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"Introduction." In Don Quixote: The Re- accentuation of the World's Greatest Literary Hero

Slav N. Gratchev PhD

Marshall University, gratchev@marshall.edu

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This book is a unique scholarly attempt to examine *Don Quixote* from multiple angles to see how the re-accentuation of the world's greatest literary hero takes place in film, theatre, and literature. To accomplish this task, nineteen scholars from the United States, Canada, Spain, and Great Britain have come together, and each of them has brought his/her unique perspective to the subject. For the first time, *Don Quixote* is discussed from the point of *re-accentuation*, that is, having in mind one of the key Bakhtinian concepts that will serve as a theoretical framework. A primary objective was therefore to articulate, relying on the concept of *re-accentuation*, that the history of the novel has benefited enormously from the re-accentuation of Don Quixote helping us to shape countless iconic novels from the eighteenth century, and to see how Cervantes's title character has been reinterpreted to suit the needs of a variety of cultures across time and space.

CONTRIBUTORS

J. A. Garrido Ardila, Bruce Burningham, Ricardo Castells, William Childers, Victor Fet, Slav N. Gratchev, Tatevik Gyulamiryan, Stephen Hessel, Howard Mancing, Margarita Marinova, Emilio Martínez Mata, Fernando González Moreno, Scott Pollard, Steven Ritz-Barr, Rachel Schmidt, S. Alleyn Smythe, Eduardo Urbina, Jonathan Wade, Roy H. Williams

SLAV N. GRATCHEV is associate professor of Spanish at Marshall University

HOWARD MANCING is professor emeritus of Spanish at Purdue University.

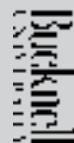
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and Mancing



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THE RE-ACCENTUATION OF THE
WORLD'S GREATEST LITERARY HERO

Slav N. Gratchev
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*The Re-accentuation of the
World's Greatest Literary Hero*

Edited by Slav N. Gratchev
and Howard Mancing



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INTRODUCTION

Bakhtin, Cervantes, and Don Quixote

Howard Mancing and Slav N. Gratchev

In his great essay on “Discourse in the Novel,” the final essay in *The Dialogic Imagination*, Mikhail Bakhtin divides prose fiction into two “Stylistic Lines.” The First Stylistic Line has its origins in ancient fiction and is monologic, with a single voice shared between narrator and characters; basically, this is what we refer to today as “romance,” as opposed to novel. But the Second Line is what we consider the novel, in the full modern sense of the term. In novels of the Second Line, “authentic double-voiced novelistic images fully ripen, now profoundly differentiated from poetic symbols, and become the unique thing they ultimately are.”¹ In Bakhtin’s terminology, “novelistic image” refers to the image the reader creates of the novelistic hero. Because of the novel’s unfinalizability, these great novelistic images can be constantly re-accentuated: “Every age re-accentuates in its own way the works of its most immediate past. The historical life of classic works is in fact the uninterrupted process of their social and ideological re-accentuation.”² The never-ending re-accentuation of the novelistic image has “great and seminal importance for the history of literature.”³ Bakhtin ends his essay by stressing this point, with reference to Don Quixote:

In any objective stylistic study of novels from distant epochs it is necessary to take this process continually into consideration, and to rigorously coordinate the style under consideration with the background of heteroglossia, appropriate to the era, that dialogizes it. When this is done, the list of all subsequent re-accentuations of images in a given novel—say, the image of Don Quixote—takes on an enormous heuristic significance, deepening and broadening our artistic and ideological understanding of them. For, we repeat, great novelistic images continue to grow and develop even after the moment of their creation; they are capable of being creatively transformed in different eras, far distant from the day and hour of their original birth.⁴

Late in life, after his “rediscovery” by a younger generation of scholars and in response to an inquiry by a reporter from the prestigious monthly journal *Novy Mir* about the state of literary scholarship, Bakhtin criticized the tendency to evaluate a work of literature only in terms of its contemporary significance and understanding: “Everything that belongs only to the present dies along with the present.”⁵ Thus, Bakhtin effectively criticizes also our own contemporary tendency to over-value recent works and reject those of the past, a tendency we sometimes call “presentism.” In contrast, Bakhtin considers the life of works of art in *great time*: “Works break through the boundaries of their own time, they live in centuries, that is, in *great time* and frequently (with great works, always) their lives there are more intense and fuller than are their lives within their own time.”⁶ The re-accentuation of novelistic images is an important aspect of this idea of *great time*. And no novelistic image has generated as much re-accentuation as Cervantes’s Don Quixote. The image of Don Quixote is known throughout the world, even by millions who have never read the novel. It has appeared in literature, art, and music more than any other. If one wants to meditate on the concept of re-accentuation, there is no better place to begin than with Don Quixote.

This book is a unique scholarly attempt to examine *Don Quixote* from multiple angles to see how the re-accentuation of the world’s greatest literary hero takes place in art, film, theater, and literature. To achieve this end, we drew upon colleagues from North America—the United States and Canada—and Europe—Spain and Great Britain—in order to bring the widest variety of points of view on the subject. But we also wanted this book to be more than just another collection of essays of literary criticism. For this reason, we also invited contributions by scholars and artists who have dealt with our hero’s image in the visual arts, film, the theater, comic books, and television. We have included among our contributors a biologist, an art historian, a puppeteer, and a businessman. Some of these essays are not written in a typical academic, scholarly style. And that is as it should be.

One of our aims was to incorporate into this book another of Bakhtin’s signature concepts: polyphony. The concept of polyphony comes originally from music, where it refers to musical lines sung independently and simultaneously but with each voice unique and not in harmony. For Bakhtin, a polyphonic novel is one in which the author’s word has no privilege, where each character’s voice, worldview, and consciousness receives equal representation in its own terms: “A plurality of independent and unmerged voices and consciousnesses, a genuine polyphony of fully valid voices is in fact the chief characteristic of Dostoevsky’s novels.”⁷ In our case, we have chosen to minimize the editors’ voices; we have imposed no strict definition of re-accentuation on the contributors, but have given them

complete freedom to discuss the concept in their own terms, in their own style, in their own voice.

Part I of the book consists of a single chapter that lays the theoretical groundwork for understanding the concept of re-accentuation. In chapter 1 Tatevik Gyulamiryan explores the meaning of *re-accentuation* in the trans-contextualization of a concept, a character, or a literary/visual work. As it is not uncommon to confuse the meaning and usage of the Bakhtinian concept with other notions such as adaptation and imitation, this chapter makes Miguel de Cervantes's masterpiece *Don Quixote* a central focus and discusses the term *re-accentuation* to demonstrate its importance in the scholarship of *Don Quixote*, as well as discusses its relation to other concepts such as adaptation, imitation, and parody.

Part II deals with imagery and ideology. Chapter 2, written by Eduardo Urbina and Fernando González Moreno, is the foundational work in this part. In it, the authors put forward the notion that these images must be considered not only as artistic ornaments, but also, and especially, as the reflection of how the novel was read in different periods, of how Cervantes's characters were reinvented by every society to transform them into icons of their own ideals. The authors analyze these key visual readings, beyond Doré and Dalí, and focus on other illustrators, less known in some cases, but for whom *Don Quixote* becomes a real obsession or a continuous inspiration. Among these reader-painters are Charles-Antoine Coppel, whose most important professional achievements were inspired by Cervantes; Robert Smirke, whose paintings and illustrations are the real first images of *Don Quixote* in the Romanticism; George Cruikshank, who illustrated two different editions recovering the humorist reading of the novel that previous English editions had relegated; and Savva Brodsky, whose mastery and personal interpretation of the novel is quite a symbol of hopelessness before crude reality.

In chapter 3 Emilio Martínez Mata turns our attention to the ideological interpretation of *Quixote*. He argues that although throughout the seventeenth century *Don Quixote* was generally interpreted as an aesthetic satire of romances of chivalry, two facts greatly contributed to turn *Don Quixote* into one of the most influential works in the eighteenth century. According to the author, the first fact was the ideological change that took place from the end of seventeenth century and brought about the Enlightenment; the second fact was the interpretation of *Don Quixote* spread by René Rapin in 1674 as a satire on Spanish aristocracy. Rapin's interpretation allowed *Don Quixote* to be understood as an ideological rather than literary satire, placing it in a key position for the great novelists of the eighteenth century, the one that laid the foundations of the modern novel by Fielding, Smollett, Sterne, and Diderot.

In chapter 4 Ricardo Castells introduces us to the world of the Classics Illustrated—the series of graphic novels in the United States that started in 1941, with a total of 169 literary adaptations and sales of over 200 million volumes. The author indicates that although Classics Illustrated were meant for children, the comic-book versions of *Don Quixote* and other chivalric tales were surprisingly sophisticated because contemporary young readers were exposed to adaptations of Arthurian romances from an early age. According to the author, Classics Illustrated presented a simplified but respectful adaptation of *Don Quixote* because it was created for a juvenile audience that would have appreciated the literary and artistic qualities found in this re-creation of the chivalric tradition.

In chapter 5 Stacey Smythe singles out a single minor “character,” the wooden horse Clavileño, and looks at how it has been re-accentuated through time. She examines, interrogates, and problematizes the manifest and manifold ways in which images of Clavileño—in the context of Jean Baudrillard’s third order of simulacra, simulation—has proliferated beyond the borders of Cervantes’s narrative, and has been appropriated in ways that have made identification with the original all but impossible and/or irrelevant. From the lithographs of the twentieth-century surrealist painter Salvador Dalí to the aquatint etchings of the twenty-first century multi-media artist Tony Fitzpatrick, this chapter concerns itself with those images of Clavileño that not only re-accentuate Cervantes’s original text for a contemporary audience, but also stand as works of art in their own right.

In chapter 6 Stephen Hessel analyzes the presence of portraiture in the early modern European and Muslim cultural imaginations, and its impact on re-accentuations of Cervantes. Through Cervantes’s *Persiles* and Pamuk’s *My Name Is Red*, the lack in the symbolic order is considered as a source of allure and danger. The desire to achieve aesthetic permanence and the aversion to an anthropocentric representation of the world is made clear in the Muslim context presented by Pamuk’s novel. The problematic created by these opposing currents exhibits the lack that the symbolic order presents in the face of mimetic representation and re-accentuation’s capacity to be coopted to efface evidence of that lack. This concept is then applied to Cervantes’s portraits and to his legacy. Finally, the lack in the symbolic order is presented as a force that provides order to the interpretation and re-accentuation of meaning in the Cervantine universe, instead of threatening its existence.

Part III deals with the area that seems most appropriate to study the subject of re-accentuation: literature. J. A. Garrido Ardila argues in chapter 7 that the history of the novel has benefited enormously from the re-accentuation of *Don Quixote*. In the early twentieth century, some Spanish novelists (e.g., Unamuno and Azorín) again turned their atten-

tion to Cervantes's masterpiece while others (Ortega, Maeztu, and Unamuno) made it the fulcrum of some of their essays. The chapter further deals with Borges's short story "Pierre Menard, Author of *Don Quixote*" (1939) that stands out as perhaps the most enigmatic twentieth-century take on Cervantes's novel. Novelists from Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne to Austen and Flaubert had re-created in their fiction some of the most idiosyncratic features of *Don Quixote*, whereas Borges's fictional Menard re-writes it to produce the very same text as Cervantes. In this chapter the author revisits Borges's short story to explain how it implicitly parodies Unamuno's *Vida de Don Quixote y Sancho* to highlight the uniqueness of Cervantes's work. Furthermore, he also analyzes how Borges celebrates and re-creates the polyphonic perspectivism of *Don Quixote* as one of the essential features of the novel genre.

In chapter 8 Rachel Schmidt deals with World War I and how *Don Quixote* shows that meaning-making occurs through assimilating and reacting to other's words. She points out that many theories of the novel are based on strong misreadings of *Don Quixote* and argues that World War I threw into question the possibility of finding meaning with the other. She re-examines works of Ortega y Gasset, who insisted upon the illusive, atrophied nature of culture, and re-visits the works of Lukács, who probed the split between the individual and society. Further, she re-visits the essay "Meerfahrt mit *Don Quijote*" (1934) by Thomas Mann, the essay that opens with the question: "What is Germany?" The expelled *morisco* Ricote overlaps in Mann's essay with the Jews escaping on board the ship. Schmidt shows that in all cases Cervantes serves as the first speaker who dared to utter the European problem of conflict with the other, and thus raised the questions to which the modern European novel would respond.

In chapter 9 Howard Mancing takes up the 1973 argument that *Don Quixote*'s attack on the windmills he perceives as giants is "a confrontation of man and machine, one of the earliest in literature, and one of the most perfect." There are several short stories and novels that play off this idea and explicitly involve *Don Quixote*, and Mancing carefully examines many of them. The two novels discussed at length are Kathy Acker's *Don Quixote*, in which a female Quixote has an abortion, and James McConkey's *Kayo, The Authentic and Annotated Autobiographical Novel from Outer Space* (1987), a complex metafiction involving word play, messages from outer space, and a critique of Jacques Derrida's deconstruction. The discussion of short stories includes works from Poul Anderson's "Quixote and the Windmill" (1950) to Rhys Hughes's "The Quixote Candidate" (2014). The essay ends with a brief mention of the recent discovery star that has been named Cervantes and that is circled by four planets named for the major characters in Cervantes's novel.

In part IV we turn to the subject of film. In chapter 10 Slav Gratchev focuses on the process of *re-accentuation* of the image of Don Quixote when the novel was adapted to the screen in 1957 by the famous Russian director Grigori Kozintsev. In light of Bakhtinian theory, the author explains the nature, the necessity, and the results of this *re-accentuation*. He also analyzes the diaries of Grigori Kozintsev and Eugenie Schwartz and their private correspondence while they both were contemplating the film and working on the script. According to the author, these invaluable materials that chapter relies upon are indispensable for Cervantes scholarship, but until today they have only been available in Russian and have never been translated to English.

William Childers in chapter 11 is concerned with the presence of *Don Quixote* in the work of the late screenwriter Waldo Salt, who, blacklisted during the McCarthy era, eventually went on to write several acclaimed screenplays for *Midnight Cowboy*, *The Day of the Locust*, *Serpico*, and *Coming Home*, developing an innovative approach that has been highly influential with later generations. It was an adaptation of *Don Quixote* that allowed him to make the transition from the frustrated fifty-year-old has-been-who-never-was to the triumphant dean of American screenwriters he became in the 1970s. The chapter begins with an overview of Salt's career, explaining his importance in the emergence of the New Hollywood. Next, the author examines Salt's unpublished *Don Quixote* adaptation, focusing primarily on the particular re-accentuation of Cervantes's novel. Finally, the chapter ends with a survey of the quixotic element of Salt's later work before concluding with broader claims for the significance of Quixote and Quixotism in U.S. cinema during the late twentieth century.

In chapter 12 Bruce Burningham deals with Ah Gan's 2010 Chinese film version of *Don Quixote* in order to demonstrate the ultimate accuracy of Cervantes's far-reaching prediction. Like many other re-accentuations of *Don Quixote*, Ah Gan's film liberally adapts the original text to its own needs. Where Cervantes's protagonist is an aging *hidalgo* who mostly fights imaginary enemies, Ah Gan's Don Quixote is a much younger man who makes a name for himself as a pre-modern Chinese knight-errant by battling and defeating the knights of a malevolent syndicate, thereby winning the hand of his real-life Dulcinea along the way. The author argues that Ah Gan's twenty-first-century (post-Maoist) Don Quixote is a revolutionary hero whose success ultimately stems from inspiring the masses to overthrow the syndicate in favor of a new order.

Jonathan Wade in chapter 13 continues the conversation about film and re-accentuation of Don Quixote with a closer reading of the 2001 French film *Amélie*. What has yet to be explored, ponders the author, is the Cervantine intertext that informs both the framing and the framed. The specific mention of Don Quixote in the film invites viewers to consider

the various ways in which Miguel de Cervantes is implicated throughout the work. The author believes that there is the quixotic characterization of its protagonist; the character referred to as the glass man, recalling Cervantes's *El licenciado Vidriera*; and various shades of madness throughout. What is more, the film recollects the narrative structure and self-consciousness of the novel. Just as Cervantes created a story about stories and storytelling, *Amélie* presents viewers with a work of visual art about the visual arts that celebrates both their variety and their composition.

Chapter 14 is unique in many ways: first, it is written by Steven Ritz-Barr, a puppeteer, a real professional who got fascinated by Don Quixote as a universal idea. Don Quixote's story by Cervantes was the second of his series of films called Classics in Miniature®. The goal was to develop the story as a puppet performance for the film medium—a live-action animated film that captured the essence of the original text. How to transform such a long book into a thirty-minute program and yet retain the integrity of the story was no small task. The author discusses his choice of episodes that resonated more personally, while keeping in mind the limitations of puppet film. The problem was how to create a living Don Quixote in the mind of the viewers; how to make a film to be watched by young viewers and adults, those with more or less familiarity with Cervantes's novel.

Theater and television are the subject of the essays in part V. Margarita Marinova and Scott Pollard in chapter 15 explore the ramifications of Mikhail Bulgakov's authorial choices as he re-accentuated *Don Quixote*. They focus specifically on the heightened theatrical nature of the presented events, which will shed new light on several major themes introduced in the adaptation: (1) the symbiotic, and thus doomed in the Soviet context, relationship between the Artist and his community; (2) the character-building but also self-destructive consequences of the merging of theater and life; and (3) the creative Artist, his pupils, and the pursuit of self-expression in a highly restrictive society. Needless to say, Bulgakov's own experiences as a banned author in Stalin's Russia uniquely prepared him for taking on Cervantes's masterpiece. By the end of the 1920s, Bulgakov was not allowed to publish any of his own work, yet he stubbornly continued his quixotic quest to find sanctioned outlets for his creative talents. Adaptations of world literature provided one such venue. The chapter shows how Bulgakov's *Дон Кухом* (Don Quixote) dialogized the Spanish original in order to highlight its subtle links to his contemporary society.

In chapter 16 Victor Fet, who is a professor of biological science but has a great passion for literature, focuses on the screenplay of Grigory Kozintsev's *Don Quixote* (1957) that happened to be the last work of Evgeny Schwartz (1896–1958), one of the best Russian “re-accentuators.” The

work of Schwartz is little known outside Russia. He was among enthusiastic, truly Quixotic creators of children's literature and theater in the USSR. The chapter brings to us the classic play *The Dragon* (1944) written in the midst of the darkest wartime. There, Lancelot—a Quixotic rather than Arthurian knight errant—liberates a city from an evil Dragon only to find the citizens corrupted into Dragon's spawn. Schwartz's re-accentuation captured the naïve and impossible hopes of a very brief, half-baked "thaw" period with Khrushchev in power.

Finally, in part VI we step out of the traditional humanities and arts and into the practical world of business. In chapter 17 Roy Williams talks about visionaries who have always been attracted to Don Quixote's pursuit of the impossible dream. In this chapter the author, another non-academic contributor, examines Quixote as a symbol of the quest for a better tomorrow. Included in this chapter are interviews with business-people who gather from around the world at Wizard Academy, a school for entrepreneurs built upon Quixote's pursuit of a glorious beauty that no one but him could see, and the Chapel Dulcinea—the school's gift to the world: a free wedding chapel that hangs off the edge of a cliff in Austin, Texas.

This is the book that we are pleased now to offer to your attention.

NOTES

1. M. M. Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, ed. Michael Holquist, trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), 409.
2. *Ibid.*, 421.
3. *Ibid.*, 422.
4. *Ibid.*, 422.
5. M. M. Bakhtin, *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, ed. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, trans. Vern W. McGee (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986), 4.
6. *Ibid.*, 4.
7. M. M. Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, ed. and trans. Caryl Emerson, intro. Wayne C. Booth (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 6; italics in the original.