

In Memory of PhDr. Jozef Genzor

On 5 January 2019, our long-standing colleague and friend PhDr. Jozef Genzor, linguist, Korean and Filipino scholar, translator from English and Korean, left us at the age of 79. His name is intimately linked to the scientific journal of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, *Asian and African Studies*, for which he worked for many years (from 1969 until his retirement in 2010) as executive editor, as well as for the interdisciplinary journal *Human Affairs* in the 1990s.

Jozef Genzor was born on 12 September 1939 in Trenčín, but his hometown remained throughout his whole life Ilava, where he lived in a house with a large garden which he looked after tirelessly.

After completing his school-leaving exam at the Eleven Year Secondary School in Ilava, he studied Korean and the History of the Far East at the Faculty of Arts of Charles University. In 1980, he added Filipino studies to his education, studying at the University of the Philippines in Quezon City.

After graduation in 1961, he joined the Cabinet (now Institute) of Oriental Studies of the Slovak Academy of Sciences in Bratislava (SAV). He devoted his entire life to this workplace, with the exception of two years, 1967 and 1968, which he spent as a translator at the trade department of the Czechoslovak Embassy in Pyongyang, North Korea. He later enjoyed returning to South Korea and the Philippines during study visits in 1982, 1985 and 1996.

Jozef Genzor loved books and languages. For many years, he tirelessly and passionately added linguistic publications, text books and dictionaries of various languages to his library. On a professional level, he worked mainly on research into linguistic interference and the typology of Tagalog, sociolinguistics and the status of Korean as one of the world's languages. He published his research in scientific studies, journals and anthologies; these include, for example, the studies "Spanish Loanwords in Tagalog" (*Asian and African Studies* V, 1969, pp. 17–25), "Towards Typological Characteristics of the Tagalog Language", (*Asian and African Studies* VI, 1970, pp. 51–56), "Linguistic Situation and Policy in Insular Southeast Asia" (*Asian and African Studies* XXI, 1985, pp. 95–106) and "Endangered Languages and Revitalisation of Languages" (*Studia orientalia Victori Krupa dedicata*, ed. A. Rácová and M. Bucková, Bratislava 2016). As a linguist, he also cooperated with foreign colleagues, in particular the Russian scientist V. Makarenko, with whom he wrote, for example, the study "The Most Recent Phenomenon in the Evolution of Contemporary Tagalog Language and Prognosis of its Development" (*AAS* XVII, 1981, pp. 165–177). However, one of the most significant works by Jozef Genzor on languages is without any doubt the wide-ranging publication *Jazyky sveta* [Languages of the World] (1983) on which he collaborated with Viktor

Krupa and Ladislav Drozdík. This successful book was published once more in an edited version entitled *Jazyky sveta v priestore a čase* [Languages of the World in Time and Space] (1996), on which he and Viktor Krupa collaborated as authors; this book was finally published once more as *Jazyky sveta* [Languages of the World] (2015) in a Slovak and Czech version, bearing just his name. An equally important work of his as an author was the book *Písma sveta* [Writings of the World], which he wrote together with V. Krupa (1989).

Jozef Genzor was an experienced author and editor. No typographical error or mistake in the text could escape his trained eye. He also enjoyed using this skill of his when editing the journals published by the Institute of Oriental Studies SAV. For example, he contributed as an editor to the journals devoted to his long-standing colleague and friend, Viktor Krupa, *Pange lingua* from 1999 (together with S. Ondrejovič) and *Favete linguis* from 2006 (together with M. Bucková). His unceasing interest in oriental languages and Slovakia was also evident in his editing of the book *Ako prepisovať z orientálnych jazykov do slovenčiny* [How to Transcribe Oriental Languages into Slovak] from 2018 (together with A. Rácová and M. Bucková). Even after his retirement, colleagues unhesitatingly turned to him for help in editing more wide-ranging works. This talent of his also proved useful in his collaboration on the generalist Slovak encyclopaedia “Encyclopaedia Beliana”, for which he consistently edited the texts, as well as preparing entries.

Genzor’s exceptional feel for languages was expressed not only in his work as an orientalist and as the executive editor of the journals *Asian and African Studies* and *Human Affairs*, but also in his collaboration with Slovak linguists in Slovak studies, with whom he worked from 1970 as a member of the Orthography Committee of the Ľudovít Štúr Institute of Linguistics SAV. Together with scholars of Slovak, he also participated in the translation of the Dictionary of Foreign Words (1997, 2005, 2008) for which he edited the Brief Overview of World Languages at the end of the dictionary. With his chapter “Transcription from languages of the Far East”, he also contributed to the publication of *Pravidlá slovenského pravopisu* [Rules of Slovak Orthography] in 1991. In addition, from 1997 he was an active member of the Terminology Committee of the Geodesy, Cartography and Cadastre Authority of the Slovak Republic.

No description of Jozef Genzor’s multifarious personality would be complete without a mention of his translation activity. His prime achievement was the book of fairy-tales *Čarodejný strom. Filipínske rozprávky* [The Magical Tree. Filipino Fairy-Tales] (1975), published in German, French and Hungarian versions. He also translated the novel by the Filipino novelist, poet, playwright and essayist Nick Joaquín *Žena s dvoma pupkami* [The Woman who Had Two Navels] (1982) and the short stories *Zlodej bohov. Antológia filipínskych*

poviedok [Thief of the Gods. An Anthology of Filipino Short Stories] (1983). Although it might appear that his research work and translation activity focused more on his more recent field of study, Filipino studies, he did not turn his back on Korean. In cooperation with his Czech colleague V. Pucko, he translated *Tajomstvá belasého draka. Kórejské mýty a povesti* [Secrets of the Sky-Blue Dragon. Korean Myths and Legends] (1978) and *Vodopád devíti draků. Korejské mýty a pověsti* [The Waterfall of the Nine Dragons. Korean Myths and Legends], Prague 1983.

Jozef Genzor was a man full of enthusiasm for work. Despite his failing health in the last years of his life, he worked persistently until the end on his projects. His last great project was the innovative publication “Writings of the World” which was supposed to follow on from the successful book “Languages of the World” published by LINGEA. Unfortunately, he did not have time to finish it. Just like some of his other works, for example a collection of the Lord’s Prayer in different languages, and many more which we do not know about.

The Slovak public loses in Dr. Jozef Genzor an important orientalist and linguist, and the Institute of Oriental Studies SAV a colleague and good friend who was never short of a smile and a joke.

May he rest in peace.

Anna Rácová

