



MATE MARAS

# Preslikavanje ili funkcija

MATE MARAS

## Copying or Function



Vera Grimmer



Joško Belamarić

razgovarali  
interviewed by

fotografije photographs by Arhiva/Archive Mate Maras (MM)  
Vesna Prica (VP)  
Dartmouth College Library (DL)  
portreti portraits Marko Mihaljević

Razgovarali u Zagrebu 10. prosinca 2015.

¶ Matematičar, pisac i najčuveniji hrvatski prevoditelj, Mate Maras, raspolaže širokom skalom izražajnih mogućnosti. Primjenjujući principe matematike, on prevodi i najkompliciraniju poeziju. Marasovi prijevodi kompletnog Shakespearea, Miltonova *Izgubljenog raja* ili Rabelaisa, potaknut će mnoge da ponovno posegnu za klasicima. Nagrađivan značajnim hrvatskim i međunarodnim nagradama, Mate Maras na novi i kreativan način ugrađuje europske literarne vrijednosti u korpus hrvatske kulture.

Interviewed in Zagreb on 10 December 2015

¶ Mathematician, writer and most distinguished Croatian translator, Mate Maras, has a wide scale of possibilities of expression at his disposal. He translates most complicated works of poetry applying the principles of mathematics. His translations of the complete works of Shakespeare, Milton's *Paradise Lost* or Rabelais will encourage many to read these classical works again. Awarded with prestigious Croatian and international prizes, Mate Maras incorporates the values of European literature into the corpus of Croatian culture in a new and creative way.

ORIS — Vaš prevoditeljski opus, koliko kvantitativno velik, toliko i vrlo diferenciran, seže od Milтона do Dashiella Hammetta ili Virginije Woolf. Problemom prevođenja mnogi su se bavili, između ostalih i Walter Benjamin koji je zapravo doveo u pitanje uopće mogućnost prevođenja kao odraza originala. Za njega, prijevod je originalna samostalna forma, nikakav mimezis, forma koja u svojem razvitku u svojoj emanaciji može razviti mnogoznačnosti pa i značenja koja u originalu možda nisu sasvim prepoznatljiva. ¶ MATE MARAS — Na to bih odgovorio riječima jednoga velikog američkog pjesnika, Roberta Frosta, njihove ikone 20. stoljeća. Njega su jedanput

ORIS — Your translation oeuvre is large and diverse; it ranges from John Milton to Dashiell Hammett and Virginia Woolf. Many have addressed the problem of translation, Walter Benjamin among others; he even questioned the possibility of translation as a reflection of the original. According to him, a translation is an original, independent form, not a mimesis, but a form which can develop many meanings during the process of emanation, including the meanings which are not quite apparent in the original. ¶ MATE MARAS — I would like to answer this question by referring to a great American poet — Robert Frost, the American icon of the 20th century. He was

Robert Frost ►  
razgovara sa  
studentima u  
Knjižnici Baker,  
Fakultet Dartmouth,  
Hanover, SAD, 1947.

Robert Frost talks ►  
with students  
in Baker Library,  
Dartmouth College,  
Hanover, USA, 1947

(DL)



upitali: *Što je zapravo poezija?* Studenti su tražili da definiira poeziju – bio je na nekim sveučilištima gdje su ga držali kao propovjednika; nije imao nikakvih obaveza, osim da se druži sa studentima, da ga vide, da im čita svoje pjesme. Glasovit je njegov odgovor na njihovo pitanje: *Poezija je ono što se izgubi u prijevodu.* To je ta slavna fraza – *izgubljeni u prijevodu*, potekla je od Frosta. Ne znam je li se on samo poigrao riječima, ali uspoređujući njega i Benjamina, danas u svijetu postoji tendencija da se ide drugim putem, unatrag: ne samo što se tvrdi kako prevoditelji stvaraju nešto iznova i da oni nisu oponašatelji izvornih pjesnika, nego se zastupa mišljenje da su izvorni pjesnici već oponašatelji nečega, prevoditelji nečega u sebi; oni dakle nisu izmislili jezik, nego prevode arhetipove, iskustvo, baštinu koju su naslijedili.

**ORIS** — Benjamin govori o *unfassbar* – dakle, nešto što je nepojmljivo ili možda baš to nepojmljivo na paradoksalan način omogućuje da se original prevede, da se može prevesti ono što je neprevodivo.... **MATE MARAS** — Ne bih se s njime u potpunosti složio. Preveo sam jako mnogo stihova, stotine tisuća. A to se osobito tiče upravo poezije: kako prevesti dobru

once asked: *What is poetry?* At the time he was visiting universities, without obligations other than to spend time with the students, meeting with them, and reading his poetry to them. Students asked him to define poetry. His famous answer to their question was: *Poetry is what gets lost in translation.* Hence the widely known phrase. I do not know if it was only word play, but if we compare his and Benjamin's attitude to those of our time, we can see a tendency to go in a different direction, backwards: not only is it believed that the translators do not imitate poets, but create something new, but a belief is being expressed that the poets themselves imitate and translate something within themselves. They have not invented language, but translate archetypes, experience, and the heritage they have inherited.

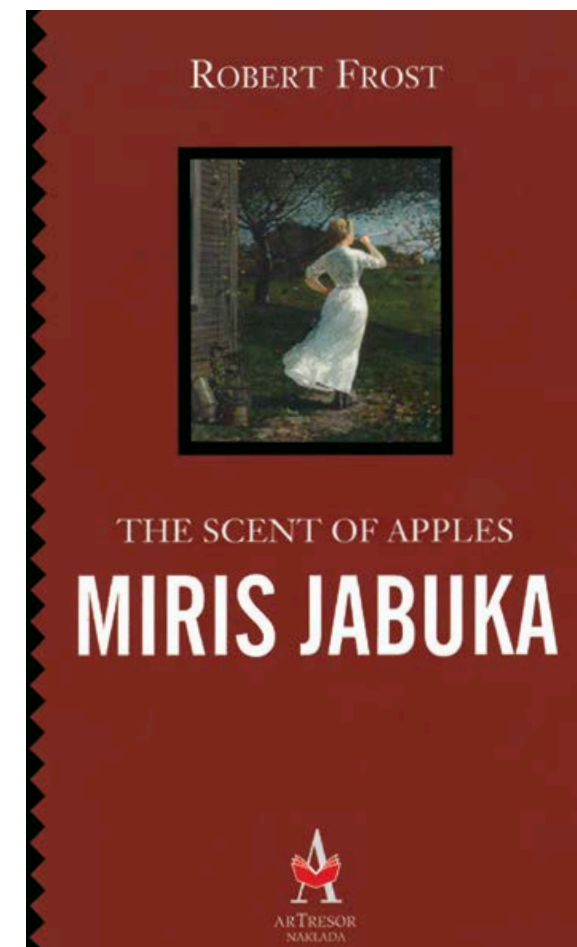
**ORIS** — Benjamin talks about the *unthinkable*; something which cannot be conceived. Maybe, paradoxically, precisely that allows the original, or the untranslatable, to be translated. **MATE MARAS** — I would not completely agree. I have translated many verses, hundreds of thousands of them. Your question mostly relates to poetry. How to translate a good

pjesmu? Kako prevesti Tina Ujevića na francuski? Kad sam bio kulturni ataše u Parizu dolazili su mi Francuzi i pokazivali pjesme Tina Ujevića koje su na francuski prevodili naši ljudi. Govorili su mi, nakon što smo se sprijateljili: *Zar je ovo najbolje što imate od poezije? Pa ovo ništa ne vrijedi.* Mislim da pjesme može prevoditi samo govornik materinskog jezika, i to vrstan znalac, ne bilo tko. Stvar je u tome da ono što prevodite mora u hrvatskom jeziku biti takvo da neupućeni čitatelj pomisli da je stvoreno u našem jeziku, da je izvorno naše, jer se mora uklapati u cijelu našu tradiciju, u naš život, u mlijeko koje smo sisali, rečeno metaforički, inače nije dobro.

**ORIS** — Moglo bi se definirati kao neka vrsta kontekstualizacije. **MATE MARAS** — Ja sam matematički obrazovan, bio sam i profesor matematike u srednjim školama prije nego što sam uistinu krenuo raditi samo ono što mi je najdraže, a to je baviti se jezikom. Mislim da je jezik najviše što nam je Bog dao, matematika dolazi poslije njega. Hoću reći, matematike ne bi bilo bez jezika, a jezik nam je darovan i bez matematike. Međutim, to su dvije kategorije istoga strukturiranja. Teško je definirati što je matematika; ima jedna njezina definicija koja kaže da je to znanost o strukturama. Dakle, uči nas kako raspoređivati stvari po sličnosti, po težini, po boji, po dugovječnosti, po bilo čemu. Jezik se služi istom metodom, mora sam svoju strukturu osvijestiti, a to čini preko logike koja je po Aristotelu dio matematike. Sada da se vratimo na pitanje – kakav mora biti prijevod? Premda trenutno govorimo o poeziji, to vrijedi i za prozu, jer proza je danas degenerirani oblik poezije. U renesansi, naprotiv, proza je bila vrlo bliska poeziji; Boccacciove dugačke rečenice možete razrezati i složiti u stihove, dobit ćete čudno skladno štivo, jer tada su još skupa živjela ta dva oblika. To isto vrijedi za druge velikane, uzmite primjerice Cervantesa ili Rabelaisa. Mislim da je 20. stoljeće otišlo glavom bez obzira i baš zastranilo na krivu stazu, pa danas proza može biti bilo kakva jer tobože odražava naš svakidašnji život. Što će mi umjetnost ako mi mora odražavati moj svakidašnji život doslovce. Onda mi je nepotrebna – i bez nje imam svoj svakidašnji život. Meni treba nešto više od toga. Treba mi sublimacija, dakle očišćenje od banalnosti, treba mi srž. Tu bih spomenuo svoje trojno pravilo, ono zlatno pravilo iz aritmetike – ako su nam poznata tri elementa razmjera, četvrti se član može lako izračunati. Kod mene je to malko drugačije, jer u stvari kazuje kakav mora biti prijevod. Prvo, ponajprije mora biti vjeran: što je pjesnik rekao na talijanskom, to moramo prenijeti u hrvatski jezik. Drugo, prijevod mora biti lijep: što je lijepo u talijanskom jeziku, ne smije biti ružno u hrvatskome – neka bude zvonko, neka ljudi uče napamet. Treće, prijevod mora biti razumljiv: nitko razuman ne piše da bude nerazumljiv. Doduše, u najnovije vrijeme

poem? How to translate Tin Ujević into French? When I was a cultural attaché in Paris, the French used to show me Ujević's poems which were translated into French by Croatians. After we had become friends, they used to say to me: *Is this the best poetry you have? It is worthless!* I believe that only native speakers, and those who are excellent professionals, can translate poems into their mother tongue. To the uninformed reader the text which has been translated into Croatian has to seem as if it was originally written in the Croatian language, as if it is authentic, because it has to fit our tradition, our life or, metaphorically speaking, the mother's milk we drank. Otherwise it is not good.

**ORIS** — It might be defined as a kind of contextualisation. **MATE MARAS** — I have been trained in mathematics, and taught mathematics in high schools before I started doing what I enjoyed most – dealing with language. I believe that language is the greatest gift we have received from God, and that mathematics comes after. Mathematics would not be



◀ Naslovnica knjige Robert Frost, *Miris jabuka*, ArTresor naklada, Zagreb, 2006., prijevod s engleskog, bilješke uz pjesme i predgovor Mate Maras

◀ Robert Frost, *Miris jabuka*, ArTresor naklada, Zagreb, 2006.; translation from English, notes on poems and preface by Mate Maras, book cover



Stvar je u tome da ono što prevodite mora u hrvatskom jeziku biti takvo da neupućeni čitatelj pomisli da je stvoreno u našem jeziku

postalo je uobičajeno, kao po nekom urotničkom dogovoru: *Idemo što nerazumljivije pisati, tako da budemo jako pametni.* To je nekakva moda, izašla iz Pariza prije stotinjak godina, to dobro znate – nadrealizam, dadaizam i tako dalje. Mislim da je to bila mala dječja bolest cijeloga društva; nikada nisam razumio čemu je to zapravo služilo.

ORIS — *To je više bila reakcija, dadaisti su reagirali na besmisao kataklizme Prvog svjetskog rata.* MATE MARAS — Doista, bila je to reakcija na nešto strašno, ali ništa nije rodila. Ostala je kao donekle zanimljiv pokus. Mislim da nije oplemenila

To the uninformed reader the text which has been translated into Croatian has to seem as if it was originally written in our language

possible without language, but language is independent. However, these are two categories of the same structure. Mathematics is very hard to define; there is a definition which describes it as a science of structures. It teaches us how to sort out things according to their similarity, weight, colour, longevity, etc. Language uses the same method; it has to become aware of its structure, and does so using the logic which is, according to Aristotle, a part of mathematics. Let us go back to the question of translation. Although we are speaking about poetry at the moment, the same can also be

ljudski rod, kao što ga je oplemenio Dante ili Shakespeare. I sada se vraćam gdje smo stali. Znači, prijevod mora biti razumljiv: mora biti jasan čitatelju, makar to išlo malo na štetu i vjernosti i ljepote, odnosno – ponajprije da bude razumljivo, ali usput i vjerno i lijepo. To je jako teško postići, jer osim ovoga idealnoga zamišljanja tih naših triju ciljeva, mora se paziti i na ustrojstvo pjesme. Koliko je duga, kako teku stope unutar stiha, ima li rima ili figura dikcije, gdje su stanke, ili pak kako se nižu riječi, jesu li u izvorniku jamske ili trohejske stope itd. Dakle, ima stotinu drugih sitnih stvari koje prevoditelj mora znati kao tajne svoga zanata. Ne može se upustiti da prevodi odmah bilo što, mora najprije nešto znati, završiti zanat. Kao što je Meštrović najprije učio klesati male nadgrobne ploče, a još prije toga kako držati dljeto i čekić, kako upoznati anatomiju kamena. Valja se sprijateljiti s tajnama svoga posla koje laici nikada ne vide.

ORIS — *Tko god o Vama govorio, podcrtavao je iskustva koja ste mogli steći u djetinjstvu: majčine rime, sentencioznost naše Zagore, zavičajni deseterac, gangu, i slične stvari. Više nas možda zanimaju prve slike koje ste zapamtili. Naime, čini se da u izboru velikih imena svjetske književnosti koje ste prevodili – od Dantea i Shakespearea, do Rabelaisa, Milтона i sada Sannazara – strši činjenica da su njihovi opusi i nevjerovatni rezervoari slika. Pitam se, međutim, je li to Vaše djetinjstvo, u imotskim Studencima, uz sve već zapažene literarne poticaje proizvelo i slike koje ste na neki način tražili u biblioteci knjiga koje ste sebi stavili na stol, moguće i po nekoj Vašoj zavičajnoj predilekciji?* MATE MARAS — Riječ je, dakle, o stjecanju slika o svijetu. To svako dijete doživi, svako na svoj način, to ovisi o sredini gdje rastemo. Ja sam imao sreću ili nesreću da sam se rodio u srednjovjekovnoj sredini. U mom najranijem djetinjstvu nije bilo struje, nije bilo automobila, nije bilo radija, nije bilo novina, nije bilo ničega. Dakle, rasli smo prirodno kao i prije 300 godina, kao u doba Alberta Fortisa koji je napisao *Put kroz Dalmaciju*. Toga talijanskoga opata doživio sam upravo kao da opisuje moje selo, naime, dok sam ga prevodio. Osjetio sam uz Fortisa i nešto drugo, a to je bio najveći doživljaj u mom djetinjstvu; kad sam preko Dubaca ugledao more, to me je zauvijek razorilo. Odjedanput sam shvatio da je svijet nešto drugo, da postoje veći, viši, bolji, draži, ljepši svjetovi od moje kotline između planina, između Biokova s jedne strane te Zavelima i Tušnice s druge, bosanske strane. ORIS — *Kad govorimo o Vašim vlastitim djelima – spomenimo samo recentna Pisma od smrti – je li to Vaš povratak na Itaku?* MATE MARAS — To je melankolična tema, napisao sam roman da se odužim uspomeni na oca. Otac se u svom sinu bio silno razočarao; školovao ga, a ništa nije stekao. Taj

said for prose, because nowadays prose is a degenerate form of poetry. In renaissance, however, prose was very similar to poetry; you can cut Boccaccio's long sentences into verses, and thus get a remarkably harmonious text because the two forms lived harmoniously at the time. It can also be said for other great writers, such as Cervantes or Rabelais. In my opinion the 20th century has gone completely mad and has strayed, since nowadays anything can be prose, because it supposedly reflects our daily life. But what is the purpose of art if it will literally reflect my daily life? It is unnecessary; I live my daily life without it. I need more. I need sublimation, purification from banality; the core. I would like to mention my three-part rule, the golden rule of arithmetic – if we know three ratios; the fourth ratio can easily be calculated. I use it slightly differently; it basically tells me what the translation should be like. Firstly, it has to be true; what an Italian poet has expressed in Italian has to be transferred into Croatian. Secondly, the translation has to be beautiful – what is beautiful in Italian, must not be ugly in Croatian – let it be melodious so that people can learn it by heart. Thirdly, it has to be logical; no reasonable person writes to be unintelligible. However, it has become common practice recently, as if the authors conspired: let us write as unintelligibly as possible, so that we appear very smart. As you already know, this trend originated in Paris about a hundred years ago as an art movement – Surrealism, Dadaism, etc. I think it was a childhood disease of the entire society; I have never actually understood what their purpose was.

ORIS — *It was more a reaction; Dadaists have reacted to the pointlessness of the cataclysm of the World War I.* MATE MARAS — It was a reaction to something terrible, yes, but it resulted with nothing. It was merely an interesting experiment. I do not think it enriched the mankind, as did Dante or Shakespeare. Let us go back; the translation has to be understandable; it has to be clear to the reader, no matter if this slightly reduces its beauty and authenticity – firstly, it has to be understandable, and then true and beautiful. This is very difficult to achieve because besides these three goals, the structure of the poem has to be taken into account, as well. Its length, its meter, whether there are rhymes or sound devices, the position of caesurae, the way the words are lined, whether there is an iambic pentameter or a trochee in the original, etc. There are hundreds of other little things a translator needs to know as secrets of his trade. Also, he cannot start translating whatever he comes across; first he needs to know something, learn the trade. Like Ivan Meštrović, who started sculpting small tombstones, and even before that

sin nije imao ni kuće, ni automobila – no, dobro, automobil sam ipak imao, rusku Ladu – ali već mi je bila prošla pedeseta, a u mene nigdje ničega. Bio sam zbilja veliko razočaranje tom čovjeku koji se mučio cijelog života i na kraju završio u emigraciji. Knjiga je roman jednoga života, priča o čovjeku koji je svojim vijekom pokrio 20. stoljeće. Bio je rođen 1903., umro 1985., dakle prilično dugo je trajao i svašta vidio. Lutao je kao Odisej, mladost proveo u Australiji, išao zaraditi novac i vratio se na svoju Itaku, s pripašajem novca, tako da ga je majka pitala: *Aj, Petre moj, tebe ništa boli!* Jer se stalno pipao po boku, a on je to radio da provjeri je li novac na mjestu. Onda je otišao s ognjišta, sam sagradio kuću, oženio se i zasnovao bogat život. Bio prvi u selu, glavar, imao novca, bio snažan kao bik, bio muškarac koji se oženio najljepšom djevojkom u kotaru.

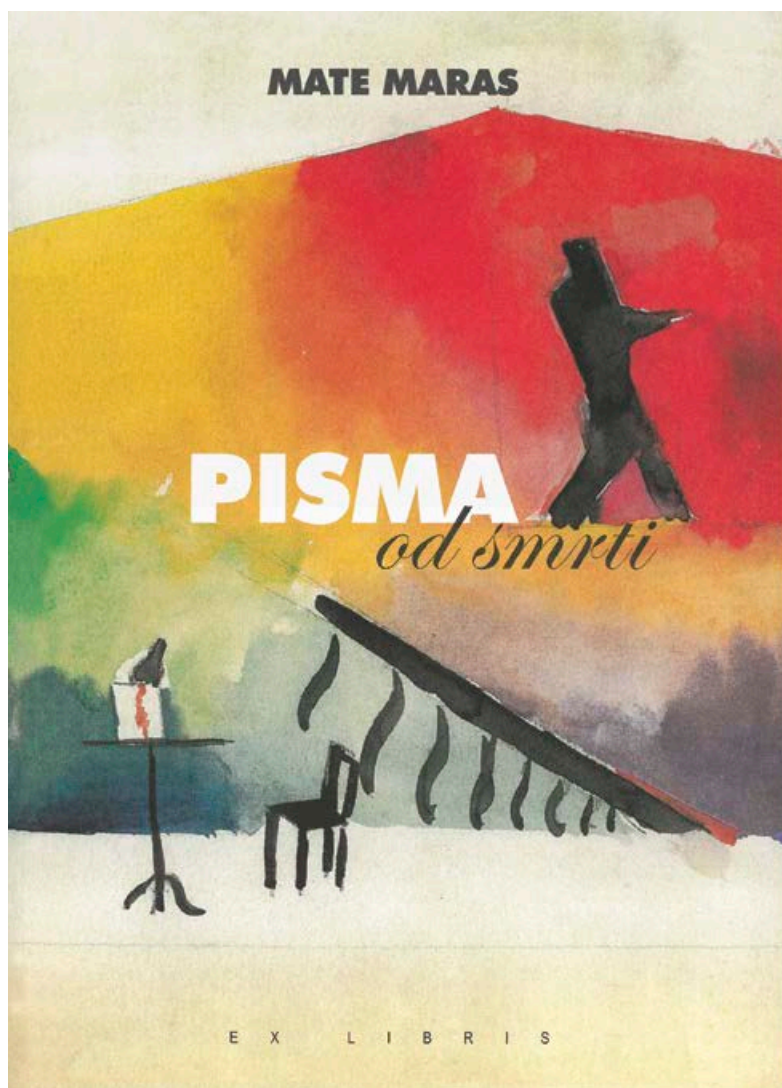
– learned to hold a chisel and a hammer, the anatomy of the stone. You must get to know the secrets of the trade which are not apparent to laymen.

ORIS — *No matter who speaks of you, they always emphasize the experiences you acquired in your childhood; the rhymes recited by your mother, sententiousness of Dalmatian Zagora, epic decasyllable, ganga songs, etc. We are interested in the first images you can remember. When we look at the great names of world literature you have translated – from Dante and Shakespeare to Rabelais, Milton and now Sanzaro, we can easily notice that their oeuvres are amazing reservoirs of images. I wonder, however, if your childhood in Studenci near Imotski, with all the familiar literary influences, has also produced images you have searched for in the library of the books you have chosen to place on your table, probably according to the preferences you derive from the area of your childhood.* ♣ MATE MARAS — It is about acquiring images about the world. Every child experiences it in their own way, depending on the area they grow up in. I was lucky, or unlucky, to be born in a rather primitive area; when I was a child, there was no power, no cars, radios, newspapers, not anything. We were growing up the same way the children were growing up there 300 years earlier, in the age of Alberto Fortis who wrote *Travel into Dalmatia*. When I was translating this text, I felt as if the Italian monk was describing my village. I also felt something else, and it was the biggest experience of my childhood – when I saw the sea across from Dubaci for the first time; it shattered me for good. I suddenly realised that the world was something completely different; that there were bigger, higher, better, nicer and more beautiful worlds than my valley situated among the mountains, between Biokovo Mountain on one side, and Zavelim Mountain and Tušnica Mountain on the other, Bosnian side.

ORIS — *When we speak about your authorial works – let us mention only the most recent book Pisma od smrti – is it your return to Ithaca?* ♣ MATE MARAS — It is a melancholic theme; I have written a novel to honour the memory of my father. My father was very disappointed in his son; he had given me education, but I acquired nothing. I had no house, no car – well, I had a Russian Lada – but I was over 50 and had nothing. I was a really big disappointment to a man who had struggled his entire life and, eventually, emigrated. The book is a novel about a life, a story of a man who lived throughout the 20th century. He was born in 1903 and died in 1985; he lived a long life and saw a lot. He wandered as Odysseus; he spent his youth in Australia, earned money and returned to his Ithaca. He always carried the money attached to his waist

Naslovnica knjige Mate Maras, *Pisma od smrti*, Ex libris, Zagreb, 2013.

Mate Maras, *Pisma od smrti*, Ex libris, Zagreb, 2013., book cover



▲ Mate Maras (najmađe dijete) s obitelji, izbjeglištvo u Slatini, Hrvatska, 1943.

▲ Mate Maras (the youngest child) with his family who took refuge in Slatina, Croatia, 1943

(MM)



◀ Mate Maras na odsluženju vojnog roka, Petrovac na Mlavi, Srbija, 1965.

◀ Mate Maras during compulsory military service, Petrovac na Mlavi, Serbia, 1965

(MM)

ORIS — *Čitajući Vašeg Shakespearea ili Rabelaisa, na nizu mjesta čovjek može zamisliti da prevodite, a da su vaši Studenci negdje u fondu. A onda čitamo Bellijeve stihove, prepjevane u studenački žargon, koji su prava čarolija, ili Vaše Vesele žene imotske. Malo tko je tako uvjerljivo pokazao kako je moguće da se nešto tako univerzalno i kozmopolitsko može usidriti u jedan potpuno drugačiji, konkretan ambijent, u jedinstvenu civilizacijsku retortu Zagore, dakako na krajnje duhovit način.* ♣ MATE MARAS — U HNK Split bit će postavljene te *Vesele žene imotske*. To će biti pun pogodak jer mislim da Split odavno nije imao nešto tako, još od vremena Tijardovića... ♣ Naime, taj Belli, talijanski pjesnik iz 19. stoljeća, pisao je samo sonete, složio je par tisuća soneta na rimskom dijalektu, a radio je kao knjigovođa u papinskoj kuriji – u doba kada ta kurija nestaje, kada nestaje i njezina država, kada se ujedinjuje

to make sure that it was there. He was touching his waist all the time so that his mother used to say to him *My dear Peter, you must be in pain!* He left his home, built his own house, got married, and started a rich life. He was the first in the village, the leader; he had money, was strong as a bull, and married the most beautiful girl in the area.

ORIS — *When we read your Shakespeare or Rabelais, there are so many places where we can imagine you doing the translation using the fund of words of your birth village Studenci. And then we read Belli's verses, translated into a jargon spoken in Studenci, which are pure magic, or your *The Merry Wives of Imotski*. Rarely there are such examples of a successful and persuasive placement of something so universal and cosmopolite into a completely different and concrete environment; the unique civilisational reservoir of Zagora. The work is also extremely funny.* ♣ MATE MARAS — *The Merry Wives of Imotski* will be staged at the Croatian National Theatre in Split. I believe it will be very successful because Split did not have anything similar in a long time, since Tijardović...

Italija. On je tad na rimskom dijalektu opisao sve što se dalo opisati, vrlo ironično, kritički, sardonično: od pape i kardinala, knezova i grofova, preko generala i vojskovođa, sve do običnih vojnika i najnižih slojeva društva. Najdraža mu je sirotinja, onaj ubogi narod koji ništa ne zna, ali zna život – koji jedva živi, a Belliju je najdraži u srcu. To su soneti, pravilni, s rimama, sve je krasno. Jedna mala digresija: Tonko Maroević me potaknuo na to, pričao mi je o Belliju kojeg je zavolio tijekom boravka u Rimu. Rekao je: *Dante je broj jedan, ali Belli je drugi, barem kad pitate Rimljane*. I nije znao kako bi ga preveo, kaže: *Htio sam ga možda prevesti na starograjski, pa na splitski, a ne leži mi ovo, ne leži mi ono...* Ništa, ja sam šutio i slušao, razmišljao što i kako, i jednoga sam ljeta riješio problem: strpat ću ja Bellija na Studence! Ako je dobar, ako opisuje ljudske mane i vrline, mora biti svugdje prihvatljiv. Jer druge su stvari tek sitne nadgradnje po kojima se umjetno razlikujemo. Naročito mi intelektualci mislimo da smo tko zna što, ali i vi možete posvjedočiti da ste se suočili s konkretnim situacijama gdje ste vrlo brzo vidjeli da su i ti mali, obični ljudi isti kao i mi. Tako su neki od tih soneta odgovori na temeljna pitanja svih ljudi što ih oduvijek postavljamo pametnijima od sebe. Na primjer, potegnulo se pitanje kako će završiti svijet? Kako će doći smak svijeta, onaj strašni Sudnji dan i sad priprosti Rimljanin odgovara. Morao bih sada pročitati taj sonet, meni jako drag, čak ga znam napamet, ako ne pogriješim: **✦ Četri će se strašna anđela pojaviti, na sve četiri čoške, s trubaljkom svaki; prvo će zatrubiti, onda glasom jakim: Dižite se redom, svem svitu objavit. Na to će iz zemlje pliva i mrav rupit, kostur do kostura, četveronožice, pa kad im se vrati čovičansko lice, ko pilići oko kvočke će se skupiti. A ta kvočka bit će Bog koji nas stvori; On će goluždravce dilit na dva dila, i crni će doli, a bili će gori. Na kraju će vojske anđeoske doć, oni će ko potli večernjega sila svitla sva pogasit, e, i laka noć.**<sup>1</sup>

**ORIS — U cijelom Vašem opusu fascinira ravnoteža između njegovanog književnog jezika i lakoće kojom pronalazite nove idiome.** **✦ MATE MARAS —** Na to me uvijek prisiljava izvornik. Ima tih ljudi... spomenuli ste ovdje Rabelaisa – on je skovao stotine riječi koje su opstale u francuskom jeziku, a imamo i takvih koje jednostavno nisu nikad zaživjele osim kod njega i, recimo neskromno, u mojem prijevodu.

<sup>1</sup> Giuseppe Gioachino Belli: *Soneti*; izabrao, prepjevao na govor Imotske krajine, te predgovorom i bilješkama popratio Mate Maras; Hrvatska sveučilišna naklada, Zagreb, 1994.

Belli, a 19th century Italian poet, wrote only sonnets; he wrote a few thousand sonnets in the Roman dialect. He worked as a bookkeeper in the Roman Curia – at the time when the Curia, as well as the state, was disintegrating, when Italy was uniting. In the Roman dialect and very ironically, critically and mockingly he described everything he could; from the Pope and cardinals, dukes and counts, generals and warriors, to soldiers and the lowest layers of society. He prefers the poor, those who know nothing, but do know how to live – who barely manage to survive and have a special place in Belli's heart. His sonnets rhyme, have a regular form, and are beautiful. Let me digress a bit; Tonko Maroević has encouraged me to start with the translation. He told me about Belli whose poetry he fell in love with during his stay in Rome. He told me: *Dante is the best, but Belli is the next, at least if you ask the Romans*. He did not know how to translate them, he tried to use the dialect of the island of Hvar, the dialect of Split, but nothing fit. I listened to him and thought about it and one summer, I solved the problem: *I will place Belli into Studenci!* If the poetry is good, if it describes human virtues and faults, it has to fit everywhere. Because, other things are merely small details that make us different. I believe that you can also confirm that you have been in specific situations when you have realised that these ordinary people are just the same as us, the intellectuals who think that they are very special. Some of these sonnets answer the fundamental questions we have always asked those who know more, like the question of the end of the world; what will happen, what it will be like on the horrific Judgement Day... The simple Roman provides the answer in this sonnet I love; I think I know it by heart: **✦ Four archangels with trumpets at their lips Will take their places, each in his corner, and blow: Then, in a terrible voice, they'll all begin To say: 'step up, everyone! Let's go!' Then will ooze up out of the earth a slime Of skeletons, crawling on all fours, To put on the shapes of human beings again – A helpless brood around a mother hen. This mother hen will be the blesse'd God Who'll separate them into black and white One part for the cellar, one for the roof. At the end, a bell-collar of angels Will appear, and, as if everyone Were off to bed, they'll turn out the lights. Good night!**<sup>1</sup>

**ORIS — The balance you achieve between a cultivated literary language and the easiness with which you find new idioms is fascinating.** **✦ MATE MARAS —** The original makes me do so. There are these authors, you mentioned Rabelais, who created

<sup>1</sup> La Penna, D. and Caselli, D. *Twentieth-century poetic translation: literary cultures in Italian and English*. Continuum, London, 2008, pg. 92, translation by Harold Norse

**svih informacija, ali kako je to kada su stvari doživljene i kada se kao doživljene prenose?** **✦ MATE MARAS —** Pa ako mogu to uopćiti, bilo je to doba nevinosti, želim reći, neinformiranosti. Bili smo svi bezazleni i ta Akademija koja je osnovana pedesetih godina prošlog stoljeća; Gavella ju osnovao. On je okupio družinu sjajnih profesora, ljudi koji nisu bili po čudi onome vremenu i onoj vlasti. Tako je to bila sreća za studente – svi oni velikani među glumcima koje još pamtimo, da ih sad ne spominjem poimence, prošli su kroz ruke tih ljudi. Evo, recimo, meni je najdraži bio i najviše je na mene utjecao Bratoljub Klaić. Predavao mi je akcentologiju i hrvatski jezik, a kako sam ja podrijetlom iz kraja gdje se savršeno očuvao naglasni sustav te kako sam prije toga studirao matematiku i paralelno pohađao Akademiju, u meni su se formirale one ladice i strukture gdje se moglo sve to svrstati, pamtiti i primjenjivati. Govorio mi je: *Ostavi sve to, idi meni za asistentu*. Njemu je to, naravno, lako bilo zamisliti: Maras će studirati četiri godine, završit će, kod mene će doktorirati, naslijedit će me. Ali meni, dvadesetogodišnjaku, to je izgledalo nemoguće: prije svega nisam imao što jesti, jer mi je istekla stipendija na PMF-u. I čim sam završio matematiku morao sam ići raditi kako bih mogao egzistirati. Zatim, tu je bio Vladimir Filipović, predavao nam je psihologiju, bio je također nepoćudan. Među predavačima bio je i Mihovil Kombol, koji je nažalost umro prije moga upisa, ali zatekao sam njegovo djelo kojim sam se nadahnjivao oduvijek, njegovim prijevodom *Božanstvene komedije*. Ništa na mene nije djelovalo kao njegov prijevod Dantea, na kraju sam završio ono što on nije stigao preveseti... Prije nekoliko mjeseci bio sam u Ravenni u bazilici San Francesco, koja je blizu Danteova groba, gdje se svake godine održavaju *Serate Dantesche*. Redovito pozivaju pojedine prevoditelje iz svijeta; ja sam bio predstavnik hrvatskoga prijevoda. U raspravi, pred brojim slušateljstvom (u crkvi je bilo valjda dvjesto ljudi), osim profesora s njihovih sveučilišta i organizatora, sudjelovala je Vlatka Badurina, naša talijanistica koja predaje hrvatski u Udinama. I govorili smo o Kombolu, o utjecaju Dantea na Hrvatsku, o mome prijevodu. Na kraju sam tim ljudima pročitao cijelo 31. pjevanje *Raja*, a to traje. Prije mene je čitala jedna glumica na talijanskom, pa sam pozorno slušao kako naglašava pojedine dijelove, da barem modulacijom glasa dočaram sadržaj na nepoznatom jeziku. Pričam sve ovo jer želim reći: doživio sam nešto što ni u snu nisam mogao zamisliti. Pred tim ljudima dobio sam *Lauro Dantesco* – Lovor Danteov. Ali da se vratimo na Kazališnu akademiju. Imao sam sreću da sam upao u klasu Vlade Habuneka i tako mi se pružila prilika da se upoznam s Josipom Torbarinom. On tamo nije predavao, nego je dolazio, često smo se vidali, *znam ja tebe, vladu jedan* itd... Već je bio u mojim sadašnjim godinama.

**Sve kulture moraju biti prožete drugim kulturama. To ponajviše vrijedi za one koje leže na malo ljudi, za jezike koji imaju malo govornika**

**All cultures have to be enriched with other cultures; especially small cultures, languages with a small number of native speakers**

hundreds of words which have become a part of the French language, but there are also those which are alive only in his work and, to be honest, in my translation.

**ORIS — It would be very nice to hear your impressions from your student days; when there was a pleiad of professors at the Academy of Dramatic Arts; Gavella, Spajić, Habunek... Were the information they had transferred to their students also their experiences and realisations? Today information are easily accessed by everyone, but what was it like when the information were lived, and then transferred as experiences?**

**✦ MATE MARAS —** If I can generalise, it was the age of innocence, so to say. We were not flooded by information. Gavella founded the Academy in the 1950s. He gathered a group of great professors, people who did not fit the times, nor were politically suitable. We, the students, were very fortunate – all the great actors we still remember today were taught by these great people. My favourite professor, and the one who influenced me the most, was Bratoljub Klaić. He taught accentology and the Croatian language. Since I came from the area which had completely preserved the system of accents, studied mathematics, and attended classes at the Academy at the same time, it was easy for me to form directories and structures, with all sorted out, remembered and applied. He used to say: *Leave everything, come and be my assistant!* It was easy for him, he probably thought that I would study for four years, graduate, obtain a PhD, and, eventually, inherit



▲ Mate Maras sa suprugom Dunjom i sinom Markom kod slikara Zlatka Price, Tar, Hrvatska, 1974.

▲ Mate Maras with his wife Dunja and son Marko in the home of the painter Zlatko Price, Tar, Hrvatska, 1974

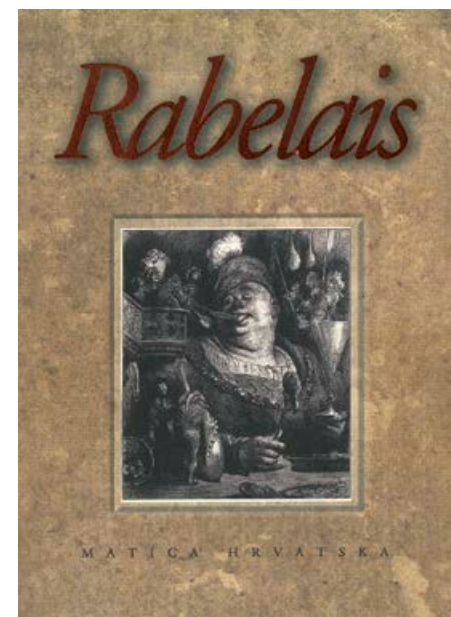
(VP)

**ORIS — Ove napomene su jedna od osnova Vašeg cijelog rada...** ▼ **MATE MARAS** — Upravo to! Što sam čuo, nisam zaboravljao. Ali možda najodlučniji faktor, upravo onaj duhovni okidač, bio je Frano Čale. Predavao mi je talijanski, bio sam mu jedini student, nitko nije htio talijanski, svi bi učili engleski. A Čale je u to vrijeme bio zaokupljen Petrarcom, napokon se bio prihvatio zadaće da se prevede cijeli Petrarčin *Kanconijer*. Govorio je kako je teško prevoditi, ponekad i nemoguće; a ja matematički obrazovan, pa kažem: *Kako teško, profesore! To vam se zove preslikavanje ili funkcija — treba nešto, na neki način, pretvoriti u nešto drugo. Imate, dakle, zadan skup talijanskih riječi, pa ako je njemu osiguran protuskup hrvatskih riječi, treba samo izvesti funkciju, naći odgovarajuće elemente, preslikati jedno na drugo i evo — dobili ste ekvivalentan skup, a to se i tražilo! Stvar je jednostavna.* Tako ja kažem, gotovo trijumfalno, a Čale meni: *Čujte, to je ipak malo kompliciranije od vaše matematike. Evo, uzmite ovaj sonet i pokušajte ga prevesti; neka vam to bude zadaća za cijeli semestar.* Vratio sam mu ga prevedena već sljedeći put — poštivao sam sve njegove odredbe, jer su se uklapale u strukturu moga razmišljanja, premda nisam znao ni što znače najobičnije riječi. Ni rječnika nisam imao, samo jednu gramatiku koju sam stalno *bubao* napamet. Tako je to počelo. Onda sam otišao s Akademije, završio sam matematiku, počeo sam raditi u srednjoj školi. Pa sam se poslije malo skitao svijetom, neoženjen, sâm, neki me zvali u Kanadu i tako dalje. Tu sada počinje nova priča i onda povratka u domovinu, nakon razočaranja u svijetu i sebi: zapravo sam se vratio u hrvatski jezik, iako sam bio otišao onamo da naučim

his position. But it was impossible for me, a twenty-year-old at the time, because I simply had nothing to eat; I stopped receiving the scholarship from the Faculty of Science and, as soon as I graduated, I had to start working. There was also Vladimir Filipović who taught psychology. Mihovil Kombol was also a Professor, but unfortunately he had died before I enrolled. I had his work, however; his translation of the *Divine Comedy* has always inspired me. Nothing has ever influenced me as his translation of Dante's works; eventually I finished what he had not completed. A couple of months ago I was in Ravenna, in the Basilica of St. Francis, located close to the tomb of Dante, where the manifestation *Serate Dantesche* is held every year. They regularly invite translators from all over the world and I was there as a representative of the Croatian translation practice. In front of an audience (around 200 people were in the church), professors from the universities, organisers, Vlatka Badurina, professor of Italian language and literature in Udine and me, engaged in a discussion about Kombol, and the influence of Dante on Croatian literature and my translation. In the end I read the 31st Canto of the *Paradise*, which took some time. There was an actress who read before me in Italian and I carefully listened to the way she emphasized certain parts so I could present the content in the unfamiliar language at least adjusting the modulation of my voice. I am telling you all this to say that I experienced something I never could have imagined. In front of all those people I received the Lauro Dantesco Award. But let us go back to the Academy of Dramatic Arts. I was fortunate to enter into the class of Vlado Habunek, and so had the opportunity to meet Josip Torbarina. He was not teaching, but used to visit and he often said to me: *I know you, you crude!* He was then as old as I am now.

**ORIS — All of these memories formed the basis of your work...** ▼ **MATE MARAS** — Exactly! I have never forgotten what I have heard. But the most decisive factor, the spiritual enticement, so to say, was Frano Čale. He taught Italian and I was his only student; no one wanted to learn Italian at the time, everyone wanted to learn English. At the time Čale was busy with Petrarch; he finally undertook the task of translating his complete *Canzoniere*. He used to say to me that translating was very difficult, sometimes even impossible. Since I was trained in mathematics, I said to him: *Difficult? It is just copying or function — you simply have to transfer something into something else. There is a given set of Italian words and, if there is a counter-set of Croatian words, you merely have to perform a function, find appropriate elements, transfer one into another and there it is, an equivalent set you have had*

oris, number 92, year 2015



▲ Naslovnica knjige François Rabelais, *Gargantua i Pantagruel*, Matica hrvatska, Zagreb, 2004., prijevod i komentari Mate Maras

▲ François Rabelais, *Gargantua i Pantagruel*, Matica hrvatska, Zagreb, 2004., translation and comments Mate Maras, book cover

još jedan jezik, da ga savladam savršeno, da mi bude kao što sam učio latinski, da mi bude elegantan, da se mogu sofisticirano izražavati. Naravno, vidio sam da je to nemoguće, čovjek se mora roditi u svojem jeziku i upiti ga s majčinim mlijekom.

**ORIS — Spominjete Dantea. U kolikoj mjeri prevoditelj stvarno treba poznavati realije iz Danteova vremena? Primjerce, kada je Kršnjavi prevodio svog proznog Dantea, s tolikim komentarima, obigrao je svaki lokalitet koji se u Komediji spominje.** ▼ **MATE MARAS** — Ah, kod mene je to potpuno suprotno. Reći ću vam kako sam dobio nagradu Društva prevoditelja, osamdeset i neke, to je bilo za Virginiju Woolf, *Gospođa Dalloway*. Radnja toga romana događa se u Londonu, i kad se knjiga predstavljala javnosti, rekao sam da nažalost nisam nikad bio u Londonu. Tome se začudila kolegica koja je govorila o spisateljici i prijevodu, pa me je upitala: *Nikad niste bili u Londonu? Pa kako ste znali sve one ulice i parkove, kako ste sve ono opisali?* Odgovorio sam: *Virginia Woolf ih je opisala. Ja sam jednostavno prenio njezine riječi.* Hoću time reći ovo: najvažnije je poštivati ono što piše, i to vjerno prevesti, jer to je ionako upućeno čovjeku koji ne poznaje mjesta i ostalo, sve će doznati iz onoga što piše.

**ORIS — Pa da, ali svaki takav prijevod, osobito Virginia Woolf, jest transfer jedne druge kulture u našu kulturu i obrnuto. I**

MATE MARAS, Intervju



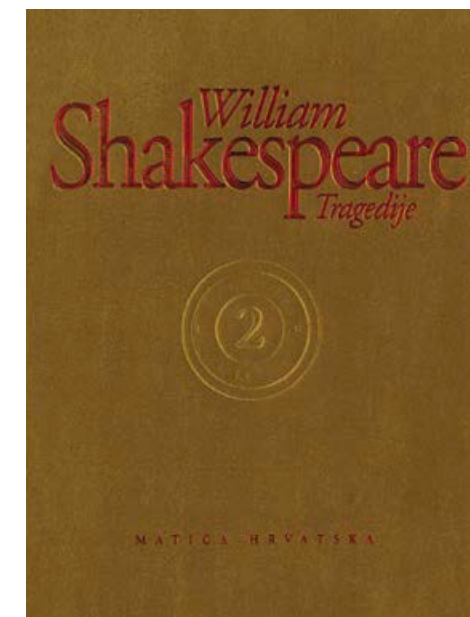
▲ Naslovnica knjige Michelangelo Buonarroti, *Rime/Poezija*, Matica hrvatska, Zagreb, 2009., preveo i priredio Mate Maras

▲ Michelangelo Buonarroti, *Rime/Poezija*, Matica hrvatska, Zagreb, 2009., translated and edited by Mate Maras, book cover

*to create. It is simple, I said triumphantly, and Čale answered: Look, it is more complicated than your mathematics. Here, take this sonnet and try to translate it; let it be your task for the whole semester.* I returned it translated at our next session — I have complied with all of his requests, because they fit into the structure of my way of thinking, although I did not know the meaning of most common words. I had no dictionary, only a grammar book I had been learning by heart. That is how it all began, later I left the Academy, obtained a degree in mathematics and started working in high school. Even later I wandered around the world, single, I was invited to visit Canada, etc. There a new story began, a return to the homeland after I had become disappointed with the world and myself: I actually returned to the Croatian language, although I had left to learn a new language, to master it, to speak it fluently so that I can express myself elegantly and sophisticatedly. Of course, I realised that it was impossible; you have to be born into a language, suck it in with your mother's milk.

**ORIS — You have mentioned Dante. How much does a translator need to know about the realities of Dante's time? When Kršnjavi translated Dante's prose, for instance, and added all the commentaries, he visited every locality mentioned in the Comedy.** ▼ **MATE MARAS** — Oh, it is completely the opposite

MATE MARAS, Interview



▲ Naslovnica knjige William Shakespeare, *Tragedije*, Matica hrvatska, Zagreb, 2006., preveo i priredio Mate Maras

▲ William Shakespeare, *Tragedije*, Matica hrvatska, Zagreb, 2006., translated and edited by Mate Maras, book cover

192 oris, broj 92, godina 2015.

193

Ni rječnika nisam imao, samo jednu gramatiku koju sam stalno *bubao* napamet. Tako je sve počelo

I had no dictionary, only a grammar book I had been learning by heart. That is how it all began

with me. Let me tell you about the award I was given by the Croatian Literary Translators Association for the translation of Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* in the 1980s. The novel is set in London, and when the book was presented to the public I said that, unfortunately, I had never visited London. My colleague, who was presenting the author and the translation, was shocked, and asked me: *You have never visited London? But how did you know all the streets and parks, how did you describe it all?* I answered: *Virginia Woolf described them. I simply translated her words.* What I mean is; it is most important to respect what is written and then translate it so that it is true, because it is directed to a person who does not know the location or anything else; they will learn everything from the text.

ORIS — Yes, but every such translation, especially of Virginia Woolf, is a transfer of a specific culture into our culture and vice versa. Speaking of Virginia Woolf, maybe it is interesting and important to know her environment, her circle; the Bloomsbury Group, the circle of the Oxford wise men. It was



Sonet iz zbirke William Shakespeare, *Soneti*, Hrvatski centar P. E. N. –a, Zagreb, 1993., prijevod, predgovor i bilješke Mate Maras

A sonnet from the collection William Shakespeare, *Soneti*, Hrvatski centar P. E. N. –a, Zagreb, 1993.; translation, preface and notes Mate Maras



sad baš kad govorimo o Virginiji Woolf, možda je isto toliko zanimljivo ili važno znati njezinu okolinu, njezin cijeli krug – Bloomsbury grupu – krug tih oksfordskih mudraca. To su bile dvadesete godine, ali to je do danas više raznoraznih pogleda. Od ekonomije pa do kritike, na kraju do tih raznih alternativnih načina života i udruživanja.

✦ MATE MARAS — Dotada nisam bio u Londonu, vrlo malo sam poznao situaciju na Otoku uopće. Nisam ni dovoljno čitao, ni Shakespearea još nisam prevodio kao podlogu za sve ostalo. Ali, imao sam tekst pred sobom i stalno se držao onoga svoga trojnog pravila: prevedi ono što piše, prevedi to lijepo i neka bude razumljivo, ništa od toga ne smiješ iznevjeriti. Onda će se automatski prenijeti slika onoga što se zbiva, kad se zbiva, gdje se zbiva. Svako dodatno objašnjanje spada u bilješke ispod crte, a te fusnote su meni uvijek mrske bile.

ORIS — Shakespeareu je bilo svejedno je li bilo anakronizama, ako je u njegovu poetiku pristajalo... ✦ MATE MARAS — Sve što mu je dolazilo pod ruku, Shakespeare je pretvarao u med i mlijeko. Jedanput mi je profesor Torbarina rekao: *Kako bismo mogli dobiti tu energiju njegova stiha? Jer svaki njegov stih ima kvantum energije, a mi to u prijevodu nemamo.* To je godinama i mene mučilo, pitao sam se na koji se način može postići Shakespeareov efekt kosidbe – kad pred slušateljem padaju stihovi kao otkosi zrela žita pod oštrom kosom snažna kosca, naročito u njegovim sonetima. Upravo za njih učitelj mi je kazao: *Da se nisi usudio prevoditi sonete, njih je nemoguće prevesti, osramotit ćeš se!* I nisam preveo nijedan dok je Josip Torbarina bio živ. Nijedan!

in the 1920s, but it is still the source of different and various worldviews; from economy and critique to alternative ways of life and living arrangements.

✦ MATE MARAS — I had never been in London until then, and I did not know much about the situation on the Island. I did not read enough; I had not even started translating Shakespeare as a basis of everything else. But I had the text before me, and I followed my three-part rule. Translate the given text, and make the translation beautiful and clear; each part of the rule had to be obeyed. If you do so, an automatic transfer of the action will happen, the setting and the time frame. Every extra explanation is a footnote, and I have always hated footnotes.

ORIS — Shakespeare did not care if there were anachronisms as long as they would fit into his poetics.

✦ MATE MARAS — Shakespeare turned everything he touched into gold. Professor Torbarina once asked me: *How could we get the energy of his verse? His every verse has a quantum of energy which is lost in the translation.* I have been thinking about it for years, and asked myself how I could achieve the effect of mowing – when his verses, especially in his sonnets, line in front of the listener like the swaths of ripe wheat which fall under the sharp blade of a strong mower. My teacher strictly warned me about the sonnets: *Do not dare translate the sonnets, it is impossible, you will lose face!* And I have not translated a single sonnet while Josip Torbarina was alive, not a single one!

ORIS — What is your opinion of the modern adaptations of Shakespeare's works – when they are completely transferred

ORIS — Spominjući teatar, kako Vi gledate na *ažuriranje*, recimo, Shakespeareovih djela, kada ga se – bez ostatka – prenosi u naše vrijeme. Kazat ću jednim primjerom na što mislim. U Dresdenu sam nedavno gledao Monteverdijevu *Kru-nidbu Popeje*. Neron u puloveru igra golf, Popeja je golema crnkinja koja pjeva uglavnom sjedeći u Mercedesovu kabrioletu iz 1970-ih. Pozornica se cijelo vrijeme rotira. Seneka si prosvira glavu u javnom nužniku, pod neonskim svjetlima. Nekidan u Stockholmu gledam *Don Giovanni*, u jednoj od najljepših europskih opernih kuća. Znete gdje je umoren Commendatore? Opet u javnom nužniku. Ne dovodeći u pitanje činjenicu da umjetnost, ako je velika, nužno govori i današnjem i budućem vremenu, mislim da su takva uprizorenja čista blasfemija. ¶ MATE MARAS — Ja mislim da je to barbarizam, mi prelazimo zabranjene granice, kako reko, malo po malo postajemo barbari, ponajprije u moralnom pogledu. A što se tiče kazališta, konkretno, ne znam gdje se sve to začelo. Ali usudio bih se reći da je kazalište poludjelo kad se pojavio film, te poslije filma televizija, a još otprije cirkus. Danas, kao da se redateljima natječu s televizijom i cirkusom. Kao da žele na pozornici prikazati nešto što se ne može vidjeti na televiziji, i gube tu bitku, naravno, jer to prestaje biti kazalištem – prvo nastrada ono što se *kazuje*, dakle riječ, temelj scenskoga zbivanja.

ORIS — Vratio bih se još jednom Vašem ishodištu, svijetu Zagore koja je stoljećima bila i nevjerojatni biorezervoar iz kojeg dolaze neki od najmobilnijih hrvatskih intelektualaca, a danas nestaje pod nivelacijom, reklo bi se, neumitnih globalizacijskih procesa. Sve to što je vas formiralo – usmena predaja, ambijent, riječ običnog čovjeka koji je znao artikulirati svoje misli i svoj stav spram svijeta najčišćim jezikom, bez ikakva zamuckivanja, istom onom sigurnošću kojom je gradio kamenu kuću koja može trajati generacijama – sve to, čini se, nestaje pred našim očima. Što će se dogoditi? Može li se taj mali svijet transformirati prema nekim novim vrijednostima? Kako u tome smislu vidite budućnost? Poslije Vas, možda će neki drugi ljudi prevoditi, ili neće, kako vidite tu mogućnost u budućnosti? ¶ MATE MARAS — Uvijek će se prevoditi, prevođenjem se omogućuje komunikacija, prijenos kulture u najširem smislu. U jednom dalekom vremenu, za nekoliko stotina ili tisuća godina, možda cijela zemlja ipak bude govorila jednim jednim jezikom, ne znam kakvim, pada mi na pamet kineski. Ali dok nas ima na svojem komadiću zemlje i dok, primjerice, Europska zajednica inzistira da joj se obraćamo na hrvatskom jeziku, možemo se nadati da će i naši potomci slušati onaj slatki troplet ča-kaj-što.

ORIS — Još jedna stvar u cijelom tom kompleksu prevođenja jest ta da tu izrazito dolazi do izražaja asimetrija u kulturi. Da

into our time? I will give an example; I have recently seen Monteverdi's *The Coronation of Poppea*; Nero plays golf in a sweater, Poppea is a huge African American who sings mostly sitting in a 1970s Mercedes convertible, the stage is rotating all the time, Seneca blows his head off in a public toilet, under neon lights. The other day I saw *Don Giovanni* in Stockholm; in one of the most beautiful opera houses in Europe. Guess where the Commendatore was killed? Again, in a public toilet. Without questioning the fact that art, especially great art, relates to the present and the future, I think that these scenes are pure blasphemy. ¶ MATE MARAS — I think that it is barbarism; we have crossed the forbidden lines. As I have mentioned before, little by little we are becoming barbarians, first in a moral sense. And regarding the theatre; I do not know where it all started. I would dare say that the theatre went wild when the film appeared, then the Television and, even before, the Circus. It is as if the directors compete with the television and the circus; as if they want to show on stage something which cannot be seen on TV. Naturally, they fight a losing battle because it is not theatre any longer – the basis of the theatrical event – the word, the spoken, is the first which is sacrificed.

ORIS — I would like to go back to another origin of yours; the world of Zagora which has been an amazing biological reservoir; some of the most mobile Croatian intellectuals have come from the area which is today disappearing under the process of the levelling of seemingly inevitable globalisation processes. All which has shaped you – oral tradition, ambience, the word of an ordinary man who articulated his thoughts and attitude toward the world in the purest language, without stuttering, with the same assurance he had while building a stone house which lasted for generations – it all seemingly disappears before our eyes. What will happen? Can this small world be transformed according to some new values? What do you think the future will look like after you? Perhaps there will be other people translating after you and perhaps not – what do you think? ¶ MATE MARAS — There will always be translations; the process allows communication, the transfer of culture in the broadest possible meaning. Far into the future, in a couple of hundreds or thousands of years, the whole Earth might speak in only one language, I do not know which one, Chinese comes to mind. But as long as we are here, on our piece of land, and as long as the European Community insists that we communicate with them using our language, we may have hope that our descendants will also listen to the sweet melody of the three dialects: Chakavian, Kaikavian and Shtokavian.

je zapravo većina današnje literature regionalna literatura, a u velikim, to jest poglavito u engleskom govornom području, prijevodi iz drugih jezika su rijetki. ¶ MATE MARAS — Rijetki su, da. Odgovorit ću vam neizravno – sve kulture moraju biti prožete drugim kulturama. To ponajviše vrijedi za one kulture koje leže na malo ljudi, za jezike koji imaju malo govornika. Jer moglo bi se popularno kazati da je kultura stvaranje nečega iz ničega, a u malobrojnijim narodima jednostavno nema dovoljno pojedinaca da to naprave. Tako je u hrvatskoj kulturi, konkretno u prijevodnoj književnosti, bilo i bit će mnogo praznina, statistički oskudijevamo ljudima koji bi mogli začepiti takve rupe. Evo, ja sam prošle godine preveo nešto što već petsto godina dugujemo svojoj zajednici, a riječ je o Zoranićevim *Planinama*. Kao što je poznato, prvi hrvatski roman napisan je pod izravnim utjecajem Jacopa Sannazara iz Napulja, ali njegova *Arcadia* nije nikada kod nas bila prevedena. To je pastoralni roman, pisan u prozi i stihu, naizmjenice – proza je onakva kakvu je pisao Boccaccio, a poezija se najviše ugledala u Petrarca. I danas se može s užitkom čitati, osobito proza. I od opsežna Sannazarova djela, od mnogih njegovih knjiga, spominje se samo *Arcadia*, jer se u njoj vratio bukoličkoj temi koja je *spavala* više od jednog tisućljeća. Dio mojega prijevoda objavljen je u Forumu...

ORIS — Sannazara sam prije par godina uspoređivao sa Zoranićem, i moram reći da mi je Zoranić jako porastao u očima, po realizmu, po iznenađujućoj vizualnoj kulturi i neočekivanim slikama koje stvara, a da nisu nastale prerađivanjem gotovih humanističkih formula. Mislim da će pojava Vašeg Sannazara biti prvorazredan događaj, te da ćemo tek tada moći bolje shvatiti i Zoranićeve domete. ¶ MATE MARAS — Evo da čujete kako zvuči taj Sannazaro. Hoćete prolog, prolog je jako informativan, ali... bolje će biti da uzmemo ulomak iz prve proze: ¶ *Na vrhuncu Partenija, nimalo niske planine u pastirskoj Arkadiji, leži jedna ljupka ravan, koja nema velike širine jer položaj mjesta to ne dopušta, ali je tako prepuna sitne i zelene trave da bi se na njoj moglo u svako doba naći zelenila, kad ga nemirne ovčice ne bi lakomim zagrizima popasle. Ondje, ako se ne varam, ima možda dvanaest ili petnaest stabala, takve neobične i silne ljepote te bi svatko tko ih vidi prosudio da se tu učiteljica priroda s najvišim užitkom potrudila da ih oblikuje...*<sup>2</sup> ¶ Čujete li vi taj uvodni tekst! Tu će pisac sada uvesti pastire, pa će se pojaviti vile i tako dalje.

ORIS — Da to stavimo kao lijepi kraj ovog razgovora? Na jednom mjestu razmatrate krajnji smisao onoga što radite, ako hoćemo – pojam korisnosti, common sense, po kojemu

<sup>2</sup> Jacopo Sannazaro, *Arkadija*, prev. Mate Maras; izdanje u pripremi

ORIS — In the complex matter of the translation practice asymmetry in different cultures becomes very apparent. Most of the literature of today is regional, whereas in big cultures, especially in the English speaking areas, translations from other languages are very rare. ¶ MATE MARAS — They are rare, yes. I will give an indirect answer – all cultures have to be enriched with other cultures; especially small cultures, languages with a small number of native speakers. You might say that culture is creating something from nothing, and nations with a small number of people simply do not have enough individuals to do that. It is the same in the Croatian culture, specifically in the literary translation practice; there have been and there will be so many holes, and we statistically lack the people who might fill them. Last year I translated the work we had been owing to our community for five hundred years – Petar Zoranić's *The Mountains*. We know that this work, the first Croatian novel, was written under the direct influence of Jacopo Sannazaro from Naples, but his *Arcadia* has never been translated into Croatian. This pastoral novel, written in verse and prose, is the prose similar to Boccaccio's, and the verses mostly imitated Petrarch's poems. You can read it with great pleasure even today, especially the prose. From all of the works of the extensive Sannazaro's oeuvre, *Arcadia* is the only one which is being mentioned, because in this work Sannazaro returned to the bucolic topic which had not been tackled for over a thousand years. A part of my translation has been published in the *Forum* magazine.

ORIS — I was comparing the work of Sannazaro and Zoranić a couple of years ago, and I must say that I was impressed by Zoranić's work; his realism, a surprising visual culture and unexpected images he created which were original; not merely rewritings of the existing humanist formulae. I believe that your translation of Sannazaro will be a first-class event, and that we will only then be able to understand the scope of Zoranić's work better. ¶ MATE MARAS — Here is an example of Sannazaro's work. The prologue is very informative, but maybe it is better that I recite the paragraph from the first prose. ¶ *There lies on the summit of Parthenius, a not inconsiderable mountain of pastoral Arcadia, a pleasant plateau, not very spacious in extent, since the situation of the place does not permit it, but so filled with tiny and deep-green herbage that, if the wanton herds with their greedy nibbling did not pasture there, one could always find green grasses in that place. There, if I am not mistaken, there are perhaps a dozen or fifteen trees of such unusual and exceeding beauty that any who saw them would judge that Mistress Nature had taken special delight in*

Prijevod ponajprije mora biti vjeran, mora biti lijep i mora biti razumljiv. To je jako teško postići, jer osim ovoga idealnoga zamišljanja tih naših ciljeva, mora se paziti i na ustrojstvo pjesme

se naš rad mora ipak na kraju mjeriti. U duhu onoga što veli Hektorović na kraju svog *Ribanja*: *A sve ča se čini na božju jest slavu / Na pomoć općini, meni na zabavu, / Na utihu mojih koji će za mnom bit, / Jer je pravo svojih pomagat i ljubiti*<sup>3</sup>. ¶ MATE MARAS — Hoćemo li s tim završiti ili da još spomenemo *Pjesmu o Rolandu*? Ni taj starofrancuski junački ep, zapisan prije tisuću godina, nismo imali na hrvatskom jeziku. Ali ove godine napokon izlazi u Matici hrvatskoj. To je priča o nećaku Karla Velikog, ispričana u četiri tisuće i dva stiha. Da vidite samo te deseterce, kao da su ih ispjevali naši guslari! Reći ću vam još nešto za kraj. U toj velikoj pjesmi postoji mjestimice, na kraju redaka, tu i tamo na pojedinom pergamentu, kratica AOI. Nitko živ ne zna što znači i čemu je služila — možda je bila oznaka da se pjevač treba odmoriti, popiti malo vode, ili da svirači tu malo zatrube i zagude, ili tko zna što. U prijevodima se ta kratica ili ostavljala kakva jest ili se sasvim izostavljala. A što sam ja s njom učinio? Pretvorio sam je u usklik iz hrvatske narodne poezije, s uskliknikom na kraju — Aoj!

<sup>3</sup> *Ribanje i ribarsko prigovaranje složeno po Petretu Hektoroviću*, Stari Grad, Faros, 1997., str. 38, stihovi 37. — 40.

Firstly a translation has to be true, it has to be beautiful and it has to be logical. This is very difficult to achieve because besides these goals, the structure of the poem has to be taken into account

shaping them<sup>2</sup>... ¶ Can you hear the beauty of this introductory text? The writer will then introduce shepherds, later the ferries will appear, etc.

ORIS — Perhaps we could conclude this nice conversation with the following words. On one occasion you have discussed the ultimate purpose of your work, the notion of usefulness if you like, the common sense our work has to be measured by in the end. It is in the spirit of the words of Petar Hektorović at the end of his *Fishing and Fishermen's Conversations*: *And all that's done is to God's glory done, / For the community and my delight / And for the comfort of my own descendants, / For it is right to help and love one's own*<sup>3</sup>. ¶ MATE MARAS — Shall we end with this, or should we mention *The Song of Roland*? This heroic poem written in old French has not been translated into the Croatian language. But it will finally be published this year by *Matica hrvatska*. It is the story of the nephew of the Charles the Great, told in four thousand and two verses. You should see the decasyllables, as if they were sung by our fiddle players! Let me tell you one more interesting thing for the end — at several places in this great song there is an abbreviation AOI, written at the end of the lines on some parchments. No one knew what it meant — perhaps it was a signal to the singer to have some rest, drink some water, or perhaps to the players to play their trumpets or fiddles, who knows. In the translations this abbreviation was omitted or left in the original. What have I done? I turned it into an exclamation from the Croatian folk poetry with an exclamation mark in the end — Aoj!

<sup>2</sup> Jacopo Sannazaro, *Arcadia and Piscatorial Eclogues*, trans. Ralph Nash, Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1966,

<sup>3</sup> From *Fishing and fishermen's conversations* by Petar Hektorović, translated by Edward D. Goy, Stari Grad, Faros, 1997, pg. 39, verses 37 — 40

