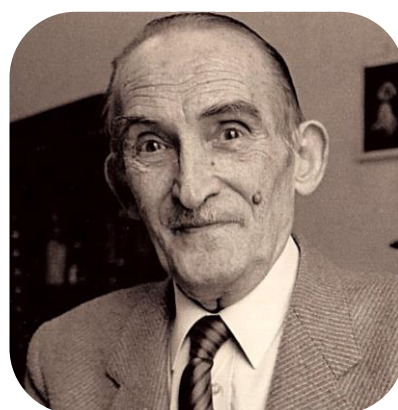


Leon Levițchi – Archive. 15

Emisiuni Radio

Ediție facsimil în 4 volume
Volumul 2

Editat de
C. George Sandulescu
și
Lidia Vianu



Speaker. Our guest to-night is Prof. Dr. Leon Levitchi, head of the department of English literature at the Faculty of Germanic languages and literatures University of Bucharest. He has recently finished his Course in Mediaeval and Renaissance English Literature -

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Anul acesta se împlinesc 100 de ani bătuți pe muchie de la nașterea Profesorului de limbă și literatură engleză Leon D. Levițchi. ESTE CENTENARUL LEVIȚCHI.

*

Nu există gramătic mai însemnat decât Leon Levițchi pentru profesorul de limba engleză din România. A scris gramatici din care toți urmașii lui au învățat structura limbii engleze, și cum poate ea fi predată vorbitorului de limba română. A făcut cele mai bune dicționare dintre câte avem. A tradus integral William Shakespeare. A predat lexicologie. A scris „Învățați limba engleză fără profesor”. A scris istoria literaturii engleze și americane.

Leon Levițchi [Radio România, 1973]

“Well – you see – quite, quite accidentally, I belong to an older generation; and quite, quite accidentally, for twenty years on end I taught English grammar to our students; and I taught them in the spirit of Charles Bally and Harold Palmer, not in that of Chomsky.... I do not in the least believe in the idea that the history of linguistics should be divided into two: the pre- and the post-Chomsky period. I should rather say: I believe in things that can be demonstrated and I do not believe in things that cannot be demonstrated. If – if! – the new achievements of linguistics can prove that we have been in the wrong, and the new achievements are in the right, all the better – we shall surrender to them: but, if they cannot justify themselves, all the worse – we

shall not surrender, and we shall go on saying that it is much much better to speak of subject and predicate than of subject and predicate group (SG, or PG)."

Leon Levițchi [Radio România, 1972]

L.L: "...an Austrian professor invited me to join an international society of lexicographers."

Announcer: "Does that imply practical or theoretical activity?"

L.L: I don't know yet; I only hope it will be applied linguistics – a discipline which I personally like very much. Of course, I like theory as well, but only if it is based on applied linguistics."

C. George Sandulescu

Leon Levițchi – Archive (LLA)

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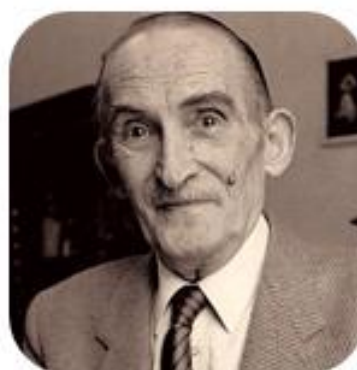
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Lidia Vianu
Director

C. George Săndulescu
Executive Advisor



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Redactia engleză

Leon D. Levițchi

The Merry Cemetery

Speaker. Two years ago, The Publishing House of Tourism ^{issued} ~~publishing~~
an English translation of Cimitirul vesel (The Merry Cemetery)
,"a sentimental monograph" by Pop Simion. The prose was translated
by Mary Lăzărescu, the verse by Leon Levițchi - whom we have in-
vited to our studio tonight -

L.L. Adsum.

Speaker. Mr Levițchi is the head of the department of English Li-
terature at the Faculty of Germanic Languages and Literatures, U-
niversity of Bucharest -

L.L. - sorry - but in connection with the Merry/ Cemetery, just a
modest and perhaps merry translator of a couple of merry lines
composed by a merry Maramureș peasant as merry epitaphs on a
number of graves in the well-known merry cemetery of Săpînța, a
village in a northern zone of Romania. In order to translate such
things, one must definitely be a very simple man, with no acade-
mic studies - therefore what ~~was~~ still consider the good part
in me, the opposite of "sophistication", the "natural man", the
part which feels without judging very much, or judges in pro-
verbs and sayings without feeling "from the structural point of
view". Anyhow, that was my conflict - academism versus simplicity.
And the best hope I have is that simplicity has got the better
of academism, that to a larger or smaller ~~ext~~ extent I ~~may~~ have
managed to be faithful to 'the natural man' in me:

I have lain here since I came,
and Stan Toader is my name.
(Father he is old as well -
Ilie of Pătrunjel).

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Speaker. People tell me that an Englishman who visited the Săpînța cemetery last year refrained from going into the precincts because he considered it a blasphemy to write humorous lines on the crosses of dead people:

In my lifetime, on this earth,
many things seemed of great worth;
to drink hard and to live high
with a handsome husband by.
May you live long, Darvei,
yet a lot you'll mourn for me;
and so long as here you be,
you shall find no one like me.

L.L. Frankly and honestly, I don't see any "blasphemy" in all that. It's rather a mentality which the aforementioned Englishman did not grasp. Very much in brackets, let me mention that quite a number of very "Christian" poets forming part and parcel of the history of English literature have often been jocular about their ultimate fates, for example Walter Map, a mediaeval English chronicler, who wrote (in The Courtiers' Trifles):

I devise to end my days
In a tavern drinking,
May some Christian hold for me
The glass when I am drinking, etc.

And, of course, there is something else, too: the firm-rooted belief of the Dacians (by the side of the Romans, there were our ancestors!) that one should ~~rejoice~~^{mourn} at the birth of a child, and ~~mourn~~^{rejoice} at a man's death. That speaks volumes, doesn't it? No, it's not a problem of blasphemy; it's ~~an~~^a problem of attitude in a very human sense! "A stream of wooden crosses," writes Pop Simion, "stream of years, a stream of names speak of those lying in the earth. The crosses are cracked, contorted and twisted by time, weather-stained, old or very old, others new. The earth forms

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humble knolls that look like turtle backs, covered with a green layer, flowers and so on. Apparently, everything is as it ought to be. But let us peer more carefully, let us peer at the silky-phosphorescent blue, winding among solemn colours. Let us peer at the world vibrating in forms and volumes. And what about the poetry? We should call it dirge, but everything is exuberant, robust, solar. It is detached from the idea of lamentation and sorrow. The temple is clean, ~~white, pure~~ ^{white, pure}. It is only primary realities that are voiced by the word and this is how it is done:

We are now come hither, man,
Stan George Talian.
From a child we liked to see
horses, as many as could be;
and one more thing, let me tell,
to buy orchards we loved well.
When we lived on the land's fat,
we were forced to leave all that.
We quit life for evermore
at the age of 54.

Speaker. May I ask you: do you like this kind of poetry?

L.L. Very much, indeed - because it is elemental like Beowulf and as deep as Shakespeare, even though it is as hard to translate as any ~~kind of~~ other kind of epitaph! Thank you for ~~the~~ your interest in the topic -

Speaker. Thank you, professor



Romanian Poems - a Bilingual Anthology

Grainia: A few days ago, Dacia Publishing-House, of Cluj, printed "A Bilingual Anthology of Romanian Poetry" under the title of "ROMANIAN POEMS". Bilingual, that is with the Romanian original on the left-hand page and the English translation on the opposite page. One of the translators, by the side of Petre Grimm, Dimitrie Cuclin, / Dan Duțescu, Andrei Bantas, Jean Ure, McGregor Hasty, ~~xxxxxx~~ is also Prof. Leon Levițchi, Head of the Department of English Literature, University of Bucharest. We have ~~asked~~^{invited} him to ~~our~~^{our} studio for a brief talk on the occasion. Professor Levițchi, judging by the technical aspects of the book in front of us, ~~1/2~~ - hard covers, matt paper, very readable ~~xxxxxxx~~ type -, the volume is highly alluring. Do you think that the contents and, of course, the quality of the translations will also appeal to the Romanian-English reader?

L.L.: Two distinct things, ~~byxxxxxxx~~ therefore. First, the selection of Romanian poems, a selection made by Sever Trifu and Dumitru Ciocci-Pop (of Cluj). It goes without saying that this selection is representative, as it includes very important names of ~~xxxxxxx~~ poets from ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ ^{a great part of the} history of Romanian literature - beginning with Vasile Alexandri and ending with Nicolae Labiş. Between them such names occur as those of Mihai Eminescu, George Coșbuc, Tudor Arghezi, Ion Minulescu, Octavian Goga, George Bacovia, Lucian Blaga, etc. Unfortunately ^{there are} two major objections ~~must be made~~: that many other poets should have been included and, on the other hand, that many other interesting or important pieces ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ should not have been excluded. From the missing authors let me mention, for example, Panait Cerna, or Alexandru Vlăduț, or Zaharia Stancu; from the missing poems, Iarna pe ulițe by Coșbuc, Cugetările sărmanului Dionis by Emi-

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nescu, or Cele trei corăbii by Minulescu. Topirceanu, a very great poet to my mind, is only represented by one poem, which is to be regretted. But this is, definitely, no fault of the editors, for, as stated in their substantial preface and postface, they simply set out to publish already existing materials, chiefly poems translated and printed by the Bucharest magazine, Romanian Review. Anyhow, the initiative of Cluj is ~~xxxxxx~~ quite praiseworthy, and the best hope I have is that in the measurable future all the gaps will be filled in up by new bilingual anthologies based not on extant translations but on translations made for the purpose.

As to the quality of translations in our volume, I must admit that it is very hard for me to speak, although or, rather, ~~xxxxxx~~ because I am one of the translators. Still, I think that I can say a few words. Roughly speaking, all the translators have endeavoured to be as faithful to the original as possible, ~~xxxxxx~~ but not to the detriment of the target language, i.e. English.

Grainic: Have they all tried to stick to certain theoretical principles of verse translation?

L.I.: I don't think so. It is rather the other way round: namely, that some principles may be derived from ^{what/} they have done. They have tried to preserve denotation, that is the exact meanings of the original text; accentuation, that is the system of emphasis in each sentence; modality, that is the emotional or intellectual attitude of the speaker towards the utterance; connotation, that is whatever is associated with the central meaning of a word or sentence; the logical-grammatical connection between sentences; and style.

Grainic: As a personal experience - has it been difficult for you to observe these principles, which, as I understand, are universally accepted....

L.I.: No, not universally accepted. They are a sort of patchwork - some

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are to be found in books,~~xxxx~~ and for some I am responsible myself. You can easily see my dilemma : the teacher in me had to hold long converse with the translator. Practically, I was continually on the run/ between heart and intellect, between the writer's desk and the teacher's... Happy the translators who are not haunted by "principles", and who, nevertheless, do a good job. For example, the late ~~xxxx~~ Margul Sperber, the translator of Miorita:

Pe-un picior de plai,	Where the mountains mate,
Pe-o gură de rai,	There is Eden's gate:
Iată, vin în cale,	They're approaching, lo!
Se cobor în vale,	And downhill they go,
Trei turme de miei	Three fair flocks of sheep,
Cu trei ciobănei....	Which their shepherds keep...

In my opinion, everything has been observed here: denotation, accentuation (rhythm), modality, and all the other 'principles'.

Crainic: Would you mind ~~gx~~ reciting a sample of your own translations?

L.L.: Well - no. What shall I choose? Perhaps - the beginning of Hora Ardealului, or Hora Unirii by Vasile Alecsandri: The Ring-Dance of the Union:

Hai să dăm mână cu mână	Men with a Romanian heart,
Cei cu inima română,	Join your hands and never part,
Să-nvîrtim hora frăției	Dance like brothers, hand in hand,
Pe pământul României!	On Romania's fair land!

Crainic: The Romanian hora is almost untranslatable...

L.L.: So it is... As I have tried to convince you... Or, perhaps it is translatable, but - I'm sorry - I don't know the English equivalent. These are the haphazards of the non-English translator... Well, ~~xxxx~~ on this rather melancholy keynote I should prefer to conclude....

Crainic: Thank you, Mr Levițchi....

L.L.: Thank you

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Poezii românești - antologie bilingvă

Crainic: Acum câteva zile, editura "Dacia" din Cluj a publicat "O antologie bilingvă de poezie românească" sub titlul de "Poezii românești". Bilingvă, respectiv cu originalul românesc pe pagina stângă și traducerea engleză pe pagina opusă. Unul dintre traducători, alături de Petre Grimm, Dimitrie Cucilin, Dan Duțescu, Andrei Bantas, Jean Ure, McGregor Hasty, este și prof. Leon Levițchi, șeful catedrei de literatură engleză, universitatea din București. L-am invitat în studioul nostru pentru o scurtă convorbire pendinte de acest prilej. Dle profesor Levițchi, judecând după aspectele tehnice ale cărții din fața noastră - copertă tare, hîrtie velină mată, caractere foarte ușor de citit - , volumul e cît se poate de atrăgător. Credeti că fondul (conținutul) și, bineînțeles, calitatea traducerilor vor găsi răsunet la cititorul român-englez?

L.L.: Deci, două lucruri distincte. Mai întîi selecția poeziilor românești, selecție făcută de Sever Trifu și Dumitru Ciocoi-Pop (din Cluj). Bineînțeles, selecția este reprezentativă, întrucît cuprinde nume f. importante de poeți dintr-o bună parte a istoriei literaturii române - începînd cu Vasile Alecsandri și terminînd cu Nicolae Labig. Între ei apar nume ca acelea ale lui Mihai Eminescu, George Coșbuc, Tudor Arghezi, Ion Minulescu, Octavian Goga, George Bacovia, Lucian Blaga etc. Din păcate sînt 2 obiecții majore: că mulți alți poeți ar fi trebuit incluși și, pe de altă parte, că multe alte poezii interesante sau importante nu ar fi trebuit excluse. Dintre autorii care lipsesc voi menționa de exemplu pe Panait Cerna sau Alexandru Vlahuță sau Zaharia Stancu, dintre poeziile care lipsesc, "Iarna pe uliță" de Coșbuc, "Cugetările sărmanului Dionis" de Eminescu sau "Cele trei corăbii" de Eminescu. Topirceanu - după mine, un poet foarte mare - este reprezentat printr-o singură poezie, ceea ce este regretabil. Totuși, aceasta nu este cîtusi de rutin vine altă tufă de poezii din volumul de față, așa cum se afirmă în substanțialele lor prefațe și postfațe,

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ei nu au făcut altceva decât să-și propună să publice materiale existente, îndeosebi poezi traduse și tipărite de revista bucureștenă Romanian Review. Oricum, inițiativa Căușului este cât se poate de laudabilă și nădăjduiesc că în viitorul apropiat toate golurile vor fi umplute prin noi antologii bilingve bazate nu pe traduceri existente ci pe traduceri făcute special în acest scop.

Cât dă spre calitatea traducerilor din volumul nostru, recunosc că este foarte dificil pentru mine să vorbesc, deși, sau mai curînd, pentru că sînt unul dintre traducători. Totuși, cred că pot să spunz câteva cuvinte. În linii mari, toți traducătorii au căutat să fie cât mai fideli față de original, dar nu în detrimentul limbii-țintă, respectiv engleza.

Gr: Au căutat ei toți să respecte anumite principii teoretice ale traducerii în versuri?

LL: Nu cred. Cred că e mai curînd invers: și anume, că anumite principii pot fi deduse din ceea ce au făcut ei. Au încercat să păstreze denotația, adică înțelesurile exacte ale textului original; accentuarea, adică sistemul de subliniere din fiecare propoziție; modalitatea, adică atitudinea emoțională sau intelectuală a vorbitorului față de enunț; conotația, adică tot ceea ce se asociază cu înțelesul central al unui cuvînt sau al unei propoziții; legătura logic-gramaticală dintre propoziții; și stilul.

Cr: Ca experiență personală - v-a fost greu să respectați aceste principii carin după cite înțeleg- sînt^t universal acceptate?

LL: Nu, nu universal acceptate. Ele sînt un fel de amestec: unele se găsesc în cărți, iar pentru unele sînt răspunzător eu însumi. Vă puteți da seama ușor de dilema în care m-am găsit: profesorul din mine a trebuit să întetînă un lung dialog cu traducătorul. De fapt, au făcut mreu naveta între inimă și intelect, între masa de scris a scriitorului și pupitrul profesorului: fericită

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traducătorii care nu sînt bătuiți de "principii" și care, totuși, fac treabă bună. De exemplu, regretatul Murgul Șerboș, traducătorul "Mioriței":

Pe-un picior de plai,
Pe-o gură de rai,
Iată, vin în cale,
Se cobor lavale ,
Trei turme de miei,
Cu t ei ciobănei...

După părerea mea, toate principiile au fost respectate aici: denotația, accentuarea (ritmul), modalitatea, precum și celelalte.

Cr. Vreți să recitați o mostră din propriile dvs. traduceri?

Li: Da, fie. Ce să aleg? Putea începutul poeziei Hora Ardealului, sau Hora unirii, de Vasile Alecsandri:

Hai să dăm mîină cu mîină
Cei cu inima romînă
Să-nvîrtim hora frăției
Pe pămîntul Romîniei!

Cr.: Romînescul hora este aproape de netradus....

Li: Așa este.... După cum am încercat să vă conving....Sau, poate, că este traductibil, dar _ îmi pare rău- nu cunosc echivalentu englezesc. Acestea sînt riscurile traducătorului ne-englez.... Ei bine, cu această destul de melancolică notă, aș prefera să închei..

Cr.: Vă mulțumim d-le Levițchi....

Li: Eu vă mulțumesc....

..-





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Crainic. Do you still preserve the manuscript?

L.L. No; ~~xxx~~ about ten years after the offence I tore my translation to pieces - for it wasn't a translation, it was the work of

A child still groping in the night,

A child still groping for the light

- ~~xxxxxxxx~~ to quote from Tennyson. As at that time I didn't know anything about such things as faithfulness to the original text, ~~xx~~ observance of the original metre, correctness of the target - language and so on, you can easily imagine that the result was only comparable to modern doggerels! Anyhow, it was so remote from Shakespeare's original, so anti-Shakespearean I would say, that, at least fragments of it might be successfully reproduced today in some modernistically-inclined literary magazine... Very much in brackets, let me tell you that the only dictionary I used was an Oxford/ pocket edition. ~~xxxx~~

Crainic. So that was the beginning -

L.L. Yes; but I persevered - perseverare diabolicum... Hard Times by Dickens - the whole of it -, Ramuntcho from the French of Pierre Loti, Oblomov from the Russian of Gontcharov, back to English again - A Journey to the Centre of the Earth by Jules Verne (therefore a translation's translation!), Bacon's Essays, and what not. But when I was appointed teacher of English (that was in 1945), an unexpected sense of responsibility awoke in me - probably as a result of my deep interest in English grammar (which I had to learn and to teach at once) - and, ~~ixxx~~ little by little, became aware of how both my pupils and myself should not translate. This is, frankly, the foundation on which, later on, I constructed my translation theory and, concurrently, heaped up my translations...

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Crainic. In other words, the child in you grew up and -

L.L. No, of course not. The child in me is still a child in me; but by its side another being came to life, growing up and maturing: the teacher, or, rather, the strict and severe onlooker, guiding the steps of the child, that is the little that is poetry in me. I apologize, I've become a bit romantic...

Crainic. There's nothing you should really apologize for. I'm sure it's precisely for this "childish quality" - "poetry" that you have been awarded the prize for Browning.

L.L. Maybe; I don't know. All that I know is that Browning has been a fascinating yet terribly difficult experience; for ~~Browning~~ Browning is both inspiration and high technicality. Shakespeare is much easier to translate.

Crainic. Shakespeare!?

L.L. Of course. Think of his blank verse - not a patch on Browning's fixed, strait-jacket versification forms.

Crainic. As I understand, Browning is one of the ~~most difficult~~ greatest ordeals for a translator.

L.L. That's right; but he is not a patch on Oscar Wilde - as a prose writer.

Crainic. Really?

L.L. Decidedly. Because, apparently, he's so very simple; like English grammar! But when you come to grips with him, you'll be knocked out in no time. His connotations, his prose-rhythms, his hints, his English. I don't think I shall ever attempt to translate Oscar Wilde.

Crainic. Well, then - after Browning - who will come next?

L.L. First, a theoretical book - A Handbook for Translators in the Making; next, perhaps, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight.

Crainic. We wish you every success in both, professor.

L.L. Thank you - you're very kind.

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Premiile Uniunii Scriitorilor pe 1972: pentru traduceri, Leon Levițchi, Versuri alese de Robert Browning

Crainic: După cum i-am informat pe ascultătorii noștri, premiile Uniunii scriitorilor români pe 1972 au fost înmânate laureaților la o întrunire festivă săptămîna trecută, întrunire care a avut loc la București. Prof. dr. Leon Levițchi, șeful catedrei de literatură engleză, universitatea București, a fost pe lista celor premiați pentru un volum de traduceri - Versuri alese de Robert Browning, editura Univers, București, 1972. De fapt, mulți dintre ascultătorii noștri îi cunosc bine numele și vocea, întrucît de ani de zile în șir, din-sul este colaboratorul mai mult sau mai puțin permanent al emisiunilor noastre în limba engleză. Permiteți-mi să vă felicit din toată inima, d-le profesor....

L.L. Vă mulțumesc mult. Mi-ați auzit vocea... Dacă, într-adevăr, a avut o sonoritate "familiară", at nci urmează cu necesitate că o mare parte din biografia mea nu mai este un secret pentru ei. Îmi amintesc că am vorbit despre traducerile mele din Shakespeare, Robert Burns, Emerson, Beowulf, baladele populare engleze, antologia de versuri americane, Sheridan, Theodore Dreiser, Jerome K. Jerome....

Crainic: Spuneți-mi, vă rog, care a fost prima dvs. traducere din engleză în română?

L.L. Da - prima mea traducere publicată a fost Alaunul de Upton Sinclair, 1945. Totuși n-aș dori să trec peste anii mei de ucenicie, cînd am tradus ~~xxx~~ vreo 2 duzini de cărți fără intenția de a le publica. "Acum mulți, mulți ani de zile (Poe)... După cîte-mi amintesc, prima mea încercare a fost Macbeth, 1938, cînd eram student în engleză în anul II, Universitatea din București.

Crainic: Mai păstrați manuscrisul?

L.L. Nu; la vreo zece ani după săvîrșirea crimei am făcut traducerea bucuțele - pentru că, de fapt, nu era o traducere, ci mai curînd lucrarea





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Unui copil ce bijbăie în noapte,
Ce bijbăie și caută lumină

- ca să citez cumva din Tennyson. Cum în acea vreme nu știam nimic despre unele probleme cum ar fi fidelitatea față de textul original, respectarea metrului original, corectitudinea limbii-scop etc., vă puteți imagina lesne că rezultatul nu putea fi comparabil decât cu dezorganizările poetice moderne! Ericum, era atât de îndepărtat de originalul lui Shakespeare, atât de anti-shakesperian aș putea spune, încât cel puțin unele fragmente ar putea fi reproduse cu succes astăzi în vreo revistă literară cu inclinații moderniste... Într-o paranteză, dați-mi voie să vă spun că singurul dicționar pe care l-am folosit a fost o ediție Oxford de buzunar....

Grainic: Acesta a fost începutul....

L.L. Da; dar am perseverat - pârseverare diabolicum.. Timperi grele de Dickens - integral -, Ramuntcho din franceză (Pierre Loti), Oblov din rusă (Goncharov), apoi iar din engleză - Chilitorie spre centrul pământului de Jules Verne (deci traducerea unei traduceri!), E-seurile lui Bacon și cite altele. Dar când am fost numit profesor de engleză (în 1945), s-a deșteptat în mine un neașteptat sentiment de responsabilitate - probabil urmare a profundului meu interes față de gramatica limbii engleze (pe care trebuia s-o învăț și s-o și predau) - și, puțin cite puțin, mi-am dat seama de felul cum atât elevii mei cit și eu însumi nu trebuie să traducem. Declar cu toată sinceritatea că aceasta este temelia pe care mai târziu mi-am clădit teoria traducerii și, totodată, mi-am îngreunat traducerile....

Grainic: Cu alte cuvinte, copilul din dvs. a crescut și...

L.L. Nu - de unde! Copilul din mine a rămas; dar alături de el a venit în existență o altă făptură care a crescut și s-a maturizat : profesorul sau, mai degrabă, spectatorul extrem de sever, călăuzind pașii copilului, respectiv puținul care reprezintă poezia din mine. Tertăți-mă, am devenit cam romantic....

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Crainic: Nu aveți pentru ce să vă cereți iertare. Sint convinsă că vi s-a acordat premiul pentru Browning tocmai ținându-se seama de această "însușire a copilului" - "poezia"...

L.L. Se poate; nu știu. Tot ce știu este că Browning a constituit o experiență fascinantă dar teribil de dificilă; pentru că Browning înseamnă atât inspirație cât și înaltă tehnicitate. Shakespeare e mult mai ușor de tradus.

Crainic: Shakespeare?

L.L. Indiscutabil. Gândiți-vă la versul lui "alb" - nu se compară cu formele versificatorice ale lui Browning, fixe, încorsetate.

Crainic: După câte îmi dau seama, Browning este ușa dintre cele mai mari ordalii pentru un traducător.

L.L. Așa este; dar nu se compară cu Oscar Wilde - ca prozator!

Crainic: Serios?

L.L. Evident. Pentru că, aparent, e atât de simplu; ca gramatica engleză! Dar când te iei la trântă cu el, te doboară cât ai zice pește. Conotațiile, ritmurile în proză, aluziile, engleza pe care o folosește. Nu cred că mă voi încumeta vreodată să-l traduc pe Oscar Wilde.

Crainic: Atunci - după Browning - cine o să urmeze?

L.L. Mai întâi, o carte de teorie - "Manual pentru traducătorii în devenire", apoi - sar putea - Sir Gawain și Cavalerul Verde.

Crainic: Vă doresc reușită în ambele, dle profesor.

L.L. Vă mulțumesc - sinteți f. amabilă.





Radio, limba engleză

Marginalia on Two International Conferences (Copenhagen,
Stratford)

Announcer. Our guest tonight is Professor Leon Levițchi, Head of the Department of English Literature in the University of Bucharest. We have invited him to our studio to tell us something about his participation in two international conferences: The 3-rd Congress of Applied Linguistics in Copenhagen (August 21-st to 26-th) and the Fifteenth Shakespeare Conference at Stratford-upon-Avon (August 28-th to September 1-st).

L.L. In my particular case the word "participation" has two distinct meanings, I'm afraid; if not exactly two distinct meanings, at least two distinct connotations: for in Copenhagen my participation was active, in the sense that there I not only took part in the debates, but also delivered a paper; while at Stratford it was only the lecturers who were practically allowed to speak, so that my role, like that of the other Romanian members of the Conference, was reduced to listening. Of course, we imparted our impressions *and they imparted their impressions to us* to our colleagues in private talks, for example during a very, very informal reception during which we were offered chips and wine...

Announcer. There was, I presume, another reception in Copenhagen...

Lev. Yes, a very great one, with plenty of food and no wine, which was supplanted exclusively by the famous Danish beer. But, as I have hinted already, in Copenhagen we could also express our points of view at the Congress, immediately after the papers, usually read, not just spoken offhand.

Announcer. Speaking about Copenhagen and the Congress of Linguistics - were you the only Romanian representative there?

Lev. No; there was also Madame ~~Suzanne~~ Tatiana Slama-Cazacu, Professor of Psycholinguistics, University of Bucharest, who *was*

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gave a paper on psycholinguistics, and Professor Dumitru Chitoran, Head of the Department ~~XXX~~ of English, the same University, who delivered ~~xxxxxxxx~~ two papers, of which one dealt with the progress of the contrastive analysis studies in Bucharest. Let me add that all these papers were received with much interest by the participants, who asked quite a number of questions referring to the ~~xxx~~ problems raised by the speakers.

Announcer. May I ask you about the subject of your own paper?

L.L. Well, I must confess - my paper was less theoretical: "Marginalia on Compiling Bilingual Dictionaries" - just a handful of remarks on the difficulties connected with the compilation of an English-Romanian Dictionary (I referred to the dictionary which in cooperation with Mr Andrei Bantas I published about a year ago in Bucharest).

Announcer. I'm sure that ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ you had a large audience...

L.L. Oh no - just about twenty people in all. And all of them very serious - I should say far too serious for a paper which ~~was~~ contained so little theoretical speculation. I even gave them funny concrete examples from various bilingual dictionaries and, well, they didn't even smile. ~~Of course, most of them were Germans.~~

Announcer. Did they ask you any questions about dictionaries?

L.L. They did and I answered to the best of my ability, of course ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ very gravely. And, when I lost any sense of humour, the atmosphere was perfect. I may ~~even~~ say that all those people there - an Englishman included - are very enthusiastic about dictionaries but they don't like to show their enthusiasm. ~~xxxxxxxx~~ Only at the end of the debates the chairman - an Austrian professor - gave up his stern ~~xxx~~ countenance and invited me to join an international society of lexicographers.

Announcer. Does that imply practical or theoretical activity?

L.L. I don't know yet; I only hope it will be "applied linguistics" -

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a discipline which I personally like very much. Of course, I like theory as well, but only if it is based on applied linguistics. Much to my satisfaction, the general direction taken by the congress was towards concrete facts of language.

Announcer. What is your wholesale appreciation of the congress and its level?

L.L. Not very high, I'm sorry to say. In spite of about 650 members attending; the smaller conference at Stratford, with its only 150 members, did better work. ^{very/} If I may express my personal opinion, the failures - I mean the uninteresting or the superficial papers in both conferences - are to be accounted for by the great number of relatives that accompanied the speakers: grandmothers, uncles, children and so on.

Announcer. How do you mean?

L.L. I have ^{come/} to the conclusion that many of the international conferences that I have attended were largely meant to be just great opportunities for tourism, I mean family ~~xxxxxx~~ tourism. After all, Copenhagen is a very beautiful town, with its Stadthus, its Tivoli garden, its parks, its patriarchal life in the suburbs; as to Stratford what shall I say? The white swans on the ~~xxx~~ Avon, the wonderful sunsets, the Shakespeare vestiges, the Stratford inhabitants who, be they young or old, are so very proud of their ancestor (and not only in the figurative sense for a surprisingly great number of them boast of being descended from ~~xxxx~~ the Sweet Swan of Avon...) - all ~~if~~ these have a fascination of their own... Of course, mention must be made also of the interesting papers; for example, at Stratford, where I heard practically all the papers, some were very good, for example The Incredible in Jacobean Tragedy by Clifford Leech or Marvin Spevack, Toward a New Shakespeare Dictionary.

Announcer. A New Shakespeare Dictionary?

L.L. Yes, a dictionary based on computers - still a dictionary,

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ultimately made by men and for men. I hope you won't suspect me of ~~undue~~ undue partiality for dictionaries! ~~And if you~~ And if you do, let me remind you that it is only dictionaries that give us the exact meaning of ~~scientific~~ a 'scientific paper'!

Kindly excuse me for being a caviller. I can't help it. Anyhow, I want to assure you that both in the English language and in the history of English literature we Romanians have a ~~very~~ great number of specialists who can produce really scientific papers! ~~And~~ It is a pity that they so very rarely publish their works in English...

Announcer. I'm really sorry that you finish up your interview on a melancholy note....

L.L. It isn't exactly melancholy. It's encouraging. Thank you.

Announcer. Thank you.



Limbi străineThe Book Salon at "Dalles"

Crainic: On the 8th of February, ^{at the} ~~this year~~ a Book Salon was set up ^{at Dalles,} ~~in Bucharest~~ during which the Cluj Publishing House exhibited a recently published book, "Romanian Poems- A Bilingual Anthology of Romanian Poetry". Bilingual, that is Romanian-English; both classic and contemporary Romanian poets - Alecsandri, Eminescu, Coșbuc, Goga; but also Blaga, Vineanu, Paraschivescu, Nicolae Labiş... Two of the translators, Mr Levițchi and Mr Bantaș, took the floor and commented upon their translations in front of an audience made up of ^{different} ~~heterogeneous~~ people....

L.L.: Indeed, very ^{different} ~~heterogeneous~~ - scholars and translators, ~~farmers~~ ^{young & old} and workers, pupils and students. To say nothing of the fact that they were ...many ! I hope you understand what I mean: very many for translations done from Romanian into English! To put it bluntly: it is but natural that people should take an interest in English-Romanian translations, for the simple reason that they can judge ~~the quality~~ ~~of the translations~~ their quality at the level of the Romanian language; whereas it is far more difficult to judge Romanian translations into English. Of course, we, the translators, have done our best - but ...there's always a but.... English is not our mother tongue and ~~however~~ although we can say we do understand the original text properly, we are never sure of the... transposition... It is chiefly a matter of... connotation.

Crainic: Connotation?

L.L.: Connotation - that is, whatever is not specified by the dictionary. Associations, lexical, grammatical, musical... Consider such a word as doina - "an elegiac song typical of Romanian lyrical folk poetry and music". I must confess, it cannot be translated; it must remain doina, with a very ample footnote, describing it as a song of infinite longing and languor, having very much to do with homesick-

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ness, with love-sickness, with household-sickness... It is just like
old/
the English witanagemot...

Grainic: Still, both you and the other translators have managed to
give an English version of the original texts...

L.L.: Yes, we have. I don't know how far we have succeeded, but we
have definitely done our best. With very few translation principles on
hand...

Grainic: Principles?

L.L.: Sure. There is such a thing as principles even in translations.
A translation must be faithful from several viewpoints: it must ob-
serve denotation, accentuation, modality, connotation, and several other
things... May I quote?

Dintre sute de catarge	Of the masts by thousands leaving
Cîte lasă malurile,	Shores which many an ocean laves
Cîte oare le vor sparge	O, how many will be shattered
Vînturile, valurile?	By the winds and by the waves...

That was our great Eminescu, translated by the late professor
Grimm, Cluj University; his translations meet all the requirements
put forward by translational practice.

Grainic: Would you mind telling us something about your impressions
concerning the wider context of the Book Salon?

L.L.: Well - I have been very much impressed both by the quantity
and the quality of the books exhibited at Dalles - among other things,
Restitutio (a bilingual edition, Minerva), The 20th century Novel
(the Univers Publishing House), Essays (Cartea Românească), An Histori-
cal Atlas (The Didactic and Pedagogical Publishing House), A Gene-
ral History of Science (The Scientific Publishing House), Histoire de
l'architecture en Roumanie (The Academy Publishing House), and so on.
I should also like to mention the exquisite Cimitirul vesel,
translated into English under the title of The Merry Cemetery - by

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Pop Simion - a book dealing with the epitaphs on the tombs of the deceased in Săpînța, for example:

Brothers-german ~~w~~ere we twain,
underground we early/ came,
Holdis George and Ilie,
we're for ever lying here.
As long as we lived on earth,
much we sang and much we pranced ,
to the violin we danced.
Young we were, Death, when you called,
not e'en 18 years old....

Crainic: The Merry Cemetery - a rather strange book.....

L.L.: So it is; but it is highly realistic ; it really reproduces the epitaphs that are there. Very Dacian-like - may I remind you that when a man died, the Dacians laughed, and when a man was born, they wept. A whole philosophy is embedded in this; a whole philosophy is embedded in the Book Salon at ...Dalles.. You should go and see it.

Crainic: Very much in brackets, I have seen it. And I liked it immensely.

L.L.: Did you? I'm glad you felt like myself...Good...Thank you.

Crainic: Thank you....





February 5, 1970 RADIO

Bertrand Russell

Leon Levitchi

When a man dies at a very advanced age, we, the quick, usually mourn more or less formally or conventionally - even when he happens to be a relative or a friend...; for it is in the nature of the quick, even if we happen to be old, to side with the young ones - and it is only when a young man or woman passes away that we sincerely become sentimental. But when the very old man who dies is a very great man - a man who has made ~~existy~~ human society greater and better and more intelligent - well, then, without necessarily becoming sentimental, we cannot help regretting the loss in some sentimental way, in a way which resembles the way we feel when somebody eternally young shares the common ~~is~~ lot of humanity. And this is precisely the case of the very old man who has been, is, and will be the ~~philosopher~~ English philosopher and logician Bertrand Russell; the peace-lover and peace-promoter, the Humanist. To my mind, it would be perfectly ridiculous to enumerate ~~the merits~~ here the merits of ~~a~~ such a personality whose contribution to the stock of human knowledge is so great that if there is someone who has never heard his name, it is that someone who should be blamed! I shall only confine myself to mention one fact which has, in my professional life, ~~given~~ been a mighty impetus: the reading of one of Russell's books, namely Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy - despite my structural dislike of mathematics... I am referring to chapters XVI and XVII where the ~~phi~~ thinker underlines the importance of the definite article THE: "It may be thought excessive to devote two chapters to one word, but to the philosophical mathematician it is a word of very great importance..." (p.167) Need I say that Russell thus points out the passage from the expressing the particular to the expressing the general? ("I heard the nightingale singing" - and "The nightingale is a singing bird?") Allow me to conclude by a generalizing the: Nature is not faultless; and one of her greatest flaws is when she suffers the great man die.

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①

Rumanian folklore is one of the richest and most beautiful ~~possessions~~ in the general ~~theatre~~ treasury of European folk literature. For centuries together folklore was almost the only form of cultural life of the ~~Rumanian~~ people, since the ruling classes were as alien to it as they were active in robbing the people of the fruits of its toil.

Now, of all kinds of (folk productions), the popular ballad is, undoubtedly, the most representative and the most interesting, rivalling in scope and importance only with the well-known English and Scottish popular ballads. The parallel ~~which~~ is far from being a forced one and, to my mind, an ample comparative study of content, motifs, versification, and many other aspects would prove most fruitful.

Among the very general considerations I'm going to make in this connection there is one which refers particularly to the so-called ballads of outlawry — Rumanian equivalent: "baladele haiducesti", the "haiduci" being ~~fight~~ outlaws, people fighting for national independence and social justice. In brief, the ballads ~~depict~~ Robin Hood type or "social ballads" whose heroes, such as Robin Hood or Allan-a-Dale or Adam Bell or George-a-Greene, took to the woods where they robbed the rich to help the poor and destitute; in Rumanian folklore, Cardea, Toma Alimos or Jenua lui Kovac. With an essential difference, however: in English popular ~~Scottish~~ ballads, the outlaws fight against the nobles, yet support the crown in which they see a necessary centralized authority, required by certain specific historical & social circumstances; in Rumanian popular ballads, the outlaws or "haiduci"



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~~Outlaw~~ fight both against the nobles and the prince, frequently the creature of the oppressing Turks. In the woods the outlaw lived in perfect freedom and the ballad praises his valour:

Foai verde, orice-as fi,
Cit oi fi, rit oi tradi,
ha mimu' n-oi caciuli.

In a rough translation: greenleaf, greenleaf, whatever might become of me, as long as I am, as long as I live, never shall I fawn on anyone. By the way, let me point out the recurrent

"foai verde" (greenleaf) in most Rumanian ballads, indicative of the outlaws' natural background, and its English counterpart which we come across in outlaw balladry: "when the leaves are green" in the merry month of May" or "in the green forest" or "green are the leaves", etc.

It is characteristic of the ballads of outlawry of both countries that the respective heroes are not alone in their fight; they are surrounded by staunch friends and often enough the peasants of the villages assist them, giving them food and shelter.

Many of the motifs occurring in English ballads are to be met with in Rumanian ballads as well. By way of illustration, let me mention King John and the Abbot of Canterbury, seemingly a late variant of King Alfred and the Abbot, whose main idea is to be found both in the German Der Kaiser und der Abt and in the Rumanian ballad Stefan cel Mare si purcarul — that is Stephen the Great (an illustrious Moldavian prince) and the Swineherd —

in which the wit and humour of simple folk ~~are~~ are shown to prevail over the cleverness of scholars.

In point of form there are many devices common to the ballads of both countries: abrupt beginnings, compulsory presence of dialogues, simplicity of language, absence of natural descriptions, presence of assonances, directness of address, use of





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magic numbers, description of elementary, primary feelings, and so on. On the other hand, while English popular ballads generally resort to the fixed classical form of four-line stanzas based on alternating iambic tetrameters and trimeters, Rumanian popular ballads are usually made up of trochaic lines rhyming in couplets. More often than not we find groups of 3 or even more lines rhyming with one another, chiefly when the last words of the lines are verbs, which ~~also~~ contributes a lot to the sing-song character of the narrative. Of the narrative, for Rumanian popular ballads, although probably originating in lyrical poetry (not unlike English popular ballads), are specifically a species of the epic genre.

As to the formal device of repetition, it is as largely used in them as in their English equivalents; both as a form of sing-song incantation and, which is far more important, as an element that makes the action and the presentation of characters as clear as possible. For it is a feature ~~to be~~ common to all folklore productions to be transmissible, the first test of genuine art: not abstruse, unintelligible, abstractionist, nonsensical art, but art with a clear message in it, art, which, in the words of one of the greatest old Rumanian folklorists, is "from the people gather'd, to the people render'd."





5/VI-71

G. Ibrăileanu

Under the sponsorship of UNESCO, on

L. Levițchi

Crainic: ~~On~~ May ~~23rd~~ the 23rd we celebrated ~~the~~ one hundred~~th~~
~~thirty~~ years since the birth of a great Romanian literary critic,
 Garabet Ibrăileanu (1871-1936). Scientific sessions/ and various other
 manifestations took place throughout the country, but the festivities
 in Iași (or Jassy), the Moldavian town where Ibrăileanu edited the im-
 portant literary journal "Romanian Life", where he was university profes-
 sor of Romanian literature and where he lived to the very end of his
 life, were perhaps the most impressive. Dr Leon Levițchi, Head of the De-
 partment of English Literature, Bucharest University, participated in the
 Jassy scientific session organized by the Jassy University in cooperat-
 ion with the Society of Philologic Studies. You also delivered a paper
 there, professor -

L.L.: Yes, I did. Although Ibrăileanu was chiefly interested in Ro-
 manian literature and culture, he wrote quite a few ^{remarkable/} articles on foreign
 writers and works; and it is precisely with them that I tried to deal in
 my own paper, its title being "G.I. and World Literature".

Crainic: May I ask you - mmm - were you asked to write a paper on
 this subject?

L.L.: No, it was the other way round. I asked the Society of Philolo-
 gic Studies to allow me to take the floor - and I'll tell you why. I'm ve-
 ry fond of Ibrăileanu - I find him extremely congenial in matters of
 literary criticism - in Weltanschauung - in many, many things...

Crainic: Will you kindly go into some specific details?

L.L.: Of course. Let me mention some of his essential propositions:

"We want as much foreign culture as possible. Not one people should
 be impervious to the culture of other peoples..." ~~With~~ With the qualifi-
 cations: "There can only be question of what was and is fit, suitable to
 the needs and the soul of the Romanian people..." Now aren't these great
 words? aren't they topical? "We must," writes Ibrăileanu, "we must"

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understand once and for all that we cannot have any kind of literature, but only that which suits our realities...It's so very simple!" Ibrăileanu goes on illustrating the maladjustments of Baudelaire in Romanian literature, despite the fact that he adored the French poet. A great lover of good literature, Ibrăileanu considers that one of the main tasks of a critic is to recommend it to the public. Here is what he writes about Thomas Hardy: "We are not going to write here a study on Thomas Hardy... We merely want to draw our readers' attention to this novelist, ~~xxx~~.... to serve ~~the~~ the readers, to ~~them~~ render them a service - to show them a source of exquisite intellectual pleasure..." Well, the frequency of such utterances in Ibrăileanu's articles and studies convinces us very soon of the permanence of an attitude, of something beyond dogmas and tenets...

Crainic: You seem to define him - that is Ibrăileanu - in terms of a good literature enthusiast...-

L.L.: That's right. He very seldom splits hairs; he is just trying to convince or, rather, persuade - "read this" or "that", and "you'll be rewarded". If we do understand this fundamental point in the critic's manner, we shall easily understand two other things: first, his lavish lapidary generalizations, for example: "Byron is the poet of the revolt against life's narrowness..."; secondly, his propensity for superlatives, e.g. "The Blessed Damozel" by D.G. Rossetti is a poem of an angel-like spirituality", or: "With Thomas Hardy the greatest novelist of recent times and one of the rare novelists of the present ~~time~~ moment has disappeared"-

Crainic: Are we to understand that Ibrăileanu refuted a scientific approach to critical analysis?

L.L.: By no means. But, as I have already said, he never split hairs. Largely influenced by the method of natural sciences, he recommended the analysis of a literary work at three distinct levels: a) ~~the~~ ^{its} anatomy ~~xxx~~; ~~xxxxx~~ b) its physiology; c) its etiology; and he often illustrated

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this viewpoint; for instance, in the case of Thomas Hardy. His very brief article on Charles Dickens is, perhaps, an exception. ~~Now~~ It is just an attitude - let me ~~now~~ quote: "Quite recently Dickens was treated with a certain coldness and disdain by some European intellectual ~~now~~ circles... But those who, in a work of art, look above all for the creative genius and the great soul, have never ceased to admire the titan...."

Crainic: Were he still alive, Ibrăileanu would be glad to see how many of Dickens's works are translated into Romanian -

L.L.: I'm sorry, I can't agree to your point of view. It's not a matter of how much Dickens we have translated - it's a matter of how much Dickens is still being read in this country! Our publishing houses are ~~now~~ printing thousands upon thousands of volumes and that is, obviously, remarkable; but the fact that the thousands upon thousands of volumes of good literature are sold - very frequently sold out! - is, to my mind, still more remarkable. Don't ~~think~~ you think so?

Crainic: I do, of course.

L.L.: And isn't that the greatest homage we can pay to the memory of our great forerunner?

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Lectiile de engleză la radio

D. Duțescu și L. Levițchi

Crainic: For several years now - more exactly since 1962 - Radio Bucharest has broadcast different level series of ~~English~~ ^{foreign languages} ~~xxx~~ radio lessons. We have invited to our studio Mr Dan Duțescu and

~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ Leon Levițchi, members of the Department of English Literature at Bucharest University, who all these years have written and presented the English by radio lessons. Mr Levițchi, tell us, please, how have these lessons been conceived and programmed?

L: Well, quite obviously we began with the beginning, that is with the beginners....

D: Whom we obviously addressed in Romanian....

L: With as much English in it as possible....

D: and with as little Romanian as possible in the subsequent stages.

~~That is~~ We have already broadcast several series for beginners, two or three for intermediate students, and ~~one or~~ two for advanced students.

Crainic: Will you kindly tell us something about the content of these lessons?

L: At the beginning, the text ~~xxxxxxxx~~ of the lesson - that is the English text - was made up of very simple patterns and structures with a gradual and ~~perpetricious~~ ^{parsimonious} introduction of new vocabulary...

D: ... with stress laid on ~~the~~ spoken, even colloquial English. Later on we gave not only texts written by ourselves, but also - and gradually more so - excerpts from English writers....

L: Oscar Wilde, Jerome K. Jerome, Bernard Shaw....

Crainic: Did you lay much store by grammar?
- especially

D: Unfortunately for the listeners, one can't do without grammar

L: ...even in the case of English....

D: ... but of course we did our best to be as moderate as possible and ^{administer} ~~give~~ grammar in tiny digestible pills.

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Crainic: How did you teach your listeners - you just expounded the new problems of vocabulary and grammar

L: - and pronunciation....

Crainic: - or what?

D. NO. We formed ourselves into a class. The two of us were the teachers, and two young girls were our pupils - students at the University -

L - and very good too, with a good pronunciation....

Crainic: So they only pretended not to know English....

L: That's right. They ~~xxxxxx~~ were even made to make mistakes - of which they were not guilty. It was part of the METHOD, you know.

D. The kind of mistakes which a beginner is expected to make and the teacher comes and corrects them.

L.- We sort of acted our lessons.

D.- We went even so far as to sing songs and impersonate characters.

Crainic: How about the results? What was the response of the public?

D. We have been in touch with our listeners all the time - by means of letters.

L.- Heaps of them - from all over the country - teachers, school children, students, workers, civil servants, etc. And, ~~were read~~ much to our pleasure, very many of these letters were worded in English, by people who had no previous knowledge of this language.

D.- ~~Byx~~ And let me add that the English of some of them was remarkably good.

L.- We even received letters in English verse....
they

D.- These letters were of great help to us, for enabled us to know the response of ~~xxx~~ our listeners and adapt our method, our rate of advance, to the ~~average~~ ability of the average listener.

L.- These lessons were broadcast ~~once~~ ^{twice} a week, once during the morning programme, and - the same lesson - during the afternoon programme, so that the largest number of listeners - including those who work in shifts, ~~may~~ might benefit by them. And, as a last remark, we endeavour to make these lessons as humorous, ~~and thereby as attractive as possible~~ ^{and thereby as attractive as possible}....

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*Shak.*

Lev. Oricât de curios ar putea părea la prima vedere, deși limbile română și engleză se deosebesc foarte mult între ele (limba română este o limbă ~~latină~~ romanică, iar engleza ~~germanică~~ este germanică; limba română are foarte multe elemente sintetice - desinente - pe câtă vreme engleza modernă este pronunțat analitică ș.a.m.d.), există în ambele și unele trăsături comparabile dacă nu neapărat întru totul asemănătoare; astfel, marea varietate de straturi lexical-stilistice: limbajul familiar, arhaic, arhaizant, elevat, popular etc. De aici, transpuneri posibile pentru traducător. Ca să nu mai vorbim de o serie de paralelisme de ordin versificatoric, metrul, ritmul - socotesc necesară sublinierea mai ales în lumina dificultățile metrice care stau în calea circulației poetice între versul românesc și cel francez.

Mai mult decât atât. Există asemănări de ordin versificatoric - și nu numai versificatoric ci, de-o vorbă, și de ordinul "tonalității", al "atmosferei", al "modalității", ca să folosesc un termen lingvistic - asemănări, spuneam, între unii poeți români sau americani. / și englezi. Dacă ar fi să traduc din Eminescu, cred că aș reciti o seamă de poezii din Dante Gabriel Rossetti, din Coleridge, din Poe, și din Burns; din Byron; traducând din Coșbuc, m-aș gândi la Burns - neapărat. De altfel, așa și am procedat acum cîtăva vreme, când am tradus cîteva poezii de Coșbuc în limba engleză pentru Romanian Review. Am la îndemînă o strofă pentru exemplificare; cu îngăduința dvs, o voi citi mai întîi în limba engleză:

I'm hungry, naked, homeless, through
With all the loads I have to carry;
You've wrong'd me, spat me, beat me. Marry!
A dog I've been to you!
Vile lord, by winds brought to this land,
If hell itself gives you free hand
To tread us down and make us bleed,
We will endure both load and need,
The plough and harness, yet, take heed -
We ask for land !

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Nădăjduiesc că ,dintre ascultătorii noștri,cei care cunosc limba engleză (trebuie,firește,să adaug) bine ,au recunoscut încercarea de a traduce "Noi vrem pământ":

Flămînd și gol,făr'de-adăpost,

Mi-ai pus pe umeri cît ai vrut

Și m-ai scuiat și m-ai bătut

Și cîine eu ți-am fost!

subiect: D. D. - au spus?

Dan D.-

Bantaș - (difficultăți tehnice)

Lev O reflecție - după părerea mea,extrem de... la subiect.Sau mai curînd - a nedumerire și un început de revoltă care făgăduiește să devină profundă.S-a tradus și se traduce enorm în țara noastră.Dar cum este posibil ca pînă la ora actuală să nu avem traduceri,volume de traduceri decente din Eminescu,din marii poeți români ,clasici și contemporani,în limba engleză??? Cînd avem nu o mîină,ci un ciorchine de traducători din română în engleză care ar putea - în sfîrșit! - ~~XXX~~ ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ cu însuflețire! - competent! - ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ să transpună pe portative englezești muzica poeziei românești autentice!!! Este o carență de neiertat a editurilor. Este vorba de un act fundamental de cultură. Cu atît mai necesară este o asemenea activitate,cu cît numeroși englezi și americani ar fi foarte doritori să cunoască poezia noastră . Firește,ideal ar fi s-o citească în original; dar este știut că anglo-saxonii nu au talente deosebite în învățarea limbilor străine; inclusiv a limbii române,față de care există ,de altfel,un interes sporit.

ce-i de făcut?

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Sesiunea jubiliara stiintifica dedicata aniversarii a 25 de ani de la întemeie -
rea Republicii Socialiste Romania

Facultatea de limbi si lit. germanice

Crainic: Last week, on December 16th and 17th, the Faculty of Germanic languages
and literatures, Bucharest University, celebrated the 25th anniversary of
our Republic by organizing a scientific session of both the teaching staff
and the students. Echoes have reached us that it was a very - if I may say
so - "fruitful" session, with a great number of papers delivered -

L. Levițchi: Thirty-five papers in all - of which twenty-seven the contribu-
tion of the English section...

Crainic: That was professor doctor Leon Levitchi, head of the Department of
English Literature, who participated in the session both in character of
chairman and speaker....

L.L.: And, chiefly, of auditor... You'll admit, it's the most comfortable ^{position} ~~xxxx~~
~~xxxx~~ - you just sit down and listen and whenever there's something you
consider to be of interest, you put it down and -

Crainic: I'm sure there was a wide range of topics discussed -

L.L.: Very wide, indeed. Let me give you an idea by mentioning some of the
titles (I have the list with me). "English romantic poets in the criticism
of Dobrogeanu-Gherea". "Camil Petrescu and Henry James". "Faulkner in Ro-
mania". "The public and melodrama in 19-th century England". "Katabasis
in Defoe's novels". "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf in the light of the
Game Theory." "Dylan Thomas's 'Before I Knocked' Analysed on Semiotic
Principles." Special mention should be made of the students' contri-
butions - not very many - just three in all - but all of them very in-
teresting, very refreshing, like a spring-gale in the middle of September.

Crainic: Youthful enthusiasm and all that -

L.L.: Yeees, and more than that: a kind of youthful maturity, if there is no
blatant incongruity in terms. The three papers which they delivered

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were very mature in point of content and very youthful in tone. One of them dealt with "Milton, the Defender of Civil Liberties", another with "External Nature in Neo-Classical Poetry", and the third with "Sonnet 43 by Shakespeare". Of course, we may not agree to the idea that in the works of the neo-classical poets external nature was something horrible - I mean exclusively horrible -, or that in Sonnet 43 Shakespeare was a master artist. But we cannot help subscribing to the tone or modality in which these 2-nd and 3-rd-year students upheld their views, that is with utmost participation: they were angry when Milton was angry, and overweening when the neo-classics were overweening! Frankly and honestly, our students' papers were up to the mark. Very much in brackets, quite a large number of our students are highly promising: their English is more than satisfactory, ~~xxx~~ their general culture is far better than our own general culture when we were 18 or 19 or 20 year⁵old, and their literary sensibility is absolutely remarkable.

Crainic: Excuse me, professor, would you really style them "scientific" contributions?

L.L.: Unhesitatingly. These young people, you know, may make mistakes as to information; ~~xxx~~ they may also make mistakes concerning the ^{sacred} ~~xxx~~ rules of composition; but their arguments - I forgot to tell you that they DO NOT SPEAK AT RANDOM - are logical, therefore scientific. And - as I have already pointed out - they come with an enthusiasm which is not characteristic of full-grown men; a kind of involvement and pleasure, which reminds me of Shakespeare's well-known line from The Taming of the Shrew, "No profit grows where is no pleasure taken."

Crainic: After all, emotional participation is or should be characteristic of any scientific research work -

L.L.: It couldn't be otherwise. To put it in very simple terms, love is knowledge! You first think of a possible subject, then you come to know more about it, then you begin to like it, then to love it, then your knowledge increases, and so on. Leaving aside the obligatory exceptions, I am sure that

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our students' teachers ~~themselves~~ - that is ourselves - also chose their subjects as a result of some affinity with them, and treated them from the vantage ground of emotional interest and even ... love. More subdued, of course, in accordance with the ~~progress~~ more advanced age and with the virtues of the proverb, "Love me little and love me long."

Crainic: Isn't it a sort of identification with the subject?

L.L.: Definitely. It has long been my belief that the more you probe into a problem the more you like it and the more you become part of it, or, the more it becomes part of you. Let me illustrate. I have never had an admiration for Piers Plowman by William Langland, the ~~exceedingly~~ great poet of the 14-th century. Well, for the festive scientific session I did not very much hesitate in choosing my subject; and my option was for Piers Plowman, for I did not know more about this poem than was necessary for the lectures I usually deliver to the students of the first year at our faculty. It may seem ridiculous, of course: I chose a subject I did not know very much about. But, I said to myself: I can't love or hate this poem before I know it. So, the first thing to do is to get acquainted with it (pencil in hand, leaving bibliography aside). After days and weeks of concentrated work I may say I am satisfied with the result: I have come to love Langland. He is great. And his poem is great. In point of content he, Langland, proves that the real way to get at Truth is by WORK, and in point of modality - well, he is as great a humourist as Chaucer! The long, lank, stern-looking Will is a woeful prejudice. I don't know whether I have succeeded in proving my point to my audience. But I do believe in my ~~thine~~ final assessment. And I thank you for the opportunity you've given me to state it -

Crainic: Thank you, Mr Levițchi -





Sesiunea științifică studențească "Ben Jonson"

Fac. de limbi și literaturi germanice

Crainic: Our guest tonight is Prof.Dr.Leon Levitchi, Head of the Department of English Literature, ~~at~~ the Faculty of Germanic Languages and Literatures, Bucharest University. Mr Levitchi, the rumour has reached us that not very long ago you celebrated Ben Jonson's four hundredth birth anniversary...

L.L.: Rumours are either right or false; the rumour that has reached you is not false. On December the 15-th our faculty, or rather, the Department of English Literature of our faculty, or, rather, the students' Debating Society of the Department of English Literature of our faculty, celebrated this anniversary. Much to our shame - I must confess - it was the students' initiative, not ours. In early November a thin, scholarly-looking first-year student who is going to take an examination in Renaissance English literature with me next June came up to me and said, "Excuse me, professor - do you really think that Ben Jonson was a very UNimportant English writer?" I replied, "Well, I admire him (as Dryden said), but I love Shakespeare; still, I don't understand your hint - ". "It wouldn't be amiss, then," she said, "to somehow celebrate him." "Celebrated?" I cried out. "Why?" She looked me up in the face and said in an unambiguous kind of voice: "For he was born in 1572." "Was he?" I said doubtfully. My memory is not very retentive and, for that matter, I very little care about dates (excepting Shakespeare and some other comparable authors). "As we are in 1972, can't we and shouldn't we - ?" "Of course!" I said. ~~xxxx~~ "Let's. After all - the connection came late to my mind - the 15-th Stratford Shakespeare Conference included Ben Jonson's name in its title, ~~x~~ so it is meet and proper that we should celebrate Ben Jonson, ~~we~~ should."

Crainic: And you did it.

L.L.: Yes. We immediately sent word to colleagues and students and we were happy to find that no fewer than 9 teachers and students were willing to

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say or write something about Ben Jonson in December, more exactly on December the fifteenth. To be frank with you, I didn't expect so many people would answer in the affirmative.

Crainic: I apologize - you seem to have certain doubts concerning the popularity of Ben Jonson in our country -

L.L.: Yes. Theoretically and Platonically, if you want, Ben Jonson is great. But even in our English department he does not enjoy the popularity of a Shakespeare, of a Marlowe, of a Byron, of a Swift.

Crainic: He hasn't been very much translated, either.

L.L.: Right you are. We can only boast Volpone, in an excellent version by Mihnea Gheorghiu. Ben Jonson is still a mere name with us, even though we know a lot of things about him from literary histories or from various books of criticism. As to his popularity among our students in the English department, well - once more I have to be frank with you, there is no enthusiasm about him. Anyhow, the important thing is that we did celebrate him, to say nothing of the interest which he roused. One of our second-year students spoke of Ben Jonson's tragedies, showing that Jonson did his utmost to prove that Shakespeare, drawing on Plutarch, was less accurate than he in matters of history. Another student showed the lyrical aspect of Ben Jonson's work, the illustrations being taken from The Sad Shepherd. An assistant-lecturer drew a parallel between the Italian and the English editions of Every Man In His Humour, pointing out the improvements of the second variant. Another assistant-lecturer showed, and very convincingly too, that Ben Jonson was not only a great representative of his own theory of humours as a playwright, but also a great poet, capable of sensibility both in Drink to me only with thine eyes and in a great number of lyrical passages in his plays (the invocation of gold in Volpone, etc.).

Crainic: May I ask you if you, too, contributed with a paper?

L.L.: Yes - I did. I spoke about "Three Linguistic Analogies Between Shakespeare and Ben Jonson."

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Crainic: Linguistic?!

L.L.: Linguistic. The epithet is horrid, but once you come to terms with it, you may accept it. Linguistic—that is, having something to do with language. And since the whole of literature is couched in words, that is in lexical-grammatical units belonging to a language, you can't separate literature from language, can you? To make a long story short, I tried to evince that there is a very close relationship between Jonson's Every Man In His Humour and Shakespeare's Henry IV or Henry V or The Merry Wives; also, between Volpone and Timon of Athens; also, between The Alchemist and The Tempest. It is very, very strange indeed that scholars have not brought out these analogies or, parallelisms.

Crainic: May I ask you: who borrowed from whom?

L.L.: God only knows, who was the borrower and who the lender. As I take it, the significant fact is that there was much borrowing and lending between the two. And – still more significant, or, rather puzzling – that literary histories and even special works do not tell us very much about this kind of intercourse. Shakespeare has been confused with Marlowe, with Walter Raleigh, with Lord Derby. He has never been confused with Ben Jonson. I can very well understand that. Yet these two people had something in common, even after the War of the Theatres. Over a glass of wine or ale, they probably talked about common themes.

Crainic: Do you mean that –

L.L.: I simply mean that, like Robert Greene who wrote his Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay to show that he could write a better play than Doctor Faustus by Marlowe, it is not at all improbable that, during a carousal, Shakespeare, or Jonson, said to his interlocutor: "I'll show you and the world that I can write a better play than you." It is perfectly human; and the blame should not be laid at anybody's door. Let me conclude by saying that great writers have always been great borrowers and lenders. What else can be said beyond this asseveration???? Thank you very much.

Crainic: Thank you very much, Mr Levitchi.

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Morfologia limbii engleze...

L. Levițchi

Crainic: And so, Prof. Levițchi, your latest course in English morphology has come out....

L.L.: Latest and perhaps last - I'm weary of fighting against the modern fashions in the blood - to quote Hamlet . Language is not only grammar or only lexicology or only phonology. It is ~~XXXX~~ both grammar and lexicology (vocabulary) and phonology and human sensibility or sensitiveness. It is in this spirit that I tried to write my Introduction to English Morphology....

Crainic: Just an/ ... introduction ?

L.L.: Yes - an introduction, nothing more. To my mind, people are so far from grammar now as they were centuries ago - with the result that they do not know their whereabouts, looking upon grammar/ as just another system of signs (~~unintelligible~~) and idiotic....

Crainic: How do you mean?

L.L.: I remember Henry Sweet saying that "grammar is the science of language". But, of course, it isn't. Grammar is but a branch of linguistics. And, it goes without saying, a very important/ one. It teaches one how to study structures....

~~XXXX~~ Crainic: Are you an adept of structuralism?

L.L. / No. Grammar is a brach of/ⁿ linguistics, it teaches one how to use the forms of words and words in sentences or phrases in close connection with semantics and - I hope I am right - in close connection with modality or ~~emotion~~ or - "the attit/ⁿude of the speaker towards the utterance".

Crainic: I must confess, I don't quite grasp your meaning....

L.L.: I had better make recourse to a concrete illustration. John makes the acquaintances/ of Mary but, as Mary loves George, she is unwilling to meet John at a party... John: Well, Mary, won't you join us? Mary: I'm sorry, I really can't... Now, this "really I can't" speaks volumes.... Just try and translate it into Roma-

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nian or any other modern language; you'll find out that it is not an easy job! To be frank with you, I subscribe to Charles Bally and to all those who maintain that the actual soul of an utterance is its modality, ~~(the attitude of the speaker towards the utterance)~~.

Crainic: Is it in this spirit that you have conceived your....

Introduction to a Course in English Morphology?

L.L.: Yeess. It is very important for a student to know the rules (of morphology and syntax), but it is as important, I think, to know - how shall I put it? - the movements of the human soul! (both for analysis and translation). The attitude of indignation, for example, can be rendered in thousands of ways: a declarative sentence: You've done a monstrous thing! interrogative: How can you have done ^hsuch a thing? interrogative-negative: Don't you think you've done a monstrous thing? and so on. By the way, these are not things that I've compiled from books of grammar; they have come to the fore as a result of my translations from English into Romanian; also, from Romanian into English.

Crainic: Am I to understand that your Course in Morphology is largely traditional?

L.L.: / It is largely traditional - with here and there personal annotations.

Crainic: Is it a course meant for the students of English in your Institute of Foreign Languages?

L.L.: Yes; as a sort of starting point; like any other English grammar book. It's just a book of reference; not a scholarly work, anyway. In other words, we applaud every student's imaginative flights, provided he has a launching platform... Let him or her speculate on the gerund, provided he or she ~~knows~~ is more or less familiar with this -ing form.... Any confusion with the verbal noun or with the verbal adjective is apt to ^{make us} pluck a student....

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Crainic: You seem to be very exacting...

L.L.: Well, just trying to imitate Hamlet: "I must be cruel in order to be good."

Crainic: Excuse me, professor, people consider grammatical rules a bit old-fashioned,... In English grammar, at least, there are so many exceptions....

L.L. : To be sure! But - exceptions to what? To standardized things! And we so very, very badly need some standardized pattern, be it - to cite Samuel Butler - even a 'hypothetical language' ! For, given the standardized form or pattern, we have a system of reference... It is I is standard. It is me is substandard. It is number one is slangy - and so on.... To my mind, it would be very awkward to start with It is me as a reliable pattern... Language - any language - is a system, and it is imperative to learn and teach it as such. That is exactly what I have tried to do. And whenever or wherever I have not succeeded, the blame should not be placed at the door of English grammar. English grammar may be as difficult and complicated as a modern motor-car, but it is a whole; and being a whole, it devolves on us to treat it many-sidedly.....

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Balada populare română și engleză

Grainic: Mr Leon Levițchi, lecturer of English language and literature in the University of Bucharest has just finished the translation of a number of English and Scottish ballads into Romanian; and the book is bound to come out....

Lev: Well, in fact, I finished the translation in January this year and the book is bound to come out very soon - say in a couple of weeks....

Grainic: I'm sorry, Mr L.

Lev: Never mind that - it's just a "technical inaccuracy". It matters very little indeed! The important thing is that AT LAST we're going to have a Romanian rendering of some of the most beautiful gems of English and Scottish popular ~~poetry~~ poetry! Not ~~forgetting~~ that the quality of the translation can possibly vie with that of the original.... It has been an awfully difficult task!

Grainic: Hmm - you emphasized laid some emphasis on AT LAST...

Lev: Exactly. However strange it may seem, very little is known in this country about the English and Scottish popular ballad, although every schoolboy is more or less acquainted with Shakespeare and Byron and Kipling - without exaggerating, whole libraries have been translated into Romanian; excepting ballads!

Grainic: Don't you think they represent a minor chapter in the history of English literature?

Lev: Of course not! The poetry of 19th century England is inconceivable without Coleridge (Rime of the Ancient Mariner) - and Coleridge is inconceivable without the English popular ballad (see Percy - Reliques of Ancient English Poetry, Scott - Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, and so on). To say the least! It is almost as much as to say that the history of Romanian literature can do without the Romanian popular ballad - which, I think, would sound pretty ridiculous to you, wouldn't it?

Grainic: Definitely. Romanian literature, from its most remote beginning up to Sadoveanu, is imbued with the spirit of Romanian folklore.

Lev: Certainly! It is really a pity that English literary historians know so very little about Romanian folklore. For, you see, extremely interesting parallels might be drawn between the

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two literatures.

Grainic: To put it bluntly, we, Romanians, know very little about English and Scottish ballads, and the English know approximately as much about our own ballads.

Levi: That's the truth about it. And the parallel is absolutely fascinating! We have quite a number of common leit-motifs - but that isn't very much of a richness - you'll find common leit-motifs everywhere (in French, German, Russian, etc. - for example KING JOHN AND THE BISHOP - Rom. Ștefan cel Mare și Porcarii...). The essential modalities described are the same: love, hatred, revolt against exploitation, jealousy, sincerity, falsehood.... That isn't much of a richness either.... A great number of English and Romanian popular ballads were composed in wooded regions, the wood and the forest being a ~~pleasant~~ shelter for the outlaws. There's something in it....

Grainic: ~~Many~~ You probably have in mind the so-called ballads of outlawry...

Levi: Yeses. The Romanian "frunză or foaie verde" (it's a refrain or just an evocative kind of verse) has its perfect correspondent in the English "greenleaf" - chiefly in the Robin Hood type of ballads. But there are other - most interesting - elements to be taken into account; evidently, some of them convergent, some others divergent (yet nonetheless significant). Popular customs, reactions, superstitions, etc. are very much the same. The metrical form of the poems isn't. The English favourite metre is iambic; the Romanian one, trochaic. The English pattern is strophical, ours is a sort of run-on verse - if I may borrow the term from Elizabethan poetry.... The beginning of an English ballad is mostly abrupt; the beginning of a Romanian ballad is usually ~~preparatory~~ circumstantial (One day, a man went to town...; A most beautiful lady once made up her mind to try her fortune... and so on and so forth). The English are implicit; we are not - we are explicit....

Grainic: Have all these details been an obstacle when you tried to translate things from one language into another?

Levi: Certainly - that was one of the hardest nuts to crack! - modality and what, ~~was~~ in technical terms, we are accustomed to call the anaphoric and the epiphoric elements... I'm happy it's all over...

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Grainic: Excuse me, didn't you enjoy the task?

Lev: I did - I did - enormously - but - between you and me and the pillar - post, it's much easier to translate Shakespeare or Beowulf! I'm in earnest.

Grainic: To be frank with you, I can't very well understand that

Lev: Well, Shakespeare's plays are written in blank verse - and that's a great blessing for the translator. Beowulf is difficult - but then you can have good annotated editions. English and Scottish ballads - there are so many collections of them - so many conflicting interpretations; besides, a ballad is a ballad, that is a poem composed by an infinite number of minds and hearts. And the translator is ONE. And he has to adjust himself to so many moods and thoughts and ... whims. And it's been four thousand...

Grainic: Four thousand...?


Lev: Yes - four thousand lives and even more. About 30 ballads.

Grainic: Not very many....

Lev: No. It's just a beginning. There is some consolation in the English proverb: Everything is difficult before it is easy.








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