

Review of World Literature (Revue svetovej literatúry)

JARMILA SAMCOVÁ

Review of World Literature

Revue svetovej literatúry
Laurinská 2
811 01 Bratislava
Slovakia
tel.: 00 421 2 544 34 916
redakcia@rsl.sk

Revue svetovej literatúry is a journal devoted to literature of translation. It was founded in 1965 when its first issue was published in a publishing house called Slovenský spisovateľ (Slovak Writer). Its aim was to publish works and introduce authors whom it was impossible to publish until then, based on various, especially political reasons. The journal was published as a bimonthly and in later years the editors prepared also the seventh, thematic issue. Thus *Revue svetovej literatúry* was a fruit of political relief in the 1960s. Even though after the occupation by the troops of the Warsaw Pact the editors were under pressure and personal changes occurred as well, they tried to keep a high literary standard despite occasional articles and contributions that were products of the time.. Even though it was not possible to publish certain authors, there were other good literary works published at that time, often by South American authors and others. In that form RSL had been published until 1994 when the publishing house, Slovenský spisovateľ, was privatized and as such could not obtain any subsidies from the Ministry of Culture. The journal was generating losses. It is unprofitable even today. It has already been published by The Slovak Literary Translators' Society (Slovenská spoločnosť prekladateľov umeleckej literatúry) for 15 years. It is a citizen-action public and as such it can also ask the Ministry of Culture for a grant.

The journal began to be published in a renewed way, as a quarterly, in 1995. It kept the cover form of the previous *Revue svetovej literatúry*. From the beginning its format and extent acknowledges the credo with which its first issue was published in 1965.

Apart from other things, the Preface to the first issue states the following:

"...this publication emerged from the simple need of a cultural nation that writes its history in a free country..."

Its aim is "... to establish connections with the world's streams of art, literature

and thought..."

"To penetrate more thoroughly into the world of ideas and dreams of creative humanity in the whole world..."

"In this direction, literature and art as such play one of the most important roles."

"Modern history shows that the enrichment of life is at the same time also its liberation."

"Because today neither life nor culture is thinkable without mutual cognition and fertilization, without that Socratic dialogue which leads to deeper knowledge of things and phenomena, which helps truth come into light, which leads to truth." (Editors 1965)

Apart from literature, the journal has always been devoted also to other kinds of art, especially to fine art, film art, dramatic art, and other arts.

Slovenská spoločnosť prekladateľov umeleckej literatúry began to issue the journal in different, much more uncertain and modest financial conditions. However, it did not abandon the intentions which its founders resolved in 1965.

It adapted to the new situation. It began to prepare issues devoted to individual national literatures, and thus to open possibilities for translators and publishers. It was in the time when the state owned, so-called "stone" publishing houses ceased to exist and the new, economically weak ones emerged, publishing above all, either out of necessity or ignorance, commercial titles, poorly translated especially from English. Translators from other languages did not have anything to translate and the high professional standard of translation and processing of manuscripts and book publishing began to fade away. In the course of fifteen years the Review had prepared a selection from almost all European languages, some issues were published repeatedly, but as a follow-up to the previous selection filling in potential white spaces. Apart from European literatures, also selections from American and South American literatures (namely Hispanic literature as well as literature written in Portuguese), the literature of the Far East, Australia, the African literature written both in English and in French, and Arabian fine literature were brought. Everything was accompanied by works of artists from the cultures included in the issue.

Translators began to be introduced in more extensive materials supplemented with bibliography. However, these shortly ceased to be published because they made high demands on authors (for example the material on Blahoslav Hečko, or Branislav Choma and Ružena Žiaranová Dvořáková). Instead of that, after a certain time, a section called Translators was introduced in an issue, presenting individual translators with a photograph and short bibliographic data. Whole groups of young translators from the then little represented languages were attracted to translation. This practice still keeps going on.

Bibliography of the 40 volumes of Review of World Literature was prepared and published on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the emergence of the journal. (Bibliography of the previous volume is published in the first issue of every following volume.)

The Review also pays attention to anniversaries of personalities in translation. For

example, in the last two years issues with a selection from Swiss, Croatian, Israeli and Danish literature were published. This year there are issues from Ukrainian, Egyptian, French and Serbian literature.

Translated by Marcela Uhrová

REVUE SVETOVEJ LITERATÚRY

Preklady zo svetovej literatúry. Prelomové a vysoko hodnotné literárne diela. Literatúry z Európy, z Ázie i Ameriky. Bibliografia príspevkov zo štyridsiatic ročníkov RSL.

Revue svetovej literatúry je časopis, venovaný prekladom z cudzích literatúr do slovenského jazyka. Vznikol roku 1965 a možno povedať, že bol výrazom politických zmien vo vtedajšom Československu. Od začiatku sa sústreďoval na hodnotné a prelomové literárne diela a dodnes si udržiava vysokú literárnu úroveň. Revue svetovej literatúry už predstavila množstvo cudzích literatúr z Európy i zo sveta, prevažne v samostatných číslach. Pri príležitosti 40. výročia existencie vydala kompletnú bibliografiu príspevkov zo všetkých štyridsiatic ročníkov.

Mgr. Jarmila Samcová.
Revue svetovej literatúry
Laurinská 2
811 01 Bratislava
Slovakia
[*redakcia@rsl.sk*](mailto:redakcia@rsl.sk)