

## Of *quijotes*, *quijotes*, and *quijotadas*:

### A Response to Alfredo Baras

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Alfredo Baras takes me rather severely to task for failing to observe that Don Quijote indeed wears the thigh guard known either as “quijote” or “greba.” Actually, I had always assumed that Don Quijote sallies forth with his *quijotes* in place, until I read Francisco Rico’s offhand comment that the *quijote* is a piece “no usada por nuestro hidalgo” (cited by Baras 119). I allowed myself to be swayed by Rico’s uncontested authority in these matters, and cited him to that effect, as Baras notes. Now, thanks to Baras, I see that I should have been more careful. Baras conclusively demonstrates the presence on our hero’s thighs not of *quijotes*, but of their synonym *grebas* (Baras 120). I am happy to stand corrected on this matter, and I trust that Baras will lavish the same erudition and attention to detail on his critique of Rico, or, as he obliquely prefers, “la edición del *Quijote* a cargo de Francisco Rico” (119), which suggests that responsibility for the omission lies with Rico’s assistants and not with the master himself.

As for my purported failure to take into account the proximity of the thigh to the genital region and consequent relation of the *quijote* as thigh guard to protection against carnal desires, I remit to *Madness and Lust. A Psychoanalytical Approach to Don Quixote* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: U California P, 1983), pages 68

and 71, where I observe that John Weiger had already made that connection in *The Individuated Self: Cervantes and the Emergence of the Individual* (Athens, OH: Ohio UP, 1978), 35, and I cite him approvingly. The reference to Weiger, with similar approbation by me, is also present in the article of reference (12). I am truly grateful to Baras, however, for the opportune reference to the *Libro de buen amor*, which neither Weiger nor I had observed.

As for my purported failure to take into account Part V (“Los vestidos y las armas de don Quijote”) of Carmen Bernis Madrazo’s splendid *El traje y los tipos sociales en el Quijote*, I remit to page 16 of my study, where I remark Bernis’ conflation of Arabic *kisa* and its Castilian derivatives (*queça, queçote, quezote, quiçote, quizote, quixote*. Bernis’ figure 519) and Catalan *quixot* and its Castilian derivative *quijote* (Bernis’s figure 346), which causes the former simply to disappear. On the same page I noted that the same disappearing act is also staged by José Antonio Maravall.

This brings me to the real bone of contention. Baras seems to assume that the point of my study was to insist that Don Quijote doesn’t wear thigh guards, and he goes to considerable lengths to demonstrate that indeed he did. It is frankly immaterial to me whether DQ went around with his thighs exposed or covered—with *quijotes*, with *grebas*, or with cut-off Levis. My point was to remark the existence of a second *quijote*, derived from Arabic *kisa* as noted above, and to suggest that this second *quijote* might also be present in the genesis of our hero’s name. Baras first misdirects attention away from the point of my study, then dismisses my (admittedly hypothetical) conclusion as “una simple cuestión de homonimia” (122), causing it, once again, to simply disappear. The question remains, as I suggested in the closing paragraphs of my study, of why there is still such resistance, especially in Spain, to the notion that the uniquely beautiful, uniquely powerful, uniquely fecund cultural complex we call Hispanic civilization might be the product of an Aryan-Semitic *convivencia*/dialectic.

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