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notes, permit one to see easily some of the ways in which the manuscript's spelling differs from modern Spanish. B-v; c before e or i, ç, and z; and g before e or i, j, and intervocalic x are changed so frequently that I included them in a list of changes made without annotation. There is no instance of an intervocalic or initial s used in place of z, nor is y used in place of ll. The popular (simpler) consonant clusters are used, and of the learned combinations, only ch is found (charidad 1:22, charater 4:13), perhaps by influence of the often-written “Christo.”

The author of the fragment had an aspirated /ʃ/. While the conjunction e is always substituted for y before initial (h)i, as in the modern system (6:22, 7:17, 8:14, 8:23, 9:3, 12:18, 13:12), y is used three times before the word hijo (3:1, 7:7, 9:23), in which position e is not found. Words with /ʃ/ are spelled with h in the manuscript: hecho (1:5); hambre (6:31, 7:22, 11:14-15, 11:19); hermosa (1:3, 3:13; hermosura, 1:21), hallar (1:8, 1:18; hallo, 1:9; hallado, 1:4, 1:28). /H/ is usually not written: this includes buenos (1:14) and all forms of aver. However, we find it on such Latinisms as habituando (2:24) and honestidad (1:21; also onesta, 9:29). There is one example of a word spelled with a superfluous, obviously silent h: horden (14:1; hordenado, 14:2; hordenio, 14:5). All of this suggests an author with vacillating use of h, but usually writing /ʃ/ differently from /H/.

The phonetic evidence, then, supports the authenticity of the fragment.

"The Pastoral Episode in Cervantes' Don Quijote: Marcela Once Again"

YVONNE JEHENSON

Nearly the entire history of writing is confounded with the history of reason . . . It has been one with the phallocentric tradition . . . With some exceptions, for there have been failures . . . in that enormous machine . . . [there have been] poets who would go to any lengths to slip something by at odds with tradition—men capable of loving love and hence capable of loving others and of wanting them, of imagining the woman who would hold out against oppression and constitute herself as a superb, equal, hence "impossible" subject, untenable in a real social framework. Such a woman the poet could desire only by breaking the codes that negate her. Her appearance would necessarily bring on, if not revolution—for the bastion was supposed to be immutable—at least harrowing explosions.

(Hélène Cixous, "The Laugh of the Medusa" 879)

In Chapters 11–14 of the Quijote, Cervantes introduces the pastoral episode of Marcela and Grisóstomo. Marcela, a wealthy orphan, has chosen to stave off marriage for a while. She becomes a shepherdess and, dressed in pastoral garb, lives happily in the woods with other shepherdesses caring for the flock her father has left her as inheritance. The student Grisóstomo, out of love for Marcela, also dresses as a shepherd in order to pursue her. Realizing that Marcela is simply not interested in marrying,
he kills himself. The episode centers on the conventional pastoral topoi of the disdainful mistress who has brought about the shepherd’s suffering (in this case his death); and on both Marcela’s unconventional defense of a woman’s right to choose her own life style, and the author’s unconventional handling of the episode.  

Critical interpretations of Marcela are often couched in binary oppositions. She is either Madonna or Shrew. Marcela has been seen as an archetypal figure: “la pastora superhumana” whose “amor puro” may be seen in contraposition to Rocinante’s carnal instincts (Percas de Ponseti, I, 129–132); as the personification of philosophy: “la andante filosofía neoplatónica” (Willtrout 168–169); as a demon: “an instrument of the demon of love [who] charms and poisons his [Grisóstomo’s] soul” (Herrero 296). Even when Marcela’s assertive speech is seen as “el discurso de una libertad femenina,” she is nevertheless objectified into the “proposito del autor,” her role being to transmit “formulaciones platónicas no exentas de un componente cristiano” (Macht de Vera 7–13). When critics choose to be literal rather than archetypal, Marcela often becomes the object of gender-inflected interpretive misprisions. Diego Clemencín (1765–1834) is vehement at her taking the spotlight away from Grisóstomo: “La aparición de la pastora homicida... su deseo y desembarazos y su hachillería y silogismos quita a este episodio el interés que pudieran darle el carácter y muerte del malogrado Grisóstomo, a quien no puede menos de mirarse como un majadero en morirse por una hembra tan ladina y habladora” (77; emphasis mine). Other critics find it unbelievable that Marcela could be happy without the company of men: “The image of an unaffectedly correct maiden who is supposed to trudge through the woods with her sheep, spending the day with ‘zagallas,’ is awkward, and even in a humorous light, Marcela cannot be fully believable” (Finello 123). There are those who are disturbed because she seems so insensitive about Grisóstomo’s death: “If she comes, it is not to pay the tribute of pity... but to use that grave as a tribune from which to plead the cause of the self” (Poggioli 173–174); or “... she could hardly have chosen a less appropriate time of her arrogant, self-serving speech... a modicum of humanity and respect for the man who killed himself out of love for her would surely have compelled her to keep silence” (McGaha 32–34).

But Marcela must plead the cause of the self and she cannot and may not be silent. It is Cervantes’ way of subverting the pastoral genre within which he has encoded her. This is what I intend to argue in the essay. My interpretive purpose is to show that Cervantes’ unconventional handling of both the pastoral genre, and of Marcela within this pastoral episode, are fraught with purposeful ambiguity because “all the requisite properties of a drama of unrequited love have been assembled and at the anticipated climax the leading lady walks off because she has not consented to play such a role in the first place” (Williamson 48). My premise is that the reason for the ambiguity is that the episode conveys a subversive knowledge of the class and gender relations of the society within which the work has been produced and with whose values it is often at odds. Literary works are conveyors of the working myths of a culture and so must not be read as gospel but as myths (Munich 238–250). At Hélène Cixous cautions us in “Sorties,” there is no such thing as “nature” or “essence” but living structures sometimes frozen within historico-cultural limits which intermingle to such an extent with the historical scene that it becomes difficult, even impossible, to imagine something else (96). In this essay, I will try to imagine something else—a feminist re-reading of the Marcela-Grisóstomo episode. I will show that Cervantes subtly undermines the conventions of the pastoral genre and has Marcela explode traditional literary codes. Marcela will undermine both Grisóstomo’s encoding her as the disdainful mistress of courtly love and the pastoral tradition, and Don Quijote’s inscribing her into the chivalric mode of damsel in distress. By not subscribing to the tradition of woman as central object of the males’ pastoral

1 This article was prepared, in part, at an NEH summer institute on the Don Quijote in Tempe, Arizona in 1989. I would like to thank Drs. Edward Friedman and James Farr for their suggestions, and Drs. Ruth El Saffar, Diana Armas Wilson, and Adrienne Munich for their careful reading of, and comments on, the preliminary version.
lament, Cervantes undermines the genre and marginalizes Marcela. He has her renounce all the advantages conferred upon her by what Simone de Beauvoir would call woman's traditional alliance with the superior caste (48). But it is precisely Marcela's marginality that will become her greatest strength.

I. THE PASTORAL GENRE AS A MALE FANTASY

Pastoral has traditionally been associated with escape into an irresponsible dream world. Such an association usually focuses on the conventions of pastoral rather than on the raison d'être of the pastoral ideal. Pastoral literature conventionally reflects as its central image the mythical age of long ago, as Alexander Pope reminds us in his Discourse on Pastoral Poetry.

It is this golden world that Don Quijote contrasts with his own contemporary iron age in the pastoral episode of Part I, Chapter 11. It is a mythical age marked by class equality and community of goods in which its denizens "ignoraban estas dos palabras de tuyo y mío." It is an age wherein woman presides—the virgin goddess Dike-Astraema of Hesiod and of Ovid to whom Don Quijote alludes in his speech. Don Quijote adds a third figure, that of bountiful Mother Earth who "sin ser forzada, ofreca, por todas partes de su fértil y espacioso seno." During Astraea's reign, there were no wars: "Todo era paz entonces, todo amistad, todo concordia"); and women were safe: "Las doncellas y la honestidad andaban . . . sola y señora, sin temor que la ajena desenvoltura y lascivo intento le menoscabasen." If they chose to be unchaste, it was their personal choice, their free will: "y su perdición nacia de su gusto y propia voluntad." In this locus amoenus of eternal springtime, it is indeed possible for shepherds and shepherdesses to pipe as if they would never grow old, and as Shakespeare says in As You Like It, to "fleet the time carelessly as they did in the golden world" (I, i, ll. 110–11). But we cannot define the nature of pastoral by Don Quijote's speech, no matter how typical these conventions actually are of the genre. Instead, the conventions themselves must be seen as the outcome of a more fundamental impulse buried in the human psyche (Lynen 13–14). This need to suspend sequential

3 El Ingenioso hidalgo Don Quijote de la Mancha, I, 3rd. ed. Luis Andrés Murillo (Madrid: Clásicos Casalia, 1985), p. 155. All references to the Quijote will be from this edition and will be cited in parenthesis in the text by chapter only.

time and to project oneself into a mythical time when humanity enjoyed a happiness, a freedom, a plenitude which seems forever unattainable in our postlapsarian iron state finds its origin, according to Jung, in an analogy with childhood. It reflects the period when nature heaps gifts upon the child without any effort on her or his part. In a deeper sense, the golden age stands for life in unconsciousness, for unawareness of death and of all the problems of existence. It symbolizes the "Center" which precedes time, or which, within the limitations of existence, seems to bear the closest resemblance to paradise. Ignorance of the world of existence creates a kind of golden haze, devoid of the growing understanding of concepts of duty, the father-principle and rational thinking (Cirlot 5). It would seem to be an unconscious reflection, in a contemporary context, of Lacan's notion of a pre-symbolic, imaginary and pre-verbal union with the mother, a condition where the child has not yet had to choose the "Father's Law" over the "Desire of the Mother." But the Golden Age symbolizes a "Center." Like Paradise (Genesis) and like Paradise's image in the pastoral genre, it is ultimately a fiction of the male. The pastoral genre is his conscious wish fulfillment. It is he who wishes, even in fiction, temporarily to be devoid of the father principle and of the burden of responsibility which he has erected in androcentric society. And if pastoral images a desire for the Mother, it is still the male's desire and entails his regulation of the role of the Mother/Woman. It is a role by which, here too, she is ultimately absent. She is either the bodyless Beatrice-like "goddess" whose physical absence or death he bemoans (as with Sannazzaro's Fili), or the difficult and disdainful mistress who is emotionally absent by failing to take care of his needs and desires. In both cases she is a male construct, the object of his imagination. As Françoise Parturier has said in her Lettre ouverte aux hommes: "Inaccessible women remain your loved ones: dead women, exiled women . . . women saints . . . angels. It is not women you love, sir, but Woman; that is an invention which 'real presence' does not live up to. You have in you a secret preference for imaginary pleasures" (62). This is reflected in the pastoral genre. Pastoral is a male fantasy, a microcosmic image of man's gender-inflected wish fulfillment. Marx and Engels have reminded us of the essential relationship between our fictional constructs and the society within which they are created: "The phantoms formed in the human brain are also, necessarily, sublimates of their material life process . . .
and bound to material premises. . . . Life is not determined by consciousness, but consciousness by life” (47). Pastoral, like all literary fantasies, is produced within and determined by its social context. Though it might struggle against the realities of the iron age from whence it springs, the literary golden world cannot be understood in isolation from it. It frequently shows in graphic form a tension between the conventions and expectations of human society and the resistance of the conscious or unconscious mind to these expectations (Jackson 3–7). And woman’s role in the pastoral fantasy reflects this tension. In a manifest position of exclusion she keeps the system together, latently, by virtue of that exclusion. The male bonding thereby remains intact.

Despite the ubiquitous references to the presiding goddess of the classical mythical age, it is indicative that when the age is evoked, the feminine presence is already absent from the golden world. In the Works and Days, for example, Hesiod nostalgically laments the “golden generation of mortal people” who existed before the Goddesses Nemesis and Aulos (Decency and Respect) forsook mortal men and returned to Olympus (31–33). The absent goddess, in fact, seems to become central to the Golden Age topos. As Harry Levin conjectures, it may well be that the departing Nemesis and Aidos prepared the way for the stellar heroine later introduced (14). The stoic Aratus in his Phaenomena explains that the maiden Goddess of Justice, Dike, who absent herself from the golden world now appears in heaven as the constellation Virgo, thus combining Chastity and Justice. After Aratus, the virgin goddess is invoked under the starry appellation of Ovid’s virgin Astraea. Not only is she forever absent, it may well be that in this world also, to reiterate Lacan, “the woman does not exist”—perhaps literally. Since Pandora, in Hesiod’s version, was the first of her sex to disrupt the golden world, it follows that there were only men in Hesiod’s Golden Age (Levin 14). In Plato’s Politicus (272a), he too states that “the men of those days [the age of Kronos] had neither wives nor children.” Theocritus, who is the first to introduce love into pastoral, underlines in his idylls the homoerotic love with which pastoral was most concerned: “An equal yoke of friendship they bore. There were men of gold then when the loved one returned his love” (I, XII). The “disrupting” Eve of Genesis also prompts the Church Fathers to fantasize how different the Hebrew-Christian Paradise would have been had it been devoid of women. Augustine tells us in his commentary on Genesis (De genesi ad litteram IX. v. 9): “if it was company and good conversation that Adam needed, it would have been much better arranged to have two men together, as friends, not a man and a woman” (Wilson 18: emphasis mine).

II. CERVANTES’ SUBVERSION OF THE PASTORAL GENRE

Theorists traditionally identify three oppositions as essential to the genre’s heightening of the contrast between the pure pastoral ideal and the reality of everyday life: Otium/Negotium, Nature/Civilization, Innocence/Passion. Cervantes subverts these oppositions. In Chapter 11, the theme of Otium/Negotium is already called into question. Cervantes underlines the existence of real class structures which separate the Don from his squire even in this miniature Golden Age. In line with the ideal he espoused, Don Quijote assumes the democratic stance of the denizens of the Golden Age and invites Sancho to eat from the same plate. Sancho humorously refuses. He wants to be his own peasant self and to ignore the polite forms of dining room behavior incumbent on someone in Don Quijote’s class (“donde me sea forzoso mascar despacio, pebro poco, limpiar me un menudo”). But Don Quijote, his “amo y señor” forces him to do so: “con todo eso, te has de sentar . . . Y asiéndole por el brazo, le forzó a que junto dí se sentase” (I, 11). Relations of power are not absent in this iron age. The knight and the squire, in fact, are wholly out of place in the goatherds’ pastoral space. Nor do the goatherds understand these characters from another genre. Don Quijote’s quest for chivalric adventures, as well as his archaic speech patterns, are as alien to pastoral as is Marcela’s speech in Chapter 14.

In Chapter 12, another jarring motif is introduced. The Innocence/Passion theme is subverted. For pastoral tranquility to be preserved, either “virtuoso affetto” or reciprocal love are permitted in pastoral not the maddening amor hermoso of tragedy (Livingston Lowes). Instead, we have here a Girardian triangle of desire created by the male bonding of the two friends, Grisóstomo and Ambrosio, and which the shepherdess Marcela shatters. Marcela is not just another Galatea, Diana, Fili o Selvaggia. In fact, she is not even a pastoral figure until the love-sick swains make her into the object of their complaints. Grisóstomo, the “pastor fingido,” and his friends become pastoral shepherds for Marcela
Throughout Chapters 12 and 13, she is defined in dichotomous binarisms as the recalitrant “Other.” He pursues/she disdains; he asks/she refuses; he loves/she hates; he is gentle/she is adamant as marble; he is honorable/she is ungrateful; Grisóstomo is the victim/she is the persecutor: “Quisito bien, fue aborrevido; Adoró, fue desdeñado; rogó a una fiera, importunó a un mármol... sirvió a la ingratitud, de quien alcanzó por premio ser despojos de la muerte en la mitad de la carrera de su vida...” (I. 13). Not only is she cast in a series of unflattering binary oppositions, but also she is patterned on triangular structures of desire wherein the two male friends are bonded and privileged while she is reviled. The entire point of the story, Pedro admits, is structured on this triangulation: “se puede sacar cuánto haya sido la crudeza de Marcela; el amor de Grisóstomo; la fe de la amistad vuestra [Ambrosio]...” (I. 13: emphasis mine). Marcela becomes central to a discourse marked by contrasts that negate her and her feelings and that are articulated solely from the male lens in which she is a mere reflection—a specular image—of either their expectations and/or their disappointments. She is encoded by all who speak of her as an “ingrata;” “cruel;” “endiablada moza;” “fiero basílico.” She is simply a generic object—the object of the shepherds’ complaints.

Marcela is not alone in this encoding. Gender relations are consistently described in similar misogynistic patterns throughout Chapters 11–14. The men set up a series of binary oppositions which privilege them and in which the female is created entirely in the image of their desires and expectations. In Chapter 11, for example, the goatherd sings his rustic song to Olalla. The language differs from Grisóstomo’s Petrarchan canzone in its rusticity but not in its attitude toward or its imaging of women. The song is created solely from the male’s perspective:

Yo sé, ... que me adoras,
puesto que no me lo has dicho...
Porque sé que eres sabida,
en que me quieres me afirmo:...
Dejo el bailar por tu causa, ...
No cuenta las alabanzas

South can console himself with the thought that he is not a ‘dirty nigger’—
and the more prosperous whites cleverly exploit this pride. Similarly the most mediocre of males feels himself a demigod as compared with women” (51).
que de tu belleza he dicho;
que, aunque verdaderas, hacen
ser yo de algúnas malquisto. . . .
pon tú el cuello en la gamella;
verás como pongo el mio.
Donde no, desde aqui juro . . .
de no salir destas sierras
sino para capuchino (I, 11: emphasis mine).

If the shepherdess does not acquiesce in the role within
which the shepherd has encoded her, then the shepherd either
threatens to become a monk or, like Grisóstomo, to kill himself.
The woman’s role, then, is to reciprocate and be “good,” or to
refuse, and like Olalla above, at best be considered coy (“I know
you adore me because you have not told me you do.”), or at
worst, like Marcela, be labelled “esquina hermosa ingrata.” But
the text seems self-conscious about the conventional misogyny
of its pastoral laments and exhibits a subversive attitude toward
them. Even before Marcela appears, and in the midst of these
stock tirades against the “disdainful woman,” the men them-
selves are uncomfortable. They know Marcela does not deserve
their negative assessment. Vivaldo acknowledges that the nega-
tive image of Marcela, conjured up by Grisóstomo and his sym-
pathizers, differs from the positive things he has heard about
her: “dijo que no le parecía que conformaba con la relación que
él había oído del recato y bondad de Marcela. . . .” (I, 14). Pedro,
the goatherd, also praises Marcela. He claims she is courteous
and kindly, straightforward and honest with all her suitors,
modest and proper in her behavior. Marcela has never, he says,
“dado indicio, ni por semejanz que venga en menoscabo de su
honestidad y recato; . . . ninguno se ha alabado. . . . que le haya
dado alguna pequeña esperanza de alcanzar su deseo . . . los
trata cortés y amigablemente” (I, 12). Ambrosio, Grisóstomo’s
friend, and the enemy of the “ingrata” Marcela, adds a third dis-
sonant voice to the tirade against Marcela. He acknowledges that
Grisóstomo was away from her when he wrote his invective and
that his complaints against her are therefore imaginary suspi-
cions: “los celos [eran] imaginados y las sospechas temidas como
si fueran verdaderas” (I, 14: emphasis mine). Yet they continue to
call her cruel and “ingrata.” It is clear that these men have “a
stake in the solidarity which [has] bonded them to tradition’s fa-
bles” (Munich 249). They cannot or will not speak of her except
in negative terms and always in reference to her effect on them.
The irony is that we begin to see through the Petrarchan conven-
tion of Grisóstomo’s lament to the masochism/narcissism that
motivates his suicide. He too has been the victim of tradition’s
pastoral fables. Ambrosio admits that Grisóstomo’s life was cut
short by a fictional construct, by a shepherdess whom he reified,
then sought to immortalize immorally: “una pastora a quien
él procuraba eternizar para que viviera en la memoria de las
gentes” (I, 13). Grisóstomo himself seems unaware of his narcis-
sistic obsession—not with the real Marcela but with the imagi-
nary facsimile he created:

Yo muero, en fin: y porque nunca espero
buen suceso en la muerte ni en la vida,
pertinaz estaré en mi fantasía.
(I, 14: emphasis mine)

But Grisóstomo is dead. His fatal error lies in his having inter-
preted Marcela’s behavior “as a sign of literary convention, as an
exteror crust to be broken through, whereas in reality, it is Mar-
cela’s very being” (Sieber 193). Petrarch and his followers had
traded the idea of the lover’s death allegorically though seri-
ously (Iventosch 67). The Renaissance pastoral had smiled at
such histrionics. In the Aminta, for example, the chorus had re-
assured Tirsi who feared that Aminta would kill himself for Sil-
via that such posture was theatrical not pastoral: “E uso ed arte
di ciascun ch’ama minacciarsi morte: ma rade volte poi segue
l’effetto” (II. 1312–1314). Rosalind’s response in Shakespeare’s As
You Like It is similar: “Men have died from time to time, and
worms have eaten them, but not for love” (IV, i, 96–98). And
d’Urfe’s pastoral characters in l’Astre echo Rosalind’s senti-
mments: “. . . soyez certain que vous ne mourrez pas encore de
cette maladie . . . j’en ay veu plusieurs attaints de mesme mal
[l’amour] mais je n’en vis encor jamais mourir un seul” (II, bk. I,
33–34). But Grisóstomo’s death is real. A violent suicide has
taken place in the pastoral bower.5 As in Poussin’s Et In Arcadia
Ego (The Arcadian Shepherds), Cervantes reminds us that his pas-
torial reverie is also only temporarily distanced from reality
(Panofsky 300). It cannot escape it entirely. Class, generic dif-
ferences, and death exist in Cervantes’ pastoral bower.

5 This is hinted at in his canzone: “ponedme un hierro en estas manos!/Dame, desdén, una torcida soga” (I, 14). See also Iventosch 64–76.
Finally, even the theme of Nature-Civilization is subverted in Chapter 14 as the natural world of pastoral, and its encoding of gender relations is tested. Its conventions, its assumptions, and its expectations are debunked by the erudition and sophistication of Marcela's speech. She defends her cause clearly and rationally, undermining every assumption predicated of her as a pastoral character. She does this in a speech steeped in the best oratorical tradition of Western culture—the classical rhetoric of Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian as well as the medieval school manuals which perpetuated the traditions of ancient oratory (Mackey). Cervantes' coup de grace comes with the appearance of Marcela. She erupts into the circumscribed world of the goatherds and explodes it by assuming a negative function. She rejects both the societal and the fictional codes that have inscribed her: “She has simply refused to be a ‘sex object’” (Dunn 3); and her appearance on the rock “makes her look like someone breaking away from the ancient fiction that has bound her...” (Finello 123). Marcela refuses to be silent, refuses to be blamed for Grisóstomo's suicide, and refuses to vindicate herself within the terms of the binaries used to malign her. She simply asserts her freedom to live her life in her own way, thereby subverting the Persecutor/Victim dichotomies and undermining centuries-old normative expectations.

Before her appearance, she has circulated—in her absence and in her silence—as a value object essential to the males' fiction, a token, a sign.6 Once she erupts on the scene, she fractures the system that had depended on her silence for its perpetuation. Through the use of language, Marcela transforms herself from the Object of their imagination to what Monique Wittig would call an “absolute Subject” (66). She immediately reappropriates her person by reappropriating the very language by which they have tried to suppress and to alter who she really is. Language now becomes her most powerful weapon. As Debey says in *Et voilà pourquoi votre femme est muette* (1980): “To reduce woman to silence is to reduce her to powerlessness; that is

6 Speaking of woman as object of exchange in Lévi-Strauss' system, Christine Brooke-Rose describes the degeneration of women from “essential values” to value objects: “in other words, tokens, signs. And since signs do ‘speak’, if only through the symptom-signifier, the system was doomed from the start, or rather, had to depend for aeons on women’s silence, on the repression of their signified into the unconscious” (310).
and property rights." Forced love (hotly contested by Marcela) is simply masculine efforts to obtain 'property' " (188).

The narrator tells us that without waiting for a reaction—not caring one bit about their opinion of her—Marcela turns from her interlocutors, her speech ended, and enters the thickest part of a nearby wood: "sin querer oír respuesta alguna, volvió las espaldas y se entró por lo más cerrado de un monte que allí cerca estaba . . . "(I, 14). Don Quijote, sword in hand, leaps to her defense. He will let no one harm Marcela—a Marcela whom we have seen is perfectly capable of taking care of herself. Marcela thereby assumes a negative function in the text. She has undermined both Grisóstomo’s encoding her as the disdainful mistress of the courtly love tradition, and Don Quijote’s inscribing her into the chivalric tradition of damsel in distress. In Kristevan terms, Marcela has exploded the social and generic codes by which they have tried to inscribe her (1980, 166). She has refused to comply with generic expectations, "her rejection is not part of pastoral convention" (Sieber 193). She has also refused to comply with the traditional expectations of her society. What Cervantes has done in this episode is remarkable. There seems to be no precedent for Marcela in the literary history of the time. Marcela’s choice to live freely and alone is unquestionably an "hecho grave en los contextos culturales de la época" (Macht de Vera 10).

Melveena McKenzie has elaborated on the "mujer esquiva" as a persona non grata in the seventeenth century. A woman who avoided marriage was, in fact, anathema because the century viewed the issue of marriage in a very circumscribed way. Love and marriage were a woman’s birthright. She had been created from man in the Garden of Eden as his helpmate, and so on the temporal level he is her first cause and final end. When she rebels against marriage, it is not against man-made rules that she rebels but "against the natural order of things as decreed by God" (116). The avoidance of men "is neither natural nor plausible in a woman and . . . beneath any apparent antagonism there is some fault of character which makes her behave in this way" (120). She is therefore made to see the error of her ways, and the literary piece can then end happily as "self-deception gives way to self-knowledge." But Marcela ignores all societal expectations. She is very different from her seventeenth-century "mujer esquiva" counterparts.

Is there an explanation for Marcela who, textually and contextually, seems singular in choosing her own lifestyle? Ruth El Saffar does not see Marcela’s stance as necessarily positive. In the context of the period she sees it as an escape from her "traditional role" which would require that the young woman either marry or enter the convent." Marcela is thereby seen by El Saffar as vulnerable, as lacking. Motherless, she has grown up in a home "in which eros is suppressed" (61–64). Javier Herrero follows this train of thought: "It is no accident that the hardhearted women who cannot surrender themselves to the imperfection of a human embrace, Marcela and Leandra, both lack mothers" (298). Ann E. Wiltrot attributes Marcela’s stance, on the other hand, to the fact that she is not an aristocrat and so is not inscribed by societal norms of "appropriate" behavior: " . . . no [está] sujeta a la rigidez del código del honor, lo cual la deja en libertad para construir su propia defensa"; and to the fact that without a father to protect her she has had to take care of herself (2). I concur with the latter view. Marcela’s marginality is her greatest strength. Outside of the pastoral she has been forced to take care of herself, and within the pastoral she has been maligned simply for being herself. What has Marcela to lose? What is important is that she simply does not care how they react as long as she explains her part in the situation. She vindicates her position and simply goes into the woods, leaving them "admirados, tanto de su discreción como de su hermosura" (I, 14). Cervantes refuses to inscribe Marcela in the male system of representation. By reinforcing her marginality he deprives her of her centrality as essential object of the shepherds’ complaints. But her marginality does not leave official structures questioned (Clément 1975; Richman 1980; Bowlby 1983). On the contrary, Marcela’s stance constitutes a revolutionary moment of rejection. She posits a specificity of her own—as opposed to the specular image of her that the males have created—and so effects in Kristevan terminology, "an asociality, in the violation of communal conventions, in a sort of a-symbolic singularity" (Féral 11).

Yet the text reveals once again its profound and problematic levels. On the level of speech, Marcela succeeds but not on the level of writing. An irrevocable chasm separates the scriptional from the sexual here. Marcela has subverted the male view of her as textual object, but she remains a sexual object. Everyone,
including Don Quijote, wants to go after this beautiful object. Her knowledge of the best Western tradition of oratory, her impeccable presentation, her courageous stance within the text itself, her refusal to play the role of *mujer esquiva* within her cultural context are in danger of being lost or suppressed from the collective memory. Like other women before and after her, she has been limited in her choices. She can either be “immortalized” as the men have wanted her to be or she is to be suppressed and even maligned in subsequent publications for exhibiting “inappropriate” behavior. On Grisóstomo’s epitaph she remains—for posterity—what they had said she was in the first place, a “*mujer esquiva*”:

Murió a manos del rigor/de una esquiva hermosa ingrata, con quien su imperio dilata/la tiranía de amor (I, 14: emphasis mine).

Sexual difference, as Nancy K. Miller reminds us, can actually be made “to structure the scene of production, the actual production . . . the reading . . . and the glossing of . . . [a] text” (358). What comes to mind is the similar articulation, on the part of another fictional character, of the distortion possible in male-authored publications. As Jane Austen puts it in *Persuasion*: “Men have had every advantage of us in telling their own story. The pen has been in their hands. I will not allow books to prove anything” (239).

The pastoral interlude, however, does not have closure. Grisóstomo is never really the focal point—Marcela is. Grisóstomo lives and dies within the easily recognizable conventions of courtly love and of pastoral. He lives and dies in shepherd’s attire and chooses as his burial place the foot of the rock where the Corktree Spring is. It is there that he first saw Marcela (I, 12). Marcela, on the other hand, is open to multiple interpretations. She resists all the signifying practices that have tended to circumscribe her within a homogeneous and unifying text. Through her speech, Cervantes calls attention to the heterogeneity implicit in all literary discourse which appropriates, contextu- alizes, and comments upon another “language,” namely, that of gender (Kaplan 164). Marcela’s marginality to mainstream sexual and social literary conventions makes possible her freedom to question the unquestionable and articulate the “inappropriate,” thereby bringing about what Josette Féral describes as the feminist disordering, deviating from, and derailing of traditional dis-course (1980, 46). It is this same marginality that makes it ultimately possible for Marcela to interrogate the very conditions of the conventional production and re-production of misogynistic discourse in the pastoral genre. Marcela’s speech gives the lie to the functioning of prior negative image systems of women, and dis-orders a tradition whose codes of silence have successfully maintained women in a manifest position of exclusion.

In this episode, to reiterate Cixous’ assessment in the article’s epigraph, Cervantes has dared to “slip something by at odds with tradition . . . [thereby] imagining the woman who would hold out against oppression and constitute herself as a superb, equal, hence ‘impossible’ subject, untenable in a real social framework” (1976, 879). Such a woman Cervantes imagined in Marcela.
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