

**SCTMG 2020****International Scientific Conference «Social and Cultural Transformations in the  
Context of Modern Globalism»****RUSSIAN POETRY IN GERMAN ANTHOLOGIES FROM  
SECOND HALF OF THE 20TH CENTURY**

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(a) National Research Tomsk State University, Tomsk, Russia, [stekljannik@mail.ru](mailto:stekljannik@mail.ru)***Abstract***

The article considers Russian poetry in one of the lesser-studied types of collective works - a German anthology from the second half of the 20th Century. The research potential of this publication is measured according to several components: 1) the publisher's preferences in terms of selecting Russian poets and their texts for presentation to the German reader; 2) the implementation of various concepts for literary criticism; 3) the transformation of translations. Throughout the research, data was collected on the representation of Russian poets in German anthologies from the second half of the 20th Century using specific methods of literary analysis: all Russian poets have been systematized by text and translator in a table. A systematic understanding of strategies for representing Russian poetry in the authors' publications, and the topic as a whole, reveals details about the perception of Russian poetry in Germany in the second half of the 20th Century. German publishers are guided by two principles, which are reflected in their choice of texts and translations: the maximum approximation of the Russian poetry with the German by determining the points of contact, and the preservation of authentic, original characteristics inherent in Russian poetic culture. The results of the study can be applied to research on how Russian poets are received in Germany.

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**Keywords:** Russian poetry, anthology, landscape lyrics, multiple translations, translation.

## 1. Introduction

In modern Humanities there is a steady interest in the problem of intercultural, in particular, inter-literary relations, reception and imagology, to comprehend the issues of the Canon of national literature. The anthology of foreign languages offers a wide field for philological research. The popularity of anthologies of foreign poetry is explained by a number of reasons: firstly, they serve as the primary source of foreign literature in translation; secondly, such anthologies are aimed at the General reader, who is given the opportunity to get the quintessence of foreign literature of a particular period in the cut. Publishers, having made a representative selection, present to the reader the best, most interesting or valuable, thus forming a canon of texts in the host verbal culture. Precise methods for literary criticism have been actively used in order to achieve greater objectivity in the results. The results from processing the statistical data mean it is possible to draw conclusions about the formation of the school canon in anthologies from the second half of the 19th Century to the early 20st Century. The monograph of Tartu and Russian researchers of the Russian poetic Canon indicates the importance of considering poetry publications intended for school education, which contribute to their consolidation in the cultural memory (Vdovin, 2013). Compiling thematic indexes, which contain the principle motifs in the work of a given poet, by how often they are mentioned significantly facilitates the work of subsequent researchers (Epstein, 1990). Some studies of Russian poetry within the European literary space and in the context of Russian-German literary relations. Hilo (2015) showed that the foreign-language work of individual Russian poets is interpreted from a point of view that is different from the Russian national canon. So, Ekuch (2010) details the translation and literary-critical reception of Dmitriev (Müller, 1979) in poetry collections and other publications in Germany and establishes that Dmitriev in this body of texts appears as "the author of conventional didactic and sentimental poetry" (Ekuch, 2010, p. 130). Hilo attempts to make a whole comprehension of the image of Yesenin (Dedecius, 2003) in Germany, as a result of which the author establishes that the perception of his poetry reflects the main trends in the development of Russian-German literary relations in the 20-21 Centuries (Hilo, 2015). Generally speaking, the texts selected in the anthology are the best for studying the translation of poems, and this is inextricably linked with the phenomenon of multiple translations, which focuses on the works of the Magadan school of translation studies. The authors dedicated not only to the definition of the concept, but the planned integrated approach to the phenomenon of translation multiplicity, including the consideration of this phenomenon in evolution, the development of relevant classification, and number of General provisions about the phenomenon of translation multiplicity assigning them the status of postulates (Chaikovskii, 2008).

## 2. Problem Statement

The fact that the works of individual Russian poets are modified for the German reader suggest that not only the work of Russian poets through the selection of texts, but also their recognition relative to other poets, as well as translations of texts can be significantly altered in the anthological context, in which often iconic figures and marginal poets coexist.

### **3. Research Questions**

In German publishing, the anthology occupies a traditionally strong position, "it plays a decisive role in the dissemination of literature and the formation of a reader's taste in both qualitative and quantitative terms" (Boedeker & Essman, 1997, p. 2). The two-volume work «World literature in German poetry anthologies of the 19th and 20th century» unifies the scientific research from Gottingen "Literary translation" (Die literarische Übersetzung) in the field of defining the German translation culture paradigm (Essman & Schoening, 1996). Scientists came to the conclusion that German anthologies make a significant contribution to the dissemination of foreign poetry, and, in a broader sense, participate in international cultural exchange.

In domestic literary studies, Smirnova's dissertation is devoted to the study of the anthology as a kind of collective work, in which the author focuses on the definition of the anthology, its place in the publishing and literary process, and identified the basic principles of its construction. We can fully agree with Smirnova's (2003) definition of 'anthology': "an anthology is a collective work of selected texts which represents the literature of a certain period, trend, direction, country, etc., including the most valuable works and gives the most complete idea of what was written in this sphere" (p. 95).

### **4. Purpose of the Study**

To study strategies for representing Russian poetry in German anthologies from the second half of the 20th Century through the selection of poets, texts and translations that are published.

### **5. Research Methods**

Precise methods for literary criticism were used to work with the corpus of anthologies. Based on how often they were included in anthologies, a table was compiled in which all Russian poets whose texts are in anthologies from the second half of the 20th Century are listed in descending order. When comparing translations, not only a translation analysis of texts was used, but also Porter's method (Porter, 2015), which make it possible to determine the accuracy of the translation relative to the original in percentage terms.

### **6. Findings**

#### **6.1. Anthologies from the second half of the 20th century**

Content and secondary information in introductions, comments, afterword help to identify the author's installation, to judge the choice of the publisher and the individual strategies of the compiler of the anthology, as well they often include arguments about the development way of Russian literature, in particular Russian poetry. The selection of such criteria as bilateral - multilateral, two- or one- language anthology, edition of West or East Germany, anthology of 20th or 21th Century helps to characterize the publishing choice regarding Russian poets, and the selection of texts of their works, and most importantly, translations. General trends in the transformation of anthologies from the second half of the 20th Century are outlined: the clear predominance of a certain theme, genre, era or group of authors,

which is extremely unusual for anthologies of the 19th Century, contributes to the expansion of the range of poets introduced; anthologies of world poetry, in which only a part of the anthology focused on Russian poetry, and thus the choice was limited to only the best poetic pieces, give way to anthologies of exclusively Russian poetry. This, in turn, also contributes to a deeper, comprehensive introduction to Russian poetry. Due to the above-mentioned changes to anthologies, young, lesser-known authors, some of whom are not at all famous, are increasingly featured alongside, and sometimes instead of, canonized poets. “Fresh” translations are preferred in anthologies: from the 1950s to 1970s translators from even the 19th Century from the turn of the 20th Century appear very often, for example K. K. Pavlova (Goepfert, 1994), K. Schmidt (Etkind, 1981), F. F. Fiedler (Laaths, 1969), R. M. Rilke (Britting, 1963), but starting from the mid-1980s a trend can be noted where pre-existing translations by contemporary translators are included, or a translation for a poem is specially ordered for a planned anthology.

## 6.2. Statistics on the representation of Russian poets

The main body of research consists of more than 40 anthologies published in Germany and Switzerland. The data from processing the content of each anthology included in the research corpus makes it possible to identify the poets with the largest number of texts (is given in brackets). The most popular poets include very famous poets (Table 01). If we consider the representation of poets by centuries, then the poets of the 18th Century are not significantly ahead of their contemporaries of other centuries (Table 02); the absolute leaders are in the 19th Century (Table 03); in the 20th Century poets, it is predominantly those from the first half of the century which are mainly popular, only two poets are from the second half of the 20th Century and represent a different generation of poets (Table 04).

**Table 01.** The most popular poets in German anthologies from the second half of the 20th Century

Russian poet	Number of poems
A. S. Pushkin (Baumann, 1951)	155
A. A. Akhmatova (Borowsky, 1983)	126
S. A. Yesenin (Dedecius, 2003)	103
M. Y. Lermontov (Müller, 1979)	101
F. I. Tyutchev (Schmid, 2003)	101
A. A. Blok (Nitzberg, 2003)	86
V. V. Mayakovsky (Lewerenz, 1962)	80
B. L. Pasternak (Laaths, 1969)	73
O. E. Mandelstam (Brang, 1998)	71
M. I. Tsvetaeva (Borowsky, 2001)	71
G. N. Aygi (Dedecius, 2003)	53

**Table 02.** The most popular poets of the 18th Century in German anthologies from the second half of the 20th Century

Russian poet	Number of poems
G. R. Derzhavin (Etkind, 1981)	31
I. A. Krylov (Baumann, 1951)	26
V. A. Zhukovsky (Schmid, 2003)	20
A. P. Sumarokov (Baumann, 1951)	20

I. I. Dmitriev (Müller, 1979)	16
M. V. Lomonosov (Müller, 1979)	13

**Table 03.** The most popular poets of the 19th Century in German anthologies from the second half of the 20th Century

Russian poet	Number of poems
A. S. Pushkin (Baumann, 1951)	155
M. Y. Lermontov (Müller, 1979)	101
F. I. Tyutchev (Schmid, 2003)	101
N. A. Nekrasov (Etkind, 1981)	38
E. A. Baratynsky (Schmid, 2003)	32
A. N. Tolstoy (Nitzberg, 2003)	32

**Table 04.** The most popular poets of the 20th Century in German anthologies from the second half of the 20th Century

Russian poet	Number of poems
A. A. Akhmatova (Borowsky, 1983)	126
S. A. Yesenin (Dedecius, 2003)	103
A. A. Blok (Nitzberg, 2003)	86
V. V. Mayakovsky (Lewerenz, 1962)	80
B. L. Pasternak (Laaths, 1969)	73
O. E. Mandelstam (Brang, 1998)	71
M. I. Tsvetaeva (Borowsky, 2001)	71
G. N. Aigi (Dedecius, 2003)	53
I. A. Brodsky (Borowsky, 1983)	40
V. Y. Bryusov (Nitzberg, 2003)	38

### 6.3. Landscape lyric poetry in German anthologies

Foreign-language cultural space represents its own dimension of Russian poetry, in which individual figures of poets-classics are presented from a point of view different from the domestic literary Canon, in connection with which the work of a poet is understood in a new way. In Russian poetry, the poets Tyutchev (1980) and Fet (1985) are assigned the definition of "the most recognized landscape poets" (Epstein, 1990). Tyutchev in the corpus of anthologies is represented by 52 texts, which are included a total of 101 times. Only nine poems can be attributed to landscape lyric poetry, seven to love, and the rest of the poems contain philosophical reflections. This correlation is explained in a commentary on the anthologies, which emphasizes Tyutchev's fascination with the philosophical work of Schelling (Müller, 1979). The poetic activity of Tyutchev is very highly appreciated by German publishers: despite the information available in the comments of German publishers about Tyutchev as a poet of landscape lyrics, this side of his work is given very little attention.

The work of Fet is represented by 31 poems, his texts appear 41 times in the corpus of anthologies. Of these, landscape images are present in five poems, love motifs in eight, and a philosophical component can be traced in 18 texts. Also present are comments about his translations of J. V. Goethe's "Faust" and A. Schopenhauer's philosophical work "The World as Will and Representation" (Borowsky, 1983). However, the most frequently mentioned texts "Ya prishel k tebe s privetom" [I came to you with

greetings] (4) (Fet, 1985), "Chudnaya kartina" [Wonderful picture] (4) (Fet, 1985) are examples of landscape lyric poetry. The versatility of A. A. Fet's work, expressed in the early works by landscape and love images, in the later works mainly by philosophical reflections gives choice to German publishers in order to represent Fet as a philosopher or to attempt adequately to present his work at the expense of shifting the focus to landscape lyrics.

#### 6.4. Multiple translations of poems

Poets from the 18th, 19th and 20th Century, whose translated texts were included the highest number of times in the corpus of anthologies were included in the field of translation research. The number of translations makes it possible to evaluate the translation not only in relation to the original, but also in relation to other translations, to identify patterns of multiple functions. An important role in the translation is played by a number of facts: by whom the translation was made - by poets-translators or poets-philologists, to what time epoch the translation belongs. The poem with the highest number of different translations is "I go out on the road alone" by M.Y. Lermontov.

Derzhavin (1987) «Reka vremen v svoem strelen'i...» [Time's river in its rushing current...].

In anthologies from East Germany are six authentic poems typical of the poet's work that deal exclusively with Russian culture. Anthologies from West Germany give a more complete picture of the work of Derzhavin due to the selection of texts because they, firstly, are of different genres, and secondly, include those dating back to European literary culture. The poem "Time's river in its rushing current..." (1816) features in the anthologies of Western Germany under six translations, while there are numerous vivid additions that deviate from the original. The most accurate and adequate in terms of relaying the meaning is the translation by R.-D. Kyle (Etkind, 1981). The form of the poem, expressed through a pictorial device, an acrostic, which Derzhavin established in the first eight lines and which vertically reads "the ruin of honor", was not emulated by German translators.

Lermontov "Vyhozhu odin ya na dorogu" [I go out on the road alone] (Lermontov, 1983)

Translations of the poem "I go out on the road alone" appear 11 times, of which the most popular translation (4) is by the Austrian poet and writer Rilke (1914). This indicates a clear preference by publishers in the era of modern translations. Regarding the number of translations of Lermontov's poem "I go out on the road alone" and its inclusion in anthologies, it can be concluded that the poem is of great interest to the German audience largely because it develops the themes of H. Heine and L. Uhland.

Simonov "Zhdi menya" [Wait for me] (Simonov, 1979)

In the corpus of anthologies, Simonov's "Wait for me" is noticeable, for among the relatively small total number of his texts that are included (5), four translations of the poem "Wait for me" are featured. The poem appears in the corpus of anthologies eight times. In West Germany the poem "Wait for me" is his only one that appears (2), the remaining texts are found in editions from East Germany. Accordingly, Simonov is known to the West German reader as a representative of military lyric poetry that leans towards sentimental love. In East Germany, his fame is somewhat broader, but more subjective. Based on the postulate about multiple translations and an excellent original, the fact that Simonov's poem has been translated multiple times demonstrates that German publishers rank the poem amongst the best that Russia has to offer. The formalizing principle makes Blum's (Baumann, 1951) translation the most

popular amongst those that currently exist, as it is found in anthologies from East and West Germany five times.

## 7. Conclusion

The analysis makes it possible to conclude that anthologies of foreign literature, in a broad sense, serve as a certain medium and a guide to another culture. They serve as the most important tool in constructing the pantheon of foreign verbal culture, in particular, Russian literature as represented to a foreign-speaking reader, publisher or translator. An anthology of Russian poetry is a dynamic space for two reasons: 1) the publication itself is transformed as its boundaries change; 2) the selection of Russian poets is very varied, some poets end up being included for a short period, others, on the contrary, form a kind of anthological canon of Russian poetry. Classical Russian poets are represented in German anthologies quite fully due to the large number of texts. The consistent mention of not-so-widely-known poets (for example, G. N. Aygi) is a result of the literature's contact with Germany. The anthology of German poetry represents a rich material for studying different categories of Russian poetry.

Landscape lyric poetry does not resonate with German publishers. Interest is primarily focused on philosophical lyric poetry, which is explained by the philosophical outlook and world-view of German poetry and German culture in general. Two great Russian landscape poets are presented from a different, philosophical point of view, their landscape poems do not prevail in German anthologies. The assumption that there is a more adequate representation of Tyutchev's poetry than of Fet's, due to the greater number of texts is not justified.

Translation decisions are often closely dependent on the personal worldview of translators. In cases where the translation is rendered by the poet, it is about the influence on the translation of their own artistic system. However, the general tendency to use the principle of domestication (an approximation of a foreign word, the development of another by adaptation) - can be traced in the considered translations. The principle of foreignization (the intention of moving the recipient to another environment of verbal culture) is used in translation exclusively by the translators of the source culture such translators as F. F. Fiedler and K. Blum.

Russian poetry as a whole is viewed through an imagological prism: German publishers seek to find, above all, German heritage born from Russian culture. They detail the personal interactions of Russians poets in the German world, which create a certain image of immature non-independent literature, although it has clear representatives.

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