

From: *Cervantes: Bulletin of the Cervantes Society of America*, 28.1 (Spring, 2008): 199-201.
Copyright © 2008, The Cervantes Society of America.
<http://www.h-net.org/~cervantes/csa/artics08/Mancings08.pdf>

Cervantes, Miguel de. *Don Quijote de la Mancha*. Edición de Castilla-La Mancha. Al cuidado de Francisco Rico. Junta de Comunidades de Castilla-La Mancha. Empresa Pública Don Quijote de la Mancha, 2005. CI + 1243 pp.

Rico, Francisco. *El texto del "Quijote": Preliminares a una ecdótica del Siglo de Oro*. Valladolid: Centro para la Edición de los Clásicos Españoles, Universidad de Valladolid, 2005. 566 pp.

The edition of *Don Quijote* by a large team of Cervantes scholars and coordinated by Francisco Rico that was first published in 1998, and in a slightly revised version in 2004, has been universally praised and is often considered the closest thing we have to a 'definitive' edition of Cervantes' novel. The edition under consideration here, published by the Comunidades de Castilla-La Mancha (C-LM), reproduces that text of the novel, thus putting into the hands of readers an inexpensive, expertly annotated edition, but without all the extensive critical paraphernalia and bibliography of the exhaustively annotated edition for scholars. This is the second such edition to be made available,

as the same text of the novel (pagination identical) was also published in 2005 by the Real Academia Española. The RAE version was made available early in the year and enjoyed enormous success, selling well over a million copies. The C-LM edition did not appear for over a year and has had far less success.

But if the text of the novel is identical in these two editions, the introductory and scholarly apparatus is not. The introductory material of the RAE edition begins with a 'Presentación' by Rico and is followed by essays by Mario Vargas Llosa, Francisco Ayala, and Martín de Riquer, and ends with a 'Nota al texto' by Rico. The C-LM edition also begins with a 'Presentación' by Rico (different from the RAE one) and is followed only by a 'Prólogo' by Rico and the same 'Nota al texto' as the other edition. The material following the text of the novel is completely different in the two editions. The RAE edition gives us a symposium on 'La lengua de Cervantes y el *Quijote*' with essays by five different scholars; this is followed by a 'Glosario'. In place of this, the C-LM edition ends with a lengthy set of supplementary material all prepared by Rico. First there is a series of 'Anexos' consisting of a summary biography of Cervantes, comments on language and style of the novel, and a very brief critical bibliography. Next comes a set of illustrations (also used in the original 1998 edition) and a lengthy set of 'Índices' dealing with proverbs, phrases, themes and characters, writers and works cited in the novel, character and historical names, and a list of the words annotated. Finally, there is a plot summary.

Which of these two editions is best? Depends on your preference. The superb text—the reason for the books' existence—is exactly the same in both editions. So from this point of view they are exactly equal. The preliminary material in the RAE edition provides a nice little anthology of commentary on the novel, which may give it somewhat of a more popular appeal. On the other hand, the C-LM edition is Francisco Rico's presentation from start to finish. Its lengthy preliminary commentary is more coherent and consistent, one great scholar's vision of the novel. The collection of essays on language and style in the RAE edition is very nice, covering the topic from a variety of points of view. The C-LM edition's appendices and indices are more workman-like but are far more useful for the reader who wants to locate a specific word or phrase in the novel. Both editions are, in short, superb. It is simply a shame that the C-LM edition did not appear sooner in order to give buyers another option.

Francisco Rico's *El texto del "Quijote"* is a masterful (and sometimes polemical) presentation of a series of topics related to the writing and publication of Cervantes' novel. The book is divided into two parts, each of which consists of six chapters. Those of the longer first part are all new essays, and as such will be described at more length here, while those of the second part are reprints of articles published previously (mostly in journals such as *Bulletin Hispanique* and *Hispanic Review*; see pp. 503-4). The act of bringing all of these important essays together in a single volume is one that will be appreciated by Cervantes scholars. Rico's aim is to reconstruct the process of writing and printing a book in Cervantes' time and the contexts in which these acts were carried out. I will not attempt to make a detailed commentary on each of the chapters in the book because of the richness of analysis and presentation of technical details; rather, I

will simply list the main subjects considered in each of the chapters.

The first part of the book, "Notas al uso," begins with an introduction titled "El fantasma de la pinceps," and consists of a review of the history of editions of *Don Quijote*, noting important editions, editorial procedures, etc., and anticipating some of the issues to be discussed in subsequent chapters. Rico's position is that the first printed edition should not be fetishized, and that subsequent printings, previous editors' decisions, and other factors should also be taken into consideration. Chapter I, "Cómo se hacía un libro en el Siglo de Oro," describes the process of printing a book, placing emphasis, among other things, on the fact that the printers worked from a clean copy made by an *amanuense*, a sort of professional scribe, rather than the original author's manuscript. Chapters II and III, "Del borrador a la censura" and "Por Juan de la Cuesta," continue and develop further the material presented in the first chapter. Here Rico presents a detailed discussion of the role of the author's *borrador* (manuscript) and the scribe's *original* (clean copy used by the printers), the relationship between publisher Francisco de Robles and printer Juan de la Cuesta, authorial revisions, differences between Rico's own understandings of the process of publication and those of other modern editors and textual specialists (especially Robert M. Flores), the role of censorship prior to printing, and many of the minutia of the text such as punctuation, spelling, minor (and some more major) changes introduced in later editions, and much more. Chapter IV, "Márgenes del error," deals with the very large number of errors—both in the text and in the table of contents—in the early editions of Cervantes' novel, especially in the first printing of 1605. Finally, chapters V and VI, "El asno de Sancho (1604, 1605, 1608)" and "Las huellas del rucio: cuestiones de principio," deal exhaustively with what is probably the most complicated and controversial issue of the theft and recovery of Sancho's ass.

The second part, "Excursos," also consists of six chapters: 1) "Componedores y grafías en el *Quijote* de 1604," 2) "*Don Quijote*, Madrid, 1604, en prensa," 3) "El primer pliego del *Quijote*," 4) "El título del *Quijote*," 5) "Quexana y las conjeturas verisímiles," and 6) "A pie de imprentas. Páginas y noticias de Cervantes viejo." These are all superb essays and they complement beautifully those of the first part of the book. The book ends with an "Índice de láminas," an extensive and very useful "Bibliografía citada," a list of "Lugares del *Quijote* en las ediciones del Instituto Cervantes (QC)," an "Índice de nombres," and an "Índice de términos y conceptos." All of these great indexing tools can be of great value to the scholar using the book in their research and are a welcome inclusion.

The material presented in *El texto del "Quijote"* is often very detailed and technical. This is not a book for the general reader of the novel, but a valuable reconstruction of a time, place, and process for literary scholars and historians. Every Cervantista will either want to have it or make sure it is acquired by the local research library.

Howard Mancing
Purdue University
mancing@purdue.edu