

CZECH TRANSLATORS OF THE NORTH UNITE TO FACE A CHALLENGING MARKET

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Czech translators of the Nordic languages have founded an independent professional association called Czech Translators of the North (Překladaťelé Severu). Its aim is to improve translators' pay and working conditions, disseminate information about contracts with authors and support the publication of quality translations, among other means by training new translators and editors.

Czech Translators of the North is an independent, voluntary professional organization. It unites translators of Nordic literature into Czech. Its mission is to facilitate meetings, support cooperation between translators of Nordic literature, defend their rights and advocate their professional development and interests. It also aims to monitor the quality and prestige of Czech literary translations and spread awareness of Nordic culture, above all literature.

In recent years, an unprecedented number of literary translations from the Nordic languages into Czech have been published. These are not only currently trendy genres, but also books from the literary canons of the Nordic countries, which demand a high artistic level of translation. Despite this, translators lacked a forum for exchanging expertise. So, when **the Scandinavian House** in Prague ran some translation workshops specialized in Nordic fiction, they proved to be extremely popular and the idea was born to found a professional association focused only on translation and interconnected subjects. A questionnaire which was sent out confirmed that over **70 Czech translators from the Nordic languages** appreciated this initiative.

In November 2018, the founding meeting of the association took place and the translators voted on the name, **Czech Translators of the North** (Překladaťelé Severu), the association's regulations and its committee members. The committee then elected **Kateřina Křišťůfková**, a translator from Norwegian, as the association's **Chairperson**, and **Martin Severýn**, a translator from Swedish, as **Vice-Chairperson**.

"It was first and foremost the dismal situation in the field of artistic translation which motivated us to found the association. We would like to initiate discussions with publishing houses and interested organizations, because we all want translations by good translators and editing by competent editors. We want to show that translations matter but also that quality has its costs and that a quality translator deserves appropriate remuneration and decent working conditions," said the association's chairperson, Kateřina Křišťůfková.

According to the association's rules, a condition for membership is having published at least two literary translations from a Nordic language into Czech. Those who don't yet fulfill this condition can still become associate members. The association also wants to be open to students of Nordic languages who have not published any translated books but who are interested in the profession.

The association is currently working on its visual identity and web pages and is also preparing a program for 2019, which will include activities based on the association's articles, i.e. networking, cooperation and professional development. The next venture for the association will be during the **Norwegian Culture Week** in March, which is organized by the Scandinavian House. The association will take part in setting up a **workshop for students of Norwegian philology** (22. 3.) and a **seminar for publishers and editors** (29. 3.) There will also be a program for translators as a part of a professional forum at the Svět knihy book fair in May 2019.

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