THE EMERGENCE OF THE MODERN EUROPEAN NOVEL IN SPAIN 1599-1605

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Palabras clave: Género, constricción, novela europea, burguesía.

Resumen: El foco en donde se va plasmando el género novelesco y deconstruyéndose los modelos anteriores es un espacio complejo cruzado por las tensiones de cualquier proceso histórico importante. Sin lugar a duda, su advenimiento coincide con una fase de la expansión de la burguesía pero el género se nos presenta ya en sus albores como un espacio de contradicciones vector de valores subversivos. Como práctica social, brota de la puesta en relación de una serie de datos y de una serie de *constricciones* que le dan sus coordenadas socio-históricas por incorporar a su modo los cuestionamientos más disputados en una sociedad determinada.

Mots-clés: Genre, contrainte, roman européen, bourgeoisie.

Résumé: Le creuset où le roman prend forme en tant que genre et où se déconstruisent progressivement les anciens modèles est un espace complexe traversé par les tensions qui accompagnent habituellement tout processus historique important. Certes son émergence coïncide avec une phase d'expansion de la bourgeoisie mais le genre, dès ses origines, se présente comme un espace conflictuel vecteur de valeurs subversives. En tant que pratique sociale, il surgit de la mise en relation d'un certain nombre de faits sociaux et d'une série de *contraintes* qui lui conferent ses coordonnées socio-historiques, incorporant, sur un mode qui lui est propre, les enjeux fondamentaux d'une société déterminée.

Keywords: Genre, Constraint, European Novel, Bourgeoisie**.**

Abstract: The melting pot in which the novel as a form is forged, and in which the earlier models are progressively deconstructed, is a complex space traversed by the tensions that habitually accompany every major historical process. Its emergence does coincide with a certain phase of expansion of the bourgeoisie, but the novel as a genre, from its very origins, presents itself as a conflict-ridden space and as a vector of subversive values. As a social practice it arises from the coming into relation of a certain number of social facts and from a series of *constraints* that give it its socio-historical coordinates, incorporating what is profoundly at stake in the history of a specific society.

In relation to the primary modelling system (language), which, by its act of denomination, marks off segments in the continuum of reality, the different discursive practices which as a whole constitute what is known by the name of literature (poetry, theatre, and essay...) are modelling systems that we call secondary because they redistribute a linguistic substance already segmented by the initial act of denomination. These secondary modelling systems evolve within the framework of their respective and always specific institutions: they are artificial macrosemiotics, equipped with sense-trajectories which are obligatory transit points that the messages cannot evade (Cros, 1983, 1998). The system marks the messages indelibly with its constraints. In order to illustrate the nature of these constraints, let me refer to what I have said elsewhere on the subject in the case of epistolary exchange. We begin our letters with a greeting of the type: *My Dear* … and end them with a ritual formula like: *Yours ever...*(*I am yours and you are mine, and, when I say* good-bye, I *am already the* My Dear… *of the reply that I expect to get from you.*).What we write within this framework thus circulates between these two poles of a single structure which simultaneously sets in motion the desire to possess the other and to abandon oneself to him in return. That these formulas may sometimes be omitted or replaced by other

less explicit formulas is of no importance: this social practice continues to be structured by the tête-à-tête of the two correspondents (Cros, 1984). I assume that each individual genre is distinguished from the other genres by a series of signs of differentiation which may be similarly defined in terms of constraints, rules of the game, that are, if you like, internalized and therefore reproduced in the no conscious mode by all those who choose to express themselves through that genre. I also assume that these same constraints operate according to the historical context and are consequently subject to evolutionary processes. It is these constraints that give the genre thus defined its socio-historical coordinates. They come into being at the same time as the genre, which arises from the matrix of their emerging configuration. The term which will eventually designate the new genre is only its visible face: clear, neutral and, I would almost say, innocent. Now this configuration that I shall call form - an enigmatic structure in which social structures are codified - emerges at a precise moment in history, incorporating what is profoundly at stake in that history.

As a social practice, in fact, the genre of the novel arises from the coming into relation of a certain number of social facts. It is easier to understand this process if one thinks about what happens in the case of a puzzle, which only becomes meaningful when I fit the last piece in: everything that, up to now, was only a formless and meaningless juxtaposition takes on a sense with this last piece; in that piece, the directions which up to now had not reached their goal come together and intersect; in that piece, colours acquire extension and justification in the form of objects, elements of a landscape, the outline of figures; what that piece signifies flows into all the pieces that surround it, restoring their original forms and meanings. Yet that last piece can only construct its sense from the bringing together and convergence of all the others; it is all those

others pieces which have turned it into meaning, which have given it its meaning. If this comparison is accepted, one may reasonably claim that the novel, in emerging from History, gives a meaning in return to that same History.

It is on the basis of this double hypothesis that I shall approach the problem of the origin of the novel in Spain. It has been said that the novel came into being as a continuation of the epic, and that its emergence was linked with the economic and political rise of the bourgeoisie, an assertion that, formulated in this way, is content simply to observe that the two facts are in some sense concomitant and fails to enquire into the processes that articulate them. It also complicates any approach to the problem in the case of Spain, where, according to some historians, the bourgeoisie was only constituted belatedly as a class.

I want to put forward the hypothesis that it was between 1599, the date when the First Part of *Guzmán de Alfarache* appeared in print, and 1605, the publication date of the First Part of *Don Quijote*, that the European novel emerged. This thesis is not new: I proposed it in 1967 in *Protée et le gueux* (Cros, 1967), where I pointed out that Mateo Alemán's and Cervantes's texts established a genuine conflicting dialogue. To bring them together into a single corpus should allow us better to understand how the various origins of the novel as a genre became the vectors of a future which was self-evidently to be plural. I propose to develop this point of view further here.

I shall first consider *Guzmán de Alfarache* as the exemplar of the picaresque genre in its fully developed form. I have shown elsewhere (Cros, 2001a) that the structure of Alemán's text - the dialectics of Justice and Mercy - reproduces that of *Lazarillo de Tormes*, and that this structure gives an account of the upheavals which affect the field of religion under the impact of evolution at the economic level. In order to achieve industrial growth, Europe has to draw on

the pool of labour constituted by the idle population of vagabonds, and thus regulates beggary; in so doing, it calls into question the Catholic conception of charity. This controversial project, which arose in the Lutheran Europe of the north, was literally imported into Spain by Vives's treatise *De subventione pauperum*, published at Antwerp in 1526. The gap separating the economic level of the Iberian peninsula from that of its neighbours is accompanied by an equivalent lack of correlation of mentalities and does explain the exacerbation set in motion in Spain by the calling into question of one of the fundamental elements of Catholic ethics. It is from this negative synchrony (*dys- synchrony*), in my view, that picaresque literature arises. This reading corroborates the argument associating the origin of the novel with the development of the bourgeoisie, but it is necessary to point out in addition that what happens at this moment refers us to a symbolic space in which the rise of the bourgeoisie is subject to critical appraisal. If the picaresque genre is born of the projection of *Guzmán de Alfarache* on to *Lazarillo de Tormes*, the configuration of structures on which it depends (*justice* versus *mercy*) makes visible a historical fracture and a conflict that opposes an authentic value*, mercy*, to a value, *justice*, which has been degraded by becoming merely instrumental (on the pretext of countering idleness and vice, the Reformers serve the interests of a rapidly expanding capitalism). This, then, would be the first constraint of the novel as a modeling sistem (the confrontation of degraded and authentic values), and if we extrapolate from that observation, we will find that this assertion intersects with the theses developed by Lukács in his *Theory of the Novel* (Lukács, 1963), all the more because a similar confrontation may be seen to operate in *Don Quijote*, where the authentic values of chivalry are mediated by the degraded value represented by the imitation of the *Amadis de Gaule* (Girard, 1961).

The novel as a genre thus emerges from the coming into relation of the following factors:

1. economic and social processes, in particular the development of global routes of communication , the necessity of organizing commercial channels of commerce, the corresponding development of transport by mule, of inns, roads, towns. (Braudel, 1966, vol. I, 261 ff)The whole narrative architecture of the two texts rests on this primary level of reality (travel, stops-over in the inns during which the intercalated tales are told, characters such as mule-drivers, inn-keepers, travelers encountered on the way, etc.);

2. conflict-ridden situations: the rise of the merchant classes transcribed by Mateo Alemán: (Cavillac, 1983), the rise of the "wealthy peasant" class, which is in the process of being assimilated into the nobility, a development indicated in the intercalated stories** of *Don Quijote* (Cros, 1984, 140 ff.), tensions within the nobility;

3. forms of behavior and normative systems (money, honor, chastity, wealth, poverty, asceticism, the distinction between licit and illicit love-relations, etc.);

4. modes of characterization: the typology of ruffians, pages, nationalities, humores: [to take just one example, the opposition between *el humor cálido y seco* (hot, dry humor) attributed to Don Quijote and *el humor frío y húmedo* (the cold, damp humor) that characterizes Sancho is articulated in the couple Doña Cuaresma / Don Carnal, thus providing an essential line of force of the narrative (Cros, 1990);]

5. social practices (the organization of charity, the workings of the Ideological State Apparatuses: religion, family, education...);

6. debates that themselves transcribe the evolution of the infra-structure (debates on begging, on the reform of the bridges and roads, on luxury, idleness, etc. - see above).

The impact and the '*sign effects*' (Ricœur) of these different factors no doubt vary according to the text under consideration. Nonetheless, they represent as a whole a considerable quantity of facts which, as history incorporated by and in the writing, are components of the genesis of the genre.

7. It remains to evoke one last factor, namely a transhistorical practice which provides a specific matrix for the production of meaning (the literary tradition with its clichés, rules, techniques...). The impact of this practice is no doubt more immediate, and it is legitimate to suppose that it contributed more actively than other factors to the dynamic

8. impetus of the novel's genesis (Cros, 1983). Certain of these aspects are relevant to each of the two texts and are relatively well known; others by contrast only implicate them in an indirect way or have not been rightly commented . In the first place, as Riley has shown (Riley, 1962), almost a hundred and fifty years after the invention of typography, literature is beginning to emerge as a powerful phenomenon, generating a market which is already relatively broad, as witness the manner in which, precisely, *El Libro del pícaro* is distributed: while the First Part of the original text appears in 1599, the French translation is published as early as the following year, which is an extraordinary feat; there follows an edition in Latin which will form the basis of the English, German and Italian translations (Cros, 1967). The problems posed by the popularization of the printing press have thus by this time been definitively

resolved, and this broadening of the reading public is apparent in the prefatory materials: from now on, authors address not only the *discreto lector* (the discriminating reader) but also the *vulgo*, (the ordinary people)), that is to say the reader who doesn't know the rules (*vulgo: se toma también por el común modo de discurrir y opinar de la gente baxa o que sabe poco*, Covarrubias) ("*vulgo:* also designates the common fashion of speaking and judging among lower-class people or those who have little knowledge", Covarrubias). Whatever the strategies hidden behind this way of addressing the reader, the shadow of what will become *the general public* is already present. To this one may add the topicality of literary criticism at the end of the sixteenth century (Riley, 1962) and, in these circumstances, the debates surrounding the question whether the epic can be written in prose. As is well known, *Don Quijote* touches on these problems at various points, and from that angle can be termed a farcical epic. This schema doubtless does n't fit on *Guzmán de Alfarache*, but this is because, within the corpus I have isolated, the dividing line is represented by Aristotle's *Poetics*, which was known in Italy by the beginning of the sixteenth century and more widely disseminated from 1548 onward by Robortelli. The first Spanish translation dates from 1626, but López Pinciano provides commentaries on Aristotle's text in his *Filosofía antigua poética* (*Ancient Poetic Philosophy*) of 1596. Cervantes, who lived in Italy from 1564 to 1575, could read Italian and could thus have had direct access to Italian translations and commentaries. On the one hand, then, Cervantes's fascination with the epic and the influence of the *Poetics*; on the other, *El Libro del pícaro*, which owes absolutely everything to the art of eloquence and to rhetoric (Cros, 1967). Furthermore, between the two works - since the

First Part of *Guzmán*'s writing was completed in 1597 (Cros, 1967) - comes the end of the reign of Philip II, the accession of Philip III, and a radical change of atmosphere at the Court (Cf. the celebrations of the *Carnestolendas* at Valladolid in 1599).

From a certain point of view, it would be impossible to imagine a more diversified origin. *Guzmán de Alfarache* is the first urban novel, and the city will in fact become the protagonist of the modern novel. In *Don Quijote*, by contrast, it is the vision of the countryside that dominates: the peasant (who only appears on one solitary occasion in Alemán's work, and then in a negative light) is at the centre of Cervantes's text where, furthermore, the social dynamics is represented by the rise of the peasant who has acquired wealth, while in Alemán the narrator privileges the point of view of commercial environment as vectors of the aims of the bourgeoisie (Cavillac, 1983). If the two texts are considered jointly, one notices in the background of Cervantes's text the continued presence of a medieval mode of production that lacks of all dynamism and, as I was saying earlier, in the intercalated tales, in particular in the figure of the *campesino rico* ("the rich peasant"), the early signs of its gradual regression, while in Alemán's narrative, we hear only the noisy voices of the city and the feverish activity generated by pre-capitalist and capitalist modes of production in the streets and squares of the towns. Considered thus in a synoptic perspective, these works articulate the entire social formation of their time (Cros, 1984 b).

Their respective indices of modernity appear as literally the inverse of one another: contrary to Cervantes, Mateo Alemán has a dynamic and prophetic vision of history (Cavillac, 1983), but whereas the former's practice of writing is astonishingly modern, the latter's re-

produces the norms of the medieval arts of poetry and of traditional rhetoric as inherited from Aristotle (Cros, 1967), ... apart from one thing, which is, however, far from negligible. For Aristotle's categories seem to me to be overturned in Mateo Alemán's narratve by the introduction of Saint Augustine's *sermo humilis*, which breaks the rigid classification of styles (high, middle, low) by setting against it the mechanism of the potential reversibility of the sublime and the humble (*humilis / sublimis*) on the model of the figure of Christ, 'God made flesh'. The impact of the *sermo humilis* affects the textual structures: is visible in the circumstances surrounding the instance of enunciation (a galley-slave who declares himself to be the sentinel of human life), is visible in the recurrent exhortations addressed by the narrator *Yo* (I) to a collective *Tu* (You) as an embodiment of the community, at once corpus christi (*sublimis*) and massa peccati (*humilis*), but is visible , above all , with this "paradoxical syntagm": "*la cumbre del monte de las miseries* ("t the summit of the mountain of wretchedness), which inverts the lexicalized metaphor *abismo de la miserias* (the abyss of wretchedness) and situates Guzmán's entire itinerary "in an ascending perspective, from the dark abysses of sin to the luminous summits of grace", as Michel Cavillac magnificently puts it (Cavillac, 1983, pp. 84, 122). A reversible dynamic of this kind, which by a kind of boomerang effect gives the trajectory "of the abandoned man to the new man" (Cavillac) its full meaning, transcribes with exemplary clarity the genetic impact of *sermo humilis*. I know of no other example in secular Spanish literature of a similar recourse to *sermo humilis* prior to Alemán's text. The fact that such a reconfiguration of the practice of writing accompanies the emergence of the novel as a genre seems to me of the utmost importance, in so far as this reconfiguration cancels the mortgage that decorum had previously imposed on the instance of enunciation and, by erasing all social hierarchies, catapults both the narrator and

the narratee into an utopian egalitarian space in which, from now on, the novel will establish itself.

In the period with which we are concerned, no term exists to designate what will later be called "novela" (novel). Narrative works carry the titles of "History...", "Portrait...", "Life..." "Book...", etc., and this void is precisely a powerful semiotic indication that we really are dealing with the dawn of the emergence of a new model, for it tells us that no critic has pointed out the potential convergences of these various texts in order to derive from them a new poetics. This is not the case with the *novella* (short story; to day, in Spanish: *novela corta*), which is explicitly recognized as a genre by Cervantes in his prologue to the *Novelas ejemplares*, where, in 1613, he declares that he was the first to write this kind of narrative in Spain. It clearly never occurs to him to consider *Don Quijote* as one of these *novelas*. Up to and including the eighteenth century (Sobrino's Spanish/French dictionary), the term "novella" is synonymous with *patraña*, *cuento* (Cavarrubias), *conseja* (César Oudin), *fable*, *conte fait à plaisir*, *nouvelle* , (Sobrino)]. There is no doubt however that the *novela* in this sense (*novela corta*) played a role in the birth of the novel as a major genre: *Guzmán de Alfarache* and *Don Quijote* both contain intercalated narratives of this kind and this practice may be seen as the intratextual insertion of a model, a reference point in relation to which writing will periodically measure itself, situate itself, doubtless in order better to define its own specific character.

The point where are connected these two genres (the novella and the novel) belong to the field of poetics. So let us now turn to what the *Diccionario de Autoridades* says about the term "novella*": Historia fingida y texida de los casos que comunmente suceden o son verisímiles...* (Fictional story, woven from events that commonly occur or are probable). Here, the definition first vacillates between two contradictory notions: on the one side, fiction (*historia fingida*),

on the other one, reality (*casos que comunmente suceden*), then finally settles on a middle term, verisimilitude (*o son verisímiles*). The same tension arises in one of the definitions given by Covarrubias for the term *fábula*: *Rematemos con que algunas veces damos nombres de fábulas a las cosas que fueron ciertas y verdaderas* (reality), *pero en su discurso tienen tanta variedad que parecen cosas no acontecidas sino compuestas e inventadas de algún gallardo u lozano ingenio* (fiction) ("Let us conclude with the remark that sometimes we give the name of fables to things which were certain and true (reality) but which are strung together in such an intricate way that they appear to be not simply narrated but composed and invented by some gallant, lively wit" (fiction)). What makes it possible to move from one to the other of these two poles *truth* and *fiction* belongs to the composition and the disposition, in other words to the rhetoric y/or to the poetics. [Cf. Texer (see above, Historia fingida y texida...), *metafóricamente vale componer, ordenar y colocar en método y disposición una cosa.... Diccionario de Autoridades* ("To weave... as a metaphor means to compose, place in order and arrange a subject with method and disposition";). These definitions, in fact, revert in different forms to the opposition between History and Poetry, that is to say between the particular and the universal, or again between what has really happened (*los casos que comunmente suceden.., las cosas que fueron ciertas y verdadera*s) and what <u>might</u> have happened. Juan de Mal Lara is much less precise when, in his *Descripción de la galera real de Ser / Ser° Don Juan de Austria*, he evokes the role given to each of these two notions in the context of an allegory of Rhetoric, holding *en la una mano un libro abierto que es la Poesía de donde toma los colores de las palabras y en la otra otro libro que es la Historia de donde le vienen los colores de las cosas* ("in one hand an open book which is Poetry, from which she takes the colors of words, and in the other, another book which is History, from which she acquires

the colors of things"); but what he says on the subject bears witness to the same preoccupation as the dictionaries I have been quoting.

The link between the novella (*novella corta*) and the emergent novel is to be found here, particularly if we take into account the fact that Mateo Alemán calls his *Libro del pícaro* both a fable and a poetic history. I have frequently emphasized the importance of the notion of *poetic history* (Cros, 1967, 2001), which appears to me to have been imposed by the feeling that the genre which is emerging or will emerge is not reducible either to history or to poetry: López Pinciano likewise vacillates between the two terms:

> el objeto (de la poesía) no es la mentira, que sería coincidir con la sofística, ni la historia que sería tomar la materia a lo histórico; y no siendo historia, porque toca fábulas, ni mentira porque toma historia, tiene por objeto el verisímil que todo lo abraza. (López Pinciano, 1953, I, 220)

> ("the object (of poetry) is not falsehood, which would make it the equivalent of sophistry, nor history, which would be to steal the material from the history; and being neither history, since it has to do with fables, nor falsehood, since it uses history, it has as its object the verisimilar, which includes all of that").

This neologism (*poetic history*) coined by Alemán seems to me to be the most appropriate expression for defining the modern novel. For if it is true that every narrative in the novel is a discourse on the past, we still need to be clear about what sort of past that might be. I shall make a distinction here between on the one hand a past offered to the reader and read as having really existed, that is to say recognized as belonging to a collective memory, which corresponds

to what we call the historical, and on the other, a past which may or may not have existed, presented as plausible, which constitutes the texture of the fictional. In the novel, the relation to history implies a constant movement back and forth between these two kinds of material, and this takes us back to the Aristotelian distinctions according to which history corresponds to what has really existed, to the domain of the singular and the individual, whereas poetry, by contrast, belongs either, on the ethical plane, to what ought to be, or, on the plane of the representation of the plot, to what might be or might have been, and implies the general and the collective. Poetry thus belongs to the domain of the possible. In this way, the possible appears as a category capable of broadening the field of the representation of the real by presenting, through the extrapolation of certain tendencies written into the primary materials that explain and justify the emergence of the historical event, a continuity and a sequence different from those which actually came into being. However, these two kinds of representation, the real and, as it were, its double, arise from the same unified whole and the same complex set of causes (Cros, 2001b, pp. 156-7).

It will be evident that this concept of poetic history makes it possible to go beyond the apparent contradictions I have drawn attention to in the attempted definitions of *novela* and *fábula* provided by the various dictionaries; and this makes it abundantly clear that these contradictions were perceived, or at the very least internalized, before the question to which they apply became, in Alemán's work, the object of an attempted solution. The French translator Jean Chapelain shows his awareness of this solution when he remarks, in his *Déclaration pour l'intelligence de ce livre* ("Declaration for the understanding of this book"), that, even though it is a fiction (*pièce poétique... fausse*), the history that follows is treated in such a way (*composition... façon de la traiter*) that it develops a

linked sequence of causes and consequences (*dont on rapporte tous les changements... au vice*) that reproduces every day reality (*il n y a rien de si commun*):

> Now although the author calls the piece poetic, it is only poetic to the extent that it is false, since in the manner of treating it, there is nothing more commonplace, so you should not expect to find here great strokes of fortune or unforeseen and extraordinary events. That kind of composition which they call the marvelous is rightly banished from this work in that it is a history in which no role is given to Fortune and all the changes and misfortunes are attributed solely to vice and to bad behavior.

Cervantes's text too, ceaselessly, calls the established distinctions into question: the entire narrative of the supposed exploits of Don Quijote may be read as a parable illustrating the supremacy of history as the site of truth by comparison with the lies told in the chivalric romances and the fantasies they are liable to engender. But in his work the praise of "the truth of history" is accompanied by an eulogy of the credible lie: "The better is the lie, the more it appears to be true, and the more it has the character of the doubtful and the possible the more it pleases." (*Tanto la mentira es mejor cuanto más parece verdadera y tanto más agrada cuanto tiene de lo dudoso y posible.*) (*Don Quijote*, P. I, c. 47). In his masterly study, Riley makes the following remark:

> There is in the *Quixote* a practical solution to the problem which taxed the wits of Italian theorists of the Counter-Reformation: how to bring the universal and the particular into harmony [...] It is not history and not poetry: its

centre is somewhere in between and it includes both of them. (Riley, 1962, pp. 177-78).

Once again, we are obliged to come to the same conclusion: the Aristotelian categories become the matter of a new approach which transcribes the terminal decline of a post-medieval way of perceiving the world under the impact of the progress made in the field of the empirical sciences.

I have up to now left aside one whole aspect of these two texts concerning the ways in which they incorporate elements of folklore, and in particular of the carnival's folklore whose presence in *Don Quijote* has been demonstrated in masterly fashion by Mikhail Bakhtine (Bakhtine 1970, 1974). But I have to emphasize that the carnival's traditions, that belonged originally to the rural world, were taken over by the urban European bourgeoisie in the first decades of the sixteenth century. This phenomenon corresponds to a phase of the historical process characterized by the progressive rise of the bourgeoisie, which has already won its battle against the aristocracy on the economic level but which continues the struggle on the political and cultural levels. Since it possesses no class memory as yet, it cannot have any culture of its own, and in its clash with the dominant class, it finds itself obliged to take over for its own purposes a culture which is foreign to it, or which it had progressively lost, namely popular traditions. The manner in which materials from folklore function in Cervantes's text provides clear evidence for this usurpation (Cros, 1990). However, althought this material may be redistributed in new ways in *Don Quijote*, it preserves in its memory semiotico-ideological trajectories which transcribe a world-view irreducible to the bourgeois project and symbiotically fused with the everyday experience of the rural lower classes. These trajectories set up a series of intratextual points of view which con-

template the society "from the opposite bank", to borrow a phrase of Juan Goytisolo, and thus take on the subversive function of all *carnival's literature* (*littérature carnavalisée*).

Let us now recapitulate. The calling into question of Aristotelian categories and of social and moral values; the erasing of hierarchical classifications (*sermo humilis*)*;* the rejection, arising from the growth of the empirical sciences, of that which is not verisimilar; the insertion of an alternative point of view at the very heart of the narrative instance: *such are the principal constraints which come into being with the genre of the novel and from which the novel emerges*. All of these constraints correspond, as we have just seen, to the way in which a whole mass of social facts are intergrated. The novel is thus nothing other than history incorporated in a form which is specific to it. This form tells us of the overtaking of the post-medieval way of imagining the world and of the advent of a new socio-economic and socio-cultural horizon. As far as this last point is concerned, it is difficult not to observe that the two protagonists, at the end of their existence as characters, slip into the mould of the poetic figure of the *Homo novus*, whether we are speaking of Guzmán, the repentant sinner suddenly visited by grace, or of Don Quijote abjuring his fantasies and becoming, on his deathbed, Don Quijano el Bueno. As it thus articulates the rejection of the past, this circular organization of the narrative opens the way not to a return to the initial position but towards a future possibility different from that which existed before and carrying new values, as is suggested by the set of connotations that traditionally accompany this poetic figure. At the narrative's level, this new *phenotext* (Cros, 1983: 1998) tells us what the different constraints I have been defining told us, namely that something new is emerging into and from History. But, at the same time, it attracts attention to itself and to the contrast that it sets up with another schema of narrative syntax, that is to say a relatively

archaic organization which consists in juxtaposing episodes in the way that one threads pearls on a necklace (*episodios ensartados*). For, whatever the merits and the eventual scope of these two masterpieces, we are obliged to observe that, at a primary level, their narrative material is for the most part redistributed according to this latter schema: the successive chapters develop, for each narrative, a single identical "theme " (delinquent deeds in the picaresque narratives, the examples of strange behavior in *Don Quijote*) and may give the impression of simple unconnected sequences. It is doubtless true that, beyond this level of composition, lines of force become visible (the respective evolution of Don Quijote and Sancho, the rise of Guzmán towards the moment of grace that I evoked a moment ago). These compositional lines construct in both cases a progression announcing the "circular" organization that characterizes the modern novel and of which I have just spoken. But the coexistence of these two schemas is a new indication of the process of gestation which redistributes the earlier models.

The melting pot in which the novel as a form is forged, and in which those earlier models (from the *romance* to the chivalric romance and the novella / *novella corta*) are progressively deconstructed, is a complex space nourished by three sources: *the epic*, the *rhetoric* and the *carnival's traditions* and traversed by the tensions that habitually accompany every major historical process. Its emergence does coincide with a certain phase of expansion of the bourgeoisie, but the novel as a genre, from its very origins, presents itself as a conflict-ridden space and as a vector of subversive values.

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