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THE HAZARDOUS ART OF MISTRANSLATION

Have you ever read a Russian novel? Or is it merely your impression that you have? No profession is more prone to pratfalls than that of the translator, few are more subtle, and fewer still more rewarding for perceptive readers.

«Such labored nothings, in so strange a style...»
(Pope, *Essay on Criticism*)

When Panama sent her diplomatic note to the United States during the crisis in 1964, should the Spanish word *negociar* have been conveyed in English by "negotiate" or "discuss"? Should it have been interpreted as a demand for a renegotiation of the treaty or just as an offer to discuss the situation? And is it proper to use English parameter to translate classical Greek poetry, since it so happens that hexameters sound clumsy in English, which somehow falls naturally into pentameter?

The best way of handling a translation is about as slippery a matter as the best way of organizing a society, the best way of living a life, or, for that matter, the best way of writing. In dealing with a piece of literature a translator must hear its tone, judge its language, appreciate its style, and understands its subtleties of meaning. And then, as if such passive appreciation were not hard enough, he must re-create all these features as closely as possible in a tongue foreign to the original author. In trying to convey the essence of a literary work in another language, he is in the position of the conductor of an orchestra of outlandish instruments asked to perform a classical symphony–he must first adapt the piece to the unfamiliar instruments and then guide his barbarous musicians through it. If he is not fluent in the language into which he translates, the effect may be like playing Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata* on an empty tin can.

The age-old arguments about translation run the whole gramut from repudiation of the word-for-word job to denunciation of overly arrogant paraphrasing. One extreme position

was taken by Vladimir Nabokov in his delightful preface to his translation of Lermontov's *A Hero of Our Time*. Objecting violently to paraphrasing, he comes to the conclusion that a translation should read like a translation, *i.e.*, not well. Apparently as a deliberate illustration of what he means, Nabokov turns out a translation that reads just as he says it should, which is a tour de force for a man of his literary prowess.

But on another occasion Nabokov incidentally supplied ammunition to the proponents of freedom to paraphrase, although this time he was speaking about paraphrasing himself. In the introduction to his Russian version of his *Conclusive Evidence, A Memoir*, he explains to his readers that the Russian text will not follow the English original exactly, that it will be, in relation to it, what a realistic full-face portrait is to a stylized profile. Being in this instance both author and translator, Nabokov knew both what he wanted to say and the Russian and the English reactions to the written word. He must have felt that, in order to produce the desired impression, he had to use different words in different combinations. And I submit that he served himself much better than he served Lermontov.

Another extremist view was expressed by Professor John A. Kouwenhoven in "The Trouble with Translation" (*Harper's*, August 1962), which roughly boils down to the idea that there ain't no such thing as translation and that those who are under the impression that they have read Tolstoi and Dostoevski are mistaken–they have read only the translators of those illustrious authors.

As a matter of fact, there are indeed cases where any resemblance between original and translation seems purely coincidental. There may, however, be varying degrees and forms of flop.

Leo Tolstoi wrote the story "What Men Live By" late in life, at a time when he was trying to get "closer to the earth," to make his prose sound like a folktale, imparting to it the sing-song of peasant grandfather telling a story to his grandchildren in the simplest possible words.

But here is a passage from this piece as it is rendered in English by an unnamed translator (in *Great Russian, Short Stories*, Edited and Introduced by Norris Houghton, Dell, 1958). It fails completely to catch the tone of the original.

> Semyon's wife had finished her work early. She has chopped wood, brought water, fed the children, taken her own supper, and was now deliberating when it would be best to mix some bread, "today or tomorrow?"
>
> A large crust was still left. She said to herself, "If Semyon gets something to eat in town he won't care for much supper, and the bread will last till tomorrow."
>
> Matriona contemplated the crust for some time and said, "I am not going to mix any bread. There's just enough flour to make one more loaf. We shall get along till Friday."

Nothing is left of Tolstoi folktale simplicity. In the original, the narrative and the dialogue are built of the same kind of words. Tolstoi's Matriona could not *deliberate* or *contemplate* as the translator makes her do, nor could she *"perceive* that her husband's breath smelt of liquor" as he has her doing a bit later. In the original she rather "falls to thinking" what to do about the bread, and Tolstoi makes her turn "the heel of the loaf this way and that" as a way of conveying her *contemplation* of it. As to the liquor on her man's breath–in Tolstoi Matriona simply smelled it.

I have picked this particular passage because tone and language play a vital role in it, which may not be as true with other of Tolstoi's writings. These elements, however, are certainly crucial in everything written by L. F. Céline.

An Un-Célinean Journey

Céline revolutionized the French language, turned its grammar, syntax, and punctuation upside down and made a new, unique instrument with which to deliver his message of despair. He carried this off magnificently in his *Journey to the End of the Night* and his *Death on the Installment Plan*, although in later works he lapsed into obscurantism. But, as if anticipating his collapse, translators created incoherence where there was none as yet in the French. In addition, because of the wrong choice of words and rhythm, when passages were understandable, they made the author sound pedestrian.

The English translation of the *Journey* by John H. P. Marks–the one through which a generation of English-speaking readers has come to know Céline–on the whole represents a serious effort. But the following passage, typical of many others, illustrates how Marks fails to transmit the tone and the language of the original.

> Just when, even so, I was going to make some little gesture of remonstrance to interrupt all this unmannerliness, she turned back and blazed out at me, blazed out what she had long been harbouring in her heart. Now it was my turn, with a vengeance...

Apparently trying to be as faithful to the letter as possible, the translator incorporates words directly from the French text: "*faire un petit geste de remontrance*." However, these words of Latin origin have a value and tone in French completely different from those they have in English. The translation of the simple French word *grossierté* by "unmannerliness" manages to give the entire passage an extremely un-Célinean, jovial overtone. Then, "blaze-out" is used to cover two different actions–one, "she flared up," and the other, "she let me have it," while, perhaps to make up for this, the translator has the woman "turn back", although Céline doesn't. To top all this off, the passage contains two interjections which are misinterpreted in this context–*tout de même* and *je peux le dire*–rendered respectively by "even so" and "with a vengeance." I believe the following would convey the tone and the action of Céline's passage more accurately:

> When at last I was on the point of making some kind of protest, to stop this flood of abuse, she flared up and let me have it too–she'd had it in for me for a long time. It was my turn now, that's for sure!

Tone, certainly, is important to a rendering of Céline. But it is even more vital to catch his attitude toward life, which is expressed in a leitmotif that breaks surface here and there throughout the book, in a variety of metaphors. In one instance, Marks loses Céline's point by missing the colloquial meaning of the word *malin*:

> I would even, I believe, have more easily felt sorry for a dog dying than for Robinson, because a dog's not *sly*; whereas whatever one may say, Leon [Robinson] was just a bit *sly*.

The following rendering, translating *malin* by "smart" rather than "sly," would be closer to Céline's spirit and intention:

> I even think it'd have been easier for me to feel sorry for a croaking dog than for Robinson, because a dog isn't smart, while Robinson, he was a bit smart after all.

Another such passage is altogether missing from the 1934 and the 1962 editions of Mr. Marks's translation. It is a thought which crosses the narrator's mind when he discovers a New York men's room, and gives a point to the lugubrious and unpleasant description which precedes it.

> There are the guts, of course. You know that practical joke they play on a hobo in the countryside? They stuff an old purse with the rotting guts of a chicken. Well, take it from me, that's just what a man's like, only he's bigger, and mobile, and greedy, and then inside him there's a dream.

A dream emanating from rotten guts and pity for those who do not understand what is going on–these form the leitmotif of this great work of art which does not reach–or at least not with full force–the readers of Céline's *Journey* as conveyed by Mr. Marks. Perhaps this is the reason why Céline–whom many Frenchmen consider the only really great writer of the twentieth century, with the exception of Marcel Proust–is underrated by people who cannot read his impressionistic argot in the original.

And speaking of Proust, how well has he fared in translation? Rather poorly, to judge from this curious note in *French Literature and Thought Since the Revolution*, a textbook edited by two Dartmouth professors, Ramon Guthrie and George E. Diller (Harcourt, Brace), which is at present in use at Columbia and other colleges:

> An inadequate translation of this novel [*A la recherche du Temps Perdu*] by C. K. Scott-Moncrieff is published under the exceedingly misleading title, *The Remembrance of Things Past*, a rendering which, as Proust complained, destroys the whole significance and misrepresents the whole purpose of his word. Fortunately, Mr. Scott-Moncrieff died before the appearance of the final volumes, which were translated by Henry Blossom with a better

comprehension of Proust's meaning.

I don't suppose that such a drastic solution was needed to save Proust from a mistranslator. Perhaps more vigorous protest from editors, and later literary critics, could have halted the damage long before the last volumes of this gigantic novel were reached.

Babel's Restless Soul

But then Proust deals in concepts of tremendous scope and depth that may have distracted many readers from the style of the translation. This, however, is not the case of Isaac Babel, author of small, stylistic jewels, a fanatic of the *mot juste*, a man who wrote and rewrote his stories, using a carefully controlled extravagance of metaphor to convey his meaning. When the stories first appeared in English, however, they contained extravagances of a quite different kind, and not controlled at all. Thus, in Babel's "The Awakening" (*Collected Stories*, Edited and Translated by Walter Morison, with an Introduction by Lionel Trilling), he describes the Jewish mothers of Odessa taking their tiny offspring to a famous violin teacher in the hopes of having them and turned into child prodigies like Mischa Elman and Jascha Heifetz. Here is the scene in the teacher's waiting room, as rendered by Mr. Morison:

> There Jewish girls aflame with hysteria sat along the wall awaiting their turn, pressing to their feeble knees violins exceeding in dimensions the exalted persons they were to play to at Buckingham Palace.

Sound quite impressionistic and mysterious. Who are these Jewish girl violinists? (Babel spoke only of boy violinists.) And who are the dwarfish inhabitants of Buckingham Palace–no bigger than the violins between the girls' knees–for whom they were to perform? A glance at the Russian text is quite revealing. Babel had written in Russian something to the effect that:

> Inside, Jewish mothers, on the verge of hysteria, sat along the walls, waiting their turns. They clutched against their shaky knees violins bigger than those destined to perform on them in Buckingham Palace.

Mr. Morison's translation leads me to some imaginings of my own. I picture Isaac Babel's restless soul, like a Dybbuk, invading the body of some admiring translator, there to suffer new pangs over his impotence to express himself through that stiff-jointed medium.

What happened to Babel and other writers who have created strikingly individual styles may perhaps be best conveyed to Americans by showing them the reverse operation as it is performed on J. D. Salinger's prose in the Soviet Union today.

Here is the opening paragraph of "De Daumier-Smith's Blue Period" as it appeared in *Novy Mir* (Nº. 11, 1963), the leading Soviet literary magazine. I have retranslated it sticking as closely as possible to the Russian:

> However little sense it makes now and however simple this story, at times so virtuous, may be, I would like to dedicate it to the memory of my by no means virtuous stepfather Robert Agadganian, or Bobby Junior, as everyone, including me, called him. He died in 1947 of thrombosis, without a single previous attack but not without certain pangs of conscience.

A glance at Salinger's original, besides yielding a meaning that has been missed by the Soviet translator, Yu. Zhukova, should also make it evident to what extent everything that "makes" Salinger has been lost:

> If it made any real sense–and it doesn't even begin–I think I might be inclined to dedicate this account, especially if it's the least bit ribald in parts, to the memory of my late ribald stepfather, Robert Agadganian, Jr. Bobby–as everyone, even I, called him–died in 1947, surely with a few regrets, but without a single gripe, of thrombosis.

Nabokov satirizes this kind of translation in an almost oversubtle spoof in *Pale Fire*. One of his characters retranslates into English these lines from *Timon of Athens*:

> The sun's a thief, and with his great attraction
> Robs the vast sea: the moon's an arrant chief,
> And her pale fire she snatches from the sun:
> The sea's a thief, whose liquid surge resolves
> The moon into salt tears...

Not having a Shakespeare in the original handy, Nabokov's character works from a Zemblan translation with the following result:

> The sun is a thief: she lures the sea
> And robs it. the moon is a thief:
> He steals his silvery light from the sun.
> The sea is a thief: it dissolves the moon.

The passage, we note, has lost in the process the very words "pale fire" that Nabokov significantly chose for the title of his book.

No Laughing Matter

Leaving aside the talent of many translators for shattering such a brittle commodity as beauty, let us consider what may happen in translation to a comic writer like Zoshchenko. A man who can tell a really good joke is rare enough and one who can put across, say, a French, a Scottish, or a Jewish joke for a linguistically unrelated audience is exceptional.

Zoshchenko's best stories have for their setting hungry postrevolutionary Russia, peopled with characters who talk and think an illiterate lingo studded with misunderstood neologisms, improperly used revolutionary catchwords, technical terms, bits of thieves' slang, etc. The language is somewhat reminiscent of Damon Runyan's present-tense, ungrammatical gangsters' talk, interspersed with mispronounced foreign expressions, a smattering of medical and an impressive array of legal terms. In translating Zoshchenko, it is vital to understand which words and expressions are deliberately off and to what extent, and not to go contributing wrong words of one's own that may be funny to a student of mistranslation but interfere with the original humor. Here, for instance, is a passage from "The Story of My Illness" in which Zoshchenko's narrator journeys through a Soviet hospital like Dante through the *Inferno*. The sick narrator is first struck by a sign, "Corpses given out from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m." Shocked he protests to the medical orderly, who replies to the effect that a man as sick as he is should not indulge in *self-criticism*. Zoshchenko chooses this term deliberately, to make fun of its use by the Soviets as a euphemism for denunciation of anyone

but oneself.

In a recent English translation of Zoshchenko's writings (*Scenes from the Bathhouse*, translated by Sidney Monas, University of Michigan Press), the word is given as just "criticism" which loses at least one laugh. And many more perish by the wayside throughout the story and the entire book. Thus, a couple of paragraphs further on, a nurse tells the patient to follow her to the washing station (*obmyvochnyi punkt*) Here is this scene in translation:

"Come along, patient," she says, "to the washtub."

These words made me flinch.

"It would be better," I say, "if you didn't call it a washtub, but a bath. This,"

I say, "is *prettier*, and makes the patient feel better.

And I," I say, "am not a horse that they should be washing me up."

(The italics are neither Zoshchenko's nor mine.)

No, no, Zoshchenko was not trying to make us laugh by having someone assume that horses are washed *up* (not down) whether in bath or washtubs, but rather poking fun at the pretentious use of "washing station" instead of plain bathroom which is like using "oh, accommodation unit, sweet accommodation unit" instead of "oh, home sweet home."

When the narrator is preparing to get into the bath, here is what happens according to Mr. Monas' English translation: "And so I began to undress, and suddenly I see in the bath under the water some kind of head emerging..."

I checked the text and found that Zoshchenko, unimaginatively, had not made the head *emerging under* the water, which would have been quite a performance, but simply sticking *out* of the water. But then, as we have seen, Mr. Monas owed Zoshchenko a laugh.

Making Dostoevski Suffer

Beauty and humor are not all that suffer upon translation–ideas do too. I could pick an example almost at random from translations of Dostoevski, translations which I am sure have contributed considerably to his reputation for profound obscurity. I will quote here a

passage from *Notes from Underground*, a novel-of-ideas par excellence, first in the classical translation by Constance Garnett (unchanged in an edition "revised and edited" by Avrahm Yarmolinsky), and second, in the translation of David Magarshack.

> For if a desire should come into conflict with reason, we shall then reason and not desire, because it will be impossible retaining our reason to be *senseless* in our desires, and in that way knowingly act against reason and desire to injure ourselves.

Quite complicated indeed! Now let us see how Mr. Magarshack copes with it:

> For when one day desires comes completely to terms with reason we shall of course reason and not desire, for it is obviously quite impossible to *desire* nonsense while retaining our reason and in that way knowingly go against our reason and wish to harm ourselves.

Besides some disagreement over which word Dostoevski meant to italicize, there is direct contradiction here as to whether the desire should come into conflict or to terms with reason. But both translators do convey the impression that Dostoevski is not much of a writer.

What Dostoevski is actually driving at is that the moment desire merges with reason, we will reason instead of desiring and it will be impossible to desire something senseless, *i.e.*, harmful, while retaining reason. Parenthetically, this passage expresses nothing less than the view of the nineteenth-century rationalists, against which the main burden of Dostoevski's attack is directed.

But the damage Dostoevski suffers from translators such as Constance Garnett and David Magarshack is nothing compared to the job done on him by C. J. Hogarth, and Englishman I believe, some of whose translations were first published in the Everyman series.

Let us take, for instance, Dostoevski's short novel, *The Gambler*, in which the interrelationships of the characters and the action of the plot play a major role in imparting Dostoevski's views on the gambler's psychology. From the very first page, Mr. Hogarth shows us that he hasn't grasped the situation very well–the main "villain," the Frenchman Des Grieux, is first introduced as a "French lady."

A few pages later, when the narrator relates how he got into a squabble with some Frenchmen and Poles, Des Grieux says "with bored contempt," "Well, I suppose someone somewhere has given you a lesson in good behavior."

Not so Mr. Hogarth's Frenchman. Here, "in a careless, contemptuous sort of tone," he says, "Of course, one always learns *something everywhere*." And he puts these two last words in italics, as so many translators do, hoping apparently that the stressing of a word will produce a miracle and pin down the slippery meaning of the original. These pearls and many more like them come from the four or five opening pages of the novel. Then, skipping ten pages, we reach the point where the General, gambling at the Casino, first wins and then loses. I quote from Mr. Hogarth:

> And when in the third round *red* turned up, he lost, at a stroke, 1,200 francs. Yet even then he rose with a smile and thus preserved his reputation; yet I knew that his money bags must be chafing his heart, as well as that, had the stake been twice or thrice as much again, he would still have restrained himself from venting his disappointment.

Aside from the fact that it is very badly put, the passage says that the General has an unlimited control over himself, an important point since this is a "psychological" novel, after all. But actually it reads:

> And when the red won that time, he lost twelve hundred francs in one go. He smiled and walked away with perfect control. I am convinced, though, that black cats were clawing at his heart and that if the stake had been twice or perhaps three time greater, he would have lost control and showed his agitation.

The point Dostoevski is making here is that the General's beautiful composure has definite limits and that it would collapse under stronger pressure; he is preparing us for the man's later total disintegration.

I haven't read all through Mr. Hogarth's text but only checked a few suspect passages here and there against the original. I dare say, however, that a resilient hypothetical reader who waded through it all would get a completely different picture, if any, from the one

Dostoevski was trying to paint.

Of course, outside Russia, people expect an obscure–and, many say, a humorless–performance from Dostoevski. And, although many Russian children have read quite a bit of him by the time they are twelve and have been known to laugh in the process, one can imagine solemn, highbrow exchanges between the readers of Garnett and Magarshack that would go clean over the heads of any Russian, child or adult.

Too Delicate to Be Clear

The problem of comment based on distorted translations is an old one. Back in 1835, Stendhal (of whom, by the way, to the best of my knowledge, no decent English translation exists to this day) wrote:

> M. Artaud, who spent twenty years in Italy, has just published a translation of Dante in which he produces not less than two mistranslations and one absurdity per page... And yet all the scribblers of Paris constantly discredit the name of this great man in quoting him [in translation], and presuming to explain him. Nothing makes me angrier. [Stendhal, *La vie de Henry Brulard*, Classiques Garnier, paris, 1961.]

That is what the French did to a great Italian in the past, and this is what the Anglo-Saxons do to a Frenchman today.

Guy de Maupassant, being a Frenchman and otherwise depraved, has come to be regarded in foreign countries as very sexy, in fact too offensively so for English-speaking readers. And so *The Complete Short Stories of Guy de Maupassant*, translated by God knows whom (Doubleday, 1955), introduced by Professor Artine Artinian, and available in every college library, finds a way to handle the Frenchman's crude approach to sex without offending Anglo-Saxon prudishness.

In the very well-known story entitled "Toine," the innkeeper, a very fact and jovial man, is an inveterate drinker. In fact, he drinks so much that

> The local jokers asked him:
>
> "How come you don't drink the sea, Big Toine?"

> He answered:
>
> "There're two things that stop me from doing that: number one, it's salty, the sea; and number two, someone would have to bottle it first, because my stomach i'nt supple enough for me to lap it up in its present container."

The above is my rather loose rendition of the following passage:

> *Les farceurs du pays lui demandaient :*
>
> *"Pourquoi que te ne bé point la mé, pé Toine?"*
>
> *Il répondit :*
>
> *"Y a deux choses qui m'opposent, primo, qu'a l'est salée, et deusio, qu'il faudrait le mettre en bouteille, vu que mon abdomin n'est point pliable pour bé à c'te tasse-là!"*

Granted that Toine talks in a Norman patois, as do all of Maupassant's peasants, still, this hardly excuses the following translation in the above-mentioned edition:

> The blackguards of the community wondered why Toine had no children and one day asked him as much. With a wicked wink he replied: "My wife is not attractive enough for such a fine fellow as I am."

I have not made a mistake: this is the very same passage. And I can even offer an explanation. By bringing in the children which Maupassant does not mention, the translation was under the impression that he was being delicately euphemistic in conveying Maupassant's "sexy" "*Bé la mé*" which, despite the obvious context, he deciphered as "*Pourquoi que tu ne baise pas la mère, Toine?"* rather than the very natural "*bois la mer*." And then, to make it fit, he gave an explanation (the woman was unattractive) and left out the allusions to an unsupple stomach and bottling something–unbearably crude naturalistic details in the context as he understood it.

The Process Is Organic

The most puzzling thing about bad translations is that they get published at all. Chances are that an original English manuscript of such a caliber would never pass even the

first reader of a sane publishing house. Can it be, then that names like Dostoevski and Maupassant mesmerize the publishers and make them "see" profound meaning and messages in these incoherent misrepresentations? Or perhaps, if they can't make any sense of these writers, they are too ashamed to admit it and to busy or incurious to investigate by comparing translations. They reassure themselves that the exotic image of the bearded Russian Dostoevski will "carry" any old text, just as the Beatles can carry any old rock'-n'-roll song and make teen-age girls scream to boot.

And so once these publishers have decided upon a classic, they assume that any translator will do and go shopping for a "reasonnable" one, often in England where prices are lower. At first glance, this law of economics seems a likely explanation for the existence of world classics in a hall of distorting mirrors. But then, how can one account for the case of Mr. Hogarth's *The Gambler*, since his publishers must have been well aware of the existence of Constance Garnett's version, which is in the public domain, *i.e.*, free for the taking, and, despite all its defects, is magnificent compared with the text for which they had to pay something, however little. Obviously economics cannot always account for everything and there may be some cases where Freud should be called in to help Marx explain what makes publishers tick.

The fact is that many translators fail and many publishers do not care enough about literature to realize it. What is more, book reviewers and literary critics too seldom go to the trouble to compare translations of worthwhile books to help the better displace the worse as quickly as possible and thus stop the massacre of literature–for readers may not go back to Dostoevski after meeting him through his worst interpreters.

And yet, despite everything, there exist numerous translations from which a pretty accurate understanding and feeling of the original can be acquired. Indeed, a reader with a very imperfect knowledge of the finer points of the original language would get more out of these than if he tried to go directly to the source. For in the latter case, the reader himself will be his own built-in bad translator.

I feel fairly certain that, unless an American reader's French is really good, he could get much more out of Francis Steegmuller's translation of *Madame Bovary* than he could out

of doing it the hard way; that a Russian, without exceptional knowledge of English would obtain a higher aesthetic enjoyment from Boris Pasternak's translations of Shakespeare's plays and sonnets than he would from wading through the original; that the best way for an English-speaking person (the Latin scholar aside) to appreciate Juvenal would be through the good offices of Dryden. Indeed, there are many good translations around. Just to mention a few at random, there is the excellent handling of Plivier's *Stalingrad* by the Winstons, that of Tertz's smuggled manuscript *The Trial Begins* by Max Hayward, and the renditions of Montaigne and Voltaire by Donald Frame.

Thus, a literary character is not inevitably doomed when the words, phrases, and sentences that constitute his essence and existence are replaced by words, phrases, and sentences formed in another land. An original literary work is an organic compound of form and content. To drag it over the language wall, the translator must first, of necessity, separate the content–the meaning–from the form, *i.e.*, the original words, then, on the other side of the wall, embody the content in other, alien words in such a way as to reproduce upon foreign readers an emotional and intellectual effect as close as possible to that which the original work produced on the translator. Although these alien words have different sounds, connotations, etc., they often can, in certain arrangements, achieve this effect. The result, of course, should preserve the subtle, slippery, extra-rational tones, overtones, and moods of the original. And it must be *literature*. If it is not and if the translator resigns himself to his failure–he is a hack. But he may well be under the misapprehension that he has succeeded, because he has only his own, often deceptive, feelings to guide him. Since literary translation consists of the externalization of ideas and images born in someone else's mind, it can no more be a precise science than writing itself–like writing it is full of intangibles.

But then, they say that medicine, too, is an art.

Source : *Harper's Magazine*, April 1966 (232), pp. 94-102.