

# Queen Caroline's Merlin Grotto and the 1738 Lord Carteret Edition of *Don Quijote*: The Matter of Britain and Spain's Arthurian Tradition

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Rachel Schmidt attributes the canonization of *Don Quijote* in England to the 1738 publication, in London, of Lord Carteret's four-volume deluxe edition of the novel in Spanish (46). She holds that this edition marked a shift that elevated the work from popular literature to a classic, launching it to the realm of those texts that represented the aristocratic and learned values of neoclassicism. English statesman Lord Carteret actually undertook the project so as to please Queen Caroline of England, a lover of literature who had complained that she could find no edition of Cervantes' novel



Figure 1. The Section of Merlin's Cave in the Royal Gardens at Richmond. From John Vardy, *Some Designs of Mr. Inigo Jones and Mr. William Kent* 32. (The original is unknown and probably lost.)



Figure 2. William Kent. *Retrato de Cervantes de Saavedra*. From the London, 1738 edition. The room at the upper left is believed to represent Queen Caroline's Merlin Cave.

worthy of her library of the wise Merlin.<sup>1</sup> The Queen's Merlin Book Collection consisted of antique knight chronicles and was located in her famous (or infamous) cave dedicated to the Arthurian wizard in Richmond Gardens; the architectural structure was not really a cave at all but rather a thatched Gothic cottage that consisted of a circular room with openings on three sides that contained collections of English books (Colton 9) (Figure 1). A small illustration of this so-called cave even appears within the Lord Carteret edition.<sup>2</sup> The 1738 *Quijote* is said to mark a milestone in the history of English book-illustration, and Lord Carteret himself was meticulous about the role the illustrations were to play (Hammelmann 448). The reference to Merlin's Cave subtly turns the deluxe edition's outward tribute to things Spanish into praise for British identity rooted in the British gothic past and the mysteries of Arthur and Merlin.

Lord Carteret's 1738 *Quijote* contains two important images of Cervantes, the second of which includes the reference to Merlin's Cave. The first is an allegorical frontispiece that, according to Frederick De Armas, represents Cervantes as both Hercules and Apollo, a double-representation that ultimately glorifies Cervantes as a man of letters, canonizing him as an Apollonian poet who joins the English Parnassus of the eighteenth century (5). The second image is by William Kent and is the first extant portrait of Cervantes. Featured as both a soldier and an author, Cervantes sits in the right foreground with a pen in hand, surrounded by piles of books and pieces of armor fixed on the wall. In the background of the illustration, in the upper-left hand corner, is a vaulted Gothic room, which is said to represent Queen Caroline's Merlin Cave (Figure 2).<sup>3</sup> William Kent, in fact, designed not only

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<sup>1</sup> Schmidt 47; Hammelmann 5. See Ashbee 123-24.

<sup>2</sup> See Johannes Hartau, in *Don Quijote in der Kunst*, in which he argues the Gothic structure is most likely a reference to the Queen's Merlin Grotto (64-66).

<sup>3</sup> This plate, while always part of the front matter, is found in different locations in different copies. It may be found online at: 1) the Proyecto Cervantes at Texas A&M University, <<http://www.csdl.tamu.edu/cervantes/V2/index.html>> (8 June 2006), and 2) the Banco de imágenes del *Quijote* (1695-1905), <<http://www.qbi2005.com/frmControl.aspx?idform=frmBusExperta.aspx&idPrupal=frmPrupal.aspx?idform=frmBusExperta.aspx>> (8 June 2006).

the portrait in question but also the actual Cave itself in the Royal Gardens at Richmond. Don Quijote atop Rocinante followed by Sancho Panza on his donkey ride through the Gothic room, significantly transplanting Cervantes' most famous characters from the dusty roads of sixteenth-century Spain to the enclosed domain of Merlin and the British Arthurian tradition to which the enchanter belongs. The inclusion of this Spanish novel within Queen Caroline's Arthurian realm depicted in this small illustration reveals a sense of British patriotism. By containing the novel within the Arthurian tradition that not only gave rise to the genre of romance that Cervantes claimed, in his prologue, he was seeking to destroy but which also continued to provide a source of pride and identity for eighteenth-century England, the 1738 producers framed the novel as more than a neoclassical tool to warn against the dangers of reading fantastic literature and used it to glorify the British traditions of Arthur and Merlin that inspired literatures and cultures well beyond their borders. Situated at the beginning of the deluxe edition, the illustration draws attention to the roles that Merlin, prophecy, and the cave will play within the novel, quietly establishing the idea that the book achieves its status as a classic at least in part through its association with the Arthurian romance tradition.

The *Quijote* was recognized as a classic in England before it was so recognized in Spain. It achieved acclaimed status in its homeland only after the 1780 Ibarra edition whose production was commissioned and supervised by the Real Academia de la Lengua. Some possible reasons why the book's canonization occurs first in the British Isles come to light when considering the meaning of the illustration within the early eighteenth-century sociopolitical contexts of England and Spain. The 1730s marked an especially heated period in British politics; a campaign for war against Spain defined the powerful Opposition movement of the time led by vocal parliamentary spokesmen, among them Lord Carteret (Gerrard 6). It is remarkable and unusual, then, that such a lavish edition of such a large Spanish work would be published

in England in its original language.<sup>4</sup> Also curious, the Carteret edition—largely through its portraits of the author and its inclusion of the first Cervantine biography—actually instigated the movement to cast the Spanish author as a hero, underscoring his dignity and seeking to establish his authority (Schmidt 49). Schmidt describes, however, the general disregard in which Cervantes was held by his countrymen, who in the eighteenth century labeled him a traitor to their nation's military values; the Valencian scholar D. Gregorio Mayans y Siscar, who supplied the biography, was actually labeled as anti-Spanish by his fellow Spanish intellectuals (Schmidt 57). Schmidt reveals how Mayans paradoxically contributed to the British neoclassical interpretation of the novel by "rescuing it from the contempt of neoclassical intellectuals in Spain" (59). The British salvation of the Spanish novel can be interpreted, then, as a British crusade to champion Cervantes, an act to exalt her enemy's enemy. The Merlin Cave illustration includes Cervantes' characters within an architectural structure that was designed precisely to celebrate the Matter of Britain, symbolically depicting British cultural and artistic supremacy and highlighting the descent of Arthurian literary pieces produced in foreign lands from the original British tradition.

Merlin's Cave came into existence through the interests and effort of Queen Caroline of England. The wife of George II, Queen Caroline was an intellectual who had a very active political life and played an important part in English affairs from the time of her husband's accession in 1727 until her death ten years

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<sup>4</sup> Hammelmann studies the publishing history of the 1738 edition and explains that it was unusual, although not unheard of, to produce such large works in the original language. J. R. Tonson, the publisher of the Carteret edition, did in fact publish three other editions of foreign works in the original language in the mid 1720s (5). They were a Racine (celebrated French playwright whose works are noted for their loyalty to the classical unities), Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata* (an Italian late sixteenth-century masterpiece that greatly influenced English poets like Spenser), and Plutarch's *Lives* (an erudite biography that compares and contrasts ancient Greeks and Romans and that greatly influenced Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, *Coriolanus*, and *Antony and Cleopatra*.) The *Quijote*, not an obvious exemplary classical or neoclassical text, stands out among these early eighteenth-century publications, making the circumstances surrounding its neoclassical production worthy of examination.

later. She actually became the intermediary between her weak, unpopular, and disinterested husband and his powerful minister, Robert Walpole. Ruling with her strong ally Walpole, the Queen acted as regent on several occasions for months at a time, and it was during one of her regencies that Caroline built Merlin's Cave, an architectural structure that immediately became the object of political satire in political journals of the day.<sup>5</sup> For Queen Caroline, the cave of Arthur's famed prophet served as political propaganda, legitimizing the Hanoverian kings and their right to the British throne. For the anti-Walpole Opposition of which Lord Carteret was a vocal member, the figure of Merlin situated in the cave became an object of ridicule, closely associated with the minister, the devilish "wizard" who could not be trusted (Colton 12–16).<sup>6</sup> By building the Cave, Caroline unwittingly "played directly into the Opposition's hands" (16).

Indeed, various political commentators of the time supplied opposing political interpretations of the Cave and the waxwork icons that it housed. Chief journals like *Gentleman's Magazine* and the *London Magazine* reported the debates over the Cave's meaning and included full-page engravings of the interior (Gerrard 170). In this way, the Cave became part of the popular imagination of the time in England; it was opened to the public, and

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<sup>5</sup> Colton explains that "Merlin's Cave met with very little sincere applause.... [T]he little building often suffered ridicule, or at least playful contempt, during its short lifetime. And whether pro or con, this printed reaction to Merlin's Cave was, in the 1730s, unexpectedly profuse" (5).

<sup>6</sup> By all accounts, Walpole and Lord Carteret had an extremely antagonistic personal relationship throughout the reigns of both George I and George II. Carteret continually posed a threat to Walpole's efforts to consolidate power. Carteret's personal charm, knowledge of the German language, and expertise in foreign affairs endeared him to both Hanoverian monarchs; he operated specifically to gain favor with the king and queen because he believed that anything could be accomplished with the support of the Crown. In 1724, under the reign of George I, Walpole, fearful of the close relationship between Lord Carteret and the king, had Lord Carteret removed from his influential position as secretary of state and sent to Ireland as lord lieutenant. Later, in 1742, in the face of increasing opposition led by Carteret, Walpole was forced to resign. On the fall of Walpole's ministry, Carteret became the secretary of state again, assuming an important leadership role under George II. Still active in politics, though, Walpole then worked to secure Carteret's dismissal, which came in 1744.

hundreds of people paid visits and enjoyed guided tours (171). The building came to be a sort of public entertainment, and it started a vogue for Arthurian theatrical productions. "Inn-keepers and puppet-booth owners in the Richmond vicinity capitalized on the Cave's popularity. A number of taverns changed their name to Merlin's Cave, and coffee houses supplied 'Merlin in Miniature,' scaled-down versions of Caroline's figures" (171).

Judith Colton has shown how the wax figures all exploit Merlin's prophetic aspect to legitimize Hanoverian rule. Sources agree on the identity of three of the figures besides that of Merlin: his squire/secretary, Henry VII's Queen, and Queen Elizabeth. The remaining two figures had various identifications, the first labeled as Minerva, Britomart from Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, Britannia, or Bradamante (Britomart's prototype in Ariosto's *Orlando furioso*); the last was possibly Queen Elizabeth's nurse, Britomart's nurse from Spenser, Melissa (the prophetess from *Orlando furioso*) or Mother Shipton (a famous British sorceress) (Colton 10–13). Merlin's most famous prophecy concerns the glorious return of Arthur to the throne of Britain, and both Henry VII and Queen Elizabeth put his prediction to political use by claiming to be the rightful descendants of the fabled king of Britain. Spenser confirmed their claims in his famous poem, the *Faerie Queen*. Spenser's Britomart visits Merlin's cave where the sorcerer tells her of the future line of descendants that will result from her marriage, detailing a long line of princes that culminates in Elizabeth, the true continuation of Arthur's line. By housing these figures within her Hanoverian structure, Queen Caroline situates her dynasty among the rightful heirs to the British throne.

In addition, the Queen includes Melissa and Bradamante from *Orlando furioso* in order to establish a specific hereditary link between the Hanoverian family and British Arthurian myth. In Ariosto, Bradamante and the prophetess Melissa visit Merlin in his grotto. Ariosto's Merlin foretells the rise of the House of Este, the house from which the Hanover dynasty had descended.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> According to Judith Colton, "in Ariosto Merlin foretells the coming glories of the House of Este. It was from this House that those of Brunswick and Han-

Thus, as a whole, the sorcerer's cave can be seen as an attempt to mythologize the Hanoverian dynasty, connecting them to British Arthurian antiquity and therefore granting them the authority to rule, a difficult political message to deliver during this time of growing opposition to Walpole's government. Merlin's grotto similarly serves to buttress the authority of the 1738 Lord Carteret edition of the *Quijote* by including the novel within the cherished Arthurian tradition, situating Cervantes' characters within the same space that houses personages from the Italian masterpiece in chivalric literature and the major Arthurian work during the reign of England's beloved Queen Elizabeth. The Opposition's motives for including the illustration within the publication are in direct conflict with their reasons for depicting Walpole as a Merlinesque figure.

The discrepancy is not difficult to reconcile, though, because the Opposition to which Carteret belonged was in fact an extremely patriotic movement that aimed to reassert British identity in artistic, cultural, and commercial spheres. The Patriot Opposition's association of Caroline's Merlin with Walpole does not reflect their general disregard for their mythical past. Rather, according to Christine Gerrard, their sardonic reading of the Queen's Merlin affirms the magician's versatile character and the Opposition's extreme hostility to Walpole, not Caroline (175). Gerrard explains that the Patriot Opposition eagerly invoked British historical myth and legend to inspire their country to achieve greatness. For them, Arthurian legend and the *Faerie Queen* represented Britain's glorious "Gothic" past associated with notions of liberty and freedom and with British supremacy

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over were descended" (13). She then adds "Leibniz had established definitively the connection between the House of Este and the House of Brunswick" (13). Christine Gerrard similarly explains that "Leibniz, among others, had recently established that it was from the House of Este that the lines of Brunswick and Hanover were descended" (170). Leibniz was a good friend of Queen Caroline, who would have known of the German philosopher's findings and would have highlighted the connection because it suited her plan to establish the antiquity of the House of Hanover and its connection to Arthurian myth. Whether Leibniz and others had the genealogy right is beside the point. What is important is that people believed in this familial link.

(Colton 14). The Opposition wanted Britain to assert itself in the international sphere, campaigning for a war with Spain that would open up new Atlantic markets for the British merchant. Chief among their complaints against Walpole was his refusal to stand up to Spanish aggression and dominance in the Atlantic (7). Lord Carteret, therefore, despite his fervent pride in the Arthurian tradition and its proper political heirs like Queen Elizabeth—who did stand up to Spain and defeated the “Invincible Armada” in 1588—would not include the current monarch, given his close association with Walpole, among Arthur’s descendants who fulfill Merlin’s most famous prophecy concerning the return of England to her rightful glory.

Beyond its overtly political message concerning the Hanoverian claim to fulfill the enchanter’s prophecy (yet related to politics), Judith Colton also suggests a very personal meaning of the Cave for the Queen, an interpretation of the structure’s significance that provides insight into Lord Carteret’s personal reasons for wanting to please the Queen with his deluxe edition. This possible meaning relates to the Queen and King’s poor relationship with their son Frederick, the Prince of Wales. When George II and Caroline went to England in 1714, they left their seven-year-old son in Hanover. The King feared Frederick’s popularity and delayed his arrival in England, only worsening an already poor father/son relationship. When Frederick finally went to London in 1728, George II did little to welcome him. Consequently, the Prince of Wales became allied with the Opposition; the Opposition members were in fact strong supporters of the House of Hanover, preferring the Prince to his father the King as the rightful descendant to Arthur. Finally, in 1735, after years of public conflict, measures were taken to make peace within the family. George II, at long last responding to Frederick’s request, chose a bride for his son to marry during the summer of 1735, the summer the Cave was built (Colton 18). According to Colton, the Cave represents “an official gesture of conciliation towards Frederick,” the wax figure of Merlin representing Frederick and alluding to “the Prince’s forthcoming marriage as well as to his succession” (18). A leading Opposition member, Lord Carteret was

deeply involved in the family scandal, courted Frederick, and avidly supported the Prince's accession to the throne as the Patriot King who would put an end to the political turmoil (Gerrard 41). A chivalric cult came to surround Frederick in the 1730s, associating the young prince with King Arthur and attempting to convert him into the future British Patriot King. Both Frederick and the Opposition worked to revive Arthurian chivalry within this Hanoverian context (Gerrard 107, 188, 214). By doing so, Lord Carteret fell into the Queen's bad graces. On a personal level, then, the deluxe version of the *Quijote* can be seen as an attempt to win back her favor. Carteret included an illustration of the architectural structure that represented her effort to reconcile with her son in order to conciliate her, hoping that she might forgive Lord Carteret for his involvement in the family scandal that she was trying to put to rest.

The personal and political layers of meaning attributed to the Cave and connected with its inclusion in the deluxe edition also impinge on the narrative that it precedes. The illustration depicting Cervantes' characters roaming through Merlin's Grotto suggests a connection between Don Quijote and King Arthur and draws attention to the primary roles that Merlin, prophecy, and the cave play within the novel.<sup>8</sup> The image of such a charged and well-known political symbol of the time at the onset of the novel

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<sup>8</sup> Prior to the eighteenth century, there does not exist a prevalent, well-known Arthurian tradition linking Merlin and caves. There are medieval versions of Merlin's imprisonment story in which he is incarcerated in a cave, though that is not the universal notion of his imprisonment. There also exists a folklore reference to a geographical phenomenon to a cave (called Merlin's Cave) that runs through the foot of a cliff at Tintagel. Literary works, satirical commentaries, and other physical structures that highlight Merlin's association with the cave appear in the wake of Queen Caroline's Merlin Cave, taking inspiration in the Richmond structure. I do not want to suggest, then, that Cervantes establishes the Merlin-Cave link that later inspired Kent's building, but there is an obvious link between the two established in the eighteenth-century building that then provides a frame for reading the 1738 Carteret edition of the *Quijote*. The illustration of a physical structure that unites the Merlin-Cave phenomenon with the novel's protagonists directs attention to the importance of this series of associations within the novel.

provides a possible frame through which to interpret the narrative to follow. The competing interpretations of the Merlin figure during the reign of Queen Caroline attest to the versatility of the Arthurian enchanter and alert the reader to the possible contradictory readings associated with his presentation in the novel. During the reign of Queen Caroline, Merlin represented among other things both the great legitimizer of the British throne and the devilish wizard who could not be trusted. In the novel, as will be discussed, he is the quintessential prophet who legitimizes the knight's life purpose and a chiefly threatening figure who perfectly suits the Duke and Duchess's plan to frighten and intimidate Don Quijote. The Cave reference establishes the primacy of the Merlin figure in interpreting Arthurian literature, suggesting that he is central to interpreting not only *Orlando furioso* and *The Faerie Queen* but also *Don Quijote*.<sup>9</sup>

The enchanter appears as the figure of Death in the novel, and as such he foreshadows the death of Don Quijote himself and that of chivalric romance. Manifesting his traditional prophetic aspect and thus performing his familiar role in romance, the wizard delivers his prophecy to disenchant Dulcinea: his divinely inspired instructions (that Sancho deal himself 3,300 lashes on his bare backside) that in great part move the plot in Part II. The unreliable prophet—who foretold a glorious future for the Britons under the reign of King Arthur that never did come—succeeds in making his recipe for Dulcinea's disenchantment the primary motivation for the rest of the novel. Although it is the Duke and Duchess's steward who dresses up like the wizard to declare the recipe for Dulcinea's disenchantment, the sinister pair's idea to include Merlin as a character actually has its

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<sup>9</sup> Carol Harding suggests that the way in which Merlin is presented in any given literary piece is related to the overall theme or direction of the work (11). In this way, the character Merlin serves as an interpretive tool, providing a means by which to penetrate fundamental aspects and concerns of a given text. In *Don Quijote*, the Arthurian enchanter figures only in Part II; while there are significant allusions to the sorcerer in both the Cave of Montesinos and Clavileño episodes, the pivotal intervention of Merlin as an actual character occurs as part of a dramatic production staged by the Duke and the Duchess for Don Quijote and Sancho (II, 35).

roots in Don Quijote's otherworldly experiences in the Cave of Montesinos. Despite the neoclassicists' desire to downplay the fantastic elements of the text, this small illustration quietly reveals the important role that the marvelous will play.<sup>10</sup>

Don Quijote's fantastic tale of the Cave of Montesinos is of noteworthy thematic significance because it establishes Merlin's connection with prophecy and death.<sup>11</sup> The primary narrative function of Merlin in the episode is to validate the knight's self-proclaimed duty to revive and to improve the forgotten art of chivalry for both himself and his listening audience. The Arthurian enchanter does not appear in the Cave, but rather it is through Montesinos' remarks that the sorcerer's culpability for the depraved state of chivalry is established. By making the wizard the lord who oversees the dead chivalric world and who foretells its salvation at the hands of Don Quijote, the Knight creates a story to justify his cause.

The cave episode also interweaves Don Quijote's devout mission to resuscitate the ideals of chivalry by carrying out the task of disenchanting the world of the dead with the particular assignment of rescuing Dulcinea from her evil sorcerers.<sup>12</sup> At the

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<sup>10</sup> John Vanderbank, under the supervision of John Oldfield, neoclassical thinker and intimate of Lord Carteret, designed sixty-eight vivid illustrations for the 1738 deluxe edition, and interestingly two of them depict the Cave of Montesinos episode. Schmidt describes the neoclassical producers' efforts to "inscribe the marvelous [the Cave scene] within a pictorially rational frame" so as not to give the fantastic unsuitable power. Guiding the reader, they underscore the crucial point that the whole episode was imagined. Nevertheless, Schmidt highlights the fact that "the marvelous still appears, albeit literally marginalized and faint" (70). The potentially dangerous fantastic content is not altogether excluded.

<sup>11</sup> For thorough discussion of the Cave episode, see Henry Sullivan's *Grotesque Purgatory* in which he argues that it is the most pivotal incident in Part II.

<sup>12</sup> Instead of evil sorcerers, however, the reader knows that Sancho is actually Dulcinea's "enchanter." In Part II Chapter 10, Don Quijote sends Sancho to Toboso to find Dulcinea to see if she would allow that the Knight see her and also grant her blessing upon him. Sancho, having already had to invent his first encounter with the damsel in Part I when his master had him deliver a letter to her, is again faced with the problem of finding someone who does not exist. As will be remembered, however, he determines to take advantage of Don Quijote's madness by convincing him that three peasant girls on the road to Toboso

end of his journey below, Don Quijote sees the enchanted Dulcinea and proclaims an earnest pledge not to rest until he disenchant her. Montesinos assures the brave knight that instructions as to how to disenchant her will come in due course. It is understood that Merlin will provide them, since Montesinos has made it clear that the wizard controls all of the happenings of the underworld. So, although Don Quijote's tale ends here, the narrative elements are now in place for the remainder of Part II. The Knight has established the primacy of disenchanting Dulcinea as the primary motivating force of the narration, and he has connected that task and made it dependent upon the anticipated intervention of the Arthurian wizard. Unwittingly, the Knight has laid down the narrative reins soon to be picked up by the merciless Duke and Duchess.

For the aristocratic pair, Merlin is a chiefly threatening figure who perfectly suits their plan to frighten and intimidate Don Quijote. Merlin is "la mesma figura de la muerte, descarnada y fea" (II, 35; 313). As such, he appears as part of a mini-play that the aristocratic pair stage in the forest for Don Quijote, Sancho, and company, just after a day of hunting. As if from nowhere, loud sounds of warlike instruments are heard, and fire lights up the sky. The Devil himself first appears to announce that instructions for Dulcinea's disenchantment will follow.<sup>13</sup> Merlin then dramatically appears to deliver the prophecy.<sup>14</sup> Casting aside the

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are actually Dulcinea and her two damsels. Inverting their roles, Don Quijote sees three country girls on donkeys, while Sancho insists that they are three beautiful ladies upon three snow-white horses. The Knight errant is forced to believe that she is under some sort of wicked spell so as to explain why he does not see her lovely image.

<sup>13</sup> The Devil actually says that Montesinos will arrive to deliver the instructions. Merlin later explains that the Devil erred in this message, explaining to the confused Sancho, unhappy with his undesirable role in the disenchanting process, that "el Diablo, amigo Sancho, es un ignorante y un grandísimo bellaco: yo le envié en busca de vuestro amo, pero no con recado de Montesinos, sino mío" (II, 38; 318).

<sup>14</sup> See Alfred Rodriguez and Karl Roland Rowe's "Midsummer Eve and the Disenchantment of Dulcinea" for a discussion on Cervantes' incorporation of traditional Midsummer rituals as context for this episode. This study shows how "the disenchantment of Dulcinea, ...has much in common with the purificatory

benevolent aspect or even the ambiguous nature of Merlin and exclusively developing his negative side, the Duke and Duchess foreground the wizard's relationship with and even superiority over the Devil. Instead of Satan's son, their Merlin acts as if he were his father. And this particular manifestation of Merlin as the figure of Death does indeed provide insights into interpreting Don Quijote's death and the novel as a whole.

Upon initial consideration, Merlin's portrayal as the figure of Death may seem to fit well with the neoclassic interpretation that took at face value the prologue's statement of intention that the novel was to be an invective against books of chivalry. In this way, Don Quijote is ultimately saved from his madness, Alonso Quijano finally realizes that there is no Dulcinea, Merlin's prophecy is nothing but a charade, and the world of romance does not correspond in any way to the surroundings in which the Knight lives. As the figure of Death, the enchanter could be conceived of as a dead phenomenon that embodies the defunct world of romance, which is proven to be an illusion. Merlin is seen to represent darkness, and belief in him is nothing more than an obstacle to living.

But Merlin's immortality, a defining aspect of his character, evidenced by his strong presence in eighteenth-century British politics, suggests that his presentation as Death cannot be taken at face value. Given his importance in Part II, Cervantes' Merlin is anything but dead and irrelevant. That the Duke, Duchess, and company are the creators of Merlin as the figure of Death does not serve as evidence of the enchanter's extinction but rather underscores his potent existence and immortality. Yes, Don Quijote introduces Merlin into the narration, but it is those around the Knight—who are portrayed as being able to discern fiction from reality—who most thoroughly and purposefully adopt and adapt the wizard's medieval literary persona so as to carry out their specific plans. They are the ones who ultimately

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rituals of Midsummer" (82). Furthermore, this article underscores how appropriate it is that Sancho, Dulcinea's "enchanter," be the primary object of the purification process. Through self-flagellation, he not only "disenchants" Dulcinea but also receives his due punishment for his bewitching her in the first place (83).

illustrate the versatility and eternal nature of this figure who exists independently from any individual conception of him.

The wizard's immortality is especially well established in the Spanish Arthurian tradition. In the fifteenth-century Spanish romance the *Baladro del sabio Merlín*, the enchanter is buried alive, and from the grave he bellows a cry that reverberates throughout the land, prefiguring the demise of Arthur and his kingdom.<sup>15</sup> But just as Merlin and King Arthur are immortalized in death and just as Camelot, the center of the Arthurian universe, persists despite its destruction, not as a specific place but as "a state of mind, a source of inspiration, an idea," so too Don Quijote, along with Merlin and the world of romance he embodies, continues as a vibrant force captivating the imagination of modern readers (Lacy 67). Even the producers of the 1738 edition could not entirely overlook the vibrant force of Merlin and the chivalric fiction he embodies.

Schmidt discusses the power of the visual image "to supplement the text with meanings not intended by the author or the editors" (73). She significantly demonstrates that despite the attempt to offer a totalizing neoclassic presentation of the novel, the tendencies to idealize, sentimentalize and romanticize the novel existed in eighteenth-century editions, particularly in graphic forms, well before the German Romantics. The connection between Merlin and Don Quijote highlighted in this Kent illustration underscores how it is that Don Quijote achieves immortality, a process that contradicts both Cervantes' stated purpose and the 1738 producers' general neoclassical plan.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> See Barbara D. Miller's dissertation "The Matter of Merlín: Manifestations of the Enchanter and *El baladro del sabio Merlín (The Shriek of Merlin)*," which reveals an original Iberian flavor in the development of the story Merlin on the Peninsula. Miller underlines the apocalyptic manner of Merlin's live burial at the end among the outstanding unique features of this romance.

<sup>16</sup> Anthony Close has argued that much of nineteenth- and twentieth-century literary criticism of the *Quijote*, deeply imbued within a Romantic ideology and proposing highly symbolic and idealistic readings that seek to express some truth about the human experience, has failed to recognize the satirical and parodic nature of the *Quijote*. Close's primary contention in regard to these Romantic interpretations is that they are more closely related to modern concerns about questions of national identity and of the human condition than to

Alonso Quijano, not Don Quijote, dies at the end of the narrative. The Manchegan knight, he who believes in Merlin, is the one who achieves immortality, living on in the human imagination and spanning cultures, nations, and time. In direct opposition to the supposed purpose of the book that seeks to illustrate the devastating consequences of a misguided belief in the books of chivalry, Don Quijote is shown to realize transcendence through his faith in romance and, more specifically, through his confidence in Merlin's prophecy. It follows then that a certain double parody is what is ultimately at work. The first and most readily perceptible level of the satire manifests itself to the extent that the narrative expressly purports to destroy the chivalric model and then adopts the features and conventions of this model it seeks to extinguish. But on another level, the text in the end actually unfolds as a parody of itself, for the expressly ironic evocation of the books of chivalry, which seeks to expose them for the pernicious lie they are, remarkably results in a confirmation of their worth (or, of the worth of this parody that becomes the "perfect" book of chivalry).<sup>17</sup>

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those surrounding and motivating Cervantes; for Close, *Don Quijote* is essentially burlesque and satirical. In part as a response to Close's concern but mostly because our discussion of Renaissance and neoclassic adoptions of the quintessential literary wizard from romance requires consideration of the sorcerer's medieval origins and meanings in chivalric literature, I consider the role and function of Merlin in the *Quijote* as part of Cervantes' elaborate parody of books on chivalry. The concept of parody as a consciously ironic "evocation of another artistic model" and more generally as a response to "preceding styles" is especially useful in approaching a text whose declared reason for being is to serve as a vehement denunciation of the *libros de caballerías* (Slethaug 603). Given Merlin's standing as the quintessential prophet and enchanter of romance, his presentation within this blatant invective against the improbable tales in which he figures prominently provides insights into understanding the nature of this parody. Beyond contributing to the artistic coherence of Part II, Merlin serves as a vehicle by which Cervantes moves beyond the realm of the comic and ironic to explore the perennial questions of the human condition. For Cervantes, the serious and the ridiculous or humorous are not incompatible.

<sup>17</sup> Edward Dudley, in a 1997 comprehensive study of Arthurian themes in *Don Quijote*, offers an alternative approach, one that downplays the parodic design of the text and instead insists on Cervantes' commitment to "Romance." For Dudley, Romance is "an informing force that underlies many kinds of stories.... It represents a view of life that provides or attempts to provide a sense of mean-

The *Quijote* explores the age-old theme of life as a quest, and the crucial aspect of this textual exploration into the meaning of life is that the Arthurian wizard's prophecy guides and frames the journey. Interweaving the idea of the quest with the pursuit of love, Merlin's prophecy directs Don Quijote's journey and thus in Platonic terms, as articulated in the *Symposium*, becomes a symbol of the Truth, of the Good, of that abstract reality to which we aspire. The comic and the sublime are not inharmonious for Cervantes; juxtaposing the wizard's actual recipe for Dulcinea's disenchantment with what the prediction itself represents quint-essentially exemplifies this assertion. That Sancho is to thrash himself 3,300 lashes but cunningly escapes from this unpleasant task by hitting a tree and screaming so as to feign severe physical suffering is comical. But that Don Quijote is immortalized because his existence is ordered around his striving to release his loved one from evil enchanters poetically illustrates the Platonic ideal of the life worth living as that one which aspires to the love of the Good. In his pursuit of Dulcinea, who exists only as an abstract reality, Don Quijote moves beyond physical and romantic love to the realm of the Platonic love of the Good and in doing so he discovers his life's purpose.<sup>18</sup>

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ing to the shape of human events" (xv). The stated purpose of his book is to explain the meaning of this discourse (xv). And after identifying in the *Quijote* the very rhetorical devices characteristic of medieval romance, Dudley comes to the conclusion that *Don Quijote* itself is Romance.

<sup>18</sup> In his book on the theory and practice of fiction in Spain's Golden Age, Barry Ife explains how Cervantes' novel is a response to Plato's critique of imaginative literature. Set forth especially in the *Republic*, Plato's ideas on literature permeated the intellectual atmosphere of the sixteenth century. A large number of sixteenth-century critics attacked fiction, taking Plato's point that "literature sets bad examples by causing its audience to experience feelings of a range and intensity which they might never have experienced otherwise in their own lives.... [T]he undermining of the reason excites and disturbs the soul and leads to the stimulation of base desires and the breakdown of character" (36). For Ife, Cervantes' work "constitutes the most intelligent account of the dangers of fiction for the untutored reading public and of the writer's responsibility to that public" (11).

Reading the novel in light of Plato enriches our understanding of the Spanish masterpiece. The *Dialogues* and *Don Quijote* are replete with profound ironies and contradictions. Plato attacks Poets and bans them from the Republic, as he

I would argue, then, that chivalric fiction, embodied by the quintessential literary wizard, is not portrayed as pernicious, as indicated in the prologue, but instead serves as the perfect vehicle through which Cervantes can express that elusive idealistic quest which we should undertake but which in the end does not correspond to the physical reality or world in which we live. The ideals to which we strive are after all just like fiction because they exist only in the abstract. That neither the fantastic nor the ideal manifests itself in our here and now does not mean that they serve no purpose, and Cervantes' novel illustrates this point by fusing Merlin's prophecy with the concept of the ideal and together making them the means by which Don Quijote achieves immortality. *Don Quijote* shows that the life journey is not about obtaining the truth, possessing the ideal, or realizing the fiction; rather it is about pursuing all three, which are ultimately one and the same. After all, Don Quijote achieves immortality not because he frees Dulcinea from the enchantment but because he leads his life aspiring to do so.

That feeling of aspiration, transferred from the individual to the collective national identity, becomes the basis for the Carteret edition. Feelings of patriotism that later in the eighteenth century would finally establish the *Quijote* as a foundational text of Spanish culture in the eyes of the Spaniards themselves<sup>19</sup> were first at

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writes among the most beautiful pieces of fiction known to the Western tradition. Cervantes would have known that Plato's attack on fiction is one against works that do not educate the reader in moral truth. The Platonic dialogue is educational and would have been admitted into Plato's city. Similarly, *Don Quijote* is morally educative poetry in that it uses fiction to portray a hero of the soul and of morality. Yes, Don Quijote is an example of how too much reading poisons the soul. And yes, his insanity portrays the kind of divine madness, Love, which is Good, according to Plato himself.

<sup>19</sup> "At then end of the eighteenth century in Spain, the fortune of the errant *Don Quixote* took a turn for the better as the novel was finally acclaimed a status in its own land.... *Don Quixote* had been recognized as a classic first in England and France. The publication of Mayans y Siscar's biography of Cervantes and analysis of the novel...was cause for national debate...the debate was fundamentally nationalistic, for at stake was not merely the literary honour of Spain but the legitimacy of its culture, the importance of its place in Europe" (Schmidt 126). "The writer of this prologue [of the 1780 Ibarra edition] sidestepped the debate in Spain by referring to the supposedly unanimous acclaim of the text

play in connection with England's role in the canonization process of the novel decades before. Although the 1738 producers sought to cast the novel in a neoclassical mold, the illustration reveals the sense that the *Quijote* does not destroy romance but rather celebrates chivalric fiction, achieving its status as a classic at least in part through its association with the Arthurian tradition that not only arouses British hope but also inspires literatures and cultures beyond her borders, even in the lands of her fiercest enemies who could not yet embrace their own chivalric knight. Like England's beloved King Arthur, Don Quijote is a product of romance, a character whose immortality hinges on belief in the prophecy of Merlin and in the magical world he embodies. If the first portrait of the Lord Carteret deluxe edition ultimately depicts Cervantes as the triumphant Apollonian poet liberating Mount Parnassus from the monstrous invaders of fantastic literature, the second reveals that the primary weapon of the Man of Letters was actually romance itself.

The complexity of the character Merlin makes it possible to access layers of meaning wherever he appears. The small illustration of the Queen's controversial Cave within the Lord Carteret edition has shed light on the complicated political climate in England at the time of its publication and on the meanings attached to the novel itself. Some of the complex sociopolitical and personal factors motivating the deluxe edition of the Spanish novel in England have been exposed, helping to explain the perplexing history of *Don Quijote's* canonization in England through a luxurious edition in Spanish published before the *Quijote* had achieved canonical status in Spain. Although Merlin's Cave was destroyed some thirty years after its creation<sup>20</sup> and has long been

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among the 'cultured nations.' This characterization of those countries where *Don Quixote* had already been hailed as a classic implied that the work must likewise be proclaimed a classic within the peninsula as well as beyond the Pyrenees in order to establish and defend Spain's own culture" (Schmidt 139).

<sup>20</sup> Capability Brown, Master Gardener to George III, created parks for the English gentry and nobility in late eighteenth-century England, bringing about a revolution in English garden design. In 1765, Brown made drastic changes at Richmond, completely removing Merlin's Cave (Turner 64). It is beyond the scope of this paper to investigate the possible political implications of its destruc-

forgotten, it was both a highly charged political symbol in its time and very likely a meaningful personal tribute to the Queen's son.

Unfortunately for Caroline, her effort to make peace with her son was of no avail. After the Prince's marriage, George II banished him and his wife from the court in 1737; Frederick would never become monarch, never assuming his position as a rightful descendant of King Arthur. Later in 1737 Queen Caroline died, never having had the opportunity to enjoy a deluxe version of the *Quijote* worthy of her library. Lord Carteret's personal desire to appease the Queen directly was of no avail either. But Carteret seems to have made political gains with this project; the deluxe edition's apparent attempt to appease Spain might have played a part in triggering national events to follow.

In 1739, a year after the Carteret publication, the Opposition finally drove Walpole into war with Spain, the War of Jenkins' Ear.<sup>21</sup> Surely Carteret's sponsorship of the edition that sought to propitiate the Queen and underscored the "problem of Spain" contributed to his (and the Opposition's) ultimate success in agitating Walpole—the Opposition's great enemy who was more concerned with keeping the peace with Spain than promoting British interests and dominance—pushing him into a war that he did not want. King George II would have appreciated the generous gesture to his wife whose counsel and support he openly declared that he missed, and Carteret's influence with the King would have increased given that Walpole lost his strategic ally. In fact, in 1742, in the face of opposition led by Carteret, Walpole was forced to resign. Carteret, replacing Walpole at the head of ministry became the secretary of state, assuming an important

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tion.

<sup>21</sup> The War of Jenkins' Ear soon merged into the War of Austrian Succession. Spain, allied with France, would remain in conflict with Great Britain throughout the eighteenth century, an adversarial relationship that would culminate in the 1805 Battle of Trafalgar that marked a decisive victory for Great Britain and final defeat for Spanish maritime power. Not until Napoleon's troops occupied Spain in the early nineteenth century would England and Spain fight on the same side. In 1814, together with the British, the Spanish drove Napoleon out of Spain.

leadership role under George II (Van der Kiste 175).<sup>22</sup> The personal political rivalry between Carteret and Walpole would last until Walpole's death in 1745, and the extremely antagonistic political relationship between England and Spain continued until 1814 when the two countries finally joined forces to drive Napoleon's troops out of Spain.

But within this complex web of political, familial, national, and international intrigues surrounding the production of the deluxe version, we find embedded a story of triumph for the *Quijote*, which became a classic with this 1738 edition. Underneath the outward celebration of things Spanish lies Lord Carteret's subtle yet not to be missed statement on the power and influence of England's mythical past that gave rise to great literature in different languages and in different places, exposing the Spaniards as unable to appreciate their uniquely Spanish Arthurian tradition. Seeking personal political advancement in the name of British patriotism, Lord Carteret promoted both England's and Spain's abandoned sons, the Prince of Wales and Don Quijote, establishing the legitimacy of both through their connection with the Matter of Britain. The canonization process once again has proven to be driven by sociopolitical forces that relate more to personal, economic, and political interests than to the inherent, timeless truth and beauty of the piece. But perhaps the most important conclusion to take from this investigation concerns what critics can learn by analyzing how texts come to be part of that core group of literary works referred to as the Canon. The Hanoverian-Walpole-Carteret soap opera has been fascinating and revealing, and we have now a better sense of the sociopolitical motives behind the publication of the 1738 edition. The larger insights offered here, though, relate to how to read the masterpiece that not only transcends the time and place in which it was written but also rises above the narrow political and artistic agendas associated with its canonical triumph. This exercise has revealed the eternal and adaptable nature of romance, something Cervantes knew well. Although romance "had different functions

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<sup>22</sup> Still active in politics, though, Walpole then worked to secure Carteret's dismissal, which came in 1744.

at distinct moments in its countries of origin and adoption," its driving force—the actual heart of the chivalric experiment—is the quest for identity (Krueger 4). That quest remains relevant, long after the context surrounding Queen Caroline and Merlin's Cave has lost the relevance that it had in 1738.

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