

The Translator as Author: Two English *Quijotes*

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The History and Adventures of the Renowned Don Quixote. Translated from the Spanish of Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra by Tobias Smollett. Introduction and Notes by Martin C. Battestin. The Text Edited by O M Brack, Jr. Pp. xlix+942 (The Works of Tobias Smollett). Athens and London: The University of Georgia Press, 2003. Hb. \$100.00.

Don Quixote. By Miguel de Cervantes. A New Translation by Edith Grossman. Introduction by Harold Bloom. Pp. xxxv+940. London: Secker & Warburg, 2003. Hb. \$29.95.

Postmodern folklore makes much of Borges' Modernist character Pierre Menard, the would-be translator of Don Quijote who worked so hard to be like Cervantes that he eventually rendered the text into its original Spanish.¹ The story turns on the inevitable aging of the original, and the insight that an old text in a new context must imply new authorship of some kind. Texts change over distance, translation is one way of reacting to that change, and strongly authored translations react in rather auspicious ways. There is more to this than facile paradox. Of the two translations under review here, only one, Tobias Smollett's version of 1755, can today stake a claim to authorship. The other, Edith Grossman's recent translation of 2003, neither seeks nor receives such designation. The differences between the two might thus offer reference points for some four hundred years of translation, now that, in 2005, we celebrate the fourth centenary of Cervantes' text.

What is Smollett's claim to authorship? First, this edition of his translation curiously omits Cervantes' name from both the dust jacket and the spine. Cervantes is certainly restored on the title page, yet the attribution of up-front authorship remains clear. Second, this translation is published as the seventh volume in the Works of Tobias Smollett, and there is indeed a solid novelistic oeuvre in terms of which it can be read. Third, to read this version, as is perhaps the case with any historical translation for which there are many later and more accessible rivals, is to read Smollett, not Cervantes. Why else would we turn to eighteenth-century English? Why else should we be bothered with the recognized mistakes? Fourth, and here we return to paradox, Smollett's authorship of the translation was publicly challenged by what this edition calls 'a curious conspiracy of scholars' (p.xxxiv). If authorship can be challenged, it must be possible.

¹ Jorge Luis Borges, 'Pierre Menard, autor del Quijote', Sur 56 (1939), 7-16; reprinted in Ficciones (Madrid, 1997), 41-55.

Here is the story. Some apparently forged letters revealed that Smollett had not only relied on previous translations into English (which no one denies) but that he knew little Spanish and thus contracted the job out to other hands.² That might explain, among other things, why the publication was repeatedly delayed. In his introductory note to the translation, Smollett does indeed state that the ‘greatest part’ of the work had been finished four years previously, and that he had spent ‘some time employed in correcting it’ (p.20). This is strange. Martin Battestin, in his introduction to this volume and elsewhere³, amply demonstrates the originality of Smollett’s work and tries to account for the circumstances of publication. For Battestin, the booksellers’ notices suggest that the translation, first announced in 1748, was delayed so as not to coincide with a new edition of the previous Motteux/Ozell translation in 1749, and was then published in 1755 partly in order to counter the second edition of Jarvis’s translation in 1754. Smollett was thus paid for the work five years in advance, and the long delay required a complete reorganization of the subscription basis. That is not entirely clear (one delay would be in order to avoid a previous translation, the other apparently sought to coincide with a rival translation). Nor does it seem overwhelmingly important. The beauty of the product is the wealth and colour of its English, no matter who the author. True, there are the occasional Scottish items that would indicate Smollett’s own background, in which Battestin delights (‘Sancho stuffs his budget with good things to eat, and his stomach wambles; waits strike up tunes, and a skinker pours the wine; hare-hunters search in vain for a scut [...]’, p.xliv). A four-page glossary helpfully explains such morsels. Yet, for the contemporary reader, one eighteenth-century hand can be just as delightful as another, Scottish or otherwise. Indeed, so much critical ink has been spent on justifying Smollett’s authorship that one easily forgets this is, after all, an old translation, re-edited well beyond its day. It is the re-editing that matters most.

Some see the contemporary English-language translation culture as dedicated to no more than domestication and fluency. That view might struggle to understand why we should be publishing old translations. A quick search can locate full online translations of *Don Quixote* by Shelton (1612-20) and Ormsby (1885), as well as facsimiles of Smollett’s. The most reprinted version, Jarvis’s translation of 1742, is still available (in the Oxford World Classics). In fact, in the welter of available versions, Smollett has occupied a relatively minor place, sidelined for over a century (for reasons that we will guess at below). His translation, which was slow to sell at first, went through a string of editions until 1858 and then fell from view until a fairly recent edition, in 1986, prefaced by Carlos Fuentes (reprinted this year in the Modern Library Classics). So why this new edition in 2003? Battestin points out that the 1986 version was based on the first edition of Smollett’s translation, did not include Smollett’s revision, omitted many of Hayman’s illustrations, and contained printer’s errors. Fair enough. But there must be more to it than that. Quite simply, the previous edition was not a piece of scholarship (and can be found for under \$10). This one is, and decidedly so (it costs 10 times as much).

This edition has 49 pages of critical apparatus at the beginning (list of illustrations, preface, acknowledgements, list of abbreviation, introduction), then 199

² See Francesco Cordasco, ‘Smollett and the Translation of the “Don Quixote”’: Important Unpublished Letters’, *Notes & Queries*, 193 (21 August 1948), 363-4; ‘Smollett and the Translation of the “Don Quixote”- A Critical Bibliography’, *Notes & Queries*, 193 (4 September 1948), 383-4; and *Letters of Tobias George Smollett: A Supplement to the Noyes Collection* (Madrid, 1950). For an account of the ensuing debate, see Lewis Knapp and Lillian de la Torre, ‘Forged “Smollett” Letter’, *Modern Language Quarterly*, 14 (1953), 228.

³ Battestin’s title is worth retaining: ‘The Authorship of Smollett’s *Don Quixote*’, *Studies in Bibliography*, 50 (1997), 295-321.

further pages at the end: notes to the text, glossary, five of Hayman's designs for his illustrations, textual commentary (repeating much of what has been said in the introduction), notes on corrected and uncorrected sheets (lists of punctuation differences between the editions), list of emendations (textual differences), 'word-division' (words hyphenated at the end of the line in one edition and within the line in another), 'historical collation' (which seems to go over the 'list of emendations' again), 'bibliographical descriptions', an index (to the whole lot), and an 'appendix to the index' that lists the places in the notes where Smollett is compared with previous translations. This is rather a lot of editing. Much of it is to be appreciated with enthusiasm, especially the index, which has proved extremely useful for research (although the entry for 'Jews' does not lead anywhere; were they expelled?). The notes are often good fun, and the glossary is entertaining for more than just Scottish terms. Yet one cannot help but be a little perplexed. This is the kind of meticulous scholarship that brings real fruits when applied to medieval versions of Aristotle, for example. But, sorry, for Smollett, as a translator? Or for Hayman, the illustrator? This is a text that the back cover wants to sell as 'rambunctious', which might be a real virtue (Salman Rushdie, quoted thereon, somehow knows that this is 'the only translation in English that feels as rambunctious as the original'). Yet those 248 pages of excellent scholarship are anything but a hoot; a joke explained at length is no longer amusing. One senses the edition would be an act of exceeding generosity if it were only of the translation. In a word, Smollett has been accorded the full editorial privileges of authorship.

If Smollett is the author of his Quixote, why should we not say the same of our contemporary translator Edith Grossman? The reasons are not particularly textual (we shall soon compare a few key passages). They have more to do with the way the translator herself is presented and authorized. Grossman enters her volume as a name surrounded by tall-standing canonical writers. The dust jacket has snippets from Carlos Fuentes, Thomas Mann and Milan Kundera, all on how good Cervantes is (not on this translation). Harold Bloom's introduction is a farrago of further citations and Literary Meditations, only one of which actually concerns Grossman (who 'might be called the Glen Gould of translators, because she, too, articulates every note', xxii). The translator is set up as a woman surrounded by a forest of great men, daunted by the task facing her, aspiring to be a pianist playing Bach, genially, but neither adding nor taking away. Yet she does add notes. Her Translator's Note, in the first place, claims topical modesty, seeking inspiration in Cervantes' Preface to the Reader and justifying her strategies in terms of further literary authorities, as if she had not been able to figure it out by herself:

I mentioned my fears to Julián Ríos, the Spanish novelist. His reply was simple and profound and immensely liberating. He told me not to be afraid; Cervantes, he said, was our most modern writer, and what I had to do was to translate him the way I translated everyone else—that is, the contemporary authors whose works I have brought over into English. (p.xix)

The advice is not wrong. Nor can it be entirely right, since there is no one solution to these problems. Where it creates doubts is in Grossman's generic aim to 'recreate for the reader in English the experience of the reader in Spanish' (p.xix), which latter reader she immediately identifies as someone confronted with the original: 'When Cervantes wrote Don Quixote, his language was not archaic or quaint'. True enough. But when Spanish readers enter the text today, the language is indeed archaic and occasionally quaint, as Borges has reminded us. A translation entirely in the current language of today would necessarily hide the enormous distances travelled by the text, and the

reasons why those distances have made it a classic for generations of readers.

Grossman's implicit defence is that, since English has built up a fair stock of archaic Quixotes, the only thing she could possibly add to the pile is a rendition in reasonably contemporary language. The corollary, as all neo-classicisms have realized, is that a merely contemporary version will also age with the passing of time, adding to the heap, and speaking to no more than one receptive moment. It will neither seek nor be accorded authorship of its own.

That said, Grossman does rather more than she claims to do. Fidelity to a mythical 'first reader' has her translate the first printing of the Spanish text, with numerous textual errors that have to be negotiated. Yet she is working from Martín de Riquer's edition of that printing, giving her the benefits of first-class scholarship (the scholarly edition of Smollett, on the other hand, is based on the supposition that we should work from the most revised translation, comparing English versions more than entering the textual world of the Spanish). More important, the aim to translate this text according to the norms of the moment ('the way I translated everyone else') does not imply any immediate domestication or fluency. Unlike most of the other English translators of Don Quijote, including Smollett and many of those of the twentieth century, Grossman retains Spanish proper nouns and currency units, constantly reminding us that the action takes place in the past of another country. Unlike the majority of the other translators, including Smollett, she includes such essential items as the mock sonnets that follow and complete the irony of the Author's Prologue (written by fictional heroes and dedicated to Don Quixote, closing with a dialogue between horses). Grossman is of great primary service simply because she renders what is there. And this service is by no means limited to translating the way she has rendered contemporary Hispanic authors. Throughout the text there are sparse footnotes, almost always helpful and to the point, constantly providing the cultural and textual world of the original. Explication could indeed justify all the notes she plays. In these ways, Grossman shows how our translation norms have developed in recent decades. In aiming to be endemic in its strategies, her translation names the otherness of the original, underlining rather than eclipsing the distance travelled by the text, at the same time as the narrative voice attains relative transparency. That, it seems, may be part and parcel of the contemporary renunciation of authorship.

A few comparisons between these translations might illustrate the presence and absence of authorship.

First, let us consider the translators' notes at those points where the Cervantine text is inconsistent (of which points there are many, this classic being in many ways a rushed job). There is an entertaining list of Cervantes' inconsistencies given in the index to Smollett's translation, under Smollett, sub-head WORKS, entry 'Smollett's criticisms of Cervantes' inconsistencies' (though the categories leave much to be desired, the list is nevertheless there). For example, Cervantes gives many names for Sancho Panza's wife, and in one paragraph (I.7) has Sancho refer to her as both 'Juana' and 'María'. Smollett follows the name change and remarks in his footnote, 'How comes Juana to be so suddenly metamorphosed into Mary?' (p.58n). Grossman also preserves the change, noting, 'Presumably through an oversight on the part of Cervantes, Sancho's wife has several other names, including Mari Gutiérrez, Juana Panza, Teresa Cascajo, and Teresa Panza' (p.57). Observe the footing. Smollett is turning to the reader and saying, look, I don't understand what is happening in this text. He thus opens space for a first person that can ask questions (many of his footnotes are indeed in the full first person). Grossman, on the other hand, reports textual information and offers a hypothesis distanced from any subject position. Smollett is very much

present as a subjective intermediary; Grossman would prefer to provide authoritative information, especially from an authority beyond herself. In this case, both translators agree not to correct Cervantes' apparent mistake, giving the text the benefit of the doubt.⁴ In other cases, however, Smollett intervenes with moralistic commentaries such as, 'Methinks it is inconsistent with the character of the knight, to allow Sancho to tell such a fraudulent untruth in his hearing' (p.158n). Such a judgement would be unthinkable in Grossman.

Another easy comparison: Despite all the research, no one knows what Don Quixote ate on Saturdays. The Spanish says 'duelos y quebrantos' (in the first lines of the novel). Grossman says 'eggs and abstinence', without gloss. This is not bad, since the aim of the menu is to indicate relative poverty, as well as two words that fit together well. J.M. Cohen's old Penguin version (1950) has 'boiled bones', which seems similarly unmotivated by anything except poverty and assonance. Prior to Smollett, Stevens had 'sorrows and troubles', which is fair enough as a straight gloss of the Spanish words, and others had specified that as 'eggs and bacon', 'peas soup', or, apparently according to a dictionary of the time, 'omelette of eggs and brains'. For all this, Smollett says 'gripes and grumblings', which he glosses as 'pains and breakings, and evidently points at such eatables as generate and expel wind' (p.28n). That is a fairly amusing and not wholly unjustified footnote, and it might just pass as 'rambunctious'. But by the time it is glossed in a 30-line note by our contemporary editor, which effectively repeats Smollett's note and shows how it elaborated on a previous translation, well, we have invested a lot of scholarly effort in a little weekly flatulence. The humour is absent in Grossman, and killed by commentary in Smollett.

Here we might begin to understand why Smollett's version came to be regarded as indecorous and vulgar. As the nineteenth century progressed, Cervantes' text was consecrated as a classic of world literature, at the same time as popular culture spawned a multitude of comic versions and rewrites in English. Back in the eighteenth century, it was still possible to hold those two aspects together, forming what Smollett aptly names and conveys as Don Quixote's 'ludicrous solemnity' (p.20). In his notes, perhaps more so than in the playful ironies of his text, we see Smollett propping up one side then the other, implying vulgarity and seeking morality. The nineteenth-century split between popular and high culture would break that tension. The English Quixote became a relatively sanitized classic, his Saturday meal became boring, and things have largely remained that way.

As a quick illustration of this historical argument, consider strategies used to render the 'Author's Preface', where the Spanish has the author speak to the reader in the intimate second person 'tú', while a discussion between the author and a friend is in the formal second person 'vos'. Here is how that distinction has been rendered into English (the list is not complete, and we include only those editions we have been able to inspect):

Shelton (1612):	THOU mayst believe me, gentle reader, without swearing
Smollett (1755):	Idle reader, without an oath thou mayest believe

⁴ The two names for Sancho Panza's wife are reduced to one in Motteux and Motteux/Ozell. One reason for not correcting the apparent mistake is that, in Part II (IV. 7 / ch. 61), the narrator criticizes the author of a spurious version of Part I precisely because that version gives two names for Sancho Panza's wife. At that point Smollett notes, 'I am apt to believe that this remark was intended as an ironical sarcasm on the trivial observations of hypercritics' (671n), and refers back to his previous note. At the same point, Grossman relies on external authority: 'As Martín de Riquer points out...' (846n). Smollett, perhaps alone, was wary of becoming a hypercritic.

Motteux/Ozell (1762)	You may depend upon my bare word, reader, without any farther security
Kelly (1769)	READER, you may depend upon my bare word without any other security
Wilmot (1774)	THOU mayst assure thyself, reader, that I
Smirke (1818)	READER, thou wilt believe me, I trust, without an oath
Jarvis (1809, 1824):	You may believe me, without an oath, gentle reader
Clark (1864-67)	You may depend upon my bare word, reader, without any farther security
Anon (1862)	Reader, thou wilt believe me, I trust, when I tell thee
Jarvis (1866):	Loving reader, thou wilt believe me, I trust, without an oath
Ormsby (1885):	IDLE READER: thou mayest believe me without any oath
Watts (1888)	IDLE READER; thou canst believe me without an oath
Cohen (1950):	Idle reader, you can believe without any oath of mine
Raffel (1995):	Leisurely reader: you don't need me to swear
Rutherford (2000):	Idle reader, I don't have to swear any oaths to persuade you
Grossman (2003):	Idle reader: Without my swearing to it, you can believe

The earlier translations into English could clearly render this as 'thou', as opposed to the formal 'you' that appears later in the preface. In the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, however, 'thou' increasingly signalled archaic rather than intimate values. It was thus abandoned by some versions in the eighteenth century, though not by Smollett, and in some popularising versions such as J. W. Clark's revision of Jarvis (sold in parts in 1864-67). Yet 'thou' was retained in most nineteenth-century renditions, appearing as late as Watts' 1888 version (republished in 1895), by which stage it surely sent out quite the wrong classicising signals. Note, also, the problematic renderings of Cervantes' naming of the reader as desocupado (un-busy): 'idle reader' is humorous and apposite, and it used by both Smollett and Grossman. Yet many other translators have sought to flatten the text into anonymous convention ('loving' and 'gentle' readers are decidedly endemic, although Burton Raffel's 'leisurely reader' does rise above the pack). In their basic strategies, Smollett and Grossman stand historically separated by a long period in which most English translators did their level best to make this text a standard classic. Translatorial anonymity has been the order of the day for some two centuries.

It thus seems rather strange that Smollett has been criticized for failing to render all the stylistic variations of Cervantes' text, and indeed for not recreating many of the plays on words, particularly on proper names, that keep Spaniards laughing when they read the text.⁵ With regard to the first charge, here is Smollett's Quixote addressing two prostitutes, who are supposed to understand nothing:

'Never was knight so honoured by the service of ladies as Don Quixote when he first ushered himself into the world; ladies ministred unto him, and princesses took charge of his Rozinante. [...] the time will come, when your highnesses shall command, and I will obey, and the valour of this arm testify the desire I feel of being your slave.'

The charmers, whose nature never designed to expose such extraordinary compliments, answered not a syllable, but asked if he chose to have anything for supper? (p.35)

⁵ These criticisms are made in Thomas R. Hart's review of the 1986 edition of Smollett's translation, *Cervantes: Bulletin of the Cervantes Society of America*, 8 (1988), 118-22.

The translator is supposed to produce something that common folk would not understand, and Smollett does possibly fail on that score (translators like to be understood). The obscurities of Don Quixote's speech are, unfortunately, often close to those in Smollett's narrative voice as well. Yet Smollett's Quixotic speech is considerably more opaque, even allowing for the movement of centuries, than Grossman's version of the same:

'Never was a knight
as well-served by ladies
as was Don Quixote
when he first sallied forth:
fair damsels tended to him;
princesses cared for his horse.

[...] the day will come when your highnesses will command, and I shall obey, and the valor of this my arm will betoken the desire I have to serve you.'

The women, unaccustomed to hearing so much high-flown rhetoric, did not say a word in response; they only asked if he wanted something to eat. (p.28).

Grossman's use of verse follows Cervantes and is justified by a footnote ('Don Quixote paraphrases a ballad about Lancelot'). But when all is said and done, the girls would not have seen the verse form (only one half-rhyme here), and Don Quixote's words are plain enough ('betoken' might be the only challenge). If anything, the verse form makes things clearer to the reader (sounding out every note, indeed) at a point where the narrative itself calls for greater obscurity. Smollett, in these comparisons, has the colour that Grossman lacks. He is also able to find a nice name for prostitutes ('charmners', as opposed to 'women').

The second criticism made of Smollett concerns the rendition of playful names. On this score, Smollett again does better than most. Here is his Sancho Panza making fun of the Arabic historian Cid Hamet Benengeli (named as such on p. 66), who wrote the Arabic original of which the story of Don Quixote would be a translation:

'... the author of our history is called Cid Hamet Bean-and-jelly?' 'That name is Moorish,' replied Don Quixote. 'Very like,' said the squire, 'for I have been told that the Moors are very fond of beans and jellies.' (p.387)

Now Grossman, who has also made the previous reference to Benengeli:

'...the author of our history is named Cide Hamete Berenjena?'
'That is a Moorish name,' responded Don Quixote.
'It must be,' responded Sancho, 'because I've heard that most Moors are very fond of eggplant.' (p.473)

At least Smollett attempted the joke. Grossman, on the other hand, sends us on a paper-chase looking for information. Here she inserts a footnote referring us to a previous footnote, way back on p. 67 (a long way to go in search of a punch-line), which explains that 'Benengeli (berenjena in Spanish) means "eggplant", a favorite food of Spanish

Moors and Jews'. This is information instead of humour, and perhaps not entirely accurate information at that (I have not yet found a language where 'benengeli' means 'eggplant', and I have looked in Arabic and Hebrew).

Let us try one final comparison, this time to seek Grossman's positionality, as at least potential authorship. On the same page, the narrator tells how he found an interpreter for the Arabic text. Smollett has:

I looked about for some Portuguese Moor who should understand it; and indeed, tho' the language had been more elegant and ancient, I might easily have found an interpreter. (p.66)

No notes, no editorial glosses, and no clue of why the 'morisco' named in the Spanish text should have been Portuguese. Now Grossman:

I looked around to see if some Morisco who knew Castilian, and could read it for me, was in the vicinity, and it was not difficult to find this kind of interpreter, for even if I had sought a speaker of an older and better language, I would have found him. (p.67)

Grossman correctly footnotes that a Morisco is 'A Moor who had been converted to Christianity'. She then adds that the other language is 'An allusion to Hebrew, spoken by the Jews who were merchants in the Alcaná'. The identification of the language is very probably correct. However, like the shared culture of eggplants, a Jewish translator would have more interest than most in making it explicit. This is a translator who sounds out all the notes, including those that Spain long tried to banish from its history. At those points, yes, we might concede Grossman some authorial identity.

Moral of the story: Read Smollett for colour, fun, and scholarship if you will (but Shelton or Motteux also provide the first two pleasures); read Grossman for information.

I take the liberty of saying what I think, on a more general level. As mentioned, 2005 marks the fourth centenary of the first part of Don Quijote. This is an occasion for Spanish pride, on many levels. We have a new edition of the original, with ample scholarship attached, going beyond Martín de Riquer.⁶ But then, in today's newspaper, for example, we also have things like a full-page advertisement for tourism in La Mancha, advertising the region's Quixotic hospitality, nobility, and... restaurants. Now, how could Don Quijote's meals attract anyone to a restaurant, at least on Saturdays? Has no one actually read the text? To believe the publicity, Cervantes' work would be Spain's great gift to world culture, and the number of its translations would be a reliable measure of its greatness. However, read within Spanish history, Cervantes' text surely marks the decadence of what was once the world's superpower. It is a strange text to celebrate. South American gold stayed idle in aristocratic coffers; Jewish merchants would have to move it to the Low Countries to feed the development of capitalism, Spain declined as its 'Golden Centuries' were literary but not economic. The low aristocrat Don Quijote is as idle as that gold in Spain, his head full of past grandeur, subject to ridicule in a mean and prosaic present, and none of that is clear cause for national pride. Within the Spanish context, Cervantes spoke true precisely because he

⁶ Don Quijote de la Mancha, edición dirigida por Francisco Rico (Barcelona, 2004).

saw the seeds of that decadence. He sought ways to live with it, with the tragic irony of a mistreated writer, who found no way forward in history.

Beyond that Spanish context, those ironies meshed with quite different forces. The rising merchant class, the power of money (all Smollett's dealings with booksellers and subscribers) could use them to create a quite different modernity, ridiculing aristocracy yet inheriting its cultural values. Reading any of the eighteenth-century English translations (Motteux, Jarvis, Kelly, as well as Smollett), one is reminded of Fielding but also of Sterne, for example, similarly searching for a realist form suited to a new culture. Those translations are part of a Modernist history; they belong to the English context; their Spain is little more than a literary occasion for serious fun within a context of class mobility. To read them is to read English literary culture; they are not tragic in any national way. For this reason, they are a good read, on their own terms. On the other hand, we have seen the nineteenth-century translations (Smirke, Duffield, Ormsby, Watts) as a sad old lot, trying to make the text part of high culture, in opposition to the popular, when Cervantes' form needs both in order to work. That tendency is also present in the twentieth-century versions (Cohen, Putnam, Raffel, Rutherford—the last reviewed in this journal 11:1, 2002), which gain in philological accuracy but do not take too many risks with indecorum. At the same time, those twentieth-century versions make the text increasingly Spanish. The names become Spanish, the places are glossed as parts of Spain, and we are told more about Spanish history. Grossman is clearly within that line. Despite her bland narrative voice, hers is a translation about a country and language that are resolutely non-English and yet demand to be known. The Modernist reading that we might apply to Smollett is repeatedly upset, if only because Grossman's characters 'don't care an *ardite*' (p.123) there where Smollett's 'don't care a farthing' (p.114). In this non-domesticating reading we might see, not any return to seventeenth-century Spain, but more the practical workings of globalisation, or at least the presence of Spanish in the United States. The Hispanic other is not all that distant, nor is the weight of the Hispanic past. Grossman, writing from relative non-authorship, gives space to the Spanish context of this text, far more than the English eighteenth century ever did. Then again, for the contemporary Jewish translator, the history of Spain need not be entirely external. It could have been translated not just from Arabic, but from an older (and better?) language as well.