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Yang De-you

On Marshak's Russian Translation of Robert Burns

Problems concerning translation is one of the subjects in the studies of comparative literature. S.Y. Marshak's Russian translation of Robert Burns's poetry is well-known in the Soviet Union and to scholars of Burns in the Western countries. Soviet critics have almost unanimously agreed that his translation is the best, which has entered the treasure-house of poetry in the Russian language. This paper will propose some arguments about this statement in a detailed analysis of some of Burns's poems which he translated.

Samuel Yakovlevich Marshak (1887-1964), Russian poet, writer of children's literature and translator, studied English language and literature at London University from 1912 till 1914. He published his first translations of William Blake, Wordsworth and English and Scottish ballads in 1915. His first translation from Burns was done in 1924, and for more than three decades he provided Soviet readers new translations from Burns each year. In volume four of his *Selected Works* (1960) there are additional "new translations" consisting of thirteen poems.

The largest selection of his translations from Burns appeared in 1963 in two volumes with an introduction by R. Rait-Kovaleva and a postscript by M. Molozov. The collection consists of two parts, "Songs and Ballads" and "Epigrams," containing a total of 171 poems, about one fourth of the number of poems Burns wrote.

Other editions of Marshak's translations from Burns which I have checked are:

Robert Burns: a Selection (Moscow, 1947); introduction by M. Molozov —contains forty-two poems.

Robert Burns: A Selection (Moscow, 1950); introduction by M. Molozov—contains ninety-four poems.

Lyrics (Moscow, 1971); introduction by R. Rait-Kovaleva; notes by M. Molozov—contains eighty poems.

It is interesting that the poems in all the above-mentioned editions are not arranged in chronological order. The 1947 edition begins with "John Barleycorn" followed by "Is there for Honest Poverty"; in 1950 and 1963 "Is there for Honest Poverty" is followed by "John Barleycorn."

Generally the order of poems was determined in the 1947 edition. No poem in these Russian editions is marked with the year of its composition, and this information is mentioned only very occasionally in the notes.

The reason for this order may lie in the general evaluation of Burns by Russian critics. Rait-Kovaleva says that Burns is close to

> all those, who love people, love their motherland and freedom, all those who defend peace and free labor, who struggle against the dark forces of war, slavery and hatred of mankind, which Burns struggled against in his immortal poetry.[1]

Though very general and oversimplified, this is typical of the method of literary criticism prevailing among Soviet critics, emphasizing the part literature plays in society, the relationship between literature and historical events, sometimes to the neglect of the aesthetical basis of an author's experiences found in their writings as well as the artistic value of a work of art.

Because of the non-chronological order of the poems in these editions, one cannot trace the development of the author's mentality and skills in creating the poems.

Marshak's theory of translation basically is revealed in his article "The Art of Poetical Portraiture."[2] Here are some passages I translated from the Russian text:

> Artistic translation is completely different, unimaginable without engaging the soul, without imagination, intuition—in a word, without anything indispensable for creation....(p. 335-6)

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[1]*Selections of Robert Burns*. Trans. S. Marshak. 2 vols. (Moscow, 1963), I, 68. All translations from Russian are mine.

[2]*Works*, 4 vols. (Moscow, 1961), IV, 335-346.

> Let this art be defined with any term, if only both the translator and the reader could imagine in their integrity all the complications and difficulties of the mastery, whose mission is to reproduce, in another language, the innermost ideas, images, the finest shades of feelings, which have already the maximum exact expression in the language of the original....(p. 336)

> We understand that even the replacement of a single word with another in poems or in artistic prose will be essential. In translation, notably, it is not one word, but all the words which are to be replaced by others, which belong to another language system, different in its specific structure of speech, with innumerable whims and caprices....(p. 336)

> It is necessary to feel profoundly the nature of the native language in order not to give in to foreign diction, not to be captured by it. At the same time, Russian translation from French should be considerably different in its style and coloring from Russian translation from English, Estonian or Chinese....(p. 337)

> In translating poems one must understand what to sacrifice, if words of a foreign language turn out to be shorter than one's own.... (p. 337)

> The excellent tradition of the art of Russian translation has always been alien to dry and pedantic literalism....(p. 337)

> Yet, if you attentively take the best from among our poetical translations, you will find out that all of them are children of love, not a marriage out of interests...truly poetical translations should be built up, not fabricated.

> Poems of outstanding poets are translated for readers who will not only get acquainted with the approximate content of their poetry, but also truly love for a long time....(p. 337)

Marshak's principles are certainly acceptable to translators of poetry, yet his principles can be understood and interpreted in many different ways due to the nature of his generalizations. The problem is to what degree one could use these principles in translation, and to what degree one should enjoy freedom in translating. The analysis of Marshak's own translation may throw some light on this issue. My comparative reading of Burns's poems in both English and Russian has made it possible for me to trace a part of Marshak's translation process and his method.

Marshak's translations from Burns are, in a certain sense, highly successful. The Russian version of each of Burns's poems sounds beautifully rhythmical, natural in truly Russian phrases and expressions, free from any high-sounding words or clichés, though of course, most Russian words are multisyllabic, with complicated declension and conjugation endings and a surprisingly free word order, which presumably makes Russian poetical writing easier.

It is necesary to compare translations to Burns's original works. Such comparison is justified since Marshak's versions must be highly readable, artistically beautiful and melodious. Russian readers must find them

touching, familiar in their presentation; but, on the other hand, they must also retain their original features, for they are expressive of feelings, yearnings and emotions related to Scottish culture as a whole.

How well Marshak succeeded in his translations will be examined in a representative selection of Burns's poems. Burns's text and a literal translation of Marshak's are given, and my comments follow. Where necessary the word order of the translations has been altered to conform to English practice; occasionally a word has been added in brackets for clarity.

"JOHN BARLEYCORN"

There are fifteen stanzas in Burns, fourteen in Russian; Marshak has omitted stanza ten. The reason for Marshak to omit this stanza is not clear. It is not likely that he left it out by mistake, for in the 1947, 1950 and 1963 editions the poems is always in fourteen stanzas. We can only try to seek for the reason of this omission. It is true that John Barleycorn has so far suffered a lot: he was cut "by the knee," "cudgell'd," "hung," "heaved" into "a darksome pit," each of the tortures being cruel. And here, in this stanza, he is "toss'd to and fro," which may be thought not bad enough, as in the following stanza 11, "they wasted the marrow of his bones," and "crush'd him between two stones," which is, of course a great suffering. Did Marshak think that only the worst maltreatments could expose how cruel and barbarian his oppressors were? Or that the detail in this stanza was not important enough to be rendered into Russian? Or that it sounds like mere repetition? Or that the Russian text is to him approximate enough in content to the original even without this stanza? The translator keeps silent about his omission.

The rhyme of each stanza in the original is abab, octosyllabic iambic in odd lines and hexasyllabic iambic in even lines. The Russian version is presented exactly the same way.

There was three kings into the east,
Three kings both great and high,
And they hae sworn a solemn oath
John Barleycorn should die.

They took a plough and plough'd him down,
Put clods upon his head,
And they hae sworn a solemn oath
John Barleycorn was dead.

Three kings he incensed,
And it was decided,
That forever [must] die John Barleycorn.

Ordered to dig with a plough
A grave the kings,
That glorious John, a spirited fighter,
Not rise from the soil.

But the chearful Spring came kindly on,
And show'rs began to fall;
John Barleycorn got up again,
And sore surpris'd them all.

The sultry suns of Summer came,
And he grew thick and strong,
His head well arm'd wi' pointed spears,
That no one should him wrong.

The sober Autumn enter'd mild,
When he grew wan and pale;
His bending joints and drooping head
Show'd he began to fail.

His colour sickend more and more,
He faded into age;
And then his enemies began
To show their deadly rage.

They've taen a weapon, long and sharp,
And cut him by the knee;
Then ty'd him fast upon a cart,
Like a rogue for forgerie.

They laid him down upon his back,
And cudgell'd him full sore;
They hung him up before the storm,
And turn'd him o'er and o'er.

They filled up a darksome pit
With water to the brim,
They heaved in John Barleycorn,
There let him sink or swim.

They laid him out upon the floor,
To work him farther woe,
And still, as signs of life appear'd,
They toss'd him to and fro.

They wasted, o'er a scorching flame,
The marrow of his bones;
But a Miller us'd him worst of all,
For he crush'd him between two stones.

A hilly slope by grass was covered,
Rivulets filled with water,
And from the earth rises John Barleycorn.

Always so lush and staunch,
From the slope into the summer heat
He threatens with spears his enemies,
Swaying his head.

But mild autumn comes.
And heavily loaded
Drooping under the burden of cares,
Bending low old John.

The time to die arrived—
[With] winter not far away.
And there and then foes again
Came to the old man.

A hunchbacked knife brought him down,
With a blow from feet,
And as a rogue to parade,
They took him to threshing.

[The] cudgelling [of] John started
[By] scoundrels in the morning,
Then, tossing [him] up
[He] spun round in the wind.

In a well he was sunk
On the dark bottom.
But even in the water [he] didn't go down—John Barleycorn.

Not sparing his bones,
They threw them into a bonfire,
A heartless miller ruthlessly ground [him]
Between stones.

And they hae taen his very heart's blood,
And drank it round and round;
And still the more and more they drank,
Their joy did more abound.

John Barleycorn was a hero bold,
Of noble enterprise,
For if you do but taste his blood,
'Twill make your courage rise.

'Twill make a man forget his woe;
'Twill heighten all his joy:
'Twill make the widow's heart to sing,
Tho' the tear were in her eye.

Then let us toast John Barleycorn,
Each man a glass in hand;
And may his great posterity
Ne'er fail in old Scotland!

Boiled his blood in a cauldron
Under the hoop rages.
Flares up in jars on the table
And souls cheer up.

Reasonable was the late John
When alive—a good fellow—
He raises courage
From the bottom of human hearts.

He drives from the head
A boring swarm of worries;
With a jar the heart of a widow
From happiness sings.

So to the end of time
Let the bottom not dry up
In the keg—there gurgles John
Barleycorn.

1. Obviously, much of the original is lost here. Of course, Russian words are generally longer than English ones, but this linguistic problem should not be the grounds for too much of the content of the original to be cut off or changed.

The first two lines are condensed into two words "three kings"; "into the east", "both great and high" being brushed aside. It is accepted that eastern rulers were more cruel and despotic than perhaps the western ones. Marshak says that *John Barleycorn* "incensed" them. Despotic tyrants, often unreasonable and whimsical, need not have any pretext to kill their subjects; perhaps the proverb "give him a name and hang him" may best describe their sense of law and legal procedure. How can we know here that John has "incensed" him? Does Marshak mean to extol John's rebellious spirit against the oppressors by his having offended the three kings? And can a mere "it was decided" express "they hae sworn a solemn oath"? Also, in the eyes of some western Europeans, Russia belongs to the East, not only politically, but even geographically and ethnically. With this in mind, did Marshak simplify those details to be cautious, particularly because he may have translated this poem in the late 1930's? Though this speculation may not have much to do with the poem, yet the environment in which art is created needs to be taken into account.

2. In the original, the kings themselves "plough'd him down", though they are "great and high", they bury John alive in person as they really hate him, so here the "solemn oath" is repeated. By losing the whole of the

original third line, the Russian version attaches importance to their dignity and omnipotence as they issue orders to have a grave dug. John is praised here by adding a line, i.e., the attributive "glorious" and the noun appositive "a fighter spirited" to him, both of which are absent in the original; "was dead" is changed into "not rise from the earth," an imaginative extension of meaning.

In his theory of translation, Marshak did not mention that the translator must know what to add and what to sacrifice, but his own translations show that he was well aware of the subtle alterations required to render the poetry of one language into that of another.

3. In Marshak's version no spring, no showers are mentioned; we have a sketch of landscape, a consequence of spring—grass covering slopes and water from showers filling up rivers to the brim. The dynamic is turned into the static. It seems no vestige whatsoever of translation could be traced here. Here John has only risen from the earth. The three tyrants stand behind the curtain. If the long Russian words have to squeeze out the whole last line with its message, is the translator sure that he his not able to find some means to stage it?

4. "Slope" is added in stanza three, so here it appears naturally. Looking down from a hill, he threatens his enemies, swaying his head, which is an added detail wanting in the original. If the original is integrated enough to let the protagonist look great, has a translator the right to change it? The original line 4 is cut off again. Could not the translator, instead of adding, try to reproduce what is already in the original?

5. Why has whole original line 2 disappeared? Since poetry gives imagery and colors, why is this line out of place? The first three words of line 3 have, it is true, the connotation reflected in the imagery of the Russian second line, yet they by no means contain the same detail. The three words of line 3 and the whole line 4 of the original seem to have melted into line 4 in translation. "Burden of cares" here is, again, an extension of meaning. It is hard not to interpret in translating, but since almost each person will have his own interpretation, it is a good idea not to interpret too frequently.

6. The first two Russian lines inform us merely of winter drawing close and the end of life. The imagery of John Barleycorn—turning old, yellow and weak—is left to the reader's imagination. The lines are mediocre compared with the original. If a translator, completely ignorant of Burns, had to turn these two lines back into English and respected the meaning and connotations in the translated version, he would have great difficulty in restoring the imagery of the original lines. The translator, it is

agreed, is responsible both to the author and to the reader. The freedom for the translator to express himself tends to be limited in the rendered text. He should be creative, but he should not put too much of himself into the translation.

The other two Russian lines lost what is prominently stressed in the last line of the original: to show their deadly rage. The kings only "come to the old man."

7. There are two types of sickle, one is long and straight, like that in the Soviet movie "And Quiet Flows the Don"; the other, the "hunchbacked one" is like that on the national flag of the Soviet Union. According to what Burns says here, "a long and sharp" sickle is probably of the first type. Using the first type, of bigger size, one will keep standing, whereas using that of smaller size or the second type, one has to keep bending low.

This detail need not have been changed, though "hunchbacked" here may have the connotation of wickedness and ugliness. Also the subject "they" is omitted, and the tool itself is being stressed, which will keep pace with the following sentence structure.

8. The Russian version missed the original first line "they laid him down upon his back" and "full sore," and added "the scoundrels in the morning." Is this retelling the story in one's own words?

9. Burns's first two lines are simplified into "a well," with part of the meaning of line 3 transplanted therein. Lines 3 and 4 are replaced by "John doesn't go down," in the active voice, perhaps to show that John is staunch, and thus the translator's idea is subtly inserted. The original fourth line "there let him sink or swim" means that the three kings wish to kill John, so they tort ure him. In this stanza, John again becomes the subject and therefore the coherence with the previous and following stanzas is weakened.

10. The original tenth stanza is omitted in the Russian version. The reason for the omission lies presumably in the similarity of both the imagery and language of this and the eighth stanza. Marshak might think this stanza superfluous, useless in the description of John's character. It is universally accepted that literature depicts life and the author's own experiences in details which must be faithful to life, expressive, emotional and vivid. Repetitions and refrains reinforce the effect of the whole. But, as a matter of fact, when it is necessary, they will describe man in production activities in detail. Burns must have known how to brew beer, that barleycorn is to be soaked, malted, dried, ground, etc., before being brewed. Stanzas 8 through 11 sketch some points of this procedure. Of

course, Burns describes them in a literary way to serve the imagery of the protagonist; therefore, they are reasonably important.

It is surprising that Marshak's translation was not revised in any of the editions from 1947 through 1971.

11. The translation says that they threw his bones into a bonfire, whereas the English original puts it as "They wasted, o'er a scorching flame, / The marrow of his bones." Again a detail is not accurately rendered, for "marrow of his bones" is not "mere bones"; "over a scorching flame" is not equal to throwing "into a bonfire."

12. The first two Russian lines describe John's blood boiling and raging in a cauldron, to show how energetic and vigorous John remains. The other two lines are about people's enjoyment of drinking the potion with the addition of "it flares in a jar on the table." The original stanza, however, only sings about people's drinking and their mirth.

13. The original second and third lines disappeared. That shows how well Marshak knew what to sacrifice. But in his remarks about translation he did not explain the reason that he might like to add material. In this stanza "reasonably," "when alive," and "from the bottom of human hearts" are all the translator's additions.

14. Again the original second and fourth lines are absent in the Russian translation, with the original "woe" developed into "boring swarm of worries," and "from happiness" added.

15. In the final stanza of Marhak the original imagery has almost completely disappeared. The English stanza is a logical development of the previous stanzas; John Barleycorn suffered very much, but he never gave in. Though his marrow and blood were ruthlessly changed into beer, he is not dead; his spirit still encourages and brings rapture to those who drink it. John Barleycorn is the embodiment of the intrinsic staunch spirit of the Scottish people, so Burns writes, "Then let us toast John Barleycorn...and may his great posterity / Ne'er fail in old Scotland!" It is a great pity that the Russian version omitted all this imagery, especially the two key phrases "his great posterity" and "old Scotland!"

Burns himself loved the Scottish people and Scottish cultural traditions which helped to make him the greatest poet in Scottish literature. "John Barleycorn" is, threrfore, highly representative of his ideas and feelings. Had he known Russian and lived on to read this verssion, he would probably not have appreciated the degree to which this Russian version deviates from his original.

SUCH A PARCEL OF ROGUES IN A NATION

FAREWELL to a' our Scottish fame,
Farewell our ancient glory;
Farewell even to the Scottish name,
Sae fam'd in marial story!
Now Sark rins o'er the Solway sands,
And Tweed rins to the ocean,
To make whare England's province stands,
Such a parcel of rogues in a nation!

What force or guile could not subdue,
Thro' many warlike ages,
Is wrought now by a coward few,
For hirling traitors' wages.
The English steel we could disdain,
Secure in valor's station;
But English gold has been our bane,
Such a parcel of rogues in a nation!

O would, or I had seen the day
That treason thus could sell us,
My auld grey head had lien in clay,
Wi' BRUCE and loyal WALLACE!
But pith and power, till my last hour,
I'll mak this declaration;
We're bought and sold for English gold,
Such a parcel of rogues in a nation!

THE SCOTTISH GLORY

Forever farewell, Scottish country
With your ancient glory,
The name itself farewell,
Motherland majestic!

Where Tweed rushes into the ocean
And Sark flows in the sand,—
Now the domain of the English,
The border of a province.

For ages they could not subdue us,
But a traitor betrayed us.
To the enemies of [our] native land
For a handful of damned money.

The steel of England many times
In battles we blunted.
But with gold the English
Bought us at the market.

A pity that I didn't fall in battle,When with the enemy
For glory and motherland
Our proved Bruce, Wallace, fought.

But ten times at the last hour
I will say openly:
Damnation for betraying us
[That] swindling parcel!

The original title "Such a parcel of rogues in a nation" is the final line of each of the three stanzas. It is repeated in the poem, presumably to condemn the traitors and to show Scots' love of their native country. The poem sounds both indignant and nostalgic, meant to kindle their patriotic feelings. The Russian title "The Scottish Glory" seems to strengthen the glorious historical past of the nation; a curse is rendered into a piece of glorification by denouncing the accomplices of the aggressors, and thus the tone of the poem is changed to some extent.

1. In the original the word "Scottish" appears twice, but only once in the Russian version. "Sae fam'd in martial story" becomes "majestic motherland," changing the meaning a great deal, particularly since the names of Bruce and Wallace appear later—which is the logic development of the statement "sae fam'd in martial story." "Majestic motherland" tends to be too general and ordinary, not able to imply the aspect of martial fame and unconquerable spirit.

2. Perhaps it is for the sake of rhythm that the original order of the first two lines is reversed. The original third line now is divided into two, with "Such a parcel of rogues in a nation" omitted.

3. In the Russian version the word "warlike" is missing as is "martial" in the first stanza.

4. The original second line "Secure in valor's station" is replaced by "in battles," which is not accurate; the Scots defeated their enemies mainly because they were brave, though their weapons were not up to those of the English. In a battle morale and courage are often more decisive than arms, which are of course also important. Again, in order to omit the repeated last line, the third one is extended into two lines, with the adverbial "on the market" added. Marshak's principle is to know what to sacrifice because Russian words are longer than English, yet he never discussed deletions and extending one original line into two in translation.

5. The translated fifth stanza has omitted the first and second lines, including the phrase "That treason thus could sell us" which is in keeping with the basic tone of the poem; "For glory and motherland" is added in Marshak's interpretation.

6. The last Russian stanza brushes off the expression "pith and power," working in concert with the above "in valor's station," and also "We're bought and sold for English gold" echoing the "English gold has been our bane." Here at last appears the curse. "Swindling parcel" appears in the translation, but without "in a nation" which is not unimportant, since enemies are always easy to identify, whereas the "parcel of rogues in a nation" is hard to discern, therefore more dangerous and hated.

ROBERT BRUCE'S MARCH TO BANNOCKBURN—	**BRUCE TO THE SCOTS**
Scots, wha hae wi' WALLACE bled, SCOTS, wham BRUCE has often led, Welcome to your gory bed,- Or to victorie-	You, who have [been] led into battle [By] Bruce, Wallace,- You, the enemy, at any price We are ready to repulse.
Now's the day, and now's the hour; See the front o' battle lour; See approach proud EDWARD'S power, Chains and slaverie.-	The day is near, the hour comes, The enemy mighty are at the gate. Edward leads the army- Chains and fetters.

Wha will be a traitor-knave?
Whae can fill a coward's grave?
Wha sae base as be a slave?
-Let him turn and flie:-

Wha for SCOTLAND'S king and law,
Freedom's sword will strongly draw,
Free-MAN stand, or FREE-man fa',
Let him follow me.-

By Oppression's woes and pains!
By your sons in servile chains!
We will drain our dearest veins,
But they shall be free!

Lay the proud Usurpers low!
Tyrants fall in every foe!
LIBERTY'S in every blow!
Let us Do—or DIE!!!

Those, who would lay down the sword
And lie like a slave in the grave,
It's better in time to dismiss,
Let them leave the ranks.

Let him remain in the ranks,
Who for his motherland,
Will live and fall in battle,
With the bravery of a hero!

The battle goes before our walls,
[Does] shameful captivity await us?
It's better [that] the blood of our veins
We present to [our] people.

Honour orders [us] to sweep
Oppressors away from the path,
And in battle attain
Death, or liberty!

Marshak abbreviated this fairly long title to read simply "Bruce to [the] Scots" since the Russian for "Scots" is a word of three syllables (*Shotlandtsy*), so with his title he could avoid this long word in the first stanza by using the pronoun *vy* (you). A long foreign title with a proper noun in it is always cumbersome for the average reader. As the key word "Bruce" is kept here, and "to [the] Scots" is added, the reader will expect what would be narrated in the poem. This is an example of the part interpretation plays in translations.

1. The first stanza, like the second and fifth, is written in contrasts, to make the spirit and determination of the resistance of the Scots appear more outstanding; it also helps with the tragic and powerful nature of the poem. The first Russian stanza has lost that basic feature by the omission of the detail "wha hae wi' WALLACE bled" and "Welcome to your gory bed"; "bleeding" and "gory" are both tokens of sacrifice and therefore able to arouse the addressees' will to fight bravely. The last two lines in Marshak are simply a statement that the Scots are ready to repulse the enemy.

2. In the original the second stanza is a laconic depiction of the looming battle; the second line "See the front o' battle lour" is reconstructed into "the haughty enemies are at the gate" which does not sound logical here, as Bruce's Scots are marching to the field of Bannockburn, not being besieged in a town.

3. The Russian third line has replaced the original emphatic "Wha sae base as a Slave?" with a mere "It's better to dismiss," whose object is the first word of the stanza "those." The original first three lines, three terse rhetorical questions, have been here blended into a lengthy compound-complex sentence and thus have lost the quick, accelerating rhythmical

tone. In translation, the atmosphere, the mood and the tempo of the original text are certainly difficult to transmit, but whenever it is possible, efforts should be made to reveal them by means of the language of the translated version.

4. The original first two lines, "Wha for SCOTLAND's king and law / Freedom's sword will strongly draw," are significant, as the word "Scotland" here is all capitalized to suggest the importance to Scots of their motherland, just as the Russians are particularly fond of the word "Russia" which repeatedly appears in Russian and Soviet poetry. "King and law," omitted here, almost synonyms in early modern times, were thought to be an embodiment of the subjects' interests, wishes and yearnings, an embodiment of the peace and prosperity of a nation. The notion of motherland is in one sense a more modern and abstract notion. Consequently this word can hardly denote the implications of "king and law," not to mention the capitalized "SCOTLAND" which is brushed off.

5. The Russian version again stresses that the "battle goes before our walls." This is a logical fallacy as mentioned above. One may guess that the recollection of the Mongols' coming to Moscow, Napoleon's army reaching Moscow and Hitler's threatening to overrun Moscow, or even the famous and tragic siege of Leningrad may have been in Marshak's mind when he made this translation. If so, of course, his version would be more acceptable to Soviet readers. Translators like to use historical allusions, hints of their own native traditions, in their translations; in fact, this is sometimes scarcely avoidable. Yet a conscientious translator is supposed to be aware of them when he uses them, particularly when he alleges his own creativity. It is not certain that Marshak had this awareness.

6. The original last stanza contains four impassioned phrases, each a single sentence, which are cast into a single idea. In the Russian version, the capitalized word "LIBERTY" is again omitted. Though perhaps a bit too creative, Marshak's version is highly effective.

SONG—FOR A' THAT AND A' THAT—

Is there, for honest Poverty
  That hings his head, and a' that;
The coward-slave, we pass him bey,
  We dare be poor for a' that!
For a' that, and a' that,
  Our toils obscure, and a' that,
The rank is but the guinea's stamp,
  The Man's the gowd for a' that.—

HONEST POVERTY

Who of his honest poverty
Is ashamed, and all that,
[He] is the most pitiable of men,
A coward slave and all that.
  For all that
  For all that
  Let us be poor;
  Wealth is
  A stamp on gold,
  And gold
  We ourselves are.

What though on hamely fare we dine,
Wear hoddin grey, and a'that,
Gie fools their silks, and knaves their wine,
A Man's a Man for a' that.
For a' that, and a' that;
Their tinsel show, and a' that;
The honest man, though e'er sae poor,
Is king o' men for a' that.—

We eat bread and drink water,
We wear rags,
For all that,
And at the same time fools and knaves
Wear silk and drink wine,
For all that.
For all that
For all that
Don't judge by clothes.
Who feed on honest labor—
I'll call them nobility.

Ye see yon birkie ca'd, a lord,
Wha struts, and syares, and a' that,
Though hundreds worship at his word,
He's but a coof for a' that.
For a' that, and for a' that,
His ribband, star and a' that,
The man of independent mind,
He looks and laughs at a' that.

There's this clown—a born lord;
To him we must make a bow,
Yet let him be stuck-up and proud—A log remains a log!
For all that
For all that,
Though he is all in ribbons,
A log remains a log—
Even in orders and ribbons!

A prince can mak a belted knight,
A marquis, duke, and a' that;
But an honest man's aboon his might,
Gude faith he mauna fa' that!
For a' that, and a' that,
Their dignities, and a' that,
The pith o' Sense, and pride o' worth,
Are higher rank than a' that.—

A king makes his lackey
A general.
But he can make no one
An honest nobody.
For all that
For all that
Awards, favor,
And all that,
Wont' replace
Sense and Worth
And all that!

Then let us pray that come it may,
As come it will for a' that,
That Sense and Worth, o'er a' the earth
Shall bear the gree, and a' that.
For a' that, and a' that,
Its comin yet for a' that,
That Man to Man the warld o'er,
Shall brothers be for a' that.—

May the day come and the hour strike
When of sense and worth
On the whole earth comes column
To stand on the first place.
For all that
For all that
I can foretell
That the day comes
When all around,
All men become brothers!

This poem is special for its folksy feature with the constant repetition of "a' that," particularly with the four lines of the refrain in variations following the first four lines of each stanza. In Marshak's translation, however, the refrain has grown into seven, six, five, six and six lines respectively, some in three syllables, others in eight, but most in between these numbers.

1. The Russian first stanza is paraphrase of the original first two lines, lamentably brushing aside the important "we pass him by, / We dare be

poor for a' that!" of the original text, with the additional phrase "[He] is the most pitiable of men," who is "a coward slave." The key sentiment here should be "We dare be poor," which is completely lost. That this sentence is deleted here is puzzling so far as its meaning is concerned. In a country where the proletarian (almost the synonym of poor, lower class) family origin is often mentioned proudly, it is natural that people "dare be poor" and make revolution to change the status quo. Marshak could not have neglected this conception. Perhaps a knowledge of his life experience would provide an interpretation of this deletion, but this is beyond us. Further, Burns's "The rank is but the guinea's stamp" is rendered into "wealth is a stamp on gold"; rank may bring wealth, perhaps dirty money. Do proletarians dislike wealth? What do they make revolution for?

2. The imagery of the refrain here is an extension of the original text, such as "Don't judge by clothes. / Who feeds on honest labor— / I'll call them nobility." The text is not a translation so much as a paraphrase of the original.

3. The original third line "Though hundreds worship at his word" is turned into "To him we must make a bow" meaning that we belong to the humble "hundreds," which is perhaps not true.

4. Marshak's third and fourth lines do not quite express what is in the original lines. Good faith is essential in an honest man, who does not need a prince's favor, and he is not necessarily a nobody. In the refrain of this stanza, the original "their dignities" is changed into "awards, favor" from a king, in order to be followed by "Won't replace / Sense and Worth." The reason that Marshak made this change may lie in the coordination between the first four lines and the refrain. In the former a king makes his lackey a general, so here awards and favor will not replace sense and worth. If that is true, it is still not justified to omit the original last line which shows "sense" and "worth" to be of "higher rank" than nobility, a phrase which just balances the whole structure of the refrain.

5. The Russian version omitted the second line "As come it will for a' that," which is important, expressive of a common faith, or of the author's optimistic expectations for the future of mankind. One may suggest that to make up for that omission Marshak added a line, "I can foretell," to the Russian version of the refrain. It sounds odd, however, coming as it does all of a sudden where, for the first time in its form, the first person singular appears. This "I" can hardly add to the poem, though poems tend to be subjective, lyrical and expressive of the author's experience.

A RED RED ROSE	LOVE
O my luve's like a red, red rose, That's newly sprung in June; O my Luve's like the melodie That's sweetly play'd in tune.—	Love, like a rose, red rose Blooms in my garden. My love is like a song, In which I go on my path.

As fair art thou my bonie lass, So deep in luve am I; And I will love thee still, my Dear, Till a' the seas gang dry.—	Stronger than your beauty My love is. It is with you, until seas Dry up to the bottom.
Till a' the seas gang dry, my Dear, And the rocks melt wi' the sun; I will love thee still my Dear, While the sands o' life shall run.—	Until seas dry up, my friend, Until granite collapses, Until sand stops, And it, like life, runs forward.
And fare thee weel, my only Luve! And fare thee weel, a while! And I will come again, my Luve, Tho' it were ten thousand mile!	Be happy, my love, Farewell, don't grieve. I'll come to you, though the whole world I must cross through.

In the original stanza 1, the line "[red rose] That's newly sprung in June" is changed to "blooms in my garden." Here the notion of place replaces that of time. In Russia, as in Scotland, summer is thought to be the most beautiful season of the year because the warm season is shorter than in most other countries. Then why "in my garden"? It does not convey the warmth and joy of June. Further, the original "melodie" becomes a "song," not "play'd in tune." Marshak changed line 4 into "I'll go in my travel with it," which may sound more intimate and personal than it is in the original. But we are here concerned with imagery. A melody may give added depth to a song, especially when "sweetly play'd in tune." As in line 2 the adverb (sweetly) is lost.

In the Russian stanza 2, the direct vocative "my bonie lass" is lost, which certainly makes the poem appear more sympathetic and heartfelt. The translator uses the comparative degree: only my love is greater than your beauty. Marshak sounds nobler than the mild causality in Burns; what lover does not think his girl beautiful?

In the third stanza, "rocks melt wi' the sun" means more than "granite collapses." As "sun" represents warmth and heat, melting has different connotations than collapsing; both notions reinforce the atmosphere of warmth and energy in the entire stanza, rendering the effect more poetical.

In the final stanza, "fare thee weel" is repeated to transmit a sense of goodwill and benefolence, followed by an emphatic "a while!" which expresses the emotion of a lover taking his departure, aware of the possibility of a long separation, but consciously trying to console the loved one. To what point are "be happy" and "don't grieve" used here by Marshak? They sound too direct and straightforward, something which poetry usually tries to avoid. The original "it were ten thousand mile!" is an example of the use of numerals rhetorically to describe great distance. The Russian lines "the whole world / I should have to go through" sounds more vague and general. People use "the whole world" to denote thoughts of a universal sense of remoteness making the term a sort of cliche.

M. Molozov admires Marshak for "his keeping the smallest microscopic details of a picture." He notes that in Marshak's translations "the original text is not simply reflected, but also experienced by the Soviet poet." It is obvious that to preserve details and to experience a poem are the prerequisites for any translator. The problem lies in the way he preserves and experiences. As a matter of fact, Marshak has on purpose brushed off many details and changed as many; this is presumably related to his "experiencing" the poems. Translations understandably differ from creative composition in terms of the freedom a translator and a poet enjoy. If a translator is a poet himself, he will be better able to grasp the essentials of a poem; he should, however, be aware of the limits of his freedom: he is not, in my opinion, justified in writing a new poem by adapting one from another language and calling it "creative translation." If translator-poets deal with foreign poems this way, readers can never know exactly what was said in the poem in question.

Problems related to Marshak's translation of "Here's a Health to them that's awa" appear in the Russian version of the poem. Yet what is more conspicuous is that here in the Russian translation one and a half stanzas are omitted! It is difficult to justify this deletion. Perhaps Marshak thought that the following lines were the climax and key of the poem:

> Here's freedom to him that wad read,
> Here's freedom to him that wad write!
> There's nane ever fear'd that the Truth should be heard,
> But they whom the Truth wad indite.

In a way Marshak is right, and he must have considered the additional twelve lines superfluous. But in doing so he placed his understanding of the poem above that of the poet.

The Russian critic M. Molozov thinks very highly of Marshak's translations, pointing out that Marshak had faithfully transmitted some trivial details of "Tam O' Shanter" and "To a Mouse," by noting that the translator had not merely reproduced, but actually "experienced" the original text, but Molozov remains silent about Marshak's deletions. Neither Marshak nor his enthusiastic critics have ever, so far as I know, even hinted that the Russian versions are adaptations.

A year before Marshak's death a collection of Burns's poems entitled "Songs and Poems" was published by Vasiliev. Vasiliev says that in April 1958 "an interesting phenomenon" had drawn his attention at a meeting of young poets held in Smolensk, where Victor Fedotov had presented his translations of Robert Burns. Soon after the seminar, Fedotov's translation came off the press in Archangel, a remote city close to the Arctic Circle, far away from big cities where foreign authors are studied and published.

> Having made acquaintance with the poetry of the "Scottish Shakespeare" as a student at the Institute of Foreign Languages, V. Fedotov was continuously

> working at the translation of Burns, in spite of the existence of such a brilliant master as S. Marshak.
>
> Let us make a proviso first of all: here we are not talking about "retranslation," about anything like rivalry with the venerable translator. There are a few cases, which are, I think, completely justified, for example, with the famous poem "The Tree of Liberty," where the translator restores the penultimate stanza of eight lines, which had evaporated in one of the latest translations (pp. 5-6).

Vasiliev then cited the eight lines which are not included in Marshak. "I don't think the translator acted improperly in presenting some of his versions of the poems which had already been translated, offering to the reader his own point of view on Burns, his own understanding of his poetics" (p. 7).

This preface is revealing and instructive, showing us that Vasiliev is timid in recognizing the merits of the younger translator as compared to Marshak, whom he must have had in mind. Vasiliev obviously did not wish to stress the point that Marshak's prestige as a translator was being challenged by the younger man.

Translators are, like conductors, often engaged in an endeavor to interpret the original work of art in words and sound. Of course some of them are thought first-rate, excellent. Yet no translator presumes that his or her interpretation is authoritative, unsurpassable, final, perfect. There is always something to be desired. This might be the reason that Vasiliev says Fedotov's translation is "an interesting phenomenon." Not only is it interesting, but also normal, healthy in terms of a sense of rivalry or competition with Marshak who was a Lenin prize laureate. A responsible and serious translator has the right to offer to the reader his own version of Burns. Marshak has offered this, and so has Fedotov.

Taken as a whole, Fedotov's translation is highly readable, far morefaithful to Burns's original text in presentation and content than that of Marshak, though perhaps not always sounding quite as Russian as that of Marshak.

As an example we may take the last stanza of "The Tree of Liberty":

> Wae worth the loon wha watna eat
> Sic halesome dainty cheer, man;
> I'd gie my shoon frae aff my feet,
> To taste sic fruit, I swear, man.
> Syne let us pray, auld England may
> Sure plant this far-famed tree, man;
> And blythe we'll sing, and hail the day
> That gave us liberty, man.

In Marshak's version the translation reads:

But I believe the day comes—
And it is not behind mountains—
When the leaves of the magic shade
[Will] spread above us.

Forget slavery and poverty
Nations and countries, brother;
People will live in harmony,
Like a peaceful family, brother.

Fedotov's version reads quite differently:

To taste those glorious fruits
Only cowards refuse, brother;
I am ready to sacrifice all
To know their flavor, brother.
Let the turn for England come
To grow that tree, brother,
And the day will come when people
Live in liberty, brother.

The omission of "auld England may / Sure plant this far-famed tree" is a riddle since Marshak attaches importance to the historical aspect of a poem. Why did he omit this line, which tells much about Burns's wishes and the current affairs of the late 18th century both in France and England?

Marshak's Russian translation of Robert Burns is highly readable, expressive, rhythmical and melodious, and very Russian sounding. A comparative bilingual reading of the original text and the Russian version shows, however, that his translation remains controversial. The basic problem concerns accuracy. In poetical translation accuracy cannot be attained as it is in prose because the translators are confined by poetical and rhetorical limitations. Translation, at the same time, cannot be separated from the original text; it is creative within the possibilities the original text provides, but it cannot be creative in the full sense of the word. Marshak seems to have gone beyond the limits of translation, making his version more like creative writing, thus here and there inaccuracies appear. His inaccuracies can be classified into three categories: form, content and imagery. Though the form of his Russian version sounds almost perfect, it is often different from the original. An eight-line stanza is split into two stanzas of four lines in "The Tree of Liberty." Burns's refrain of four lines is turned into as many as seven in "Is there for Honest Poverty." He often arbitrarily deleted entire stanzas,

as in John Barleycorn" and "Here's a health to them that's awa," or cast two stanzas into one as in "The Tree of Liberty." Within a stanza, Marshak often deleted one or even two whole lines or extremely freely reorganized a whole stanza; examples can be found in almost every poem he touched.

Form is never separable from content. Since Marshak appears so ready to alter the original form, we naturally expect that he would make many changes in content. This loss can be seen there where whole stanzas are omitted or two merged into one, or where a whole stanza has been paraphrased or totally recast. Omissions and recastings occurred due to the greater length of Russian words, yet these can hardly be justified when Marshak wrote his own lines the way he understood them. Sometimes his omissions and substitutions can be understood, but more often the reason for them cannot be traced. A reader doing bilingual reading of his version often feels puzzled about this. Marshak might think part of the content of a poem unnecessary, trivial, superfluous or too local, and thus have felt justified in dropping it.

With the pervasive paraphrasings, additions and modifications, imagery changed a great deal in terms of the protagonist's appearance, time and space. The general tendency is that poems are simplified as compared with what is present in the original text, or considerably reinforced due to the way Marshak understood the original works. Marshak allowed himself a great deal of freedom which is more like independent creative writing than creative translation. Examples can be found everywhere in comparing the original text and word-for-word English translation of Marshak's Russian versions. This type of translation will not of course give Burns scholars a good idea of how he is introduced to Russian readers of his poetry.

For decades Marshak's translation of Robert Burns had been the only edition accessible to masses of readers, although there may be some other editions which we do not know. Then, in 1963, Fedotov's translation was published. The merit of his version lies in its greater accuracy. Having the two translations available allows Russian readers to compare the very different ways in which Marshak and Fedotov understood the same poem. The "adventure" of these two men in translating Scotland's poet may enlighten others who want to try their hand at rendering a Scots poet into Russian.

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