

# HISTORICAL ASPECTS OF THE TRANSLATIONS AND TRANSLATORS OF THE *QUIXOTE* IN GERMANY IN THE 20TH CENTURY<sup>1</sup>

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## Abstract

There is nothing new in saying that everyone in Germany knows the *Quixote*, and that one can find translations of this work everywhere. But it is strange for the average reader to know how many translations there are or when the translation he is reading was done. And it is even stranger for the reader to know who the translator was if he is not one of the “star translators” of German literature, in the case of the *Quijote* Ludwig Tieck, in other cases for example August Wilhelm Schlegel, Arthur Schopenhauer, Walter Benjamin or Stefan Zweig. However, beyond these “stars” there have been a large amount of good translators that have not been paid the attention they might deserve. This article tries to recover some forgotten or unknown details of the three German translations of the *Quixote* in the 20th century and, above all, of its translators. Some interesting details will be presented about these personalities and about the conditions under which they carried out their job.

**Keywords:** History. Translation. Germany. *Quixote*. 20th Century.

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## 1. Introduction

Throughout the 20th century and in the beginning of the 21st century, the presence of *Don Quixote* in Europe follows the unstoppable development which has already begun with its publication in 1605. The traditional forms of reception are complemented by new ways of restating the major work of the Spanish literature: to the reception in literary criticism and in different artistic genres we can add the television, the cinema or the Internet. However, translation remains the main form of transmission and reception. Despite the enormous amount of translations that the 19th century left us, the 20th century kept on translating *Don Quixote*, although much still remains to be investigated about these translations and their translators. Looking at the *Quixote* secondary literature one can see that the Cervantes' studies continue to focus primarily on the translations of the 19th century and, even though it is quite reasonable for this century has left us the most successful and enduring translations, it is also true that the translators who afterwards undertook such an enterprise deserve recognition and gratitude. Despite not reaching the heights of popularity and fame of the previous translators, they increased the affection of the European readers for our most universal work. Thus, this research article was created with the aim of writing a page in the history of the translation of *Don Quixote*, in an attempt to shed light upon some dark or forgotten aspects of its German versions in the twentieth century. A volume about the History of Translation such as this provides the perfect framework for an article like ours, which presents new data on the translations and, the most interesting of all in this case, its translators. The new historiography of translation, a new field of study which is raising the interest of renowned researchers in recent years, agrees in many cases -read the works in this field of Miguel Ángel Vega Cernuda<sup>2</sup> (see Vega Cernuda 2008) or Anthony Pym (see Pym 1998)- that a history of translation, essential in order to have a proper understanding of the importance of this activity for the history of culture, is to be written starting with the translators, its main actors. Not without reason Louis Kelly began his book *The true interpreter* (1979) saying that translators are the architects of Western culture ("Western Europe owes its civilization to translators").

This brief survey only intends to be the first step for a comprehensive historical study of the translations of *Don Quixote* in the twentieth century in Germany. Our survey of the personal and cultural background of German translators should be completed in other studies with a study of the texts to get a complete historical portrait.

As in France, where Viardot's version had consolidated itself as the quintessential French translation, in Germany Ludwig Tieck's (1799-1801) and Ludwig Braunfels' translations (1883), which had already become classic translations, continued being published throughout the twentieth century. An article published a few years ago offered an overview of all editions of *Don Quixote* in the German twentieth century and it mentioned no less than 32 different editions of Braunfels' and no less than 18 of Tieck's translation (Valero Cuadra 2007: 141-145). Along with these, which represented the vast majority, also appeared some editions of the translation made by the enlightened Dietrich Wilhelm Soltau (1800-1801), of the revised edition of Ernst von Wolzogen (1893) and some other editions of the three translations made in this century, to which we dedicate the following pages.

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<sup>2</sup> Vega said that, among all the factors involved in the process of translation, "the history of translators should have priority in the context of the history of translation" (Vega 2008:140)

## 2. Felix P. Greve, alias Konrad Thorer: frantic translation due to pecuniary needs

In 1908 a new translation of *Don Quixote* is published by the prestigious Insel Verlag. As shown in the bibliography at the end of this article, the first edition indicated that the translation was carried out by Konrad Thorer and that he had made use of the anonymous translation of 1837, an indirect translation made from a French version which had been published including the famous preface by Heinrich Heine. However, the translation was actually rather a reworking and revision of the translation of 1837 than an independent translation and, therefore, in subsequent editions the credits were modified to specify that it was a revision by Thorer of the text 1837. This translation-review was reissued throughout the century, always under Konrad Thorer's name as the translator or reviewer of the text. The truth is that Konrad Thorer is just a pseudonym that has been perpetuated as if it were a real person. The real translator behind that name was Felix Paul Greve, a curious case of a writer who hid under numerous pseudonyms and, despite the discovery of his identity some years ago, who still appears in many studies under his various pseudonyms. The fact that the role of the translator has been till nowadays of so little importance, and even less the role of the reviewers or editors, leads to the pseudonym Konrad Thorer being considered for decades as the author of the revision of the 1908 text.

As just mentioned, we find a curious case of a writer hidden under different names. Felix Paul Greve<sup>3</sup> (1879-1948) was born in Prussian territory, in Radomno, present-day Poland, where he spent the first years of his life. From there, the family moved to Hamburg, where Greve was educated in the best secondary schools of the city until he decided to study Classical Philology and Archeology in Bonn. Without having finished his studies, he spent some time in Italy and then in Munich, where he came into contact with the most important literary circles of that time and met Stefan George, Karl Wolfskehl or Thomas Mann. Greve had already stood out during his school years not just because of his intelligence but also because of his dreams of social advancement, which caused him to have to ask for large sums of money to afford the lifestyle he desired. He found his private patron in an old school friend, Herman F. C. Kilian, who, given the large amount of money which Greve owed him, decided to report Greve some years later. This led to Greve spending a year in prison for the sums he had not returned to Kilian and other creditors. Drowned by his economic situation, Greve began a frantic translation activity in an attempt to pay off his debts; there were some years of accumulation of translations and even production of own works, since he published two novels: *Fanny Essler* (1905) and *Maurermeister Ihles Haus* (1906). It is in this context that Greve published his translation of *Don Quixote*, which, as we said, was rather a revision of an earlier text than a translation itself. However, it would be interesting to carry out a critical study of translations, both of *Don Quixote* and the *Exemplary Novels*, to see to what extent Greve's pen can be found in the texts, something, as far as we know, nobody has done so far.

As mentioned, Felix Paul Greve, alias Konrad Thorer, published a translation-review of *Don Quixote* in 1908, but he translated many more texts, always from great English, French, Italian and Spanish writers: Honoré de Balzac (*Eine dunkle Begebenheit*, etc.), Alexandre Dumas (*Der Graf von Monte Cristo*), Gustave Flaubert (*Bouvard et Pécuchet*, etc.), Andre Gide (*Die enge Pforte*, etc.), Alain René Lesage (*Gil Blas*), Dante Alighieri (sonnets from *Vita Nuova*), Charles Dickens (*David Copperfield*), Jonathan Swift (*Prosaschriften*) and Oscar Wilde (*Das Bildnis Dorian Grays*), among many others. From Cervantes he translated also, as mentioned, the *Exemplary Novels* (*Die Novellen des Cervantes*, 1907). Greve's translation activity is worthy of mention and study. His immense activity of translating to German was carried out in just a few years, during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, before his financial situation was so unsustainable that Greve was forced to leave the country and emigrate to America. But this escape was not an emigration like any other: Greve faked his own death in 1909 and moved to the United States, where he adopted the name of Frederick Philip Grove. From there he went to Canada, where he began teaching at various colleges and where little later he began a literary

<sup>3</sup> The link of Felix Paul Greve with his different pseudonyms and his new identity in Canada was discovered in 1973 by D. O. Spettigue. Most of the biographical data offered here can be found in the work of Klaus Martens quoted in the bibliography. This work is mainly focused on his years in Germany, when he carried out his translations.

career... in English! Greve's works quickly became best-sellers and are still highly recognized by critics. Greve / Grove became one of the first Canadian literary classics: works as *Over Prairie Trails* (1922), *The turn of the Year* (1923) or the allegedly autobiographical works *A Search for America* (1927) and *In Search of Myself* (1946) became part of the Canadian canon and are studied in schools and universities. The last two works are allegedly autobiographical. Greve introduced himself as an immigrant born in Europe who had traveled the world, although not as a German but as a Swede. The confusion caused by these stories created a mysterious aura around him which was not discovered until many years after his death. Thus, the case of Greve is absolutely outstanding: the case of an author-translator who gets to make two literary careers in two different countries, under two different names and in two different languages. To what extent his frantic translation activity influenced his literary career could be worth a future study. As already known, many writers considered translation as a prelude to the writing itself, a training exercise to learn to master the own language<sup>4</sup>.

### 3. Roland Schacht and the forgotten *Quixote*.

After Greve, many years would go by until another lover of literature resumed the work of translating to German the literary genius from Alcalá. The next translator is surely the most forgotten and overlooked under the German translators of *Don Quixote*: Roland Schacht. In fact, it is quite rare to find his name in the secondary literature about Cervantes, as if he had never translated the work of Cervantes; besides translating *Don Quixote*, he did the same with the *Exemplary Novels*<sup>5</sup>. Roland E. A. Schacht, son of the actors Edward and Mathilde Schacht, was born in 1888 in Reichenberg, the current Czech Liberec. After studying German Philology, Modern Languages and Art History at different universities (Göttingen, Paris, Berlin and Munich), at the age of 22 he obtained a doctorate with a thesis on the evolution of the tragedy: *Die Entwicklung der Tragödie in Theorie und Praxis von Gottsched bis Lessing* (1910). From that moment, he devoted himself to write in various newspapers and magazines as a film, theater and literature critic. It is in the theatrical and cinematic field where his footprint is more visible, and his chronicles and reviews keep on being quoted today. Besides as a critic, Schacht stood out as author of plays and film scripts. In the film industry, just a look at a movie database<sup>6</sup> is enough to see his participation in different films of the 30s and 40s. The obituary which appeared in the newspaper *Der Tagesspiegel* on September 29, 1961, just a week after his death, gives us an idea of the theatrical successes he reached with his own compositions. In this obituary some of the plays were listed for which he would be remembered in the Berlin scene: *Mama räumt auf*, *Christine von Schweden*, *Schauspielerin*, *Zum Glück gehört Charakter*... After a period devoted to theatre, Schacht devoted himself to literature. In addition to writing some works (it should be highlighted his *Aufstand der Asketen*, 1955, which satirizes the German economic miracle), he translated numerous works from Spanish (Cervantes) and English (William J. Blake. *Maria Meinhardt. Roman aus dem amerikanischen Bürgerkrieg*) and, especially, from French (Guy de Maupassant. *Pierre und Jean*, Robert Antelme. *Die Mensch Gattung*, Gabriel Chevallier. *Clochemerle-Babylon*, etc.).

The *Exemplary Novels* were printed by the publishing house Rütten & Loening of Potsdam in 1948, although we know that this task was carried out during the war years. The undersigned discovered some time ago a number of documents in the archives of the *Akademie der Künste* in Berlin -specifically the files of Eduard Schacht and Walther von Molo- in which there are some letters from Schacht along with newspaper clippings, biographical documents, photographs, etc. In one of these letters, addressed to Walther von Molo and dated December 18, 1944, Schacht announced that he was translating the novels of Cervantes, in the Berlin of the cruelest war days:

<sup>4</sup> This reminds us of Stefan Zweig, who in that same time felt that the translation is the first step for a future literary career. Zweig began translating Emile Verhaeren and, following the advice of the writer Richard Dehmel, before starting his successful literary career he translated Baudelaire, Verlaine, Keats, Lemonnier... (see García Albero 2008).

<sup>5</sup> Miguel de Cervantes. *Muster-Novellen*. Potsdam: Rütten & Loening, 1948. 2 vols.

<sup>6</sup> The most comprehensive available to the general public is surely the Internet database IMDB ([www.imdb.com](http://www.imdb.com))

(...) habe aber fleißig an meinen Übersetzungsaufträgen geschafft, (...) (Manzoni, *Gullivers Reisen...*) und einen großen Teil der Musternovellen von Cervantes. Letztere enthalten äußerst merkwürdige Sachen. Ich weiß nicht, ob Sie sie kennen. Leider ist das Spanisch wegen vieler Rotwelschausdrücke sehr schwierig, zumal die spanischen Kommentare zu diesen Dingen nicht zu beschaffen sind.<sup>7</sup>

By what we read here, he was translating some works from Italian writer Alessandro Manzoni and *Gulliver's Travels*, works that do not appear in the catalogs under his name, so that's why we think that they were published without reference to the translator.

Soon after, in a letter to the same addressee dated February 16, 1945, he confirmed "die Cervantes-Novellen sind fertig" ("Cervantes' novels are ready"). In our humble opinion, it is worthy of praise that in days as cruel as those experienced in Germany during World War II, suffering daily the bombings of the allied forces, a spirit like Schacht dedicated to the Spanish lyrics translating the works of Cervantes, with the lack of resources that we can well imagine and which he complained in the aforementioned letter. But not only the translation of the novels provided Schacht some relief in so hard days. Thanks to another letter we also know that during the war he reviewed his translation of *Don Quixote*, which he had done years before, as we understand from the letter also addressed to von Molo and dated January 7, 1944:

Zum eigentlichen Arbeiten ist kaum Gelegenheit. Irgendwann werde ich mich doch einmal entschließen müssen, die Eindrücke des letzten Jahres in einer größeren Arbeit zu gestalten, im Augenblick beschäftige ich mich sozusagen mit Kunstgewerbe, d.h. ich revidiere, allerdings mit eigenem Vergnügen, eine alte Übersetzung von Don Quijote.<sup>8</sup>

This translation would have to wait a few more years to be published. It was not until 1951 when the same publisher Rütten & Loening brought to light the translation in two volumes, with a superb presentation for that time, given the lack of paper which distressed both authors and publishers.

It is regrettable that Schacht did not write up his experiences, as he would have liked if we look at what he said in the previous letter to von Molo. In his translation he did not write any preface or note to give us an idea of the difficulties of the translator or the conception of the work. We do know that, like to many other translators, *Don Quixote* seemed to him a little too long and some parts -we assume that he talks about the interspersed novels- could have been eliminated. We gather and interpret all this from a letter addressed on March 21, 1955, also to Walther von Molo:

(...) aber ich glaube nicht recht an dicke Bücher und bin der inneren Überzeugung, daß alles was räumlich über die Länge eines platonischen Dialogs hinausgeht, im Grunde überflüssig ist. Selbst der Don Quijote (haben Sie eigentlich meine Übersetzung bekommen?) und die Ilias könnten durch Konzentrierung gewinnen.<sup>9</sup>

In the same year the second edition of the translation of Schacht appeared, the first which could be called the *Quixote* translation of the GDR, although the translator had left the Eastern sector of Berlin and fled to the West (Huchel 1995:229). From this edition we deduce the importance given to this work, in a publishing house which at that time had already passed into the hands of the Government of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany SED. In 1950 the party had

<sup>7</sup> ( ... ) but I've been working diligently on my translation assignments, ( ... ) ( Manzoni, *Gulliver's Travels...*) and much of the *Exemplary Novels* of Cervantes. The latter contain very curious things. I don't know if you know them. Unfortunately, the Spanish is very difficult for the many expressions of the underworld slang, and moreover Spanish essays on these issues are impossible to find.

<sup>8</sup> I have almost no chance to get to the real work. I will ever have to decide to draft the impressions of this last year in a larger work, now I keep busy with, say, craft occupations, that is, I'm reviewing, of course with great pleasure, an old translation of *Don Quixote*.

<sup>9</sup> ( ... ) but I cannot believe in big books and I'm convinced that everything that occupies more space than a Platonic dialogue is in principle superfluous. Even *Don Quixote* (by the way, did you receive my translation?) and the *Iliad* may gain if they were abridged.

confiscated the publishing house and had put it into the hands of the SED Holding "Zentrag" (*Zentrale Druckerei - Einkaufs- und Revisionsgesellschaft*), an organ in which the whole printing and publishing industry of the newly formed socialist republic was concentrated. We said that it was the first *Quixote* translation of the GDR but it was not the only one that was printed there. Besides this, different publishers continued to publish in the GDR those of Tieck and Braunfels. We counted nine editions in the inventory Valero Cuadra did: Tieck's translation in Kinderbuch Verlag Berlin in 1979 and 1981; in Reclam in 1987; and in the same in which had appeared Schacht's, Rütten & Loening, in 1982, 1984 and 1986; and the Braunfels' translation in Verlag Neues Leben in 1985, 1988 and 1990. We realize thanks to this count that since 1955, the year of the second edition of Schacht's, until 1979, in which Tieck's reissues, there is a period of almost 25 years in which *Don Quixote* is not offered to the East German reading public. After that quarter-century, editions will appear until the reunification of Germany with an almost annual frequency.

It should also be noted that the translation of Schacht appeared accompanied by illustrations, line drawings made by the artist Josef Hegenbarth (1884-1962), who was born in Bohemia and lived in the Saxon town of Dresden, where he spent most of his life. He was one of the most notable cartoonists and illustrators of the twentieth century in Germany. The iconic image of Don Quixote and Sancho in Hegenbarth is, as far as we know, completely unknown and his artwork has not been collected yet on the existing banks of images of *Don Quixote*<sup>10</sup>.

#### 4. A *Quixote* with Austrian overtones: the translation of Anton Maria Rothbauer.

After Schacht's appears the translation with the greatest impact among those made in the twentieth century, the translation of Anton Maria Rothbauer (1905-1971). Despite being a well-known translator and a public figure -since Rothbauer was professor of Spanish literature at the University of Graz, Austria- there are many remaining gaps in the biography of this humanist<sup>11</sup>. Born January 25, 1905, in Taufkirchen an der Pram, a small town near the border with Germany, this son of a master brewer spent his childhood in Eggenberg, nowadays a district of the capital of Styria, Graz. Apparently he learned the trade of locksmith and supposedly he got some jobs in this sector, for we have no more facts about him until 1938, the year of the annexation of Austria by Nazi Germany, when he had to flee the country and settle in France while his wife and daughter were exiled to England. In France, he was imprisoned until the country's occupation by Germany in 1940 when Rothbauer took the opportunity to escape to Spain, where he spent the next years. This stay in Spain, probably in Barcelona, led him to be very knowledgeable on the Spanish language and literature. After the war, he returned to Austria and settled in the city of Graz, in whose university he started 1947 to teach Spanish lessons and Spanish literature at the Interpreter Training Institute (Institut für Dolmetschausbildung). The fact that the biographical data on this translator is scarce is shown by the website of this institution, the current "Institut für Theoretische und Angewandte Translationswissenschaft", where in one section the names of some personalities turn up. Of course, the name of our translator can be found there, but the link that should lead to his biographical data, as it occurs with the other personalities, is not linked to any other site<sup>12</sup>. Anyway, the pre-war biography of this translator, his post-war teaching, researching and translating activity shows some noteworthy details. Rothbauer got his doctorate in 1953 with a thesis on Antonio Machado, of which he translated almost simultaneously some poems for a miscellaneous volume of international poetry<sup>13</sup>. He also translated works from French (Jean Sullivan's *Die Schwäche Gottes*, and Sylvain Roche's *Der gottesfürchtige Grobschmied*) and English (Richard Pattee's *Spanien - Mythos und Wirklichkeit*). This last translation of the

<sup>10</sup> We have consulted the "Bank of Images of Don Quixote" ([www.qbi2005.com](http://www.qbi2005.com)), having 550 editions and 17603 images, and the database "Textual Iconography of the Quixote" (<http://dqi.tamu.edu>), featuring 38,012 editions of 703 editions, as advertised on their websites.

<sup>11</sup> This puts Sepp Färber (1991) in his article, from which have extracted most of the biographical data offered here.

<sup>12</sup> The page was last accessed May 10, 2012 ([http://www.uni-graz.at/uedo1www/uedo1www\\_institut/uedo1www\\_institut\\_geschichte.htm](http://www.uni-graz.at/uedo1www/uedo1www_institut/uedo1www_institut_geschichte.htm))

<sup>13</sup> Braun, Felix (1952) *Die Lyra des Orpheus: Lyrik der Völker in deutscher Nachdichtung*. Viena: P. Zsolnay.

original *This Is Spain* is a curious case of translation, since –in the purest *belles infidèles* style– Rothbauer modified, complemented and extended the original, as he explains in the book's preface:

( ... ) da ich den ursprünglichen Text, wenn auch im Sinne Pattees, doch auf eigene Verantwortung für das Verständnis im deutschen Sprachgebiet bearbeitet und aus eigenem Material ergänzt habe. (cit. in Färber 1991:102)<sup>14</sup>

Rothbauer's intention was no other than to offer a more comprehensive picture of Spain, a country which he admired and which at that time, with Franco's dictatorship in its heyday, was viewed with suspicion in the international scene. Beyond politics, Rothbauer tried to show the kindness of a country that had welcomed him, whose literature he appreciated and which he wanted to show in his native country stripped of political overtones. In this sense, the biggest favor Rothbauer could give to Spain and its literature was his dedication to the translation from Spanish to German. The first important translation was Valle Inclán's *Tirano Banderas* (*Tyrann Banderas*, 1961), which besides putting the author on the literary and translation map of his country, leaves us some interesting reflections about his translational conception. Thus, faced with the Schleiermacher's dichotomy of approaching the reader to the original text or the text to the target reader, Rothbauer opts for the first option:

Unsere Übertragungen, auch die besten, gehen von einem falschen Grundsatz aus: sie wollen das Indische, Griechische, Englische verdeutschen, anstatt das Deutsche zu verindischen, vergriechischen, verenglischen. Sie haben eine viel bedeutendere Ehrfurcht vor den eigenen Sprachgebräuchen als vor dem Geist fremden des Werks. (cit. in Färber 1991: 104)<sup>15</sup>

In addition to translating Machado and Valle Inclán, Rothbauer translated the work of the Chilean Manuel Rojas *Hijo de ladrón* (published in 1955 under the title *Wartet, ich komme mit* in Graz and as *Der Sohn des Diebes* in 1967 in the GDR) and translated and adapted to the scene some works of Spanish playwrights, like Calderón. But surely the work of his life and the most interesting for us here is his translation of the complete works of Cervantes, being the first to carry out this task and to present the German public Cervantes' texts so far unknown in his language. The translation appeared in four volumes between 1963 and 1970. The second volume (1964) contains the translation of the two parts of *Don Quixote*, a translation initially praised by critics but which, nevertheless, has been edited to a lesser extent than other previous versions he had to compete with, such as those of Tieck or Braunfels, certainly more attractive to publishers since they did not have to pay royalties for the texts.

The critics on this translation, as already said, were initially highly favourable, like Lorenz's<sup>16</sup>, published in *Die Welt der Literatur* and quoted in our bibliography. But it is also true that there were arguments against his version, a text in which the translator had put some austriacisms and in which, after a detailed examination, there may be some mistakes<sup>17</sup>. Anyway, although it is not our role in this article to carry out a review of the translations of *Don Quixote*, it is worth mentioning that Rothbauer's work is a philological translation based on the edition by Rodríguez Marín and offers a translator's introduction and a critical apparatus of notes that,

<sup>14</sup> ( ... ) because although I have kept the sense of Pattee, on my own responsibility I have reworked the original text and have supplemented it with my own material for a better understanding in the German language area.

<sup>15</sup> Our translations, even the best, start from the wrong premise: they try to germanize the Indian, the Greek, the English, instead of giving German an Indian, Greek or English character. They feel much more veneration for the own language than for the spirit of the foreign works.

<sup>16</sup> Wir wissen nicht, welches Bild sich ein kommendes Jahrhundert von Cervantes machen wird, aber wir wissen, dass fortan kein Weg mehr an Rothbauer vorbeiführen wird, vorbeiführen kann ( ... ) [We do not know what image of Cervantes will be built in the coming century, but we do know that henceforth no way will avoid or will be able to avoid Rothbauer (...)] (Lorenz 1970:11)

<sup>17</sup> See, for example, the review appeared in *Die Zeit* in 1967, quoted in our bibliography. There, the author of the review criticized harshly the translation and the translator: "Soll der Maßstab einer guten Übersetzung ihre Fehlerlosigkeit sein, so ist seine eigene schlecht, und zwar schlechter als das Deutsch seiner Einführungen und Kommentare " [If the standard of a good translation is its lack of errors, his own is, however, bad, and even worse than the German in his introductions and comments]

in addition to expressing the original meaning of idioms, expressions and presuppositions, also justifies some of his translations and compares them with previous translations. In fact, Rothbauer knew them well, especially that of Tieck, which he had analyzed and in which he had recorded no less than, in his opinion, 4,000 errors<sup>18</sup>. Nevertheless, despite the errors the translation of Tieck may have and despite the translational knowledge Rothbauer had, this version has never prevailed over the Romantic, which should make us think about the various factors that lead to a translation prevailing over other translations, factors among which fidelity to the original may be secondary. In fact, one of the points that Rothbauer criticized of his predecessors was the translation of the collocation "el caballero de la triste figura", a phrase that had passed into the German tradition as "der Ritter von der traurigen Gestalt" and that this translator wanted to correct and translated as "der Ritter mit dem kläglichen Gesicht", which may be philologically more accurate but breaks with a tradition that the reader, used to the collocation "traurige Gestalt", perceives as foreign and does not accept.

## 5. Conclusions

In this article, without undertaking any evaluation of the quality of these translations or their degree of dependence on other previous translations, which we leave for later critical works on translation, we have placed in the foreground the context surrounding the publications and the profile of the translators who carried them out, both of which should be taken into account when performing any critical analysis. Thus, we have seen that the first version which appeared in the twentieth century was the work of a tireless translator, Felix Paul Greve, who began to translate and review, both for his own enjoyment as for his economic needs, great works of world literature into German, including Cervantes' *Don Quixote* and *Exemplary Novels*. Translation is his livelihood, but certainly also his training means for mastering languages and literatures, which would later build a literary career in two different languages. The second of our translators, Roland Schacht, is a forgotten translator, both by critics as by history. Without valuating his Cervantes' translations, just the fact that he could be devoted to this noble task in tough days as the World War II, in a Berlin besieged by the bombings, makes him worthy of our admiration. Translation as an escape from disaster, like an oasis in the desert, literature as comfort in such inhuman days, Roland Schacht as the translator who found in Cervantes relief to the rawness and whose translation was published in the early years of life of the GDR: all that seems to us very noteworthy and we were surprised that so far no one has mentioned it, probably because of the indifference towards "second row" translators that has remained for centuries.

Finally, we find in Anton M. Rothbauer a new translator who offered with his version of the complete works of Cervantes the last *Quixote* translation of the twentieth century in German language. The success or failure, quality or not of each of these translations is a case apart. The important thing for us is that they all made history, they all increased the history of our most universal work, and thus we want to remember them here.

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<sup>18</sup> Rothbauer wrote in 1962 a supplement to his edition of the complete works of Cervantes titled *Der unbekannte Cervantes (Cervantes Unknown)*, in which he claimed to have found a number of errors due to the lack of Spanish knowledge of earlier translators. This supplement was a scathing critique of Tieck's translation, which presumable contained more than 4,000 errors (Rothbauer 1962:19).



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## BIONOTE / NOTA BIOGRÁFICA

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