Shifting Viewpoints

Shifting Viewpoints: Cervantes in Twentieth-Century and Early Twenty-First-Century Literature Written in German

By

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

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This book has evolved over a number of years; shorter versions of different chapters have been presented at various conferences, such as

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Meg Brown "Echoes of Cervantes's *Don Quixote* in Works by Wolfdietrich Schnurre und Margarete Hannsmann." Rocky Mountain Modern Language Association. Boulder, Colorado. 12 Oct. 2012.

Gabriele Eckart "Cervantes in Germany in the 20th Century." Mid-American Conference on Hispanic Literatures. Saint Louis, Missouri. Sept. 2002.

In addition, earlier versions of different chapters have been published in refereed scholarly journals. The following is a list of the articles published by Gabriele Eckart:

"'To Blur the Sign:' Miguel de Cervantes's Speaking Dog in Zsuzsanna Gahse's *Berganza*." *Glossen* 37 (2013). Used with permission from *Glossen.*

"Defending SED Party-line: Günther Rücker's Play *Der Nachbar des Herrn Pansa*." *Glossen* 36 (2013). Used with permission from *Glossen.*

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"The Reception of Cervantes's *Don Quixote* in Wilhelm Muster's *Der Tod kommt ohne Trommel*." *CIEHL* (*Cuaderno Internacional de Estudios Humanisticos*) 17 (2012). Used with permission from *CIEHL*.

"Cervantes's Don Quixote in GDR Poetry." *Glossen* 32 (2011). Used with permission from *Glossen.*

"The Reception of Cervantes's *Don Quixote* and *The Conversation of the Dogs* in Post-Reunification German Literature." *Glossen* 31 (2011). Used with permission from *Glossen.*

"Don Quichotte und Sancho Pansa in der deutschen Nachwendeliteratur." *Literarische Koordinaten der Zeiterfahrung*. Ed. Joanna Lawnikowska-Koper and Jacek Rzeszotnik. Wroclaw: Neisse Verlag, 2009. 177-86.

"Cervantes in the German-Speaking Countries of the Twentieth Century." *Bulletin of the Cervantes Society of America.* 23.2 (2003). Used with permission from *Bulletin of the Cervantes Society of America.*

"La Ana de Maja Beutler–¿un Quijote femenino?" *Taller de Letras* 31 (2002). Used with permission from *Taller de Letras.*

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INTRODUCTION

Miguel de Cervantes's reception in the German-speaking countries forms a highly interesting tale. Since 1617, when Niclas Ulenhart adapted Cervantes's novella *Rinconete y Cortadillo* (1613) and especially since 1648, when Joachim Caesar came out with the first partial translation of *Don Quixote of la Mancha* (1605) into German, Cervantes's works have excited some of the most important writers in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland to a degree that they have engaged in an intertextual dialogue with his works. Especially Cervantes's protagonist Don Quixote, who sallies out into the world with a raised lance to change it in the name of his ideals, has been an important factor in literature written in German. Reading this literature as it was created over the centuries, it seems as if many German-speaking writers just could not resist the temptation to use Don Quixote or Sancho Panza, his squire, to serve their different aesthetic, cultural, and political aims. Some writers, especially in periods of disillusionment, for instance after World War I or in East Germany after the Fall of the Wall in 1989, saw Quixote, who does not give up his ideals in times of disbelief, as a champion for their causes. Others used the figure of Quixote to reject political idealism as they sympathized with the more earthly Sancho. However, other works of Miguel de Cervantes, for example, some of his *Exemplary Novels* (1613), have also inspired German writers. Think, for instance, of E.T.A. Hoffmann's narrative *News from The Latest Destinies of the Dog Berganza* (*Nachricht von den neuesten Schicksalen des Hundes Berganza,* 1814), Zsuzsanna Gahse's narrative *Berganza* (1984), and Fritz Rudolf Fries's story *The Dogs of Mexico City (Die Hunde von Mexiko-Stadt*, 1997), all three of which are strongly influenced by Cervantes's novella *Conversation of the Dogs* (*El Coloquio de los Perros*).

Since much has been written about the reception of Cervantes's works in Germany during the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries, we intend to examine in this study only the German, Austrian, and Swiss literary reception of Cervantes in the twentieth century and the first decade of the twenty-first century. Aside from research on the Spaniard's influence on Thomas Mann, there is a dearth of research regarding Cervantes's influence on the literature written in German-speaking countries after 1900. We have researched the literature of this time period

thoroughly, discovered surprising references and adaptations, and intend to show in this study that several of Cervantes's works actively influenced the literature of twentieth- and twenty-first-century German-speaking writers. We think that this undertaking will be very pertinent to widening the scope of intercultural studies. Walter Grünzweig writes that "interculturality" has become a catchword in such disciplines as sociology, international education, and communication during the last decades. In Germany, a Society for Intercultural German Studies was founded "in an attempt to challenge the monocultural traditions and practices of the literary discipline by highlighting its multicultural context" (Grünzweig 2). Our study is in this line.

Cervantes's influence, as is well known, has not been limited to the realm of literature in German-speaking countries. As Gernot Gabel has recently documented, it can be seen also in art, in music, in film, in advertising, and in popular culture. In this study, we only intend to examine the creative reception of Cervantes's works by German-speaking literary authors, hoping that somebody else will pick up the staff and explore Cervantes's influence in other areas of culture from 1900 on.

While our investigations are the first to deal comprehensively with the topic of the Cervantes's reception in twentieth- and twenty-first-century literatures written in German, they are rooted in the research of Cervantes's presence in the German speaking countries before 1900. Of great importance is Gerhart Hoffmeister's *Spanien und Deutschland: Geschichte und Dokumentation der literarischen Beziehungen* (1976), which constitutes a valuable study of an intercultural phenomenon. As Hoffmeister shows, Cervantes's novel *Don Quixote* was first read in Germany as a satire against the novels of chivalry in the tradition of *Amadís de Gaula*. Therefore, also the first German "Donquichottiaden,"[1] such as Wilhelm Ehrenfried Neugebauer's *Der teutsche Don Quichotte* (1753), were written with the intention of demonstrating the danger of reading novels and adapted Cervantes's main protagonist as a ridiculous figure who was unable to differentiate between fiction and reality. With German Romanticism, this interpretation changed. The brothers Schlegel, Schelling, and others considered *Don Quixote* the Romantic novel par excellence based on the fact that the two major forces of life, "the prose in the person of Sancho and the poetry nobly represented by Don Quixote" ("die Prosa in der Person Sanchos und die von Don Quijote edel vertretene Poesie"; W. Schlegel quoted in Hoffmeister 342) are fighting and uniting with each other in this text. In addition, the novel was considered a model for the expression of "progressive [. . .] Universalpoesie" (Hoffmeister 125) and the mixture of heterogeneous elements in a literary text that the

Romantics dreamed of. Also noteworthy is Schelling's Romantic interpretation of *Don Quixote* as a philosophical novel that delineates the conflict of the ideal and the real (see Hoffmeister 125). In Cervantes scholarship, the two different readings of *Don Quixote of la Mancha* during Enlightenment and Romanticism are referred to as "hard" and "soft" readings, respectively.

Hoffmeister observes that Hegel tries to reconcile both the Enlightenment's satirical and the Romanticism's heroic interpretations of *Don Quixote*, by stating:

> Don Quixote is completely self-assured in his madness and his cause; or, perhaps, this is his madness, that he is and remains so self-assured of it. Without this inner peace not disturbed by reflection of the content and success of his actions, he would not really be Romantic. . . . Similarly, the whole work is a [. . .] mockery of the Romantic knighthood.
> (Don Quijote ist ein in der Verrücktheit seiner selbst und seiner Sache vollkommen sicheres Gemüth, oder vielmehr ist nur dieß seine Verrücktheit, daß er seiner Sache so sicher ist und bleibt. Ohne diese reflexionslose Ruhe in Rücksicht auf den Inhalt und Erfolg seiner Handlungen wäre er nicht echt romantisch. . . . Ebenso ist das ganze Werk [. . .] eine Verspottung des romantischen Ritterthums.) (Hoffmeister 126)

As will be seen in the following chapters, German-speaking authors of the twentieth and early twenty-first century who creatively modify *Don Quixote* still vacillate between a hard and a soft reading of the text, regarding Don Quixote as a fool or a hero, implying that they see Cervantes's famous novel as either a satire or a statement of Romanticism. In this study, we attempt not to take sides–neither classifying reception documents into appropriate or inappropriate reactions to Cervantes's text nor collecting critical views in order to arrive at some comprehensive "superinterpretation." Rather, our emphasis is on the question of how an author creatively uses Cervantes's novel that was "the world's first bestseller" (Egginton) to come to terms with his or her own preoccupations in a given socio-political context.

Since most German writers of the Romantic era did not speak Spanish, they depended on German translations of Cervantes's texts. Many read Ludwig Tieck's *Don Quixote*-translation that gained worldwide fame. However, translations, as is well known, reflect the intentions of the translators and are therefore documents of reception. Based on the fact that Tieck translated Cervantes's novel the Romantic way (Don Quixote being more a hero than a fool), his *Leben und Taten des scharfsinnigen Edlen Don Quijote von la Mancha* (1799/1801) contributed to the "victory of Romanticism" ("Sieg der Romantik"; Hoffmeister 127) in Germany.

In 1958, Werner Brüggemann provided a detailed and convincing study of Cervantes's reception in literary works of this period, titled *Cervantes und die Figur des Don Quijote in Kunstanschauung und Dichtung der Deutschen Romantik*. Some of the texts, in which Brüggemann discovers intertextual encounters with Cervantes, are Tieck's *Franz Sternbalds Wanderungen* (1798), Novalis's *Heinrich von Ofterdingen* (1802), Klingemann's *Nachtwachen des Bonaventura* (1804), Eichendorff's *Ahnung und Gegenwart* (1815), Jean Paul's *Komet* (1820), as well as several narratives by E.T.A. Hoffmann. Most of these texts engage in an intertextual dialogue with Cervantes's *Don Quixote*, some of them with Cervantes's *Exemplary Novels*. Also Heinrich Heine read Cervantes enthusiastically. In his *Reisebilder*, for instance, the narrator sees himself as a reversed Don Quixote who wanted not to restore, but to destroy the past (see Hoffmeister 126).

Another study that furnished valuable information for us was Lienhard Bergel's "Cervantes in Germany" (1969), although his statement that the period in which Cervantes was "an active ingredient in German life" (343) ended with Heine and Immermann and that afterwards he became exclusively the object of philological specialists is not valid. Consider Thomas Mann's famous essay "Meerfahrt mit Don Quixote" (1934), Bruno Frank's novel *Cervantes* (1934), Ernst Jünger's text *Das abenteuerliche Herz* (1929), Paul Schallück's novel *Don Quichotte in Köln* (1967), to name just a few texts published after Heine and Immermann and before 1969 when Bergel's study came out. Granted, without the flood of literary texts that refer to Cervantes published after the fall of the Wall in 1989, we might not have decided to write a whole book on Cervantes's reception in twentieth- and twenty-first-century literature written in German.

Of great importance for us in a different way are Durán and Rogg's *Fighting Windmills: Encounters with Don Quixote* (2006), Ertler and Rodríguez Díaz del Real's *El Quijote hoy: La Riqueza de su Recepción* (2007), and D'haen and Dhondt's *International Don Quixote* (2009)– volumes with different studies on the reception of *Don Quixote* in other European literatures such as in Belgium, England, Hungary, or Italy. All three volumes constitute valuable state-of-the-art studies of parallel intercultural phenomena.

The first part of this investigation examines the creative reception of Cervantes in German-speaking countries from 1900 to the end of World War II. The highlight of this period is Thomas Mann's well-known narrative "Meerfahrt mit Don Quixote" ("Voyage with Don Quixote"). The critical reception of Cervantes in essays by Bloch and Lukácz only

will be hinted at. The examination of literary texts written in West Germany, in East Germany (the GDR), and after the fall of the Wall will follow in the next chapters. Since also Austrian and Swiss writers responded to Cervantes in very interesting ways, there will be a chapter on each country's literature since 1900. Sometimes, however, a document of reception will appear in a "wrong" chapter, for instance Stephan Wackwitz's narrative *Die Wahrheit über Sancho Pansa* (1999), a text that creatively reworks Kafka's famous parable, has the same title as Kafka's text, and refers to Cervantes's novel *Don Quixote*. Instead of discussing it in Chapter Five where it belongs (it was written after the fall of the Berlin Wall), it will be dealt with in Chapter Six (*Don Quixote* in Austria) since Kafka's oeuvre is considered part of Austrian literature. Also, Gustav Regler's documents of Cervantes reception are hard to place in a certain chapter since the texts are published before and after 1945.

The final chapter of the book presents a brief summary and evaluation of the results of the intercultural processes examined in the previous chapters.

Three problems that we encountered in researching the reception of Cervantes in the works of German-speaking writers after 1900 should be pointed out. First, two lines of literary reception sometimes intersect and are difficult to keep apart, such as in Gustav Regler's travelogue *Verwunschenes Land Mexiko* (1954), where the narrator uses both Don Quixote and Faust in his discussion of what is happening in contemporary Mexico. Second, sometimes it occurs that writers who refer to Cervantes in their creative work seem to have been influenced more by other (not necessarily literary) adaptations or interpretations of Cervantes than by their own readings of Cervantes's texts. A good example is the literature written in German by authors who fought in the Spanish Civil War, for example Rudolf Leonhard's *Der Tod des Don Quijote* (1938). On their way out of Hitler-Germany, crossing France to Spain, some of them saw Georg Wilhelm Pabst's film *Adventures of Don Quixote* (1933). Since it critically refers to the Nazi's book burning, the film could only be produced and shown in France, not in Germany, during this time. It is impossible to answer the question of what those authors exactly remembered from their reading of Cervantes's novel or from their watching Pabst's film when they "saw" Quixote in the trenches of the war and wrote about it. The third problem we encountered is the question how to limit the scope of literary texts that show a proximity to a text written by Cervantes. Since *Don Quixote of la Mancha* is considered to have inspired the creation of the modern novel, the text's influence can be seen almost everywhere. We decided to examine only literary texts that either

engage in an intertextual play with a text written by Cervantes or a literary text of an author who expressed in interviews, letters, or commentaries that a protagonist was intentionally modeled after a protagonist created by Cervantes. An example of the first kind is Peter Handke's novel *Der Bildverlust* (2002); an example of the second kind is Ernst Toller's comedy *Der entfesselte Wotan* (1923).

In our attempt to make this book accessible to a greater audience, we are writing it in English. Therefore, all English translations originally written in German or Spanish are our own unless we indicate by referring to a published English translation of the original work. We also provide the translation of the titles into English, either our own translation or the title of the published English version of the work, for greater comprehensibility. Since we do offer many quotations, we will consistently use the ellipses within brackets whenever we omit words so as not to confuse the reader with the quoted author's use of his or her own ellipses.

Processes of literary reception are complex and need to be studied from different angles. Therefore, this book can only be a first step towards the investigation of Cervantes's literary reception in the work of German-speaking writers since 1900.

Note

[1] A "Donquichottiade" is a text that either has Don Quixote and/or Sancho Panza as protagonists in a new context or introduces new protagonists who are created "according to the model of Cervantes's figures" ("nach dem Muster der Cervantesschen Vorbildfiguren"; Habel 79).

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CHAPTER ONE

CERVANTES IN THE WEIMAR REPUBLIC: ERNST TOLLER AND ERNST JÜNGER

During the Weimar Republic, Miguel de Cervantes, although he did not become as famous as during German Romanticism, inspired important German writers to interact with his texts, especially with *Don Quixote*. As Araceli Marín Presno notes, the 300th anniversary of the novel's publication in 1905 was the occasion for the press, scholarly journals, and universities to appreciate this literary work. As a consequence, older translations of the text were revised, edited, and published. Beginning in 1910, in Hamburg there appeared a journal called *Don Quijote* published to promote the study of Spanish. The 300th anniversary of Cervantes's death in 1916 was the occasion for a celebration in honor of Cervantes in Munich (Marín Presno 185); the journal *Berliner Tageblatt* published a special issue dedicated exclusively to Cervantes. Given the fact that this anniversary fell in the middle of World War I, it is not surprising that German writers of the post-war period used Cervantes's protagonist with the famous raised lance to take a stance regarding German politics of the day. In fact, it seems that there were altogether closer affinities between the Spanish baroque and the Weimar period; Cervantes is only one example. See, for instance, the connection "of the 1920s cult of objectivity" (Lethen 36) to the tradition of manuals for social conduct epitomized by Baltasar Gracián's *The Art of Worldly Wisdom* (1653) that Schopenhauer had translated into German or, above all, the resonance of the Spanish *pícaro* figure for German modernist writers. Bernhard Malkmus writes that the reason for this resonance was the "spirit of competition, chaos, con trickery, fluid identities and social fatalism that has been described as the trademark of the Weimar Republic" (5).

In 1919, Peter Scher published the following poem in the renowned journal *Simplicissimus*:

Don Quixote Reproaches the Ideologists

They come riding on their scrawny horses
and show their foolishness in front of the knight;
he, high up on Rocinante, smiles bitterly
and seems to be enlightened by Sancho.

After he made up his mind, he turns dignified
from the paunchy fellow to the ideologists
and feels moved to the judgment:
the foolishness was good and without reproach–

however, there is one thing, gentlemen–he rises up in the stirrups–
that I don't approve of, to tell you quite frankly,
you men of today let the common man take the beating.
In my time, we let ourselves be thrashed.

(Don Quixote rügt die Ideologen

Sie reiten an auf ihren dürren Pferden
und üben ihre Narrheit vor dem Ritter;
er, hoch zu Rosinante, lächelt bitter
und scheint von Sancho aufgeklärt zu werden.

Nun, schlüssigen Urteils, kehrt er sich mit Adel
vom ruppigen Dickwanst zu den Ideologen
und fühlt sich zu dem Urteilsspruch bewogen:
Die Narretei war gut und ohne Tadel –

Doch eins, ihr Herrn–er hebt sich scharf im Bügel –
hat meinen Beifall nicht… ganz unverhohlen…
Ihr Heutigen überlaßt dem Volk die Prügel…
zu meiner Zeit ließ man sich selbst versohlen.) (588)

The term "foolishness" ("*Narretei*"), without doubt, refers to the so-called November Revolution in Germany–a chain of political revolts in 1918 that removed the monarchy and paved the way to the establishment of the Weimar Republic. However, leaders of the communist Spartacus League used the agitated atmosphere and chaos to proclaim socialism in Germany. Revolutionary groups who insisted on establishing a socialist state in Germany similar to the Soviet model revolted against the social democratic government; the revolts were brutally crushed by the old military forces in January 1919. The poet Scher, through the mouth of Don Quixote, probably attempts to communicate his thought that, although he approves of a socialist revolt ("the foolishness was good and without

fault"), under the given circumstances it was unwise of the Bolshevist leaders to instigate those revolts in which many people lost their lives. However, seen from today's perspective, Scher's claim that only the common man took the beating is not true if you think of Spartacist leaders like Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht, who were murdered by members of the military forces during those events.

The following comparison between Ernst Toller's and Ernst Jünger's reception of *Don Quixote* will show completely different interpretations of Cervantes's main protagonist in the politically heated atmosphere of the Weimar Republic, where many -isms like nationalism, militarism, socialism, and others were in their heyday. While both authors share an affinity to Cervantes, in Toller's comedic play *Wotan Unchained* (*Der entfesselte Wotan*, 1923) the quixotic figure of the main protagonist is a fool created for the purpose of parody, while Jünger identifies with the idealist Quixote whose madness he sees sympathetically. In his literary journal *The Adventurous Heart* (*Das abenteuerliche Herz*, 1929), Jünger celebrates the Spanish character into which he is projecting a part of himself as a hero. Interestingly, these different interpretations, on the one hand satirical, on the other hand idealistic, confirm that Fernando Varela Iglesias is right in claiming that the "pendulum-like vision [between] realism and idealism in the perception of *Quijote*" ("visión pendular [entre] realismo and idealismo en la recepción del *Quijote*") (43) is still continuing in the twentieth century.

Toller, imprisoned after his active participation in the November revolution, wrote the play *Wotan Unchained* in jail under harsh conditions. Although the name Quixote is not mentioned in the play, Toller in his commentary clearly points out that the main protagonist, the unsuccessful barber Wilhelm Dietrich Wotan, is designed to be a quixotic figure:

> That is what has become of Don Quixote nowadays: not strong enough anymore to live his dream trustingly and also not a robust black marketer who understands what he is doing all the time. A mixture of idealist and coward. A figure that makes us laugh.
> (Das ist in der neuen Zeit aus Don Quichotte geworden: nicht mehr kräftig genug, um seinen Traum gläubig zu leben, und wiederum kein robuster Schieber, der kontinuierlich das, was er tut, durchschaut. Mischung von Idealist und Jämmerling. Eine Figur, die uns heiter macht.) (364-5)

Indeed, Toller's demagogue Wilhelm Dietrich Wotan, who becomes a victim of his own imagination and sets out for a "hero's journey" ("Heldenfahrt"; 254), seems to be a mere caricature of Cervantes's character Don Quixote. Wotan is a petty-bourgeois nationalist and megalomaniac: "Humankind

languishes for a dictator. Okay, then! People, you find me ready!" ("Die Menschheit lechzt nach dem Diktator. Wohlan denn! Volk, Du findest mich bereit!"; 298). At a first reading, this protagonist reminds us of the "local matador of the Bavarian right wing people" ("der Lokalmatador der bayrischen Rechten"; "Der Dichter und Pazifist"), Adolf Hitler. Critics of Toller, who claimed that he underrated Hitler by trivializing him in this comedy, seem at first glimpse to be correct in their criticism. However, as Cecil Davis observes, Toller does not actually and directly intend Wotan to represent Hitler. Instead, a crazy fellow-prisoner whom Toller met during his captivity in Niederschönenfeld prison inspired Toller to create the character of Wotan. Although the play "includes a series of startling minor anticipations of the Hitler story" (Davis 301), the critic goes on to say that it must be read as a "swindler-comedy extended into politico-prophetic satire through the working of the author's imagination upon the contemporary Germany of 1923" (302). Hermann Korte, who also argues against Wotan representing Hitler, affirms that although the creation of Toller's comedy fell in the year of Hitler's November attempted coup, Toller had already finished the play in spring of that year; therefore, it was not written "under the impression of the event" ("unter dem Eindruck des Ereignisses"; 118). After a more careful reading of the play, it seems to be correct that Wotan, instead of being a Hitler-caricature, "was a type of wide, perhaps universal validity, though flourishing in the atmosphere of Germany" (Davis 299). This universal validity, according to our interpretation, stems from Wotan's quixotic character.

Having failed as a barber in post-War German society, Wotan, inspired by his reading of exotic novels and messianic Expressionist literature distributed by "Krause's reading circle" ("Krauses Lesezirkel"; Reimers 145), dreams of starting a German colony in Brazil's Amazon forest. Eloquently, he pretends to have legally started an "Emigrants' Co-operative" ("Auswanderergenossenschaft") (Toller 295) for that purpose. During the play, while Wotan is recruiting emigrants from different social groups who feel disillusioned after the lost war, he starts to believe in his own pretension and sees himself as a colonial hero fighting natives. His squire Sancho Panza is split into two different characters. The first is Wotan's assistant Schleim ("Slime" in English), a failed businessman and selfish opportunist who will encourage Wotan in his delusions and desert him as soon as there is trouble. The second is Wotan's wife, Mariechen, who functions as a realistic counterpoint to Wotan. Even after Wotan, pushed by Schleim, files for divorce to be able to marry a rich woman, Countess Gallig, whose money he would need for his colonial adventures in the jungle of Brazil, Mariechen will support him. When Wotan is in jail

at the end of the play, she will bring him dainties from her kitchen and, at the same time, carefully try to wake him up to reality. Kirsten Reimers correctly describes the different functions of Schleim and Mariechen:

> Schleim is carrying out what Wotan invents. He is Wotan's alter ego, the realist moment of deceit, the director according to Wotan's plan. This way, he represents another kind of realist corrective. While Mariechen is warning Wotan about the consequences of his dreams […], measuring the realization of his dreams against her experiences and his failure […], Schleim seduces the barber to illegality, acting according to his experiences as a black marketer.
> (Schleim führt aus, was Wotan erspinnt. Er ist Wotans Alter ego, das realistische Moment des Betruges, der Regisseur nach Wotan's Konzept. So stellt er eine andere Art des realistischen Korrektivs dar: Während Mariechen Wotan vor den Folgen seines Träumens warnt […], die Verwirklichung seiner Träume an ihren Erfahrungen und seinen Mißerfolgen mißt […], verführt Schleim den Friseur zur Illegalität, er geht dabei von seinen Erfahrungen als Schieber aus.) (121)

In other words, while both characters attempt to bring Wotan in touch with reality, their vision of this reality is very different. Mariechen's is based on the every-day life of the lower middle-class, Schleim's on his experiences in the world of black marketers. Although Wotan has a premonition of the fact that Schleim is pushing him into a dangerous direction–"You are my evil spirit" ("Sie sind mein böser Geist"; Toller 288)–he follows him blindly.

The trouble with Wotan's Brazil-project starts when a telegram arrives from the Brazilian consulate warning people against Wotan's "fraudulent enterprise" ("Schwindelunternehmen"; 299). Schleim, who had encouraged Wotan to proceed in his illegal actions, simultaneously had carefully avoided taking responsibility. Now, Schleim plays dumb and protests: "Fraud! Deceit! Go away, obnoxious barber!" ("Schwindel! Betrug! Gehn Sie mir weg, verkrachter Frisör!"; 299).

He even asks for money: "According to our contract I deserve a salary for one year. I'll take it." ("Nach unserm Vertrag bekomm ich Gehalt für ein Jahr. Ich nehms mir"; 299). Contrary to Cervantes's Quixote, Wotan in the end does not wake up from his delusions. He declares war on the country of Brazil. After his arrest, in prison, he is writing his memoirs drenched with his visions of German superiority, a book which he foolishly believes that the "smallest Negro tribe in the Congo will have translations printed in their dialect" ("kleinste Negerstamm am Kongo wird Übersetzungen im heimischen Dialekt drucken lassen"; 302). Wotan's last statement shows that by now he truly has become mad: "I

have a mission! Europe cannot decline as long as Wotans are alive!" ("Ich habe eine Mission! Europa kann nicht untergehen solange Wotans leben!"; 302)

The most important similarity between Wotan and the Spanish Quixote, besides the fact that they both have become mad, is their passion for reading books. Wotan does not indulge in reading novels of chivalry as Don Quixote did three hundred years earlier; he reads, as was mentioned already, exotic novels and Expressionistic literature. Reimers states,

> Wotan's lofty style of speech is determined by this reading. In Krause's reading club, the Messianic Expressionism shrank to the quality of a dime novel; the literature that wanted to wake up and change human kind became a cheap product of consumerism […].
> (Wotans pathetischer Sprachstil ist durch diese Lektüre bestimmt. In Krauses Lesezirkel ist der messianische Expressionismus auf das Niveau eines Groschenromans herabgesunken, aus der Literatur, die die Menschheit aufrütteln und umgestalten wollte, ist ein billiges Konsumprodukt geworden […].) (145)

Wotan, as Quixote before him, is also partially blind and deaf to everyday reality, such as when, right at the beginning of the play, he hears nightingales singing. Mariechen corrects him: "The chickens are cackling" ("Die Hühner gackern"; Toller 255).

To sum up the most important differences between the Spanish and German quixotic protagonists, Wotan has two Sanchos instead of one: the crooked Schleim and the ill-educated but caring wife, Mariechen. Like Quixote, Wotan is also given to oratorical outbursts and engages in lengthy speeches to win over his interlocutors. However, contrary to Quixote, Wotan, as Toller himself writes in his commentary, is not "strong enough to live his dream trustingly" ("kräftig genug, um seinen Traum gläubig zu leben"; 364). Therefore, Wotan's "heroic journey" ("Heldenfahrt") is only a melodramatic verbal expedition; the hero turns out to be not more than a loudmouth. Nevertheless, instead of being laughed at as Cervantes's hero is, Wotan "finds in all classes helpers who are ready to join him in his mad venture" (Durzak 94). After the lost World War I and the failed revolution, they all seek a way out of ideological or economic misery. One of those helpers is a Jewish banker, and another is an anti-Semite officer who dreams of establishing a dictatorship in Brazil's jungle. In addition, at the end of the text, in contrast to Don Quixote, Wotan does not recant his folly.

As several critics have pointed out, Toller's play is a parody, "not a simple parody of one particular style or genre but an attempt to weave into

a single comic pattern a number of distinct critical threads" (Davis 302). One of the most important of those threads is the Richard Wagner parody in the tradition of Carl Sternheim's "petit-bourgeois pseudo-Wagnerian anti-heroes" (Davis 304). While the language of Sternheim's parody is still ambiguous, "part parody, part pre-Expressionist earnest" (Davis 304), Toller's is clearly that of parody.

Wotan, the main protagonist's name, is also the name of the principal Germanic god in Wagner's famous *Ring*; Wotan symbolizes the greed for wealth and power. As a great parodistic stroke, Toller's play opens with the god Wotan in Valhalla wearing a helmet with huge horns. Riding a fire-breathing black horse and swinging a lasso, he drags the main character on stage and has him bow before the audience. Davis wrote after having studied photographs of early productions that Toller's madman is dressed in exaggeratedly Wagnerian style. Toller's parodistic intention is clearly laid out with the words, "Let what once was a tragedy become a farce" ("Was einst Tragödie, werd zur Posse"; Toller 253). One strand of parody that enriches the comic effect is the musical. As a part of the Wagnerian parody, Toller "has cast the play in a four-movement symphonic mold: Allegro Andante Scherzo Furioso–Rondo Finale preceeded by the Wotanisches Impromptu as Prelude" (Davis 306). This mock-symphonic pattern, as Davis shows in detail, reflects the movement and tempo of Toller's plot. In addition, there is the sound of hunting-horns, barrel-organ music, naval song and wind band, as well as jazz. It is comical when Wotan, who sees himself as a savior, hearing a Jazz band, declares, "Music of the Spheres! Music of the Spheres!" ("Sphärenmusik! Sphärenmusik!"; Toller 281).

However, the quixotic Wotan can also be read as a parody of the emperor Wilhelm II, of his megalomaniac subjects, as well as of the "expressionist drama of proclamation" ("expressionistische […] Verkündigungsdrama"; Korte 125) as Toller had written it himself in his earlier years. Indeed, the parody of all three of them is blended so strongly that it cannot be decided "if Wotan in specific scenes represents the emperor, a harmless subject, or a powerfully eloquent expressionist" ("ob Wotan in den einzelnen Szenen den Kaiser, einen harmlosen Untertanen oder einen wortgewaltigen Expressionisten darstellt"; Korte 127). Wotan's first name is Wilhelm, his moustache looks like that of Wilhelm II, and his specific way of speaking (ellipsis, missing articles, frequent verbalization of nouns, inflation of exclamation marks, and others) seems to be a copy of the emperor's speech pattern. However, his middle name is Dietrich. As Reimers points out, this name reminds the reader of the literary prototype of a subject during the Wilhelm II regime, Diederich Heßling from

Heinrich Mann's novel *The Loyal Subject (Der Untertan*, 1918). Pointing at the double role of the figure Wotan, the critic concludes:

> So, due to his first names the barber [Wotan] becomes a caricature of the ruler and his subject in one person. He is a product of Wilhelminian society–both as a subject as somebody searching for leadership and meaning […] and as a dictator, praised by the masses that are searching for a dictator.
> (So wird der Friseur [Wotan] durch seine Vornamen zur Karikatur des Herrschers und des Untertanen in einer Person. Er ist ein Produkt der wilhelminischen Gesellschaft–sowohl als Untertan als jemand auf der Suche nach Führung und Sinn […] wie auch als Diktator, hervorgehoben durch die Massen, die einen Diktatoren suchen.) (133-34)

However, Wotan's and his followers' language is also that of expressionism. Reimers remarks, "Toller consequently caricatures his own figures of redeemers and has us laugh about their messianic dreams of a 'transformation' of human kind" ("Toller karikiert konsequent seine eigenen Erlösergestalten und gibt die messianischen Träume einer 'Wandlung' der Menschheit der Lächerlichkeit preis"; 147). When Countess Gallig, for instance, "drools over Wotan as the (expressionist) bearer of salvation," stating that God himself would have entered the human world in Wotan's figure, it can be read as a "parody of the idiom of Georg Kaisers's plays" (Durzak 96).

From his prison cell, Toller had written to Kurt Wolff in February 1923 about how he conceived the idea of writing this play:

> A comedy is beginning to take shape. I would never have thought that I could write a comedy. You have to have seen the naïve and intricate, the silly and sad Quixoteries of the human heart, and to have developed at least a grain of smiling wisdom–otherwise the attempt to write a comedy is a simple-minded effort at fooling yourself. A writer of comedy must have the eye of a misanthrope and the all-embracing love of women–all in one. (Durzak 91)

That Miguel de Cervantes possessed both, the very critical eye and the love towards people, attracted Toller's attention. It has been said that Toller's Wotan-play is one of the "poetically most accomplished" comedies in German literature of the 1920s (Grimm 48). This accomplishment might have to do with the fact that Toller, as Cervantes did over three hundred years before him (see Durán and Rogg 20), probably projected a part of himself into his main protagonist. With biting humor, Toller criticizes his own expressionist "figures of redeemers"

("Erlösergestalten"; Reimers 149) whose messianic claim in the figure of Wotan is unmasked as "greed for power" ("Machtgier"; Reimers 149).

It should have become evident by now that Ernst Toller's *Quixote*-reception is a so-called "hard reading," i.e. it is in line with the Enlightenment tradition of reading *Don Quixote* as a parody of chivalric literature and a satire of the strange forms of human behavior that come from imitating its heroes. According to this tradition, Don Quixote, an anti-hero who in vain tries to convince the world that "his madness is a higher form of sanity" (Byron 424), is only ridiculous.

In complete contrast to Toller's interpretation of a quixotic character for the purposes of satire and parody, Ernst Jünger takes the idealism and heroism of the Spanish knight-errant seriously. This puts Jünger's interpretation in the Romantic tradition, according to which, as Varela Iglesias points out, "the madness loses its ridiculous character and becomes the ideal objective, the true reality" ("la locura pierde su carácter ridículo y se convierte en la meta ideal, en la verdadera realidad"; 50). Thus Jünger's is a so-called "soft reading" of *Don Quixote*.

In Jünger's early narrative *Combat as an Inner Event* (*Der Kampf als inneres Erlebnis*, 1922), the first person-narrator is a soldier during World War I. On a short vacation, strolling through the French town of Mouvaux, he feels worn out. In this situation, it suddenly occurs to him how Quixote must have felt after lost battles:

> I am so tired, so weary of things that I wish I were dead. A soldier, a knight-errant, a Don Quixote who splintered many lances and whose fantasies dissolve into a scornful laughter. I feel clearly that there is an extraneous, a horrible meaning behind everything that happens.
> (Ich bin so müde, so überdrüssig, daß ich wünschte tot zu sein. Ein Landsknecht, ein fahrender Ritter, ein Don Quixote, der manche Lanze zersplittert und dessen Trugbilder in höhnisches Gelächter zerfließen. Ich fühle mit unzweifelhafter Klarheit, daß irgendein fremder Sinn, eine furchtbare Bedeutung hinter allem Geschehen lauert.) (Jünger, *Der Kampf* 68)[1]

Identifying with the knight-errant who, after a defeat is at the brink of losing his belief in his "fantasies" ("Trugbilder"; *Kampf* 68) and thus in the meaning of his life, the narrator senses a transcendence behind the tragic reality of war. Although he cannot define it, he respects it and looks up to it with awe. The firm belief in this transcendence–a kind of non-personal substitute for a god of war that is hovering over history–keeps the young soldier going.

Seven years later, in the first version of *The Adventurous Heart* (*Das abenteuerliche Herz*, 1929), the first-person narrator remembers his

favorite books that he read as a youth. He admits that he liked the "knight of the sad countenance" ("Ritter von der traurigen Gestalt"; 57) even more than the main characters of Stendhal's and Balzac's novels. He explains why: "When […] this book of a man for whom the sword and the pen lay, due to a deeper necessity, next to each other fell into my hands, I could not find a trace of humor in it. I read it with a real Spanish seriousness" ("Als mir […] dieses Buch eines Mannes in die Hände fiel, dem Schwert und Feder mit tieferer Notwendigkeit beieinanderlagen, da fand ich keine Spur von Humor darin. Ich las es mit einem wirklich spanischen Ernst"; Jünger, *Das abenteuerliche Herz* 57). While other readers might not be thrilled by a book without traces of humor, the young Jünger loved it mainly because of that. This remark is an indication of the fact that the author tended to embrace idealism from the beginning. He loved Cervantes for having dramatized the serious commitment of a man to a cause even if it is a lost cause as in Quixote's case. As Tom Kindt and Hans-Harald Müller point out, the fact that Quixote is fighting for a ridiculous cause driven by the noblest motives and with exceptional engagement signifies an "unheard of provocation" ("beispiellose Provokation"; 230) for Jünger. Don Quixote's cause is ridiculous because it is lost. By the time Jünger wrote *The Adventurous Heart*, he seems to have decided that it does not matter if a cause is lost or not.

Such a total commitment to a cause, whatever it is, requires wholeness. Miguel de Cervantes himself, being a soldiering writer and writing soldier, embodies it. For that wholeness he attracts Jünger to the extreme. As Jünger's further life will show, he will follow this ideal by being an exemplary soldier on the one hand and aestheticize combat in his prose on the other. However, not just the cause is different from that of Quixote (German nationalism instead of knight-errantry), but also the character of combat has changed; this makes it hard to understand the extent of Jünger's commitment. As Klaus Mann wisely observes, "You have to be a hysteric romantic like Ernst Jünger to take a fancy to the bleak horror of the battle of material" ("Man muß ein hysterischer Romantiker wie Ernst Jünger sein, um an den öden Schrecken der Materialschlacht Gefallen zu finden"; 362-3).

Also, ignoring the preponderance of irony in Cervantes's text–irony is something "cheap and low class" ("billig[ ] und plebejisch[ ]"; *Das abenteuerliche Herz* 55) according to Jünger–the author believes that the figure of Don Quixote was Cervantes's alter ego. Probably therefore, he is unable to accept the ending of the novel *Don Quixote* at which the protagonist wakes up from his fantasy world before he dies. In the third of Jünger's *Letters of a Nationalist* (*Briefe eines Nationalisten*, 1927),

published under the pseudonym Hans Sturm, Jünger remarked, "Something I always resented about Cervantes: that he has his hero die in bed and by renouncing knight-errantry" ("Eins habe ich Cervantes immer übel genommen: daß er seinen Helden im Bette und unter Verleugnung der fahrenden Ritterschaft sterben läßt"; Sturm 8). Such a triumph of reason over idealism is nothing but "desertion" ("Fahnenflucht"; Kindt and Müller 234) for Jünger. How much he would have preferred to see Don Quixote die in battle because of Jünger's conviction that "the downfall is a great thing" ("der Untergang ist eine große Sache"; Kindt and Müller 233).

In the following example, Jünger goes on to elaborate on his idealistic reading of *Don Quixote*:

> That a barber was hiding behind the Knight of the Moon and that it is actually nonsensical to slash wineskins with dagger blows–in God's name, I did not notice that. In awe, I participated in the consecration of the weapons; and trembling, I joined Don Quixote in the horrible night before the windmill adventure.
> (Daß sich hinter dem Ritter von Monde ein Friseur verbarg und daß es eigentlich unsinnig ist, Weinschläuche mit Degenhieben zu zerfetzen–ich habe es, bei Gott, nicht gemerkt. Ich nahm an der Waffenweihe voll Ehrfurcht teil und machte unter Zittern und Zagen die furchtbare Nacht vor dem Walkmühlenabenteuer mit.) (*Das abenteuerliche Herz* 57)

Jünger's admission that it does not make sense to destroy wineskins with dagger blows can be interpreted as a confirmation of Varela Iglesias's observation that, although in the twentieth century the two extremely different versions of Don Quixote readings are repeated (realism of the Enlightenment, Romantic idealism), this time the idealistic reading is much more differentiated than during Romanticism, "paying more respect to the realist interpretation" ("más respetuoso con la vertiente realista"; 57). Nevertheless, in Jünger's reading the idealism still overpowers any nuance of realism; it is still a very soft reading. An example is Jünger's vision of Sancho Panza:

> That they tossed Sancho on a blanket up in the air appeared to me as a bitter injustice done to a courageous comrade in arms and an honest friend. Every time when the sword came out of the sheath or the lance was put in to show what knight-errantry was to the cowardly, I was proud of my Man of the Mancha.
> (Daß sie Sancho auf Bettlaken prellten, das stellte sich ungefähr in der Weise dar, daß einem wackeren Waffengenossen und ehrlichen Kumpan bitteres Unrecht geschah. Jedesmal, wenn das Schwert aus der Scheide fuhr oder die Lanze eingelegt wurde, um dem Gemeinen gegenüber

> Zeugnis zu geben für ritterliche Art, war ich auf meinen Herrn von der Mancha stolz.) (*Das abenteuerliche Herz* 57)

In Cervantes's text, Sancho calls himself "a peaceable, sober, quiet man" (Cervantes 150); he behaves often cowardly. In world literature, he has become a symbol for common sense and earthliness with a touch of fearfulness over the last three hundred years. Jünger, however, for whom every man is a born soldier, sees Sancho as a "courageous comrade in arms" ("wackeren Waffengenossen"; 57). As in similar cases of idealistic interpretations of Cervantes's novel, idealism seems to constitute the meaning of life as such. As Varela Iglesias observes referring to Emilia Pardo-Bazán, who also interprets *Don Quixote* in an idealistic manner, there are "overtones of existential angst […] in the passionate way in which this author defends Don Quixote's ideal of knight-errantry" ("sobretonos de angustia existencial […] en la apasionada defensa que esta autora hace del ideal caballeresco de Don Quijote"; 51). Such overtones can also be found in Jünger's interpretation: those of a writer and soldier who is clinging to his idealistic cause of German nationalism as a transcendental anchorage.

In the following, Jünger is going on to remember his first-time reading of Cervantes's novel: "However, what I still today like as much as I liked then is that this man was no longer young when he discovered the reasons behind the world" ("Aber was mir heute noch genau so gefällt wie damals, das ist, daß dieser Mensch kein Jüngling mehr war, als er die Hintergründe entdeckte, die die Welt besitzt"; *Das abenteuerliche Herz* 57). This remark is in line with the feeling of transcendence that Jünger had described seven years earlier in his text *Combat as an Inner Event*. The author continues describing his fascination with *Don Quixote*:

> It is dramatic to see the twig of folly starting to get green on this already dry and barren life and, driven by an inner fire, growing into a jungle that surrounds it impenetrably. In those days, I believed that you had to be old to become an expert in such great and noble deeds; and today, I know that the old fools are the best.
> (Das ist ein Schauspiel, wie das Reis der Torheit auf diesem schon dürren und angetrockneten Leben zu grünen beginnt und, von innerem Feuer getrieben, zum Urwald wird, der es undurchdringlich umstellt. Damals glaubte ich, daß man alt sein müsse, um sich auf so große und würdige Taten zu verstehen, und heute weiß ich, daß die alten Narren die besten sind.) (*Das abenteuerliche Herz* 57)

This statement shows that, as was mentioned before, Jünger does not deny that Don Quixote is a fool, but interprets his foolishness as a higher form of reason, as a way of participating in a kind of Hegelian Absolute.

Also noteworthy is how differently Toller and Jünger handle the word "jungle". For Toller's Wotan, the jungle in Brazil is an alien realm to be colonized; in Jünger's case the word is used as a metaphor for protection, something positive. In the following paragraph, Jünger elaborates on the dangers from which this "jungle" is supposed to protect a man:

> To be sure, the right folly, just as the right humor, is a very serious matter. Both have to do with faith, the one with the faith in the spiritual, the other with the faith in the moral foundation of the world. But, if it ever was hard to keep the faith, then it was now in our so highly praised time. The pale followers of the Enlightenment […] already broke into our early dreams. Praised be the one who would succeed in striking up the faith in the lively fullness of the world and the colorful, meaningful and fateful play that moves it despite the idolaters of reason and the charlatans of science.
> (Allerdings ist die rechte Torheit, ebenso wie der rechte Humor, eine sehr ernste Angelegenheit. Beide hängen eng mit dem Glauben zusammen, die eine mit dem an den ideellen, der andere mit dem an den moralischen Grund der Welt. Aber wenn es einmal schwer war, sich den Glauben zu wahren, dann war es in unserer so hoch gepriesenen Zeit. Der blasse Nachtrupp der Aufklärung […] brach schon in unsere frühen Träume ein. Wohl dem, dem es gelang, den Götzendienern der Vernunft und den Scharlatanen der Wissenschaft zum Trotz den Glauben an die lebendige Fülle der Welt zu knüpfen und an das bunte, sinnvolle und schicksalhafte Spiel, das sie bewegt.) (*Das abenteuerliche Herz* 57-8)

It is obvious that the danger that threatens Jünger's idealistic vision of human wholeness in the name of a cause is almost everything that comes with the Enlightenment tradition: reason, realism, science, and democracy; Jünger without doubt points his finger critically at the tumultuous times of the Weimar Republic. So does Toller, as we remember. However, their reasons are completely different. Jünger abhors the fact that Germany has lost its monarchy after having lost the war and that he has to live in a democracy. By contrast, Toller, a former revolutionary, has nothing against that; he would not want to live in a monarchy. Nevertheless, Toller is disillusioned about the fact that this republic's reality–a "world of jobbers and profiteers" (Durzak 86)–is not perfect. Therefore, he satirizes it in his comedy, parodying at the same time his own former exaggerated revolutionary idealism that might have contributed to its imperfection. On the other hand, the republic as such repelled Jünger because it favored rationalism and common sense. Taking Don Quixote's idealism as

seriously as possible is a clear indication of Jünger's decision to keep the lance raised in the name of the absolute spirit; the fight for an ideal must go on. Unfortunately, this ideal for Jünger meant German nationalism, a cause that led him to embrace fascism in his younger years.[2]

Readings of Cervantes's novel as different as Toller's and Jünger's are evidence of the fact that the text, according to Marthe Robert, "suggest[s] a multiplicity of possible meanings among which the reader himself is forced to choose" (5). She continues:

> Is [*Don Quixote of la Mancha*] a satire of an impotent and irresponsible idealism inimical to life, a reading that suggests an opposition between Don Quixote's vague notions and the honest materialism of Sancho Panza? Or is it a heroic defense of all lost causes, of the absolute virtues of faith, magnanimity, and the passion for justice […]? (5-6)

For Ernst Toller it is the first, for Ernst Jünger the second. That they chose to read Cervantes's text so differently has to do, as we have seen, with their opposite stance within the socio-historical context. As Kindt and Müller suggest, today we are not examining such world-famous books such as *Hamlet*, *Faust*, or *Don Quixote* and their adaptations "in order to find out their 'true meaning' but, instead, to gain a privileged access to the view of the world and human beings of the recipients and their time" ("um deren 'wahren Sinn' zu erforschen, sondern um einen privilegierten Zugang zum Welt-und Menschenbild der Rezipienten und ihrer Zeit zu gewinnen"; 230).

To sum up, although the comparison of Toller's and Jünger's Quixote-reception is somehow strained by the fact that we compare fiction (Toller) and autobiographical writing (Jünger), the differences are programmatic, especially in the context of the tumultuous times of the Weimar Republic. Toller's comedy is a parody and satire in the Enlightenment tradition of *Don Quixote* interpretations; Jünger reads the figure of Don Quixote in the tradition of German Romanticism as an "embodiment of heroism" ("Verkörperung des Heroismus"; Kindt and Müller 250). To put this difference into the context of German literary history, the following analogy may be used: Heinrich Wilhelm von Gerstenberg[3] criticized Wilhelm Ehrenfried Neugebauer's hard reading, i.e. Enlightenment interpretation, of Cervantes's novel in *The German Don Quixote* (*Der teutsche Don Quichotte*, 1753) by complaining that the dignity that Gerstenberg sees in Cervantes's hero is missing. According to the critic, Neugebauer painted Don Quixote's enthusiasm for chivalric ideals so negatively that it seems contemptible to the reader. Creating one of the first soft readings of Cervantes's text in Germany, Gerstenberg claims that