

LIVES OF A POET AS A POPULAR HERO:
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Abstract: This essay explores a fictionalisation of the life of Miguel de Cervantes, which underwent translations from historiography to literature to film. Its focus is on the figure of the author rather than on the adaptations of his literary opus, and it offers re-enactments of two closely intertwined processes: that of literary creation and that of the cultural construction of the image of the artist, in retrospect, as a historic figure and a cultural icon. This seems a particularly appropriate perspective in the case of Cervantes, who has been vindicated, reinvented, and re-introduced as a creator of an emblematic figure and a foundational myth of free thought: Don Quixote. The examples of Bruno Frank's novel *Cervantes* (1934) and its filmic adaptation in Vincent Sherman's film *Cervantes/Young Rebel* (1967) are situated in particular political and social circumstances in which each one was made: the question of *mediamorphosis* from literary to cinematic expression is explored as a socially contextualised translation between arts.

There was no interest shown in the life of Miguel de Cervantes for a whole century after his death, in spite of the fact that his *Don Quixote* had already enjoyed extraordinary success in Spain and abroad. It was 121 years after his death, in 1737, when Gregorio Mayáns y Siscar (1699–1781) published his *Vida de Cervantes*. Mayáns dedicated himself to the study of the Renaissance and the Spanish humanist of the sixteenth century, and to the preservation of this tradition, which he thought was being forgotten in Baroque Spain. As a matter of fact, the person who asked for a biography of Cervantes was an English aristocrat, Lord Carteret, who had a project to publish a reliable edition of *El Quijote* and *Novelas Ejemplares*, and wanted to add a short account of the life of Miguel de Cervantes to it. Mayáns accepted the task, and wrote a biography on the basis of the forewords Cervantes wrote for his own literary works, searching for autobiographic data the author may have left in them. This means Cervantes himself is the author of the first 18th century representation of the author of *Don Quixote*, which lasted for almost a century, and therefore fiction was an important part of this biographic representation. In the 19th century, in Spain, Martín Fernández de Navarrete published a new biography of Cervantes,

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researching documents in the archives, and opening a new phase in the Cervantine biographic studies. In England, biographic works of W.H. Prescott and J.F. Kelly, and in France that of Alfred Morel-Fatio, all contributed to the research and the diffusion of the facts about the life of Cervantes. The 19th century erudition culminated in commemorative acts of 300 years of the publication of the first part of *Don Quixote* in 1905, followed by a growing number of critical editions and biographies published about Cervantes in 20th century (Lucía Mejías 2015).

As new documents about Cervantes and his life and times were being discovered and published, as the historical reality of his life was becoming better known, the dominant Quixotism in the representations of his life faded, and an evolution of Cervantine took place. In the middle of the 20th century, in the decade between 1948 and 1958, Luis Astrana Marín (1889–1959) published the seven volumes of his *Vida ejemplar y heroica de Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra*, a monumental biography of the author which is an enormously rich data base about his life and times, with a thousand documents being published for the first time (Astrana Marín 1948/1958). This book was the actual beginning of contemporary Cervantine studies, which, in the 20th century, culminated with a biographic work of the French Cervantist Jean Canavaggio (1936) (Canavaggio 1986; 1997; 2000), who recently stated: “There are still many enigmas without solution in the life of Cervantes” (Díaz de Quijano 2016).

The image historiographic work has come to establish at the moment is the following (Den Boer 1999): Cervantes belonged to a family constantly in financial trouble and constantly moving. In the Spain of his lifetime, poisoned by notions of “purity of blood,” he had to prove on various occasions to be of “old Christian blood and not a descendant of recent Jewish converts. This issue is still sometimes discussed, for example when attempts are made to find an explanation for Cervantes’ “tolerant”, mildly ironical view of reality. Through his actions both in literature and on the battlefield, Cervantes in a way embodied the ideal of the Renaissance man. Before acquiring fame as a writer, Cervantes had distinguished himself as a soldier in the Battle of Lepanto (1571), possibly the finest hour of Spain under Philip II. Having spent five years in the service of the Spanish empire, he spent the same number as a captive of the Barbary pirates in Algiers. There he earned the admiration of his fellow prisoners for his exemplary attitude in the face of adversity, and because of his three, admittedly unsuccessful, attempts to escape. However, there was also a different side to his life. Upon his return to Spain, Cervantes was forced by lack of money to accept the frustrating job of commissary and tax collector in Andalusia, a personal humiliation that coincided with the Armada disaster. This was followed by renewed imprisonment, this time on account of debt, during which he purportedly began to write the story of the hidalgo of La Mancha, the novel which would meet with enormous success upon its publication, although it would bring its author little profit.

While this oversimplified summary may give the impression of a richly documented life, it is remarkable how little is known about Cervantes, who himself was both reticent and selective as far as information about his life was concerned. There are gaps in his biography, including one of nearly four years, which are as intriguing as the well-known, spectacular episodes. As an author, Cervantes, with his remarkably wide range of work, is a fascinating figure, someone with great potential as a literary character. His debut as a dramatist was not promising, although in the end he made a reputation for himself with a number of *entremeses*, or interludes, including the brilliant *El retablo de las maravillas*. He tried writing poetry repeatedly, but never managed to distinguish himself. What is striking in his brilliant mastery of prose is that, alongside the modernity of *Don Quixote*, he kept exploring different, more traditional notions of fiction in his novel *Los trabajos de Persiles*, as well as in the *Novelas ejemplares*.

A short survey of Cervantes' autographs shows that the existing documentation about Cervantes is very scarce when it comes to his everyday and family life, and mostly concerns his professional life: petitions to get a position, "a service" at the Court after the captivity in Algiers, his work as a tax collector, and his literary career, limited to the legal documentation habitual at the time (contracts showing „originals“ of theatre pieces were sold to the theatre companies, judicial processes about pirate editions of *Quixote*). And there, fiction came in to fill in vast spaces of documental silence.

In Spanish literature, Romanticism was particularly rich in fictional recreations of the lives of 17th century writers. They appear as principal or secondary characters in poetry, stories, novels, and in plays. In the last years of the 19th century, the number of those recreations increased, and the presence of the themes and figures from *Siglo de Oro* in the Spanish historical novel became overwhelming. As far as Cervantes is concerned, the author of *Quixote* as a literary character is exploited very much in the 1860s and the 1870s, coinciding with the moment of full promotion of Cervantes as an iconic figure of the Spanish literary canon. His imaginary lives became a theme of romantic fiction, soon to be followed by variants in the emerging popular literary and theatrical forms, among others, a specifically Spanish form of operetta, called *zarzuela*, and *feuilleton* novels (Mata Indurain 2011; 2014).

It was in the 19th century that those disparate representations of Cervantes took form, as an iconic figure of Spanish language and literature *and* as a romantic hero of adventure and popular fiction. This situation reflects in a very interesting way the image of the writer and his work, construed in particular political circumstances in the Spain of the 19th century: Cervantes, a genius, a master of the Spanish language, creator of the immortal character Don Quixote—who was understood not only as a creation of Cervantes' imagination, but as a self-portrait the author left to

his readers as well—becomes the quintessence of the Spanish character. In other words, Cervantes, a forgotten genius, left to die in poverty and solitude, through his fictional character becomes the embodiment of Spanishness. The debate on how and when Cervantes became a national icon, asserting a fully national culture, went on throughout the 19th and into the 20th century. Interest in the life of the author of the famous novel rose with the universalization of the symbolic of his fictional characters. Don Quixote as a national symbol, and Quixotism as understood throughout the 19th century, was essential for the research in the life of Cervantes, scholarly biographical works, as well as for the fictional representations of the author.

Fictional lives of the author in the 20th century offer some different approaches, and retain some of those the 19th century invented. Artistic re-creations in the 20th century accepted and elaborated the portrait of Cervantes as a hero of popular genres—adventure, romance, detective, or science-fiction novel, film and TV drama. A brief chronological review recalling the names of the actors who have played Cervantes in film and on television starts with Horst Buchholz in *Cervantes* (Vincent Sherman, 1967), followed by Ángel Picazo in *The Host of The Sevillian* by Juan de Orduña (TVE, 1969), Peter O’Toole in Arthur Hillers’ *Man of La Mancha* (1972), Javier Escrivá in *Don Quixote Rides Again* (Hispano-Mexican co-production, by Roberto Gavaldón, 1973), Rafael de Penagos in the animated series *Don Quixote* (1978), Julian Mateos in the television series *Cervantes* (by Alfonso Ungria, TVE, 1981), José Luis Pellicena in *Don Quixote by Miguel de Cervantes* (by Manuel Gutiérrez Aragón, TVE, 1991), Juan Luis Galiardo in *Miguel and William* (by Inés París, 2007), Pere Ponce in the episode “Time of Gentlemen” of the hit series *The Ministry of Time* (Chapter 11: “Tiempo de hidalgos”, TVE, 2016). One of the most curious cases is *Miguel and William* (2007), a comedy by Inés París that puts Cervantes (Juan Luis Galiardo) and Shakespeare (Will Kemp) at the vertices of a love triangle chaired by the character played by Elena Anaya.

And yet, the life of a writer can be seen as a theme much more suited for literature than for film. A filmmaker who decides to make a film about a writer has to rely heavily on literary sources, and has at his disposal two fundamental resources: on the one hand, the biography of the author; on the other, his creative universe. In the case of Cervantes, both offered rich material. Readers may now be sceptical of the writer who supremely and autonomously originates a text, but they still appear to thirst for biographical knowledge, looking for a biographical replica of their favourite novelist’s fiction. Writing, inspiration and the question of representation became the themes of the narrative. The commemorations of various events in the life of Cervantes in the 19th, in the 20th century (1905, 1916, 1947) and in the 21st century (2005, 2016), each time initiated a reassessment of his work, his life, as well as their meanings in the modern world, turning the writer into an adventure hero, or into a disenchanting man. The person of Cervantes as a fictional hero was developing from Cervantes, the quixotic character to Cervantes, the author of

Don Quixote, only in recent years to take a turn towards Cervantes, the man and author in his time. If we follow Lotman's view, according to which even a single text is seen as a condensed programme of the whole culture, in some kind of a mirror (isomorphic) relation, and that cultural systems evolve and change through processes of translation, assimilation and dislocation, studying inter or intra-semiotic relations between the source text and a network of target texts means to find micro-models of some macro-cultural systems. In addition, his principle of polyglotism says that no culture can be satisfied with one language, and the minimal system is formed from a set of two parallel languages – for example, the verbal and the visual (Lotman 1979; 2005). Cervantes' fictionalised biographies worked on the material which already translated a real man into a text, both artistic (Cervantes' texts) and critical (Cervantes' biographies, historical literature, etc.). In this context, Bruno Frank's traditionally conceived 1934 novel *Cervantes* and Vincent Sherman's 1967 film adaptation thereof are analysed as micro-events mirroring the transformations Romanticist figure of a National Poet underwent in his metamorphosis first into a Great Man, then to a Self-Made Man, and finally, to a One-Of-Us, carrying the underlying idea of a gradual democratization of literature and its heroes, which "goes to the political heart of the principle of verisimilitude that organised proportions of fiction" (Ranci re 2014: 25–26), started in 19th and was propagated in the 20th century, offering a gamut of potentials as we are entering the 21st century.

A Man Called Cervantes, by Bruno Frank (1934)

The novelistic production of Bruno Frank (1887–1945) was directly affected by the impact that coming to power of the National Socialist regime had on the German literature of the '30s. Between 1930 and 1942, there were numerous novels with Hispanic themes. Within the revival of the historical novel, in which the interest in Spanish themes is not casual (especially if we consider the parallels between historical events in Spain and the course of German history during this period), appears the novel *Cervantes* (1934), in which Frank offers a personal interpretation of the life of the author of *Don Quixote*, and portrays the gestation of the great Cervantes' work as the result of a life of troubles and disappointments for a free and imaginative spirit of the author, who turns his disappointments into the material for his literary masterpiece. The fictional figure of the author of *Don Quixote* to which Frank gives life in his novel is combined with his own experiences as an author in exile, in order to further explore the use of the historical novel as a means of criticising the government of Hitler, and finding disturbing parallels between him and the Spanish monarch Philip II. Many German authors who went into exile in the fourth decade of 20th century felt a deep connection between their life and those of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza, although their interpretations of the meaning of Cervantes' fictional world vary enormously. In all of them, however, the political and social circumstances, as well as the personal ones, had important roles.

Many German speaking writers who were in Spain during the Civil War and had a first-hand experience of the culture climate that have given rise to *el quijotismo*, left a strong textual evidence of Don Quixote being omnipresent in Spain in that time (Eckart and Brown 27-39). Soldiers in the International Brigades read *Don Quixote*, and this fact was even mentioned at the Writers' Congress in Madrid in 1937. In 1933 G. W. Pabst's film adaptation of *Don Quixote* was released, with the famous Russian opera singer Chaliapin in the title role, and it was a big hit in France and Great Britain. In this film, the final scene involves the burning of Don Quixote's books, and a parallel with the Nazi burning of the books that happened in Germany only short while after the film was released was clearly established in the minds of the spectators.

Don Quixote by Pabst (1933) selects a few episodes from the original text and puts at the end both the 'fight' with the windmills and the burning of Quixote's library. The film opens with cartoons by Lotte Reiniger but seeks a realistic viewpoint, despite strong expressionistic features in the use of shadows looming over the hero. Pabst was at risk of not finishing the movie due to lack of funds, as happened many years later to Orson Welles, or to Terry Gilliam (Gilliam called it 'the curse of Quixote'). Pabst solved the problem of the missing scenes with arias, sung by the languid protagonist, the bass singer Feodor Chaliapin, who had previously played Quixote in an opera by Massenet (in 1910). Intermedial relations are built in a dynamics which is not only intertextual but also "contextual", meant here as economic and social *constraints*. In the scene of the windmills Pabst's film is faithful to the rhythm and spatiality of the novel, as well as the alternation of objective and subjective gaze, but we never enter into the mind of Don Quixote. However, there is an important iconographic invention: Don Quixote remains suspended for a long time, hanging by his spear, to the sails of the windmill rotating slowly several times. It is a *cinematic invention*, which represents an iconic translation of the clash of forces and the victory of the machine's centripetal force over the human character (Dusi 2015: 129–130). This was an iconic invention that became the matrix of a long chain of transpositions and remakes. Cervantes' double gaze and double narrative perspective, and the resulting contrast between the narrator's realism and the fantastic visions of Quixote are inter-medially translated into Pabst's film, which transposes Cervantes' first book swinging between comedy and the grotesque, opting for realism with musical moments of *rêverie*.

What happened to Don Quixote on the screen related to the experiences of many German authors. When the writers from all over the world gathered at the Second Writers Congress, held in Valencia in 1937, it had a special importance for German exiles. Debates about expressionism and about the historic novel were fervent. Authors of historical novels were accused of escapism; the answer of their defenders was that its function is to show the parallels between the past and the present, thus helping to better understand the present and the future. In 1938, a congress on historical novel was organised in Paris. In all of those debates, the theme of Don Quixote

te and Quixotism was widely discussed. Since the 1930s, with the Spanish Civil War, and with more intensity after the World War II, throughout the 1950s, and particularly in the 1960s and 1970s, throughout Europe, Cervantes' work was becoming a part of general culture, and of popular culture, implying a note of political dissent. Cervantes' fictional and popular lives in 20th century became a form of manifestation of dissatisfaction with the world we live in. In the 20th century also emerged the question: was in fact Cervantes' life his best novel? There is an interesting interplay, posited by the historical novel, between a writer, a reader and all sorts of ways in which the reader is viewing and living Cervantes and his times.

The novel is divided into two parts, with important stages of the life of the author of *Don Quixote* compressed around the most significant events. Frank must have read lots of different biographies. For decades new biographies and biographic essays on Cervantes appeared, in Spain, Britain, and France. In the Weimar Republic, just between 1921 and 1927 there appeared ten different editions of *Don Quixote*, old and new translations, adaptations, with biographic essays on Cervantes, and a first critical edition (Albaladejo Martínez 2011: 34–38). Even though until this day many critics accuse Frank of distorting historical facts, it is on the contrary: Bruno Frank followed facts as they were established by the academic historiography. For instance, the reason of Cervantes' flight to Italy, which would be a duel Cervantes had with a nobleman Antonio Sigura, was, until the end of the 19th century, insistently dismissed as spurious. All the documents concerning the order to arrest Miguel de Cervantes for having wounded Antonio Sigura, already found in Archivo de Salamanca in 1840, appeared only briefly in 1863, when Jerónimo Morán presented them in his *Vida de Cervantes*, creating a scandal in the intellectual circles and assertions among cervantofiles that it is some other Miguel de Cervantes the documents refer to, or that forgery is involved. The documents concerning this event were taken seriously, and proved to be genuine, only since the Astrana Marín's monumental biography of Cervantes (1948–1958), which added to the probability, even though it was never established with certainty, as it was not refuted either, that it concerned the writer of *Don Quixote*. Biographers simply noted the fact that Cervantes found himself in Rome with cardinal Acquaviva. And Bruno Frank begins his novel describing how the young Cervantes became the Spanish teacher (which is, given the lack of verified facts, an invented, but plausible explanation) of Cardinal Giulio Acquaviva, and how he travelled with him to Rome in 1569. The episode with the duel would have given him an excellent beginning for this novel full of adventures. But this was not mentioned by biographers of the time: two years later, the French author, translator and Hispanist Jean Cassou, in his biographical and historical essay *Cervantes*, as well as, a year earlier, in 1933, the Spanish historiographer Juan Chabás, in his *Historia de la literatura española*, both omitted any reference to the Sigura episode. All of those texts, Frank's, Cassou's, and Chabás', when translated into Serbo-Croatian, in the 1950s Yugoslavia, were still considered reliable, which would be an important fact to remember when we proceed with the discussion of the 1967 film based on the novel.

Once in Rome, various events lead Cervantes to become a soldier and join the battle of Lepanto (1571), where the Christian League, organised by the Pope, the Venetian Doge and the Spanish Emperor Philip II, lead by the Spanish admiral Don Juan de Austria, stood against the Turks under Selim II. In following crucial events in Cervantes' life, Frank continues with the most important one: on the way back from Italy to Spain, he was captured by pirates and taken to Algiers. There, he was held for five years before he was ransomed and brought back to Spain. The second part is dedicated to his life upon his return to Spain, until the creation of *Don Quixote*. In his *Cervantes*, Frank describes the change from a young idealist, and even light-headed poet, into a disenchanted man, writer of *Quixote*. Cervantes, unsuccessful as a playwright, fascinated and depressed by the overwhelming genius and popularity of Lope de Vega, in order to survive, becomes a hated tax collector, travelling through Spain until he is arrested amid intrigues and allegations of theft. In prison, he writes his life's work, *Don Quixote*.

Some critics read Frank's novel as a *Bildungsroman* (Acosta 2005: 82), in which the author's interest lies not only in the representation of the life of Cervantes, but in something more, manifested, if only partially, in the fact that he dedicates three central chapters of the novel exclusively to the figure of King Philip II of Spain, and the reality of the period, including the sensation of defeat felt by King Philip II in his final days. The fictional reality shown in the novel combines three simultaneously present components: the one of the writer; historical and political ambience in which he lives; paradigmatic representation and at the same time the explanation of times of Philip II. Frank insists on the pompousness of the courtly ceremonials, in contrast with the poverty of the people. The King sees himself as a person with a mission to maintain and extend the Christian faith in the world, all of which, on the other hand, brings oppression and death to the heretics of all sorts. King Philip II is using the Inquisition as the most appropriate means in the fight against heresy, and even suspicion of heresy, which affects Cervantes as well; he is obsessively insistent on *limpieza de sangre* of the subjects of his Kingdom, and there is a perpetual need to bring proof that one does not have any Jewish or Moorish descendants; he has an aggressive policy against England and other European countries; those are all, as Frank presents it in his novel, manifestations of a mediocre and obscurantist personality closed onto itself, and this is the monarch of the State in which Cervantes lives, and whom he briefly encounters in Frank's fictitious recreation.

As with Philip II, the character of Cervantes offers aspects based on historiography, and on literary sources. Cervantes comments on the Pope regularly assisting the sessions of the Inquisition, on its prisons, that are too small to receive all the accused, and how during only one year six prisoners were executed at the stake and two hanged; on the fact that the Pope imposed the death penalty for adultery, hunting prostitutes, banishing them and locking them up in a ghetto. Cervantes' rebellion against the lack of freedom in

prison in Algiers and the desire for freedom that anyone in a similar situation feels, manifested as inherent in human beings, leads him to the struggle that would extend throughout his life, with the clearly defined features of a personality that historians already intuited. Cervantes' fictional life here is not a fantasy opposed to a scientific rigour; on the contrary, it is backed up by historiographic accuracy, constructing a likely causal chain of events and emotions in the creation of an active hero, a man living on the level of totality, capable of conceiving a mission for himself and trying to achieve it in affronting other wills, as well as "blows of destiny". In that respect, Frank's Cervantes is a traditional active hero (see Rancière 2014: 18–22).

But, in Frank's novel, Cervantes is also an insignificant subject of Philip II, disenchanted with life and love; life offers no encouragement; unfortunate in marriage, he leaves his wife. Frank chooses to present a scene in which Cervantes reads to his wife a play he has written, *The Siege of Numantia*, and she reacts as if it were something that is not telling her anything; a deep gap opens between them, which explains Cervantes' decision to leave home and find himself the humiliating job of a tax collector. This time, it is a sort of a "silent rebellion" against a destiny of immobility, where what is real is the space of a strategic deployment of thought and will. Frank imagines—following a widespread legend instigated by Cervantes himself—the author constructing, in a prison in Seville, a character for his great literary work and this is perhaps the most powerful moment in the novel. Imprisoned, Cervantes looks at the mirror, and is surprised with what he sees: wrinkles on his face, and a mouth with barely a tooth left. Then, he starts drawing a figure of a man on the paper, and puts him on a skeletal horse, with a spear as a weapon, and spurs as immense wheels. The rider has a slender body and long legs, a figure, in short, that does not displease him, and that he draws in an attempt to explain his own past that is all confusion:

Undifferentiated oscillation between hope and disappointment, decision [...] illusion and disillusion [...] He thought he had gold in his hand, but when he opened it, he saw faeces. [...] Chimeras in his eyes, Chimeras of happiness, Chimeras of freedom [...] his hero was not a graceful teenager. [...] He had become a brave old man, decrepit, because of vanished ghosts. Would not that be something magnificent, to put on the road someone like this in the belief that cavalry was still alive? (Frank 1956: 305–306, translated by A.M.)

Then instead of writing a petition to the King on behalf of himself, he starts to write: "Somewhere in La Mancha, in a place whose name I do not care to remember..." (*Don Quixote* I: I). The process of creation of *Don Quixote* is fictionalised in a web of perceptions and thoughts, sensations and acts. The audience from outside comes to the reading (practice of the prison theatre could be evoked here) and the author reads the chapters as he is writing them, highlighting in a special way the adventure with the windmills, and the one with galley slaves. This latest adventure ends with released slaves who do not show any gratefulness, but punish their deliverer instead. Cervantes understands that the reaction of the public, who shout and laugh, could be

explained as recognition bestowed upon him, but the real reason for laughs is the comic situation of stoning to which the liberator was subjected: listeners laugh at the symbol of literary reality of truth behind the veil. The attraction his literary invention has on the audience in the prison is a source of satisfaction and of disappointment for Cervantes, resulting in the self-deprecating humour and the wide vision of reality (Frank 1956: 320–324).

German exile literature, the literature of dissident authors, many of whom were of Jewish origin or had Communist sympathies, and fled abroad between 1933 and 1939, emerged in prolific centres of German exile writers and publishers in European cities like Paris, Amsterdam, Stockholm, Zürich, London, Prague, Moscow, as well as across the Atlantic, in New York, Los Angeles, and Mexico. In the time of his involvement in the literary scene in Munich, Frank struck up a lifelong friendship with Thomas Mann. Alarmed by the growing power of the Nazi movement led by Adolf Hitler, and after the notorious Reichstag fire of 1933, Frank, who was Jewish, left Germany with his family. They lived in Switzerland and France for a while, and then moved to Austria. However, when it became evident that Hitler was going to invade and take over Austria, Frank and his family left Europe entirely in 1937, this time for the US, where he had been offered a position by a Hollywood studio.

Bruno Frank's *Cervantes* was first published in 1934, in German, in Amsterdam, by Querido Verlag, a publisher well known in the German community outside Germany. Frank himself described it as autobiographical. It is worth mentioning that his lifelong friend, Thomas Mann, on his voyage to the US, wrote the same year his *Voyage with Don Quixote*. Mann's account of his journey to America is a reflection on properly European values as antithetical to fascism. His discussion of Cervantes and his linking of Don Quixote and Zarathustra are attempts to show that the exiles of Mann's time retain the right to be called true Europeans (Pendleton & Williams 2001: 75). It was Thomas' son Klaus Mann, also already in exile, who wrote a review of Frank's novel in November of 1934, finding in it not one, but two quixotic figures: on the one side, it is the character of Cervantes, on the other, the character of Philip II, who

must go under because he wants the Unconditional, the almost Impossible, as he too is a Knight of Mournful Countenance and thus, twice related to the unknown adventurer and poet, his poorest subject: as a contrast and as a majestically transformed brother of novel's hero (Mann 1934: 155, transl. A.M.).

Frank's differentiation between the quixotic figures, one a cruel fanatic, the other an idealist with courage, imagination and mercy, into which a character of Don Quixote is split, was not an uncommon point of view in the literature in German of those years. But Klaus Mann notes that, throughout Frank's novel, Philip II stays as the background figure—maybe a symbol of Spain—but in the foreground, it is Cervantes—“the son of that poor and bad country”, allowed only to cast a shy glance at

the King, the one with melancholy vision of the world—who is “one of us” (Mann 1934: 155, transl. and cursive A.M.).

Frank’s novel *Cervantes* was translated in English, under the title *A Man Called Cervantes*, in 1934, the same year the original first appeared in German, and it was reprinted, and translated into many other languages in the following years. The English translation was selected as “The Book of The Month” in the USA in 1935 (Eckart and Brown 27); in Yugoslavia, it appeared in Serbo–Croatian in a Zagreb publishing house Binoza in 1936. In Spain, the book was translated in 1941, but the first translation into Spanish, from English, appeared in Chile four years earlier, in 1937. After that, the book was forgotten for some time. In the 1950s, Frank’s novel was reprinted in German and English. The second translation into Serbo–Croatian appeared in Sarajevo in 1956, and in the 1950s and 1960s, Frank’s novel was translated and republished in many languages (Catalogue NBS; Catalogue BNE).

***Cervantes/The Young Rebel* by Vincent Sherman (1967)**

It was not only the Spanish Civil War and World War II climate but also the Cold War one that influenced the transmissions and transfigurations of Cervantes’ hero, and of the author himself. This time, it was the powerful fiction of cinema. In 1965, the American film director King Vidor started to write, together with Herbert Dalmas, a script based on Bruno Frank’s novel *A Man Called Cervantes*, for a producer Michael Salkind, who had contracted the writers. Already in 1964, the making of the film was announced, and Anthony Quinn mentioned as one of the protagonists, in the role of Hassan Bey. But, the project did not prosper (Durgnat & Simon 1988: 317). Vidor was very interested in this adaptation, but, frustrated with script alterations imposed by the producer, he withdrew from direction and removed his name from the version of script filmed later on. In Spain, Michael Salkind formed a production house for the occasion, called “Prisma.” Finally, a film was made as a Spanish–Italian–French co-production, with a strong participation of American money. All that gave the film its appearance of super production (Sanderson, 2014).

The former actor and then screenwriter, Vincent Sherman became a master of melodrama, and especially female melodrama, where heroines almost invariably fell into the category of victims or evil creatures — often frivolous, selfish, or overly ambitious women that caused misfortune or the loss of the men who loved them. In those films, according to an immutable formula, in one way or another, the heroines ended up being punished for their sins realizing, sometimes too late, their mistake. However, in that same period, Sherman also made a film *Mr. Skeffington*, remembered as one of rare American films of the time which addressed the issue of racial discrimination, represented in the fact that being a Jew is a

social barrier to Mr. Skeffington, against which his fortune is powerless. At the end of the fifties, Sherman triumphed with *The Adventures of Don Juan*. It was the last film of Errol Flynn, made in the great tradition of *Robin Hood*. Several years later, Sherman made *The Young Philadelphians*, a film that did not lack boldness in social criticism, despite a melodramatic script. But, a political climate had its bearing on the future of the film director: blacklisted in Hollywood, Sherman, as many other American film directors and actors at the time, sought refuge in Europe. That circumstance led to his appointment as a director of a Franco–Italian–Spanish co–production film *Cervantes* (Sherman 1996: 281–288). It was Vincent Sherman’s last film, although he would direct for television until his death in 2006. Instead of King Vidor, who resigned, Vincent Sherman continued the work on the script, together with three writers, among them, Enrique Llovet, who previously worked on the script for *El Cid*, an epic film, Italian–USA co–production, made in 1961 by Anthony Mann, depicting the historic figure of Spanish medieval hero Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar and Spanish national epic *Mío Cid* (García Ruiz & Torres Nebrera, 2006: 37–38).

The classic form of biographical film is sensitive to direct and indirect forms of censorship, and the elimination or reworking of pertinent and sensitive data about the personal life of the biographical subject is a common feature of the genre that elicits criticism about its historical legitimacy. In the evolution of cinema, individuals of “consequence” were not slow to appear on screen: short films were produced in the United States, France, Russia, and Italy, featuring monarchs, political dignitaries, military heroes, dancers, and celebrities. By the middle years of the twentieth century’s third decade the cinema had turned from an artisanal mode of production to an industrial one with greater industrial and technological standardisation. The opportunities for the creation of complex narratives were in place, and the biographical film became part of the cinematic landscape. Cecil B. DeMille, considered the creator of the genre, constructed the biographic film as a form of melodrama, employing monumental history that relied on spectacle to convey conflict between desire and duty, and the private and the public spheres. *Napoléon vu par Abel Gance* (*Abel Gance’s Napoleon*, 1927), an European foundational biographical film, combined the biographical film formula and experimental treatment of epic, followed the career of Napoleon Bonaparte from a schoolboy to a soldier, lover, revolutionary, and empire builder. All of that established the genre as a premier form of biography, history, and drama. Biographical film of the interwar and World War II years were closely tied to discourses of nation formation. The tendency of those films is to mask the politics, presenting history as a moral parable or allegory about national unity. To develop the credibility of the historical context presented, the films include portraits of social institutions: the family, the local community, law, commerce, the military, and the government. History is visualised through costuming, photographs, landscapes, and printed documents, as well as reinforced through the use of music and speeches. If

concerned with issues of empire, films were replete with images of maps, scenes of combat, romanticised the trials and the superhuman qualities of European men—entrepreneurs, expansionists, explorers, and colonisers—who undertook to civilise the world. Relying on the rhetoric of a benevolent imperialism, the films highlighted an “exotic” landscape, depicted hostile encounters with indigenous peoples, and underscored the protagonists’ successful struggle to create peace and unity. According to established conventions, it is not chance that determines these men’s victory, but their resourcefulness and indomitable wills. Post-World War II cinema focused on more contemporary biographical subjects—and on the audience as consumers of popular culture—and displayed a more overt reflexivity about its identity as historical spectacle. Television offered another opportunity to experiment with biography. A biographical film purports to create an image of the man and his era, and the unabated flow of media biography is testimony to its continuing popularity, its profitability, and its responsiveness to changing cultural and social conditions (Anderson 1988).

In his *Cervantes*, Vincent Sherman is using generic formulae, continually subverting the established form of the biographical film. It follows the events described in the first part of the novel by Bruno Frank, and ends with the Cervantes’ return to Spain from the captivity in Algiers. It is a story of the early life of the young writer, and his *experiences* are in the foreground, as the material with which he creates his literary world. Here, however, Cervantes is not only the “Spanish National Poet”, but a European one, and the film is about a European author whose fame and significance are universal. It was the first screen biography of the author, and planned as a true international multiple-version project. The moment in which it was produced was one of the very interesting periods of the European, and of the Spanish cinema. In 1965, the Spanish government freed up the flow of foreign capital into and out of Spain and extended a special status to co-productions, which now qualified for generous subsidies. Their number skyrocketed accordingly, reaching a zenith in 1965, when sixty percent of all Spanish films were officially designated as co-productions, a statistic that serves to bracket the notion of Spain’s cinema as a purely national enterprise. Even more than in the 1950s, the bulk of these co-productions belonged to the popular film genres that until recently were rarely included in histories of European national cinemas: westerns, action and adventure films, peplums, and horror (Dapena 2016: 26). A number of these transnational productions could be reinscribed into the domain of the national through a connection to Spanish history and culture, even if they starred, or were directed by foreigners, as was the case with Vincent Sherman’s *Cervantes, el manco de Lepanto*—as it was titled in Spanish—or, under its English title, *The Young Rebel*, with the German actor Horst Buchholz playing the title role. The film was released as *Aventures extraordinaires de Cervantes* in France, and in Italy, as *Le Avventure e gli Amori di Miguel Cervantes*. The exemplary supporting cast includes some of the most prominent European actors of the day—Gina Lollobrigida, José Ferrer, Louis Jourdan, Fernando Rey and Francisco Rabal.

The script was made by Enrique Llovet, an author tied to the theatre, and especially known for his adaptations of classical Spanish theatre and his translations and adaptations of the great European authors. His first theatrical work, in 1946, was a comedy intended to create a new modality of humour in Spanish theatre, that of a more intellectual style. As a dramaturge, he worked with the best Spanish theatre directors and producers of his time: Miguel Narros, Adolfo Marsillach, José Osuna, José Tamayo. One of Llovet's most original creations was the drama *Sócrates*, staged in Madrid only a few years later in 1972, with clear social and political intentions. It had Socrates as a rebel against the social code and its conventions, and a theme of the freedom of thought as inherent to the human condition (García Ruiz & Torres Nebrera 2006: 74–75). This is a fact about his work which shows which direction his adaptation of Frank's novel took. In many aspects, Enrique Llovet was the ideal writer to produce a masterful adaptation of Frank's *Cervantes*. But, there was more to it than just an adaptation. It was also a biographic film which, in translating Frank's novel into a cinematic form, skilfully used more recently discovered biographic data as, for instance, introducing the duel with Sigura in order to provide the motivation for Cervantes' decision to leave for Italy. In the transition from literature to cinema, the story had to be translated from one language into another, from the text of the words on paper to the text of image, sound, and movement; feelings and thoughts had to assume a visible form, as variant hypertextual reading, in which the diverse prior biographic films, as well as literary and biographical texts all formed part of the hypotext of a film *Cervantes*.

The film begins as Turkish soldiers attack and burn a church near Nicosia, a prelude to the takeover of the island of Cyprus. The news reached Monsignor Acquaviva (Louis Jourdan), the papal nuncio to the Spanish crown, who is devastated because the Holy League does not have the power to resist the will of the Turkish hegemony over the Mediterranean, unless the support of Philip II of Spain is obtained. Looking for a secretary, Acquaviva received a few contenders that day, including a Miguel de Cervantes (Horst Buchholz), Spanish poet and commoner, who had in his pocket a mere letter of recommendation from his university professor. Acquaviva rejects him. But Cervantes returns through the window and his impetuosity eventually seduces the prelate who hires him as secretary. A new missive reaches Monsignor Aquaviva, informing him that Cyprus has now fallen under Turkish rule. Acquaviva, appointed by the Pope, prepares to visit the King of Spain, accompanied by his new secretary. Without knowing if they persuaded Philip II of Spain (Fernando Rey) to side with the Holy League, expelled by a king reluctant to join the League, they go back to Rome. Cervantes is ordered to accompany the Ottoman general-envoy Hassan Bey (José Ferrer), and while visiting Rome, Cervantes discusses with him the question of religions and states, specifically that both Muslim and the Christian religion are just heresies of the Jewish one. Suspecting that he was simply used to win time while an avoidable crusade was mounted, Miguel resigns. In an inevitable romantic subplot, Cervantes meets Giulia (Gina

Lollobrigida) in Via Apia, and a romance begins. But, soon afterwards, Vatican issues an edict, chasing out of Rome all courtesans, and Cervantes discovers, with surprise, Giulia's name on the list of them. He offers to marry her, but she refuses. Cervantes finds in his despair an additional reason to join the army and go to the Battle of Lepanto. Miguel and his brother Rodrigo (Francisco Rabal) become marked heroes, but get no serious reward and are captured by Algiers pirates for the slave market, yet are set aside to bring ransom. Although the governor of the city is Hassan Bey, a Turkish diplomat with whom Miguel had conducted the negotiations to avoid war in Rome, Cervantes plans a rebellion of the Christian slaves with Rodrigo. Their uprising fails. The brothers are about to be executed but, thanks to the generosity of his fellow prisoners, of some of the inhabitants of Algiers and of the governor, who has a great respect for him, the young Miguel is redeemed and can finally embark on a ship to return home.

Even though parts of the story's dialog and plot, as well as the characters, are part of the film script and therefore continue to exist as language, even as a literary text, once enacted and filmed, they are no longer the same – like the words in a performed song, as a part of the new composite text the words are not the same as the words in print. (Clüver, 2007: 33.) In the film *Cervantes*, the theme of writing is constantly present – Cervantes presents himself as a poet to his employer. The people he meets are future characters of his *Don Quixote*. In his home village, he has a neighbour named Sancho, a big bellied, good-natured man, who later dies in the Battle of Lepanto; in Algiers, he meets a young girl Nessa (Soledad Miranda), falls in love with her, and calls her Dulcinea, but she dies in the last attempt of rebellion led by Cervantes. Citations of his known and less known lines are omnipresent. From the very beginning, the zeal to present a variety of cultures present in Europe, and specifically in the Mediterranean, is obvious. In the Turkish attack on a church near Nicosia, Russian St Andrew's crosses are seen, discreetly pointing to the presence of Eastern Christianity there. "For freedom, as for honour, life may and should be ventured!" or, in Spanish, "Por la libertad, así como por la honra, se puede y debe arriesgar la vida," continues a voice off-screen as the opening credits are displayed. Although it was recently seen by some critics, among them John D. Sanderson in his biography of Francisco Rabal, as an exaltation of Spanish national patriotism (Sanderson 2014), as we know, or should know, it is a citation of a famous speech of Don Quixote: "La libertad, Sancho, es uno de los más preciosos dones que a los hombres dieron los cielos; con ella no pueden igualarse los tesoros que encierran la tierra y el mar: por la libertad, así como por la honra, se puede y debe aventurar la vida" (*Don Quixote II*: LVIII), very often used in Spanish culture, and in reference to the political, as well as economic freedom of a man (Fernández-Morera 2009: 130). The statements in favour of liberty throughout Cervantes' work are connected to his thematic critique of Spain's absolute monarchy and government bureaucrats, as well as with his slavery in Algiers as the culminating experience of his action-packed youth that had a lasting impact and affected the later course of his life. As a matter of fact,

this opening citation should be connected with Cervantes' decision to join the army and participate in the Battle of Lepanto as result of his search for truth, as he states to cardinal Acquaviva, which adds to the complexity of motivation given in Frank's novel. But, if there is a patriotic scene, that is certainly the one when Cervantes, under torture, asked to betray the organizers of the rebellion in Algiers, utters the names of *Christopher Columbus*, *Francisco Pizarro*, *Hernán Cortés*, and other Spanish conquistadors.

Bruno Frank details Cervantes' psychological states as an explanation of his well known fever on the eve of the Battle of Lepanto, and in the film, the reason is very tangible: Cervantes was hit by a mast upon embarking, and the fever is a result of a severe blow to the shoulder he received. There are many such subtle changes caused by the change of media, aiming to offer a coinciding picture; there are many details introduced in the film that give quick visual definitions of a character, as when Cervantes suddenly discovers Boccaccio's "Racconti" in Giulia's room (why not "Decameron", a spectator might ask). We can only speculate about this, but Cervantes blushes when he sees the book on Giulia's table. A cultural difference between Spain and Italy, candour of the young Cervantes and refinement of the Roman courtesan, all of it is represented in a glimpse.

The disenchantment similar to the one Frank imagines at the end of his novel, translates into the moment when Cervantes plans the rebellion of the slaves in Algiers. The Christians fail to rebel because Hassan Bey gives them wine to drink, and they inebriate themselves. The film is full of political allusions, sometimes very subtle, often very blunt, but it is all wrapped in a tranquilising genre of historical adventure, and it circumvented the Spanish state censorship successfully. However, if watched carefully, the scenes of the Battle of Lepanto contain its political critique: the slaves *rowing* in a galley, convicts sentenced to work at the oar, are filmed in a less enthusiastic and much less perfect way than a similar scene in the famous *Ben-Hur*—the 1959 American epic historical drama film, directed by William Wyler, which would have served as the prototype—and in a more realistic approach; the Christian League Admiral Don Juan de Austria proclaims victory when he sees the head of the Turkish admiral cut off, and his victorious speech is a voice over a scene of smoke, destroyed ships, dead bodies, and a sea of blood. After the battle, in the hospital in Messina, Cervantes says he needs peace and time to understand what has happened to him. As this glorious moment of Spanish history is tainted with a historical view that finds its parallels in Cervantes' life, the final scene of the film, Cervantes' return to Spain, also has hints not only of future books he will write, but also of hardships, poverty, and humiliations that await him at home.

In the final cut of the film changes were made which had to do with the financial side of things more than anything else. The director and the scriptwriter were powerless there, and the judgements led by the motto "to please the public, and to earn money", in an attempt to make the film more interesting to the general public, failed miserably, and destroyed some narrative elements of the original cut of the film. Also, the number

of producers multiplied: besides European funds and “Prisma”, now there was the “American International” as well. Each one intervened:

In the attempt to preserve only the action sequences, the film had been botched, with the result that it was neither an action picture nor the story of a human being. Motivations had been cut, transitions eliminated, and shifts from one place to another unexplained. I wrote a long letter stating my objections and asked that my name be removed from the film. [...] it was bungled, alas, by the input of too many others (Sherman 1996: 287).

As much as the film was pushed into the tranquilising genre of historical adventure, Vincent Sherman in his *Cervantes* is orchestrating a European and a democratic proposal. This film was not a simple adaptation of the novel. It was a biographical film made as a transposition of the literary work with serious historiographic background checking, adapting the facts to the accuracy of the results of the latest scientific research and restructuring the story in order to translate it to the new media. Many forces went into the shaping of Cervantes' life story as presented in this film, and many of them influenced it in a negative way. To begin with, the different language versions were not originally shot in the corresponding language, but in English, and then dubbed. In the Spanish version, for instance, redubbing was done very carefully, with the original voices in the case of the Spanish actors.

The search for authenticity, as was usual in films aimed to be a “popular history”, was one of many considerations, next to censorship, and self-censorship, playing to the expectations of the audiences. Biographical films often shaped the lives of the famous as self-made men. Just like in Frank's novel there was a presence of the *Bildungsroman* as a literary tradition, in Sherman's film there was a presence of biographical film tradition as cinematic tradition. Many of the properties of the classic Hollywood biographical film were still very much alive in the 1960s, and had influenced the way Sherman's *Cervantes* was filmed. However, producers' interventions missed their objective, as they were following their own belated ideas of the audience's expectations. The figure of Cervantes offers much more complex elements than a traditional adventurer, and the 1960s were, for many, a period of a distinct coincidence with the time of Cervantes, regarding the logic of the path which leads from the future to the past in order to reconstruct the present. Movements of juvenile contestation of the time proposed a distantiation from institutionalised society, searching for faraway places and errant forms of life, with “the road” as the privileged scenery, similar to the baroque world of migrations, rebels, nonconformists, outlaws, rogues, adventurers, picares, and their taste for costumes and masks, with an overtone of decadence imposed by times of defeat and elegiac laments for the lost peace and “good old times” of a closed world which is not lacking a centre, where failure is a highly appreciated experience and a highly appreciated sentiment, offering disponibility, one of baroque hallmarks of freedom. Triumph is restraining, it determines and fixes to the objectives achieved; failure is liberating. From all of this derives Cervantes'

unusual modernity, and much of the interest artists had shown in fictional variations on his life. At the same time, for instance, Dale Wasserman's Broadway musical *A Man of La Mancha* (1964) was opening an interesting approach to Cervantes' life, following an idea similar to the one exposed in Frank's novel, and it is possible to find some interesting points of connection between the two, a topic clearly worth further research.

On additional remark regarding production: *Cervantes* was a true international multiple-version project, a little known, and even less studied phenomenon, but an essential product of the European multiculturalism and multilingualism. In this system, a picture is filmed several times, with actors from different countries playing in their native language. This process was first developed in the 1930s with the advent of talkies. The fact that continental European audiences did not want to see English-only talking movies coupled with political and economic anti-Americanism helps to explain these productions. Many famous actors, actresses, directors or scriptwriters received their training in these multiple versions, which stopped production during WW2. Wilhelm Pabst's *Don Quixote* was a German–French–British co-production of that sort, with versions in three languages, French, English and German. But the German version was forbidden in Germany since its release in 1933, and was subsequently lost. European film co-productions facilitated the return of multilingual film versions in the 1950s and 1960s. The leading actors or actresses changed according to their fame in their country. These new multiple versions mixed retakes (with different actors) and dubbing. Produced up until the end of the 1960s, they were made by many important European filmmakers (Barnier 2013: 6–8). A careful analysis of aspects of cinematic production of 1950s and 1960s reveals that they were effective instances of pan-European co-operation, both culturally and economically. The formulae adopted in genre films made this way were to some extent a matter of reviving a long-established pan-European tradition of popular culture. European co-productions of this period are typically examples not of pure genres, but of genre mixing. This feature is a reflection of the tendency of film of this period to draw on early European cinema, nineteenth century pulp fiction, and various popular European narratives (Bergfelder 2002: 142). Sherman's *Cervantes/Young Rebel* was a part of that series of European popular historical films of the same decade. The film raises questions about religious differences, honour and morality. As much as the adventurous, duel-fighting, wall-climbing young Cervantes is effective with his sword as with his persuasive words, the idealistic, generous, courageous, wise and vulnerable Cervantes is not really a hero, but a messenger of fundamental problems that challenge the honesty of the audience. The important central fact of the entire story is the gradual Cervantes' transition from zeal and idealism to disillusionment and resignation, giving a sensitively portrayed contrast of cultures and strife between freedom and slavery. There is a feast of intertextual recognition, and from the variety of sources: Frank's novel, Cervantes' texts, biographic and historiographical

literature... Its polyphonic approach to the narration and its multi-layeredness has led to many incompatible responses: reactionary, or progressive? a playfully intellectual historical drama or an oversimplified Hollywood-like product? Those reactions are not unlike those provoked by cinematic fictionalisations of Shakespeare's life, which would lead us to a broader question of the fictionalisation of a National Poet's life in general. At first in the late 1930s, more intensely since the 1950s, and particularly in the 1960s and 1970s, Cervantes' work went through various important stages in becoming a part of popular culture throughout Europe, implying a note of political dissent, from covert to open manifestations of dissatisfaction with the world we live in, across the whole range of political regimes.

In Yugoslavia and Serbia, it was only in 1971, and in the form of a shorter, 90 minute French version that the distributors imported and presented Sherman's *Cervantes* in the theatres. The film was distributed by "Makedonija film", under the title of *Servantes*. At the time there were 13 companies in Yugoslavia that actively imported and distributed international films: two in Croatia, seven in Serbia, one in Slovenia, one in Bosnia-Herzegovina, one in Montenegro and one in Macedonia ("Makedonija film"). Films were imported through a business association "Jugoslavija film", whose expert services agreed upon the prices of licenses with foreign partners. The system prevented competition and contention for prices among domestic distributors. Each distributor had its own import list and if a certain film was on it, they had exclusive rights to that particular film; only if this distributor gave up the rights, another could put it on its list. There was a real competition in putting the films on the lists, so the job of a repertoire adviser was really interesting and creative in those times. The system also prevented big American companies, the so called majors, from pumping up the prices. But what is most interesting is the fact that Yugoslav distributors listed films early on, while still in production, or even in pre-production, and because of that, they were often interested in film adaptations of famous literary works (Polimac 2004: 91-92). Since the film was imported and shown in Yugoslav and Serbian theatres only in 1971 (*Kinematografija u SR Srbiji 1971* 1973: 64, 101), a portrayal of the life of the author of *Don Quixote* must have attracted the attention of distributors only at a much later date. "Jugoslavija film" printed a poster and a leaflet, in Serbo-Croatian and Macedonian. It provided a short description of the film, a translation of the one distributed throughout Europe by its producers. In these *advertising materials several interesting details can be found. It is clearly stated that it is a French-Italian-Spanish co-production.* On the poster prepared for the release of *Cervantes* in Yugoslav theatres Isidoro Martínez Ferry was credited as the director. It could have been a result of confusion on the part of the translator, because in the opening credits on the film Martínez Ferry is defined as "réalisateur", while Vincent Sherman is credited as "metteur en scène": a playful use of words, which had to do with the multiple countries production system, in which the country where the sets for filming were located had the right to employ 2nd unit directors of the film. Martínez Ferry

had a vast experience as a 2nd unit director in super-productions filmed in Spain since the 1950s, when he worked on Orson Welles' *Mr. Arkadin* (1955), in *Moby Dick* by John Huston (1956), or *Around the World in 80 Days* by Michael Anderson (1956) (Ruiz Baños, Cervera Salinas & Rodríguez Muñoz 1998: 111). Or it could be a consequence of Sherman's asking that his name be removed, even though it stayed in the opening credits of the film itself. It had only some 45,000 viewers in Serbia, and then its short life in the theatres was over. A copy exists now in possession of the Belgrade Museum of Yugoslav Film Archive, which is the one I saw. It is beginning to lose its colour, and, as the records show, as Petar Durović, the operator, informed me upon my viewing of the film on September 22 2016, the film had never been shown in the Film Archive's otherwise very active theatre.

However, in Serbia, as well as in other European countries, Sherman's *Cervantes* was shown on TV on the occasion of Cervantes' 400 anniversary, on the Czech and Slovak "Film Europe Channel", dedicated to European film, in August 2016. Since the beginning of 2016, it has been shown on French and British television as well. In Spain, the film was presented in April in one single performance in the Madrid art film theatre Ciné Doré. The DVD version was published recently. In many recent reviews (Imdb, FilmAffinity) the film is perceived as an artistic transposition among the numerous translations, transmissions and metamorphoses undergone by Cervantes' literary work in different arts and different media.

Compression de Cervantes de Vincent Sherman (1967)

by Gérard Courant (2015)

In the proliferation of countless film clips on YouTube we can also find anonymous forms of a particular form of remix, the 'clip trailer': a hybrid text between a video clip and a trailer that takes some scenes and frames from the source film in order to promote a song. In a clip trailer, the source text can be remixed in such a way so as to pay homage to the source movie or to subvert its values and topics instead. Internet prosumers (derived from "prosumption", a dot-com era business term meaning "production by consumers") use their digital skills with a Do-It-Yourself approach, remixing movies mostly as playful self-promotion, and giving rise to a new aesthetics of re-creation (Bourriaud 2002). While searching through YouTube for Sherman's *Cervantes*, we might find a quick reassembly of some key scenes from Sherman's film in a clip trailer paying tribute to the Spanish actress Soledad Miranda, or a Battle of Lepanto sequence, with Cervantes, the young rebel, embodied in a beautiful Horst Buchholz, "James Dean of the European film."

However, Vincent Sherman's *Cervantes* recently underwent another authorial translation, this time in the domain more closely related to digital form. It is the "compression" made by Gérard Courant, a French filmmaker, who, at least until 2011, held the distinction of directing the longest film

ever made. Clocking in at 192 hours, and shot over 36 years (1978–2006), his *Cinématon* consists of “a series of over 2,880 silent vignettes (*cinématons*), each 3 minutes and 25 seconds long, of various celebrities, artists, journalists and friends of the director, each doing whatever they want in the allotted time. Ken Loach, Wim Wenders, Terry Gilliam, Julie Delpy all made appearances, as did Jean-Luc Godard. While making *Cinématon*, Courant also created another kind of experimental film—what he calls “compressed” film. In 1995, he shot *Compression de Alphaville*, an accelerated homage to Jean-Luc Godard 1965 sci-fi film, *Alphaville*. Then he did a “compression” of Godard’s *À bout de souffle / Breathless* (1960), a classic of French New Wave cinema. Courant’s endeavour is consistent, and persistent, extending his work of compression to such an extent that it can be seen as an attempt at abbreviated authorial history of cinema. He translated the idea of compression from plastic arts into film. During the 1960s and 1970s, when Courant came of age as a filmmaker, sculptors like César Baldaccini created art by compressing everyday objects—like Coke cans—into modern sculptures. This French sculptor, commonly known as just César (1921–1998), began creating his “directed compressions” of objects in the ‘60s, making monumental series of cars transformed into compacted iron bundles by a hydraulic press. Influenced by these techniques Courant started making one of his series in the ‘90s, using compressed versions of films. Courant took things a step further: why not compress art itself? Why not compress a 90 minute film into 3–4 minutes, while keeping the plot of the original film firmly intact? Along the way, Courant asked himself: Do compressed films honour the original? Does one have the right to touch these masterpieces? And can one decompress these compressed films and then return them to their original form? (*Catálogo BAFICI* 2012: 371).

I had the chance to experience film at a time—the 1960s—when it was still possible to have an overview of cinema. I am probably part of one of the last generations who could access this global vision. I say ‘still possible’ for, two or three decades later, the proliferation of films reached such a degree that anyone who wished to have this vision might be ‘buried’ by this bloated mass of films. [...] From the early 1990s on I noticed a new phenomenon: more and more moviegoers did not know—or knew very little—history of cinema. And for a good reason: the number of films produced worldwide increasing constantly, it became increasingly difficult over the years to have a global view. [...] If in 1990 we know less and less of those classics, what will happen in 2020, in 2050 or 2100? And what remedy could there be to stop this bleeding? Then I had the idea to create a concept that could make you want to discover some of the masterpieces of the past, ignored today. The very simple idea was to compress movies from 1½ hours down to 3 minutes, to ensure that the entire movie is visible in accelerated mode, without wanting a single plane of the original work. [...] As for the taboo question of do we have the right or not to take a critical look at a work by modifying and transforming it, I will just say that this kind work has been done since art became modern. Let us remember the moustache Marcel Duchamp drew on *Mona Lisa*. There was no question about the inventor of the readymade appro-

priating the work of Leonardo da Vinci, but achieving a work of recreation from an existing work of art, designing an aesthetically new work, different from the original (Courant's personal website, in French. Transl. A. M.).

The result is surprising. The film undergoes a rhythmic shock: the movement of the film is completely reconstructed and redesigned. It takes on new meaning. The adventure story is relegated to the background. The surgery imprints onto the film a sort of musical rhythm, and gives the film a more aerial, more twirling style, changing into a sequence of beautiful frames and movements, with a very strange sound effect that becomes a sort of a musical element.

Digitalisation was a development very important for production, reproduction, distribution and reception of artistic products, all of which resulted in new forms of artistic creation and re-creation. Digitalisation and subsequent virtualisation reset a number of aesthetic issues, and among them, of no small importance is the one of authenticity, originality, uniqueness of the work of art. In the case of Cervantes' fictional lives we are concerned with in this article, Courant's *Compression* of Sherman's film is a new example of a transformation an author translated into a text can undergo when translated from an artform to an artform, and from a medium to a medium. The compression shifts human reception as it compresses time and space needed to communicate aesthetic and symbolic forms. Spatial and temporal constraints fade out, which entails new structural modifications of artistic communication and introduces new modes of reception. Through interactivity, we may even make our own changes, given the sufficient expertise and equipment, and revert a film to its original length. But Courant's intervention on Sherman's film, in my opinion, gives a conceptual, and at the same time intimate dimension to the work conceived as commercial mass-media product. It is one of many paths in a constant transformation of the author *as a text*, from text to text, from the medium of a book to the one of cinema, video, and digital form, that invents and reinvents the fictional lives of Miguel de Cervantes, author of *Quixote*, up to this very year, the 400th anniversary of the death of the writer, which was, of course, the motive for Courant to make his *compression*.

Differences in the fictional representations of Cervantes' life begin with the media they were aimed at, and for now, the literary one is far ahead in the number of works over any other. From scholarly biographies to stage plays, short stories, novels... Since the 19th century, Cervantes' life is becoming a source of inspiration for literary fiction, slowly emerging behind the shadow of his universally famous character. In the 21st century, Miguel de Cervantes is losing its romantic aura, transcending the one of a metaliterary myth, to become, four centuries after his death, a man of flesh and blood and therefore easier to understand. The literary works that appeared in 2015 on the occasion of the fourth centenary of the publication of the *Second Part of Don Quixote* and those that reached the bookstores at the

beginning of 2016, in which 400 years since his death are commemorated, seek to show complexities of a “real” Cervantes and his many hardships, but also use isolated known facts about him in the genre fiction (particularly crime novel, spy novel, or SF). At this moment, I was able to find 13 novels featuring Cervantes as a fictional character published in Spain since 2004, and the new Spanish translation of Bruno Frank’s novel *Un hombre llamado Cervantes* (*Ein Mann namens Cervantes*), originally published in 1995 and reprinted in 2015 and 2016. In the same period, the number of fictional representations of Cervantes’ life was significantly smaller, with only one film (Inés París’ *Miguel and William*, 2007) and one TV play (“Time of Gentlemen,” an episode of the TVE *Ministry of Time* series, 2016) using events from Cervantes’ life to develop fiction with the author as a hero. Film and television have so far produced only a handful of biographic films of this literary giant. The 21st century is likely to change this situation.

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*Животи писника као популарног јунака:
Сервантесове фикционалне биографије*

Резиме

У шпанској књижевности, романтизам је био богат фикционалним рекреацијама живота писаца из 17. века. Сервантес се појављује као јунак фикције нарочито у шездесетим и седамдесетим годинама 19. века, односно у време када овај писац постаје амблемска фигура шпанског књижевног канона. Његови имажинарни животи постали су тема романтичарске фикције, а убрзо затим појавиле су се и варијанте у новонасталим популарним књижевним и позоришним формама, између осталог, и у специфично шпанском облику оперете званом *сарсуела*, као и у фељтонским романима: Сервантес је постао заштитни знак шпанског језика и књижевности, а истовремено и романтични јунак авантуристичког и популарног романа. Све то на веома занимљив начин показује како је слика о писцу и његовом делу конструисана у нарочитим политичким околностима у Шпанији средином 19. века: Сервантес, геније, творац бесмртног Дон Кихота – који је постао производ Сервантесове маште као аутопортрет који је писац ставио својим читаоцима – а у исто време и квинтесенција шпанског карактера. Другим речима, Сервантес, заборављени геније, својевремено остављен да умре у сиромаштву и самоћи, кроз фикционалне преображаје постаје утеловљење шпанства. Дон Кихоте као национални симбол, и хомотизам онакав како га је разумео 19. век, били су од пресудног значаја за стварање такве представе. Фикционалне репрезентације у 20. веку понудиле су другачије приступе, али и задржале неке од оних које је створио 19. век. Уметничка рекреација у 20. веку прихватила је и развила идеју о Сервантесу као јунаку популарних жанрова – авантуристичког, детективног, научно-фантастичног романа, филмова и телевизијских драма. Читаоци у данашње време могу бити скептични према идеји о писцу као некоме ко самосвојно ствара текст, али су и даље жељни биографског знања, биографских реплика фикције омиљеног романсијера. Питања писања, инспирације и репрезентације постају средишње теме приповедања.

У овом огледу истражујемо фикционализовања живота Мигела де Сервантеса кроз различите преводе и метаморфозе кроз које је прошао, од историографије до књижевне и филмске фикције. Текст је усмерен на лик аутора а не на адаптације његовог књижевног дела, и приказује два тесно повезана процеса: процес књижевног стварања и процес културне конструкције слике уметника, као историјске личности и као симбола једне културе. Ове медијске метаморфозе нарочито је занимљиво пратити у случају Сервантеса, који је тек накнадно призиван, поново измишљан, и поново уведен као творац темељног мита слободног мишљења, Дон Кихота. Примери романа Бруна Франка *Сервантес* (1934), и филмске адаптације тог романа редитеља Винсента Шермана *Сервантес/Млади дунђовник* (1967), смештају се у нарочите политичке и друштвене околности у којима је свако од ових дела настало: питање *медијске метаморфозе*, преласка из књижевног у филмски израз, истражује се као друштвено контекстуализовано превођење између уметности.

Кључне речи: Мигел де Сервантес, Бруно Франк, Винсент Шерман, књижевност и филм, фикционалне репрезентације, трансмедијалне и интермедијалне репрезентације

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