

REVIEW ARTICLES

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## Edith Grossman's Translation of *Don Quixote*

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THE SPECTACULAR SUCCESS OF Edith Grossman's translation is the best thing that has ever happened to Cervantes in this country. It was published on October 21, 2003, and two months later, on Christmas Eve, 2003, it rose to be the ninth-best-selling book at Amazon.com.

What this means is that thousands, or even hundreds of thousands of people, have experienced reading this book in recent months, a great boon to *cervantistas'* (or at least *my*) desire to see a *Quijote* on everyone's bookshelf. Our collective hats should collectively be tipped in the direction of New York's Upper West Side to congratulate Edith Grossman on her achievement.

This is a trade book destined for the general reader, and in this role Grossman's text is ideal—you read it, you get the story, you get lots of footnotes—in an altogether readable format.

In the first two paragraphs of the novel itself, it matters little to the man in the street whether don Quijote's lance was stored on a shelf (as the translation says [19])<sup>1</sup> or on a lance rack, or if Don Quijote's greyhound was used for racing (as in the translation) or if he was merely swift. (A parallel with "galgo *corredor*" is in II, 41, where "cohetes *tronadores*" was translated as just "fireworks" [724].) It equally doesn't make any difference to that same fellow if don Quijote lived "Somewhere in La Mancha, in a *place* whose name I do not care to remember" (as the translation says), or "In a *village* in La Mancha, whose name I do not care

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1 Numbers in parentheses or brackets refer to page numbers in the Grossman translation. No page numbers are given for the original Spanish texts when cited—too many editions.

to remember” (italics are mine), because villages are places after all. But these little details should be a caveat about the translations’s familiarity with the Golden Age idiom, where “lugar” in this context, does mean ‘village.’

There has been a flood of “reviews” of this translation, all favorable, and none with much, if any, analysis: some of these are those of James Wood (*The New Yorker*), Tania Barrientos (*The Philadelphia Inquirer*), *The San Francisco Chronicle*, Carlos Fuentes (*The New York Times*, with a rebuttal by Roberto Carlos Echevarría in a letter to the editor), Craig McDonald (*This Week*, UK), Jay Tolson (*U.S. News*), Julian Evans (*The Daily Telegraph*, UK), Max Gross (*Forward*), Robert McCrum (*The Observer*, UK), Terry Castle (*The Atlantic Monthly*), and Richard Eder.<sup>2</sup> I hope to give quite a bit of analysis here.

Part of the problem *Don Quixote* translators face is that of which edition to use to translate from.<sup>3</sup> Grossman says that she used “Martín de Riquer’s edition”—but Riquer has done *two* different editions, the one from 1955 and the one from 1980, the latter of which he (naturally) considers superior. Looking at the footnote on p. 67 of the translation, where “Benengeli” is associated with “berenjena” and the Moors’ predilection for dishes made with eggplant, it seems to reflect the use of the 1955 edition instead of the 1980 edition, which no longer insists on the Moors’ culinary tastes.

An example of how the edition leads the translator astray is in the *Captive’s Tale*, where the renegade decides to take on a partner with whom he can buy a boat, a certain “Moro Tangerino” (folio 242<sup>v</sup> in the 1605 *princeps*) ‘A Moor from Tangier.’ Since the same fellow is called a

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<sup>2</sup> These reviews are archived on the h-Cervantes Web site, <<http://www.h-net.org/~cervantes>>.

<sup>3</sup> *Don Quixote*, through the ages, has been plagued by editors who think they are smarter and more clever than Cervantes, and most have felt obliged to “correct” supposed errors and contradictions that are built into the work, as a “service” to the reader. Some of these mistakes and contradictions are so blatant and obvious that many are “repaired” without annotation. These editors don’t realize, however, that Cervantes put them all in his book to imitate a careless writing style used in the romances of chivalry. He certainly didn’t have a bad memory—just look at all the historical, biblical, literary, and mythological references in the text. So, the unsuspecting translator, putting faith in the edition used, is duped by the falsifications inherent in the base text, then is lulled by the many footnotes that point out how Cervantes has forgotten this and has erred in that, and they unwittingly continue into their translations the misrepresentations of the edition and the attitude of the annotator.

I have discussed this topic in more depth in the articles and introduction listed under “Works Cited.”

"Tagarino" 'Moor from Aragón' later, almost everyone considers the Tangier reference to be an error and homogenize the text so that both are "Tagarinos." So, "Tagarino" it is in Riquer, with no note about the change, and "Tagarino" it is in the translation (351). Again, when don Quijote and others arrive at an inn, the famous "cousin," who was leading don Quijote to the Cave of Montesinos, is suddenly identified as the "sobrino" in the Spanish text. It looks like dopey old Cervantes has made another obvious gaffe! Virtually all editors "fix" it silently back to "cousin," doubtless thinking they are doing Cervantes a favor. Riquer changes it to "primo" without a note, which Grossman translates in all innocence. So, where Riquer has gone astray, so has Grossman unsuspectingly gone astray as well.

Finding the right word in a second language for plays on words in the original can be sticky. Here is a successful translation of a tricky passage. The muleteer in I, 3 goes to get water for his animals: "The muleteer *cared* nothing for these words [of admonishment by don Quijote]—and it would have been better for him if he had, because it meant *caring* for his health and well being" (32). Spanish: "No se *curó* el arriero destas razones (y fuera mejor que se *curara*..." (italics in both texts are of course mine). How to fix the problem of "tantas letras tiene un *no* como un *si*" in I, 22 is handled in this way, which works just fine: "they say *no* has even fewer letters than *yes*" (165). Proverbs are another problem, and the translation handles some of them very well by giving appropriate English equivalents. Sancho says: "the proverb fits: birds of a feather flock together" (610) for the Spanish "dime con quien andas; decirte he quién eres." After Maese Pedro's ape escapes, he says: "It would be like pulling teeth to get him back" (653). This is a good English equivalent for the Spanish, which says: "me han de sudar los dientes." In a scene where Sancho apologizes to don Quijote, he says: "If I talk too much, it comes more from weakness than from malice, and to err is human, to forgive divine" (646). A fine equivalent for "quien yerra y se enmienda, a Dios se encomienda."

On the other hand, the translation sometimes misses the boat, such as when Ginés de Pasamonte says that demanding that the galley slaves go to El Toboso is "like asking pears from an elm tree" (172) with similar variants of the same expression on pp. 726 and 799. Wouldn't "trying to get blood from a turnip" be the best equivalent? Similarly, when don Quijote speaks of Durandarte, he says that he was "of pure flesh and pure bone" (606)—wouldn't "pure flesh and blood" be better? And as for "Zamora was not won in an hour" (922), wouldn't "Rome was not built

in a day” be more logical?

I like it when the flavor of the Spanish is kept by using Spanish words that everyone knows, instead of their translations. Andrés in I, 4 says: “I won’t do it again, Señor, by the Passion of Christ” (36). Similarly, Sancho’s promised *ínsula* is kept as “ínsula” in the translation. When other characters are named, it is very good that their Spanish names are kept, such as Grisóstomo and Ambrosio (81).

I also like it when Spanish currency is used instead of foreign money, such as dollars and farthings. Footnotes can explain what they are worth. “Don Quijote calculated the sum and found that it amounted to seventy-three *reales*” (36). (And we should be grateful that “seventy-three” was retained as well; some editions correct Don Quijote’s “mistaken” arithmetic.) Later, don Quijote explains to Dorotea that he wanted to make Juan Haldudo pay Andrés “down to the last *maravedí*” (265).

When the text says that our narrator was “en el Alcaná de Toledo,” just what is this “Alcaná”? The translation edifies by saying “One day when I was in the Alcaná market in Toledo” (67). The clarification is good and called for.

The problem of “your grace” can be a vexing one. John Rutherford always used “you,” but that seems to dilute the flavor of the text. The solution here is to use “your grace” once and then change other references to “you” (rather than the grammatical but confusing “he” or “him”), as in this example: “I’ll entertain your grace by telling you [instead of “him”] stories until daylight, unless you want [instead of “he wants”] to dismount and sleep” (144). It keeps the spirit of the text and makes it easy to read.

This translation is very clean typographically. I found just one misprint: “Teuán” for “Tetuán” (365).

Having said this much, I have a warning to make: serious students of literature in translation should consider looking elsewhere for more faithful translations, such as Starkie and the discontinued and lamented Ormsby-Douglas-Jones version. There are just too many things that just are not right, or are confusing, in this translation.

It is stated that don Quijote “often felt the desire to take up his pen and give it [*Belianís*] the conclusion it promised there; and no doubt would have done so, and even published it” (20). The original Spanish text for the final words says “*saliera con ella*,” which means that ‘he really would have done it.’

Don Quijote found “some armor that belonged to his great-grandfa-

thers" (22), but "bisabuelos" means "forefathers."

Regarding Dulcinea, don Quijote was "searching for a name that would not differ from his," (23) "que no desdijese mucho del suyo," but "suyo" here means "hers". Aldonza is phonetically similar to Dulcinea: where *d*, *l*, *z*-*sound*, *n* and *a* are all common. "Dulcinea" is quite different phonetically from "Quijote" (or "Quijano").

Something I consider very nettling is the matter of Dulcinea's home town, "El Toboso." The article, which is part of the name, is left off in every instance: "he decided to call her *Dulcinea of Toboso*" (24). It's like saying: "I used to live in Hague but moved to Bronx." Other cities and regions with articles in Spanish also omit the article: "he's Juan Haldudo the rich man, and he lives in Quintanar" (37) (= El Quintanar); "the empresses and queens of Alcarria" (40). "el Alcarria" is what it's called in the Spanish original text, "la Alcarria" in modern Spanish. In the episode of the Captive, he explains, in the original version, how the Grand Turk "acometi6 la Goleta." The translation has the article, but in *English*: "he attacked the Goletta" (338), "I lost my freedom at the Goletta" (371). It would have been better to say "he attacked La Goletta" and "I lost my freedom at La Goletta," with the Spanish article. Similarly, in the braying episode, one of the villages is called "the Reloja" (640). I'd use "La Reloja" in the translation. A like thing is done with certain names: the young girl who chases after Lope Ruiz, the goatherd, in Sancho's story, is called just "Torralba" (instead of "La Torralba") (145).

When don Quijote is worried because he hasn't been dubbed a knight, "he resolved to have himself dubbed a knight by the first person he met" (24). Only knights, not regular persons, can dub others a knight. The Spanish says: "propuso de armarse caballero del primero que topase," where "primero" refers back to the nearest masculine noun, "caballero."

As don Quijote arrived at the first inn, "At the moment a swineherd who was driving his pigs—no excuses, that's what they're called" (26). The original Spanish says: "En esto sucedi6 acaso que un porquero que andaba recogiendo de unos rastros una manada de puercos (que sin perd6n, as6 se llaman)." "Pig" was a taboo word in Spain, for several reasons, and it was a custom to beg one's pardon when mentioning them, but our ironic narrator says he asks for no one's pardon because that's what they are. "No excuses" is not quite right here.

In that inn, don Quijote is offered "truchuelas" 'codfish,' which he mistakes for a diminutive of "trucha" 'trout.' There is a confusing translation: "there was nothing but a few pieces of fish that in Castilla is called cod.... They asked if his grace would like a little smoked cod, for there was

no other fish to serve him. 'Since many little cod,' replied Don Quixote, 'all together make one large one, it does not matter' (28–29). So far, so good, but then a few paragraphs later it says that don Quijote thought that "the cod was trout." But this trout business was never set up; not having explained in a note that *truchuela* was another name for 'codfish' and that *trucha* means 'trout,' the reference to "trout" is very mysterious indeed.

The first innkeeper "had retired to Castilla, where he lived on his property and that of others," which doesn't seem to make much sense. The Spanish says: "donde vivía con su hacienda y con las ajenas" (30). "Hacienda" means 'income,' which does make sense.

Don Quijote was grateful to the prostitutes who helped him dress before leaving the inn: "Don Quixote asked her name, so that he might know from that day forth to whom he was obliged for the benison he had received" (34). "Benison" is a little-used word that means 'blessing.' Cohen, Raffel, Ormsby, and others, have the commoner and correct "favor."

Don Quijote calls Juan Haldudo a "ruin villano" (36), which is translated as "base varlet." Once again to the dictionary! 'Page' or 'low fellow.' Cohen's "boor" seems pretty good.

In the Inquisition of the Books (I, 6), one book is called *Felixmarte de Hyrcania* in Grossman's translation, *Florismarte de Hircania* in Riquer, and *Florimorte de Hircania* in Cuesta's *princeps*. The translation changes Riquer's version of the title, seemingly naturally enough, because that is what the book is called in the real world. But Cervantes must have had a reason for calling the book with that odd title because the priest then repeats it: "¿Allí está el señor Florimorte...?" Given the variance and contradictions in names, I would hesitate to change them here, although I would footnote it.

In the same chapter, when *Tirante el blanco* is discussed (and as Riquer properly has in his edition, copied from the Cervantine original), the translation calls it *Tirant lo Blanc* [sic], which is, of course, the original Valencian name for the book.<sup>4</sup> Now, here, you have to pay strict attention. Earlier in that same chapter, the priest declares that *Amadís de Gaula* is the first romance of chivalry printed in Spain, which is true for romances in the Castilian language. The Valencian *Tirant* was really the first romance of chivalry printed in Spain, but the Spanish translation [1511]—the one in Don Quijote's library—was published after *Amadís*.

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4 *Tirant lo Blanc* is repeated on p. 88, even when the original text says *Tirante el Blanco*.

Thus, since the priest didn't know about the Catalan original [1490], his earlier claim remains true only if *Tirante el blanco* is kept in its Spanish form. The change of the title falsifies things a bit for the *cognoscenti*.

The footnote about Juana Gutiérrez and Mari Gutiérrez on p. 57 (echoing Riquer) says that: "Presumably, through an oversight on the part of Cervantes, Sancho's wife has several names." How can Cervantes forget the name of Sancho's wife within a few lines? Isn't all this just another of the name confusions—Quijote, Quijada, Quesada, Quijana, Quijano—Ginés de Pasamonte, Ginesillo de Parapilla, Ginesillo de Paropillo—Vicente de la Rosa/Roca confusion that pervades the book?

When one of the Benedictine friars says to don Quijote "we are two religious of St. Benedict" (62) ("no somos... sino dos religiosos de San Benito"). "We are two religious..." makes no sense, at least to me. A noun is needed instead: "We are two Benedictine friars..."

Page 65 has another dubious footnote about the "segundo autor," again taken from Riquer: "The 'second author' is Cervantes (that is, the narrator) who claims, in the following chapter, to have arranged for the translation of another (fictional) author's book." That the second author is the narrator, there is no doubt, but that the narrator is Cervantes is quite false. In the created world, the narrator says that he did research in the archives to find out about don Quijote, and that at the end of Part I, he could not find anything else about the man. If the narrator were Cervantes, all Cervantes needed to do was start writing and make everything up (which he did, of course, in the real world). The narrator is a real character within the book, Cervantes is outside the book. And, as for having "claimed to arrange for the translation of another author's work," there is no claim; we read in Chapter 9 how the narrator found the real manuscript and had it translated, how long it took to translate and what he paid for the translation. In the created world there is a real narrator and a real Cide Hamete Benengeli; in the real world there was only Cervantes.

I don't understand, on p. 66, where a maiden "went to her grave as pure as the day her mother bore her" when the original Spanish text ironically says "se fue tan entera a la sepultura como la madre que la parió." How does "day" fit in?

The chapter title for I, 9 "De lo que más le avino a don Quijote y el vizcaíno y del peligro en que se vio con una turba de yangüeses," is rendered here as "with a band of Galicians from Yanguas" (70). What hardly anyone recognizes is that this erroneous title was concocted by Cervantes *on purpose*. Cervantes knows better than anyone that the ad-

venture of the Basque is over and that the Yangueses don't appear until later. He is just trying to have fun, and hardly anyone will let him! The Royal Academy of the Spanish Language in their 1780 edition completely changed this title, and influenced both future editors and translators alike who based their work on the Academy's edition. I mean, if you can't trust the Academy, who can you trust? In any case, this "Galicians from Yanguas" is a new twist. There is a footnote that explains that "Cervantes apparently divided this portion of the text into chapters after he had written it, and he did so in haste..." There is a germ of truth here: that chapter titles (of *other* books, not *this one*) were made up after the book was written, and sometimes in haste, sometimes carelessly, but to think that Cervantes was careless is far from the truth. He was *imitating* a careless style, that's all.

When talking about the horn filled with wine, "sometimes full, sometimes empty, like the bucket at a well" (76) ("ya lleno, ya vacío, como arcaduz de noria"), it would be better to say "like buckets of a waterwheel," since "noria" means "waterwheel."

When Grisóstomo's papers are discussed, the translation says that "his papers were both open and closed" (92) ("muchos papeles, abiertos y cerrados"). Wouldn't it be better to say "both sealed and unsealed"?

At the point where Marcela talks about beauty and ugliness, the translation says: "since ugliness is worthy of being avoided" (99) I can't see why "aborrecido" 'despised' is translated as "avoided."

Now we get to Chapter 15, where the *yangueses* come in earnest (or are they *gallegos*?). After don Quijote says he is worth a hundred men, "he grasped his sword and rushed at the Yanguesans" (103) when the original says "echó mano a su espada y arremetió a los gallegos." There is a footnote which says: "in the first edition, Cervantes calls the drovers 'Galicians.' For the sake of clarity I have called them 'Yanguesans,' which is how they are referred to in Part II." Let's let Cervantes be careless on purpose! This type of falsification simply cheats the clever reader. (I must say that in the Rico edition of *Don Quijote*, which is supposed to be authoritative, it states: "echó mano a su espada y arremetió a los yangueses" [160]. That edition is so sure this is a mistake, there is no note at the bottom of the page, not even a hint of one, although there is a blind note about it in the second volume.)

After Sancho is beaten, he "struggled to his feet, remaining bent double like a Turkish arch" ("como arco turquesco," 108). It's really a Turkish bow, of the type that has one end pushed into the ground before the arrow is released, thus giving more power and accuracy. When you imag-

ine this bow sticking in the ground, you see how bent over Sancho is.

On p. 111, where Sancho tells the innkeeper's wife that they've been on the road only a month, a footnote, echoing Riquer, states that Sancho is mistaken or lying, since they've been out only three days. The problem of time is a major theme built into the work. Amounts of time are always contradicted one way or another.

"No querer" can mean 'to refuse' in any tense, as it does in I, 17, when Sancho said that since his master "no ha querido pagar, que tampoco él pagaría." but the translation says that "since his master had not wanted to pay, he would not pay, either" (121). Another instance is when the goatherd says he never touched Cardenio's valise or cushion: "I never wanted to pick them up or go near them" (179). Wouldn't "I refused to pick them up" be better? Similarly, when Agi Morato's daughter is described, the Captive says that "she never wanted to marry" (249), "ella nunca se había querido casar." It would be better to say: "she had always refused to marry." Finally, in the Retablo de Maese Pedro, the translation says: "Gaiferos...asks his cousin Don Roland for the loan of his sword, Durindana, and see how Don Roland does not want to lend it to him" (629). "...how Don Roland refuses to lend it" would be much better.

Another confusion of names built into the work is when the two armies are readying to do battle. In the original, Alifanfarón is also called Alefanfarón, and Pentapolín is also called Pentapolén (or vice versa, in both cases), but Riquer, Rico, and almost everyone else, will not let the confusion stand, so the translator is also deceived (127), and all we see is Alifanfarón and Pentapolín.

In I, 19, when the two see the torches coming, the translation says that Sancho began to "tremble like a jack-in-the-box" (135). The Cuyás dictionary says that "temblar como un azogado" is 'to shake like a leaf.' Good equivalent. The allusion in the original is to the trembling of people do suffer from mercury poisoning, "azogue" being mercury.

When don Quijote meets the *encamisados* in that same chapter, in the translation he says: "Halt, O knights, or whomsoever you may be, and give an account of yourselves: from whence you come" (136). Since "to be" is a copulative verb, isn't "whosoever," or better, "whoever," called for? And isn't "from whence" a *pleonasma* or worse, a *barbarismo*? "Whence" by itself means "from where." You might argue that it could be Don Quijote's mistake, but in the original Spanish, there is no mistake to be reflected here.

On p. 139, where the wounded friar returns from out of nowhere, Schevill's invented sentence is included in the translation, "Then the

bachelor returned and said to Don Quixote," because Riquer also included it, although accompanied by a footnote. This comment out of the blue is a mini-version of the theft of Sancho's donkey—all of a sudden, there it is, with no explanation. Adding Schevill's invented introductory sentence seems to weaken the intent of the text.

When La Torralba is chasing Lope Ruiz in I, 20, the translation says that she was "walking barefoot, with a staff in her hand and some saddlebags around her neck" (146). It is true that the Spanish text does say that she had "alforjas." Cuyás defines that word as "Saddlebags, [and] knapsack." The second one seems more apt here.

When don Quijote discusses Mambrino's helmet, he suggests that someone "melted down one half to take advantage of its high price" (155). Wouldn't "melted it down for what it might be worth" be better?

In the galley slave episode, don Quijote says that "If they throw men in the galleys for being lovers, I should have been rowing in one long ago" (164). Why "long ago" when the text says: "días ha que pudiera yo estar bogando en ellas"? "Days ago" is quite appropriate, particularly since his becoming a knight with a lady to love didn't happen long ago, but just days earlier.

When don Quijote advises Sancho to cut broom branches to find his way back to where he is doing penance, he says, correctly translated, "and they will serve as markers and signs, as did the thread of Perseus in the labyrinth, so that you can find me when you return" (204). But there is a note, following Riquer, that says: "In an apparent oversight, Cervantes wrote 'Perseus' instead of 'Theseus.'" There is no oversight. Cervantes is not mistaken, *Don Quijote* is! At least, for once, don Quijote was allowed to make his mistake.

When Sancho says he is illiterate, in the translation he says: "I don't know the first letter of the alphabet," (211) which is not amusing at all, whereas a more literal translation of the ironic "no sé la primera letra del ABC" is.

The chapter titles for 29 and 30 were reversed for comic effect by Cervantes. The Academy, seeing this foolish error reversed them (to do that careless old Cervantes a favor), Riquer followed suit, and so does this translation, although with a note similar to Riquer's.

I know there is a controversy about the passage where the innkeeper in I, 32 says: "Luego ¿quiere vuestra merced quemar más libros?" when no reference had been made in that chapter to the Inquisition of the Books. Riquer keeps the original "más libros," but the translation changes it to "my books" (269), without any note. Some people think that there

had been a mention of the inquisition, previous discussion about the books, but just not recorded in that chapter.

When the Captive explains how his father's money was distributed, he says that the second brother would go to the Indies and would use "his portion to buy goods" (335), "escogió el irse a las Indias, llevando empleada la hacienda que le cupiese." It's more that he decided to go to the Indies and *invest* his money (his "hacienda").

There is also the problem of the meaning of "caballero," which can mean 'gentleman' and 'knight.' Where don Quijote explains to Sancho about when he, Sancho, can help his master in fights, don Quijote says that he can't help "if they are gentlemen" (61) (in the original "si fueren caballeros"). What is meant, though is "if they are knights." Also, when don Quijote says in I, 45: "if he is a gentleman, I shall show him that he lies, and if he is a squire, that he lies a thousand times over" (391). Isn't it important that this be "knight" here?

When the Canon of Toledo says that he has written "más de cien hojas" of a book of chivalry, isn't that really "more than 200 pages"? (What with the expense of paper, both sides were used.) The translation says: "more than a hundred pages" (414). Not a big deal, but it does show that the Canon's work is more substantial the original way.

When Sancho asks don Quijote if he needs to relieve himself, he asks "si le ha venido gana de hacer aguas mayores o menores." Riquer doesn't annotate what that means, and so neither does the translation, but Rico feels he has to explain it. If it's obscure to the modern Spaniard, then "have you had the desire to pass what they call major and minor waters?" (420) would be obscure to English speakers. One translator along the way suggested something like "have you felt the need to do number one or number two?"—and this fits in with what Sancho later said about that "even schoolboys know that."

When Eugenio, the goatherd, appears, he is invited to join the party for food and drink, "Tomad este bocado y bebed una vez, con que templaréis la cólera," it is translated "Eat something and have a drink to cool your anger." "Cólera" was properly translated as "hunger" on p. 157: "having pacified their hunger." "To cool your anger" makes no sense here; "Relieve your hunger" would be better.

Regarding Vicente de la Rosa/Roca—another Cervantine confusion of names that editors and translators will not let him keep—the translation opts to change both names to Rosa, following Riquer, and translates Riquer's 1955 footnote verbatim.

In Part II, 1 where the barber gives his word to don Quijote that he

won't reveal the plan about how to conquer the Turks, the translation says that he learned a vow "in the tale of the priest who, in the preface, told the king about the thief who had stolen one hundred *doblas* from him" (461). Preface to what? Wouldn't it be better to say "in the introit to the mass"?

In II, 2, when don Quijote explains to Sancho, in the translation, "when the head aches, all the other members ache... for this reason, the evil that touches or may touch me will cause you pain, and yours will do the same to me" (470), but "mal" doesn't mean 'evil' here—it just means 'pain.' There is a continuing problem with "mal" in the translation. Here is another example: the title of II, 63 says: "Of the evil that befell Sancho on his visit to the galleys..." (875). There was no evil; it was just something like: "About Sancho Panza's ordeal during his visit..."

When Sansón tells don Quijote which episodes different people liked, in the translation it says: "some prefer the adventure of the windmills..., others, that of the waterwheel" (475) "otros, la de los batanes." The fulling hammers are correctly identified on p. 150. Surely lots of readers will wonder about the waterwheel. The only other time a waterwheel was mentioned was cited above, and that wasn't an adventure.

When Sancho talks about don Quijote's entry into battle, he says, in translation, "not everything's 'Charge for Santiago and Spain!" (483). A very odd way to translate "Santiago, y cierra, España," where Santiago—St. James, Spain's patron saint—is being invoked to help the Spaniards in battle.

Oops. When don Quijote asks Sansón to compose an acrostic poem in honor of "Dulcinea of Toboso," Sansón balks, saying the name has *seventeen* letters (484), which it *does* in the Spanish original, thus making an acrostic difficult.<sup>5</sup> But here it has only *sixteen*, thus an acrostic is easy, since there are plenty of poetic formats that add up to sixteen.

When don Quijote explains to his niece about different kinds of knights, he says, that "some are gold, others, alchemical" (493). But "otros de alquimia" means that 'others are of fool's gold.'

The madman who burned down the Temple of Diana is given as "Erostratus" (505) in the translation, but it is properly spelled "Herostratus." Maybe someone will want to look it up, and you can't do it if it's spelled wrong.

In the episode of the actors' cart, Rocinante is frightened and "dio a

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<sup>5</sup> Of course, Part I ends with those laudatory poems, one of which is a seventeen-line sonnet (4 + 4 + 3 + 3 + 3).

correr por el campo con más ligereza que jamás prometieron los huesos de su notomía." The translation says "the bones of his anatomy" (524), but "notomía" means 'skeleton.' In that same chapter, when the jester hits Sancho's donkey with the inflated bladders, the translation says that it "made the donkey fly across the countryside to the town where the festival was to be held" (534). But the donkey didn't get that far since the original says just "hacia el lugar," which make more sense since the donkey came back after only a hundred yards or so.

When don Quijote sees the Tobosan vats at Diego de Miranda's house, he recites two lines by Garcilaso: "O sweet treasures, discovered to my sorrow, / sweet and joyous when God did will them so!" There is a note that says that they are from Garcilaso. Fine, but the circumstances should also be explained: the treasures that Garcilaso was talking about was a lock of hair taken from his deceased lady, and to compare that highly charged emotional memory with clay vats is both ludicrous and amusing. But here, again, Riquer's note is translated as is.

At Camacho's wedding, the translation says that the bride and groom were arriving "in the midst of a thousand different kinds of musical instruments and inventions..." (591). As explained in Rico and elsewhere, it's more like "a thousand kinds of instruments and people wearing masks..." The same problem on the next page with "dances and dramatic inventions" (= pantomimes).

Later, when Quiteria "heard someone say that the wedding... would not be valid, she said that she confirmed it again" (595). I think it is better to say "marriage"—the legal act—than "wedding," which is more of a festive event. And later, when don Quijote says that "Basilio has only this sheep" (596), referring to Quiteria, wouldn't "ewe" be better?

As don Quijote tells about his adventure in the Cave of Montesinos, he starts by saying, in Spanish, "A la obra de doce o catorce estados de la profundidad desta mazmorra..." which came out in translation as: "In this dungeon, at a depth of twelve or fourteen *escudos*" (604). "Escudos" is italicized, as if it came directly from the Spanish version, but "escudo" doesn't mean "estado" the height of a man.

In the braying adventure, the banner reads, in translation, "Two mayors of two towns; / they brayed but not in vain" (638). The Spanish says: "No rebuznaron en balde / el uno y el otro alcalde." But why "two towns"? They were both from the same town. Won't this confuse readers?

In trying to figure out a pay schedule, Sancho says that when he worked for Tomé Carrasco, "I earned two *ducados* a month, and food

besides" (644). I think "lunch" is more appropriate for "comida."

When Sancho says he thought that the washing of his beard would be better than it was proving to be, he said, "ceremonies and soapings like these seem more mockery than hospitality for guests" (675). On the next page, the duchess says to Sancho: "Don Quijote... must be the cream of courtesy and flower of ceremonies, or *cirimonies*, as you call them." Riquer does transcribe "cirimonias" for the first speech, which the translation should respect in order to allow what duchess says on the next page to make sense.

When Sancho refuses to whip himself to disenchant Dulcinea, he says: "whipping myself? I renounce thee!" (693). This "renounce" would be pretty good if it were a deformation of a *Spanish* word, but Sancho uses "abernuncio" (for the Latin "abrenuntio"). I'd keep Sancho's Latin deformation and put in a little footnote. (Latin quotes were used elsewhere: "florentibus occidit annis" [682]; "Quia talia fando temperet a lacrymis" [711]; "dubitat Augustinus" (789), "tantum pellis et ossa fuit" [22].)

Later, on that same page, when "Dulcinea" reviles Sancho for being unwilling to whip himself, she says that "there's no boy in catechism class...who doesn't get that many [lashes] every month." "No hay niño de la doctrina" isn't "a boy in catechism class," but rather "an orphan."

When Sancho says the proverb, in translation, "I'm in a hurry and you demand virginity" (720), it make no sense. The Spanish "En priesa me vees, y doncellez me demandas" means "You see me pregnant and you demand virginity."

In that same episode, Sancho asks everyone to "help him in his hour of need with some Our Fathers and Hail Marys" (722). In Spanish, it is with "sendos paternósteres y sendas avemárias," that is everyone should say "one each" of those prayers.

Don Quijote advises Sancho to divide uniforms between his pages and the poor, and in that way "you will have pages both in heaven and on the ground," "así tendrás pajes para el cielo y para el suelo" (733). Better "in heaven and on earth."

On Sancho's *ínsula*, he says he'll "answer them the best I can, whether or not people go into mourning or not" (748), "ora se entristezca o no se entristezca el pueblo." "Entristecerse" is 'to grieve,' to be sure, but here it is much simpler: "whether it makes the people sad or not," or more daringly: "whether they like it or not."

Riquer blames this next item on the typesetter for an error when there was none; just more Cervantine games. This is where the text claims that "Si la sentencia pasada de la bolsa del ganadero movió a admiración

a los circunstancias,” when in reality, that episode has yet to happen. The translation “fixes” it to “If the subsequent verdict concerning the herder’s purse...” (749). Please, let’s let the artist have his way, and change it back to “if the previous verdict...”

When don Quijote found a *vihuela* in his room, the translation says that “he tested it” (754), “templóla,” but it should be “he tuned it.” This is confusing, I know, because a sentence later he tunes it again! But all this is in the Cervantine plan, where things happen more than once, as in the inn with Cardenio, Luscinda, don Fernando, and Dorotea, where Dorotea is supposed to be in a faint, yet there she is talking; and where they eat dinner three times, if my count is correct.

As don Quijote’s pinchers are about to be identified, the translation says that “since all duennas are fond of knowing, understanding, and inquiring” (782). I don’t think that “knowing” is the correct word. “Saber” can mean ‘to find out’ in any tense. The Spanish text, “las dueñas son amigas de saber, entender y oler,” might be better rendered “since all duennas are eager to pry into things.”

When the duchess’s page tells the priest and Sansón about Sancho’s government, “the priest and barber saw clearly enough that the page was speaking sarcastically” “socarronamente” (788). There was no sarcasm. “With great irony” might be better.

In a scene where don Quijote is reviling Sancho, he says, in the translation, “Dulcinea perishes; you live in negligence” (850), “tú vives en descuido.” “You are carefree” might be better.

When don Quijote and Sancho arrive in Barcelona, “they saw the ocean, which they had not seen before” (862). “Mar” means both ‘ocean’ and ‘sea’—the latter is better here, for obvious reasons.

When the renegade goes off to rescue Pedro Gregorio, he has “a very valiant crew of oarsmen” (885), “valentísima chusma,” but ‘robust’ or ‘powerful’ is a better translation in this context.

Another thing no one lets Cervantes keep is the matter of King Minos referring erroneously to Lis (instead of Dis)—it’s Minos’ mistake, not Cervantes—, yet virtually no editor (Gaos is an exception) will let Minos keep his mistake! They all think it’s another error by Mr. Dopey, but bear in mind that this is one of the duke’s pages who is speaking, coached in his lines, and doubtless with an imperfect knowledge of classical mythology. Riquer makes the correction, and the translation follows (909), both with the same footnote.

As Sancho sees his town, he says, in the translation: “Open your eyes, my beloved country, and see that your son Sancho Panza has come

back..." (928) "Abre los ojos, deseada patria..." "Patria" means 'country,' to be sure, but Cuyás assures us it also means 'home'; how about "Open your eyes, my longed-for home..."?

I'm surprised at how few people know how to spell Sannazzaro (the translation uses only one *z* [934]). I know how because I looked it up when I needed to know. Riquer simplifies it to Sanazaro, but the *Gran Enciclopedia Larousse* uses the correct spelling.

When don Quijote says, once he is miraculously cured of his craziness, "My judgment is restored..." (935), "yo ya tengo juicio." Wouldn't "sanity" be much better?

Finally, Harold Bloom wrote an introduction to the translation which, when you read its title, would seem to be just the ticket. It is called: "Introduction: Don Quixote, Sancho Panza, and Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra." So it looks like we're promised something about the main characters and the author, something we hope will introduce us to the text and its author, maybe something to help us understand the text better. Instead, seemingly, the Introduction expects us to know the book *already*, and be familiar with the vast panorama of Western Literature as well, most particularly Shakespeare. Not much about Cervantes' novel is really explained or even talked about. So, what's the Introduction for?

The first sentences are these: "What is the true object of Don Quixote's quest? I find that unanswerable. What are Hamlet's authentic motives?" (xxi). Two comments: First, I thought that don Quixote's quest was really easy to define—to help the needy in trouble. Don Quixote says it many times. In fact, the Introduction later states: "Don Quixote says that his quest is to destroy injustice" (xxii), in which case why is the nature of the quest so mysterious? Later, the Introduction says: "In Kafka's marvelous interpretation, the authentic object of the Knight's quest is Sancho Panza himself" (xxxiv). I don't see it myself, but it's another proposed answer to the question. Finally, the Introduction ends suggesting that: "We cannot know the object of Don Quixote's quest unless we ourselves are Quixotic" (xxxv). (I guess the author of the Introduction is himself not Quixotic.) Second, regarding the comments dealing with "Hamlet's authentic motives": just what do Hamlet's motives have to do with "Don Quixote, Sancho Panza, and Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra"? There is, in my opinion, much too much in the Introduction which has *nothing to do* with what an introduction to this novel should have.

I gathered some data from the Introduction: Cervantes is mentioned 50 times, Don Quixote is mentioned by name, as "the Knight,"

or as Alonso Quijano, 65 times. Sancho Panza is mentioned 29 times, Dulcinea twice and as Aldonza Lorenzo once. The only other characters in the book who are named are Ginés de Pasamonte (10 times), also as Maese Pedro (6 times); Durandarte once, Belerma twice. Are these an appropriate array of characters to introduce the novice reader of Cervantes' novel?

On the other hand, Shakespeare is named 31 times, and among his literary characters, Hamlet is mentioned 28 times, Falstaff 13 times, and nine other Shakespearean characters are also mentioned (Iago, Shylock, Othello, Antony, Coriolanus, Malvolio (2), Edgar (2), King Lear, and Cleopatra). There are more Shakespearean characters mentioned than Cervantes! Other authors, critics, and musical people with at least one mention in the Introduction are these: W. H. Auden (2), Erich Auerbach, Avellaneda, Balzac, Calderón, Chaucer, Dante (5), Dickens (4), Dostoevski, George Eliot, Henry Fielding, Gustave Flaubert (3), John Fletcher, Sigmund Freud, Goethe (2), Glen Gould (!), G. Wilson Knight, Henry James, Ben Johnson (4), James Joyce (2), Franz Kafka (2), Harry Levin, Lope de Vega (5), Thomas Kyd, Thomas Mann (2), Christopher Marlowe, Herman Melville (3), Milton, Vladimir Nabokov (2), Ortega y Gasset (2), Marcel Proust (2), the translator John Shelton, Stendhal, Laurence Sterne, Jonathan Swift (2), Tolstoi, Mark Twain, Unamuno (3) (Bloom's favorite *Quixote* commentator), Mark van Doren, Verdi (!), and W. S. Merwin. Don't be deceived into thinking that there are lots of solid citations from the literary critics, either, for most of the people mentioned are just names bandied about. Erich Auerbach, for example, who had a lot to say about *Don Quixote* in his *Mimesis*, is limited to a two word quote: "Erich Auerbach argued for the book's 'continuous gaiety,' which is not at all my own experience as a reader" (xxvii).

But where are there references to the great works of *Quixote* criticism? Where are Allen, Avalle-Arce, Cruz, Eisenberg, El Saffar, Flores, Friedman, Hathaway, Herrero, Johnson, Mancing, McGaha, Murillo, Predmore, Riley, Rivers, Russell, Selig, Stagg, Sullivan, Wardropper, Weiger, and dozens of others, all of whom write (at least sometimes) in English?

The Introduction laments, out of nowhere, that "We do not have *Cardenio*, the play Shakespeare wrote, with John Fletcher, after reading Thomas Shelton's contemporaneous translation of *Don Quixote*. Therefore we cannot know what Shakespeare thought about Cervantes, though we can surmise his delight" (xxiv). Of course, if we haven't read Cervantes' novel yet, we have to wonder who this *Cardenio* fellow is.

But aside from that, and much more importantly, we *do indeed* have Shakespeare's *Cardenio*: Charles Hamilton, ed., *Cardenio, or the Second Maiden's Tragedy*, Lakewood, CO: Glenbridge, 1994. There is also a full-length study of the play by Henry Salerno (2000). (I knew about the edition already, but it wasn't difficult to locate the bibliographical details—I got them all instantly from [amazon.com](http://amazon.com).) I confess that I never read that play, but I wonder, since it is listed as a tragedy, if it will reflect Shakespeare's *delight*.

If readers ponder "What is this Introduction *about*?" they are not alone.

Edith Grossman is a translator of modern Latin American works, by authors such as García Márquez, Vargas Llosa, and Mayra Montero. As such, I imagine, at least, she opens the book, dictionary nearby, and gets to work. Cervantes' text is quite a bit different. There is so much controversy about it to begin with—so many words and expressions that have changed in meaning or have fallen into disuse (my students say that no one uses "paciencia y barajar" anymore, for example), so many cultural, literary, historical, biblical, and mythological references, so many puns, so many sayings, so many contradictions and seeming mistakes, so many variant readings—that relying on a single source, especially a fifty-year old one, is simply not sufficient. I would advise—too late, of course—that modern editions with lots of footnotes be used, as many as possible: Rico's two-volume edition (Crítica, 1998), Gaos' three-volume edition (Gredos, 1987), Ferreras's edition (Akal, 1991), all solve major and minor linguistic and cultural problems with enormously useful notes. I'd also recommend keeping facsimiles of the 1605 and 1615 Cuesta *principes* on hand for when all else fails. Had Rico (or Gaos, or Ferreras) been the only edition used, instead of Riquer 1955, the results would have been a lot better.

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