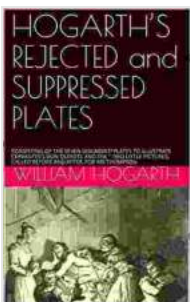


Consisting of the Seven Discarded Plates to Illustrate Cervantes' Don Quixote: A Comprehensive Analysis of an Abandoned Literary Masterpiece

Within the annals of literature, Miguel de Cervantes' magnum opus, Don Quixote, stands as a towering achievement. First published in 1605, this epic tale of a delusional knight-errant and his loyal squire, Sancho Panza, has captivated readers for centuries. However, few are aware of the existence of seven discarded plates that were originally intended to illustrate the novel's first edition. These plates, discovered centuries after Cervantes' death, offer a fascinating glimpse into the author's creative process and provide valuable insights into the development of his masterpiece.

The Genesis of the Discarded Plates

In the early 17th century, it was customary for publishers to commission illustrations to accompany major literary works. Cervantes himself oversaw the creation of the plates for the first edition of Don Quixote. He worked closely with an engraver named Francisco de Robles, providing detailed instructions on how each scene should be depicted.



**HOGARTH'S REJECTED and SUPPRESSED PLATES:
CONSISTING OF THE SEVEN DISCARDED PLATES TO
ILLUSTRATE CERVANTES'S DON QUIXOTE AND THE “
TWO LITTLE PICTURES, CALLED BEFORE AND
AFTER, FOR MR. THOMPSON** by Jane Sullivan

★★★★★ 4.7 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 3690 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
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However, for reasons that remain unknown, seven of the original plates were ultimately rejected by Cervantes. Some scholars speculate that he may have been dissatisfied with Robles' execution of the designs, while others believe that he simply changed his mind about the visual representation of certain scenes.

Rediscovering the Lost Plates

For centuries, the discarded plates remained lost to the world. It was not until 1863 that a Spanish bibliophile named Pascual de Gayangos stumbled upon them in the library of the Royal Academy of History in Madrid. Gayangos recognized their significance and had them published in a limited edition of 100 copies.

Since then, the plates have been reproduced in various editions of Don Quixote and have become an important part of the novel's iconography. They offer a unique opportunity to explore Cervantes' original vision for his characters and the world they inhabit.

A Detailed Examination of the Plates

The seven discarded plates depict key scenes from the first part of Don Quixote. Each plate is accompanied by a brief caption that provides a summary of the corresponding chapter in the novel.

1. **Plate 1:** Don Quixote's first sally

This plate depicts Don Quixote setting out on his first adventure, armed with his trusty lance and accompanied by his faithful squire, Sancho Panza. In the background, we see the inn where Don Quixote has mistaken for a castle.

2. **Plate 2:** Don Quixote's battle with the windmills

One of the most iconic scenes in the novel, this plate shows Don Quixote charging at a group of windmills that he has mistaken for giants. Sancho Panza, riding behind, watches in amazement and trepidation.

3. **Plate 3:** Don Quixote's encounter with the muleteers

In this scene, Don Quixote mistakes a group of muleteers for an army of knights. He charges at them with such ferocity that he is knocked unconscious and his horse is severely injured.

4. **Plate 4:** Don Quixote's penance in the Sierra Morena

After a series of misadventures, Don Quixote decides to retreat to the Sierra Morena mountains to do penance for his sins. This plate shows him kneeling in prayer, surrounded by the animals that inhabit the forest.

5. **Plate 5:** Don Quixote's encounter with the goatherds

While wandering through the mountains, Don Quixote comes across a group of goatherds. He engages them in a long conversation about the nature of chivalry and the ideal knight-errant.

6. **Plate 6:** Don Quixote's encounter with the galley slaves

In one of the most moving scenes in the novel, Don Quixote frees a group of galley slaves. This plate captures the moment when he declares their freedom, despite the protests of their guards.

7. **Plate 7:** Don Quixote's return home

After a long and eventful journey, Don Quixote finally returns home to his village. This plate shows him being greeted by his friends and neighbors, who have long given up hope of ever seeing him again.

Cervantes' Creative Process Revealed

The discarded plates provide valuable insights into Cervantes' creative process. They show how he experimented with different ways of visualizing his characters and the events of the novel. In some cases, the plates differ significantly from the descriptions in the text, suggesting that Cervantes was still refining his ideas as he wrote.

For example, in Plate 1, Don Quixote is depicted with a long beard and wearing a suit of armor. This contrasts with the description in the novel, which states that he has a short beard and wears a patched tunic. It is possible that Cervantes initially intended to portray Don Quixote as a more

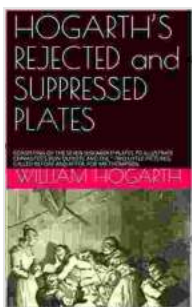
traditional knight-errant, but later decided to make him a more comical figure.

The Plates' Influence on Later Editions

Although the discarded plates were not used in the first edition of Don Quixote, they have had a significant influence on later editions. Many illustrators have been inspired by Robles' designs, and some have even incorporated elements of the plates into their own work.

For example, the famous 18th-century illustrator Antonio Carnicero borrowed heavily from Plate 2 in his depiction of Don Quixote's battle with the windmills. Carnicero's engraving became one of the most iconic images of the novel, and it has been reproduced in countless editions ever since.

The seven discarded plates for Don Quixote are a fascinating and valuable addition to the literary canon. They offer a unique glimpse into Cervantes' creative process and provide insights into the development of his masterpiece. While they may not have been used in the original edition, these plates have had a lasting influence on the visual representation of Don Quixote and continue to inspire artists and readers alike.



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