

Preface

One of the uncanny effects of the Internet is making references to the time and place of composition of casual postings, such as this preface, irrelevant. However, in this case, one of the *Delos* editors happens to have spent in Germany the entire month of January 2021, including Wednesday the 20th, the extraordinary and memorable inauguration ceremony for Joe Biden and Kamala Harris, the new president and vice president of the United States. There are certain elements of that ceremony resonant and relevant to the Spring 2021 issue of this translation journal, which showcases poetry from France and Portugal, Holland and Israel, Peru and China: this inauguration revives a tradition of poetry recitation going back to the first and perhaps most celebrated performance by Robert Frost spontaneously paraphrasing one of his dedicatory poems at the inauguration of John F. Kennedy, January 20, 1961, in which he alludes to American exceptionalism with the futuristic concluding reference to the nation “such as she will become.”

Reflecting the extraordinary speed of the Internet, in turn, was the instantaneous availability in Germany of the German translation, “Der Hügel, den wir erklimmen“ (The hill we conquer), in addition to the source text in English by the young poet laureate, Amanda Gorman performing her poem “The Hill We Climb.“ Noteworthy in this incantatory translation is the verb “erklimmen“ in the title, selected by the anonymous, but no doubt officially sanctioned translator, from a more poetic register, instead of the common and denotative “steigen“ or “besteigen.“ The mountaineering term “erklimmen“ is an echo of the well-known traditional German Volkslied “Wenn wir erklimmen . . .“ (When we conquer . . .), also known as the “Bergvagabundenlied“ (mountain-vagabond climbing song); this song is replete with references to Edelweiss, snow-covered mountain peaks and life-risking Alpine rock-climbing. The prestigious publisher Hoffmann und Campe in Hamburg has already announced it will publish the works of Amanda Gorman in Germany.

In this Spring 2021 issue of *Delos*, we are introducing a new content item category, an additional invitation for submissions. We call it our Forum. We envision a new interactive, open, and perhaps free-wheeling category of contributions, in addition to our traditional segments: letters-to-the-editors,

follow-up discussions, and supplemental information, and other communications in the field of literary translation. To begin, we have Stanley Corngold's translator memoir (a category which our colleague Sylvie Blum, professor of French studies at the University of Florida and sometime *Delos* contributor, has recently alerted us to), a poem on translation by Al Shoaf, and a fascinating experiment in translation of a modern song to the language of the Troubadours. Submissions suitable for Forum of such items for online or hard-copy publication in *Delos* should be sent directly to one of the three executive editors, Alexander Burak, Hal Rennert or Judy Shoaf.

Another first for *Delos* on our watch is the first article in this issue, an interview with the celebrated translator of Elena Ferrante's novels, Ann Goldstein. On the other hand, we welcome back Patricia Worth with another translation from Marcel Aymé, as delightful as her version of "The Wolf" (*Delos* Fall 2018). Short fiction from Norwegian and Turkish provide glimpses of a literary language emerging in Scandinavia and popular (feminine) voices just after the end of the Ottoman Empire.

A note on the images in this issue: inspired by the ekphrastic poetry of Jules Breton and Eduardo Chirinos (translated for us by Sharon Fish Mooney and Gary Racz), we have chosen images which echo, though they do not illustrate, some of our contributions.

Hal H. Rennert
Judy Shoaf
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