

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This thesis contains the explanation of the theories used in describing the research. I use the Mimetic as the main theory, and the History of Chivalry and Psychological approaches as the supporting approaches. I am also going to describe about character, and as a comparison to this thesis, some related studies are also mentioned here.

II.1. MIMETIC THEORY

Cervantes depicts the Spanish society during the sixteenth century in Don Quixote. To quote Fitzmaurice Kelly in Outline of Literature:

"Nobles, knights, poets, courtly gentlemen, priests, traders, farmers, barbers, muleteers, scullions, and convicts; accomplished ladies, impassioned damsels, Moorish beauties, simple-hearted country girls and kindly kitchen-wenches of questionable morals -- all these are presented with the genial fidelity which comes of sympathetic insight." (1923 : p. 286)

Based on this fact, I use the Mimetic theory, which according to Abrams in The Mirror and the Lamp:

"The mimetic orientation -- the explanation of art as essentially an imitation of the aspects of the universe." (1971 : p. 10)

Thus this theory is applied in order to describe literature in relations to something outside itself: and to support the statement above, Danziger states in An Introduction to the Study of Literature that Mimetic theory:

"defines literature in relation to life, seeing it as a way of reproducing or recreating the experiences of life in words."
(1965 : p. 8)

From these two statements on Mimetic Theory. I can say that Cervantes has imitated the reality of the social life of his country at the time he wrote the novel in the sixteenth century. It is into this kind of reality that Cervantes presents his character, Don Quixote, practising knight-errantry. While the fact is, as stated by Anderson, in The World in Literature:

"The political and social revolution of the Renaissance that destroyed medieval feudalism disposed as well of the fearless Christian knight on his faithful steed roaming the countryside as the heroic avenger of wrongs. By the sixteenth century knighthood and the code of chivalry were becoming quaint anachronisms in a world of powerful monarchies and wars with gunpowder... They were attacked by rational observers as ludicrously out of step with the times." (1967 : p. 346)

At that time, knighthood were not practiced any more. Yet, all through the novel, the Don ventures in a modern world as a knight to express his idealism. With each adventure, we will know more about his character and just how far the ideals of chivalry influence his character. For example,

when Don Quixote refuses to pay for the lodgings at an inn. he says to the innkeeper:

"However, seeing it is not a castle but an inn, the only thing for you to do is to overlook the payment, since I cannot contravene the rule of knights-errant, none of whom. I am sure -- at least, up to now. I have read nothing to the contrary -- ever paid for his lodging or anything else when he stopped at an inn." (I, p. 180)

From this event, we know then that the Don has the courage to impose his faith on chivalry on every situation in society.

II.2. HISTORY OF CHIVALRY

The word "chivalry" is derived from the Latin 'caballus' (horse) through the French 'chevalier' (horseman or knight). It was the system of values and ideals of conduct held by knights in Medieval Europe. In its institutional form, chivalry was an informal, international order to which many, but not all, of the ruling class (nobility) belonged.

The origins of chivalry are difficult to ascertain. Probably the custom of investing youths with armor as practiced by the Germanic tribal chieftains provided the foundations of the system. But a more certain origin was feudalism, the social-political system that governed early medieval Europe. At first the feudal noble spent most of his time fighting for land, plunder, and ransom. But as political stability replaced anarchy, there gradually appeared certain ideals more exalted than love of carnage. The vassal's loyal-

ty to his lord's cause became the principal feudal virtues.

By the 12th century these military qualities had been elaborated into an ethical code that defined the characteristics of the ideal knight. The virtues were prowess in arms, courage in battle, courtesy toward one's enemy, and generosity toward one's social inferiors. Glory, the knight's highest aspiration, was earned in combat. Honor was gained by living according to the chivalric code. All nobles invested with knighthood considered themselves a part of the international order of chivalry.

Chivalry's code was rough-hewn for courage, prowess, and generosity were not far removed from arrogance, brutality, and prodigality. But a majority of knights undoubtedly honored the ideal, for it was admirably suited to the demands of feudal warfare. Two institutions, the Christian church and the noble courts, attempted to mitigate feudal chivalry's military harshness by offering reformulations of the chivalry code.

The church's ideal of knighthood was summed up in the famous epic prose, The Song of Roland. Roland, the hero, serves church, emperor, and God simultaneously. The Crusades inspired the formation of chivalric orders that combined knightly and monastic ideals. Composed solely of knights who had taken monastic vows, these orders produced many of the best warriors of the day.

The second institution tending to modify the military-political ethic of chivalry was the feudal court and its noble ladies. As peace and relative stability increased in the 12th century, life became less barbaric and leisure increased. A new ideal, that of courtly love, was elaborated by the ladies and their minstrels. They called on the knight to treat women with refined courtesy and said that it was to win his lady's love that the knight strove for fame on the battlefield and in tournaments.

Social skills -- gentle conversation, dancing, and competence on a musical instrument -- were added to the qualities and skills expected of the knight. Contemporary literature focused on the ideal of courtly love and in turn helped shape it. The ideal of courtly love helped civilize the crude knights and enhanced the position of women in society.

II.3. PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH

Psychology, the science of mental processes and behavior, has been related to literature and to criticism, since "many writers have consciously drawn upon various theories of human motivation" (Danziger, 1965 : p. 136). So we may find it valid as a way of understanding the people, or the characters, in a story. This is the reason I use psychological approach to help me clarify the description of the Don's character.

The usage of psychological terminology is appropriate in explaining Don Quixote's reactions in facing certain realities. For example, when Don Quixote regards windmills as giants, the flock of sheep as an army, etc.. I can say, in terms of psychology, that he is hallucinating, which means that the ideals of chivalry has affected his mind so much that he always relates every thing and every situation to knight-errantry.

II.4. CHARACTER

Most novels are concerned with ordinary people and their problems in the societies in which they find themselves. If we recollect some of the novels we have read, we will realize that they are about characters, their reactions to an extended series of actions, and their attempts, both successful and unsuccessful, to shape those events.

The novel Don Quixote is one of those novels concerns with people and society. And since I focus this thesis on the major character, it is necessary to explain about character. According to Roberts, in Writing Themes About Literature, the definition of character is:

"The sum total of typical qualities and propensities in any given individual that are controlled by that individual's drives, aims, ideals, morals, and ideas of conscience. These qualities are manifested in his behavior under any set of circumstances."
(1969 : p. 11)

Character in a novel can be analysed through the actions, utterances, and attitude of the character. He can also be observed through the direct statements, the events, the dialogues, the internal monologue, other characters' attitude or information, etc.

Through the characters, we may observe human nature in all its complexity and multiplicity. It enables us to know people, to understand them, and we can view their inner life in a way that is impossible to us in ordinary life. So, by knowing fictional characters we can also understand people in real life better than we could do otherwise.

According to Laurence Perrine, in Story and Structure, all fictional characters may be classified as static or developing:

1. **Static character:**

The character is the same sort of person at the end of the story as he was at the beginning.

2. **Developing (or dynamic) character:**

The character undergoes a permanent change in some aspect of his character, personality or outlook. The change may be a large or a small one; it may be for better or for worse: but it is something important and basic: it is more than a change in a condition or a minor change in opinion.

As the major character in the novel, Don Quixote may be classified as a developing/dynamic character. His character develops and changes in the course of the story.

especially in Part II of the novel. where he begins to show hesitations in imposing his idealism, and his actions lack of spontaneity. He starts to doubt in identifying things and people. For example, the adventure in the boat: all the Don seems to know for sure is that there is someone he must rescue from oppression. He cries out to Sancho:

"Do you see? Over there, my friend, appears a city, castle or fortress where some afflicted knight must be, or some luckless queen, infanta, or princess, for whose assistance I have been brought here." (II, p. 529)

In the first part of the book, the Don would never have doubts like this; in other words, he has changed.

II.5. RELATED STUDIES

Several studies has been made on this famous work of Cervantes. One of them is a thesis by Cecilia Wardojo, with the title of The Study of Theme through the Characters, Settings, and Conflicts in Cervantes' Don Quixote (1989). According to her, the theme of the novel is that idealism ironically fails in the modern world:

"Idealism merely makes the idealist and other people suffer because of Don Quixote's blindness to see the reality. He glorifies his ideology too much, treats daily events in an idealistic way and redresses the wrong without considering the effect of his work. Furthermore, the setting indicates that idealism succeeds in places which are far from the realists' influence and fails in the modern civilized places. Through the conflicts, idealism is proved to fail against

the realistic society..." (1989 : p. 1)

An essay by Dorothy van Ghent. On Don Quixote. sees the novel as a structure based upon a system of contrast. There is a humorous contrast between the Knight and his Squire: the formal, ideal nature of things as they appear to Quixote's mind, and down-to-earth nature of things as they appear to Sancho's mind. Between the two volumes of Don Quixote, there is a major contrast of narrative design: the 1605 volume contains five individual short-stories, the 1615 volume contains no digressive interlude of this kind.

Other contrasts are so profuse, from those of the largest and the most general kind down to contrasts between individual motifs (details of action) and even to types of nouns coupled in a single sentence, that van Ghent thinks the readers are led to fix on this principle as the governing structural principle of the book.

The contrasts pile up in too great a multitude and the contrasted terms play freely among hundreds of antithetical relationship. According to van Ghent, there are two critical concepts -- the related concepts of paradox and parody -- will help us to ascertain the function of contrast in Don Quixote.