

## Was Thomas Shelton the Translator of the ‘Second Part’ (1620) of *Don Quixote*?’

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**T**HIS PAPER IS ADMITTEDLY a provisional study of the authorial problems of Part Two of Thomas Shelton’s *Don Quixote* (1620). I say provisional because a terminal illness prevents me from doing the definitive study that is called for. Nevertheless, it makes a convincing enough case for someone else to pursue the matter more thoroughly.

Like Cervantes, who first conceived of writing a “novela ejemplar”<sup>1</sup> of some seven or eight chapters but later expanded it into a full-size novel, I began translating *Don Quixote* in 1984 with the intention of translating only those chapters usually selected for inclusion in textbooks of surveys of world literature. I originally intended to send those chapters to publishers to let them compare my version with those of Samuel Putnam and J.M. Cohen. After finishing these chapters, I decided to translate a few more, and then a few more, and eventually decided to translate the whole novel, a task that I finally completed in 2006. In the course of this activity I assembled a collection of the 15 major English translations, beginning with Thomas Shelton’s of 1612 and 1620, and ending with Edith Grossman’s of 2003.<sup>2</sup> During this time I read through my draft

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<sup>1</sup> “Su proyecto inicial habría sido sólo en el hacer una breve ejemplar contra los libros de caballerías.” Gaos, Vicente. *El ingenioso hidalgo don Quijote de la Mancha*. Madrid : Editorial Gredos, 1981-1987. Vol. 3, p. [18].

<sup>2</sup> 1612-1620. *The history of Don Quixote of The Mancha* / translated from the

- Spanish of Miguel de Cervantes by **Thomas Shelton** ; with a new preface by F.J. Harvey Darton, and illustrated with two portraits, eighteen plates, and facsimiles. London : Privately printed for the Navarre Society Limited, 1923. 2 v. : ill. ; 23 cm.
- 1700-1703. *Don Quixote* / Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra; translated by **P.A. Motteux** ; introduction and notes by Stephen Boyd. [Complete and unabridged]. Hertfordshire : Wordsworth Editions Limited, 2000. xvi, 765 p. ; 20 cm. (Wordsworth classics) Original title: The history of the renowned Don Quixote de la Mancha.
1742. *Don Quixote de la Mancha* / Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra ; translated by **Charles Jarvis** ; edited, with an introd., by **E.C. Riley**. Oxford, New York : Oxford University Press, 1992. xxii, 1087 p. ; 19 cm. (The world's classics)
1755. *The adventures of Don Quixote de La Mancha* / by Miguel de Cervantes ; translated by **Tobias Smollett** ; with an introd. by Carlos Fuentes. New York : Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1986. xxxi, 846 p. : ill. ; 23 cm. Original title: The history and adventures of the renowned Don Quixote.
1818. *Don Quixote de la Mancha* / translated from the Spanish of Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra [by **Mary Smirke**] ; embellished with engravings from pictures painted by Robert Smirke. [1st ed.] London : Printed for T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1818. 4 v. : 50 plates ; 24 cm.
1881. *The ingenious knight Don Quixote de la Mancha* / composed by Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra ; a new translation from the originals of 1605 and 1608 [sic] by **Alexander James Duffield**, with some of the notes of the Reverend John Bowle, Juan Antonio Pellicer, Don Diego Clemencín, and other commentators. [1st ed.]. London : C. Kegan Paul, 1881. 3 v. ; 24 cm.
1885. *Don Quixote, the Ingenious Gentleman of La Mancha* / by Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra ; the translation by **John Ormsby**, with a new introduction by Irwin Edman ; and the illustrations by Edy Legrand. New York : Heritage Press, c1950. 682 p., [48] leaves of plates : ill. ; 29 cm. Original title: **The ingenious gentleman, Don Quixote of La Mancha.**
1888. *The ingenious gentleman Don Quixote of La Mancha* / by Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra ; done into English by **Henry Edward Watts**. New ed., with notes, original and selected. London : Adam and Charles Black, 1895. 5 v. ; 22 cm. Original title: **The ingenious gentleman Don Quixote of La Mancha.**
1908. *The visionary gentleman Don Quijote de La Mancha* / by Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra ; translated into English by **Robinson Smith**. 3d ed., complete with a life of Cervantes, notes, and appendices. New York : Hispanic Society of America, 1932. 2 v. ; 24 cm. Original title: **That imaginative gentleman Don Quixote de la Mancha.**
1949. *The ingenious gentleman Don Quixote de La Mancha* / Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra : a new translation from the Spanish ... by **Samuel Putnam**. New edi-

more than 200 times, making a word-for-word comparison of each of the previous translations with my own, as well as comparing each of the others with the original Spanish. The Spanish text with which I worked was the critical edition of Vicente Gaos.<sup>3</sup> I frequently consulted as well the outdated but highly inspirational critical edition of Francisco Rodríguez Marín.<sup>4</sup> After self-publishing my *Don Quixote* in 2006,<sup>5</sup> I sent out several review copies, one of which was to the *Times Literary Supplement* of London. Their “reviewer” totally ridiculed it, whereupon I wrote a letter pointing out the places where I took issue with the “reviewer.” As a result of my letter, Hackett Publishing Company asked to see a copy of my translation and, after vetting it with various readers of theirs, agreed to publish it in late 2008 or early 2009. I regret having “rushed” my version

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tion. New York : Viking Press, 1958. xxx, 1043 p. ; 24 cm.

1950. *The adventures of Don Quixote* / by Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra ; translated by J.M. Cohen. [1st ed.]. Harmondsworth, Eng. : Penguin Books, 1950. 940 p. ; 20 cm. (Penguin classics)

1964. *Don Quixote of La Mancha* / Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra ; translated and with an introd. by Walter Starkie. [1st ed.]. New York : New American Library, 1964. 1052 p. ; 18 cm. (Signet classics)

1995. *The history of that ingenious gentleman Don Quijote de la Mancha* / Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra ; translated from the Spanish by Burton Raffel ; introd. by Diana de Armas Wilson. [1st ed.]. New York : W.W. Norton, 1995. xviii, 733 p. ; 24 cm.

2000. *The ingenious hidalgo Don Quijote de la Mancha* / Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra ; translated by John Rutherford. [1st ed.]. NY : Penguin Books, 2001, c2000. xl, 1023 p. ; 20 cm.

2003. *Don Quixote : a new translation* / by Edith Grossman ; introduction by Harold Bloom. [1st ed.] New York : ecc, 2003. xxxv, 940 p. ; 24 cm.

3 *El ingenioso hidalgo don Quijote de La Mancha* / Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra ; edición crítica y comentario de Vicente Gaos ; [llevada a cabo por Agustín del Campo]. Madrid : Editorial Gredos, 1987. 3 v. ; 26 cm. (Biblioteca románica hispánica ; IV, Textos ; 18)

4 *El ingenioso hidalgo don Quijote de la Mancha* / de Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra. Nueva edición crítica, con el comento refundido y mejorado y más de mil notas nuevas / dispuesta por Francisco Rodríguez Marín. Madrid : Ediciones Atlas, 1947-1949. 10 v. : ill. ; 22 cm.

5 *The adventures and misadventures of Don Quixote* / translated ... by James H. Montgomery. North Charleston, SC : BookSurge, 2006. Available from Amazon.com.

into print, but at the time I thought my illness might not allow me to see it published. I have since gone through my manuscript and made numerous improvements, incorporating many of the comments of the scholars who vetted my work. In working on my translation, when I came to Thomas Shelton's, I was overwhelmed by the beauty and power of his language, especially when I considered that it was the first translation of the *Quijote* into any language. But somewhere in the "Second Part" I became somewhat disenchanted with its literary style, even asking myself why I had been so tremendously impressed in the first place. During an exchange of correspondence with Dr. Anthony lo Ré, Spanish professor emeritus at Chapel Hill, he mentioned the possibility that Part Two of Shelton's translation was not by Shelton himself. This struck a responsive chord in me and seemed to explain my lack of enthusiasm for the Second Part. I returned to study the controversial Second Part and discovered, to my amazement, that although it was indeed translated by Shelton himself up through Chapter *Forty*, it was startlingly clear that Chapters *Forty-One* through *Seventy-Four* were definitely the work of some other hand. I proceeded to read all I could about Shelton, which was easy enough, since very little is known about him. In reading the few references I could find, I discovered that there has been considerable discussion of the authorship of the 1620 translation. But, after studying Shelton's version over a period of years, I feel that the solution to the controversial question of authorship is really quite simple.

In effect, no formal proof is needed if one will merely read the 1620 translation with an eye to its literary style. When one reads Chapters *Forty* and *Forty-One* consecutively, his or her only conclusion will be that they cannot both be translated by the same person. However, proof needs to be based upon something more solid than mere reading. I went to the Web and downloaded the text of the Shelton translations of 1612 and 1620. Then, using the "Find and Replace" function on the computer, it was an easy matter to compare the parts translated by Shelton and those by the anonymous author. I compared the vocabulary used by Shelton with that of the other translator. The results show that certain words employed by Shelton numerous times through Part Two, Ch. 40 hardly appear in the chapters by the other translator. I then chose a single grammatical construction to demonstrate the difference between the two translators. I chose the auxiliary 'do,' followed by the main verb, and searched it in all conjugations of the present and past tenses. Additionally, I would have liked to make a study of the syntax between the two translators but my present infirmity has not allowed

me to devote the necessary time and effort. Still, I think the following analysis, as simple as it is, will tend to indicate that Chapters Forty-One through Seventy-Four of the Second Part could not possibly have been written by the same person who wrote the first forty chapters as well as all of Part One (1612).

Following are the two tests which I *did* employ in the study.

I) THE INCIDENCE OF VOCABULARY WORDS  
IN THE PORTIONS TRANSLATED BY SHELTON  
COMPARED TO THOSE BY THE ANONYMOUS TRANSLATOR

In the first example, 10 to 0 means that the word *Address* (in the sense of "to lead") occurs 10 times in Shelton's portion, and 0 times in the anonymous translator's portion.

Address (lead)	10 to 0
Affect (feel affection for)	4 to 0
Ambages (equivocal courses)	3 to 0
Answerable (corresponding to)	3 to 0
Apaid (pleased)	4 to 1
Apparalled	20 to 0
Arabical	5 to 0
Argument (indication)	17 to 0
Artificial (constructed according to the rules of art)	14 to 0
Attending (waiting for)	4 to 0
Canvassing (being tossed i a blanket)	4 to 0
Careful (anxious)	4 to 0
Certes	5 to 0
Commark (district)	6 to 0
Crupper	6 to 0
Damosels	5 to 0
Depended (hanging, suspended)	4 to 0
Detect (reveal)	8 to 0
Dight (array)	6 to 0
Dilate (expound)	4 to 0
Disastrous (suffering disaster)	5 to 0
Disgrace (misfortune)	5 to 1
Disventures (misadventures)	3 to 0

Eftsoons	7 to 0
Empannel (saddle an ass)	5 to 0
Emulate (regard as a rival)	3 to 0
Exigent (demanding action)	5 to 0
Forcible (inevitable)	12 to 0
Gratify (be thankful for)	12 to 0
Hotpen	5 to 0
In resolution (fnally)	7 to 0
In such sort	39 to 1
Inhabitable (uninhabitable)`	3 to 0
Intecur (intervene)	2 to 0
Leasings (lies)	3 to 0
Lecture (reading)	4 to 0
Malet (wallet)	8 to 0
Minuity (detail)	3 to 0
Occurred (ran up to)	3 to 0
Of all which	4 to 0
Opinion (reputation)	10 to 0
Pannel	36 to 0
Paragon with (rival)	2 to 0
Prevent (anticipate)	5 to 0
Price (esteem)	4 to 0
Prosecuted (continued)	19 to 0
Quader (square with, fit in)	2 to 0
Quitasoll (parasol)	2 to 0
Recchelessness (thoughtlessness)	3 to 0
Reduce (bring back)	6 to 0
Rumour (noise)	6 to 0
Runagates (renegades)	3 to 0
Securely (without anxiety)	7 to 0
Succeeded (occurred)	9 to 1
Thereunto	14 to 1
Thou beest	16 to 1
To wit	40 to 2
Travails (labors)	2 to 0
Vent (tavern)	8 to 0
Well-nigh	6 to 0
Whereunto	15 to 1
Wights	3 to 0
Wistly (wistfully)	3 to 0

Wood (mad)	3 to 0
Yesteryear	8 to 0

I find it hard to understand how Shelton would use the phrase 'to wit' 40 times in the first seven tenths of the translation and only twice in the final three tenths; or 'in such sort' 39 times in the first seven tenths and only once in the final three tenths. The same holds for all the other examples above.

## 2) GRAMMATICAL FORMS:

**I do** [followed immediately by the main verb with no intervening words] e.g. I do imagine ...; [Excluded forms: I do not imagine ...; I do only imagine ...]

I do ...	69 to 1
Thou dost ...	24 to 1
She doth ...	3 to 0
He doth ...	5 to 0
We do ...	4 to 0
You do ...	8 to 0
They do ...	24 to 1
I did ...	21 to 1
Thou didst ...	11 to 0
She did ...	2 to 0
He did...	27 to 2
We did ...	4 to 1
You did ...	1 to 0
They did ...	<u>10 to 2</u>
	213 to 9

Because Shelton's text constitutes 71 % of the entire *Quixote*, I have multiplied the 9 instances of the anonymous translator by 2 1/2. The results are still an astounding 213 to 23.

## 3) SYNTAX

I have not analyzed the syntax as I would liked to have done, but the most superficial examination of the text will show that the portion containing

Shelton's "fine old crusted English," to borrow Ormsby's famous phrase, is more reminiscent of Robinson Smith's eccentric translation, whereas the anonymous portion reads almost as though it were from the pen of Charles Jarvis. Beginning with Part Two, Chapter Forty-One, there is a distinct change from the tortured, convoluted style of Shelton to a more flowing, modern style. Admittedly a writer's style will undergo a gradual development over the course of ten years but not to the extent of the drastic transformation that is exhibited between two single chapters, in this case Chapters Forty and Forty-One of Part Two.

I believe the intrusion of a second author in Part Two accounts for the lack of authorial attribution in the "Second Part" of 1620. The publisher possibly did not want to publicize the fact that the second publication contained Shelton's work *only* through Chapter Forty. Apparently the deception worked, and it has continued to work with both casual readers and scholars. To my knowledge, no one to date has pointed out the abrupt change of literary style in Part Two. Surely someone has and I have simply overlooked it.

The fact that there are two translators (at least) involved in Part Two would also explain the differing opinions of the critics as to the relative literary merits of the 1612 and 1620 publications. For example, Duffield says in his 1881 translation: "Part II ... cannot be by Thomas Shelton, although it is invariably ascribed to him; unless it can be conceived that a scholarlike gentleman, of quick discernment and fine taste, could lose within the space of half a dozen years his knowledge of the Spanish tongue, his fine old English, his poetic fancy, his modesty, and his delightful manners."<sup>1</sup> Duffield is obviously focusing upon the latter half of Part Two and then generalizing to include the whole "Second Part." John Ormsby takes the opposite position: "It has been asserted that the Second [Part], published in 1620, is not the work of Shelton, but there is nothing to support the assertion save the fact that it has less spirit, less of what we generally understand by 'go,' about it than the first."<sup>2</sup> Though

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<sup>1</sup> P. xliii of *The ingenious knight Don Quixote de la Mancha* / composed by Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra ; a new translation from the originals of 1605 and 1608 [sic] by Alexander James Duffield, with some of the notes of the Reverend John Bowle, Juan Antonio Pellicer, Don Diego Clemencín, and other commentators. [1st ed.]. London : C. Kegan Paul, 1881. 3 v. ; 24 cm.

<sup>2</sup> P. 17 of *Don Quixote, the Ingenious Gentleman of La Mancha* / by Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra ; the translation by John Ormsby, with a new introduction by Irwin Edman ; and the illustrations by Edy Legrand. New York : Heritage Press, 1950.

unaware of the fact, he is basing the first part of his statement on the portion translated by Shelton, and the second part of his statement on the portion translated by the unknown translator. To do justice to Shelton, it should be recognized that chapters 41 to 74 of Part Two were by a different hand, and their shortcomings should not be attributed to Shelton.

Another accepted “fact” is Shelton’s statement that he made the translation of the First Part (1612) in a mere 40 days. Highly doubtful—if one were to copy the entire 1612 *Quixote* using a quill pen, one would be hard pressed to accomplish this sole task in as little as two weeks time, much less while simultaneously translating. Shelton is obviously being ironic in making such a statement, or, as Duffield comments: “This is a merry jest.”<sup>3</sup> It is anyone’s guess as to why he would make such an assertion, unless possibly by claiming that the translation was made in only forty days, he was absolving himself of any errors it contained, thereby boasting (to paraphrase Cervantes) that if he could do such a thing in 40 days, what couldn’t he have done in a more reasonable length of time. I see no indications that his translation was done in haste. It does contain some sentences and clauses that are unworthy of his talents, but in the very next sentence he will produce a jewel. What is most astounding is that his monumental translation is accomplished without benefit of a dictionary of the Spanish language, an authoritative Spanish textual edition, or a single philological work on *Don Quixote*. And no less significant was his lack of any prior English translation to help guide him.

In summation, I would hope that studies critical of the 1620 publication would distinguish between the work of Thomas Shelton and that of the unknown translator. It is bad enough that the world knows so very little about this consummate translator, but even worse that he is blamed for a portion of the *Quijote* that he did not even translate.

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3 Op. cit, p. xliii.