

Publicado en *Hispania* (la norteamericana, no la española), 59 (1976), 954-55.

This review is a predecessor of my article "On Editing *Don Quixote*," published in *Cervantes* 3.1 (1983): 3-34 and 160 (<http://www2.h-net.msu.edu/~cervantes/csa/bcsas83.htm>). According to Francisco Rico in his 1998 edition, Cuesta's typesetters worked with a professionally-made copy, and not Cervantes' autograph.

Flores, R[obert] M. *The Compositors of the First and Second Madrid Editions of "Don Quixote,"* Part I. London: Modern Humanities Research Association, 1975. x + 148 pp. \$45.

As a step toward preparing a truly critical edition of *Don Quixote*, Flores in this volume examines the compositorial practices of the Madrigal-Cuesta press. Analyzing the orthographic variants found in the first edition of the *Quijote*, he demonstrates that these variants occur in identifiable groups, and concludes that the groups reflect the spelling preferences imposed by Cuesta's compositors. Identified by *pliegos* are four such compositors who worked on the first *Quixote* edition. Flores also shows that the pages of *Don Quijote* were not set serially, but with (usually) two compositors working simultaneously, estimating, by casting-off copy, the point in the manuscript at which each would begin work. That these estimates were not precise, and last/minute adjustments in the composed text necessary, explains the varying number of lines per page, many of the expansions and contractions, and even a missing chapter-heading (Chapter 43), which was deleted to make room for extra lines of type.

Because the estimates were inexact, and because two additional compositors were called in near the end of the job, suggesting a rushed schedule, Flores concludes that there would not have been a printed edition of 1604 used as printer's copy, and the edition traditionally

accepted as the *princeps* is, in fact, precisely that. Flores then turns to the second edition of Cuesta, demonstrating that the compositors of that edition (presumably two, plus those of the pages printed at the Imprenta Real) worked from the previously printed first edition, without access to Cervantes' manuscript.

Despite his ground-breaking work, Flores has [p. 955] not collated multiple copies of the Cuesta editions of the *Quijote* to detect alterations¹ in press, nor does she explain why this standard practice should be unnecessary. It is surprising to find not even a passing reference to Richard Schaefer's *Juan de la Cuesta* (University of Alabama Press, 1973), and to see that Rodríguez Marín's editorial work is judged only on the basis of his 1916 edition. Flores is rather hard both on Cuesta's compositors, who should not be judged by contemporary standards, and earlier *Quijote* editors.

Skeptics in the matter of textual criticism continually question its practical value. Flores' declared goal is the preparation of an old-spelling edition of Part I (only) of *Don Quijote*. By identifying the spelling the compositors imposed on the manuscript (almost certainly Cervantes' autograph), and subtracting these alterations from the text of Cuesta's edition, he intends to purify the text by establishing and following Cervantes' own orthography. However laudable this procedure is in theory, the results seem meager so far: he can only conclude that Cervantes wrote Dulzinea rather than Dulcinea, and that he spelled certain forms of *haber* without initial *h*. One wonders why he did not consult the small number of Cervantine autographs for information, however limited, about his spelling.

Nevertheless, Flores seems to know well what he is doing, and he may indeed produce the definitive edition of *Don Quijote*, Part I. One final note: this study is well written and his complex arguments easy to follow. Good writing is not so frequently found that it should go without praise.

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¹[“Alterations,” in the printed text.]