

# MY FAVORITE MAP

## DON QUIJOTE'S ROUTE MAP

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### Why this map?

Asking a cartography enthusiast to discuss their favorite map is not unlike asking a parent to choose a favorite child. Like a good parent, I have to confess that all of my maps are special to me, whether they remind me of my family's history, reinforce a personal connection with a region, are historically significant, or they are just beautiful works of art. Broadly, my interests in cartography fall along the lines of *The Age of Discovery*, *Colonial America*, *New York City*, and *Maps of Spain*, so I had some excellent choices for this article. I decided to discuss a "cross-over" map that is primarily a literary/fantasy map based on the fictional events portrayed in *Don Quijote* in the context of contemporary cartographic development and the national identity of Spain in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

I have a personal connection to this map, having completed coursework on *Don Quijote* at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid, as well as advising the *La Real Academia Española*<sup>1</sup> on the growth plan for *The Instituto Cervantes*<sup>2</sup>, which today has over seventy-five instructional centers around the world promoting Spanish language, literature, culture, and art. Not surprisingly, *The Instituto Cervantes* chose Alcáza de Henáres, the birthplace of Miguel de Cervantes, *Don Quijote's* author and hero of the Spanish Golden Age of Literature, as the location for their headquarters.

### The Novel

*Don Quijote* was released in two parts, with Volume I published in 1605, and Volume II in 1615 in Madrid by noted publisher Juan de la Cuesta. *The Quijote*, as it is referred to in Spain, figures deeply into Spain's national identity and is a source of tremendous national pride. It is widely considered the first modern novel and is one of the most beloved stories of all time. It has been translated into over 145 languages and continues to be the subject of academic inquiry, figuring among the most significant works in Western Literature.

The location of Don Quijote's fictional hometown has been the source of intense debate by Cervantes scholars, as the novel famously begins:

*"Somewhere in La Mancha, in a place whose name I do not care to remember..."*

Many scholars place the location as a small town in southern La Mancha, Argamasilla de Alba, where Cervantes spent time in prison for financial irregularities during his time as a tax collector. Some believe that he composed his first draft from that prison, but that theory has been primarily dispelled based on a lack of documentary evidence. The more prevalent

view today is that Cervantes wrote the initial draft from yet another prison cell but in Sevilla.

Don Quijote is driven mad by his obsessive reading of chivalric romances, which were very popular during the late fifteenth century, and often reads, fantasizes, and acts-out throughout the night. He ultimately decides to venture out as a *knights-errant*, seeking out adventures, righting wrongs, and performing valorous acts in service to his Lady Dulcinea, a poor peasant girl in a neighboring village. For most of the novel, Don Quijote is accompanied by his faithful squire, Sancho Panza. Don Quijote ambles about the countryside in a delusional state, seeing the world not as it is, but as how he imagines it should be—his romantic ideal. Perhaps the best-known adventure from the novel is when he charges the windmills, believing that they are threatening giants aggressively waving their arms from atop the hills of La Mancha. His attack is a complete failure, and he ends up badly bruised and injured.<sup>4</sup> This scene epitomizes Don Quijote and Sancho Panza's adventures, and their fate throughout the novel. It would take 175 years for someone to plot Don Quijote's travels and adventures on a route map.

### Cervantes's Cartographic Knowledge

Cervantes was well-traveled and possessed a very sophisticated level of cartographic knowledge for his time. He was active when Ortelius published *The Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* in 1570, and it is likely he had first-hand knowledge of the text<sup>5</sup>. Cervantes traveled to Rome, where he worked as an aide to a Cardinal, served in the Spanish Armada, and battled the Ottoman Empire in the Battle of Lepanto. On a return trip from Genoa, pirates kidnapped Cervantes and held him prisoner in Algiers for several years. References to Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Americas frequently appear in Cervantes' writing. The Spanish countryside described in *The Quijote* is likely based on his extensive travels throughout Spain when he worked as a tax collector for the Crown.

Cervantes even portrays Don Quijote as a metaphorical cartographer, who endures physical pain and hardship to chart his way through the world in contrast to the passive *courtiers* who only travel the world from the comfort of their studios.

*"... and even if all of us are knights, there is a vast difference between them, because the courtiers, without leaving their chambers or the thresholds of the court, walk the whole world looking at a map, without spending a penny, or suffering heat or cold, hunger or thirst; but we, the true knights-errant, exposed to the sun, the cold, the air, the merciless weather night and day, on foot and on horseback, we measure the whole earth with our own feet, and we do not know the enemies merely in painting, but in their very being."<sup>6</sup>*

This quote is a somewhat disdainful reference to the growing popularity of world and regional maps that, for the first time, allowed people to passively experience the world through the charts and atlases published by the leading cartographers like Ortelius, Braun and Hogenburg, Mercator and Hondius (see Fig. 1).



**Figure 1.** *Nova Hispaniae Descriptio*, Hondius; first issued circa 1610. Image source: raremaps.com

The highly decorated map of the Iberian Peninsula in Figure 1, *Nova Hispaniae Descriptio*, by Hondius, was published circa 1610. It is the first carte-a-figures map of the region, and one of the most striking seventeenth-century printed maps of Spain. It includes views of the principal Iberian cities on the border, with regional characters in contemporary dress, clearly influenced by Braun and Hogenburg's *Civitates*. The cartouche features the coat of arms of the Kingdom of Spain with a portrait of King Philip III in a medallion in the margin. As maps like this became more accessible, the general public could genuinely begin to possess geographic and cultural knowledge on a broader scale.<sup>7</sup>

**The First Map of Quijote's Route**

In 1780, on the 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the publication of *The Quijote*, the *Real Academia* published a lavishly printed edition of *Don Quijote* (*The Ibarra Edition*) that included a forward, a biographical sketch of Cervan-

tes, plot analysis, illustrations, **and the first map depicting Don Quijote's travels throughout Spain.** Since its original publication, there had been many translations of the work, and *La Real Academia* felt it was necessary to reclaim control over the narrative, and claim *Don Quijote's* authentic Spanish heritage by publishing a *luxe* edition unparalleled in the world. Tomás Lopéz, Royal Cartographer to Charles III, and Spain's leading cartographer at the time, produced the map. Lopéz studied under French cartographer Juan Bautista Bourguignon de Anville in Paris, learning his technique as a "studio" cartographer, primarily relying on prior published maps or descriptions and accounts from local sources<sup>8</sup>, as they often lacked first-hand knowledge of the local topography. At the time of *The Quijote*, Lopéz was working on the *Atlas General de España* (*AGE*), the first effort to map the entire Peninsula at a detailed regional level. To gather the geographic information for his atlas, Lopéz divided the provinces into circles with diameters of three leagues (16,718 m), and sent questionnaires to local priests with instructions to map local features with their town as the center-point of the circle. Lopéz would then compile the surveys and draw the map in consultation with other sources. It is not difficult to see how this process could compromise accuracy.

In mapping the Quijote route (Fig. 2), however, Lopéz was assisted by Don Joseph de Hermosilla, captain of the Royal Corps of Engineers. Hermosilla went out into the field, and took precise scientific measurements based on de-



**Figure 2.** *Mapa de una Porcion del Reyno de España que Comprehende los Parages por Donde Anduvo Don Quixote y los Sitios de sus Aventuras / Delineado por D. Tomás López, 1780.* Image source: Newberry Library

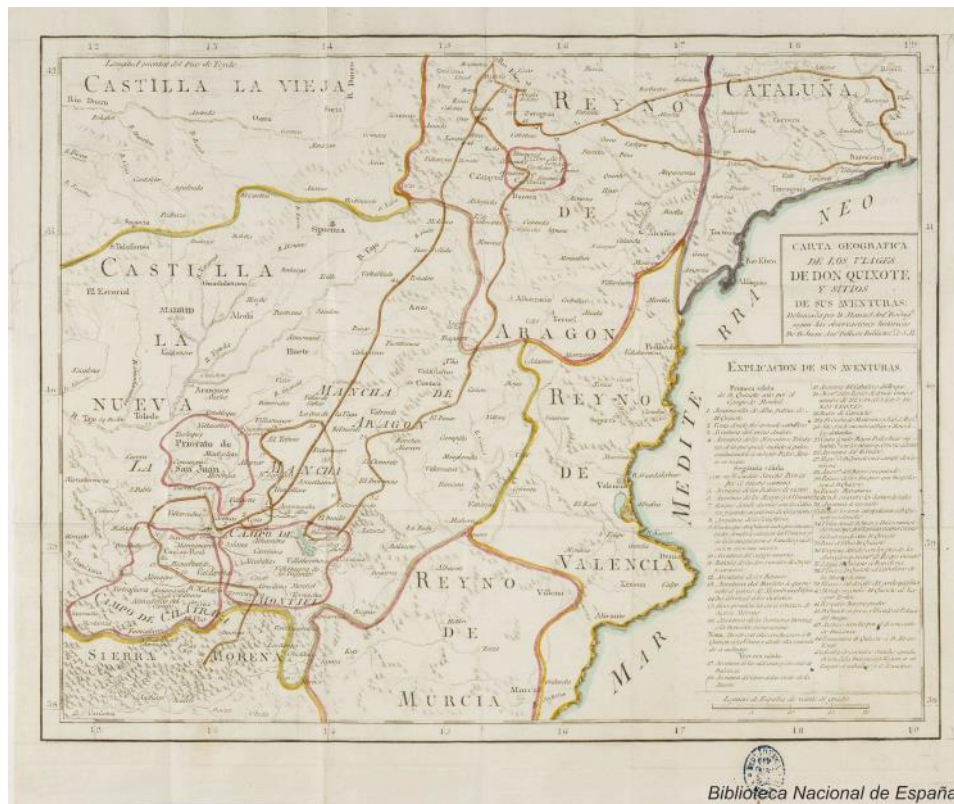
scriptions in the novel in order to triangulate and plot the route of a fictional character using the most sophisticated topographical and surveying instruments available at the time. This merger of science and fiction is what makes this map so interesting to me. It is also worth noting that Lopéz played more the role of a *Courtier*, not leaving his studio, while Hermosilla was more of a *knight-errant*, physically tracing the route "on foot" in true Cervantes style.

The map covers a good portion of the Iberian peninsula, from Segovia on the Western border to Barcelona on the East Coast, and from Zaragoza in the North to Alicante on the Southern Coast. The base map leverages Lopéz's regional plans from his *AGE*, and shows mountains, topographical features, villages, principal rivers, and important buildings. Different colors of route lines depict each of Don Quijote's three journeys, with a number referring to each of the thirty-five adventures indicated in the key immediately below the cartouche vignette. The cartouche vignette depicts a knight escorting an empty suit of armor seated on a horse with a lance and a barber's basin, clearly symbolic of a deceased Don Quijote. Location #35, the last location on the map key, indicates the point from which a defeated Quijote "returned to his hometown and died."<sup>9</sup>

### Other Quijote Maps

The publication of the *Ibarra* edition, with its Lopéz map, led other publishing houses to produce elegant volumes of *Don Quijote* with different versions of the knight-errant's route. In 1797-98 Juan Antonio Pellicer, Royal Librarian to Carlos III, published an edition of *The Quijote* with a route map engraved by Juan Antonio Rodriguez. This map shows a route comprising forty-five adventures and identifies his home village as Argamasilla de Alba<sup>9</sup>, something Lopéz could not bring himself to do. The Pellicer map is beautiful and differs from the Lopéz map, primarily in that different routes are used when Don Quijote returns home after each journey, which allows Pellicer to describe ten additional adventures.

Some 415 years after its publication, *Don Quijote* continues to delight its readers and inspire new paths of academic research and investigation. It is a timeless novel, and I encourage you to engage with our knight-errant on a journey while thinking about the prolific cartographic development at the time. Like novels, maps tell stories of exploration, love, conquest, and defeat. They guide us on the path forward and provide abundant views of our past. Having thought about *Don Quijote* from the perspective of cartography has only deepened my desire to learn more<sup>11</sup> about this novel and the history surrounding its publication.



**Figure 3.** *Carta Geografica de los Viajes de don Quixote y Sitios de sus Aventuras / Delineada por D. Manuel Ant<sup>o</sup> Rodrigz. Según las observaciones históricas De D. Juan Ant<sup>o</sup> Pellicer... Madrid, 1798.* Image source: Biblioteca Nacional de España

*Endnotes & Sources* ➡

## Endnotes and Sources:

<sup>1</sup> *La Real Academia Española*, founded in 1713, is Spain's official institution charged with ensuring the stability of the Spanish language in coordination with national language academies in twenty-two other Spanish-speaking nations through the Association of Academies of the Spanish Language.

<sup>2</sup> *Instituto Cervantes* is a global non-profit organization created by the Spanish government in 1991. It is the largest organization in the world responsible for promoting the study and the teaching of Spanish language and culture.

<sup>3</sup> Cervantes, Miguel de, *El Ingenioso Hidalgo Don Quijote de La Mancha*, Madrid, 1605 and 1615

<sup>4</sup> Throughout the novel, Don Quijote and Sancho Panza are referred to as "*molidos*," which translates as "ground down," precisely what a windmill does to the grain. Windmills were a new addition to the La Mancha landscape and are symbolic of modernization and new technology designed to drive the economy and finance the Hapsburg's war efforts.

<sup>5</sup> Domínguez, Julia, "Qué Grandeza es Mandar en un Grano de Mostaza ... La Visión Celestial de Sancho y El Theatrum Orbis Terrarum de Abraham Ortelius", *Hispanófilia* Volume No: 166, pp. 19-37

<sup>6</sup> Pinet, Simon, "Literature and Cartography in Early Modern Spain: Etymologies and Conjectures," *History of Cartography* Volume: 3, Chapter 18: page 469

<sup>7</sup> Support for map description based on text from Barry Lawrence Ruderman <https://www.raremaps.com/gallery/detail/37574/nova-hispaniae-descriptio-hondius>

<sup>8</sup> C. San-Antonio-Gómez, C. Velilla & F. Manzano-Agugliaro (2011), "Tomas Lopez's Geographic Atlas of Spain in the Peninsular War: A Methodology for Determining Errors", *Survey Review*, 43:319, 30-44

<sup>9</sup> Lopéz, Tomas, *Mapa de una Porción del Reyno de España que Comprehende los Parages por Donde Anduvo Don Quijote y los Sitios de sus Aventuras*, Publisher: Don Joaquín Ibarra, Madrid, 1780.

<sup>10</sup> Lewis, Elizabeth Franklin, "Mapping Don Quixote's Route: Spanish Cartography, English Travelers and National Pride," *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture*, Volume 46, 2017, pp. 35-48.

<sup>11</sup> Líte Mayayo, Carmen, *Los Mapas del Quijote (Program guide on the 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Publication of Don Quijote)*, Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, 2005. <http://www.bne.es/es/LaBNE/Publicaciones/CatalogosExposiciones/los-mapas-del-quiote.html>



## JULIE SWEETKIND SINGER ASSUMES NEW ROLE AT STANFORD UNIVERSITY

**Julie Sweetkind Singer** has been appointed Associate University Librarian for Science and Engineering Resources at the Stanford University Library, and will be overseeing staff, operations, and budgets in the five Science and Engineering libraries: the Branner Earth Science Library, the David Rumsey Map Center, the Hopkins Marine Station's Miller Library, the Li and Ma Combined Science Library, and the Terman Engineering Library.

Since joining the Stanford Libraries in 2000, Julie has been very involved in the establishment and development of the David Rumsey Map Center. She has helped to institute the digital philanthropy project, which digitizes antiquarian map collections from private collectors for public use, has overseen the development of the Libraries' GIS program, and has coordinated programs to ensure the long-term preservation of geospatial data resources of significance. Julie also currently serves on the Advisory Board of the Leventhal Map Center, the Boston Public Library, and the User Working Group of the Socioeconomic Data and Application Center. She teaches map history for the California Rare Book School and the Australasian Rare Book School. **Julie is also a long-time member of the California Map Society and served a term as our Northern California Vice President.**

The California Map Society offers sincere congratulations on her very well-deserved new position, and we look forward to working with her for many years in the future on many interesting and educational programs.

