

Violence, Humor and Sancho's Resistance to Carnival

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In her article 'Humour and Violence in Cervantes' from the *Cambridge Companion to Cervantes*, Adrienne Martín thoroughly explores the interplay and contradictions between the two phenomena from the perspective of audience reception across time but also from a more theoretical standpoint, such as Bakhtin's conception of the carnivalesque. Ultimately, there can be no single explanation of how violence and humor relate to each other in the misadventures of *Don Quixote's* protagonists. Martín concludes that "Since Cervantes' work is a symbiosis of life and literature, a relation one cannot emphasize enough, his work also exceeds humorous and violent motives yet abounds in their grave implications" (Martín 2002, 182). At first glance, Sancho Panza as a humorous character seems quite straightforward. But just like his master, Sancho resists being clown as much as he regrets being a beating victim. Each aspect of characterization reinforces the other to elicit a reader's ridicule or sympathy, or potentially both in classic Cervantine contradiction. The difficulty in disentangling violence from Sancho's humorous nature is very much part of what makes him a complex character.

To speak of humor and violence in literature is to speak of reception, and yet one particular reader or spectator whose voice deserves more attention is Sancho Panza himself. *Don Quixote* is a consummately meta-literary work, and it should not surprise us that Sancho appeals beyond the pages of the book, asking that he be heard. In the second part of the novel he speaks up for his own comical *bona fides*, especially when a less wholesome version of himself has run amok in Avellaneda's apocryphal Second Part:

[...] ese Sancho que vuestra merced dice, señor gentilhombre, debe de ser algún grandísimo bellaco, frión y ladrón juntamente, que el verdadero Sancho Panza soy yo, que tengo más gracias que llovidas; y si no, haga vuestra merced la experiencia, y ándese tras de mí, por los menos un año, y verá que se me caen a cada paso, y tales y tantas que, sin saber yo las más veces lo que me digo, hago reír a cuantos me escuchan [...]. (II, 52)

Piecing together Sancho's view of himself as a comic figure reveals a personal sense of *decoro*. It stands in starker relief when comparing his pride in one sort of humor—his verbal *gracias*—with the humiliating slapstick of *palizas*, each sort representing one side of *entremés*-style joking (Martín 2002, 176). Early in his career as squire, Sancho wishes to distance himself from the his master's physical humiliation. He maintains this distance by lying about Don Quixote injuries from the many "picos y tropezones" when crossing through the mountains. Sancho explains to the *ventera* in Chapter 16 of the First Part that "No caí, sino que del sobresalto que tomé de ver caer a mi amo, de tal manera me duele a mí el cuerpo que me parece que me han dado mil palos" (I, 16). As the beatings continue well into the second part of the novel, embarrassment turns to bitterness and sarcasm. Witness Sancho's reflections after the battle of the braying villagers: "Subamos y apartémonos de aquí, que yo pondré silencio en mis rebuznos, pero no en dejar de decir que los caballeros andantes huyen, y dejan a sus buenos escuderos molidos como alheña, o como cibera, en poder de sus enemigos" (II, 28). While much of his resentment is directed towards his master's cowardice and failure to save him, he remains the ultimate humiliated victim of a large-scale joke that has run amok and turned violent. He is attacked for apparently mocking the assembled "escuadrón" of villagers defending their honor, after which these happily head home. They are ironically "regocijados y alegres" after killing a joke in which Sancho wanted to play no part (II, 27). Making an ass of himself has brought no joy to Sancho.

Scholars have implied that in situations like these Sancho should be part of the fun. Some locate Sancho's association with an ass in the tradition of carnival in matters of violence or death linked with laughter (Di Stefano 895; Gorflike 46; Rodríguez 1679). This *locus* is situated in a broader analytical realm of Sancho as an inherently "carnavalesque figure" (Burke 48; Molho 248; Nadeau 355). The critics' arguments are sound, but does a literarily self-conscious fellow like Sancho consider himself to be such a representative? If it is against his will, what form of the "carnavalesque" are we speaking about? Just as the broader discussion of the relationship between humor and violence in *Don Quixote* is unending, so too is an effort to measure the exact degrees to which Sancho is, or is not "carnavalesque". Consequently this brief study will not attempt to give any final words to the debate nor seek to close off discussion with an inventory of points for or against. Instead, the purpose here will be to simply to join others in opening up the discussion by focusing more on Sancho's own voice and views than perhaps has been done in the past. The complexity of Sancho's carnivalesque nature can be likened to Bakhtin's description of "universal laughter":

True ambivalent and universal laughter does not deny seriousness but purifies and completes it. Laughter purifies from dogmatism, from the intolerant and the petrified; it liberates from fanaticism and pedantry, from fear and intimidation, from didacticism, naivete and illusion, from the single meaning, the single level, from sentimentality. (122-13)

This means that seriousness is a part of Sancho's carnivalesque nature as much as anything else and this seriousness can resist the current of carnival itself, whether "carnival" refers to an inherent folk tradition transformed by Cervantes into fiction or to modern interpretations of carnival that have proliferated since the 1970's (Redondo 39-40). The specific examples of resistance examined here consist of Sancho's *manteamiento*, Dulcinea's *desencantamiento* through Sancho's self-flagellation, and Don Quixote's fight with the goatherd Eugenio during which Sancho's presence plays an important role.

Jerome R. Mintz describes Sancho's *manteamiento* as a "carnival prank ... when tavern merrymakers toss Sancho Panza high in a blanket as they would a dog at carnival," (xxx) while Howard Mancing writes that it is "the greatest single humiliation that Sancho Panza ever suffers, literally being dehumanized and treated like a dog" (652). Merrymaking and abject humiliation are not mutually exclusive, but when combined they create a substantial barrier between participants and eliminate any utopian interpretation of a carnivalesque atmosphere (Bakhtin 265). The *manteamiento* is punishment for Sancho and his master refusing to pay the innkeeper, but any potential laughter, if we attempt a Bakhtinian interpretation, could hardly be called "light amusement or a form of salutary social punishment of corrupt and low persons" (Bakhtin 67). There seems to be no corrective at play here and Christopher Braider sees the prank and its instigators as representative of the entire novel's detachment from such intentionality. "[H]owever roguish or malicious it may at time appear, it is at bottom cheerful, frolicsome, and above all 'well-intentioned,' that is, possessed of no definite intention at all" (102). Cervantes himself keeps the intentions of the instigators ambiguous as he describes them as "gente alegre, bien intencionada, maleante y jugueta" (I, 17).

There is a tension between the undeniable laughableness of Sancho's situation and the ambiguous nature of the laughter that can be elicited by his predicament. Because there is no resolution to this tension, Sancho does not benefit from this carnival atmosphere, in matters of correction or otherwise. Whatever the attitude of the surrounding people, the damage is done. Those who tossed Sancho in a blanket cease their sport when he becomes too tired and they place him back on his donkey, a sign that they are not really cruel. But this perfunctory consolation matters little to Sancho. When Maritornes, a young woman working at the inn,

kindly offers him water in sympathy, that matters little as well. Sancho demands wine, perhaps a nod to his carnivalesque needs, but this demand is in compensation for what he has suffered, not a joyful part of the *manteamiento*. In the act of Sancho repeatedly thrown into the air, laughter has taken the place of sympathy, making it effectively cruel. When Don Quixote later attempts his own act of consolation, he clarifies that as he looked on, “más dolor sentía yo entonces en mi espíritu que tú en tu cuerpo” (II, 2). This is either a false memory or an outright lie if we are to believe the omniscient narrator at the time of the event, given the explanation that “[...] cuando vio el mal juego que se le hacía a su escudero. Viole bajar y subir por el aire, con tanta gracia y presteza que, si la cólera le dejara, tengo para mí que se riera” (I, 17). Or, as Bernaschina Schürumann writes, “Es decir, nada de dolor, sino ira por la imposibilidad de concretar hazañas dignas de elogio y granjearse fama, y de fondo risa, por la burlesca situación en la que se halla el escudero” (211). Efron adds this explanation: “But Sancho is not to suspect a lack of sympathy in his master; he is ordered to ‘Be quiet’ about it” (Efron 1972, 91). It is difficult to call the *manteamiento* carnivalesque in the Bakhtinian sense because there is no counter-balance, no cycle, no regeneration, only bitterness from Sancho and phony compassion from his master. Louise Cowan argues for Bakhtinian dynamic at play, but her reasoning is a bit convoluted because it depends upon Sancho being “‘elevated’ by the blanket-tossing witnessed by the silent laughter of his master,” something that is not readily apparent (157). Trying to square this episode with Bakhtin’s vision of the carnivalesque ultimately betrays a lack of balance. This lack is reflected in the broader view of the unsympathetic narrator who “smiles at Don Quijote’s lame excuse that the perpetrators ‘podían ser . . . fantasmas y gente del otro mundo,’ who had paralyzed him” (Jehenson 1994, 185).

If Cervantes had created a more moralizing narrator, one who dropped the filter of irony and detachment, such an omniscient voice would have revealed the cruelty against Sancho for what it was. To see what Cervantes could have done, one can observe the moralizing satires of Francisco Santos cited by Caro Baroja, which include a “broma terrible de Carnaval” (Caro Baroja 87). Santos’s “descriptions” are really visions from his “horas de sueño” but, based on the modern historian’s own documented ethnographic cases, many of Santos’s visions seem quite plausible. While Caro Baroja is content to cite the first sentence of Santos’s vision/description, I include the whole paragraph here to convey how the burla is truly “harto pesada”:

Aquí conocí que era fiesta de Carnestolendas, porque luego vimos mojigangas y soldadescas, notando algunas burlas harto pesadas hechas de ordinaria gente, pobre y desvalida. Llamaron de una casa grande a un ganapán o mozo del trabajo, a quien la fortuna crió para blanco de algunos negros de alma, y, haciéndole entrar con palabras falsas engañosas, le llenaron el rostro de hollín y luego de agua y ceniza, y como la pasión de su afán le hizo lugar a la lengua (que es la defensa del pobre), unos valentonazos le dieron de palos, puñadas y puntapiés. Pasaba al tiempo un buen señor, y, viendo el suceso y las lágrimas de aquel pobre, reprehendiendo a los dañadores, dijeron: “Váyase con Dios vuesa merced, que son Carnestolendas y no importa.” (Santos 1973, 71)

Perhaps Sancho Panza is not “pobre y desvalido”, but he certainly finds himself among the “gente ordinaria” who suffer so that others can enjoy a prank or two. Santos describes his perpetrators as “algunos negros de alma.” For the narrator in *Don Quixote*, the group that attacks Sancho is ambiguously “maleante y juguetona,” leaving room for the inclusion of a “valentonazo” element, to cite Santos’s term. Despite Cervantes’s ambiguity, Sancho’s *manteamiento* clearly relates to Santos’s “burla harto pesada” because both lack the open-endedness of Bakhtin’s vision of medieval carnival. Instead, both pranks belong to a more restrictive Baroque version:

During this period (actually starting in the seventeenth century) we observe a process of gradual narrowing down of the ritual, spectacle, and carnival forms of folk culture, which became small and trivial. On the one hand the state encroached upon festive life and turned it into a parade; on the other hand these festivities were brought into the home and became part of the family's private life. The privileges which were formerly allowed the marketplace were more and more restricted. The carnival spirit with its freedom, its utopian character oriented toward the future, was gradually transformed into a mere holiday mood. (Bakhtin 33)

The narrator in Cervantes's novel describes how the malignant merry-makers took Sancho and "comenzaron a levantarle en alto y a holgarse con él como con perro por carnestolendas" (I, 17). It is this last word that has seized the imagination of critics (Gorfkle 113; Iffland 47) who cite Caro Baroja's observations on the tradition of harassing animals at carnival in the manner suffered by Sancho. Mancing, as cited above, describes him as "dehumanized" (652), while Barbara Simerka explains that Don Quixote's inaction adds insult to injury and "dehumanizes" Sancho in yet another way (195). John G. Weiger underlines the "obvious physical discomfort" of the situation (92). We cannot forget that while the perpetrators are entertained, the motive behind Sancho's treatment is based on punishment, though it involves merry-making. The punishment is not because Sancho's treatment represents "punishment as individual incarnations of the dying truth and authority of prevailing thought, law, and virtues" (Bakhtin 212). The people who throw him in blanket show no evidence of being put off by his master's adherence to chivalric values, which scarcely merit respect from the outset because of their burlesque articulation. Sancho suffers for others' amusement merely because he has not paid.

José Manuel Fraile Gil is perhaps the only critic—at least, that I can find—who has pointed out that Cervantes prefigured Sancho's *manteamiento* punishment in one of his previous works, the *entremés La elección de los alcaldes de Daganzo*, dated between 1590 and 1598 (Fraile Gil 208). At the end of the *entremés*, instead of proffering the common punishment of humiliating *palos* (Martín 2002, 176), several characters seize a *sacristán* killjoy, functioning as a flimsy authority figure, and bundle him into a blanket after he tries to interfere with some festivities. The *bachiller* characters shout of of "¡Arriba, amigos!" suggests that the *sacristán* is either tossed into the air like Sancho Panza or on the verge of going airborne before his tormentors answer his pleas to stop (Cervantes 1992, 169). The *sacristán* is also the victim of a stream of insults. The shouts of "bellaco, necio, desvergonzado, insolente, y atrevido" are a permissible form of anticlericalism that harkens back to Bakhtin's vision of abusive language stemming from ancient incantations that mocked and insulted "the deity." These were "humiliating and mortifying [and] at the same time revived and renewed" (Bakhtin 16). In the case of the *sacristán* in the *entremés* and *Don Quixote's* Sancho Panza, whatever spirit of renewal evoked by the perpetrator's laughter must also include the humiliation and mortification of the victim. This application of a Bakhtinian perspective, while helpful, is not always applicable. For example, few would consider the following passage from the novel a carnivalesque scene, despite it containing a barrage of insults and overwhelming humiliation that follow a typical pattern of Don Quixote's laughable rage:

¡Oh, válame Dios, y cuán grande que fue el enojo que recibí don Quijote, oyendo las descompuestas palabras de su escudero! Digo que fue tanto, que, con voz atropellada y tartamuda lengua, lanzando vivo fuego por los ojos, dijo:

-¡Oh bellaco villano, mal mirado, descompuesto, ignorante, infacundo, deslenguado, atrevido, murmurador y maldiciente! ¿Tales palabras has osado decir en mi presencia y en la destas ínclitas señoras, y tales deshonestidades y atrevimientos osaste poner en tu confusa imaginación? ¡Vete de mi presencia, monstruo de naturaleza, depositario de mentiras, almario de embustes, silo de bellaquerías,

inventor de maldades, publicador de sandeces, enemigo del decoro que se debe a las reales personas!
¡Vete; no parezcas delante de mí, so pena de mi ira!

Y, diciendo esto, enarcó las cejas, hinchó los carrillos, miró a todas partes, y dio con el pie derecho una gran patada en el suelo, señales todas de la ira que encerraba en sus entrañas. A cuyas palabras y furibundos ademanes quedó Sancho tan encogido y medroso, que se holgara que en aquel instante se abriera debajo de sus pies la tierra y le tragara. (I, 46)

Cervantes's earlier scene from *La elección de los alcaldes de Daganzo* confirms the potential for a *manteamiento* to remain thoroughly imbued with the carnivalesque spirit, but in the messier context of Cervantes's sprawling novel, with a fully developed and far-from-cartoonish character like Sancho Panza, the situation changes. Tossing somebody in a blanket can become a humiliating and mortifying act that is only 'renewing' for the perpetrator, not unlike Don Quixote's cathartic torrent of abuse that leaves Sancho figuratively beaten into submission.

Bakhtin's comments about the reduction of carnival's liberating potential in the seventeenth century are significant if we consider references to *manteamiento* in other works from roughly the same period as *Don Quixote*. Fraile Gil cites another *entremés*, this one by Luis Quiñones de Benavente called *El abadejillo*. At the beginning of the piece, when a group of women list carnival pranks, most of which involve spraying liquids or throwing "huevos" and "naranjas" (the early-modern equivalent of water balloons), one of the merrymakers spots an omission: "Ahí te dejas, por olvido o yerro, / tanta persecución de todo perro, que en maza y manta cruel corre fortuna" (cited in Fraile Gil 208). This is an *entremés* peppered with terms like "picaño," "burlas," and "juego," and in which the men are humiliated and smeared with all manner of foreign substances. It is therefore significant that the unambivalent terms "cruel" and "persecución," especially in the context of *manteamiento*, are reserved exclusively for the treatment of dogs. It practically implies that such treatment is a punishment taken too far, even during Carnival.

Another example reinforces the idea that Sancho Panza would be quite justified in resisting his role as a carnivalesque figure in the context of blanket-tossing. Pedro Calderón de la Barca certainly has a carnivalesque side to his playwrighting (Bergman 17-19), but two of his *comedias* contain nearly identical references that heavily emphasize the punishment side of *manteamiento*. In *La criada y la señora*, the peasant woman Gileta gets revenge upon her husband Perote when she is disguised as a lady and her servants to *mantear* her husband, declaring: "Al brazo seglar de pajes / estáis ya entregado. Vaya, / voltéenle. Enjerce, enjerce" (cited in Fernández Mosquera 661). In his study of the play, Santiago Fernández describes such behavior as carnivalesque (655) but also as "violencia burlesca" (661), "violencia explícita" (665) and "violencia vengativa" (662) in the specific case of the *manteamiento*. In Calderón's *Lances de amor y fortuna*, the exact phrase "brazo seglar de pajes" is repeated in reference to the same vengeful punishment but with the violence substantially heightened. In the third act, the leading man Rugero's servant Alejo, the play's *gracioso*, is set upon by the servants of the leading lady Aurora. This occurs after a disastrous mix-up in which some jewels meant for Aurora's war campaign are substituted for a worthless stone. She cries out: "¡Hola! ¿No habrá gente aquí / que mate a palos a un loco?" potentially invoking the same carnivalesque violence of the *entremés* that is also found in *La criada y la señora* (Calderón de la Barca 50; Fernández Mosquera 657). But beyond the carnivalesque, Alejo's comments about his *palos* betray a different precedent, that of Mengo in *Fuenteovejuna*. In Lope's play, Mengo jokes about being whipped by the Comendador's servants and declares:

Porque quise defender
una moza de su gente,
que con término insolente

fuerza la querían hacer,
 aquel perverso Nerón
 de manera me ha tratado
 que el reverso me ha dejado
 como rueda de salmón.
 Tocaron mis atabales
 tres hombres con tan porfía,
 que aun pienso que todavía
 me duran los cardenales. (183)

Compare this to Alejo's complaints in Calderón after facing the wrath of Aurora's lackeys:

[speaking to himself] ¡Ay de ti,
 Pobre y desdichado Alejo!
 Rota traigo la cabeza,
 Desgonzado traigo el cuerpo,
 Derrengada traigo el alma.
 ¡Ay de mi , yo vengo muerto! (51)

And when a sympathetic Conde asks him: “¿Estáis herido?,” he answers:

Tanto monta a palos muerto.
 Si acaso Aurora os envía,
 Oficiales de refresco
 Para acabar esta obra,
 Duélaos el saber que tengo
 A ruedas, y de fortuna,
 Salmonado todo el cuerpo. (51)

To borrow a phrase from Susan Fisher's analysis of a production of *Fuenteovejuna* with its “staged scene of carnivalesque celebration in which Fuente Ovejuna at once revels in the murder [of the Comendador] and expresses its loyalty to the Catholic Kings,” we can equate Alejo's moans with Mengo and the “black-humored recounting of the abuse (‘azotes’) he has suffered” (72, 78). The previous *palos* and the pain they cause severely color Alejo's comments upon his *manteamiento* afterwards. Afraid to face the vengeful Aurora again, he explains to those present:

Me entregó, sin algún duelo,
 Al brazo seglar de pajes,
 Condenado a mantear; y ellos
 Con tal gana lo tomaron,
 Que al mas mínimo boleó
 Andaba de viga en viga
 Como bruja por el techo.
 Pero yo se lo perdono,
 Si con vosotros me vengo
 Desta Aurora , desta alba,
 Noche para mi. (Calderón 52)

The reluctance and shame described in the examples above, including that of *graciosos* whose *raison d'être* is to make the audience laugh, demonstrate that Sancho Panza in Cervantes's novel likewise has every right to resist the carnival spirit. It becomes particularly difficult to play along when it is manifest in such a one-sided fashion that gives the audience—including “gente alegre, bien intencionada, maleante y juguetona”—pleasure at a real psychological and physical cost to the victim.

That is not to say that either Cervantes or his narrator, or even the characters within the novel, are excessively cruel, or that any cruelty contradicts carnival. The mixture of humor and violence in Cervantine carnivalesque context simply means that cruelty is not easily suffered or “forgiven,” to borrow from the *gracioso*’s ironic promise cited above. I agree with Catherine Kunce in disagreeing with Nabokov about the overall use of violence in the novel. It “is not for the mindless amusement of cloddish readers,” but can instead carry “a psychological message” (Kunce 96). Also, as Ilse Logie writes, “Nabokov is often unjust to Cervantes, because he is judging him by anachronistic criteria, which is remarkable for someone who is so keen on the concept of ‘original meaning’” (Logie 2017, 52). The solution to anachronism is to listen to the voices of the narrator and characters from Cervantes’s own time period, and most importantly listen to the voice of Sancho himself and how it speaks of a resistance to carnival. Each of his mentions of *manteamiento* is accompanied by a painful recollection of physical abuse, emphasized by me in italics below. In chapter 18 of the First Part Sancho complains, “[...] todo ha sido *palos y más palos, puñadas y más puñadas*, llevando yo de ventaja el *manteamiento* y haberme sucedido por personas encantadas, de quien no puedo vengarme [...]” (I, 18). Then, in chapter 25: “[...] no se puede llevar en paciencia, andar buscando aventuras toda la vida y no hallar sino *coces y manteamientos, ladrillazos y puñadas* [...]” (I, 25). Further on, in chapter 37 we read:

–Todo lo creyera yo -respondió Sancho-, si también mi *manteamiento* fuera cosa dese jaez, mas no lo fue, sino real y verdaderamente; y vi yo que el ventero que aquí está hoy día tenía del un cabo de la manta, y me empujaba hacia el cielo con mucho donaire y brío, y con tanta risa como fuerza; y donde interviene conocerse las personas, tengo para mí, aunque simple y pecador, que no hay encantamiento alguno, sino *mucho molimiento* y mucha mala ventura. (I, 37)

This resentment of the *manteamiento* and its connection to physical pain continues in chapter 28 of the second part: “[...] si esta vez me ha dejado apalear, otra y otras ciento volveremos a los *manteamientos* de marras y a otras muchacherías, que si ahora me han salido a las espaldas, después me saldrán a los ojos [...]” (II, 28). The reference to “espaldas” refers to the beating suffered during the misadventure of the “rebuznos”. The narrator reminds us of the aftermath in the following manner: “De cuando en cuando daba Sancho unos ayes profundísimos y unos gemidos dolorosos; y, preguntándole don Quijote la causa de tan amargo sentimiento, respondió que, desde la punta del espinazo hasta la nuca del cerebro, le dolía de manera que le sacaba de sentido” (II, 28).

Modern commentators have analyzed Sancho’s beatings and his *manteamiento* in a single context. Most often the equivalency is found in Sancho’s disbelief in Don Quixote’s explanations (Gorffle 133; Bernaschina Schürumann 212; Worden 502). There has been much less focus on the suffering itself as a connecting feature or what Sancho has to say about it. And yet the character is happy—or miserably driven—to remind us about this very connection. Lest we believe that the *manteamiento*, compared to beatings, is a less grievous offence against his body and his dignity due to carnivalesque overtones, we must recall that it is the narrator, not Sancho, who proffers the description of him tossed in a blanket “como con perro por carnestolendas” (I, 17). This word “carnestolendas” appears only once in the entire novel, while Sancho’s own descriptor for this moment of “mucho molimiento” echoes the adjective “molido” that appears forty-two times in the novel and is inevitably linked with with extremely prosaic and non-festive punishments throughout. The “perro de carnestolendas” simile imposed by narrator, itself describing a dehumanizing and non-utopic custom, does little to undermine Sancho’s own view that being thrown in the air and beaten to the ground are one and the same sort of action to him. In both cases, even under the most positive interpretation, whether Bakhtinian or otherwise, Sancho remains a very *unwilling* participant in the social context of the novel.

It is understandable that the character's pleas are often dismissed by modern criticism. It is easy to argue that nearly all of the novel's violence is of a cartoonish and relatively harmless nature, specially by invoking Bakhtin's view on certain episodes from Rabelais's *Gargantua and Pantagruel*. The Russian critic repeatedly cites the beatings of the catchpoles at Lord Basché's house in Book Four as carnivalesque occurrences. He also underlines the ritualistic nature of the violence, how it is anthropologically linked to other customs. Most important, the catchpoles represent officialdom laid low:

The beating is a feast of death and regeneration in the comic aspect. Ambivalent volleys of blows are showered on the Catchpoles; they are bridal creative blows accompanied by the sound of drums and the tinkling of festive goblets. The Catchpoles are beaten like kings. (205)

But if we compare Cervantes to Rabelais, Sancho's social status makes it impossible for him to be "beaten like a king," except perhaps in a degraded form as the reluctant governor of Barataria (Glasgow 227). He may alternate with his master between being "funny man" and "straight man" (Durán 109-110) but he is hardly an authority figure at any point in the novel. Cervantes has created a number of killjoys and *aguafiestas* to populate his work, especially in the figure of the Duke and Duchess's *eclesiástico* (Close 208; Iffland 444). Sancho, if he is to be "beaten like a king," only achieves this status under extreme circumstances and it is not in his nature to reflexively put an end to fun. Regarding Bakhtin, Cervantes, and comic violence, the only connection that the Russian critic makes between Sancho and Rabelais's catchpoles is through physical appearance. The connection is that they all share comically contrasting body types that have made Don Quixote and Sancho iconic, and which are pre-figured in fat and thin catchpoles (201). Through Bakhtin and Caro Baroja, the argument for the carnivalesque quality of Sancho's *manteamiento* has been made several times, while Sancho's own characterization and vocal protests serve as a strong counterargument, at least in terms of him refusing to be a part of the celebrations. If we are to find a more appropriate example through which Sancho fits into a positive carnivalesque context, we will have to look elsewhere while continuing to listen to Sancho and share his wariness about being a "carnivalesque figure".

A source of constant violence, humiliation, and potential laughter is the running joke of Dulcinea's *desencantamiento* through self-flagellation in the second part of the novel. Alban Forcione writes that in a particular context of Dantean parody,

Sancho's carnivalesque re-creation of the classical purification quest of Christianity belongs to a system of motifs of purgatorial suffering pervading the episodes of his mistreatment by the duke and duchess. The most prominent and disturbing is, of course, the penitential lashes that he must inflict upon himself for the sake of the suffering Dulcinea. (56)

Not all critics find the situation "disturbing" but some can agree with Forcione about its parodical and carnivalesque nature. Adrienne Martín, when citing Agustín Redondo, writes how "Sancho becomes a synthesis of all the penitents who participated in such early modern religious processions, and the equivocal disenchantment scheme is a subversive, carnivalesque criticism of common and often hypocritical religious practices" (Martín 2002, 180). In the spirit of carnival, Sancho's self-flagellation can be included among a series of "contrarrituales" that work against the "ritual de sacrificio y purificación que implican las penas corporales" (Nava 354). There is certainly a European carnival tradition of parodying church rituals, and these can include absurdly solemn processions with grotesque elements, but Bakhtin (182, 202) appears silent on the subject of penitential parodies, the sort that would be represented by Sancho's own mandated *desencantamiento por vapuleamiento*. Steven Hutchinson has carefully studied the social and literary context of Sancho's "penance"

and makes no mention of a connection with carnival. At the same time, the critic does admit that mockery and parody are at work:

Por supuesto, esta disciplina de Sancho es una burla por parte de los duques y los de su casa, y una parodia por parte de Cervantes, pero no se ha de imaginar que sea burla o parodia de un tema del todo sacrosanto. Abundan testimonios de cómo las prácticas monásticas de disciplinarse habían degenerado en las procesiones públicas, lo cual ya era objeto de sátira literaria. (296)

But cases of *disciplinantes* receiving moral censure are not equivalent to those that involve festive mockery in the carnivalesque spirit. While exuberant, the masochism on display in the cases to which Hutchinson alludes seems antithetical to the carnivalesque, in Bakhtinian terms or otherwise. If the suffering and fear of *disciplinantes* were debased somehow, involving feasting, sex, or defecation, then it could pass a threshold into the realm of popular laughter; but early-modern satire, the sort to which Hutchinson refers, is something else. It remains on the level of official culture condemning its own “gloomy masochism” taken to excess and goes no further (Bakhtin 173). It is difficult to find an explicit carnivalesque tradition of *disciplinante* parodies in early-modern Spain, even at a later and more enlightened time when Charles III prohibited excessive public self-flagellation. At that time, Francisco de Goya, an artist with a very satirical eye, decided to portray the custom as a folkloric curiosity and not as a target for ridicule (Rodríguez G. de Ceballos 391).

Before looking further into what critics have to say about the connection between carnival and Sancho’s obligation to *desencantar* through self-harm, there is one preceding example worth considering. It foreshadows Sancho’s distaste for the very connection that modern critics have attempted to make. This is the carnival tradition of a parchment *matapecados* as a lash in the *entremés* genre, cited by Eugenio Asensio and named by Emilio Cotarelo. But a *matapecados* was little more than a variation of delivering *palos* to others, not really an example of mock-violent penance (Asensio 1971, 20-21). One can, however, make a connection to carnival through the similarity between a *matapecados* and an inflated *vejiga*. In chapter 11 of the second part of *Don Quixote*, Sancho vicariously suffers under a comical thrashing implement in the hands of the *bojiganga* from a troupe of actors:

Miraba Sancho la carrera de su rucio y la caída de su amo, y no sabía a cuál de las dos necesidades acudiría primero; pero, en efecto, como buen escudero y como buen criado, pudo más con él el amor de su señor que el cariño de su jumento, puesto que cada vez que veía levantar las vejigas en el aire y caer sobre las ancas de su rucio eran para él tártagos y sustos de muerte, y antes quisiera que aquellos golpes se los dieran a él en las niñas de los ojos que en el más mínimo pelo de la cola de su asno. (II, 11)

As Adrienne Martín writes, “Cervantes here walks a narrative tightrope between comicality and sentiment, in which the mention of ‘cola’ and ‘asno’ clearly signal humour, yet Sancho’s consternation should not be dismissed as simple amusement creation on Cervantes’ part” (Martín 2017, 59). The *bojiganga*, a figure whose actions fill Sancho with terror, is also called a “moharracho” by Cervantes. This refers to a figure who invokes the misrule of carnival and in some moralists’ eyes was associated with religious travesty. Father Pedro de Guzmán writes in his *Bienes del honesto trabajo, daños de la ociosidad en ocho discursos* (1614): “[...] otros [juegos] son poco honestos, y modestos, como son las comedias y representaciones, bailes, danzas, máscaras, moharraches, invenciones de carnestolendas, y antiguamente los juegos Bacanales, o Saturnales [...]” (195). On the history of regulating the decorum of religious dress, Hernando de Castillo writes: “[...] y [los Reyes y Emperadores Católicos] mandaron desterrar y azotar a las mujeres públicas; y a los truhanes o moharraches, que para representar comedias de burlas y chocarrerías o para entrar en máscara, toman hábito de frailes o monjas [...]” (84). The *bojiganga* therefore seems like

Cervantes's best approximation of an inverted penitent flagellant in the carnival tradition. Sancho's reaction is telling because he wants no part of this activity. What Martín terms "consternation" can easily be called reluctance or resistance. There is terror instead of joy or laughter on Sancho's part, anticipating the put-upon nature of an entire running joke. This will be Sancho whipping himself in order to *desencantar* Dulcinea.

For Agustín Redondo, the procession led by Merlin that announces Sancho's penance in chapter 35 of the second part is clearly carnivalesque, but only through the inclusion of Sancho's inherently carnivalesque nature:

Paródicamente, Sancho se ha transformado en *disciplinante de sangre* y viene a ser la síntesis de todos los disciplinantes de esas procesiones en que salían varios centenares de penitentes por las calles. De ahí los tres mil trescientos azotes que ha de propinarse. El blando y carnavalesco Sancho, deseoso siempre de satisfacer sus exigencias corporales, viene a ser el doble paródico del cuaresmal y ascético don Quijote a quien, transformándose en *disciplinante de amor*, le hubiera correspondido tal penitencia. (Redondo 182)

Redondo acknowledges that "Sancho se resiste a aceptar la penitencia prevista," but in doing so the critic frames the character as an avatar of bodily pleasure who shuns asceticism. For Redondo, Sancho's carnivalesque nature represents one ideological extreme with Don Quixote on the other end. If we consider the moralists' censures cited above, however, Sancho is definitely not alone in opposing self-flagellation. Also, being carnivalesque is hardly a requirement to oppose it thus. Redondo emphasizes the ritualistic nature of the *vapuleamiento* but not in the travestied carnivalesque sense. He describes it as a form of initiation that Sancho must pass in order to become governor of Barataria, leaving aside his own desires to concentrate on the common good (187). Following Redondo's argument, Sancho whipping himself is an integrative path to officialdom, making him a vassal of the Duke and Duchess. If Sancho is "beaten like a king" (to cite Bakhtin again) as governor, it is only after he is brought into authority. Such a position cannot be considered a travesty in itself if Sancho is later meant to be laid low. In this way, his initiation is actually a departure from ritualistically carnivalesque activity in the Bakhtinian sense.

If there is anything carnivalesque to be found in the running joke of self-flagellation by Sancho, it is of an imposed sort that is similar to his unwilling participation in the *manteamiento* of *mucho molimiento* that left him shaken and afraid. Some have even argued that, by being imposed, such hilarity instigated by the Duke and Duchess cannot be considered carnivalesque at all (Jehenson and Dunn 2006, 25). Though he evokes laughter, Sancho has serious misgivings on an intertextual level, evoking the tradition of *graciosos* like Mengo in *Fuente Ovejuna* who elicit laughter from the audience by joking about the bright red marks left by the lash. Sancho wants no part of this strain of violent humor and he only agrees to Merlin's proposition when his terms of "no he de estar obligado a sacarme sangre con la diciplina" are accepted. Lest we think him incapable of such self-harm, we must recall Sancho's reaction at discovering his loss of the "libro de memoria" that recorded Don Quixote's promise of three *pollinos* in payment:

Cuando Sancho vio que no hallaba el libro, fuéle parando mortal el rostro; y, tornándose a tentar todo el cuerpo muy apriesa, tornó a echar de ver que no le hallaba; y, sin más ni más, se echó entrambos puños a las barbas y se arrancó la mitad de ellas, y luego, apriesa y sin cesar, se dio media docena de puñadas en el rostro y en las narices, que se las bañó todas en sangre. (I, 26)

Bénédicte Torres writes, "Sólo la codicia puede explicar tal actitud contraria al deseo tantas veces expresado de ahorrarse cualquier dolor. Este caso de autocastigo es único" (173). But the promise of a governorship would appeal much more to Sancho's greed than a mere three *pollinos*, and yet drawing his own blood with a lash in exchange for a governorship is

somehow too big a price to pay. Significantly, Sancho resists self-harm more strongly when it takes a potentially carnivalesque form, making his distaste for the role of “carnavalesque figure” imposed upon him quite clear.

Sancho retorts “Abernuncio” twice to his lashes before entering a negotiation to mitigate the pain, giving a clear initial indication that he does not see himself as a some sort of carnival clown whose mere presence can take a mortifying and horrifying practice and make it the subject of joyous laughter. The squire refuses to be an agent for positively transforming what Bakhtin calls “the very contents of medieval ideology –asceticism, somber providentialism, sin, atonement, suffering, as well as the character of the feudal regime, with its oppression and intimidation–” (73). He has no patience for mockery, especially when leveled as an excuse against his right to complain about physical discomfort. “–Déjeme vuestra grandeza -respondió Sancho–, que no estoy agora para mirar en sotilezas ni en letras más a menos; porque me tienen tan turbado estos azotes que me han de dar, o me tengo de dar, que no sé lo que me digo, ni lo que me hago” (II, 35). Whether one simply ascribes his mispronounced “ab renuncio” to his lack of education or locates it in the context of the Duke’s court as a “world upside-down” fostered by a carnivalesque spirit,” (Williamson 2015, 162), the sentiment behind “abernuncio” is absolutely sincere.

Sancho’s unwillingness to whip himself is so strong that it leads to a dramatic physical confrontation with his master Don Quixote. The squire’s words also show more than a mere resistance to the carnivalesque. They demonstrate that such characterization is an imposition that limits his own free will, for which he is literally willing to fight. When Don Quixote attempts to pull down Sancho’s breeches and whip him with Rocinante’s reins, Sancho wrestles his master to the ground and pins him down with his knee as the ultimate declaration that: “Los azotes a que yo me obligué han de ser voluntarios, y no por fuerza, y ahora no tengo gana de azotarme; basta que doy a vuesa merced mi palabra de vapularme y mosquearme cuando en voluntad me viniere” (II, 60). He refuses to become a “moharrache,” a hierarchically imposed “invención de carnestolendas” —to cite Father Pedro de Guzmán again—, not out of moral indignation, but because it is an affront to his own freedom and by implication an affront to the spirit of carnival itself, at least in a Bakhtinian sense (Bakhtin xxi).

Invoking Bakhtin, Manuel Durán writes that Sancho Panza tilts the novel’s focus towards society instead of the individual, the latter represented by his egotistically crusading master. Sancho, in stark contrast, is the one who would “intentará adelantarse por el camino colectivo –la fiesta, la orgía, la risa–” (Durán 1980, 80). Such an assertion suggests that Sancho is the embodiment of carnival, that he contains its very essence. Summarizing Bakhtin, Rachel Lynn Schmidt writes,

Sancho's carnivalesque body serves to insert the carnivalesque in the novel, where it doubles with the modern, bourgeois notions of the body represented not only by Don Quixote, but also by the characters of the interpolated sentimental novels. Likewise, Sancho's carnivalesque laughter doubles with the individualized, bourgeois laughter of the new modernity. (258)

There is little doubt that Sancho represents Bakhtin’s “lower strata” much more than Don Quixote, mostly in the matter of eating, but the degree to which Sancho can inject the essence of the carnivalesque into somber situations is debatable. Doubt about this status increases during moments that first appear linked to “la fiesta, la orgía, la risa,” (to cite Durán again) are not seen as such by Sancho, though he be a spectator too. This is the case in our last example of this study, Don Quixote’s fight with the goatherd Eugenio in chapter 52 of the First Part. For Gorfkle, the carnivalesque overtones are clear:

A typically farcical fist fight ensues, as plates, cups, and tablecloth are upturned. The narrator likens the “heroic” struggle to the amusement of a dogfight: “Reventaban de risa el Canónigo y el Cura, saltaban los cuadrilleros de gozo, zuzaban los unos y los otros, como hacen a los perros cuando en pendencia están trabados...” (I, 52: 597). The hero, singled out by the gods to carry out heroic feats, is transformed into the carnivalesque image of the dog, a symbol of evil, traditionally employed in folk festivities as the victim of beatings, tossings and persecutions. (Gorfkle 43)

In her notes, Gorfkle goes on to explain:

The response of the so-called respectable bystanders seems to affect our modern sensitivity. This is evidenced by several critics’ inclination to interpret this scene as a social satire against a society that expresses negative social values. [...] Such a hypothesis underlies the modern reader’s loss of contact with the idiom of carnival. (Ibid.)

Getting “in contact with the idiom of carnival” through Caro Baroja, as Gorfkle does, reminds us that cruelty to animals was part of the festivities. At the same time, dog-fighting *per se* is not something that anthropologist-historian Caro Baroja brings up. Instead, he broaches the subject of humans harassing animals in the manner of the *manteamiento* that we have analyzed above (Mancing 109). Dog-fights as a symbol of carnival do not receive any notice in Bakhtin either, and it would appear that Cervantes’s simile of “los perros cuando en pendencia están trabados” is not referring to carnival at all, but rather to a mundane chance encounter between aggressive canines. All the same, this lack of a solid connection to carnival by way of dehumanization has not prevented other critics from interpreting Don Quixote’s brawl with Eugenio as consummately carnivalesque. James Iffland, instead of connecting the fight to Sancho’s *manteamiento*, describes it as a ritualistic and sacrificial crowning and decrowning of a carnival king. In this way, Iffland indirectly evokes Bakhtin’s analysis of Rabelais’s catchpoles “beaten link kings,” cited above:

El instrumento inicial de la venganza del rey es justamente algo comestible — un pan — , lo cual se amolda bien a su papel carnal. La reacción del cabrero al ataque también se pliega al contexto que se va desarrollando, puesto que no tiene respeto alguno por las figuras eclesiásticas presentes ni por la mesa tan bien puesta, la cual queda deshecha con una violencia muy afín a la que se practica en el Carnaval [...] Su intento de estrangular a don Quijote y luego, de acuchillarlo, cabe, asimismo, dentro del sistema carnavalesco, ya que representa el destronamiento y subsiguiente sacrificio ritual de aquel que se ha designado como rey de las festividades. Tampoco se trata de un sacrificio verdadero, considerando que todo esto es motivo de diversión, como se verá. Así, pues, los dos clérigos, uno de ellos compañero de viaje de Carnaval, impiden una “sanguinolenta venganza”. Preferible es la solución del barbero, quien ayuda al cabrero a subirse encima de don Quijote donde le aporrea: esto es, un sacrificio festivo, no más. (Iffland 114-115)

What is Sancho doing while these ‘festividades’ (Cervantes writes “regocijo y fiesta”) carry on? It is striking that the character associated by so many critics with carnival is the one who opposes the jovial crowd. The one whose “carnavalesque body serves to insert the carnivalesque in the novel” (Schmidt 258) also feels helpless and dismayed (“sólo Sancho Panza se desesperaba”) instead of enjoying the moment.

We know that on the whole Sancho is quite capable of laughing at his master’s misfortune, especially at the resolution of the ‘aventura de los batanes’ in Chapter 20 of the First Part. At that point, Sancho’s laughter is so contagious that Don Quixote joins in, only to beat his squire after being mocked for his excessive promises of heroism. But even then, Don Quixote cannot dismiss the hilarity of the situation: “No niego yo que lo que nos ha sucedido no sea cosa digna de risa, pero no es digna de contarse; que no son todas las personas tan discretas que sepan poner en su punto las cosas” (I, 20). If we compare that episode to the fight in Chapter 52, Don Quixote ends up equally at peace with his rival (“ruégote que hagamos treguas”) as he was with Sancho after striking him and hearing his squire’s hopeful

declaration that “ahora que estamos en paz”. Such a peaceful ending supports Iffland’s assertion that the bloodier of the beatings was, in the end, “un sacrificio festivo, no más,” similar to the inconsequential terror of the “batanes”. Still, we cannot ignore that Sancho reacts much differently to his master being beaten by the goatherd in an atmosphere of laughter compared to his own punishment in chapter 20 when he admitted that had “andado algo risueño en demasía.” The different reaction in Chapter 52 is significant because Sancho has seen his master quickly recover from beatings countless times before. “Like a jack-in-the-box Don Quijote springs back every time after being knocked down” (Fernández-Morera 413). Fernández-Morera’s description refers to philosopher Henri Bergson’s vision of the comic and closely aligns with the underpinnings of Bakhtin’s carnivalesque. Among the Russian critic’s influences for *Rabelais and His World* was Bergson’s 1900 essay *Laughter*, “which distinguishes between all kinds of rigidity, as in thought or mores, and the ‘inner suppleness of life’ [...] Public ceremonial in particular begs to be parodied and unmasked by laughter, as in carnival” (Clark and Holquist 387). From several different angles of interpretation, everyone gathered in the fight scene from chapter 52, whether spectator, instigator, or both, represents the spirit of carnival, except for Sancho. He does join in the fight, but only to keep Eugenio from strangling his master, and when he scrambles for a knife so that he can make a quick stop (“sanguinolenta venganza”) to the fighting, the canon and the priest hold Sancho back from carrying out his plan. All spectators but Sancho want the fun to continue. He is willing to draw blood with a blade instead of resorting to the less-than-lethal weapons of his fists. He may even go for the kill if it will put an end to the “festividades.” What Iffland calls an imminent “sacrificio festivo” risks turning into the least carnivalesque of sacrifices the sort littered throughout the novel. In references to “dagas,” “cuchillos,” a “puñal” throughout, we find threats of suicide (Luscinda in I, 27; Camila in I, 34; Basilio in II, 21), of death upon a group of Christian galley slaves (I, 41), or the phantasmagorical action of carving out Durandarte’s heart (II, 23). The deadly threat from Sancho in chapter 52 of the first part is quite jarring against the overall “regocijo y fiesta” of the scene. Suffering a desperation shared with other characters who turn violent in *Don Quijote*, Sancho almost literally becomes a killjoy, but he is physically overwhelmed by the forces of joy and laughter. When he reaches for a knife, it is the ultimate sign of resisting carnival and therefore he must be stopped to ensure continuous enjoyment of the collective.

Ultimately, the sound of “una trompeta, tan triste que les hizo volver los rostros” halts the entertaining brawl, followed by the sight of *disciplinantes* “abriendo las carnes” that continue to divert everyone’s attention (I, 52). This is the antithesis of carnival, a somber procession representing the foundation upon which the the parody of Sancho’s imposed self-flagellation rests. Unlike that punishment, or his *manteamiento*, here Sancho does not seize upon the sight of the *disciplinantes* to verbalize his resistance to carnival. Regardless, his actions speak quite loudly. After Don Quijote seems clubbed to death with the stump of a support pole held by someone in the procession, Sancho reacts in a manner that highlights the ambiguity of the situation and his resistance to contribute to its carnivalesque nature. Like the preceding scene in the same chapter, this one is a mixture of laughter and violence. At one point, the mood of the *disciplinantes* seems to turn carnivalesque (“tomáronse a reír muy de gana”), but when the attacker suspects that he has killed Don Quijote, he decides to flee. The *cuadrilleros* of the Santa Hermandad arrive with crossbows, facing off against men carrying scourges and candlesticks, leading to a very tense situation. In a matter of seconds, the atmosphere has changed from serious to silly, to serious again. Sancho is described as throwing himself down on his master and “haciendo sobre él el más doloroso y risueño llanto del mundo, creyendo que estaba muerto” (I, 52). Most readers will be on the side of “risueño,” tacitly recognizing Don Quijote’s status as a cartoonish, “jack-in-the-box”-like

figure. He seems the embodiment of Bergson's idea of "how often something mechanical is encrusted upon some living form of life," (Clark and Holquist 387), another "sacrificio festivo" (Iffland 115). It is what Bakhtin might call a "regenerating and laughing death," one in which "the knight of the sad countenance must die in order to be reborn a better and greater man" (Bakhtin 22). But why then is Sancho hyperbolically crying? Such behavior contrastively heightens the "risueño" aspect of the scene but before we link it to carnivalesque ambiguity, we must recall that Sancho's sobs in themselves are not commonly associated with laughter throughout the novel. In his article "El último llanto de Sancho," Vicente Bernaschina Schürumann—who curiously misses this particular example—lists five examples of Sancho's "llanto", excluding the true death scene of Don Quixote. Except for the tears that accompany Sancho's cowardice during the adventure of the *batanes*, the squire does not appear to cry for comic affect in the novel. If anything, his tears are a sign of frustration or even protest, especially on the last two occasions before his master's actual demise (Bernaschina Schürumann 210). Therefore, his "más doloroso y risueño llanto del mundo" should be interpreted in a similar manner, a sign of his resistance to carnival laughter, even as he inadvertently tickles the funny bone of readers who expect him to offer non-stop comic relief.

In 1978, citing Sancho's tenure as governor of Barataria, Redondo wrote that he was "uno de esos reyes irrisorios de las fiestas carnalescas" and consequently "el papel de «loco» carnalesco de Sancho Panza se halla reforzado por Cervantes" (53). In the same year, Manuel Durán wrote that "Es Sancho Panza el que representa la influencia siempre latente pero casi siempre oculta de las tradiciones carnalescas" (85). Four years later, R. M. Flores reacted harshly to this assertion. "Durán has defeated in the process the arduous progress that Sancho had made through hundreds of years of imitations and criticism by returning him to the role of laughable buffoon he had been forced to play in previous centuries" (82). Whether it is mark of lost "progress" or not, the association between Sancho and buffoonery seems everlasting. Nearly twenty years after Flores, Gordana Yovanovich uses the character as an example of how, compared to the "Romantic Grotesque," "we see how much more festive and playful the Renaissance was even in the most profound tragedies." Along with the fool in King Lear, "Sancho Panza is also an example of the medieval carnivalesque clown who re-emerges in a learned Renaissance work." Sancho is a "play thing" and not a "gloomy puppet." He is inherently "humorous" but never "dehumanizing" (Yovanovich 1999, 27). However one may rate Sancho as a carnivalesque clown or buffoon, he rarely loses his complexity as a character in the eyes of modern critics. Nowadays, thanks to Bakhtin, Sancho can be celebrated for his gluttony and risibility without depriving him of his humanity. It is not wrong for critics to infuse Sancho with the carnivalesque spirit in their analyses, but I and others do feel a sense of propriety about how this is done. The whipping boy for the worst sort of imposition of carnival upon Sancho is Avellaneda and his apocryphal second part. For that author, "Puede haber Carnaval, pero servirá sólo para ejemplificar lo risible, lo irrisorio, del proyecto de ascenso, no únicamente por parte de Sancho, sino por la de su amo" (Iffland 1999, 268). And yet some critics are willing to give Avellaneda the benefit of the doubt. E. T. Aylward writes, "If Avellaneda can be said to create here a gross oversimplification/stereotype of the stock dim-witted peasant character, he has done no more than elaborate upon the personality created by Cervantes in the early adventures of the original *Don Quixote*" (Aylward 36). Sancho's "personality" described in this manner presupposes that for the entire first part of the novel, he is figuratively a rag doll in the hands of the author. He would be a sort of literary *pelele* tossed in a blanket, an image reinforced by the words "como con perro por carnestolendas" (Fraile Gil 207-208). This is the role that the "gente alegre, bien intencionada, maleante y juguetera" wish to assign him, that of a dehumanized puppet. Likewise the narrator whose only explicit

mention of “carnestolendas” is in the moment of Sancho’s *manteamiento*, and likewise those who do not see it worthwhile to give Sancho a voice in the matter. Such neglect verges on making Sancho an abject figure but, as Michael André Bernstein writes about Sancho Panza’s short tenure as governor of Barataria: “Sancho may be both gullible and easily abused, but he is too innocent and good-natured to be inwardly humiliated, let alone abject, for long” (Bernstein 1993, 123). Only by listening to Sancho throughout the novel can we lend him a much-needed ear and discover that he always had agency. From the very beginning, he had been exercising his right to resist carnival when it was imposed upon him.

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