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DOCTOR IN LITTERIS

DAVID GEORGIUS LITTLE

Bildung ist Umgang.

Doctores honoris causa, Academici, decus nobis hodie adferunt celebrantibus diem faustum, ducentos et quinquaginta abhinc annos, quo, cathedra litterarum Germanicarum constituta, feliciter inaugurata est doctrina disciplinaque litterarum sermonum morumque recentiorum apud Collegium Sanctissimae Trinitatis. Laeta libenter primum ad vos duco candidatum praeditum acuto ingenio atque insignem fide ac perseverantia, qui rationes optime novae linguae docendae ac discendae inventas nobis exhibuit, insulae Hiberniae cunctaeque Europae. Ab Anglia oriundus, DAVID GEORGIUS LITTLE acceptissimus legatus est de scientia Hibernica elocutionis ac communicationis, comes fidelis Europae, custos iustitiae ac diversitatis. Cum primum ad insulam nostram venit, ut doctor Germanicis litteris tradendis adiungeretur cohorti Collegii nostri, protinus virtutem suam ostendit, ut qui a puero linguam et Gallicam et Germanicam coluisset et omnia exercitia feliciter complevisset apud Universitatem Oxoniensem; sed minime ei placuit ratio docendi, qua ipse litteris erat instructus, quamvis antiquitate comprobata. Nam grammatici Romani, custodes Latini sermonis (ut voluit Seneca philosophus) institutionem puerorum vel iuvenum persequi solebant idoneis auctoribus legendis, artis grammaticae principiis omnibus memoriae mandatis. Sed, ut secum cogitavit, non est quod mores antiqui necesse sint boni vel utiles; cui prodest scientia sermonis nisi loquentibus? Si verum nulli loquentes inveniuntur, si lingua deficit a viginti varietate sermonum, quid restat de vi atque vita verborum? Nihil, inquam, nisi litterae oblitteratae et periturae. Haec consideranti viro sapienti venit in mentem, quae sit fons optimi cuiusque novi consilii: Europa, mater communis. E colloquiis cum collegis ab undique parte Europae advocatis, e sermonibus saepissime consertis, oriuntur apud nos primo officina academica de elocutione ac communicatione, deinde Schola dedita scientiae linguae, elocutionis ac communicationis, postremo illud templum educationis iustissimae quod dicimus institutum de studiis surdidatis. Quae omnia ipse condidit vel duxit vel consulit, quo fortioribus praesidiis firmaret praecepta Concilii Europaei de lingua in schola docenda sicut discitur usu cotidiano. Ducentis fere libellis editis viam aperuit et rationem, quam maxime accommodatam propriis et praecipuis curis necessitatibusque; nam multum interest si studia iniverit iuvenis si senex, si ingenuus si profugus, si sanus si aegritudine afflictus. Ex quo clare intellegitur virtus egregia huius magistri, qui, auspice Europa, hominum libertatem ac dignitatem eloquenter defendit. Plausis acclamate, quaeso, hunc sodalem emeritum Collegii nostri, candidatum plane dignum qui in coetum nostrum honoris causa admittatur.

DOCTOR IN LETTERS

DAVID GEORGE LITTLE

Education is interaction.
(Adalbert Stifter)

Honorary doctorates in today's ceremony celebrate the 250-year anniversary of teaching modern languages in our University. It is an honour to open the proceedings with a candidate who, with a vision equal to his commitment, has transformed the discipline in our College, in Ireland and in Europe. No-one more than DAVID GEORGE LITTLE, Fellow Emeritus of our College, deserves the title of 'Ireland's Language Ambassador', for he aligned the theory and practice of language teaching with the powerful European idea of unity in diversity. An Oxford graduate in German and French, he came to Ireland in 1970 to take up a lectureship in the German Department. His qualifications were superb, as was to be expected from a keen student of foreign languages since childhood, but he remained critical of the method of the instruction he had received, which consisted of the study of grammar and translation of literary texts. That method had been consolidated by millennia of practice – Greco-Roman education was based on reading the 'best authors' guided by the teachers, called 'grammarians, guardians of language' (Seneca, *Epistle* 95.65) for their role in preserving supposed linguistic standards – but does such a method achieve the primary goal of language learning? Language is communication; a language lives on, in all its beautiful variety across time and space, through the interactions of those who speak it; consigning a language to the written page amounts to killing it. As he reflected on these matters, this linguist initiated a series of radical innovations. First came the Centre for Language and Communication Studies in 1979, a language laboratory and research institute, which under his directorship would soon shine as a brilliant manifestation of the possibilities offered by the report on *Autonomy and Foreign Language Learning* published by the Council of Europe in the same year. He then directed the newly established School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Studies, and saw the creation of the Centre for Deaf Studies, a true model of inclusion in education. Two hundred publications emphasise his vision: collaborative learning, with each student's individual interests and needs at its heart, is the key to autonomy and freedom. To this day he continues assisting the Council of Europe's mission of promoting democracy and human dignity through projects intended to facilitate plurilingualism and intercultural awareness. Through his linguistic research and pedagogy, this man has proved that a good education is an exercise in social justice. He deserves our highest academic honours, marked by your resonant assent.

DOCTOR IN LITTERIS

JOHANNES CHRISTIANUS OESER

‘**V**ox in homine magnam voltus habet partem: adgnoscamus ea prius quam cernamus non aliter quam oculis; totidemque sunt hae quot in rerum natura mortales, et sua cuique sicut facies. hinc illa tot gentium totque linguarum toto orbe diversitas, hinc tot cantus et moduli flexionesque, sed ante omnia explanatio animi.’ Quidnam, quaero, Plinius philosophus naturalis tanta diligentia de varietate vocum disseruit, nisi eam in omni parte conservandam arbitrasset? Quod perdifficile est, sodales sapientes; nam officium interpretis, id est sermonis vertendi in alterum, vulgo dicitur ‘transferre’, quod significat alteram vocem ad alteram tutissime traducere, nulla modulatione, nulla vi verborum, nulla elegancia elocutionis neglecta. Qua arte omnium peritissimus iure habetur apud nos JOHANNES CHRISTIANUS OESER, interpres mirabilis litterarum Hibernicarum ad usum Germanice legentium. Berolini ipse natus atque eruditus, iuvenis profectus est ad insulam nostram litterarum copiosissimam; ab hospite mox civis factus Dubliniensis, fines Germaniae tandem aperuit stirpi Hiberniae, ut demum admittantur cohortes nostrae litterarum recentiorum. Huius vero ducis pacifici, vel potius dicam paciferi, arma fuere copiae amplissimae scriptorum Hibernicorum, quorum Anglicos sermones in Germanicam linguam vertebat, vel scripta Germanice reddita lucide illustrabat. Quot vocum flexiones, quanta diversitas! Tam scite, tam venuste scriptores nostros interpretatus est, ut clarissime agnoscerentur voces Hibernicae, nunc lepida illius Oscar Dubliniensis, nunc nitida Derek Belfastiensis, nunc variae modulationes, quas finxerat Sebastianus narrator ingeniosus; audiri denique videtur vox ipsa cuiusque scriptoris ex fere triginta Hibernicis redditus sapienter. Eo magis mirandum hoc iudico, quod multum discrepare scio linguam Germanorum ab Hiberno genere Anglici sermonis, sive poetice exprimatur sive familiariter. Non tantum interpres, sed auctor doctissimus iure ubique laudatur, quia sapientiae virtutes vertendi conformat. Nonne nos solet docere, ne extinguantur voces vitales, differentiam nostri alienique sermonis rite esse observandam ab interprete, velut a custode fidei, non a fero victore? Gratias maximas agite, Academici, viro bene merito de re publica litterarum Hibernica, fautori varietatis ac patrono disertissimo artium vertendi et interpretandi, exemplo denique discipulis huius Collegii, ut recte intellegant (liceat mihi repetere verba sodalis facundi) familiaritatem cum gentium linguis litterisque re vera ad pacem iustitiamque spectare. Vir bonus utriusque sermonis peritus doctrina disciplinaque nobis suadet ne umquam, arte deserta, ingenio spreto ac relicto, vocem nobis praecipuam mutemus cum muto quodam automate. Illud memoria tenete: ‘Sua cuique vox sicut facies et explanatio animi.’ Nunc claris vocibus universi adsentiamur.

DOCTOR IN LETTERS

HANS-CHRISTIAN OESER

‘**V**oice constitutes a large part of a human being’s personality: we recognise a person by it before we see him just in the same way as we recognise him with our eyes; and there are as many varieties of voices as there are mortals in the world, and a person’s voice is as distinctive as his face. This is the source of the difference between all the nations and all the languages all over the world, and of all the tunes and modulations and inflexions, but before all things of the power of expressing our thoughts’ (Pliny, *Natural History* 11.271). Imagine the complexity of carrying across – this is what, literally, ‘translation’ means – all the nuances and tones of someone’s voice from one language, one nation, one place to another. In all its magnitude, the difficulty has been superbly overcome by the undisputed master in the magic art of translation in contemporary Ireland, HANS-CHRISTIAN OESER: he is the German voice of Irish writers. Born and educated in Berlin, he has lived in Dublin since 1980, opening the doors of Irish literature to German readers through hundreds of translations, collections of short stories, literary, cultural and political reflections. He has splendidly rendered Oscar Wilde’s wit and Derek Mahon’s imagery; he has found modulations for each character’s idiom in Sebastian Barry’s novels; the personal and distinctive voice of each and every one of the thirty more Irish writers he has translated is unambiguously recognisable. His achievement is all the more remarkable because of the distance between the German language and English, both in its highest poetic expressions and in the most colloquial demotic varieties of Hiberno-English. His abilities come from such a deep understanding of the profession, that he has become an international authority in the field of literary translation: ‘The translator,’ he explains, ‘is a respecter of differences who does not conquer, does not appropriate, does not displace or subsume but seeks to rescue, to mature, to expand and prolong the life of the original work.’ This man has not only rendered an incommensurable service to Irish literature, but has fostered cross-cultural dialogue; he has promoted the art of translation and the recognition of the profession in Ireland, as founding member of the Irish Interpreters’ and Translators’ Association, as editor of *Translation Ireland*, and as member of the worldwide Commission for Literary Translation. We are honoured by his presence in our Centre for Literary Translation, which trains the new generations in a practice that, as one of our most distinguished colleague writers puts it, is a ‘vital vehicle of cross-cultural understanding.’ We are proud to bestow our highest academic recognition on a man who has taught us that at the heart of translation are human understanding and creativity, with a sense of register and style, with a respect of personal voices that no machine can achieve: our voice is who we are.

DOCTOR IN LITTERIS

EDA SAGARRA

Si enim bona est vita creata, quam bona est vita creatrix?

‘**Q**uem virum aut heroa lyra vel acri / tibia sumis celebrare, Clio?’ Si vero Horatius poeta Musam interrogasset apud nos, equidem credo patronam Historiae hoc respondisse, non virum, sed feminam celebrandam esse musica laude, liberam ac liberalissimam mulierem Hibernicam, sagacem atque sedulam, ornatam fortissima virtute ac pietate firmissima. Huic mulieri, sodales, nomen est EDA SAGARRA. Dulce ridentem semper eam vidimus ut nunc—nimirum, quod quaecumque susceperit cum gaudio facere solet, quamcumque societatem et communitatem vitae cognovimus plenam esse caritate patienti ac benigna. Saepe eam hoc clamantem audivimus: ‘Benedictus Deus excelsus, qui beatam me creavit,’ et manifestum factum est eam omnia credere, omnia sperare, ut decet magnanimam, quae numquam dubitat quin omnis Dei creatura tendat ad bonum. At de cursu honorum academico candidatae piissimae nonnulla dicere oportet. Studiis feliciter excultis apud sorerem Universitatem Hibernicam, Viennam profecta ut ad gradum doctoratus in Philosophiae admitteretur, omnia exercitia insigniter praestitit in historia, philosophia, linguis litterisque Germanicis et priscis et recentioribus. Britannia deinde, quae iam puerulam doctrinae rudimentis nutriverat, septemdecim per annos apud se magistram retinuit. In patriam rediit ut prima mulier sederet in vetusta cathedra Professoris Litteris Germanicis tradendis, quam conditam hodie celebramus; prima item fuit quae munera exercitaret iuxta Statuta Universitatis, Decanam Studentium hospitem in Collegio, et paulo post Registraria Collegii et Universitatis; nec fas est omittere dignitatem Procancellariae, quam laeta libenter accepit postquam a negotiis academicis in otium studiosissimum se sibi vindicaverat. Quam raro tunc mulieres auctoritate valere solebant! Quod nec rectum nec humanum esse querebatur candidata nostra iustissima, et adiutantibus sodalibus fidelibus (quas propter, Domine, gratias tibi agimus), omni auxilio adhibito a vinculis, ut ita dicam, inaequalitatis muliebra ingenia expedit. ‘Omnia renovanda’ saepe exhortari audiebatur; saepius etiam eam vidimus promissa solvere hinc indagatione novissima – nam prophetica quadam arte res gestas muliebres describere voluit, ab illa prima dissertatione de moribus maiorum rebusque novis Germaniae a litteris inlustratis – hinc honestissimis officiis civilibus: ea enim duce ac conditrice, ut in illo emblemate legitur, Concilium Indagationis habemus in patria. Amplissimis vero honoribus iam decoratam extollamus et nos, nam vita bene acta demonstravit quod scripsit: ‘gesta hominum, non virorum iure memoriae traduntur.’ Effusissimum plausum date, sodales, admirantes fulgidam gloriam atque exemplum Academiae nostrae, dignam pluribus laudibus quam dicere possim; legite, quaeso, mirabilem eius vitae narrationem, et omnium verissimam laudem invenietis paternam, filiam donum gratissimum sibi datum et toti generi humano.

DOCTOR IN LETTERS

EDA SAGARRA

If the created life is good, how good is the creative life!
(St Anselm, *Proslogium* XXIV)

‘**W**hat god, man, or hero do you choose to praise / with lyre or shrill flute, Clio?’ (Horace, *Odes* 1.12.1–2). If asked today, the Muse of History would reply: ‘I choose a woman—a free-spirited Irish woman of unbounded generosity, curiosity and creativity, courage and compassion. Her name is EDA SAGARRA.’ Her smile, as radiant as always, shines before you today, as the permanent feature of the love and joy that she has brought into every undertaking, every relationship, every achievement throughout her life. When she says ‘I have had the good fortune to have been born a happy person,’ she acknowledges the driving force behind her astonishing powers of leadership: faith in people, God’s creatures, and in their capacity for good. She started her academic career in England, where she had been educated as a young girl, before proceeding to obtain her Master’s degree in the National University of Ireland and her Doctorate in Philosophy at the University of Vienna. She came to us in 1975, the first woman to hold the Chair of German, which was established exactly 250 years ago. When she was appointed Dean of International Students in 1979 and Registrar in 1981, she was the first woman to hold a College office. Shortly after her retirement (if this were a word that could suitably apply to her), she served as Pro-Chancellor of the University until 2008. How few women were in senior University positions at that time! With her natural disposition to identify problems and determination to solve them, she has given her unwavering support to women in academia, aided in her mission by other exceptional Trinity women who are with us today, in body or in spirit. Her motto, as her colleagues recall, was ‘constant innovation.’ Brilliant evidence of this fact is in her academic work, which, since the publication of her first book in 1971, *Tradition and Revolution. German Literature 1830 to 1890*, singled out this scholar as one of the founders of the social history of literature in German studies; her attention to the history of women was prophetic of the rise of important new fields in the Humanities. Her vision accomplished the creation of the Irish Research Council, of which she was founding Chair, and which still awards a medal in her name. The conferring of the German Order of Merit is but one of her many international recognitions. She is the living proof of the truth she tells in her *Social History of Germany, 1648–1914*, ‘History is human, and not just male.’ On a woman who has been rightfully hailed as ‘one of the most influential and inspirational women in the history of our University’, many more words of praise could be lavished, but I find none more true and more moving than this, her father’s acknowledgement, buried in a footnote of her wonderful autobiography, *Living with My Century*: ‘Eda is a giver.’ Your applause will signal your admiration and eternal gratitude.

DOCTOR IN LITTERIS

CORINNA SALVADORI LONERGAN

*Silenzio, o voi che ragunati siete:
Voi vedrete una istoria nuova e santa.*

Laurentio illi Magnifico placuisse puto nuntium angelicum mittere ad nos, ut fabulam tam veridicam, quam olim illa de Sanctis Johanne et Paulo, de apostola piissima litterarum Italicarum vobis nuntiaret. Nam velut divino spiritu instincta CORINNA SALVADORI LONERGAN, sodalis emerita Collegii nostri, Domina Commendatrix Ordini Insigniter Meritorum adscripta Rei Publicae Italicae, apud nos iure celebratur patrona poesis et custos fidelissima litterarum Italicarum. Florentia eam genuit, aluit deinde civitas Dubliniensis; Collegium vero nostrum cum eam sexaginta abhinc annos magistram accepit, re vera matrem familias academicae recepit almam ac magnanimam. In artibus liberalibus puerula versabatur, a parentibus musicis instructa ad eam concinnitatem suavem percipiendam, quam Dante *legame musaico* vulgari sermone appellare solebat. Unde fieret illa virtus poetica discipula magis magisque comprehendebat, duce eodem poeta Florentino de vulgari eloquentia sic disserente: ‘Et hii sunt quos Poeta Eneidorum sexto’ (ubi, ut scitis, Orpheus vates a Sybilla laudatur) ‘dilectos Dei et ab ardente virtute sublimatos ad ethera Deorumque filios vocat, quanquam figurate loquatur.’ Quid vero sibi voluit uterque divinus poeta? Haud dubium responsum dat candidata nostra, dicto humanissimo Balthasaris illustris, *da Dio nasce la bellezza, ed è come circolo, di cui la bontà è il centro*. Quod non mirabimur, nam ab adulescentia haec studiosissima Balthasaris scripta tanta acie ingenii indagavit ut, mirabile auditu, ad artem poeticam Guilelmi vatis Dubliniensis pertinentia invenerit. Omnibus quidem constat poetas sapienter secum colloqui solere, verba consiliaque inter se libenter mutuantes, sed prima candidata nostra ausa est lumina Renascentiae Italicae comparare, creberrimis disputationibus interpretationibus lecturisque, cum Hibernicis scriptoribus optimis aetatis recentioris. Tantam doctrinam discipulis innumeris egregia sedulitate adhuc impertit, ut nunc legendo nunc interpretando gaudeant suavitate artis poeticae ac luce sapientiae transfigurentur. Nonne ad id tendunt studia liberalia? Nonne id pulcherrime significat sacra imago in media capellula nostra? Ut olim Ille ‘ascendit in montem ut oraret, et facta est species vultus eius altera: et vestitus eius albus et refulgens’, sic nos ascendimus, et luce studiorum omnino novi facti sumus. Mulieris pietatem ac virtutem diutissime cognovistis, sodales; animi puchritudinem reddit ipsa effigies, quam miramur in aula communi. Gratulantes denique unanimi testamur, ipsius verbis libere usurpatis, nihil in ea ab humanitate discrepare, immo virtutes ingenii concinere cum factis moribusque probissimis; hanc mulierem sapientem, hanc magistram optimam esse verissimum exemplar integrae humanitatis.

DOCTOR IN LETTERS

CORINNA SALVADORI LONERGAN

Silence, all you who are assembled here:

A story new and holy you will see.'

(Lorenzo de' Medici, *Rappresentazione
di S. Giovanni e Paolo*,
transl. C. Salvadori Lonergan)

Lorenzo il Magnifico would readily lend his Angel's words to announce the joyful *Rappresentazione* of a life munificently given to the glory of his name and of the Italian literary bequest to the world. This is the faithful story of CORINNA SALVADORI LONERGAN, Fellow Emerita of Trinity College, Commendatore dell'Ordine al Merito della Repubblica Italiana, inspired Patroness of Poets and inspiring Muse of Italian Studies in our University. Florence gave her birth, Dublin raised her, our College gave her an academic and spiritual home, which she has honoured and beautified with her presence for sixty years, and continues to do so with incomparable vitality and generosity. The Arts are in her blood: her musical parents attuned her ears to hear the sweet harmony of poetry; when she entered the path of literary studies, she discovered that 'poets are God's beloved, raised to the heavens by their ardent virtue and made the children of God' (Dante, *De Vulgari eloquentia* 2.4.10, with Virgil, *Aeneid* 6.129–131). Why would the Divine Poets say this, you may ask; she would probably answer with Castiglione, to whose influence on W. B. Yeats she devoted her Master's thesis at UCD and very first monograph, published in 1965: 'Beauty springs from God, and is like a circle of which goodness is the centre' (*The Book of the Courtier*, 4.57). She has brought to life the dialogue between Italian and Irish literature, through her perceptive translations, insightful studies, and public readings of Dante, Lorenzo, Poliziano, Ariosto, of Yeats, Beckett, Heaney, and many others. She has transmitted her passion to entire generations of students of Italian and of Literary Translation, whom she generously teaches to this day, in her firm belief in the transformational power of education. She often reminds us that no sacred image is more fitting to welcome students to the University than the Transfiguration, which can be admired in the central stained-glass window of our Chapel. Just as that day on the mountain, when 'the appearance of His face changed, and His clothes became as bright as a flash of lightning' (Luke 9: 29), so our studies enlighten our minds and elevate our souls. The beautiful person who stands before you – and gently looks out the window of her splendid portrait in the Common Room – is unique. I ask you most warmly to acclaim her, because (if I may paraphrase her interpretation in *Yeats and Castiglione*) 'No discord but a mutual relationship exists between her character and actions, between person, intelligence and conduct. The ideal of the humanists – gentlewoman, teacher, scholar – has *Unity of Being*.'