

# Don Quixote and the End of Knight Literature

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**Abstract**—Don Quixote, one of the most famous figures in world literature, was a humanist under the illusion about chivalry. This paradoxical figure combined tragic fate with comedic flavor. A chronic comment on Don Quixote by Cervantes was that it ended knight literature and started neoteric river novel. Although in the preface of this novel, Cervantes stated that his purpose of writing was to overthrow the medieval knight story, he actually held a complicated attitude toward medieval knight novel—satirized the old form of medieval knight story and discloses evil and corruption of the society, taking stereotypical chivalry as his carrier for burgeoning humanism.

**Index Terms**—knight literature, Don Quixote, humanism, critical theme

## I. INTRODUCTION

### A. A Brief Review of Knight Literature

Knight literature, also called “chivalrous man” literature, was formed from 11<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> century. It is the secular literature totally different from church literature. Being a special literature phenomenon of the Middle Ages, it is a product of chivalry and also the literature representing the context of its times. From 11<sup>th</sup> century to early 12<sup>th</sup> century, the feudal system was basically established in Europe and with chivalry being set up and the status of knights improved, there produced their own moral code and mental life. That has broken through Christian asceticism and birth ideas, needing to enjoy their lives, yearning for secular love, and pursuing the knight honor of individual heroism, chivalry of helping the weak and eliminating the strong and knight demeanor of being gentle and educated. “A new kind of elegant literature was formed in the heyday of knight society and the literature combined the noble spirit temperament together with the worship of love”, which is “knight literature” (Zhang, 2004).

Knight literature is most based on folklore and epic and most of its basic theme is about the determination, chivalrous adventure, noblewomen worship and supremacy of love in feudal knights, which can almost be divided into two types: one focuses on the love twists and turns between knights and noblewomen, which is often shown by lyrics. The other is about knights fighting, taking adventure and determining to be successful, which is often shown by the form of knight legend. “European Literature” says, “their poems tell about the real life and love, singing about knight’s adventure (Li, 2001).

### B. The Literary Status of Don Quixote

Cervantes (1547 – 1616), the Spanish great humanist and outstanding realism writer, has been dead for 395 years, but such remarkable and typical characters as Don Quixote and Sancho Panza created by him still remain their brilliance now. When talking about their names, we will have the vivid and marvelous images in front of us. Once Belinsky said, “in all the famous literary works of Europe, the only one can combine the serious with the funny, the tragic with the comic and the trivial and vulgar in life with the great and beautiful so perfectly is “Don Quixote” of Cervantes” (Belinsky, 1952). Spanish people regard it as a national pride and all the people in the world regard it as the literary treasure. Until today, with its bitter irony, ingenious art design, funny exaggeration and profound philosophy, it still attracts lots of readers.

### C. Outline of Don Quixote and Its Composing Significance

In a village of La Mancha, Spain, there lives a poor country gentleman whose original name was Alonso Quixano. He has become obsessed with books of chivalry that is popular, and wants to go out as a knight-errant in search of adventures. He, with a lance in his hand, dons an old suit of ragged armor which he found from antiques handed down from his forefathers and rides on his skinny horse named “Rocinante”, which means that it changes from an inferior house to a precious superior house when it is ridden by a chivalry. He renames himself “Don Quixote de la Mancha”. Besides, he designates a neighboring farm girl as his lady love and gives her a noble name, making his decision to serve for her all his life. He aspires to take great adventures and achieve splendid successes, helping the humiliated and the oppressed. The first time, he set out alone. He regards an inn as a castle and asks the innkeeper to hold an investiture for him. Along the adventurous journey, Don Quixote fights single-handed. As a result, he is soundly beaten and injured severely. Then he is found and brought to his home on a donkey’s back by a neighboring peasant.

The second time, he persuades a farmer named Sancho to be his squire, promising him governorship of an island if they win victory, then the pair sneak off. Don Quixote still act on his weird ideas, thinking windmills to be ferocious giants, flocks of sheep to be enemies, galley-slaves to be victimized chivalries, wine skins to be giant heads. He chops and kills them, doing many ridiculous things. His deeds are not only harmful to others but also incur much beating and trouble to himself. He doesn't end his second adventure until he is brought home in a lion's cage. A month later, Don Quixote and Sancho begin their third adventure. On their way to Zaragoza to participate in a joust competition, they have various adventures, being invited to a castle by duck and duchess, who play such cruel jokes on them that they are tired both physically and psychologically with injuries all over their bodies. But Don Quixote regards all of these as sufferings that a chivalry must undergo, unable to wake up to reality. Samson, Don Quixote's neighbor, in an effort to get him return home, jousts with him disguised as a rival knight. Don Quixote is defeated and has to return home as Samson requests. Upon home, he retires to his bed with a deathly illness and fully recovers his sanity just before death. He said to his niece in remorse, "The stupid shadow in my heart caused by reading novels of chivalry has disappeared. Now I know they are just absurdity and deception. I regret that it is too late that I have no time to read the mind-nourishing books to compensate my foolishness." He dictates his will, which includes that his niece will be disinherited if she marries a chivalry.

Cervantes lives in an unrest time when the Spain's national power is deteriorating, falling into a decline. The feudal system heads for collapse and disorder, but the feudal class and monks still live a luxurious and debauched life, trying to maintain superficial prosperity. The ruling class still publicizes politics and culture, beautifies feudal ruling and anaesthetize people's mind by using chivalry legends, which causes that although absurd chivalry legends has disappeared in western countries, novels of chivalry are popular and overflow in Spain. Having been cruelly prosecuted by feudal system, Cervantes is aware of cruelty of the ruling class and corruption of church institution, abhors chivalry system and chivalry literature that beautifies this system. He wants to wake up people to reality from endless illusion. Therefore, in the preface, Cervantes points out that the aim of this novel is to "remove the reputation and influence of chivalry in society and among the public". From the perspective of art and literature, *Don Quixote* is also successful. The creation of characters, the application of realistic techniques and satirical tongue are unprecedented, exerting a profound influence on the development of the whole literary history.

## II. THE BLOOM OF HUMANISM: GETTING THE END OF KNIGHT LITERATURE FROM ITS IDEOLOGICAL CONNOTATION

### A. *Renaissance and Humanism*

Renaissance is a cultural movement, taking place from 14<sup>th</sup> century to 17<sup>th</sup> century, which is also an ideological and cultural liberation movement with the banner of reviving the ancient culture against the feudalism and church. It is a great revolution period in European history, making vital and profound influences on Europe and even the development of social history.

The essence of Renaissance is humanism, with "humanity" against "divinity", "human rights" against "religious authority". They put forward the slogan that "I am a man, so I have all the characters of human beings". They are not so satisfied with the church control in spirit world that they ask for being human-oriented, not God-oriented, eulogizing people's wisdom and strength, praising the perfect and lofty human nature against the despotic rule of religion and feudal hierarchical system, advocating individual liberation, equality and freedom, and promoting individual personality. Therefore, the humanism concepts emphasize "man", giving play to the instinct of "man" and being a power for "man" to pursue the true, the good and the beautiful (Jiang, 2005, p.59).

### B. *Humanism Shown "Don Quixote"*

#### 1. Reflecting Humanism with Realism Creation Technique

Firstly, *Don Quixote* is a real picture of Spanish society. Living in Spain in the sixteenth century and seventeenth century, Cervantes uses his fifty-year experiences to compose this novel, which are the reflection of his life, thoughts and emotion as well as the panorama of the Spanish society at that time. The book creates about 700 characters with different professions and dispositions, including aristocrats, landlords, businessmen, monks, peasants, shepherds, actors, bandits, prisoners, performing artists, prostitutes and so on. It is proper to say that the characters range from noblemen to common people, who reflect all aspects of Spanish social political life and economic life in the sixteenth century from different angles. Cervantes is the pioneer in reflecting times and reality with such broad and vivid pictures and profound humanistic care. In this novel, Don Quixote and Sancho walk across Spain in their chivalry-errand adventures. Following them, the readers have mountains, forests, counties and villages of Spain before them. Don Quixote had access to different persons in society and especially experiences the ordinary life of people in low and medium class. What he experiences "like a giant picture, show a corrupted Spain dynasty, extravagant and dissipated government and the miserable life of people of lower class" (Chen, 2006). On the other hand, some details in this novel expose churches' darkness. For example, the clergy procession on the way to bury the dead is thought as monsters and ghosts in darkness by Don Quixote; the clergy tutor in the duke's is a foolish conceited fake gentleman. This novel describes in large number the miserable fate of the working people, disclosing that they suffer from grave exploitation and prosecution. For example, the landlord Aldudona refuses to pay the wages the shepherd Andris had earned and beats him. A paragraph in the novel describes the experiences of soldiers, "Soldiers are poorer than the poverty-stricken persons. The

few wages that they rely on are either delayed or in arrears. If they rob, it is inevitable for them to lose life and to lose consciousness. They even can not afford to buy clothes. The ragged jackets are used both as dresses and shirts; on cold winters, they sleep in bleak fields, defending against coldness only by breathing out, however, the air breathed out from hungry stomach equals with, contrary to physics, cold air that are gasped" (Yang, 1991, p.345), this paragraph not only denounces the cruelty of Spain monarchy but also expresses sympathy for soldiers in lower class.

Secondly, the characters in this novel are the medium through which Cervantes expresses humanistic thoughts. In *Don Quixote*, the author often comments on society and life with the protagonist Don Quixote's words, among which there are profound insights with sparkles of humanist thoughts. For example, when Sancho is going to take office, Don Quixote instructs him that he must care about the poor, be fair in handling affairs and merciful in executing the law and must not take bribes. In his opinion, civil officials should be honest and military officials should be brave and should not run away when facing dangers. He thinks that violence should be only used in just wars with the purpose of peace. Another example is that Don Quixote once said, "Mean persons are not those in low position while noblemen without knowledge are only common people" (Yang, 1991, p.300). All of these are author's expression of humanism. In the chapter 54 of part two, Cervantes, in this novel, tells an event that is closely related with the reality and draws the attention of the whole Spanish society banishes Morisque from its territory. On Sancho returns home in melancholy after resigning his position as "governor of the island", he comes across a group of pilgrims dressed up like Europeans, among whom there is a Morisque who ran away in the great banishment-Lichode (he is Sancho's old neighbor, running a shop in the village). Recognizing him, Sancho put his arm around Lechode's neck and says, "What weird clothes you are wearing. Who can recognize you? How dare you are to return to Spain. If you are caught, you will suffer." Sancho describes to him the scene where his daughter was banished, "Your daughter was so pretty that day that the whole villagers came out to see her, exclaiming her most beautiful in the world. She, crying, hugged her acquaintances, girl friends and all the villagers who sent her, and prayed to God and Goddess to bless us. She was so heart-broken that I, who don't weep usually, couldn't help crying. To be honest, any people wanted to rob her and hide her, but nobody dared to do that. Who dares to disobey the king's order?" in the end, Lechode and Sancho hug each other and said goodbye in tears (Yang, 1991, p.389). Obviously, in this scene, Cervantes obscurely expresses his protest against this inhuman deed and reveals us the complicated history of the banishment of a Morisque family in the times of great banishment, showing his sympathy and mercy for the deportees, which indicates the author's attention to social reality and strong humanism. The artist's consciousness is a part of the times' consciousness. The success of *Don Quixote's* realism lies in that it reflects the ideological concept and social outlook of an extraordinary time. By describing the Spanish feudal society that seems to be strong but stops developing under the impact of Great Revolution, *Don Quixote* leaks out signals that Spanish royalty heads for collapse, reflecting the author's humanistic spirit in every detail of humanism (Zhu, 1994, p.80).

## **2. The humanistic connotation in the novel**

From the ideological content of novel, "Don Quixote" seems ridiculous, but in fact it implies the author's deep understanding and summary toward Spanish realistic relationship and it also expresses the author's strong tendency to humanism. The works uses a lot to show the polarization between the rich and poor in the autocratic monarchy with the feudal being dominant. The upper class enjoys prosperity, while the working people live without clothes and food. Feeling bored in extravagant life, the duke couples spend a lot of money on strange clothes to play jokes on Don Quixote, arousing all the servants to act as noblewomen in misfortune, magicians and all sorts of evil-doers, so that Do Quixote and Sancho can be cheated. By contrast, there are lots of farmers and craftsmen who cannot support their families, struggling with death and living in despair. Sanchos have to work hard all day long, but they are still so hungry that they have to be rangers with hardships. When the noble indulge in hunting, drinking and amusement, the farmers have to pray for rain carrying a god sculpture. Describing the features of the times, the author relentlessly flays the social darkness and ugly rulers, deeply revealing the sharp contrast between luxury and poverty and between the imperious and powerless, and yearning for free and happy humanism.

## **3. The humanism shown by the character images in the novel**

The novel contains the humanistic ideas not only in the ideological content, but also in the character images. Through *Don Quixote*, Cervantes explicitly expresses his humanistic ideals.

First of all, through the deeds of Don Quixote, the novel expresses the individual liberty, individual freedom and humanism advocated by humanists against the feudal monarchy and theocracy. In the novel, Don Quixote regards freedom as life. The reason why he sets the slaves free is his idea that "people were born with freedom and it was too cruel to make free people slaves" (Yang, 1991, p.174). Do Quixote was entertained by the duke once, but he did not like the duke's deluxe castle, feeling it like a dull prison. Finally, he left the castle, going to the suburb and feeling refreshed. He couldn't help saying, "Freedom is priceless given by God, while nothing under the ground and in the sea can be compared with it. Like freedom and dignity, it is worth fighting with our lives" (Yang, 1991, p.156). The duke's castle is like a social shadow of Spanish upper class being dark and killing human nature, but the wide natural world is the free world for humanists and the common pursuit for humanists in the Renaissance.

In addition, Don Quixote also often praises the equal thought and advocates that they should break the feudal hierarchy concepts, thinking that people's high or low status is not decided by their social positions or blood relationship, but by their own noble or inferior virtues; people's virtues depend on their own effort, which is inner, not

external. For example, in the novel, when Sancho is going to be a governor, he feels restless for having raised pigs and ducks. Don Quixote warns him, "Don't need to admire the born noble. The blood relationship being inherited, virtues are cultivated by themselves; the virtues have their own values, but the blood relationship is a favor done by their ancestors" (Yang, 1991, p.296). It is one feature of new ideas in humanism to emphasize the non-hereditary and important virtues.

The description of another character Sancho also reflects this novel's humanism. Sancho was a poor peasant and is forced by life to be Don Quixote's squire, hoping to free himself from poor life and make a fortune. Later, he suffered from a lot with Don Quixote. He notices his master's insanity and knows that his master's promise is not so reliable, but he is touched by his master's kindness and has sincere and real feelings for him. After conquering various tribulations, he becomes more and more broad-minded, gradually overcome selfishness. Especially when he is appointed as "governor of the island", his character has a quantitative leap. His desire for wealth is replaced by democracy that changes the situation. He is proud of being a peasant, stopping envying noblemen. During his short governorship, Sancho fully shows his wisdom and ability that he accumulated in practices. He, adhering to justice, protects the innocent people, helping the weak and eradicates the strong. Besides, he reforms misadministration, formulates new laws and abolishes brutal sentences. He is successful in achieving what Don Quixote strives to do. He is acute at observation and severely punishes spies. Once he sees through the traps set by duke and duchess, he immediately resigns. He says to the duchess, "I was born naked and leaves this position without taking anything. So I don't suffer any loss and don't gain extra advantage unfairly." "I didn't bring even a cent when taking the office and don't take a cent when I leave" (Yang, 1991, p.381) Obviously, he is totally different from those authorities that corrupt and bribe in Spain at that time.

From the above analyses, we can know that Don Quixote by Cervantes indicates humanistic thoughts in both content and molding of characters. Don Quixote reflects Cervantes' humanistic thoughts and the development and direction of the emerging bourgeoisie literature and shakes the ideological foundation of chivalry literature with humanistic thoughts. In this way, its publication "sounds a death knell to chivalry literature and creates an epic of declining chivalry system". The chivalry literature ultimately disappears from people's sight in the ideological tide of Renaissance.

### III. THE USE OF IRONY AND THE END OF KNIGHT LITERATURE IN "DON QUIXOTE"

"Don Quixote", the novel is successful in using ironic narrative way in the means of literature and art. In the preface of the novel, Cervantes mentions explicitly: the purpose of his writing the book is to attack knight novel. By making the image of Don Quixote, the novel adopts parody and irony to satirize the popular knight novel at that time in Spain. Aiming to criticize by imitating the narrative way and contents of the knight novel, the works reaches the goal of ending the knight literature by denying the outdated feudal knight system.

#### A. *The Imitation of Narrative Ways of Knight Novel to Highlight the Ironic Effect*

Irony is used through the works, whose most outstanding reflection is the narrative model of "Don Quixote". Imitating the writing style of the knight novel, the works describes the "ranger history" of Don Quixote and his servant, Sancho Panza. The former is so addicted to the knight novel that he decides to imitate the ancient knight to travel all over the world, defending against an injustice. The structure and language of the whole novel is to imitate the knight novel which is opposed by the author. By imitating the narrative model of the knight novel, it highlights the ridiculous image and absurd behavior of Don Quixote, making a strong satire by overturning and contrasting the fate of heroes in the knight novel, so as to eliminate the infection and narcotism of the knight novel and to reach the goal of burying the knight novel in laughter. It can make readers wake up from illusion, facing up to Spanish history and fact. By imitating the narrative style of the knight novel on purpose, Cervantes makes the comic effect and by this kind of funny imitation, it creates the effect of being funny, ridiculous, ironic and absurd, which doubts the effectiveness and authenticity of the knight novel and which finally denies it.

#### B. *The Satire and Criticism of "Don Quixote" to the Content of Knight Novel*

It criticizes the trend of demonization in knight novel. The knight novel of the Middle Ages mainly reflects different adventures of knights, which is of legend. Being different from hero epic, it is not based on historical facts, so in order to exaggerate the bravery of knights, the knight novelists make up some nonexistent objects in the real life to test knights, such as some miraculous magicians, witches, super giants and fierce monster. These are often in the knight legend of the Middle Ages. It is influenced by demonization of the knight novel, so Don Quixote who used to be learned loses his head when facing the reality and doing a lot of ridiculous things when treating life not based on the reality. For example, he regards the windmills as giants. Relentlessly Cervantes criticizes and satirizes Don Quixote's illusion about demons. Cervantes expresses his antipathy to the demonization of the knight novel from the mouth of characters in the works, thinking that literature should imitate the reality.

### IV. THE CONTRAST IN "DON QUIXOTE" TO HIGHLIGHT THE CRITICISM THEME

The novel, "Don Quixote" adopts a large number of contrast techniques from various views, which makes it

outstanding in the contrast of the criticism theme and unified in the theme, fighting strongly against the absurdity of the feudal system and against the psychoplegia and poison made by the knight literature. "Don Quixote" shows the contrast in four sides: the comparison between different people, the comparison of complex personalities caused by the characters' own conflicts, the comparison between illusory world and real world and the comparison between the realism creative skills and the illusion of traditional knight novel.

#### A. *The Comparison between Don Quixote and Sancho*

In the novel, Sancho is the opposite of Don Quixote and in essence he represents the real society against Don Quixote. Sancho is practical with a clear head. Being a servant of a knight, he does not want to achieve great, but he imagines that he may seek for a way to get rid of his poverty by adventures. Therefore, he stands on the real side generally, holding a sardonic attitude toward Don Quixote's "absurd" behaviors from an ironic view. This forms their opposite relationship between both of them, one being imaginative and the other real, one being foolish and the other smart, and one being idealistic and the other realistic. Through Sancho's clear head and wisdom, it exaggerates the foolish head and absurd behavior of Don Quixote. When Don Quixote regards a windmill as a giant, Sancho persuades Don Quixote not to believe it is a giant, but a windmill. The latter does not believe it at all. In this case, Sancho looks at Don Quixote mockingly. Sancho, the character is used to serve as a foil to the unrealistic Don Quixote, pursuing chivalry spirit, to criticize the absurdity of chivalry and knight literature, divorced from reality.

#### B. *The Comparison between the Dual Personalities of Don Quixote*

It is obvious that Don Quixote is featured with dual personality: he is a comic character, and meanwhile he is a tragic role, isolating the ideal from the reality, having a contradiction between noble motivation and unprofitable behavior and finally ending his life with harming himself and others; wearing a prevalent knight armor of the Middle Ages, his mind is full of equality, freedom and philanthropic humanism of Renaissance; the dual personality of Don Quixote is the best criticism of the knight literature, which is just like the description of the works, "if this person is wise but very stupid, so he may be stupid and wise" (Yang, 1991, p.118). Don Quixote is poisoned by the knight novel, acting as a lunatic and having a difficulty with the social reality. But without chivalry, he is very sober, not only knowing Latin, but also understanding Italian. He is good at the literature of Greek and Rome, knowing the ancient and recent history well, but as long as the chivalry is mentioned, the image of Don Quixote will become absurd and ridiculous when he thinks about the plots described in the knight novel. A series of his knight adventures only brings failure. His enthusiasm and noble ideals are destroyed by his understanding mistakes and absurd means. There is always a contradiction between subjective motivation and objective effect, while the contradiction is the conflict between his outdated knight spirit and reality.

As it is described above, the era mistakes of Don Quixote are trying to recover the outdated knight spirit, so it makes him a comic character. But the author highlights his feature of determining to wipe out all the sins in different situations, showing his noble quality in his personality, which is to sacrifice his life in pursuing the justice, ideal and society in spite of dangers. His ideal is noble as well as absurd. Therefore, different from other pure comic characters, he is also a role with the tragic, revealing his tragedy in absurdity and getting people's sympathy. Just like what the author wants to show, Don Quixote has a dual personality. According to the description in the novel, the reason why he can be mad and make mistake is the knight novel, so it can deepen people's abominations and disgust to the knight novel and feudal system

#### C. *The Comparison between Vision World and Real World*

As the analysis above, the contradictory personality of Don Quixote is in isolating his idealistic illusory world from the real world. In his mind, the popularity of chivalry is a kind of ideal society, where there is no evil or no bullying, but just the fairness, justice and freedom. Therefore, he will do it going through hell without any hesitance. This seems to be his fantasy, in which he always lives and when there is a conflict with the reality, it is one of the roots causing the tragic fate of Don Quixote.

In Chapter 22 of Vol. 1, Don Quixote meets a group of prisoners under escort and driven by his chivalry, he asks the guard to set free the prisoners, "It is God who sends me to this world, implementing the chivalry I believe in, fulfilling my intention of robbing the rich and helping the poor... Now I calmly beg you. If you agree, I will reward you; if you refuse, I will use my gun, my sword and strength of my arms to make you listen to me". After helping the prisoner to scatter the guards, Don Quixote asks them to describe his heroic behaviors to a woman he loves, but it is refused by the prisoners, who think that "Don Quixote is so ridiculous to set them free and he must be mad" (Yang, 1991, p.174). Through the description, the author exposes the gap between the knight world imagined by Don Quixote and the real world, to highlight the fact that the outdated knight spirit is incompatible with the social reality and that the knight novel poisons Don Quixote's thought.

In Vol. 2, there are changes in character relationship and status, when Don Quixote and Sancho become the honored guests of the duke couple and the wise mentors of servants. Moreover, Don Quixote is the funny, lovely and respected friend. But by the noble and their wives, Don Quixote and Sancho are only regarded as dolls for their entertainment. In the farcical hardship made by the duke couple, the knight image in Don Quixote's ideal is collapsed and the chivalry spirit he wants to carry forward is heavily satirized. The reason why virtues and ideals of Don Quixote are destroyed is

that he wants to make the illusion of knight spirit and chivalry described in the novel becomes a perfect living way, but in the reality it must be rebuffed. The failure of Don Quixote really proves that the society has made great progress, in which the old chivalry and knight literature based on chivalry cannot continue to exist any longer in the real society.

#### V. CONCLUSION

Formed in the second half of 11th century, the Knight literature was popular in 12th and 13th centuries, declining in 14th century. It fully shows the spirit pursuit of the feudal noble, which is also a representative form of aristocracy literature. This kind of literary form is a product created in the special historical conditions of European the Middle Ages and it must disappear with the fall of its economic and class bases.

Being at the top of history, "Don Quixote" uses a humanist view to survey the whole Spanish society. With the real society being the background of characters, it creates this typical image of Don Quixote. The works confirms the lovely and respectable personalities, but it also criticizes that the remained feudalist ideas attached with literary forms poison the ordinary people in spirit during the social transformation. The author uses a comic tone to tell the tragic fate of characters, profoundly exposing the direct reason causing such a tragedy — the knight literature controls people's thoughts, to criticize the unreasonable social system and wish a future of brilliant human nature.

The reason why "Don Quixote" is regarded as a rarity in the world literature history is not only that it is a piece of excellent literary works, but that it is an encyclopedia reflecting the social reality of Spain and even the whole Europe, making an outstanding contribution in promoting the "metabolism" of literary forms.

By imitating the narrative ways of knight literature, Cervantes uses various techniques of expression, revealing the absurd chivalry and knight literature, laughing at the chivalry and knight literature ironically and ruthlessly and making a criticism about its reasonable existence in the new period to overturn the knight literature and complete the commission to end the knight literature. It is because the works owns these elements that it can be representative of humanism literature and also adds beautiful colors to the world literature.

In "Don Quixote", Cervantes connects different social cultures together, linking history with reality, revealing the distance between ideals and reality of the knights, satirizing and criticizing the knight novel, reaching the goal of cleaning the ways of knight novel and finally completing the mission to end the knight literature.

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