

By 1750, Motteux's translation was in its eighth edition. This was a collaborative venture, Motteux acknowledging assistance from fellow authors and a long list of noble and considerable patrons who subscribed for the edition, though he feels the need to apologize for haste that resulted in a quarto rather than a prestigious folio edition. Motteux's preface to the opening volume of 1700 (published as *The History of the Renown'd Don Quixote de La Mancha, Translated from the Original by Several Hands*) is the most significant piece of Cervantes criticism since the first full set of annotations on *Don Quijote*, Edmund Gayton's immensely popular *Pleasant Notes upon Don Quixot* (1654). Here Motteux crucifies John Phillips and criticizes Stevens, argues that every age produces Don Quijotes and Sancho Panzas, and comments on the dramatic nature of *Quijote* and on its indirect inculcation of morality. Surprising to modern readers is the exceedingly harsh appraisal of Sancho Panza, who is taken to epitomize the 'mean, slavish, and ungenerous Spirit of the Vulgar in all Countries and Ages'. Motteux is early in refuting the case made by Temple referred to in this chapter's opening, that 'the wonderful Declension of the Spanish Bravery and Greatness in this last Century may be attributed very much to his carrying the Jest too far, by not only ridiculing their Romantic Love and Errantry, but by laughing them out of their Honour and Courage' (sig. A7^r).

Quixotic characterization—full adoption, that is, of the Cervantic conceit of a contemporary who sees the world as if it were a medieval romance—was relatively slow to develop after Francis Beaumont took early advantage of it onstage in *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* (?1607).¹¹ Dryden's *Sir Martin Mar-all: or, The Feign'd Innocence* (1668) has a luckless protagonist conceived after the Quixotic manner, whose accident-prone attempts to aid sophisticated gallants in their intrigues invariably turn out for the worst. More explicitly, his play *The Rival Ladies* (1664) is based on the story of *Las dos doncellas* from *Novelas ejemplares*. By that time, two parts of Samuel Butler's *Hudibras* were in print, a verse satire the hero of which, although not explicitly Quixotic, has irresistibly brought the Don to mind for generations of readers. In prose fiction, *Quijote* was a slow burner. The first mention of *Quijote* in any such work was in Robert Anton's *Moriomachia* (1613), but it is not until the 1680s that textured Quixotic characters start to develop. In the anonymous *The London Bully; or, The Prodigal Son*, for example, a picaresque work of 1683 dealing with the cheats practised by town apprentices, there is a detailed account of a 'Nephew of *Don Quixot*', hopelessly in love with an innkeeper's daughter who suffers from the same drawbacks as Maritornes (43). Fantastical Spanish clothing, gravity of manner, high-flown rhetoric: this sets the scene for the development of the eighteenth-century novel in respect of its turn towards Cervantes.

¹¹ Beaumont's prescient understanding of his source is educed by Lee Bliss, 'Don Quixote in England: the Case for *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*', *Viator*, 18 (1987), 361–80.

Quixotic frenzy was as strong in the eighteenth century as it had been earlier. There was a 'Cervantic moment' in England, equivalent to that of the 1690s, around the mid-1720s. In 1725, when the Motteux–Ozell translation was published for the fifth time, the 1620 translation attributed to Shelton was also issued in a verbatim reprint, just as it became generally known that the painter Charles Jervas had completed his new version, undertaken because the burlesque inflection of Motteux's translation did not sort with Jervas's sense of the real dignity of *Quijote*. Alexander Pope mentioned to Jonathan Swift in a letter of 14 December 1725 that 'Jervas and his *Don Quixot* are both finish'd', though the two-volume translation was not published until 1742. The *succès de scandale* created by Lewis Theobald's production in December 1727 of what he presented as a lost Shakespeare play based on the Cardenio tale, *Double Falshood*, raised the profile of Cervantes by coupling his name with that of England's greatest writer. Perhaps taking advantage of that, one Harry Bridges sought the protection of Lord Carteret for another translation of six of the *Novelas ejemplares*, published as *A Collection of Select Novels* (1728). Also in 1728, the young Henry Fielding began work on his play *Don Quixote in England*, though it was not performed until 1734. In 1729, under the editorship of Samuel Croxall and printed by the same printer (John Watts) as had been responsible for Theobald's *Double Falshood*, a six-volume *Select Collection of Novels and Histories* was published that included rescensions of the inset stories from *Don Quijote* (the Cardenio story, for instance, is published as 'The Adventures on the Black Mountain') and some eight of the *Novelas ejemplares*, making it the most comprehensive selection so far published. Croxall makes a strong case for the abbreviated novella form as part of his preface, declaring 'the *Novels of Cervantes*' to be

the richest Jewel in this Collection. These are enliven'd by the same Spirit which animates *Don Quixot*, and shine in the fairest Light by a Brilliancy of Thought, an elegant Invention, tender Sentiments, and a thorough Insight into human Nature. Besides, the Author has had the Address to confine them within such proper Bounds, as to finish the Story before the Reader's Appetite is pall'd and cloy'd.¹²

Editions such as this made Cervantes' most attractive narratives readily available to generations of readers and fiction-writers after 1730. Cervantes' standing in England had never been higher.

Cervantes and Novelistic Possibility

In the stanzas preceding the sensational one quoted at the beginning of the chapter, Byron reads *Quijote* in a typically Romantic, and we might think wrong-headed, manner:

¹² Samuel Croxall (ed.), *A Select Collection of Novels and Histories*, 6 vols (London, 1729), vol. 1, sig. A8^r.