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ON A TRANSLATION OF SLOBODAN SELENIĆ'S NOVEL *PREMEDITATED MURDER* (*UBISTVO S PREDUMIŠLJAJEM*)

Abstract: Translation of literary texts is a very demanding undertaking since, in addition to having to faithfully transpose the meaning of the original into a foreign language, the translator also has to take into account the literary characteristics of the original text such as style, narrative method(s), potential intertextual references and the complex interplay of meanings, both those explicitly stated and those hidden in-between the lines. In addition to this, the translator should never lose sight of culturally determined lexical items, which often present problems of their own stemming from the essential incompatibility of some culturally marked items in the source and the target language. Bearing in mind that our literature is one of the so-called “small” ones, publication of translations of Serbian literary works in foreign languages is a very important factor when it comes to presenting both our contemporary and older literature, as well as our culture, to foreign readers. It is with this in mind that the analysis conducted in this paper will try to establish how faithful the English translation of Slobodan Selenić's novel *Premeditated Murder (Ubistvo s predumišljajem)*, is to the original text, taking into consideration primarily the factors referred to above.

Keywords: literary translation, translational faithfulness, freedom in translation, omission, addition, paraphrasing.

There is an inordinate number of papers dealing with translation by comparing original literary works to their translations. So, why did I choose to produce yet another paper of this kind amidst myriads of similar ones? There are several reasons, most of them closely linked to my working as

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a lecturer teaching translation, someone whose responsibility is to instil professional standards in younger generations and the need to debunk stereotypes regarding the key question – what constitutes good translation work? Those clichéd attitudes towards translation could also be deemed as fallacies.

The next question that needs to be answered is – why Selenić? When I started teaching translation from Serbian into English, I had to make several important decisions, one of them being which literary texts to choose. The first fallacy is based on the assumption that there is a perfect translation of a literary text which invariably requires a perfect translator. So, I decided to choose an exemplary author with an indisputable reputation and made a special effort to obtain the English translation of Selenić's novel *Ubistvo s predumišljajem*.

I also wanted to prove to my students that there is not just one acceptable translation of a text, but that many correct versions exist, and that the point is to be able to make a distinction between the acceptable and the unacceptable. This leads to the inevitable question of what is acceptable and what is not, and the sensitive issue of defining the criteria for assessing the quality of a translation.

I am of the opinion that we are on very treacherous ground here and should tread carefully, because it is of paramount importance that we do not mix up our personal taste with objective arguments that need to be substantiated.

Instead of overwhelming the reader with all those contemporary translation theories, I would rather get down to the analysis of the translation and do my utmost to apply the criteria I have mentioned above. Before I embark on that, I would just like to mention some of the key words that always come up in the analysis of a translation work. Those terms are literal translation, faithful translation, word for word, sense for sense, free translation, translation by paraphrasing, translation by omission, translation by addition.

The word literal is always used with a negative connotation in translation and justifiably so. But the term faithful is often used unjustifiably with a negative connotation, giving rise to too many so called free, creative takes on what a good piece of translation work is. Free translation is frequently just an excuse to disregard the original meaning conveyed by the author and is also indicative of the kind of translator who has a tendency to think of themselves as being better than the author themselves. That kind of attitude

is unacceptable because the translator puts themselves in the focus instead of the author of the original. The main reason for opposing this tendency is very eloquently summed up by Peter Fawcett: "...translation quality assessment proceeds according to the lordly, but completely unexplained, whimsy of 'It doesn't sound right'" (Fawcett, 1981:142).

Commencing our analysis, let us take a look at the very beginning of the novel:

EKNOLIDŽMENT

Ćuj mene – eknolidžment! Ko u pravoj knjizi.

Ali ja jesam pisac. Tačnije – oću da budem. I biću. Studiram dramaturgiju. Dakle – tu sam! Samo što nisam. Oma da kažem – neću da budem pismen pisac. Ja sam vukovac. Pišem ko što govorim. A govorim kako se meni sviđa, čoveče. Jesam i fotošljokor. Kao, umetnički. Ali to me nešto i ne pali. Škljocam za lovu, kad moram. (Selenić 2009: 11)

This is translated as:

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

See that? Acknowledgement! Like this is a real book or something.

Well, I *am* a writer – sort of. Or at least, I will be one shortly. I study drama – so you could say I'm almost there.

I'm not some smart-arse writer – I'll tell you that up front. I want to have my own style, you know what I mean? I write like I talk and I talk as I damn please. That's basically my rule.

Of course, there's other things I do in life. I'm a photographer, for one. "Art" pictures. I do it for the dough, but somehow it just doesn't do it for me. (Selenić 1996: 3)

While the phonetic Serbian transcription of EKNOLIDŽMENT immediately points to the comic possibilities of the narrative style through the use of a bilingual pun, that aspect of the original is inevitably lost in the "normal" English spelling of the word in translation. This, however, is just a small detail that cannot really detract much from the overall impression on the part of the reader if the translation manages to retain the spirit of the original to a sufficient degree.

On the evidence of the opening paragraphs, the translation, by and large, manages to faithfully transpose the liveliness and the rapid-fire pace of Jelena's narrative. True, the very first sentence of the Serbian original ("Ćuj mene – eknolidžment!") is split into two in the version in English ("See that? Acknowledgement!"), but in combination with the highly amusing

observation that follows (“Like this is a real book or something.”), made all the more so by its very colloquial tone, the brief introductory paragraph, reduced to a single line of text, faithfully renders the atmosphere of the original in the English version.

Even a cursory glance at the translated version of the second paragraph reveals that, for no apparent reason, it was broken into three very short paragraphs. As it is not at all clear what is to be gained by this, if anything, it gives rise to the following question concerning the translator’s liberties: where does one draw a line between what is acceptable and what is not? While it is not possible, in the nature of things, to provide an answer based on hard-and-fast rules and criteria, it is safe to say, along very general lines, that, as long as the sense of the original is faithfully transposed, including all the nuances of meaning and atmosphere that are normally present in a literary text, such liberties may, generally speaking, be considered acceptable.

This could hardly be said of the remainder of what was singled out as a separate paragraph in translation. The phrase “Ja sam vukovac” is entirely lacking in translation. The narrator’s adherence to Vuk Karadžić’s principle, naturally following from her declaration of being a “vukovac”, namely, “Pišem kao što govorim”, was incorporated within the statement “I write like I talk and I talk as I damn please” in translation. It is reasonable to assume that most foreign readers will not be familiar with the name and historical significance of the great Serbian language reformer. However, that hardly warrants totally omitting that reference in translation. A simple enough solution would have been to include a brief explanation in the form of a footnote.

In itself, omission is not necessarily a bad thing in translation. As Mona Bakes observes, “it does no harm to omit translating a word or expression in some contexts”, and if a given word or expression is not semantically essential to the development of the text to warrant distracting the reader with long, possibly complicated explanations, professional translators may decide to simply omit the item in question (Baker 2018: 43). Inevitably, some loss of meaning will occur when parts of the original text are omitted in a translation. On account of this, it is advisable, as Mona Baker warns, “to use this strategy only as a last resort, when the advantages of producing a smooth, readable translation clearly outweigh the value of rendering a particular meaning accurately in a given context” (Baker 2018: 45).

In the excerpt being analysed, the facetious reference to the great Serbian linguist serves the purpose of character development. As David A. Norris

aptly observes in his analysis of this novel, it is Jelena's highly distinctive narrative voice, whose main characteristics are "the non-standard grammar of street slang and rapid switches from one register to another in a playful medley of different tones and inflections" (Norris 2016: 109) that decisively determines its general tone. The omission of this reference, thus, deprives the foreign reader of an important means of characterisation. Another problem with the passage under analysis is the fact that the two sentences flanking the narrator's manifesto-like proclamation that she "talk[s] as [she] damn please[s] – namely, "I want to have my own style, you know what I mean?" and "That's basically my rule" – have no foothold in the text of the original and come across as translator's padding whose function is to fill in the gaps resulting from the unfortunate omission of the term "vukovac" and its implications from the narrative. The fact that the aforementioned "padding" sentences are entirely the translator's making makes this solution all the more questionable.

The translation technique used in this particular case, therefore, is the opposite of omission, which, as we have already seen should be applied very judiciously if the translator's aim is to achieve what Eugene Nida and Charles Taber refer to as functional equivalence: "The translator must strive for equivalence rather than identity" (Nida and Taber: 1982: 12). In view of the fact that

"[n]o two languages exhibit identical systems of organizing symbols into meaningful expressions [...] no translation in a receptor language can be the exact equivalent of the model in the source language" (Nida 1966: 13).

Consequently, all types of translation involve some form of loss of information, i.e. omission, or addition of information (Nida 1966: 13), both of which can be observed in the brief passage quoted above, both equally questionable. This is not to say that addition and omission in translation are suspect as such, for there do exist contexts in which they are thoroughly justified, as has been convincingly argued by many commentators. Suffice it to say, as Nida observes, that additional elements "may legitimately be incorporated into a translation" (Nida 1964: 227) for a number of reasons, just as "[t]here are cases where omission is required to avoid redundancy and awkwardness" (Nida 1964: 228).

What the translator should never lose sight of is that both approaches should be exercised with caution. Essentially, in the example under review, the need for "padding" in the form of additions to the original text stemmed

from the unfortunate decision to omit “vukovac” in translation altogether. Apart from depriving the reader of information of importance for character development, this resulted in a gap which necessitated the translational “padding” referred to above. As was mentioned before, the resultant gap could have been filled by a brief explanatory footnote, which Nida considers to be one of the “legitimate” additions to the original text, their main functions being to explain linguistic or cultural discrepancies, in this case by providing information on wordplay functioning as a means of characterisation, or adding information that may be useful when it comes to understanding the historical and cultural aspects of the situation dealt with in the original text (Nida 1964: 238-239).

Be that as it may, let us take a closer look at another passage that occurs early on in the original text:

– Je l’ se kurva?

(...)

– Pobogu, ne!

(...)

– A otkud si tako siguran? Nisi joj držao sveću!

Molim vas – nisam joj držao sveću! (Selenić 2019: 19)

In translation, this comes out as:

“Does she sleep around?”

(...)

“Good heavens, of course not!”

(...)

“And how would you know? Did you take notes by any chance?”

Dear God! Did I by any chance *take notes*?! Would you believe it?

(Selenić 1996: 9)

The very crudely formulated opening question in Serbian, posed by a secret police interrogator, refers to the heroine’s grandmother, or to put it more precisely, to her sex habits during a very troublesome period in her personal life and for the then Yugoslavia in general. It is not translated literally (“Does she whore around?”, in the sense of “have unlawful sexual intercourse as or with a prostitute”, would have served that purpose), but I see no reason to criticise the actual translation used, even though it has some characteristics of a paraphrase. As Mona Baker points out, “[t]he

main advantage of the paraphrase strategy is that it achieves a high level of precision in specifying propositional meaning” (Baker 2018: 40), and that is certainly the case with “sleep around” in place of “whore around”.

The same could not be said of the translation of the idiomatic expression “držati sveću” a couple of lines further on. “Take notes”, the purported equivalent of the said phrase, is nowhere near in semantic terms. As a matter of principle, in view of the fact that there exist at least two idiomatic expressions in English (“play gooseberry” or “third wheel”, both in the sense of “an unwanted third party accompanying two people on a date” would fit the bill in that respect), I don’t see why it was necessary for the translator to rely on her own devices and come up with “take notes”, unless it was a case of it “sounding right”, as Peter Fawcett would put it. Therefore, I should think that “A otkud si tako siguran? Nisi joj držao sveću!” would be quite adequately translated as “How can you be so sure? Did you play gooseberry?” or “How can you be so sure? Were you a third wheel?”, as both are natural English equivalents of the Serbian idiom, which is by no means the case with “take notes”.

Another example that deserves attention is the following one:

...napetost varničila između visokog, crnookog Krsmana – lep kao dvogodac arapske rase, ciganska sorta, tamne masti – i krhke, porcelanske gospodice Jelene u predratnoj, besprekorno beloj i savršeno uštirkanjoj bluzi od češkog platna i stare prečanske čipke. (Selenić 2019: 21)

In translation, this runs as follows:

...yes, tension, between the tall, dark-eyed and dark-skinned Krsman and that fragile, porcelain Aphrodite – your grandmother... (Selenić 1996: 10)

Any reader comparing the original text with the English translation for the first time would be forgiven for staring in disbelief: the additional descriptions of Krsman (“lep kao dvogodac arapske rase, ciganska sorta, tamne masti”) and Jelena (“u predratnoj, besprekorno beloj i savršeno uštirkanjoj bluzi od češkog platna i stare prečanske čipke”) are entirely missing in translation. What on earth could have justified such an egregious omission? Did the translator feel that these descriptions were superfluous? Or was it a case of their “not feeling right” in English? Either way, did she ever wonder what made the author include them in the original Serbian text in the first place?

A likely answer to any of the above dilemmas is, in all likelihood, rather depressing, for on the evidence of the above, the translator’s attitude towards

the author is indicative of blatant disregard of authorial intent coupled with outright disrespect for the author. This is all the more puzzling if we bear in mind that the author's purpose for expanding the basic descriptions of the protagonists is not at all difficult to see. Krsman's animal-like characteristics present a telling contrast to Jelena's sophistication and fragile beauty. His Gypsy-like complexion hints at a darkness in his soul, while Jelena's porcelain skin and pre-war immaculately starched blouse are details that serve to emphasise the gap between the new powers-that-be, feral in appearance and demeanour, and the old bourgeois elite, still defiant despite being quite helpless at the hands of their new masters. On the other hand, reducing Jelena to a porcelain Aphrodite merely results in emphasising her beauty at the expense of all those significant details that provide an in-depth presentation of the relationship between Jelena and Krsman, while at the same time contributing to a fuller picture of the general atmosphere of the turbulent times they lived in. Taking all of this into account, the reference to Aphrodite is completely inappropriate and misleading. It is entirely missing in the original, so this is yet another example of the translator's gratuitous addition of an association not created by the author.

If all of the above was used to great effect in the Serbian original, there is no apparent reason why it would not work in translation. As it is, the reader is again deprived of important segments of character development and details providing more detailed information about the overall social atmosphere in post-war Yugoslavia. That is why I firmly believe that the above passage should have been translated in full. The following is one possible version of it:

...the tension between the tall, black-eyed Krsman, as handsome as a two-year-old Arabian stallion, a type of Gypsy breed, dark-skinned, and the fragile Miss Jelena with porcelain skin, wearing a pre-war, perfectly white and immaculately starched blouse made of Slovakian linen, adorned with lace from Vojvodina.

Let us now take a look at another illustrative passage, which is also instructive when it comes to analysing the faithfulness of the translation:

– Pitam se, eto, možete li vi, uz vašu, uz moju najbolju volju, pojmiti kako su čudno, kako su nespojivo različiti izgledali vaša baka Jelena prispela u *Tanjug* pravo iz francuskog zabavišta i Krsman Jakšić iz zaseoka Korlače u nekoj planinskoj zabiti Kopaonika, tog decembra 1944. godine na drugom spratu *Tanjugove* zgrade u Frankopanovoj ulici? Krsman iz Korlača, major Ozne, bog i batina, može šta pomisli, a pomišlja svašta! I lepa Jelena, senjačka princeza odrasla na zrnu graška, odjednom nesnađena u urušenom svetu, obožavani očuh čami na Banjici i čeka da bude izve-

den pred *Sud za suđenje zločina i prestupa protiv srpske nacionalne časti*, molim vas lepo, brat se tek vratio posle dva meseca prinudnog rada u Borskom rudniku i samo ga potpuna iscrpenost organizma privremeno štiti od slanja na sremsku klanicu!

Tek ih je jedno ludo vreme, gospodice Jelena, a ne i najbujnija mašta, moglo spojiti. (Selenić 2019: 23)

This is translated as:

I was wondering if you could, to the best of your ability, picture how odd and unbridgeably different from each other these two characters appeared. Tanjug, winter of 1944: cosmopolitan and sophisticated Jelena, the princess from Senjak suddenly lost in an unbalanced world, her adored father wasting away in the Banjica jail and awaiting trial before the “Court for the Trials of Crimes and Offences Against the Serbian National Honour”, her brother only recently freed after two months of forced labour in the Bor mine, and Krsman Jakšić, OZNA major, which is to say, secret police agent, a former shepherd from some remote corner of the Kopaonik Mountain. Those were truly insensate times, and that unholy alliance proves it. (Selenić 1996: 12–13)

The first thing that strikes the reader comparing the text of the translation with the original is that, instead of the information that Jelena arrived at the Tanjug news agency straight from a French nursery, as it were, the mention of her name is accompanied by the adjectives “cosmopolitan” and “sophisticated”, without a single word about her privileged childhood. The latter, of course, was meant to provide a narrative contrast to Krsman’s humble origin, as his birthplace is a godforsaken village deep in the countryside, which, however does get a mention in translation. It was for a reason that, at this point of the narrative, the author chose to contrast the characters’ childhood circumstances, thus adding depth to the already established friction due to their post-war circumstances. As it is, we only get Krsman’s half of their disparate backgrounds in translation, as opposed to the end result of her upbringing in Jelena’s case. Another detail hinting at her privileged childhood, old Mr Kojović’s good-natured description of her in Serbian as “senjačka princeza odrasla na zrnu graška” (literally: princess from Senjak brought up on a pea, a facetious reference to Andersen’s fairy tale “The Princess and the Pea”), is shortened to “princess from Senjak” in translation, once again preventing the reader from getting a fuller picture of the characters and the situation they are in.

What eventually brings Jelena and Krsman together is the predicament of Jelena’s stepfather, who, for reasons unknown, becomes her father in translation. Being imprisoned by the secret police known by the acronym

OZNA (the Department for the People's Protection) and awaiting trial before the Court for Crimes and Offences against Serbian National Honour was a very serious matter indeed in those times. So serious that it would justify Jelena's turning for help to Krsman, an OZNA member in the rank of a Major, and therefore very powerful. Just how powerful will not be quite clear to a foreign reader, for the part about Krsman being "bog i batina, može šta pomisli, a pomišlja svašta", literally – all-powerful, capable of doing whatever he might think of, and he thought of all sorts of things, is entirely missing in translation. True, we are told that Krsman is a former shepherd even though there is no mention of this in the Serbian original. That is why I believe that the original reference should have been retained and propose translating as "the Alpha and the Omega" because this biblical reference to the Almighty God can also be used colloquially to denote a very powerful person, and Krsman did see himself as almost Godlike due to the power he wielded as an OZNA Major.

The final sentence of the paragraph in translation, which constitutes a separate short paragraph in the original, is so loosely related to the meaning of the original that it cannot even qualify as a paraphrase. In the original, the period of time in question is described as "crazy", whereas the translation insists on its brutality ("insensate"), which is certainly true in terms of the fate of Krsman and Jelena, but hardly consistent with the authorial intent. The same goes for Jelena and Krsman's union, described as being outside the boundaries of even the most fertile imagination in the original, which comes out as "unholy alliance" in translation. Summing up, the dominant impression concerning the translation of this passage is one of overwhelming arbitrariness, be it in the case of omissions and additions, or when it comes to the very loose retelling of its final sentence. Bearing in mind all of the above, this is how I would propose to remedy the unwarranted omissions and additions in the translated passage analysed:

I wonder if you could possibly imagine, however hard I try to conjure it up, how odd, how irreconcilably different they looked on the second floor of Tanjug in Frankopanovna Street in the winter of 1944, your grandmother Jelena showing up there straight from a French nursery and Krsman Jakšić from a small village Korlaće, a far-flung corner of Mount Kopaonik? Krsman from Korlaće, an OZNA major, the Alpha and the Omega, who could do whatever came to his mind and all sorts of things came to his mind! And beautiful Jelena, a princess from Senjak, wrapped in cotton wool and lost in a collapsing world, her adored stepfather languishing in Banjica prison awaiting trial before the Court for Crimes and Offences against Serbian National Honour, can you imagine, her brother having just returned after

two months of forced labour at the Bor mine, his extreme fatigue being the only reason why he had not yet been sent to the carnage of the Srem Front.

Only those crazy times could bring them together, something that even the most vivid imagination could not have foreseen.

Another passage worthy of interest in this respect is the following one:

To „zezaš” on često kaže. Kaže to sasvim naročito. Nekako stidljivo. Najslade na svestu. Upiš od borca za slobodu Moslavine!

Na Terazijama, ispred *Kasine*, gomile besposlenih prdadžija iz Moslavine izvlače volu rep. Ne znam baš da li su, ali svi izgledaju kao da su iz Moslavine. Šešir na glavi, probile znojne fleke kroz filc. Bela košulja, zakopčano najgornje dugme, plehano, špicevi kragne uvrnuti. Plavi sako, braun pantalone. Prašnjave cipele, na jednoj obavezno pertla iskidana, pa nastavljena vezivanjem u čvor. Zihher postoje neke specijalne radnje u kojima se oni oblače. Ja nikad nisam videla košulju s plehanim dugmićima ili komplet plave pantalone i braun sako, keve mi gadure! Uvek kad vidim takvu dvojicu raznobojnih, pitam se – što, jebote, ne doraju pantalone, pa da obojica budu u jednoj boji. (Selenić 2019: 64)

In translation, this comes out as:

He says that a lot – the “Oh come on, you’re kiddin”. He manages to say it in a very unique way. Kind of shyly. So sweetly you want to die. Some Serbian artilleryman we have here, eh?

On Terazije Street, in front of the “Kasina” restaurant, piles of Moslavinian farts are standing around, twiddling their thumbs. Why Moslavinian, you ask? How do I know, you ask? I have two words for you: dress code. Some of its classic features are: the hat, soaked in grease marks; for some kind of Indiana Jones effect the white shirt, buttoned up all the way, concealing the enchanting hairy chest and endowing the body with an air of mystical unavailability; the crumpled collar, adding the essential element of nonchalance and free-spiritedness. Then of course, there is the blue jacket, exquisitely well matched with the brown trousers (the reverse combination is also available), and finally, the coquettishly dusty shoes with one of the laces inevitably torn and tied back together in a knot. Stunning, isn’t it? There’s gotta be some kind of specialist boutique that caters for these guys. I mean, I’ve never seen a suit made up of blue jacket and brown trousers, have you? Whenever I see two bicoloured guys like that, I start wondering why the hell they don’t trade trousers, so at least they’re in one colour. In-fucking-credible. (Selenić 1996: 49)

The first four sentences in translation give the impression of successfully conveying the meaning and the stylistic effect and tone of the original. But then the reader comes across a solution that appears to be problematic, namely, “Some Serbian artilleryman we have here, eh?” as the proposed equivalent of “Upiš od borca za slobodu Moslavine!”. This seems to be one of those situations in which the notion of freedom in translation is put to

a test. While it is true that Bogdan is an artilleryman, in the original the humorous effect is achieved by referring to him as a freedom fighter from Moslavina, not his serving in an artillery unit. Although not really faithful to the original, this sentence in translation at least retains some connection to the original, however tenuous. That could hardly be said of the section that follows the mention of “piles of Moslavinian farts... twiddling their thumbs” (noting that “piles” is not a very fortunate choice for “gomile”), which, for the most part, is sheer improvisation. Instead of a straight description from the original followed by a couple of humorous comments, in translation we get rhetorical questions, directly addressing the reader, a narrative strategy nowhere to be found in the original. There follows a mention of “dress code”, a feature of which are hats “soaked in grease”, as opposed to “hats with sweat stains coming through the felt” in the original. Amplifying the overall impression, the Moslavinian fellows loitering about are endowed with “some kind of Indiana Jones effect”, “enchanted hairy chest”, even “an air of mystical unavailability” of all things, needless to say, equally non-existent in the original, where the narrator, let us add, qualifies her initial statement by adding that she cannot be sure that they actually are from Moslavina but they look the type anyway. In translation, however, there is not any doubt whatsoever about their origin.

As if this were not more than enough, the Moslavinian layabouts are attributed with “nonchalance” and “spiritedness”, their alleged dress code is explained in further detail by throwing in an expanded depiction of their absurd sartorial elegance – the brief “Blue jackets, brown trousers” of the original is augmented by a fanciful description: “Then of course, there is the blue jacket, exquisitely well matched with the brown trousers (the reverse combination is also available)”. An additional note of absurdity is achieved by adding an effeminate touch in the shape of “coquettishly dusty shoes” (just dusty in the original). The rhetorical question posed to the reader, “Stunning, isn’t it?”, is perfectly appropriate here – in the sense of entirely missing from the original, as everything else referred to in this and the preceding paragraph, and the reader’s astonishment stemming from the realisation that there is so much of it to be found in a single paragraph.

Surely, this is translational freedom gone too far. A more faithful translation of the said passage would look something like this:

A ludicrous freedom fighter from Moslavina!

In Terazije Square, in front of the Kasina restaurant, crowds of idle farts from Moslavina are twiddling their thumbs. I’m not sure if they’re really from Moslavina,

but they all look like they are. They're wearing hats with sweat stains coming through the felt. White shirts, with top tin buttons done up and spiked collars curled. Blue jackets, brown trousers. Dusty shoes with one of the laces ripped without fail and fixed by tying a knot. You bet there're specialised shops where they buy clothes. I've never seen a shirt with tin buttons before or blue trousers paired with a brown jacket, I swear on my bitch mother's life! Whenever I see two guys wearing mismatched clothes like that, I wonder why the hell they don't trade trousers, so that they're both dressed in one colour.

In conclusion, I would like to stress once again that my main motive for writing this paper is the wish to appeal, on the basis of years of my own teaching practice, for a reasoned, responsible, more objective approach to translation that would respect the author's intention, the authenticity and integrity of the original text, and strive to present as much of its atmosphere to the foreign reader as possible, excluding any arbitrariness in the process. This, naturally, is not an easy task, as there are no universal rules that would apply to any conceivable situation and make things easier for the translator. Scholars have rightly pointed out that omissions from and additions to the original can be justifiable in cases when the original phrase is untranslatable or nearly so, or when, due to cultural differences, it may have entirely different implications in translation. But that certainly does not justify the tendency of translators to take their task lightly and rely on their own idea of what would "sound right" or leave a better impression in translation, rejecting segments of the original text at the expense of its integrity, as a result of which references made in the target language do not correspond to those made in the source language, or mean entirely different things. Examples of this, unfortunately, are plentiful in the translation of Selenić's novel analysed in this paper. In the final analysis, in doing so, the translator deprives the reader of an authentic experience of the original and a deeper understanding of the author's intent.

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O PREVODU ROMANA SLOBODANA SELENIĆA
UBISTVO S PREDUMIŠLJAJEM (PREMEDITATED MURDER)

Rezime: Prevođenje književnih tekstova veoma je zahtevan poduhvat budući da, uz to što mora verno da prenese značenje originala na strani jezik, prevodilac takode mora uzeti u obzir književne karakteristike izvornog teksta kao što su stil, narativni postupak, potencijalne intertekstualne reference i složenu međuigru značenja, kako onih eksplicitnih tako i onih skrivenih između redova. Pored toga, prevodilac nikada ne treba da gubi iz vida kulturno određenu leksiku, koja često predstavlja problem koji proističe iz suštinske nekompatibilnosti nekih kulturno određenih leksičkih jedinica u jeziku izvora i jeziku cilja. Imajući u vidu da naša književnost spada među takozvane „male“ književnosti, objavljivanje prevoda srpskih književnih dela veoma je značajan činilac kada treba predstaviti dela naše savremene i starije književnosti stranim čitaocima. Imajući navedeno u vidu, analiza sprovedena u ovom radu nastojeće da utvrdi u kojoj meri je prevod na engleski romana Slobodana Selenića *Ubistvo s predumišljajem* veran originalu, uzimajući u obzir prvenstveno napred navedene činioce.

Ključne reči: književni prevod, vernost prevoda, sloboda u prevodu, izostavljanje, dodavanje, parafraza.