THE EVALUATION OF ANTONIO MACHADO’S PERSONALITY AND CREATIVE ART IN XX CENTURY RUSSIA

Оценка личности и творчества Антонио Мачадо в России XX века

Yulia A. Grunina
grunina-yua@rudn.ru
Peoples’ Friendship University of Russia (RUDN University) (Moscow, Russia)

Galina A. Khimich
khimich-ga@rudn.ru
Peoples’ Friendship University of Russia (RUDN University) (Moscow, Russia)

Ekaterina Dm. Terentieva
terentyeva-ed@rudn.ru
Peoples’ Friendship University of Russia (RUDN University) (Moscow, Russia)

абстракт

The aim of this research is to analyze the changes in perception of Antonio Machado’s works in Russian translation at various points of the XX century. To achieve that we reviewed a number of Soviet literary criticisms examining distinct aspects of Machado’s work. The current research is undertaken with the use of biographical, descriptive and cultural-historical methods. This allows us to trace how ideological shifts initiated by the USSR to conduct its cultural policy had an impact on the work of translators and literary critics, attempting to convey the creative explorations of foreign authors to the Soviet audience. The conducted analysis demonstrates how severe political restrictions have impeded the acknowledgement of the poet’s true contribution to the Spanish and world cultures. However, thanks the efforts of literary critics and translators Machado’s creative works have become part of the Russian culture.

Keywords: Antonio Machado, the XX-century Russia, poetic translation, literary criticism
РЕЗЮМЕ

Цель данной работы – проанализировать изменения представления о творчестве Антонио Мачадо на разных этапах перевода его произведений на русский язык в XX веке. Для этого рассматривается ряд критических литературохудожественных работ советского периода, посвященных различным аспектам творчества Мачадо. В работе были использованы биографический, описательный и культурно-исторический метод. Подробное исследование позволяет проследить как под влиянием изменений в идеологических установках, с помощью которых государственная власть пыталась проводить в СССР свою политику в сфере культуры, менялись возможности переводчиков и литературоведов донести до читателя подлинный облик и всю глубину творческих исканий тех или иных зарубежных авторов. Проведенный анализ убедительно демонстрирует негативное влияние жестких политических ограничений на понимание реального вклада поэта в испанскую и мировую культуру. Благодаря усилиям литературных критиков и переводчиков творчество Мачадо стало частью русской культуры.

Ключевые слова: Антонио Мачадо, Россия XX века, поэтический перевод, литературоведение

1. INTRODUCTION

We would like to remind readers that whenever they feel touched by a poem or whenever it triggers reflection or delight, they owe this both to the Spanish poet and to his "partner", the translator. It is the translator who worked a miracle; they transported the complex and delicate "tree" of the Spanish poem to the foreign soil of the Russian language and Russian versification. They made it with such love and patience that it did not wither, as it often happens, but spread its roots, bloomed, bore fruit, and became a "phenomenon of the Russian poetry" without losing its national identity and natural beauty (Столбов 1983: 18).

Such are the words of Valeriy Stolbов, an outstanding Russian translator of Antonio Machado’s works. The above excerpt is found in the foreword to the anthology of Spanish poetry "Land and Song". When translated into a different culture, in many ways, the works of any author can be charged with new meanings. This is influenced by multiple factors: the quality of the translation, acute knowledge of common themes and methods, socio-political and cultural contexts of the two countries, and even compatibility of ideological positions in different regimes.

It should be noted that, unfortunately, Spanish literature in Russia has not become widely recognized and widespread as, for example, American or French literature. However, Russian writers have always been attracted to the Spanish literature owing to its deep spiritual and moral principles, firm connection with the national culture, its philosophical value, and a high level of artistic skill. It is the Spanish literature that gave the world such timeless images of Don Quixote and Don Juan. These and many other were integrated in the works of Russian writers (for example, "The Stone Guest" by Pushkin and Prince Myshkin from the novel by Dostoevsky).

It is difficult to pinpoint whether Antonio Machado saw fame and recognition in Russia. On the one hand, the Spanish poet was fortunate with translators. His works were brought to the Russian readers by renowned masters of literary translation. On the other hand, Machado’s poetry and prose were published with lesser frequency and not to the extent they deserved. Furthermore, Machado’s texts often suffered due to ideological interference and fragmentation, which of course distorted the image of the poet amongst Russian readers of the twentieth century.
In the present work we shall attempt to shed light onto the subject of Antonio Machado’s publications in XX century Russia. In addition, this study aims to analyse XX century Russian literary works devoted to various aspects of Machado’s oeuvre, publications in the Russian periodicals related to his name. To identify the main stages of Machado's works in Russia, all his works are analysed and referenced in chronological order. The main purpose of this study is to reveal the image of the Spanish poet, which was formed in the minds of the Russian readers of the XX century. The current research relies upon the biographical, descriptive and cultural-historical methods.

2. THE FIRST RUSSIAN TRANSLATIONS OF MACHADO’S WORK

2.1. Machado in translation during 1920s – 1950s

The first mentioning of Antonio Machado in the Soviet periodicals is seen long before his own publications. In 1929 the Leningrad publishing house "Krasnaya Gazeta" published a small book titled "Literature of Spain and Spanish America, 1898–1929", which referenced Machado’s name (Выгодский 1929). In 1934 his name was included in the Literary Encyclopaedia (Выгодский 1934), and in 1938 the article about Machado was included in the Great Soviet Encyclopaedia (Шмидт 1938: 832).

The first poems by Machado “La voz de España” (“The Voice of Spain”) ("Russia, noble Russia ...") and "Valencia" ("Clear is the face of heaven") translated by F. Kelyin were brought to the attention of the Russian readers in 1938 in the magazine "Internatsionnalnaya Literatura" (Мачадо 1938). Then publications of Machado's poetry in the periodical press and in poetical anthologies appeared with increased frequency. However, considering the time of the Spanish poet's first appearance and the socio-political context of that period in Russia, the principle upon which his poems were selected for publication is evident – it was the civil lyric poetry of Machado.

From 1936 onwards one would constantly take notice of Machado's name on the pages discussing the events in Spain. The reader would be informed of the poet's commitment to his people, about "fighting with his pen" in the name of victory. The latest lifetime publication of Machado's works in Russia was a passage from his letter saying: "It is better to be at war than in shameful peace" (Мачадо 1939: 216-217).

The death of Machado (on February 22, 1939) stirred evident public reaction in the Soviet press. Not two days after the poet's death, an obituary by Ilya Ehrenburg was published. The latter was in Spain at the time as a war correspondent working for the "Izvestia" newspaper: "He wasn't a moralist. He was a poet and he was truly Spanish – a true fighter... Even the dry sierra of Castile would spring up with flowers as he looked onto it. The generations to come will hold onto Machado's poems, pure as water. Friends won't forget this man – his youthful smile, his bright eyes. He lived a resounding life and died on the march" (Эренбург 1939: 1).

A year after the death of Machado, an article by "Internatsionnalnaya Literatura" written by Latin American writer Juan Marinello and translated by N. Lyubimov saw publication. In the article the author recalled his meeting with Antonio Machado, who then lived in "wounded Valencia" in a small room in a guesthouse with a meaningful
name "Amparo". Back then Machado embodied "the best that Spain had to offer at the time". "This unending pilgrimage, says the author of the article, the worship of wise people has an Eastern character about it" (Маринельо 1940: 219). Don Antonio had words of kindness and wisdom for everyone.

Antonio Machado was also visited by Soviet writers, translators, and journalists. The memories of these meetings would go on to make the most exciting pages in the books by O. Savich, I. Ehrenburg, F.V. Kelyin and others.

2.2. The analysis of A. Machado's creative work in 1950s USSR

Over the years the interest in Machado's works among Russian readers did not fade, but rather grew stronger. This is proven by the fact that none of the memorable dates associated with Machado had been left unnoticed: in 1954, fifteen years after the poet's death, a literary evening was held in his memory. The second edition of the great Soviet Encyclopaedia was published the same year and again included the article about Machado (Введенский 1954: 554). Twenty years after the poet’s passing, several literary evenings were held in 1959. One of those evenings took place in the All-Union State Library of Foreign Literature. An "Address to All People of Goodwill" was published the same year titled "In Memory of Antonio Machado" and translated into Russian. The speech was made by prominent Spanish cultural figures, who called upon writers and artists to dedicate one of their works to Machado: "The extraordinary power of poems by Antonio Machado, their deep humaneness is the result of a connection between the poet and people, their suffering and aspirations", the speech indicates, "to pay tribute to the memory of the poet means paying tribute to the Spanish people" (Памяти Антонио Мачадо 1959: 278).

1958 was significant for Machado's recognition in Russia as a poet. In 1958, a year before the 20th anniversary of the poet's passing, the "Khudozhestvennaya Literatura" publishing house issued Antonio Machado's "Selected Poems" – the poet’s first book in Russia (compiled and edited by A. Golemba). The book includes poems from his anthologies "Soledades" ("Solitudes"), "Campos de Castilla" ("Fields of Castile"), "Nuevas Canciones" ("New Songs") and "Poesias de Guerra" ("Poems of War") (Мачадо 1958).

In a short preface by César Arconada who called himself "the disciple of Machado" the readers are presented with a rather elusive image of the poet and his works. Considering the date of the publication, a modern reader needs not question why Machado is presented as a poet whose "ideals were not brought to life in small provincial towns, where there was no proletariat" (Арконада 1958: 5). In addition, the author of the preface did not evade such clichés as, for instance: "The poet's activities in defence of the Republic and democracy had won him a huge sympathy among the masses" (Арконада 1958: 5). Finally, the author of the introductory article spoke quite negatively of the early poetic collections by Machado, and described them as "individualistic riot, sarcasm, escape to nature and solitude" (Арконада 1958: 6).

Despite the limited nature of the author’s view in the foreword, "Selected Poems" was an important milestone for the Spanish poet in Russia since it allowed the reader to become familiar with Machado's early works and have some, if a bit flawed, understanding
of his poetic path. As was rightly noted by scholars thereafter (Тертерян 1973: 311), in having read the above collection of poems one would be left with a curtailed idea of who Machado was. The collection did not include his latest philosophical and lyrical works. Sadly, those works are a long way from reaching the Russian readers.

In 1964, twenty-five years after Machado’s death, a new wave of publications followed. Special mention should be made of the article by L. Ospovat "Antonio the Kind", published the same year in "Inostrannaya Literatura" in the "Calendar of Foreign Literature" column (Осповат 1964).

Here we consider it possible to make the first conclusions regarding the image of the poet that was formed in the minds of the Soviet readers by that time. The first “portrait” of Machado was made by critic D. Vygodskiy in the Literary Encyclopaedia: "Machado is a typical representative of the petty bourgeoisie which in the face of oncoming capitalism seeks to escape into a world of self-analysis and is struggling to find resolution to the contradictions of modern realities" (Выгодский 1934: 43-44). Complete disregard of the poet’s peculiarity and instead – a generalization. However, in 1954, the Soviet Encyclopaedia states the opposite about the same poet: "The collection of poems by Machado "Campos de Castilla" ("Fields of Castile") (1912) is filled with love to the native land and painful reflection on the fate of the Spanish people" (Введенский 1954: 554). The perspective on the poet in the newspaper articles flush with political ideology experienced a shift. So did the attitude of critics.

The true face of Antonio Machado had little to do with what was presented to the Soviet readers. Thus, in the wake of the war in Spain followed by Franco's dictatorship Machado was presented as a flamboyant Republican. Machado's speech at the Congress in support of culture: "To write for the people!" (Мачадо 1958: 206) was interpreted in the spirit of Soviet ideology and turned into a slogan. The collection of poems titled "Poesias de Guerra" ("Poems of War") was seen as the pinnacle of Machado's poetry in the USSR.

The poet's name itself became a sort of catchphrase, and the Spanish people’s love for Machado was explained solely through his position during the civil war, rather than the scale of his talent.

3. THE SHIFT IN APPROACH TO DESCRIBING A. MACHADO'S WORK IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE XX CENTURY

3.1. Mid-1960s – 1970s publications

The first scholar to analyse Machado’s creative journey was V. Grigoriev. He authored three works about Antonio Machado: an article on the epic poem "Alvargonzalez Land" in the "Leningrad University Herald" (1966), and two books: "Work of Antonio Machado, 1936–1939" (1967) and "Antonio Machado (1875–1939)" (1971).

"Antonio Machado, 1936–1939" as a scholarly work is a striking example of the selective attitude to the literary heritage of the poet. This book covers Machado's works during the war years. Although it was published at the end of the 1960s with censorship subsiding in intensity, the study is ripe with proclamatory stamps and statements.
The second collection of poems by Antonio Machado titled "Selected Lyrics" was released in 1969 as part of the "Selected Foreign Lyrics" series. Whilst the 1958 book depicts Machado as a poet of the “masses”, the above book introduces a more genuine image of him. In it Mark Samaev, the author of the foreword, distinguished the poet’s fine landscape lyricism, which he compared to that of Pushkin’s (Самаев 1969: 3).

Mark Samaev explains the mystery of the irresistible impact Machado's poetry has on readers primarily through indicating "its astonishing spirituality" (Самаев 1969: 3). Furthermore, for the first time the readers were presented with a brief analysis of the Machado’s poetical form. The verses are "so accurate and harmonious, they almost go unnoticed; "the poems seem to glow in a soft and mysterious light and are full of peculiar musicality, inseparable from their meaning" (Самаев 1969: 7) (Samaev was the first to discuss Machado's poetic form).

Translations for this book were completed by Pavel Grushko and Mark Samaev. Though in the foreword the translator noted that Machado is one of those poets who, "when brought over to the foreign soil, lose much of their original beauty (Самаев 1969: 7), the translations still greatly helped uncover the true image of the poet."

The same year Inna Terteryan published her first work about Machado. She would go on to become one of the most prominent scholars of Machado's poetry. That above article titled "Philosophical and Psychological Interpretation of the Image of Don Quixote and the Battle of Ideas in the 20th-Century Spain", first raised the issue of philosophical motives in Machado's works, focusing on the prosaic aspect of his heritage (Тертерян 1969).

A book titled "Antonio Machado (1875–1939)" by V. Grigoriev was released in 1971. The author studied the poet's entire creative journey and presented a detailed account of his biography, the first of its kind. Emphasis was put on discovering the social implications of Machado’s work.

A year after the publication of the abovementioned work a book written by Inna Tynyanova “The Wind of People's Struggle. The Story of Spanish Poetry” (1972) was released. In it the author pays her personal tribute to Machado. The translator writes words of reverence and affection about the Spanish poet: “How much warmth Antonio Machado found in his soul to describe that cold and inclement region! No matter where he was, in Seville, Madrid, Valencia, the songs of the mountain region which he loved so much sounded ever so fresh and novel” (Тынянова 1972: 99).

The book written by Tynyanova reveals her personal image of Machado. For her Machado was a sad knight, the "pupil of the Nightingale" who invited music in his verses like no other poet did (Тынянова 1972: 95).

In 1973, Inna Terteryan publishes "The Test of History. Essays on the Spanish Literature of the Twentieth Century" and analyses the poet’s journey in a separate chapter called “Antonio Machado”. While her position remained unchanged, she examined the poet from the philosophical and aesthetic points of view.

Great importance was attributed to his early works. Terteryan sees no erroneous view of the world in Machado’s early poetry – it was not something for the poet to overcome, but rather the source of the entire poetic system; she studies in detail the early stages of the poet's imagery and symbols, their further transformation and the poetic themes which remained steadfast throughout his life as a poet. Still, their semantic field was expanding in no small measure due to historical and philosophical
associations, proving thereby the integrity of Machado's poetics. In her study Terteryan tried to expand, unravel and shed light on the new meanings of Machado's poetics. The merit of I. Terteryan is in revealing the profound psychological aspect of Machado's poetry, especially in his early poems. According to Terteryan, the underlying concept for "Solitudes" was psychological insight, whereas for "Fields of Castile" it was historicism (Тертерян 1973: 321). Terteryan sees a "special poetic gift of reaching into history" in the ability to create deep "historical formulas" that make lines more powerful than any historical treatise (Тертерян 1973: 320).

It can be concluded that the "Antonio Machado" chapter written by I. Terteryan in 1973 became the first study to set ajar the depths of Machado's poetry.

3.2. "Selected Works" (1975), "Spanish Poets of the twentieth century" anthology (1977) and "Land and Song" (1983)

1975 was a major milestone for Machado as a recognized poet in Russia. To this day, the most conclusive "Selected Works" collection published by the "Khudozhestvennaya Literatura" publishing house was released that year in honour of Antonio Machado 100th birthday. This collection included poetry and prose that had been previously unpublished. Several books mentioning Antonio Machado also see the light of day: a book by V. Kuleshova “Spain and the USSR” (1975); the collection of articles, essays and short stories by O. Savich "Two Years in Spain. 1937–1939" (1961) was reissued.

The final book by Antonio Machado to be published in our country in the XX century was "The Selected Works" published in 1975 (Russian literature expert Valeriy Stolbov was the author of the foreword and the translator for parts of the book. He was also the one to initiate its publication) allowed readers to look if not at the comprehensive portrait of Antonio Machado then at least at what the sketches to the portrait would look like. The book contains poems from all collections ("Solitudes ...", "Fields of Castile", "New Songs", "Apocryphal Songbook of Abel Martin", "War Poems"); some of his prose works were published in Russian for the first time, including essays, fragments of speeches, as well as articles on the writer's contemporaries: Juan Ramon Jimenez, Pio Baroja, Miguel de Unamuno, Valle-Inclán (Мачадо 1975).

The foreword "Sketch" written by Valeriy Stolbov word by word and phrase by phrase managed to unravel the soul of the Spanish poet. Ease and simplicity of presentation by Stolbov is combined with deep knowledge. "Sketch" by Stolbov, in our view, is the most complete and detailed study of Machado's works in the XX century.

Two years after the release of the "Selected Works", the "Spanish Poets of the twentieth century" poetic anthology was published as part of the "World Literature Library" series. The above collection also includes poems by Juan Ramón Jiménez, Federico García Lorca, Rafael Alberti and Miguel Hernández. Some poems were not previously published in Russian, while some were retranslated for better clarity and impact.

Another work by I. Terteryan is a foreword to an anthology written together with L. Ospovat. In the foreword titled "Five Spanish Poets" the authors give a comparative analysis of the creative journeys and poetic views of two contemporaries – Antonio Machado and Juan Ramón Jiménez (Terteryan wrote the part about Machado, and Ospovat wrote about Jiménez) (Тертерян, Осповат 1977).
"Land and Song" compiled by V. Stolbov was published in 1983. Poems by Machado and by his renowned contemporaries were included in this collection, honouring the Spanish poetry of the XX century and its origins – folklore and poetry of the Golden Age. Poems are outlined in an unusual way: not chronologically, but rather by themes – childhood, folklore, poetry, etc. (Земля и песня 1983).

3.3. Publications of A. Machado's prosaic works

It is also important to consider Machado's prose within the Russian context. Prosaic heritage of Antonio Machado includes his book "Juan de Mairena", as well as essays, articles, notes, most of which Machado dedicated to discussing ethics and aesthetics, creativity, the essence of art, where he expressed his philosophical views, and shared his thoughts on the fate of the country.

Before 1971 the prose written by Machado was quite poorly represented in Russia. Most of what was available were the publications of his speeches and statements. In essence, Machado’s prose was simply not translated and not studied in Russia prior to 1971. Then the magazine "Voprosy literatury" published a collection of fragments from the book "Juan de Mairena" under the heading "Revelations of the Kind Sage", compiled and translated by I. Tynyanova (Тынянова 1971). These publications became a true revelation to the Russian readers.

Tynyanova’s selection of articles includes: "The poetic art of Juan de Mairena", "Dialogue about the "song machine"", "Juan de Mairena instructs his students", "Recordings and speeches of Juan de Mairena". In the preface to the above work, I. Tynyanova informs the reader of Mairena's biography, presents the main topics of the discussions with his students, including topics of philosophical, social, political, moral, literary and human essences.

Translations by I. Tynyanova were the first step to revealing Machado as a prosaic writer. The next and fundamental step in this area was the works by V. Stolbov. The already mentioned book published in 1975 included most of Machado's prose as translated by Stolbov. Of the forty-seven chapters of the first pre-war publication of "Juan de Mairena" (two chapters – the seventh and sixteenth – reproduced in full) and excerpts from fifteen chapters of his later prosaic works. The "Selected Works" also included some of the following articles: preface to "Solitudes" and "Fields of Castile", the "Nature and Art" essay, "Criticism", "Additions", "Children in the Cathedral", "Poetics", notes on his contemporaries, war prose translated by Stolbov; "From the Letter to Juan Ramón Jiménez", "On Education", "Draft of the opening speech to the Academy" translated by N. Malinovskaya (Мачадо 1975).

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of notes, essays and literary studies on the works of Antonio Machado published in Russia in the XX we can conclude that there were two stages of Machado's "creative journey" in Russia.
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The chronological timeframes are vague but can be roughly identified as follows: the first stage is set between the 1930s (formally – 1929 onwards – after the first publication was made) and the end of the 1960s; the second stage lasted between the late 1960s through to the end of the XX century.

The first stage relates to the idea of Machado being exclusively a poet-Republican, an anti-fascist who "fought with his pen" on the frontlines of the national liberation war. During this period Machado's works were thought to be propaganda influencing people's minds. That along with the processes of Soviet censorship and propaganda explains the selective attitude to his works in terms of publications in press. It is not surprising that the studies have taken the form of small newspaper publications with strong political nature. Very few truly thorough studies of Machado's works were made during that period.

Although ideological oppression subsided at the beginning of the 1960s, Machado's works still received the same proclamatory treatment as before.

However, the view on Machado's figure was slowly changing in the late 1960s – early 70s. New studies were emerging that were no longer limited to a brief overview. The approach to Machado’s personality changed. The researchers were attracted to the philosophical side of his works which implies a serious approach to the study.

Between 1958 and 1975, a large span of time, Machado’s books experienced a major shift in character and quality of translation.

Thus, the true image of the Spanish poet was gradually revealed to the Russian-speaking readers with this process lasting for several decades. The complete heritage of Antonio Machado has not yet reached the Russian readers. However, thanks to the efforts of literary critics and translators alike, Machado became accessible to the Russian speakers and found its readers in a country whose people and culture he highly respected. Translators and researchers of Antonio Machado's works made the poet a part of Russian literature, which Machado himself perceived as special for its spirituality and humaneness. "The sympathy for the suffering of the entire humanity – that is the ethical core of the Russian literature", Machado said (1949: 283) in his lecture on Russian literature on April 6, 1922 in Segovia.

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