Print Media as Socio-Imagological Tools: German world of V. A. Zhukovsky’s “Herald of Europe”

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Abstract

The article presents the results of the research aimed at examining the “German text” in “Herald of Europe” of post-Karamzin period when the face of the first Russian thick magazine devoted to European culture, literature and politics was to the large extent determined by the translations chosen by its editor V. A. Zhukovsky. This famous Russian poet deliberately selected German periodicals to cover social and political issues in “Herald of Europe”. In German periodicals he also used to find sources of apolitical articles on literature and culture. Due to V.A. Zhukovsky’s work the Russian reader got acquainted with both popular European writers of that time and the authors of the second rank. A separate unit of publications translated from German originals and published in “Herald of Europe” was associated with the ancient Russian history. Therefore “Herald of Europe”, with V.A. Zhukovsky as the editor-in-chief in the period mentioned, concentrated the ideals of European Enlightenment and became the area to enhance the Russian romantic style.

Keywords: German text, V. A. Zhukovsky, “Herald of Europe”, editorship.

1. Introduction

The aim of this article is to give a comprehensive analysis of the “German text” in “Herald of Europe” which prevailed over any other cultural and national segments and which in the time of Zukovsky’s being the editor-in-chief was represented in all the sections of the magazine by works of all sorts of writers.

The first Russian thick literary and political magazine, which had been founded in 1802 by N.M. Karamzin, as is known was published twice a month during twenty years in an edition unprecedented for that time. The edition marked a new era in the history of Russian journalism as it was the first private and in many aspects independent magazine in Russia. The ideological strategy of the magazine was changing in accordance with the historic circumstances and the editors’ opinions. From the beginning it was stipulated by Karamzin to combine two directions of information policy: the policy of education and the moral one. The pioneering work of “Herald of European
Europe” was that it could participate in forming a public space which united the fashionable society, literati and political elite. One way or another, this function was preserved during the whole period of “Herald of Europe” functioning.

2. Review of related research

The magazine founder’s successors (in 1805 “Herald” was bought by M. T. Kachenovsky, since 1808 it went into administration of V.A. Zhukovsky) due to the new geopolitical situation represented two different strategies, two basic elements of this edition conception: the social and political strategy and the cultural and educational one. The peculiarities of three stages of the development of “Herald of Europe” have been reflected upon in special works, with the period of Zhukovsky’s editorship and direct influence, relatively estimated as 1807-1811, being the least examined. The investigations of modern researchers of Zhukovsky’s life and creative work (Aizikova, 2004) are the only exception in this respect and they are at the same time the basis for serious posing the escalated issue. Within the framework of Complete works and letters of the first Russian romanticist these academicians finalized for publication an extensive volume of his prose which for the first time ever appeared on the pages of “Herald”.

It is known that Zhukovsky in the first place correlated his own principles with the history of the periodical founded by Karamzin; in the second turn he had to compete with the politically oppositional “The Russian Messenger” of S.N. Glinka. As a result the pages of the magazine were filled with translated texts of native authors on different topics and of all possible genres of flash fiction. Zhukovsky took the magazine into his hands in the time after “The Treaties of Tilsit” had been signed, when keen criticism of Napoleon as well as any kind of Gallomania was out of favour in the society. Therefore his complete literary program embarked upon a new course. The appeal to the “Germans”, or Germanomania (the term by A.N. Veselovsky), which had been born in the progressive minds of young Russian noblemen in the early 19th century, particularly in the activity of Andrey Turgenev and the representatives of the Friendly Literary Society, was vividly embodied in Zhukovsky’s “Herald”.

Zhukovsky-publisher stated his own program in the famous "Letter to the editor from the county" (Zhukovskiy, 1895), and, concerning the sources for magazine publications, we learn about them from the private correspondence of the poet. One of the reliable "suppliers", who he counted on, was A. I. Turgenev, who at that time almost migrated to Europe. At the beginning of July 1807 Zhukovsky wrote to his friend: "Now I start to prepare plays; but since I have very little hope for myself and dread my being lazy, then, my dear friend, it will be nice if you try to help me. You now have fairly enough guidebooks and sources, you know German literature well, therefore you can point out what suitable and new, or old but still unknown things there are in German books, and where they can be found. <...> As for politics, if you have time, provide me with genuine works or translations, or at least, advise on plays worth to be published <...> Is there anything in your brother's papers? I think, some of his magazine articles, written in the foreign lands, could be of great use " (Lobanov, 1981).

The German view of the world became, literally, the point of reference for "Herald of Europe" during Zhukovsky's editorship due to translations. The main source of fiction as well as of news on science and art, literature and politics was periodicals coming from the Germany which was contemporary to the poet. Current social and political issues were covered in the section "Review of Overseas Accidents" and "Politics", and those reports were translations of the German newspaper "Hamburg Correspondent" («Hamburger Korrespondent»). Analytical reports, historical and political reviews were "delivered" by "Minerva on Politics, History and Literature" («Minerva für Politik, Geschichte und Literatur»), which had been published by a former Prussian officer I.V. Arhengolts since1792 and lasted for more than fifty years. The target readers of the German "Minerva" were bourgeoisie and liberal-minded military men. The magazine of about two hundred pages used to come out monthly and contained predominantly political surveys, historical insights and detailed reports on military events. As a motto for his brainchild Arhengolts chose an English slogan, which is above all proclaimed objectivity and the need to distinguish between judgements and news. Through the German "Minerva" the
Russian reader of "Herald" in 1808 was reported in detail of the political actions of England (Zhukovskiy, 1895); of the French campaign in the East Indies [4, № 13, pp. 68-78]; of the revival of Germany (Zhukovskiy, 1895).

The apolitical periodicals of Germany were used by Zhukovsky-editor even more actively. At least seven messengers on German secular and literary life became the source for translated publications in "Herald of Europe". Among them was "The Newspaper for the Elegant World" («Die Zeitung für die elegante Welt»), which was a magazine about literature and culture. It was established in Leipzig by I.G. K. Shpazir and was published from 1801 to 1859, with the regularity of three times a week and later, since 1806, four times a week. Accordingly, the title was aimed at the elected, elite reader and the edition had a variety of supplements. The magazine's authors developed upon various themes (from classic literature to fashion and gardening), with political issues being completely excluded (see, for example, "Notes on a New Covent Garden Theatre in London") (Zhukovskiy, 1895). Another constant source of literary texts was "Morning Edition for the Educated Classes" («Das Morgenblatt für gebildete Stände») which was issued from 1807 to 1856 and came out up to six times a week with the circulation of two thousand copies, under the guidance of the head of one of the central European publishing houses "Cotta". It was one of the leading print periodicals in Europe in the first half of the 19th century. According to J.F. Cotta "The Morning Edition" represented a type of periodical which was groundbreaking for the beginning of the century: it was a miscellany of poetry, travelogues, memoirs, reviews and articles on art, etc. The magazine published works of many well-known figures of the epoch, therefore the articles were usually signed by the authors themselves. On the pages of "Herald" texts from "Leipzig Literary Newspaper" and "German Public Leaflets" were published; Zhukovsky-editor could not help but pay attention to the popular literary and entertainment magazine «Der Freymüthige, oder Ernst und Scherz» («The Open-minded, or in Jest and in Earnest »), founded in 1803 by Germans G. Merkel and A. Kotzebue, directly related to Russia. These authors' flash fiction used to be included in "Herald" with enviable regularity.

It was due to Zhukovsky’s choice that in 1808 Klopstock and Goethe literally became the "face" of the magazine "Herald of Europe": he placed the portraits of these German classics on the title pages of the 41st and 42nd parts and published eponymously-named articles about them (Zhukovskiy, 1895). However, the most frequent guests of the magazine were German enlighteners and romanticists of the second rank: I. Ya. Engel, a critic and moralist, and J.G. Sultser, a critic. Engel’s renowned "Secular Philosopher" («Der Philosoph für die Welt») gave rise to a series of translations, placed in the after-Karamzin "Herald". In 1807 "Death" (Zhukovskiy, 1895) and "The Cave on the Island Antilaros" (Zhukovskiy, 1895) came out; in 1808 "Waldemar" (Zhukovskiy, 1895) was published; in 1809 Zhukovsky published his two flagship translations of the fragments from "Secular Philosopher" devoted to the profit of criticism and poetry. The year of 1810 was marked by the short story "The Hive".

As far as borrowings from Sultser are concerned, his main work "General Theory of Fine Arts" («Allgemeine Theorie der schönen Künste») and addings to it became the source of the plots to be placed in "Herald". In 1807 and 1811 six translations of selected articles by Sultser were printed, with the clarifications of the amphitheatre and the Gothic taste, of the fine arts and poetry of the ancient, of the satire and topiary art among them (Zhukovskiy, 1895).

When it comes to the modern age, F. Shiller turned to be the most popular celebrity among not merely German but also all European poets of that period. Owing to "Herald", the best translations of the German genius' prose and poetry, which were made by Zhukovsky, saw the light: "The Fierce" came out in 1808; "Cassandra" and "Crying Lyudmila" (originally "Amalia") were first published in 1809; "The Traveler" was showed forth in 1810. The prose writers of the second rank who won a particular popularity were K. F. Moritz (1757-1793) and G. K. Lichtenberg (1742-1799). Zhukovsky, having acquainted with all the published books by the romance-Stunner K.F. Moritz (Poplavskaya, 2008), popular at the beginning of the XIX century, chose to translate his holistic parable and aphoristic fragments of the prose corpus "Whims and Fantasies". These fragments were suitable for periodicals, and he published them in "Herald" in 1808. Regarding the posthumous seven-volume collected works of the famous satirist, a "German Swift" G.K. Lichtenberg (Poplavskaya, 2008), the editor of
"Herald" selected his satirical comments on various prints and caricatures by Hogarth which were fully consistent with the magazine section "Explanation of a Picture": "The Way of the Depraved. Caricature"; "The End of Things. Explanation of Cartoons"; "A Marriage of Convenience (Hogarth’s Caricature)".

Finally, a separate unit of publications in "Herald of Europe" was associated with the ancient Russian history. However, the authors of the monumental work on the daily life and manners of the ancient Slavs and Russian as well as on Russian state system were German researchers G.F. Miller and A.L. Schletser. The first fundamental source studies of Russian chronicles became "Nestor" by Schletser that caused a heated debate at the beginning of the 19th century and then for several decades determined the direction of Russian historiography. Zhukovsky, who was explicitly interested in Russian antiquity due to his own literary experiments, continued the series of articles devoted to the works by Schletser. The main helper for him to continue this work was A.I. Turgenev, supplying him with literature and willingly consulting on investigations of the Gottingen historian. Zhukovsky requested him to send the listings of Schletser's essays, as well as his major works, which he received without any controversy. Besides, he had a personal agreement with Schletser for his works to be printed. Thus, in the third issue of 1808, the publisher placed the translation of Schletser's item under the title "The Look at the Past, Present and Future" and with his own note: "The venerable author of this reasoning, Mr. Schletser, a Moscow professor, known in the scholarly world by some useful classical writings and now engaged in the publication of the Historical Atlas of the Russian Empire, out of his good-fellowship with the publisher promises to continue adorning the papers of "Herald of Europe" with his works "........

3. Conclusion

The German text during the editorship of V.A. Zhukovsky took center stage on the pages of "Herald of Europe", which was due to the general political situation in the world (the “Treaties of Tilsit” between Russia and France) and the individual program of the publisher, who neglected national and patriotic radicalism in favour of the ideals of the European Enlightenment. This can be explained also by the objective cultural and historical reasons: at the beginning of the 19th century Germany became the depositary of advanced scientific and humanitarian ideas and the centre of a new, romantic trend in arts and literature. As a result of this strategy, "Herald of Europe" began to justify its own name. The main body of the texts in the magazine comprised translations from the German press undergoing at the beginning of the century an unprecedented upsurge of various kinds of non-political publications, many of which became information "providers" for “Herald”. Zhukovsky-editor borrowed innovations in the field of literature enthusiastically: more than a dozen popular German authors were placed on the pages of the magazine in his Russian translations. It is safe to assert that "Herald of Europe" in late 1800s became the "forging shop" for the Russian romantic style, specified by Zhukovsky.

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