

Rosen, Edward

Brod's Brahe: Fact vs. Fiction. (English) Zbl 1170.01407
Sudhoffs Arch. 66, 70-78 (1982).

From the text: “When Max Brod (1884–1968) published his Tycho Brahes Weg zu Gott [Wolff, Munich, 1915], the title page carried the classification ‘Roman’ i.e., a novel. Yet when this ‘Roman’ was translated into English as The Redemption of Tycho Brahe [Knopf, New York, 1928], the American title page did not indicate that Brod’s account of Brahe was a novel. If the ordinary reader of the English translation failed to notice the announcement facing the title page that the publisher was issuing selected German novels in English translation, Brod’s extensive use of Latin expressions as well as his frequent references to official documents and private correspondence may have given rise to the impression that his depiction of Brahe, like his study of Reuchlin half a century later, was ‘a historical monograph’. But in his autobiography Brod recalled the psychological contrast he had devised between his fictional Brahe and Johannes Kepler, the other great astronomer in his tale: ‘In my Tycho Brahe novel, for my character Kepler I re-evoked this quality of boldness in science and constant fresh beginnings, while in Tycho Brahe I wanted to portray rather the stubborn scholar, sticking to his system.’ As for the encounter between Brahe and Kepler, Brod ‘sought to depict [it] in these pages not without some freedom’. But if his story may be misunderstood to be history, then his imaginative departures from fact should be mapped out as a guide to the unwary.

MSC:

- [01A70](#) Biographies, obituaries, personalia, bibliographies
- [01A40](#) History of mathematics in the 15th and 16th centuries, Renaissance
- [01A60](#) History of mathematics in the 20th century
- [01A80](#) Sociology (and profession) of mathematics
- [85-03](#) History of astronomy and astrophysics

Cited in **3** Documents