(1759–67) that such possibilities are best realized in the English novel. Sterne frequently acknowledged the inspiration of *Don Quijote* ('Gentle Spirit of sweetest humour, who erst didst sit upon the easy pen of my beloved CERVANTES'), but as Melvyn New rightly says, 'it is the tone, the attitude of voice . . . and not content at all' that creates the connection.[15] Above all in the case of Sterne, it is what we have earlier termed the 'metatextuality' of *Quijote*, its use of other books as building bricks, that proves so suggestible.

It is in this context of ontological uncertainty that we must view another great Cervantic gift: that of Don Quijote's madness. To say that Don Quijote is 'mad' is not sufficiently informative. Two stories in the *Exemplary Novels* can help us to get closer. The story of 'The Glass Graduate' (*El licenciado vitriera*) concerns Tómas Rodaja, who has been given a doctored love potion by a frustrated lover that causes him to believe he is made of glass and to eschew human contact. All the learned scholars in the University 'were perplexed to see that in a single subject such a rare delusion as to believe you were made of glass could coexist with so fine an intellect that it was able to reply to any question correctly and intelligently' (114). In 'The Illustrious Kitchen Maid' (*La ilustre fregona*), an aristocratic teenager named Tómas de Avendaño says this of his love for a beautiful kitchen-maid:

> I can't explain how love so elevates and ennobles the lowly condition of this kitchen maid that when she stands before me I don't see her poverty and although I'm well aware of it I don't recognize it. Although I try, I find it impossible to focus my mind on the lowliness of her status even for a fleeting moment, because this thought is immediately erased by the recollection of her beauty, her gracefulness, her composure, her virtue, and her modesty, which lead me to believe that locked and hidden beneath that rustic exterior there must be some treasure of great value and immense worth. (205)

Don Quijote's 'love' for Dulcinea del Toboso, a woman who does not exist and who is created for his master by Sancho Panza out of a country wench, is a heightened form of what Tómas feels for the kitchen maid. Love, in the orthodoxy of the period and often in extra-literary reality, idealizes its object: occluding the blemishes and faults of the beloved object from the lover, it can be (as is frequently expressed in Shakespeare's contemporaneous comedies) a form of blindness. Many of the love situations represented in *Don Quijote*, other than the Don's own hopelessly idealistic quest, reinforce a point that would become the stock in trade of the English amatory novel as introduced in 1719 by *Love in Excess*, whose author, Eliza Haywood, was a one-woman publishing industry. That point is that love cannot be controlled by moral prescriptions. Cervantes expresses it thus: 'The proof is clear: passion will always defeat us, unless we flee from it, nor can anyone take up arms against so powerful a foe; for we need divine strength to resist human urgings' (pt 1, ch. 34). The power of sexual desire to overcome all obstacles

[15] Laurence Sterne, *Tristram Shandy*, ed. Melvyn New with Richard A. Davies and W. G. Day, 3 vols (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1978–84), 2.780 (vol. 9, ch. 24); 3.16.

put in its way, an aperçu afforded in particular by the inset stories of Cardenio and the Curious Impertinent, becomes an engine of theatrical and fictional plotting in eighteenth-century English writing.

In respect of his belief that the events recorded in romances and works of knight-errantry are historically true and factually accurate, Don Quijote has what modern psychiatry might term an 'encapsulated delusion'. Like the glass graduate, he is in other respects entirely sane, able to hold intelligent—indeed, acute and perceptive—conversations provided they do not compromise that deluded belief. The character of Quijote could not have had its impact if a probing intellect and analytical capacity had not accompanied the false belief system. In constructing such an articulate brand of folly, Cervantes was a pioneer in the representation of intelligent talk within fiction. 1.38, for example, stages a long disquisition from Quijote on whether the profession of scholarship is preferable to that of arms, decided in favour of arms on the unusual grounds that soldiery involves far more hardship and privation. Later (pt 1, chs 47 and 48) Quijote participates in a thoughtful conversation about probability in fiction and in the theatre—a theoretical discussion of the very subject that the storyline itself is constantly probing: what *is* literary probability? While the indebtedness of Fielding to Cervantes has never been in doubt, it is less often remarked that Richardson's conversational ideal—his creation of characters such as Sir Charles Grandison who impress us by what they say rather than what they do—also finds a precedent, even if not exactly a model, in *Quijote*. William Warburton, in the preface he supplied for Volumes 3–4 (1748) of Richardson's *Clarissa*, provided a stadial account of the development of fiction. Each stage, from 'barbarous' romances, through Spanish and French variants in which intrigue, love, and honour dominated, via the corruptions of 'little amatory Novels', to Richardson's current emphasis on manners and conduct accurately derived from 'Human Nature', corresponds to a stage in the development of civilization itself (pp. ii, iv, v).

Quijote's conduct is upwardly striving: it aspires towards a heroic ideal. In doing so, it comes into collision with the standards of the commonplace world. To an extent, Sancho Panza is in the novel to represent that 'real' world:

> 'Just tell me: don't you see that knight riding towards us on his dapple grey horse, wearing a golden helmet on his head?'
>
> 'What I can see,' answered Sancho, 'is just a man on a donkey, a drab one like my own, who's wearing on his head something that glitters.' (pt 1, ch. 21)

Here we have the essence of the master and man formula, to be endlessly imitated in later fiction. Complementary in their strengths and deficiencies—Quijote broadly representing the higher and spiritual faculties of the human soul, where Panza represents the corporeal and appetitive aspects of the psychosomatic complex—the pairing echoes down the centuries. Pairs of characters locked into a sadomasochistic, manic-depressive dynamic are found in Abraham Adams and Joseph Andrews, Tom Jones and Partridge,