

Sancho Panza, *Arbitrista*

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Just as Sancho Panza's governorship of an *ínsula* in *Don Quijote*, Part 2 represents the unexpected fulfilment of the peasant-squire's credulous fantasy, the series of edicts that he enacts on his last afternoon in Barataria is the culmination of his equally surprising tenure as governor. These "constituciones del gran gobernador Sancho Panza" have attracted significant scholarly attention, most of it in praise of the program's socio-economic reforms (1150; 2.51). The critical consensus is that Sancho's astonishingly successful term of governance reflects Cervantes's own political judgements and constitutes a serious, censorious engagement with contemporary power structures and economic policies. Luis Corteguera reads the Barataria episode as a rejection of contemporary Reason of State political theory in favor of an older concept of 'la naturaleza ética del gobierno' (144). Agustín Redondo sees in Sancho a Carnavalesque holy fool divinely gifted with Solomonic wisdom, who demonstrates that to be a good and just governor and judge one must be a "verdadero cristiano" and not merely a "gran letrado o capitán" (69; original emphasis). Also applying a Carnavalesque lens to the episode, James Iffland notes the "aureola 'divina'" that surrounds Sancho, who manages to "armar una pequeña utopía" in his *ínsula* (399, 400). For Javier Salazar Rincón, Sancho's governorship is "donde Cervantes muestra más a las claras su talante revolucionario" (245). Most forcefully of all, Ludovik Osterc asserts that in Sancho's *constituciones* "Cervantes se había adelantado, también en este campo, en varios siglos, a sus contemporáneos, vislumbrando con su sagaz ingenio lo que los modernos economistas se jactan de haber descubierto" (287).¹ These kinds of interpretation are problematic on two counts. Firstly, because Sancho's reforms are neither original nor revolutionary; on the contrary, they are thoroughly conservative and repeat the received wisdom of the status quo. Secondly, Sancho's pragmatics reproduce precisely the preoccupations, proposals and stereotyped rhetoric of the *arbitristas*, the political and economic reformers whom Cervantes and others satirize for their crackpot schemes. Through his unwitting mimicry of these lunatic *arbitristas*, Sancho, the puppet governor of a pretend island polity, performs the comic function of a buffoon.

In order to better understand how Sancho enacts this role, some brief comments on the *arbitristas* and Cervantes's treatment of them are in order.

Un arbitrio es cualquier propuesta dirigida a aumentar los ingresos de un reino o entidad política, pero en el conjunto de la Monarquía hispánica y de manera muy especial en la corona de Castilla, el fenómeno del arbitrista trascendió lo puramente fiscal y dio lugar a todo un corpus de obras sobre pensamiento político, económico y social, teñido a menudo de un profundo reformismo. (Dubet and García Guerra 870)

An *arbitrista* is one who writes and submits *arbitrios*. Although there were important antecedents from the mid-sixteenth century, the phenomenon began in earnest in the last five years of the 1590s (Vilar 45). Both the terms *arbitrio* and *arbitrista* took on negative connotations quickly thereafter. In a memorial of 1598 to the newly crowned Felipe III,

¹ Even a dissenter from this trend such as Darío Fernández-Morera, who reads Sancho's economic policies as self-contradictory and counterproductive, analyzes them as "a satire on government's wrong-headed interventions in the market place," and thus a serious contribution to the political economy of the period (107). José Antonio Negrín de la Peña contextualizes Sancho's edicts with abundant historical data on the real economy. Though more neutral in his analysis, he, too, takes Sancho's reforms to straightforwardly express Cervantes's own economic opinions.

Baltasar Álamos de Barientos warns the king: “No le engañen a Vuestra Majestad las razones aparentes y presupuestos falsos de los arbitristas” (121). In a letter of 1606 to Fray Diego de Mardones, Felipe III’s confessor, Pedro de Valencia writes:

De mí digo que, aunque aborrezco todo este género de los que llaman arbitrios y deseo servir a Su Majestad no de arbitrista, sino de antídoto y defensor del Reino contra el veneno lisonjero y engañoso de los arbitristas, pésame de que las necesidades aprieten para ello, pero bien sé y concedo que hay ocasiones en que conviene y es forzoso usar de arbitrios como de remedios presentes y vehementes, cuales son los narcóticos, para resistir a un dolor intolerable y dar lugar al consejo; pero de éstos hase de usar con grande cautela de que no mortifiquen la parte y hagan algún daño irremediable, y tener siempre la mira al todo de la curación” (1994a, 125).

It is apparently lost on Valencia that, by using such medical terminology, he is imitating the discourse of the very *arbitristas* whom he abjures.

The *arbitrista* as a literary figure appears to have emerged with Cervantes’s exemplary novel “El coloquio de los perros” (Vilar 48). The character is notable not only for his originality, but also for his insanity, an element that we find in Francisco de Quevedo’s satirical portrait of a “loco repúblico y de gobierno” in *El Buscón*, but which otherwise appears to be absent from the literary tradition (Quevedo 1987a, 153). Jean Vilar has studied this character and his *arbitrio* (essentially, national solvency through mass fasting) in great detail. He notes that: “Si se toman los temas uno por uno, todos ellos se encuentran, ya sean en la idea y el contenido, ya sea en el estilo del razonamiento, en los arbitristas-economistas” (202). He concludes that Cervantes “condensa, sin merma en la originalidad del estilo, el contenido de todo un espíritu” (206).

All of the hallmarks that make Cervantes’s portrait of this *arbitrista* so distinctive, *locura*, humor, and a precise engagement with both the language and concepts of contemporary *arbitrismo*, are present in Sancho’s political program. Prior to the formal proclamation of his edicts, the new governor gives a preview of his reformist projects before beginning his night-time *ronda* of Barataria:

[E]s mi intención limpiar esta ínsula de todo género de inmundicia y de gente vagamunda, holgazanes y mal entretenida. Porque quiero que sepáis, amigos, que la gente baldía y perezosa es en la república lo mesmo que los zánganos en las colmenas, que se comen la miel que las trabajadoras abejas hacen. Pienso favorecer a los labradores, guardar sus preeminencias a los hidalgos, premiar los virtuosos y, sobre todo, tener respeto a la religión y a la honra de los religiosos. ¿Qué os parece desto, amigos? ¿Digo algo o quíebrome la cabeza? (1119; 2.49)

Sancho begins by referencing the tradition of the hard-working honeybees (*abejas*) and the idle drones (*zánganos*) who consume the fruit of their productive labor, which was widespread in the period. In his *Introducción del símbolo de la Fe* (1583), Fray Luis de Granada describes the slaughter of the thieving *zánganos* in the hive in fancifully anthropomorphic detail:

Tienen también de noche sus velas, que guardan la casa para que nadie entre a hurtarle sus tesoros, mayormente los zánganos, que son ladrones de casa, los cuales, sintiendo que las abejas duermen, se levantan muy callados a comer de los trabajos ajenos. Mas si las velas los toman con el hurto en las manos, castíganlos blandamente, mas no los matan, perdonándoles aquella primera culpa, mas ellos no por eso se emiendan, porque de su naturaleza son glotonos y holgazanes, que son dos males no pequeños. Y por esto, cuando las abejas salen al campo, ellos se quedan escondidos en casa (porque cuanto son más cobardes y más desarmados, tanto usan de más ruindades y mañas), y entonces se entregan a su placer en los panales. Y volviendo las abejas, y viendo el estragón hecho en su casa, ya no usan con ellos de clemencia, sino dan en ellos con coraje y braveza, y mátanlos. (362)

This language permeated the political discourse of the age. Bees were associated with many virtues, including intelligence, chastity (they were believed to reproduce asexually), and clemency (their “king” was believed to lack a stinger). However, because the *arbitristas*, to a man, located idleness (*ocio* or *ociosidad*) at the root of all Castile’s troubles (social, political, and economic), they found the greatest appeal in the natural example of the bees’ solution to the problem of the idle and unproductive. In his “Discurso contra la ociosidad” (1608), Valencia writes:

Por estas i otras consideraciones i por la experiencia ordinaria de los daños *que* el ocio causa a las repúblicas, todos los legisladores se armaron contra él. Primeramente, en la república de las abejas, *que* es república natural i propuesta por Dios para egemplo de buen gobierno a las policías humanas, no consienten a los ociosos. Críanse en las colmenas unos abejones mayores *que* las abejas i *que* an menester más para comer, *que* los llaman en latín *fucos* i en castellano çánganos; éstos no hazen más *que* comer, i assí las abejas, a ciertos tiempos, deve ser por orden i mandado de su Rei, los matan i los echan fuera de la colmena. Assí *que* en esta república tienen los ociosos pena de muerte. (1994b, 162; original emphasis)

Similarly, in his *Amparo de pobres* (1598), Cristóbal Pérez de Herrera blames the false poor who prefer begging to honest labour for all of Spain’s socio-economic ills:

porque esta gente ociosa, fingiendo ser pobres, nos llevan y usurpan lo que tenemos, y quitan la limosna a los verdaderos —como está dicho—, y nos ayudan a comer los frutos de la tierra, no aprovechando en algo a la república, ni a la cultura dellos, como los zánganos de las colmenas, que comen la miel que no les costó trabajo a criar. (1975, 110)

Pérez de Herrera employs this imagery throughout his treatise, as do many others. Whatever Cervantes’s specific sources for Sancho’s plan to rid his *ínsula* of *zánganos*, the inspiration for it is clear.

A further aspect of the contemporary symbolism of the beehive was as a natural example of optimum political organisation. In this sense, the salient aspect of the so-called well-ordered republic of the bees was its rigidly hierarchical, tripartite social structure. Valencia refers to this tradition in the above-cited passage, and in his *Enigmas* of 1618 Pérez de Herrera sets it out, as well: “Es la abeja símbolo del buen gobierno, por el mucho y gran concierto que tiene en la fábrica y compostura de la colmena; que ella y la hormiga nos dan ejemplo de prudencia y orden de vivir” (1943, 148). Luis de Granada, however, develops the symbolism in much greater detail:

Si nos pone en admiración el fruto de las abejas, muy más admirable es la orden y concierto que tienen en su trato y manera de vida. Porque quien tuviere conocimiento de lo que gravísimos autores escriben dellas, verá una república muy bien ordenada, donde hay rey, y nobles, y oficiales que se ocupan en sus oficios, y gente vulgar y plebeya que sirven a éstos, y donde también hay armas para pelear, y castigo y penas para quien no hace lo que debe... Verá también aquí la imagen de una congregación de religiosos de grande observancia. Porque primeramente las abejas tienen su perlado o presidente, a quien obedecen y siguen. Viven en común sin proprio, porque todas las cosas entre ellas son comunes. (355)

Luis Méndez de Torres puts it similarly, if more succinctly, in his apicultural treatise *Tractado breue de la cultiuacion y cura de las colmenas* (1586):

Tienen las abejas tanta orden y concierto en su vivir, que podría dellas tomar exemplo una muy ordenada república. Obedecen un señor, siendo ellas libres. Viven con su señor en comunidad como en una religion, siendo entre ellas todo comun, assi el trabajo, como el provecho, y mantenimiento. (20)

Thus, the bees have a harmonious social organization with a king, nobles, clerics, and commoners who serve them, and this idealized natural order is explicitly presented as a model for human society.

Given that Sancho has just declared his desire to rid Barataria of *zánganos*, his stated intentions to “favorecer a los labradores, guardar sus preeminencias a los hidalgos, premiar los virtuosos y, sobre todo, tener respeto a la religión y a la honra de los religiosos” likely derives from this tradition. It is tantamount to reaffirming the traditional social order, with its three estates of nobility, clergy, and commoners. As political rhetoric it is pure boilerplate, the equivalent of a modern platform of Mom and Apple Pie. It also shares many of the conservative presuppositions and policy goals of much contemporary *arbitrismo*.

Numerous *arbitristas*, following a long classical tradition, advocate favoring farmers and rewarding the virtuous. For some, both groups are practically synonymous. Martín González de Cellorigo (1600) asserts that those who invest in mortgages on arable land (*censos*) are destroying the republic, “porque atenedos a la renta se han dejado de las ocupaciones virtuosas de los oficios de los tratos de la labranza y crianza, y de todo aquello que sustenta los hombres naturalmente” (20-21). Luis Valle de la Cerda (1600) similarly contrasts ruinous and immoral financial dealings and land speculation, “vsuras, mohatras, cambios, y aun censos tan subidos de punto,” with “la labrança, que es la natural gra[n]geria por si mesma necessaria, como dize Aristoteles” (40v, 41r). Lope de Deza (1618), for his part, insists that:

la Agricultura excede en nobleza a los demás artificios y adquisiciones, pues ella sola es la natural, digna de nobles, de virtuosos y de sabios; las demás suertes de granjear son invención humana, muchas dignas de odio y de infamia por ser fuera de la naturaleza y contrarias a la virtud o, a lo menos, que se ejercitan sin ayuda de ella. (12)

Simultaneously protecting the privileges of the nobles and the members of religious orders is more problematic. Both the *hidalgos* and the *religiosos* enjoyed significant legal entitlements and fiscal exemptions, the latter of which, particularly, put them increasingly at odds with the *labradores*.² In one of the earliest memorials dedicated to economic reform, Luis Ortiz (1558) complains that the citizens of cities such as Toledo, Valladolid, and Burgos are granted exemptions from taxes (*pechos*), which then fall disproportionately on the poor members of the surrounding regions:

y asimismo hay gran suma de hijosdalgo, monesterios, clérigos y otras personas de orden que son libres [de pechos] y todo lo vienen a pagar los labradores que los más son pobres y desventurados en lo que se recibe gran escrúpulo de conciencia. (38)

Furthermore, it was widely believed that too many men and women were entering religious orders without a true vocational calling, in search of an easier life. In the *Remedios para el bien de la salud del cuerpo de la Republica* (1610), Pérez de Herrera suggests the need to

poner algun limite y estechar mas con el medio ecclesiastico necessario el recibir los que piden habito en las religiones, considerando los prelados, que los reciben, si es llamamiento de Dios, o desseo de acomodarse, y razon de estado de muchos. (1610, 19v)

Sancho de Moncada (1619) also notes that there are too many *religiosos*, which causes problems “como son irse agotando la gente, no hallarse quién acuda al comercio, oficios, guerra, labranza, y a las demás necesidades públicas, por entrar algunos a comer, y al parecer sin vocación de Dios, y otros inconvenientes” (205). Moreover, Pedro Fernández Navarrete

² For a succinct summary of the privileges of *hidalguía*, see Parello (151-52).

(1626) remarks on the popular perception that the Church had accumulated an unjust amount of wealth at the expense of the poor:

Una de las causas por qué de ordinario el estado secular tiene ojeriza con el eclesiástico es, por juzgarle más rico de lo que está, ponderando que las mejores posesiones y los mejores juroes son de las iglesias clericales y regulares, y que por esta causa no tienen los seglares la sustancia de hacienda que piden las cargas de sus estados. Dicen asimismo, que teniendo abierta la puerta para recibir dádivas, está cerrada al dar y enajenar cosa alguna de las que reciben: y que con lo que la muerte de tantos fieles les acarrea cada día para fundaciones de aniversarios y capellanías (cuyas dotaciones jamás vuelven al estado secular) es forzoso que éste quede atenuado y enervado de hacienda, y que sólo sea colono e inquilino del eclesiástico, que no contento con los diezmos y primicias, se engrandece con grandes posesiones, con granjas, con vasallos, y con otras haciendas raíces, de que se originan las quejas de los seglares. (355)

Significantly, however, Ortiz, Pérez de Herrera, Moncada, and Fernández de Navarrete do not propose limiting the privileges of the nobility and religious orders. While many *arbitristas* called for the curtailment of certain practices among the privileged classes (above all excessive spending on frivolities and economically sterilizing investments in land, *censos*, and government debt, *juroes*), so far as I know, none ever advocated the serious curtailment of their entitlements. Despite his insistence on the need to remove the social stigma from all kinds of labor, including commerce, and to promote mercantile activity as honorable, González de Cellorigo is adamant about preserving traditional social structures:

Tres órdenes dan a este instrumento los escritores: el uno de eclesiásticos y los otros dos de nobles y plebeyos, las cuales el Príncipe ha de disponer de manera que no se muden, que no se alteren, confundan ni igualen, sino que cada uno conserve su lugar, su orden, su concerto, de suerte que con diversas voces hagan consonancia perfecta. (124)

The *arbitristas* were not social revolutionaries. On the contrary, they were concerned to *renovar* and *restaurar* the kingdom to its period of greatest glory, under the *Reyes Católicos*.³ Their efforts to both reform and preserve existing socio-economic and political structures, therefore, are often vague and potentially contradictory. For example, in a memorial that is prototypical both in its content and in its bullet point structure, the *Diez puntos* of 1599, Gaspar de Pons writes in point 4.19: “Renouar y hazer de nueuo las Leyes conuenientes, para fauorezer la labrança, y criança, haziendo hazer para ello todos los riegos que se puedan” (1599, 8v). Point 10.2, advises:

Tambien conuiene que se guarden las exemciones, y libertades a los dedicados al Culto diuino, y que se procure con mucho cuydado de componer las competencias de jurisdicciones Ecclesiasticas, y seglares en la mejor manera que se pueda, porque si no se haze con tiempo pueden causar la total ruyna de la Monarchia. (1599, 13r)

Thus, for Pons, it is simultaneously critical to favor farmers *and* safeguard the privileges of the clergy. Given that Pons was a trusted economic advisor to both Felipe II and Felipe III and was subsequently appointed to the *Consejo de Hacienda*, no one seems to have worried about the workability of his proposals. More to the topic that concerns us, in some ways Sancho’s reform program for Barataria sounds not unlike the *Diez puntos* in miniature. Of course it does. That is the point.

There is a further aspect in which Sancho’s plan to rid his *ínsula* of *zánganos* while favoring *labradores* and preserving the established social order reflects contemporary *arbitrismo*. Pérez de Herrera’s tirades against the *ociosos* in the *Amparo de pobres* are

³ See Elliott (51-58) and Perdices de Blas (37-39).

inseparable from his assertion that the false poor provide cover for foreigners and heretics to infiltrate Spain and undermine the Catholic integrity of the kingdom. He alleges that he has been informed “de personas religiosas y de otras muy virtuosas y prudentes” that

en este hábito fingido [i.e. false poor] han andado, y deben de andar, por los reinos de V. M. algunos herejes de diferentes sectas, y espías suyas, y de moros y turcos, y otras gentes de leyes perniciosas y malditas, que pueden hacer y sembrar el daño que se puede entender y temer entre la gente ignorante. (1975, 39-40)

Similarly, in a memorial of 1607 Valencia asserts that *labradores* make good and loyal soldiers, and he offers the following proposal for dealing with Moriscos:

conviene que se les acorten las fuerzas: no se les debe permitir que sean labradores. Esto hará el oficio más honrado, y a los moriscos no los hará ejercitados y valientes; antes, ni se les habían de consentir otros oficios semejantes que crían buenos soldados, sino que solamente fuesen tenderos y tratantes en las ciudades y plazas. (1994c, 156)

So, the false poor *zánganos* represent not just an economic problem, but an ethno-nationalist and religious one, as well. Sancho’s proposal to rid Barataria of “todo género de inmundicia y de gente vagamunda, holgazanes y mal entretenida” is ideologically inseparable from his plan to “favorecer a los labradores, guardar sus preeminencias a los hidalgos, premiar los virtuosos y, sobre todo, tener respeto a la religión y a la honra de los religiosos”. As much as a platform of economic reform, it is a proposal to systematically privilege the most unimpeachably Old Christian sectors of society.

John G. Weiger has noted this ethno-religious element in Sancho’s governorship, pointing out that the *labradores* were prototypical Old Christians, as well as the popular anti-Jewish prejudices underpinning Sancho’s resolution of the dispute between the farmer and the tailor (many tailors were of *converso* origin) (208-17). Where Weiger sees consistency of characterization in Sancho’s actions as governor, however, I read the episode as an indication of the multifaceted yet partially compartmentalized functionality of his character. Once again, the clue is in the connection between the false poor and Spain’s foreign enemies. Pérez de Herrera asserts that he has it on good authority that every year, the *Hospital Real* near Burgos dispenses charity to “ocho o diez mil franceses y gascones, y de otras naciones, que entran con ocasión de romería por estos reinos, sin que se sepa por dónde vuelvan a salir, ni a qué vienen, ni si van a sus romerías” (1975, 40). These false pilgrims constitute a threat to national security:

deben de ser muchos los que cada año andan por estos reinos, llevando y sacando mucho dinero dellos para hacernos guerra por ventura con ello propio; fuera de los peligros que tiene el consentirlo para las almas (que es lo que importa más) pudiendo dejar hecho mucho daño, sembrando sectas malditas contra nuestra santa fe católica, y que la limosna que éstos llevan, será más justo se reparta entre nuestros pobres naturales. (1975, 41)

What Pérez de Herrera describes, Cervantes dramatizes in Sancho’s encounter with his exiled former neighbor, the Morisco Ricote, and the group of German false pilgrims with whom he is travelling. Ricote explains to Sancho how the Germans (read: Protestant heretics) despoil Spain, smuggling its gold out of the county:

tienen por costumbre de venir a España muchos dellos cada año a visitar los santuarios della, que los tienen por sus Indias, y por certísima granjería y conocida ganancia: ándanla casi toda, y no hay pueblo ninguno de donde no salgan comidos y bebidos, como suele decirse, y con un real, por lo menos, en dineros, y al cabo de su viaje salen con más de cien escudos de sobra, que, trocados en oro, o ya en el hueco de los bordones o entre los remiendos de las esclavinas o con la industria que ellos pueden, los

sacan del reino y los pasan a sus tierras, a pesar de las guardas de los puestos y puertos donde se registran. (1172; 2.54)

Contrary to what one would expect from his actions as governor, but in keeping with his broader characterization as kind-hearted and tolerant, Sancho shows no hostility whatsoever, either to Ricote or to his thieving, heretical companions. When one of them proclaims, “*Español y tudesqui, tuto uno: bon compaño,*” he enthusiastically responds, “*Bon compaño, jura Di!*” (1169; 2.54; original emphasis). Sancho knows exactly who these people are and what they represent. He refuses to help Ricote recover his treasure, in part because “*haría traición a mi rey en dar favor a sus enemigos,*” but nevertheless he is willing to violate the king’s commandment to turn in secretly returning Moriscos: “*conténtate que por mí no serás descubierto, y prosigue en buena hora tu camino*” (1173-74; 2.54). We would hardly expect such behavior from “a good-natured peasant, informed by the prejudices of his class,” who consistently acts out “a culturally imposed attitude regarding the Old Christian-New Christian controversy” (Weiger 216). This is not to say that Sancho never behaves as such a character. On multiple occasions he manifestly *does* express such attitudes.⁴ Consistency and coherent linear development are not the essence of Sancho’s characterization, however. Rather, he acts in multiple guises according to the exigencies of the narrative. Thus, in Barataria he (unwittingly and intermittently) plays the role of courtly buffoon, and in that capacity, he (equally unknowingly) apes the *arbitristas*. His plan for Barataria is pure cant, the rhetoric of reform deployed to comically parodic effect. The fact that his encounter with Ricote and the Germans (the king’s enemies all) comes immediately upon his renunciation of his governorship reinforces the conclusion: having abandoned the imposed role of jester, he has cast off its attendant discourses.⁵

What, then, of “Las constituciones del gran gobernador Sancho Panza” (1150; 2.51)? As in the case of his informally announced reform program, none of his official edicts are either original or revolutionary. Susan Byrne believes that they are directly inspired by the proposals of Pérez de Herrera (90-95). It is certainly plausible, and in some cases even likely. The *protomédico de galeras* was a prolific writer of memorials, many of which were published, and he enjoyed the support of the Castilian *Cortes* and the king. On the other hand, nothing in Sancho’s proposals is specific enough to conclusively establish a link to Pérez de Herrera. There are multiple possible sources for Sancho’s decrees, including current Castilian law and numerous memorials both known and lost. The safest conclusion is that, as in the case of the insane *arbitrista* of “El coloquio de los perros,” Cervantes distilled abundant, disparate materials, by Pérez de Herrera and others, down to its essence to create Sancho’s *constituciones*. This includes not just law codes and *arbitrios*, but popular prejudices and topics of literary satire, as well.

All of these elements are immediately apparent in Sancho’s edicts. The governor spends his last afternoon in Barataria

en hacer algunas ordenanzas tocantes al buen gobierno de la que él imaginaba ser ínsula, y ordenó que no hubiese regatones de los bastimentos en la república, y que pudiesen meter en ella vino de las partes que quisiesen, con aditamento que declarasen el lugar de donde era, para ponerle el precio según su estimación, bondad y fama, y el que lo aguase o le mudase el nombre perdiese la vida por ello. (1149; 2.51).

⁴ His qualifications for governor include “el creer, como siempre creo, firme y verdaderamente en Dios y en todo aquello que tiene y cree la santa Iglesia Católica Romana, y el ser enemigo mortal, como lo soy, de los judíos” (751; 2.8).

⁵ Constraints of space preclude a discussion of Sancho’s announced intention to close down gambling houses and the scribe’s critical rejoinder (1122; 2.49). Suffice it to say that it, too, precisely reflects contemporary debates. See Strozestki and García Santo-Tomás.

Sebastián de Covarrubias (1611) defines a *regatón* as: “El que compra del forastero por junto y revende por menudo” (855). This is indistinguishable from the definition of a merchant given by Tomás de Mercado in his *Suma de tratos y contratos* (1571): El mercader no busca ni aguarda se mude la substancia o cualidad de su ropa, sino el tiempo y, con el tiempo, el precio, o el lugar. V. g., mercar en Sanlúcar cien fardos de ruana y venderlos aquí, dos a dos y tres a tres o a varas en la tienda” (1: 70). The difference appears to be one of scale and, perhaps, price. The *regatones* “suelen... vender comúnmente por lo sumo,” i.e. at the highest morally legitimate price (Mercado 1: 182). This view is consistent with Covarrubias’s etymology of *regatón*: “de RE et CATUS, A, TUM, por la solicitud y solercia que tiene en sacar ganancia de la mercadería” (855). In a memorial of 1600, Gaspar de Pons asserts that: “Los hombres de negocios, y los regatones, y tenderos, y otra gente de la mesma profession, es sin duda, que en ningun tiempo de años a esta parte, ganaron tanto como ganan al presente” (1600, 14r). He further insists that “la pobreza destes Reynos procede... de no guardarse las leyes que ay contra los vsureros, y jugadores y vagabundos, y recatones” (1600, 13v). Pérez de Herrera likewise declares that “los q[ue] negocian con dinero seco de[n]tro destes Reynos, como son regatones, reveu[n]deores [sic] vsureros, y mohatrerros, y otros de fuera, sin pagar alcauala ni diezmo, ni los demas derechos, saca[n] gande fruto e interesse” (1610, 22r). Pons’s and Pérez de Herrera’s assertions of the *regatones*’ wealth and their grouping of these middlemen with usurers (including *mohatrerros*), gamblers, and vagabonds gives some idea of their reputation.

Pons’s statement that laws against *regatones* are not enforced reveals that such laws existed and that they were commonly flouted. Book V, title 14 of the *Recopilacion de las leyes destes reynos* (1640) is entirely dedicated to legislation “De los regatones” (2: 40r). The first law contained therein, promulgated by Enrique III at an unspecified date and reaffirmed by Fernando and Isabel in 1480, states: “Porque la nuestra Corte sea mas abastada de viandas, defendemos, que ningun regaton, ni otra personas sean osados de comprar en nuestra Corte, ni à cinco leguas en derredor, viandas algunas para reue[n]der” (2: 40r). This is very close to Sancho’s order “que no hubiese regatones de los bastimentos en la república.” His extension of the prohibition to *la república* casts his edict in the mold of the *arbitristas*. Ortiz, for example, proposes to control prices through a similar, though even more sweeping, measure:

Que ninguno pueda comprar mas mercaderías de las que gastare en su trato e oficio de esta manera que el pañero no compre más lana ni el zapatero más cueros de los que hobiere menester e gastare en su trato u oficio y si comprare mas para ser mercader dello o por mejor decir regaton, vendiéndolo en lanas o en cueros sin labrar, lo pierda y se les pongan otras penas y la misma orden se tenga en todos los otros oficios. (69-70)

Sancho’s permission to import wine, within certain limits, is perhaps the only one of his measures that is truly unusual. David Vassberg states that municipal governments intervened aggressively in local markets, and their aim was to suppress competition from outside suppliers until local stocks had been consumed. “Wine is a good case in point: even if the local wine was almost undrinkable, the local government was likely to force its inhabitants to consume the entire local crop before more palatable outside vintages could be sold” (23). Sancho’s prohibition of diluting wine with water, on the other hand, enjoyed long precedent in Castilian law. A proclamation by Enrique II in 1407 declared: “Tenemos por bien, y ma[n]damos, que los regatones que andan en la nuestra Corte vendan el vino puro, sin le echar agua, so pena que por cada vez q[ue] se hallare auerlo vendido con agua les sean dados cinquenta açotes” (*Recopilación* 2: 41r). Sancho’s command is therefore not at all unusual. The penalty that he imposes for violators, that “el que lo aguase o le mudase el nombre perdiese la vida por ello,” is unduly harsh and simply not consistent with his general

character or basic human decency. It is, however, entirely in keeping with the kinds of punitive measures that the *arbitristas* advocated.

In a memorial of 1600, *De como se remediaran los vicios de la corte y que no acuda á ella tanta gente inutil*, Bartolomé Leonardo de Argensola suggests that any of the king's ministers illegally involved in inside business deals be dealt with in literally draconian fashion: "se deben inuentar leyes terribles como las de Dracon contra los tales" (161v). The same year, Gaspar Gutiérrez de los Ríos also appealed to the law of Draco in calling for severe punishments on the idle: "Que le mouio a Draco[n] legislador de los Antenie[n]ses, para co[n]denar a los ociosos a muerte? Ninguna otra cosa, sino co[n]siderar, q[ue] son ta[n] infinitos los males q[ue] procede[n] dellos" (281). Most hysterical of all, in an effort to control imports and exports throughout the kingdom, Moncada offers the following solution:

El medio eficaz es poner en cada partido de puertos, como son San Sebastián, Bilbao, La Coruña, Alicante, Cádiz, Cartagena, y los demás, un tribunal de jueces seglares, que procedan por vía de inquisición, siguiendo el estilo de la Apostólica de España, contra los que sacaren, o entraren cosas prohibidas, afrentando y condenando irremisiblemente a muerte a los culpados... Es buen medio, y caso que el santo oficio, ocupado en cosas mayores, o por haber de condenar a muerte a muchos, no se encargue de esto, lo haría bien el dicho tribunal. (127)

Such a violently extreme proposal leaves little left to parody. Nowhere else in *Don Quijote* does Sancho evince anything like this level of arbitrary cruelty, so its inclusion here is hardly attributable to his overall characterization. Nor is it an example of his gradual evolution toward moral seriousness or his ethical governance of Barataria. Don Quijote urges Sancho to show clemency as governor, advice that Sancho explicitly recalls and puts into practice (1143; 2.51). Rather, it is explicable as part of a stereotyped discourse of political reform that he unknowingly parodies in his role as puppet-governor of an invented polity. It is buffoon *arbitrismo*, not a serious political agenda.

Sancho's edict regarding those who sell watered-down wine has another, literary precedent. Tavern owners who sold such stock were frequent targets of contemporary satire. In *La hora de todos y la Fortuna con seso*, Quevedo writes of *taberneros*:

cuando más encarecen el vino, no se puede decir que le suben a las nubes, antes que bajan las nubes al vino, según le llueven, gente más pedigüña del agua que los labradores, aguadores de cuero, que desmienten con el piezgo los cántaros" (1987b, 218).

In Quevedo's "El sueño del Juicio final," the narrator observes a *tabernero* who is sweating profusely with fear, to whom a demon says: "Harto es que sudéis el agua; no nos la vendáis por vino" (2003, 101).

It is notable that Quevedo groups the *taberneros* with "sastres, libreros y zapateros" in his dream of judgement (2003, 101), as this returns us to Sancho's edicts: "Moderó el precio de todo calzado, principalmente el de los zapatos, por parecerle que corría con exorbitancia" (1149; 2.51). Whether footwear was exorbitantly expensive relative to other goods is not a question that I am in a position to answer. I suspect not, in view of Vassberg's comment that "[n]ot many small villages could provide enough business to support a full-time maker and repairer of footwear," and so itinerant cobblers were common. Small or isolated villages might even offer special economic incentives to attract them. "Thus Pineda Trasmonte (Burgos), a place with thirty-four households in 1597, reported that it did not require shoemakers who practiced their trade in the village to pay the sales tax (*alcabala*)" (61). On the other hand, that the rapacity of the *zapateros* was a popular trope can be inferred not only from the Quevedo quote above, but also from Carlos García's *La desordenada codicia de los bienes ajenos* (1619). The thief Andrés, whose testimony condemns his parents and brothers

to death, declares his intention to become a shoemaker, “pareciéndole el más ganancioso de todos los officios” (130).

More generally, the *arbitristas* constantly called for official price controls, particularly on primary goods. Pérez de Herrera insists that wealthier merchants should conduct business “por mayor, en fardos y valones... y en tiendas los otros, poniendoles los censores precio de las sedas y paños, y otras mercaderias al principio del año” (1610, 22r). The children of beggars should be apprenticed to manufacturers, “[p]oniendoles tassa a sus maestros, y a todos los oficiales de manufacturas destos Reynos en las hechuras de las cosas, porque es insufrible lo que lleuan por ellas” (1610, 22v). So, the excessive profits of unscrupulous *zapateros* were a motif of literary satire, prices of commercial goods were generally perceived to be too high, and price controls were widely called for by the *arbitristas* and aggressively implemented by local municipalities (Vassberg 23-24). All in all, hardly a revolutionary policy on Sancho’s part.

Nevertheless, the focus on the quality of wine and the price of shoes is in keeping with the lived experience of a poor *labrador*. Not so Sancho’s following edict: “puso tasa en los salarios de los criados, que caminaban a rienda suelta por el camino del interese” (1149; 2.51). Sancho Panza believes that servants’ salaries are too high? The same Sancho Panza who, following his beating in the adventure of the braying aldermen (2.27) and decision to leave Don Quijote’s service, calculates that he is owed 30 *reales* per month in salary and then attempts to fleece his master by spuriously asserting that he has been the knight’s squire for 25 years (944-46; 2.28)? The same Sancho Panza who, knowing full well that he “enchanted” Dulcinea and seeing no relationship between whipping himself and her disenchantment (1283; 2.67), nevertheless accepts Don Quijote’s offer of payment “de contado” for each lash, calculates the total amount in 825 *reales*, then fraudulently “se llamaba a engaño,” thus declaring *himself* to have been illegally defrauded by half the amount that he was legitimately owed, and subsequently swindles his desperate master by whipping trees instead of his own flesh (1310-14; 2.71)? *That* Sancho Panza believes that servants are overpaid? Not likely. Moreover, Cervantes has already dramatized an encounter between Don Quijote and Sancho and a servant boy who better reflects the reality of contemporary servitude. He is on his way to join a company of soldiers and sings a song as he goes: “A la guerra me lleva / mi necesidad; / si tuviera dineros, / no fuera, en verdad” (909; 2.24). The boy goes on to say that he has served only “a catarriberas y a gente advenediza, de ración y quitación tan mísera y atenuada, que en pagar el almidonar un cuello se consumía la mitad della; y sería tenido a milagro que un paje aventurero alcanzase alguna siquiera razonable ventura” (910; 2.24). He has not even been allowed to keep the two *libreas* that his former masters gave him to wear while in the Court, which Don Quijote terms “[n]otable espilorchería [tacañería]” (910; 2.24).

Sancho’s edict is neither the result of his character nor his experience, but it is indicative of a strong current of reformist discourse among the *arbitristas*. Linked to the propagation and/or enforcement of sumptuary laws that sought to prohibit the nobility’s ruinous expenditure on clothes, jewels, and other luxuries, the proposals regarding servants do not call for a legal salary cap, but they do advocate strict limits on the number of servants. A particularly relevant example is Gaspar de Pons’s fictional *Diálogos* of 1595, in which three characters discuss proposed sumptuary legislation. The new laws will limit each nobleman to one *lacayo* and two *pajes*:

los quales pajes no han de passar de diez y sieta años, y esta tasa en los años se pone porque los naturales destos Reynos no consuman toda la vida en servir, sino que casi sea[n] forçados los que siruen en vinie[n]do a ser hombres de ser soldados. Pues es mejor quitar la ge[n]te de servir, que no de la labraça, como se haze todas las vezes que se quinta. Demas de que bien se sabe que para la guerra es la peor gente la quintada, y la mejor, la que no tiene otro modo de ganar la vida. (1595, 69r).

The page boy on his way to war in *Don Quijote* is just beyond the seventeen-year-old threshold: “la edad llegaría a diez y ocho o diez y nueve años” (908; 2.24). From Pons’s point of view, this poverty-induced outcome is a policy success.

The law to which Pons refers in the *Diálogos* figures in a feasibility study (*tanteo por verisimil*) of 1594, although it appears not to have been implemented, at least by 1600 when Pons included the document in a compendious memorial dedicated to restoring the health of the *Real Hacienda*: “7. Que se manden moderar los criados de acompañamiento en todas las personas que no se pueden llamar señoría, conforme a la pragmática, dexando a los hombres dos pajes, y vn lacayo, y a las mugeres vn paje, y dos escuderos” (1600, 23r). This point is followed with an explanatory note:

Parece muy conueniente, que se moderen los criados en todo lo que se pudiere, pues los superfluos no siruen sino de consumir las haciendas de sus dueños, y hacen falta para cultiuar el campo y exercicio de los oficios mecánicos, y para las guerras, y de escusar criados, y que anden bien aplicados y ocupados resultaran otros muchos prouechos en beneficio de su Magestad, y de sus Reynos. (1600, 23r)

Pons’s concern is exclusively with the financial well-being of the nobility and the Royal Treasury, a perspective that Cervantes inverts in his sketch of the poverty-stricken *paje-soldado*. In 1610 Pérez de Herrera was still banging the same drum: “Y CONVIENE ta[m]bien mucho, ponerse numero y orde[n] en los criados: pues mie[n]tras mas ay, son peor seruidos los amos, y tienen mayor numero de enemigos forçosos domesticos,” although he at least shows some (genuine?) concern for the servants themselves:

Y a los mismos criados les esta ta[m]bien muy mal: pues fuera de que tiene[n] menos q[ue] darles sus amos, siendo mas en numero, cabie[n]doles menor parte, se amilana[n] a seruir toda la vida ellos y sus hijos... pudiendo por ve[n]tura ser seruidos de otros, procura[n]do acomodarse en la guerra, o a estudiar, o a papeles, o a otras cosas q[ue] les ayude a ser ricos y descansados. (1610, 15v)

As in his pronouncements on the *zánganos* and the preservation of existing social structures among the *labradores*, *hidalgos*, and *religiosos*, when limiting the salaries of servants, governor Sancho sides with the privileged classes against the commoners, and he does so in the language of the *arbitristas*. A less revolutionary policy is scarcely conceivable. It makes no sense in terms of Sancho’s lived experience and prior characterization, but it is completely in keeping with his role as pretend governor playing a role for the entertainment of his aristocratic masters (and Cervantes’s readers, who no doubt recognized the social type behind Sancho’s actions).

Sancho’s next two edicts are closely related and reflect a concern with social, more than economic, policy:

puso gravísimas penas a los que cantasen cantares lascivos y descompuestos, ni de noche ni de día; ordenó que ningún ciego cantase milagro en coplas si no trujese testimonio auténtico de ser verdadero, por parecerle que los más que los ciegos cantan son fingidos, en perjuicio de los verdaderos. (1149; 2.51)

The prohibition on lewd songs existed in contemporary Castilian law, and did so well into the twentieth century (Negrín de la Peña 240). Nevertheless, the *arbitristas* considered current law to be in need of renewal. Thus, Gaspar de Pons writes in the *Diez puntos*:

Renouar, y hazer de nuevo, las leyes conuenientes, contra los cantares, bayles, comedias, libros, y pinturas, que fueren desonestos, porque de mas de que Philosophos gentiles, y los Sanctos, los reprueuan y tienen por gran ocasion de vicios la experiencia nos la enseña cada dia, con mucha lastima. (1599, 9r)

The craftiness of blind men was, of course, proverbial (one need only think of Lázaro de Tormes's first master), but their unfounded tales of miracles were also of concern to the *arbitristas*. In the *Amparo de pobres*, Pérez de Herrera writes:

Parece ser necesario mandar V. M., siendo servido, se remedie y ataje la manera de sacar dineros de unos ciegos, y otros que lo fingen por ventura no lo siendo, teniendo muy buena vista, que se ponen en las plazas y calles principales de los lugares grandes destes reinos, y algunos a propósito para ello, a cantar con guitarras y otros instrumentos coplas impresas, y venderlas, de sucesos apócrifos sin ninguna autoridad, y aun algunas veces escandalosos, imponiendo y enseñando con ejemplos fingidos a los ignorantes y mal inclinados. (44-45)

Sancho's final proclamation concerns the false poor, and so is related to his declaration to rid Barataria of *zánganos*: "Hizo y creó un alguacil de pobres, no para que los persiguiese, sino para que los examinase si lo eran, porque a la sombra de la manquedad fingida y de la llaga falsa andan los brazos ladrones y la salud borracha" (1150; 2.51). Proposals for the appropriate means of dealing with the indigent went back at least as far as Juan Luis Vives's *De subventionem pauperum* (1526) and included a notable debate in print between the Dominican Domingo de Soto and the Benedictine Juan de Robles in 1545. In the early seventeenth century, the greatest exponent of a systematic program of examination and discrimination to separate the so-called false poor from the true was Cristóbal Pérez de Herrera, who sets out his plan for the creation of *albergues* in which to house and treat the legitimate poor in his *Amparo de pobres* (1598). Sancho's edict sounds like a distillation of many passages throughout that text. In the first of its ten *Discursos*, Pérez de Herrera describes six "inconvenientes" caused by the false poor:

Lo cuarto, y no de los menores inconvenientes, es haber muchos que con poco temor de Dios, movidos desta ociosa y mala vida, pudiendo trabajar en otras cosas, se hacen llagas fingidas, y comen cosas que les hacen daño a la salud para andar descoloridos, y mover a piedad, fingiendo otras mil invenciones para este efeto. (1975, 27)

Pérez de Herrera then goes on to list many such tricks, including harrowing stories of parents who blind or cripple their children to facilitate a lifetime of begging (27-39). The problem, he avers, must be addressed "con grandísima caridad y celo cristiano, e intención de no hacer mal a nadie," through the creation of an *albergue* in every city, "[y] que en esta casa se examinen y vean, por un administrador o retor que ha de haber, hombre tal que convenga," plus two others drawn from the local religious and civil authorities (1975, 51, 55). The ultimate aim is to identify and put to productive labor the false poor: "para que se ocupen los que, no ganando alguna cosa, consumen buena parte de los frutos de la tierra, como los zánganos de las colmenas de que ya se hizo mención en otro discurso antes deste, y hurtan la limosna a los verdaderos pobres" (1975, 189). It is possible that Pérez de Herrera's printed text directly inspired Sancho's final proclamation. If it did not, however, the debate that it caused, and more particularly the language in which that debate played out, certainly did.

What conclusions can be drawn from "las constituciones del gran gobernador Sancho Panza"? In view of the preceding, I take it as conclusively demonstrated that none of them are original or revolutionary, and that collectively they represent pro-forma the reformist discourse of contemporary political economy. In some instances they repeat already current legislation, which may be part of the joke, given how frequently the *arbitristas* called for the renewal, or the simple enforcement, of existing laws. I therefore consider the narrator's final statement that Sancho "ordenó cosas tan buenas, que hasta hoy se guardan en aquel lugar" to be ironic hyperbole (1150; 2.51). To the extent that Sancho's edicts have, in fact, been maintained, it is likely because they were already in force; to the degree that his measures are "tan buenas," one would have to say the same of untold numbers of plans put forward by the

arbitristas. That seems highly implausible, given the widespread animosity toward them as a group. As Vilar notes:

Todo nos parece indicar... que el vulgo sentía aborrecimiento y desconfianza hacia los arbitrios y el ‘género de gente’ que los inventaba y, además, que los autores en sus parodias se inspiraron directamente en el estilo de los Pérez de Herrera, de los Cellorigo, de los Lope de Deza, es decir, en los economistas más desinteresados y mejores de su generación. (259)

It may be true that, as Vilar alleges, “[e]n Cervantes, en [Juan Ruiz de] Alarcón, se adivinan secretas simpatías,” but in “las constituciones del gran gobernador Sancho Panza” Cervantes does not engage seriously with contemporary socio-economic problems (Vilar 289). Rather, as with the *arbitrista* of “El coloquio de los perros,” he creates a compilation of the *arbitristas*’ Greatest Hits, a point-by-point enumeration rattled off, not by an insane reformer, but by an illiterate peasant who has no actual political authority of any kind and whose position as governor is part of an extended *burla* orchestrated by the duke and duchess and their servants.

It is precisely that burlesque aspect, and the Carnavalesque world-upside-down atmosphere in which Sancho’s governorship unfolds, that explains his ability to flawlessly imitate the specialized content and standardized rhetoric of a written discourse to which he could not possibly have access. Rachel Schmidt argues that Sancho’s exposure to Don Quijote, who frequently employs the language of contemporary *arbitrismo*, serves to “render verisimilar some of the most inventive and socially critical episodes in the novel” (129). I agree that there is some evidence in support of this reading. When Sancho announces his intention to cleanse his island of the idle, his prefatory “Porque quiero que sepáis, amigos” reflects the way that Don Quijote habitually addresses *him*, although his conclusion, “¿Digo algo o quiebrome la cabeza?,” is pure Sancho (1119; 2.49). Nevertheless, his repetition of the tropes of *arbitrismo* exceeds any imitative capacity demonstrated elsewhere in the novel. Maxime Chevalier has noted a similar incongruity in Sancho’s resolutions of the various enigmas and disputes with which he is presented, most of which are derived from written, not oral or popular, culture: “Quiso Cervantes que triunfara la agudeza de Sancho en unas sentencias de índole erudito, en unos casos que mal podía conocer un analfabeto” (70-71). Chevalier’s explanation for this lack of verisimilitude is that Cervantes chose to present an improved version of a peasant, “el aldeano tal como debía ser,” and he therefore concludes: “En este terreno antepuso el novelista la idealización a la verosimilitud” (72).

Chevalier is correct, I believe, to see a deliberate lack of verisimilitude in the episode (and Schmidt is equally right in that Sancho’s long contact with Don Quijote attenuates this inconsistency), but, unless we are prepared to attribute to Cervantes a similarly idealized view of the *arbitristas*, it is difficult to accept his conclusion. The best explanation for Sancho’s sudden and otherwise inexplicable access to written, indeed, courtly culture and a highly developed discourse of political economy is his function in Barataria as a buffoon. Numerous critics have noted governor Sancho’s characterization as a traditional fool, but all of them simultaneously accept his political agenda as a serious and prudent reform program. In this regard, Redondo reads Sancho as a carnivalesque holy innocent who expresses divinely inspired truths: “Por la boca inocente del ‘loco’ o del niño pueden expresarse las verdades divinas” (49). However, since, as Redondo also argues, this wisdom was exclusively a feature of popular culture, it is dissonant with the written sources of Sancho’s verdicts as judge and his socio-economic reforms. Moreover, the *arbitristas* could hardly be associated with sainted innocents speaking divine truths: “el Anticristo ha de ser arbitrista,” according to Quevedo (1987b, 204). Anthony Close points out the partial conflation in the period between the “natural” and “artificial” fool, the former associated with the saintly simpleton and the latter with the maliciously witty court buffoon, both of whom were termed

“loco” in the period. “Thus Sancho is a simpleton-fool with some of the qualities of a clever jester” (348). Salazar Rincón notes that, as a character, Sancho descends, in part, from a long line of “truhanes, juglares, bufones, chocarreros, hombres de placer y decidores graciosos, locos fingidos o auténticos”. He further argues that:

especialmente en el palacio ducal y en el desempeño de su fingido gobierno, en que la acumulación de elementos bufonescos y carnalescos llega al máximo, Sancho, junto a don Quijote, es el truhán chocarrero al que constantemente se coloca en el disparadero para provocar la risa de quienes le tratan. (216-17)

In his analysis of the pre-Barataria ducal palace episodes, however, Jean Canavaggio demonstrates how Sancho’s character, while incorporating many traditional aspects of the natural fool and courtly buffoon, remains highly pliable even as others attempt to channel it into a strict category:

Su locura no es el elemento de un proceso genético, un dato previo que procedería de la prehistoria del personaje; al contrario, forma parte del horizonte de expectativas de quienes la recelan, como don Quijote o de quienes la provocan para divertirse, como los duques y sus acólitos. (135)

Canavaggio shows how Doña Rodríguez, Don Quijote, the duke and duchess, and their chaplain all attempt to define Sancho (*truhán*, *bufón*, *estulto*, *bobo*), all with only partial success.

To this list we could add Cervantes and his contemporary readers who, as Salazar Rincón rightly points out, tended to see Sancho as a comic type with “una importante dimensión de carácter colectivo, que hoy pasa por lo general inadvertida a los lectores no especializados” (214). This is the case in the Barataria episodes, in which Sancho, the puppet governor cast in the role of court fool, plays the part better than anyone could have imagined, unconsciously mimes the discourse of contemporary political reform, and provides his delighted readers (the duke and duchess among them) with an astonishing display of political parody. This is an important, though ironic, aspect of Sancho’s much-commented *discreción* in the ducal palace episodes: he has unwittingly matched his behavior precisely to the requirements of the moment.⁶ Although some aspects of his political agenda are demonstrably at odds with his broader characterization and the discourse that he parrots is manifestly beyond his capacity to know, much less control, Sancho’s behavior in Barataria *is* verisimilar in the sense that it is entirely appropriate to the kind of satiric mimicry undertaken by a maliciously clever court jester. In the imposed role of buffoon, Sancho portrays the apotheosis of the *arbitristas* to perfection.

Yet, as Canavaggio shows, Sancho remains impossible to pigeonhole. With regard to his reform agenda, this is best demonstrated by his impromptu *residencia* with the duke and duchess after he abandons Barataria. In summarizing his governorship, he declares: “No he pedido prestado a nadie, ni metí dome en granjerías; y aunque pensaba hacer algunas ordenanzas provechosas, no hice ninguna, temeroso que no se habían de guardar, que es lo mismo hacerlas que no hacerlas” (1182-83; 2.55). What about “Las constituciones del gran gobernador Sancho Panza,” that “hasta hoy se guardan en aquel lugar” (1150; 2.51)? For Iffland, it is precisely the “legado permanente” of Sancho’s edicts that gives his governorship “una innegable resonancia sociopolítica, tratándose ya no de agudezas verbales sino de aportes verdaderos a la vida diaria de las personas” (400). Why, then, does Sancho explicitly deny his achievements? The answer lies in in the discourse of *arbitrismo*. On one level,

⁶ On Sancho’s unexpected courtly discretion, see Schmitz.

Sancho's declaration that he has not been party to any "granjerías" reflects the *arbitristas'* preoccupation with official corruption. Thus, Leonardo de Argensola writes:

convendra advertir que si hubiere algunos ministros poco rectos que secretamente se mezclen en el comercio y lleben algun trato, yendo á la parte de la ganancia con los obligados de las cosas precisa y utilmente necesarias á la republica, sean castigados conforme a sus culpas exemplarmente. (161v)

On a deeper level, Sancho's insistence that he has not used his governorship for personal gain reflects the widespread perception of *arbitristas* as impertinent grafters, out to enrich themselves through graft. Anne Dubet and Elena García Guerra explain that contemporary criticism of the *arbitristas* was based less on their unviable proposals than on their efforts to extract personal benefit from the implementation of their reforms: "Es evidente que, en la base de esa impopularidad, se hallaba el hecho de que las propuestas presentadas al monarca o al Consejo de Hacienda, en el caso de ser aceptadas, proporcionaban buenos beneficios a su autor" (870). The procedure was to submit a proposal outline, and, if it was accepted for consideration, the author was issued with a "cédula de merced" affirming his exclusive rights of intellectual property (such exclusivity explains the *arbitristas'* much-parodied insistence on secrecy). This *cédula*, the *arbitristas* claimed, entitled them to 1.5-4% of the proceeds accruing to the *Hacienda Real* as a result of the implementation of the plan. "Pero algunos no sólo pedían una participación en los posibles ingresos, sino también oficios, rentas perpetuas, inmunidad jurídica, o todo a la vez" (871). Little wonder, then, that contemporary texts often present the *arbitristas* as self-interested charlatans.⁷

It is not uncommon to find reactions against this widespread accusation from the *arbitristas* themselves. Pérez de Herrera prefaces the *Amparo de pobres* by writing of the "medios eficaces" that it contains: "graciosamente los renuncio como cosa mía, y gusto que se comunique a todos" (1575, 15). The epilogue to his *Remedios* is even more explicit. After declaring that a prosperous kingdom is the surest way to enrich the king (a common claim at the time), he writes:

Y este es a mi parecer el verdadero y cierto arbitrio del desempeño de Vuestra Magestad, no admitiendose los que piden tanto por ciento de lo que diere[n] de prouecho, con lo que propusieren y sacaren, que quien tiene tan desordenada codicia, es imposible acertar en ninguna cosa, pues va fundado en ella, y no en bien y vtilidad de los proximos. (1610, 31r)

By insisting that he has not benefitted financially from his governorship, and by denying, not merely that he had an economic interest in his activities, but that he had enacted any edicts at all, Sancho *graciosamente los renuncia como cosa suya*, to repurpose Pérez de Herrera. In this way, the peasant political economist simultaneously fulfills and subverts the parody of the *arbitristas* contained in his *constituciones*.

"Las constituciones del gran gobernador Sancho Panza" are neither original nor revolutionary, but Sancho Panza the literary creation is. From the poor *labrador* "de muy poca sal en la mollera" who sets out with Don Quijote enticed by the promise of the governorship of an island (99; 1.7), he has developed into a character capable of encompassing an astonishing range of literary and popular sources and expressing practically every human motivation, from the most venal to the most noble, often in rapid and alternating succession. The very capaciousness that makes Sancho so fascinatingly complex simultaneously renders him contradictory and militates against a consistent, incremental development along any dimension (foolish-wise, greedy-generous, deceitful-honest). As his

⁷ As in *Teresa de Manzanares* and *El siglo pitagórico*. See Castillo Solórzano (77-78) and Enríquez (343-52).

governorship of Barataria demonstrates, Sancho Panza, quite incongruously, can become anything. Including an *arbitrista*.

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