

REALITIES AND POETS: GÓNGORA, CERVANTES, AND THE NATURE OF ART

Edward H. Friedman
Vanderbilt University

This essay forms part of a larger project that examines, or reexamines, two classic critical texts, Pedro Salinas's *Reality and the Poet in Spanish Poetry* and Erich Auerbach's *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*, with an eye on the dialectics of natural and fabricated worlds in Góngora and Cervantes. It does not pretend to "redefine" reality or nature, but rather to show how two master critics can engage and guide us in the new millennium.

Reality and the Poet stems from a series of lectures that Salinas delivered in 1937 at Johns Hopkins University.¹ Starting with the *Poema de mio Cid* and ending with Espronceda, Salinas seeks to discover, through the poetry, the poet's perception of the world around him, from concrete, material objects to the most profound abstractions. He reminds us that "[r]eality does not mean realism until the nineteenth century when the realistic school proclaims that the only way to transcribe reality is to make a faithful human copy of it" (139). In many ways, notably in the chapters on Garcilaso and Góngora that will be the focus here, reality, for Salinas, means *nature*, the physical world that is to be represented and captured in words. The titles of the chapters—"The Idealization of Reality" and "The Exaltation of Reality," respectively—chart a course for contrasting the sensibility of the Renaissance with that of the Baroque. The brilliant economy through which Salinas's critical judgments are conveyed is striking: "The Renaissance poet of nature sees nature through a complicated set of reflections. Between real nature and his mind the wonderful and subtle lenses of ideas are interposed. They cannot be satisfied with the trees but only with the idea of the trees" (80). The shepherds of Garcilaso's eclogues are not shepherds but courtiers with a penchant for nature and with comprehensive parameters, who seek the plenitude of country and city, object and idea. The flame of passion—the "spiritual heat" (84)—, as expressed by Garcilaso the poet, is as intense as any fire. An operating force of this poetry is the compatibility, and the interdependence, of signifier and signified. Nature provides, as it were, *natural* analogues for the articulation of human emotions. Garcilaso recognizes and seizes upon the ready-made field of reference; yet, it must be recalled, his version of nature is idealized, free of sweat, of disagreeable smells, of insects, of extreme temperatures,

of rustic simplicity.

If we look at Garcilaso's often-cited *carpe diem* sonnet, "En tanto que de rosa y azucena," we can see a clear example of what has been called the symmetry of the Renaissance vision. The beauty of the love object equals, and intersects with, the beauty of nature; elements of nature's domain are the vehicles, and the physical attributes of the woman are the tenors of this metaphorical system. Nature teaches us about beauty and also about the brevity of beauty. Humanity and nature are at one, part of the earth's symmetrical pattern, capable of grandeur yet equally subject to the ravages of time. The Petrarchan imagery that Garcilaso has borrowed accentuates the inseparability of human and natural beauty, and, alas, their shared fallibility, their vulnerability to change. The sonnet ends, as often in Garcilaso, with a paradox, in this case concerning the consistency of mutability. The sonnet is not about beauty, but about the need to seize the day. The message follows an idealized, and dual, projection of what Salinas describes as "a complicated set of reflections," as lenses that mediate and facilitate the movement from signifier to signified, while at the same time they introduce a third factor into the equation, a factor that some forty years after Salinas's lectures would differentiate structuralism from poststructuralism. Poetically speaking, nature is not just "out there." It must be refashioned, transferred—translated—into the verbal medium, and purged of its ugliness, that is, beautified. Idealization in this sense is not merely a show of respect but transformation, purification. The lauded equilibrium between the natural and the corporeal becomes a process through which both the vehicle and the tenor are elevated, cleansed of their defects, and reconfigured by the imagination. The "idea of the trees" finds a counterpart in the idea of physical beauty and in the idea of love. Like the shepherds of the eclogues, nature and beauty are stylized, intellectualized, and, ironically, distanced from their sources.

In Garcilaso's first eclogue, foregrounded by Salinas, the idealization of nature is complemented by revisionism and selective memory. Not only is nature "poeticized," but the original events are sifted and cleansed of their blemishes. Note, for example, the opening lines, which introduce Garcilaso's divided and reformulated self, his alter egos Salicio and Nemoroso, "cuyas ovejas al cantar sabroso / estaban muy atentas, los amores, / de pacer olvidadas, escuchando" (vv. 4-6). This is a poem about loss. Garcilaso transmits with dignity and reverence the sadness and the deeply-felt complaints of the shepherds, but the reader sees, or feels, their emotions through several filters: the autobiographical play, the sentimentalizing or beautifying of nature, and the eloquence of the poetic speakers. Salinas comments that Renaissance man "is inclined toward the source of the natural while he is not a natural being, is not a creature of nature, but a product of reflection and the cultivation of his soul" (79). It might be argued that Garcilaso situates the eclogue in the realm of Aristotelian natural law, which he recasts within a frame of Platonic idealism, capped by a

brief upward gaze inspired by the premature death of Elisa. What may be most unique about Garcilaso's portrayal of the pastoral world is his ability to represent love in the broadest possible sense, as sentiment and ideal, as immaculate physicality, as alchemy that transmutes coarseness in the natural and psychic landscapes into the highest forms of beauty. Within this setting—this structure—rhetoric would seem to intrude upon feeling, but Garcilaso uses the rhetorical base to emphasize the theme of loss. The two shepherds speak of the splendor and abundance that surrounds them. They are good-looking, talented, prosperous, sensitive to their environment and appreciative of its magnificence. Without the presence of the beloved, however, everything loses its value. The perfection of the setting draws attention to the transition from hope to hopelessness, from the sweet suffering of love to desperation and despondency.

There is an admirable lack of cynicism on the part of Salinas, who views Garcilaso's idealization of the natural world as reverential. I would see it, rather, as a secular version of what Salinas explores in the chapter that occupies the middle space between those dedicated to Garcilaso and Góngora, "The Escape from Reality," a commentary on the mystic poetry of Fray Luis de León and San Juan de la Cruz. Salicio and Nemoroso are lost in their thoughts. If not oblivious to their surroundings, they abandon the tangible for the intangible, for memories that coalesce into near perfection. Even rejection is made beautiful by the idealization of loss. In a series of superb essays on *Lazarillo de Tormes*, George Shipley exposes a rhetorical strategy whereby Lázaro rewrites his history through a process of renaming and recontextualizing data. In a different medium and with a different message, this is what Garcilaso and his shepherds do: the poet by accepting the conventions of the literary pastoral—the pastoral myth—over the reality of the countryside, and the shepherds by poeticizing grief, by venerating the act of mourning. They "escape" reality through a kind of displacement that is poetic in a double sense: following a prescription and enacting a verbal embellishment. The absent and deceased women—*las mujeres de carne y hueso*—constitute, of course, part of the reality that is displaced, like the trees, by the idea of the women. It is Garcilaso's challenge, and, arguably, his principal achievement, to combine radical stylization with emotional depth. He does this not so much by creating a mutually exclusive poetic world, but rather by juxtaposing—linking metonymically—pastoral reality with images and feelings evoked by the pastoral, as reshaped by previous poets and by his particular figural impulse. Animated by this empowerment of the poet, Góngora effects a reshaping of his own.

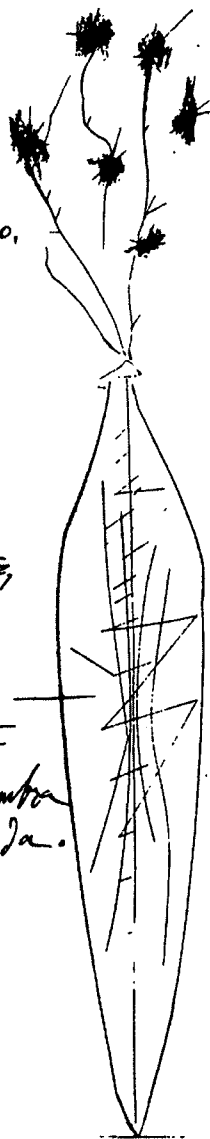
According to Salinas, Góngora's starting point is his sense of "the poetic insufficiency of reality" (139). The poet must compensate for this lack, converting material reality into an "esthetic reality" (141). His solution relies on the complete spectrum of rhetorical figures, with an unmistakable predilection for metaphor. When Salinas focuses on a description, in

the *Soledades*, of poplars along a river bank as fireworks on display, we can see that the poet is not concerned with the idea of the trees, but with their reinscription, their transference to another plane of reference and to another level of poetry. One can associate Góngora's appropriation of metaphor with the Russian formalist concept of *ostranenie*, or defamiliarization, but I would submit that Góngora goes beyond the traditional metaphor by disturbing the comfortable balance between vehicle and tenor. The competitive spirit that helps to motivate his artistic production and to determine the direction of his art would seem to encourage him to attempt to shatter the first element in order to promote the second, that is, to establish a clear hierarchy in which the natural object is superseded by the verbal construct. Góngora appears to want his readers to decode the message and yet to favor the new, more elaborate, and richer form of expression, which often announces its novelty, and its implied superiority, through a double metaphor that manifests itself as "A si no B." Salinas contends that "Góngora is enamoured of the real. But he exalts it, ennobles it in such a way that the world becomes a marvelous feast for the imagination and the senses" (146). One can hardly dispute Salinas's analysis of Góngora's technique, but the concentration on "his passion for the substance of material reality" may conceal another variety of passion.

I think that there is an implicit linguistic ideology in the poetry of Góngora, the essence of which is found in Salinas's phrase "the poetic insufficiency of reality." The difference, for me, is that I see Góngora as anything but the ultimate nature lover, the poet who delights in gilding the lily, so to speak, or who gilds the lily merely to make it more beautiful. My approach is more subjective than that of Malcolm K. Read in the brilliant *The Birth and Death of Language: Spanish Literature and Linguistics, 1300-1700*, of 1983, which treats the baroque primarily through Cervantes and Gracián. Seeking a synthesis of what could be labeled the baroque mindset, Read observes in his chapter on Gracián: "Implicit in the exaltation of art over nature is a perspective on human history. Man is born naked and helpless, lacking any natural means of defence. His fate depends upon the application of his wit. He perfects himself daily, until he fulfills his total potential" (163). Read sees as "unmistakably Faustian" the response to repressed memories of a pristine state through the search for happiness, not in the past, but in a utopian future (183). The baroque is characterized precisely by its distance from nature, and the "supreme exponent of this culture in terms of poetry" was Góngora (167). Seventeenth-century linguistic and literary theorists, along with poets, stress the distance between nature and art, which, of course, brings Góngora's art into the center. Read moves to discuss Gracián's "growing distaste for art and artifice and his disenchantment with social man, [which] turned [his] thoughts to the dream of the Golden Age" (170), but Góngora does not seem to suffer from this specific form of *desengaño*. It could be argued that his poetry is well entrenched in, following the Faustian motif, *recuerdos del porvenir*, wherein he

SONETO X

Mientras por competir con tu cabello
Oro brunito el Sol retálza é vano,
Mientras, con menos espacio, é medio llano
Mira tu blanca frente el lilio bello:
Mientras a cada labio, por cogello,
Siguen mas ojos, q' al clavel terrano.
Y mientras triunfa con su dolo y su vano
Del faciente marfil tu gentil cuello,
Goza cuello, cabello, labio, y frente,
~~Oro, lilio, clavel, ojos, el faciente,~~
No Ante, q' lo q' dura en tu edad durada
Oro, lilio, clavel, cristal faciente,
No solo en plata, o viola tronca de
Se huelva, mas tu, y ello juntamente
En tierra, é humo, en polvo, en sombra
- en nada.



"Mientras por competir con tu cabello"

Illustration by Pablo Picasso

Courtesy George Braziller, Inc.

© Estate of Pablo Picasso

Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York



Illustration by Pablo Picasso
Courtesy George Braziller, Inc.
© Estate of Pablo Picasso
Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

hopes to gain a lost perfection, not through recuperation as much as through reinvention. The poetic past, like nature, gives him the raw material which he will magnify and improve.

Góngora's companion piece to Garcilaso's egalitarian "En tanto que de rosa y azucena," "Mientras por competir con tu cabello," places nature in competition with female beauty, and nature fares poorly. We can assume that Góngora would like for Garcilaso to fare poorly in an implied comparison as well. There may be a biblical resonance to the familiar final verse, "en tierra, en humo, en polvo, en sombra, en nada," but the allusion to nothingness keeps the sonnet grounded to earth, to this life. The *carpe diem* ethic stands in opposition to Christian theology; immortalizing only the moment, its interests are more epicurean than eternal. The woman's beauty—and, with it, sublimely and/or subliminally, the poet's art—surpasses nature, the standard made substandard. The transformative power of the word links the criteria for beauty with the poet's self-validation, both of which counter, in some way, the cult of nature. Read, in fact, outlines a move away from ornate and obscure language toward linguistic naturalism, and the later development serves to illuminate Góngora's antinaturalism, his faith in the preeminence of the imagination. Note, for example, the depiction of beauty in another *carpe diem* sonnet, "Ilustre y hermosísima María." In addition to an ironic variation of the rivalry of "Mientras por competir" in verses 12 and 13, "antes que lo que hoy es rubio tesoro / venza a la blanca nieve su blancura," Góngora employs a distancing device that twice renders the sun as Phoebus and the dawn as Aurora, thus avoiding the naming of the natural object. Although the archetypal Gongorine sonnet, or paean to *culteranismo*, may be one on the order of "De una dama que, quitándose una sortija, se picó con un alfiler," I would offer as an example of the poet's treatment of the nature/art dichotomy the sonnet "De pura honestidad templo sagrado," which I believe encapsulates Góngora's poetic ideology.

In the metaphorical scheme of the poem, the cherished lady is presented as a temple, with a coral door, emerald-green windows, a roof trimmed in gold, and a beautiful foundation and elegant wall of white nacre and hard alabaster, constructed by a divine hand. If "el viento mueve, esparce y desordena" the golden hair of Garcilaso's lady (Sonnet 23, v. 8), here the strands of gold "al claro sol, en cuanto en torno gira, / ornan de luz, coronan de belleza" (vv. 10-11). There is a remarkable transposition in these verses, for the syntax allows the "cimbrias de oro" (v. 9), struck by the sun, to form a type of halo over the temple and, in turn, to crown the sun with beauty. A common feature of Garcilaso's sonnets is the use of paradox in the second tercet, as in "todo lo mudará la edad ligera / por no hacer mudanza en su costumbre" (Sonnet 23). In "De pura honestidad templo sagrado," Góngora shifts from the woman as temple to the woman as idol: "Ídolo bello, a quien humilde adoro: / oye piadoso al que por ti suspira, / tus himnos canta y tus virtudes reza." She is the sacred temple

made by God who, through love's heresy, ends by replacing God as the object of worship. Like the sun that shines and then is shined upon, she transcends her creator. This is a supreme challenge, for the poet must choose to place art and the search for a personal signature over religion, the lady (and himself) over God. We might quote Vicente Huidobro's "El poeta es un pequeño Dios," deleting the word "pequeño," to try to understand Góngora's position, his struggle for authority at any cost.

Góngora's "Inscripción para el sepulcro de Domingo Greco" provides a statement on the relation of nature and art. The poet contrasts the hardness of the tombstone to the soft brushstrokes of El Greco, who brought life to wood and canvas ("que dio espíritu a leño, vida a lino," v. 4). Hyperbaton and metonymy are, analogously, the tools of Góngora, who captures life in words, through a complex rhetoric. When he writes, "Su nombre, aun de mayor aliento dino" (v. 5), Góngora equates breath with speech. Art is a life force, a means of projecting, adorning, and mastering nature. The artist leaves a heritage: "... Heredó Naturaleza / Arte; y el Arte, estudio. Iris, colores. / Febo, luces—si no sombras, Morfeo" (vv. 9-11). El Greco has added new skills to artistic creation. Nature has acquired, or inherited, art, through the poet's body and through his body of work. The painter's corpus, in this double sense, now is linked to nature; and, it is nature that profits, through unique colors, shades, and radiance. Not only does El Greco augment nature's palette, but he redefines nature through art. Góngora memorializes this achievement by redefining the epitaph, by requiring the figurative passerby (*peregrino*) to decipher his message and thus to engage in the artistic process. Nature is a sign of stability, consistent even in its inconsistencies. Art marks instability, the inventive impulse, the need to extend boundaries. Nature is predetermined, while art allows for freedom of expression, not unrelated to free will. The artist here is not so obviously in competition with nature, but he is capable of incorporating nature into his own enterprise and of enhancing it, of rising above it. His accomplishments grant him immortality, for his paintings and his lessons—his artistic soul—will live on. The concept of nature inheriting from the artist inverts the traditional premise and boosts the status of art. Although Góngora alludes to fame in the sonnet, his emphasis is on the superposition of nature by art, on how the painter (and the poet) can alter our vision of the world.

Salinas demonstrates how the Renaissance poet displaces nature through ideas. The baroque poet intensifies this premise by overdetermining the space of ideas, by endlessly converting signifieds into new signifiers. He stimulates readers by daring them to enter his verbal and conceptual puzzles, and thereby to veer ever more keenly from direct expression, from direct experience with nature, and from so-called objective reality. Góngora seems to exalt words far more than he exalts nature, and, in the double sense, he *uses* nature, as the first phase of an ascending system of values and as the adversary in a conflict between materiality

Al sepulcro de Dominico Greco
excelente Pintor

Esta en forma elegante, o peregrino,
De porfido lapiente lara llave,
El pincel niega al mundo mas suave,
Que vio espirito al leno, vide al lino,
Su nombre (aun de mayor aliento vino)
Que en los clarines de la fama cave,
Venerato, y proijue ta camino,
Yace el Griego, heredó natura liza
Arte, y el arte estudio, Iris colores,
Faba luzes, y no jombras Morfeo.
Tanta mana, a pesar de tu dureza,
Lagrimas beva, y qu... tos, jada otros
Corteza funeral de arbol Sabco.

"Al sepulcro de Dominico Greco excelente pintor"

Illustration by Pablo Picasso
Courtesy George Braziller, Inc.
© Estate of Pablo Picasso
Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

and abstraction. Although he may allude to things divine and eternal, his focus is on a heaven on earth, whose symbolism makes him the sovereign ruler, the implied deity. He can never separate himself from the nature that gives him impetus or from the celestial dominion that activates his rhetoric, but he can disrupt analogical relationships as he vies for supremacy. "De pura honestidad templo sagrado" is, to a degree, a microcosm of the *Fábula de Polifemo y Galatea*, where the imposing cyclops is simultaneously a poet and a surrogate for the poet. Polifemo is monstrous, merciless, omnipotent, melancholy, and, one might say, out of tune. Góngora bases Polifemo's identity—and the poem's operating premise—on his inability to be contained. The distinctive eye reflects earth and heaven, and belittles them both. Nonetheless, Góngora surrounds the cyclops's discourse with his own, a more intricate, more bedazzling discourse, testament to an internal staging of the anxiety of influence. The deformed nature of Polifemo, and of the *Polifemo*, underscores the poet's control of setting and semiotics. In the chapter entitled "The Enchanted Dulcinea" of *Mimesis*, first published in 1946, Auerbach argues that, for Cervantes, "the phenomena of reality had come to be difficult to survey and no longer possible to arrange in an unambiguous and traditional manner" (358). The same could be said for Góngora, who responds—who shakes foundations—in a vastly different manner. Idealization and exaltation imply deference, and Góngora and Cervantes strike me as immoderately irreverent writers, unwilling to confine themselves to preexisting realities. Góngora, venerator of the metamorphosed signifier, may see his language "naturalized," only to re-submerge and then to be newly critiqued. Cervantes, in contrast, opens doors that will never be closed.

Auerbach separates Cervantes from the metaphysical doubt that preoccupied early modern European thinkers. He sees skepticism as out of keeping with the temperament of Spain and of Cervantes, who passes judgment only on the writer: "So far as the secular world is concerned, we are all sinners; God will see to it that evil is punished and good rewarded. However arduous it may be to survey and judge phenomena, before the mad knight of La Mancha they turn into a dance of gay and diverting confusion" (358). Somewhat ironically, Auerbach anticipates the free play of poststructuralism, but his insistence on the "neutral," "noncritical," and "nonproblematic" portrayal of reality may underestimate the symbolic role of reading and writing in *Don Quijote*. Cervantes is as committed as Góngora, and as Velázquez, to showcasing the significance of the artist as interpreter and inventor. In Part 1 of the *Quijote*, the comic tone does not conceal the examination of truth, of history, and of the scope of the art object. Cervantes transcends both literary idealism and new forms of realism to set forth a metafictional other. Like his baroque counterparts, he establishes art as the macrocosm, with life (or nature) as the microcosm. Literary history finds an amazing serendipity in the apocryphal continuation of *Don Quijote*, by the pseudonymous Alonso Fernández de Avellaneda.

Cervantes's defense of his intellectual property precipitates transference—an allegory reenactment—of the macrocosm/microcosm shift to the pages of the authentic, or legitimate, second part. While honoring the superiority of his own creation, Cervantes realigns the borders of the “true history.” Part 1 orchestrates comedy in unusual and innovative ways because it subverts literary norms and the authority of the past, in sacred as well as secular terms. A fundamental aspect of Cervantes's recourse to the comic mode is the interplay of art and ideology. The *entremés* “El retablo de las maravillas,” for example, reveals the merger of physical comedy and social criticism. In the 1605 *Quijote*, Cervantes devises a vehicle through which to contemplate and comment on the world around him, together with a world of abstractions and mysteries. In the 1615 *Quijote*, the unforeseen rivalry promotes a recasting of the dual venture.

I do not agree that *neutrality* describes the authorial posture of the *Quijote*, nor do I agree that Cervantes circumscribes his message systems to the purely literary realm. The fact that *Don Quijote* is multiperspectivist does not make it neutral, nor does that make it as good-spirited—as even-spirited—as Auerbach would have it. Cervantes's message about the power of literature is also a message about the powers and the limits of perception. The conclusion that Cervantes “found the order of reality in play” (358) seems to imply that, having recognized the disorder of reality, he replaced it with an ordered artistic reality. My feeling is that he did the opposite, by inscribing the irreconcilable difficulties and incongruities into the text, and by lovingly diminishing the world to allow it to fit into the literary object. In 1605, Cervantes stands in contrast to Góngora, truly a man with a mission. The publication in 1614 of the Avellaneda sequel disrupts the ingenious challenge to authority, the benevolent synthesis of art, philosophy, and theology. The real world has invaded his private space and his public persona, and he must respond.

Góngora faces the burden of the past by endeavoring to take the models of his predecessors—Ausonius, Petrarch, and Garcilaso, to name but three—to new heights. In general, they have found in nature a perfect source from which to extol the beauty of the love object. Nature is the ideal, the goal for which the poet strives. Góngora's paradigm, on the other hand, subsumes nature and places it at the mercy of a feminine ideal. Ironically, of course, the proposed center—the woman whose gifts outshine nature—is but a surrogate for the true center, poetic discourse. Exceeding nature is actually exceeding poetic depiction of nature. The overriding goal is writing over, through lexical, rhetorical, and semantic maneuvering. Because the poetic predecessors have seized upon nature as the epitome of inspiration, nature becomes the metonym of their particular mode of expression and, consequently, Góngora's point of departure in the battle for supremacy. His sight/site concentrates on poetry, accessed through nature and feminine beauty. Surpassing nature through art thus becomes replacing one artistic idiom with another. Since Góngora's ad-

versaries exist on the page and in society, the clash blends art with life. On one level, the signified may succumb to the signifier, and emotion to linguistic nuance, accumulated rhetoric, exaggerated obscurity, and preciousness. On another, the poet makes a case for his own position, in the parnassus and in society. As in the pastoral genres, nature in the poetry of Góngora is immediately uprooted, reconstructed. What Salinas views as exaltation may be more akin to effacement; nature is a means to an end, a *topos* or pretext rather than the heart of Góngora's concern. While it praises beauty against a natural backdrop, much of the poetry operates at the metalinguistic level, with one-upmanship as its apparent objective. A purveyor of words, Góngora encloses himself in a verbal universal, yet he cannot lose sight of his poetic forebears or of his target audiences, two groups to whom he is proving himself: an educated and elite readership and those who exert control over his social status. Although the poetry is more metaliterary than metaphysical, the richness of the imagery and the sophistication of the rhetoric bespeak a familiarity with nature that is deep and abiding. Góngora seems more interested in *his* world than in the world at large, but the parallel rivalries give added spirit to his literary corpus.

Cervantes, for me, is both metaliterary and metaphysical. The prologue to Part 1 of *Don Quijote*, the presence of the chivalric intertext (along with the pastoral, the picaresque, the Italian *novella*, etc.), and the commentary on the *comedia nueva* (1. 48), among other elements, attest to his preoccupation with the literary past. In a rapidly changing world, with challenges to authority from all sides, Cervantes sets out to relate the tasks of his two protagonists—the character who wishes to relive the romances of chivalry and the authorial figure(s) who must struggle for an individual imprimatur—to the condition of the society and to humankind's interpretive conundrums. He uses history as the principal referent to the outside world, but his philosophy, like his novel, can be seen as precociously poststructuralist, not in the nihilistic strain but rather as a marker of crumbling foundations and elusive frames.² Whereas Góngora brings down nature to glorify the word, Cervantes, in his examination of processing strategies, subordinates history to historiography and absolute truth to relative truth. He acknowledges that the first terms are less complete and less objective than the second, but celebrates that they are more valid, more realistic, in effect. The comic tone allows him, perhaps, to appear more even-tempered, and less invested in the trajectories of his text, but his inscription is evident in the first part, including through alter egos ranging from the prologuist to the absent author of *El curioso impertinente* to the captive. In certain ways, he reserves the strongest humor for the weighty matters, and his wit becomes drier and less pointed when issues hit close to home, as in the curate's critique of Lope.

Part 2 of *Don Quijote* is perforce more metafictional than Part 1, due, logically, to the addition of Part 1 to the intertext. We know that Cervantes had written much of his continuation before the publication of the

Avellaneda volume, but it is his response to the intrusive other that directs much of the 1615 *Quijote*. Góngora's primary rivals are the poetic fathers highlighted by Bloom and his arch-enemy Quevedo, writer and recipient of scandalous sonnets. Cervantes starts in a similar fashion, with a benign rejection of idealistic fictions, a reorientation of realism, and a venting of his dramatic frustrations at the prolific and triumphant king of the *comedia*. He employs far greater subtlety and attacks with far less viciousness than Góngora, in part, it would seem, because his creative method and creative goals depend on preexisting genres. He unquestionably stands at the summit of refurbishers; he is the literary alchemist par excellence. Avellaneda pushes him to modify his course, however, as he reacts in print to the false *Quijote*. The spurious sequel rouses Cervantes to the defense of Part 1, which cannot but embrace a defense of the Arab chronicler, Cide Hamete Benengeli, and therein a modified rendition of the history/historiography dichotomy. Cervantes opens his second part with a nod to the real world, where the record of Don Quijote's exploits has reached the general public. The metafictional play turns into a personal conflict, and Cervantes's rejoinder is an allegory of the incursion into his domain. The adversarial situation animates the 1615 *Quijote*, placing the knight errant not only against Cide Hamete (and Cervantes's) protagonist but also against a counterfeit hero, a fraud. If Góngora overwhelms the competition with baroque intensity, Cervantes's search for superiority involves a figurative surrender (with Avellaneda's Don Álvaro Tarfe as witness) and, significantly, a movement toward closure, an act that may change the course of narrative. Cervantes's "original plan" consists of a dialectical arrangement that places an increasingly metaliterary plot against the existence of the book (Part 1) in the public sphere. The amplification of both the imaginary and the "real" worlds represents Cervantes's baroque intensity, whereby even closure has a double face: the spirituality of a Christian death and the practical elimination of further sequels (see Friedman).

Reality and the Poet and *Mimesis* are classic critical studies. Their authors tackle substantial issues and establish comprehensive frames, yet the attention to detail is admirable. Salinas argues for Góngora's exaltation of nature and Auerbach for Cervantes's gaiety and neutrality. While I see more irreverence and more of an edge, respectively, I continue to admire these examples of scholarship. On the one hand, they clearly derive from a love of literature and from respect for comparative approaches. On the other, they invite readers to analyze texts with the utmost care and to test all hypotheses, in short, to reflect, to debate, and to experiment. In the process, consumers of art may explore the minds of the artist and the critic and, last but hardly least, their own imaginations and their peculiar realities.

Notes

¹As a graduate student at Johns Hopkins University, I was introduced to Salinas's book by another scholar-poet, Elias L. Rivers, for whose guidance and friendship I will always be grateful. Christopher Maurer published an edition of Salinas's earlier *Mundo real y mundo poético*, which informs sections of the Hopkins lectures.

²For an example of a reading along these lines, see Parr. For a counterexample, see Close.

Works Cited

- Auerbach, Erich. *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*. Trans. Willard R. Trask. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1953.
- Close, Anthony. "Constructive Testimony: Patronage and Recognition in *Don Quixote*." *Conflicts of Discourse: Spanish Literature in the Golden Age*. Ed. Peter W. Evans. Manchester and New York: Manchester UP, 1990. 69-91.
- Friedman, Edward H. "Guzmán de Alfarache, *Don Quijote*, and the Subject of the Novel." *Cervantes for the 21st Century / Cervantes para el siglo XXI: Studies in Honor of Edward Dudley*. Ed. Francisco La Rubia Prado. Newark, DE: Juan de la Cuesta, 2000. 61-78.
- Garcilaso de la Vega. *Poesías castellanas completas*. Ed. Elias L. Rivers. Madrid: Castalia, 1969.
- Góngora y Argote, Luis de. *Obras completas*. Vol. 1. Ed. Antonio Carreira. Madrid: Fundación José Antonio de Castro, 2000.
- Maurer, Christopher, ed. *Pedro Salinas. Mundo real y mundo poético y dos entrevistas olvidadas, 1930-1933*. Valencia: Pre-textos, 1996.
- Parr, James A. "Plato, Cervantes, Derrida: Framing Speaking and Writing in *Don Quixote*." *On Cervantes: Essays for L. A. Murillo*. Ed. James A. Parr. Newark, DE: Juan de la Cuesta, 1991. 163-87.
- Read, Malcolm K. *The Birth and Death of Language: Spanish Literature and Linguistics, 1300-1700*. Potomac, MD: Studia Humanitatis, 1983.
- Salinas, Pedro. *Reality and the Poet in Spanish Poetry*. Trans. Edith Fishtine Helman. Intro. Jorge Guillén, trans. Elias L. Rivers. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1966 [1940].
- Shipley, George A. "The Critic as Witness for the Prosecution: Making the Case against Lázaro de Tormes." *PMLA* 97 (1982): 179-94.