

JOYCE STUDIES IN ITALY

13

**WHY READ JOYCE
IN THE 21ST CENTURY?**

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HORSEY WOMEN AND ARSE-TEMISES:
WAKE-ING *ULYSSES* IN TRANSLATION

Translation brings the news of things, not the things themselves, as an avid Joyce reader, novelist Péter Esterházy stated in his opening lecture at the 2006 International Joyce Symposium in Budapest. The news of Joyce's *Ulysses* was twice brought into Hungarian: after a first translation by Endre Gáspár which, published in the unlikely year 1947, never had the chance to become embedded in cultural memory, a second translation version by novelist Miklós Szentkuthy came out in 1974, to be hailed as one of the greatest achievements of literary translation into the language. The text which is referred to as Szentkuthy's *Ulysses* as often as Joyce's, has enjoyed since publication the status of a cult book, obviously aided by the common critical topos—or misprision rather—of Szentkuthy as “the Hungarian Joyce.”¹ If “what can best be described by the name James Joyce is something that failed to happen in Hungarian fiction” (Esterházy 2006), the news of *Ulysses*

¹ The attribute which probably harmed rather than aided Szentkuthy's literary career was given by one of the most influential critics of the interwar period, the poet Mihály Babits, who wrote a hostile review on Szentkuthy's first, monumental novel *Prae* (1934) which, according to him, strove to resemble *Ulysses* even in its lack of structuring, paragraphs and punctuation. Babits's reluctance to warm to Joyce, whom he considered inferior to near-classic Proust, was transferred to Szentkuthy's experimental novel, an oppressive, “dreadful baroque monster” or “gigantic parody” (Rugási 2007, 735). The still widely held topos is founded on a number of correspondences in the work of the two authors as critic Dávid Szolláth shows: firstly, both novels use expansive narrative structures, style parodies, catalogues. If the single most important narrative technique of *Ulysses* is interior monologue/stream-of-consciousness, then with Szentkuthy's *Prae* it is (self-)commentary progressing from digression to digression; the structural link with both is free association. Both works employ the strategy of contrapuntal montage, manifest in the liberal amalgamation of high and low cultural registers, often deployed in the context of a blasphemous Catholicism. Both authors weave their fictions around subtexts and intertextual allusions, their novels being travesties/parodies of classical/mythological narratives (the *Odyssey* vs. the myth of Orpheus); even the patterns of erudition of the two novelists show surprising similarities (Szolláth 2010, 65-6).

arriving via Szentkuthy's idiom had far-reaching effects on the postmodern prose turn of Hungarian literature in the 1970s-80s, best illustrated by the work of Esterházy himself—who even chose June 16 for the setting of his 1985 novel *Helping Verbs of the Heart* (*A szív segédigéi*)—and gave a decisive impulse to the disseminative language poetics of writers Győző Határ, Dezső Tandori, Lajos Parti Nagy, to name but a few.

Szentkuthy, whose vast (meta)fictional output remains an isolated experience and out of the groove of the mainstream narrative tradition in Hungarian, seems to have wanted to appropriate *Ulysses* as his own work and to become Joyce's co-author rather than a "mere" translator (Kappanyos 1997, 50); this statement alone accounts for much of the criticism directed at the translation since then. The novelist-translator—also the author of the canonical Hungarian version of *Gulliver's Travels*, a book whose irreverent satirical tone obviously suited him—came from a tradition of domesticating, poeticizing translation, a tradition of the *belles infidèles* that produced, quantitatively as well as qualitatively, the better part of the Hungarian versions of early 20th century prose and poetry in the interwar period. Telling in this respect is his translation "programme" published in a 1968 article in which he announces his intention to re-translate *Ulysses*: "it is unquestionable that the best translators in the history of world literature (Hungarians included) could never resist fusing (a) their own personalities and (b) their own most modern age with the style and age of the classics." Such a claim simultaneously signals a *domesticating* and *visible* translation poetics, one that willingly embraces the idea of cultural transfer and indigenizing translation—quite at odds with current translation norms. In the same article he argues that, on account of the actuality of Joyce's *Ulysses*, the translator must "resort to everything from slang to the language of fantasy in the Arabian Nights-bag of Hungarian vocabulary." Furthermore, no translation can aim to be the mirror image of *Ulysses* but rather, the translator has to "play chess" with the original—although he warns of the danger of "over-Ulyssesizing" (Szentkuthy 1968, 274-279). This warning is all the more surprising since Szentkuthy's *Ulysses*, a "fireworks of joint creation" was criticized for its tendency of "out-Joycing Joyce himself" and for treating literary translation as a field of poetic contest (Egri 1974, 433); in critic Tamás Ungvári's memorable phrase, Szentkuthy renders the "Joyce of the fool's cap" credibly, but falls short of the "Joyce of the bowler-hat" when he applies all his virtuosity to style parodies and the original's "verbal magic" but sins against the text's infrastructure of motifs and echoes. Ungvári blames this on Szentkuthy's

conception of literary (prose) translation, common in Hungarian culture as being “merely art, linguistic carnival and juggling with words: but it is much more, it is also a science” (Györffy 2007, 736). The novelist and translator was obviously interested, first and foremost, in Joyce’s excess of language and extraordinary affinity to play: as he states in an early, 1947 article on *Ulysses* and its first Hungarian translation, the novel which he describes in such terms as “sound-perversion” and “word-promiscuity” is but “one gigantic, fairy tale-like pun” (Goldmann 2005, 48). Rather than proposing a comprehensive critical analysis of Szentkuthy’s text—a task that would require a much wider scope—the present paper attempts to map the virtual chess-moves of the reading experience that the Hungarian *Ulysses* pre-programs.

To begin with, Szentkuthy’s text quite obviously suffers from a number of major fallacies, mostly due to the fact that the translation was carried out at a time when the bulk of Joycean textual criticism, the Gabler text, Gifford’s notes and the *Ulysses* concordance were unavailable.² Furthermore, neither the translator nor his editors (Tibor Bartos and Levente Osztoivits) were in contact with foreign or Hungarian Joyceans, and they lacked both the necessary Irish cultural and historical background and a working knowledge of idiomatic Hiberno-English to be able to decipher the novel’s dense network of Irish, local allusions. Consequently, with instances when specific (Anglo-Irish) cultural information is offered in the original, the translator rather too heavily relied on the technique of covering the original’s place up with something that might contextually fade into the background; in addition, Szentkuthy’s off-the-cuff “makeup” solutions tend to be ostentatious language games and effects, filling in the semantic gaps with flamboyant linguistic contrivances. An even more painful shortcoming regards editing and, in a broader sense, structural and stylistic fine-tuning, and is probably to ascribe to both Szentkuthy and his editor Bartos: the Hungarian text’s carelessness regarding the intricate interrelations between the episodes and the network of intratextual echoes often obfuscates the text’s arguably most important structural principle. Thus, the characters’ Homeric attributes are subject to wide variations across the episodes; an odd name that generates semantic nuclei, like the horse Throwaway, the man in the mackintosh or

² Although the second, 1986 edition, re-edited and often rather arbitrarily tampered with by Tibor Bartos (who didn’t submit his alterations to the translator) was allegedly revised in concordance with the Gabler text, several critics have shown that there is no evidence to support this claim; Szolláth demonstrates with a number of examples how far Bartos failed to take into account even the typographical errors corrected by Gabler (2010, 70).

Ruby Cohen (rebaptized Ruby Kohn, to chime in with *Rubicon*) are unsatisfactorily dealt with; since these recurrences are often the reader's only tool for recuperating the "plot", the Hungarian *Ulysses* risks becoming, by and large, more puzzlingly "unreadable" than the original (Kappanyos 1997, 46-50).

Although the topos "Hungarian Joyce" does little justice to Szentkuthy, not to mention the Irish master, the 1934 novel *Prae*, completed when the author was barely 23, can nevertheless be read as an illuminating subtext to Szentkuthy's Joyce. The metafictional work capitalizes chaos theory—it even uses the adjective "chaocosmic" (*káokozmikus*) some years before "in the chaosmos of Alle" was added to the galley proofs after 1936 (Szolláth 2010, 73)—and is built around a theory of wordplay that embraces everything from language to contemporary architecture, complete with the launch of a new editing style: detours (*Prae* I, 9). This theory, outlined in the treatise of the author's fictional alter-ego Leville-Touqué, shows what Szentkuthy assimilated from his Joycean—both Ulyssean and Wakean—readings:

The whole century progresses towards wordplay [...] Wordplay is the expression of the instinct by which we consider the relationships born out of chance to be more perennial realities and much more characteristic beings than the very objects that feature in the relationship. One can thus imagine the new setting of the world: trees will vanish from the alleys where only the patches of intertwining foliage remain; the elements will disappear from chemical compounds, leaving behind the vectors of their bindings as sole material realities [...] All left and right banks will fade, but the world will be filled with an infinite number of solid bridges. (*Prae* I, 30, my translation)

The linguistic mimicry of *Prae*, playing on a wide range of authorial registers, embraces a vast array of wordplay relying on the translation or interlingual trafficking of foreign-language (German, French, Latin and English) quotes, puns and turns-of-phrase; these ironic foreign sentence-collages are, however, mostly felt to be components of one language and style. As Gyula Rugási, Szentkuthy's most sensitive exegete writes, the English-ness or French-ness of some of his fictional characters is immaterial in that the author tends to produce the same puns in all languages; these contrivances function more as metaphors translatable from, and into, Hungarian, than idioms characteristic of the language in which they are voiced (2007, 316).

By critical consensus, *Prae* never quite lived up to its theory of wordplay which bore its finest fruit only several decades later, when translating *Ulysses*, in what became Szentkuthy's signature: his contrived, multiply allusive Szentkuthysms—especially when some contextual difficulty needed to be bridged. One instance of the translator filling in the semantic blanks with the *de rigueur* word-concoction, as if penned by his woman writer character dubbed Hippopochondra Stylopotama (*Prae* I, 28), occurs in *Lestrygonians* where Bloom indulges in erotic fantasies on an Amazonian widow: “Strong as a brood mare some of these horsey women... Born courtesan” (*U*, 8.345). Although the English original hardly presents the reader with interpretive difficulties, the Hungarian translation makes a point of punning: “Az ilyen *farmiszek* szívósabbak a tenyészkanacánál... Született *nimfomáriája* van” (196). *Fartemis* plays on the Greek goddess *Artemis* and the Hungarian for “backside” [*far*], giving birth to a buxom “Arse-temis,” while “born courtesan” is rendered with the phrase “(she) has an inborn *nymphomaria*”. What in the English original is a sexual innuendo is explicitated in conspicuous contrivances, ascribing an all-devouring sexuality to the chaste goddess' name and dragging in the Virgin Mary as her sexually voracious double.

In a neighbouring passage in *Lestrygonians*, Bloom vents his resentment against Purefoy, an aging Methodist vegetarian who annually presents his wife with an offspring: “Saffron bun and milk and soda lunch in the educational dairy. Eating with a stopwatch, thirtytwo chews to the minute. *And still his muttonchop whiskers grew*” (*U*, 8.358, my emphasis). The rationale for the appearance of Purefoy's “muttonchop whiskers” might be a belief that meat-eating made (male) hair grow (Gifford 1988, 166), besides increasing potency—both visibly disproved by Purefoy's diet and his large family. In translation, the ornamental facial hair mutates into the, faintly sexual, “bakkonbartoló kotlett” (196)—a nonce construct loosely based on *bak* [buck/goat], a self-coined word *bartoló* (present participle of a non-existent verb) and *kotlett* [cutlet]; the cluster chimes with *barkó* [whiskers]. The phrase can be “read”, however, as an interface between Hungarian and German, *Backenbart* and *Kotelette* being alternative terms for *whiskers* in German, the latter also standing for *cutlet*. Szentkuthy (born Pfisterer), of German extraction, knew German *von Haus aus*, obtained his degree in English and French and had more than a passing acquaintance with Latin and Italian; his translation offers us a slightly Wakean-leaning Bloom who, unlike his original, the timid *bricoleur* of the words of others, in his interior

monologues routinely lets loose idiosyncratic witticisms and “high falutin stuff” (*U*, 7.260).

If the Hungarian Bloom is linguistically promoted to the status of a “university wit”, then one might with some right expect Mulligan and Stephen to pour forth a deluge of verbal sparkles. Skimming the first pages of the Hungarian translation, one comes upon the following appellations: the memorable Mulliganism “jejune jesuit” (*U*, 1.45) is rendered as “*loy-oládé jezsuita*” (6) which combines the name of St. Ignatius Loyola and loyal(ly) with chocolate/marmalade, giving Stephen the nay-sayer a sweet tooth. Haines the “ponderous Saxon” (*U*, 1.51) is defined with an “essence” of Englishness—the War of the Roses—in the formula “*ponderosa Tudor Rózsa*” (6), punning on *tuberose* and *Tudor rose*, at the first occurrence of his name when the (Hungarian) reader needs to decrypt the information that he is English. The same character, dubbed a “woful lunatic” (*U*, 1.59) is turned into a syphilitic for the sake of alliteration (*lueszes lunatikus*, 7), coupling two terms that sit well in the mouth of medical Mulligan. Compulsive alliteration-cum-wordplay gets the upper hand in the following exchange between Mulligan and Stephen:

“Ah, poor dogsbody!... I must give you a shirt and a few noserags. How are the secondhand breeks?”

“They fit well enough,” Stephen answered. (*U*, 1.112)

Ó, *csorvasz csipkerózsám*... Adok neked inget és egy pár *fikafityulát*. *Antik gatyáiddal*, mondd, hogy állsz?

Fitten fittyengek – válaszolt Stephen. (8-9, my emphasis)

Mulligan’s patronizing “poor dogsbody” is transformed into the alliterating Hungarian “wither(ed) rose-hip,” the plant’s name also translating as Sleeping Beauty (*Csipkerózsika*), lending Stephen an air of a girls’ boarding school. The mock-Homeric compound “noserag” is turned, with a characteristic lowering of register, into an alliterating “snot-cap” (*fikafityula*), whereas the “secondhand” breeches are rendered “antique” by the translator’s antics of style. Stephen’s wry response to such teasing is turned into a phrase that would out-clown many a Mulliganism: *fitten fittyengek* is a disseminative construct that combines an adverb derived from the English adjective *fit* (which, decades before the global marketing of *fitness*, would hardly have been at the fingertips of Hungarian audience) and a self-coined verb that connotes *fityeg* (“to hang loose”) and *fittyöng*, itself derived from *fityül* (“to whistle”) with the addition of the verbal suffix *-(o)e/ö)ng* denot-

ing repetitive action (*gyakorító képző*). Thus the Hungarian syntagm relies on interlingual play, reading the English *fit* in at least two senses, yielding a Stephen fit as a *whistle* in his not particularly tight-fitting secondleg apparel. The fact that the alliterating syllable *fitty* also chimes in with words with sexual connotation—a mild slang for the male sexual organ (*fütyi*) and prepuce (*fityma*)—adds unorthodox overtones to the mutual teasing game which gleefully glosses over Stephen’s psychological unease.

Such examples where Szentkuthy camouflages relatively straightforward information in arcane cultural allusions are galore in *Telemachus* alone, baffling a reader already at a loss in the dense Joycean text. One gets the impression that the translator couldn’t resist dropping his “fahroots of cullchaw” (*FW* 303.20)—the exotic fruits, far-faring roots and contrapuntal farts, of his encyclopaedic erudition—on every occasion the text presented. For not only does Szentkuthy start off his word-machine at full gear, punning and alliterating even where the original doesn’t support such effects of language but, as the above example shows, he is not above slipping in allusions to the “abominable regions” (*U*, 14.1566), sensibly adding bawdry allusions (Kappanyos 1997, 48). The playful tautology in Mulligan’s exclamation, “We’ll have a glorious drunk to astonish the *druidy druids*” (*U*, 1.296, my emphasis), for instance, is rendered with the fourfold alliteration, “*Dicső dáridót rendezünk, ámuljatok durrantó druidák*” [‘We’ll organize a glorious revelry, marvel you banging druids’ (15)] where the onomatopoeic epithet *durrantó* is common euphemism for “farting.”

That translation is an opportunistic business relying on whatever linguistic opportunities the target language offers, is one of the clichés of translation studies. In this sense, Szentkuthy seems never to have let an occasion pass to “commit his filthy synecdoche,” to quote Beckett’s *Murphy*, especially when an occasion to alliterate presented itself. The *Oxen Coda* which, without the advantage of Gifford’s notes and recent textual criticism, must have seemed indeed one “giant, fairy tale-like pun” with its near-portman-teaux, egregious gaps and semantic obscurities, was in many respects an ideal terrain for Szentkuthy’s “word-promiscuity”. Where the English text demands that Stephen deliver his parody of the Apostles’ Creed—“Parson Steve, Apostates creed!” (*U*, 14.1451)—the Hungarian text (“Stephanosz Szentatya, aposztaták proosztatája,” 527) not only promotes Stephen to the status of *pope* (Holy Father), but also dubs him apostates’ *prostate*, grafting unholy body imagery onto anti-ecclesiastic *non serviam* (and oblivious to the fact that here “Apostates’ Creed” is not one of the many alternative names

of Dedalus, but hides an intratextual allusion).³ An apparently harmless interjection, “Steve boy” (*U*, 14.1528) yields the nickname *Dedili* (530) that amalgamates Dedalus, debil(ity)—the only meaning of *debilis* in Hungarian being idiocy, mental retardedness—and the slangy syntagm *de dili(s)*, “how bonkers,” that renders the Div. Scep. a dedal gaga. A reference to the Yeats sisters, Elizabeth and Lily—apostrophized “the weird sisters” in *Telemachus* (1.365)—and Dun Emer Press which they ran in Dundrum where several early volumes of Yeats were published, occasions a disseminative construct that asks for back-translation into normative Hungarian and raises the question, tongue-in-cheek, of what’s in a name:

To be printed and bound at the Druiddrum press by two designing females.
Calf covers of pissedon green. (*U*, 14.1454)

HU/Szentkuthy 527: Nyomtatták és kötötték imprimáturba pergamenten, borítót *pervezte rafinő*. [Printed and bound in *imprimatur+spit* parchment(+Lat. –er), cover *designed+pervert(ed)* by *refined/cunning female*.]

“Standard Hu”: Nyomtatták és kötötték imprimáturba pergament(er), borítót *tervezte rafinált nő*.

Szentkuthy’s translated version conflates the two sentences, adding a (mock-)pedantic Latinate inflection. The portmanteaux for “designing females” slip in a strong sexual innuendo, corroborated by the hint at perversion on design (*rafinált*, cognate and false friend of “refined,” means somebody cunning, worldly—said of a woman, it would connote a person who skilfully exploits her sex-appeal for achieving her goals), while also forsaking the metamorphic Homeric epithet “pissedon green” (a relative of “snotgreen”) for the sake of a full-blown Szentkuthysm. The internal correspondence with *Telemachus*⁴ is partially obscured, being transferred to another textual locus: the reference to the mucous substance coughed up (*turha*) in the distortion of *imprimatur* nevertheless creates a link to the “bard’s noserag” (*U*, 1.73) of that colour, *turhakarpa* (7), a mock-Homeric

³ According to J.N. Turner, the referred passage is “He Who Himself begot middler the Holy Ghost and Himself sent Himself, Agenbuyer, between Himself and others, Who, put upon by His fiends, stripped and whipped, was nailed like a bat to barndoor, starved on crosstree, Who let Him bury, stood up, harrowed hell, fared into heaven and there these nineteen hundred years sitteth on the right hand of His Own Self but yet shall come in the latter day to doom the quick and dead when all the quick shall be dead already” (9.492-499; Turner 1997, 84)

⁴ “Five lines of text and ten pages of notes about the folk and the fishgods of Dundrum. Printed by the weird sisters in the year of the big wind” (1.365).

compound of “spit/snot” and the pejorative *kapca*, foot-rag or any cheap piece of cloth, appositely illustrating the translator’s custom of *literally* lowering the register.

Many such translation choices give the impression that Szentkuthy was approaching the *Ulysses* text from, and with a background knowledge of, the unbound semiosis of the *Wake*—packaging, as it were, the experience of reading two texts in one for the Hungarian reader.⁵ He is known to have tried his hand at translating passages from *Work-in-Progress*—of which his library included *Anna Livia Plurabelle* (1930) and *Haveth Childers Everywhere* (1931) and with which he creatively engaged before 1939—although the results were never published.⁶ Many Szentkuthisms of the early episodes, as well as his rendering of the more experimental *Aeolus*, *Sirens* or *Oxen*, for instance, create the effect of actualizing the experience of the *Wakean* language—a language which already foreshadows the postmodern linguistic turn—in translating the previous work, pre-programming a reading that is not only linear but also aslant, askew, with multiple eyes⁷ to the lateral leaps and lapses of the tongue. This carnivalized and even babelized translation text raises the question of the fruitful illusion of translatability—what should a translator be faithful to, the signifier or the signified. Szentkuthy seems to have consistently opted for the former; playing on Martha Clifford’s lapsing letter, it is indeed seductive to affirm that he favours the word to the world, at only a letter’s remove from the latter, especially in translation where structural, allusive and rhizomatic connections, networks depend on a series of contextual negotiations.

However, it must be stated that, while Szentkuthy’s Hungarian version succeeds, with a creditable margin of honour, in making a notoriously difficult work even more difficult to read⁸ and pre-programs a reading of Joyce’s book-web as a gigantic carnival of language first and foremost, it also sensibly levels the styles and registers of Joyce’s original. Szentkuthy’s

⁵ Critic Dávid Szolláth, a member of the translator team working on the new Hungarian *Ulysses*, arrives at a similar conclusion in his 2010 article.

⁶ Ferenc Takács, oral communication.

⁷ Philosopher Béla Hamvas, one of Joyce’s first, and most discerning, critics in Hungarian wrote of the “mystical satirico-symbolical poem” *Finnegans Wake* in a 1931 article that its words are “multiple-eyed” and “live multiple lives” (Goldmann 2006, 230).

⁸ A view obviously not endorsed by Péter Esterházy who affirms in *Yes*: “For me, Joyce’s voice in Szentkuthy’s translation sounded very natural, I had no difficulty reading the book and it gave me much pleasure” (2006).

self-generating word-machine tends to take over; as Kappanyos and Szoláth argue in their 2010 articles, Szentkuthysms dominate the pages of the Hungarian *Ulysses* in such overwhelming density that they become its chief stylistic marker, obscuring thereby other important thematizations of language, diachronic as well as pertaining to the use of internal translations or dislocations. Moreover, Szentkuthy's theory of wordplay, applied full gear to *Ulysses*, is backed up by his own idiosyncratic, and encyclopaedic, patterns of erudition, liberally overlooking such considerations as the characters' distinct levels of education—to the effect that most characters in the Hungarian version tend to speak the Szentkuthyan idiom only.⁹

If Szentkuthy's juvenile fictional experiment was dismissed in 1934 by Babits, the most influential critic and poetaster of the age, for lacking in Joyce's "plurivocity and Rabelaisian richness" (Rugási 2007, 735), it seems that, by the time he came to translate *Ulysses*, he had learned his lesson *re* Rabelais and did everything to entwine the Hungarian *Ulysses* with laughs low. In contradistinction to the earlier, literalist translation by Endre Gáspár (1947) which, for all its attention to detail and its merits in transposing the original's "surrealist, expressionist, impressionist, naturalistic and symbolic effects" (Egri 1967, 234), generally fails to see Joyce's humour, Szentkuthy's version is explosively Gargantuan. Considering the reputation of the original—to which G.B. Shaw famously refused to subscribe, but considered that "every male Dubliner between 30 and 50 should be forced to read it" (Nash 2006, 100)—and the fact that the translation was published at a time when literary works, films with an openly sexual content were routinely censored, cut in communist countries, the unabashed salaciousness of Szentkuthy's version is even more striking.¹⁰ The rationale for this can be found, at least partially, in Szentkuthy's 1968 translator's program that announces an intention to actualize Joyce's novel—gargantualizing his text to achieve a linguistic and cultural shock-effect akin to that presumably produced by the original.

⁹ Famously, in *Prae* even the prostitute character has a Sorbonne degree and her lengthy philosophical excursions are on a par with those of the finest minds around.

¹⁰ A comparison might be made with the Romanian *Ulysses*, translated by poet Mircea Ivănescu and published in 1984, which was sensibly "tamed", cleansed of taboo words, its register de-slanged and heightened to be compatible with the aesthetics and public morals of communist Romania, as Arleen Ionescu shows in her case-study on Molly's monologue in Romanian.

The Hungarian translation, as even a casual leafing through demonstrates, tends to explicitate innuendos, renders slippery names more overtly sexual and is everywhere sprinkled with salacious points and puns. The French writer Paul de Kock for instance, whom Molly singles out for his “nice name” and who once had a wide Hungarian readership, is rebaptized Paul de Basoche: the Frenchified spelling hides a Hungarian four-letter word, the author of erotic novels translating as a Very Copulator; Boylan’s dandy appellative is rendered with the slightly folksy adjective *Bagzó* (horny, mating). Even more interesting are Szentkuthy’s, often entirely gratuitous, inserted points and witticisms. In the *Oxen Coda* for instance, where Joyce’s intimidating breakdown of idioms, coupled with lack of information, must have made every second word look potentially obscenable, the timid thunder-word “Thunderation” (*U*, 14.1462), patterned on Bloom’s “moderation” and the Cyclops narrator’s “botheration,” becomes “*Alea ejaculata est*” (527), in tune with a Nighttown-bound carnivalesque episode.

Szentkuthy uses several tactics in achieving linguistic and cultural shock-effect. He may resort to recondite *double-entendre*, playfully clothing openly sexual content in foreign phrases and quasi-medical-sounding Latinisms, as if acting on the Beckettian incentive to calculatingly deprave the cultivated reader. Such is the case of his rendering of a *Sirens* crux that combines the name Goodwin and the sound of woodwinds in a densely musical phrase: “Woodwind like Goodwin’s name” (*U*, 11.1050). Szentkuthy cuts through the Gordian knot with much aplomb, forsaking the problematic name: “*Fagott és fuvola mintha falliteráció*” [Bassoon and flute, as if falliteration] (353). The Hungarian sentence f-alliterates on two musical instruments in a word-amalgam with a recognizably phallic touch, from whose casual encounter with the (sexually charged) flute cultivated readers might also detect more than a hint at fellatio.

Another frequent device is to lay linguistic landmines, occasions in the Hungarian text that trigger salacious associations, as in the case of Joyce’s smart play on pun/punish in Martha Clifford’s letter in *Sirens*: “How will you pun? You punish me?” (*U* 11.891). As for the Hungarian version: “*Hogy fog megb? Büntet engemet?*” [How will you *f.* (*me*)? (Are you) *punishing* me?] (347), the coded linguistic ellipsis evokes the very taboo-word, a monosyllabic b-word complete with the verbal prefix *meg-*, conveying aspect (perfect). Part of the textual game in soliciting the reader’s filling in the four-letter word in the proffered gap is, to play the expected association innocently down in the next sentence, with a wink at the reader: *honi soit qui mal y pense*.

Reading *Ulysses* in Hungarian might give the impression that it was intended for a re-reading rather than the reading: that, just like Szentkuthy's chief works, *Prae* and *St. Orpheus's Breviary*, written as commentaries based on other narratives, the translation was a rendering-cum-commentary of Joyce's original. If the text, rather too willingly, forsakes much stylistic, structural fine-tuning, it does so to sin on the side of *transluding*. As Fritz Senn writes, "translations are off the toptic, are less dynamic, less Protean, less gushing, less self-righting, less looming, less weaving, less misleading—also *more* misleading—, less synecdochal, less dislocutory, less everything and—perhaps most bitterly—less transluding. They should be admired, not trusted" (1984, 37). Definitely a translation to be admired, not trusted, the "authoritative" Hungarian *Ulysses* noticeably strives to make Joyce's text more kaleidoscopic—as far as an inherently less kaleidoscopic language, Hungarian, allows—in a superlatively misleading way, in a collideorscape of transfers that often allows structurally vital senses to fade in favour of punning interlingual bridges.

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