

December 4, 1957

71 Raymond Avenue  
Poughkeepsie, N. Y.

Dear Professor Ferrater Mora:

I am afraid that I must be acting as a jinx on my translatees (if you will permit the term): not only have I seen no reviews of "Man at the Crossroads" (though I am glad to learn that there have been some), but the Ortega book was published the middle of November, and except <sup>for</sup> ~~one~~ <sup>one</sup> in Newsweek (prompted, I take it, by its "news value"), not a single review of that has appear<sup>e</sup>d either. I hope that this baleful influence of mine will be overcome. Has Beacon advertised your book? In view of the fact that they got a considerable part of the translation cost paid for them, they certainly ought to.

Meanwhile, I noticed your book on Ortega listed among the "250 Outstanding Books" in the Times Book Review (issue of Dec. 1, page 71).

In which same compendium of "beautiful letters" I observe that Herten is advertising "Man and People" between "Where Did You Go?" ~~and~~ "Out." "What did You Do?" "Nothing." and "You're Stepping on my Clea~~r~~ and Dagger."

As to "The Intellectual," I am sorry that he has not yet found a home. Have you thought of trying the Atlantic Monthly or the American Scholar? And did I mention The Literary Review, the first number of which has now appeared (it contains some translations by me in an article by someone else); The editors are Clarence R. Decker and Charles Angoff (neither of whom do I know); address: Fairleigh Dickinson University, Teaneck, N. J. But perhaps this should go last on "The Intellectual's" list, for they seem to be stressing "fiction" and "creative" as against "critical" writing.

Good luck to the Diccionario, 4th edition!

I have had to abandon my Portuguese study for a time, to translate another

book of Eliade's (a short one, I am glad to say). He is arriving on these shores shortly to fill the chair of History of Religions at Chicago. Now I, who have no religion, ever got herded into this field is one of those mysteries. But then, I have no philosophy either - and here I am translating you and Ortega. All that I really have is a little taste. Left to myself, I should do nothing but travel, climb mountains, and read the obscurer classics.

Vladimir Nabokov came here some weeks ago and gave a highly entertaining, if somewhat discursive lecture on "The Art of Translation." He has been at work for some years on a translation of Pushkin's Eugen Onegin, and describes the pages of his translation as "two or three lines of text resting on a skyscraper of footnotes." That is certainly one way of going about it - and perhaps the most legitimate way. But are there readers for such a translation? I suppose it depends on what is in the footnotes; one reads Gibbon's often with more relish than his text.

With best wishes to, and for, your several endeavors, and a heartfelt curse on the non-reviewers of "Man at the Crossroads" and "Man and People,"

Yours cordially,

Willard R. Trask

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