

Of Poets and Barbarians:  
Challenging Linguistic Hierarchies in Cervantes's  
*Los trabajos de Persiles y Sigismunda*

SONIA VELÁZQUEZ

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA



For a long time, modern readers and scholars had a hard time knowing how to interpret the bold claim Cervantes made for his ambitious last work, *Los trabajos de Persiles y Sigismunda*. In the dedication of the second part of *Don Quijote* to the Count of Lemos, Cervantes wrote: “[*Persiles*] ha de ser o el más malo o el mejor que en nuestra lengua se haya compuesto, quiero decir de los de entretenimiento; y digo que me arrepiento de haber dicho el más malo, porque, según la opinión de mis amigos, ha de llegar al extremo de bondad posible” (623). While *Don Quijote* opens the way to the modern European novel with its shifting planes of representation and its commitment to rendering the heterogeneity of lived experience through language, *Persiles* appears to turn back to the comforts of romance, that is to say, idealized characters, a meandering plot, and a fondness for the exotic and elevated discourse. No surprise then that the critical consensus regarding *Persiles* through the first half of the twentieth century went against Cervantes’s own assessment. Detractors often followed the estimation of William J. Entwistle about the elevated style and diverse content of the *Persiles*: “the attempt to gild the lily in his later work proved his undoing” (163). In other words, what Entwistle and other early twentieth-century critics of Cervantes’s last work found deplorable was the unfitting relationship between matter and style. He lamented that while Cervantes’s style “does reach formal perfection in this novel . . . it is so often applied to insignificant matter that the effect is hollow and dull” (166).

Thanks to the scholarship produced in the last four decades, one would be hard-pressed now to find critics who would agree with the British Romanist’s final estimation of the matter of *Persiles*. In fact, as reflected in the works of critics such as Barbara Fuchs, Diana de Armas Wilson, or more recently, William Childers and Michael Armstrong-Roche, the matter of *Persiles* is anything but dull and trivial. Cervantes’s last work, far from being a piece of escapist fiction, criticizes imperial ambitions, the ideology of *pureza de sangre*, the corruption of officials, and the vagaries of desire within and outside marriage.<sup>1</sup> Still, these seminal studies address only half of Entwistle’s critique. By focusing on the “matter”

---

<sup>1</sup> Focusing on the conventions of romance as a genre, Diana Wilson recuperates a revolutionary utopian impulse in the novel that makes it possible to imagine gender equality.

of *Persiles*, from plot to genre, they leave the question of style largely unaccounted for. This is more than a formalist quibble. If the recuperation of *Persiles* for late modernity depends on readings that bring out Cervantes's critical stance vis-à-vis the pieties of his time, then the scholarship needs to reckon with David Hildner's challenge to account for how the claims about the antihegemonic character of *Persiles* square with what he calls its "conventional and even 'retrograde'" (459) epic style. In other words, how do we square the purported "revolutionary" content of *Persiles* with Cervantes's dedication to the high style of epic characterized by symmetrical constructions, multiple subordinate clauses, labored dialogue, limited variation in characters' speech, and relative lack of playfulness? This is a central question, especially in light of the ideal Valdesian style of writing that aimed to imitate speech tempered by *discreción*.<sup>2</sup>

The suggestion that style itself may have a political valence may strike contemporary readers used to thinking of style along the lines of dispensable ornament as odd. However, as Mercedes Blanco, Kathy Eden, and others have shown, for early modern writers, style was not just a matter of words but of *ethos*, what Blanco calls "el carácter idiolectal del estilo . . . la creencia de que cada individuo humano, y aun más cada escritor, y por supuesto cada nación y cada clima, tiene su estilo, como tiene su propio rostro" ("La idea" 23). The expectation that language should reveal not only a unique personality and the recesses of the speaker's soul but also the circumstances of his or her nature (nationality, social status, etc.) informed the organization of languages along an ascending scale of value.<sup>3</sup>

---

Similarly, Barbara Fuchs reads in *Persiles* a critique of Counter-Reformation ideology of identity through its predilection for the romance trope of cross-dressing. Conversely, a focus on familiar novelistic traits, such as writerly self-consciousness as highlighted by Julio Baena, or William Childers's emphasis on the *Persiles*'s engagement with historical reality, places Cervantes's last work in line with its iconoclastic, more recognizably modern older sibling, *Don Quijote*. More recently, Michael Armstrong-Roche's work has put forth a compelling case for approaching the complexities of *Persiles* by looking back to epic, particularly to the important role played by religion and politics in the genre, in order to better understand how Cervantes's last work announces in novelistic form a new type of epic. Much earlier, of course, Alban K. Forcione's study of *Persiles* in light of Renaissance literary theory brought back to the center Cervantes's long-misunderstood posthumous work.

<sup>2</sup> Juan de Valdés on style: "muy pocas cosas observo, porque el estilo que tengo me es natural, y sin afectación ninguna escribo como hablo; solamente tengo cuidado de usar de vocablos que signifiquen bien lo que quiero decir, y lo digo cuanto más llanamente me es posible" (233). For a contextualization of Valdesian style in light of orality and scriptuality, see Hans-Martin Gauger. On the virtue of discretion in Cervantes and its relation to "natural" speech, see Ángel Rosenblat (56–67).

<sup>3</sup> Malcolm Read convincingly shows in "The Concept of Man as 'Homo loquens'" how the commonplace structure of the *scala naturae*, the idea that every element of creation can be arranged on an ascending scale according to its degree of perfection, influenced the early modern understanding of linguistic diversity among species and between humans. Read highlights in particular how the stylistic concept of simplicity, understood as the capacity to encompass complexity in a relatively economical form, was used in turn as a criterion to judge the relative merits of various languages. On account of simplicity, human speech ranks above animal modes of communication but below the spiritual language of angels; similarly, Hebrew is often recognized as the highest language because Adam used it to communicate with God and it was as such it was not only the first human language, but also the simplest and most perfect (78). Below Hebrew one usually found Latin and Greek, languages believed

In this article, I propose to study the language of *Persiles* in light of this complexity, and thus move beyond the apologies or condemnations of its language as flat, overly precious, or mannerist in comparison with the diversity and liveliness of *Don Quijote*'s. I will do this in two movements. First, through a very close reading of the opening sentence of *Persiles* in the context of early modern linguistic theory, I want to show how it is precisely from the heights of epic diction—and not in spite of it—that Cervantes questions central humanist tenets and assumptions about the relationship of language to individual speakers, to communities of speakers, and to the idea of humanity itself. Secondly, I will analyze central episodes that show how characters within the novel break the expectations of a linguistic chain of being that would equate clarity of speech with civilization.

### The Epic *Voces* of the Barbarian

The book that Cervantes boasted would dare compete with Heliodorus's *Ethiopian Story* opens on a desolate landscape, self-consciously *in medias res*, and from its very first sentence it asks the reader to consider the relation of humans to language, shouts to eloquence, sound to discourse, and speech to character:

*Voces daba el bárbaro Corsicurbo a la estrecha boca de una profunda mazmorra, antes sepultura que prisión de muchos cuerpos vivos que en ella estaban sepultados. Y, aunque su terrible y espantoso estruendo cerca y lejos se escuchaba, de nadie eran entendidas articuladamente las razones que pronunciaba, sino de la miserable Cloelia, a quien sus desventuras en aquella profundidad tenían encerrada.*  
(51, my emphasis)

Cervantes's *Persiles* addressed the most pressing questions of Renaissance literary theory, including the viability of a modern prose epic. In the aftermath of the rediscovery, translation, and interpretation of Aristotle's *Poetics*, poetry was identified closely with imitation rather than with the use of verse, which gave validity to the idea of a prose epic. This is not to say, however, that prosody became irrelevant. Critics such as Alonso López Pinciano recognized its value in enhancing the *deleite* of poetry, but, along with stylized speech ("alto lenguaje y peregrino," i.e. the use of rarefied diction, neologisms, foreign loan words, archaisms, etc.), its use by the poet is optional (266). In contrast, López Pinciano identifies "fábula y imitación" as essential to poetry, and as Alban Forcione has shown, the Spanish critic coincides with contemporaries such as Jacques Amyot

---

to possess a greater degree of rationality (Latin's orderliness was particularly visible in the existence of a codified grammar and recognized orthography), evident in the elegance and intellectual weight of their literature. The vernaculars vied in turn for high ranking based on their closeness to Latin in richness of expression or to Hebrew by tracing a language's genealogy mythologically back to Babel. See Mignolo for a study of how the presupposition of a linguistic "chain of being" grounded the misunderstanding of Amerindian languages and non-alphabetic writing systems.

and Julius Caesar Scaliger in holding the *Ethiopian Story* as the classical standard of epic prose, just as Virgil stood as the model for epic verse.<sup>4</sup> One of epic's most salient features is its disposition, particularly, the choice of beginning the tale in the middle of the story. This technique was applauded because of the suspense and admiration it created in the reader, and also because, when done well, it provided a focal point for bringing together disparate narrative matter.

But Cervantes does not simply begin in the middle of the story, but also in the middle of the sentence, as it were. The syntax of the first clause—"Voces daba el bárbaro Corsicurbo"—is slightly transposed so that the subject of the sentence, "Corsicurbo, the Barbarian," appears at the end, thereby allowing the unspecified, mysterious "voces" to become the first word of the novel. Moreover, in keeping with the epic aspirations of the *Persiles*, when read aloud, the first clause also sounds like a hendecasyllable, the preferred Italian and Spanish meter for epic. And yet, for all the ambition of the incipit, the voices brought forth by the author to greet the reader do not issue from a classical muse singing of a warrior's wrath or from a strong poet who will speak of arms and men, but from a clamoring barbarian.<sup>5</sup> In contrast to the composition of song or epic, the act of *dar voces* is described in Sebastián de Covarrubias's *Tesoro de la lengua castellana* as "exclamar y hablar descompuestamente" (s.v. *boz* and *grita*). Even so, I hope to show that all is not *descompuestamente*, as Covarrubias's definition would suggest, for beneath the barbarian's roar lies a careful, poetic arrangement.

Still, at the level of sound, the prominence of the first five words is emphasized by the rhythm they create, almost perfectly alternating stressed and unstressed syllables. A marked alliteration further contributes to the constitution of this clause as a poetic unit.<sup>6</sup> The phrase opens and closes with the same sound, /bo/, and paving the way from the first to the last are three syllables that repeat the phoneme /b/: "*Voces daba el bárbaro Corsicurbo.*"<sup>7</sup> Diana Wilson's reading of

<sup>4</sup> In the third epistle of the *Philosophía antigua poética*, "De la esencia y causas de la poesía," Fadrique declares that imitation in meter makes a more perfect poem since "la poética deseando *deleitar* busca el deleite no sólo en la cosa, mas en la palabra; y no sólo en ésta mas en el número de las sílabas cierto y determinado, al cual llaman metro" (117, my emphasis), all while still adhering to an interpretation of Aristotle that sees "fábula y imitación" at the core of poetry. For a more detailed discussion of Renaissance literary theory, including Pinciano's poetics in the work of Cervantes, see Riley (1–49) as well as Forcione's *Cervantes, Aristotle, and the Persiles*, chiefly part 1, "Romances of Chivalry and the Classical Aesthetic" (11–87), and part 3, on *Persiles and Sigismunda* (169–301), and Mary Anne O'Neil for a Bakhtinian reading of Cervantes's experiment. For a review of the Renaissance discussion of prose as legitimate poetry and the cohabitation of the two in many popular Renaissance genres, see Aurora Egido's "Las fronteras de la poesía en prosa."

<sup>5</sup> The syntax of *Persiles* follows the convention of classical epic in verse which typically put the topic of its poem front and center, whether it be Homer's "Rage—Goddess, sing the rage of Peleus' son Achilles"; Virgil's "Arms, and the man I sing"; or in Alonso de Ercilla's praeteritio, "No las damas, amor, no gentilezas / de caballeros canto enamorados . . . / mas el valor, los hechos, las proezas / de aquellos españoles esforzados."

<sup>6</sup> Although speculative, it is tantalizing to recall in this context that medieval northern European poetry (composed in Old Scandinavian, German and English) was characterized by alliterative verse rather than the use of rhyme scheme, which adds an extra touch of beauty to Cervantes's successful, albeit most likely unintentional, collation of both traditions.

<sup>7</sup> Under the entry for the letter *b*, Covarrubias notes that "muchas vezes le damos el sonido, y aun la figura de la v." Specifically regarding Cervantes's use of the consonants *b* and *v*, see Daniel Eisenberg: "*B* and *v*, which in writing were much closer than they are in type, represented the same sound. In the *Parnaso* [Cervantes] rhymes *sabes*, *graves*, and *alabes*

these words in *Allegories of Love* is attentive to Cervantes's experimentation with "the difference between voice as speech and voice as sound" as she aligns Corsicurbo with voices that sound, even resound, but are not really meaningful speech.<sup>8</sup> While I agree that sound is important, I would argue, pace Wilson, that the *voces* we hear and read at the beginning of the novel, as in a poetic utterance, signify through *both* their sound and sense. Taken together, the insistence on the phoneme /b/ reverberates as a witty imitation of Classical barbarian speech, for the word *bárbaro* represents the Greek perception of the sound of foreigners attempting to speak Greek but managing only to mutter "bar-bar." Moreover, the three constitutive letters (*b*, *a*, *r*) of the word *barbarian*—the foreigner accused of doing violence to proper language—are themselves characterized by aggressive sounds.<sup>9</sup> The consonant *r* is described in Covarrubias as a growling, canine letter ("llamaronla letra canina por el estridor con que se pronuncia, como el perro"). The letter *b*, described as silent itself, seems to impose a sort of mutism on the speaker who must press his lips closed in preparation for the sound that is ultimately produced when the *b* is followed by a vowel.<sup>10</sup> As for the vowels, the same dictionary records the commonplace identification of the letter *a* with a primal scream common to every human being ("es la primera que el hombre pronuncia en naciendo . . . en que parece entrar en el mundo lamentándose de sus primeros padres Adan, y Eva"), while *o* usually accompanies and stresses affect, from admiration and desire to indignation, pain, and scorn.

Now, at the level of discourse, the incipit simply states that "Corsicurbo, the barbarian, shouted"—which, when one thinks of it, is an oddly tautological way to begin a novel. How else, according to decorum, would an uncouth barbarian speak? If the barbarian's essence is that he does not make sense insofar as his own speech is meaningless to the Greek, and his attempt to speak Greek fails, then it follows that, at worst, he will shout and gesticulate, and at best, babble:

---

(23, 27–29–31), *suave*, *grave*, and *cabe* (38, 26; 39, 2–4), *nuevo*, *Febo*, and *llevo*, (40, 31; 41, 1–3), *amentativa*, *arriba*, and *oliva* (50, 14–16–18), etc. Cervantes always signed his name with a *b*, yet allowed it to always be printed on the title pages of his books with a *v*" (7).

<sup>8</sup> I quote Wilson in full: "In the beginning of Cervantes's last writing is not the Word but rather 'un terrible y espantoso estruendo' (51). We are moved, from the start, to reflect on the difference between voice as speech and voice as sound: the barbaric voice is not constituted by the words it utters but by a shout for more sacrificial victims" (111). Her approach to the *Persiles* in *Allegories of Love* privileges issues of gender and allegory; correspondingly, her discussion of the Barbaric Isle focuses on the practice of cannibalism, in its relation to chronicles of Amerindian practices, and the barbarians' extreme exogamy as "turn[ing] on the issues, the ideologies, and the tensions of sexual difference" (117).

<sup>9</sup> Covarrubias writes under *bárbaro*: "este nombre fingieron los Griegos de la grosera pronunciacion de los Estrangeros, que procurando hablar la lengua Griega, la estragauan, estropeandola con los labios, con el sonido de *barbaro*." The dictionary then reports that, more generally, Greeks and Romans used the term to refer to all foreigners, and that closer to current practice, it applies to "todos los que hablan con tosquedad, y grosería, llamamos barbaros a los que son ignorantes sin letras, a los de malas costumbres . . . que viven sin razón y finalmente los que son desapiadados y crueles." On the development of the image of the barbarian from antiquity to the early modern period, see Anthony Pagden's "The Image of the Barbarian" in *The Fall of Natural Man* (15–26).

<sup>10</sup> The description of *b* in Covarrubias reads: "no tiene ningún sonido, antes cierra la boca, apretando un labio con otro, si no se le dan las vocales inmediatas, o interponiendose una de las semivocales, l, r."

“bo-ba-ba-ba-bo.”<sup>11</sup> Critics such as Aurora Egido have therefore judged barbarian speech as “the degree zero of language” (“Las voces” 116), or, as Diana Wilson has put it more emphatically, by describing barbarian speech as a “wildly exhibitionist discourse, accompanied, at the same time, by a kind of angry aphasia” (*Allegories* 128).<sup>12</sup> Similarly, Luis Avilés interprets the act of shouting as a symptom of the barbarians’ lawlessness and a threat to communication in general, but whereas Wilson focuses on the repressive aspects of barbarian speech and psyche, he highlights their uninhibited nature as “[s]houting becomes an overflow, a surplus of the body, which denotes an undisciplined act, with no repression” (144). The focus on the sound of Corsicurbo’s exclamation, described in the second sentence as an almost incomprehensible terrible and frightful roar (“terrible y espantoso estruendo cerca y lejos se escuchaba, de nadie entendidas articuladamente las razones que pronunciaba”) would initially seem to confirm the distance separating the barbarian’s *voces* from true discourse. In contrast to these readings, I propose that in fact our barbarian not only possesses full linguistic capabilities, but his place in the hierarchy of languages is not too far from that of the novel’s hero.

### Articulate *Razones*, Translation, and Human Discourse

The general condemnation of Corsicurbo to silence or incomprehensibility hinges on the ambiguous relationship of voice to both sound and reason. The

---

<sup>11</sup> Cervantes’s barbarians often communicate through signs with their foreign captives, although it is worth noting that signing is not exclusive to the barbarians, as other characters who do not share a common language also turn to non-verbal communication—most notably the courtship of Barbarian native Ricla by Antonio de Villaseñor, a Spanish exile whose misadventures lead him to the shores of the Isla Bárbara (80). Moreover, the barbarians also make use of translators when they are at high sea engaged in the commerce necessary to the fulfillment of the prophecy that structures life in their island. The barbarians are known to purchase foreign beautiful women because of an old prophecy declaring that the mother of the future king destined to lead the barbarians to world domination will be chosen from among them. Male foreign captives are also needed because their pulverized hearts serve to test the manhood of the male barbarian destined to father the much-awaited leader by being the one capable of ingesting the powdered hearts without grimacing.

<sup>12</sup> The first quotation is taken from Aurora Egido’s “Las voces del *Persiles*,” where she inscribes the first chapters of the novel in the context of Renaissance humanism’s rethinking of the boundaries between barbarism and civilization/civility in light of New World encounters as seen in writers such as Michel de Montaigne and the Inca Garcilaso. Consequently, she interprets the novel’s representation of multiple languages as “una sinfonía que va desde el grado cero del lenguaje y de las voces, al deseable diálogo y entendimiento de las personas a través de la palabra” (116). While I share with Egido the belief that Cervantes does more than simply reflect the linguistic diversity of a post-1492 world, I would hesitate to trace a movement from voices to dialogue along a straight developmental line, for as the example of the incipit shows, the barbarous and the poetic coexist in one utterance at the same time. Diana Wilson offers a different diagnosis in *Allegories of Love*, where the point of departure is more psycholinguistic. She suggests that the barbarians’ logophobia (their repression of unnecessary speech, their own and that of their female captive translators, along with their preference of signs, sounds, and gestures to words as a medium of communication) is linked to the monosexual, hyper-masculine culture they live in and its repression of the maternal. This view is later complemented by her study of language and colonialism in *Cervantes, the Novel, and the New World*, where she focuses on the literary kinship of the

question is then whether these *voces* hark back to the Latin understanding of *vox*—as articulated words, sentences, or speech—or if they are the unintentional “overflow” of an unruly body, and in that sense, closer to animal cries.<sup>13</sup> When Covarrubias defines *boz* as “propriamente el sonido que profiere el animal por la boca,” he is repeating the humanist commonplace that voice is common to both men and beasts, and therefore not considered sufficient to constitute true speech or *oratio*.<sup>14</sup> To take one example, Pedro Mexía’s chapter on “Si es propio y natural en el hombre el hablar y si solo el hombre habla” (I.36.91–93), in his best-selling miscellany *Silva de varia lección* (1540), considers limit cases of communication among men (such as Pliny’s Troglodytes, whose bat-like sounds Mexía recognizes as true language, albeit “muy imperfecta y Barbara” [I.36.93], in contrast to his ancient source), and also the similarities between human languages and animal sounds. He closes this discussion by quoting Ludovico Celio’s curious tale of Cardinal Ascanio of Tarragona’s parrot that could recite the entire Catholic Creed in Latin, “sin error palabra sola” (I.36.93). Although Mexía acknowledges the wonder of the animal’s mimicry, he reports and agrees with the Cardinal’s response: both deny the equivalence of the parrot’s recitation to true discourse (*hablar*) because the animal showed no signs of understanding the meaning or implications of what it had said. The conclusion drawn from the story, following Aristotle, is that there is a type of expression common to humans and beasts, but true speech consists of words, *razones y palabras*, that express more than instinctual affects:

Y como dice Aristoteles, por sola la voz assi sin forma se puede significar y dar a entender el pesar, y dolor, e alegría y placer . . . y esto en los brutos animales y aves, que tienen diferencia en los cantos y rores: quando están tristes o alegres, o las hieren o se regocijan o andan en celo: pero *el hablar y sermón*: por do se muestra en particular lo útil y necesario, lo dañoso y malo, y lo justo y lo injusto, y lo honesto y bueno, se cuenta lo pasado y se avisa lo por venir, por *razones y palabras* que lo signifiquen . . . a solo el hombre es dado y el lo tiene en su propia naturaleza. (82v–83, my emphasis)<sup>15</sup>

The anecdote of the praying parrot is of particular interest in the context of the *Persiles* because we find an analogous episode when Ricla, a “bárbara de nación” [native barbarian] (82), recites a version of the Creed in Spanish as she speaks of the early years of her relationship to her husband Antonio, the man who taught it to her and is described throughout the novel as “el bárbaro

---

barbarians in the *Persiles* and those represented by two influential poet-chroniclers of the Indies, the Inca Garcilaso and Alonso Ercilla, in order to show how Cervantes’s anti-utopian island could be read as a “parody of the discourses of Iberian expansionism” (181).

<sup>13</sup> See Lewis and Short for a full definition of *vox*.

<sup>14</sup> On the history and significance of this commonplace in the early modern period, see Read (70–76). For the flip side of the issue, see Serjeantson.

<sup>15</sup> Serjeantson shows that, parallel to the early modern consensus, only humans were capable of true speech, there was a general agreement that animals “used their voices (*loquela*) to express their passions” (443). The true stakes of the discussion, then, were the moral, scientific, and philosophical implications of the existence of this “little language.”

español.” Is her performance true speech? To phrase the question in Pedro Mexía’s terms: does Ricla “entiende y sabe lo que dice,” or is her declaration of faith “una cierta costumbre mostrada por muchos días de formar esas voces” (93)? Her actions—guaranteeing Antonio’s survival on the Isla Bárbara, marrying him, giving him two Christian children, and providing the riches necessary to buy their way off of the island—would seem to show that not only does she understand the implications of her conversion, but she puts her money where her mouth is, as it were. However, her speech in Book I is also peppered with expressions that indicate that she takes some distance from Antonio’s teachings. She says, for example, of Antonio’s celebration of her baptismal ceremony that it was done “aunque no con las ceremonias *que él me ha dicho* que . . . *se acostumbra*,” while of their nuptials she remarks that they were “al modo *que él dice que se usa* entre verdaderos cristianos” (82, my emphasis).<sup>16</sup> Ricla’s focus on custom and habit arguably casts a shadow of doubt on the practices of “verdaderos cristianos.” How many of them would have truly known and understood the theology behind their religious practices? How different would their own recitation of the Creed (in Latin or in their mother tongue) be from the converted barbarian’s, or from the parrot’s, for that matter?

A similar challenge to the opposition of barbarian voice and true human discourse takes place at the very opening of the novel. Already in the second sentence, we learn that the barbarian’s voice is, in fact, not as meaningless as readers initially suspected. The strident sound is qualified thus: “Y aunque su terrible y espantoso estruendo cerca y lejos se escuchaba, de nadie entendidas *articuladamente* las razones que pronunciaba sino de la miserable Cloelia” (my emphasis). In her discussion of the “pared down language” of the barbarians, Wilson asserts that although the barbarians do not live in a prelinguistic world, “the first thundering imperative of the first barbarian who speaks in the *Persiles* is immediately qualified as meaningless” (*Allegories* 127). She arrives at that conclusion first by reading the adverb *articuladamente* as qualifying the *reception* of Corsicurbo’s words rather than his pronunciation of the same: “The sentences he pronounced were understood articulately by nobody” (Wilson’s translation). Secondly, she assumes that Cloelia, as a woman, is included in the indefinite pronoun *nobody*. However, given that in the early modern period *articular* was primarily used in relation to the language of the speaker (usually followed by nouns such as *voz*, *razón*, *palabra*, etc.), I find it difficult to agree with Wilson’s interpretation of *articuladamente* as referring to the barbarian’s reception and the consequent condemnation of Corsicurbo to unintelligibility.<sup>17</sup> It is true that

<sup>16</sup> See also Armstrong-Roche’s study of the Isla Bárbara chapters where he argues that Cervantes challenges the equation of religion with the performance of empty rituals in favor of a humanist vision of religion based on charitable acts.

<sup>17</sup> Covarrubias does not include *articular* or *articulación* as entries in his dictionary, but the eighteenth-century *Diccionario de Autoridades* gives the following definition under *articular*: “formar voces claras e inteligibles y hablar de modo que se perciba bien, y se entienda, explicando syllabas y letras.” A search performed on Dec. 15, 2012 on the database *El corpus del español* for the use of *articular* in texts printed between 1500 and 1700 yielded 27 relevant entries. The verb was followed by a direct object in 26 of these occurrences, with *voz/voces* appearing most often (9 times), followed by *palabra/s* (5)—other instances include *razón/es*, *agravio*, *nombre*, *sentencia*, and *acento*. A similar search for *articulado/a/s* gives 30 entries, 15 as adjectives, twice for *voz* and once for *razones*—other nouns include *palabras*, *penas*, *querelas*,



Corsicurbo's words are not accessible directly to the reader yet, but we are told nonetheless that Cloelia, a bilingual prisoner who had served as Auristela's old chambermaid, understood them. I stress the fact that Corsicurbo had an intended audience because the initial unintelligibility of the barbarian's voice is not due to an inherent linguistic deficiency on his part (or of the barbarian's language itself), but to the fact that the prisoners in the cave are all foreigners kept in an effort to fulfill the prophecy that the barbarians believe will lead them to world domination.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, once Cloelia has been introduced in the text as translator for the barbarian, Corsicurbo's words will finally be available to the reader (in translation, of course) when his request to send a new prisoner up from the cave is rendered in direct discourse: "Haz, oh Cloelia, que así como está, ligadas las manos atrás, salga acá arriba" (51).

A subtle but important shift has taken place in the description of Corsicurbo's language as indistinct *voces* have become *razones*, articulated words or sentences expressing the barbarian's intentions to an addressee who will understand them. In short, Corsicurbo, unlike Mexía's parrot, fulfills all the requirements of true human discourse.<sup>19</sup> This conjecture is further strengthened by the repetition of key terms and ideas (voice, articulation, and *razones*) that again teeter on the verge of failed communication in the description of Periandro's first speech in the novel. At Corsicurbo's command, Periandro emerges from the darkness of the dungeon where he has been held captive, and his first action is to thank heaven for allowing him to see the light of day before his execution. The narrator specifies that Periandro spoke "con voz clara y no turbada lengua" (52)—in other words, "pronunciaba articuladamente"—as is indeed fitting for a protagonist who will later prove to be certainly loquacious and arguably even eloquent and persuasive.<sup>20</sup> And yet, for all of Periandro's clarity, as with Corsicurbo's first intervention, we are told that "*ninguna destas razones fué entendida de*

---

*tonos, silbos, and suspiros*. All of these cases described the action of the person emitting the message rather than the comprehension of the recipient. Incidentally, *articuladamente* appears only once, in the opening of *Persiles*.

<sup>18</sup> The literal and symbolic economies of the Isla Bárbara trade on the "currency" of foreign men and women from among whom the barbarians expect to find the parents of their future leader. For an analysis of this economy according to a Lacanian understanding of the retroactive relationship of subjects to the Law, see Eduardo González.

<sup>19</sup> As summarized by Serjeantson (and implicit in Mexía's words), true speech would require that the speaker be capable of producing articulate sounds—consonants and vowels—together in recognizable syllables which, in turn, combine to create meaningful words. Words are considered meaningful when they are recognized by a community as such, but above all when words are believed to act as "messengers or interpreters" of a person's inner thoughts to an interlocutor (427–31).

<sup>20</sup> Periandro's entry into the world is marked by oratory, and he will continue to make speeches (on marriage, on the importance of courage, on the value of fame versus riches, etc.), to tell lies in order to escape trouble, and stories for the purpose of entertaining and gaining the sympathy of his listeners. Is he eloquent? Most of his fellow travelers think so. Sinforosa, his most sympathetic listener is described as "pendiente de sus palabras como con las cadenas que salían de la boca de Hércules" (221). However, other characters do occasionally criticize his storytelling, judging it at times unbelievable or too long and digressive (for the meta-literary implications of Periandro's volubility and the responses it draws from his audience, see Forcione's *Cervantes, Aristotle, and Persiles*, 187–211). Similarly, scholars are divided in their assessment of this effusive character: from Stanislav Zimic, who has no

los bárbaros, por ser dichas en diferente lenguaje que el suyo” (52, my emphasis).

Cervantes’s awareness of both sides of the communication gap is partly a literary device borrowed from Heliodorus to add an element of verisimilitude to an adventure story occurring in an exotic setting, where people of different backgrounds meet.<sup>21</sup> Significantly, however, in the case of the *Persiles*, the focus on the linguistic gap also corrects the initial impulse to draw categorical differences between linguistic communities and their speakers. After all, from a structural perspective, the hero and the barbarian stand surprisingly close with regard to language: both are capable of articulating words that will reach their intended audience but are meaningless to everyone else.

### Breaking the Linguistic Chain of Being

Before studying the implications of this parallel and pursuing an even more surprising congruence, I want to clarify that in bringing out the similarities between Corsicurbo’s language and Periandro’s, I am not arguing that they are the same. Instead, I propose to move beyond the initial impression of the barbarian’s language in the *Persiles* as the inscrutable and potentially destructive language of the other in order to recognize in its representation a break with the traditional alignment of languages (and speakers) along a hierarchical scale. From a Renaissance humanistic perspective, linguistic clarity refers to a set of stylistic attributes such as elegance and purity that may also assess the moral and intellectual quality of the speaker—an issue that arguably informs Don Quijote’s concern over Sancho’s speech and his capacity to govern himself and the promised island of Barataria. Ottmar Hegyi, who has studied Cervantes’s familiarity with the Islamic world, goes one step further and observes that “to contemporaries of Cervantes, linguistic clarity and its opposite can acquire religious and ethnic associations. Thus clarity is associated with ladino [one conversant in Latin] in contrast to algarabía [Arabic, particularly the dialects of North Africa]” (231). Speaking of the *Persiles* in particular, Hegyi concludes that “Periandro’s speech is not only different from that of the Barbarians, but also clearer and more articulate, that is, more rational” (232). The language spoken by Cervantes’s barbarians is indeed different and remarkable. It is loud and terrifying, and *what* it communicates (the call for a new prisoner to be executed in the passage

---

patience for Persiles’s tall tales (they point to “un sujeto jactancioso de la peor especie” [62]) to Carolyn Lukens-Olson’s interpretation of Periandro’s eloquence based on his success in fulfilling the Odysseus-like role of safely leading his troop of pilgrims to their common destination. From this perspective, she argues that Periandro’s eloquence constitutes a new form of heroism, as an alternative, if not corrective, to the military might of epic and chivalric heroes. See also Armstrong-Roche, who aligns Periandro’s fabulous storytelling with the birth of a new poetic (rather than martial) hero proper to the hybrid epic-novel Cervantes created in *Persiles*.

<sup>21</sup> For a comparison between Heliodorus and Cervantes on the question of communication across languages, see Brioso Sánchez and Brioso Santos, “De nuevo sobre Cervantes y Heliodoro.” More generally, see Elvezio Canonica de Rochemonteix for a study of inter-linguistic episodes in Cervantes’s prose and theatre.

examined here, and the expression of the barbarian Bradamiro's selfish passion for a cross-dressed Persiles which results in the destruction of the island in I.4) points to reprehensible behavior that easily corresponds to the last definition given in Covarrubias of *bárbaro*: "los que son despiadados y crueles." Nevertheless, I want to insist that this barbarian language is also presented to us as articulate and comprehensible, albeit through translation. That is to say, it is not aphasia, or the degree zero of language any more than Periandro's. Actions, including a speaker's use of language—either to speak in the imperative to a female slave, in the case of Corsicurbo, or to pray to "los cielos" as the imperfectly Catholic Periandro does—, are what differentiate our characters rather than their degree of linguistic articulation or the status of their language. Thus, in a subtle way, Cervantes presents a challenge to the heuristic assumption concerning the value of languages and speakers that was a commonplace in the Renaissance—a challenge that will become a constant feature of the *Persiles*.

Perhaps the clearest example of how the taxonomy of languages and speakers is upended in the *Persiles* occurs early in the novel when Antonio de Villaseñor, the *español bárbaro*, speaks of his brief but striking encounter with a Spanish-speaking wolf on a deserted Arctic island where he tries to find safe haven after being shipwrecked. Before Antonio can reach the island, a she-wolf addresses him "en voz clara y distinta, y en mi propia lengua" to warn him against staying there: "Español, hazte a lo largo, y busca en otra parte tu ventura, si no quieres en ésta morir hecho pedazos por nuestras uñas y dientes; y no preguntes quién es el que esto te dice, sino da gracias al cielo de que has hallado piedad entre las mismas fieras" (77). No explanation of this uncanny episode is offered and seeking one is, in fact, expressly discouraged. There is no attempt by other characters or the narrator to rationalize or dismiss the episode as a tall tale told by a disreputable character. And yet, Antonio's story counters the basic premise of a linguistic "chain of being" which supposes a distinction between humans and animals, for the wolf does not only speak Spanish clearly and distinctly, but unlike Mexía's parrot, the wolf's words cannot be merely ascribed to mimicry since they convey a distinct message of mercy.

This is the most extreme and fantastic example in *Persiles*, and skeptical critics might be tempted to write off its importance because it occurs in the context of the exotic northern regions, but it is not an isolated occurrence. Consider also the chiasmic characters of Cenotia, an exiled *morisca* sorceress from Alhama, and Rafala, the "hermosa y mora" daughter of a treacherous Valencian Moor. Cenotia, in love with Antonio's teenage son, attempts to seduce the young *bárbaro español* by appealing to their shared language, Spanish. She says to him, "mira que te hablo español, que es lengua que tú sabes, cuya conformidad suele engendrar amistad entre los que no se conocen" (200). However, the impropriety of her desire prevails over any humanistic hope that a common language shall by itself foster good will between strangers, and Antonio will let his bow and arrow answer for him. Rafala, on the other hand, speaks imperfect Spanish, yet she saves the pilgrims by warning them, "en lengua aljamiada" (354), of an impending attack by marauding Berbers. As with Corsicurbo and Periandro, the degree of linguistic purity or clarity of a speaker is not a reliable litmus test of a

character's disposition. Instead, it is the coincidence of speech and action that reveals one's true character.

## Rethinking Barbarolalia and Epic Discourse

Cervantes's representation of barbarolalia differs as much from his classical predecessors as from contemporary epic-inflected writings about the New World. In Heliodorus's *Ethiopian Story*, an equivalence is suggested between Egyptian and Greek. Furthermore, in the Homeric world, even the anthropophagous, cave-dwelling, lawless Polyphemus speaks Greek to Odysseus.<sup>22</sup> In contrast, Corsicurbo's language in *Persiles* is acknowledged as different, and it is mediated for the reader through acts of translation that nevertheless allow a certain strangeness to remain in elements such as a transposed syntax and sonorous diction. Moreover, these rough edges, so to speak, differentiate Cervantes's representation of barbarian speech from others that also would have been familiar to his contemporaries from chronicles, *cartas de relación*, and perhaps most importantly, Alonso de Ercilla's epic poem *La Araucana*. These texts generally dealt with radical linguistic and cultural difference in one of two ways. Heroic enemies such as Lautaro and Moctezuma either became accomplished orators in the works of Ercilla and Hernán Cortés, following classical and chivalric epic models, or anonymous Indians were restricted to a communication through gestures and signs as in the letters of Columbus.

Closer to Cervantes's poetic project in the *Isla Bárbara* chapters might be Luis de Góngora's *Fábula de Polifemo y Galatea* (1613), a poem that retells the Ovidian tale of the Cyclops's inappropriate passion for Galatea in a language marked equally by violent figures of speech that deform normal syntax (i.e., asyndeton, hyperbaton, and anacoluthon) and deemed by his detractors as monstrous and presumptuous as the one-eyed lover himself. Both works emerge from the outer limits of epic. In the words of E. C. Riley, "while Cervantes attempted an epic in

---

<sup>22</sup> Let us recall that Homer's depiction of Polyphemus emphasizes his primitive and impious nature, for in addition to practicing cannibalism, he has no self-control (as evidenced by his drunkenness), and he openly flaunts the divine laws of hospitality upon which the Greek sense of civility is founded. More generally, he and the other Cyclopes lack important Greek markers of civilization such as agriculture and a recognizable political organization. Polyphemus's mastery of language is not sophisticated enough to see through Odysseus's linguistic tricks, but he is *not*, strictly speaking, a barbarian, that is to say, a non-Greek speaker. Concerning the *Ethiopian Story* and the positive representation of Egyptian linguistic otherness in what has been called "the most Egyptian of the [Greek] novels" (Nimis 50), see Máximo Brioso Santos. Stephen Nimis, for his part, shows how the ancient novel moves from a beginning where Orientalist stereotypes of Egyptians predominate to the realization that both cultures share an important literary and religious legacy—in contrast with the barbarous Persians. A defining moment in this shift occurs when the Egyptian priest Calasiris speaks of the Egyptian ancestry of Homer (presumably the son of an Egyptian priest, but in fact the direct descendent of Hermes), and Cnemon, an Athenian, accepts the proposition on account of Homer's "typically Egyptian combination of concealed meanings and sheer enjoyment in his poetry" (*Ethiopian Story* 3.15.1; qtd. in Nimis 52).

prose, Góngora was experimenting with lyric poetry on an epic scale” (53).<sup>23</sup> The central actions of both *Persiles* and *Polifemo* concern love, and although both works hold the battlefield at bay for the most part, they remain within the accepted limits of epic matter, which admits, in addition to martial accounts, exemplary acts of love, human and divine.<sup>24</sup> The shift from Mars to Venus, however, far from removing these works into a realm of idealizing and escapist literature gave both writers freedom to compose epics that escape echoing the well-known song of the winners or the curse of the losers that characterize the genre.<sup>25</sup> Instead, these hybrid epic works daringly succeed in giving a voice proper to the inhospitable barbarian by accepting a certain measure of improper writing. Decorum is thus breached when *plática peregrina*—the characteristic of lofty epic verse and noble characters, according to López Pinciano—is granted to creatures such as Cyclopes or barbarians. Moreover, this peregrine language is not limited to the expression of alterity but is significantly adopted by the poetic/narrative voice itself.

<sup>23</sup> There are relatively few comparative studies of these two writers, and an even smaller number of those that take into account their forays into epic. Hatzfeld’s 1953 article begins with an acknowledgment of the epic ambition of both writers but ultimately focuses his attention on the motif of pastoral weddings as present in the first *Soledad* and in *Don Quijote*, more precisely the chapters concerning Camacho, Basilio, and Quiteria (II.19–21). He concludes that while both works share a common structure and descriptive richness, Cervantes never loses sight of “reality,” which gives his *bodas* a sensuality that is missing from Góngora’s more precious descriptions. Rafael Lapesa revisits the comparison arguing that a more balanced assessment of each writer’s poetics can be made by considering the more idealistic Cervantine works such as *Galatea* or *Persiles* rather than *Don Quijote*, but again focusing primarily on the pastoral aspects of both works. Recently, Mercedes Blanco’s monumental study *Góngora heroico* has traced the poet’s peculiar engagement with the genre of highest cultural prestige of his time. Focusing on las *Soledades* in their dialogue with the theory and poetry of Tasso, she writes, “[l]as *Soledades* ponen en tela de juicio dos de los fundamentos del poema heroico: la fábula y el suspense narrativo-dramático. Y sin embargo Góngora maneja los motivos típicos, los hábitos retóricos, los ‘estilemas’ del poema heroico, pero dándoles un sesgo insólito y paradójico” (31). Cervantes does not abandon the Aristotelian predilection for *fabula* but, as I have tried to show here, he certainly also twists the styles of epic.

<sup>24</sup> Based on the authority of previously canonized works such as Marco Girolamo Vida’s *Christiad* and Heliodorus’s *Ethiopian Story*, López Pinciano admits religious and erotic matter as suitable for epic, but with some reservations: imitation of religious action is difficult to achieve because of the audience’s familiarity with the subject, while matters of love can be admitted only as long as the poem demonstrates that “debajo de aquella paja floja, hay grano de mucha sustancia” (XI.468).

<sup>25</sup> David Quint maps the generic differences between epic (teleological plot centered on a significant event) and romance (a meandering, episodic narrative with little closure) onto two different poetic discourses: the triumphalist song of the conqueror, which corresponds to the self-contained form of epic, and the erratic but unyielding resistance of the defeated consistent with the structure of romance. These two currents are not polar opposites, and in fact they often coexist in the same work. More precisely and closer to our discussion of monstrous or barbaric speech, Quint examines the genealogy of the “epic curse”—a threat to the unifying narrative of the winner uttered by the victims of imperial projects, from Polyphemus and Dido to the giant Adamastor in Luiz de Camões’s *Lusíadas*—in order to show how the voice of the vanquished often emerges as a threat to the victors’ narrative only to be reappropriated by the epic concerns of the winners, thus avoiding any true encounter between heroes and barbarians.

## Conclusion

Much of the scholarship that addresses *Isla Bárbara* focuses on what the barbarians say in order to arrive at what the barbarians are or represent—incarnations of perversity and evil, allegories of New World cannibals, a parody of Old World conquistadors, etc. One could say that when we read with the goal of seeing, knowing, and identifying the shouting barbarian, we attempt to make good on the promise of “speech as the mirror of the soul” articulated by humanists such as Juan Luis Vives.<sup>26</sup> The transparency of language is taken for granted, and the opening of the *Persiles* is read for whatever factual content or ethnographic detail might help find the barbarian outside the text, as it were.

But if we take another route, focusing instead on *how* things are said as much as on what is said, then we can not only hear Corsicurbo shouting, but we can hear through the shouting the growing pains of the Spanish language as it stretches and alters itself to translate the barbarian’s voice. This approach also highlights the double point of enunciation. I have tried to call attention to what may seem an obvious observation and yet is rarely noted—namely, the fact that the *voces* that syntactically get ahead of themselves in the opening of the novel signal back to not one, but to two points of enunciation. The grammatical subject of the first sentence, the *who* that gave out a cry, “*voces daba*,” is of course the barbarian Corsicurbo. But the words that give this barbarian a poetic voice (as we saw, rendered in epic meter, signifying through sound and sense) also point to the mediating narrative voice responsible for bringing the story to the reader.

A similar structure can be found in Luis de Góngora’s sonnet “*De un caminante enfermo que se enamoró donde fue hospedado*,” where “[d]escaminado, enfermo, peregrino / en tenebrosa noche, con pie incierto / la confusión pisando del desierto / *voces en vano dio*, pasos sin tino” (lines 1–4, my emphasis). According to Mary Gaylord, the locution *dar voces*, “offers a telling example of language’s built-in confusions: one (a speaker or subject) apparently gives voice, utters cries or words, produces sound as the voluntary, physical act of the subject. Yet it is also cries, words and voice that point to, identify, give voice to the speaker himself” (96). As with Corsicurbo’s words, here too the communicative function of language runs the risk of dissolving into sound signifying nothing, “*voces en vano*.” However, while in the sonnet the risk is averted by the unexpected appearance at the end of the poem of an “I” that shares the woes of the *peregrino*, in *Persiles* the destruction of meaning is avoided thanks to the intervention of at least one translator.<sup>27</sup>

To conclude, I want to suggest that by opening the novel with a poetic utterance attributed to a named barbarian, Cervantes puts forth the possibility that

<sup>26</sup> See, for example, Vives’s *De ratione dicendi*, where he writes “no hay otro espejo que devuelva la imagen del hombre más verdadera que el discurso y no se profiere ninguna ofensa en el proverbio griego: ‘tal es cada uno cual es su forma de hablar’” (87).

<sup>27</sup> I am grateful to Ronald E. Surtz for suggesting I read Góngora’s sonnet, to Marina S. Brownlee, Hall Bjørnstad, Miguel Balsa, William Egginton, Alban K. Forcione, Natalia Pérez, and the anonymous reviewers for their generous comments, and to Phillip Usher for having invited me to present an earlier version at Barnard’s Center for Translation Studies.

poetry itself retains something of the barbarous, and in consequence, the surprising collusion of what are supposed to be the highest and lowest registers of speech begs for a reconsideration of both and of the entire notion of an ethical-linguistic hierarchy. This reconsideration begins with the recognition that “barbarous” here is no longer understood as meaningless babble, but as the violent yet fragile effort to reach over a linguistic gap—a hesitant attempt to speak Greek. This primary gesture of the other reaching out to a listener, speaking in a version of *our* language, also founds the novel’s narrative and poetic ethos. This barbarous-poetic language comes very close to delineating a radically modern concept of poetry and of style not far from the Deleuzian call for writers to “minorize” their language not by including foreign words into the mother tongue but by “carving out a nonpreexistent foreign language *within* his own language [making] the language itself scream, stutter, stammer, or murmur” (109–10). In response to the epic’s conflict between foreign conquerors and vanquished natives, written in an imperial language, Cervantes offers a hybrid epic-novel, translated from an unknown language where peregrine voices reign.

## B I B L I O G R A P H Y

- Amyot, Jacques. “Proësmes.” *L’Histoire aethiopique de Heliodorus, contenant dix livres traitant des loyales et pudiques amours de Theagenes Thessalien, & Chariclea Aethiopi[n]ne. Nouvellement traduite de Grec en François*. Paris: Ian Longis Libraire, 1547. Print.
- Armstrong-Roche, Michael. *Cervantes’ Epic Novel: Empire, Religion, and the Dream Life of Heroes in Persiles*. Toronto: Toronto UP, 2009. Print.
- Avilés, Luis. “To the Frontier and Back: The Centrifugal and the Centripetal in Cervantes’ *Persiles* and *Sigismunda* and Gracián’s *El Criticón*.” *Symposium* 50.3 (1996): 141–63. Print.
- Baena, Julio. *El círculo y la flecha: principio y fin, triunfo y fracaso del “Persiles”*. Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina, Department of Romance Languages, 1996. Print.
- Blanco, Mercedes. *Góngora heroico: Las Soledades y la tradición épica*. Madrid: Centro de Estudios Europa Hispánica, 2012. Print.
- . “La idea de estilo en la España del siglo XVII.” *Edad de oro cantabrigense: actas del VII Congreso de la Asociación Internacional de Hispanistas del Siglo de Oro (Robinson College, Cambridge, Jul. 18–22, 2005)*. Frankfurt: Vervuert, 2006. 17–29. Print.
- Brioso Sánchez, Máximo. “La problemática de la comunicación lingüística en la novela griega antigua.” *Habis* 34 (2003): 323–43. Print.
- Brioso Santos, Héctor, and Máximo Brioso Sánchez. “De nuevo sobre Cervantes y Heliodoro: la comunicación lingüística y algunas notas cronológicas.” *Cervantes: Bulletin of the Cervantes Society of America* 23.2 (2003): 297–341. Print.
- . “Sobre la problemática relación entre Heliodoro y el *Persiles* de Cervantes: el motivo de la comunicación lingüística.” *Criticón* 86 (2002): 73–96. Print.
- Canonica de Rochemonteix, Elvezio. “La conciencia de la comunicación interlingüística en las obras dramáticas y narrativas de Cervantes.” *Cervantes: estudios en la víspera de su centenario*. Vol. 1. Kassel: Reichenberger, 1994. 19–42. Print.
- Cervantes, Miguel de. *El ingenioso don Quijote de la Mancha*. Ed. Francisco Rico. Madrid: Real Academia Española, 2004. Print.
- . *Los trabajos de Persiles y Sigismunda*. Ed. Juan Bautista Avallé Arce. Madrid: Castalia, 1969. Print.
- Childers, William. *Transnational Cervantes*. Toronto: Toronto UP, 2006. Print.
- Covarrubias Horozco, Sebastián de. *Tesoro de la lengua castellana o española*. Ed. Martín Riquer. Barcelona: Alta Fulla, 1989. Print.
- Davis, Mark. *Corpus del Español: 100 Million Words, 1200s–1900s*. Provo: National Endowment for the Humanities and Brigham Young U, 2002. Web. 15 Dec. 2012.

- Deleuze, Gilles. "He Stuttered." *Essays Critical and Clinical*. Trans. Daniel W. Smith and Michael A. Greco. London: Verso, 1998. 107–14. Print.
- Diccionario de Autoridades (1726–1739)*. Real Academia Española, n.d. Web. 30 Oct. 2013.
- Eden, Kathy H. "Literary Property and the Question of Style: A Prehistory." *Borrowed Feathers: Plagiarism and the Limits of Imitation in Early Modern Europe*. Oslo: Unipub, 2008. 21–38. Print.
- Eisenberg, Daniel. "Cervantes' Consonants." *Cervantes: Bulletin of the Cervantes Society of America* 10.2 (1990): 3–14. Print.
- Egido, Aurora. "Las fronteras de la poesía en prosa." *Fronteras de la poesía en el barroco*. Barcelona: Crítica, 1990. 85–113. Print.
- . "Las voces del *Persiles*." *¡Bon compañero, jura Di! El encuentro de moros, judíos y cristianos en la obra cervantina*. Ed. Carolina Schmanser, and Monica Walter. Frankfurt: Vervuert, 1998. 107–33. Print.
- Entwistle, William J. "Ocean of Story: *el último sueño romántico de Cervantes*." *Cervantes: A Collection of Critical Essays*. Ed. Lowry Nelson, Jr. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1969. 162–69. Print.
- Ercilla y Zúñiga, Alonso de. *La Araucana*. Vol. I. Ed. Isaias Lerner, and Marcos A. Morínigo. Madrid: Castalia, 1979. Print.
- Forcione, Alban. *Cervantes, Aristotle, and the Persiles*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1970. Print.
- . *Cervantes's Christian Romance: A Study of Persiles y Sigismunda*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1972. Print.
- Fuchs, Barbara. *Passing for Spain: Cervantes and the Fictions of Identity*. Urbana: U of Illinois P, 2003. Print.
- Gauger, Hans-Martin. "La conciencia lingüística en el Siglo de Oro." *Actas del IX Congreso de la Asociación Internacional de Hispanistas (18–23 agosto 1986)*. Frankfurt: Vervuert, 1989. 45–60. Print.
- Gaylord, Mary. "Góngora and the Footprints of the Voice." *Cultural Authority in Golden Age Spain*. Ed. Marina S. Brownlee, and Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1995. 79–106. Print.
- Góngora, Luis de. "De un caminante enfermo que se enamoró donde fue hospedado." *Poesía lírica del Siglo de Oro*. Ed. Elías L. Rivers. Madrid: Cátedra, 1997. 210. Print.
- González, Eduardo. "Del *Persiles* y la Isla Bárbara: fábulas y reconocimientos." *MLN* 94.2 (1979): 222–57. Print.
- Hatzfeld, Helmut. "The Baroque of Cervantes and the Baroque of Góngora Exemplified by the Motif 'las bodas.'" *Anales Cervantinos* 3 (1953): 87–119. Print.
- Hegyí, Ottmar. "Algerian Babel Reflected in *Persiles*." *Ingeniosa Invención: Essays on Golden Age Spanish Literature for Geoffrey L. Stagg in Honor of His Eighty-Fifth Birthday*. Ed. Ellen. M. Anderson and Amy R. Williamsen. Newark: Juan de la Cuesta, 1999. Print.
- Hildner, David. Rev. of *Allegories of Love*, by Diana de Armas Wilson. *Hispanic Review* 63 (1995): 458–59. Print.
- Homer. *The Iliad*. Trans. Robert Fagles. New York: Penguin, 1998. Print.
- Lapesa, Rafael. "Góngora y Cervantes: coincidencia de temas y contraste de actitudes." *Revista Hispánica Moderna* 31 (1965): 247–62. Print.
- Lewis, Charlton T., and Charles Short, eds. *A Latin Dictionary Founded on Andrews's Edition of Freund's Latin Dictionary*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1879. *Perseus Digital Library*. Ed. Gregory Cane. Tufts U. Web. 16 Dec. 2012.
- López Pinciano, Alonso. *Philosophía antigua poética*. Vol. 1. Ed. José Rico Verdú. Madrid: Fundación José Antonio de Castro, 1998. *Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes*. Web. 22 Dec. 2012.
- Lukens-Olson, Carolyn. "The Heroics of Persuasion in *Los trabajos de Persiles y Sigismunda*." *Cervantes: Bulletin of the Cervantes Society of America* 21.2 (2001): 50–71. Print.
- Mexía, Pedro. *Silva de varia lección*. Sevilla: en la imprenta de Fernando Díaz, a costa de Alonso Mata, 1587. *Fondos digitalizados de la Universidad de Sevilla*. Web. 17 Dec. 2012.
- Mignolo, Walter. *The Darker Side of the Renaissance: Literacy, Territoriality, and Colonization*. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P, 1995. Print.



- Nimis, Stephen. "Egypt in Greco-Roman History and Fiction." *Alif: Journal of Comparative Poetics* 24 (2004): 34–67. Print.
- O'Neil, Mary Anne. "Cervantes's Prose Epic." *Cervantes: Bulletin of the Cervantes Society of America* 12.1 (1992): 59–72. Print.
- Pagden, Anthony. *The Fall of Natural Man: The American Indian and the Origins of Comparative Ethnology*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1982. Print.
- Quint, David. "Voices of Resistance: The Epic Curse and Camões's Adamastor." *Representations* 27 (1989): 111–41. Print.
- Read, Malcolm K. "The Concept of Man as 'Homo Loquens' in the Spanish Renaissance." *Revista Española de Lingüística* 12.1 (1982): 65–84. Print.
- Riley, Edward C. *Cervantes's Theory of the Novel*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1962. Print.
- Rosenblat, Ángel. *La lengua del Quijote*. Madrid: Gredos, 1971. Print.
- Scaliger, Julius Caesar. *Poetices libri septem*. Lyon: Antoine Vincent, 1561. Print.
- Serjeantson, Richard. "The Passions and Animal Language, 1540–1700." *Journal of the History of Ideas* 62.3 (2001): 425–44. Print.
- Valdés, Juan. *Diálogo de la lengua*. Ed. Cristina Barbolani. Madrid: Cátedra, 2006. Print.
- Vives, Juan Luis. *De anima et vita. Opera omnia*. Vol 3. Valencia: B. Monfort, 1782–1788. 300–520. Print.
- . *De ratione dicendi / Del arte de hablar*. Trans. José Manuel Rodríguez Peregrina. Granada: U de Granada, 2002. Print.
- Virgil. *The Aeneid*. Trans. John Dryden. University Park: Pennsylvania State UP, 1989. Print.
- Wilson, Diana de Armas. *Allegories of Love: Cervantes's Persiles and Sigismunda*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1991. Print.
- . *Cervantes, the Novel, and the New World*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2001. Print.
- Zimic, Stanislav. "El *Persiles* como crítica de la novela bizantina." *Acta Neophilologica* 3 (1970): 49–64. Print.