

ROGUES IN DIALOGUE: THE LITERATURE OF ROGUERY IN SPAIN AND
ENGLAND IN THE SIXTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH
CENTURIES

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Anton Garcia-Fernandez

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Approved:

Dr. Edward H. Friedman

Dr. Cathy L. Jade

Dr. Andrés Zamora Juárez

Dr. Mark L. Schoenfield

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To my wonderful wife Erin,
who gives meaning to everything in life

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From a very early age, while I was growing up in the northwest of Spain, I was drawn to the great recordings of the legendary crooner and jazz vocalist Bing Crosby. It was by listening to his old records that I learned to speak English, so I owe a great deal of my vocabulary and writing style to Der Bingle. In his 1953 as-told-to autobiography *Call Me Lucky*—the first autobiographical text I ever read—Crosby reflects upon his immensely successful career and states that he has always strived to do his best at anything he attempted in life (57). Like the Old Groaner, I believe that throughout the two and a half years that it has taken me to research and write this dissertation I have tried to do my best to deliver a manuscript that is, I hope, thorough, clear, and engaging. However, the completion of this work would never have been possible without the help and encouragement of a group of people to whom I remain eternally grateful.

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CHAPTER I

THE SUNDRY FACES OF THE ROGUE: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE CONCEPT OF ROGUE LITERATURE

The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were a period of literary experimentation throughout Europe, and a great number of these innovations came to fruition in the field of rogue literature. The rogue's nomadic lifestyle and criminal practices captivated the imaginations of authors and readers, particularly in Spain and England, where an important body of works of this kind emerged in this time period. From Robert Greene's *A Notable Discovery of Cozenage* (1591), which details "[t]he high-lawyer that challengeth a purse by the highway side" (121), to Carlos García's *La desordenada codicia de los bienes ajenos* (1619), which expounds on "[I]os salteadores [que] hurtan en los caminos y despoblados con grande impiedad y tyranía" (149), these texts depict the figure of the rogue that is foreboding in the threat of its sensational attacks. What is most intriguing about the developments in the Spanish and English rogue literature of this time, however, is not just that there are similarities in their representations of rogues. Rather, it is that these groups of texts from different geographic and linguistic backgrounds are able to harness an intertextual dialogue around the figure of the rogue, facilitating each tradition's exchange and adaptation of conceptualizations of the rogue to suit their own cultural contexts. An examination of texts from both countries shows that, despite their common interest in the rogue as a dangerous villain, Spanish and English authors had very different understandings of criminality and the role of government. Pursued in depth, this exploration of Spanish and English rogue literature reveals that the

two traditions put forth strikingly different characterizations of the rogue. In English rogue pamphlets, the rogue acquires the position of scapegoat, embodying a type that is inherently criminal and that is to blame for the social problems facing the country; in Spanish picaresque novels, the *pícaro* becomes an outlet for social criticism, denying responsibility for his own desperate acts and speaking against concepts of social order that promote inequality and that are enforced by government and religious institutions.

The trend among English pamphleteers is an attitude of condemnation of the figure of the rogue, as is evident in Greene's *Second Part of Cony-Catching* (1591), in which he states that "with my pen I will endeavour to display the nature and secrets of divers cozenages more prejudicial to England than the invasion of Porsenna was to Rome" (150). On the contrary, among Spanish picaresque novelists, the rogue's self-consciousness and ironic distance color these texts' portrayals of the protagonists as critical figures that are empowered rather than accused. In *Lazarillo de Tormes* (1554), for instance, there is no third-person narrator to bemoan the social plague constituted by rogues because the rogue himself, Lázaro, the protagonist, acts as a first-person narrator who condemns the ill treatment he receives at the hands of many masters from varying classes and vocations, resulting in his own morally questionable behavior. Prime among these abusive masters is a priest from the town of Maqueda, a miserly man who drives Lázaro to starvation: "No digo más, sino que toda la laceria del mundo estaba encerrada en éste [the priest]: no sé si de su cosecha era o lo había anejado con el hábito de clerecía" (47). As these texts showcase, the two traditions of Spanish and of English rogue literature conceive of criminality in markedly different ways: whereas in the English texts criminality is presented as an inherent defect of the rogue's nature that must

be categorized, controlled and, if possible, excised, in the Spanish texts criminality is depicted as something more circumstantial that develops out of social inequalities and that is, therefore, a subjective determination rather than an inherent defect. As these conceptions and trends developed in the two traditions, at the same time an intertextual dialogue between them fostered debate and exchange of ideas that would inform the course of rogue literature in both countries.

All the aforementioned works appeared at a time when, after the groundbreaking introduction of the printing press, texts could be circulated much more easily and faster. This technical development amounted to a true revolution that brought about the creation of an incipient market for printed books, now turned into more affordable daily commodities in a way that had been hitherto impossible for manuscripts. The study of these early years of what has come to be known as *print culture* are relevant because, among many other reasons, the relationship between the author and his or her readership was forever transformed at this time by the appearance of a literary market that turned books into material objects for consumption, and this economic dimension had a profound effect on the relationships established between authors, texts, and readers. Moreover, the introduction of the printing press also made it much easier for any given printed text to cross geographical boundaries and become available, either in its original version or in translation, within a wider geographical space.¹ The remarkable popularity of the English translation of *Guzmán de Alfarache* as *The Rogue* (1622) by James Mabbe, which resulted in the widespread use of the word *gusman* as a synonym for *rogue*, and

¹ For a thorough discussion of Spanish picaresque texts available in translation in Germany, France, and Great Britain, see Garrido Ardila, *Novela* 139-82.

gusmanry as a synonym for *roguery* (Garrido Ardila, *Novela* 164), exemplifies the extent to which the literary market widened at this time, crossing geographical boundaries. In this context of much more feasible cultural exchange, then, authors writing in different countries and within different literary traditions and social and historical contexts could encounter texts from abroad and recognize in them similar thematic and formal threads that could, in effect, lead these distant authors into a dialogue with one another through the exchange of ideas in their works. The authors that cultivated this type of fiction within these geographical and temporal coordinates—mostly the English rogue pamphleteers and the Spanish picaresque novelists—engaged in an extremely fruitful, constant literary interplay that not only helped to shape and reinvigorate each tradition, but also resulted in the creation of ideal images of the fictional literary figure of the rogue that, as we will see, were in many ways radically opposed.

For the noticeable success that they enjoyed when they were published in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, British jest-books and rogue pamphlets have garnered comparatively little critical attention over the centuries. The former appear as footnotes in literary histories, and in the introduction to his edition of *A Hundred Merry Tales and Other English Jestbooks of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries*, first published in 1963, P. M. Zall offers a history of jest-books, tracing their literary roots back to classical Greek and Roman sources, yet the critic deems them “not ‘literary’,” pointing out that they “are more concerned with what is said than with how it is said” (1). Critical studies devoted to rogue pamphlets are not plentiful either: usually treated as a lesser genre or even as reliable historical—thus, not literary—texts, Frank Wadleigh Chandler includes them in the first of his 1907 two-volume study *The Literature of*

Roguary (see esp. Chandler 93-111), but without delving into their central role in the development of later English rogue literature. The most relevant of the early studies on rogue pamphlets is *Elizabethan Rogues and Vagabonds* (1913) by Frank Aydelotte. Aydelotte's discussion of rogue pamphlets appears within the wider framework of a study that considers vagabondage from a markedly historical perspective, yet the critic ranks among the first to voice doubts as to the historical accuracy of the contents of rogue pamphlets, thereby treating them more as literary artifacts than as purely historical records. Nevertheless, Aydelotte provides historical facts relevant to the many layers of fictional content of rogue pamphlets, a context that became widespread among the few critics that studied these texts shortly after Aydelotte. For instance, A. V. Judges, in the introduction to his anthology of rogue pamphlets, tracts, and ballads, entitled *The Elizabethan Underworld* (1930), attempts to prove that the works that he has selected for inclusion in the volume are valuable as reliable historical evidence of the lifestyle and mores of the lower social strata; even as late as 1973, in the introduction to his own anthology of rogue pamphlets, Arthur F. Kinney offers a similar historical approach, reading the literary content of the pamphlets as historical evidence of the social climate of Elizabethan and Jacobean England. From the 1980s onward, though, and coinciding with a renewed critical interest in popular literary genres such as the rogue pamphlet, the opposite approach took precedence over the historical view among the still small community of critics who dealt with these texts: thus, Paul Salzman, Linda Woodbridge, and Steve Mentz,² among others, treat rogue pamphlets as fictional constructions of an ideal figure of the rogue and his or her criminal dealings that serve the manifold purposes

² These and other critical approaches will be discussed more in depth in chapter 2.

of the pamphleteers, many of whom these studies portray as hacks in search of the monetary gain that could be derived from their sensationalistic descriptions of the mysterious, seemingly dangerous urban underworld.

In contrast, the critical evaluation of the Spanish picaresque novel has followed completely different routes. The sheer amount of criticism on the subject written, both by Hispanists and non-Hispanists, from the mid-nineteenth century onward, has looked at the genre from a whole array of varying and often opposed perspectives, ranging from those critics who restrict the picaresque label to a handful of novels—usually *Lazarillo de Tormes* and *Guzmán de Alfarache*—that have a set of recognizable characteristics in common; to those who open up the paradigm in order to include works written outside of Spain. This broader definition extends the corpus of the genre by considering novels published as late as the twentieth century to fall under the rubric of the picaresque; to those who question the validity of the term *picaresque novel*, pointing out that the label is so diffuse that it has come to lose its meaning.³ Critical approaches to the picaresque novel are so copious that the field has produced an important amount of metacritical studies that aim at offering a survey and a systematic classification of the different kinds of perspectives used by scholars in their critical assessments of the genre over the decades.⁴ For instance, Ulrich Wicks divides these various approaches to the study of the picaresque novel into two basic groups or orientations: on the one hand, there is the

³ Many examples could be offered of each of these three different critical approaches to the picaresque genre. Just for the sake of illustration, though, Ayala would be among the first group; Friedman *Antiheroine's Voice*, among the second; and Eisenberg and Dunn, among the third.

⁴ Other than the classifications by Wicks and Cabo Aseguinolaza that I discuss in this section, the most recent of these metacritical discussions can be found in Garrido Ardila, *Género picaresco*.

historicist or closed approach, which consider the picaresque novel “as a closed episode in the literary history of *siglo de oro* Spain and, in related forms of fiction, in the literary histories of England, France, and Germany as well” (19). This approach may be traced to as far back as the nineteenth century and has its roots in the studies by F. W. Chandler and in Fonger de Haan’s *An Outline of the History of the Novela Picaresca in Spain* (1903), both of which proved influential. Wicks notes that the main interest of all historicist studies on the picaresque novel “is primarily on the social milieu, on the literary climate that provoked a reaction against romances, and on the particular indigenouslyness of picaresque fiction to Spain” (19).⁵ On the other hand, there is the formal or ahistorical or open approach, which “sees the picaresque as a basic narrative structure that may have flowered in Spain during a particular period but is essentially a universal narrative type” (25). This group houses studies such as Stuart Miller’s *The Picaresque Novel* (1967), Harry Sieber’s *The Picaresque* (1977), Richard Bjornson’s *The Picaresque Hero in European Fiction* (1977), Alexander Blackburn’s *The Myth of the Picaro* (1979), and Edward H. Friedman’s *The Antiheroine’s Voice* (1987), among others, all of which are concerned with establishing a narrative type by posing fundamental questions that Wicks reformulates thus: “Is there a narrative form that can be called picaresque apart from (though not denying) literary-historical ties to a particular place, time, or cultural milieu? Is there a distinction to be made between the picaresque genre (a historical manifestation) and the picaresque narrative tradition (an ahistorical narrative ‘deep structure’)? As these issues are explored, the scope becomes much more

⁵ Wicks includes Alexander A. Parker’s *Literature and the Delinquent* in this group, yet he concedes that Parker’s approach is a “reevaluation of the historical focus” (28) achieved by placing a greater emphasis on the cultural-literary background.

comparative” (26). Wicks’s approach falls somewhere in the middle between both groups, although perhaps more slanted toward the ahistorical or open option, as he posits the concept of “fiction P,” which he defines as a literary prototype that changes every time a new text that takes this prototype as a starting point is produced: “A genre and its prototype,” says Wicks, “are a construct, and extratext—a fiction—and this fiction is more dynamically active in the creation of new fictions than are the individual fictional texts from which it was constructed. Moreover, fiction P itself changes every time it helps engender a new fiction, which in turn also changes all previously existing texts related to P” (33). The present study constitutes an integration of both approaches singled out by Wicks, inasmuch as it sees the Spanish picaresque novel as a transnational literary phenomenon that cannot be restricted to Spain—in a way, it is what Wicks describes as “a universal narrative type”—however, at the same time, this study takes into account the social, historical, and literary circumstances of both Golden Age Spain and Elizabethan and Jacobean England that decisively inform and determine the different texts produced by authors from both traditions, and which go a long way to explain the noticeable divergences present in each author’s reconceptualization of the literary figure of the rogue, the central character in these texts.

Three years after Wicks, Fernando Cabo Aseguinolaza formulated in his thoroughly researched study *El concepto de género y la literatura picaresca* (1992) another metacritical classification that distinguishes between three basic orientations in the critical assessment of picaresque literature:⁶ first, there is the referential approach, a

⁶ In his study, Cabo Aseguinolaza uses the term *literatura picaresca* instead of *novela picaresca*, carefully avoiding delving into the realm of the theory of the novel.

highly positivistic critical perspective that “dirige su atención hacia rasgos de índole contextual, los cuales pueden ir desde las condiciones socioeconómicas representadas en el texto hasta la situación socio-racial del escritor o, incluso, los tipos de discurso operantes en la sociedad contemporánea de posible parentesco con el de los pícaros” (16). Within this first group, Cabo Aseguinolaza classifies the studies by highly influential critics such as Américo Castro, Marcel Bataillon, A. A. Parker, and Maurice Molho. Secondly, Cabo Aseguinolaza distinguishes a more formal approach, a critical stance “orientada hacia un estudio inmanente de la serie literaria y las obras que la componen” (16). This second orientation coincides with Wicks’s ahistorical approach in many ways, inasmuch as it is concerned with identifying the essential features of the genre, and it has been followed by a large group of canonical scholars such as Fernando Lázaro Carreter, Francisco Rico, and Jenaro Talens, among others. Lastly, Cabo Aseguinolaza notes that there is still a third approach, which he terms comparative and which “pone el énfasis en una concepción de la narrativa picaresca no limitada por el marco espacio-temporal de la España del Siglo de Oro” (16). This approach already starts with the work of F. W. Chandler and encompasses the contributions of scholars such as Claudio Guillén, Alexander Blackburn, and Robert Alter. As understood by this group of critics, the concept of picaresque literature is much more open and inclusive, perhaps because, as Cabo Aseguinolaza observes, “[e]s probable que . . . un cierto grado de relajamiento conceptual sea estrictamente necesario para el estudio comparativo del la picaresca, y tanto más cuanto más abarcador sea éste” (41-42). Once again, the present study constitutes an attempt to integrate the Spanish picaresque tradition and the English jest-book and rogue pamphlet traditions by taking into account both their points of contact

and of divergence. For that reason, my approach will integrate the three groups distinguished by Cabo Aseguinolaza's metacritical taxonomy. As noted previously, the objective of my study is to critically consider the many different, and often opposed, ways in which the authors from both traditions construct a specific idea image of the rogue in their works—whether they be jest-books, rogue pamphlets, or picaresque novels—to suit the general purpose of their texts. These various conceptualizations of the rogue are always determined by issues such as ideology, literary tradition, the social and historical context that spawns the work, the literary market that shapes the relationships between the author and the reader, and so on; therefore, it will be useful to consider the three critical approaches outlined by Cabo Aseguinolaza in a study that seeks to account for the intertextual dialogue established between authors belonging to different literary traditions.

As we demarcate the specific parameters of the present study, it is necessary to underscore the central role accorded to the concept of intertextuality. In *The Antiheroine's Voice*, Edward H. Friedman contrasts the original model of the picaresque novel as established in canonical works such as *Lazarillo de Tormes*, *Guzmán de Alfarache*, and *El Buscón* with the variations introduced in works like *La pícaro Justina*, whose protagonist is a female character. Friedman also studies the diverse ways in which later novels from the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries, from Daniel Defoe's *Moll Flanders* to Benito Pérez Galdós's *Tristana* to Elena Poniatowska's *Hasta no verte Jesús mío*, whose protagonists are also female characters, engage in an intertextual dialogue that results in transformations of the original picaresque model. In the context of Friedman's study, then, the concept of intertextuality becomes very prominent as texts

belonging to different time periods and literary traditions (Spain, England, Latin America, etc.) are read in the light of one another. This is so because, as Friedman notes:

[n]o text exists in isolation. The concept of intertextuality, in its multiple forms, allows for synthesis between what a text owes to its literary and cultural precedents, what an author creates by recreating, and how contextualization affects the production of meaning. Intertextuality considers synchronically what source studies view diachronically. Every decision in the process of composition implies a confrontation, if only intuitive, with other texts and with the collectivity of texts. . . . By changing the setting—the economic milieu and the narrative circumstance—the author reverses the premises and the perspectives of the works he imitates. (3-4)

Although it was particularly pronounced in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and that is precisely one of the main reasons why my study concentrates on that specific time period, the intertextual relationships between British and Spanish authors do not end in the seventeenth century. For instance, Henry Fielding states in the title page of *Joseph Andrews* (1742) that his novel is “written in imitation of the manner of Cervantes, author of *Don Quixote*” (1). As Friedman notes, the confrontation between a given text and other texts that precede it may not be as obvious at first sight because in some cases intertextuality is materialized in a more intuitive way. Thus, even though Dr. Carlos García⁷ does not acknowledge his debt to the works of Thomas Harman and John Awdeley, he does include elements taken from English rogue pamphlets, probably via the French tradition of such works, which in turn derives from their English counterparts, in his *Desordenada codicia de los bienes ajenos* (1619). Textual echoes surface between

⁷ Carlos García published his only two extant works, *La oposición y conjunción de los dos grandes luminares de la tierra* (1617) and *La desordenada codicia de los bienes ajenos* (1619) using the title of “Doctor,” although it remains unclear whether this title was legitimate or not.

García's work and the rogue pamphlet tradition, yet García refashions these features from rogue pamphlets and adapts them to suit the context and purpose of his picaresque novel, completely overturning in the process the original sense that these features have in the rogue pamphlets. As I will show, if the lesser-known *Desordenada codicia* comes across as such an atypical, heterogeneous picaresque novel, it is in no small measure because of the inclusion of elements drawn from the rogue pamphlet tradition, a genre that did not flourish in Spain and whose defining features were mostly extraneous to the picaresque genre. What García does in this work is precisely what Klaus Meyer-Minnemann describes as "hibridación transgresora" (19) between the typical features of the picaresque novel (autobiography, service to several masters, social commentary) and features taken from other genres. The result of this intertextual interaction with other literary genres is often a work that, like *Desordenada codicia* and Miguel de Cervantes's *Rinconete y Cortadillo* (1613), challenges the preestablished generic boundaries of the picaresque novel.

In the context of my study, then, the picaresque novel is not seen as a genre that should be limited to Golden Age Spain; rather, because of the intertextual dialogue established between Spanish texts and texts from foreign literary traditions, as well as because of the wide circulation that Spanish picaresque novels experienced in translation into other European languages, it becomes necessary to view the picaresque as a transnational literary phenomenon. As a basic literary pattern was established in Spain in the second half of the sixteenth century by the two foundational picaresque texts, *Lazarillo de Tormes* and *Guzmán de Alfarache*, other Spanish works, such as *El Buscón* and *La pícaro Justina*, to name but two, modified and revised that original pattern;

moreover, as Spanish texts circulated across geographic boundaries, they interacted with other genres, at the same time leaving their imprint on those genres and importing features from them that would in turn revitalize the picaresque as a genre. Thus, by considering the 1576 English translation of *Lazarillo de Tormes* by David Rowland, a different, multifaceted understanding of a work such as Thomas Nashe's *The Unfortunate Traveller* (1594) emerges. The complexity of texts such as *Rinconete y Cortadillo* and *Desordenada codicia* acquires more significance when read in the light of the British rogue pamphlet tradition. Even within Spain, the influx of the picaresque genre does not die out with the picaresque novels published in the mid-seventeenth century—Antonio Henríquez Gómez's *Vida de don Gregorio Guadaña* (1644) and the anonymous *La vida y hechos de Estebanillo González* (1646), to cite but two examples of works that are considered as marking the twilight of the genre—but it is revised and reinvigorated as late as the twentieth century in works such as Camilo José Cela's *La familia de Pascual Duarte* (1942) and *Nuevas andanzas y desventuras de Lazarillo de Tormes* (1944).⁸

⁸ As Edward H. Friedman observes, in *La familia de Pascual Duarte*, Cela reaccentuates the paradigm of the picaresque as found in *Lazarillo de Tormes*, *Guzmán de Alfarache*, and *El Buscón* by revising it in a modern context: "*La familia de Pascual Duarte* sustains the confessional form and penitential premises of the picaresque novels. For whatever reason, the narrator, following precedent, deals in partial truths and an incomplete story. Like Lázaro, he confuses defense and rationalization, and the full implication of his words escapes him. Like Guzmán, he takes responsibility for his guilt without incorporating a metamorphosed self into the discourse. What for Guzmán may be an insincere repentance is for Pascual a conditioned insensitivity to humanity and a lack of awareness of his own character. Circumstance has robbed him of positive examples, and the revelations in his account are often closed to him. The elegance of Pascual's prose suggests the baroque opulence of the *Buscón* as a sign of the implied author. While Quevedo practices conceptist art and preaches society's lesson, Cela achieves a meaningful incongruity between discursive form and message. The transcriber as editor and censor shields the reader from the spontaneity of creation, blurring object and objective. The intrusive scribe and the inexplicably poetic language signal an ironic counternarrative. Cela captures the isolation of his protagonist by placing the narrator

Therefore, if we are to account for the presence of the picaresque genre across time and space, as well as for its fruitful interactions with other genres, it will be necessary to broaden the scope of the term *picaresque novel*, to view the genre not synchronically, as a closed corpus of texts that have a fixed set of characteristics in common, but diachronically so that we may account for both the similarities and the differences that can be observed in a wider range of texts produced in different time periods by authors writing in diverging spatio-temporal contexts. This view of the genre is expressed by Claudio Guillén in his essay “Toward a Definition of the Picaresque,” published as part of his book *Literature as System* (1971), in which he calls for a broader conception of the picaresque novel, distinguishing four main types of picaresque texts:

Picaresque genre, first of all; a group of novels, secondly, that deserve to be called picaresque in the strict sense, usually in agreement with the original Spanish pattern; another group of novels, thirdly, which may be considered picaresque in a broader sense of the term only; and finally, a *picaresque myth*: an essential situation or significant structure derived from the novels themselves. (85; emphasis mine)

Thus, Guillén tends to view the picaresque as a universal narrative type—hence the term “picaresque myth,” which designates situations and structures that may exist in other genres but that are akin to the picaresque—not restricting the scope of his classification to novels written in Spain only. Though Fernando Lázaro Carreter does concentrate solely on texts from the Spanish tradition, he also advocates for a more dynamic conception of the picaresque genre in his classic study *Lazarillo de Tormes en la picaresca* (1972), distinguishing between *maestros* (the authors who set the groundwork for the picaresque

among the other voices of the text. This is the paradox and the paradigm of the picaresque” (65-66).

as a genre) and *epígonos* (the authors who took some basic features of the works of their predecessors and recreated them as they produced their own works),⁹ and understanding the series of picaresque novels as a dynamic process of generic formation. In the words of Lázaro Carreter, then,

resulta necesario, para comprender qué fue la “novela picaresca”, no concebirla como un conjunto inerte de obras relacionadas por tales o cuales rasgos comunes, sino como un proceso dinámico, con su dialéctica propia, en el que cada obra supuso una toma de posición distinta ante una misma poética. Debe sustituirse la vía de la inducción, que considera el corpus ya construido, por un método que permita observar su construcción. Este punto de vista hace reconocer enseguida que determinados rasgos del contenido y de la construcción, existentes en diversas obras, fueron sentidos en otras como iterables o transformables. Y ello permite un deslinde, relativamente fácil, entre dos niveles distintos en el ámbito de la picaresca . . . ; aquel en que surgen determinados rasgos, y un segundo, en que se advierte la fecundidad de aquellos rasgos, y son deliberadamente repetidos, anulados, modificados o combinados de otro modo. (198-99)

Indeed, any critical discussion of the picaresque must look back at the texts that constitute its object of study in such a way to enable the critic to construct an interpretation of those texts that accounts both for their dynamic relationship with the generic paradigm to which they belong and for their possible intertextual interactions with other genres. As Klaus Meyer-Minnemann insightfully reminds us, any discussion of the picaresque novel—or any other genre, for that matter—is fundamentally “una construcción *a posteriori* que importa situar al nivel de descripción de los representantes

⁹ Lázaro Carreter’s distinction between *maestros* and *epígonos* is interesting and valuable to a certain extent because it underscores that the picaresque genre is not a fixed group of works but that it changes as new works are written. However, the main criticism that could be leveled against it lies in the fact that the scholar from Aragón avoids to specify which novels belong to each group.

de la serie cuya coherencia de objetos verbales genéricamente relacionados fundamenta” (19). It becomes necessary, then, to first consider the specific texts that we are studying and their intertextual relationships with one another as a first step in a critical approach that seeks to analyze picaresque texts from a broader scope. This is what Florencio Sevilla Arroyo does, following Lázaro Carreter’s ideas, in his anthology of picaresque texts *La novela picaresca española* (2001). After establishing *Lazarillo de Tormes* and *Guzmán de Alfarache* as the foundational texts that set up the basic generic parameters of the picaresque novel, Sevilla Arroyo studies the ways in which later texts recreate these parameters and experiment with the basic elements of the genre, concluding that “[b]astará con que no se traspasen las coordenadas fundamentales, pudiendo moverse dentro de las mismas con derecho al uso casi libertino de los rasgos preestablecidos” (ix). As we can see, any discussion of the picaresque genre is basically a construction *a posteriori*, whose point of departure always lies in the literary materials (the texts) that have been selected to be studied, and therefore, if we are to study the interactions between texts produced in different time periods and belonging to different literary traditions, it becomes absolutely necessary to take a perspective that, like Lázaro Carreter’s among others, is essentially broader and more dynamic, so as to account for and explain not only the similarities but also the differences among the texts.

Furthermore, as will become clear in the course of this study, the terms *picaresque novel* and *picaresque literature* will not be operative as general terms that encompass the different genres with which we will be dealing, insofar as some of those genres—namely the jest-book and the rogue pamphlet—precede the appearance of the picaresque novel at least by several decades. The foundational texts of the picaresque

genre, the anonymous *Lazarillo de Tormes* and Mateo Alemán's *Guzmán de Alfarache* were published in 1554 and 1599 respectively, while the earliest rogue pamphlet, Gilbert Walker's *Manifest Detection*, was printed in 1552, and the works of John Awdeley, Thomas Harman, and Robert Greene all appeared before *Guzmán de Alfarache*. As for the jest-books, the earliest go back to the late-fifteenth and early-sixteenth centuries. Moreover, before the publication of *Lazarillo de Tormes*, there already existed in Spain a handful of works whose protagonists hailed from the lower strata of society, which offered a portrait of the underworld, and whose depictions of an atmosphere of social and moral decay could be considered picaresque *avant la lettre*: Fernando de Rojas's play *La Celestina* (1499) and Francisco Delicado's *La lozana andaluza* (1528) are but two examples of this type of works.¹⁰ It would be a mistake, of course, to consider these texts, as well as the jest-books and rogue pamphlets as strictly picaresque, even if they have undeniable points of contact with the picaresque novel. Therefore, for the purpose of my study, I argue that it will be more appropriate from the outset to establish a difference between the broader concept of rogue literature and the more restrictive concepts of the jest-book, the rogue pamphlet, and the picaresque novel, the last three of which are encompassed by the broader label of rogue literature.¹¹ In the context of my study, then, I

¹⁰ In Portugal, some of Gil Vicente's farces from the 1520s, such as *Farsa dos almocreves* and *Quem tem farelos?*, written in a mixture of Spanish and Portuguese, could also be ascribed to this group of texts that somehow foreshadow the picaresque novel.

¹¹ In *The Literature of Roguery*, F. W. Chandler already advances a taxonomy that is in some ways similar to mine, as he discusses the picaresque novel as "the Spanish source" within the wider context of literature of roguery, alluded to in his title, whose origins Chandler traces back to "Spain in the middle of the sixteenth century" (6). However, Chandler is exclusively interested in the study of English literature and does not actually contrast the English and the Spanish traditions from the integrative perspective that I am taking in the present study

understand *rogue literature* as an all-inclusive umbrella term applicable to any text across time periods and literary traditions that is constructed around the essential, unifying figure of a rogue, basically a social outcast, an outsider that may be presented in the work under different guises and with different, and in many cases opposed, literary functions. Whether they be Spanish or Portuguese *pícaros*, English *rogues*, or French *gueux* and *mercelots*—all of which have been used in different works to designate such a character—the relevant difference lies not so much in the figure of the character itself or in his or her actions as in the diverse cultural conceptualizations of the figure of the rogue on the part of each author writing in a specific spatio-temporal context, all of which always serve a certain kind of purpose and interest. By looking from this perspective at the bulk of rogue literature that has been produced since the sixteenth century, we will gain a broader, more complete understanding of the various literary representations of the figure of the rogue, as well as of the unique interactions at work between these representations, which despite their similarities, sometimes carry markedly opposed functions. The scope of my study is circumscribed to the Spanish and English rogue literature traditions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—and more specifically to the intertextual dialogue established between genres such as the jest-book, the rogue pamphlet, and the picaresque novel—not simply for the sake of limiting the size of what could otherwise become a monumental research endeavor due to the transnational dimension of the concept of rogue literature, but rather because the interactions between these two literary traditions were never more pronounced and bidirectional than in the early modern period. Read in the light of one another, works like *Lazarillo de Tormes*, *Caveat for Common Cursitors*, *The Fraternity of Vagabonds*, *Rinconete y Cortadillo*, and

Desordenada codicia shape and reinvigorate one another, while at the same time creating a fictional conceptualization of the central figure of the rogue which, in spite of its undeniable points of contact, serves noticeably dissimilar, contrasting literary purposes and is determined by differing ideological stances.

Regarding the figure of the rogue, whereas most critics agree that it constitutes an essential defining feature of the picaresque genre, there is a certain amount of disagreement about the terms that should be used to designate it, as well as about the specific definition of what a rogue is. Thus, for instance, in *Literature and the Delinquent*, A. A. Parker prefers to use the word *delinquent* rather than *rogue* or *vagabond* as a synonym for *pícaro* and gives the term the meaning of “an offender against the moral and civil laws; not a vicious criminal such as a gangster or a murderer, but someone who is dishonourable and anti-social in a much less violent way” (4). Moreover, in his study *The Anatomies of Roguery* (1987), Claudio Guillén compares the jest-book and the picaresque novel, making a clear difference between the terms *rogue* and *pícaro*: whereas the latter should be circumscribed only to the genre of the picaresque novel, the former appears in various genres and under different guises, which include the figures of the jester, the goliard, the criminal, the bandit, and the ruffian. According to Guillén, then, the word *rogue* bears a certain connotation of delinquency that *pícaro* lacks: “The *pícaro*,” says Guillén, “is an occasional delinquent. The tendency to criminal behavior is not an inbred feature of his character. His allergy to work, his spirit of defiance lead him to use the crafty, half-dishonest methods of the parasite. If he steals, he is driven by necessity and more sinned against than sinning” (138-9). However, works such as *Rinconete y Cortadillo* and *Desordenada codicia* show *pícaros* who often

penetrate into the realm of delinquency, and the protagonists of jest-books only occasionally engage in illegal activities, which suggests that Guillén's classification seems to belie the textual reality of these works. Therefore, for the purpose of the present study, and within the broader realm of rogue literature, I understand the term *rogue* as designating primarily a literary character, male or female, whose origins lie (or are purported to lie)¹² in the lower strata of society, and who is either forced to or decides to live by his wits; he is usually an outsider living in the margins of society who may be conceptualized by the author in different ways in order to serve different purposes within the literary work.

Of course, the rogue is essentially a literary entity, a literary material that does not exist outside of the framework of the literary text. Therefore, even though the rogue that we find in literary works may be in some ways based on the extraliterary reality of the time in which the work was produced, we should not misconstrue the literary rogue as a perfectly reliable representation of the real-life rogue. For instance, then, Francisco Rico, describing the figure of the protagonist of picaresque novels, reminds us that it is basically a "*criatura literaria* porque responde al arquetipo del 'Pícaro' novelesco, donde el pícaro real queda largamente desbordado" (106). Klaus Meyer-Minnemann also warns us against the error of considering the autobiography of the protagonist of picaresque novels as the narrative of a real-life character: "En vez de tomar esta trayectoria como un simulacro fidedigno de lo que solía pasar a un pícaro en el transcurso de su vida en la

¹² One example of a work that should be ascribed to the genre of rogue literature but whose main character does not hail from the lower classes is Wilkie Collins's *A Rogue's Life* (1879). Its protagonist, Frank Softly, is a self-fashioned rogue: he is a member of the upper-middle class, yet a series of circumstances result in his lack of funds and drive him to live by his wits, the defining characteristic of the rogue in the context of my study.

realidad social, hay que concebirla, antes que nada, como una construcción artística al servicio de la intencionalidad del autor, que en la obra se expresa” (26-27). Thus, in the course of this study, the term *rogue* will be applied to the low-life character—or characters, as in, for example, Cervantes’s *Rinconete y Cortadillo*—around whom the works pertaining to the genre of rogue literature are constructed and organized. Like the label *rogue literature*, the term *rogue* is here, in a way, a sort of umbrella term that brings together the protagonists of jest-books, the diverse types of criminals from rogue pamphlets, and the *pícaros* of picaresque novels, all of whom share the traits of being literary characters born into the lower levels of the social order and living by their wits, whether delving into delinquent activities or not. Since the rogue is essentially a literary character, his existence is circumscribed to the framework of the literary work within which he or she operates, and so there is not a one-to-one correlation between the literary rogue and the real-life rogue. As a literary character, then, the rogue, in the words of Jesús G. Maestro, “carece de *existencia operatoria* fuera de su existencia estructural, es decir, al margen de su realidad formal en la materialidad de la obra literaria” (*Concepto* 93). As a literary construction, then, the rogue will be, within the context of the present study necessarily subject to the particular conceptualization of the author,¹³ which always serves a certain purpose and is decisively determined and informed by issues such as

¹³ In this study, I follow the concept of the author as formulated by Jesús G. Maestro: “El autor es el artífice de los contenidos lógico-materiales, ideas y conceptos, objetivados formalmente en un texto que, de ser literario, interpretamos como literatura. . . . [E]l autor de obras literarias es un ser humano esto es, un sujeto operatorio, que es Autor precisamente porque lo es de formas verbales estéticamente relevantes . . . , de experiencias psicológicas esencialmente humanas . . . , y de ideas y conceptos lógicos absolutamente inderogables” (*Materiales* 57-8).

ideology, literary tradition, social and historical context, and social and political agenda, among others.

Hence, although the three genres may be classified under the heading of rogue literature and are constructed around the figure of a rogue, as we will see, the authorial conceptualization of the rogue in jest-books, rogue pamphlets, and picaresque novels emerges as radically different. Besides showing the general traits already outlined, the rogue is defined in jest-books by the largely comic nature of his actions and remarks. Within the context of this genre, the rogue is conceptualized mostly as a vehicle for entertainment, and his tricks and witty remarks are meant to elicit laughter. Like any fictional rogue, the protagonist of jest-books is a strictly literary character, and, even in the case of the jest-biographies, which attribute fictional jests to a character known to have existed (Master Skelton, Tarlton), the protagonists are simply literary entities that, other than the coincidence of names, have little or nothing to do with the real-life person on whom they are allegedly based. In short, as conceptualized in jest-books, the rogue is mostly a tool used for entertainment, although in some jests a certain embryonic form of criticism does surface in some of the comic remarks of the protagonists.¹⁴ The conceptualization of the rogue that emerges in rogue pamphlets is completely different from that of jest-books and radically opposed to that of picaresque novels. In their attempt to classify rogues according to their illegal practices and to uncover their witty

¹⁴ A perfect example of one such kind of jest can be found in the collection of *Tarlton's Jestes* (1638) under the title "Tarlton's answer to a rich Londoner": "Tarlton, meeting a rich Londoner, fell into talke about the Bishop of Peterborough, highly praising his bountie to his servants, his liberality to strangers, his great hospitality, and charity to the poore: 'He doth well,' sayes the rich man, "for what he hath, he hath but during his life.' 'Why,' quoth Tarlton, 'for how many lives have you your goods?'" (18).

tricks, pamphleteers such as Gilbert Walker, John Awdeley, Thomas Harman, and Robert Greene turn the rogue into the object of criticism, blaming him for everything that they perceive as negative and dangerous in English society. Thus, these works serve a two-fold purpose: on the one hand, they conceptualize the rogue as a scapegoat for current social ills, while on the other, their sensationalistic portraits of the rogue and their outrageous practices make their works more appealing and commercially viable for a readership that became increasingly fascinated by the allure of the fictional underworld created by pamphleteers. In this sense, Guillén observes that between the sixteenth and the eighteenth centuries the reading public's interest in the figure of the criminal increases: "Crime has the quality of being remote, unbelievable, and yet human. . . . Furthermore, the criminal is the boldest expression of asocial living. He has freed himself defiantly from social chains. Thus his fascination is both social and psychological. If his act is monstrous, the rebellious independence which it implies seems profoundly human" (146-47). Besides the commercial viability of the work, pamphleteers show a clear social agenda as they conceptualize the rogue as the object for criticism, as the ultimate cause and embodiment of all social ills. One of the main features that sets the kinds of rogue presented in English rogue pamphlets and in Spanish picaresque novels apart is determined by the central figure's radically different conceptualization in each tradition.

Indeed, whereas pamphleteers turn the rogue into the object of their harsh criticism, picaresque novelists conceptualize the rogue as a subject empowered with his own voice and perspective on the world around him and use him as vehicle for sharp social criticism. In rogue pamphlets, the rogue is the object who suffers the attacks of the narrator; in picaresque novels, the rogue becomes the subject who criticizes a society

within which he feels that he has no place. As Francisco Rico has noted, the point of view of this rogue, the *pícaro*, is prevalent in picaresque novels:¹⁵ his (or hers, of course) is “un punto de vista singular [que] selecciona la materia, fija la estructura general, decide la técnica narrativa, preside el estilo; y, a su vez, materia, estructura, técnica y estilo explican tal punto de vista” (51). Thus, within the wider context of rogue literature proposed previously, we may understand the picaresque novel as a work, whether autobiographical or not, constructed around literary figures of rogue protagonists who usually hail from the lower social strata and who are empowered with their own voice and present sharply critical, necessarily personal portraits of a society in which they cannot find a place and that precludes their hopes for social improvement. This social dimension of the picaresque novel has been pointed out by a group of critics such as Américo Castro and Maurice Molho, who conceive the genre primarily as a vehicle for satirical social commentary on the concept of honor and as a reaction against “las maneras de arte que tienen como tema la vida noble y ascendente” (Castro 121) on the part of a series of authors who were probably New Christians, that is, that had been forced to convert to Catholicism after the expulsion of the Jews and Muslims from Spain in 1492. In this sense, Antonio Rey Hazas has very accurately described the picaresque genre in terms of being a “poética comprometida” (*poetics of compromise*), emphasizing the social dimension of the picaresque novel as an essential feature of the genre. Rey Hazas observes that the literary careers of most picaresque novelists are reduced to a single work that embodies their view on social issues such as social mobility and the

¹⁵ As we will see, even in a text such as Cervantes’s *Rinconete y Cortadillo*, which is told by a narrator from a third-person narrative perspective, the events in the story are focalized and filtered through the joint point of view of the two protagonists, Rincón and Cortado.

centrality of the concept of honor in Golden Age society: according to Rey Hazas, these authors “perseguían, probablemente, demostrar y hacer comprender a los aristócratas la vacuidad de unos conceptos clave [tales como] herencia de sangre, honra adquirida en la cuna, honra como mera apariencia” (*Novela* 45).

Rey Hazas’s concept of *poética comprometida* is very relevant in the context of my study, inasmuch as this dimension of social criticism is of paramount importance in the study of rogue literature works such as the rogue pamphlet and the picaresque novel. In his book *La novela picaresca* (1990), Rey Hazas observes that if the picaresque genre seemed so appealing to such a variegated group of authors, it was precisely because they conceived it as a vehicle for social commentary. Whether it be a *converso* such as Mateo Alemán or an aristocrat such as Francisco de Quevedo, the poetics of the picaresque novel enabled these writers to formulate their opinions about relevant social and moral issues such as social mobility, honor, social status and marginality, poverty, and injustice, among many others. In Rey Hazas’s words,

resulta evidente que el esquema picaresco carece de exclusivismo ideológico, puesto que usan de él tanto los grupos discriminados como los privilegiados; aunque también es obvio, por las mismas razones, que es un modelo narrativo favorecedor del debate y de la polémica sociomorales. La especial configuración de la picaresca como novela de permisividad crítica y polémica explicaría la inserción en sus líneas, tanto del punto de vista social de los marginados, como de la perspectiva moral de los integrados, máxime en un momento histórico nuevamente teocrático, como es el siglo XVII español, donde con frecuencia es difícil discernir lo moral, lo político y lo social. (71)

There is no doubt that both the Spanish picaresque novel and the English rogue pamphlet are genres with a clear social and political agenda, and the radically opposed social

stances taken by English pamphleteers and Spanish picaresque novelists will inevitably inform and decisively determine their own conceptualization of the figure of the rogue, as well as the diverse functions that the literary character of the rogue acquires in each work.

Hence, the rest of the chapters in the present study will be devoted to the discussion of several different aspects of the interactions established between the Spanish and English rogue literature traditions in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, all of which will shed light on the possible determining factors that led to the different literary conceptualizations of the figure of the rogue portrayed in the three types of rogue literature that we are considering, the jest-book, the rogue pamphlet, and the picaresque novel. The second chapter constitutes an analysis of the jest-book and rogue pamphlet traditions that seeks to identify and examine the two different constructions of the rogue established in each genre as a first step to considering those two particular conceptualizations of the figure of the rogue in the light of the anonymous *Lazarillo de Tormes*, the only Spanish picaresque novel that was available in translation in England during the sixteenth century, when the popularity of both jest-books and rogue pamphlets reached its pinnacle. The third and fourth chapters turn to the Spanish tradition in an attempt to show how this fruitful intertextual dialogue established between the picaresque novel and the rogue pamphlet enabled authors such as Miguel de Cervantes and Dr. Carlos García to experiment with the generic parameters of the picaresque novel and to create works that superseded the boundaries of the picaresque novel as a genre. The third chapter offers a reading of Cervantes's exemplary novel *Rinconete y Cortadillo* (1613), traditionally considered by many critics to be at best an atypical picaresque work, that takes into account the elements drawn from the rogue pamphlet tradition that Cervantes

incorporates into the text and that allow him to create a fictional underworld that constitutes a satirical, grotesque intensification of the moral decay of the respectable society that lies outside of this underworld and with which it is in constant interaction. The fourth and final chapter features a critical discussion of the lesser-known picaresque novel *La desordenada codicia de los bienes ajenos* (1619), written by a largely unknown author named Dr. Carlos García, a Spanish expatriate who lived part of his life in Paris, where he wrote and published the novel, and who in all likelihood was familiar with the genre of the rogue pamphlet through the popular series of such works published in France in the 1590s and mostly modeled on their British predecessors. Throughout the novel, García weaves together elements from the picaresque novel and features drawn from the rogue pamphlet tradition, refashioning the latter to suit the purpose of his novel and drastically changing the original sense that such elements have in the pamphlets. As we will see in the ensuing pages, throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in Spain and England, the literary character of the rogue presented several different faces as it was subject to different constructions and conceptualizations on the part of diverse authors. Such conceptualizations were determined by issues such as ideology, social and historical context, literary tradition, and in no small measure, the intertextual dialogue in which Spanish and English rogue literature texts engaged in this period, reshaping and reinvigorating one another, and superseding preestablished generic boundaries in the process. For that reason, the main purpose of the present study will be to contrast a series of representative texts from both traditions with one another in an attempt to integrate these two literary traditions so as to shed some light on the unique ways in which they

interacted with one another, as well as on the factors that informed their different, and often opposed, cultural conceptualizations of the central figure of the rogue.

CHAPTER II

WARNING MEETS ENTERTAINMENT: SIXTEENTH-CENTURY ENGLISH JEST-BOOKS AND ROGUE PAMPHLETS AND *LAZARILLO DE TORMES* (1554)

Looking into the origins of an intertextual dialogue between the rogue literature in England and Spain, the genres of English jest-books, English rogue pamphlets, and Spanish picaresque novels provide the earliest materials through which to track interactions between form, theme, and style. Each one of these genres was acknowledged in its time as an identifiable type of literature, which is relevant because commentary on the identifiable characteristics of each genre marks the beginnings of this interplay between Spanish and English authors that would eventually lead to explorations of criminality in Thomas Nashe's *The Unfortunate Traveller* (1594), Miguel de Cervantes's *Rinconete y Cortadillo* (1613), and Dr. Carlos García's *La desordenada codicia de los bienes ajenos* (1619). Notably, jest-books build their texts around the figure of a troublemaker—this could be something as simple as a prankster and at times a more dubious figure such as a thief—but in terms of form, they are structured loosely as entertainment without a strong unifying frame such as a social criticism or chronology. Rogue pamphlets play a key role in the origins of the intertextual dialogue examined in this study because, stemming from the jest-book tradition, they incorporate the formal pattern of jest-books with their series of disparate scenes illustrative of roguish practices, and because they acquire a definite social agenda, albeit different from that of Spanish picaresque novels. Appearing in Spain, picaresque novels likewise portray the figure of an outcast, but their theme and style are accented by a marked social agenda that is intent

on representing the inequalities rampant in Spanish Golden Age society, unifying the stories around the afflicted experiences of the protagonist. Authors exposed to these various genres and aware of their similarities and differences would generate works synthesizing elements pertaining to each tradition, fueling a complex debate on criminality that can be witnessed in the rogue literature of these two countries in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Before examining these works, such as the aforementioned titles by Cervantes and García, this chapter explores the specific points at which jest-books and rogue pamphlets intersect with and diverge from the Spanish picaresque tradition, and particularly *Lazarillo de Tormes* (1554), the only picaresque novel available in translation in the sixteenth century.

Jest-Books

Jest-books are collections of short humorous tales in prose—the *jests*—that are mostly culled from oral tradition. Paul M. Zall considers that examples of jests are already present in the classical period in texts such as Homer’s *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and traces them back to Greek apothegms, which Zall depicts as “short, pithy anecdotes about historical or living people bearing some kind of moral point” (3). Roman orators made good use of these apothegms as a rhetorical device, yet it was Quintilian that first analyzed them critically, classifying them into two categories: apothegms about things done and apothegms about things said. Zall paraphrases one of Quintilian’s examples thus: “Cato, struck by a ladder carried on the shoulder of a workman on a busy Roman street, replies to the workman’s ‘Take heed, sir,’ with ‘Why? Do you carry anything else?’” (3). Certainly, the anecdote is very close in spirit to some of Howleglas’ witty

remarks and to some of the very short stories compiled in the volume *Tales and Quick Answers* (ca. 1535). Quintilian's taxonomy of apothegms is also pertinent to the description of the nature of jests, inasmuch as some of the jests contained in jest-books can be considered to be language-based (that is, about things said), while some others are more action-based (that is, about things done).

After tracing their origins back to the classical period, Zall turns to the fifth century, considering a series of twenty-one jests attached to a manuscript entitled *The Golden Words of Pythagoras*, usually attributed to Hierocles of Alexandria.¹⁶ These jests are almost always concerned with misunderstandings triggered by the ambiguity created by the use of words that have more than one meaning. Typically, one of the characters is unable to recognize the polysemic nature of a term, taking in its literal sense instead of in its intended metaphoric one, thereby becoming the center of a situation that comes across as funny precisely because of its ridiculousness. According to Zall, though, there is nothing new or purely classical about Hierocles's jests: "Rather they are derivative of a timeless tradition that attributes to some cultural or ethnic class the facility for blundering by taking everything literally and by being completely impractical about matters of fact" (3-4). Indeed, this practice of ridiculing characters by virtue of their belonging to an ethnicity that is perceived as culturally inferior and less intelligent is very common in some of the jest-books that I will be discussing in this chapter.

¹⁶ Zall also transcribes two of these fifth-century jests, all of which seem to be language-based. They read as follows: "A pedant, desiring to see how he looked when asleep, stood in front of a mirror with his eyes closed" and "A pedant, seeing a deep well in his field, asked his hired man if the water was good to drink. 'Oh, yes,' was the reply. 'Your ancestors drank from that well.' The pedant said: 'What long necks they must have had to drink from such depths!'" (4)

By the Middle Ages, this tradition of apothegms and jests was condensed by Petrus Alphonsus in his *Disciplina clericalis*, a compilation of tales of Jewish and Arabic origin that drew variously from apothegms and Aesop's fables, and that Alphonsus put together in the twelfth century. Zall stresses the popularity of Alphonsus' work throughout the Middle Ages, noting that its subject matter was quickly channeled into *fabliaux*:

Alphonsus' jests became household words in the medieval world and spread from Spain to Iceland or wherever missionaries wandered. They are chiefly short tales rather than jests about things said, and as "fabliaux," were readily absorbed into medieval literature. At the same time, however, preachers in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries used them as bases for their private collections, exchanging new versions, adapting or adopting new jests in tavern, marketplace, or cloister. Often a private collection is found to contain three or four versions of the same jest because it may have been picked up in three or four different places or from as many people. Names, places, incidents, may change, but the basic jests are familiar. (5)

The Renaissance period meant a whole new era for this kind of collections, which, until the invention of the printing press, had circulated in manuscript form: early print culture revolutionized jests, making them much more readily available to the reading audience and spawning the commercialization of jest-books. Poggio Bracciolini's *Liber facetiarum*, which was printed in 1477 after circulating in manuscript form for several years, can be said to have been at the heart of the flourishing of jest-books. Not only were Bracciolini's *facetiae* one of the first collections of this kind to be printed, but they also introduced noteworthy innovations whose importance to the discussion of jest-books should not be overlooked. For the first time, Bracciolini eschews the moral teachings of apothegms and fables, displaying a much more parodic agenda. Moreover,

Bracciolini “brings up eyewitnesses and cites the sources of his jests ... [which] feature actual persons, places, and things as opposed to historical figures or ‘a pedant’ or Marcolphus” (Zall 6). It is difficult, however, to ascertain whether these “actual persons” really existed, but it seems clear that, by doing away with the moralistic element of his sources, Bracciolini is playing with their content and intention, and bringing us closer to the kind of texts included in jest-books such as *The Sackful of News* (ca. 1558), *A Hundred Merry Tales*, and *Tales and Quick Answers*.

The few critics who have dealt with jest-books have been suspicious of their literary status, preferring to analyze them strictly from a historical perspective. Zall, who compiled several jest-books into a single volume in 1963, expresses that opinion in his introductory essay: in his view, jests are not literary because they “are more concerned with what is said than with how it is said, and generally make their point simply, succinctly and with as much zest as the jest will bear” (1). In order to prove his point further, Zall also argues that jest “are meant to be said as well as read” (1) and that their style “is conversationally dramatic, vernacular vs. literary, and sometimes seemingly taken down from actual speech” (1-2). Although this description does fit some of the shorter anecdotes contained in *Tales and Quick Answers*, it certainly does not apply to the tales in *A Hundred Merry Tales* nor to those in *Howleglas* and the metafictional world through which its unknown author presents the jests attributed to its main character. In the context of my study, jest-books are understood as literary texts that play a key role in a tradition that leads to an intertextual dialogue between English rogue pamphlets and Spanish picaresque novels.

Paul Salzman, who has also written briefly on jest-books, is not as categorical as Zall and does not dismiss them as not being literary altogether. Rather, he offers a classification of jest-books that divides them into three categories, based on their content and structure: collections of detached jests, jest-biographies, and collections of comic short stories (203).¹⁷ Inasmuch as the third category was not widely cultivated in England—although texts of this kind, like *The Mirrour of Mirth*, by Bonaventure des Périers, were available in translation—I will be focusing here mostly on the first category, which describes the stories featured in *A Hundred Merry Tales* and *Tales and Quick Answers*, and on the second one, whose consideration in the light of *Lazarillo de Tormes* proves extremely productive.

Collections of detached jests make no attempt at unity: they are detached from one another and vary in length, concentrating on verbal puns—the *quick answers*, for instance—and funny actions performed by the characters, who are always types such as a priest, a friar, a Welshman, et al. On the contrary jest-biographies, albeit not actual biographies, do achieve a certain kind of unity by relating all the jests to the same character, who may be an actual person—as in *Merry Tales Made by Master Skelton* (1567) and *Tarleton's Jestes* (1611)—or simply a fictional entity, as is the case in *Howleglas*. Salzman argues against unity in jest-books, dismissing characters like Tarleton as “a convenient peg upon which certain actions are hung” (203) and considering that, despite the presence of the central character, “the jests themselves remain isolated, and there is little development from jest to jest” (203). I agree with Salzman’s view that it is not possible to draw much of a picture of Tarleton, Skelton, or

¹⁷ For his taxonomy of jest-books, Salzman follows Wilson 124.

Howleglas from the reading of these works, but I believe that it would be erroneous to consider that jest-biographies do not achieve any unity. Indeed, whether the stories actually happened during Tarleton's or Skelton's lifetime becomes unimportant—as does any attempt to ascertain whether Howleglas actually lived or not—, for what is relevant is that the authors of these texts chose to use the central character as the nuclear element of their work, thereby bringing unity to it. It is not the same kind of unity that we can find in *Lazarillo*, where Lázaro does go through a learning process as he walks through his fictional life, yet the protagonist of a jest-biography appears as a unifying element, as the centerpiece around which the whole work gravitates.

Despite his refusal to recognize any kind of unity in jest-biographies, Salzman does acknowledge that some of them do make an attempt at portraying a much more rounded central character: one such example mentioned by Salzman is *Dobsons Drie Bobbes* (1607), whose hero, Dobson, seems to undergo certain changes derived from the jests narrated in the text. However, Salzman regards this work merely as an exception, as an example that strays away from the typical features of jest-biographies, not only because of its depiction of Dobson, but also because of its portrayal of the urban milieu in which the jests are set: “The early sections of *Dobsons Drie Bobbes*,” Salzman states, “are particularly convincing in their depiction of both Dobson's career and the town of Durham, but this work is an exception, an example which other writers of jest-biographies did not choose to follow” (203). Salzman lists other jest-biographies that also make an attempt at unity—thereby contradicting his thesis—and concludes that it is necessary to be cautious when it comes to determining to what degree jest-biographies have played a role in the early stages of the development of the novel, reminding us that

“an exploration of Renaissance fiction itself must approach the influence of the jest-book cautiously, and avoid an anachronistic view which sees these writers as in some way anticipating a form which they would probably have scorned” (203). However, not only do jest-biographies like *Howleglas* achieve a certain sense of unity by means of the figure of their main character, but jest-books, taken as a genre, can be found at the basis of the rogue pamphlet tradition.

A Hundred Merry Tales (1526)

Printed by John Rastell, the brother-in-law of Sir Thomas More, in 1526, only “three copies of the book are extant, and suggest two different editions—though both were printed by Rastell” (Zall 58). *A Hundred Merry Tales* can be described most accurately as a collection of detached jests, inasmuch as it compiles one hundred stories that are not interconnected but that do share a similar structure and subject matter. A quick look at “The Kalender,” the table of contents that precedes the tales, illustrates this structural likeness: the titles of all the jests begin with the syntactic construction “Of the...,” thereafter concentrating on the most important facts of the story and on its protagonists, who are always character types (a miller, a scholar, a merchant, a maid, a friar, etc.) or indeterminate characters such as “the three men” and “the woman.” Therefore, the main focus is the story itself, rather than the characters that appear in it; indeed, most of the jests presented in *A Hundred Merry Tales* are chiefly concerned with language, with witty remarks or responses, not with the development and exploration of a given character. A brief look at one of the jests will illustrate what the unknown author or compiler is attempting to underline:

A gentleman and a gentlewoman sat together talking—which gentleman had great pain in one of his teeth, and happened to say to the gentlewoman thus: “I wis, mistress, I have a tooth in my head which grieveth me very sore, wherefore I would it were in your tail.” She, hearing him saying so, answered thus: “In good faith, sir, if your tooth were in my tail, it could do it but little good—but if there be anything in my tail that can do your tooth good, I would it were in your tooth.” By this, ye may see that a woman’s answer is seldom to seek. (92)

As we can see, the woman’s answer, however absurd it might sound, is precisely what is supposed to trigger laughter and amusement here. As a purely language-based jest, the story does not concentrate on action but on words, and in many instances, plays on words and puns are featured extensively. Moreover, most of the jests provide some sort of teaching, often illustrating a well-known stereotype associated with a profession, with an ethnicity or, as in the previous example, with gender. The tale above, then, exemplifies that “a woman’s answer is seldom to seek,” but subsequent jests warn that “he that will learn no good by example nor good manners to him showed, is worthy to be taught with open rebukes” (96) and that “a vicious act is more abominable in one person than in another, in one season than in another, and in one place than in another” (122).

Sometimes, the jests are based on national stereotypes, on the widespread idea that a certain national group must necessarily be associated with a certain kind of flaw. Thus, there are several tales in the volume that present the Welsh as being barbarous, irrational, violent people:

In the time of Lent a welchman came to be confessed of his curate—which in his confession said that he had killed a friar. To whom the curate said he could not absolve him. “Yes (quod the welchman), if thou knewest all, thou wouldst absolve me well enough.” And when the curate had commanded him to show him all the case, he said thus: “Marry, there were

two friars and I might have slain them both if I had list, but I let the one
'scape. Therefore, master curate, set the one against th' other and then the
offense is not so great but ye may absolve me well enough." (92-3)

Although the jest is meant to offer an example of the evil-doing and moral laxity of
"divers men" (93), that the tale is attributed to "a welchman" is not gratuitous in the light
of other jests in this and other collections that invariably depict "welchmen" as cruel and
amoral.¹⁸ The anonymous compiler takes advantage of received notions that readers
would have about a specific national group for the description of a character that belongs
to it. This leads Zall to assert that *A Hundred Merry Tales* contains jests that are "patently
directed at teaching the newly 'civilized' Welsh the rudiments of urban gentility" (8).
This may very well be so, inasmuch as the Welsh are the only foreign characters included
in this volume, in stark contrast with other jest-books, such as *The Sackful of News*,
where jokes are made not only at the expense of the Welsh, but also the Irish, the Dutch,
or the French.

However, not all the stereotypes exploited in *A Hundred Merry Tales* are related
to gender or nationality: many of the jests thrive on common assumptions about the vices
of certain professions. Thus, the thirty-third jest plays on the widespread stereotype that
friars are gluttonous and greedy: the tale focuses on a friar described as "a very glutton
and a great niggin" (95), who preaches a sermon about "the miracle that Christ did in
feeding five thousand people with five loaves of bread and with three little fishes" (95).
Hearing the biblical story, the friar's boy interjects: "By my troth, master, then there were
no friars there" (95), which causes the congregation "to fall on such a laughing that for

¹⁸ Other examples of similar portrayals of Welsh characters, in *A Hundred Merry Tales*
alone, are to be found in jests numbers 16, 31, 48, 61, 81, and 92.

shame the friar went out of the pulpit” (95). Once again, whereas this story is supposed to be a warning against greed and gluttony—“By this, ye may see that it is honesty for a man that is at meat to depart with such as he hath to them that be present” (95)—, it also pokes fun at friars, who are usually depicted as mean and tight-fisted in jest-books,¹⁹ by making a friar its central character. It is only with that stereotype in mind that we can fully understand and appreciate the remark made by the friar’s boy and the subsequent reaction of the congregation: if the words of the friar’s boy elicit laughter in the members of the congregation—as well as in the readers themselves—is precisely because of these preconceived ideas about the figure of the friar.

This is not to say, however, that there is any attempt at social criticism in *A Hundred Merry Tales*: while we do find jests made at the expense of friars, curates, and other clergymen, the text never intends to denounce or correct the vices of the clergy; rather, the author light-heartedly pokes fun at these characters by exploiting certain stereotypes associated with them, yet from the reading of the jests, it does not seem possible to infer any kind of particular social worldview that the author might have. Unlike in *Lazarillo*, where Lázaro’s depictions of the *clérigo* and the *buldero* are charged with satire and bitter social criticism meant to expose the vices of the Church, the stories featured in *A Hundred Merry Tales* merely aim at amusing the reader, mainly through the use of language. Spanish picaresque novels are concerned with satire and social criticism; jest-books are not. A moral teaching may be drawn from the jests—and in many cases,

¹⁹ Further examples of friars presented in a similar light, in *A Hundred Merry Tales* alone, can be found in jests numbers 15, 25, 70, and 82.

the closing tagline stresses the specific moral teaching—but social commentary is mostly absent.

Although most of the stories compiled in *A Hundred Merry Tales*, as we have seen, are language-based, there are a few that emphasize action, and these are arguably the most interesting in order to analyze later works, like Nashe's *The Unfortunate Traveller*, that draw largely on action-based jests. The third jest in the collection, entitled "Of the wife that made her husband to go sit in the arbor in the night while her 'prentice lay with her in bed" (60), constitutes a valuable example of one such jest. Its title perfectly sums up the content of the tale: a woman tricks her husband into leaving their bed one night and going to the arbor dressed in female attire, under the pretext that she had set up an appointment there with an untrue servant. This servant is actually her lover, and while her husband is away at the arbor, the servant comes into her chamber and "for a season they were both content and pleased each other by the space of an hour or two" (66). Thereafter, the servant goes into the arbor and completes the trick, pretending to chastise the cross-dressed master, of whose real identity he is aware:

"A, thou harlot! Art thou come hither? Now I see well—if I would be false to my master, thou wouldst be a strong whore. But I had lever thou were hanged than I would do him so traitorous a deed. Therefore I shall give thee some punishment as thou, like a whore, hast deserved." And therewith he lapped him well about the shoulders and back and gave him a dozen or two good stripes. . . . "Alas, man," quod the master, "I beseech thee—no more—for I am not she—for I am thy master—feel, for I have a beard!" And therewith he spared his hand and felt his beard. "Alas, master," quod the 'prentice, "I cry you mercy." (66)

The shrewd plan of the lovers turns out to be successful, for at the end of the jest, the husband gladly confesses to his wife that "I have cause to be glad, for I thank God I

have as true a wife and as true a servant as any man hath in England” (66-7), oblivious that he has fallen prey to the trick and has been sent up as a cuckold. There is no doubt that this is a different kind of jest: whereas the ones analyzed above make use of language to elicit laughter, this one places a greater emphasis on action. Though somewhat lengthier, its extension does not allow for much character development, but it does describe a more carefully orchestrated plan with a clear objective in whose achievement, like in many of the tricks in picaresque novels, theater plays a significant role. Though still structurally rather simple, this is a more complex narrative than the ones analyzed above, inasmuch as it gravitates around a preconceived plan that could not be put into practice without a certain dramatic skill on the part of the characters.

Finally, the jest also ends with a moral tagline: “By this tale ye may see that it is not wisdom for a man to be ruled always after his wife’s counsel” (67). At first glance, it looks simply like yet another misogynous message from the compiler of the volume, in the manner of some of the taglines already discussed, yet it is particularly interesting because it comes across as a condemnation of the wife’s cheating practices as well, an aspect that will become central in rogue pamphlets. Whereas jest-books present tricks and tricksters in a somewhat neutral way in order to amuse the reader, rogue pamphlets denounce the tricksters and warn against tricks similarly to this jest. The anonymous writers of jest-books conceive of their texts purely as entertainment; pamphleteers, although concerned with entertaining the reading audience that purchase their stories, display an ulterior social agenda.

As for the sources of the stories included in *A Hundred Merry Tales*, Zall believes that they mostly have an English origin:

Although Rastell was deeply concerned with the problem of providing translations to the ‘unlearned’ (i.e., those having neither Latin nor Greek), *A Hundred Merry Tales* is the closest thing we have to a distinctively native English jest-book. It is relatively untouched by alien influences and seems to be attempting for a colloquial English style what Poggio had attempted for a colloquial Latin style. (8)

The style of the collection is blatantly colloquial, and in some cases, words are rendered almost phonetically in the original text: in this sense, the anonymous compiler of *A Hundred Merry Tales* seems to be attempting to emulate Poggio Bracciolini’s *Liber facetiarum*, in which Bracciolini experiments with a vernacular Latin style. However, rather than being purely native, most of the stories are actually taken from European folklore at large. As an example, we can take a look at the sixty-sixth jest in the volume, entitled “Of the man that would have the pot stand there as he would” (62). This jest focuses on a man who forces his wife to remove the pot from the fire even though the meat is not yet ready to eat, which he requests, in his own words, solely “for [his] pleasure” (123). The man ultimately forces his wife to set the pot atop a high ladder: “And when the husband looked up and saw the pot stand there on high, he said thus: ‘Lo, now standeth the pot there as I would have it.’ This wife, hearing that, suddenly poured the hot pottage on his head and said thus: ‘And now been the pottage there as I would have them.’” (124).

Although the outcome is different, the storyline of this jest harks back in many ways to the thirty-fifth tale in Don Juan Manuel’s *Libro de los enxiemplos del Conde Lucanor e de Patronio* (1335), whose heading reads: “De lo que contesçió a un mançebo que casó con una muger muy fuerte e muy brava” (217). In this tale, a man weds a very unruly, stubborn woman, and on their wedding night, he is put to the challenge of

controlling her, which he does by successively slaying a dog, a cat, and a horse for failing to obey his orders. Subsequently, when he commands his wife to bring him some water and cook some dinner, she obliges out of fear:

E él assí, vravo e sañudo e ensangrentado, tornóse a la mesa, jurando que si mil cavallos e omnes e mugeres oviesse en casa quel saliesse de mandado, que todos serían muertos. . . . e desque cató a una parte e a otra e non vio cosa viva, bolvió los ojos contra su muger muy bravamente e díxol con grand saña, teniendo la espada en la mano: “Levantdvos e datme agua a las manos.” La muger, que non esperava otra cosa sinon que la despedaçaría toda, levantóse muy apriessa e diol agua a las manos. E díxole él: “¡A!, ¡cómmo gradesco a Dios porque fiziestes lo que vos mandé, ca de otra guise, por el pesar que estos locos me fizieron, esso oviera fecho a vos que a ellos!” Después mandol quel diesse de comer; e ella fizolo. (221)

Just like the jests in *A Hundred Merry Tales*, Don Juan Manuel’s *exemplum* also features a moral teaching, always presented in verse form: “Si al comienço non muestras qui eres, / nunca podrás después quando quisieres” (222), that is, it is necessary to show one’s true character from the beginning because should we fail to do so, it will become impossible to succeed after some time. Both the outcome of the jest and its moral teaching differ from those in the *exemplum*: as we have seen, in the text included in the English jest-book, the wife snaps back at her husband by pouring the stew all over him, and the narrator concludes that “[b]y this tale men may see it is no wisdom for a man to attempt a meek woman’s patience too far, lest it turn to his own hurt and damage” (124). However, there are specific similarities in the storyline, which may be spotted from the very beginning of the jest: for instance, the description of the male character and the situation are strikingly similar. The text focuses on “[a] young man lately married to a wife [who]

thought it was good policy to get the mastery of her in the beginning” (123), which mirrors the situation in Don Juan Manuel’s *exemplum*.

Moreover, though far from being the prototype of the shrew presented in the medieval Spanish text, the wife in the jest also seeks to please her husband out of fear: the narrator states that her husband “fiercely then commanded her to set [the pot] there or else, he said, she should repent,” and the wife obliges because she is “somewhat afraid to move his patience” (123-4) and “loath yet to offend him” (123). The jest, thus, is a variation on the literary type of the shrew,²⁰ a retelling of the story with an unexpected comic twist: whereas Don Juan Manuel intends his tale to teach a moral lesson to the reader, the anonymous jest writer modifies its sense and its original serious tone by inserting a more light-hearted slapstick ending that is meant to amuse the reader. In any case, when discussing the sources of Don Juan Manuel’s thirty-fifth *exemplum*, H. Tracy Sturcken observes that “[t]he tale’s origins lie remotely in Eastern fiction and as a stock anecdote it is well-known in Western folklore” (87). Furthermore, in a much more accurate footnote to his edition of *El Conde Lucanor*, Alfonso I. Sotelo points out that the source may be found in Persian folklore (217). Hence, it seems that, rather than being purely English, the origins of the sixty-sixth jest in *A Hundred Merry Tales* can be traced back to Don Juan Manuel’s *exemplum*, and therefore, to the rich tradition of Middle

²⁰ This same theme would be used most famously by William Shakespeare in *The Taming of the Shrew* (ca. 1590), and it has survived well into the twentieth century in films and musical comedies such as Cole Porter’s *Kiss Me Kate* (1948).

Eastern and European folkloric literature, and the same may be said of the vast majority of anecdotes and brief stories that make up the volume.²¹

***Tales and Quick Answers* (ca. 1535)**

First published around 1535, there are two different editions extant of *Tales and Quick Answers, Very Merry, and Pleasant to Read*: “The first, dating from about 1535, was printed by Thomas Berthelet and contained 113 jests (although numbered as though 114). The second, dated 1567, was printed by Henry Wykes and added twenty-six new jests” (Zall 240). For the purpose of this study, I will concentrate on the former edition, both because it is the oldest and because Wykes’s edition simply adds further tales but does not present any significant changes worthy of note. Like *A Hundred Merry Tales*, *Tales and Quick Answers* may be described as a collection of detached jests that makes no attempt at unity: the different stories exist independently of one another and vary in length, although they are generally slightly shorter than those contained in the 1526 jest-book. Like its predecessor, *Tales and Quick Answers* presents tales that are “very merry and pleasant to read,” mirroring the title of *A Hundred Merry Tales*, as well as emphasizing the light-hearted, amusing tone of the stories. The title of the collection itself divides its content into two different categories—the *tales* and the *quick answers*—according to their main focus. The former are the lengthier stories, recounting a particular

²¹ A comprehensive study of the sources of the tales in English jest-books has yet to be undertaken. Despite its obvious difficulty and magnitude, such a study would be interesting because it would show the richness and variety of the subject matter of this kind of books, which would later be reworked and adapted into rogue pamphlets and rogue novels.

trick and mostly based on action. The latter are short anecdotes, witty replies and remarks mostly based on puns and wordplay. As we can see, no novelty is to be found here, inasmuch as *A Hundred Merry Tales* already included action- and language-based jests. In *Tales and Quick Answers*, though, the quick answers greatly outnumber the tales, underlining the eminently fast-paced nature of the collection.

As an example of these quick answers, let us turn to the second jest, entitled “Of him that preached on Saint Christopher’s Day,” a typical instance of a brief language-based jest:

A friar that preached upon a Saint Christopher’s day, greatly lauding Saint Christopher, said: “What a prerogative had he here on earth in his arms to bear our Savior! Was there ever any like him in grace?” A homely, blunt fellow, hearing him ask twice or thrice that question so earnestly, answered: “Yes, marry, the ass that bore both Him and his mother.” (246-47)

As we can see, there is no space for character description and development here: the friar is merely a character type, while the character who utters the witty remark is simply depicted as “homely” and “blunt.” The sheer linguistic economy of the narration may be explained by pointing out that there is not actually a story to be told here: the focus of the jest is the wordplay brought about by the polysemic nature of the word *bear*. Indeed, the quick answers in this volume are almost always motivated by linguistic ambiguity, which creates a communicative barrier between the characters when one of them fails to understand the underlying meaning of the other’s utterance. This prevents successful communication, which in turn leads to an absurd reply that invariably comes across as a witticism—whether intended by the character or not—and it is this element of absurdity that elicits laughter in the reader.

Some of the jests, in fact, focus on the different ways in which characters use linguistic ambiguity to serve their own preconceived purposes. One such jest is the forty-second, which recounts the story “[o]f the courtier that bad the boy hold his horse”:

A courtier on a time that alighted of his horse at an inn gate said to a boy that stood thereby: “Ho! sir boy, hold my horse.” The boy, as he had been afraid, answered: “Oh master, this is a fierce horse—is one able to hold him?” “Yes,” quod the courtier, “one may hold him well enough.” “Well,” quod the boy, “if one be able enough then I pray you hold him your own self.” (274-5)

Here, the boy takes advantage of the semantic indeterminacy of the word “one” in order to tweak language in such a way that it may allow him to evade his responsibility. I would argue that, even though these two jests rely on linguistic ambiguity for their comic effect, they differ in their motivations for the quick answer: whereas the second jest thrives on linguistic misunderstanding, jest number forty-two reflects how language may be used as a vehicle to alter reality at one’s fancy. The “homely, blunt fellow,” thus described for a specific reason, finds himself unable to get at the correct meaning of the friar’s words; the boy, on the contrary, is aware of the meaning of the courtier’s utterance, yet he makes a deliberate use of its semantic ambiguity with a predetermined goal in mind.

The structure, linguistic economy, and fast-paced nature of these quick answers hark back to the jests of Hierocles discussed before, the main difference being that Hierocles’ anecdotes did not end with a moral teaching. Though there are some quick answers in the collection that eschew moral taglines, most of them follow the pattern already found in *A Hundred Merry Tales*, featuring a certain kind of moral message,

expressly written out at the end of the jest. A typical example of this, among the many that could be cited, can be found in the eighty-seventh jest, which offers the quick answer “[o]f him that had sore eyes”: “One that had sore eyes was warned of the physician that he should in any wise forbear drinking or else lose his eyes, to whom he said: “It is more pleasure for me to lose mine eyes with drinking than to keep them for worms to eat them out.” By this tale ye may perceive that it availeth not to warn some for their own profit” (306).

Zall finds noticeable differences between the taglines in *Tales and Quick Answers* and those in *A Hundred Merry Tales*: “Both jest-books retained the moral tag lines discarded by Poggio and *Howleglas*, but those in *A Hundred Merry Tales* are mere vestigial appendages, while those in *Tales and Quick Answers* are derived from the ancient apothegms via Erasmus” (8). Unlike Zall, I do not find important differences between the taglines in both collections: they share the same structure, and their goal is to stress moral teachings that are often identical in both jest-books. Rather than “vestigial appendages,” the taglines in *A Hundred Merry Tales* and *Tales and Quick Answers* are central parts of the jests, commenting on the tale or witty answer and often underscoring the moral lesson that may be derived from the jest.

In fact, sometimes the moral lesson maintains a longer presence in the text than the quick answer itself, as is the case in the eleventh jest, entitled “Of him that kissed the maid with the long nose.” The story relates the dialogue between a “babbling gentleman” and “a fair maid that had not the least nose” (251). When the gentleman points out the difficulty of kissing her due to her disproportionate nasal appendage, the maid retorts: “Sir, if ye can not kiss my mouth for my nose, ye may kiss me there as I have a nary

nose” (251). While other similar quick answers in the collection might be followed by a short moral tagline commenting on the jest and underlining its moral teaching, in this case the commentary is actually longer than the jest and becomes its central element. Here, the narrator is not content with pointing out the moral message of the jest: rather, he elaborates on the message of the tale, offering more than one possible moral lesson and illustrating his assertions with examples culled from different sources:

Ye may by this tale learn that it is folly so to scoff that yourself thereby should be laughed to scorn again. One that is over-covetous ought not to a-twit another of prodigality. “Thou art her brother (said Alcmeon to Adrastus) that slew her husband.” But he blamed not Alcmeon for another’s fault, but objected against him his own: “Thou hast with thy hand (said he) slain thine own mother.” It is not enough to have rebukes ready and to speak evil words against others, for he that so should do, ought to be without any vice. For of all men, saith Plutarchus, he ought to be innocent and have the life unculpable that would reprehend the faults of others. The little moral book²² saith: It is a foul thyng, worthy rebuke and blame / A vice to reprehend and do the same. (251)

When considering the sources of the material presented in *Tales and Quick Answers*, Zall goes so far as to consider that the volume is a translation: “Its ‘quick answers’ are chiefly from Erasmus and its tales from Poggio or Sebastian Brandt. Its popularity redirected whatever development jestbooks might have shown had they followed *A Hundred Merry Tales* along a more native path” (8-9). However, Zall does not provide any evidence to support his theory: many of the jests contained in the collection actually mention classical

²² This jest is one of the rare cases in *Tales and Quick Answers* that ends with some verses that sum up the general sense of the tale, which reminds us of Don Juan Manuel’s *El Conde Lucanor*. In a footnote, Zall recognizes “the little moral book” to be “*Parvus et magnus Cato*, a poetical paraphrase of some Distichs by Cato, which Caxton translated from the French about 1477” (251).

sources such as Plutarch²³ and feature characters from the Greek and Roman tradition as their protagonists, but I would argue that, just like any fifteenth- and sixteenth-century version of a classical text, the jests herein are free adaptations rather than actual translations.

Despite their structural similarity, however, there is an important difference between *A Hundred Merry Tales* and *Tales and Quick Answers*: the moral taglines are often used as a vehicle for irony, something that occurs mostly in some of the action-based tales and hardly ever in the language-based quick answers. The narrator in *Tales and Quick Answers* seems to be much more aware of his role as a narrator: not content with telling the story, as is usually the case in jest-books, the narrator is often found sharing his own perspectives and opinions about the tale with the reader, thereby influencing the reader's perception of the facts in the story. Whereas the narrator in *A Hundred Merry Tales* is rather neutral and detached, the one in *Tales and Quick Answers* occasionally displays a subtle ironic tone that brings him closer to the typical narrator in Spanish picaresque novels, as well as to the narrators found in rogue pamphlets.

An example of such intrusive narrative practices may be seen in tale number forty-four, entitled "Of him that said he believed his wife better than others, that she was chaste" (276). As its title implies, this action-based jest focuses on the story of a man who refuses to believe his friends' warning that his wife "(as the voice went) was not very chaste of her body" (276). Inquired by the man as to the truth of the rumor, the wife

²³ Some examples of jests in *Tales and Quick Answers* that mention classical sources or include characters taken from the Ancient World can be found in tales numbers 11, 21, 25, 29, 33, 34, 46, 48, 49, 59, 61-65, 67, 69, 81, 104-07, 109-13.

reacts in a highly dramatic way in order to defend herself: “She, knowing that perjury was no greater offense than avoutry, with weeping and swearing defended her honesty, and bore her husband on hand that they feigned those tales for envy that they had to see them live so quietly. With those words her husband was content and pleased” (276). Beyond the very theatrical response of the wife, what is interesting here is that her alleged infidelity, first presented merely as a rumor—“as the voice went”—turns into certainty owing to the intrusiveness of the narrator, who briefly enters the character’s inner thoughts and concludes that the wife’s denial of her infidelity is only due to her “knowing that perjury was no greater offense than avoutry.” Here, the narrator allows us a glimpse into the character’s thoughts, intimating that she has, indeed, committed adultery (“avoutry”) and portraying her as a liar (“perjury”). Therefore, the wife’s attempt to defend her honesty is merely a theatrical performance aimed at altering reality through language and action. When the husband’s friends persist on telling him that his wife has been unfaithful, his answer is full of the pathos inspired by any character that is willingly blind to the reality around him: “So yet another time, again his friends warned him of his wife and bad him rebuke and chastise her. To whom he said: ‘I pray you trouble me no more with such words. Tell me, whether knoweth better my wife’s faults, you or she?’ They said: ‘She.’ ‘And she (quod he), whom I believe better than you all, saith plainly that ye lie’” (276).

Because of the intrusive nature of the narrator, the reader knows more than the main character in the story, which enables the reader to fully appreciate the irony of the husband’s choice to believe his wife’s side of the story. In merely nine years, then, we have come quite a long way from the basically detached narrator of the jests in *A*

Hundred Merry Tales. The intrusiveness of its narrator brings *Tales and Quick Answers* closer to the rogue pamphlets and Spanish picaresque novels such as *Lazarillo*, yet the use of irony is definitely the main feature that links these works. Like many of the jests in this collection, this tale ends with a moral tagline: “This was well and wisely done. For one ought not to give light credence to those things wherein resteth perpetual grief of mind” (276). Not only does the narrator once again offer his opinion about the facts in the story, commending the husband’s actions for being “well and wisely done,” but the tale’s moral tagline features no moral teaching at all—for how could the reader believe that the husband has acted well and wisely when the narrator has previously certified the infidelity of his wife? Laughter is here elicited by the ironic nature of the tagline, since there is no moral teaching from which to profit in the reading of the jest. If we, as readers, are moved to laughter by this story, it is precisely because of the way in which it is told, because of its mode of narration: the wife’s infidelity is originally presented as a rumor, then turned into truth by an intrusive narrator, and in turn not accepted as truth by the husband. Finally, the ending, though it imitates the moral ending of any typical jest, is atypical in that it eschews the usual moral teaching. This final ironic twist enriches the jest, somehow foreshadowing the kind of narrator soon to be found in English rogue pamphlets and, more importantly, in Spanish picaresque texts.

The similarities between the forty-fourth jest in *Tales and Quick Answers* and some of the elements that make up the seventh and final chapter of *Lazarillo de Tormes* are striking, to say the least. In its final *tratado*, or chapter, after suffering numerous hardships in the service of sundry masters, Lázaro settles down in the town of Toledo, marrying a servant-girl to the local Archbishop, and achieving his longtime goal of

improving his social and economic status. Soon, however, we learn the reason why Lázaro has decided to take up the pen and record the story of his life: he has been called upon to explain *el caso*, that is, the rumors that his wife has been allegedly performing sexual favors upon the clergyman: “Mas malas lenguas,” writes Lázaro, “que nunca faltaron ni faltarán, no nos dejan vivir, diciendo no sé qué y sí sé qué de que veen a mi mujer irle a hacer la cama y guisalle de comer. Y mejor les ayude Dios que ellos dicen la verdad. Porque, allende de no ser ella mujer que se pague destas burlas, mi señor me ha prometido lo que pienso cumpliré” (132). Therefore, just like in the forty-fourth jest of *Tales and Quick Answers*, Lázaro’s wife’s infidelity is presented as a rumor by the narrator, who is Lázaro himself in this case, inasmuch as *Lazarillo* is an autobiographical text. And as in the jest, the reaction of Lázaro’s wife upon being presented with the rumor by Lázaro and the Archbishop parallels that of the wife in the English text:

Entonces mi mujer echo juramentos sobre sí, que yo pensé la casa se hundiera con nosotros; y después tomóse a llorar y a echar maldiciones sobre quien conmigo la había casado: en tal manera, que quisiera ser muerto antes que se me hobiera soltado aquella palabra de la boca. Mas yo de un cabo y mi señor de otro tanto le dijimos y otorgamos, que cesó su llanto, con juramento que le hice de nunca más en mi vida mentalle nada de aquello, y que yo holgaba y había por bien de que ella entrase y saliese, de noche y de día, pues estaba bien seguro de su bondad. Y así quedamos todos tres bien conformes. (134)

The dramatic element already found in the jest, also surfaces here, and his wife’s performance also seems sufficient to appease Lázaro’s suspicion that the rumors might bear some truth: “Y así quedamos todos tres bien conformes,” concludes Lázaro, somehow mirroring the narrator’s words in *Tales and Quick Answers* at a similar point of the story—“[w]ith those words her husband was content and pleased” (276). When

confronted by his friends about the matter, Lázaro's response is undoubtedly akin to the one found in the English text:

—Mirá, si sois mi amigo, no me digáis cosa con que me pese, que no tengo por mi amigo al que me hace pesar. Mayormente, si me quieren meter mal con mi mujer, que es la cosa del mundo que yo más quiero y la amo más que a mí, y me hace Dios con ella mil mercedes y más bien que yo merezco. Que yo juraré sobre la hostia consagrada que es tan buena mujer como vive dentro de las puertas de Toledo. Quien otra cosa me dijere, yo me mataré con él. (134-35)

There seems to be little doubt that both characters may be driven by different motivations when uttering their responses to what is basically the same dilemma. We know next to nothing about the character of the husband in the jest in *Tales and Quick Answers*: he is merely a character type, the gullible husband whose gullibility is meant to move the reader to laughter. On the contrary, we understand that Lázaro may be driven by social and economic factors in deciding to ignore the rumors about his wife's alleged infidelity. This final episode of his life story is preceded by six other chapters depicting his efforts to escape a bleak existence marked by poverty: indeed, all the previous episodes in the novel serve, in a way, to explain and justify Lázaro's choice to believe his wife and ignore the possibility of her unfaithfulness now that he has been able to improve his economic status. Both characters may have different reasons for the choice that they make, yet both texts are linked not only by the likeness of the situation that they present, but mostly by the irony implicit in their very choice to overlook the rumors. And this ironic tone in both cases is due to the figure of the narrator.

In *Tales and Quick Answers*, the husband may not actually know that his wife is committing adultery, yet because of the narrative voice, the reader is aware of that

information. In the autobiographical *Lazarillo*, the main character and the narrator coincide, and Lázaro suggests that he may have an inkling that his wife is not actually chaste when he explains his decision to overlook the rumors on the grounds that “me hace Dios con ella mil mercedes” (134) —that is, Lázaro sees marriage as an economic transaction, yet the irony here lies in the idea that, in order to improve his social status, Lázaro must be willingly blind to a matter that affects his honor. Therein lies, in fact, one of the main differences between Spanish picaresque fiction and the English jest-books: whereas the jest is basically a comic story, Lázaro’s negation of the importance of honor, a social matter that was paramount in the Spanish Golden Age, turns into a poignant commentary on the social practices of his time.

The Jest-Biography: *Howleglas* (ca. 1528)

First printed in English around 1510 in an edition prepared by J. van Doesborke of which only fragments are now extant, *Howleglas* is the English version of the German *Tyll Eulenspiegel*, a popular character who, in turn, “descends from the mythical jester of King Solomon’s court, Marcolphus, whose jests became popular in the twelfth century” (Zall 152). The two most complete editions that have survived were printed by William Copeland around 1528 and 1530; for this study, I will use the text edited by Zall, which is primarily based upon the 1528 edition, supplemented by the 1530 where necessary.

Steven H. Gale suggests that the German character Eulenspiegel “may have been based on (or confused with) the real life of an idiot savant who lived in Braunschweig in the 1300s [because] the tales certainly provide a biography” (550). Nevertheless, even if that is the case, what we find in the collection of stories entitled *Tyll Eulenspiegel* should

not be considered an account of the life of the real Eulenspiegel, but rather of his literary counterpart. Gale himself reminds us that the sources of the stories in the original German edition of *Tyll Eulenspiegel* are extremely varied, ranging from the tales of Marcolphus and Poggio Bracciolini to those related to German comic figures such as Father Amis and Father vom Kalenberg. “Somehow, somewhere, someone—Gale hypothesizes—had the idea of organizing all of these stories around a central character” (550). Howleglas, then, whether based on a real person or not, is a purely literary construction, a fictional character that, as Paul Salzman has noted of Tarleton, becomes “a convenient peg upon which certain actions are hung” (203). As I have already pointed out, Salzman considers that jest-biographies lack unity because there is no character development and the jests are mostly isolated. It is erroneous to maintain that jest-biographies do not have any sort of unity, inasmuch as that unity is provided by the central character (in this case, Howleglas) whose fictional biography is constructed by means of the jests that are woven together. Howleglas may experience little development in the course of the story, yet as the main character, he constitutes the unifying element of the book. Little does it matter that the jests are merely attributed to him, as they are fictional actions performed by a fictional character: rather than a true-to-life biography of an actual German peasant, what we have in *Howleglas* is a fictional biography, as fictional, indeed, as the autobiography of the little rascal born in the river Tormes.

Furthermore, the unknown author of *Howleglas* constantly strives to give the story a certain sense of continuity so that the jests do not seem to be isolated but that they appear to be part of a more homogeneous whole. He does not achieve this by means of having Howleglas learn certain lessons as he experiences the world around him, in the

manner of *Lazarillo*, but by linking each new jest with the context of the previous one. Like the jest-books already discussed, *Howleglas* is preceded by a table of contents listing all the stories and offering a one-sentence description of their content. However, differently from *A Hundred Merry Tales* and *Tales and Quick Answers*, the tales herein are organized in such a way so as to give the impression to the reader that this is the biography of an actual person, beginning with his birth (“How Howleglas as he was born was christened three times upon one day”) and leading all the way up to his death (“How Howleglas was buried”). The order of what comes in between those two landmarks may not be important, but the author still makes an attempt at achieving a sense of continuity by reminding us in each jest of certain elements of the previous one, thereby creating a common space between one jest and the next that strengthens the impression that this is, indeed, Howleglas’s biography. For example, after deceiving a man who asked him the way with a nonsensical answer in the second jest, the third one begins: “Many great complaints came before the father of Howleglas, how his son was a deceiver of folks and a great mocker” (158). A little later, the sixth jest opens with the following sentence: “As Howleglas’ mother was thus without bread then bethought Howleglas how he might best get bread for her” (161), thus referencing that in the previous jest, Howleglas’s mother bemoans her shortage of bread. In the seventh jest, Howleglas serves a master who lives in a castle, and after one of his attempts at deception, Howleglas is made to escape to avoid being punished for his misdemeanor. The eighth jest quickly references his escape: “As Howleglas ran out of the castle he came to a village that was called Buddest in the land of Brounswick” (164). Although this does not happen in all of the stories, there seems to be no doubt that the anonymous author of *Howleglas* is striving to create a

common space between the ending of one jest and the beginning of the next in order to make the narrative transition between the episodes a little smoother, thus giving the impression that the reader is actually perusing the biography of a real character.

As far as the content and structure of the tales in *Howleglas*, it is very similar to that of the jest-books previously discussed: some of the tales are based on language, on a comic quick answer by means of which Howleglas deceives another character, while some others—the more action-based—recount practical jokes that the main character tirelessly plays on the rest of the characters in order to achieve a certain predetermined goal or, most of the time, to prove his ability to outwit the victim. One jest belonging to the latter group, entitled “How Howleglas took upon him to be a painter, etc.” (178), mirrors the theme of Miguel de Cervantes’s interlude *El retablo de las maravillas* (1615). In the story, Howleglas, who purports to be a painter, is commissioned by an earl to paint a series of portraits of his family, for which he would be handsomely paid. After some time, the earl requests to see the paintings, at which point Howleglas, who has simply hung some white cloths on the wall, warns him: “Worshipful lord, before that you see my work, I must show to you one thing: He the which is not born in wedlock may not see my painting” (180). This mirrors Chanfalla’s claim in *El retablo de las maravillas* that bastard children and new Christians would not be able to see what was presented on the tricksters’ bare stage: “que ninguno puede ver las cosas que en [el retablo] se muestran, que tenga alguna raza de confeso, o no sea habido y procreado de sus padres de legítimo matrimonio; y el que fuere contagiado destas dos usadas enfermedades, despídase de ver las cosas, jamás vistas ni oídas, de mi retablo” (143). The reaction of the townspeople in *El retablo de las maravillas* is exactly the same as that of the earl in *Howleglas*:

[T]he lord saw no work but the plain wall. Then thought he in his mind: “Am I a bastard? Is my mother a whore? I see nothing but the white wall.” And for because that he would not be known for a bastard, he said to Howleglas: “Master, your work pleaseth me marvelously well. But my understanding is very small therein.” And with that, he went out of the hall and came to his wife. (180)

Howleglas’s deception will be uncovered by the earl’s wife, but not before Howleglas has had the chance to escape the country with the earl’s money in his pocket. The similarities between the English and the Spanish texts are striking, yet they differ greatly in the motivation for the story. Whereas Howleglas’s trick is simply meant to prove his skills at outwitting the earl, thereby amusing the reader, Cervantes uses his version of the story in his *entremés* in order to convey his own commentary about contemporary Spanish society. By describing illegitimacy and purity of blood in terms of sickness (“estas dos usadas enfermedades”), Cervantes turns his text into a subtle piece of criticism of the obsession with the matters of honor that characterized Spanish Golden Age society.

The author of *Howleglas* clarifies the overall intention of the book in a short preface that precedes the stories: “This fable is not but only to renew the minds of men or women of all degrees from the use of sadness, to pass the time with laughter or mirth” (156). Therefore, unlike Spanish picaresque texts, which display a certain social agenda, *Howleglas*, like any other jest-book, is simply meant as a source of entertainment. Like Lázaro, Howleglas enters the service of several masters—among them also a priest and a pardoner, for instance—but it is not possible to derive a critical depiction of social groups at large—the clergy, for one—from these episodes, something that Lázaro does enable us to do. Howleglas’s stories are only supposed to elicit laughter and amusement; they are mainly about the central character’s wit and showmanship.

Rogue Pamphlets

Beginning in 1552, with the publication of Gilbert Walker's *Manifest Detection of the Most Vile and Detestable Use of Diceplay, and Other Practices like the Same*, rogue pamphlets became one of the most popular forms of literature of the sixteenth century in England, a popularity that lasted well into the seventeenth century, when authors like Thomas Dekker and Samuel Rid were still producing works of this kind. Also known as cony-catching pamphlets and *libri vagatorum*,²⁴ their main aim was to uncover the illegal practices of the real-life rogues, vagabonds, and criminals that populated the country's foremost cities. Unlike jest-books, which were merely collections of witty stories and jokes, rogue pamphlets bear an almost encyclopedic façade, which led Frank W. Chandler to term them *anatomies of roguery*, defined as essays "descriptive of the grades, cheats, or manners of professional criminals" (87). Indeed, rogue pamphlets often deal with the language, mores and hierarchy of the urban underworld, sometimes going as far as to offer lists of names of actual rogues²⁵ and glossaries disclosing the meaning of their secret jargon.

²⁴ Frank W. Chandler notes that there were examples of *libri vagatorum* in several European countries, among them Germany, France, Italy, and Spain. However, he considers that the volumes produced in England "transcend in number, interest, and importance those of the Continent" (87). The Spanish text that Chandler mentions in his study, although he does not analyze it in detail, is Dr. Carlos García's *La desordenada codicia de los bienes ajenos*. The fourth chapter of my study deals with García's indebtedness to the English rogue pamphlet tradition in his *Desordenada codicia*.

²⁵ This is the case of John Awdeley's *Fraternity of Vagabonds*, which includes a list of "the Twenty-Five Orders of Knaves" (51), and of Thomas Harman's *Caveat for Common Cursitors*, which features an appendix with an alphabetical list of the names of well-known rogues, classifying them according to their chief practice. Moreover, at the end of his *Disputation between a He Cony-Catcher and a She Cony-Catcher*, Robert Greene announces the undertaking of a massive work that would include "all the names of the foists, nips, lifts and priggers in and about London" (226), but whose completion he would never achieve.

Many critics have named the German poem *Narrenschiff* (1494), by Sebastian Brandt (translated into English as *The Ship of Fools* by Alexander Barclay in 1509), as one of the main forerunners of rogue pamphlets. Sandra Clark notes that, even though the poem only has one chapter that deals with beggars and vagabonds, “its method of proceeding by listing types of fools, each described in a self-contained section, is used as the basis for much later English rogue writing” (40). Rogue pamphlets are invariably divided into several chapters, each one of which offers a more or less detailed account of the tricks and cheats of a specific kind of rogue, often purporting to have been taken down during the course of actual interviews with real criminals. Most rogue pamphlets are concerned with devising a taxonomy of the different types of rogues that may serve as a warning to the reader, as well as an attempt to expose the vices of a society that disturbs the author. As we shall see, pamphleteers such as Thomas Harman and Robert Greene believe in the performative power of literature, in its ability to exert an influence on reality: therefore, these authors will almost always have a social agenda in mind, striving to use their works as vehicles to promote certain kinds of legislative changes that would repress begging and vagabondage. Together with this comes an awareness of the existence of a reading market that purchases their books, an element that will decisively influence the author’s way of approaching the subject matter, turning most rogue pamphlets into sensationalist texts that, rather than painting a faithful portrait of real-life rogues and their practices, strive to construct a sensational, essentially literary image of the rogue with the intention of purveying the reading market with exciting and attractive material. And, of course, in so doing, pamphleteers have an undeniable debt with jest-books, the structure and content of which they constantly borrowed, to such an extent, in

fact, that it would not be an exaggeration to consider that rogue pamphlets actually evolved out of jest-books.

Over the decades, though, critics have insisted on taking rogue pamphlets at face value, seeing them basically as faithful historical documents recording the criminal practices of the urban underworld. Chandler's coinage of the term *anatomies of roguery* already suggests this. His two-volume *The Literature of Roguery* (1907) is one of the first studies that considers rogue pamphlets, dividing them into *beggar-books*—Robert Copland's poem *Hye Way to the Spytel Hous* (ca. 1535) and the works of John Awdeley and Thomas Harman—*conny-catching pamphlets*—the treatises by Robert Greene and Thomas Dekker—and *prison tracts and repentances*. Chandler praises Awdeley's *Fraternity of Vagabonds* for “reflecting actual low-life” (89), as well as for the detailed description of some of the rogues' cheats. Chandler also accepts Thomas Harman's explanation that he used interviews with real-life rogues as the main sources for his *Caveat for Common Cursitors*, although he recognizes that many of the types of criminals portrayed in Harman's work seem to expand on the types already delineated by Awdeley.

Frank Aydelotte's classic study *Elizabethan Rogues and Vagabonds* (1913) surveys both literary works and historical documents in an attempt to differentiate between fact and fiction. His work is divided into two different parts: some of the chapters concentrate on the historical context that spawned rogue pamphlets, looking at the social conditions that favored vagabondage and providing historical data and documents of various kinds (laws, letters, journals, etc.); other chapters consider how this reality was presented in literary works, namely by rogue pamphleteers. In his own words,

Aydelotte's critical method consists of "piecing together historical and literary material so as to make as complete a picture as possible of [the rogues'] life" (v). Aydelotte doubts whether the content of rogue pamphlets should be taken entirely as historical fact: he recognizes that the purpose of pamphleteers was mainly selling their work, and therefore, "[l]ike all popular literature these pamphlets followed the prevailing fashions, and this fact must be allowed for in estimating what the rogue life which lay behind their descriptions really was" (77). However, he concludes that, underneath their fictional layers, many elements of rogue pamphlets are corroborated by legal documents of the time and other texts such as plays and descriptions of England written by foreign travelers in the country. On the whole, like Chandler, Aydelotte takes the pamphlets at face value, and although he admits that the pamphleteers did engage in a great deal of borrowing from texts that preceded them,²⁶ he draws most of his descriptions of illegal practices from rogue pamphlets, which he takes as historical documents (84-102). Moreover, he justifies his belief in the overall factual accuracy of rogue pamphlets by means of a very surprising argument:

In the first place, to reject the whole of conny-catching lore as fiction is to go, I believe, quite contrary to the evidence which we find outside the pamphlets themselves. From many sources in Elizabethan history and literature, the statements of Greene and his fellows are confirmed. . . .

²⁶ In the sixth chapter of his study, Aydelotte, after dismissing any Spanish and German influence on English rogue pamphlets, discusses the most important works of this kind and notes the great debt that Greene's pamphlets owe to Walker's *Manifest Detection* (125-6). Aydelotte also points out that the anonymous *The Groundworke of Conny-Catching* (1592) "is almost entirely stolen, word for word, from Harman" (127), while *Mihil Mumchance, His Discovery of the Art of Cheating in False Dyceplay* (1597) "is stolen verbatim from the *Manifest Detection*" (127). The large amount of borrowings, versions, and reprints attests to the popularity of rogue pamphlets, as well as to the existence of a market for this type of works.

Nowhere is there a contemporary statement that these rogue customs are a literary fiction. Nevertheless the pamphleteers . . . are not slow to criticize each other for inaccuracies, and to point out the widespread plagiarism which certainly existed in this kind of literature. *Had the whole thing been a myth some pamphleteer or many would have hastened to say so.* (77; emphasis mine)

First of all, inasmuch as in Elizabethan times the concept of originality did not entail the same connotations that it does nowadays, it seems more accurate to talk about literary borrowing rather than plagiarism when dealing with rogue pamphlets (Salzman 203-04). Furthermore, if pamphleteers did not criticize one another on the grounds of the lack of correlation between social reality and literary accounts, it is precisely because all of these authors were aware of the fictional nature of their works, and therefore, it would not have been very plausible to voice criticism against someone else for a practice that was widespread among authors of rogue pamphlets. On the whole, pamphleteers were concerned with verisimilitude only on the surface, their main concern actually being to supply the market with as sensational a type of material as possible in order to make their works more attractive to readers. There is no doubt that they based their writings upon an actual problem, for there is ample proof that rogues, vagabonds, and beggars were numerous in England at the time, yet their texts construct an ideal figure of the rogue, endowing him with menacing, exaggerated, sensational attributes, thereby distorting social reality through fiction with an undeniable economic purpose in mind.

In the introduction to his monumental edition of Tudor and Stuart rogue tracts and ballads *The Elizabethan Underworld* (1930), A. V. Judges seems to concede at first that rogue pamphlets constitute a mixture of fact and fiction: “In their studies of rogue life and behavior, the pamphleteers of the Elizabethan period broke several of the rules which

ought to govern scientific observation. And such has been the literary success of their achievement that we love them for it” (xiii). Judges observes that literary critics and historians alike have overlooked the historical value of these texts, so he sets about proving their validity as historical documents by means of a survey of historical and legal texts that reflect the pamphleteers’ depictions of the underworld during the reigns of Elizabeth I and James I. In so doing, just like Aydelotte a few years before him, Judges necessarily ends up taking the pamphlets at their face value. Therefore, while he does offer some interesting information about the social context that spawned the passing of legal edicts to control the wandering poor (namely field enclosures, depopulation of rural areas, increase of the population at large, disbandment of the military personnel of feudal domains, increasing urbanization, rise of unemployment), he takes some of the commonplaces that we find in rogue pamphlets as historical truth. Hence, for instance, he accepts the idea that rogues became professional and organized themselves into rigidly hierarchical societies, as most pamphlets claim, without offering any documented proof about it: “At some point,” Judges writes, “since the beginning of vagrancy legislation in the fourteenth century . . . the picaro became a professional. . . . Out of that struggle emerged the free companies of English beggars. Boys and girls were born into roguery, and youths and young women drifted into it without ever learning the elements of husbandry or handicraft” (xxviii). However, Judges’s basis for claims like this seems to lie in a reading of Thomas Dekker’s pamphlets, which he praises for offering “a far more vivid picture of the life of the City’s shady characters in street and ordinary and brothel than can be expected from any modern pen” (xxvi). Vivid as Dekker’s depictions of the

London underworld undeniably are, their sheer sensationalism hardly qualifies them as historically accurate.

In the introduction to his edition of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century rogue pamphlets *Rogues, Vagabonds, and Sturdy Beggars* (1973), which mostly includes works already contained in Judges's collection, Arthur F. Kinney follows in Judges's footsteps, using a similar critical approach. Kinney seems fascinated by the abundance of roguish characters in Elizabethan and Jacobean drama and fiction, which leads him to search for documental proof to back the exuberant depiction of criminal life found in the texts that make up his edition. Kinney's intention with his thoroughly researched introduction is to provide an accurate socio-historical context that will facilitate the reading of the rogue pamphlets in the volume. Aydelotte had already observed that the number of vagabonds and rogues had increased greatly in the sixteenth century, pointing to new practices such as field enclosures and sheep farming as foremost reasons for the rise of unemployment and the subsequent increase in beggary and vagabondage (3). Kinney expands on Aydelotte's and Judges's observations, mentioning a hasty industrial development that greatly influenced the relationship between employer and employee, a rapid growth of the population across the British Isles, and the increasing cost of military expansion: "The population of England doubled in the sixteenth century and the increased numbers, along with heavy government expenditures for defense, exploration, and an expansionist economy, caused serious inflation" (22). This situation favored a massive relocation of country workers to England's cities—most notably London—where, being out of a job, many joined the large groups of beggars and vagabonds. According to Kinney's research, their significant increase in numbers is attested to by the countless laws that the Tudors

passed in order to control the situation, most of which proved inadequate and fruitless at best. Kinney quotes extensively from one of these laws, which defines what the Tudor state understood by the term *rogue*, a legal text that in many ways echoes the descriptions found in the pamphlets:

[A]ll and every suche persone and persones that be or utter themselves to be Proctours or procuratours, goinge in or about any Countrey and Countreys within this Realme, without sufficyent auctoritye deryved from or under our Sovereigne Ladye the Queene, and all other ydle persones goinge about in any Countrey of the said Realme, using subtyll craftye or unlawfull Games or Playes . . . And all and everye persone and persones whole and mightye in Body and able to labour, having not Lord or Maister, nor using any lawfull Marchaundize Crafter or Mysterye whereby hee or shee might get his or her Lyvinge and can gyve no reckninge how hee or shee doth lawfully get his or her Lyvinge . . . shalbee taken adjudged and deemed Rogues Vacaboundes and Sturdy Beggers. (13)

Although Kinney does paint an interesting portrait of the social context during the reigns of Elizabeth I and James I, bringing forth data from county records and various legal texts, just like Aydelotte and Judges, he also surrenders to the temptation of taking excerpts from Elizabethan plays and rogue pamphlets as historical fact, as the detailed, true-to-life accounts that they most definitely were not. Hence, for instance, Kinney uses literary sources to justify the idea that rogues “developed complicated methods by establishing their own guilds” and, echoing Judges, to posit that Elizabethan criminals “formed their own fraternities with networks and hideaways and a ready band of helpers who would dispose of their pilfered goods” (11).

In stark contrast with these critics, in more recent years, scholars have shown a tendency toward looking at rogue pamphlets more for what they really are—literary

artifacts. In her study *Vagrancy, Homelessness, and English Renaissance Literature* (2001), Linda Woodbridge notes that there seems to be a mismatch between the content of rogue pamphlets and the information that has survived in sixteenth-century criminal records, which Woodbridge sees as a flagrant contradiction: how are we to explain, then, the repressive nature of Elizabethan poor laws when criminal records do not reflect accurately the sheer numbers of vagrants and beggars depicted in the pamphlets? In order to clarify this seeming contradiction, Woodbridge terms rogue literature “the tabloids of its day” (4) and considers that they actually exerted an important influence on legal texts: “The word ‘rogue’ itself seems to have migrated from the rogue literature into the Poor Laws; and in more general ways, the myth generated by rogue literature were [*sic*] the yeast acting upon a dough of public anxieties to produce the bitter bread of repressive legislation . . . [which] itself manufactured the vagrant class” (4). In Woodbridge’s opinion, then, pamphleteers had a strongly anti-vagrant social agenda, and in their works they catered to the interest of many social groups in exaggerating the threat of vagrants, which may be explained by taking into account that “many were constructing their own identities against what vagrants represented” (5). In her well-researched study, Woodbridge sets about unmasking what she considers to be erroneous assumptions about vagrants that abound in the rogue literature of the sixteenth century, drawing some very relevant conclusions that contribute greatly to our understanding of the many ways in which Elizabethan pamphleteers constructed an ideal image of the rogue and his unlawful practices.²⁷

²⁷ For a more detailed explanation of this hypothesis, see Woodbridge 6-12.

In the first place, Woodbridge finds that, contrary to the claims of pamphleteers, rogues were not organized into starkly disciplined societies, but that such a notion was nurtured in the imagination of people living in a strongly hierarchy-minded society such as that of Tudor times. Second, the complex system of criminal specializations described in rogue pamphlets constitutes, according to Woodbridge, yet another invention that contributes to “eras[ing] the unemployment problem by creating the impression that vagrants *did* have employment, gainful if not lawful” (6). Third, while rogue pamphlets present rogues as seditious, and statutes became gradually repressive against vagrants, Woodbridge finds no evidence to support the claim that beggars were the cause of rebellions or that they had radical political agendas (7-8). Fourth, Woodbridge denies that rogues were unemployed by choice and asserts that their alleged promiscuity is yet another literary fiction: “tales of vagrants’ sexual orgies,” she concludes, “and their keeping of women as sex slaves are almost certainly what they sound like: tabloid-style fantasies” (9). Finally, the author does not find strong evidence to support the claim of most pamphleteers that rogues had their own clandestine lexicon: Woodbridge posits that the long lists of cant words that abound in rogue pamphlets were simply meant to add to the sensationalism of the works and had no basis in reality, but were rather influenced by comic storytelling and jest-books (11-12). Woodbridge’s research is extremely relevant inasmuch as it suggests that, although rogue pamphlets were based on a very real problem—that of poverty and vagrancy in the sixteenth century—they self-consciously distorted reality through fiction with the purpose of portraying a fictional image of the rogue that might have an impact on social and legal practices. Like Spanish picaresque novels, English rogue pamphlets constitute a sharply critical view of Tudor society. Yet

unlike the Spanish texts, which used the figure and voice of the *pícaro* as a vehicle for social criticism, English pamphleteers turned their pen on the rogue, producing a deliberately exaggerated depiction of vagrants and their vices in order to prompt an increase in the severity of the laws passed against them.

Departing from Woodbridge's strongly historicist approach, and looking at rogue pamphlets from a more literary point of view, Steve Mentz posits that these texts—especially those written by Robert Greene—have very clear affinities with the popular literary form of romance. Mentz inserts rogue pamphlets into the historical context of England's budding urbanization during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, a phenomenon that entailed profound social changes that often provoked considerable and understandable social anxiety in the individual: "The transformation of London from late medieval town to early modern metropolis," Mentz writes, "gave rise to a crisis in cultural legibility, as citizens tried to read changing urban institutions through existing social conventions" (240). Therefore, Mentz claims that Greene and other pamphleteers reworked this new urban social reality by means of the generic structure of romance, with whose alternation of loss, wandering, and recovery most readers would be familiar, in order to present the dangers of urban life in literary terms that readers could understand and profit from in their daily social interactions. Thus, Mentz sees Greene's rogue pamphlets as a sort of "magic books," endowing them with a certain kind of performative power; readers who are able to recognize in them the typical structure of romance might be enabled to extract a literary solution to a real social problem:

For Greene's readers, London's dangers thus become part of the predictable wandering phase of literary romance, which is always followed by recovery. In other words, the city's dangers become formulaic

and part of a new stable order. Investigating the reading of the cony-catching pamphlets means uncovering the possible of strategic uses of behaviors presented as criminal. . . . [Greene's] tales of thief-filled London could be recognized by his readers as following the wandering-recovery pattern of Elizabethan romance. In this generic frame, danger must be followed by rescue, even if the rescue seems long in arriving or merely fortuitous when it comes. This deep generic coding allows threatening events and hostile characters to both expose and reconfigure social anxiety. These pamphlets teach individuals that the city is a dangerous place and also that it is possible to live there if one reads the right books. (241-2)

Mentz's critical approach to the problem of the blurring between fact and fiction in rogue pamphlets is very productive in that it dramatizes the relations established between the author and the reader: Greene and other pamphleteers actively create their readership and seem to be conscious of the terms in which they need to address it. These writers, then, make a conscious use of existing literary codes—the romance, for example—in order to codify and make more manageable a new and seemingly unsettling social reality. But they do so in literary terms, constantly intertwining fact and fiction and modeling social facts through fiction so as to make reality more understandable.

Within the context of the present study, and following critics such as Woodbridge and Mentz, rather than accepting rogue pamphlets as historically accurate facts, I will look at them as fictional texts that construct an imaginary picture of the urban underworld and the individuals that populate it. The authors of rogue pamphlets had a twofold motivation for altering reality through fiction and diffusing the boundaries between fact and literary representation. On the one hand, rogues and their deceitful practices and idle way of life constituted social stigmata in a rapidly changing urban environment with which pamphleteers sought to deal in their works. On the other hand, the increasing

urbanization, along with the technical changes derived from the rise of early modern print culture, brought about the formation of an avid reading market that delighting in the reading of words recounting the exploits of those roguish individuals that lurked about town squares and street corners. The popularity of rogue pamphlets in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries favored the construction of the literary character of the rogue, based on the existence of real rogues and vagrants, but noticeably exaggerated and transformed by means of sensationalist narrative practices, and influenced by preceding popular literary genres such as the romance and the jest-book.

Gilbert Walker's *Manifest Detection of Diceplay* (1552)

Published in 1552, the title page of *A Manifest Detection of the Most Vile and Detestable Use of Diceplay, and Other Practices like the Same* shows one G. W. as its author, which has led to its being attributed to Gilbert Walker, although no biographical data has been hitherto found on Walker and there is no conclusive evidence that he actually wrote the work (Kinney 61). Judges is prompt to praise the book for its accuracy, considering that “[n]ot only does it present to us an early and, to all appearances, genuine picture of the London cony-catcher who preyed upon the upper classes of society, with an account of the devices and tricks of the trade founded on personal knowledge; it becomes a quarry from which the writers of the next generation draw their material” (492).

Although Walker is very detailed in his description of roguish practices, Judges's claim that the tricks herein uncovered is genuine and based on the author's personal knowledge is conjectural at best and attests to the critic's tendency toward uncritically taking rogue pamphlets at face value. I agree with Judges, though, that the *Manifest Detection* became

a source of material for later pamphleteers who pilfered Walker's work tirelessly for several decades.²⁸ Moreover, Judges's claim is valid in a way because this is, without any doubt, the least exaggerated and sensational rogue pamphlet of the sixteenth century, which perchance could be explained by taking into account that, being the first work of its kind, Walker was treading on unknown literary ground at a time when a definite market for this type of works had not yet been established.

The text is prefaced by a few short lines in which Walker presents himself as an observer of social reality, making it clear that his work is intended to be a mirror of the enormous store of tricks put into practice by dice players and other rascals, in order to prevent readers from being cheated out of their money:

Gentle reader, when you shall read this book, devised as a mean to show and set forth such naughty practices as hath been, and be peradventure yet used in houses of dice-play, think it not to be written in dispraise or offence of the honest, but for that, under color and cloak of friendship, many young gentlemen be drawn to their undoing. And to the intent that such as have not yet fed of that sour-sweet or hungry bait (wherewith they at length unawares be choked), shall learn, not only to avoid the danger thereof by knowing their mischievous and most subtle practice, in getting a prey to spoil the same; but shall also by mean thereof see, *as it were in a glass*, the miserable ends that a sort of handsome gentlemen hath by this crafty and subtle device come to, imputing for want of knowledge, their cause of misery to ill fortune. (26; emphasis mine)

The words "as it were in a glass" are central here, inasmuch as they illustrate how Walker is attempting to efface himself as a writer in order to give an impression of merely recording reality as it is, not the way it appears to him. The contradiction at work here, though, is that Walker is necessarily an observer, an insightful mediator between reality

²⁸ For an in-depth textual discussion of this, see Aydelotte 127-39.

and the inexperienced reader who falls prey to the tricksters precisely because he is unable to see beyond the surface of reality. Therefore, despite Walker's claims, if the *Manifest Detection* reflects events as though it were a mirror, then it is a very special sort of mirror enabled to uncover a layer of reality that lies beneath its deceitful surface. Subsequent pamphleteers will use this metaphor of the glass in their works, but simply as a rhetorical device, because their main interest, unlike Walker's subtle attempt at self-effacement, will always be to make their own voice heard in their texts.

Even though the *Manifest Detection* inaugurates the vogue for rogue pamphlets, Walker already seems to be aware of the commercial possibilities of this kind of popular literature, perhaps based on the widespread success of jest-books, as he seems to be trying to fashion his own readership. This is precisely why he presents the work in the form of a dialogue between two characters simply designated by their initials, R. and M. The former, R., is described as a "raw courtier" (29), persuaded by an unnamed trickster to accompany him to his home for dinner, after which dice and card games break out among everyone present and the courtier winds up losing a considerable amount of money. The latter, M., seems to be versed in the cheats begrudged by his interlocutor and attempts to open his eyes: "I can neither forbear thee, for the zeal I bear unto you," he says to R., "or the hatred I bear to the occupation, to make you understand some parts of the sleights and falsehoods that are commonly practiced at dice and cards" (33). From the very beginning, then, we recognize that R., newly arrived in an urban environment with which he is not very familiar, is identified with the average reader of the pamphlet, while M., an expert on the cheats and deceits of the urban underworld who exposes these practices, could be identified with Walker. The ensuing dialogue dramatizes Walker's

warnings to his readership concerning the kinds of dangers that they may encounter as they move through London. M.'s claim that "of only dicers a man might have half an army" (34) may well be an exaggeration, yet it should be understood in the context of his dialogue with an interlocutor who is not able to see beyond the appearance of the tricksters. Therefore, M. explains the cheats of rogues and their deceitful laws in terms of theater, necessary for the trick to be successful, and presents criminals as parasites of society, as threats to the social order of the early modern urban world: "So, as I told you before, the foundation of all those sorts of people is nothing else but mere simulation and bearing in hand. And like as they spring all from one root, so tend they all to one end: idly to live by rape and ravin, devouring the fruit of other men's labors" (36).

Walker is also the first pamphleteer to rehearse the uncovering of the rogues' cant, that is, the secret language supposedly used by criminals to ensure the secrecy of their actions, and he is also the first to posit that rogues were organized into a strictly organized hierarchical society: "No man can attain to be a workman thereat [at the rogues' craft], till he have had a good time of schooling, and by that means do not only know each other well, but they be subject to an order such as the elders shall prescribe. No man so sturdy to practice his feat but in the place appointed, nor for any cause once to put his foot in another's walk!" (49). Although, as we have already seen, it probably does not have any basis on reality, this description of the underworld as a rigidly compartmentalized society mirroring the organization of the regular urban space, as well as of the bidirectional relationship established between the space of the city and the illegal spaces underlying it, will be central in Spanish picaresque texts such as Miguel de Cervantes's *Rinconete y Cortadillo*.

As for the cheating practices themselves, Walker exposes the different laws governing the criminal behavior of rogues in a rather more subdued way than the pamphleteers that followed him. Although he mentions and successively describes the sacking law (cheats having to do with prostitution), the high law (robbery, mostly on highways), and the figging law (the cheats of cutpurses), noting that rogues invariably spend time observing and studying their victim in order to “understand his nature, and whereunto he is inclined” (45) and use the practice that seems more suitable to each specific case, his explanation of the so-called barnard’s law is somewhat lengthier and more detailed. This is a kind of cheating at cards or dice that is a little more elaborate and that involves a great deal of theater and make-believe and that calls for a group of rogues to play very definite roles, all of which are essential for the success of the trick. In a nutshell, the barnard’s law is a deceit that gravitates around a group of at least four rascals who cheat victims out of their money at cards by making believe at first that they are not skillful players of a given popular game—be it mumchance, farkle,²⁹ or any other—only to reveal their true mastery of it when the stakes grow high enough. Already suggested by the title of the *Manifest Detection*, this is a more complex practice because it implies that the rogues have a perfectly orchestrated plan that includes a great deal of preparation and requires adequate dramatic skills. The barnard, that is, the rogue who plays the most important part in deceiving the victim usually appears as “some rich farmer of the country, a stranger to you all, that . . . is so careless for his money that out he throweth an hundred or two old angels upon the board’s end” (47), a character that

²⁹ *Mumchance* appears in some rogue pamphlets as a card game and in others as a dice game, but in both cases, the fact that players need to remain silent while they play is an important feature. *Farkle* is a dice game usually played with six dice.

feigns familiarity with the country-born victim. From the beginning of Walker's description, we can see that the actions of the rogues, based on careful observation of the victim's character, have a very definite goal in mind, and so M.'s depiction of the barnard's law is subject to the portrayal of the means by which the rogues achieve their successful end, slowing down the pace of the narrative to give an in-depth account of how the knaves set up the trap and quickly jumping to the conclusion once the plan is put into practice: "The first wager is drink, the next twopence, or a groat, and lastly, *to make the tale short*, they use the matter so that he that hath eighty years of his back, and never played for a groat in his life, cannot refuse to be the verser's half, and consequently, at one cutting of the cards, to lose all they play for" (48). This is, undoubtedly, one of the most enduring parts of the *Manifest Detection*: as we shall see, it has echoes in Cervantes's *Rinconete y Cortadillo*, and Robert Greene elaborates on this law, greatly embellishing it, in an extended section of his *Notable Discovery of Cozenage*.³⁰

At an earlier point of the dialogue, M. had stated the intention of his exposé of roguish practices: "For a falsehood, once detected, can never compass the desired effect" (36). Having exposed all the cheating laws and thieves' cant that he has seen fit, M. detaches himself from his subject matter, asserting that "since cheaters were the first authors thereof, let them also bear the blame" (50). Far from being coincidental, M.'s words should be understood in the context of Walker's attempt to give the impression that the text simply reflects factual information taken down from the observation of

³⁰ For Greene's version of the barnard's law, which he terms *cony-catching law*, turning it almost into a short story within his tract, see *A Notable Discovery of Cozenage*, 123-34. For a discussion of the relationship between *Rinconete y Cortadillo* and English rogue pamphlets, see chapter 3 of the present study.

reality, without the need for an author as a mediator. At this stage, at the very end of the pamphlet, Walker is once again stressing the idea that his material is not fictional, thereby underscoring the profit that readers may draw from their reading of the work. M. also mentions that he has disclosed “as briefly as I can, the *principal* practice of the cheaters’ crafty faculty” (50; emphasis mine), suggesting that there may be more material available that he has chosen overlook, and leaving his picture of the underworld somehow incomplete. Later pamphleteers, of course, would waste no time following in Walker’s footsteps and using his work as a basis to create a colorful, sensational picture of the rogue in which fact and fiction are constantly intertwined.

John Awdeley’s *Fraternity of Vagabonds* (1561)

First printed in 1561, John Awdeley’s *Fraternity of Vagabonds* is the first rogue pamphlet that, in spite of its sheer brevity, attempts to classify and describe the different kinds of rogues and vagabonds that populated the underworld of England’s early modern cities. For many centuries, Awdeley’s work was believed to be a sort of abbreviated version of Thomas Harman’s much longer and more detailed *Caveat for Common Cursitors* meant to capitalize on the success of Harman’s pamphlet. Yet twentieth-century scholars have found evidence to the contrary: the *Fraternity of Vagabonds* is, in fact, the blueprint for Harman’s *Caveat*. In the letter to the Countess of Shrewsbury that prefaces his work, Harman writes: “There was years since a small brief set forth of some zealous man to his country, of whom I know not, that made a little show of their names and usage, and gave a glimpsing light, not sufficient to persuade of their peevish, pelting, and picking practices, but well worthy of praise” (62). Chandler already believes that

“Awdeley’s beggar-book suggested to Thomas Harman the plan for his more elaborate *Caveat*” (89), and Judges concurs (496), and so it seems that Harman, although perhaps he did not know Awdeley in person, was well acquainted with his work and used it as a general model for the composition of his more elaborate pamphlet.

Even though not a great deal of biographical data on him have survived, John Awdeley—also known at times as John Sampson or Sampson Awdeley—seems to have been one of the earliest English printers, and apparently a rather successful one (Kinney 87). His *Fraternity of Vagabonds* is divided into two separate parts: the first concentrates on “the fraternity of Vagabonds, both ruffling and beggarly, Men and Women, Boys and Girls, with their proper names and qualities. Whereunto are adjoined the Company of Cozeners and Shifters” (53); the second, according to the title-page, gives a list and brief description of “the Twenty-five Orders of Knaves, otherwise called a Quartern of Knaves, Confirmed for ever by Cock Lorel” (51). The general critical tendency has been to deem the first part a truthful account of the types and practices of real-life rogues, dismissing the second as purely fictional on the grounds of Awdeley’s mention of the legendary character of Cock Lorel, who harks back to texts such as the anonymous *Cock Lorel’s Boat* (ca. 1500) and Alexander Barclay’s *The Shyp of Folyes* (1509). Critics such as Chandler, Aydelotte, and Judges³¹ fall into this critical approach; while there is no doubt that the material for the second part is drawn from Barclay’s work, there is no reason to believe that the first part is based on Awdeley’s observation of urban reality, inasmuch as the style of the first and second parts seems to be very much alike, with its

³¹ In fact, Judges even goes so far as to excise the whole second part from his anthology *The Elizabethan Underworld*, justifying his decision on the grounds that this second section “departs altogether from reality . . . [and] the treatment is artificial” (494).

short descriptions of different types of rogues. In any case, Awdeley expands here on Gilbert Walker's rather dubious idea that it was common for rogues and criminals to organize themselves into secret societies within which each one of them had a very specific role to play. Like Walker, he attempts to expose the rogues' cheating practices, yet he is the first to rehearse a taxonomy that categorizes criminals according to their skills. Despite this, Awdeley never takes what we could term a sociological approach to his subject matter, much preferring to create a fictional framework to justify the source of his material, which he does by inserting two paratexts in verse that precede his taxonomy of criminals.

The first one of these, a poetic conversation between an upright-man and the legendary figure of Cock Lorel, appears in the title-page:

The Upright-man speaketh:

Our brotherhood of vagabonds,
If you would know where dwell.
In Gravesend barge which seldom stands,
The talk will show right well.

Cock Lorel answereth:

Some orders of my knaves also
In that barge shall ye find:
For nowhere shall ye walk, I trow,
But ye shall see their kind. (51)

This prefatory poem has led Aydelotte to assume that the words of the upright-man should be identified with the first section of the work, whereas Cock Lorel's answer

should be related to the second section, based on Barclay's *Shyp of Folyes*. Because the upright-man is one of the types of rogues described by Awdeley in the first part of his book, this section is "a description of real vagabonds and conny-catchers—drawn apparently from life" (117); the second section, though, because of its relation with the literary character of Cock Lorel in this poem, is "literary rogue satire, drawn not from life" (117) but from Barclay's work. Aydelotte sees this first prefatory poem as an attempt at connecting the two parts, one factual and one fictional, by means of poetry. However, that Awdeley talks about the upright-man in the first part of the *Fraternity of Vagabonds* should not be viewed as conclusive of its basis on the author's observation of real life. The upright-man, indeed, like Cock Lorel, is a purely literary fiction, a figure that will be recurrent in rogue pamphlets from Harman's *Caveat* onward: he is one of the many prototypes of rogues imagined by pamphleteers, and his connection with the purely literary figure of Cock Lorel here only adds to its fictional nature.

The second poem that prefaces the text constitutes a message from the printer to the reader—the printer being Awdeley himself—regarding the source of the material that ensues, which is supposed to be a vagabond who has been apprehended by the police and who has consented to disclose the information that follows in exchange for immunity.

The poem is worthy of being quoted in its entirety:

This brotherhood of vagabonds,
To show that there be such indeed,
Both justices and men of lands,
Will testify it if it need.
For at a Sessions as they sat,

By chance a vagabond was got.

Who promised if they would him spare,
And keep his name from knowledge then,
He would as strange a thing declare,
As ever they knew since they were men.
“But if my fellows do know,” said he,
“That thus I did, they would kill me.”

They granting him this his request,
He did declare as here is read,
Both names and states of most and least,
Of this their vagabonds’ brotherhood.
Which at the request of a worshipful man
I have set it forth as well as I can. (52)

Aydelotte accepts the content of the poem as truthful, noting that “[t]here is no reason to doubt the truth of this assertion: his classes of knaves, their methods of begging, and the tricks of the ‘Cousoners and Shifters’ are confirmed in almost every detail by Harman and Greene” (118). Sandra Clark, however, seems to be much more cautious and does not fully embrace Aydelotte’s thesis, aware that “the reformed vagabond is plainly a device of the kind that Greene and his followers often used to lend verisimilitude to a fiction or semi-fiction” (42). Indeed, if Awdeley’s picture of the underworld is confirmed by Harman and Greene, it is precisely because these two authors took the *Fraternity of Vagabonds* as a basis for the writing of their own works, in which they elaborated on Awdeley’s taxonomy, mixing fact and fiction in order to paint their own, highly

fantasized rendition of urban criminal life. Like Gilbert Walker before him, and Harman and Greene after, Awdeley creates a fictional framework in which to insert his depiction of rogues and their practices. In the case of Walker's *Manifest Detection*, the framework was a dialogue between an inexperienced courtier and a character who was acquainted with the cheating practices; in the case of the *Fraternity of Vagabonds*, it is the account of a vagabond who betrays his fellow rogues after being caught by police forces. In both cases, this framework lends an appearance of truth to the text, while being plainly fictive.

As a whole, the text of the *Fraternity of Vagabonds* comes across as rather telegraphic: Awdeley paints the portraits of the ruffling and beggarly vagabonds in the first section and of the twenty-five orders of knaves in the second with very rapid brushstrokes, sometimes in just two or three lines, providing just enough information for the reader to get a very basic idea of each kind of rascal and dispensing with elaborate details. For whatever reason, at the very end of the first section of the pamphlet, Awdeley inserts somewhat lengthier accounts of the exploits of "the Company of Cozeners and Shifters" (56). It is in these three more in-depth descriptions of a courtesy-man, a cheater or fingerer, and a ring-faller that fact and fiction intertwine most productively, as they read more like the chapters in Harman's *Caveat*. Awdeley does not limit his portrait of these cozeners to a few sentences, but he weaves a longer story into his description of their practices, including bits and pieces of dialogues, very much in the way in which Harman devised his book. The supposed sociologist gives way here to the crafty storyteller, paving the way for Harman and Greene.

Hence, in spite of its brevity, Awdeley's *Fraternity of Vagabonds* is an important landmark in the development of English rogue literature, inasmuch as it constitutes an

interesting example of the genre of the rogue pamphlet as it would be popularized in the second half of the sixteenth century, still in an embryonic stage. Awdeley was the first pamphleteer to lend to his work an appearance of sociological taxonomy based on direct observation of reality. However, rather than letting ourselves be taken in by mere appearance, we must recognize that, like any rogue pamphlet, the *Fraternity of Vagabonds* presents fictional elements under the cloak of fact, making it very difficult to ascertain where reality ends and literature starts.

Thomas Harman's *A Caveat for Common Cursitors Vulgarly Called Vagabonds* (1566)

Printed merely four years after the *Fraternity of Vagabonds*, Thomas Harman's *Caveat for Common Cursitors* takes Awdeley's work as a model but, unlike its predecessor, is a much more complex, longer pamphlet. Harman's work is much less fragmentary than Awdeley's, and while he also rehearses a taxonomy of the different types of rogues and their practices, he does so following the section in the *Fraternity of Vagabonds* entitled "The Company of Cozeners and Shifters," mixing fact and fiction in order to illustrate his depictions of the knaves and their cheats with fictional stories that owe a great deal to the long-standing tradition of jest-books.

Apart from the fact that he was a country magistrate from a well-to-do family (Judges 495), there is not a wealth of biographical data on Harman, and we must rely on his own claims in the *Caveat* to obtain a more complete image of who he really was. This is precisely what most critics seem to have done, yet the problem, as with most rogue pamphlets, is that these bits of information that Harman gives us about himself might not

be entirely reliable, inasmuch as they are inserted in the preface to the work, in which he attempts to devise a context that may explain how he came to acquire the material for his book. Like Walker and Awdeley before him, Harman constructs a framework for his pamphlet in order to create an illusion of verisimilitude, and even though some of his claims about himself might be true, we must take them with a grain salt, as they may be part of the seemingly fictional framework of the book. In the prefatory letter to the Countess of Shrewsbury, to whom he dedicates the pamphlet, Harman explains how he allegedly came into contact with the information that he exposes in his *Caveat*:

For I, having more occasion, through sickness, to tarry and remain at home than I have been accustomed, do, by my there abiding, talk and confer daily with many of these wily wanderers of both sorts, *as well men and women, as boys and girls*, by whom I have gathered and understand their deep dissimulation and detestable dealing, being marvelous subtle and crafty in their kind, for not one amongst twenty will discover, either declare their scelerous secrets. Yet with fair flattering words, money, and good cheer, I have attained to the type by such as the meanest of them hath wandered these thirteen years, and most sixteen and some twenty and upward, *and not without faithful promise made unto them never to discover their names or anything they showed me. For they would all say, if the upright-men should understand thereof, they should not be only grievously beaten, but put in danger of their lives, by the said upright-men.* (62; emphasis mine)

Therefore, Harman claims that he has obtained his material first hand from some of the rogues themselves, who called in at his house during a period of his life when sickness prevented him from leaving his lodging. As we can see, the author is very craftily inserted into the work, but he situates himself comfortably in the periphery, standing on the outside of the underworld looking in through the eyes of allegedly real rogues. He presents himself as the privileged one who has been made privy to all the secrets of the

criminal world. In a way, he claims to have tricked the tricksters, promising them not to disclose their confidences only to betray them right away, going so far as to include an alphabetical list of names of rogues organized according to their chief skill. According to Aydelotte, in fact, “[a]mong the certificates still preserved of rogues punished during the ‘watches and searches of 1571-2, in Southern and Midland counties, occur the names of fourteen of Harman’s rogues, and five or six others of them are mentioned in the Middlesex Sessions Rolls down to 1590” (122).

There is no doubt, then, that Harman, himself a magistrate, had a certain degree of knowledge about criminals, which makes it plausible that some of the elements of his *Caveat* may be based on that knowledge. However, what is most interesting here are the terms in which he concocts the framework for the pamphlet, which almost mirrors the already discussed prefatory poem that introduces Awdeley’s *Fraternity of Vagabonds* and that is also meant to explain the source of the text. Harman tells us that he has had the chance to talk with all kinds of rogues, “as well men and women, as boys and girls” (62), which reminds us of the title of Awdeley’s tract, a brotherhood of vagabonds that included “Men and Women, Boys and Girls” (53). Likewise, Harman portrays his confidants as fearing for their lives should the upright-men learn of their betrayal, which echoes Awdeley’s poem “The Printer to the Reader,” where the vagabond that has been apprehended by police forces decides to disclose secret information about the underworld but reflects that “If my fellows do know . . . that thus I did, they would kill me” (52). Therefore, although he may be basing some of the contents of his pamphlet on his personal knowledge about rogues, like many other pamphleteers, Harman also creates a

decidedly fictional framework for the text, mostly inspired by Awdeley's *Fraternity of Vagabonds*.

Nevertheless, Harman seems to have a clear social and political agenda in the writing of his work, and his agenda is much more evident in his text than in Awdeley's. The title of the tract itself underscores that this is a *caveat*, that is, a warning, as we can read in the title-page, "set forth by Thomas Harman, Esquire, for the utility and profit of his natural country" (61). The author believes in the performative power of literature, in its possibilities as a vehicle to reform current legislation and make punishment for these pernicious rogues harsher. In his letter to the Countess of Shrewsbury, Harman echoes Walker's *Manifest Detection* claiming that his book reflects criminal practices "as it were in a glass" (62), yet his purpose actually goes further than a mere warning to unsuspecting citizens: he hopes that, after reading the content of his pamphlet, "the Justices and shrieves may in their circuits be more vigilant to punish these malefactors, and the constables, bailiffs and borsholders, setting aside all fear, sloth, and pity, may be more circumspect in executing the charge given them by the aforesaid Justices" (62). That is to say, Harman believes in writing as an agent of social and legal change, as a platform from which to cry out for social reforms so that idle rogues "be dispersed and set to labour for their living, or hastily hang for their demerits" (63). What is more, in a rather exaggerated moment of exaltation, the author even imagines these illiterate rogues reading the work and claims that the pamphlet "is set forth for their singular profit and commodity, for the sure safeguard of their lives here in this world, that they shorten not the same before their time, and that by their true labour and good life, in the world to come they may save their souls" (63). Harman saw these wandering rogues as a threat to

the social order and attempted a gesture of inclusion meant to reform these criminals by trying to make them fit into that social order.

C. S. Lewis harshly criticized Harman for what he believed to be his literary ineptitude, considering that he was “a hard, inquisitive man with one literary gift and no literary standards” and that, as a writer, “you might often take him for little better than a dunce” (qtd. in Kinney 105). However, a closer reading of the *Caveat* shows that, along with a sharp awareness of his role as an author, Harman had a deep concern with the use of language: not only did he construct his sentences carefully, making constant use of alliteration,³² he inserted an “Epistle to the Reader” in the second printing of the work. In it, he reflects on the vocabulary that he uses to refer to the rogues, claiming that he consciously favors a plain style of writing in order to make the text more understandable to contemporary readers. The author, then, proves to be aware of the instability of language, of its dynamic quality, and of the changes it undergoes over time, and therefore he asserts, in all modesty, that in the *Caveat*, literary style has taken a backseat to plainness so as to make the work more profitable for his country: “according to my plain order,” he writes, “I have set forth this work, simply and truly, with such usual words and terms as is among us well known and frequented. So that, as the proverb saith, ‘Although truth be blamed, it shall never be shamed’” (67). Harman knows for whom he is writing:

³² Toward the end of the letter to the Countess of Shrewsbury, Harman describes how a group of rogues turns a burial into a feast in the following terms: “Thus having their makes to make merry withal, the burial was turned to bousing and belly-cheer, mourning to mirth, fasting to feasting, praying to pastime and pressing of paps, and lamenting to lechery” (64). This passage, which dramatizes the literary motif of the world upside down, is noteworthy because of its use of alliteration and parallelism, both of which were devices closely associated with the literary vogue of euphuism, begun by John Lyly in his romance *Euphues* (1578).

he imagines and constructs his readership, an aspect that was rapidly stepping to the forefront of literary life in these early stages of print culture that brought about dramatic changes in the relationship between authors and readers. Throughout the twenty-four chapters into which the *Caveat* is divided, Harman fashions himself as a social observer who aims at disclosing the well-kept secrets of the urban underworld that are not patent to common city-dwellers. The chapters vary in length, yet in all of them, the author follows the proverb quoted in the prefatory letter—"Something lurk and lay hid that did not plainly appear" (62)—exposing and shedding light on these hidden roguish practices. The structure of the chapters is usually the same: first, Harman describes each type of rogue in detail, portraying their appearance, the setting of their cheats, and the practices themselves in a purportedly detached manner that is supposed to liken him to a sort of early modern sociologist. Then, in order to illustrate and complete the portrait of each rogue, the author relates a story that exemplifies the criminal practice already described. So as to lend more verisimilitude to the story, Harman either presents himself as a witness to the facts in the tale or claims to have heard them from a trustworthy source, by means of sentences such as "I was credibly informed" (73), "not long sithence, a wild rogue chanced to meet a poor neighbor of mine" (78), and "I have seen and handled a number of them" (93).

In many cases, Harman leaves his privileged position as an outside observer and becomes a character in some of the stories. As an example, the chapter on the dummerer depicts this rogue as the kind who "will never speak, unless they have extreme punishment, but will gape, and with a marvelous force will hold down their tongues doubled, groaning for your charity, and holding up their hands full piteously, so that with

their deep dissimulation they get very much” (91). Right after this brief description, Harman launches into the story, in which he becomes the main character who, recognizing the intentions of one of these dummerers, sets about exposing his dissimulation. When a surgeon attempts to make the dummerer speak, Harman the character offers a word of advice on how to proceed: “Knit two of his fingers together, and thrust a stick between them, and rub the same up and down a little while, and for my life he speaketh by and by” (92). Of course, the procedure works and the rogue is exposed as feigning his inability to speak. In another chapter, Harman describes freshwater mariners or whipjacks as men who “will run about the country with a counterfeit licence, feigning either shipwreck, or spoiled by pirates, near the coast of Cornwall or Devonshire . . . Then pass they through Surrey, Sussex, by the sea-coasts, and so into Kent, demanding alms to bring them home to their country” (84). The author backs his description of this type of rascals with the claim that he has “divers times taken away from them their licences” (84). Again, this self-fashioning as a first-person witness to roguish practices, as well as an agent of the law, is supposed to give the pamphlet an appearance of reality.

Despite Harman’s claims, though, the inset stories that we find in the *Caveat* owe a great deal to jest-books as regards structure and content, and they are often too exaggerated to be taken at face value. For instance, the chapter on hookers or anglers renders this variety of rogue as “perilous and most wicked knaves . . . [that] customably carry with them a staff of five or six foot long, in which, within one inch of the top thereof, is a little hole bored through, in which hole they put an iron hook, and with the same they will pluck unto them quickly anything that they may reach therewith” (73).

Harman states that he has had the opportunity to meet some of these hookers or anglers at his house, as well as seeing their thieving contraptions and conversing with them. The subsequent example of the way in which these rogues commit their robberies, in spite of Harman's attempt at disguising its fictional nature, reads like a page out of a jest-book:

I was credibly informed that a hooker came to a farmer's house in the dead of the night, and putting back a draw window of a low chamber, the bed standing hard by the said window, in which lay three persons (a man and two big boys), this hooker with his staff plucked off their garments which lay upon them to keep them warm, with the coverlet and sheet, and left them lying asleep naked saving their shirts, and had away all clean, and never could understand where it became. I verily suppose that when they were well waked with cold, they surely thought that Robin Goodfellow, according to the old saying, had been with them that night. (73)

Not only does this story lack verisimilitude—for how is it possible that the hooker left the sleeping man and boys virtually naked without waking them up?—but it ends on a rather amusing note with its reference to the folkloric character of Robin Goodfellow that, in typical jest-book fashion, moves the reader to laughter.

These twenty-four chapters that contain Harman's taxonomy and analysis of the different types of rogues and vagabonds that lurk in the streets of London are followed by one section that lists alphabetically the names of some real upright-men, rogues, and palliards,³³ and by another section that offers a glossary of "their pelting speech" (113), that is, the secret language of the underworld, of whose existence Walker had already spoken in his *Manifest Detection*. The pamphlet is brought to an end with a short account of the apprehension and execution of Nicholas Jennings, a real-life rogue that he

³³ For Harman's discussion of upright men, rogues, and palliards, see respectively *Caveat* 69-72, 74-78, and 80-81.

mentions in his chapter on counterfeit cranks (85-90). Harman, then, fashions his *Caveat* as a sort of collage of direct real-life observations of the mores and criminal procedures of urban rogues and illustrating stories culled from the rich tradition of English jest-books already discussed in this chapter. His method of composition makes it rather difficult to separate fact from reality: Harman presents his work as a sort of sociological study, yet it would be erroneous to simply read it that way. If we strive to go beyond the surface, we will discover that he is sharply aware of his role as an author and that he uses literature as a means of enacting social change. Together with Walker's *Manifest Detection*, Harman's *Caveat* became the model for the rogue pamphlets that followed it, especially those penned by Robert Greene in the 1590s, and as such, it is a key text to understand how Elizabethan and Jacobean pamphleteers contributed to create an ideal image of the rogue that did not necessarily correspond to social reality. Like Spanish picaresque novelists, pamphleteers such as Harman possessed a definite social agenda, yet it most certainly was a starkly different one.

Robert Greene's 1591-1592 Cony-Catching Pamphlets: *A Notable Discovery of Cozenage* (1591)

In the second half of the sixteenth century, as the rise of early modern print culture was creating a rapidly growing market for popular fiction and decisively modifying the relationship established between the author and the reader in the process, very few fiction writers enjoyed as much popularity as Robert Greene, whose self-fashioned colorful persona endeared him to a large section of the reading audience. In spite of his literary success, extant biographical data about Greene are rather sketchy,

populated with fiction and legend, often brought forth by Greene himself. The author seems to have been born at Norwich around 1558, earned degrees from Oxford and Cambridge, traveled abroad, and become acquainted with the dubious characters of the London underworld of whom he speaks in his cony-catching pamphlets (Judges 498-9). By 1592, at the young age of thirty-four, he passed on in London amid dire poverty. In between, though, he managed to publish some of the most enduring romances, such as *Pandosto, or the Triumph of Time* (1588), whose balanced sentence constructions and classical allusions betray the influence of euphuism, and in the last two years of his life, a series of highly successful rogue pamphlets.

Critics term Greene's rogue works *cony-catching pamphlets*, although Merritt Lawlis prefers the label "criminal fiction," noting that the nomenclature of cony-catching pamphlet "applies only to the first and largest section [of *A Notable Discovery of Cozenage*] . . . and not to the other four sections. 'Criminal fiction' fits the whole work better; it suggests fictional or semifictional accounts of underworld activities" (396). Although, as we can see in the titles of some of these rogue pamphlets, Greene himself used the term *cony-catching*, I am inclined to agree with Lawlis: though he uses Walker's *Manifest Detection* and Harman's *Caveat* as a starting point, Greene takes the genre of the rogue pamphlet one step further, thinly disguising fiction as fact, and turning his accounts of the practices of the London underworld into full-fledged short stories, where the exaggerated elaboration of the roguish trick becomes the main focus. Realizing the economic possibilities of his sensational accounts of criminal life, this tendency becomes more acute as his series of rogue pamphlets progresses, but it is already present in the

opening installment, *A Notable Discovery of Cozenage, Now Daily Practised by Sundry Lewd Persons, Called Conny-Catchers, and Cross-Biters* (1591).

Like the rest of his rogue pamphlets, the *Notable Discovery* was written in the context of Greene's alleged repentance for his old days of folly and wantonness, perhaps aware that he was nearing the end of his life. In the preface to this pamphlet, amid classical allusions to characters like Diogenes, Ovid, and Socrates, who proverbially underwent a moral redemption in their old age, Greene confesses to the reader: "my younger years had uncertain thoughts, but now my ripe days calls on to repentant deeds, and I sorrow as much to see others willful, as I delighted once to be wanton" (119). These words inscribe the pamphlet into that context of repentance and redemption, in which Greene claims to eschew his old rowdy ways while at the same time explaining that he has once been a witness to the criminal practices that he is about to expose:

The odd madcaps I have been mate to, not as companion, but as a spy to have an insight into their knaveries, that seeing their trains I might eschew their snares, those mad fellows I learned at last to loath, by their own graceless villainies; and what I saw in them to their confusion I can forewarn in others to my country's commodity. . . . Though I have not practiced their deceits, yet conversing by fortune and talking upon purpose with such copesmates, hath given me light into their conceits, and I can decipher their qualities, though I utterly mislike of their practices. (119)

Like Harman, who claims in his *Caveat* to have acquired his material from conversations with real-life rogues, Greene takes advantage of his literary persona here in order to justify the sources of his stories. Similarly to Harman, he situates himself in a privileged position, fashioning himself as a rogue who has had the opportunity to witness the dealings of the underworld but who now rebukes them and sets about to expose them.

Critics have read this gesture in the light of other texts that Greene penned in these very productive last years of his life, like *The Repentance of Robert Greene*, published in 1592 (Clark 48), yet as regards his rogue pamphlets, it should be viewed simply as one of the complex web of devices that he employs in order to lend credibility to his works. The repentant Robert Greene who claims to detest the cheats of urban cony-catchers, then, does not seem to be too far away from the repentant vagabond taken prisoner by police forces in Awdeley's *Fraternity of Vagabonds*.

One of Greene's main contributions to the genre of the rogue pamphlet is his definite choice of an urban setting for his stories, which dramatize the clash between country characters confronted with the perils of an urban milieu with which they are hardly acquainted. The events in Greene's rogue pamphlets always take place in London, which has led Steve Mentz to consider them "'magic books' for London's citizen-readers, initiating them into the languages of urban culture and making the city seem manageable if viewed through the lens of romance" (241). Likewise, Craig Dionne terms them "domestic handbooks . . . [that] call for a more austere form of civic management in response to what appears to be a spontaneous generation of social decay that encroaches upon the public space of the commonwealth" (45). Like Harman, Greene asserts that his purpose in writing his *Notable Discovery* is to foster legal changes that would make laws against rogues and criminals harsher, and he shows his patriotism by signing his pamphlet with the motto "Nascimur pro patria" (134), that is, "We are born for our country." Yet, he dedicates the work "to the young gentlemen, merchants, apprentices, farmers, and plain countrymen" (119), trying to shape his readership, writing for those sections of the population that would have money to spend on his pamphlets. Beyond a

doubt, then, Greene's repentance, as well as his prolific work as a pamphleteer in the last two years of his life, can be seen purely as moves seeking monetary gain. In more literary terms, of course, this entails a shift toward sensationalism, with fiction overtaking fact, in an attempt to make previous accounts of the same roguish practices more outlandish and attractive. For his first rogue pamphlet, the *Notable Discovery*, then, Greene chooses to linger mainly on two of the laws already outlined by Walker and Harman, which he terms the cony-catching law and the crossbiting law. The former, which is an elaboration of the practice that Walker labeled barnard's law in his *Manifest Detection*, refers to a cheat at cards or dice; the latter, also rehearsed by Walker, pertains to the cheats of prostitutes. Unlike Harman, Greene is not interested in a pseudo-sociological approach followed by a story illustrating the practice through fiction, but in his *Notable Discovery*, Greene the moralist-reformist takes a backseat to Greene the storyteller. Rather than discovering—that is, exposing—different types of cozenage, as the title of the pamphlet implies, Greene is interested in elaborating on them, in exploring their possibilities for literary creation.

Accordingly, in the preface to the work, the author offers a brief outline of both the art of cony-catching and the art of crossbiting, giving the reader in the introduction “a light in brief what I mean to prosecute at large” (123) in the body of the pamphlet. His outline of the cony-catching law, much longer than that of the crossbiting law, suggests that cheating at cards and dice is going to be the main focus of the *Notable Discovery*. This outline is based on the text of Walker's *Manifest Detection*, sometimes transcribed almost verbatim. For instance, like Walker's, Greene's description of the taker-up or verser also stresses his penchant for rhetoric, and the character of the barnard is rendered

in very similar terms, “like some aged farmer of the country, a stranger unto you all, that had been at some market town thereabout, buying and selling, and there tippled so much malmsey that he had never a ready word in his mouth, and is so careless of his money that out he throweth some forty angels on the board’s end” (122). After the cheat has been put into practice, Greene describes its success in luring the unsuspecting cony to play cards or dice for money by making use of nearly the very same words in Walker’s text: “The first wager is drink, the next twopence or a groat, and lastly, to be brief, they use the matter so, that he that were a hundred year old and never played in his life for a penny, cannot refuse to be the verser’s half, and consequently, at one game at cards he loseth all they play for, be it a hundred pound” (122).

Despite the borrowings from the *Manifest Detection* in the preface of his pamphlet, as we move onto the sections on “The Art of Cony-Catching” and “The Art of Crossbiting” that make up the body of the *Notable Discovery*, we become aware that Greene’s work is altogether different from its predecessors. As he proceeds to “prosecute at large” his depiction of the art of cony-catching, Greene reveals himself as a master storyteller. Not only does he once again acknowledge his reading audience by presenting the cony—that is, the victim—as perhaps “a gentleman, a merchant or apprentice” or a “poor country farmer or yeoman” (123) that arrives in London unaware of the workings of this new, faster urban space, but he makes use of interesting devices in order to build up the suspense in the story and even offers us a glimpse of the cony’s inner world and thoughts. The focus here, unlike in Walker’s *Manifest Detection*, is not actually the trick itself, which he already briefly outlined in the preface, but rather the multi-layered performance of the rogues in order to deceive the cony, as well as the gradual impact that

the rhetoric power of the knaves has on the victim's behavior. Both the rogues and the cony are, of course, character types; in spite of Greene's thinly veiled attempts at moralizing, the centerpiece of the *Notable Discovery* is storytelling, and the fictional tale of the rogues' relentless efforts to cheat the cony at cards or dice is constantly adorned with fast-paced dialogue, which lends the pamphlet an undeniable conversational feel. Little by little, the words and actions of the rogues, which are meant to alter reality only enough to prevent the victim from recognizing that alteration, have a strong bearing on the cony's consciousness. Although at first he prefers to stand by and watch the rogues play cards, he is gradually lured into taking a more active role in the game by the appearance of monetary gain that it seems to imply, until "the sweetness of gain maketh him frolic, and no man is more ready to vie and revie than he" (130). At last, then, the cony has fallen into the trap set up by the rogues, a final, almost epiphanic moment to which the rest of the elements of the tale are subordinated. Of course, Greene draws the subject matter from rogue texts that preceded him, yet he elaborates on them endlessly, underscoring the fictional nature of the stories and pretending to moralize, a practice that he most certainly sees as a convention of the genre but that in his works seems totally devoid of real content.

Indeed, after his discovery of the cony-catching law, Greene inserts two shorter tales that are loosely related to this roguish trick but that have a recognizable jest-book flavor. The first of them is described as "a merry jest done of late to a Welshman" (131), which reminds us of similar stories in *A Hundred Merry Tales* and *Tales and Quick Answers*. More interestingly, though, this section on the art of cony-catching ends with a conversation between Greene and "one whom I suspected a cony-catcher" (133). Their

subsequent conversation at an alehouse turns into a defense of the practice of robbery and cheating on the part of the rogue, based on the commonplace that all professions have their deceitful practices after all, and presented in very similar terms as in Dr. Carlos García's *Desordenada codicia*. In almost nihilistic words, negating all kind of morality, Greene's cony-catcher reasons thus:

Tut, sir, . . . as my religion is small, so my devotion is less. I leave God to be disputed on by divines. The two ends I aim at are gain and ease; but by what honest gains I may get, never comes within the compass of my thoughts. . . . Yea, I am sure you are not so ignorant, but you know that few men can live uprightly, unless he have some pretty way, more than the world is witness to, to help him withal. Think you some lawyers could be such purchasers, if all their pleas were short, and their proceedings justice and conscience; that offices would be so dearly bought, and the buyers so soon enriched, if they counted not pillage an honest kind of purchase; or do you think that men of handy trades make all their commodities without falsehood, when so many of them are become daily purchasers? . . . Therefore, sir, cease to persuade me to the contrary, for my resolution is to beat my wits and spare not to busy my brains to save and help me, by what means soever I care not, so I may avoid the danger of the law. (133-34)

Greene's five rogue pamphlets,³⁴ all of them published in 1591-1592, represent a decidedly conscious move toward fiction in the genre that was already latent since Gilbert Walker inaugurated it with his *Manifest Detection*. As the pamphlets became increasingly popular upon their publication, Greene embraced the fictional element to its fullest extent, contributing to construct and complement the fictional representation of the

³⁴ The titles of Greene's five rogue pamphlets are *A Notable Discovery of Cozenage* (1591), *The Second Part of Cony-Catching* (1591), *The Third Part of Cony-Catching* (1592), *A Disputation between a He Cony-Catcher and a She Cony-Catcher* (1592), and *The Black Book's Messenger* (1592). A sixth work, *The Defence of Cony-Catching* (1592) is often attributed to him, yet Judges notes that there is no evidence that he actually wrote it (499).

figure of the rogue already begun by his fellow pamphleteers. This culminates in his *Disputation between a He Cony-Catcher and a She Cony-Catcher* (1592), in which Greene experiments with a totally fictional dialogue between Laurence, a pickpocket, and Nan, a prostitute, who argue over “whether a whore or a thief is most prejudicial” (208) for the commonwealth. In that work, as in the rest of Greene’s rogue literature output, there is no attempt whatsoever at disguising the fictional nature of the work, thereby paving the way for English rogue novels such as *The Unfortunate Traveller*, in which Nashe mixes elements taken from the jest-book and rogue pamphlet tradition with narrative practices culled from *Lazarillo de Tormes*.

Sixteenth-Century English Rogue Literature and *Lazarillo de Tormes* (1554)

About halfway through the adventures related in the first part of *Don Quixote* (1605), the knight-errant and his squire cross paths with a group of galley-slaves that are on their way to Seville to serve their punishment. One of them, a dangerous criminal named Ginés de Pasamonte, announces that he has written a book about his own life and boasts about its literary quality:

—Es tan bueno—respondió Ginés—, que mal año para *Lazarillo de Tormes* y para todos cuantos de aquel género se han escrito o escribieren. Lo que le sé decir a voacé es que trata verdades y que son verdades tan donosas que no pueden haber mentiras que se le igualen. (206)

This oft-quoted passage is important for many reasons, but most of all because it suggests that, toward 1605 readers in Spain already appear to be aware of a certain genre that could be identified as the picaresque novel. True, Cervantes does not use the words *pícaro* and *picaresco* here, and perhaps the term *género* could be taken to mean *kind* or

type, but the figure of Ginés de Pasamonte is a prototype that embodies all the characteristics ascribed to the picaresque genre: like Lázaro, he seems to belong to the lower strata of Golden Age society; like Guzmán de Alfarache, he has been sentenced to serve time in the galleys; like both Lázaro and Guzmán, he has penned his autobiography, whose title—*La vida de Ginés de Pasamonte*—even mirrors the titles of the narratives by Lázaro and Guzmán. And like these two, Ginés’ name has what appears to be the name of his birthplace attached to it. Moreover, when talking about his work, he takes *Lazarillo de Tormes* (1554) as a point of reference, as a sort of canonical text with which to compare his own.

Cervantes, therefore, recognizes here some of the constitutive elements of the picaresque genre, presenting them in a playful, ironic way; thus, when Don Quixote inquires whether Ginés has finished his book, the galley-slave replies: “¿Cómo puede estar acabado ... si aún no está acabada mi vida? Lo que está escrito es desde mi nacimiento hasta el punto que esta última vez me han echado en galeras” (I, 22). Foreshadowing what he would later do in some of his exemplary novels, such as *Rinconete y Cortadillo* and *El coloquio de los perros* (1613), Cervantes is playing with the generic features of the picaresque: not only does Ginés’ life story end at approximately the same point as Guzmán’s, but his book—just like any autobiography—will always be unfinished. Cervantes recognizes the unstable nature of the fictional autobiography that usually constitutes picaresque novels, but more importantly, by 1605, this episode in *Don Quixote* is already hinting at the fact that Cervantes—and, therefore, readers at large—viewed the picaresque as a literary genre with clearly defined characteristics.

That the picaresque novel was an acknowledged genre by this point in time can be corroborated, furthermore, by taking a look at the first edition of Francisco de Quevedo's *Historia del Buscón*, published in Zaragoza in 1626 although it already circulated in manuscript form before its publication (Ynduráin, "Introducción" 65). In the preliminary letter of the *Buscón*, the publisher of the work, Roberto Dupont, states that the novel is "[é]mulo de Guzman de Alfarache (y aun no se si diga mayor) y tan agudo y gracioso como don Quixote, aplauso general de todas las naciones" (91). Hence, Dupont also recognizes, toward 1626, the existence of the picaresque as a genre, and a very popular one if we bear in mind that, in order to praise Quevedo's text, he compares it with *Guzmán de Alfarache*, which became an immediate best-seller upon publication, judging by the numerous editions that the novel went through in just a few years (Micó 64-72). Many features of *Buscón*, such as Pablos's text being presented in the form of an autobiography or the presence of a narratee to whom the text is addressed, also imply that Quevedo himself was aware of the existence of a clearly defined genre in which to inscribe his novel.

Spanish picaresque texts such as *Lazarillo*, *Guzmán*, and *Buscón* were widely available in translation in many European countries such as France, Germany, Italy, and Great Britain, although, as Juan Antonio Garrido Ardila has recently shown, these translations varied greatly in intention and in faithfulness to the original. For instance, French, German, and Italian translators modified whole chapters of *Lazarillo* and *Guzmán*, in many cases even adding their own sequels and distorting the meaning and the constitutive features of the original texts. Thus, the first German translation of Alemán's work features the spurious second part, written by Martí, instead of Alemán's original

sequel, and later, its translator, Aegidius Albertinus, also decided to publish his own continuation under the pseudonym Martinus Freudenhold. As Garrido Ardila concludes, “Alemania ... desmembró el *Guzmán* y engendró un texto que integra la Primera Parte de Alemán, la Segunda Parte de Martí y una tercera de un autor teutón de quien sólo conocemos el pseudónimo” (*Novela* 140). These translation practices altered the way in which the Spanish picaresque genre was perceived in the rest of Europe. The popularity of the original Spanish works varied notably from country to country and across time periods. Great Britain, though, showed a very strong initial response to the translations of these works: English readers soon embraced the Spanish picaresque texts, and novels such as *Lazarillo*, *Guzmán*, and *Buscón* were widely read and exerted a powerful influence on English literature that lasted well into the eighteenth century (Garrido Ardila, *Novela* 21). But when it comes to discussing the intertextual relationships established between Spanish and English rogue literature throughout the sixteenth century, it becomes necessary to circumscribe our study to merely one work: *Lazarillo de Tormes*, which was the only Spanish picaresque novel available in English translation during that century.

The anonymous *Lazarillo* was translated into English by David Rowland³⁵ and first published in 1576, and its two reprintings during the sixteenth century alone (in 1586 and 1596) attest to its immediate success (Garrido Ardila, *Novela* 143-44). The title-page of Rowland’s translation presents the work as *The Pleasaunt Historie of Lazarillo de Tormes, a Spaniarde, wherein is conteyned his marvellous deeds and life, with the*

³⁵ For further information on David Rowland and the circumstances surrounding his translation of *Lazarillo de Tormes* into English, see Santoyo, Davies, and Rodríguez Rodríguez, all of which are cited in the bibliography of the present study.

straunge adventures happened to him in the service of sundrie Masters. While this title seems to stress the entertaining elements of the novel, describing Lázaro's life as a "pleasaunt historie" of "marvellous deeds" and "straunge adventures," on the whole, Rowland's translation is much more faithful to the Spanish original than translations published in other countries: in fact, according to Garrido Ardila, translated versions of Spanish picaresque novels such as *Lazarillo* and *Guzmán* into English, "permanecieron fieles a los originales" (*Novela* 149), with very few alterations, and this may be one of the reasons that would explain why the Spanish texts exerted such a long-lasting influence on English literature: the two Spanish novels that we regard as the foundational texts of the picaresque genre were available in English virtually unaltered, thereby allowing English authors to perceive the many innovations introduced by these works, as well as to realize the creative pathways that they opened up. One such author was Thomas Nashe, who adapts many features of the anonymous *Lazarillo* in *The Unfortunate Traveller* (1594), intertwining them with countless references to the social and historical reality of England and its current literary scene. However, it would not be completely accurate to read Nashe's novel solely in the light of *Lazarillo*; rather, it also becomes necessary to recognize that prior to Rowland's translation of the Spanish work in 1576, there already existed in the British Isles a rich, long-standing tradition of texts that could be labeled as rogue literature, namely the jest-books and the rogue pamphlets, the latter sometimes referred to as cony-catching pamphlets or *libri vagatorum* because of their descriptions of the ways of life of rogues and the tricks that they put into practice. This type of works met with a great deal of success throughout the sixteenth century, to such an extent that, by the 1590s, when Nashe wrote his most important output, authors and readers alike had

already acknowledged that they constituted a sort of genre with very defined features and literary conventions.

Nashe himself envisions the first few episodes in his account of the life of Jack Wilton in *The Unfortunate Traveller* as a variation on the themes of a jest-book: Jack plays witty pranks on some of the other characters, like the heroes of jest-books, for the purpose of delighting himself in the performance of the trick and proving the superiority of his wit. Then, before the text changes in tone and pursues other literary paths, Jack reflects upon his actions:

This was one of my famous achievements, insomuch as I never light upon the like famous fool. But I have done a thousand better jests, if they had been booked in order as they were begotten. It is pity posterity should be deprived of such precious records; and yet there is no remedy; and yet there is too, for when all fails, well fare a good memory. (262)

Like any jest-book hero, Jack considers his tricks as achievements, as proofs of his ability to outwit those around him, but more importantly, he terms them *jest*s and wishes that they could be “booked in order as they were begotten,” in an unmistakable reference to jest-books that suggests, on the one hand, that Nashe is entering here into an intertextual dialogue with these works, and on the other, that he viewed jest-books as a genre whose defining features were susceptible of literary interplay.

Nashe, however, is not the only author who recognizes the existence of the jest-book as a genre: one of his contemporaries, Robert Greene, who published a series of rogue pamphlets between 1591 and 1592, uses in these works headings for the roguish tricks that he uncovers that read like the headings of jests. For instance, toward the end of *A Notable Discovery of Cozenage* (1591), two of the stories that Greene tells begin with

the headings “How a cook’s wife in London did lately serve a collier for his cozenage” and “How a flaxwife and her neighbours use a cozening collier” (146). Furthermore, in *The Third and Last Part of Cony-Catching* (1592), one of the stories is presented as “[a] pleasant tale how an honest substantial citizen was made a cony, and simply entertained a knave that carried away his goods very politicly” (181). These headings remind us of those placed at the beginning of each of the forty-seven sections of *Howleglas* (1528), introducing the jests performed by the main character using the same “How...” structure, as in “How Howleglas as he was born was christened three times upon one day” (156) or “How that Howleglas when that he was a child answered a man that asked the way” (157). Besides, some of the stories contained in *The Second Part of Cony-Catching* (1591) are referred to as “merry tales”: there is, for example, “[a] merry tale, how a miller had his purse cut in Newgate Market” (166) and “[a] true and merry tale of a knight and a tinker that was a picklock” (176). The use of the words *merry tale* is not coincidental here, but a clear reference to *A Hundred Merry Tales*, the title of one of the most popular and influential jest-books, printed in 1526.

Nashe’s *Traveller* blends features of *Lazarillo de Tormes* and of this native English rogue tradition that precedes the translation of the anonymous Spanish novel, in order to create a novel that in some ways follows certain characteristics of *Lazarillo*, while at the same time departing from it. To my judgment, if *Traveller* comes across as such a heterogeneous text, it is because of its unique blend of these two kinds of features. This mixture of features from the Spanish and English rogue literature traditions occurs also in seventeenth-century Spanish picaresque novels such as Miguel de Cervantes’s *Rinconete y Cortadillo* and Dr. Carlos García’s *La desordenada codicia de los bienes*

agenos, both of which critics have traditionally considered atypical and have been somehow puzzled by their heterogeneity. In the third and fourth chapters of my study, I offer a critical reading of those two picaresque novels aimed at showing how their heterogeneous nature and their generic experimentation are in no small measure due to the intertextual dialogue in which they engage with the English rogue literature tradition of the sixteenth century, particularly with the jest-biography and the rogue pamphlet.

A special kind of jest-book, the jest-biography achieves the unity that most jest-books are lacking by means of the insertion of a central fictional character, like Howleglas, to whom all the jests are attributed. The presence of this central character who unifies all the tales takes jest-books in the direction of the picaresque tradition inaugurated in Spain by *Lazarillo*, yet there are some noteworthy differences between English jest-biographies and Spanish picaresque novels. Howleglas and Lázaro may be related, but they are not blood brothers: the hero of jest-biographies is not altogether equal to the literary figure of the *pícaro*. To begin, Howleglas is mostly a static character: the jests that are attributed to him are loosely related to one another, yet throughout the book, Howleglas emerges as a character who delights in the jokes and tricks that he performs yet who learns nothing about life or the world that he inhabits along the way. The first jest in the collection recounts his birth and christening, and the last one renders his death, but all the jests that come in between are interchangeable. Like many of the elements that make up *Lazarillo de Tormes*, the tales in *Howleglas* are culled from folklore and from classical literature, but whereas the jest-biography tells them in a straightforward way, for the sheer pleasure of storytelling, the anonymous writer of *Lazarillo* weaves them into a narrative that is organized according to a plan. In the

prologue of the novel, Lázaro gives us a clue as to the context that spawned his taking up the pen in order to write his autobiography:

Y pues Vuestra Merced escribe se le escriba y relate el caso muy por extenso, parescióme no tomalle por el medio, sino del principio, porque se tenga entera noticia de mi persona; y también porque consideren los que heredaron nobles estados cuán poco se les debe, pues Fortuna fue con ellos parcial, y cuánto más hicieron los que, siéndoles contraria, con fuerza y maña remando salieron a buen puerto. (11)

Lázaro writes his autobiography to shed light on *el caso*, which at the very end of the text turns out to be a series of rumors about the alleged infidelity of his wife with a clergyman. Therefore, instead of simply dismissing the rumors in a few sentences, he decides to relate his life story, attempting to portray the several circumstances that, over the years, have contributed to bringing him to his present state. Throughout the novel, Lázaro undergoes a process of learning as he encounters and deals with the trials and tribulations of the outside world. This is one of the features that bring unity to the novel, turning Lázaro into a much more dynamic character than Howleglas: the tales of which the English jest-book hero is the protagonist have no bearing on his inner world; contrary to that, Lázaro learns the workings of society the hard way and this affects his relationship with the world and with those around him, turning him into a much more complex character.

Besides the dynamic nature of Lázaro versus the more static picture that we get of Howleglas, there is another main feature that distinguishes both characters, and therefore, the jest-book and the picaresque genre. From the quotation above, we can doubtless infer that Lázaro has a certain kind of social agenda in the writing of his autobiography: he

presents himself as a member of the lower social strata of Spanish Golden Age society, one of those whom Fortune has not favored, as opposed to those who inherited noble estates. Hence, as he thinks back on his life from an older age and a rather improved social position, Lázaro is aware of his place within society and acknowledges the difficulties of trying to better his status in the context of a rigidly hierarchical social organization. *Lazarillo de Tormes*, and in general picaresque fiction at large, give lowly characters such as Lázaro the opportunity to paint a first-hand picture of the different elements and classes that make up sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spanish society. Picaresque novelists in Spain use fiction with a social agenda in mind as they write the autobiographies of *picaros*, and the social criticism and satire that we recognize in *Lazarillo* are nowhere to be found in the works of English jest-book authors, whose main aim, in the words of the anonymous writer of *Howleglas*, is “but only to renew the minds of men or women of all degrees from the use of sadness” (156).

Unlike the writers and compilers of jest-books, the rogue pamphleteers of the second half of the sixteenth century *did* have a very specific social agenda in mind as they sat down to compose their anatomies of the criminal world. Published at a time of stark social changes brought about by a move from a rural space to a more urban one, however, their social commentary differs from that of most Spanish picaresque novelists in that, rather than offering us a picture of contemporary society through the eyes of a *picaro*, they have a strong anti-vagrant slant, harshly criticizing rogues and vagabonds for their idleness and criminality, and presenting them as threats to the commonwealth in hopes of fostering the passing of more severe laws against them. In a way, rogue pamphlets stray away from Spanish picaresque novels such as *Lazarillo* because they

fashion themselves as almost sociological accounts of the practices of the underworld. Nevertheless, in most cases this is simply a façade, a device to lend credibility to the works, which are full of fictional stories culled from the rich jest-book and comic tradition. As rogue pamphlets become increasingly popular with a rapidly growing reading audience, they gradually turn more sensational, constructing a purely imaginary, exaggerated figure of the rogue through fiction.

The prolific store of rogue tricks and practices that rogue pamphlets constitute will turn up time and again in English rogue novels and Spanish picaresque works well into the eighteenth century. As I hope to demonstrate in the following two chapters, the Spanish and English literary traditions in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries entered into a constant and very productive intertextual dialogue around the figure of the rogue. Therefore, it would not be possible to wholly understand, for instance, the narrative innovations introduced by Thomas Nashe in a work such as *The Unfortunate Traveller* without bearing in mind the fictional universe set forth in *Lazarillo de Tormes*, widely available in England after the publication of David Rowland's translation in 1576. Likewise, reading two very different Spanish picaresque novels such as Miguel de Cervantes's *Rinconete y Cortadillo* and Dr. Carlos García's *La desordenada codicia de los bienes ajenos* in the light of the content and idiosyncrasies of English rogue pamphlets will offer us a very productive critical angle that will enable us to have a clearer insight into those two works in our attempt to understand in what ways Cervantes and García were trying to move away from the narrative model proposed by *Lazarillo de Tormes* and fulfilled by Mateo Alemán's *Guzmán de Alfarache*. Considering these two

traditions and their interactions side by side will doubtless be beneficial to our understanding and critical reception of both.

CHAPTER III

IMAGINING AN EXEMPLARY UNDERWORLD THROUGH FICTION: MIGUEL DE CERVANTES'S *RINCONETE Y CORTADILLO* (1613)

Containing Poverty: Vagrants, Beggars, and the Poor Laws in Sixteenth-Century Spain

The social and economic conditions of sixteenth-century Spain were not very different from those in England: in fact, during the first half of the sixteenth century, the first few decades of the Spanish colonial expansion, the level of population rose steadily, and this coincided with a period marked by a disproportionate rise in prices. Historians have noted that one direct economic consequence of Spain's colonial efforts was inflation: the Spanish economy experienced a veritable boom, yet at the same time, the living standards fell for most of the population. In a country where wealth was mainly connected with land-owning, and where land was concentrated on merely a reduced number of landholders, those who worked for a fixed salary (the vast majority of the population) found it extremely hard to survive in the new economic reality. Historian Henry Kamen attributes the steep rise in prices of the first half of the sixteenth century to three main causes: the rise in population, the colonial expansion, and bullion imports. He notes that "[t]o the demand created by expanding population was added the demand from America for food and manufactures; treasure when it arrived gave merchants more cash to invest in trade, manufacturers more money to invest in production" (99). This economic boom brought about the impoverishment of the large part of the population that lived on meager rents: as John Lynch reminds us, "[s]mall landowners of the *hidalgo* class, the lower clergy, government officials and many others all found their standard of

living reduced as the price of commodities rose beyond their means” (127). As ridiculous as the figure of the squire in the third *tractado* of *Lazarillo de Tormes* might seem, striving to maintain his honor while starving, he should actually be seen as the literary embodiment of a whole social class that could not afford their daily nourishment but that, owing to their title of nobility, were not expected to perform manual labor, at the expense of their honor. During the first half of the sixteenth century, inflation mounted to such an extent that its impact on Spanish society can hardly be overlooked: as prices rose in such a steady, disproportionate way, poverty struck much of the Spanish population. These harsh economic coordinates were eloquently summarized by Battista Antonelli, an Italian engineer who was then working in Castile and who in 1581 mentioned that at the time in Spain “the prices of goods have risen so much that seigneurs, gentlemen, commoners and clergy cannot live on their incomes” (qtd. in Kamen 101). And by this, of course, Antonelli meant the majority of the population.

During the Middle Ages, Spain had been mostly a rural country, which in part explains why landowning was synonymous with wealth. To a large extent, this remained so during the sixteenth century, although Spain did undergo a process of incipient industrialization, which in turn prompted migration of large numbers of rural workers to the urban milieu, a phenomenon that, as we have seen, was also widespread in the British Isles around this time, and one that is mirrored in the picaresque novels, almost always set in an urban space. Moreover, the economic boom in Spain brought about a certain change in social mobility, which was absolutely unthinkable in the Middle Ages. Even though not all historians seem to agree, this uncertain time of inflation and mass poverty was also the time of the rise of the Spanish middle class, mostly made up of

successful, wealthy traders and merchants that had found fortune through trade with the new American provinces. Wealth quickly became a vehicle for nobility, inasmuch as nobility titles could be purchased, which rich merchants certainly did. Therefore, the term *middle class* comes across as a little unstable, for their members saw it simply as an intermediate stage, aspiring to the acquisition of a title because nobility entailed privileges such as tax exemption in an age when taxes were extremely burdensome (Lynch 107). Of course, the traditional nobility—those who descended from medieval landowners, for whom nobility had run in the family for centuries—strongly objected to this new view of nobility in which wealth emerged as more important than lineage. For these nobles, the concept of purity of blood, of being the descendants from an old line of nobility, became of paramount importance: as we can perceive in the literature of the period, this obsession with the so-called *limpieza de sangre* not only took on a social and economic connotation, but also a markedly religious one, as Old Christians were identified as having “clean blood” in contrast with the New Christians, the *conversos* (i.e., those who had recently converted to Catholicism), who were always under suspicion of not being truthful in their newly acquired religious beliefs.

Regardless of one’s personal view of nobility, it is obvious that sixteenth-century Spanish society was divided by the new economic situation, and in this changing social climate, as Lynch plainly states, “the rich were getting richer and the poor poorer” (126). Contemporary accounts and documents illustrate this point, underscoring the dire poverty of the working classes, who in the city of Barcelona would eat a daily meal “consisting of a piece of bread and garlic” (Lynch 108). It is little wonder, then, that in the earlier *tractados* of *Lazarillo de Tormes*, Lázaro, always concerned with survival, considers

hunger as his main enemy and attempts to avoid it at any price. The increase in population throughout the sixteenth century, together with the steep increase in prices, logically provoked an increase in the amount of poor people, as well as in the ranks of vagrant beggars. The former wandered along the streets of Spain's major cities, finding themselves out of a job, malnourished, and unable to afford even their most basic necessities; the former could be seen on the roads and highways, leading a nomadic life and begging for alms wherever they had a chance. The phenomenon of mass poverty in Spain, then, somewhat mirrors the social reality of Elizabethan England, which was strikingly similar. And as in Britain, mass poverty sparked social alarm, which in turn led to the passing of restrictive legislation against the poor. The prevailing idea was not necessarily to solve the problem of mass poverty, but rather to contain it, to control it by means of a number of measures that restricted what poor people were allowed to do. These legal measures, known as the Poor Laws and not significantly different from those passed in England, were mainly concerned with putting an end to the increasing problems of law and order brought about by the harsh economic climate. These Poor Laws emerged for the first time around 1518 and were based on the idea that the problem of begging could be contained by limiting the mobility of beggars; therefore, laws were subsequently passed ordering beggars to remain within a fixed distance of their hometowns, issuing begging licenses, and registering vagrants in order to keep a record of their numbers and personal circumstances. Like their British counterparts, these measures were largely unsuccessful in Spain, although they did reduce the already limited options available to the poor to a certain extent, and more importantly, they marginalized and criminalized them. Thus, for the first time in Spain, poverty and

criminality began to be increasingly identified with each other, and there was a sense that poverty and idleness were somehow connected, and that idleness in turn led necessarily to criminal behavior.

In her study *Discourses of Poverty* (1999), Anne J. Cruz observes that around the middle of the sixteenth century efforts began to be made to confine the poor precisely because the boundaries between poverty and infirmity started to become blurred. The issue of pauperism has traditionally been seen mainly as a moral problem, and the poor were considered as “symbolic spectacle” (Cruz 39), as a reminder to the rest of society that salvation could be earned by means of charity. In early modern Spain, however, the issue of poverty takes on ethical undertones as poor people are increasingly blamed for not wanting to work, which inevitably led to the passing of harsher measures against vagrants and beggars in order to ascertain whether they were unable to work or not. These measures were meant to contain the problem, turning a social issue into a legal matter, and identifying poverty with sickness. As Cruz remarks, “[T]he social disease of poverty became analogous with corporal infirmity, which now needed to be not only cured, but enclosed, so as to be hidden from public view” (50). The increasing attention devoted to whether the poor were legitimate or not, whether they feigned their inability to work or not, was echoed most famously in the social and religious debate between the Dominican Domingo de Soto and the Benedictine Juan de Robles, whose opposing views on how to approach the issue of mass poverty illustrate just how deeply contemporary theoreticians were divided regarding this social phenomenon.³⁶ Soto expounds his views

³⁶ What follows is merely a brief outline of the Soto-Robles debate. For a more in-depth discussion of the debate, see Cruz 21-29.

on the matter in his treatise *Deliberación en la causa de los pobres* (1545): being a Dominican, one of the foremost mendicant orders, Soto firmly believed that the poor should be free to beg, and therefore, he opposed the Poor Laws that restricted this freedom. In his opinion, the well-off should offer their help to the poor because it should be their moral and religious obligation. As Cruz remarks, the corollary of this view is that there is an emphasis on “*caritas* over rational ethics and charity over justice” (24); that is, for Soto it is more important to help the needy over any other consideration, even if it means that some of the recipients of this help are feigning their inability to work. This is precisely one of the main points of criticism that Soto received from his opponents, the most outspoken of whom was Juan de Robles, who meant his treatise, *De la orden que en algunos pueblos de España se ha puesto en la limosna para remedio de los verdaderos pobres*” (1545) as a response to Soto’s work. The title of Robles’s treatise is already quite significant, inasmuch as it discriminates between the *verdaderos pobres* (i.e., the *true poor*) and those who are idle and fraudulent. In his opinion, therefore, the latter should be punished for their idleness, and in stark contrast with Soto’s ideas, the former should be relieved not through charity but via organized donations, that is, alms collected, administered, and distributed by the Church.

As we can see, the ideas of both parties are difficult to reconcile. It may be that Soto’s opinions were affected by his belonging to a mendicant order, but as Cruz reminds us, not all mendicant orders were in agreement with Soto and eschewed Robles (26-29). In fact, Francisco de Osuna’s *Quinta parte del abecedario espiritual* (1542) already foreshadows Robles’s ideas, especially his urge to the poor to find work and his blatant condemnation of idleness, an aspect that is of paramount importance for Osuna, who

writes, “quando eres pobre porque eres ocioso no eres digno de consolacion sino de reprehension, ni te deven llamar pobre sino holgazan” (qtd. in Cruz 28). Spain and England were faced with similar social problems, which provoked similar debates that in turn led to the implementation of legal measures that invariably failed to contain the problem. The literature of the period, both in Spain and the British Isles, echoes the social issues of poverty, beggary, and mass disenfranchisement that constituted the social reality of both countries. However, whereas Spain gave birth to the new genre of the picaresque novel, which began with *Lazarillo de Tormes* and proliferated in the early decades of the seventeenth century, once Mateo Alemán had codified the main elements of the genre in his two parts of *Guzmán de Alfarache* (1599 and 1604), the rogue pamphlet did not thrive in Spanish literature. Upon their publication, rogue pamphlets were met with unprecedented success in Elizabethan England, as exemplified by the works of writers like Robert Greene or Thomas Dekker, who had specialized in the production of this type of popular literature by the end of the sixteenth century. Yet, despite shared social and economic climates, the rogue pamphlet is conspicuously absent from Spanish early modern literature. In the first chapter of his classic study *Literature and the Delinquent* (1967), in which he explores the genesis of the picaresque novel, Alexander A. Parker sets out to answer a similar question: noting that most critics claimed that picaresque novels echo the poverty and imperial decline of Spain, Parker wonders, “[H]ow can we assess with any confidence that conditions in Spain were so much worse than those in other countries that it was appropriate for novels of delinquency to be born there and not elsewhere?” (10). Recognizing that public morals in Spain at the time could not be worse than in the rest of European countries, Parker arrives at the conclusion that the reasons

explaining the rise of the picaresque novel in Spain logically need to be “cultural rather than economic” (13); that is, if we are to explain why Spain was home to the new genre, we need to look at issues of literary history. Similarly, then, if social and economic conditions in England were not too far apart from those in Spain, how can we explain that the proliferation and popularity of rogue pamphlets in England did not take place also in Spain? Echoing Parker, I posit that if we are to address such a question, it is absolutely necessary to approach it in cultural and literary terms.

First of all, before the appearance of the first rogue pamphlets toward mid-century (John Awdeley’s *Fraternity of Vagabonds* and, most of all, Thomas Harman’s *Caveat for Common Coursitors*), England already had a long-standing tradition of jest-books and other works dealing with the witty tricks of criminals and with the lives of characters who lived by their wits. As we have seen, these works hark back to the end of the fifteenth century and their roots can be traced back to classical sources and even to native English texts such as Chaucer’s medieval *Canterbury Tales*. Titles like *A Hundred Merry Tales* (1526), *Tales and Quick Answers* (1535), *Howleglas* (1528), and others all predate the publication of the earliest rogue pamphlets, and their popularity attests to the existence of a readership interested in this type of fiction. Of course, with the appearance of rogue pamphlets, the largely comic tone of jest-books shifted somewhat as more emphasis was put on the criminal nature of the deeds of rogues, but the pamphlets still relied heavily on the narrative structure and content of jest-books, and therefore readers could relate to a preceding tradition of which they were well aware. In contrast, in Spain not a great number of works dealing with the underworld were produced before the appearance of *Lazarillo de Tormes* in 1554. Francisco de Rojas’s narrative in dialogue *La Celestina*

(1499) is often cited as a precursor of the picaresque novel, because it seems more suited to be read than to be performed on a stage, and it certainly gives voice to lowlife characters and depicts their illegal practices in an atmosphere of utter moral decay, typical features of British rogue pamphlets. In the wake of Rojas's work, the clergyman Francisco Delicado anonymously published his *La lozana andaluza* (1528), a novel in dialogue that shares many features with *La Celestina*, offering, among other things, an account of the licentious life of its protagonist. Moreover, prison life was portrayed in Cristóbal Chaves's *Relación de lo que pasa en la cárcel de Sevilla* (1585), some of whose sections do remind us of passages in English rogue pamphlets, and which was printed after *Lazarillo* but before *Guzmán*. Yet from the existence of these few works we should not derive the existence of a tradition of books focusing on the lives of low characters and their cheating practices, at least not to the extent to which such a tradition did exist in the British Isles, further fueled by the printing revolution, which made these works more readily available, thus shaping a readership that demanded and consumed them.

Furthermore, when picaresque novels did appear in Spain in the wake of the anonymous *Lazarillo* and Alemán's *Guzmán*, they could not be considered absolutely identical to English rogue pamphlets. Although both genres had several characteristics in common (a marginal protagonist and an atmosphere of criminality, to name but two) they differed greatly in tone and focus: while British pamphleteers aimed at uncovering the tricks and cheats of rogues in order to condemn their practices and raise public awareness about a social problems for which the rogues themselves were blatantly blamed, Spanish picaresque novelists made use of the autobiographical mode in order to offer a portrayal of contemporary society in which the *cuadro de costumbres* converges with sharp

criticism of a society in which social mobility is virtually denied to lowborn individuals. In short, rogue pamphlets have an agenda of harsh criticism against the figure of the rogue, invariably seen as a criminal, but hardly ever against the society that engenders him; picaresque novels give voice to the rogue, enabling him (or her) to select certain moments of his life to illustrate the hardships that he is made to undergo and to elicit running criticism of the current state of affairs. The critical stance of the pamphlets is placed on the criminal; that of picaresque novels is placed on the society that shapes the rogue, mostly seen from the focal point of his own perspective. Moreover, picaresque novels may give us an account of the cheating practices of the rogue as he attempts to survive in a hostile environment and strives to improve his situation within a society that precludes social mobility, but they hardly ever set out to classify the different types of rogues and their actions. In contrast, rogue pamphlets take on a markedly taxonomic approach, seeing the rogue as a case in study and describing and classifying their practices in an almost encyclopedic way. This is precisely why it would not be possible to label picaresque novels as *anatomies of roguery*, as Frank W. Chandler has done with rogue pamphlets, because the picture of the rogue that we obtain from both genres is markedly different. In order to attempt to understand why the rogue pamphlet was not cultivated in Spain, where the picaresque novel did thrive at around the same time, it is necessary to look first at the literary climate of sixteenth-century Spain immediately preceding the publication of *Lazarillo de Tormes* to find that works dealing with the underworld were conspicuously scarce. Then, it will be necessary to admit that the pictures of the rogue as the main protagonist of their texts were starkly different in the

case of the British pamphleteers and the Spanish novelists, and rarely did these two opposing views of the rogue come into contact.

Rarely, indeed, but far from never. As we will see, there are at least two Spanish picaresque novels that do show some points of contact with rogue pamphlets, both in content and structure: Miguel de Cervantes's exemplary novel *Rinconete y Cortadillo* (1613) and Dr. Carlos García's *La desordenada codicia de los bienes ajenos* [*The Inordinate Greed for the Goods of Others*] (1619) both follow or incorporate patterns that may be traced back to the British rogue pamphlet tradition, although it is true that in both cases, these novels constitute rather an exception to the rule, and therefore, we cannot talk about the existence of a rogue pamphlet tradition in Spanish literature. It is also quite significant that the only novels that may be said to be somewhat akin to the rogue pamphlet were written by a rather obscure author who lived a great part of his life in France, where he published his work (García), and by an author who was constantly striving to challenge the boundaries established between literary genres (Cervantes). In the discussion that follows in this chapter and the next, it is not my intention to suggest that Cervantes or García actually read and were aware of the role that rogue pamphlets played in their works;³⁷ rather, I will establish the similarities between these two novels and the British pamphlet tradition and argue that in both cases, the recurrence of elements from this form of popular fiction in these two works allows their authors to play with the established generic parameters of the picaresque novel, as well as with the expectations

³⁷ In the case of Dr. García, however, there may be grounds to believe that he was actually in contact with rogue pamphlets, inasmuch as the genre was cultivated in France, where he published and is supposed to have written his *Desordenada codicia*. Yet there is no conclusive historical evidence of this, and therefore, we cannot be absolutely certain. For more information on García and the rogue pamphlet tradition, see Massano 23-29.

that their readership might have about the picaresque novel as a genre. If these two works somehow escape the conventions of the picaresque genre, I suggest, it is in no small part because of their intertextual relationship with the English rogue pamphlet tradition.

A Fraternity of *Pícaros*: Miguel de Cervantes's *Rinconete y Cortadillo* (1613) and the English Rogue Pamphlet Tradition

Chronologically, the first of the two novels that I have chosen as case studies in order to explore the intertextual relationships established between the traditions of the Spanish picaresque novel and the English rogue pamphlet is Miguel de Cervantes's *Rinconete y Cortadillo*, one of the texts found in his collection of *Novelas ejemplares* (1613) but certainly written at least circa 1604, as evidenced by the slightly different version of the text that circulated in manuscript form and was included in the manuscript compiled by Francisco Porrás de la Cámara toward 1606 (El Saffar 30). When compared with preceding picaresque works such as the anonymous *Lazarillo*, Alemán's *Guzmán*, and Francisco López de Úbeda's *La pícaro Justina* (1605), Cervantes's novel comes across as a highly heterogeneous text, indeed quite a departure from the already established picaresque models. Throughout the decades, critics have debated at length whether *Rinconete y Cortadillo* belongs to the picaresque genre at all, and even those critics that do ascribe the novel to the picaresque form seem to be wary of very definite categorizations and admit to the difficulty of approaching the text from a generic standpoint. In this sense, William H. Clamurro notes, "I have always found *Rinconete y Cortadillo* one of the most accessible and enjoyable of the *Novelas ejemplares*. Yet at the same time, I find it the most vexing to fit into any meaningful pattern pertinent to the rest

of the collection” (72). Stanislav Zimic underscores that *Rinconete y Cortadillo* is not merely an imitation or parody of *Guzmán*, but rather an “advertencia crítica, moral sobre los potenciales efectos negativos de su lecture, de su representación de la experiencia picaresca, en lectores desprevenidos” (85). Ruth El Saffar attests to the generic indeterminacy of the novel by considering that it can be accurately described neither as a picaresque text nor as a *cuadro de costumbres* mirroring the behavior of the lower strata of Spanish Golden Age society, as other critics had done before her (30). Thomas R. Hart, while recognizing the picaresque nature of the work, prefers to concentrate on its grotesque setting and on Cervantes’s attempts to blur the barriers between the serious and the comic: “The interest of Cervantes’s contemporaries in *Rinconete y Cortadillo*,” Hart suggests, “probably lay in the novella’s capacity for provoking admiratio through its exotic setting and grotesque characters” (57). And in the introduction to the English translation of eight of the *Novelas ejemplares*, Lesley Lipson asserts that *Rinconete y Cortadillo* does show certain affinities with the picaresque but subsequently goes on to note that “[a]lthough Cervantes’s story is not a satire on the church in the manner of *Lazarillo de Tormes*, it nevertheless draws comic attention to the doctrinal and spiritual ignorance of the common man and the emptiness of religious observance” (xx).

Even from this brief survey of critical opinions about *Rinconete y Cortadillo*, we can infer that Cervantes’s novel is the source of many disagreements about its generic nature among *cervantistas* and literary critics. It is, indeed, an atypical text in that it at the same time embraces and eschews the conventions of picaresque fiction, which results in a highly unusual text that sometimes leans toward the genre and sometimes strays away from it. And this is so because, just as he does with the conventions of chivalric literature

in *Don Quixote*, Cervantes is writing *Rinconete y Cortadillo* with the tradition of preceding picaresque texts—mostly *Lazarillo de Tormes* and *Guzmán de Alfarache*—in mind, and his short exemplary novel is conceived against the backdrop of those works and constantly attempts to go beyond the constrictions of a very popular literary form with which his readers would be sufficiently acquainted. And, as I will discuss in this section of my study, Cervantes does so in part by bringing in elements of English rogue pamphlets and entering into an intertextual dialogue with a literary tradition that was scarcely known in early modern Spain. As we read *Rinconete y Cortadillo*, we promptly realize that it constantly departs from the picaresque conventions established in *Lazarillo de Tormes* and *Guzmán de Alfarache*, and the deeper we analyze the text, the more striking the differences become. The first difference that we encounter right away as the novel opens is the use of a third-person narrator in stark contrast with the autobiographical first-person narrator of other picaresque texts. As we will see, this is one of the elements that brings *Rinconete y Cortadillo* closer to the rogue pamphlet tradition, but more importantly, it is a practice that brings to the forefront the problematic nature of the narrator, as well as the importance of observation and the narratorial gaze in the work. In contrast with most picaresque novels, this is a text seen through a multiplicity of eyes: just like in rogue pamphlets, who observes whom within the fictional framework of the text will be of paramount importance, thus creating a work with multiple narratorial layers; that is, although there is only one narrator, the telling of the story is sometimes focalized through the observing gaze of some of the characters. Moreover, neither Rincón nor Cortado dwell too long on an account of the stories of their lives, much preferring to offer a brief, sketchy description of their personal experiences

up to the point in which they meet outside of the Molinillo inn on their way to Seville. In this respect, then, they stand in contrast with Lázaro, who writes his anonymous correspondent, Vuestra Merced, presenting a much lengthier account of his life “del principio, porque se tenga *entera noticia de mi persona*” (11; emphasis mine). Both Rincón and Cortado recount their lives, in typical picaresque fashion, from the beginning, but they can hardly be said to offer a complete, detailed account, choosing throughout the novel to remain as vague about their past and their origins as possible.

As far as plot goes, nothing much actually happens in *Rinconete y Cortadillo*, as opposed to the adventure- and misadventure-filled pages of other picaresque novels: upon their arrival in Seville and following their induction into Monipodio’s fraternity of rogues, both Rincón and Cortado—now rechristened by their boss as Rinconete and Cortadillo—seem to take a backseat to the multifarious events taking place at Monipodio’s headquarters; they become spectators of the dealings of other characters, who now claim center stage in the novel. In addition to this, from their own accounts of their life stories, it does not look as though Rinconete and Cortadillo, unlike Lázaro and Guzmán, have been forced into leading a life of roguery, but rather they seem to decide to live by their wits and enter a life of thieving and crime of their own accord, always determined to abandon this lifestyle whenever they grow tired of it. As Zimic rightly argues, the underworld depicted in *Rinconete y Cortadillo* is more literary than real; it is determined by an already existing literary tradition, the picaresque, that the two protagonists always have in mind and strive to live up to:

Rinconete y Cortadillo, enamorados de las novelescas aventuras picarescas, huyen de sus hogares, deseosos de emularlas fielmente con sus

andanzas, de moldear su vida, al menos por un rato, de acuerdo con las literarias del admirado Guzmán y sus congéneres, que de seguro considerarían como auténticas autobiografías, para confirmarse íntimamente la plausibilidad de su proyectado vagabundeo por el mundo. (87)

Their perception of the world around them decisively shaped by literary conventions, Rincón and Cortado echo Don Quixote's worldview in this respect: theirs cannot be accurately described as picaresque lives, but at most as picaresque interludes within two lives of emulation, which opens up a multitude of literary possibilities for Cervantes in his constant interplay with picaresque conventions. As an example, when the two boys first arrive in Seville, the narrator notes that they see six galleys, a sight that "les hizo suspirar, y aun temer el día que sus culpas les habían de traer a morar en ellas de por vida" (200). This reaction at the sight of the galleys may be explained by considering that Guzmán winds up as a galley-slave at the end of the second part of Alemán's account of his life. Similarly, the first occupation that they take up in Seville is that of *esportilleros*, basket-carriers, one that Guzmán also takes up at some point of his life. Like Don Quixote, then, Rincón and Cortado experience the world about them through literature, and Cervantes makes good use of elements (the galleys, the basket-carrier) that are commonplace in the universe of picaresque literature, elements whose meaning is highly charged with very definite connotations in this context. As readers of picaresque texts themselves, Rincón and Cortado recognize these elements as they appear before their eyes very much in the way in which contemporary readers of the exemplary novel also would owing to their acquaintance with these picaresque conventions.

Nonetheless, in *Rinconete y Cortadillo*, Cervantes constructs a text that goes beyond these literary conventions, and one of the mechanisms that he employs in order to achieve this is the introduction of elements culled from English rogue pamphlets. With their exposé of roguish types and their sensationalistic details, the pamphlets fulfill the double function of warning their readers about the dangers that they may encounter in the urban space—harshly condemning the rogues for their illegal practices in the process—and of entertaining the readers by means of the sundry stories and tales interspersed throughout the pamphlet. These texts, often presented as sociological studies of the urban underworld but invariably illustrated with amusing stories that blur the lines between the factual and the fictional, are both a source of instruction and of entertainment. In *Rinconete y Cortadillo*, Cervantes eschews the former and leans toward the latter, at the same time presenting the reader with a critical portrait of the society that allows for the existence of the figure of the *pícaro*. In the prologue to the reader that precedes his *Novelas ejemplares*, itself rather contradictory, Cervantes suggests that it is indeed possible to extract a moral lesson from each of the short novels that make up the collection, yet he overtly refuses to offer any hint as to what exactly those moral lessons are; rather, he goes on to assert that the primary function of the collection is to delight readers that open the volume seeking to occupy their leisure time:

Mi intento ha sido poner en la plaza de nuestra república una mesa de trucos, donde cada uno pueda llegar a entretenerse sin daño de barras; digo sin daño del alma ni del cuerpo porque los ejercicios honestos y agradables, antes aprovechan que dañan. Sí, que no sempre se está en los templos; no siempre se ocupan los oratorios; no siempre se asiste a los negocios, por calificados que sean. Horas hay de recreación, donde el afligido espíritu descanse. (52)

In many ways, these words echo the prefaces of many of the English rogue pamphlets, although any criticism of rogues and their tricks is understandably absent here. When read in the light of *Rinconete y Cortadillo*, these words become extraordinarily enlightening: Cervantes is creating a picaresque novel that aims at entertaining the reader, pushing aside all of the strongly moralistic elements that are present in *Guzmán de Alfarache*. Alemán famously inserted two prologues in his novel: the first one, addressed to “el vulgo,” those readers who “[n]o mira[a] ni repara[n] en las altas moralidades de tan divinos ingenios y solo [se] contenta[n] de lo que dijo el perro y respondió la zorra” (109), points out that it is possible to read the book purely for the delight derived from Guzmán’s adventures and misadventures; the second one, addressed to the “discreto lector,” the reader who “[podrá] moralizar según se [le] ofreciere” (112), stresses the need to go beyond the merely entertaining tales about Guzmán and profit from the long moralistic digressions interspersed throughout the novel.³⁸ Whereas Alemán favors this “discreto lector” who concentrates on the novel’s moral teachings, Cervantes is very outspoken in his embracing of the entertaining aspect of his exemplary novel. Unlike Alemán, Cervantes is writing a picaresque novel that eschews moral teachings—at least explicit moral teachings like those in *Guzmán*—and prefers to concentrate on amusing the reader, something at which most English pamphleteers also aimed in rather explicit ways. However, unlike rogue pamphlets, *Rinconete y Cortadillo*

³⁸ Alemán brilliantly conveys this idea in this second prologue by means of a play on the words *conseja* (the tale) and *consejo* (the moral extracted from the tale): “Mucho te digo que deseo decirte, y mucho dejé de escribir, que te escribo. Haz como leas lo que leyeres y no te rías de las conseja y se te pase el consejo; recibe las que te doy y el ánimo con que te los ofrezco: no los echas como barreduras al muladar del oluido. Mira que podrá ser escobilla de precio. Recoge, junta esa tierra, métela en el crisol de la consideración, dale fuego de espíritu, y te aseguro hallarás algún oro que te enriquezca” (111).

does not openly condemn the rogues themselves as much as the social structure at the heart of which roguish practices thrive.

Moreover, another element that brings *Rinconete y Cortadillo* closer to the English rogue pamphlet is the problematic role and place of the narrator in the narrative. In most pamphlets, the narrator—more often than not identified with the author—takes on the role of observer of social attitudes and practices, purporting to provide us with an accurate description of the everyday activities of the colorful roguish protagonists. The narrator treats each kind of rogue as a case study, often claiming that he has acquired his information through direct contact with the delinquents themselves. For instance, in his *Caveat*, Thomas Harman explains that the contents of his pamphlets originated in interviews that he conducted with real-life rogues that supposedly happened to stop by his dwelling almost on a daily basis: “Yet with fair flattering words, money, and good cheer, I have attained to the type by such as the meanest of them hath wandered these thirteen years, and most sixteen and some twenty and upward, and not without faithful promise made unto them never to discover their names or anything they shewed me” (62). Thus, a certain kind of ventriloquism emerges here: Harman, as the author who has access to mechanized modes of printing and disseminating material, appropriates himself of the rogue’s words, obtained under false pretense of not uncovering the source, and speaks *for* the rogue, but he does so in an attempt to criticize and condemn the rogue’s practices. The narrator, then, places himself in a rather peculiar situation: he is the outsider in a world of social outcasts, he places himself in the periphery, standing on the outside looking in and presenting himself as the privileged one that has been made privy to the hidden secrets of the underworld. However, the narrator represents a moral stance

that, albeit ambivalent, does not represent that of the rogue himself.³⁹ The narrator purports to use the rogue's words, yet in the process of uncovering the roguish tricks, the words of the rogue undeniably take on a meaning that is diametrically opposed to that of his original words. This process of displacement of meaning complicates the deep structure of rogue pamphlets, which prove to have several narrative layers: that is, the rogue supposedly confides in the author/narrator, discovering the inner workings of the underworld; then the narrator rephrases the rogue's words, and by so doing, his original words are decisively modified along the way. The narrator uses the rogue—whether it be a real-life criminal, as Harman claims in his *Caveat*, or not—as a sort of puppet in order to criticize and expose the covert social structure in which the rogue lives.

Similarly, in *Rinconete y Cortadillo*, Cervantes chooses to tell the story from a third-person narratorial perspective, yet this is only seemingly so. As the novel advances, we become aware that, although the story is still rendered by a third-person narrator, the point of view becomes gradually that of Rincón and Cortado, through whose eyes we gain access to the events in the story, especially after they arrive in Seville and become a part of Monipodio's fraternity. In *Rinconete y Cortadillo*, the point of view is focalized on the two rogues, who, just like the narrator in the pamphlets, are the outsiders within the picaresque underworld of Monipodio. As readers, we see what they see, we become privy to their initiation as rogues as they penetrate into a world that is new to them, hoping to emulate the literary feats of Guzmán, about which they most likely have read or heard. As we can see, the narratorial gaze is essential in this exemplary novel because it is full of observers (as we will soon discover, not only Rincón and Cortado take on this

³⁹ For a more in-depth discussion of this particular point, see Salzman 206.

role) that mediate between the facts in the story and the reader. Cervantes brings in elements of the pamphlet tradition, yet he accommodates them to his own purposes, modifying them when necessary.

Whereas the narrator in rogue pamphlets presents himself as an outsider who aims at analyzing and uncovering the inner workings of a world of crime that exists outside of legality, Rincón and Cortado's roles as rogues-to-be prevents us from considering them as total outsiders; rather, they are newcomers for whom this journey into the underworld will serve as a learning experience. This is precisely why Cervantes focalizes the narrative through them, using them as very engaging narrative tools: because of their role as newcomers, they experience at the same time a mixture of eager interest and a certain detachment from the world upon which they gaze, which undoubtedly links them with the figure of the narrator in rogue pamphlets. At the outset of the novel, the two youngsters seem to meet merely by chance at an inn on the road, someplace "en los fines de los famosos campos de Alcudia, como vamos de Castilla a la Andalucía" (191). The meeting between the two boys happens by chance, which is underscored by the use of the word *acaso*: "un día de los calurosos del verano se hallaron en ella [the inn] *acaso* dos muchachos de hasta edad de catorce a quince años" (191; emphasis mine). Therefore, it is a fateful encounter that occurs in a definite place, inasmuch as such an inn did exist where Cervantes situates it (Sieber, *Novelas* 191), yet the location is precisely an inn, "what in terms of symbolic geography is an intermediate zone" (Clamurro 75). That is to say, as Clamurro notes, the Molinillo inn is a place where people are in transit, an intermediate location existing between the starting and finishing points of a journey. The motif of the journey—whether it be physical or psychological—is a commonplace in

picaresque literature, yet in this case, fate acts upon the two boys' lives at a certain stop within their personal journeys. Their lives come into contact by chance, but as they discover that they share several interests and that their existences have many an element in common, the two rogues-to-be become so close as to be effectively confused with one another. In the earliest stages of the novel, the narrator makes every effort to describe them in such a way that their appearance does not seem to differ much: "ambos de buena gracia, pero muy descosidos, rotos y maltratados. Capa, no la tenían; los calzones eran de lienzo, y las medias, de carne" (191-92). Only certain garments (their hats, their footwear, and their shirts) allow us to make a difference between them, but in general both characters are cut from roughly the same cloth, and it would be easy to mistake one for the other. The indeterminacy of their identity is underscored by the fact that, at the outset of the novel, it still takes a while for the narrator to disclose their names: throughout most of the opening dialogue between the two boys, the narrator refers to them simply as "el mayor" ("the elder") and "el mediano" ("the younger") and refrains from using their names until after they have briefly related their life stories. Similarly, the same scarcity of information applies to both accounts of their prior life experiences: neither one of them offers a very detailed account of their lives, preferring to dwell on their thieving activities. Besides going against the picaresque convention of explaining the *pícaro*'s dubious origins and family ties in some detail, Rincón and Cortado's own accounts are noted for their similarity and only differ in each of the two boys' specific delinquent inclinations: Rincón seems to be adept at cheating at cards, while Cortado presents himself as a cutpurse. Once again, the two characters are portrayed as almost one and the same, sharing looks and backgrounds and only differing in the slightest details.

However, in these opening pages of the novel, Rincón and Cortado have not yet acquired their role as observers; rather, they stand at the beginning of a process that will lead them from being observed by other characters—and by the narrator—to becoming themselves the observers, a role that they will not take on until they penetrate into Monipodio's criminal fraternity in Seville. For the moment, Cervantes chooses to show off their abilities at card cheating and stealing, always unwittingly under the gaze of some other character. As an example, before leaving the inn and accompanying some horsemen to Seville, the two boys contrive to cheat a muleteer out of some money at card play, a passage that brings to mind some of the tricks exposed in Gilbert Walker's *Manifest Detection of the Most Vile and Detestable Use of Diceplay* and Robert Greene's *A Notable Discovery of Cozenage*. Rincón and Cortado emerge victorious from their first joint roguish venture, yet they do so under the attentive look of the innkeeper, "que les había estado oyendo su plática sin que ellos advirtiesen en ello" (198-99). This episode foreshadows the type of control of illegal activities that they will encounter in Seville, underlining that Rincón and Cortado have embarked on a learning experience during which they will find out that the success of their activities will depend greatly on their ability to perform them in a covert way, so as not to be discovered—and uncovered—like the characters in rogue pamphlets.

Rincón and Cortado's arrival in Seville marks their first entrance into the urban space, the chief *locus* of rogue pamphlets, as well as signaling the beginning of their gradual shift from being observed to becoming themselves the observers. As already noted, we acquire our first impression of the city from the perspective of the two boys, a mixture of wonder at its magnificence and of exciting recognition of certain elements

with which they would be familiar from literary depictions of them in popular picaresque texts:

Hecho esto, se fueron a ver la ciudad, y admiróles la grandeza y sumptuosidad de su mayor iglesia . . . Echaron de ver los muchos muchachos de la esportilla que por allí andaban; informáronse de uno de ellos qué oficio era aquél, y si era de mucho trabajo, y de qué ganancia. Un muchacho asturiano, que fue a quien le hicieron la pregunta, respondió que el oficio era descansado y de que no se pagaba alcabala, y que algunos días salía con cinco y con seis reales de ganancia, con que comía y bebía a cuerpo de rey, libre de buscar amo a quien dar fianzas y seguro de comer a la hora que quisiese, pues a todas lo hallaba en el más mínimo bodegón de toda la ciudad. (200)

The occupation in question is, of course, that of basket-carriers, with which the two boys would have been acquainted via their reading of picaresque texts, and thus, recognizing its value for all sorts of illegal endeavors, Rincón and Cortado take up that occupation, soon taking advantage of their new vocation to steal a sack of money and a handkerchief from an unsuspecting sexton. These two actions reveal that, in addition to the manual abilities required to relieve people of their belongings, their delinquent activities will benefit greatly from their noticeable linguistic prowess, and element that, just like in rogue pamphlets, will become paramount as the novel progresses. For instance, once Cortado eyes the sexton's handkerchief, he feels instantly compelled to steal it, and the method that he uses to accomplish this goal relies as much on his ability to steal as on the verbal maneuvers with which he distracts his victim:

[H]abiéndose ido el sacristán, Cortado le siguió y le alcanzó en las Gradass, donde le llamó y le retiró a una parte, y allí comenzó a decir tantos disparates, al modo de lo que llaman bernardinas, cerca del hurto y hallazgo de su bolsa, dándole buenas esperanzas, sin concluir jamás razón que comenzase, que el pobre sacristán estaba embelesado escuchándole. Y

como no acababa de entender lo que le decía, hacía que le replicase la razón dos y tres veces. Estábale mirando Cortado a la cara atentamente y no quitaba los ojos de sus ojos. El sacristán le miraba de la misma manera, estando colgado de sus palabras. Este tan grande embelesamiento dio lugar a Cortado que concluyese su obra, y sutilmente le sacó el pañuelo de la faldriquera. (205)

In its focus on language, this episode is somehow reminiscent of Howleglas's witty remarks, as well as of some of the quick answers found in the jest-book *Tales and Quick Answers*. But whereas Howleglas and the jest-book characters take advantage of the multiplicity of meaning of some words, here Cortado removes all meaning from the words that he utters, reducing language to a nonsensical succession of sounds and using it as an effective weapon that aids him in diverting the sexton's attention and achieving his delinquent goal. To this, Cortado adds a convenient dose of theatricality, which is usually absent in jest-books but very much a part of the exploits narrated in rogue pamphlets, seeking to deceive the sexton through both language and action: as a result, Cortado's victim "estaba embelesado escuchándole" and was "colgado de sus palabras." Cervantes demonstrates here that language, even when it is completely devoid of meaning, may be used as a means to charm and control an audience, an aspect that is also covered in most rogue pamphlets, which make the rogues' cant and lingo one of their primary objects of study. However adept at using language to serve their roguish purposes Rincón and Cortado may be, at this early stage of their stay in Seville, the two boys have not yet acquired their role as observers: this episode of the sack of money and the handkerchief does not go unnoticed, for this time their actions have been closely observed by another basket-carrier, a *mozo* that informs them in no uncertain terms that thieving in Seville is strictly regulated by a certain Monipodio, who, as his very name seems to imply, holds

the monopoly of crime in the city. Crime, then, does not appear to be forbidden in this new urban milieu; freelance crime, though, most certainly is, as we can infer from Rincón and Cortado's conversation with the *mozo*:

—Díganme, señores galanes: ¿voacedes son de mala entrada, o no?

—No entendemos esa razón, señor galán—respondió Rincón.

—¿Que no entrevan, señores murcios?—respondió el otro.

—No somos de Teba ni de Murcia—dijo Cortado—. Si otra cosa quiere, dígala; si no, váyase con Dios.

—¿No lo entienden?—dijo el mozo—. Pues yo se lo daré a entender, y a beber con una cuchara de plata: quiero decir, señores, si son vuestas mercedes ladrones. Mas no sé para qué les pregunto esto, pues sé ya que lo son. (206)

Besides being the first encounter of the two knaves with the idea of an organized criminal underworld, a society created in order to look after the interests of all sorts of criminals—an idea with which they would not be necessarily acquainted from their reading of *Lazarillo de Tormes* and *Guzmán de Alfarache*—this passage brings once more to the forefront the novel's emphasis on language. If just a few lines before it was the sexton that did not understand Cortado's intentionally nonsensical use of language, now it is Rincón and Cortado that fail to grasp the meaning of certain words and expressions used by the *mozo*, such as *ser de mala entrada* ("to be a thief"), *entrevan* ("understand"), and *murcio* ("thief"). Disconcerted by the basket-carrier's use of this unknown lexicon, Cortado attempts to evade the question with a witty answer ("No somos de Teba ni de Murcia") only to find that this is not as successful with the *mozo* as it had been with the sexton. The exchange tellingly ends with the basket-carrier's

translation of the new vocabulary, which finally enables communication between the three characters. This lack of knowledge of the *germanía*, the specific linguistic code of the underworld, immediately marks Rincón and Cortado as outsiders, as newcomers, as rogues-to-be: for them, entering Monipodio's fraternity of rogues will become a linguistic journey, and the acquisition of the language of the organization, a secret code with which they are not acquainted, is a key moment in their apprenticeship. As Clamurro has most insightfully pointed out, this basket-carrier can be considered an interpreter of sorts: "the *mozo* takes them into a new discursive or linguistic realm. The more experienced *mozo* in effect serves as an interpreter or educator for Rincón and Cortado. The initiations of language are a primary function of this transitional passage. Each new detail about this new world prompts curiosity and questions. To enter is to be forced to learn" (79). This is so because Rincón and Cortado's experience with the underworld has been limited to a mostly literary acquaintance with it; their encounter with the *mozo* may be seen as their very first contact with a scenario akin to that about which they had been reading. Inasmuch as the entrance into Monipodio's underworld may be described as a learning process, it is essential to first acquire the linguistic code that will allow the two boys access to knowledge about Monipodio's society. As they accompany the basket-carrier to his boss's headquarters, they are introduced to several of the most important terms that they need to know in order to make sense of and survive in this new realm into which they are beginning to penetrate. Just as their previous experience of roguish life had occurred through their reading of picaresque novels—and therefore through a literary representation of it by means of language—their first taste of roguish life outside the pages of the novels they have read also happens through language, with the *mozo* offering

definitions of the most commonly used *germanía* words in plain, everyday terms: “Sepan voacedes que *cuatrero* es ladrón de bestias; *ansia* es el tormento; *roznos* los asnos; hablando con perdón; *primer desconcierto* es las primeras vueltas de cordel que da el verdugo” (208). Not only is this a defining moment in Rincón and Cortado’s apprenticeship as rogues, but it also marks their shift from being observed by other characters to acquiring their role as observers of the events happening at Monipodio’s headquarters.

While the two boys are learning about the vocabulary of the underworld, Cervantes uses them as mediators between this underworld and the reader in a manner not much unlike that of rogue pamphlets, most of which also aim at exposing the linguistic code of criminals. Thus, we need only remember that Harman’s *Caveat* includes a list detailing the vocabulary of thieves, “wherewith they buy and sell the common people as they pass through the country” (113), as well as several examples of coded sentences translated into plain, regular English. Moreover, in his *Notable Discovery of Cozenage* and *The Second Part of Cony-Catching*, Robert Greene follows Harman’s example, featuring similar tables “wherein is discovered the nature of every term, being proper to none but to the professors thereof” (135). Pamphleteers, then, tend to present language as a dangerous weapon, as a powerful tool used by rogues in order to perform their tricks and cheats. The remarkable linguistic ability of rogues places them in a very advantageous position regarding their victims, and the pamphleteers’ decoding of their covert lingo is explicitly meant to impair this linguistic superiority by shedding some light into the darkness of their vocabulary. Similarly, as Rincón and Cortado become acquainted with words such as *cuatrero*, *ansia*, and *roznos*, their hidden meaning

is uncovered for the reader, and the two boys emerge, therefore, as mediators between the secret language of the underworld and the reader. It is through them that Cervantes conveys his vast knowledge of *germanía*, yet as similar to that of pamphleteers as this practice appears to be, it actually serves a markedly different purpose than in rogue pamphlets. Whereas pamphleteers seek to expose the secret language of the underworld in order to warn the reader and hopefully render dangerous rogues powerless, Cervantes intends Rincón and Cortado's acquisition of the language of Monipodio's fraternity merely as a necessary step forward in their development as rogues: from outsiders to initiates, and from objects of the observation of others to observers themselves. We have already seen the two knaves use language as a weapon against the sexton, and they will use it again while in Monipodio's hideaway, but nowhere does Cervantes include a word of warning to the reader about the potentially dangerous implications of Rincón and Cortado's use of language. Unlike rogue pamphlets, *Rinconete y Cortadillo* is not presented as a self-fashioned sociological study; rather, Cervantes is definitely more interested in exploring the comic and sometimes grotesque possibilities offered by language.

As we will soon discover, while at Monipodio's courtyard, Rincón and Cortado prove to be much more adept at using language than the rest of the members of the fraternity, its leader included, which automatically puts them in a position of superiority and underscores their detachment from their peers from the very outset. From the moment that they set foot in Monipodio's hideaway, they become somewhat learned observers of a world that they perceive as ridiculous. As readers, the account of the goings-on within the criminal brotherhood to which we have access is filtered through

Rincón and Cortado's eyes, which will decisively influence our image of Monipodio and his grotesque entourage of whores, pimps, cutpurses, cardsharps, and petty thieves. Even before Monipodio himself grants them audience and interviews them, the description of the building that the crime kingpin uses as headquarters for his illegal activities is based on what the two boys happen to see in this new, alien environment:

Miraban los mozos atentamente las alhajas de la casa en tanto que bajaba el señor Monipodio; y viendo que tardaba, se atrevió Rincón a entrar en una sala baja, de dos pequeñas que en el patio estaban, y vio en ella dos espadas de esgrima y dos broqueles de corcho, pendientes de cuatro clavos, y una arca grande, sin tapa ni cosa que la cubriese, y otras tres esteras de enea tendidas por el suelo. En la pared frontera estaba pegada a la pared una imagen de Nuestra Señora, destas de mala estampa, y más abajo pendía una esportilla de palma, y, encajada en la pared, una almofia blanca, por do coligió Rincón que la esportilla servía de cepo para limosna, y la almofia, de tener agua bendita, y así era la verdad. (209-210)

As they gradually step back and conform to their role as observers, Rincón and Cortado not only gaze at the underworld around them and at the characters who inhabit it, but they also make keen guesses at what may be hidden underneath the surface. At this early stage, though, they are still explorers of the new setting, still in awe of the new reality that they are discovering. It will not take them too long to make the necessary connections between this concealed criminal society and the everyday social order that exists outside of it in Seville; as a start, however, the previous quotation already seems to suggest that Rincón may be aware of the close connection of Monipodio's fraternity and their roguish practices with established outside institutions such as the Catholic Church. These are criminals that, despite the illegality and amorality of their professions, present themselves as pious citizens who attempt not to overlook their religious duties. Social

satire is evident in the insistence with which Cervantes links criminal types with religion, and this is an aspect that marks an important difference between *Rinconete y Cortadillo* and typical rogue pamphlets, whose intention is hardly ever to rehearse any kind of social criticism of the Church or the government, but rather to show that rogues are responsible for the ills of contemporary British society.

Nevertheless, as Monipodio descends from his upstairs quarters to make his first acquaintance of Rincón and Cortado, we are presented with yet another description filtered through the eyes of the two newcomers, one that closely follows the pattern found in descriptions of roguish types from the pens of John Awdeley, Thomas Harman, and Robert Greene in their rogue pamphlets. In the eyes of the two boys, the supreme ruler of the Seville underworld appears to be

de edad de cuarenta y cinco a cuarenta y seis años, alto de cuerpo, moreno de rostro, cecijunto, barbinegro y muy espeso; los ojos, hundidos. Venía en camisa, y por la abertura de delante descubría un bosque: tanto era el vello que tenía en el pecho. Traía cubierta una capa de bayeta casi hasta los pies, en los cuales traía unos zapatos enchancletados, cubríanle las piernas unos zaragüelles de lienzo, anchos y largos hasta los tobillos; el sombrero era de los de la hampa, campanudo de copa y tendido de falda; atravesábale un tahalí por espalda y pechos, a do colgaba una espada ancha y corta, a modo de las del perrillo: las manos eran cortas, pelosas, y los dedos gordos, y las uñas, hembras y remachadas; las piernas no se le parecían; pero los pies eran descomunales, de anchos y juanetudos. En efeto, él representaba el más rústico y disforme bárbaro del mundo. (211)

There is no doubt that this physical description of Monipodio is much more thorough than those that we find in rogue pamphlets, which are more interested in the rogues' actions than in their physical appearance. In fact, Awdeley hardly ever offers an account of the appearance of the different types of rogues that he describes in the *Fraternity*:

perhaps due to the brevity of this work, Awdeley concentrates on roguish practices. He is more interested in what rogues *do* than in what they *look like*. In his attempt to go beyond the scope of Awdeley's tract, however, Harman sometimes includes information about the physical aspect of certain kinds of rogues in his *Caveat*, especially in those cases in which the criminals make use of their outward appearance as an integral part of their deceptions. For instance, when describing the type of criminal labeled simply as *a rogue*, Harman warns his readers about their clothes and countenance, which are intended to trick honest citizens into giving them alms. These rogues are described as

having a kercher, as white as my shoes tied about their head, with a short staff in their hand, halting, although they need not, requiring alms of such as they meet or to what house they shall come. But you may easily perceive by their color that they carry both health and hypocrisy about them, whereby they get gain when others want that cannot feign and dissemble. (74)

Likewise, in the chapter devoted to counterfeit cranks—i.e., vagabonds that pretend to be gravely ill in order to beg for money or clothes—Harman makes it a point to depict their clothing, or as is the case here, the lack thereof, used as a means to deceive and take advantage of others: “Many of these do go without writings, and will go half naked, and look most piteously. And if any clothes be given them, they immediately sell the same, for wear it they will not, because they would be the more pitied” (85). Harman's occasional concern with the physical appearance of rogues actually responds to the purpose of his *Caveat*, which is to render useless the criminal practices of rogues. Therefore, it sometimes becomes necessary to scratch the surface of reality, to warn his readers against the deceptive nature of physical appearance so that they will not be taken in by the rogues' carefully crafted deceptions. The main idea here, of course, is that reality

may be more complex than it may seem at first sight, and so Harman's warning will be much more effective if, besides concentrating on the rogues' actions, the work offers hints as to what the readers may find upon their first encounter with one of these criminals. Thus, Harman's portraits of the different types of individuals that populate this urban underworld feature much more of a visual component than those of Awdeley. And Greene, whose 1591-1592 rogue pamphlets borrow a great deal from Harman's *Caveat*, closely follows in Harman's footsteps. On the contrary, rather than paying attention to Monipodio's actions and utterances, which will become much more prominent as the text unfolds, Cervantes prefers to introduce this lord of misrule of the Seville underworld by offering a detailed physical description. This portrait of Monipodio, focalized through the eyes of Rincón and Cortado, is far from a faithful depiction of the typical rogue, but it is distorted and intensified by means of the use of hyperboles and grotesque elements. For instance, Cervantes dwells on physical characteristics that are meant to shock the reader, such as the inordinate amount of chest hair ("por la abertura de delante descubría un bosque: tanto era el vello que tenía en el pecho"), the unusual size of his feet due to sickness ("los pies erna descomunales, de anchos y juanetudos"), and his noticeably sunken eyes ("los ojos, hundidos"). Monipodio's portrait ends with an observation that sums up the grotesque nature of this central character: "En efeto, él representaba el más rústico y disforme bárbaro del mundo" (211). Distortion, exaggeration, and grotesque intensification dominate this first portrait of Monipodio, suggesting that he, as the ruler of this fraternity of criminals, is a grotesquely intensified parody of the roguish characters found in picaresque texts. Cervantes is again consciously parodying the generic conventions of the picaresque: the gang of petty thieves and prostitutes with which

Rincón and Cortado have come into contact will be, just like its leader, a distorted, deformed version of the underworld found in both picaresque novels and rogue pamphlets. The irony, as we will see, is that this grotesque underworld shares common characteristics with the regular Seville society that lies outside of it, which once again underscores Cervantes's central idea: it is not the rogues themselves that should be criticized and punished, but the social structure that allows the underworld to exist and that even takes advantage of its existence if need be.

As mentioned before, upon entering Monipodio's brotherhood, Rincón and Cortado gradually acquire the role of observers, and all descriptions of the locales and of the actions are filtered through their point of view, although the story continues to be narrated from a third-person perspective. Curiously, immediately after this first description of Monipodio, the narratorial voice explicitly enters the narration to observe that he has overlooked to mention a small detail in his rendering of this scene:

“Olvidábase me de decir que así como Monipodio bajó, al punto todos los que aguardándole estaban le hicieron una profunda y larga reverencia” (212; emphasis mine).

This not only serves to reinforce the slightly more complex, non-autobiographical narrative structure, but it also marks Rincón and Cortado's definitive move into the role of observers of the actions of the rest of the characters within the fraternity inasmuch as it is the last time that the narrator's voice explicitly intrudes upon the narration. This shift will become final during their first interview with Monipodio, one of the key moments in the exemplary novel. At first sight, the objective of this early meeting is merely to acquaint the two youngsters with the laws and codes that sustain Monipodio's organization, as well as classifying Rincón and Cortado according to their primary talents

for criminality. This idea of systematizing the different kinds of rogues according to their abilities is, of course, a primary concern of most rogue pamphlets;⁴⁰ in their attempt to offer a detailed picture of the criminal underworld, these works scrutinize their subject matter very much in the same way that Monipodio inquires into the nature of Rincón and Cortado's practices. In both cases, the process renders the rogue much more manageable, creating a more defined identity for him: in the case of the pamphlets, readers become acquainted with a prototype of rogue with which they were not previously familiarized; in the case of the exemplary novel, Monipodio brings the newcomers into his organization and attempts to turn them into a part of his establishment, making them fit into the social order that he has created. However, it quickly becomes apparent that the two youngsters do not easily conform to Monipodio's social order inasmuch as they seem to be slightly overqualified for the job. This, of course, allows Cervantes to delve into both literary and social criticism, both markedly humorous and parodic. Following the pattern already established when the two boys met outside the Molinillo inn, Cervantes again declines to conform to picaresque conventions and chooses not to relate the life stories of the protagonists. Thus, when inquired about his parents, origins, and profession by Monipodio, Rincón is nonchalantly cautious and vague in his reply: "El ejercicio ya está dicho, pues venimos ante vuestra merced; la patria no me parece de mucha importancia decilla, ni los padres tampoco, pues no se ha de hacer información para recibir algún hábito honroso" (212). It becomes clear, then, that these are *pícaros* who

⁴⁰ Coincidentally or not, the title of Awdeley's tract is *Fraternity of Vagabonds*, and Monipodio's organization, sometimes referred to as a *cofradía*, strangely echoes Awdeley's title. Furthermore, Dr. Carlos García, in his *Desordenada codicia*, describes the different types of rogues closely following the pattern of rogue pamphlets, especially of Harman's *Caveat*. In a very eloquent final chapter, García also presents his rogues as being organized into a heavily regulated fraternity.

live primarily in the present, and who, unlike Lázaro and Guzmán, do not believe that much may be gained from offering accounts of their past. Whereas Lázaro carefully selects episodes from his past in order to explain and justify his present situation at the time of writing his life story, Rincón chooses to conceal his past and concentrate on his present, and he is empowered to do so by the natural wit that his mastery of language affords him. Rincón and Cortado's first interview with Monipodio is rendered as a parody of the learning process that rogues undergo in picaresque novels: rather than a learning experience, this quickly becomes a mockery of a ceremony of initiation, during which Rincón and Cortado relate their criminal abilities to Monipodio (i.e., cutting purses and cheating at cards) and in turn, the ruler supreme of the fraternity rechristens them before granting them full membership of the organization: "Pues de aquí en adelante ... quiero y es mi voluntad que vos, Rincón, os llaméis *Rinconete*, y vos, Cortado, *Cortadillo*, que son nombres que asientan como de molde a vuestra edad y a nuestras ordenanzas" (212). This baptism of the two newcomers is an essential component of their initiation because, on the one hand, their newly acquired names identify them as members of Monipodio's organization by pointing out their criminal assignments within the fraternity, and on the other hand—and perhaps more importantly—they mark the moment in which they finally take on their new role as observers of the action within the narrative framework of the novel. As Edward H. Friedman has observed, "Monipodio's changing the names to *Rinconete* and *Cortadillo* emphasizes the sense of identity vital to the ethical transformation which incorporation into the *confradía* implies" ("Imposition" 208). Throughout the text, there is no doubt that Rincón and Cortado's identity is in constant movement, and it is precisely the instability of their identity that allows them to assume a

different persona depending on the different scenarios that they encounter. As Ruth El Saffar has noted, this underlines the narrative complexity of a text that has several narratorial levels. According to El Saffar, then,

the narrator who introduces the work retires to the background, allowing Rincón to represent him in inviting Cortado to emerge from his solitude; Rincón and Cortado subsequently shed their separate identities and fuse into a single character who represents a thief. When the thief is recognized as such, the character again sheds the role. In all cases an identity is first presented and then superseded by a character who always measures the distance between the role he is playing and his actual nonfictional identity. The movement is toward greater and greater skill in manipulating the mask and hiding the true self. (38-39)

Indeed, hiding their true self is precisely what the protagonists of British rogue pamphlets attempt to do, either by donning a specific kind of clothing apparel or by making use of a covert linguistic code, and the main aim of pamphleteers is to expose whatever it is that the rogues are trying to hide. In the case of *Rinconete y Cortadillo*, Cervantes uses this multiplicity of identities as a means to go beyond the typical autobiographical mode of narration found in the picaresque genre, presenting the reader with the third-person narrative of the adventures of two rogues whose separate identities gradually fuse into a single one and who, upon entering Monipodio's fraternity, move from a position in which they are observed by the narratorial voice and by some of the other characters into a new position from which they become the observers of the underworld around them. Like the authors of rogue pamphlets, Rincón and Cortado acquire a mediating role between the facts in the story and the reader, who has access to those facts through the narrator but always through the mediation of the two knaves, whose identities are now indistinct.

In such a context, their mastery of language becomes their primary resource to reinvent themselves and to maintain what El Saffar has considered a “delicate position as both observers and participants” (37). It is certainly no coincidence that the section of the novel that takes place in Monipodio’s courtyard is constantly punctuated by so many instances of wordplay and linguistic games. Both Rincón and Cortado take great delight in showing off their linguistic prowess, which ironically goes unnoticed by everyone but themselves, and which actually proves their intellectual superiority within the fraternity of criminals from the outset. As an example, following his christening of the two newcomers, Monipodio launches into a long speech full of malapropisms and lexical errors, which quickly becomes the object of Rincón’s blatant mockery:

—Por cierto—dijo Rinconete, ya confirmado con este nombre—que es obra digna del altísimo y profundísimo ingenio que hemos oído decir que vuesa merced, señor Monipodio, tiene. Pero nuestros padres aún gozan de la vida; si en ella les alcanzáremos, daremos luego noticia a esta felicísima y abogada confraternidad, para que por sus almas se les haga ese naufragio o tormenta, o ese adversario que vuesa merced dice, con la solemnidad y pompa acostumbrada, si ya no es que se hace mejor con *popa y soledad*, como también apuntó vuesa merced en sus razones. (213)

Here, Rincón is commenting on Monipodio’s verbal errors—*naufragio* instead of *sufragio*, and *adversario* instead of *aniversario*, among others—in a humorous, facetious way, thus signaling that, in spite of his power, Monipodio is several steps beneath the two boys intellectually. It seems clear, then, that language is yet another aspect that adds to the grotesque nature of Monipodio and his domain. This mastery of language also affords Rincón and Cortado certain privileges (they are automatically spared the mandatory one-year period as novices), as well as allowing them to retire comfortably to the background and gaze at this new world that unfolds in front of them. In fact, despite

El Saffar's assertion that Rincón and Cortado are both observers and participants, the truth is that they participate very little in the action while at Monipodio's *patio*; it would seem much more appropriate to consider them, as William Clamurro rightfully does, "spectators, listeners and occasional commentators upon the actions that ensue. ... [T]hey are curious visitors, almost marginal onlookers" (80-81). They are, indeed, marginal figures within Monipodio's social order precisely because of the privileged position that their skillful use of language allows them to occupy. Thus, Cervantes's grotesque depiction of the Seville underworld becomes even more intensified when focalized through the unified perspective of two newcomers who marvel at what they see in Monipodio's headquarters in constant and utter disbelief.

Even a quick, superficial look at the goings-on within Monipodio's fraternity may go a long way to explain the possible reason why the two boys seem to marvel constantly at what they see: quite surprisingly, the underworld that manifests itself in front of Rincón and Cortado's eyes bears an uncanny resemblance to the regular, respectable society that lies outside of it. Both are indeed governed by roughly the same rules, although those in Monipodio's organization are completely inverted and, like Monipodio himself, grotesquely intensified. The Seville underworld is a realm populated by criminals, prostitutes, and outlaws whose names—just like those of Rincón and Cortado—are fashioned according to the type of illegal practice that they have mastered.⁴¹ As Roberto González Echevarría has observed, "[Monipodio's] brotherhood

⁴¹ The genealogy of the characters, an essential aspect of chivalric works that had been already parodied in picaresque novels such as *Lazarillo de Tormes* and *Guzmán de Alfarache*, is absolutely irrelevant here; the rogues within Monipodio's fraternity are not valued for where they come from but for their criminal abilities, for what they can do,

is an alternative society, a counter-utopia. ... In that utopia people and things acquire new names according to their features, which are contingent, the product of accidents, like violence and sickness” (200). It is certainly a society unto its own, a society whose inverted rules parody those of the respectable society of Seville, a society that has been turned upside down; yet it soon becomes clear that the members of Monipodio’s brotherhood, their illegal occupations excepted, spend their time doing basically the same sort of things as any regular citizen of Seville. Thus, as Rincón and Cortado retreat into their new role as observers, they witness, for example, the violent domestic quarrels of the prostitute Cariharta and her lover and pimp Repolido, who mercilessly beats her when she fails to produce the amount of money that he had expected. They also witness and take part in an improvised banquet, after which some of the rogues bring out some makeshift instruments and launch into a spirited ad-libbed musical performance. And, more importantly perhaps, Rincón and Cortado do not fail to notice the ambiguous relationship of these thieves, thugs, and prostitutes with their religious beliefs: these are criminals who, despite their unholy ways of earning a living, are concerned with fulfilling their religious duties by attending church services and paying to light candles. Toward the end of the novel, Rincón humorously reflects on the absurdity of the concept of religion favored by the member of the fraternity: “sobre todo, le admiraba la seguridad que tenían y la confianza de irse al cielo con no faltar a sus devociones, estando tan llenos de hurtos,

and this is reflected in their names. For instance, just as the name of Cortadillo refers to his skills as a cutpurse, that of the prostitute Gananciosa possibly makes reference to the lucrative nature of her profession, and that of Maniferro, a pimp with an iron hand, reminds everyone of the occasion when he lost one of his hands as punishment: “y el de Maniferro era porque traía una mano de hierro, en lugar de otra que le habían cortado por justicia” (219). The identities of these rogues depend primarily on their practices and their outward appearance, not on their base family origins.

y de homicidios, y de ofensas de Dios” (240). Once again, Cervantes’s grotesque portrayal of the Seville underworld serves as a vehicle for social commentary on the respectable society that lies outside of it; in this case, Cervantes’s criticism is directed against the institution of the Catholic Church, which has turned religion into a merely formal pursuit, devoid of any real meaning, and which is more concerned with monetary retribution than with the spiritual well-being of its followers. Indeed, for Monipodio’s brothers and sisters, as Alexander A. Parker has noted, “[r]eligion ... has become superstition, a danger to which all institutional religion is liable” (30).

Yet again, Cervantes’s humorously distorted portrait of the criminal underworld supersedes the typical purpose of rogue pamphlets: not only does the exemplary novel subject the inner workings of Monipodio’s fraternity and its members to scrutiny, the way British pamphleteers do, but this scrutiny is intended as both a parody and a criticism of the regular society that engenders the rogue. But Cervantes even decides to go one step beyond, as the novel also exposes the indelible connections of this criminal brotherhood with the institutions of the outside world, revealing that, in many ways, both parties need each other in order to subsist. In this respect, Jesús G. Maestro’s keen observations seem particularly enlightening:

El espacio de Monipodio es una organización social efectiva, en la que las fuerzas del orden son ladrones profesionales y organizados. Los delincuentes funcionan como una red policial, alternativa y combinada con ciertos alguaciles y con determinados nobles que solicitan sus servicios. Es un mundo al revés, en el que el ladrón hace la guardia custodiando la salud física y el orden moral del gremio. . . . [L]os delincuentes son devotos, religiosos, misericordiosos. No forman una banda cualquiera, sino una hermandad, esto es, una cofradía, un grupo ejemplar de devotos criminales. En absoluto son enemigos de la Iglesia, donde siempre podrán encontrar acomodo, si llega el caso, acogiéndose a sagrado. (*Ascuas* 96-

Indeed, Rincón and Cortado watch as members of the church, the nobility, and even the law enforcement system wander in and out of Monipodio's headquarters seeking their criminal services and requesting different kinds of favors. For example, at some point an *alguacil* (i.e., some kind of sheriff or constable) comes in and inquires about the whereabouts of a sack of money and a handkerchief allegedly stolen from one of his friends, a sexton, demanding that it be immediately returned. As it turns out, these are exactly the same items stolen by Cortado while briefly working as a basket-carrier upon the two boys' arrival in Seville. Rincón and Cortado resolve to return the purloined goods to comply with Monipodio's rules: the crime kingpin authorizes this return noting that "[m]ás disimula este alguacil en un día que nosotros le podemos ni solemos dar en ciento" (218). The agreement between Monipodio and this representative of the city's law enforcement structure according to which the *alguacil* grants immunity to the fraternity's illegal practices in exchange for certain favors underscores the corruption that is rampant amid the institutions of respectable society. Similarly, toward the end of the novel, a gentleman enters the scene seeking audience with Monipodio and interrupting the ongoing merry-making after the banquet to express his dissatisfaction at the way in which the fraternity has taken care of certain business for which the gentleman had previously paid a considerable amount of money. Apparently, Chiquiznaque, one of Monipodio's underlings, had been instructed to slash the face of one of the gentleman's enemies but had failed to carry out the task satisfactorily. Chiquiznaque's ridiculous explanation for his failure to comply with the task emphasizes the grotesque nature of the dealings that take place in this deformed underworld: "Digo que viendo que en la

estrechez y poca cantidad de aquel rostro no cabían los puntos propuestos, porque no fuese mi ida en balde, di la cuchillada a un lacayo suyo, que a buen seguro que la pueden poner por mayor de marca” (233). These words, while meant to elicit laughter due to their nonsensical nature, are proof that members of the nobility also resort to the illegal services of the underworld when it comes to dealing with shady affairs. The relationship between the society upside down ruled by Monipodio and the respectable society that exists outside of it, in fact, may be most accurately described as one of symbiosis: through all kinds of favors and services to individuals belonging to the respectable society of Seville, Monipodio and his brothers in crime increase their dividends and perpetuate their own existence. In the eyes of the society on the outside, Monipodio’s fraternity becomes a commodity, an invaluable resource of which to make use when circumstances call for it, an aspect that is paramount for the survival of the organization. Therefore, Cervantes’s depiction of this urban underworld, his construction of a grotesque, deformed image of the rogue through the lens of fiction becomes a vehicle to denounce the moral decay and corruption of the prevailing social order of Golden Age Spain. Just like any of the outside social institutions, the brotherhood keeps records of all its dealings in a *libro de memoria*, a logbook wherein are recorded all the slashes that are to be inflicted on unsuspecting victims on a weekly basis, as well as the earnings that will derive from such a practice. Again, this is an outrageous inversion of an element from the outside world meant as a parodic intensification. In the words of William Clamurro, the logbook is an element that “parallels and parodies the legal system of the respectable, law-abiding sectors of society from which Monipodio and his minions are supposedly separate and yet ... with which they are simultaneously very much in league” (91).

Indeed, Monipodio's fraternity is contained and harbored by the city, without which it certainly would not have a reason to exist; once again, it becomes clear that crime in Seville seems to be tolerated as long as it remains enclosed in a clearly defined space where it is easier to control and access anytime that its services may be needed. As Rincón and Cortado soon realize, this is a space in which freelance crime is forbidden, where the freedom for which they crave is actually curtailed, and therefore, by the end of the novel, we get an inkling that the two youngsters do not intend to stay within Monipodio's jurisdiction for too long: "[Rincón] propuso en sí de aconsejar a su compañero no durasen mucho en aquella vida tan perdida y tan mala, tan inquieta, y tan libre y disoluta" (240). Interestingly, Cervantes ends *Rinconete y Cortadillo* rather abruptly stating that there are more facts to the story than those divulged in the text. In what appears to be a subtly critical commentary on the impossibility of autobiographical picaresque novels such as *Lazarillo de Tormes* and *Guzmán de Alfarache* to relate the end of the *pícaro*'s life, the text concludes in a manner that resonates with rogue pamphlets: "y así se deja para otra ocasión contar ... otros sucesos de aquellos de la infame academia, que todos ... podrán servir de ejemplo y aviso a lost que [los] leyeren" (240). However, unlike Mateo Alemán, Cervantes never continues the adventures of Rincón and Cortado, and unlike Thomas Harman, he never provides any sort of caveat or warning in the end.

As we have seen in the course of this chapter, then, *Rinconete y Cortadillo* is, in many respects, an atypical, heterogeneous text, one that has many elements in common with previous picaresque novels such as *Lazarillo de Tormes* and *Guzmán de Alfarache*, but also one that departs from such models, going beyond the typical generic parameters

of the picaresque as established up to the moment in which it was written. *Rinconete y Cortadillo* is Cervantes's attempt at transcending the limitations imposed by the notion of a pre-established literary genre. In this exemplary novel, Cervantes features elements that are akin to those found in British rogue pamphlets, presenting a fictionalized exposé of the criminal underworld of Seville and the illegal practices of its inhabitants. What makes Cervantes's novel unique among other examples of Spanish picaresque fiction is that he is able to appreciate from a literary perspective the advantages that certain sensational features from the rogue pamphlet tradition could offer to a text that, nevertheless, maintains the emphasis on social criticism that had characterized the picaresque tradition in Spain from the second half of the sixteenth century onward. As the story advances, it becomes clear that Cervantes is less interested in uncovering roguish tricks, which is the main aim of British pamphleteers, than in manipulating certain elements taken from the rogue pamphlet tradition in order to create an underworld that is a grotesque inversion of the legitimate society that lies outside of it. Throughout *Rinconete y Cortadillo*, Cervantes resorts to humor, parody, hyperbole, and similar elements, thereby conveying a fictional underworld that, far from being dangerous, comes across as grotesque and ridiculous. This perhaps explains why González Echevarría considers that in this novel Cervantes offers a "positive portrayal of Monipodio and his criminal brotherhood" (199). Unlike British pamphleteers, Cervantes never directs the full force of his criticism against rogues and their practices, he never advocates for their banishment and merciless punishment; rather, the novel denounces the corruption of a society that allows for the existence of the underworld and even shamelessly seeks out its illegal services when necessary. What results, of course, is a different, very intriguing text that combines

elements of form, content, and style from both the Spanish and the British rogue traditions to move beyond merely commercial and social purposes into a decidedly literary and more artistically complex endeavor.

CHAPTER IV

A PERSONAL INTERVIEW WITH THE UNDERWORLD: DR. CARLOS GARCÍA'S *LA DESORDENADA CODICIA DE LOS BIENES AGENOS* (1619)

When in 1599, some forty-five years after the publication of the anonymous *Lazarillo de Tormes*, widely considered to be the first Spanish picaresque novel, Mateo Alemán took some features from his predecessor to compose *Guzmán de Alfarache*, he effectively codified the basic elements of the genre. As most readers—and most importantly, other authors—soon realized, the picaresque genre, which, metaphorically speaking, had been lying dormant for several decades after the initial success of *Lazarillo de Tormes*, basically consisted of a first-person account of the life of a *pícaro*, usually presented in the manner of a memoir, with the rogue traveling through Spain—or Europe, as is the case with the rogue from Alfarache—and being focalized as a vehicle for moralistic diatribes and, more often, for keen social commentary. The novels are fundamentally episodic, yet all the different episodes function as milestones in the protagonist's learning process as he travels through life. However, as soon as the basic features of the picaresque genre were thus established, some authors began to play with these literary conventions, seeking to go beyond the generic boundaries that defined what a picaresque novel should be. And in this context, the British rogue pamphlet tradition played an interesting, if often overlooked, part, offering novelists new elements that could be readily incorporated into their works, which in turn started to stray away from the typical conventions of the picaresque novel.

As we have seen in the previous chapter, Miguel de Cervantes was one of the authors who recognized the appeal of certain characteristics of rogue pamphlets. Using his exemplary novel *Rinconete y Cortadillo* as a case in point, I discussed the many ways in which Cervantes departs from the conventions of the picaresque genre, incorporating various elements from the rogue pamphlet tradition while still retaining the emphasis on social criticism that is alien to the pamphlets but very much a central feature of most picaresque novels. Thus, even though the rogue pamphlet, which was extremely popular in Britain throughout the sixteenth century and whose popularity spread to other European countries such as France and Germany, never really thrived in Spain as a literary genre, its imprint may be felt in works that sought to supersede the constrictions imposed by the notion of literary genre. After a critical discussion of *Rinconete y Cortadillo* in the light of the rogue pamphlet tradition, let us now turn to another such work, a lesser-known picaresque novel entitled *La desordenada codicia de los bienes ajenos*, written by Dr. Carlos García, a mysterious Spanish expatriate living in France, and first published in Paris in 1619. This is one of only two works known to have been published by García. The other, *La oposición y conjunción de los dos grandes luminaires de la tierra*, first printed in 1617, is an essay of sorts in which the author attempts to shed some light on the traditional rivalry existing between France and Spain. Although important scholarly efforts in the twentieth century did uncover a few facts about specific moments of García's life, not very much is known yet about large portions of his existence; his biography is made up of a few references in contemporary literary works and legal documents that have been pieced together but that leave us a picture of his life and his literary undertakings that is grossly incomplete.

Nevertheless, from the reading of his *Desordenada codicia*, it is possible to infer that García had a keen sense of the picaresque novel as a genre with definite generic boundaries that he constantly attempts to overturn in his work. And, as we will see, García makes use of various elements from the rogue pamphlet tradition in the *Desordenada codicia*, to such an extent that it would not be possible to fully understand the novel without considering the different ways in which García works identifying features of rogue pamphlets into both the structure and the content of his work. Just like Cervantes's *Rinconete y Cortadillo*—with which García was well acquainted—*Desordenada codicia* is an unusual, heterogeneous picaresque novel. This, together with its relative obscurity, has led some critics to question its status as a picaresque novel. On the contrary, I argue that *Desordenada codicia* is indeed a picaresque novel, but one in which—like Cervantes in *Rinconete y Cortadillo*—García consciously challenges the limitations imposed by the established literary parameters of the picaresque genre, while at the same time holding on to certain features (social commentary, autobiographical mode, presence of a narratee, et al) that are generally considered central to the picaresque novel. *Desordenada codicia* constitutes the Spanish text in which the imprint of the British rogue pamphlet tradition is to be felt most strongly, surpassing *Rinconete y Cortadillo* in this aspect. By means of introducing elements from British pamphlets into his work—probably via examples from the French pamphlet tradition, which was modeled on its English counterpart—García weaves a tale which has many points in common with *Rinconete y Cortadillo* and which, besides uncovering roguish tricks and offering a classification of different types of rogues according to their illegal practices, gives voice to the *pícaro* and uses him as a vehicle for sharp social criticism. Indeed, it

can certainly be no coincidence that *Rinconete y Cortadillo* and *Desordenada codicia* come from the pen of two authors who refused to conform to strict literary norms. One of them, Cervantes, is notorious for his constant obsession with challenging the widespread assumptions about the concept of literary genre, which he does masterfully not only in *Don Quijote* but also in *Rinconete y Cortadillo*. The other one, García, usually considered a second-rate writer—if considered at all, that is—is an expatriate who lived most of his life outside of Spain, an author whose work stands in the periphery and who was exposed to literary forms that, like the rogue pamphlet, did not manage to fully blossom in Spain. Yet before delving into a critical reading of Carlos García’s *Desordenada codicia* and its intertextual dialogue with rogue pamphlets, I will now turn to gathering what little biographical data scholars have been able to piece together, which, although rather scarce, does shed some light on the circumstances under which the work was produced.

Dr. Carlos García: The Mysterious Life of a Spanish Expatriate in France

In the introduction to his 1996 edition of *La desordenada codicia*, Victoriano Roncero López notes that “la literatura española, sobre todo en la Edad Media y Siglos de Oro, abunda en autores cuya semblanza biográfica se limita a unos mínimos datos que dejan unas inmensas lagunas en lo que fue su circunstancia vital” (11). In very few cases does this assertion ring truer than in that of Dr. Carlos García, whose life is shrouded in mystery to such an extent that for several centuries scholars not only doubted the legitimacy of his doctoral title but even went as far as questioning García’s very existence or, at best, considered his name to be merely a pen name for a much more renowned author. Thus, Ludwig Pfandl posits that García was probably exiled in Paris, where he

wrote and published *Desordenada codicia* and *Oposición y conjunción* (qtd. in Gutiérrez 10),⁴² but this theory is problematic because it is based on certain passages of *Oposición y conjunción*, a largely fictional work. A similar problem is to be found in the brief introductory essay written by J. M. Eguren for his joint edition of the two works known to be by García, published in 1877 by the Librería de los Bibliófilos: Eguren praises both texts—especially the *Desordenada codicia*—yet he believes that the author “disfrazó probablemente su verdadero nombre bajo el de *Doctor Carlos García*” (v). A little later, bearing in mind that the *Desordenada codicia* seems to him to be a picaresque text, the scholar supposes that García must be “[u]no de estos tipos tan conocidos y comunes en nuestra literatura picaresca” (ix). Of course, Eguren’s theory must be rejected because he is identifying García and Andrés, the roguish protagonist of the *Desordenada codicia*, with each other, and thus he is taking at face value what is merely a fictional text. Toward the end of his introductory essay, though, the critic seems to be aware that its content might not be too substantial and therefore chooses to apologize for the lack of more reliable biographical data on García: “Dispénsenos, pues, el lector que ciñamos esta *Advertencia* á las breves y someras observaciones que anteceden” (x). Eguren also points out that the scarcity of information on García’s life goes all the way back to Nicolás Antonio, who in his *Bibliotheca Hispana Nova* (1672), a painstakingly researched index of Spanish authors compiled in Latin, is unable to find any data on García and also questions his doctoral degree.⁴³ Even as late as 1959, although by then a little more

⁴² For more on Pfandl’s questionable theories about García’s biography, see Pfandl 33-52.

⁴³ The entry for Carlos García in Antonio’s *Bibliotheca Hispana Nova* is extremely vague and reads as follows: “Carolus Garcia, necio quis, doctorem sese nuncupans, non sine

information had been discovered about his life, Fernando Gutiérrez states that “[n]ada se sabe sobre la personalidad del doctor Carlos García, ni tampoco cuál fue ese doctorado suyo con el que se sintió tan dichoso” (9) and still speculates that it might simply be a pen name used by “un español auténtico que vivió a conciencia su época y no digamos ya su vida” (9). Gutiérrez concentrates on the *Oposición y conjunción* in his search for clues about García’s biography, arguing that it does describe the author’s experiences as a foreigner in France: “La obra . . .,” Gutiérrez states, “da cuenta de las aventuras que le sucedieron en París cuando visitó esta capital por primera vez [y] a través de ellas podemos conocer un poco humanamente al doctor Carlos García” (12). Again, this scholar is taking a fictional account as biographical truth, and for that reason it does not seem possible to accept his theories.

Undoubtedly, the most outrageous case in this long history of speculation about García’s true identity is that of José María Sbarbi y Osuna, who in his book *In illo tempore y otras frioleras* (1903) discusses both the *Desordenada codicia* and the *Oposición y conjunción* at length and attributes both of them to Miguel de Cervantes:

Publicadas ámbas [*Codicia* and *Oposición*] en París, aquélla en 1619, y ésta en 1617, úna y ótra como parto de un *Carlos García*, sediciente doctor, muy conocido en casa, dado que nadie sabe cosa alguna de semejante sujeto, es lo más probable que, ó le fueron encargadas á Cervantes dichas obras por alguien que, pagándoselas razonablemente, quiso lucirse con el mérito ajeno en la corte de Francia á los ojos de los personajes á quienes respectivamente van enderezadas, ó tal vez, y esto me parece harto más verosímil, que después de fallecido su legítimo autor, algún curioso las adquirió de manos de sus herederos, quienes probablemente las cederían por un pedazo de pan, que, pensando piadosamente harta falta les haría. (17)

utriusque gentis invicem sibi emulae observations multae, Gallice simul et Hispanicè conscripsit” (qtd. in Massano 8).

Sbarbi's theory does not have any solid support and apparently rests on merely a hunch, yet he argues that a close reading of García's two works reveals that they are full of what he calls *cervantismos*, that is, "los caracteres de lenguaje que tanto distinguen al autor del *Quijote*" (18). In an appendix, Sbarbi devotes more than eighty pages to a lengthy textual comparison between excerpts from *Desordenada codicia* and *Oposición y conjunción* and some of Cervantes's works such as *Don Quijote* and *Rinconete y Cortadillo* in an elaborate attempt to prove his point.⁴⁴ Of course, Sbarbi's hypothesis is not conclusive and should be rejected, yet it does constitute an interesting example of the obscurity that for several centuries was associated with the name of Carlos García.

This indeterminacy about the events of García's life has persisted until the present day, yet in the twentieth century, the scholarly efforts of a handful of Hispanists, mostly Canadian and French, have contributed to shedding some light on at least some specific stages of the author's biography, and although there remain numerous shady, unknown spots in the reconstruction of his life, it does seem clear that a real-life Carlos García, a Spanish expatriate living in France, did exist, was perhaps a doctor (though it remains unclear what his specialization was), and did compose the two literary works that were printed under his name. The first reference to García was discovered by Joaquín López Barrera in 1925 (see López Barrera 83-95), and we owe it to a contemporary of our author, Marcos Fernández, who in his *Olla podrida a la española* (1655) claims to have known García personally, denies him the title of doctor, and goes on to criticize him very harshly. Jean-Marc Pelorson, in a very enlightening, thoroughly researched article

⁴⁴ For this curious textual comparison, see Sbarbi y Osuna 149-233.

on Carlos García's relationship with the Spanish and Portuguese colony residing in Paris in the 1610s, quotes extensively from Fernández's incendiary text:

Partea terrible odio la embidia nada virtuosa como es entre los galos o gallos i españoles que dicen muchos vergantes, gallinas capadas, que no dan güebos si no negros para ellos, que entre las dos naciones se alla un odio terrible pruevan lo por la Antipathia del Dotor Garcias (*sic*), a el conoci en Paris, Medico sin grado, filosofo entre seglares, predicador de lo que el quiso, i boton con cola en oxal proivido, abotonador general, i Albeitar de agraçones, bodegonero de asaduras porque el relleno de la bolsa no admitia mas, i vecino de la bastilla, picador del potro por orden de la reina Maria, me decia muchas veces que el sabia bien a donde avia de ir despues de su muerte, yo le respondia que por aquella vez no le queria acompañarle que a su vuelta nos veriamos; era elocuente en las lenguas, goloso y bevedor; mas de bruces bonbeava propaganda; este tal fue el que escrivio el dicho libro, creyendo que los dichos del bulgacho dan fe a la gente de virtud y valor. (Pelorson 543)

This portrait of García is grossly one-sided and was written with the undeniable intention of slandering the author's name, accusing him of all sorts of what Fernández considered to be dissolute behavior, from drunkenness to homosexuality. Some critics harbor doubts as to the validity of Fernández's testimony: Giulio Massano believes that this depiction of García "es seguramente exagerada, y echa una luz siniestra sobre nuestro autor" (9), and Victoriano Roncero López warns against taking it completely at face value "por el carácter satírico de la obra en que aparece" (12). While there is no doubt about the exaggerated nature of the excerpt, at least it proves that a certain Carlos García, who presented himself as a doctor, did live in Paris at the time, and that it was there that Fernández got in contact with him. More importantly, the passage also indicates that this

Carlos García was the author of *Oposición y conjunción*, whose subtitle is *La antipatía de franceses y españoles*.

Moreover, Pelorson, in his aforementioned article on García and the Spanish and Portuguese colony of Paris,⁴⁵ unearths a second document referring to the author, which seems to prove beyond the shadow of a doubt that he was living in Paris in the 1610s, as well as stating that he was incarcerated for eight months, apparently under a false accusation. This document is a legal deposition culled from the records of a case against Léonora Galigai, in which Carlos García (his name is rendered in French as Charles Garcia) was called upon to declare on Thursday, June 8, 1617. It is not very clear exactly why García participated in this legal process, yet in all likelihood, it must have been because of his association with a Portuguese doctor named Montalto who was involved in the proceedings. The case itself was rather shady and involved the request and usage of witchcraft, but this deposition is the most informative document on García to date, establishing that he was probably born in Zaragoza in the 1580s and that he practiced medicine and was versed in philosophy and math, and it even states roughly where in the French capital he was dwelling:

Charles Garcia natif de Caesar Augusta au royaume d'aragon faisant profession de Medecine et de diverses sciences philosophie Mathématiques, aagé de trente six ans environ, demt rue de l'Arbre Sec pres la Croix de Trahouer, apres promesse de dire verité, a dit avoir cy devant eu grande familiarité avec un juif qui se disoit medecin nommé Montalto et que ledit Montalto s'estant asseuré de l'amitié de déposant luy a plusieurs fois demandé s'il sçavoit la Magie negromencie et quelques aultres sciences pour contraindre les espritz ou s'il cognoissoit

⁴⁵ For more information on this subject, see Pelorson 518-76.

quelque aultre qui fust versé en tel art et science. (575)

The deposition also indicates that García spent some time in prison at Fort-l'Évêque, although the circumstances leading to his imprisonment remain unclear; according to the document, Dr. Montalto inquired García about whether he was acquainted with the practice of influencing one's will and desire by means of the use of witchcraft, which García denied. After having found an individual who was versed in such practices, Montalto decided that it had been a mistake to approach García, who up until that point had been counted among his friends, about this particular, and so he attempted to arrange García's murder. When this failed, Montalto somehow made use of his connections and succeeded in sending García to prison, apparently under false accusations:

Et voyant led. Montalto que quelque chose qu'il eust faict pour faire mourir le dept, il n'avoit rien obtenu, fit emprisonner le déposant au fort Levesque l'espace de huict mois où il fut mené par De Fonctis sans plainte sans accusation sans information contre luy et sans preuve de justice et depuis la marquise donna ordonnance audt de Fontis de faire sortir le déposant la nuit de la prison afin de le renvoyer ainsi à force en pays esloigné, ce qu'ayant esté sceu par quelques seigneurs de ceste ville Mesme. (576)

The deposition certainly does have a fictional air, and in any case it must not be forgotten that it is García's voice that speaks here, which means that he would undoubtedly attempt to present himself in the most favorable light. But whatever the actual circumstances leading to García's incarceration, the document proves that our author spent some time in jail prior to the writing of the *Desordenada codicia*. This is important inasmuch as García chooses to set the interview between Andrés, the protagonist of the novel, and the narrator precisely within the walls of a prison, where the two of them are incarcerated at

the time of their conversation. The certainty that García was imprisoned has led some critics to identify the narrator of the novel with García himself: for instance, Massano sees the narrator's assertion that "quando en ella [prison] estuve, aunque muy nueva para mí, no hallé cosa que me agradase" (105)⁴⁶ as an autobiographical reference; also, Pelorson believes that the author drew largely on his real-life description of the atmosphere within the prison in *Desordenada codicia*: "Il n'est donc pas interdit de penser que la nouvelle de García," writes Pelorson, "tout en s'inscrivant dans une tradition littéraire complexe, a eu son point de départ dans la réalité" (554). In this respect, I share Pelorson's view that García's bleak portrait of the atmosphere behind prison walls is based on his first-hand knowledge of prison life, yet that does not necessarily mean that we should think of García and the narrator in *Desordenada codicia* as one and the same entity. Indeed, it would be as erroneous to consider Andrés's roguish tales as actual occurrences in García's life as to identify García and the figure of the narrator with each other. The narrator, who shares this role with that of narratee, is rather a purely literary, intratextual entity that may have some features in common with the real-life, extratextual author Carlos García, but that has a central function within the narrative framework of the novel.

Furthermore, Pelorson suggests in his article that García might have been Jewish (575), an idea rejected by Roncero López as being "meras suposiciones que no han podido ser comprobadas" (12), as well as by Michel Barea in an essay in which he attempts to trace García's biography with the help of further documents that he

⁴⁶ All quotations from the text of the *Desordenada codicia* are taken from Massano's edition, cited in the bibliographical section of this study.

unearthed; according to Bareau, “rien ne permet de croire que García était Juif ou judaïssant, ou même suspecté de l’être” (65). Bareau dates García’s first arrival in France around 1613 (77), and Roncero López indicates that his incarceration took place in June 1615 at Fort-l’Évêque, “prisión de la que salió en febrero de 1616” (13). However, as unclear as the circumstances under which García was sentenced to prison are the reasons why he left Spain and settled down in France. Ludwig Pfandl posits that García was probably exiled in Paris (qtd. in Gutiérrez 10) but he neither states the cause of this alleged exile nor offers any conclusive proof. Roncero López quotes a passage from *Oposición y conjunción* in which the narrator says, “Yo salí algún tiempo hay de España movido solamente de la curiosidad a que el natural deseo y apetito de saber inclina las voluntades algo inquietas” (12). Yet, again, this quotation is problematic both because of its vagueness and because it is not necessarily uttered by García himself.

Finally, another point on which scholars seem unable to agree has to do with the legitimacy of the doctoral degree that García claimed to possess and that appears not only on the title page of his two works but also in most documents referring to him that have survived. Although it is not impossible that he had obtained the title of doctor in medicine in Zaragoza or at the Sorbonne in Paris, there is no conclusive proof, and Roncero López notes that “no consta en los archivos de la Sorbona ningún Carlos García” (13). One of the surviving documents refers to García as “Maistre Charles Garsier, docteur en la sacrée Theologie de l’Université de Paris” (Bareau 74). If we believe, as Bareau does, that “Charles Garsier” is a French rendering of our author’s name, then he would be claiming in this case to be a doctor in theology. Roncero López considers that this could be possible, even if García was never ordained as a priest:

Se equivoca Bateau al afirmar que para ostentar el título teológico tenía que haberse ordenado. Debemos recordar que en la época no sólo los miembros del clero cursaban estudios de Teología, sino que éstos eran bastante comunes entre los laicos; basta recordar el caso de Francisco de Quevedo, entre otros. Así que se puede plantear la hipótesis de que efectivamente nuestro laico escritor hubiera cursado Teología en la Sorbona. (14)

We should take this, however, as a hypothesis yet to be proved. Whatever the case, it seems that the passage of time and the scarcity of reliable historical documents have blurred the memory of the elusive Carlos García. Leaving aside a few lines from his writings that sound autobiographical but that in no way should be accepted as trustworthy biographical data, the surviving documents mentioned above leave us with numerous questions and just a few certainties: Carlos García hailed from Aragón, probably from the city of Zaragoza, where he was born sometime in the 1580s; by the 1610s, he was living in Paris, where he was incarcerated at Fort-l'Évêque and later, upon his release, was called upon to declare as part of the Leonora Galigai case; it was also in Paris that he published his two works, the *Oposición y conjunción* and the *Desordenada codicia*, the latter one of which, as we will see, is of great interest to this study because it is a picaresque novel that incorporates various elements from the rogue pamphlet tradition.

Thievery as One of the Noble Arts: Dr. Carlos García's *La desordenada codicia de los bienes ajenos* (1619) and the English Rogue Pamphlet Tradition

A quick look at the publishing history of *Desordenada codicia* reveals that the novel—as well as the previous work by Carlos García, the *Oposición y conjunción*—was met with greater acclaim abroad than in Spain. At a time when Spanish picaresque texts

were quickly popularized across geographical boundaries through their translations into other European languages, foreign editions of *Desordenada codicia* by far outnumber the editions of the work in its original tongue.⁴⁷ The only Spanish edition from the seventeenth century known to exist is the first printing, in Paris in 1619; the rest of editions in Spanish did not come out until the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, by which time the *Desordenada codicia* was seen as a rare, largely unknown work. This may be explained by bearing in mind that the novel was written and published outside of Spain, and in any case it does underscore its peripheral nature. There were two Spanish editions in the late-nineteenth century: one of them, from 1877, reprints it in tandem with the *Oposición y conjunción* and was issued by the Librería de los Bibliófilos with the intention of saving it from obscurity;⁴⁸ the other one, from 1886, was sponsored by the Marquis of Jerez and consisted merely of a hundred copies. In 1946, some sixty years after the previous edition, Ángel Valbuena Prat recognized the picaresque nature of the work and included it in his compilation of picaresque texts entitled *La novela picaresca española*. Another edition followed in 1959, with a brief foreword by Fernando Gutiérrez, but the first serious critical edition would not appear until 1977, carried out by Giulio Massano. Not only does this edition maintain Carlos García's original spelling, but it also includes ample notes and a detailed study by Massano on several aspects of the novel and its author. Since then, the only new critical edition of the *Desordenada codicia* was published by Victoriano Roncero López in 1996; also featuring detailed textual

⁴⁷ For a very detailed account of surviving editions of the work, see Massano 59-76, which I am following in part here.

⁴⁸ This edition was reprinted in Barcelona by Editorial Fontamara in 1976 and has been recently published in the United States by Nabu Books.

notes, as well as an essay on the work as a picaresque novel, it constitutes a very valuable companion volume to Massano's.

In contrast, after the *princeps* edition was published in Spanish in 1619, an abundant number of translations appeared, mostly in French and English and all of them in the seventeenth century. In fact, it only took two years for the first French translation to become available, and two more editions of the text, from 1623 and 1632, attest to its popularity among French readers. Curiously, all of these French editions do away with the original Spanish title of the work and prefer to use a shortened version of its subtitle—*L'antiquité des larrons*—referring to the author simply as “Don Garcia.” As for the English editions, all three of them completely modify the original title and are almost certainly rendered into English not from the original Spanish version but from the aforementioned French translations from the 1620s and 1630s.⁴⁹ The first English version of *Desordenada codicia* is entitled *The Sonne of the Rogue* (1638), and it was followed by *Lavernae, or the Spanish Gipsy* (1650), whose title includes a reference to Laverna, “la diosa protectora de los ladrones” (Massano 63), and finally by *Guzman, Hinde and Hannam Outstript* (1657). Not only do these three editions attest to the novel's acceptance in Britain, but interestingly, two of them seek to inscribe it within the extremely popular genre of rogue literature. Thus, *The Sonne of the Rogue* relates Andrés to Guzmán de Alfarache, whose life story was known far and wide simply as *The Rogue* after the bestselling translation by James Mabbe, first published in 1622. The allusion is much more evident in the 1657 version, whose title mentions Guzmán by name and

⁴⁹ Massano offers the complete text of the English titles pages, on which the name of the author appears as “Don Garcia,” not as “Dr. Carlos García,” as in the first printing in Spanish. See Massano 61-64.

places Andrés in the same class with the knave from *Alfarache*, as well as with Hinde and Hannam, two characters who are regulars in the very successful series of English criminal biographies published throughout the seventeenth century.⁵⁰ Therefore, judging by the titles of these English editions of *Desordenada codicia*, there is no doubt that García's work was perceived in Britain as belonging to the group of picaresque novels first introduced into the British Isles via David Rowland's translation of *Lazarillo de Tormes* in the 1570s and of which *Guzmán de Alfarache* was the foremost example. And besides presenting it as a Spanish picaresque novel, one of the titles also manifestly links the *Desordenada codicia* with another kind of English rogue literature, the seventeenth-century criminal biography, which itself shows undeniable connections with the rogue pamphlet tradition.

As a result of this, perhaps, Frank Wadleigh Chandler, when discussing what he calls the anatomies of roguery, that is, “an essay descriptive of the grades, cheats, or manners of professional criminals” (87), mentions the *Desordenada codicia* and describes it as “the most extensive” (87) example of that kind of literature in Spain. Hispanists, however, overlooked García's text for centuries; when it is discussed at all, it is almost always in terms of a lesser work and often derided as not deserving of the picaresque label. Thus, Alberto del Monte considers it rather a *liber vagatorum* than a picaresque novel (110) and Francisco Rico claims that the novel should not be ascribed to the picaresque mode in any way (131). Domingo Ynduráin, while admitting that the work does have a certain picaresque feel, notes that it is not “estrictamente una novela picaresca en cuanto a la estructura” (*Desordenada* 351). The most extreme case, though,

⁵⁰ For more information on criminal biographies, see Peterson.

is that of Charles Aubrun, who is extraordinarily critical of García and the *Desordenada codicia* and goes so far as to wish that it “sepultada quede en el olvido” (629). Other critics have not been as harsh as Aubrun, yet even some scholars that do ascribe it to the picaresque genre—for instance, Carballo Picazo 426-66, among others—do so with reservations.

In more recent years, scholarship has tended to see *Desordenada codicia* as a representative of the picaresque genre, though acknowledging and studying some of the ways in which it departs from canonical picaresque titles such as *Lazarillo de Tormes* and *Guzmán de Alfarache*. Already in 1946, Valbuena Prat includes García’s work in his exhaustive anthology of Spanish picaresque novels, and in his “Prólogo explicativo” presents it as a picaresque text in spite of its differences with other novels contained in the volume. In his opinion, the *Desordenada codicia* constitutes

una de las *formas diversas de la picaresca usual*. El autor, de una parte, deja de ser el pícaro, para dejar a éste que, en sus conversaciones, le cuente sus aventuras y fechorías. El ladrón que las narra hace, satírica y burlescamente, la apología de su profesión. . . . Es una obra entretenida e interesante, sobre todo en la *parte narrativa de aventuras de pícaro*, y la descripción doliente del ambiente de cárcel por el autor” (1155-56; emphasis mine).

In this very brief foreword, Valbuena Prat does discuss the possible sources for one of the episodes in the novel—Andrés’s stealing of the boots in chapter four—yet he does not speculate about the reason for the unusual picaresque nature of the work. Leaving aside the aforementioned comment by Chandler on *Desordenada codicia* as an anatomy of roguery, Massano is, to the best of my knowledge, the first critic to point out the connection between García’s reworking of the picaresque genre and the preceding

tradition of rogue literature in Germany, England, and France, perceiving the work as an unusually complex picaresque novel made up of a variety of thematic and structural elements taken from diverse literary tendencies very much in vogue across Europe at the time:

La desordenada codicia es una creación literaria que acomuna, en su concepción y estructura, elementos tradicionales, pero no necesariamente fundamentales, de la literatura picaresca española y corrientes truhanescas y burlescas en boga fuera de España, a principios del siglo XVII. ... Carlos García supo introducir en la literatura española corrientes novelísticas europeas, hasta su tiempo desconocidas o poco empleadas. (17)

Massano recognizes that García's novel is, indeed, a variegated *mélange* of elements culled from the Spanish picaresque genre, which he terms "la corriente tradicional" (18), and features drawn from other European literary forms, which he labels "las corrientes nuevas" (23), because some of them were virtually unknown in Spain at the time, mostly different kinds of rogue literature and inset stories taken from Italian *novelle*. However, although Massano names the works of John Awdeley, Thomas Harman, and Thomas Nashe as possible predecessors of García's novel, he does not offer an account of the intertextual dialogue established between the *Desordenada codicia* and the English rogue pamphlet tradition, much preferring to concentrate on the *novelle*, as well as on other aspects such as its didacticism and its style. Roncero López is another of the critics who consider the *Desordenada codicia* as a picaresque novel. Pointing out a string of features that link García's work with *Lazarillo de Tormes* and *Guzmán de Alfarache*—the autobiographical mode, the base origins of the protagonist, and the presence of a narratee—Roncero López concludes that this is, in fact, a picaresque novel, a genre in

which “los escritores españoles del siglo XVII encontraron el modelo narrativo perfecto para expresar sus opiniones sobre la sociedad en la que vivían; en sus obras ... hallaron cauce adecuado para reflejar sus motivos de disensión frente al orden establecido o para avisar a sus contemporáneos de los peligros que acechaban a la sociedad estamental o al hombre barroco” (16). Therefore, Roncero López recognizes the social content that is present in *Desordenada codicia*, as it is in most picaresque novels, yet he does not explore the connections between García’s novel and the rogue pamphlet tradition. I basically agree with the view expressed by Valbuena Prat, Massano, and Roncero López: *Desordenada codicia* is, indeed, a picaresque novel, albeit a highly unusual one. And its heterogeneity is directly related to its incorporation of several elements of the rogue pamphlet tradition, which become central to the novel’s structure and content. At the same time, however, the work maintains distinctive features that are typical of the Spanish picaresque novel; that is, García introduces elements from the rogue pamphlet while holding onto others that are closely associated with the picaresque genre: the result is an atypical picaresque text that reworks certain features from the rogue pamphlet in order to serve the usual picaresque purpose of conveying social commentary through the first-person narrative perspective of a *pícaro*, which in turn is exactly the opposite of what pamphleteers intended to do with their texts.

Set entirely in France, unlike most Spanish picaresque novels, which are set in Spain with occasional escapades abroad, the *Desordenada codicia* is structured in the manner of a conversation between the narrator and Andrés, a thief who relates a certain number of episodes to the narrator, interspersed with his personal views on thieving practices, different types of delinquents, and theoretical musings on several social and

moral issues. The discussion between the two characters takes place, interestingly, behind the walls of prison, and therefore, apart from regular society in a way, but it often deals with the inner workings of contemporary seventeenth-century society and the different ways in which it interacts, whether directly or indirectly, with the criminal underworld to which Andrés belongs. The conversation between Andrés and the narrator, set in prison, has led some critics to see the figure of the narrator as an autobiographical reference by García (Massano 105); however, though García very well could have found inspiration in his own experiences at Fort l'Évêque for his depiction of this character, the narrator seems to be merely a literary construction. No indication is ever given as to the events in his past or the reasons why he has ended up in prison. All that seems clear from his words in the first two chapters is that he abhors his confinement and that, after a while, he does not find it too difficult to act as the confidant of the other inmates: “con un buen semblante y algunas blanquillas que en mi bolsa traía, gané la voluntad de la chusma, de tal suerte que no avía persona de cualquiera calidad que fuese que no me estimase en mucho y consultase conmigo lo más intrínseco de su conciencia” (106). Rather than a criminal, the narrator appears to be a member of respectable society, and it is precisely in this capacity of confidant that he soon comes into contact with Andrés. From that moment on, the narrator sheds his original role of narrator and takes on that of narratee, initially acting as Andrés's interlocutor, asking a few questions and making a few occasional comments, but most of the time silently listening to Andrés's life story, told by the rogue from a first-person perspective. As we can see, then, García is employing here the typical narrative structure of picaresque novels, in which a *pícaro* offers a first-person account of the story of his life, usually addressed to another character within the

novel. In this case, the author literally gives voice to the rogue, who is not writing his biography but actually *telling* it to an interlocutor. As in *Lazarillo de Tormes* and other texts from the picaresque tradition, Andrés often refers to this interlocutor as “vuestra merced” (115), “señor” (107), and “señor mío” (195). In addition to this, though, García is also adapting the customary narrative structure of rogue pamphlets, in which pamphleteers purport to have gleaned their material from personal conversations with real-life rogues. Both Awdeley and Harman make use of this device in the *Fraternity of Vagabonds* and the *Caveat for Common Cursitors*, respectively,⁵¹ yet García employs it in order to achieve a diametrically opposed effect: whereas English authors always speak for the rogue invariably intending to criticize him and blame all the social and economic ills of contemporary British society on him, García, following the common practice of Spanish picaresque novelists, empowers the rogue with the ability to speak for himself and uses him as a vehicle for subtle social criticism. Thus, the author from Zaragoza is reworking some typical features of the rogue pamphlet tradition to suit the purposes of

⁵¹ In his *Fraternity of Vagabonds*, Awdeley explains the origin of the contents of his pamphlet in a prefatory poem: “For at a Sessions as they sat, / By chance a vagabond was got. / Who promised if they would him spare, / And keep his name from knowledge then, / He would as strange a thing declare, / As ever they knew since they were men / ... They granting him this his request, / He did declare as here is read, / Both names and states of most and least, / Of this their vagabonds’ brotherhood. / Which at the request of a worshipful man / I have set it forth as well as I can” (52). Harman also devises a framework to justify the validity of the materials that make up his *Caveat*: “For I, having more occasion, through sickness, to tarry and remain at home than I have been accustomed, do, by my there abiding, talk and confer daily with many of these wily wanderers of both sorts, as well men and women, as boys and girls, by whom I have gathered and understand their deep dissimulation and detestable dealing. ... [W]ith fair flattering words, money, and good cheer, I have attained to the type by such as the meanest of them hath wandered these thirteen years, and most sixteen and some twenty and upward, and not without faithful promise made unto them never to discover their names or anything they showed me” (62). These real-life rogues that Harman claims to have interviewed, of course, are probably as real as the character of Andrés in the *Desordenada codicia*.

his picaresque novel, all the while not losing sight of so central a feature of the picaresque tradition as the presence of a narratee. The *Desordenada codicia* contains a very interesting blend of elements from both traditions: the novel includes a classification of roguish types but also tells the life story of a specific rogue in the first person. In a manner of speaking, it could be seen as a fictional rendering of one of those conversations between the pamphleteer and the rogue that are supposed to have been carried out at the inception of most rogue pamphlets but that constitute no more than a fictional framework for such volumes.

By structuring the *Desordenada codicia* as a conversation between Andrés and the narrator, García creates a framework for what is essentially a clash between two different voices that are opposed: although now in prison, where he has landed under circumstances that are not disclosed, the narrator represents the point of view of respectable society; with his fervent defense of thievery, Andrés is a representative of the underworld, and his portrayal of it will not only reveal in part how this underworld is structured, but it will also bring to the foreground certain negative aspects of the contemporary Spanish society that allows for the existence and flourishing of the underworld to which Andrés belongs. The opposition of these two distinct voices may be felt already in the title and subtitle of the novel, which read *La desordenada codicia de los bienes ajenos. La antigüedad y nobleza de los ladrones*. Fernando Gutiérrez observes that there is a contradiction in terms between the title and the subtitle: “Resulta difícil ponerlos [title and subtitle] de acuerdo con la intención de que respondan a una misma finalidad. . . . Choca un poco esto de ‘desordenada codicia’ cuando Andrés se esfuerza en probar la antigüedad y nobleza de su oficio, remontándose hasta Adán” (19). In my

opinion, the contradiction, as Gutiérrez suggests, is obvious here, yet it must be understood in the context of the clash between these two opposed voices. Indeed, the title represents the view of the narrator—and by extension, that of respectable society—who regards thieving critically as that inordinate greed for the possessions of others to which the title of the novel refers. The narrator devotes the entire first chapter to a lengthy description of the bleak atmosphere inside the walls of prison, which he compares with hell in rather eloquent terms: “Es tan parecida la terribilidad que del infierno nos pintan las sagradas letras a la miseria que en la prissión se padece que, a no tener ésta la esperança que a la otra falta, pudiéramos darle el título de verdadero infierno; pues en lo esencial tienen recíproca y cabal correspondencia” (83). Moreover, toward the end of his argumentation, the narrator makes it clear that the comparison is intended to dissuade the reader—whom he addresses directly here for the first and only time—from getting involved in any illegal practices that would lead to imprisonment: “Esta es, en breves palabras, la miserable práctica deste vivo retrato del infierno. ... Medite en ella el lector, para que espantado y temeroso de su ferocidad y dureza, se quite de inconvenientes tan peligrosos como cada día se presentan al hombre en la livertad” (102). Therefore, the view of the narrator is akin to that of English pamphleteers, in that he strongly disapproves of and openly condemns roguish practices. On the contrary, the subtitle conveys the view of Andrés himself, who indulges in long digressions in between the different episodes of his life story, in which he attempts to prove the antiquity and nobility of thieving and illustrates his points with copious examples drawn from the Bible and classical literature. The title and content of the third chapter, “en el qual cuenta el ladrón la nobleza y excellencia del hurtar” (115) is but one of the many instances in

which Andrés expresses his view of thieving as one of the noble arts. As we will see, the clash between these two opposed viewpoints on the criminal underworld is briefly dramatized in the third chapter of the novel; as Andrés begins to narrate his life story and to paint a portrait of the roguish types, practices, and inner workings of the underworld, the narrator quickly retreats into his new role of narratee, and Andrés's voice and perspective become prevalent in the novel.

Besides voicing the narrator's perceptions of prison atmosphere and warning the reader against the immorality of crime, the first two chapters in the novel function as clear markers of this character's status as an outsider within the context of the penitentiary: like Rincón and Cortado as they enter Monipodio's headquarters in Seville, the narrator is presented here as a newcomer to a world with which he is not even slightly acquainted. This is precisely why, upon his arrival, the narrator insists on avoiding any kind of contact with the rest of the inmates, which he considers as inhabitants of a world of which he does not have the slightest interest in becoming a member: "Passé los primeros días en lo que todos los que allí entran, que es considerar la habitación, escandarizarse de las conversaciones que allí se pasan y huir el trato familiar de los habitantes. Y passara yo todo el tiempo que allí estuve en semejante empleo, si fuera en mi mano el hazello, pues la compañía no me conbidava a ser demasiado doméstico y familiar" (105-6). Upon his first encounter with Andrés, the narrator's status as an outsider becomes even more recognizable, as he struggles to make sense out of the rogue's vocabulary, which is filled with words from the *germania*, the secret language of criminals. Unable to understand Andrés's code, the narrator concludes that the rogue "no estava embriago, pero loco sí; y como a tal otorgué todo lo que me decía, aunque sin

entendelle” (108-9). Far from being insane, Andrés is merely using the linguistic code of the underworld as a safety tool, as a mechanism to determine whether his interlocutor is to be trusted or not; after having established the narrator as trustworthy, Andrés proceeds to uncover the hidden meaning of some of the key words that made up his speech:

Reffrene vuestra merced su cólera, le suplico, señor mío, que el avelle hablado por cifras no carece de mysterio, y créame que no a avido en ello otra intención que ocultar mis desdichas a algunos soplones que ordinariamente van desvelados escuchando las vidas ajenas para relatallas a sus correspondientes; pero aora que sin recelo puedo hablar, yo me declararé confiado en que vuestra merced, como de tan buen entendimiento, no se escandalizará de oyr mis flaquezas, ni por ellas me privará del buen consejo que de su estremada charidad espero. Y assí, sepa que el cardenal es el que hoy me darán a medio día en las espaldas; la escrivanía del puerto, la que reciben los que van condenados a galeras; los de tercio, son algunos de nuestra compañía, los quales guardan la calle quando se haze algún hurto y éstos lleban el tercio; los del quinto, son alguna gente horrada, o a lo menos tenuta del vulgo por tal, la qual encubre y guarda en su casa el hurto, recibiendo por ello el quinto de lo que se roba. (110-11)

This is one of the many examples that seem to suggest that García was well acquainted with Cervantes’s *Rinconete y Cortadillo*, published only six years before the *Desordenada codicia*, which, together with the rogue pamphlet tradition, constitutes one of the main picaresque texts with which García’s work establishes a fruitful intertextual dialogue. As is the case with Rincón and Cortado in the episode with the *mozo* from Asturias upon their arrival in Seville, the narrator here is faced with a new linguistic code that is totally unknown to him. His first contact with the underworld as he begins his conversation with Andrés, very much like Rincón and Cortado’s entrance into Monipodio’s fraternity in *Rinconete y Cortadillo*, is first and foremost a linguistic journey, in which Andrés, like the *mozo*, becomes the translator and interpreter. As we

have seen, language is one of the primary concerns of rogue pamphlets such as those by Awdeley, Harman, and Greene, which attempt to uncover the rogues' own lingo by means of the introduction of lexicons and translations of coded sentences into regular speech in order to render the rogue less dangerous in the eyes of the reader. García appropriates this feature of rogue pamphlets, yet in contrast, rather than using it as a device to simply expose the language of the underworld, employs it as yet another marker of the narrator's status as an outsider, as a newcomer in the realm of the underworld. His interview with Andrés that will follow will be for him a learning process, a passage to a world as of yet unknown to him. In this respect, then, García is much closer to Cervantes than he is to the British pamphleteers whose uncovering of the rogues' linguistic devices he appropriates and reworks in his novel.

Consistent with his role as guide of the narrator on their journey through the underworld, Andrés's voice takes precedence as soon as the conversation between the two characters begins, with the narrator taking a backseat and becoming a full-blown narratee, merely uttering a few comments here and there, which become more and more scarce as Andrés's narrative advances. In fact, what at first seems to begin as a dialogue between Andrés and his interlocutor, soon turns into a monologue, during which Andrés relates the story of his life and explains the circumstances under which he has arrived at his present state. In his own words, Andrés promises to "dar larga cuenta de su vida, de la de sus padres, y de los varios acontecimientos que en su arte le sucedieron, juntamente con todas las menudencias que entre los de su officio se pasan" (113). Therefore, Andrés promises to elaborate on his autobiography in a way that apparently will not stray too far away from other picaresque models such as *Lazarillo de Tormes*; indeed, in the prologue

to the story of his life, the *pícaro* from Tormes states a purpose that rings quite similar to Andrés's: "Y pues Vuestra Merced escribe se le escriba y relate el caso muy por extenso, parescióme no tomalle por el medio, sino del principio, porque se tenga entera noticia de mi persona; y también porque consideren los que heredaron nobles estados cuán poco se les debe, pues Fortuna fue con ellos parcial, y cuánto más hicieron los que, siéndoles contraria, con fuerza y maña remando salieron a buen puerto" (10-11). This autobiographical narrative perspective is precisely the first feature that Roncero López points out in his discussion of the *Desordenada codicia* as a picaresque novel: "Carlos García asimila este autobiografismo," notes the critic, "aunque lo dota de cierta originalidad, puesto que la primera persona aparece desdoblada en dos seres completamente independientes: el narrador y Andrés. ... Este narrador-narratario se inviste de los atributos de juez y critica en ocasiones los excesos del hampón" (18-19). As Roncero López suggests, this narrator-turned-narratee functions as the interpreter or transductor—"intermediario entre el lector y Andrés" (19), as the critic puts it—of Andrés's account, yet rather than in this aspect alone, the novelty of *Desordenada codicia* lies in the kind of autobiography that Andrés constructs. Unlike Lázaro, who looks back at his past and carefully selects those events that help to justify his current situation (the *caso*), Andrés does explain the events leading up to his incarceration, yet the episodes from his life that he narrates are chosen as illustrations of the classification of rogue types that he elaborates throughout the novel. Whereas Lázaro structures his autobiography in a largely linear fashion, painting a portrait of the different classes of which contemporary Spanish society was composed through his account of the hardships that he is made to endure as he serves several masters, Andrés mostly dispenses with this

linearity, and his autobiographical episodes are subject to the kind of rogue that they attempt to illustrate. As it is the case in most picaresque novels, the different episodes in Lázaro's life function as milestones in the learning process that he undergoes throughout the work. On the contrary, it would not be accurate to say that Andrés goes through any kind of learning process: like the central characters in jest-biographies, he is largely the same character at the beginning and at the end of his autobiography. His critical view of contemporary society is not channeled through accounts of his serving many masters—in fact, he only serves one, a shoemaker, and rather briefly—but it is emphasized by the inclusion in the novel of two important elements: one the one hand, the roguish tricks that Andrés performs, which are always ill-fated and which underscore the limited options available to those born of lowly origins within a society that rules out social mobility; on the other hand, Andrés's lengthy theoretical digressions in which he strives to prove that thieving is, indeed, a noble art, as well as arguing that thieves are not just relegated to the underworld but can also be found among the supposedly respectable members of regular society. Andrés's view of every human being, whether a *pícaro* or an allegedly honest citizen, as a criminal, which borders on a nihilistic view of the world, is born out of his disillusionment with a society that pushes him to a marginal position from a very early age.

The first clear example—and perhaps the most significant—of how the institutions of contemporary Spanish society push Andrés to the margins occurs early in the novel. After an entire chapter devoted to his first defense of the practice of stealing as a noble art (which I will discuss more in detail later), the fourth chapter, entitled “en el qual cuenta el ladrón la vida y muerte de sus padres y la primera desgracia que le

sucedió” (125), contains the actual beginning of Andrés’s autobiography. Like Lázaro, Andrés traces his life story back to his birth and briefly describes his parents and their humble origins. However, unlike the *pícaro* from Tormes, García’s rogue chooses not to reveal the name of his birthplace, which he claims to have forgotten, nor the identity of his parents, whose first names are Pedro and Esperança but whose last names Andrés keeps to himself. When, in one of his infrequent comments, the narrator demands to be made privy to that information, Andrés declines to disclose it, echoing Rincón and Cortado in that respect. His answer is worthy of being quoted in full, inasmuch as it constitutes a perfect example of how García strays away from the typical picaresque pattern of giving notice of the protagonist’s birthplace and the identity of his mother and father found in texts such as *Lazarillo de Tormes* and *Guzmán de Alfarache*, and veers closer to Cervantes’s revision of the genre in *Rinconete y Cortadillo*:

No me mande, le suplico, . . . que quebrante un solemne juramento inviolable entre los de nuestra arte y compañía, qual es no descubrir a persona alguna nuestra propria tierra y el nombre de nuestros padres, supuesto que a la verdad de mi historia importa poco el sabello. Y aunque le parezca a vuestra merced que no tiene mysterio el encubrillo, créame que se engaña, porque no ay cosa más peligrosa en nuestra arte que el proprio nombre, assí el de la patria como el de la pila; pues quando damos en las manos de la justicia, aunque ayamos sido mil vezes convencidos de algún crimen, siendo el nombre diferente y trocado, siempre hazemos parecer que es el primero, y no sabiendo el de nuestros padres y tierra, no pueden informarse *de moribus et vita*, ni quedar nuestros parientes affrentados. (129)⁵²

⁵² Compare this excerpt with Rincón’s reply to a similar inquiry by Monipodio in *Rinconete y Cortadillo*: “El ejercicio ya está dicho, pues venimos ante vuesa merced; la patria no me parece de mucha importancia decilla, ni los padres tampoco, pues no se ha de hacer información para recibir algún hábito honroso” (212).

Despite concealing this information, Andrés does follow Lázaro's practice of describing his parents, and especially his mother, in some detail, although the data about his own upbringing is rather scarce. Moreover, unlike Lázaro and most picaresque protagonists, Andrés presents his closest relatives as virtuous, law-abiding citizens, as people who are poor but not downright destitute. Both his father and his mother are, in his own words, "gente aunque ordinaria y plebeya, honrada, virtuosa, de buena reputación y loales costumbres" (125), and regarding their income, they are "no tan ricos que pudiesen comprar baronías ni casar algunas huérfanas con lo que les sobraba, ni tan pobres que pidiesen limosna ni se sugetasen a nadie" (125). Instead of offering an account of his own experiences as a child, as most picaresque protagonists do to a certain extent, García's *pícaro* chooses to concentrate on the single episode of his childhood that is to leave an indelible mark on the rest of his existence: the events that cause his parents to be brought before justice and, under false accusations from "algunos maliciosos y desalmados" (126), to be sentenced to death. Andrés reminisces about these events in the following terms:

Acusáronles (¿ay maldad semejante?) de aver sacrilegado una iglesia, saqueado la sacristía con los cálizes y ornamentos della, y, lo que peor es, de aver cortado la mano de un San Bartolomé que estava en un retablo, el qual dezían ser de plata. Acusación tan maliciosa quanto falsa, particularmente por la parte de mi madre, cuya devoción y respeto a los santos era tan grande que, quando yva a la iglesia, si el sacristán no le cerrava la puerta, no avía remedio de salir de allá. (126)

This episode, however, does not make an impression on the young Andrés merely because of the falsehood of the accusations nor because of the capital punishment to which his parents were sentenced, but also—and especially—because the judges make

the macabre decision of sparing Andrés's life on the condition that he be the executioner of the sentence. This cruel, unexpected turn of events will determine the life of the *pícaro*, relegated to marginality by a society in which justice does not protect the members of the lower strata, and by a legal system that forces a youth into such an execrable position, thereby proving its ineffectiveness. The execution of his parents at his own hands lies at the very heart of Andrés's critical view of regular society as a space where he does not belong, where his place has been cruelly denied him. As Massano notes, survival will be the rogue's primary concern from this moment on: "Toda su vida futura," observes the critic, "será determinada por esta experiencia negativa inicial y no es sorprendente que Andrés llegue a considerar a la sociedad como causa primordial de su corrupción y que conciba el hurto como la sola forma apta para retribuir a una sociedad que lo ha condicionado con un proceso educativo negativo" (21). Thus, both Lázaro and Andrés regard survival as their foremost necessity, yet their motives are different: whereas the knave from Tormes is forced to steal because of the mistreatment and starvation to which his masters subject him, Andrés is made to become a thief by the cruelty of a legal system that has deprived him both of his parents and of his personal dignity. Both *pícaros* convey a sharply critical view of the world around them, but Andrés's condemnation of the social and moral corruption of contemporary society is decisively determined by his inability to define his own identity amid such moral decay. And, as Roncero López notes, this traumatic early episode of his parents' execution is a central motive that drives him to criminality: "Andrés ... no se halla preparado para afrontar ... la vida en una sociedad en la cual todos deben estar alerta para luchar contra todos. ... Andrés, contrariamente a lo que sucede con Pablos o con Lázaro, ni se separa

voluntariamente de sus padres ni es abandonado por ellos, sino que se ve obligado a salir al mundo, consciente de su ociosidad y holgazanería” (23). I would add, furthermore, that this early episode in Andrés’s life leads him to face the world around him with total distrust, as well as perceiving society as a hostile environment where nothing is actually what it seems. As we will see, this perspective comes to the surface most clearly in Andrés’s portrait of society as a realm pervaded by crime and trickery, as a space that is not too far from the underworld to which he belongs.

Roncero López notes that Andrés’s base family origins are another of the traits that link *Desordenada codicia* with the picaresque genre, yet he refuses to take the rogue’s description of his family at face value and questions the virtuosity of his parents. On the one hand, the critic bases his argument on Andrés’s description of his mother as “devota” (*devout*), which coincides with one of the rogue types that he later includes in his taxonomy of the underworld. On the other, his argument rests on the fact that Andrés’s parents are said to have died as “mártires” (*martyrs*), which in the critic’s opinion is a word “que el autor emplea en su doble sentido: muerto por sus creencias religiosas, pero que en el lenguaje de germanías sirve para denominar al ‘reo que sufre el tormento en sus diversas formas sin confesar sus delitos, *los haya o no cometido*” (22; emphasis mine). Although we should not rule out completely the possibility of a multiplicity of meaning in those particular words used by Andrés, I disagree with Roncero López’s view. First of all, the definition of the word “mártir” in the secret lingo of the underworld that the critic offers does not necessarily imply that the person that suffers all kinds of tortures without uttering a word is guilty. Moreover, Andrés’s usage of the word “devoción” is consistent with the pious description of his mother, whose

“devoción era tan conocida de todos los del pueblo, que todas las vezes que passava por la calle, salían mil personas a encomendalle algunas Ave Marías por preñadas, enfermos y otras personas afligidas, teniendo todos gran fe en sus oraciones y devoción” (126).

Though, I reiterate, it is not impossible to think that Andrés might be lying, I do not believe that there is enough textual proof to support the view that his parents were not law-abiding people, particularly if we bear in mind that this account of his parents’ morals is inserted into a chapter throughout which Andrés strives to present himself as a victim of a society that has deprived him of the comfortable atmosphere of the parental home, thrusting him into a world that he does not seem prepared to face yet. According to Andrés, then, there is no place in society for those who, virtuous though they may be, are born poor. Hence, Andrés’s life will be governed almost inevitably by the deterministic view that thieving is an “hábito que tenía ya casi convertido en naturaleza” (130).

García underscores Andrés’s difficulties to find his own place within regular society early on in the novel. Thus, in the aftermath of his parents’ execution, he attempts to take on an honest profession, but it is all in vain because all his neighbors refuse to even consider hiring him because they are aware of his having acted as his relatives’ executioner. No matter that his bad reputation stems from an extreme situation that, rather than a dilemma, could be best described as the proverbial Hobson’s choice, his reputation follows him wherever he goes, to such an extent that Andrés is made to leave his hometown, the first of many periods of exile that he will be forced to endure throughout his life: “me resolví a buscar un amo a quien servir o algún official con quien assentar; todo lo qual fue en vano, porque siendo el caso de mis padres fresco y la infamia corriendo sangre, no hallé quien quisiera recevirme en su casa, ni aun para moço

de caballos, por donde me fue forçoso dexar mi tierra y buscar la ventura en otra estraña” (128-29). Once he finds himself away from his hometown, Andrés does find employment as an apprentice to a shoemaker, following Lázaro’s practice of serving a master. And, like Lázaro with his several masters, Andrés only encounters hostility and violence during his time with the shoemaker: “tomó mi amo ocasión para menospreciarme, rompiéndome algunas formas en la cabeça, por ver si podría dexarme alguna impressa, ultra la continua abstinencia con que me castigava” (130). The passage echoes the episode of the statue of the bull in *Lazarillo de Tormes* (22-23), yet in Andrés’s case, rather than a valuable lesson in survival, the episode with the shoemaker leads him to his first experience as a delinquent. Like Pablos in Francisco de Quevedo’s *El Buscón*, Andrés feels “ciertos impetus de nobleza que me inclinavan a cosas más altas y grandiosas que hazer çapatos” (130), and so he devises a plan that involves the stealing of boots, a plan whose failure will result in his being expelled from the city. This episode establishes a pattern of ill-fated criminal escapades that will follow Andrés throughout his whole life. In spite of his failure and the punishment that ensues—“tres años de destierro” (132)—the rogue does not seem to feel any sort of regret for his actions; rather, he insists on defending stealing as a noble profession: “no obstante esta y otras muchas desgracias que me han sucedido después acá,” says Andrés, “es fuerça que yo confiesse la excellencia desta arte, assí por las razones sobredichas, como por la nobleza de su origen” (132). Repentance and regret for his roguish ways are not an option for Andrés within a society that constantly mistreats and rejects him.

Indeed, this takes us to yet another form of social criticism expressed by Andrés in the novel. As we have seen, the protagonist—like Lázaro, Guzmán, Justina, and the

rest of picaresque characters—uses examples from his own experience as vehicles for social criticism, as means that enable him to paint a portrait of a social environment that makes him feel dislocated and pushes him to live in the margins of the law. In addition to this, García inserts passages in which Andrés defends the convenience and nobility of thieving, as well as disclosing the variety and practices of the different criminal types that populate the underworld, which he compares with the diverse professions that exist within respectable society, whose seeming honesty is but a mirage. Andrés's reflections on these subjects, which are presented in chapters three, five, six, seven, and eight, to a certain degree break up the linearity of his autobiography that we had come to expect from the account of his origins in the fourth chapter discussed above, yet they contribute to the sharply critical picture of social immorality that Andrés is attempting to convey. These five chapters are central to the rogue's justification of his criminal behavior, as well as to his criticism of a contemporary social order determined by dishonesty and deception, and they contain elements borrowed from the rogue pamphlet tradition and reworked by García so as to suit his specific purposes.

As already noted, Andrés's conversation with the narrator starts off in the third chapter, at which moment the narrator takes on the role of narratee, and their interview begins precisely with the rogue's defense of the nobility of thieves to which the subtitle of the work makes express reference. In the course of this argumentation laden with irony, Andrés proclaims that thieving is superior to and more secure than alchemy and makes a burlesque comparison between stealing and Aristotle's theories on physics: "Ni menos tiene esta noble arte los principios de Aristóteles, porque él y otros muchos que le siguen imaginaron que no puede de nada hazerse algo, siendo verdad que, en esta nuestra

arte, de nada se haze el todo” (117-18).⁵³ By resorting to the principle of authority and seeking out examples from classical philosophy whose meaning he totally subverts, Andrés manages to prove in an ironic, burlesque way that thieving is an art, which he describes in no uncertain terms as “la más noble, más absoluta y privilegiada de quantas hoy ay en el mundo, tanto que no conoze ni respeta rey ni roque, ni se le da un maravedí de quantos monarcas ay sobre la tierra, ni del braço eclesiástico ni seglar” (118). Thus, the criminal underworld seems to lie in the margins of society, out of reach of the social order and of the institutions of respectable society, but, as Andrés will soon explain, the underworld is actually housed within this regular society, with which it is in permanent contact.

Besides this defense of thieving as one of the noble arts, Andrés already mentions in this third chapter two ideas that he will further develop in chapters five and six. On the one hand, he posits that stealing, far from being confined exclusively to the underworld, is a universal practice followed by all individuals across social boundaries; on the other hand, he hints at the idea that the underworld and respectable society should not be seen as two worlds apart, completely independent of one another, because in fact both realms

⁵³ In a footnote to his edition of the text, Massano discusses this comparison in the following terms: “Los principios de Aristóteles se consideraban como parangón de toda la filosofía. Aquí el autor, absurdamente, afirma que el arte del hurto se opone a esos principios tan universales. El hurto es algo fuera de las leyes universales, es, según Carlos García, algo superior” (117). Rather than considering it absurd, I believe that this comparison should be read in the context of Andrés’s argumentation, which is dominated by irony and subversion. Here, Andrés is defending thievery as one of the noble arts, and he does so by resorting to the usual rhetorical practice of looking for proof for one’s arguments in classical literature and philosophy. Andrés makes use of Aristotle’s theory for burlesque effect, completely inverting its original meaning in the process. The rogue is tweaking philosophical principles here very much in the same way in which he tweaks legal principles when he carries out his illegal practices.

do engage in constant interaction, an idea which is also explored by Cervantes in *Rinconete y Cortadillo*. The rogue will discuss the first of these ideas—stealing as a universal practice—at length in the sixth chapter, yet he already points in that direction when he asserts that “[t]odos hurtamos, y, por nuestros pecados, unos laban la lana y otros tienen la fama” (121); that is, thieving is common to all social classes and professions, but there is a double standard that ensures that only low-born thieves will be punished. As for the second idea—the interactions between regular society and the underworld—it is central to Andrés’s portrayal of the corruption that he sees as pervasive in the society of the time. Through bribery, for instance, criminals manage to escape punishment, taking advantage of a corrupt legal system whose primary concern, as we have seen in the case of Andrés’s parents, is economic gain rather than justice: “¿[L]e parece que es poco,” reflects the rogue, “hallar crédito de la vida y tener a nuestra devoción uno y mil alguaziles que nos fien los açotes, galeras, el tormento y la horca, solo con una simple y mal segura promessa de que le satisfaremos con las ganancias del primer hurto?” (123). Therefore, as long as monetary gain may be obtained, the institutions of regular society tolerate the existence of the underworld.

Andrés elaborates on his witty defense of thieving as a noble art throughout the fifth chapter by arguing for its antiquity, the second quality attributed to it in the subtitle of the work. The entire chapter is devoted to proving that stealing is an activity “inventada en el cielo y praticada en la tierra por los más nobles y calificados moradores della” (139). To illustrate his point, Andrés once again resorts to examples drawn from sources of authority, in this case the Bible and Greek and Roman mythology. These examples range from biblical allusions such as the Devil, Adam, and Cain and Abel, to

mythological tales such as those about Paris and Helen, Theseus and Ariana, and Jason and Medea, among others, all of which are used to prove that stealing is not only universal but has been practiced since the beginning of time in all cultures. Moreover, Andrés observes that it is ambition, not poverty, that turns human beings into thieves:

De aquí infiero el engaño notable en que vive hoy el mundo, creyendo que la pobreza fue inventora del hurto, no siendo otro que la riqueza y prosperidad; porque el amor y desseo de la honra y riqueza crece quanto ella mesma se aumenta, como dixo bien el otro poeta y siendo la ambición un fuego y insaciable hydropesía, quanto más leña le dan, más se aumenta su llama, y quanto más bebe más se acrecienta la sed. Y assí en estos ladrones la grande prosperidad y riqueza que tenían fue causa de su desordenado apetito e insaciable ambición. (136)

This reflection is interesting for two main reasons: on the one hand, Andrés presents ambition as one of the main causes of the rampant corruption of contemporary society, something that British pamphleteers like Harman argue as well, constantly depicting rogues drawn to vice and crime not by necessity, but by ambition. The main difference, though, is that García presents ambition as a trait of all social classes, whereas pamphleteers limit its influence to the realm of the underworld. On the other hand, *Desordenada codicia* strays here away from *Lazarillo de Tormes*, whose main character is not lured into stealing by ambition, but by hunger and sheer necessity; García thus aligns himself with the likes of Alemán in his *Guzmán de Alfarache*, Cervantes in *Rinconete y Cortadillo*, and Thomas Nashe in *The Unfortunate Traveller*, whose protagonists turn into criminals for reasons that have very little to do with necessity.

Having thus established both the antiquity and nobility of thieves, Andrés turns his discourse toward respectable society much more directly in the sixth chapter, only to

find that this appearance of respectability is no more than an illusion: if we scratch a little beneath the surface, we discover that thievery is to be found among all social classes and professions. Respectability, then, according to Andrés, is worthless, merely a mask donned to conceal the shady goings-on beneath a respectable surface. The rogue argues that all regular citizens aspire to live well above their economic means, and that it is precisely this ambition that drives them to cheating and stealing:

Porque, *sic argumentor*, señor, el hombre que tiene un officio de mil ducados de renta, sin otro beneficio, patrimonio o pensión, y tiene una casa que por el alquiler paga ocho cientos, sustenta un cavallo, dos lacayos y un criado, su muger, dos donzellas y sus hijos, un maestro que le enseña, que para todo esto a menester mil ducados, y con todo esso al cabo del año se halla con dos vestidos, sin deudas y quinientos ducados de ganancia, sin que en su campo aya llovido más que en los demás, ni aya heredado los bienes del algún antecessor suyo, *ergo*: ladrón. (142)

In order to prove this point, Andrés does not limit his argument to this hypothetical case, but he takes a quick look at the foremost trades (tailors, weavers, shoemakers, et al) and other professions (doctors, surgeons, attorneys, et al), pointing out some of their illegal practices. The brevity with which Andrés uncovers the tricks and cheats of the different professions brings to mind particularly Awdeley's description of rogue types in his *Fraternity of Vagabonds*, whose style is as concise and straight to the point as Andrés's. García is appropriating here a central feature of rogue pamphlets, of which he will make further use in chapters seven and eight as Andrés delves into his own classification of rogue types, yet he is reworking it to fit the context into which it is being inserted. Rather than exposing and condemning the illegal practices of rogues, Andrés is shattering the appearance of respectability associated with certain professionals, blatantly exposing them as rogues. Interestingly, Andrés's keen critical view is also directed against

members of the clergy, whose activities are depicted as being primarily prompted by ambition and not by any sort of spiritual motives. The passage, which is extremely critical and dispenses with the usual subtlety found in other picaresque texts regarding criticism of the Church, concentrates on three different religious types (*el clérigo*, *el religioso*, and *el predicador*) and is worthy of being quoted in full:

El clérigo hurta diziendo quatro missas por quarenta que le pagaron, a más del dinero que recibe por los aniversarios, responses y otros sufragios, de los quales, por ventura, no se acuerda iamás. El religioso hurta un mayorazgo entero acometiendo con un modesto semblante y el cuello torcido un doliente en el artículo de la muerte y representándole un monte de escrúpulos y cargos de conciencia, le comuta en obras pías aplicadas a su convent, todo lo que estava obligado a restituir, sin que el dexar desheredados media docena de pupilos y la muger del doliente mendigando, le engendre algún escrúpulo de conciencia. El predicador hurta desentrañando a Santo Thomás y a San Agustín lo mejor de sus obras; y, aviéndoles hurtado hasta el pensamiento, vende en el púlpito la doctrina que dize por suya, hiziéndose primer inventor de lo que no es. (147)

Therefore, according to Andrés, clergymen use religion as a tool to trick believers out of their earnings, and spirituality is simply an excuse to conceal their ambition for economic gain. Like Cervantes in *Rinconete y Cortadillo*, García presents religion in his *Desordenada codicia* as a discourse devoid of meaning, whose practitioners act more as rogues than as men of God.⁵⁴ That *Desordenada codicia* was printed in Paris, outside of

⁵⁴ Interestingly, a similar view is already expressed by the Portuguese playwright Gil Vicente almost a century earlier in his *Farsa dos almocreves* (1527). In the play, a priest is attempting to receive payment for his religious services from an *hidalgo* who refuses the priest's request, claiming that he does not have any money. The dialogue between the two characters makes it obvious that they regard religion merely as a social practice, devoid of all spiritual meaning: while the *hidalgo*, a member of the dwindling Portuguese aristocracy of the sixteenth century, requests the services of the priest as a formality

Spain, allowed García to include such a direct attack on the Church and get away with its going uncensored. Andrés brings his argumentation to a close by reinforcing the universality of thievery—“Finalmente, todos hurtan y cada official tiene su particular invención y astucia para ello” (148)—as well as by intensifying his reversal of moral and social values ironically describing as morally good some professions that are traditionally dismissed as dishonorable: “Pero como no ay regla general que no tenga su excepción, podemos excluyr del número de los ladrones toda la gente de buena conciencia, quales son: lacayos, palafreneros, cocineros, corchetes, el carcelero y sus moços, alcahuetes, truanes y putas” (148).

As Massano notes, then, the closing phrase of this chapter “se justifica solo si entendida *per absurdum*” (148); indeed, the utterance is a grotesque intensification meant to underscore Andrés’s view of thieving as a universal practice, but at the same time, it is strategically placed immediately preceding the rogue’s classification of kinds of thieves that ensues in the following two chapters. With its ironic, almost absurd allusion to professions that have more in common with the margins of society than with respectability, that final reflection by Andrés functions, so to speak, as a gateway to the underworld as seen through the eyes of the *pícaro*. As mentioned earlier, the seventh and eighth chapters are those in which García engages in the closest, most noticeable intertextual dialogue with the British rogue pamphlet tradition, whose structure and

expected from the members of his social class (though one that he cannot afford anymore), the priest expects his spiritual services to secure him certain worldly retributions, namely money and connections as court. The priest’s request illustrates this: “Digo que em tres annos vay / que sam vosso capelam ... / Eu fora ja do ifante, e podera ser del Rey. ... / Ora pois veja, senhor, / que he o que me ha de dar, / porque alem do altar / servia de comprador. ... / Ora eu recebi cem reaes / em tres annos, contay bem, / tenho aqui meo vintem” (38-39).

content he reappropriates and revises in the novel. In discussing the intertextual relationships established between *Desordenada codicia* and English rogue pamphlets, I am not attempting to suggest that García had direct access to the works of Awdeley, Harman, and Greene, inasmuch as that is impossible to ascertain with total security and no documents have survived to suggest that the author was versed in the English language. However, it must be pointed out that there had existed in France toward the 1590s a very popular, if short-lived, tradition of *liber vagatorum* that had many points in common with English rogue pamphlets. As Juan Antonio Garrido Ardila reminds us, “[a]ntes de la publicación de los clásicos españoles en traducciones francesas había existido en Francia una corriente literaria de *libri vagatorum*, entre los que destacan *La vie généreuse* ..., publicada en Lyon en 1596, y *Avertissement, antidote et remède contre les piperies des pipeurs*, acerca del famoso criminal Antoine d’Anthenay, publicada en París en 1584” (*Novela* 156). A quick look at the whole title of the *Vie généreuse*, the most popular among these French texts, reveals the undeniable likeness between both the English and French traditions; it reads, “La Vie généreuse des Mercelots, Gueuz et Boesmiens, contenant leur façon de vivre, subtilitez et gergon, mis en lumière par M. Pechon de Ruby, gentilhomme Breton, ayant esté avec eux en ses jeunes ans, où il a exercé ce beau mestier. Plus a esté adjousté un dictionnaire en langage blesquin, avec l’explication en vulgaire” (147). The similarities with English rogue pamphlets are inescapable here: besides its concern with the lingo of the underworld, the *Vie généreuse* exposes the lifestyle and tricks of different types of rogues, and even the narrative framework echoes the pamphlets—as well as *Rinconete y Cortadillo* and the *Desordenada codicia*—with its fictional rogue, Pechon de Ruby, as the vehicle of the

criminal exposé, after “having been with them in his younger years, when he took up this beautiful profession.” Thus, even if it may not be possible to ascertain whether García’s library boasted the original works of English pamphleteers,⁵⁵ he certainly could have been well acquainted with the genre via the extremely popular texts from the French rogue tradition.

In any case, a close reading of the seventh and eighth chapters of *Desordenada codicia* reveals an undeniable intertextual relationship with the English rogue pamphlet tradition, especially with John Awdeley’s *Fraternity of Vagabonds* and Thomas Harman’s *Caveat for Common Cursitors*. In this section of the novel, Andrés, like English pamphleteers, takes a conspicuous look at the underworld and formulates a taxonomy of the different types of thieves that lurk about in this marginal space that he knows so well. What is interesting here, though, is not merely that García is taking formal and material elements from rogue pamphlets, but rather that he reworks and adjusts them in order to suit the purposes of Andrés’s argumentation, radically subverting in the process the original sense of these elements within the English pamphlets. Thus, Andrés follows the example of pamphleteers as far as structure and content are concerned, yet he totally departs from their models regarding the overall purpose of his anatomy of the underworld. Nowhere throughout his classification of roguish types are we going to find

⁵⁵ I have always felt that it could be possible that García was indeed acquainted with at least some of the English pamphlets. In fact, the choice of the word *descubrir* in the title page of the 1619 edition of *Desordenada codicia*, which describes the work as an “Obra apazible y curiosa, en la qual se descubren los enredos y marañas de los que no se contentan con su parte” (Massano 59), could be taken as a hint that García might have known Robert Greene’s *A Notable Discovery of Cozenage* (1591), whose title includes the word *discovery*, akin to *descubrir*. However, other than this lexical coincidence, there is no documental proof that García was in any way acquainted with Greene’s 1591-1592 cony-catching pamphlets.

any direct criticism of the different criminals and their illegal activities. Andrés does describe and thereby does expose the various practices of thieves, yet unlike British pamphleteers, he does not do so in a sensationalistic attempt to censure his fellow criminals; rather, his discovery of the illegal methods of thieves should be read in the light of his previous portrait of the questionable behavior of the members of allegedly honest professions. Indeed, criminals are compared with these seemingly honest citizens in an attempt to prove Andrés's point that stealing is universal and that the underworld and regular society do not actually stand too far apart. Prior to delving into his portrait of the underworld, Andrés makes a clear difference between what he calls *ladrones discretos* ("concealed thieves"), that is, the representatives of the various professions that he discussed in the previous chapter, and "ladrones . . . a lo descubierto" (149), that is, "non-concealed thieves," the marginal types that conform the classification that ensues. Andrés suggests that no basic differences exist between these two kinds of delinquents, other than that, whereas the former go unnoticed and are tolerated by society, the latter are invariably punished and forced to live on the margins of the law. In the rogue's view, far from being an intrinsic difference between the two main types of thieves that he has singled out, this is actually a product of the different parameters employed to judge each group by a legal system that he perceives as essentially corrupt and iniquitous.

In his discussion of these "non-concealed thieves," Andrés follows the typical pattern found in rogue pamphlets: each type of rogue is identified by the name assigned to it in *germanía*, that is, the secret linguistic code of the underworld (*salteadores*, *estafadores*, *grumetes*, et al), whose meaning Andrés explains briefly before uncovering the kinds of practices associated with each roguish type. The brevity and conciseness of

Andrés's descriptive style immediately brings Awdeley's *Fraternity of Vagabonds* to mind: Awdeley's pamphlet is merely a catalogue of rogues and vagabonds featuring a very brief description of each kind, concentrating on their practices, tools, and attire, invariably rendered in a rather linguistically sparse style. Like Awdeley's, some of Andrés's entries in his taxonomy of the underworld are brief and simple—for instance, his portrayal of *cigarreros* and *sátyros*⁵⁶—yet some of the types require special attention, in which case Andrés's descriptions are longer and much more detailed, bringing them closer to Harman's *Caveat for Common Coursitors*. Like Harman, the rogue concentrates on the thieves' physical appearance, variety of tricks, and tools of the trade, but unlike the English pamphleteer, whose portraits of criminals are constantly sprinkled with pejorative terms such as “these ranging rabblement of rascals” (69), “most wicked knaves” (73), and “beastly people” (92), García's rogue seldom uses such epithets in his depiction of his fellow thieves. In fact, even in the case of the cruel *dacianos*, who steal young infants of three or four years of age and break their arms and feet before selling them to other vagabonds, Andrés admits that they are “gente cruel, desapiadada y feroz” (153), yet he immediately adds that these *dacianos* have garnered a bad reputation within the underworld. Again, it is evident, even in this extremely amoral example of criminal behavior, that Andrés does not actually aim his discussion of thieves at censuring roguery overtly, but at contrasting this society of thieves with regular outside society.

⁵⁶ “Los cigarreros tienen por particular officio frequentar las iglesias, saraos y banquetes públicos; cortan una media capa, las mangas de un sayo, medio manto, un cuarto de faldellín y, finalmente, lo que topan, porque de todo se saca dinero” (152). “Los sátyros son gente silvestre y agreña, la qual tiene su destricto y habitación en los campos y desiertos, robando caballos, vacas, carneros y toda suerte de animales que la ocasión les presenta” (153).

In some specific cases, the echoes of British rogue pamphlets within Andrés's classification of thieves are particularly striking. Thus, the aforementioned *sátyros*, who are devoted to stealing "caballos, vacas, carneros y toda suerte de animales que la ocasión les presenta" (153), are next of kin to Harman's "prigger of prancers," described as "horse stealers" (124) in Harman's *Caveat for Common Cursitors*. Likewise, the *cortabolsas*, whose method of stealing consists of "meter la mano en la faldriquera del que acometen y sacalle diestramente la bolsa y todo lo que en ella tiene, sin que lo sienta" (159), display a talent for thieving that closely resembles that of the pickpockets exposed in Gilbert Walker's *Manifest Detection* (1552), who lead their victim "to the gaze of an interlude, or the bear-baiting at Paris Garden, or some other place of throng where, by a fine-fingered fig-boy, ... picked shall be his purse and his money lost in a moment" (48). However, beyond these and other close textual coincidences, one of the most interesting elements from the British rogue pamphlet tradition that García refashions in his *Desordenada codicia* is the inclusion of fictional tales, always presented as real-life examples, in order to illustrate the practices of each roguish type. This feature, already present in Walker's *Manifest Detection*, first appears systematically in Harman's *Caveat for Common Cursitors* and later in the pamphlets by Robert Greene and Thomas Dekker. Harman invariably follows his anatomy of each kind of criminal with a fictional take, usually sensationalistic and exaggerated, that is offered as a factual example of the rogue's practices and that is often presented either as having been witnessed by the author or as having been obtained by him in the course of a conversation with a rogue. Andrés first follows this structure toward the end of the seventh chapter, when he illustrates his description of the *mayordomos*, a type of thieves who specialize in stealing "pan, vino,

carne y otras vituallas con que sustentar la compañía” (153), by means of a story that he claims to have occurred to “uno de mis camaradas” (155). Regarding this aspect of Andrés’s narrative, Massano observes that the inclusion of inset stories was a common practice in Spanish Golden Age literature: “La utilización de cuentos, provenientes especialmente de la tradición de las novelas italianas,” says Massano, “no es cosa nueva en la literatura española, pero Carlos García sabe manipular mejor que otros el material ameno ... y presenta el resultado de su innovación como una acción real, atrevida y burlesca, de uno de sus ladrones o de sí mismo” (29). This critic goes on to analyze each one of Andrés’s interpolations, concluding that most of them may be traced back to the tradition of Italian *novelle* by the likes of Giovanni Francesco Straparola and Girolamo Morlini, whereas some others may be of French origin and others may even be originals by García.⁵⁷ Nevertheless, regardless of the sources of the interpolations and the prevalence of this practice in the Spanish literature of the time, what is new and relevant here is the way in which García incorporates these inset stories into the novel, a way that is akin to the practice as it is found in rogue pamphlets such as Harman’s *Caveat for Common Cursitors*. First of all, like Harman, García incorporates these interpolations in order to exemplify the practices of a specific kind of criminal that Andrés has previously described. And, more importantly, in the three particular inset stories included in the eighth chapter, it is Andrés himself that is featured as the protagonist of the tale, and he is not merely an observer. The story is not presented as hearsay or as having been witnessed by Andrés, as in the rogue pamphlets, but Andrés plays a central role in its plot and tells the story from a first-person perspective. Indeed, García weaves episodes from Andrés’s

⁵⁷ For a thorough discussion of the sources of the inset stories in *Desordenada codicia*, see Massano 29-36.

own biography—which up until this point had been interrupted by his defense of thieving as a noble art and by his exposé of both seemingly honest professions and the practices of thieves—into his anatomy of the underworld, thereby straying away from the rogue pamphlet tradition and veering closer to the autobiographical mode of the picaresque genre. Hence, García borrows elements of structure and content from rogue pamphlets and ably conjugates them with typical elements from the picaresque tradition: some episodes of Andrés's biography, linked thematically with specific sections of his typology of rogues, serve as illustration of such sections, empowering Andrés with the authority conferred by personal experience. This is one of the reasons why it would be erroneous to consider *Desordenada codicia* merely as a rogue pamphlet; rather, like Cervantes's *Rinconete y Cortadillo*, it should be seen as an atypical picaresque novel that includes certain features drawn from the rogue pamphlet tradition that have been modified and refashioned in order to suit the specific narrative context into which they are inserted. Beyond functioning as this undeniable point of contact between both literary traditions, as already noted, these autobiographical episodes that illustrate a part of Andrés's typology of the underworld empower the rogue with authority on his subject and have the rhetorical effect of rendering his thesis seemingly more solid. Indeed, the idea here is that if Andrés's knowledge of the underworld is so vast and grounded on personal experience, not only will his anatomy of the criminal underworld be more valid and reliable, but perhaps also his exposé of the dishonest practices of respectable professionals that precedes it.

After drawing his classification of rogue types to a close, Andrés picks up the narrative of his life, which he continues in a mostly linear fashion throughout the

following four chapters, up until the final events that land him in the prison where his conversation with the narrator-turned-narratee is taking place. This further section of the novel, however, does not stand independently from the criminal typology that precedes it, but rather the two sections are connected by a process of cause and effect: Andrés's final interpolation in the eighth chapter is an ill-fated cheat meant to exemplify the kind of practices associated with the *maletas*, that is, thieves who "se encierran en una bala, cesto o tonel, y fingiendo ser alguna mercadería encomendada, hazen que algún amigo suyo, transformando en mercader, la lleve a la casa de otro, para que la noche, estando todos durmiendo, rompa con un cuchillo la tela y salga a vaziar lo que ay en casa" (164). The failure of Andrés's escapade as a *maleta* will lead to his being sentenced to ten years in the galleys at Marseilles, which is precisely the episode that Andrés narrates as he picks up his autobiography. This principle of causality that strings Andrés's adventures together dominates this final section of the novel, which begins with the rogue's experiences in the galleys and leads up to the moment in which the interview between the two characters is taking place in jail. While in Marseilles, Andrés manages to trick his way out of his galley sentence by taking advantage of the gullibility of the lovelorn captain, whom he leads to believe that he has magical powers that could succeed in winning the favors of the object of the captain's affection. This episode, which is full of echoes of the jest-book tradition,⁵⁸ whose central characters (Howleglas, Master Skelton, Skoggin, Tarlton, et al.) exploit the power of language to their full advantage, constitutes the only instance in the whole novel in which Andrés's dealings meet with success: his

⁵⁸ Massano, however, suggests that this episode is García's own reworking of magical elements already present in sixteenth-century Spanish literature, subsequently used by French and British authors such as Charles Sorel and Alexander Smith (see Massano 35).

ensuing adventures in Lyon—with a string of pearls—and in Paris—yet another fateful experience as a *maleta*—end up in failure, leading to punishment after punishment until he finds himself imprisoned again. The recurrence of failure in Andrés’s criminal endeavors has caused several critics to interpret this aspect of the plot from various points of view. For instance, Fernando Gutiérrez turns Andrés’s failures into the central motif of the novel, suggesting that the main lesson that may be drawn from the *Desordenada codicia* is related to the misfortune of the protagonist: “La moraleja,” claims Gutiérrez, “que la tuvieron siempre todos los libros de la época, es la mala suerte de Andrés, que se complica a veces mucho más de lo esperado” (19). However, although Andrés’s misfortune is a relevant thematic element of the work, it seems insufficient if we are to account for and explain the complexity of the novel. Though an integral part of the narrative, the text can hardly be reduced to a discussion of Andrés’s failures as a thief. Moreover, in his examination of the possible didactic dimension of the *Desordenada codicia*, Massano considers the work within the context of the Counter-Reformation. As prescribed by the doctrines of the Council of Trent, García’s novel must not simply entertain, but also instruct, and therefore Andrés’s ill-fated criminal adventures may be seen as a vehicle for didacticism:

La desordenada codicia sigue narrando las aventuras que aparentemente ensalzan la visa ladronesca. Aparentemente, porque todos los lances, excepto dos, terminan sin éxito y con la consiguiente reclusión en la cárcel. El lector debe de [*sic*] concluir que el robo no lleva a ningún lugar agradable y que el precio que se paga por los “enredos y marañas” es demasiado costoso. (40-41)

The text itself, however, seems to challenge Massano’s interpretation of this element in the novel: indeed, not in a single moment of the work does Andrés ever criticize criminal

practices in an overt way, and more importantly, never does he express any sort of repentance for his roguish behavior. To the contrary, Andrés glorifies thieving and presents it as a noble art that is pervasive not only in the realm of the underworld but also within the context of respectable society. Thus, for instance, toward the beginning of their conversation, at a time when the narrator still makes occasional comments that interrupt Andrés's discourse, the narrator objects to Andrés's incensed defense of thievery and observes that owing to the inordinate amount of misfortunes that the rogue has endured throughout his lifetime, rather than extolling the virtues of crime, perhaps he should "escarmentar con las experiencias passadas" (119). Andrés's reply, however, leaves no doubt that there is absolutely no trace of repentance for his roguish ways:

Vuestra merced tiene razón, señor mío ... y confieso que nos suceden muchas desgracias y azares, pero más come un buey que cien golondrinas; quiero dezir, que un buen lance nos haze espaldas a muchas desgracias, quantimás que no nos suceden tantas como vuestra merced piensa, y aunque nos sucedieran muchas más, no sería possible apartarnos deste trato, sino es con la muerte, porque no sé qué tiene consigo esta nuestra arte, que es como el hidrónico, que cuanto más bebe, más sed tiene. (119-20)

Moreover, just a few pages before this hardly repentant speech, Andrés does seem to show some regret for the illegal activities that have landed him in prison, which the narrator notes with a hint of surprise: "[Y] acabando su cuento con un profundo suspiro que del alma le salía, se dexó caer entre mis braços medio desmayado" (112). Tellingly, though, we will soon learn that Andrés's seeming contrition is related to a cruel mockery from some of the inmates, who have led him to believe that his sentence is now final, and that he is about to be whipped and subsequently sent to the galleys immediately. As soon as Andrés learns the truth about the prank, he sheds all appearance of regret and returns

to his shameless celebration of his activities as a *pícaro*: “Con esta nueva volvió el desdichado tan repentinamente en su ser primero, que *sin quedalle algún rastro, ni señal de sentimiento*, hizo veinte y cinco cabriolas en el ayre con mil gracias y donaires, y sus compañeros començaron a dalle pelillo y matraca sobre el caso” (112; emphasis mine). Due to this flagrant lack of repentance shown by Andrés throughout the novel, I believe that it is more fitting to read the rogue’s failures in the light of social criticism, rather than as a vehicle for didacticism. Therefore, Andrés does not show any sign of repentance for his activities as a thief precisely because he is attempting to prove that stealing and other illegal practices are pervasive and commonplace amid the members of respectable society. The only difference between the occupations of seemingly honest citizens and those of the inhabitants of the criminal underworld lies, according to Andrés, in the manifest double standard employed to judge both groups: while the former are tolerated and constitute an effective part of regular society, the latter are circumscribed to marginality and constantly punished and imprisoned. In the rogue’s opinion, then, within a society that is marred by corruption and moral decay, where social mobility is not an option, criminality is the only choice really available to those born into the lower strata of the social order. And while all other professionals (doctors, traders, shoemakers, weavers, clergymen, et al) are hailed as respectable citizens despite their shady dealings behind closed doors, the only fate of thieves and criminals—that is, of *pícaros* like Andrés—will be the whip, the galleys, or the prison, the inside of which is described by the narrator in such graphic terms as “el chaos confuso de la prission,” “horrible habitación,” “perpetuo infierno,” and “una tierra de calamidad, morada de tinieblas y habitación de miseria, adonde sempiterno horror y ningún orden habita” (96). Examined from the perspective of

the rogue, the comparison between the atmosphere within a prison and the realm of hell acquires a whole new meaning: the criminal's stay in such a chaotic, appallingly dreadful place not only will not result in repentance for his roguish ways, but it will also rule out the reformation of his behavior. Not surprisingly, Andrés does not see prison or the galleys as a space of moral reformation, but rather as a space ruled by chaos and moral decay. This is precisely why, instead of amending his ways, following imprisonment, whipping, galley sentences, and exile, Andrés invariably relapses into thieving, which leads to his being punished again, in a never-ending vicious cycle. Hence, Andrés is reflecting here on yet another important social issue: punishment of criminals not only is inefficient, but it is merely a way for social institutions to contain and to a certain extent control, but not resolve, the ubiquitous problem of crime. Ironically, Andrés suggests, the mechanisms used by social institutions to supposedly suppress crime only engender more crime.

This is a point that the rogue tangentially explores in the final chapter of the novel. At the end of the twelfth chapter, Andrés explains the circumstances that have brought him to his current situation in jail—namely a failed escapade as a *maleta* in Paris—bringing his life story full circle similarly to Lázaro in *Lazarillo de Tormes*, although Andrés does not really have a *caso* on which to shed light, as the *pícaro* from Tormes did. The novel, however, does not end at that precise moment, but it includes a final chapter, entitled “De los estatutos y leyes de los ladrones” (201). This final section, which most patently echoes Cervantes's *Rinconete y Cortadillo*, is an appendix of sorts in which Andrés describes the criminal underworld as a perfectly organized society, characterized by a strict hierarchy and ruled by “razón, estatutos, leyes y premática”

(201). An older, more experienced criminal, the captain, presides over this society of thieves that brings Monipodio's fraternity to mind; the physical description of this *capitán* is certainly akin to that of the crime kingpin of Seville in *Rinconete y Cortadillo*: "Es este nuestro caudillo hombre viejo, prudente, experimentado, sagaz y, finalmente, jubilado en el arte, al qual, aviéndole ya faltado las fuerças y ligereza para hurtar, exercita la teórica con nosotros, enseñándonos el método y preceptos de hazello" (203). The intertextual dialogue established between this thirteenth chapter of *Desordenada codicia* and *Rinconete y Cortadillo* is certainly striking, which seems to suggest unequivocally that García was very familiar with Cervantes's exemplary novel. For instance, Andrés notes that newcomers into the underworld are required to undergo "tres meses de noviciado" (202), a requirement that was also enforced within Monipodio's fraternity, although in its case the trial period lasted for nine extra months. After this three-month rite of passage, the captain decides the kind of criminal occupation that each rogue should take up based on his or her talents: "Y aviendo conocido su capacidad y talento, le da el officio de salteador, grumete, cortabolsa, o otro de que fuere más capaz" (202). In the context of the Seville fraternity, this was also Monipodio's prerogative,⁵⁹ and like Cervantes, García also fashions this society of rogues as a strictly regulated, very efficient congregation of criminals, complete with weekly meetings intended to plan and record their illegal endeavors:

Para esto nos manda juntar una vez en la semana en cierto puesto señalado, a donde nos obliga a dar estrecha cuenta de todos los hurtos y

⁵⁹ Compare the previous quotation with the following excerpt from *Rinconete y Cortadillo*: "Pues de aquí en adelante—respondió Monipodio—quiero y es mi voluntad que vos, Rincón, os llaméis *Rinconete*, y vos, Cortado, *Cortadillo*, que son nombres que asientan como de molde a vuestra edad y a nuestras ordenanzas" (212).

acontecimientos que en ella a avido, reprehendiendo ásperamente los negligentes y descuydados y alabando los vigilantes y astutos. Suele esto hazerse sábado en la noche, en el qual día ordena todo lo que se deve hazer la semana, señalando a cada uno los lugares y puestos que a de tener y los hurtos en que se a de emplear, tomando riguroso juramento a todos de fidelidad y castigando al delinquente por la primera vez con quitalle la parte del hurto que le toca; por la segunda, privándole del officio por seis meses y, si fuere incorrigible y pertinaz, le entrega en manos de un alguazil. Si pecare de negligencia y descuydo, como es acudir tarde a su puesto, divertirse o dexar passar algún lanze sin acometelle, se le priva del beneficio de una semana, y quitándole el officio de ladrón, le da el de espía o centinela por el tiempo que nuestro consejo ordenare. (203)

The intertextual connections with *Rinconete y Cortadillo* are undeniable here: García devises an effective, highly regulated social order constituted by all kinds of thieves and criminals, a society upside down that at the same time mirrors and rivals contemporary society. In fact, Andrés refers to the underworld as “nuestra república” (202) and sprinkles his description of it with passing social criticism, commenting on issues such as the convenience of allowing young people to decide for themselves what occupation to take up and whom and when to marry, as well as ironically intimating that the social order of the underworld is superior to and more effective than that of regular society. Andrés’s burlesque subversion of the contemporary social order even contemplates the institution of the Church, as he discusses the rogues’ religious beliefs, facetiously describing himself and his fellow criminals as half-Christians:

En lo que toca a la religión, somos medio cristianos, pues de dos mandamientos principales que ay en la ley de Dios, guardamos el uno, que es amar a Dios, pero no al próximo, pues le quitamos lo que tiene. De la penitencia, recebimos las dos partes, que son la confesión, porque algunas vezes nos confessamos, y la contrición; pero de la tercera, que es la satisfacción, no ay hablar. (207)

In this specific point, García seems to distance himself from Cervantes slightly: whereas in *Rinconete y Cortadillo* Cervantes depicts the criminals' relationship with religion as merely theatrical and devoid of content, as no more than a superstition, García goes one step further and suggests that religion is regarded with contempt by thieves and has absolutely no place within the underworld, a largely practical, material society totally uninterested in more metaphysical concerns. However, like Cervantes, García does underscore the symbiotic relationship established between the underworld and respectable society: Andrés states that “[d]e todos los hurtos se saca primeramente el quinto para satisfacer con él al que nos pedona los açotes, destierro, galeras y horca” (203). Therefore, the rogue calls attention to the corruption of the institutions of contemporary society, some of whose officials blatantly disregard their duties in exchange for some kind of monetary retribution. In such a context, the underworld thrives and its existence is seen by Andrés as a natural consequence of a regular society governed by corruption and moral decay.

Desordenada codicia is, then, an atypical picaresque novel, a lesser-known work penned by a largely unknown author whose heterogeneity is directly linked to the inclusion of elements that are not common in other picaresque novels, namely features from the British rogue pamphlet tradition. The intertextual dialogue established between *Desordenada codicia* and English rogue pamphlets is central to any critical discussion of the novel, to such an extent that without considering this literary interplay, it will not be possible to fully appreciate the multiple layers of significance of García's work. In this text, García weaves elements of structure and content (the formulation of a typology of rogues and the exposé of their thieving practices being the most important) drawn from

British rogue pamphlets, possibly via French sources that were based on the original English works, into the first-person narrative of a rogue's life story. In the process, García refashions these elements and adapts them to fit the specific context into which they are inserted, thereby decisively modifying the sense with which British pamphleteers had employed them and conjugating them with some typical features (autobiography, presence of a narratee, social criticism, et al) from the Spanish picaresque tradition. Thus, both English pamphleteers and García construct an ideal, fictional figure of the rogue which, albeit similar in some respects, is radically opposed as far as its function is concerned. While pamphleteers fashion the rogue as an object to be harshly criticized and used as a scapegoat on whom to blame the social and economic difficulties of Britain, García, like Cervantes in *Rinconete y Cortadillo*, conceives the rogue as a vehicle for social criticism. Andrés, the protagonist of *Desordenada codicia*, is not an object to be censured but a subject empowered with the capacity to denounce the corruption and decay of a society that has driven him to marginality from an early age. In this sense, Andrés does not stand, after all, too far apart from the rest of picaresque protagonists. On the one hand, like all of them, he voices his opinions on contemporary society and displays a keen critical gaze on the world around him. On the other hand, his final state of dishonor is undoubtedly akin to that of more illustrious counterparts such as Lázaro de Tormes, Guzmán de Alfarache, and Pablos de Segovia. By the end of *Desordenada codicia*, mirroring Lázaro's case, Andrés's honor is at stake due to the mostly unsuccessful thieving that he has shamelessly put into practice and that has ultimately landed him in prison; just like Guzmán, he is facing yet another galley sentence; and as in the case of Pablos, his status within the social order is far from improving. However,

Andrés's situation at the end of the novel, as well as the countless misfortunes that he has endured throughout his life, only serve to further underscore his marginality and the manner in which he is rejected by a society that precludes social mobility and in which he feels displaced. Andrés does not expose the types and activities of the inhabitants of the underworld to warn the reader against the dangers of such practices nor to blame his fellow thieves for the social ills of contemporary society; rather, his taxonomy of rogues should be read in the light of his previous exposé of the illegal practices performed by supposedly honest citizens as they carry out their everyday business. In this context, stealing, whether covertly or overtly, is seen as universal, and the underworld only differs from respectable society in the double standard with which the two realms are judged. Incarceration and other sorts of punishment are the only fate of thieves and criminals such as Andrés, who will not contemplate the possibility of reformation or repentance despite their times in prison or in the galleys, for how could Andrés possibly show any truly heartfelt regret for his activities as a thief when thieving is actually a generalized practice across social classes and when allegedly respectable thieves remain unpunished? All in all, it is true, we may not know a great deal about Carlos García's own biography due to the scarcity of historical documents related to him that have survived, yet throughout the pages of one of his two extant works, *La desordenada codicia de los bienes ajenos*, he emerges as an author with a keen, witty eye for the treatment and criticism of social issues, and also as a writer who, like Cervantes, was strongly concerned with experimenting with and going beyond the established generic parameters of the picaresque novel, which, as we have seen, he very ably challenges in this work by

engaging in highly personal and particularly fruitful intertextual dialogue with the rogue pamphlet tradition.

CONCLUSIONS

In *Jonathan Wild, the Great* (1743), his largely fictional biography of the real-life criminal Jonathan Wild, Henry Fielding notes that “the *Spanish Rogue* was [Wild’s] favorite book” (14). Although it is possible that Wild may have been acquainted with James Mabbe’s 1622 translation of Mateo Alemán’s *Guzmán de Alfarache*, which appeared simply as *The Rogue* and was met with wide popular acclaim, Fielding most definitely was. With this allusion to Alemán’s novel, Fielding is inscribing his work within the tradition of rogue literature, and the allusion itself is just one of many instances that illustrate the intertextual echoes existing between the eighteenth-century novels of English authors such as Fielding, Daniel Defoe, and Tobias Smollett and the tradition of the Spanish picaresque novel. Yet these intertextual echoes had already begun to be heard about two centuries before the publication of *Jonathan Wild, the Great*. In fact, the literary dialogue between Spanish and English authors of works that can be described as rogue literature was particularly intense and productive throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which saw the flourishing of genres such as the English jest-book and rogue pamphlet and the Spanish picaresque novel. Most importantly, this time period saw the interplay between them, enabled to no small degree by the introduction of the printing press, an invention which facilitated the works’ crossing geographic boundaries and resulted in the creation of an incipient literary market.

Over the centuries, the jest-books and the rogue pamphlets have garnered a much smaller critical attention than the picaresque novel, perhaps in part because picaresque works have been inscribed in the critical debate that seeks an answer to issues such as the

nature and the origin of the novel. Whereas English literature scholars such as Ian Watt in his classic study *The Rise of the Novel* (1957) bestow the fatherhood of the novel on eighteenth-century British writers such as Defoe, Fielding, Smollett, and Samuel Richardson, Hispanists point out that the picaresque may very well signal the birth of the genre two centuries earlier, and some—following Fernando Lázaro Carreter—even hail *Lazarillo de Tormes* as the pioneering modern novel. Indeed, the autobiographical *Lazarillo* presents a first-person narrative of the trials faced by the protagonist, Lázaro, as he wanders through life serving several masters, and each episode constitutes a landmark in the protagonist's learning process. Moreover, the work is not merely an arbitrary collection of unconnected episodes, but each one of those episodes is meant to explain and justify Lázaro's alleged final state of dishonor—the *caso*—that is, the rumor going around the city of Toledo that his wife is supposedly having an affair with an archbishop. Thus, the different episodes of Lázaro's life about which he reminisces from his comfortable position as a town crier in Toledo form an organic whole. Most Hispanists agree that works such as *Lazarillo* and *Guzmán* should be considered novels, yet over the decades critics have spilled a great deal of ink arguing over what exactly the picaresque novel is, over which works should be ascribed to the genre, and over whether this genre should be limited only to Spain or whether works from other literary traditions can be labeled as picaresque, among many other issues. Because Spanish picaresque novels were published and read in translation to wide acclaim beyond the geographic boundaries of Spain, it would be erroneous to restrict the corpus of the picaresque merely to Spanish works. Most importantly, as the literary market widened, Spanish picaresque novels interacted with other similar genres, and this interplay was bidirectional, affecting the

different genres involved to a greater or lesser extent. Though picaresque novels traveled far and wide across Europe, the intertextual dialogue between Spanish and English authors, who shared a markedly similar social and historical context, was particularly fruitful, as shown by the interplay established between the picaresque novel and English genres such as the jest-book and the rogue pamphlet. Therefore, only an analysis of the intertextual relationship between these genres throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries will shed light on the many ways in which these Spanish and English authors interacted and created in the process a fictional image of the figure of the rogue, the central character of all these works, that, despite its undeniable similarities, is in many ways noticeably different. Only an intertextual analysis of the interplay between these genres will enable us to fully comprehend the idiosyncrasies and the complexity of works such as Miguel de Cervantes's *Rinconete y Cortadillo* (1613) and Dr. Carlos García's *La desordenada codicia de los bienes ajenos* (1619), both of which have puzzled critics to such an extent that some even deny them their place within the picaresque genre.

As we read works belonging to these three genres in the light of one another, it quickly becomes apparent that, inasmuch as the jest-book and the rogue pamphlet predate the picaresque novel in some cases by several decades, the term *picaresque novel* ceases to be operative to refer to the three genres as a whole. Consequently, it becomes necessary to replace it with the more appropriate label of *rogue literature*, an all-inclusive, transnational umbrella term that encompasses any text across time periods and literary traditions constructed around the central, unifying figure of a rogue. Although sometimes inevitably based on contemporary social reality to a greater or lesser degree, this rogue is always a literary construction, a conceptualization on the part of an author

which is determined by a specific spatio-temporal context, as well as by the specific agenda that the author may have as he or she sits down to compose the work. By studying these three genres together and attempting to integrate them, we gain a more complete understanding of the diverse ways in which writers who inscribe their works within each genre conceptualize the figure of the rogue in order to suit their particular purposes. Thus, the striking differences between works that at first sight have so much in common are born out of the often opposed fictional images of the rogue created by each author in his or her own context.

Hence, whereas as jest-book compilers endow their protagonists with verbal wit and cunning in order to entertain the reader with their actions and remarks and occasionally introduce certain hints of good-natured social commentary, authors of rogue pamphlets seek to expose the rogue and his illegal tricks and cheats in order to turn him into a scapegoat and blame the many social and economic obstacles facing Elizabethan and Jacobean England on him. This objectification to which pamphleteers subject the figure of the rogue stands in stark contrast with the image of the rogue conveyed in picaresque novels. Spanish picaresque novelists conceptualize the rogue as a subject, endowing him or her with voice and using him or her as a vehicle for social criticism. There is little doubt that this dimension of social commentary is one of the main reasons why this group of novelists, some of whom published merely one novel, selected the picaresque novel as the literary structure for their works, and I would also argue that this is why the genre has remained so healthy over the centuries. Indeed, the genre appears to lend itself extremely well to any kind of social criticism regardless of the time period and the social context. Camilo José Cela's *La familia de Pascual Duarte* (1942), for instance,

is just one example of a picaresque novel written outside of the context of Golden Age Spain that comments on several aspects of a social structure that is the result of a repressive government such as that of Francisco Franco right after the Spanish Civil War. In most rogue pamphlets, the rogue is always the object of criticism, while in picaresque novels criticism is channeled through the literary construction of the rogue who narrates a story that is often autobiographical. The rogue protagonist is certainly the object of social rejection and marginality, and his or her constant quest for social improvement often goes unrewarded, which further emphasizes the critical dimension of these works, denouncing that social mobility is patently denied to individuals belonging to the lower social strata. These essential generic differences, I argue, go a long way to explain why the rogue pamphlet never flowered in Spain.

However, as we consider the English rogue pamphlet and the Spanish picaresque novel side by side, it becomes apparent that these two types of rogue literature engaged in a surprisingly fruitful literary interplay, which emerges most strongly when we look at works that attempt to go beyond established literary conventions, thereby defying clear-cut categorization. This is the case, for instance, of Thomas Nashe's *The Unfortunate Traveller* (1594), which draws largely on the long-standing traditions of jest-books and rogue pamphlet but which cannot be fully understood without bearing in mind David Rowland's 1573 translation of *Lazarillo de Tormes* into English. And, more relevantly for the present study, this is also the case of the aforementioned picaresque novels *Rinconete y Cortadillo* and *Desordenada codicia*, by Cervantes and García respectively. As the generic boundaries of the picaresque novel became established in the foundational works *Lazarillo* and *Guzmán*, these two authors sought to experiment with the form, to

test the limits of the genre, and to overturn literary conventions and readers' expectations about the newly minted genre. The inclusion of elements culled from the rogue pamphlet tradition—namely the exposé of roguish tricks and vocabulary and the depiction of the underworld as a rigidly organized society in reverse teeming with criminals of all kinds—provided the desired innovation, a way to depart from the preestablished parameters of the picaresque novel. Yet these two works still retain the agenda of social criticism that characterizes the picaresque genre, among other features. Cervantes and García include elements taken from rogue pamphlets in their novels, but as they do so, they decisively modify these features in order to suit the purposes of their works, and this is precisely where the interplay between the two genres becomes particularly fruitful, resulting in a reinvigoration of both literary forms. Like the relationship between *Monipodio's* fraternity and regular society in Seville, the relationship established between these two types of rogue literature is largely symbiotic, and a great deal may be gained from critically considering the intertextual dialogue between the two traditions.

In closing, I would maintain that no single genre stands in isolation, and it may only be fully understood when studied in the light of other genres with which it interacts. The intertextual relationship between the Spanish and the English rogue literature traditions is evident in the eighteenth century, when authors such as Defoe, Fielding, and Smollett expressly admitted their debt to Cervantes and to the Spanish picaresque tradition. Yet the literary interplay between Spanish and English writers of rogue literature works was especially recurrent and fecund in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, setting the groundwork for the interactions between both traditions in the ensuing centuries. By considering and analyzing this intertextual dialogue as it began and

developed in the early modern period, not only do we set the necessary basis for a better understanding of later genres such as the mid-seventeenth century criminal biography, the eighteenth-century novels previously mentioned, and the Victorian-age works of Charles Dickens and Wilkie Collins, but we also gain a unique and fascinating insight into the germane genres of the jest-book, the rogue pamphlet, and the picaresque novel themselves that enables us to shed new light on the ways in which authors like Cervantes and García cleverly blur the conventional lines that traditionally separate literary genres.

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