

THE ESSENTIAL CONTRIBUTION OF ALEXANDRU HALLUNGA TO THE TRANSLATION OF ADAM SMITH IN ROMANIA

Octavian OPRICĂ*

1776 was a prophetic year for the Western civilization. On one side of the Atlantic the American Revolution successfully created a new nation and on the other side an epoch-making book was published that would give an unprecedented impetus to the development of the science of Economics. As Peter Drucker says: "Who could have predicted this amazing event?" [1]

Smith's *Wealth of Nations* was not successful at first and until after the third edition (1784) had not made much impact on the British readers. The third edition, considered the final version, incorporating amendments and "Additions" was reprinted twice during the life of the author (1786 and 1789). The fifth edition is the one taken as a good version translation by Professor Alexandru Hallunga [2], although contemporary editors consider that "it is certainly illogical to follow this text, simply because it is the last published in Smith's lifetime" [3].

Two centuries after the first publication, the Glasgow edition of the Works and Correspondence of Adam Smith [4] gave the complete picture of this fabulous man.

The fact that until 1934 the Romanian language had had no translation of this outstanding scholar seemed to indicate that, on the one hand, Romanian students studied Adam Smith in French or, more unlikely, in the original, and, on the other, that the Romanian language had not yet become apt to render the ideas into an incipient scientific economic vocabulary. We find quotations of Adam Smith in Nicolae Sutu [5, p.66], Ion Ghica [6, p.24], and other economists of the 19th and early 20th century but all these quotations refer to either the English original or German and most frequently French translations. The attempt of Alexandru Hallunga to give the first translation of Adam Smith into Romanian is all the more valuable in contributing to the advancement of economic studies in our country.

Alexandru Hallunga (born on 4, June 1902 in Bacau, in an old Moldavian family) studied in Iassy and later, as

a delegate to the Students' Congress in Manchester, 1924, decided to stay in England for a while to continue his economic studies. He got his Ph.D. in Law and Economics at the University of Paris (1924 – 1926) with a Thesis on Customs Taxes. When coming back to Romania, he was appointed assistant professor to the Chair of Virgil Madgearu, probably the most outstanding Romanian economist in the 1930s, and continued uninterruptedly until 1943, when we find him working as a substitute professor of The Faculty of Law in Iassy, at the Chair of the History of Economic Doctrines. Hallunga was also the secretary of the economic department of the Romanian Social Institute, a prestigious scientific and research body directed by Dimitrie Gusti, as well as editor of the economic section of the review "Viata Romaneasca".

With important contributions to various domains of law and economics, Professor Alexandru Hallunga remains in the minds of Romanian readers as a perfect translator and interpreter of Adam Smith. Besides the complete translation of "The Wealth of Nations" he also offered extensive information over the entire work of Adam Smith [7] and a consistent part in his course on the History of Economic Doctrines (starting with the Physiocrats and mentioning the then recent trends: State socialists, Christian socialists and Bolshevism and Anarchism). In his Curriculum Vitae of 1945 [8] we find recommendations and appreciations by N. Iorga, Virgil Madgearu, George Strat et al. concerning his translation of Adam Smith (the first Book had been published in 1934 and then subsequently the other four books of the original up to 1938, a total of 466 pages). Professor George Strat in a review of the First Book underlined "the great service to the development of the study of economics in our schools" and "the gratitude of those, young or adult, who often quoted the name of Adam Smith, without having any direct knowledge of his work" [9, p.97-98].

Alexandru Hallunga's contribution to making the works of Adam Smith known in Romania is an essential one. Suffice it to say that so far nobody else have considered themselves fit to embark on the difficult task of producing a new translation of Adam

* Lecturer, Department of Germanic Languages and Business Communication, A.S.E. Bucharest

Smith's *Wealth of Nations*. The Academy Publishing House printed his translation in 1965 in two volumes containing Books I – IV chapter 3 in the first volume, and Book IV chapter 4, Book V and Addendas in the second volume. The publication mentioned the name of the translator on the reverse page and included a presentation of Adam Smith by N. N. Constantinescu in which "the classic of the bourgeois political economy"... "has been overcome by the birth of Marxism", which explains not only the long lack of translations of Smith's works, but also of any comprehensive studies of his works [10].

Hallunga's translation of Adam Smith is by far the most praised of his works. In a review of the translation there is a remark that "the translation could not have been an integral achievement due to the lack of an economic-scientific terminology in our country" [11]. The author of the review draws an analogy with Gheorghe Lazăr's attempt more than a century before to render into Romanian the books on philosophy and sciences. The comparison is only symbolical because what Gheorghe Lazăr did in 1819 cannot be placed side by side with a translation that was done after more than a century of economics in Romania. Ion V. T. Stănescu [12] also emphasizes that the best edition of Smith's work (ed. Edwin Cannan) was used for the translation, the best that could have been chosen and moreover the one employed by Charles Gide at the University of Paris, where Alexandru Hallunga took his Ph.D. in 1926. Another analogy with the best French translation is the insertion of "the digression on the value of silver in the last four centuries" after chapter XI of Book I, attempted before by Charles Garnier in his 1843 translation. The respective digression is not found in the copy of either vol. I or vol. IV in the possession of the Library of the Academy, "Bucovina" Publishing House, Bucharest, 1934 and 1938 but it was included at the "right" place in the Edition of the Academy, 1962 and the subsequent edition of Chisinau, 1992 [13].

The differences between the 1934-1938 editions and the 1962-1965 ones are mainly stylistic and the editors do not explain the additions. We presume that Alexandru Hallunga took over the version of the previous edition and supplied the missing parts without any reference to the first edition. Besides in vol. II of 1965 some other works of Adam Smith are mentioned under the initials A. H. (obviously Alexandru Hallunga) with the intention of drawing the reader's attention to other outstanding contributions by Adam Smith:

1. *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*;
2. *Considerations concerning the first Formation of Languages and the different Genius of Original and Compounded Languages*;

3. *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*;
4. *Posthumous Essays*;
5. *Lectures on Justice, Police, Revenue and Arms, delivered in the University of Glasgow*.

The Complete Works of Adam Smith in 8 volumes published by OUP came only in 1976 (two hundred years after the first publication of *The Wealth of Nations*) and no attempts have been made to publish a new revised translation of Adam Smith's masterpiece.

Trying to illustrate the validity of Alexandru Hallunga's pioneer work I have selected certain excerpts from his translation. A very frequently used concept is "STOCK" sometimes repeated 4-5 times or more on a page and contained in the title of **Chapter I, Book II, "Of the Division of Stock"**.

The first thing that strikes the reader is that **stock** and **capital** are used interchangeably so that you are at a loss in finding a distinction between the two. I have chosen a long quotation of parts of this chapter to illustrate Alexandru Hallunga's rendering into Romanian of the two words (**stock** and **capital**).

Book II: Of the Nature, Accumulation, and Employment of Stock (Romanian: *capital*).

Chapter I: Of the Division of Stock (Romanian: *capital*)

When the *stock* (Rom. *rezerva de bunuri* – approx. 'reserve of goods') which a man possesses is no more than sufficient to maintain him for a few days... he seldom thinks of deriving any revenue from it... But when he possesses *stock* (Rom. *o rezerva*) sufficient to maintain him for months or years, he naturally endeavors to derive a revenue from the greatest part of it... this whole *stock* (Rom. *rezerva*), therefore is distinguished into two parts. That part which, he expects, is to afford him his revenue, is called his *capital* (Rom. *capital*). The other is that which supplies his immediate consumption; and which consists either, first, in that portion of his whole *stock* (Rom. *rezerva*) which was originally reserved for his purpose; ... and which are not entirely consumed; such as a *stock* (*stocul*) of cloathes (A.S.'s spelling), household furniture, and the like. In one or other, or all of these three articles, consists the *stock* (Rom. *rezerva*) which men commonly reserve for their immediate consumption.

I shall further select randomly other instances of rendering the word **stock** into Romanian. The quotations are from **Book I, chapter XI "Of the Rent of Land"**.

... accumulation of *stock* (acumulare de *capital*)

... the undertaker of the work who hazards his *stock* in this adventure (care isi pune in joc *capitalul* in aceasta "afacere cu riscuri")

... the other [part pays] the profits of their employer upon the whole *stock* of materials and wages which he advanced (asupra intregii *sume* avansate de el pentru materiale si salarii)

... what was sufficient to replace his *stock* to him (ceea ce ar fi suficient pentru a-si reface *capitalul*)

... the profits of *stock* (profiturile *capitalului*)

There is no apparent distinction in rendering the word *capital* in the following quotation:

The *capital* annually employed... will... amount only to one thousand pounds (*capitalul* anual intrebuintat...)

In this latter case the word *capital* refers to the investment of a sum of money; hence it is different from "replacing stock".

The following quotation has both *stock* and *capital* employed in a similar distribution:

... yet they [wages] never bear any regular proportion to the *capital* of which he oversees the management (totusi salariul nu e niciodata in raport cu

capitalul, a carui administrare o supravegheaza); and the owner of the *capital* (iar proprietarul *capitalului*)... expects that his profits should bear a regular proportion to his *capital* (in proportie directa cu *capitalul*). In the price of commodities, therefore, the profits of *stock* (profiturile *capitalului*) constitute a component part...

Concluding remarks should prize the quality of Alexandru Hallunga's translation and are meant to suggest a new edition of his valuable work for the benefit of those who either have no access to an original or do not understand the English version well enough to take full profit and pleasure in reading Adam Smith's language. Besides, for a better knowledge of Adam Smith's works, a translation of other works like *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* or *Considerations concerning First Formation of Languages* would be a real asset to our younger generation of economists.

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