When I first proposed the idea of this talk, I thought I knew what I wanted to do, and what I could do with it; but as so often happens, I became less sure as time passed. I suspect that this is an experience shared by many of us, especially as we set out to explore the universe of Cervantes, that well-lit but disconcertingly peculiar place, where objects and persons alike exist in strange fields that bend thought in directions we never intended it to go. But I would like to make clear at the outset that, rather than offering well-rounded, definitive-seeming scholarship, I want to suggest directions and possibilities, and perhaps some impossibilities.

The starting point, the analogy or central conceit, if you like, from which I started is reflected in the title of this talk: it is that of Alice's looking-glass world. You recall how, having passed through the looking glass, Alice finds herself among things and people who look familiar, who use the same words that she uses, but who evidently follow some strange rules of conduct as well as some reversed laws of causality. It occurred to me that Cervantes does not merely anticipate this transposition, he doubles it back upon itself. Don Quijote has inhabited the looking-glass world of chivalric fiction and has become so habituated to its assumptions and its practices that when he sallies out into the everyday world, this world of inns and sheep and stage-coaches seems to him to be a strange looking glass world, a world whose laws and premises and operations he will struggle to resist, or to master, and finally, to comprehend. Of course, if this analogy works at all, it is because of the many ways in which mirrors and mirroring are of fundamental conceptual and structural importance to the novel as a whole, and to the idea of parody that the novel embodies. Don Quijote is not, as some people have thought, concerned with problems of perception: it is about recognition. Aristotle would have been dazzled by it. It is peppered with recognitions from beginning to end: recognitions, non-recognitions, and most importantly, self-recognitions, sometimes rejected, with tragic consequences, other times delayed. And throughout these one hundred and twenty-six chapters we watch the fragile romance of an elusive self-recognition unwind slowly, laboriously, lovingly, endlessly deferred, it seems, in the conversations of Don Quijote and Sancho; in that amazingly rich and subtle intercourse between the self, the other, and the other's world. So at this point in my preamble, we already can begin to infer the importance and the variety of the mirror as a device; and more crucially, the centrality of mirroring as a mode of novelistic thinking. Mirrors are far more than a playful conceit—which is not to say that they cease to be a playful conceit as well. As a conceit they engage us as readers also in the game of recognition. The enterprise of critical reading becomes one of recognizing recognitions. That, too, is a playful conceit. So I offer this talk less as a scholarly exercise, and more in the nature of a scherzo.

I am going to ask you not to accompany me for a few moments in our ritual game of scholarly self-recognition; and let us begin by recalling some of the conceptual mirrors that were familiar to Cervantes. First, the description, attributed to Cicero, of comedy as a mirror of human behavior, an image of truth:

\[ \text{imitatio vitae, speculum consuetudinis, imago veritatis} \]

This dictum is enlarged in Renaissance poetics to include other dramatic modes, notably tragedy. Minturno, for example, claims that . . . no teaching is to be found which so much abates the passions of the mind as does tragic poetry, since she does not present a single thing that cannot come about, and clearly presents to us the condition of man as though she were a brightly shining mirror; and he who in his mirror sees the nature of things and the variety of life and the weakness of man does not grieve over it, when he thinks carefully on it . . . (L'Arte Poetica, 1564).

Marlowe and Shakespeare put the matter succinctly. In the prologue to Tamburlaine, Marlowe affirms:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{View but his picture in this tragic glass,} \\
\text{And then applaud his fortune as you please.}
\end{align*}
\]

And Hamlet asserts that the end of all acting “was and is to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature, to show virtue her own feature . . .”, and so on (Hamlet, II.ii. 21-25).

The mirror as metaphor, then, can be made to reflect anything that is put before it. Socrates tells Glaucon in the Tenth Book of Plato's The Republic that “in a way” any one can very easily make anything in the world:
the Priest's intention. (The Priest is skillful at entrapment by mirrors, as this and other episodes show: I will have more to say about his
Stories also are mirrors: the Priest re-tells the narrative of the Captive, and the Judge recognizes himself and his brother in it, as was
en poder de don Fernando, y que cuando con razones no le pudiere atraer a que conozca lo que os debe, de usar entonces la libertad
reflected in her: in a certain city there lived, he says, "un cielo", a metaphor (or is it perhaps a metonymy?). Later, he swears an oath to
Quijote's shadow, El Roto de la Mala Figura. Like Don Quijote he worships, not the real shining Luscinda, but the fantasy that he finds
Eyes become mirrors, as when Don Quijote and Cardenio meet and stare at each other (1, xxxiii); from that moment, Cardenio is Don
Cecial merely glosses this double emblem when he asks which of the two, Sansón or Don Quijote, is the more crazy (Part 2, ch. xv).
When Carrasco returns in Part 2, ch. lxiv as the Caballero de la Blanca Luna, the "muchas lunas pequeñas de resplandecientes
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This experience of mirrors, of one world inscribed in the second world that it resembles, but with which it is not identical, could be a
model for our experience of parody. In parody, too, authority is displaced; it becomes a play of reflections back and forth between the
new text and the pre-existent text that is absorbed into it. Margaret Rose, in her book Parody / Meta-Fiction (1979), observes that
Cervantes's parody of romance, like the Cretan liar paradox, also has the effect of warning the readers against the very book they are
now reading. It is a mirror of its own operations as well as the distorted reflection of an earlier text.

The difficulty with talking about Don Quijote has always been that of setting boundaries and stabilizing signs in a text where concepts
turn into their opposites, and where concepts also proliferate

through analogy and through metonymy. Mirrors, for example, are literally present on the body of the Caballero de los Espejos (alias
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little mirror reflects the image of whomever approaches it; but prior to this, the coat of mirrors has emblematized the wearer. Tomé
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That fashion'd others (2Henry IV, II.iii).

This convergence of the metaphors of mirror and book, of image and copy, may be particularly suggestive for our reading of Don Quijote.
What is fascinating about the images that we see in mirrors, and in books, is that they condense into a small area objects that in
reality occupy a lot of space, and still manage to look life-size. Mirrors can enclose within their small surface the limitless depth of space
and sky, which is mystery enough; but they may also puzzle and surprise us with the sharpness of their images, and with their curious
deviations from what is expected. Mirrors thereby presume an inner authority, which disconnects us by contradicting what we feel sure
we know. They make us see ourselves as other, because they do not conceal what we usually conceal from ourselves: Velázquez's
"Rokey Venus", in front of her glass makes the point with her peculiar reflection. But in fact there is no authority that could be identified
within the mirror. And the glass as metaphor can deceive, too; the mirror of art presents images structured according to the shapes
desired by the perceiving mind. Velázquez's Venus sees herself as she wants us to see her. Mirror images, therefore, leave us with two
uncomfortable paradoxes. The first is that two worlds can be made to occupy one space, the world of the mirror in the world that is being
mirrored. The second is that one world can double itself into two spaces. But in art, these are not paradoxes, for in art two worlds can occupy a single space.

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When Carrasco returns in Part 2, ch. lxiv as the Caballero de la Blanca Luna, the "muchas lunas pequeñas de resplandecientes
espejos" of the first encounter have now been replaced by the single "luna resplandeciente" painted on his shield. This single device
perhaps reflects a singleness of purpose and concentrated determination, though neither it nor the shining whiteness of its image can
conceal Carrasco's duplicity from the reader. Indeed, the fickle planet is an apt image for the man who declared after his earlier defeat,
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1.2 (1992) Don Quijote through the Looking-Glass
Cervantes's text has to do with the failure of the characters, notably of Don Quijote himself, to heed the emblematic message. Don fellow metaphorizers and emblem books can present mirror images as a way to self-knowledge, then the irony of all those mirrors in phenomenon it falls within the science of optics, and it can serve only as a problem in the phenomenology of perception. If Hamlet and mirror is not an esthetic object. It says nothing about art, good or bad. It tells us nothing about representation or about mimesis. As a Gillian Beer has observed of the 

( \textit{Rindióse Camila: Camila se rindió}. What is seen in that linguistic mirror is the reversal of all the signs of value: play becomes earnest, pretense true deceit, comedy tragedy. The story is read aloud by the Priest who, we assume, has looked into many souls; but he says he finds it implausible, apparently unaware that it is a mirror for his listeners and for the absent Don Quijote. There are other inverse reflections: Don Quijote on his mountain, recreating an episode in the story of Amadis; Don Quijote among phantoms in the depths of the Cave of Montesinos.

All these varied textual manifestations and modalities of the mirror —real mirrors, the imagery of reflection, reversals of figure and of structure, repetitions with a difference—they all elide into one another, beyond the capacity of a single figure to hold them together. Not only does the gloomy opening of the Cave of Montesinos reverse the open space of the Sierra Morena, and the somnambulistic loss of control in the cave reverse the planned performance on the mountain; the failure to deliver the old heroes and Dulcinea from enchantment (in 2, xxii) refers us back to the only time (1, xxii) when he realized his mission as a liberator: on that occasion, however, he freed not heroes but criminals! The reflections and refractions, inversions and reversals, are too varied to be categorized under the figure of the mirror, though the mirror with its invisible surface and its illusory depth, its reciprocal gaze and reversed image is central to much of the book’s imagery; a kind of magnet image that others cluster around. A paradigmatic figure of the book’s continual practice of repetition with difference including, as we just noted, the great traditional redemptive places: the mountain and the underworld, the peak and the depth, convex and concave.

A variant of the mirror is the metaphor of the labyrinth, which first makes its appearance as the knight and his squire make their way in the wilderness of Sierra Morena. A wanderer in a maze becomes lost because he repeatedly encounters the same; when difference is a minimal modulation upon the same, it becomes a maddening form of entrapment. This is a point that Foucault has made familiar to us. However, both mirror and labyrinth contain their own binary oppositions, both may carry a positive sense. In emblem books, a labyrinth may figure as a spiritual center, and a mirror as a revealer of truth. Each one can serve as an ambivalent, antithetical sign: for loss of self, and death, on the one hand, but also for recognition and self-discovery on the other. If the Sierra Morena is a labyrinth, it is not so in Northrop Frye’s sense, as an “image of lost direction.” Don Quijote does not merely wander there. On the contrary, there is where he finds his center, as well as his reflection in Cárdeno. By imitating the love-sick Amadís, without text and without audience, he discovers himself as pure role.

When Alice enters the looking-glass world, she finds herself among people who for the most part speak the same language as she does, but their activities follow strange rules. They have the advantage of not only knowing their own moves, but the moves that she, too, must make. She is perplexed by a world that to them is familiar, logical, ordered, and has predictable outcomes. She learns to orient herself in that world, but only to a limited extent, and pragmatically, without understanding it. She accepts it because she has no alternative but to accept it. As narrative, as process, it imposes a referentiality that she finds implausible, but which she is unable to question from within. This aporia enables readers to see what Alice cannot: the conventional, rule-bound, arbitrary nature of their world, the world that she left beyond the mirror, but still carries within her. As the reader’s surrogate in the looking-glass world, she reads it against the grain, applying our standards of common sense and familiarity to it. But as a solitary stranger in it, she has to survive by its rules and so becomes alienated from herself. One of the clearest moments of alienation—and conciliation—comes in her meeting with the Unicorn. The Unicorn looks at Alice with disgust and asks “What—is—this?” On being told that it is “a child,” he comments, “I always thought they were fabulous monsters.” The Unicorn then goes on with exemplary pragmatism to propose, “. . . if you’ll believe in me, I’ll . . .” This model contract, familiar to us in the episode of Clavileño, has all along underlain the dialogic relation between Quijote and Sancho.

Like the Unicorn, Don Quijote also operates in a similar field between the poles of taxonomic revulsion and pragmatic accommodation. Dodgson puts the problem: suppose one were to pass through the looking-glass into a world ordered by a different logic and a different set of assumptions? Cervantes asks the further question: suppose one who had passed into the looking-glass world of romantic fiction and had become assimilated into it, were then to return? Would not our world then appear to him as a looking-glass distortion of the superior world from which he had just set out? But would it not also still be the enduring world of his original home, of known people, of bonds of sentiments and shared memories? So, how far could Cervantes take his comedy of misreading the familiar world, a comedy that always comes so close to being the tragedy of alienation from that world? As Gillian Beer has observed of the Quijote, mimesis is “a two-way process” (\textit{The Romance}, London: Methuen, 1970).

But Cervantes must have known very well, just as Shakespeare did, and as Aristotle did, and as Socrates did, that an image in a mirror is not an esthetic object. It says nothing about art, good or bad. It tells us nothing about representation or about mimesis. As a phenomenon it falls within the science of optics, and it can serve only as a problem in the phenomenology of perception. If Hamlet and fellow metaphorizers and emblem books can present mirror images as a way to self-knowledge, then the irony of all those mirrors in Cervantes’s text has to do with the failure of the characters, notably of Don Quijote himself, to heed the emblematic message. Don
Don Quijote believes that he is remaking our real world in the image of a superior world of chivalric romance. In the view of the "real world" characters, he is a looking-glass person at large in their real world; whereas he believes that he is the only real person in a looking-glass world. But the characters that he encounters are all, in some sense, questers, just as he is; this one goes in search of a past, that one seeks to retrieve a broken romance, that other one (Don Diego de Miranda) looks for confirmation of virtuous humility, and those others crave ratification of their arrogant power to create the images of their authority. Even the Priest and the Barber are eager to be seen as the very image of companionship and benevolence. It is scarcely surprising, therefore, that Don Quijote has such disturbing effects on everyone. He is the fiction of a fiction that we readers find in him. And for the other characters he is the mirror of a mirror, the mirror of all their mirrors, and they cannot keep their eyes off him. And neither, of course, can we.

I spoke a little while ago of the Priest's ability to entrap with mirrors. I need to elaborate on that point, and I have to go over some ground that I explored back in the 1970s, in order to illustrate the term "structural unity." It is obvious enough, I believe, that the part played by this priest in Don Quijote's world does not relate to any presumed spiritual authority. We see him in the company of the Canon of Toledo, bursting with laughter as Quijote and Eugenio the goatherd bloody each other. He is not inclined to look for the hand of God in human affairs, unlike...
to what it dismembers. The preformed world of the first text is inscribed into a new one. This reinscription can not eliminate the first text; rather, the parody creates a textual world that offers a new context for re-encoding it; the former text is given the possibility of a re-reception. Parody is certainly an act of transgression, but it is an *authorized* transgression. I quote Linda Hutcheon:

> Even in mocking, parody reinforces; in formal terms, it inscribes the mocked conventions onto itself, thereby guaranteeing their continued existence. It is in this sense that parody is the custodian of the artistic legacy, defining not only where art is, but where it has come from (*A Theory of Parody, 75*).

The Cura, a man devoted to the idea of a literature based on morality and on truth to observed reality, who could not accept the truth of *El curioso impertinente*, creates new levels of fantasy and enriches the play of chivalric intertextuality. Returning to our initial analogy, we can say that the Cura attempts to entrap Don Quijote by setting up an image of the chivalric world. As a result, Don Quijote does indeed believe that the looking-glass world in which he finds himself, and which the other characters would call ‘real’, has been made to conform to the rules and practices of the world on the other side, his side, of the glass. And, as if to confuse this play of interfaces even further, we may note one more amusing paradox that links Quijote, the amateur busybody, with his professional counterpart, the Cura. In the best and most successful moments of his career Quijote, the man of arms, conciliates rivals not with weapons but with words of peace. The Priest, a soldier of the Word, on the other hand twice has Quijote subdued by force: first, when he is caged, and the second time through the agency of Carrasco.

I now face the same problem that Cervantes faced; namely, how to stop. The way that Cervantes manages Quijote's end is very complex and subtle, and I want to mention briefly just one aspect of it. Don Quijote's renunciation of chivalry, and his refusal to be lured into the game of pastoral give the impression of a clear and serene self-knowledge that is appropriate to the solemn deathbed scene in Part Two, chapter seventy-four. He had already pricked Sancho's inflated declamation upon reaching their village (“Abre los ojos, deseaba patria, y mira que vuelve a ti Sancho Panza tu hijo, si no muy rico, muy bien azotado. Abre los brazos y recibe también tu hijo don Quijote . . .”) with a curt “Déjate desas sandeces” (2, lxii); now he rebukes the watches at his bedside: “déjense burlas aparte, y tráiganme un confesor que me confiese y un escribano que haga mi testamento . . .” For the second time: stop fooling.

But who is this man who has sloughed off the persona of Don Quijote and claims to have shattered the mirror, to have passed finally beyond role playing? “Dadme albricias, señores, que ya no soy Don Quijote de la Mancha, sino Alonso Quijano, a quien mis costumbres me dieron renombre de *Bueno*.” This is surely the first time that anyone has heard the name Quijano; in Part One, chapter one, he is variously recorded as Quijada or Quexana or Quesada, but not Quijano. And noone until now has tagged him with the sobriquet *Bueno*, much less claimed that it is a matter of general renown. But the Cura repeats it and gives it *imprimatur*: “Verdaderamente se muere, y verdaderamente estáuerdo Alonso Quijano el Bueno . . .”

Now I am going to call as witness Montaigne, the magician of contrived simplicity and transparent mirrors. In Book One, Essay nineteen, he argues that the life of no man should be judged to have been happy until he is dead. He refers to deaths that reversed the whole reputation of a person's life, and even cites the splendor of a death that outshines the great works that the man might have performed had he lived longer. I am going to cite a very interesting passage from that essay, and I ask you to notice the language of performance that carries it along:

> Since this mortal happiness of ours depends on the calm and contentment of a noble mind, on the resolution and assurance of a well-ordered soul, it should never be attributed to a man until we have seen him perform the last act of his drama, which will certainly be the most difficult. All the others allow of some disguise; our fine philosophical speeches may be only an outward show, or we may not be so hard-pressed by our misfortunes as not to be able to keep our features composed. But in this last scene between ourselves and death there is no more pretense. We must use plain words, and use such goodness or purity as we have at the bottom of the pot . . .

Acts. Drama. Disguise. Scene. Show. Composed features. We follow the flow of concepts (they are faithfully rendered from the French). But finally, says Montaigne, we must use plain words, as he does with his abrupt change of metaphor: “such goodness or purity as we have at the bottom of the pot.” And as Cervantes does when he says of Don Quijote's final moment, “dio su espíritu,

> quiero decir que se murió.” Cervantes here uses the hallowed euphemism, “He gave up his spirit,” only in order to cancel it: “I mean, he died.” Everyone knows that *dio su espíritu* means *se murió*; so the *quiero decir* is an intrusive voice that insists on the plain words. The pious phrase is a game with words that obscures the stark and brutal fact. But, as is so often the case, the converse is also true: when euphemism must be judged appropriate to the occasion, it is “plain speaking” which then becomes a rhetorical game. Cervantes terminates the parody as he cancels the role and the name of Don Quijote, and seemingly sets him firmly in the ‘real’ world, dictating his testament, and dying in his bed. But then he subverts this cancellation as his protagonist dons a new name and slips through a new
mirror; one that the Cura, the knight of the soul, once again holds in place.

Montaigne, that master of the self as performance, would have smiled, if he were capable of smiling. And now I can bring my scherzo, my performance, to a close.