

Unveiling Dorotea Or the Reader as Voyeur¹

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DEEP IN THE Sierra Morena, in *Don Quijote I*, the curate, the barber and Cardenio discover Dorotea, a creature of amazing beauty and grace, who charms them entirely as she will Don Quijote later and as she has charmed all readers of the novel. In contrast to Cardenio's wild unpredictability and his self-defeating despair, she shines forth in loveliness and intelligent courage. Such was Madariaga's evaluation of the two forsaken lovers, when in his *Guía del lector del "Quijote"* he entitled the chapters dealing with them "Dorotea o la listeza" and "Cardenio o la cobardía."² The emergence of Dorotea is orchestrated with great care. In the following remarks I consider the principal stages of this event with special attention to the narrative and

¹ A version of the first part of this paper was read at the Cincinnati Cervantes Symposium, held on February 25, 1983, at the University of Cincinnati.

² Salvador de Madariaga, *Guía del lector del "Quijote,"* Buenos Aires, Sudamericana: 1972 (reprint from the original that appeared in the Buenos Aires newspaper *La Nación* between 1923 and 1925); he calls Dorotea "La persona más lista de todo el orbe quijotesco," p. 7. Also on Dorotea see: Francisco Márquez Villanueva, *Personajes y temas del "Quijote,"* Madrid, Taurus: 1975. He recasts his comments therein on Dorotea as "Dorotea la muchacha de Osuna," in *Archivo Hispalense*, Nos. 141-146, (1976), pp. 147-163. On the topic of women disguised as men see Melveena McKendrick, *Women and Society in the Spanish Drama of the Golden Age*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973.

descriptive strategies that set it forth and to the impact of the episode's underlying eroticism. I expect these questions to lead us to some of the fundamental issues raised by Cervantes' text.

I

The end of Cardenio's story, as he relates it to the curate and the barber in the Sierra Morena, is also the end of Chapter XXVII and of the third "subpart" of *Don Quijote I*.³ The "editor"⁴ and discoverer of the manuscript left by Cide Hamete Benengeli brings this section to a close by reestablishing the dialogue with the reader as he creates the bridge to the "Cuarta parte," last "subpart" of *Don Quijote I*. The coda to the episode refers to four levels of the text: 1) Cardenio's tale (innermost level); 2) the curate and the barber

belonging to the *andanzas* of Don Quijote; 3) Cide Hamete Benengeli; 4) the “voice” that presents the whole to the reader (outermost level).

The pattern is repeated at the beginning of the “Cuarta parte” (Chapter 28), where the same editorial voice⁵ proclaims anew the interest of the book and our good fortune at being thus entertained. This voice introduces 1) *cuentos y episodios* —Cardenio's before, now Dorotea's; 2) curate and barber; 3) the *verdadera historia*; 4) “editor.”

One effect of this redrawn multi-layering⁶ is to relegate Cardenio to the curate / barber narrative level —which is properly speaking that of Don Quijote. It is from this level that the young man will

³ *El ingenioso hidalgo don Quijote de la Mancha* I, ed. by Luis Andrés Murillo, Madrid: Castalia, 1978. All further references are to this edition. On the topic of “subparts” see his note 1, I, p. 139. For the most cogent explanation to date of Cervantes' seemingly haphazard division of his material into “partes,” see R. M. Flores, “Cervantes at Work: The Writing of Don Quixote, Part I”: *JHP*, 3 (1978), 135-60.

⁴ On the topic of the various “authors,” or narrative voices in *Don Quijote*, see G. Haley, “The Narrator in *Don Quixote*: Maese Pedro's Puppet Show,” *MLN* 81 (1966), 164-77; Ruth El Saffar, *Distance and Control in Don Quixote*, Chapel Hill: North Carolina Studies in the Romance Languages and Literatures, 1975. Also the very perceptive little book by Mia Gerhardt, *Don Quichotte, la vie et les livres*, Amsterdam: N. V. Noord-Hollandsche Uitgeers Maatschappij, 1955.

⁵ For a theoretical study of problems adjacent to this topic of narrative levels see the various studies of Gerald Prince, in particular: “Introduction to the Study of the Narratee” in Jan D. Tompkins, ed., *Reader-Response Criticism*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins U. P., 1980, also “Understanding Narrative,” *STCL*, VI, Nos. 1, 2, pp. 37-50.

⁶ If we schematize the levels of narration that are implied at the end of Chapter 27, the image that comes to mind is one of “surfacing.” In effect, [p. 91] as we proceed from Cardenio's tale to the “editor's” directives (“lo que se dirá . . .”), we are drawn up from the innermost level —“episodio”— to the most immediate, the closest to us as readers, or narratees. On the other hand, the beginning of 28 plunges us back, from the same plane, to that deepest level now constituted by Dorotea's voice (anticipating her tale —another “episodio”). R. M. Flores' contention that Cervantes abandoned the regular division in “partes” (originally eight chapters each) when he began to rearrange his material (Marcela / Grisóstomo episode; interpolated tales; Sierra Morena sequence) and that he abandoned this idea with the “Cuarta parte,” does not affect my argument. The fact that Cervantes added, according to Flores, the introductory page to the Dorotea episode confirms my contention that he wanted the reader to become aware of the special structural features of his arrangement: “What probably happened is that after the major interpolations and the displacement of the pastoral interlude [Grisóstomo / Marcela], Cervantes must have felt very proud of the overall results. Thus, he wrote a new, one-page long passage for the beginning of Part Four to boast about his resourcefulness and praise the newly interpolated ‘cuentos y episodios’” (Flores, p. 142).

participate in the action. Another consequence is to create in the reader an initial distancing from the upcoming scene while setting it in relation to the narrative structure of the novel as a whole. The reader's recovery of his most self-aware stance, toward reflection on the work —at the limits of the distance from its story-telling center— is further reinforced by the temporal “layering” of the opening frame to Chapter 28: “editor's” present, time of the action, time of imitated action, i.e., of *libros de caballerías*, present of reader.

Let us now hear the *voz* (Dorotea's) that interrupted the curate as he was about to console Cardenio:

—¡Ay Dios! ¡Si será posible que he ya hallado lugar que pueda servir de escondida sepultura a la carga pesada deste cuerpo, que tan contra mi voluntad sostengo! Sí será, si la soledad que prometen estas sierras no me miente. ¡Ay, desdichada, y cuán más agradable compañía harán estos riscos y malezas a mi intención, pues me darán lugar para que con quejas comunique mi desgracia al cielo, que no la de ningún hombre humano, pues no hay ninguno en la tierra de quien se pueda esperar consejo en las dudas, alivio en las quejas, ni remedio en los males! (p. 344)

These words, heard by the curate, the barber, and Cardenio and “overheard” by the reader, are framed first by the wider textual references that have been reintroduced in the bridging of “Tercera” and “Cuarta Parte”; we may speak of this widest frame as the “reader-oriented” frame. The utterance itself creates suspense and mystery at the level also of the “adventure” by 1) interrupting the

flow of events; 2) eliciting the curiosity of the three men —and our own.

A double focus of attention is thus suggested: the one required by the events, in which we submit willingly to the story's impetus and identify with its characters, and the one required by the text proper. The mysterious lament is also the opening move in a veiling / unveiling strategy to which the tableau that follows will conform. From this standpoint, while the utterance expresses the wish to hide, the wish is negated by the situation —three people, no less, overhear and will discover the speaker. Furthermore, curiosity is already aroused also about this “cuerpo, que tan contra mi voluntad sostengo.” It is curiosity about a *bodily* form, which later events will only gradually satisfy for what the three men —and the reader— discover is a disguised form. Beyond that, this disguised form (Dorotea) is the repository, the embodiment of another *tale*, the mirror image of Cardenio's, though not entirely congruent with it, as we shall see.

My purpose is now to attend mainly to this strategy as it involves the reader-oriented activity of the text. But to do this I must summarize the same process at the level of the “*historia*,” with regard to the actions and attitudes of the curate, the barber and Cardenio.

Let me begin by suggesting that they assume immediately the attitudes of voyeurs, as becomes plain in reading this most fascinating passage:

Todas estas razones oyeron y percibieron el cura y los que con él estaban, y por parecerles, como ello era, que allí junto las decían, se levantaron a buscar el dueño, y no hubieron andado veinte pasos, cuando detrás de un peñasco vieron sentado al pie de un fresno a un mozo vestido como labrador, al cual por tener inclinado el rostro, a causa de que se lavaba los pies en el arroyo que por allí corría, no se le pudieron ver por entonces; y ellos llegaron con tanto silencio, que dél no fueron sentidos, ni él estaba a otra cosa atento que a lavarse los pies, que eran tales, que no parecían sino dos pedazos de blanco cristal que entre las otras piedras del arroyo se habían nacido. Suspendióles la blancura y belleza de los pies, pareciéndoles que no

estaban hechos a pisar terrones, ni a andar tras el arado y los bueyes, como mostraba el hábito de su dueño, y así, viendo que no habían sido sentidos, el cura, que iba delante, hizo señas a los otros dos que se agazapasen o escondiesen detrás de unos pedazos de peña que allí había, y así lo hicieron todos, mirando con atención lo que el mozo hacía; el cual traía puesto un capotillo pardo de dos haldas, muy ceñido al cuerpo con una toalla blanca. Traía, ansimesmo, unos calzones y

polainas de paño pardo, y en la cabeza una montera parda. Tenía las polainas levantadas hasta la mitad de la pierna, que, sin duda alguna, de blanco alabastro parecía. Acabóse de lavar los hermosos pies, y luego, con un paño de tocar, que sacó debajo de la montera, se los limpió; y al querer quitársele, alzó el rostro, y tuvieron lugar los que mirándole estaban de ver una hermosura incomparable, tal, que Cardenio dijo al cura, con voz baja:

—Ésta, ya que no es Luscinda, no es persona humana, sino divina.

El mozo se quitó la montera y, sacudiendo la cabeza a una y a otra parte, se comenzaron a descoger y desparcir unos cabellos, que pudieran los del sol tenerles envidia. Con esto conocieron que el que parecía labrador era mujer . . . (pp. 344-45).

Almost immediately the tableau is set: “detrás de un penasco . . . vieron . . . a un *mozo vestido como labrador*, al cual por tener *inclinado* el rostro . . . no se le pudieron ver por entonces” —notice the multiple screens and feints that precede the description proper. Subsequent to this, all the verbs describing the actions of the three men refer 1) to sight or emotions elicited by sight; 2) to hiding, or furtive behavior. The object of this voyeuristic attention is first of all the feet⁷ of the, “young man,” mentioned directly no fewer than four times and once metaphorically as “pedazos de blanco cristal.” It seems evident that the curate's and his companions' curiosity was aroused because they anticipated that such feet belied the appearance of their owner and that in fact they were looking at a woman. The voyeur's interest depends as much on what he sees as on what he anticipates seeing, and this presupposes that he knows what he will see.

⁷ A. David Kossoff, in “El pie desnudo: Cervantes y Lope,” *Homenaje a Wm. L. Fichter*, (Madrid: Castalia, 1971), pp. 381-86, studies the erotic connotations of the naked foot whose sight enralls the trio. Also Louis Combet, *Cervantès ou les incertitudes du désir*, Lyon: Presses Universitaires de Lyon, 1980. Both Kossoff and Combet point out —Combet uses practically the same documentation as Kossoff— the great erotic importance given to the feet of ladies in Golden Age Spain; this idiosyncrasy was thought most curious by foreigners (the correspondence of Mme. d'Aulnoy is mentioned), who felt that it approached foot fetishism—all this expressed, of course in the language of the times. Louis Combet brings to bear depth psychology and erotic symbolism in his analysis. Javier Herrero, in “The Beheading of the Giant: An Obscene Metaphor in *Don Quijote*,” *RHM*, 39, No. 4, (1976-77), pp. 141-49, also examines the significance of erotic symbolism linked to Dorotea, and pursues it into the adventure of the wineskins at the Inn of Juan Palomeque.

Besides the carefully staged⁸ approach of the three men that sets them in the role of voyeurs, everything else in the description contributes to the intensification of erotic / voyeuristic effects. The very gradual revelations: feet; disguised body with a hint of the feminine, “un capotillo pardo de dos haldas, *muy ceñido* al cuerpo . . .”; leg, in terms of its *uncovering* (“las polainas levantadas hasta la mitad de la pierna . . .”); face, also discovered as the result of a movement, that is, teasingly surrendered (“al querer *quitársele*, alzó el rostro . . .”). Add to this the proximity of water which maintains as background all the erotic connotations that are traditionally linked to it, and the suggestion of bathing in it which the flowing hair offers as a metaphor. The flowing hair covers —and uncovers— the body, as the flowing water bathed and revealed the feet.

Let us now retreat from this luminous scene to an instant before the three men disclose their presence. It is in reflecting upon our role as readers that the full, extraordinary impact of the passage makes itself felt. For the veiling / unveiling strategy that establishes the voyeuristic attitude of the trio becomes even clearer as it elicits the same interest in the reader. Dorotea hides from us also behind multiple screens. She is first seen “detrás de un peñasco”; the three men hide, “detrás de unos pedazos de peña”; Dorotea is hiding in men's clothing, as a woman, and beyond that her true nature, the story that she embodies, is further contained within her. We, as readers, are in a sense behind the three observing men, and we see no more of her beautiful form than they see, nor do we have more information on the situation than they have.⁹ This reticence of the text, metaphorically suggested by the screens —rocks, clothing— already makes of us willing, or unwilling, voyeurs. We now realize that we have become embedded in the text, implicated in it.¹⁰

The curiosity created in the three men through hearing —the voice first heard— and seeing, that seeks first sensorial satisfaction, and later intellectual satisfaction, functions equally well for us as

⁸ I was reminded of the highly theatrical aspect of the *tableau* by Professor J. J. Allen.

⁹ Chapter 20, the adventure of the *batanes* (“fulling mills”) is another instance where the reader's information is as limited as that of the protagonists. See my “Boccaccio and Cervantes: The Frame As Formal Contrast,” forthcoming in *Comparative Literature*.

¹⁰ The erotic charge of the text, though wholly implicit, is nevertheless remarkably intense.

readers precisely because we can only see and hear what *they* can see and hear. And as we retreat to the surface of the text, we note that the strategy of reticence and denial has been incorporated into it, so that we are voyeurs not only because we see with their eyes, but also as we read with ours, for the text *feigns* to labor under the same misapprehensions: it discovers that the young person is a woman at the same time as do the curate, the barber and Cardenio.

As soon as we see the feet, of course, we too know that we have before us a woman. But the pleasure is not in knowing, rather in the veiling and unveiling game, the anticipation of every tantalizing confirmation of what we guess. The text now assumes the masculinity of this person who becomes naturally “he”; the text, in fact, commits itself to the same posture as that of the three voyeurs —and commits us also— until the evidence becomes incontrovertible. It creates a complicity¹¹ in the reader. All pronouns are masculine. The

next noun referring to the young person is “dueño,” now specifically masculine, though retaining some ambiguity since its masculinity is put in question by the “blancura.” Of course, we are still dealing with mere appearances. The beautiful feet seem inappropriate to the activities denoted by the “hábito de su dueño.”

The game of appearances continues, however: “mirando . . . lo que el mozo hacía . . .” The surmise that this is a “mozo” is immediately undermined by what follows. In effect, although it is entirely possible for a young man to wear his “capotillo ‘muy ceñido al cuerpo,’” our anticipation, on which the text's game depends, that this is a woman makes this a feminine detail: we imagine the pleasantly rounded forms barely hinted at by the cloth. The next details of clothing, which seem quite masculine, are equally qualified, for the “polainas” are pulled up to show a leg “que . . . de blanco alabastro parecía.” Again, no masculine detail is allowed to remain unambiguous. We are close to the final revelation, and it is necessary to reintroduce that first image of the bathing feet in its erotic context. Now we see the

¹¹ Roland Barthes, *S/Z*, Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1970, comments on such complicity: “le lecteur est complice, non de tel ou tel personnage, mais du discours lui-même en ce qu'il joue la division de l'écoute, l'impureté de la communication: le discours, et non tel ou tel de ses personnages, est le seul héros *positif* de l'histoire” (p. 151). Cervantes already used grammatical means to suggest referential and perspectival ambiguity in the episode of Mambrino's helmet: “Mandó a Sancho que alzase *el* yelmo, el cual, tomándola en las manos, dijo . . .” (p. 254, Murillo, my italics; *la*, in “tomándola,” refers to “bacía”).

face: “alzó el rostro y tuvieron lugar los que mirándole estaban de ver una hermosura incomparable . . .” Still, we are not told that this is a woman's face, which is now quite evident. To the contrary, the indirect article *le* is still masculine, it refers to “el rostro” and is grammatically correct, but plays its role as well in the game.

Cardenio cannot but remark on such beauty. The effect of this interruption is to retard further the revelation —it also anticipates Cardenio's later interruptions of Dorotea's tale and of the second uncovering that it represents. As we approach even closer to the confirmation of our knowledge, to the discovery that this lovely person is a woman, we have one of the most striking details of indirection yet, or of playfulness, for although all the words uttered by Cardenio are feminine, they *do not* yet point to a feminine presence. To return to Cardenio's remark, “Ésta” refers to “persona,” but we want to replace “persona” with “mujer” and have done with it. Not so. For the next reference is again to “El mozo.” The rest of the sentence, describing the marvelously feminine gesture — “sacudiendo . . .”— and the exquisite hair, absolutely negate all masculine content to “mozo.” No more evasions are possible. “Con esto conocieron que el que parecía labrador era mujer . . .” This “parecía” gathers within itself all its previous uses (four forms of “parecer” to this point) and maintains for a moment the tension of ambiguity that has controlled the description, before an avalanche of feminine beauty overcomes it: “. . . mujer, y delicada, y aun la más hermosa que hasta entonces los ojos de los dos habían visto, y aun los de Cardenio, si no hubieran mirado y conocido a Luscinda; que después afirmó que sola la belleza de Luscinda podía contender con aquella. Los luengos y rubios cabellos no sólo la cubrieron las espaldas, mas toda en torno la escondieron debajo de ellos,

que si no eran los pies, ninguna otra cosa de su cuerpo se parecía: tales y tantos eran. En esto, les sirvió de peine unas manos, que si los pies en el agua habían parecido pedazos de cristal, las manos en los cabellos semejaban pedazos de apretada nieve” (pp. 345-346). The long hair reveals the young man to be a beautiful woman, but only that, a mere problematic appearance; with the erotic charge that has been accumulated to this moment, we contemplate this beauty bathed in golden hair. And yet, the hair, like water, covers her in erotic mystery, and we want to know more: “todo lo cual, en más admiración y en más *deseo de saber* quién era ponía a los tres que la miraban” (p. 346).

The curiosity we seek to satisfy now was elicited by the young woman's own words; we recall the suggestion of a fault, or sin, perhaps even an amorous misadventure. The young woman tries to flee but she falls, betrayed again by her beautiful, delicate feet: “no hubo dado seis pasos cuando, no pudiendo sufrir los delicados pies la aspereza de las piedras, dio consigo en el suelo” (p. 346). Certainly this is a “fortunate” fall and prefigures the fall that her story will recount as a betrayal of the body. At the same time it underlines the erotic connotation of the beautiful feet. The curate helps her, also prefiguring the later recovery of her self-esteem, of her beloved, that is to say, Dorotea's ultimate redemption.

Now, however, we are far from this, and we await her story. Whatever ambiguities of gender had been suggested by the text are further resolved by Dorotea's beautiful gesture: “y apartándose los cabellos de delante de los ojos con entrambas manos miró los que el ruido hacían” (p. 346). The sense of hearing is again preeminent, preparing us for the tale to come and closing the visual circle that it had opened, that is to say, her overheard lament. The curate then reassures the young woman and says: “contadnos vuestra buena o mala suerte . . .” (p. 346).

We prepare then to hear a tale that no doubt will prove as fascinating as that of Cardenio—now a listener—another of those “cuentos y episodios . . . que, en parte, no son menos agradables y artificiosos y verdaderos que la misma historia” (p. 344). In retrospect, the elaborate introduction to this striking tableau effectively recalls us to our condition as *readers*. The distancing from the heart of the text that takes place at the chapter's opening has a two-fold effect: it focuses our attention on the text *qua* text, on its strategies and presentation, on its reticences, keeping present to our mind the various fictional levels at work; it creates an effect of funneling in, increasing the “voyeuristic” tension by multiplying the screens through which we discover the scene, the trio of voyeurs, the beautiful Dorotea. The special care with which the tableau is elaborated, with its multiple narrative and temporal levels, keeps us firmly anchored to our situation as readers and renews our “*jouissance du texte*.”¹² We look forward to the final satisfaction of our curiosity at this very moment, just before Dorotea begins her tale, a curiosity not only erotic—or esthetic—but also intellectual.

¹² In *Le Plaisir du texte*, Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1975, Roland Barthes proposes as a *texte de plaisir* one that allows for a pleasant, easily accessible [p. 98] reading and a *texte de jouissance* (tr. as “text of bliss” by Richard Miller), or orgasmic pleasure, the demanding, *interrupted*, disturbing text. *Don Quijote* responds to both readings.

II

Before proceeding to Dorotea's self-revelations, to the gradual unfolding of her story, it will be useful to recall the principal moments of her discovery by the male trio and by the reader. The "scene" subdivides according to points of interference between the two principal narrative levels now in force, that is to say, the *historia* or Don Quijote's *andanzas*; the curate, the barber, and now Cardenio are part of this central strand. Within it originates the incipient *episodio*,¹³ Dorotea's tale.

The first moment of Dorotea's unveiling, the lament heard by the three men, interferes with the curate's intention to offer solace to Cardenio who has just ended his tale.¹⁴ It seems appropriate that this initial disclosure should come about through hearing, since it announces, is in fact the preamble to, Dorotea's "confession." Hearing is replaced by sight and silence in the second moment, the description of the "mozo" which we have just examined. It ends when Cardenio cannot but whisper his admiration of this as yet ambiguous beauty to the curate, comparing "him" to Luscinda.¹⁵ The third moment marks

¹³ These interferences may range from the introduction of a new narrative line —as when the trio hear Dorotea's initial lament— to the interruption of narration —as when Don Quijote interrupts Cardenio's tale— to the drastic cessation of the *historia* —as in the *vizcaíno* episode, Chapters 8 and 9, when the very progress of the narrative base as well as its transmission are "endangered."

¹⁴ The instant of this interruption and the curate's very gesture and intent are reiterated almost verbatim: "y al tiempo que el cura se prevenía para decirle algunas razones de consuelo, le suspendió una voz que llegó a sus oídos, que en lastimados acentos . . ." (end of Chapter 27, p. 343); "así como el cura comenzó a prevenirse para consolar a Cardenio lo impidió una voz que llegó a sus oídos, que, con tristes acentos . . ." (beginning of Chapter 28, p. 344).

¹⁵ Cf. "Triangular Desire," first chapter of René Girard's *Deceit, Desire and the Novel*, tr. by Yvonne Freccero, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins U. P., 1965), pp. 1-52. An aspect of the narrative interruption seems to conform to a triangular pattern —akin to Girard's scheme, and pointed out by Cesáreo Bandera, *Mimesis conflictiva*, (Madrid: Gredos, 1975), Chapter IV. In this instance we have Cardenio-Luscinda-Dorotea; other comparable incidents, though of a more radical nature as interruptions, are Don Quijote-Amadís-Cardenio and earlier Don Quijote-Cide Hamete-*vizcaíno* (here I use Cide Hamete as representative of the multiple persona of the text's transmitter —editor, translator, Arab sage, "second author." See note 4).

the discovery of the true nature of this lovely apparition in a crescendo of admiration. Her effort to flee is thwarted by her delicate, beautiful feet, first "erotic" betrayers of her femininity and concrete image of her vulnerability as a woman. It ends also as a voice, the curate's, breaks the silence, entreating the young woman not to flee for, he observes, "ni vuestros pies lo podrán sufrir ni nosotros consentir" (p. 346). The fourth and final moment of this initial "discovery" begins with a quick return to the young woman, still silent: "A todo esto, ella no respondía palabra, atónita y confusa" (p. 346).

The curate encourages her to reveal her predicament since her disguise is now transparent. In his appeal the curate concisely recalls the essentials of the visual scene just

past: “Lo que vuestro traje, señora, nos niega, vuestros cabellos nos descubren: señales claras que no deben de ser de poco momento las causas que han disfrazado vuestra belleza en hábito tan indigno, y traídola a tanta soledad como es ésta” (p. 346). He then tries to persuade the young woman to confide those “causas.” The initial suspense concludes with the fourth moment when sight finally gives way entirely to words. A last, quick glance offers us Dorotea poised in uncertainty: “estaba la disfrazada moza como embelesada, mirándolos a todos, sin mover labio ni decir palabra alguna . . .” (p. 346). The disguise is again mentioned (as such and through the simile) as references to “telling” (“decía,” “sin mover labio ni decir palabra alguna,” “decirle,” “dijo”), surrounded by departing references to sight (“mirándolos,” “muestran,” “vistas”), close the visual representation and her silence, which she now breaks: “dando, ella un profundo suspiro, dijo . . .” (p. 347), sight at last gives way to language.

This gradual revelation is carefully elaborated to suggest the difficulties of language to penetrate the real in two related and fundamental topics of literature: the plumbing of a mystery and the description of beauty. The disguise and the beauty it hides inextricably unite these two interests. They are also conjoined in that beauty is in itself an ultimately mysterious reality that resists the power of language. The development of this passage obeys the requirements of intermittent revelation. We witness a piecemeal unveiling, to maintain suspense, of course, and to intensify also the erotic component of the scene until it allows final knowledge, and our voyeuristic-esthetic desire becomes, when language replaces vision, an intellectual-esthetic attention. Likewise, we read a disseminated

description of loveliness because beauty can only be depicted by means of its components.¹⁶ It is worth noting that Dorotea is, so far, the first beautiful woman described directly by the text, that is to say, without the intermediary of a character's language. The earlier description of Marcela was limited to a general statement merely confirming the opinion of those who had known her: “tan hermosa, que pasaba a su fama su hermosura” (p. 185). As for Luscinda, we have simply Cardenio's enthralled vision: “un cielo, donde puso el amor toda la gloria que yo acertara a desearme: tal es la hermosura de Luscinda” (p. 292). Sancho's description of Aldonza Lorenzo does not fall into the same category since, as for La Torralba and Maritornes, plainness offers no resistance to language, in fact, it invites its onslaught.

The text can only present a “dismembered” description of Dorotea because she is disguised, but this disguise is the very image, as well as the result, of an amorous fault; that is why the passage is so erotically charged, and it is the erotic charge that has “metamorphosed” the young woman and allows only a dispersed description of her charms: feet, upper body —not seen but suggested— ankles, face,

¹⁶ Cf. Roland Barthes, *S/Z*: “La beauté ne . . . peut vraiment s'expliquer: elle se dit, s'affirme, se répète en chaque partie du corps mais ne se décrit pas. Telle un dieu (aussi vide que lui), elle ne peut que dire: *je suis celle qui suis*. Il ne reste plus alors au discours qu'à asserter la perfection de chaque détail et à renvoyer 'le reste' au code qui fonde toute beauté: l'Art.” (40); also: “Malice du langage: une fois rassemblé, pour se *dire*, le corps total doit retourner à la poussière des mots, à l'égrenage des détails, à l'inventaire monotone des parties, à l'émiettement: le langage défait le corps, le renvoie au fétiche. Ce retour est codé sous le nom de

blason. Le blason consiste à prédiquer un sujet unique, la beauté d'un certain nombre d'attributs anatomiques: *elle était belle quant aux bras, quant au cou, quant aux sourcils . . .*" (120). Cervantes was working here within the tradition of Petrarchism, which had a fundamental impact on the Renaissance description of the female body. Cf. Nancy J. Vickers, "Diana Described," *CI*, 8, no. 2 (Winter 1981), 277, who quotes as follows from Elizabeth Cropper, "On Beautiful Women, Parmigianino, *Petrarchismo*, and the Vernacular Style," *Art Bulletin*, 58 (1976), 376: "Petrarch's figuration of Laura informs a decisive stage in the development of a code of beauty, a code that causes us to view the fetishized body as a norm and encourages us to seek, or to seek to be, 'ideal types, beautiful monsters composed of every individual perfection.' Petrarch's text, of course, did not constitute the first example of particularizing description, but it did popularize that strategy by coming into fashion during the privileged early years of printing, the first century of the widespread diffusion of words and images. It is in this context that Petrarch left us his legacy of fragmentation" (p. 277).

finally, long golden hair. Dorotea herself will provide the final approach to our central mystery, undertaking in her speech what seems to be the ultimate unveiling of her nature, explaining the causes of her displacement —she does not belong in the Sierra— and of her metamorphosis —her disguise and also her plight as an abandoned woman. Her tale conforms as well to the two patterns suggested above: a) it falls into a sequence of four moments each marked by the interference of another level of narrative; b) Dorotea's self-descriptions are piecemeal, selective, and ultimately call for our reconstruction as did her initial aspect.

Dorotea begins her tale by mentioning that her parents are vassals to a *grande* of Spain, whose second son she accuses of betrayal and conduct unworthy of his rank. As she pursues her story, we notice that she describes herself not in terms of what she *is*, but in terms of how others see her, her parents in particular. This first penetration of her disguise reveals her assumed self. To her parents she is "el espejo en que se miraban, el báculo de su vejez, y el sujeto a quien encaminaban, midiéndolos con el cielo, todos sus deseos" (p. 348). Because of her intelligence and discretion she administered the estate as "mayordoma y señora."¹⁷ After attending to such business, the little time she had left was devoted to expected activities of her condition: "los entretenía en ejercicios que son a las doncellas tan lícitos como necesarios" (p. 349).¹⁸ She reads devout books, she plays the harp, because "la experiencia me mostraba que la música compone los ánimos descompuestos y alivia los trabajos que nacen del espíritu" (p. 349) —a hint here, perhaps, that this equanimity may have hidden inner turmoil. All in all, her activities are regulated by outside expectations, either those of her parents or those of custom. But this evasiveness will again be vulnerable to sight. That inner mystery hidden by such formalized outward expression will be pierced by desire:

"Es, pues, el caso que, pasando mi vida . . . , sin ser *vista*, a mi parecer, de otra persona alguna que los criados de casa, porque los

¹⁷ In a private communication Ruth El Saffar has suggested to me that Dorotea may anticipate Cervantes' later "androgynous" figures.

¹⁸ Dorotea's other readings, which she does not admit at this point, were romances of chivalry. This form of entertainment would be part of that not altogether avowed, turbulent inner self of the young woman, hinted at when she admits that she was not blind to Don Fernando's agreeable figure.

días que iba a misa era . . . tan acompañada . . . y yo tan cubierta y recatada que apenas *vían* mis ojos más tierra de aquella donde ponía los pies, y con todo esto, los del amor, o los de la ociosidad . . . a quien los de lince no pueden igualarse, me *vieron*, puestos en la solicitud de don Fernando, que éste es el nombre del hijo menor del duque que os he contado.”¹⁹ (p. 349)

Here, Dorotea's story is interrupted as the “surface” text interferes to describe the shock felt by Cardenio at the mention of Don Fernando.

Dorotea's inner self has remained disguised to us, as listeners / readers, hinted at perhaps, but eluded through a tactical description in terms of expectations and assumed roles; but it is to this inner, turbulent, erotic center that Don Fernando's gaze penetrates. Like the opening lament overheard by the curate / barber / Cardenio, which revealed the general condition of Dorotea and her presence, this first part of her narrative also offers an exterior cover that sight will penetrate.

In the second moment Dorotea recounts Don Fernando's maneuvers, and her resistance that merely increases his desire. At last he finds his way into her chambers because Dorotea's maid betrays her. Here again, once face to face with Don Fernando, sight renders her powerless: “en la soledad deste silencio y encierro, me le hallé delante; cuya *vista* me turbó de manera, que me quitó la de mis ojos y me enmudeció la lengua” (p. 351).²⁰ Don Fernando's pleas gradually have their intended effect on the young woman, unaccustomed to such wiles, though he is forced to promise marriage to her: “Si no reparas más que en eso, bellísima Dorotea . . . ves aquí te doy la mano . . . y sean testigos desta verdad los cielos, a quien ninguna cosa se asconde, y esta imagen de Nuestra Señora que aquí tienes.” (p. 352) There are here a number of “disclosures” relentlessly building toward the final offer by the young man: a) the result of Don Fernando's deviousness is his penetration into her rooms, at night, the last refuge of her privacy; b) the discourse of love is dangerous to Dorotea, who

¹⁹ Cf. Herrero's article “The Beheading of the Giant: An Obscene Metaphor in *Don Quijote*” (note 7, above). Professor Herrero points out that Don Fernando is Pandafilando de la Fosca Vista. This identification is clearly confirmed by our reading of the text with the emphasis on *sight* as both the harbinger of Dorotea's erotic fault and the emblematic connotation of the entire episode.

²⁰ Cf. Herrero once again.

weakens under its impact; c) ultimately the last condition is reached; Don Fernando seizes upon Dorotea's final defense and overcomes it easily; he offers the secret betrothal. The promise of marriage deprives Dorotea of any means of resistance. Dorotea's ultimate vulnerability is intrinsic to her condition as a woman²¹—and Don Fernando's promise unveils it. Similarly, at the end of the second moment of her discovery by the trio of men she was betrayed by an “hermosura incomparable” that called for an immediate resolution of the ambiguity. At that point Cardenio whispered to the curate that no one but Luscinda

could be as beautiful, anticipating thus the upcoming discovery of Dorotea's feminine nature. In parallel manner, it is Cardenio who here interrupts the young woman's tale, by intimating later revelations of his own that may shock (“espanten”) Dorotea.

In the third segment of Dorotea's tale, Don Fernando proceeds to the actual secret oath of betrothal. Dorotea considers the situation through an internal debate, and cannot find sufficient reasons to refuse, unable to resist in particular Don Fernando's repeated *juramento* and his “disposición y gentileza, que, acompañada con tantas muestras de verdadero amor, pudieran rendir a otro tan libre y recatado corazón como el mío” (p. 353). She is vanquished, then, by her innocence and her credulity, because she is unused to the language of love—and because she cannot believe that someone of Don Fernando's class could so perjure himself—as well as by the other aspect of her femininity: her erotic desire, heretofore repressed. After calling in her maid—the same one who has just betrayed her—as a witness to Don Fernando's oath, she surrenders: “y con volverse a salir del aposento mi doncella, yo dejé de serlo . . .” (p. 354). Don Fernando's passion quickly wanes after this—he only sees her once again the next night—and soon Dorotea learns that he has actually married the beautiful Luscinda. Dorotea's fall into error and her betrayal—by her weakness and by her lover, who was simply its instrument—recall precisely their prefigured image in the third moment of her first “unveiling,” when her naked feet prevented her flight.

²¹ Marriage would be the aim and purpose of a woman of Dorotea's condition, though she could never, under more normal circumstances, expect to marry someone of Don Fernando's social class.

This third installment of Dorotea's tale provides another instance of the dispersing and metamorphic power of eros. In effect, to Don Fernando's passionate demands Dorotea reacts by an inner duplication, creating a division within herself and establishing a dialogue between the two parts: “Yo, a esta sazón, hice un breve discurso conmigo, y me dije a mí mesma” (p. 353). This scission is resolved later into an anticipation of her disguise. After love-making she becomes *other*, as is indicated by the discreet zeugma²² with which she describes the event “con . . . salir . . . mi doncella, yo dejé de serlo . . .” It is this intimate transformation that will necessitate the later disguise.

The intrusion that closes this part of the story occurs with the mention of Luscinda. The tale is interrupted by a description of Cardenio's reaction as he hears his beloved's name, a reaction reminiscent of those that announced his bouts of madness, but whose intensity now resolves itself into tears.

The last portion of Dorotea's tale begins with her anger at the news of Don Fernando's marriage, her determination to seek him out, and her disguise. This disguise is indispensable to her if she wants to travel alone—only accompanied by a male servant—but it also represents her new resolve, through which she overcomes her feminine “weakness” and assumes a virile, decisive appearance. Cardenio, on the other hand, simply allows his outward appearance to deteriorate, losing the spirit and prerogatives of rank and nature as he reverts to unreason.²³ Now Dorotea's account begins to merge with Cardenio's. While these stories complement and complete one another, they are not exactly parallel in that Dorotea's reaction is the very opposite of Cardenio's. Correspondingly, Don Fernando's

own situation is also reversed: he has betrayed Dorotea, but feels betrayed by Luscinda when he discovers that she and Cardenio were secretly promised to one another.²⁴ The rest of Dorotea's tale confirms the double nature that she has assumed, establishing it as a strength rather than a weakness. Her servant, thinking only that she is a woman and unprotected, compromised and therefore available,

²² Murillo draws our attention to this figure of speech in his edition, p. 354, note 19.

²³ Cf. Edward Dudley, "The Wild Man Goes Baroque," in *The Wild Man Within*, ed. E. Dudley and M. E. Novak, (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1972), pp. 115-139.

²⁴ Cf. Ruth El Saffar, *Beyond Fiction: The Recovery of the Feminine in the Works of Cervantes*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984.

makes advances to her. Dorotea wards off his aggression, pushing him over a precipice. A similar situation forces her to flee the herdsman with whom she takes refuge, when he guesses her secret. In the Sierra she is finally discovered by the curate, the barber and Cardenio. Through her vicissitudes the inner scission that Dorotea underwent under the impact of desire adds to her nature rather than weakening it, this growth then becomes a possibility for transformation, an adaptability to the demands of events through which, for instance, she will become Princess Micomicona in order to assist in returning Don Quijote to his home.

At the conclusion of her tale, however, she reaches the point of her escape into the Sierra disguised and almost defeated: "donde . . . pudiese . . . rogar al cielo se duela de mi desventura y me dé industria y favor para salir della" (p. 358). The motif of this last part of the tale has been the disguise, its uses and dangers. It answers quite neatly to the comments of the curate in the same fourth moment of her initial discovery: "Lo que vuestro traje, señora, nos niega, vuestros cabellos nos descubren: señales claras que no deben de ser de poco momento las causas que han disfrazado vuestra belleza" (p. 346). It also concludes this part of Dorotea's story by completing a circular pattern initiated when we first hear her voice. Still, we come to the end of Dorotea's revelation and find her disguised. What is more, in the next chapter she immediately assumes the "role" of *doncella menesterosa* in order to take part in the curate's plans for Don Quijote's recovery from his madness. So that she has gone from one disguise to the next with hardly a transition —merely the recognition scene when Cardenio identifies himself.

What is, then, Dorotea's actual self? What aspect of her mutable nature represents her truly? In the chapter that follows (29) she is brought up to date on Don Quijote by the curate: her narrative, that is, she herself, converges with the story of our knight, as had Cardenio earlier. Immediately Sancho's voice is heard: "Saliéronle al encuentro y, preguntándole por don Quijote, les dijo como le había hallado desnudo en camisa, flaco, amarillo y muerto de hambre, y suspirando por su señora Dulcinea" (p. 361). Thus, in one hidden part of the Sierra, we have Don Quijote²⁵ pursuing his penance,

²⁵ Cf. Javier Herrero, "Arcadia's Inferno: Cervantes' Attack on Pastoral," *BHS*, 55, (1978), 289-99; also Edward Dudley, "Don Quijote as Magus: The Rhetoric of Interpolation," *BHS*, 49, (1972), 355-368, and my own "The Sierra Morena as Labyrinth," *MLN*, 99 (1984), 214-34.

disguised —without his armor— following Roland / Cardenio's madness.²⁶ In another corner, equally secluded —the three men must come out (“Salieron”) to meet Sancho— we have found Dorotea, victim of a lover's betrayal, disguised also. Both disguises are response to the power of eros. To some extent, Dorotea is a counterpart of Don Quijote more than she is of Cardenio. Like our knight she wills her condition; she transforms herself to achieve her ends and she will also become, as Princess Micomicona, a part of Don Quijote's fantasy. Like him also, she has been a source of fabulation. To a degree her nature grows from an addition of fictions: she falls prey to Don Fernando's false promise, she reinvents herself as a man, she turns easily into a princess. When she takes the appropriate clothing out of her bags, she does not change back from a “lad” into Dorotea, rather into Dorotea-as-damsel-in-distress, in other words she *is* a damsel in distress at the level of the *historia*, the narrative level of Don Quijote, and she plays the role of a damsel in distress within the “imagined” adventures —real for him— of Don Quijote. Similarly, Don Quijote is doubly mad in his invented madness for Dulcinea, and says so himself (“loco soy, loco he de ser . . .”).

Our unveiling of Dorotea's form left us with a woman's body hidden in man's clothes, covered by golden hair that reaffirmed her feminine nature but *did not* do away with the male disguise. Her story repeats, moment by moment, the same stages of uncovering at the level of her inner nature, and yet does not leave us a single, central being. Dorotea becomes herself in her interaction with Don Quijote. She can never return to her “prelapsarian” state, nor is she only a fallen woman, or a fallen woman with the determination of the assumed male disguise. She is all this together and Princess Micomicona as well. She grows into the complete woman who will know how to assume the role that will also convince Don Fernando and will regain her “social” integrity; she is, then, the sum of all these aspects. Before her “odyssey” she saw herself in terms of the expectations of rank and family. She suffered the dissociating impact of eros and found her strength through anger and indignation. Thereafter she no longer conformed to the image that others sought in her. Thus she is an example of what woman can be, even within the strictures of a patriarchal society that wants to make her the repository

²⁶ Cf. articles mentioned in preceding note, and also Marthe Robert, *The Old and the New*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), pp. 12-22).

of man's social covenant, the emblem of his “honor.”²⁷ This is not to say that she is, a feminist *avant la lettre*. Her aim *is* to regain Don Fernando and she understands her fulfillment in those terms. Nevertheless, how Don Fernando and the other men around her, except for Don Quijote and Sancho in their own realms, pale by comparison! She proclaims the possible completeness of womanhood, and serves to point out to us the inadequacy of reductive piecemeal understanding.

Dorotea's development into her full self has grown out of our vision of parts. We

participated in the “voyeuristic” experience of her unveiling and the dispersing impact of that erotic vision. No single part was sufficient. That is why the various moments of her discovery, external and internal, voice, feet and hair, sin, betrayal and disguise were shown as parallel discoveries, all necessary to the final completion. Similarly, through their interaction with the *historia*, the various narrative levels converged toward a completion, an encompassing reading.

We indicated that Dorotea's figure gained clarity as a counterpart to Don Quijote. The interruptions in her tale occurred at moments of interference occasioned by Cardenio, either as his reactions were described, or when he interjected comments himself. The reader in each instance will recall the interruption of the young man's own tale by Don Quijote, when the former's narrative intersected Don Quijote's.²⁸ Cardenio thus becomes a species of intermediary of our knight. Half naked, still unkempt and emotional, he is Don Quijote devoid of a dream. It is through this “atroso caballero de la Sierra” (p. 290), a reduced copy of the “Caballero de la Triste Figura,” that the echo of the latter reaches us now.

Don Quijote also, we have learned, escapes any attempt at reduction. Our multiple vision of Dorotea is augmented by the reverberations it receives from that of Don Quijote, reflected by the willed, or suffered, self-limitations of Cardenio.

We began the chapter (28) with a reminder of the narrative's multilayered depth. We then plunged into the highly restricted, tantalizing uncovering of a veiled reality, brought face to face with

²⁷ On this vast theme of “honor” in Golden Age Spain, the literature is enormous. I have found some very useful comments, though concerning another area of interest, in Edwin Honig's *Calderón and the Seizures of Honor*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP. 1972.

²⁸ Cf. note 26, Girard and Bandera.

erotic mystery and drawn into a reductive stance. Gradually we emerged, bringing these parts together, as we tried to solve the mystery. The mystery remains elusive; it is together the sum and its components, the *historia* and its episodes, the story and its telling. The text's complete nature is like Dorotea's. We must make it whole out of its parts, as we did her. We surmised “voyeuristically” Dorotea's beauty from its disparate aspects. The task of reading is this “voyeuristic” completion of the text, the pleasure of guessing and delaying an outcome.²⁹

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²⁹ I want to thank Professor Ruth El Saffar for having kindly consented to read an earlier draft of this paper and for her suggestions.

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