

EDITORIAL

A poetry magazine published from Salzburg is very likely to be first and foremost associated with Georg Trakl. Some of our readers and contributors may have asked themselves why we have not published more of “Austria’s Kurt Cobain”, an innovative epithet making Trakl a member of the 27 Club, by no means an exclusive constellation of popular musicians who bowed off the stage at the age of 27. Admittedly, we have only published Trakl’s poetry once: in our second year we included half a dozen poems in a translation section focusing on German poetry of the First World War.

It is certainly not for a lack of admiration and appreciation on our part of Trakl’s work; nor is it because of a shortage of submitted translations, that we have not published more of his oeuvre. Quite often translators have singled out our magazine for their translations, because they assumed we would be the logical place for Trakl’s work. However, we decided after a dozen issues that we would only publish poets in translation whose work was hardly known, or not known at all, by English-language readers.

This cannot be said in any sense of Trakl. A poet writing in German is of course even when known to English readers not known in the widest sense. Still Trakl’s work had and has appeared in reputable British magazines; *Adam*, *Agenda* and *Stand* among them. Add to that the fact that in 1968 Jonathan Cape published a notable volume of *Selected Poems* with Trakl rendered into English by a tribe of distinguished poets led by Michael Hamburger and Christopher Middleton. Little happened until the turn of the millennium. But with it came a turn. Five volumes of translation appeared between 2001 and 2012. The English Trakl industry was in full swing.

In Austria, especially in Salzburg, various activities and publications marked the 100th anniversary of Trakl’s death in 2014. Eberhard Sauermaun and Hermann Zwerschina’s work on the historico-critical edition of Trakl’s *Collected Works and Correspondence* (8 volumes) was finally completed with the publication of the last volume. Walter Müller’s monologue *mutter.TRAKL* [mother.TRAKL] was premiered in a theatre in Salzburg. The Salzburg Festival commissioned Walter Kapacher, winner of the 2009 Büchner Prize, to write a play on Trakl en-

titled *Abschied* [Farewell]. The European Commission financed a new Trakl website where visitors can examine and enjoy antiquarian and contemporary visuals of many sites in the town, and read Trakl poems related to these settings. Unfortunately, this website is only available in German. As regards Trakl's reception in the university world two volumes deserve to be mentioned. Hans Weichselbaum, director of the Trakl Centre, revised his biography for the occasion. Rüdiger Görner published his important study *Georg Trakl. Dichter im Jahrzehnt der Extreme* [Poet in the Decade of Extremes], which is – two years after its publication – still not available in English translation. Literary journals too have devoted an issue, or at least a section of it, to Trakl, among them the Salzburg-based *Literatur und Kritik* [Literature and Criticism]. Fourteen artworks by local artist Alexander Steinwendtner, constituting the so-called Trakl 'alley' on the University campus, were unveiled on 3 November 2014, the 100th anniversary of the poet's death.

However, all this was surpassed by the discovery in February this year of a hitherto unknown Trakl poem, written in 1911. A volume of Hölderlin's poetry, published in 1905, contained not only Trakl's bookplate but also, in the poet's own handwriting, a poem inscribed to Hölderlin. As the poet has apparently not made any corrections, usually a regular characteristic of Trakl manuscripts, critics are agreed that the text represents the final version confirmed by the poet.

When I informed David Malcolm about the unknown Trakl poem, he was immediately interested in doing a joint translation. Below is our final version which, we hope, our readers will enjoy. As far as we know, this is the first publication of the poem in English translation:

Hölderlin

The woods lie wide in autumn's showing.
The winds rest to hold off their waking.
Shy game its peaceful sleep is taking,
While the stream so quietly is flowing.

So was a noble head bedarkened,
In all his beauty, gleaming, tearful,
By madness that a whisper – fearful,
Pious – through evening's grasses beckoned.

Wolfgang Görtschacher