the call to help the less-fortunate or to act on behalf of God for the interest of others. Through these examples, Deidacio successfully breaks all three of the Franciscan vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience.¹⁰¹

Father Castaña is another example of stealthy corruption with equally furtive and unflattering motives. He is called the “argonauta” (Argonaut), a term derived from classical mythology referring to a person on a quest for something dangerous yet rewarding.¹⁰² To live up to his name, Padre Castañas “goes through the air from the convent to the Street and the Street to the convent, without there being a wall that he does not jump over, or a tower from which he lets himself down every night of the

¹⁰⁰ vienen del monasterio son tan bien condimentadas y llenas de guarniciones que, temiendo por la salud de mis superiores, les quito de los ojos la tentación, no sea que cuando menos acordemos les dé un patatús y quede la orden en acefalía (*Capítulos* 290).

¹⁰¹ According to an authoritative Franciscan website (<http://www.franciscans.org/index.php/en/who/conv-franc/vows>), the evangelical vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, which flow from and intensify our baptismal call to holiness, serve to bind the friars together in a common way of life. It is this vowed relationship to God and one another that allows the friars to embrace the world as their cloister and serves to bind them together in a fraternal relationship and way of life.

¹⁰² An Argonaut was a member of the band of men who sailed to Colchis with Jason on the ship ‘Argo’ in search of the Golden Fleece.

week.”¹⁰³ He is like the rebellious teenager who slips out against parental rules to do whatever he wants, yet his consequences are more severe, since he is a man of God who could face expulsion for breaking sacred Catholic laws. Father Justo admits that it is more curious that Father Castañas leaves during the day only on Thursdays and Sundays to visit the sick and spends the rest of his days in quiet meditation. Not only does he flagrantly disobey the laws of his convent but he also neglects his clerical duties to administer to the community’s needs. Since Juan Montalvo is Ecuador’s nineteenth-century watchdog of corruption, it is unsurprising that the narrator, Father Justo, highlights the deceitful practices of Father Deidacio, a kleptomaniac, and Father Castañas, a sneaky friar. Their lack of punishment, however, reveals Montalvo’s deepening distrust of the clergy’s unrestricted and unexamined actions behind closed doors and subsequent absence of accountability.

Not only does Montalvo abrasively expose behaviors ill-befitting of friars within a religious community, but he also attacks the hierarchy and practices of Catholicism itself. Father Justo leads them to brother Valentín, whom they appropriately call “*el santo*” (the saint) because he is on track for canonization. Since quotation marks are Montalvo’s usual form of emphasis, the isolated use of italics suggests that the nickname should be read in a sarcastic, drawn-out tone. Father Justo says that Brother Valentín is offered the promotion because of his “*dolorida y callada continencia*” (painful and quiet continence) as a result of the spiked belt or hairshirt he

¹⁰³ se anda por los aires del convento a la calle y de la calle al convento, sin que haya pared que no salte, ni torre por donde no se descuelgue todas las noches de la semana (*Capítulos* 291).

wears on his crotch.¹⁰⁴ Considering that a hairshirt is a coarse cloth usually worn around the thighs as a sign of penance, its precise position on his crotch scratches the reader's bodily humor, creating a comical, albeit peculiar (and painful) image. The double entendre of the word "continence" also adds to the humor; on one hand, it means self-restraint, but its less-than-rosy physiological definition of "the ability to voluntarily control urinary and fecal discharge" (OED dictionary) undercuts the friar's accomplishment. If the absurdity of weaing a cilice on one's crotch earns such admiration and ascent in rank up the hierarchical ladder, Montalvo critiques the Catholic Church for following an arbitrary process to make undeserved promotions.

To add another dimension to these criticisms, Father Justo adds that *el santo* never leaves his bed unless he is unwell, showing that friars do not earn their positions through altruism but through inactive, personal suffering. What is worse is that the other brothers admire him and the undeserving behavior that Montalvo criticizes.¹⁰⁵ Brother Valentín does make a redeeming effort, however, to correct these praises with a more accurate picture: since he was a child he was under orders not to enter the frigid church because of his ill-health. Don Quixote congratulates Brother Valentín for his faith but fears that with his nightly visits to the bathroom, "he has not been forced to do meditation, and must go and look for it..."¹⁰⁶ His unfinished sentence provides the perfect opening for Father Justo to finish his sentence with the ultimate insult: "in Hell." The passage begins with the appraisal of Brother Valentín's canonization, but

¹⁰⁴ que parece traer cilicios hasta en la horcajadura, según su dolorida y callada continencia (*Capítulos* 291).

¹⁰⁵ a quien a buena cuenta llamamos desde ahora el santo (*Capítulos* 291)

¹⁰⁶ no le halle la ronda en la cama, porque no ha de haber santo que le haga tercera, y será menester vaya a buscarlo...en los infiernos (*Capítulos* 292).

the text takes a sudden turn so that the final word in the paragraph indicates that Brother Valentín, *el santo*, will end up in Hell. However much he has tried to reverse these undue pretenses of saintly righteousness, he must go searching in the hellish flames for the praiseworthy clerical traits he lacks.

If Montalvo's anti-clerical sentiments had not been made clear enough, he also turns friars into the perpetrators of one of the novel's most violent scenes. While Don Quixote and Father Justo are speaking, the friars are outside throwing their capes onto Sancho's donkey. The irascible Sancho unleashes a few of his proverbs as a friar grabs him roughly by the collar and throws him to the side. Sancho falls to the ground on all fours and takes refuge under his donkey to avoid any more beating. The friars leave without another word. The episode shows the friars acting more like a gang of teenage boys who injure their victims for sport rather than a group who should practice nonviolence of the Catholic faith.

To widen the dimension of his anticlerical criticisms, Montalvo includes scenes in which other characters comment upon broader social and political themes surrounding friars. A dinner conversation between Sancho, a Butler, and their hospitable hostess, Doña Engracia, veers towards a description of Sancho's reign on the "ínsula Bataria." Two notable differences emerge: first, as a form of comical self-aggrandizement, Sancho calls himself the "King" rather than the "Governor," and second, his details target the opulence of the Catholic hierarchy. Montalvo exploits the familiar trope of *la isla Bataria* to present a parallel chilling portrait of an Ecuadorian society run afoul by corruption and poor government. Sancho's first detail and source

of pride is the serene security enjoyed by all people. Highlighting its peacefulness, Sancho boasts that his reign is free from wars and neighboring conflicts; more importantly, the populace is not immobilized by a constant fear to avoid threats of assault and death. It is hard to ignore the subtle parallel to general Ecuadorian society living in constant fear from attacks from neighboring Colombia (precipitated by Garcia Moreno) and a crushing sense of insecurity from the mad rule of two tyrants. Sancho could also be a mouthpiece for Montalvo's opinions on his country's economic irresponsibility and decrepit electoral process. Referring to himself as the judicious king, Sancho describes how he has put the reign's riches into reserve so that they will accrue a larger fortune, and all of this is "without taking into account the merit of the farms that are looked after by the reigning family, farms and pastures where horses as big as churches are raised, and that beget the best colts in the world."¹⁰⁷ His description paints an idealistic portrait of a land flowing with milk and honey, of happily plump horses running through the countryside. Sancho makes an astute comment that "it is understood that he is a good monarch, who is also loved by his vassals."¹⁰⁸ In addition to his financially prosperous reign, Sancho is well-loved by its people. As a larger social commentary, Montalvo shows that good governance and smart fiscal policy go hand in hand—but were also eminent characteristics absent from the tyrannical reigns of Veintemilla and Moreno.

Moving from politics to religion, Montalvo's Sancho describes an event in his

¹⁰⁷ Esto es sin hacer mérito de las alquerías que corren de cuenta particular de la familia reinante, fincas y pastos donde se crían yeguas grandes como iglesias, que dan los mejores potros del mundo (*Capítulos* 328).

¹⁰⁸ ya se entiende que es buen monarca, querido además por sus vasallos (*Capítulos* 328).

reign that amounts to priestly immunity and poor legal justice. Sancho explains how each year on the queen's birthday she asks him to grant a general pardon for delinquents and the remission of sins.¹⁰⁹ Her request is ridiculous. Why would the royal family allow a mass exodus of prisoners to be released into the kingdom? Even more incomprehensible is the monarch's ability to grant forgiveness of sins when normally that is reserved for members of the church. Voicing such a sentiment, the Butler rightly exclaims, "Stop there, Don Sancho Panza! This business of the remission of sins is the provenance of priests who forgive them one by one, if the sinner demonstrates repentance."¹¹⁰ The Butler wonders how Sancho could possibly possess this power if he is only a temporary sovereign ruler¹¹¹, but offers a list of viable options appropriately within the powers of his office: Sancho could grant safe-conducts (*otorgar salvoconductos*), releases from prison (*hacer excarcelaciones*), exemptions from judgment (*eximir de juicio a un culpable*), or it is understood (*se entiende*) that he could act like a despot (*obrando a lo déspota*). All of these sentences build up to the final comedic piece of advice—to usurp the state's power. The phrase 'se entiende,' or the English idiomatic equivalent of "you know" or "duh," is ripe with Montalvo's sarcasm—if a leader cannot govern properly, as a last resort he can snatch total control. The Butler maintains that the only way for Sancho to remit sins would be if he were simultaneously made "confessor and sovereign, two things that certainly contradict each other. The best course of action for your grace would be to attach

¹⁰⁹ En el natalicio de la reina, esta señora impetra de su augusto esposo indulto general para los delincuentes, y remision de los pecados, con motivo de tan fausto acontecimiento (*Capítulos 328*).

¹¹⁰ ¡Alto ahí, señor Don Sancho Panza! eso de remitir los pecados es incumbencia de los sacerdotes, quienes los remiten uno por uno, si el pEgador muestra arrepentirse (*Capítulos 328*).

¹¹¹ ¿Cómo va a perdonarlos vuesa merced, cuando no es sino soberano temporal? (*Capítulos 328*).

yourself to the church, supposing that the peace of the world and the remission of sins are to your taste.”¹¹² All of these comments show the potential harm wrought from an inseparable church and state, a topic that Montalvo touches upon in two of his other essays, *Las Catalinas* and *El Cosmopolita*, when he scorns the dangerously expanding powers of the Ecuadorian Catholic church and its meddling in governmental affairs. Thus, the Butler’s advice for Sancho to ally with the church is charged with sarcasm, because Montalvo would never recommend such an action. If it is the only solution, then it further reveals the clergy’s monopoly of power and the limited means of the Ecuadorian public to fight back. The Butler’s ‘if one can’t fight it, join it’ attitude is not necessarily defeatist but a recognition of a harsh reality for Ecuadorian citizens.

To prove further the point of the church’s range of power, Montalvo hyperbolizes the economic boom of Sancho’s reign to show that such success can be earned without the church’s support and delegation of funds. When the Butler accuses Sancho of greed, he replies that “economy is not greed”¹¹³ and points out that nobody in his reign has succumbed to starvation (*nadie se ha de morir de hambre*) because a wise financial advisor reserved resources for calamitous times. Sancho’s distinction between economy and greed reflects Montalvo’s belief that a thriving economy to benefit the whole populace could come about through shrewd and benevolent means rather than greed and corruption. Sancho’s obvious solutions—to give to the poor, save money, and fight hunger—are subtle criticisms against Ecuador’s foolish

¹¹² ordenándose el rey, fuere a un mismo tiempo confesor y soberano, cosas que en cierto modo se contradicen. Lo mejor en vuesa merced sería acogerse a Iglesia, supuesto que son tan de su gusto la paz del mundo y la remisión de los pecados (*Capítulos* 328).

¹¹³ Economía no es avaricia (*Capítulos* 329).

financial practices and inability to accomplish such tasks. To sum up, this interchange suggests that for a sovereign ruler to assume the church's powerful role as confessor and redeemer, one must heavily abuse the sovereign power to do crazy things like set prisoners free. The rosy-colored idealism of Sancho's prosperous kingdom shows what prudent, church-state separation can accomplish.

The laziness of friars is another topic of ridicule. After Sancho's claim that he is excited to return to the peaceful rest (*descanso*) and security (*seguridad*) of his own house, the Butler delivers a great punch line: "This is being a canon."¹¹⁴ This response suggests that friars do nothing else but sleep within the comforts of their cloister. The Butler then describes an exhaustive list of a typical clergy member's work day. At nine in the morning the clergyman raises his "venerable head" (*la cabeza venerable*) from "two pillows made of crimson silk" (*dos almohadones de seda carmesí*) surrounded by "thick Damask curtains" (*un espeso cortinaje de damasco*). To accentuate the friar's wealth, Montalvo chooses satin and Damask because they are expensive, luxurious fabrics. At ten he opens his eyes slightly to smell the "high quality meat" (*buenas carnes*) from the breakfast cooking downstairs but prefers to lay in the comforts of his bed. He "demands his breeches" (*pide al fin las calzas*), although it's unclear who is fulfilling this request, puts on his slippers (*las chancletas*) and slides into the breakfast table "very well wrapped up in a stuffed cassock."¹¹⁵ Montalvo's clever word choices create a funny image of a fat priest wiggling into his snug-fitting garb. Both adjectives, "arrozado" and "embutido," convey the meaning

¹¹⁴ Esto es ser canónigo (*Capítulos* 329).

¹¹⁵ muy arrozado de una balandrán embutido (*Capítulos* 328).

of stuffed. ‘Arrebozado’ means to be wrapped up in a shawl-like garment while ‘embutido’ refers to sausages, thereby rendering a comic translation: stuffed like a sausage in his muffled dress. If the priest resembles the fat sausage that he is about to eat, measuring a ‘jeme’—the distance from the thumb to the end of the forefinger when both are extended—this suggests that priests *are* good for nothing other than dressing like and eating savory sausages. After dining on hot chocolate, amply buttered bread, and meats from the comforts of an armchair “worthy of the Pope” (una butaca pontificia), the in-house barber (el barbero de servicio) uses a washbasin to shave the reverend so that it was as if the man “had taken seven baths in the fountain of youth.”¹¹⁶ To fit within the elaborate scheme, the clergyman’s cassock is made of silk with a line of fine, jet-black buttons that go from the neck to foot.¹¹⁷ With all the details put together, the convent more closely looks like a luxurious spa filled with pampered friars than a place of religious activity.

Even though they are treated like royals the friars act with ill-mannered rudeness. To create a startling contrast between the priest’s moralistic ugliness shrouded in pompous finery, Montalvo plays with alternating hyperbolic adverbs against low diction. For example, the priest enters the chapel where a meeting is assembled and starts to “sing in a respectable voice” that is occasionally interrupted with a “mature and rather unclean cough, which makes it known that it leaves the most

¹¹⁶ como si hubiera tomada siete baños en la fuente de Juvencio. Juvencio is a medieval corruption of a Latin word referring to youth (*Capítulos* 329).

¹¹⁷ de fino azabache el cordón de botones que desde la quijada se suceden hasta la punta del pie (*Capítulos* 329).

revered belly and passes through a hairy chest.”¹¹⁸ Juxtaposing a “respectable voice” and a loud cough produces a comedic effect. Placing the superlative “reverendísimo” (most revered) near “velludo” (hairy) produces a jarring incongruity between the priest’s normal-looking chest and his idolization as a priest. The narrator says that when he walks in religious processions, the “train” (cauda) of his cassock is so long that it looks like “a comet” (un cometa). The celestial metaphor evokes a divine, awe-inspiring aura yet produces a ridiculously ostentatious image of such over-the-top dress. As Enrique Anderson Imbert also observes, it was a Romantic characteristic to brusquely alternate sublime and vulgar expressions,¹¹⁹ a contrasting diction of which Montalvo makes excellent use.

To show the complicated web of church politics, Sancho’s rejects the Butler’s invitation to join the church hierarchy. After the Butler finishes his detailed descriptions of a typical day in the life of the church, he asks Sancho: “what will we say if from prebend your grace rises to precentor, from precentor to archdeacon, from archdeacon to dean, and from here you pass to bishop or perhaps archbishop at once.”¹²⁰ His description of the ascension from prebend to archbishop humorously shows what an impossibly slow proposition that would be. But then the Butler remarks: “I think that the great cape would fit don Sancho perfectly, and without further

¹¹⁸ se pone a cantar en voz respetable, interrumpiéndola de cuando en cuando por una tos madura y no muy limpia, la cual da a conocer que sale de un reverendísimo vientre y pasa por un velludo pecho (*Capítulos* 330).

¹¹⁹ Fue un rasgo romántico alternar bruscamente expresiones sublimes y vulgares (*El Arte* 148).

¹²⁰ que diremos si de racionero sube vuesa merced a chantre, de chantre a arcediano, de arcediano a dean, y de aquí pasa a Obispo por no decir arzobispo de una vez (*Capítulos* 330).

investigation he should be granted the red cap, or the rank of cardinal.”¹²¹ The Butler’s whimsical comment shows the extent to which one person’s opinion can hold sway over a prospective candidate’s short cut to the top ranking positions without the checks and balance of further investigation. In addition to the illustration of the friar whose cilice wrongly earns him a fast track towards canonization, this example shows the corrupt and who-knows-who network reality of church politics.

Sancho’s rejection of this offer to join the church on two separate grounds seasons his insult against the Catholic church. First, Sancho reasons that since widowhood is a necessary prerequisite, he would have to first enjoy civil life fully and time spent with his wife. This reasoning implies that the life of a clergy member is so dull that he would have to enjoy all of his other pleasures first. Second, he cites Don Quixote’s oft-quoted logic that knighthood does not lead to being the cardinal.¹²² The immiscibility of the knight’s sword and the bishop’s accoutrements recurs as one of the novel’s greatest jokes; if benevolent, knightly acts are discordant with religious behavior then this implies clerical backhandedness.

Before the conversation between Sancho and the Butler ends, a small marital joke indirectly pokes fun at the undesirability of a convent as a place to live and work. Sancho says he would need ample time to consider a clerical career, but at the very least is reassured that nobody can “take away from me that at present your graces will kiss my spouse.”¹²³ The Butler asks, “is she young?” Horrified by his tasteless

¹²¹ Tengo para mí que la capa magna le había de sentar de perlas al señor Don Sancho, y que sin más averiguación se le había de conceder el capelo, o digamos el cardenalato (*Capítulos* 330).

¹²² por la Carrera de las armas no alcanzamos la púrpura cardenalicia

¹²³ ordenarme, y nadie me quita que al presente me besaran vuestras mercedes la esposa (*Capítulos* 331).

question that implies the Butler's interest in his spouse, Sancho clarifies that the "esposa" is the episcopal ring. He adds that "when one has suffered twenty years with a woman, this business of making himself ready to receive holy orders should be more tasteful and accommodating for a man."¹²⁴ The joke resonates because Sancho posits that one would only be in the right state of mind to enter a convent only after that person has endured the exhausting work of sustaining a long marriage. Sancho ends the chapter by quoting a verse from Juan Ruiz, Archpriest of Hita and author of the medieval book, *The Book of Good Love*: "Men, birds, every beast who lives in a cave / always want company according to their nature."¹²⁵ By this logic, the convent would draw a crowd of burnt out old men because they enjoy each other's company—hardly the image of a conscientious religious order.

In many instances Montalvo imitates familiar Cervantes tropes, but whereas Cervantes employed the 'appearance versus reality' trope in a light-hearted, adventuresome way, Montalvo twists the same trope in a parable about hypocrisy, so that it becomes a sober reminder of how false appearances covering corrupt realities can be dangerous. A simple parable of a donkey gives Montalvo the opportunity to unleash freely his disdain for such corrosive hypocrisy. Don Quixote and Sancho walk through the forest discussing the power of Durindana's sword to cut the world in half when a young man hunting quail passes by. Overhearing their conversation about famous enchanters, he notes an example of a beneficial enchantment: "I, like a friend,

¹²⁴ Cuando uno ha sufrido veinte años a una mujer, señor intendente, esto de venir a ponerse en capacidad de recibir las órdenes eclesiásticas, debe de ser trance además gustoso y acomodado a las inclinaciones del hombre (*Capítulos* 331).

¹²⁵ *Libro de buen amor*: "Homes, aves, animalias, toda bestia de cueva./ Quieren segunt natura compañía siempre nueva (*Capítulos* 331).

know them, and I can tell your grace that the enchanter that has them enchanted did not do it because she is envious, but rather because she is good and a giver of justice of envy.”¹²⁶ The Spanish adjective ‘justiciera’ refers to the *rigorous* fight to meet crimes with justice, enhancing the noble cause of the magician.¹²⁷ The lad points to a donkey nearby and explains: “Look, your grace, at that bay donkey with the face of a good person, that seems to be mediating on its canonization: it’s a Tartuffe called Pinipín de la Gerga, a man who is so perverse that he wants to show that he is a saint, so treacherous that he appears to be loyal. His virtue is hypocrisy: under his religious cape he is sold to Satan, under the color of friendship a thousand betrayals turn in his black bowels.”¹²⁸ To convey the severity of this man’s act, Montalvo alludes to two paradigmatic examples of hypocrisy: Tartuffe and Satan. Tartuffe, the principal character in Molière’s comedy of the same name, has become synonymous with a person who pretends to be pious; Satan’s role as the ‘adversarial one’ in Judeo-Christian theology naturally contradicts the biblical directive not to be hypocritical, such as the message from the twenty-third chapter of Matthew.¹²⁹ It is only one of the few moments in the novel where Satan’s name is called upon to strengthen the association between the clergy and their fiendish actions, especially considering

¹²⁶ yo, como vecino, los conozco, y sé decir a vuesa merced que la maga que los tiene encantados no los encantó de envidiosa, sino de buena y justiciera (*Capítulos* 302).

¹²⁷ According to La real acáademica española

¹²⁸ Mire vuesa merced ese asno bayo, de cara bonachona, que parece estar meditando en su canonización: es un Tartufo llamado Pinipín de la Gerga, hombre que tiene de perverso cuanto quiere mostrar de santo, de aleve cuanto aparenta de leal. Su virtud es la hipocresía: so capa de religión está vendido a Satanás, so color de amistad mil traiciones se agitan en sus negras entrañas (*Capítulos* 303).

¹²⁹ Matthew 23:27-8: “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people’s bones and all uncleanness. So you also outwardly appear righteous to others, but within you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness” (*English Standard Version*).

Pinipín sold himself to the devil. The added information that Pinipín is on track for canonization elicits a terrifying realization: if he successfully becomes a saint, he will be revered after death even though he was actually a hypocritical impostor. But since all of the men are aware of Pinipín's trick, he is made to look like a foolish ass.

Cervantes's Don Quixote repetitively expresses that knight errantry conforms to all Christian practices; Montalvo's Quixote, however, ultimately concedes that the two spheres are irreconcilably different. Throughout the chapter titled, "An account of the banquet that was honored with the presence of Don Quijote de la Mancha,"¹³⁰ Don Quixote and Sancho defend knightly tales from heresy in a meeting where friars are converged. One of them says: "God help us! exclaimed the friar. Is your grace now going to prove to us that even women have gotten into those heresies?"¹³¹ After Don Quixote spews off a list of famous enchanters from Morgaina to Queen Guinevere, the friars accuse him of being anti-Catholic. Taken aback by their offenses, Don Quixote responds: "their [knights'] purpose is the amending of offended damsels, the help of anguished widows, the humiliation of the arrogant; their purpose is to aide the needy, to raise the fallen, to fight for the defenseless. If all of this isn't catholic, then right now, your grace, call into question everything regarding chivalry, and deprive its champions of fire and wáter."¹³² The rhetoric is similar, if not identical, to many of Don Quixote's monologues in Cervantes. A closer examination of the Spanish reveals

¹³⁰ Donde se da cuenta del ágape que honró con su presencia Don Quijote de la Mancha (*Capítulos* 224).

¹³¹ "¡Dios nos asista!, exclamó el fraile. ¿Ahora va a probarnos vuesa merced que hasta las mujeres se han metido en esas herejías?" (*Capítulos* 226).

¹³² Su fin es el desagravio de las doncellas ofendidas, dijo Don Quijote, el socorro de las viudas angustiadas, la humillación de los soberbios; su fin es acudir al menesteroso, levantar al caído, valer al indefenso. Si todo esto no es católico, ponga vuesa merced ahora mismo en entredicho el reino de la caballería, y priveles del agua y del fuego a sus campeones (*Capítulos* 226).

an interesting reversal, where Don Quixote urges the clergy to put an ecclesiastical ban on their own thinking. The text says “ponga vuesa merced ahora mismo en entredicho”: an English idiomatic translation of ‘poner en entredicho’ is “to call into question”; the literal meaning of ‘entredicho’ is an ‘ecclesiastical interdict.’ Combined, the definitions capture a sense of a legalistic prohibition, rendering Don Quixote’s phrase a call to give up their scorn of knightly tales and join his position.

Riffing upon the oft-repeated “caballeros andantes” (knights errant) in Cervantes’s original version, Montalvo creatively explores the possibility of “frailes andantes” (errant friars) to make a greater comment upon the difference in their aims. The friars think that it is possible to become an “errant friar” because chivalric tales can be traced back to the apostolic Romans and the first spreaders of Christianity.¹³³ In response, Don Quixote confesses that he has never read about such a thing. Brother Pancraccio explains that if this were the case, friars would wear a “carapace, back and armbands; a pouch, leg armor, and a helmet with visor.”¹³⁴ Terrified by such an overbearing costume, the friar retracts his statement: “Don Quixote has steered me away from my resolution: if there are no errant friars, I should stay humbly in my abbey.”¹³⁵ Whatever the reasoning behind the friar’s change of heart—vanity, laziness, or unacceptable fashion statement—the reader laughs at such silly logic for rejecting knighthood, a noble career characterized by benevolent deeds, so he can stay within

¹³³ Al contrario, señor caballero, si las aventuras son de las romanas, digo, de las apostólicas, no es imposible que yo abrace carrera de las armas, en pudiendo haber frailes andantes (*Capítulos* 226).

¹³⁴ coraza, espaldar y brazales; escarcela y greba; capellina y yelmo con su respectiva visera (*Capítulos* 226-7).

¹³⁵ Don Quixote me ha desviado de mi resolución: si no hay frailes andantes, me debe estar humildemente en mi abadía (*Capítulos* 227).

the comfort of his abbey. Don Quixote agrees that a chaplain should not become a knight' sidekick unless he wants to and that "the next thing will be for each one to keep moving forward in his way of life and profession."¹³⁶ One friar rebuts that King Charles V managed to do both because he "put the scepter of the world to one side, and humbled himself and evangelized to the extreme to move into a monastery and only [called] himself Friar Carlos?"¹³⁷ ¹³⁸ Above all, however, Don Quixote believes that the spheres of knight errantry and clericalism should be kept separate.

This chapter also includes one of the most oft-quoted passages from Montalvo's *Capítulos*. The friar asks Don Quixote about his motivation to enter knighthood, whether it was inspiration ("el numen") or touch ("el tacto"). Don Quixote responds with one of the most recognizable and cited passages from *Capítulos*: "Many reign, but few know how to govern. He who finds himself at the head of an empire must know how to govern; and knowing it, he has no need of palace favorites who discredit him on one hand and take away his glory on the other. Wisdom is the most useful thing for men on the throne; and the scepter, or power, in no hand is better than in that of the wise man."¹³⁹ Montalvo's Quixote makes direct

¹³⁶ Si ya no quisiere vuesa merced, dijo Don Quijote, venirse conmigo a título de capellán, con cargo de ir absolviendo a los que yo fuere derribando. Pero ni esto se me acuerda haber visto en las historias; y lo mejor será siga adelante cada cual en su manera de vida y profesión (*Capítulos* 227).

¹³⁷ Luego vuesa merced no aprueba el modo de proceder de Carlos V, que deja a un lado el cetro del mundo, y se humilla y evangeliza hasta el extremo de pasar a un monasterio a llamarse fray Carlos, simplemente

¹³⁸ According to the Encyclopedia Britannica, Charles, after his reign as both King of Spain and Holy Roman Emperor, exhausted physically and fraught with the problems of imperial expansion and Protestantism, bequeathed the Spanish throne to his son, Philip, and the title of Holy Roman Emperor to his brother Ferdinand. He then retired to the monastery of San Juste in western Spain.

¹³⁹ muchos reinan, pocos saben gobernar. El que se halla al frente de un imperio ha de saber gobernar; y en sabiéndolo, no ha menester palaciegos favorecidos que le desacrediten por una parte y le defrauden de su gloria por otra. La sabiduría en ninguna parte es más útil a los hombres que en el trono; y el cetro, o el poder, en ninguna mano está mejor que en la del sabio (*Capítulos* 227).

references Ignacio Veintemilla and Gabriel García Moreno, whom he felt were unwise and misused their “scepter” of power.

The following episode after this passage picks up the debate of friars versus knights: “Where the festival of the priest continues, given on the occasion that we already know about.”¹⁴⁰ Partially for their own amusement and partially in awe of Don Quixote’s belief in chivalric romances, the friars again challenge him to defend undisputably the existence of these romances. The difference between Cervantes and Montalvo, however, is that the Ecuadorian uses the words “heresy” and “heretical”; nowhere do these words appear in the original *Don Quijote*. One of Montalvo’s friars even mentions a legal codex that classifies chivalric tales: “not only the Church but also the civil authority declare themselves against those dangerous fantasies, sir Don Quijote; as proof of this assertion, I only need to put my hand on any law book from Spain.”¹⁴¹ This assertion illustrates the collapsing divide between church and state, where it is “not only the Church but also the civil authority” that unite in their opposition to chivalric tales, paralleling Ecuador’s situation when churches were backed by civil authorities. The simple article ‘any’ (cualquier) only adds to the richness because it signals the arbitrary certainty of finding similar laws across a wide range of codices, proving that the dual power of church-state is universally mandated and inescapable. The punishments for heresy are more severe; whereas Cervantes’s Quixote only faces public scorn for his mad delusions, Montalvo’s Quixote faces real,

¹⁴⁰ Donde se continúa el festín del cura, dado con la ocasión que ya sabemos (*Capítulos 227*)

¹⁴¹ Pero no solamente la Iglesia, mas también el poder civil se declaran contra esas peligrosas fantasías, señor Don Quijote; en prueba de esta aserción, no tengo sino echar mano por cualquier código de España (*Capítulos 228*).

dire consequences—excommunication. Shocked by his nonchalance towards his blasphemous and incriminating remarks, the friars encourage Don Quixote to retract them: “And will your grace not fear incurring the penalty of excommunication *latae sententiae*?^{142,143} With resolute defiance, Don Quixote is unfrightened by such a threat and will not withdraw beliefs which he believes to be right:

by the manifestation of the truth... We men are like this: what we once affirm we uphold it to the end, as if in taking a step back it would be from honor and not from reputation. I hold it that it presupposes more valor in fighting oneself and conquering oneself on the side of justice, than carrying forth declared errors or foolish pretensions. In this way, if I feel something sinful, I deny myself: knight errantry in no way opposes Christian doctrine; the most renowned knights have been not only humble believers, but also devout men who pray (*Capítulos* 229-30).¹⁴⁴

Reinforcing that knight errantry is not at odds with Christianity is not a new theme; the slight difference between “Christianity” and “Christian doctrine,” however, is important. Catholic doctrine and its teachings codify beliefs; throughout history, punishments and excommunications have been made according to the adherence or rebellion against doctrine. Don Quixote essentially tries to re-write the Catholic doctrine itself, asserting that knights can be Christian and follow its teachings. Cervantes’s mention of the the closeness between knighthood and Christianity is part

¹⁴² The commentary in the Catedra edition defines this as a type of excommunication that applies automatically, upon committing a determined type of offense, and does not require a communicated sentence (*Capítulos* 229).

¹⁴³ “¿Y no temerá vuesa merced incurrir en pena de excomunió *latae sententiae*?, preguntó en tono de amenaza uno de los clérigos (*Capítulos* 229).

¹⁴⁴ sino por la manifestación de la verdad. Los hombres somos así: lo que una vez afirmamos lo sostenemos a capa y espada, como si en el dar un paso atrás fuese de la honra y no de la negra honrilla. Yo tengo para mí que presupone más valor el combatirse uno consigo mismo y vencerse en pro de la justicia, que el llevar adelante errores declarados o necias pretensiones. En este concepto, si algo senté de pecaminoso, me desdigo: la andante caballería en ninguna manera se opone a la doctrina cristiana; antes los más renombrados caballeros han sido, no sólo creyentes humildísimos, sino también rezadores y devotos

of the satire, but for Montalvo this theological component adds a necessary foregrounding for his political and anti-clerical humor.

When the priest offers to take Don Quixote and Sancho through a chapel to look at paintings, Montalvo's anti-clerical humor slowly rises to the surface. Looking at a painting of a famous shipwreck, the priest explains that all of the passengers were saved, except those that drowned. When Don Quixote wonders about the whereabouts of the ones who perished, the priest replies: "wherever God has put them; the canvas only shows those of the miracle."¹⁴⁵ Rightly bewildered, Don Quixote cannot understand how this could be a miracle if only a few were saved. The interchange is hilarious because it brings to light either the priest's absurd naivete or nonchalance; either he is aware of but chooses to ignore the harsh reality of what lies outside the scope of the canvas, not visible to the eye, or he is recklessly blinded by his religion.

The topic shifts to monetary matters when the priest unearths resplendent treasures from an ark ("el arca"), a sacred, crafted wooden box, explaining that they are "small figures and symbols that represent different miracles; you know that the principal ministry of the patron of the village is to cure all types of infirmities, through an offering of gold or silver formed in the shape of the infirm member."¹⁴⁶ His description conforms to a common Hispanic practice of *los milagros*, where the devout offer small gold and silver objects to specific saints in the form of the

¹⁴⁵ ¿Luego no se salvaron todos? Preguntó Don Quijote. –Ni la tercera parte, señor. –Y los que perecieron, ¿dónde están?, volvió a preguntar Don Quijote. –Donde Dios los ha puesto, señor; en el lienzo no están sino los del milagro (*Capítulos* 237).

¹⁴⁶ son figurillas y símbolos que representan milagros diferentes; pues habéis de saber que el ministerio principal del patron de este pueblo es curar toda clase de enfermedades, mediante una prenda de oro o de plata que figure el miembro enfermo (*Capítulos* 238).

aggrieved body part in the hope a miraculous cure will be granted.¹⁴⁷ The priest's list of victims includes the following individuals: a paralyzed man, a woman with bronchitis and another with tuberculosis, a man who suffers from an enlarged heart (hypertrophy), a man who endures insufferable headaches, and another man who oozes bodily pus. All of the sufferers have two things in common: they offer appropriately elaborate gifts to the saints (a ten pound golden heart, a head of silver that looks like the bust of a Roman emperor) and yet perish from their afflictions. Following a humorous description of common diseases that contrasts hyperbole and litotes, Don Quixote interrupts with a very important question: "Where are the miracles that these small symbols represent?"¹⁴⁸ The priest responds:

Your grace is not incredulous, without a doubt, and knows that there are visible and invisible miracles. The first we touch with our hands; the second are hidden from our fragile understanding. Who knows the secret virtue of divine things, or the actions of the blessed? The highest things pass right over the heads of us simple mortals: human intelligence has its narrow passageways where the greatest mysteries of our religion do not fit. If the miracle is verified, it is neither here nor there if it is palpable. Here your majesty holds a silvery eye offered by a man who was cross-eyed. Do you suppose this person offered this tribute to the saint so he could see correctly? Not at all. But the owner of this eye knows that if in this world he sees slanted, in eternity he will see in a straight line (*Capítulos 239*).¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁷ If, for example, someone has a sore arm, a tiny silver arm is hung on or near the favorite saint; the farmer who hopes that his pig will bear him many healthy piglets, asks his patron saint for intercession, and pins a pig *milagro* on the saint's robe. This is according to Philip Bareiss, writing for the Museum of Spanish Colonial Art.

¹⁴⁸ ¿Dónde están los Milagros que representan estos miembros diminutos? (*Capítulos 239*).

¹⁴⁹ Vuesa merced no es incrédulo, sin duda, y sabe que los Milagros son visibles e invisibles. Los primeros los tocamos con la mano; los segundos se ocultan a nuestro frágil entendimiento. ¿Quién sabe la virtud secreta de las cosas divinas, ni la manera de obrar de los bienaventurados? Mortales endeables, se nos pasan por alto las mayores cosas: la inteligencia humana tiene sus estrechuras en donde no caben, ni de lado, los grandes misterios de nuestra religión. Si el milagro se verificó, poco hace al caso que sea o no palpable. Aquí tiene vuesa merced un ojo de plata, ofrende de uno dque los tenía torcidos. ¿Supone el señor Don Quijote que así pagó el tribute al santo ese quídam, como se puso a mirar derechamente?

Montalvo uses ocular imagery to convey distorted human vision and its need for divine perfection, which is attainable only after death. Evoking mysticism, the priest asserts that there are unsolvable mysteries unbeknownst to human reason. He offers no solace for the cross-eyed man during his lifetime even if he makes an offering to the church. To question this motive, Sancho asks about the purpose of the silver eye if the cross-eyed man is already condemned. The priest's answer strikes at the heart of Montalvo's exposure of misguided logic to justify priestly swindling: "He who gives to the church is condemned little, friend Panza; and the more a good Christian gives, the less he is condemned. He who gives in abundance is scantily condemned, and he who gives all that he owns is not condemned at all."¹⁵⁰ The priest's verbiage sounds very biblical but does not conform to accepted Christian theology whereas Don Quixote's speech doesn't just *sound* biblical but is grounded in actual theology. Don Quixote asks about what would happen if he offered up Rocinante, but the priest sneers that this would be unnecessary, because a saint would not want his pathetic horse or Sancho's vermin. Montalvo voices his criticisms of clerical indulgence through Don Quixote's riposte:

Be this as it may, the wealth of this saint should always increase as a constant income because the saint has no expenses; and he could well take advantage of them [the outgoing cash/expenses] in pious works, a thing that would be pleasing to the owner of the treasure. Well, these precious arms and legs aren't good for anything when there is so much hunger to mitigate and so many pains

Nada de eso. Pero el dueño de este ojo sabe que si en este mundo ve un tanto al sesgo, en la eternidad ha de ver en línea recta.

¹⁵⁰ El que algo da a la Iglesia, se condena poco, amigo Panza; y mientras más da un buen cristiano, se condena menos. El que da en abundancia, no se condena sino escasamente; y el que da cuanto posee, nada se condena (*Capítulos* 238).

to relieve. Piety in the service of charity is the sweet mystery of the Christian religion. (Capítulos 240)¹⁵¹

Don Quixote harshly calls out the fraudulent practices of the church: priests get rich from the golden trinkets donated by desperate sufferers and use none of the wealth to alleviate great pain and suffering. Hypocrisy runs rampant.

In this vein of hypocritical hoarding, the priest takes them throughout the chapel and comments upon the church's hidden treasures as if it were an auction. Hypocritically, the priest frightens visitors with punishment from the saints if they touch the church's relics, but when Sancho asks if the priests are allowed to access them he chuckles and says he can swipe a few if he pleases. Sancho asks if travelers could steal any unused objects, but the priest berates him and shares the story of a woman who had the audacity to ask for a dozen silver knives. The priest then does a mean thing: he offers Sancho some small trifles and the sacred pyx, the vessel in which the Eucharist is kept, but goes back on his word: "And are they mine, by luck, so that I can waste them for favor by giving them to some John Doe who was blown into this church by random winds? Nobody gives something that he doesn't have."¹⁵² The priest's words drip with hypocrisy: earlier he remarked he could take church objects at will but now he asserts that he has no right to them. Standing next to the untrustworthy and fickle priest, Don Quixote and Sancho look like saints. Not only does the priest hide his greed and shape-shift his story, he vigorously taunts Sancho

¹⁵¹ Pero sea de esto lo que fuere, las riquezas de este santo deben de ir siempre a más, siendo el ingreso constante, ninguna la salida; y bien se pudiera aprovechar de ellas en obras pías, cosa que agradaría muy mucho al dueño del tesoro. Pues en suma, de nada sirven estos brazos y piernas preciosos, cuando hay tantas hambres que mitigar, tantos dolores que aliviar. La piedad al servicio de la caridad, es el bello y dulce misterio de la religión cristiana.

¹⁵² ¿Y son mías, por ventura, para que yo me ponga a derrocharlas en favor de cualquier quisque traído por el viento? Nemo dat quod non habet (*Capítulos* 241).

with the invitation to steal something from the Virgin's alcove: "In her alcove, the Virgin has a good quantity of pearls, diamonds, rubies, and other treasures; would it serve you, Señor Panza, to take them in your care? There are choker necklaces, rings, rosaries and relics that have not been used; help us, your grace, with relieving us of all of this rubbish. And look how the head of your horse gets excited!"¹⁵³ Bullied and bruised by the priest's hurtful words, Sancho wonders why he always has to be the butt of mean jokes. Even Sancho's use of the word 'presa' (prey) to describe himself connotes a serious priestly transgression of insulting a harmless creature.¹⁵⁴ Annoyed that Don Quixote and Sancho have disrupted the peace with their many questions, the priest makes no amends but brazenly asks for more offerings. Throughout this long dialogue between these three characters, Montalvo does not hesitate to disguise his anticlericalism and critique of the church's lucrative accumulation of wealth. This anticlericalism, leftover from the Enlightenment, ideologically distinguishes him from Cervantes.

Normally Montalvo uses Don Quixote as a foil for the priestly flaws, but Sancho rises to serve a similar function. Using the familiar prose story of Molière's *La Fontaigne*, Montalvo adds to the mounting list of examples of why priests are utterly useless and unskilled. In a chapter titled "What happened between Sancho Panza and the Widow,"¹⁵⁵ a conversation takes place between Sancho, a priest, and a widow. The

¹⁵³ La Virgen tiene en su camarín, buena cantidad de perlas, diamantes, rubíes y otras porquerías de éstas; ¿sería vuesa merced servido, señor Don Sancho Panza, de tomarlas también a su cargo? Son gargantillas, sortijas, rosarios y relicarios que ya no se usan; favor nos haría su merced con desembarazarnos de todo ese cascote. ¡Y Miren cómo discurre el cara de caballo (*Capítulos* 241).

¹⁵⁴ los sofiones que da el señor cura!: aínas me hace ahorcar por haber pedido una presa de esas crudas (*Capítulos* 241).

¹⁵⁵ De lo que pasó entre Sancho Panza y La Viuda que en este capítulo se presenta (*Capítulos* 331).

woman turns to the two men for advice because her husband has just died and now she is unsure whether to continue living as a widow or risk marrying a servant who could mistreat her and usurp the inheritance. As the narrator puts it, the priest simply responds with whatever he thinks she wants to hear: “the priest... was one of those prudent men who responds always according to the wish of those who consult them.”¹⁵⁶ Even though the woman goes on to add details that would swing a normal person’s counsel one way or the other, the priest’s answer remains constant with whatever she thinks she wants to hear. The woman calls into question the morality of her servant because “one time he took advantage of the honor of a damsel in my service.”¹⁵⁷ so the priest encourages her not to marry him; when she presents his gentler side, “but if your grace could have seen how he apologized, almost dying of grief, kneeling on the ground, asked us for forgiveness and swore he would never do it again,”¹⁵⁸ the priest changes his tune. To add to the increasing hilarity, the constantly changing, rapid-fire dialogue between priest and widow brilliantly captures the priest’s obsequious, unthinking advice all the while the severity of the servant’s transgressions escalates. For example, the woman explains that her servant took advantage of a nun, liked to get drunk and then eat and drink everything, and in a mad temper, run around the house shouting curses. But then he “would confess, and remain clean, and reconcile himself with our Holy Mother church, for a long time.”¹⁵⁹ After

¹⁵⁶ El cura, que a dicha era uno de esos hombres prudentes que responden siempre según el deseo de los que los consultan (*Capítulos* 332).

¹⁵⁷ Se alzo una vez con la honra de una doncella de mi servicio (*Capítulos* 332).

¹⁵⁸ Pero hubiera visto vuesa merced aquel arrepentirse, aquel morirse de pesadumbre cuando, tirado de rodillas, nos pedía perdón y juraba no volverlo a hacer (*Capítulos* 333).

¹⁵⁹ Pero se confiesa, y queda limpio, y se reconcilia con nuestra santa madre Iglesia para mucho tiempo (*Capítulos* 333).

all of these terrible acts, the priest has the nerve to comment, “he is a great man! Oh if only all honorable women could find one of these!”¹⁶⁰. Montalvo’s criticisms are unequivocal—a priest who can praise such horrors clearly has a tainted sense of morality. Furthermore, the priest subverts his mentorship role between confessor and confessed because he uses a random strategy to soothe the widow’s distress: “pay attention to the sounds of the bells, which will tell you without lying what you should do in your conscience,” because “they are the language of the church...and their advice always come from a position of reason” (334).¹⁶¹ Normally a priest might offer reassuring words of scripture or sound advice aligned with Catholic virtues, but his silly solution subverts the traditionally serious relationship between confessor and the confessed. In stark contrast with the priest’s ill-advice, Sancho offers some sage wisdom: “For the first few days, you should wear the pants and govern your house, and pay attention to the estate.”¹⁶² In anger and defiance, the woman stubbornly ignores Sancho, returns to the quack listening-to-the-bells method, because, she snides, “each person is the master of her own will and house.”¹⁶³ Sancho concludes the chapter with a melancholic yet truthful assessment: “my female friends do not love me because I tell the truth.”¹⁶⁴

The juxtaposition of Sancho’s clear-headed counsel and the priest’s nonsense

¹⁶⁰ Es un grande hombre. ¡Oh si todas las mujeres honradas pudieran hallar de éstos! -- No ocultaré, señor cura, que cuando se emborracha niega que se ha confesado, llama a diez o doce santos, los mete en el sombrero y baila sobre ellos (*Capítulos* 333).

¹⁶¹ Prestar atento oído a las campanas, las cuales le dirían sin mentir lo que debía hacer en coincidencia... la lengua de la iglesia son las campanas, el aviso que ellas dan, debe de ser el puesto en razón

¹⁶² Quiso la señora los primeros días calzarse las bragas, y gobernar su casa, y tener cuenta con la hacienda (*Capítulos* 334).

¹⁶³ cada uno es dueño de su voluntad y su casa (*Capítulos* 335).

¹⁶⁴ mal me quieren mis comadres, porque digo las verdades (*Capítulos* 334).

reveals the church's willingness to lie and conform to the pleas of the desperate, even if the outcome is harmful. Priests are portrayed without the backbone or sensibility to lead others. The reader sympathizes with Sancho because they understand he is needlessly disregarded while priests receive undeserved praise. Recalling one of Don Quixote's remarks from an earlier chapter adds more humor to this episode. When he insultingly tells Sancho, "you were born to be a confessor of nuns before you were born to be a knight errant,"¹⁶⁵ Don Quixote not only downgrades the role of a religious confessor, claiming that it is much easier than a knight errant, but also uses the phrase as a pejorative. The stunned Sancho cannot understand why he is continuously disgraced when he acts like a saint: "Your grace would find a manner to reprimand me even when I act like a saint, and correct me when I speak like a learned profesor."¹⁶⁶ Montalvo paints Sancho as the poor underdog, the unsung hero, who exhibits more wisdom than any priest but, to create continuity with the theme of hypocrisy, the priests win out again—praised for their unwise counsel and not punished for their ineptitude.

To reinforce the honorability of Don Quixote, Montalvo fashions a more in-depth discussion about proper names. Montalvo's infatuation with the prospect of creating an *honorable* Don Quixote comes to light through the character's discussion with a priest about whether 'honrado' (honorable) should become part of his name. After the ecclesiaste calls him the *honorable* Don Quixote, the knight responds

¹⁶⁵ En el mundo se ha de ver escudero tan amigo de su buen pasar: tú naciste para confesor de monjas antes que para escudero de caballero andante (*Capítulos* 316).

¹⁶⁶ Vuesa merced hallaría de qué reprenderme aun cuando yo obrase como un santo, de qué corregirme aun cuando hablase como un catedrático (*Capítulos* 315).

skeptically: “He who kills fifteen thousand Jews or Moors in battle, is it good that he be called the honorable Don Quixote?”¹⁶⁷ The scene shows Don Quixote’s natural distrust of the clergy because he accuses the chaplain of using sarcasm in his use of “honorable,” even though the chaplain confesses that he has “read [the story of Don Quixote] eight times, and is more familiar with it than his breviary.”¹⁶⁸ Throughout his monologue, Don Quixote mentions that other knights such as Don Grimaltos, Don Brianges, and Don Tablante (famous knights) have never used such a term in their titles. Even though the scene is an imitation of Don Quixote’s attempt to imitate perfectly famous knights by using the right forms of address, the interplay between knight and chaplain reveals a greater tension. Don Quixote questions the chaplain’s veracity and sincerity, calling him the “honorable chaplain” with disdain.

Throughout the text, Montalvo makes use of a number of different rhetorical strategies to mock friars. He refashions existing stories, such as Molière’s *Tartuffe*, uses hyperbolic language to exaggerate their vices, and even suggests that “honorable” is not a fitting title for clerics. Combining a variety of different methods, Montalvo maximizes humor while at the same time reinforcing his anticlericalism through a kaleidoscope of different satirical angles.

¹⁶⁷ Ahora vamos a ver, ¿qué le ha movido al honorable eclesiástico a llamarme *el honrado Don Quijote*? El que mata o puede matar en una batalla quince mil judíos, o sean moros, ¿es bueno para que se le llame a secas *el honrado Don Quijote*? Nunca hasta ahora habíamos oído decir *el honrado Don Grimaltos, el honrado Don Brianges, el honrado Don Tablante*. La cortesía manda y el uso requiere se nombre a uno *el Caballero de la Muerte*, a otro *el de la Hoja Blanca*, a éste *el de la Sierpe*, a ése *el del Basilisco*, sin honrado, jabonado ni alforja (*Capítulos* 323).

¹⁶⁸ Sepan vuestas Mercedes que la tengo de ocho vueltas y so más familiar con ella que con mi breviario. Llámese honrado el señor Don Quijote, séalo en efecto, y no tenga cuidado de lo demás (*Capítulos* 323).

Conclusion

Not that this thesis has established the context and purpose of Montalvo's book, it will be helpful to step back and take a slightly different, personal approach to capture the lasting achievements of his work.

While I leisurely browsed through a stack of books in Ecuador, I stumbled upon a title that captured my attention: *Capítulos que se le olvidaron a Cervantes*. Only a few months previously I had completed a semester-long course devoted to reading *Don Quijote de la Mancha* in the original Spanish. Like most readers who dedicate sufficient time and energy to studying this brilliant masterpiece, I became an obsessive fan of such an uninhibited, imaginative knight and his down-to-earth companion. Even though in the opening chapters Cervantes's narrator sets out to satirize chivalric tales, and even though I was equally aware of the daunting volume of accompanying scholarship, I suspended all of these notions and got swept up in Cervantes's fast-paced and delightfully fun adventure. Now that I had found a book claiming to be *The Chapters that Cervantes Forgot*, my skepticism heightened. Why would anyone dare write a sequel to Cervantes's impressive novel? Hadn't this author learned from Alonso Fernández de Avallenada, the poor soul who published a sequel and was viciously mocked, suffering the literary equivalent of being roasted alive or impaled upon a stake? Motivated out of an interest to find out why and how this author proposed to accomplish such an extraordinary task of competing with Cervantes, I bought Juan Montalvo's book. I admit a secretive joy that Don Quixote might come back to life, as if I had found a deceased person's journal full of untold

stories.

After the first couple of chapters, I was let down. I had the overwhelming realization that the essence of Cervantes's Don Quixote had been changed. Once I was able to remove the obstacle of my unrealistic hope for a perfect sequel—as if Montalvo were the reincarnated Cervantes—I quickly noticed Montalvo's undeniable humor and richness of underlying themes that deserved their own attentive analysis. My priorities and allegiance to Cervantes shifted to Montalvo, and I was soon dedicated to the study of his role as a clever prose writer and witty social commentator amidst a tumultuous backdrop of ruthless despots and corrupt clergy.

W.B. Stanfords speaks to this phenomenon of imitating a well-known mythical hero or theme and lists some causal criteria for variation: “the different ways by which the authors adapting the hero acquired their information about the tradition around him; the amount of information to which those authors had access; the language(s) in which they presented their portraits of the hero; the authorial habit of assimilating old material to contemporary fashions and customs; problems of morality, such as the question of how to treat the hero's traditional morals; the authors' technical intentions (for example, regarding the question of whether to adapt the hero to a heroic, tragic, satiric, or other context); the authors' personal reactions to the hero's traditional personality; and above all, the presentation of the hero in his earliest definitive portrait” (2-3). To use this yardstick, Montalvo decided to heighten the moralism and religiosity of his Don Quixote amidst a cast of questionably deceptive characters, namely priests, because of Montalvo's “technical intentions” to make a

grander comment of the hypocrisy taking place in nineteenth century Ecuador. Thus, Don Quixote becomes an idealistic paragon of virtue, and, even though *Capítulos* is set in Spain, the countryside and essence is nothing but Ecuadorian. From a political standpoint, *Capítulos* was not designed as direct invocation of action against tyrannical leaders but as a gentler, narrative form, encouraging readers to remember such honorable virtues as justice and independence. Benjamin Carrion praises Montalvo for producing a climate of libertarian heroicism in the youths of his time and country, writing with an incredible capacity for emotion and power for conveying his ideas.¹⁶⁹

After finishing Montalvo's work, I similarly became a youthful admirer of this new Quixote, even with its harsher comedy and different agenda. None of Montalvo's novels, however, have been translated into English, leaving a wide corpus of noteworthy literature and philosophy inaccessible to a non-Spanish speaking readership. After doing a rough translation of the entire work, I have condensed it into a digestible summary so as to orient the reader and provide helpful subsequent analysis. My ultimate goal is to cast light on a very deserving yet heretofore obscured author and widen his fan base to English speakers. By bringing him to the forefront of literary consciousness, I cannot guarantee his place on the same illustrious pedestal as the Spaniard, but he is at least deserving of joining other notable Latin American authors that have undergone a similar feat of imitating Cervantes and have

¹⁶⁹ haber producido, a fuerza de de exaltación de la obra de los hombres libres en las edades ilustres, un clima de heroicidad libertaria en las juventudes de su tiempo y, en especial de su país. Una capacidad increíble de emoción, un poder tan extraordinario de dar fuerza a las ideas, pocas veces las ha tenido escritor alguno de combate (*Pensamiento vivo* 29).

demonstrated considerable clout during their respective lives.

Because the contexts in which these writers wrote their masterpieces may feel unfamiliar to the reader, I have provided some insight into the political and social complexities of nineteenth Ecuador and seventeenth Spain. These contexts reveal a general disenchantment from a supposedly golden nationalism to an underlying hypocrisy—themes that consistently turn up in the popular literature. Both authors utilize naïve characters plopped into a harsher, unfair world, but Montalvo's offshoots and divergences reveal an interesting priority. He Christianizes his Quixote, leavening it with biblical themes and allusions to sanctify his character. Other notable critics, such as Maria Ochoa Shivapour and Roberto Agramonte, have aptly picked up the novel's many cases of direct moralism but lose sight of its function. Just as Cervantes scholarship, which at times gets lost in obscure, myopic interpretations that miss out on the comedy of *Don Quixote de la Mancha*, Montalvo's *Capítulos que se le olvidaron* suffers a similar oversight. Critics' claim of its dry passages of morality skews the creative originality of Montalvo's piece because it is harmfully reductive and ignores other rewarding interpretive possibilities.

I argue that the structure of Montalvo's novel works like a diptych; on the one side, Montalvo moralizes Don Quixote and infuses biblical themes to overly sanctify his character; on the other side, he relentlessly mocks the vices of the clergy and other generic themes of the Catholic Church. Working in tandem, these two extreme sides creates a spark of realization about unfair political leaders and the forceably increased presence of the clerics within everyday national life. He uses the same trope of

idealism by painting his character as the most perfectly honorable knight, on the same plane as a Davidic or Pauline figure, perhaps offering a hope to which Ecuadorian citizens can strive.

The substance of Montalvo's novel is relevant and thought-provoking, but the aesthetic transmission of those thoughts is equally gripping. Cervantes created a timeless work because of its captivating exploration of psychology, but more importantly, because he invented an endearing funny book. He used satire in its greatest height to simultaneously make his points tactfully and sincerely. This is just one reason why Montalvo adored the seventeenth-century writer and wanted to imitate not only his character but also his aesthetics. Montalvo contrasts hilarious understatements and hyperbolic exaggerations to create a satiric effect. Some critics argue that Montalvo's novel drips with sarcasm, but this again is too reductive and misses his finer, nuanced linguistic investigation. Juan Montalvo uses his literary prowess not only to pay homage to Cervantes, but to immortalize his political agenda within an effective satiric framework. *Capítulos que se le olvidaron a Cervantes* does not deserve to be read simply because it's a forceful critique, but also because of its beautiful prose and clever use of satire.

And my encounter in that bookstore, I'd like to think, serves as a testament to his aesthetic and satirical value. I started with an initial curiosity and worked toward an extensive analysis of Montalvo's humor—to the point that I found myself drawing smiley faces and 'haha's in the margin. This joy has stayed with me as I have examined how Montalvo overlays his original prose onto a familiar story, and, even in

a twenty-first century context, encourages us to think about hypocrisy, the abuses of power, and how literature can illuminate the truth of our lives through incisive laughter.

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