

Cervantes' Hermetic Architectures:
The Danger Outside, from the *Novelas ejemplares* to the *Persiles*

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Cervantes' novels are peopled with characters constantly on the move, always going from here to there, pursuing amorous, spiritual, picaresque or chivalric quests. Since these figures often move outside cities, the architectures of Cervantes' novels are few. As such they call attention to themselves and we may inquire as to their presence and function. While the Inn is one of the most prevalent architectures, it is a hybrid one, combining inside and outside. I am more interested in the home, villa or palace, the church and the cave (as reconfigured by humans), in order to see if indeed they abide by the concepts of place and space as delineated Yi-Fu Tuan: "Place is security space is freedom; we are attached to the one and long for the other." Thus, the villa, the church and perhaps the cave should be equated with security. At the same time, during the baroque all worldly security is insubstantial as we move through the theater of life. Can these architectural places guard from the danger outside? Or do these hermetic sites wall-in certain dangers? Can some of these spaces evoke Hermes through the *Corpus Hermeticum*, thus concealing hermetic mysteries? As a first step in this analysis I will look at a sample of hermetic architectures in Cervantes cycle of *senectute*, his last three published prose works: *Novelas ejemplares*, *Don Quijote II* and *Persiles y Sigismunda*. Six sites/moments will be explored: (1) the joys of infernal places; (2) the castle of jealousy; (3) the duchess's torture chambers; (4) the invisible villa; (5) Hipólita's false loggia; and (6) the church outside.