

From midlife crisis to regeneration and personal growth: Cervantes' "Don Quixote" as a psychotherapeutic rehabilitation tool

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Don Quixote, the hero of the volume that bears his name, is traditionally identified as the eternal archetype of the aging loser. If a person uses the common phrase: "Do not behave like *Don Quixote*" he is actually asking to warn you not to sink into a reverie. It was often suggested that Cervantes deliberately created a deranged hero who himself immersed in hallucinations, based on *Chevaleresque*, medieval Knighthood tales that are completely detached from the "real world".

Is that so? In this paper, I argue that through the exceptional hero, Cervantes creates a *carnavalique* illusion, which enables him to play the game God. Through virtual reality experience created deliberately for the benefit of everyman, represented by Sancho Pancha. Don Quixote, himself, who is acting as Merlin the Magician (rather than a chevalirique knight), enables the implied author to guide the reader from the binds of history to the enriched imaginary, from the forced artificial pragmatism to utopia, from the average and routine to the vision, aspirations and desires fulfillment. Eventually, he brings the apprentice, jointly with the reader, back to reality and its boundaries. However, upon the crossing of the return threshold, Sancho- the everyman archetype has become a better man as he completed the ultimate entire journey, or in short, have completed the journey and evolved from mid-life crisis to renewal and personal growth.

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