

This article was downloaded by: 10.2.97.136

On: 26 Sep 2023

Access details: *subscription number*

Publisher: *Routledge*

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The Routledge Companion to Iberian Studies

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Publication details

<https://test.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781315709895.ch16>

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Published online on: 28 Mar 2017

How to cite :- Rosa Navarro Durán. 28 Mar 2017, *The Influence of Tirant Lo Blanch on Golden Age Iberian Authors from: The Routledge Companion to Iberian Studies* Routledge

Accessed on: 26 Sep 2023

<https://test.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781315709895.ch16>

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Literature and visual culture



16

THE INFLUENCE OF *TIRANT LO BLANCH* ON GOLDEN AGE IBERIAN AUTHORS

Rosa Navarro Durán

Literature has no frontiers but those of language, and these may be eliminated with the assistance of a good translator. In the sixteenth century, as a result of the wide diffusion of literary creations made possible by the revolutionary invention of printing, already firmly established by that time, the great fifteenth-century Catalan writers had a deep influence on the texts of Castilian authors, in what was to become a pivotal moment for the creation of new literary forms. In narrative, the crucial case is that of the greatest chivalric novel written on the Iberian Peninsula, *Tirant lo Blanch* by Valencian writer Joanot Martorell:¹ despite only being in print very briefly during the sixteenth century, its influence on Iberian literature was profound, as an examination of its many great readers will show.²

Firstly, I propose a hypothesis to account for its limited editorial success. I then proceed to an analysis of the presence of *Tirante el Blanco* in Alfonso de Valdés's two *Diálogos* and his *Lazarillo de Tormes*. Moving to the second half of the sixteenth century, I show traces of this great chivalric novel in *Don Clarisel de las Flores*, by Jerónimo de Urrea, the Spanish translator of *Orlando furioso*. Finally, I focus on the work of one of its most enthusiastic readers, Miguel de Cervantes, to show echoes of *Tirante* in *La Galatea* and *Persiles*, and I point out just a few of the many elements of it which may be seen in the *Quijote*.

***Tirante el Blanco*: a fleeting existence in print during the sixteenth century**

The scrutiny of Don Quijote's library offers a true image of the hero: the different books he had read inform us about the models which Cervantes's creature, born of the act of reading, strived to imitate. The first book which Maese Nicolás hands over to Pedro Pérez is *Amadís de Gaula*, which the priest is determined to burn as the initiator "de una secta tan mala;" but the barber intercedes on its behalf and it is eventually salvaged for its artistic quality. After succinctly praising *Palmerín de Inglaterra*, the census of chivalric books seems complete, but at that moment a large volume falls at the barber's feet: the *Historia del famoso caballero Tirante el Blanco*.

Upon hearing the title, the priest exclaims: "¡Válame Dios, que aquí esté *Tirante el Blanco*! Dádmele acá, compadre, que hago cuenta que he hallado en él un tesoro de contento y una

mina de pasatiempos.” Upon remembering some of its characters, he continues: “Digoos verdad, señor compadre, que por su estilo es este el mejor libro del mundo: aquí comen los caballeros, y duermen y mueren en sus camas, y hacen testamento antes de su muerte” (Cervantes 1998, 83). The priest, Quijote’s friend, reveals himself as an enthusiastic reader of the translation of Joanot Martorell’s *Tirant lo Blanch*, which Diego de Gumiel, the printer of the work’s second edition (Barcelona, 1497), published as an anonymous work, without acknowledging the Catalan original, in Valladolid in 1511.³

Pedro Pérez’s amazement at finding the book in Don Quijote’s library is well justified: by that time, it might have been a rare book, because it was not reprinted after the first 1511 edition; indeed, only two copies of this unique edition now survive (Riquer 1975), both incomplete and lacking various pages (Mérida 2002). The original did not fare much better, as only two editions of *Tirant lo Blanch* were published, the first in Valencia in 1490 by Nicolás Spindeler, and the second in Barcelona by Diego de Gumiel in 1497. Very few copies of any of the three editions have survived. As López Estrada reminds us (1993, 448), Ferdinand Columbus bought a copy for his library “por 260 maravedises, y es uno de los más caros de la lista; el *Floriseo* le costó 128 maravedises.”

Menéndez Pelayo notes that “el original catalán del *Tirante* había penetrado en Italia antes que estuviese traducido en ninguna lengua. Ya en 1500 lo leía Isabel de Este, marquesa de Mantua, y un año después comenzaba a traducirlo, a instancia suya, Niccolo da Correggio.” He also cites imitations by Boyardo, Ariosto, Bandello, and Shakespeare, in his comedy *Much Ado About Nothing*, before noting the book’s rapid fall into oblivion. He posits the possibility that this might be due to “su realismo demasiado prematuro para un libro de caballerías,” or perhaps, to “su desenfrenada licencia en las pinturas eróticas;” he also reminds us that “la Inquisición no le puso nunca en sus índices” (Menéndez Pelayo 1943, vol. 1, 402–403).

Anyone who reads the book may suppose that there must have been a very specific reason, beyond the implausible distaste of readers, for such a wonderful work to fall into oblivion, as exceptional works usually manage to endure despite changes in literary taste. Moreover, this fall from grace occurred in the kingdoms of Aragon and Valencia, as well as in Castilla y León, as if both Catalan and Castilian readers shared this “mezquino” literary taste, while Italians continued to appreciate the book (the 1538 translation was twice reprinted, in 1566 and 1611).

Alfonso de Valdés, Charles V’s secretary of Latin correspondence, read the book, and we can find traces of his reading in his two *Diálogos* and his *Lazarillo*. Another to read the work was Antonio de Guevara, Charles V’s preacher, who placed the knight Tirant among historical heroes in a letter he wrote to Juan de Padilla, “capitán que fue de los comuneros contra el Rey, en la cual le persuade el autor que deje aquella infame empresa,” on 8 March 1521 (though we should always be suspicious of any supposed fact from the mouth of the inventive Franciscan):

Si vos, señor, tomáredes mis consejos, asentara os yo en mis crónicas entre los varones ilustres de España, es a saber: con el famoso Viriato, con el venturoso Cid, con el buen conde de Fernán González, con el caballero Tirán y con el Gran Capitán y otros infinitos caballeros dignos de loar y no menos de imitar.

(Guevara 1950, vol. 1, 308)

Why did such a splendid work, whose hero was ranked among history’s greatest by the Emperor’s preacher, not have a successful life in print?

In attempting to explain why so few editions of *Tirant* and *Tirante* survived, it may be useful to recall an event contemporaneous to Gumiel’s edition that has nearly disappeared from the historical record. In 1517, six years after *Tirant* was translated and published in Spanish,

the young King Charles arrived in Spain. He was greeted by his grandfather's young widow, Germana de Foix, and they embarked on a passionate romance, the outcome of which was their daughter Isabel of Castile. Regina Pinilla Pérez de Tudela has unearthed documents that prove this daughter's existence. In her will, Queen Germana bequeathed a necklace of 133 pearls "a la serenísima doña Isabel, infanta de Castilla, hija de su Majestad el Emperador, mi señor e hijo;" moreover, the Duke of Calabria wrote to the Empress in this regard: "Vea V. M. el legado de perlas que dexa a la serenísima infanta doña Isabel, su hija" (Fernández Álvarez 2000, 98–99). As the priest of *El Quijote* notes, *Tirante* narrates the romance of "la señora Emperatriz, enamorada de Hipólito, su escudero." When the young man, with discreet clarity and "voz algo ronca y baja" finally seeks the love of the Empress, the old lady at first sensibly argues that her age is not "conforme" with his, adding: "que si tal cosa fuese sabida, ¿qué dirían de mí?: que me he enamorado de mi nieto" (*Tirante* 1974, vol. 3, 243). The book does not punish this unequal and adulterous love with a moralizing denouement; quite the contrary, the novelist rewards it with a happy ending: Tirante, the Emperor, and Carmesina all die, while the Empress, heiress of the Empire, rushes to marry Hipólito. The Spanish translation of *Tirant* was published in 1511. As these events occurred just a few years later, any courtier would easily associate the fictional love story with the real romance between the widowed Queen and the young Emperor. It is reasonable to assume that no printer, even though the book was not explicitly banned, would venture to republish it in the kingdoms of Castilla y León or Valencia, the latter being a territory directly linked to Queen Germana.

However, the literary success of *Tirant/Tirante* was far greater than its few editions and limited circulation may suggest, because the book had two great readers: the novelists Alfonso de Valdés and Miguel de Cervantes. This is clear from the indisputable echoes of *Tirante* in their work, which provide an elegant example of how the influence of *Tirant lo Blanch*, the first European novel, was to spread through the work of other writers. This therefore gives us another measure for the success of a book: the quality of its readers (in their alternative mode of literary creators), and the traces it leaves in those readers and their subsequent works.

***Tirante* in the works of Alfonso de Valdés**

As Alfonso de Valdés's two *Diálogos* are primarily historical rather than fictional texts – albeit with a satirical bent – *Tirante el Blanco* provided him with words and worldviews, rather than specifically narrative resources. For example, in Valdés's *Mercurio y Carón* we find the hapax "artizar," by which he labels the French as tricksters who send peace envoys to the Emperor while getting ready for war: "como siempre suelen los franceses artizar, que estonces se muestran más deseosos de la paz cuando más se aperciben para la guerra, por tomar desproveídos a sus contrarios" (Valdés 1999, 158). This unusual word is also found in *Tirante*: as a true strategist, the young captain fortifies the city while, to escape, he simultaneously digs mines under the sites considered most "flacos." "Como el Caudillo vio hacer a Tirante tan sotiles y artizadas obras, estaba el más maravillado hombre del mundo" (*Tirante* 1974, vol. 4, 43); according to Martín de Riquer, "artizar" is a translation of the Catalan word *artizades* ("artificiosas, hechas con ingenio").

The word "contramina" appears in its straightforward sense in *Tirante*: "Tirante dudaba que no minasen el castillo; y el Rey y los otros se tenían por perdidos; e ordenó que se hiciese una contramina" (*Tirante* 1974, vol. 4, 131). But in Valdés's *Diálogo de Mercurio y Carón* and in his third work, *La vida de Lazarillo de Tormes*, it is used in a figurative sense. In the former, the soul of the married woman refers to the condition of her husband thus: "Y dime tan buena maña, contraminando sus vicios con virtudes . . ." (Valdés 1999, 275). In the latter, Alfonso de

Valdés combines two words (“maña” and “contraminar”) when Lázaro narrates the greed of the old blind man and how he managed to neutralize him: “Digo verdad: si con mi sotileza y buenas mañas no me supiera remediar, muchas veces me finara de hambre. Mas, con todo su saber u aviso, le contraminaba de tal suerte, que siempre, o las más veces, me cabía lo más y mejor” (Valdés 2011, 9).

Valdés’s ideas also seem to have been influenced by *Tirante*. In the *Diálogo de las cosas acaecidas en Roma*, we find the same endorsement of peace as in *Tirante*. While on the Berber Coast discussing peace, Placer de mi Vida tells Tirante: “Bien sabes que dijo Jesucristo que bienaventurados serán los pacíficos porque ellos serán llamados hijos de Dios. E la noche de Navidad, cuando Jesucristo nació, los ángeles cantaban: ‘Gloria sea dada a Dios en los cielos, y paz en la tierra a los hombres de buena voluntad’. Y pues tú eres cristiano, ¿por qué vienes contra sus mandamientos?” (*Tirante* 1974, vol. 4, 174–175). The same reference appears in Lactancio’s wonderful speech against the Pope’s war: “¿Dónde halláis vos que mandó Jesucristo a los suyos que hiciesen guerra? [. . .] Cuando Jesucristo nació, no tañeron al arma, mas cantaron los ángeles: *Gloria in excelsis Deo, et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis!* [. . .] Pues el que esta [la caridad] no tiene, ¿cómo será cristiano?” (Valdés 1992, 101). The Emperor in the *Diálogo de Mercurio y Carón* has the same attitude towards happiness and sorrows as Tirante, who, in answer to the Queen of England’s advice not to grieve in order better to display his virtue, states: “Jamás fue ninguno, serenísima señora, que me viese triste – dijo Tirante – por gran pérdida que me viniese; ni mucho menos alegrarme por más bien que se me siguiese” (*Tirante* 1974, vol. 1, 205). Furthermore, in Valdés’s dialogue, the loyal secretary to the Emperor tells us: “El Emperador, aunque en todas sus cosas se conformó tan de verdad con la voluntad de Dios, que ni las prosperidades le dan demasiada alegría ni las adversidades tampoco tristeza . . .” (Valdés 1999, 136).

Tirant’s influence can also be found in *Lazarillo de Tormes*. When Carmesina despises Tirant after hearing lies about him from the wicked Viuda Reposada, the brave captain, alone in his room, refuses to eat. Estefanía laments this situation and tells Diafebus: “¿Qué remedio podremos dar a su gran dolor, que tanto como yo adobo de día desbarata la Viuda de noche!” (*Tirante* 1974, vol. 3, 135). It is easy to see the similarities this excerpt shares with Lázaro’s account of how his boss fixes the holes he has carved during the day in an old chest: “Torna a buscar clavos por la casa y por las paredes, y tablillas a atapárselos. Venida la noche y su reposo, luego era yo puesto en pie con mi aparejo, y cuantos él tapaba de día, destapaba yo de noche” (Valdés 2011, 23). It is also *Tirante* that gives us the clue to the concealed reference to the author’s name in *La vida de Lazarillo de Tormes, y de sus fortunas y adversidades*. Its first three letters (read in reverse, as in Hebrew), added to the last three (read in Latin order) render LA V / DES (Valdés). This explains the strange article (“La”) that opens the title, as such titular “lives” would usually dispense with the article, and begin “*Vida de . . .*” Tirante orders that his flag should bear the following message: “La letra que está primera / en el nombre de esta pintura / la llave es con que ventura / cerrada tiene la postrera” (*Tirante* 1974, vol. 2, 159). This motto is accompanied by golden “calnados,” because the Catalan form for “padlock” is “cadenat,” a word opening with the ‘c’ of Carmesina, and ending with the ‘t’ of Tirant. Thus, Alfonso de Valdés might have obtained the idea of ciphering his last name in the title of his work from his careful reading of *Tirante*.

Another reader of *Tirante el Blanco*: Jerónimo de Urrea

Captain Jerónimo Jiménez de Urrea translated a key work of Renaissance literature from Italian, Ariosto’s *Orlando Furioso* (1549). Even though the priest, going over Don Quijote’s

library, claims that the “señor capitán [. . .] le quitó mucho de su natural valor” (Cervantes 1998, 81), Cervantes had read this translation carefully. He had also read de Urrea’s *Diálogo de la verdadera honra militar* (Navarro Durán 2013), as well as the manuscript of his chivalric novel *Don Clarisel de las flores* (unpublished until 1879), as evinced by the similarities between *Don Quijote* and that other delirious novel, similarly full of wizards. Within this chain of readers, it is also worth noting that Jerónimo de Urrea had also read *Tirante el Blanco*, as his *Clarisel* makes clear. The Aragonese writer was born circa 1510 (Geneste 1975, vol. 1, 72), and fought with Garcilaso in the skirmish at Muy, where Garcilaso died, as well as in the disastrous battle of Algiers. Always loyal to the Emperor, he was also part of his army in the successful battles of Dura and Mühlberg. It is not surprising, then, that he had read *Tirante el Blanco*. For proof of this it should suffice to note that when Urrea’s Belamir *el fermoso*, accompanied by Gelandar from Hungary, lies to the King of Macedonia’s daughter, Leoniselda, and tells her that, even though they carry weapons, they are ladies, he comes up with the following invented names: “Buena señora, a esta mi hermana llaman Reposada y a mí Traviesa” (Urrea 1879, 291), *Tirante*’s Viuda Reposada being the obvious inspiration.

We can detect imitation of other minor details, for example in the death of a character as a result of a burst gallbladder. In *Tirante*, this is the fate which befalls the giant Quirieleisón as he rages in front of his master’s tomb, after his defeat by Tirante: “[. . .] vio a su señor de la manera que estaba, tomole tanto dolor, mezclado con extrema ira, que le reventó la hiel en el cuerpo y luego arrebatadamente murió” (*Tirante* 1974, vol. 1, 256); the same occurs to the disgraceful duke of Andria (vol. 2, 285). In *Don Clarisel*, a maiden knocked down by a palfrey dies in the same way: “[. . .] y a la doncella derribó con tal caída que la cuitada no movió más pie ni mano porque se le quebrantó la hiel en el cuerpo” (Urrea 1879, 200). There are also echoes of another scene. After a day of hunting, the unknown Nobleman (as Clarisel is often styled) “quiso reposar cerca de una fuente en lo bajo de la selva,” and thus rested under “grandes y fojosos plátanos; sacando un pequeño libro, que siempre consigo traía, que de fechos de caballeros antiguos trataba, a lo que él muy aficionado era [. . .]” (Urrea 1879, 178). The same scene, including a wood and a fountain (though changing the plane-tree for a pine tree) appears in *Tirante*, in a “sitio muy deleitoso, con gran espesura de árboles,” where the young knight finds the hermit who tells him about chivalric orders reading from Ramon Llull’s *Llibre de l’orde de cavalleria*: “Hijo mío – dijo el ermitaño – , toda la orden es escrita en este libro, el cual yo leo algunas veces por traer a la memoria la merced que Dios me ha hecho en este mundo, porque yo honra y mantenía a todo mi poder la orden de caballería” (*Tirante* 1974, vol. 1, 101–102).

Other details may be added, but the foregoing should suffice to prove that Captain Urrea had read *Tirante el Blanco*, and that the impressions which that book left on him were to emerge in the fanciful chivalric romance he wrote during the second half of the century. It is evident, then, that Joanot Martorell’s novel continued to influence Castilian literature during the sixteenth century, by means of Gumiel’s anonymously published 1511 edition. Moreover, this influence even extended beyond the sixteenth century, as one of its most enthusiastic readers was Miguel de Cervantes.

From *La Galatea* to *Persiles*: *Tirante* as background

Traces of *Tirante* in Cervantes’s work are not limited to *El Quijote*. They are also evident in some of the *Novelas ejemplares* and, to a greater extent, in *Los trabajos de Persiles y Sigismunda*. *La Galatea* also displays some traces that might be attributed to Cervantes’s reading of *Tirante*, in which case Cervantes might have read the book at an early date, before 1585, when his pastoral novel was published. For example, in the first book of *La Galatea*, Teolinda

is narrating her romances when the shepherdesses hear a great clamour of herdsmen's cries and barking dogs. Hiding among the branches, they see a pack of hounds chasing a hare. The narrator says: "Y no tardó mucho que por el mesmo lugar donde las pastoras estaban, la vieron entrar y irse derecha al lado de Galatea" (Cervantes 1994, 75). The hounds follow the hare to the side of the shepherdess, who protects the animal. Arriving there, the herdsmen "quedaron admirados de la hermosura de Teolinda."

At the beginning of the fourth book "del venturoso y esforzado caballero Tirante el Blanco" we encounter him, shipwrecked and hopeless, in a Tunisian cave, along with a sailor who has also survived the disaster. The ambassador of the king of Tremicén is hunting in the area, and the narrator relates how they "hallaron una liebre, y por haber sido muy corrida con los perros y con los halcones, no pudiendo haber otro reparo, se entró en la cueva donde estaba Tirante." When one of the hunters, chasing the hare, discovers Tirante, who is resting, he tells his master: "Yo no creo que natura pudo formar un cuerpo mortal con más perficción y hermosura que el que yo he visto" (*Tirante* 1974, vol. 5, 9–10).

The scenes presented in the two books are strikingly similar: chased by hounds, a hare takes refuge next to the main character, and when the hunters find the hare, they discover a beautiful unknown person, Teolinda or Tirante. We might add the image of scimitars glittering under the fire of a nocturnal Turkish attack on a coastal Catalan village: "A la luz de las furiosas llamas se vieron relucir los bárbaros alfanjes y parecerse las blancas tocas de la turca gente" (Cervantes 1994, 120). In *Tirante el Blanco*, Placer de mi Vida, alone on the Barbary Coast, naked, and deathly cold, witnesses a fight between Moors and Christians, and "con los relámpagos vía relucir las espadas a la ribera de la mar" (*Tirante* 1974, vol. 3, 363). Might this second similarity confirm Cervantes's early reading of *Tirante*? If so, he would have kept the book to hand for a long time, as it is a constant presence in all his later works.

Cervantes also wonderfully recreates a great scene from Martorell's novel in *El celoso extremeño*. One of the most charming – and sauciest – episodes of *Tirante* occurs in Carmesina's bedchamber. Placer de mi Vida has hidden the brave captain in a large chest, with holes through which he can breathe. Unaware of his presence, Carmesina undresses for her bath, while a cheeky Placer de mi Vida illuminates her body for the enjoyment of the voyeur:

La Princesa se comenzó de desnudar, e Placer de mi Vida le puso el asiento que venía de cara de donde Tirante estaba, de manera que él la podía muy bien ver a su placer. E como del todo fue desnuda, Placer de mi Vida tomó una candela encendida, y por hacer placer a Tirante mirábala toda la persona, que allí no había nada encubierto.
(*Tirante* 1974, vol. 3, 180)

In *El celoso extremeño*, we find a wealthy old man who lives with his young and beautiful wife in a Sevillian house that he keeps locked, as if it were a convent. The rogue Loaysa, after seducing with his music an old black eunuch slave who guards the house, manages to enter into the hallway. Having learned of the presence of the handsome musician, the lady of the house and her maids carve a hole in a turntable and take turns to spy through it; meanwhile, the slave passes a candle across the handsome young singer's body so they can admire the attractive boy: "Poníase una al agujero para verle, y luego otra; y por que le pudiesen ver mejor, andaba el negro paseándole el cuerpo de arriba abajo con el torzal de cera encendido" (Cervantes 1995, vol. 2, 42). When we compare the two scenes, we can appreciate the greatness of both writers and how much Cervantes enjoyed reading *Tirante*. He reversed the sexes of observer and observed, turning women into admirers of male beauty in *El celoso extremeño*: desire belongs to both sexes.

We move now to a very different scenario and a more melancholy tone in *Persiles*. When Tirante, who has undertaken to help the Emperor, reaches Constantinople, the Emperor appoints him as commander of his troops. Immediately, the knight goes to the palace to pay homage to the Empress and Princess Carmesina. “La cámara era muy oscura, que no había en ella lumbre ni claridad ninguna,” as the ladies are in mourning following the death of their son and brother. The knight asks for a torch to bring some light into the room. “Después que la lumbre entró en la cámara, vio un pabellón todo negro. Allegose a él e abriole y vio una señora toda cubierta de paño grosero con un gran velo negro sobre la cabeza que la cubría toda hasta los pies” (*Tirante* 1974, vol. 2, 118). In *Los trabajos de Persiles y Sigismunda*, a group of pilgrims is made to witness a bizarre scene at an inn: Claudino Rubicón has killed Count Lamberto of Scotland, and the widow, Mrs. Ruperta, “agraviada y airada” and seeking revenge, carries a bloody sword and her dead husband’s head. The episode is very different save for the mourning; what brings both scenes together is the widow’s chamber. When the pilgrims find this room, it is described as “un aposento todo cubierto de luto, cuya lóbrega oscuridad no les dejó ver particularmente lo que en él había, y estándole así mirando, llegó un hombre anciano, todo asimismo cubierto de luto.” This old man, the widow’s squire, tells them the story of the widow, and how she had vowed “que mi vestido será negro, mis aposentos lóbregos, mis manteles tristes y mi compañía la misma soledad” (Cervantes 2002, 589) until she fulfills her oath and takes revenge on her husband’s death.

These are far from the only traces of Cervantes’s reading of *Tirante* evident in his last novel, but I turn now to the pages of *Don Quijote de la Mancha* to underscore some of the debts this great work bears to *Tirante el Blanco*, starting from the very name of its main character.

From the title of *Don Quijote* to Cervantes’s will: debts to *Tirante*

The *hidalgo* from La Mancha needed eight days to come up with “Don Quijote,” a name befitting his new occupation as a knight-errant; he then remembered that Amadis had added to his own name “el de su reino y patria, por hacerla famosa, y se llamó Amadís de Gaula,” and accordingly, he styled himself “don Quijote de la Mancha, con que a su parecer declaraba muy al vivo su linaje y patria, y la honraba con tomar el sobrenombre de ella” (Cervantes 1998, 42–43). As for the ideal birthplace for Cervantes’s parodic knight-errant, this “de la Mancha” is strange in the name of a knight who is supposed to be unblemished, and should be understood in opposition to the “blanco” of “Tirante el Blanco.”

Immediately after Don Quijote begins his adventurous life on a hot July day, he realizes he lacks something essential: he needs to be dubbed a knight. Overcoming an enormous grief that almost brings an end to his adventure, he finally decides to ask the first person he meets to knight him; and his habit of transforming reality is to help him turn a castle into an inn. After Quijote assaults two other guests, the innkeeper, himself a reader of chivalric novels, decides to “abreviar y darle la negra orden de caballería” right away to avoid further harm. As the “castle” has no chapel, he convinces Don Quijote that the setting is of no importance. He begins the ritual with the assistance of the two prostitutes who are accompanying a group of mule drivers to Seville. The innkeeper pretends to read prayers from his account book (where in reality he keeps a tally of the hay and barley he has given to the mule drivers), and touches Don Quijote’s shoulders with the sword to confer his knighthood. One of the girls, Tolosa, fits his sword for him, and the other, Molinera, fastens on his spurs.

The paradoxical nature of the ceremony is intensified if we compare it to a parallel event in the life of Tirante el Blanco, who was knighted by the King and the archbishop of England in a vast room. He is first seated in “una silla grande de plata que estaba cubierta de un rico paño

de seda verde,” and the archbishop, dressed as a deacon and holding an open missal, takes his oath – the wording of which reminds us of what Don Quijote tells the shepherds about the Golden Age: “se instituyó la orden de los caballeros andantes, para defender las doncellas, amparar las viudas y socorrer a los huérfanos y a los menesterosos” (Cervantes 1998, 123). In *Tirante*, the King of England, placing the sword over the knight’s head, declares: “Dios te haga buen caballero y señor San Jorge.”

There is thus a clear contrast between the inn, in *Don Quijote*, and the luxurious platform that the King erects for Tirante’s ceremony, as well as between the innkeeper and the archbishop and the King of England. In addition, a further parallel adds to the scene’s humour. The account of the retinue in *Tirante el Blanco* is as follows: “Luego venieron siete doncellas vestidas de blanco, a significación de los siete gozos de Nuestra Señora, e ciñéronle la espada. Después vinieron cuatro caballeros, los mayores en dignidad que allí se hallaron, y calzáronle las espuelas, a significación de los cuatro evangelistas” (*Tirante* 1974, vol. 1, 167–168); in Don Quijote’s case, we have the barley account book, the innkeeper, and the two prostitutes. In *Tirante*, there are seven maidens clad in white to symbolize the seven joys of the Virgin Mary; for Don Quijote, Tolosa and Molinera.

Don Quijote’s adventures come to an end when the despair resulting from his defeat in Barcelona, and a strong fever, take him to the grave. In Tirante’s case, he is struck by a sudden and severe pain in his side while taking a walk on the riverbank, only a day away from Constantinople and the happiness he would have found there. He is taken to the city, “e como fue echado en la cama,” the “físicos” find no remedy for him. He then asks for his Franciscan confessor, with whom he will also take communion and write his will. Don Quijote also asks for a confessor and a scribe. In his will, he includes Sancho, his housekeeper, and his niece, to whom he bequeaths all his possessions. The narrator adds: “Andaba la casa alborotada, pero, con todo, comía la sobrina, brindaba el ama y se regocijaba Sancho Panza, que esto del heredar algo borra o templa en el heredero la memoria de la pena que es razón que deje el muerto” (Cervantes 1998, 1221). Tirante’s bequest remembers his servants, and declares “mi sobrino y criado Hipólito de Roca Salada” heir of his possessions and titles (*Tirante* 1974, vol. 5, 187). Carmesina dies from sorrow, as does the Emperor upon seeing his daughter’s grief. In contrast, the narrator tells us of Hipólito: “Y no penséis que Hipólito toviese mucho dolor, que luego que Tirante fue muerto, hizo su cuenta que él sería emperador, e mucho más después de la muerte del Emperador y su hija, teniendo confianza del mucho amor que la Emperatriz le tenía” (*Tirante* 1974, vol. 5, 214). Inheritance thus assuages the pain of loss, and in both *Tirante* and *Don Quijote* the narrator underscores how these material gains can cause the inheritor to forget.

In addition to the heroes’ wills, we find another legal document in both tales. In the first book of *Tirante el Blanco*, the King of Friesland, the King of Apollonia, the Duke of Burgundy, and the Duke of Bavaria appear before the King of England, though they remain anonymous. They hand the King a document in which the Mantuan notary Ambrosino certifies that they are “caballeros de cuatro cuartos,” and bears witness that they have appeared before three cardinals, the patriarch of Jerusalem, and two great knights (*Tirante* 1974, vol. 1, 216). Something similar happens in Chapter LXXII of the second part of *Don Quijote*, during the knight’s encounter with Álvaro Tarfe, a character from *Quijote’s* apocryphal second part by Alonso Fernández de Avellaneda. The character from the spurious book sees with his own eyes the differences between the Don Quijote he knows and the one in front of him, between this witty Sancho Panza he is now talking to and the greedy, dumb character of Avellaneda’s book. After declaring that he is Don Quijote de la Mancha, “el mismo que dice la fama, y no ese desventurado que ha querido usurpar mi nombre y honrarse con mis pensamientos,” and telling

Tarfe that he has never been to Zaragoza, as he avoided the city on learning that the usurper had gone to a jousting tournament there, he appeals to Tarfe's status as a knight, asking that he "sea servido de hacer una declaración ante el alcalde de este lugar de que vuestra merced no me ha visto en todos los días de su vida hasta agora, y de que yo no soy el don Quijote impreso en la segunda parte, ni este Sancho Panza mi escudero es aquel que vuestra merced conoció." By chance, the mayor and a scribe then happen to walk into the inn, and the declaration is thus effected (Cervantes 1998, 1208). The legal documents are different, as are their settings, but their functions are the same. The scribe from the village in La Mancha has a similar role to the notary in Rome who signs the text recognizing the knighthood of those who now present a letter to the King of England.

A thoroughgoing analysis of the presence of *Tirante el Blanco* in *Don Quijote* would require much more space than is available here. Nonetheless, the examples given herein should suffice to underscore, once again, the contention made at the outset of this study, that good literature has no linguistic borders. Joanot Martorell had a profound influence on literature written in Spanish because some of its greatest innovators had read their works. This paper is but a brief incursion into a fascinating topic: the way great authors of the Golden Age read contemporary works, and how these, in turn, influenced their own books, underscoring in addition the importance of the work of translators in the process of transmission that so often occurs among significant works of literature. While the influence of Greek and Latin models in the literature of the Golden Age is universally acknowledged, similar influence exerted by contemporary writers often goes unnoticed. By carefully examining a text, we can detect the readings of particular writers, for good literature feeds on literature, more than it does on life.

Notes

- 1 I leave aside the issue of the possible intervention of Martí Joan de Galba in Martorell's work and direct interested readers to Villalanzo and Chiner (1992). I would nonetheless note here that if Martorell pawned his copy of *Tirant*, it was very likely a completed work; had it not been finished, the sum he was given by the pawnbroker – "cent reals" – would have been excessive.
- 2 Literary histories bear testimony to another great fifteenth-century Catalan novel, *Curial e Güelfa*, the manuscript of which, kept at the Biblioteca Nacional de España (BNE), was only discovered by Manuel Milà i Fontanals in 1876. There was no trace of its influence on any previous work, nor was any mention of it recorded anywhere. The reason for the late discovery of this otherwise unobserved work was that it was actually a "Gothic novel" created by Milà, as is clear from the traces of Romanesque works visible in it, from Muntaner's *Crònica* to the Italian *Novellino*; *Paris e Viana* and *Petit Jehan de Saintré*; the troubadours Rigaut de Berbezilh and Raimbaut de Vaqueiras; Alfonso de la Torre's *Visión deleitable* and the *Coplas* of Jorge Manrique; even *La Celestina*, Luis Milán's *El cortesano*, *Lazarillo*, and the *Quijote* (Navarro Durán 2014). This erudite and clever forgery (similar to the case of Macpherson's *Ossian*) serves to emphasize the central point of this essay: that great authors assimilate their reading of other literary works and exhibit it in writing their own.
- 3 In this paper I use the 1511 Spanish translation of *Tirant*, since that was the version read by the various writers analyzed here.

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