



## Echo of the work of Heinrich Heine outside Germany

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### Abstract

From the time he was alive, Heinrich Heine became famous in many countries outside Germany. In these countries, relatively early and quite different from what was happening in his homeland, the position he had secured in the field of national literature, and later in the field of world literature, was called indisputable. Heine's work began to be translated, interpreted and commented, to be admired and imitated more and more, becoming, within a short time, amongst the best of the world's poets. His reception and influence on poets of other countries has been researched and proven through countless scientific studies. Even today, his influence continues to be researched everywhere, both in the past and in the present, and Heine himself is valued and honoured as a great German poet. This paper deals with the echo of the work of Heinrich Heine outside Germany. According to the well-known German researcher Wandel, among the Anglo-Saxons and amongst Americans, as well as among Slavic and Scandinavian people, Heine is valued, and not just Goethe or Schiller, as a powerful representative of German culture. His influence extends even wider and deeper into European-Latin countries, especially in France, where his spirit is just as alive as it is in Germany.

*Keywords:* H. Heine; echo; poet; influence; translated; literature

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## 1. Introduction

As the German scholar Wandel points out, Heine, in his own brilliance, has added glory to Germany, and all over the world, people first think of Heinrich Heine when mentioning German literature (Wandel, 1916). In this regard, Wandel adds that among the Anglo-Saxons and amongst Americans, as well as among Slavic and Scandinavian people, Heine is valued, and not just Goethe or Schiller, as a powerful representative of German culture. His influence extends even wider and deeper into European-Latin countries, especially in France, where his spirit is just as alive as it is in Germany.

The German philologist Hyfer points out in a study of his own that in the outside world there is an unreserved admiration for Heine, unlike what has happened to him during different eras in his homeland. According to this researcher, the reasons for this should not be sought only in the fact that in these places the nature of the poet was less known and that the best ones were known from his works, but, first of all, that in these places Heine was seen more objectively, away from nationalist

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passions, that is, unlike what is seen in Germany, and that his works have been regarded by progressive literary currents as the works of a comrade-in-arms.

Heinrich Heine has been and continues to be especially well-known and appreciated in France. When he arrived in Paris in May 1831, he was immediately greeted by the Parisian press as "*défenseur de la cause du progrès et des intérêts populaires*", thus, as a comrade-in-arms in the pursuit of social progress (Beutin, Ehlert, Emmerich, Hoffacker, Lutz, Meid, Schnell, Stein und Stephen, 1994). He was also regarded as a genuine representative of innovative German literature. Since then, they have been incessantly referring to Heine in France, as "*cet Allemand presque français*".

## 2. Methodology

Before beginning to analyze the Echo of H. Heine literary work outside of Germany from different perspective we want to present some fundamental arguments and relations between different countries. For the many literature researchers sometimes methods and theories are confused, however there are many methods and theories that some of them we can adopt. In this paper we have tried to present the Echo of Heine's through different processes, as interlingual, intercultural and cross-cultural communication. Our research methodology and the realization of this study is based on several forms and methods, for example intra- and multi- disciplinary, chronological and historical, biographical, philological, comparativ, inductive, deductive, etc., in this perspective this study can be relevant and as good alternative.

## 3. Results and Discussion

### 3.1. H. Heine in France

In France he first became known and famous as a prose writer, because his poetic creativity was only later conveyed to the French public through good translations. Then Heine was mentioned almost entirely as a poet and admired, along with "*Lyrical Intermexos*", which was considered his most characteristic piece of work, as well as "*The Book of Songs*", "*Ata Trolin*" and "*Romanseron*".

But in the meantime, it became increasingly clear that Heine was seen, in a very one-sided way, only as a poet, although it must be admitted – as the scholars point out – that, as such, he exerted a considerable influence on French literature, even to Éluard and Giraud, and that in the cultured strata of the French people his most outstanding creativity in the field of lyrical poetry was especially admired (Calvié, 2006). In this country, from an early age they recognised the importance of Heine in world literature, comparing the German poet with Byron, Rable, Dante, Voltaire, Goethe and Schiller. On the question of how Heine is viewed today in France, what his place is in French culture and in the consciousness of the French people, critics point out that he is considered one of the most popular and well-known German poets.

Along with Goethe, he is the most widely read German lyric poet and has long been called a "classical" poet. Every French student knows his poem "*Grenadiers*"; in high school reading books students are introduced to his other poems and parts of his prose work "*Travel pictures*", especially from the book "*Drummer Le Gran Germany (Gaál-Gyulay, 1837)*".

Several scientific studies on his life and literary work, translations of his works, and popular scientific biographies have been published in recent decades. The French critic Garnie writes, among other things, that "this France, which had been his refuge, added to the glory which he had known in his youth, and which, after his death, was strictly denied to him in Germany (*Briegleb, (1969)*)."

However, the portrait of Heine is not always sketched fairly. Thus, to this day there are still attempts to present him in a distorted light as a "decadent Baudelaire poet", as a "forerunner of French symbolism" and as a poet of melancholic-sentimental songs. But, in addition to these assessments, which were more or less one-sided, since the beginning of the twentieth century, French studies of Heine have contained a current that strove for a more objective and comprehensive assessment.

This progressive current of French scholars aims to make an assessment on Heine, which values this poet much more as a combative personality, and sees all his outstanding abilities in its active embodiment in harsh and imposed controversies. This current pays more attention than before to his political works, because it is in them that Heine emerges as a human mediator between Germany and France, as a representative of a better and more democratic Germany. "Paris is effectually the centre of Europe, and a residence in it is the best training an American can have, previously to visiting the other parts of that quarter of the world. Its civilisation, usages, and facilities the edge off our provincial administration, remove prejudices, and prepare the mind to receive new impressions, with more discrimination and tact.

I would advise all our travellers to make this their first stage, and then to visit the North of Europa, before crossing the Alps, or the Pyrenees. (E. Von Gaál-Gyulay, 1837)" Thus, these scholars emphasize the poem "*Germany. A Winter's Tale*", calling it "a masterpiece of a revolutionary poet", as an important work, where Heine wanted to give the example of fearless poetic creativity to all the discouraged progressive poets of his time, where he, with full belief in social progress, calls on compatriots to walk the path of democracy. In this regard, a French scholar of this progressive stream writes: "Heine has convincingly shown that political poetry has two degrees, the degree of enthusiasm and the degree of ardent or prophetic zeal, that is, the degree of satire and the degree of powerful or derisive controversy (Kortstadt, 1974).

However, he has consistently believed in the fact that he was a good soldier of the only war that mattered to him, of the war for freedom (Kruse, 2006)." Another French scholar of this progressive tendency sees in Heine, amongst others, the great example of a sincere, courageous and optimistic man and artist, a selfless fighter and far-sighted political writer, who warned the French about the danger of German expansionist militarism and who recognised very early on the importance of social problems.

### 3.2. *Heine in G. Britain and USA*

Heinrich Heine has long been regarded as a great German poet of world importance, both in Great Britain and in the United States. Starting in the 1930s in these countries, they began to deal, to an increasing extent, with Heine's literary creativity (Neuhaus, 2020). Although English bourgeois-conservative critics judged him on the basis of religious conviction and at first dismissed him as a friend of French revolutionaries, the English nevertheless soon noted his poetic mastery, "*his talent as a poet and his brilliance as a wit*", as the critic Sol Lipzin writes in his study entitled "*The English Legend of Heinrich Heine*", acknowledging, even in the most conservative circles, his importance as a social and political reformer (Hink, 1990).

In addition, as early as the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, the English began to refer to Heine as the greatest German lyricist after Goethe and as a "German Voltaire" (Stackelberg, 2007). Particularly highly rated are "*Book of Songs*", "*Drummer Le Gran*" and "*Journey to Harc*", where they saw "the classic embodiment of pleasure from travel". In the United States, where Heine was met with less intensity, he soon began to be seen as an important mediator of culture and knowledge between Germany and the United States. The complete collection of Heine's works was first published in 1855-1856 in Philadelphia.

In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, under the influence of his ardent admirers, Heine was called in Great Britain "Aristophanes the German, perfectionist of Goethe, equal to Virgil, Dante and Shakespeare." In that country, Heine was admired not only as a lyrical genius and brilliant prose writer, but also as the "revolutionary democrat who wanted to defend human rights, awaken Germany from its political lethargy and show the way to democracy. (Neuhaus, 2020)".

At the crossroads between the two centuries, another feature of the image of Heine appears in Britain: they began to see him, without underestimating his poetic superiority, especially for being "the first-line literary fighter for democracy around the world. (Neuhaus, 2020)." During World War I, the British often recalled his progressive political stance, "his devotion to the cause of freedom, his struggle against German tyranny, his campaign against oppression and exploitation in every country in the world."

In the post-war years, other translations and especially many new biographies of Heine were published in Great Britain, some of which became best-selling books. As noted by local critics, these works provide an opportunity to understand the serious effort made to see Heine in a fair, objective and comprehensive manner, in his entirety as a world-class poet and as a literary and political innovator. In the time of fascism and especially during the Second World War, English literary scholars constantly defended Heine against anti-Semitic attacks of fascism and honored him as the worthy representative of the real Germany, of a better and more democratic Germany.

Related to this, it is worth mentioning an article by a Member of Parliament in the Lower House of Great Britain, that was published on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 1944 in the *New York Times*, where the author calls Heine a "true prophet" and "the best of all German poets", and points out the dangerous aims of German fascism and nationalism. Today in Great Britain and the USA, the former objective path in the study of the life and work of Heinrich Heine continues. In this study the emphasis is always on the actuality of this poet, because, as the critics point out, his influence is still remarkable, since he, as a "great critic and social thinker", has known how to deal with the freedom-loving efforts of humanity in a historical and dialectical way.

Such tendencies are also observed today in other Western European countries, for example, in Italy, the Netherlands, the Scandinavian countries and Switzerland, where they also refer to Heine as "the most influential representative of German literature" and as the "greatest artist with indelible individual traits" (Pelloni, 2007).

### 3.3. *Heine in Scandinavian countries*

In Scandinavian countries, Heinrich Heine had exercised an uninterrupted literary influence during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In Denmark, where he has always been placed alongside Goethe and compared to him, he has been called a typical representative of modernity in literature, without forgetting in this case his political importance (Brandes, 2018). Especially under the influence of the Danish philosopher and critic Georg Brandes, Heine was regarded as a political and progressive poet (Brandes, 2018).

The domestic political development on the path to liberalisation in some Scandinavian countries has kept alive the interest in Heines' literary creativity even later on. There are also worldview differences, but the fundamental tendency for an objective and positive assessment, the obvious goal of understanding the German poet as a living force, remain crucial. This becomes apparent particularly in the recognition given to Heine by the progressive scholar and Swedish translator Ture Nermans, who, in the preface to a successful three-volume publication of this poet's work, strongly emphasises the political actuality of his literary creativity. In this respect, he writes: "Politically, maybe only now

Heine is really current in his satire. He was the first modern poet in world literature, the first great poet of the bourgeois era and the first sensible exponent of his time."

### 3.4. *Heine in Russia*

Towards the end of the 1920s and the beginning of the 1930s, the works of Heinrich Heine began to enter Russia, which found its readers, first of all, in the ranks of the new progressive intelligence. The latter are enthusiastic about the popular and innovative spirit of his lyrical poetry, admiring in him the shrewd mastery of language and the ardent defender of freedom.

As a matter of fact, the new Russian intelligentsia, as critics point out, immediately grasped Heine across the range of his poetic personality. According to Russian literary critics, Pushkin not only highly valued Heine's poetic work "*The Book of Songs*", but he read with great pleasure, in a French edition, the prose work "*Travel pictures*", and had expressed his special sympathy for the poem "*Germany. A winter tale*" (Windfuhr, 1976).

In the 1930s and 1940s, Heine's works were at the center of the war taking place in Russia between progress and reaction. Russian censorship began to ban the publication of some works of the German poet, and many progressive personalities tried by all means to make Heine known as a combative poet among Russian readers. This was achieved through the feverish activity of skilled translators, in part also famous poets, such as Lermontov, Grigorjev, etc. A large number of writers, including Turgenev, were influenced by Heine in their literary creativity. In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the translation and publication of Heines' works began to intensify. Thus, during the years 1864-1882, the first edition of several volumes came out in Russia, but was crippled by Tsarist censorship. In the preface to a Russian edition of the poem "*Germany. A Winter's Tale*" in 1875, Turgenev called Heine "the most popular poet in Russia" (Constanze, 2001), while Chernyshevsky saw in Heine "one of the most serious and noble poets". Local scholars point out that in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, when the Russian revolutionary movement entered a new phase, Heine gained even greater popularity, which took on much wider proportions in the 1920s and 1930s and especially in later years. In fact, this suited the needs of the ruling ideology, which used for its own purposes the aspects of Heines' literary creativity it was interested in, leaving aside especially the critical stance of the German poet towards Marxist ideology (Constanze, 2001).

### 3.5. *Heine in in Eastern and Southeastern European countries*

In Eastern and Southeastern European countries, such as Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, etc., Heinrich Heine has enjoyed and continues to enjoy widespread fame. In these countries, as well as in Russia, there were two currents: one current preferred to value Heine as a poet of the "*Book of Songs*", while the other current preferred to value him primarily as a political writer.

The works of Heinrich Heine have exerted and continue to exert a significant influence even in the countries of the Far East, where the German poet had begun to be known and appreciated on a large scale, especially at the beginning of the last century. It had its deepest and earliest influence in Japan.

### 3.6. *Heine in Japan*

Heine himself refers as early as 1854 to his Japanese glory. "*The Fisherman's Daughter*" is Heine's first poem to be published and translated into Japanese (Nitz, 1998). Heinrich Heine became generally known in this country around 1901 through the translation of a volume of selected love poems. Subsequently, many Japanese poets were influenced by Heine and read his works with pleasure. In Heine they noticed from an early age not only the "*admirable lyric*", but also a "*sharp social critic*"

(Heine, 1981). In the 1920s and 1930s, Heine's poems played a major role in Japan's national and democratic movement. Japanese literary critics see in Heine the "great exemplary writer" who "managed to create a complete picture of time and life, of historical facts and genuine poetry, to always remain faithful to his ideals and, as a poet, to defend true humanism until the end of his life, thus becoming a poet of all times, precisely because he was a poet of the time, and a universal poet, precisely because he was a national poet".

### 3.7. Heine in Albanian

According to bibliographic data, the first poems of the famous German poet Heinrich Heine translated into Albanian were published in Albania a hundred and a few years ago, in the third phase of the Albanian National Renaissance, which began in the 1830s and 1840s and reached its peak in 1912 with the declaration of Independence of Albania.

During the period after the declaration of Independence, the patriotic spirit of the literature of the National Renaissance developed further, while in the years 1920-30 its realism, democratic character and social problems deepened.

After the Second World War, a special and deeper interest in the life and work of Heinrich Heine was noticed in the Albanian press.

Thus, in Albanian newspapers and magazines, translations of his various poems were often seen; essays, articles, comments and studies on Heine were published. In the meantime, the translation and publication of some works began, and among anthologies, and school and university textbooks the major literary figure of the German poet emerged for the first time with selected pieces of his creative works.

In foreign literature texts for the second grade of high schools in Albania dedicated to Heinrich Heine, it is said, amongst others: "Heines' most beautiful lyrical poems are made in the spirit of folk songs, and their main motive is *love*. The power of love is represented by antitheses. Nature merges with the poet's feelings. When a person feels love, then even nature laughs, spring comes. When a person's love is extinguished, then the leaves of the trees fall, and, when love disappears altogether, even heaven and earth are clothed in black. The poet's heart is like the sea itself: sometimes calm, sometimes wavy, sometimes furious. Heine's poems have a classical simplicity and resound like songs.

## 4. Conclusion

After Goethe, the Heinrich Heine is the greatest German lyricist. He lived in a transitional era, full of wars and contradictions. This is also reflected in the progress of his work. In Heines' worldview of politics and life there has often been a crisis, he often looks pessimistic and looks back. Yet, he never detached himself from reality. His satirical and political poetry exerted a great influence on all those who fought for justice and freedom. For this positive side of the creative activity he was consciously proud, saying: "*I want you to put a sword on my grave, because I was brave in the fight for the good of humanity*" That's why the Nazis burned his literary works (Kryeziu. 2012).

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