

The background of the cover is a close-up photograph of a microscope. The eyepiece is at the top, and the objective lens is in the center. The stage is at the bottom, with a small green leaf fragment on it. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights and deep shadows. A red diagonal stripe is visible in the upper left corner.

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**“THE COTTER’S SATURDAY NIGHT” BY ROBERT BURNS
IN THE RUSSIAN RECEPTION OF THE 19TH CENTURY**

Dmitry N. Zhatkin

Penza State Technological University, Russian Federation

Nikita S. Futljaev

Penza State Technological University, Russian Federation

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Abstract

The research paper presents the history of the translational reception of the “The Cotter’s Saturday Night” poem by R. Burns in Russia in the 19th century, wherein along with a widely known, repeatedly published and reflected by researchers I.I. Kozlov’s interpretation (1829), it analyzed the readings of the Burns’ work, created by V.D. Kostomarov (1861), A.M. Fedorov (1896), attracted materials of Russian literary criticism (V.G. Belinskiy, O.I. Senkovskiy, N.A. Polevoi, P.I. Veinberg, etc.), as well as other works devoted to the Russian destiny of “The Cotter’s Saturday Night”. The research is based on fundamental works in the field of historical poetics, comparativistics, history of Russian translated fine literature, theory and history of poetic translation (Alexander N. Veselovskiy, Alexey N. Veselovskiy, V.M. Zhirmunskiy, M.P. Alexeyev, Y.D. Levin, A.V. Fedorov and others). In the process of studying the scientific problem, comparative-historical, contrastive, cultural-historical and historical-typological approaches were used, as well as methods of integrated analysis. R. Burns’ poem “The Cotter’s Saturday Night”, which appeared in the Russian language in 1829 in interpretation by I.I. Kozlov, immediately attracted attention of the leading literary critics and publicists of the epoch, i.e. N.A. Polevoi, I.V. Kireevskiy, V.G. Belinskiy, who were criticizing the “loose transversion” created by I.I. Kozlov, but noting its strong points, justified mainly by the content of the original, where such important motives as picturing the rural life of ordinary people, their endless desire to find happiness, belief in fate and in the inevitability of overcome circumstances come to the fore. In early 1860-ies, on the background of general liberalization of the public life, the appearance of V.D. Kostomarov’s translation came unexpectedly as he russified the original and emphasized the patriarchal character of people’s life and religiousness of villagers, thus contradicting the democratic vision of the life and work of the great Scottish poet, which were actively formed in the period of reforms by Alexander II.

Keywords

Burns – I. I. Kozlov – V. D. Kostomarov – A. M. Fedorov – “The Cotter’s Saturday Night” – Poetics

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Introduction

The literary work of Scottish poet Robert Burns started to gain popularity in the Russian literary community since the beginning of the 19th century while the first readings of his works turned out to be either prosaic interlinear translations or loose russified transversions. The seventh part of the “Hippocrene or the Pleasures of Philology” journal in 1800 published for the first time in Russia Burns’ poem “Address to the Shade of Thomson”, which was translated in prose by an unknown interpreter¹. The next nearly three decades were characterized by a practically complete lack of attention from the part of the Russian translators and literary critics to the Scottish poet; the exceptions were the brief characterization of the theme of Robert Burns’ literary work, published in 1821 by an anonymous author in the foreword to the “Collection of Exemplary Russian Poetic Writings and Translations”², and the epigraph from Burns’ verse “Ae fond kiss”, reproduced in the language of the original to the poem by G.G. Byron “The Bride of Abydos”, published as a separate book in translation by I.I. Kozlov in 1826.³

In 1829 the printing office of the Department of Public Education published a small book called “The Rural Saturday Evening in Scotland”. It was a free imitation of R. Burns by I. Kozlov⁴, which, apart from “loose transversion” of the “The Cotter’s Saturday Night”, comprised a translation of the poem “To a Mountain Daisy, On Turning One Down With The Plough, In April, 1786”. The Russian interpreter selected for translation the most congenial to him poems by Robert Burns, which affirmed love to the native land, pictured the life of ordinary people, praised the routine work and everyday family life of the villagers, represented endless attempts to find lost happiness, while obeying blind fate, its inevitability; finally it was important for I.I. Kozlov to use an opportunity to present very religious, patriarchal heroes, carriers of high moral qualities⁵. “The Cotter’s Saturday Night” in I.I. Kozlov’s translation starts Burns’ future uneasy way to the Russian reader – a way to knownness, popularity and success.

Literature review

The most profound studies of the Russian translations of Burns’ works were published by S.A. Orlov⁶, E.S. Belasheva⁷, Y.D. Levin⁸, D.N. Zhatkin⁹. Distinctive literary

¹ R. Burns, Verses in Honour of Thomson. Hippocrene or the Pleasures of Philology. Part VII. 1800.

² Preface, Collection of Exemplary Russian Poetic Writings and Translations in Verses, issued by the Society of Lovers of Russian Literature: In 6 parts. 2nd edition, corrected and published. Part. 1 (Saint-Petersburg: Printing Works of I. Glazunov, 1821), XC-XCI.

³ The Bride of Abydos, A Turkish Tale by Lord Byron. Translated from English by Ivan Kozlov (Saint-Petersburg: Printing Works of A. Smirdin, 1826).

⁴ The Rural Saturday Evening in Scotland, Free Imitation of R. Burns by I. Kozlov (Saint-Petersburg: Printing Office of the Department of Public Education, 1829).

⁵ B. O. Korman, Author’s Conscience in the Lyrical System of I.I. Kozlov. Philological Sciences num 4. 1975.

⁶ S. A. Orlov, Burns in Russian Translations. Scholarly Notes of the Herzen Leningrad State Pedagogical Institute. Vol. 26. Department of General Literature (Leningrad: Printing Office of the LGPI, 1939).

⁷ E. S. Belasheva, Robert Burns in Translations by S. Marshak: Thesis for the degree of candidate of philological sciences. The Chernovtsy State University. Chernovtsy. 1958.

⁸ Y. D. Levin, Burns in the Russian Language. Burns R. Poems (Moscow: Raduga, 1982).

features of Burns’ poem “The Cotter’s Saturday Night” or separate aspects of the reception of its translations in Russia in different yeas were highlighted by literary critics V.G. Belinskiy, N.A. Polevoi, O.I. Senkovskiy, I.V. Kireevskiy, translator and author of literary-critical articles P.I. Veinberg, literary scholars I.I. Ivanov, M.M. Morozov, A.A. Elistratov, B.I. Kolesnikov, V.G. Moisevich, S.V. Bobyleva and others. With this, it is worth noting that the only reading of this Burns’ poem, relatively well analyzed in the Russian literary studies until now, is still the “loose transversion” by I.I. Kozlov; all the translations of “The Cotter’s Saturday Night”, made in the following centuries (including the Soviet epoch and the current period), have not become an object of special studies.

Materials and methods

The materials for the research were the translations of Burns’ poem “The Cotter’s Saturday Night”, created in Russia in the 19th century by I.I. Kozlov (1829), V.D. Kostomarov (1861), A.M. Fedorov (1896), the reviews of Russian literary critics to this Burns’ work and its Russian interpretations (V.G. Belinskiy, O.I. Senkovskiy, N.A. Polevoi, P.I. Veinberg, etc.), as well as other works devoted to the Russian destiny of “The Cotter’s Saturday Night”. In the process of studying the scientific problem, comparative-historical, comparative, cultural-historical and historical-typological approaches were used, as well as methods of integrated analysis. In the methodological aspects the research is based on fundamental works in the field of historical poetics, comparativistics, the history of Russian translated fine literature, theory and history of poetic translation (Alexander N. Veselovskiy, Alexey N. Veselovskiy, V.M. Zhirmunskiy, M.P. Alexeyev, Y.D. Levin, A.V. Fedorov and others).

Results

In line with the image of literary translation in Russian in the epoch of romanticism, the “loose transversion” by I.I. Kozlov was considerably different from Burns’ original. Thus, the dedication to Robert Aiken, which used to open the “The Cotter’s Saturday Night”, was replaced by a dedication to Alexandra Andreevna Voeikova, I.I. Kozlov’s close friend and lady-love who died in 1828, while the volume of the dedication was considerably expanded from 9 to 35 verses. In the end of the “loose translation” one more addition comes up, i.e. the patriotic appeal to the Holy Rus and the Russian people, composed of 18 verses: “And I to you, to you appeal, / Oh, Holy Rus, oh, Terra Mater! / <...> / A country of sublime hearts, reflections and deeds! / <...> / Let there be honour and simplicity of morals / And the purity of people’s conscience / Always your glory and joy, / And the flame circle be your fence, / And the shadow of ages will disappear before you / With the sound of strings of exalted signers!”¹⁰. In general, the Russian interpretation expanded from 89 to 288 verses, but the number of couplets reduced from 21 to 19, the structural firmness of the original was violated, i.e. the original had 21 couplets by 9 verses each, while in I.I. Kozlov’s translation couplets comprised different numbers of verses – from 10 to 35.

The Russian translator kept the iambic pentameter of the original, quite accurately conveyed its content, but at the same time allowed himself a great creative freedom, omitting or adding lines at his discretion. For instance, in the very beginning of the “loose

⁹ D. N. Zhatkin, *Following the Roads of Russian Burns. Literary Translation and Comparative Literary Studies – V: Collection of Research Papers*. Responsible editor D.N. Zhatkin (Moscow: Flints; Nauka, 2016).

¹⁰ I. I. Kozlov, *Complete Collection of Poems* (Leningrad: Soviet Writer, 1960), 169.

transversion”, the couplet following the dedication has a vivid picture of a foul weather day: “November is roaring, there is a snowstorm and blizzard in the fields; / A foul weather day began to fade behind the mountain; / Already unharnessed a tired bull from the plough, / And all in dust it’s dragging home”¹¹. Nevertheless, this picture is not quite clear: on the one hand, the words *snowstorm* and *blizzards*, inappropriately used together, are synonyms in their substance when describing foul winter weather and the movement of falling or already fallen snow by the wind; on the other hand, the bull, being all in *dust*, is “dragging home” together with the ploughman upon completion of the working day. The following questions are quite reasonable then: what was the ploughman doing in the field amidst the snowstorm and blizzards, and where did the dust come from to cover the bull... Let us compare the translation and the original: “November chill blows loud wi’ angry sough; / The short’ning winter-day is near a close; / The miry beasts retreating frae the plough; / The black’ning trains o’ craws to their repose”¹². As we see, Burns has neither snowstorm nor blizzards. There is only a November chilly wind, which is blowing hard and getting angry; both the foul weather and the mountain, mentioned by I.I. Kozlov in the second verse, are the liberties of interpretation as Burns is speaking only about the completion of a short day; in the third verse the interpreter wrongly treats lexeme “miry” (dirty), using the adjective “tired”; the last out of the cited verses, where the vivid picture is supplemented by the “blackening trains of crows” heading to rest, is entirely omitted.

The interpretation of the verse “Collects his spades, his mattocks, and his hoes”¹³ looks to be quite disputable as I.I. Kozlov makes it double in size due to the use of extra details and gives a new sounding to it as a result of replacing the names of the instruments of labour, typical for a peasant of the 18th century (“shade” – *лопата*, “mattock” – *мотыга*, “hoe” – *тыпка*) by the more “advanced” ones: «His plough, and crow, and harrow, / And harness – all put in place”¹⁴. We will note that neither *соха* (“plough, plow”), nor *лом* (“crow, crowbar”), *борона* (“harrow”), *сбруя* (“harness”) correspond in this case to Burns’ image of the everyday peasant labour. The lines of the Russian sentence “He amuses his imagination, / That Sunday will begin happily”¹⁵ also change the image of a ploughman, who in Burns’ original is merely hoping to have an easy morning – “hoping the morn in ease”, which he will use for the rest – “rest to spend”. Finally, in verses “And through a little wood towards his cozy house / He goes to his family to rest and stay in peace”¹⁶, apart from certain synonymy of lexemes “rest” and “stay in peace”, turns out to be lost a typical atmospherity of the original where the *tired* peasant is coming back home *though the moor* – “and weary, o’er the moor, his course does homeward bend”¹⁷.

The couplets, describing biblical scenes, were interpreted with a special accuracy as the religious theme was, most likely, the main one in the literary activities of I.I. Kozlov, who was a passionate believer knowing “the whole New Testament and prayers by heart”¹⁸. In this connection it is quite natural to see the appearance in I.I. Kozlov’s translation of the elements of didacticism, preaching and moralizing, which were internally

¹¹ I. I. Kozlov, Complete Collection of Poems... 162.

¹² R. Burns, The Cotter’s Saturday Night. Burns R. The Complete Works (Edinburgh: William P. NimmoM 1865), 47.

¹³ R. Burns, The Cotter’s Saturday Night... 47.

¹⁴ I. I. Kozlov, Complete Collection of Poems... 162.

¹⁵ I. I. Kozlov, Complete Collection of Poems... 162.

¹⁶ I. I. Kozlov, Complete Collection of Poems... 162.

¹⁷ R. Burns, The Cotter’s Saturday Night... 47.

¹⁸ N. M. Danilov, Ivan Ivanovich Kozlov (Petrograd: Printing Works of the Imperial Academy of Sciences, 1914), 33.

inorganic for the free spirit of Burns. It is especially visible in the fifth couplet, where I.I. Kozlov, having not sensed the substantial nuances, interpreted Burns’ expression “their master and mistress”, pointing out to the dependence of children upon their parents, by a traditional combination of words “mother and father”, which has downplayed the thought on the importance of parents in the life of children. And this unfolds on the background of the following lines, where a girl, submissive to the will of her parents, is afraid to introduce her loved one, fearing that they may not admit him: “Trembles like a leaf, barely utter a word”, “<...> brings him to them, being ashamed, / And she is happy that he is admitted friendly”¹⁹. A line of parental instruction has disappeared in the Russian interpretation – not to tease each other and not to gamble (“And ne’er, tho’out o’sight, to jauk or play”²⁰). It was replaced by I.I. Kozlov with a request to “be truthful in deeds and speeches”²¹ which is not present in the original.

I.I. Kozlov did not claim the laurels of a perfect translator capable of conveying the idea and accuracy of the original by a colourful poetic language – he only presented to the Russian reader a “free imitation of R. Burns”, owing to which he opened for the Russian reader the literary heritage of the great Scottish poet.

The issuing of the book “The Rural Saturday Evening in Scotland. Free Imitation of R. Burns by I. Kozlov” caused reviews of the leading literary critics of the 19th century. In particular, N.A. Polevoi in his review “On the Life and Literary Works of R. Burns...”, published in issue No. 14 of the “Moscow Telegraph” in 1829, noted the importance of the first poetic translation of Burns’ work into Russian, and even called I.I. Kozlov’s verse “smooth”²², but at the same time criticized the translator for his desire to present Burns as “a simple peasant who *incidentally* plays a poetic fistula”²³. In such a way, according to N.A. Polevoi, the readers of the “free imitation” came across a distorted image of Burns: instead of a high-minded poet who fell “under the strokes of fate, which threw him in a state other than the one to which he belonged with his mind, soul, and imagination”²⁴, “the ardent Singer of Scotland who burnt in the fire of passions,” was painted as “a simple villager, very nicely narrating about his rural life”²⁵. I.I. Kozlov, “having not understood Burns’ character”²⁶, presented his verses in such a “distorted view” that after the reading of them one has “nothing left in the soul”²⁷. Noting the distortions of the original, which start already in the first couplet, a great number of gaps and misinterpretations, N.A. Polevoi is not ready to provide any indulgence to the creator of the “loose transversion”: “No matter what our poet calls his translation, he remains in equal responsibility to the reader as he has obliged to present Burns to him”²⁸. Having not sensed in I.I. Kozlov’s translation the very “*character* of Burns’s poetry”²⁹, N.A. Polevoi characterized the transversion as a false

¹⁹ I. I. Kozlov, Complete Collection of Poems... 164.

²⁰ R. Burns, The Cotter’s Saturday Night... 47.

²¹ I. I. Kozlov, Complete Collection of Poems... 164.

²² N. N. [Polevoi N.A.], On the Life and Literary Works of R. Burns: (The Rural Saturday Evening in Scotland. Free Imitation of R. Burns by I. Kozlov. Saint-Petersburg. 1829, Printing Office. 37 p. in 16). Moscow Telegraph. Part XXVIII. No. 14. 1829, 207.

²³ N. N. [Polevoi N.A.], On the Life and Literary Works of R. Burns... 206.

²⁴ N. N. [Polevoi N.A.], On the Life and Literary Works of R. Burns... 205.

²⁵ N. N. [Polevoi N.A.], On the Life and Literary Works of R. Burns... 206.

²⁶ N. N. [Polevoi N.A.], On the Life and Literary Works of R. Burns... 206.

²⁷ N. N. [Polevoi N.A.], On the Life and Literary Works of R. Burns... 207.

²⁸ N. N. [Polevoi N.A.], On the Life and Literary Works of R. Burns... 208.

²⁹ N. N. [Polevoi N.A.], On the Life and Literary Works of R. Burns... 208.

way of translation: “...you either write on your own or convey the original, which you have selected, in a precise way; otherwise I recognize neither you nor the foreign poet”³⁰.

The “loose transversion” was mentioned by I.V. Kireevskiy in his “Review of the Russian Literature of 1829”, issued in “The Morning Star of 1830” almanac, where he paid attention to the peculiar beginning of the poem, i.e. the heartfelt dedication to untimely departed A.A. Voeikova: “The Saturday Evening, imitation of Burns is remarkable if to judge by the verses attached in the beginning to the death of A.A. Voeikova, where one can see a touching feeling of the soul, which knows how to love the beautiful”³¹. The sixth volume of the “Encyclopedic Lexicon” by A.A. Pluchart, issued in 1836, along with the general characteristic of Burns’ works as “abrupt glimpses of high spirit, while the author was completely deprived of everything that is needed to achieve perfection: education, leisure, constant effort, even the lifetime”³², separately mentioned “The Rural Saturday Evening in Scotland” by I.I. Kozlov and called it the “most decisive example of connecting the sublime and simple-hearted”³³.

Issue No. 3 of the “Domestic Notes” of 1841 included a review by V.G. Belinskiy on the third edition of the “Collection of Poems by Ivan Kozlov”, which was published a year before that, where the author spoke critically on I.I. Kozlov’s manner of translation and called his interpretations of western poetry (in particular, “The Bride of Abydos” by G.G. Byron and “The Crimean Sonnets” by A. Mickiewicz) “attempts” with varying degrees of success. Turning to the “The Cotter’s Saturday Night” by Burns, V.G. Belinskiy regretted that I.I. Kozlov created the “loose transversion” instead of a full-fledged translation of the extremely interesting work: “...Kozlov might have translated this excellent play in an excellent manner, but as an imitation it looks like something very strange”³⁴. V.G. Belinskiy was especially puzzled with the end of the poem, where “after a great appeal of the Scottish poet to his Motherland, the translator (in the 19th couplet) suddenly appeals to Russia”: «Let us suppose that his appeal is full of patriotic ardour; but if it is appropriate – that is the question!»³⁵. Elaborating on that more, V.G. Belinskiy recalled the immortal translation by N.I. Gnedich of the “Iliad” by Homer and the activity of M.M. Kheraskov, the author of the Russian sagas, which was critically reassessed since 1820-ies, though those two may hardly be compared irrespective of the seeming closeness, and finally concluded that the “life in Scotland presented by Burns in his beautiful idyll” is inconsistent with the life of “our our men, women, guys, boys and girls”³⁶.

Among the books, which belonged to V.A. Zhukovskiy and are kept in the scientific library of the Tomsk State University, there is an issue of “The Rural Saturday Evening in Scotland” of 1929. Its now missing title page used to have I.I. Kozlov’s autograph note “To

³⁰ N. N. [Polevoi N.A.], On the Life and Literary Works of R. Burns... 209.

³¹ I. V. Kireevskiy, Review of the Russian Literature of 1829. Kireevskiy I.V., Kireevskiy P.V. Complete Collection of Works Vol: 2: In 4 vol. (Kaluga: Grif, 2006), 45.

³² Robert Burns, Encyclopedic Lexicon. Saint-Petersburg: Printing Office of A.A. Pluchart. 1836. Vol. VI. BIN–BRA, 387.

³³ Robert Burns, Encyclopedic Lexicon... 388.

³⁴ V. G. Belinskiy, <Reviews> Collection of Poems by Ivan Kozlov. Third edition. Saint-Petersburg. The Printing Office of the third department of the secretariat of His Imperial Majesty. 1840. In two parts. In 1/8 part of a standard paper sheet. The 1st part of 315 pages, the 2nd one – 367 pages. Belinskiy V.G Complete Collection of Works: In 13 volumes. Vol 5. Moscow: Printing Office of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR. 1954, V. 73.

³⁵ V. G. Belinskiy, <Reviews> Collection of Poems by Ivan Kozlov... V, 73.

³⁶ V. G. Belinskiy, <Reviews> Collection of Poems by Ivan Kozlov... V, 72.

dear Zhukovskiy”; the trace of this autograph from a hard pressed pencil writing can be seen on the front page with the help of side lighting³⁷. It is very likely that I.I. Kozlov’s present aroused V.A. Zhukovskiy’s interest to Burns’ literary works, which resulted, in particular, in the creation on 22 July 1831 of a travesty transversion of Burns’ “John Barleycorn”, which was called “The Confessions of a Cambric Handkerchief”³⁸.

In many respects owing to I.I. Kozlov’s translation, “The Cotter’s Saturday Night” starts to be treated in Russia as “the most important Burns’ writing”³⁹, as it is written about, for instance, by O.I. Senkovskiy in his article “Robert Burns”, which was anonymously published in 1837 in the “Library for Reading” and created on the basis of the essay of the same name by French translator Léon de Wailly. O.I. Senkovskiy genetically elevates “The Cotter’s Saturday Night” to an earlier poem by Robert Fergusson called “The Farmer’s Ingle”, and after that he reproduces the content of the English original in detail: “In Burns’ text the action takes place in November; the farmer returns from work, glad that he will be able to sleep longer tomorrow morning. Here is his secluded hut, overshadowed by an old tree; here his little children are running towards their father, stumbling and shouting merrily. The brilliant light in the fireplace, the cleanliness of the whole room, the smile of his wife and the babbling of the baby who climbs onto his knees - all that makes him forget the fatigue. Older children, who are in service on other farms, are gathering in the evening. Jenny, their grown up daughter, brings to her father and mother the money, which she has saved out of her salary. All this first part of the poem is full of the same calm entertainment as in the Fergusson’s one (sic!); but in the second part of Burns’ work there appears a young man, who is in love with Jenny and is respectfully escorting her; when later, after the dinner, the whole family kneels down to pray to the God in a common prayer, Burns is leaving far behind the nice pattern of poetry, which he liked so much. This poem seems to be written in the memory of his father, and if so, it does credit to both”⁴⁰.

Burns’ poem “The Cotter’s Saturday Night” had been rarely mentioned in the subsequent Russian criticism and literary studies until the end of the 19th century. In particular, P.I. Veinberg in the jubilee year of 1896 called it one of the best and mostly important works by the Scottish poet⁴¹. Charles Turner, a professor of the Saint-Petersburg University in the same year characterized “The Cotter’s Saturday Night” as an “incomparable picture of the home life of the poet’s parents”⁴². I.I. Ivanov in the article about Burns, printed in 1896 in the “Russian Thought”, cited three enthusiastic verses about love from the translation of “The Cotter’s Saturday Night” made by V.D. Kostomarov⁴³.

V.D. Kostomarov’s translation of “The Cotter’s Saturday Night” was created in 1861 and published in the same year in the eighth issue of “The Contemporary”⁴⁴. A short-term

³⁷ The Library of V. A. Zhukovskiy: (Description). Compiled by V.V. Lobanov (Tomsk: Printing Office of the Tomsk University, 1981), 35.

³⁸ K. N. Atarova, Commentaries. English Poetry in Translations by V.A. Zhukovskiy. Compiled by K.N. Azarova and A.A. Gugin (Moscow: Rudomino; Raduga, 2000), 335.

³⁹ K. N. Atarova, Commentaries... 128.

⁴⁰ O. I. Senkovskiy, Robert Burns. Library for Reading. 1837. Vol. XXIV. – Part. II.

⁴¹ P. Veinberg, Robert Burns (Essay. – To the 100th anniversary of his death). The Russian Heritage. 1896. No. 9; No. 10.

⁴² K. Turner, Robert Burns. The Works of God. 1896. – No. 7, 110.

⁴³ I. Ivanov, Robert Burns. Russian Thought. 1896. – No. 7. No. 8.

⁴⁴ R. Burns, The Cotter’s Saturday Night. Ilyll (“November was roaring, the snowstorm was getting angry in the valley...”). Translation by V. Kostomarov. The Contemporary. 1861. No. 8. Part I.

period of V.D. Kostomarov’s literary activity (1860–1865) was clearly divided by the events of the August of 1861, when being arrested for the creation of a clandestine printing office, he gave testimonies, based on which M.L. Mikhailov and N.G. Chernyshevskiy were convicted. The exposure of D. Kostomarov’s deplorable role of an informer and fabricator of the “material evidence” led to a complete breakaway between him and the literary society; since then until the very death, which followed in the December of 1865 he published his works unanimously or under pen-names. The specificity of D. Kostomarov as a person affected the further reception of his activity as a translator, especially in the Soviet literary studies. For instance, E.S. Belashova, criticizing V.D. Kostomarov as an interpreter who “openly falsified Burns’ acutely critical works, changing their ideological orientation for his own interests”⁴⁵, was categorically against the presentation of “The Cotter’s Saturday Night” as a poem of special importance for the literary work of the Scottish author. Noting that V.D. Kostomarov “understood in an entirely wrong way the main character of Burns’ literary activity”, E.S. Belashova elaborated on her position in the following way: “In his assessment of the people’s poet of Scotland he < V.D. Kostomarov > orients on his poem “The Cotter’s Saturday Night”, calling it “the most serious of his < Burns’ – E.B. > writings”. This is absolutely wrong. “The Cotter’s Saturday Night” poem, where Burns gives an idyllic description of life of a peasant family, cannot determinate the ideological orientation of the whole poetry of Robert Burns. As M. Morozov rightly notes in his studies, this poem “stands alone” in the literary activity of the Scottish poet, its motives are nor typical for the poetry of Burns in general⁴⁶. According to one more researcher of this topic – A. Bobyleva, the key V.D. Kostomarov’s mistake was the interpretation of Burns as a “humble singer of pure and sonorous songs”, who turned out to be capable of “speaking the tone of a spiritual mentor, consoler, promising afterlife paradise to earthly sufferers”⁴⁷. A. Bobyleva comes to a conclusion that V.D. Kostomarov was not so much translating Burns, but rather “was introducing into the poem the sense in line with his views and objectives”⁴⁸.

V.D. Kostomarov treated Burns’ original quite loosely, having omitted the epigraph from Thomas Gray, introductory dedication to Robert Aiken, couplets No. 17, 19, 20 and 21. The omission of the poem’s final has significantly changed its general tonality by weakening the patriotic pathos, faith in the courage, honesty and nobility of the nation, its eternal desire for freedom. In total, the translator has reduced the text from 189 to 144 verses, from 21 to 16 couplets. It is unclear why the 17th couplet remained untranslated. It is one of the couplets called to underscore the importance of religion in the life of a simple villager: “Compar’d with this, how poor Religion’s pride / In all the pomp of method, and of art / <...> / But haply, in some cottage far apart, / May hear, well-pleas’d, the language of the soul; / And in His Book of Life the inmates poor enroll”⁴⁹; compare in A.M. Fedorov’s translation: “Terrestrial faith, your image looks so pale! / And why should there be an elegant and false brilliance? / <...> / And only there, among ordinary people, / The

⁴⁵ E. S. Belasheva, Robert Burns in Translations by S. Marshak. Scholarly Notes of the Chernovtsy State University. Vol. XXX. Series of Philological Sciences. Issue No. 6. Chernovtsy, 1958, 70.

⁴⁶ E. S. Belasheva, Translations by V.D. Kostomarov from Robert Burns’ Literary Works. Annual Collection of Scientific Papers of the Chernovtsy State University of 1956: In issue No. 2. Chernovtsy, 1957. Issue No. 2.

⁴⁷ A. Bobyleva, Robert Burns in Russian Translations. The First Collection of Students’ Works. The K.L. Khetagurov Ossetian State Pedagogical Institute. Ordzhonikidze. Philological issue. 1959. 143.

⁴⁸ A. Bobyleva, Robert Burns in Russian... 143.

⁴⁹ R. Burns, The Cotter’s Saturday Night... 47

language of soul comprehends in a well-disposed manner / And preparing the God’s bosom for the poor”⁵⁰.

The verse about “The black’ning trains o’crows to their repose”⁵¹, as though not noticed by I.I. Kozlov, received an unexpected reading in V.D. Kostomarov’s text: “And a black rook has dozed off on a hillock”⁵². Later on this detail has made a lot of difficulties for the translators, compare: “The flight of a deaf crow is full of noise” (A.M. Fedorov⁵³); “The train of crows is swirling for the rest” (V.A. Shirokov⁵⁴); “A flock of crows is riding to the nesting spots”); “The crows are heading to the nesting spots”⁵⁵ (S. Sapozhnikov). In our view, the most precise readings were offered by T.L. Shchepkina-Kupernik (“The flocks of crows are heading to the quietness”⁵⁶ and E.D. Feldman (“The flock of crows is flying to the nests”⁵⁷), who have preserved the simplicity of the original, free from archaism and pretentiousness.

V.D. Kostomarov’s translation crates a feeling of hastiness and negligence in relation to the original, which embodies in a great number of artistic details, “thought out” for the author instead of the “ancient (centuries-long) tree” an “old willow” comes up, the “economical” wife of the peasant becomes “hospitable”, the babbling baby, who used to sit on the father’s knees and make him forget about the day works, disappeared. In the third couplet the verse “Comes home, perhaps to shew a brow new gown”⁵⁸ was transversed in a deliberately rude manner – “Then Jane came back from the town: / How could she have failed to come if she has new clothing!”⁵⁹; thus there is an impression that the girl came to the native house to her parents, who were trying “to enroot the love for the goodness in the hearts of their children” only to have a chance to show off in front of the mother, tailoring for the junior son “a new vest <...> out of old clothing”⁶⁰. On the contrary, in Burns’ picture Jenny comes to her relatives in order to find out about the situation in the family and, in case of necessity, to help with her earned and saved money, and, *perhaps*, to show her nice new dress.

Unexpectedly comes V.D. Kostomarov’s translation of a simple and unpretentious verse “And “Let us worship God!” he says with solemn air”⁶¹, where, inconsistently with the

⁵⁰ R. Burns, *The Cotter’s Saturday Night*. Translation by A.M. Fedorov. Odessa: Printing Works of the “People’s Library” of V.N. Marakuev. 1896. 8.

⁵¹ R. Burns, *The Cotter’s Saturday Night*... 47.

⁵² R. Burns, *The Cotter’s Saturday Night*. Translation by V.D. Kostomarov. Robert Burns and his works in translation by Russian writers. Under the editorship of I.A. Belousov (Saint-Petersburg: Printing Works of A.S. Suvorin, 1904), 90.

⁵³ R. Burns, *The Cotter’s Saturday Night*... 3.

⁵⁴ R. Burns, *The Cotter’s Saturday Night*. Translation by V. Shirokov. Burns R. Collection of Poetic Works / Compiled by E.V. Vitkovskiy (Moscow: Ripol-classic, 1999), 63.

⁵⁵ R. Burns, *The Cotter’s Saturday Night*. Translation by K. Manasenko. Burns R. Verses and Poems. Preface, compilation and commentaries by E.V. Vitkovskiy (Moscow: Eksmo, 2012), 82.

⁵⁶ R. Burns, *The Cotter’s Saturday Night*. Translation by T.L. Shchepkina-Kupernik. Burns R. Selected Lyrics. Translated from English by T.L. Shchepkina-Kupernik; editorship, preface and commentary by S. Babukh. Moscow: State Printing Office “Fine Literature”. 1936. 140.

⁵⁷ R. Burns, *The Cotter’s Saturday Night*. Translation by E.D. Feldman. Burns R. Poems. Translation, article and commentary by E.D. Feldman, article by D.N. Zhatkin, illustrations by A.F. Kabanin (Saint-Petersburg: Vita Nova, 2017) 22.

⁵⁸ R. Burns, *The Cotter’s Saturday Night*... 47.

⁵⁹ R. Burns, *The Cotter’s Saturday Night*... 90.

⁶⁰ R. Burns, *The Cotter’s Saturday Night*... 91.

⁶¹ R. Burns, *The Cotter’s Saturday Night*... 47.

original, an image of the mother comes up: “And the mother said solemnly, “Let us pray”⁶². Such an injection is not only changing the nuances of the author’s intention, but also influences the reception of the whole couplet, entirely devoted in Burns’ text to the housefather; this was realized by V.D. Kostomarov too, and he was reasoning exceptionally about the father until the last verse of the couplet: “*the elder* <...> put the Holy Bible, which *his* father cherished”, “*he opened*”. The use by V.D. Kostomarov of the elements of russification in the text (e.g., “was settling things at the fair”, “flies like an arrow, as an instant, hour by hour”, “an honest fellow”, “an all-right guy”, “blessed them all to rest in peace”) made the description closer to the realities of the Russian daily life, putting it off the circumstances of the life of Scottish villagers and strengthening the feeling of a certain depthlessness in description, the weakening of a number of motives and images, deliberate disregard of artistic details. However, among V.D. Kostomarov’s translations of Burns’ works there have been some undoubted success stories, which, in particular, may be judged by D.I. Pisarev’s review of the poem “For a’That and a’That”; not receiving the religious pathos of the last couplet (“Pray all, that God will send / to us His Kingdom. / So that the honest work in the world will become / the most honorable of all! / First of all, first of all / From here to eternity, / So that a man to another man / Should be a brother first of all...”), the critic simultaneously noted that V.D. Kostomarov “has translated this poem in a simple and elegant manner, preserving that touch of humour and that easiness of expressions, which were typical for the original”⁶³.

Discussions

In 1876, issues No. 5 and 6 of the “Delo” journal published an article by N.I. Utina (under a pen-name N. Al-eva) “Robert Burns (Scottish People’s Poet)”, where the author, stating that the Scottish poet “was interested in theological themes only accidentally and under the influence of <...> friends”, preferring “day-to-day issues”⁶⁴, was retold in detail the plot of “The Cotter’s Saturday Night”, quoting the major part of the 18th couplet in V.D. Kostomarov’s translation and presented her free translation of one of the fragments, antithesizing a pious prayer of a modest villager and a false godliness of the nobility and theologians: “Compared to this simple but sincere prayer, how miserable is the mock solemnity with which priests and learned theologians flaunt! How artificial is their idle talk, how contemptible is their external, fake piety, not emanating from the heart! True piety may be found only in a hut, and while it is possible to rest on such simple but encouraging pictures, until then the old Scotland will be a respected and great country. Princes and lords are henchmen of kings, and an honest man is the noblest product of the Creator. In moral terms, the hut leaves the castle far behind. What is all the splendor of the nobility, if not trumpery, often decorating a desperate scoundrel and libertine!”⁶⁵. For sure, N.I. Utina has tried to highlight the key points differently in the interpretation of Burns’ poem, focusing primarily on the interest and respect of the Scottish poet to ordinary people.

In Odessa, V.N. Marakuev’s “People’s Library” published in 1896 a separate eight-page brochure, which was the translation of “The Cotter’s Saturday Night”, made by A.M. Fedorov; it was titled as “The Saturday Evening in Village”. The translator preserved

⁶² R. Burns, *The Cotter’s Saturday Night*... 94.

⁶³ D. I. Pisarev, <Reviews:> “Poets of all the Times and Peoples”. Printed by Kostomarov and Berg. 1862. Pisarev D.I. Complete Collection of Writings and Letters. Vol: 4. In 12 vol. (Moscow: Nauka, 2001), 247.

⁶⁴ N. Al-eva, N. <Utina N.I.>. Robert Burns (Scottish People’s Poet). Delo. 1876. No. 5. Part I. No. 6. Part I. 287.

⁶⁵ N. Al-eva, N. <Utina N.I.>. Robert Burns...

the number of couplets (21), the same number of verses in each couplet (by 9) and tried to convey the idea of the Scottish author, having reproduced the pictures of the rural life, hard work in the field, atmosphere of joy, connected with the return to the cozy house, to the fireplace and relatives. A.M. Fedorov was attentive to the scene of the parents’ meeting the loved one of their daughter, full of awkwardness and impressiveness; in the scene of the Bible reading one can feel children’s submission to the will of the parents, readiness to hear and receive their instructions. The religious parts were conveyed by A.M. Fedorov with a special care, without additions or omissions. The interpreter has kept the epigraph from T. Gray, which turned out to be translated into the Russian language for the first time (“Let the haughty not dare to laugh, / At their uncomplicated fate and their work ... / He’d better not to touch at all / Those simple lines with a poor hero”⁶⁶), as well as the introductory couplet with a dedication to Robert Aiken.

But the reader was again offered a free poetic “transversion” from Burns, which is obvious in everything, starting with the Russian name and ending with separate substantive nuances. A.M. Fedorov tried to reinterpret every line of the original, for instance, in the first two verses of the second couplet “November chill blows loud wi’ angry sugh; / The short’ning winter-day is near a close”⁶⁷ he changed the lexeme *chill* with the *wind*, expression *blows loud* – with the verb *whistles*, and also he changed positions of separate words in order to keep the rhyme. In the verse “The miry beasts retreating frae the pleugh”⁶⁸ the translator offered his option for the interpretation of lexeme *beasts* [скот] – *a horse* (previously, in I.I. Kozlov’s text it was *a bull*, in V.D. Kostomarov’s translation it was *an ox*). In Burns’ original the *tired* peasant is coming back home *through the moor* – “weary, o’er the moor”⁶⁹, and in A.M. Fedorov’s translation the ploughman “is walking tiredly through the heather”⁷⁰. By using in the third couplet the word of an everyday use *тятя* (*dad*) instead of the neutral *отец* (*father*), the translator unreasonably “lowers” the sublime tone of the Scottish poem: “Unsteadily on his legs, towards the “Dad”/ The baby is running happily and noisily...»⁷¹. In general, it is possible to state that A.M. Fedorov actively used words and expressions from the spoken and colloquial language: “greetings to the modest housewife”, “was settling a pretty business”, “new clothing”, “to flaunt”, “labour kopeck”, “wonders and authentic things”, “glorified”.

As in the text of V.D. Kostomarov, in A.M. Fedorov’s translation one carelessly chosen word – “she does not mind *flaunting* in new clothing”⁷² – instantly destroys the image of the daughter who is getting embarrassed and pale during the meeting with the parents, “the hope <...> flourishing like lily in the spring”. In the 21st couplet the translator makes an unsuccessful attempt to interpret the word “parritch”, which means any kind of porridge, with the use of expression “Scottish oatmeal”. In the 12th couplet with its typical sublimity, amplified by the use of adverbs *solemnly* and *reverentially*, A.M. Fedorov again made an inappropriate use of one lexeme – *having coughed*, thus the atmosphere of the whole part was spoilt: “The father took the Bible solemnly: / The gift of grandfathers, an honourable and old one. / <...> / And has chosen the song of Zion, / And, *having coughed*, <...> / Declared: “Friends, let’s praise the God”⁷³.

⁶⁶ R. Burns, *The Cotter’s Saturday Night*... 2.

⁶⁷ R. Burns, *The Cotter’s Saturday Night*... 47.

⁶⁸ R. Burns, *The Cotter’s Saturday Night*... 47.

⁶⁹ S. A. Orlov, *Burns in Russian Translations*...

⁷⁰ R. Burns, *The Cotter’s Saturday Night*... 2.

⁷¹ R. Burns, *The Cotter’s Saturday Night*... 3.

⁷² R. Burns, *The Cotter’s Saturday Night*... 5.

⁷³ R. Burns, *The Cotter’s Saturday Night*... 6.

Conclusions

Meanwhile the interpretations of “The Cotter’s Saturday Night, created in the 19th century, look imperfect and even inadequate, but in some periods in the past they were considered significant in artistic and aesthetic aspects. Transversions by I.I. Kozlov and V.D. Kostomarov were re-published several times in numerous literary collections and anthologies of the subsequent years, made up the basis for the first Burns’ author books in the Russian language; translation by A.M. Federov remained unnoticed though it represented an apparent interest for the researchers of translated fine literature. Based on the achievements of the predecessors and trying to avoid the same misjudgments and mistakes, the translators of the 20th – early 21st centuries created new Russian versions of “The Cotter’s Saturday Night”, deserving a separate research.

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