

TRANSKRYPCJA NAGRAŃ

TASK 1.

Speaker A

I think the film's stars are the little smiling kids who sometimes run in front of the director's camera. Well, the main character grieves for their future as much as for the loss of his unborn child and his murdered wife. You can easily trace shades of *Solaris* in it, especially when Fiennes decides to join his wife in eternity, and you can wonder at his capacity to express this sense of loss in the movements of his face. Remember to bring plenty of hankies, girls!

Speaker B

What a disappointment! I believe it's a grossly melodramatic and overblown film and just uses Africa as a colourful background to irritate western liberals. Now, business is sometimes unethical and it's nothing new to me!

The film also lacks the moral complexity of..., say, Graham Greene's *Quiet American*, and plays more like a boring sixth-form debate. So my recommendation is simply don't bother seeing it - just get the soundtrack.

Speaker C

Everyone in this film plays their part to a T, and the picture of UK mandarins - in league with amoral British interests abroad - seems horribly real! I believe Fiennes's performance speaks for the whole film: it's technically very proficient but easier to admire than to rave about. And there's something about the pacing and atmosphere, much like the civil servant hero, that throttles any tension one might have expected, and the end result is a little, well, dull. But isn't real life sometimes, as well?

Speaker D

I have to say I found this film boring and tedious. The characters are mostly stereotypes, the dialogue is tedious and the plot, while complex, is at the same time blindingly obvious.

Graham Greene's *Quiet American*, I mean the recent adaptation, is similar but far better: it's got very realistic characters and much more subtlety. That's not a surprise when you learn the story comes from John le Carre, the author often described as the master of the sweeping cliché.

I know I'm flying in the face of a lot of people's opinions, but I can't tell a lie. You could not pay me to watch it again!

Speaker E

I think the film is well-acted, as Weisz and Huston only rarely go into melodramatic territory. It's a sad tale of corporate crime in Africa, but it's also a well-photographed and musically scored picture. There are many contrasting scenes of city squalor and natural beauty, and sometimes the hand held camera work can make you a little dizzy, which only adds to the overall atmosphere of the film.

Now, interesting as it is, the combination of plot twists and flashbacks make it a little hard to follow but I'm sure it's a film that'll stir both your emotions and intellect.

TASK 2.

Today, in our programme ‘Great Amateur Scientists’, you are going to meet Pierre Morvan, a world expert on ground beetles. Since the late 1960s, Mr. Morvan has made trips to the Caucasus, Iran, Bhutan, Nepal and Tibet – most of them financed by his job as a taxi-driver. He’s collected thousands of specimens – many of them new to science, and described over 300 new species.

Mr. Morvan, your hobby is quite unusual. How did it start?

As a 7-year-old boy living in rural Brittany, I desperately wanted to become an explorer and go to the Himalayas. Also I had already had a huge collection of insects. I loved biology but preferred skipping other lessons and exploring on my own than learning in the classroom. And having such a close contact with nature I learned plenty of things that other people in the countryside didn't know.

With such a passion for nature, why did you become a taxi driver?

I studied horticulture for a while, but then circumstances changed and I had to get a job. My mother had three children and couldn't provide for everyone. I started to work in the hotel business. I used to talk about my ambition to travel to the Himalayas and I went away on research trips until my boss had had enough. So I became a taxi driver. It was on my own terms, I didn't have to work regular hours and that way I could go away whenever I wanted.

Tell us about your first foreign expedition. Where did you go?

At the time I got interested in one particular species of ground beetle typical of the Pyrenees region which could also be found in the Caucasus Mountains. I wondered why it was found in these two places and nowhere else. I travelled to the Caucasus region in 1968. The French National Museum of Natural History in Paris was amazed at my findings. They had been trying to send a similar expedition for 7 years, without any success.

Your biggest discoveries came from the Himalayas. When did you go there?

I finally got to go in 1971. When I told the museum in Paris they said, "You'll be wasting your time because it's barren, there is no life" In 1971 we knew of about 30 species of ground beetle from the region but knew very little about them. I have now described 200 species in Nepal alone. We now know of some 4000 to 4500 species from the region. And there are many more species to be discovered.

Is it difficult funding your work?

When you're not professional you have to find the money yourself. I need access to the specimens in the museum in Paris and the British Museum - they have collections that date back a century and more. I live in Brittany and getting to Paris or London is expensive. Fortunately, I won the 1987 Rolex Award for Enterprise. If I hadn't won the prize, I would have had to reduce my expeditions. I also got a Rolex watch with my award and I'm trying to sell it. I am 70 years old and I live in the country, so to go around with a Rolex doesn't make much sense. I'd rather have the money so I can continue my expeditions.

Abridged from New Scientist, 21 January 2006

TASK 3.

Londoners are learning not to trust their mayor, Ken Livingstone, especially when it comes to transport. After promising to freeze the city's congestion charge for a decade in 2003, he raised it by 60% this year. Asked in 2001 about replacing London's Routemaster – the 1950s world famous red double-decker – he replied that only a 'ghastly dehumanised moron' would consider getting rid of such an iconic vehicle. Four years later, the morons have had the last laugh. The final Routemaster retired from commercial service.

London's self-appointed commentariat has lined up to complain. Journalists have written hundreds of wistful articles about the British-built Routemaster and architectural critics have labelled it a design classic. Public-safety campaigners lament the loss of the bus conductor suggesting that that he should be kept on for safety reasons, for instance to prevent terrorist attacks. There is also rage over the Routemaster's replacement: the 18-metre 'bendy bus', which is everything the Routemaster is not – modern, boring and, to everybody's horror, German!

But protesters are overdoing it. The Routemaster was not popular when it was first produced and the only cities that bought any then were Sunderland and London. The days of its dominance are definitely past; when Transport for London was created in 2001, the Routemasters ran on mere 20 of its 700 routes. Bendy buses have fully replaced them on three routes and newer double-deckers on the rest.

Nor are the lamentations universal. Wheelchair users prefer a ghastly modern bus they can board to a romantic old one they can't.

The authorities pointed out that passengers seem happy, even on the new bendy-bus routes – 78% of people on those routes polled after the change said the service was as good or better, although Londoners as a whole disagree.

Abridged from The Economist, December 10th – 16th 2005