

DIFFERENT TRANSLATIONS AND VARIOUS TYPES OF CAVAFY IN HUNGARIAN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

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The publication of a new edition of the poetry of Constantine Petros Cavafy in Hungarian translation in 2006 added a degree of nuance to the prevailing literary translational techniques in Hungary because Balázs Déri's translations of the poems not included in the 1968 edition made a departure towards domestication from the commonly used reconstructional method. This caused different understandings of Cavafy's poetry as well as various images of the poet in Hungarian culture. Furthermore, in the same year, the publication of András Ferenc Kovács's Cavafy transcriptions, that is, his pseudo-translations, further influenced our understanding of the Alexandrian poet. In this article, after offering a brief overview of various methods of translation prominent in 20th century Hungarian culture, I aim at pointing out that the first edition of Cavafy's poems in Hungarian used the typical model of reconstruction, whereas Déri's new, 2006 translation is a move away towards domestication. Having analyzed four poems in the original Greek and their Hungarian translation, I would like to point to the necessity of diversity in literary translation; having different types of Cavafy also means understanding contemporary Hungarian poetry from multiple angles.

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In 2006, Hungarian literary translation took a departure towards the English tradition with the publication of a book – with the title of *Alexandria Örök* (Alexandria is Perennial) – containing the poetry of Constantinos Petros Cavafy. One cannot speak of a radical change or of a paradigm shift because domesticating translation had been part of the Hungarian literary translation. The above mentioned book is even more interesting if one considers that it does not only contain the early, unpublished, disowned, or unfinished poems translated by Balázs Déri, but the main Cavafy corpus translated by György Somlyó and István Vas before 1968. The book thus contains Cavafy's poetry translated with two different methods, with reconstruction and domestication.

In the same year, a volume of poetry by András Ferenc Kovács was published under the title *Hazatérés Hellászból (Kavafisz-átiratok)* (Homecoming from Hel-

las (Cavafy transcriptions)), enriching our vision of Cavafy. Also, Balázs Déri's own poetry based upon Cavafy's poetic language had been published in literary magazines such as *Jelenkor* or *Kalligram*. It seems that the various translations into Hungarian have not only had an impact on our understanding of the Alexandrian poet but influenced Hungarian poetry as well. The analysis of literary translations is a two-directional task; on the one hand, presuming the independence of the target text, it is a specific interpretation of poetry, and on the other, it may be expanded into the task of interpreting the literary influence of the source text. These two-directional tasks, which mutually fertilize each other, may lead to a comparative interpretation (vergleichende Interpretation), as Tilman Heisterhagen and Helmut Markus (1992, 239–72) say. As a result, the first step of such a comparative interpretation would be to read the translation as an independent and “original” text, then having analyzed the source text, would be to read the two texts in each other's light. The comparative interpretation highlights primarily the target text but at the same time, it looks into the possible reading and translation modes of the source text. It seems that the analysis of the effect of translations on the literature of the target language may be beneficial for scholars of literature because such analyses of certain poems may become means of researching the history of poetry. With the above mentioned train of thoughts I agree with Mihály Szegedy-Maszák, who claims that one of the main tasks of the literary historian should be the research of literary effect history (1995, 22–3). In analyzing different translations of Cavafy's poems into Hungarian I came to the conclusion that the translations as well as their effect have produced various images of Cavafy in Hungarian language and culture.

In her *Catullus noster*, Anikó Polgár observes four big translational paradigms in the history of Hungarian literary translation: reconstruction, domestication, integration, and application (2003, 9). Polgár gives account of several variations of these four paradigms while admitting that domestication and integration are almost the same in their methods but the difference between them lies in gradation. Based upon her classification, I would like to show that the first Cavafy translations by István Vas and György Somlyó belong to the translation method of reconstruction, the 2006 translations by Balázs Déri use domestication, and the poems by András Ferenc Kovács are applications of Cavafy's poetry. With my analysis, I would like to re-evaluate the philology-based reconstructive literary translation method and also emphasize the importance of the plurality of various translation methods.

If a literary and/or translation critique approaches a work already translated – as he/she has the ability to compare the translation with the “original” indicated in the paratext – he/she might become biased because for the critique, the translation is a metatext that is identified in its connection to the pretext. According to a prevailing view of translated literary texts in Hungarian culture, the meta-poem is “a

poem that was created based upon a certain poem, thus it is of secondary value, a derivative, one that models a previous original literary text” – as Gábor Halász says when studying the literary translations of Hungarian poet and translator, Mihály Babits (1981, 609). The accentuation of the alleged secondary value of the translation can lead to the overestimation as well as of the idealization of the source text. The notion of originality evokes the cult of the genius of Romanticism, and emphasizing the originality of the pretext itself heightens the translator to the level of a master. Before this prevailing view on translation, there had been a different translation theory in Hungary at the beginning of the 20th century which preferred domestication. This can be traced from Antal Radó’s and János Csengeri’s translation theories based upon the views of literary translation by Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorf. Before looking into Cavafy’s poetry translated into Hungarian, I would like to give a short summary of the above mentioned literary translation paradigms.

Reconstruction

Reconstruction is a philology-based method which is source text oriented; its main aim – with Schleiermacher’s word – is “to conduce” the reader of the translation to the author of the source text (Schleiermacher 1963, 47). To achieve this, reconstruction spreads the limits of the source language to its extremes in order to show the hidden presence of the source text in the field of grammatical construction as well as in style. István Vas points to the fact that the ordinary reader of the translated text lacks the language competence of the source language thus the translator invites his/her reader into a certain “reservation” (Vas, 1974, 600). According to Vas, the ordinary reader is released from the task of learning the source language but he/she is definitely *not* released from the engrossment in the culture and intellect of the source language. Following from Vas’s view on translation, one need not master Greek language in order to be able to read Cavafy but is obliged to know the poet’s Alexandria with its past and contemporary culture.

Domestication

The opposite process of reconstruction is domestication. It postulates an ideal reader who is not competent in reading the source language along with its culture but merely the target culture. Domestication aims at purging the foreignness of the translated text as it presupposes the incompatibility of the source and the target culture. Furthermore, it gives both the source and the target text the same canonical position in each culture. Lawrence Venuti claims that domestication is “an

ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to target language cultural values, bringing the author back home” (1995:20). Domestication seems to be analogous with fluent translation, which is intelligible, immediately familiar, that is, uses standard target language free from foreign sounding elements.

Application

Application is the integration and adaptation of the source text into the target text, in which the sovereignty and the primacy of the target text is emphasized. The translator may use adaptation on the ground that his/her *Sitz im Leben* is different from that of the source text, or his/her artistic intentions are stronger than his/her attachment to the source text so he/she may feel compelled to create something new from the elements of the source text. When using application, the translator not only translates the source text but also transcribes it because the source text gives him/her a good *à propos* to convey his/her own message. It seems that pseudo-translations are a certain type of application; for example, István Géher’s *Anakreóni dalok* (Songs of Anacreon) or his *Mi van, Catullus?* (What’s up, Catullus?) evoke the spirit of Anacreon and Catullus, but Géher’s poems seem *as if* they were translations – actually they are inspired by the verses of ancient Greek and Roman poets. Géher applies the Anacronistic strophe in form, and the themes of wine, death, love, friendship, etc. as content, in his own Anacronistic poems, taking form and content from Anacreon, so it is plausible to render his above mentioned poems as a certain form of application.

Having seen the major translation paradigms in Hungarian culture, I would like to have a closer look at Cavafy’s historical poetry highlighting the difficulties of translating the poet’s language. I shall not concentrate on his (homo)erotic verses although they are, many times, interwoven with historical dimensions. Edmund Keeley in his *Cavafy’s Alexandria* markedly approaches the poet’s verses through the motif of Alexandria; when he starts describing a myth in progress, he points out that Alexandria became, for the poet, a central metaphor and eventually a myth encompassing the entire Greek world. It seems that Alexandria becomes not only a symbol of existence but also an analogy of Cavafy’s poetry; the poet shows a continually altering city of which population, language, religion, and culture has always been mutating but in the mutation, the poet exhibits the constant element which transmits the eternal through the constant changes. Alexandria thus becomes a metaphor of poetry’s survival technique.

Cavafy’s poetry, especially his historical or rather, his pseudo-historical verses, in which he reconstructs imaginary scenes of history, models the above mentioned survival technique; these texts portray history either as necessity or as a certain type of combinatory order, in which the human exists merely as a con-

struction through language, rhetoric, or ritual performances, as can be seen in poems such as “Waiting for the Barbarians” or “In a Township of Asia Minor”. The expressiveness of these poems arises from Cavafy’s capability of the direct presentment of ritual perlocutionary speech acts, for example the making of a welcome speech, or the ceremony of transferring the power, or pondering on the outcome of a battle, or wording an epitaph. Many times in Cavafy’s verses the combination of different registers of the Greek language within the same poem forces even the most common everyday acts into historicity. The citation in the poet’s verses or their finding-like nature calls into existence countless variants of intertextuality. Many a time, Cavafy poetically reveals some ancient passages; “The Horses of Achilles” for example, is a display of a topos by Homer and its excavation from the epic stream and its gleaming within the framework of poesy. Sometimes a historian’s passage becomes an anecdote, like “Nero’s Deadline” or “Julian and the Antiochians;” these invented anecdotes end in a nub with a parable but they are never full of pathos. Mainly in the case of epistles and epitaphs occurs that sometimes the poem itself turns into a historical “fact”. In Cavafy’s poetry presentation of historical events are based upon the poet’s own perception of history or rather, on his view of historical events thus it is a multi-dimensional perspective of historical events that the poet offers to his readers. He treats these historical or semi-historical events with irony and many times subverts what is usually regarded as an “official” version of history.

The difficulties one has to face when translating Cavafy’s poetry is most of all the poet’s very conscious blending of the main registers of the Greek language, the *katharevousa* (purified) and the *dimotiki* (demotic). These registers of Modern Greek are still haunting today although *dimotiki* in 1976 became the official standard language. The language learner who has not learnt Classical Greek before, will definitely have many difficulties with the *katharevousa* words as well as *katharevousa* declension and conjugation in today’s language as well. After the Hellenist era, intellectuals in Greece refused the natural development of the spoken Greek language and started a movement of purifying (“καθαρεύειν” meaning “to purify”) Greek language from its “rustic,” “plebeian” elements, that is, from its demotic form. *Katharevousa* thus became an artificially revived language of *koine* Greek (“κοινή” means “common”), the ancient Greek unified from its main dialects and spoken as a lingua franca during Hellenism. The parallel use of *katharevousa* and *dimotiki* lead to the so-called *diglossia* (bilingualism), which practically meant that only erudite people were able to understand the official *katharevousa* language. Later in the 19th century Greek intellectuals, among them writers and poets, fought for the recognition and general usage of *dimotiki* since they found *katharevousa* too artificial and far from quotidian speech. The literary translator has many difficulties if he/she aims at showing the different registers of *katharevousa* and *dimotiki*. While most Greeks were enthralled by

dimotiki, Cavafy embraced an eclectic discourse of both registers, and also, he often cited words or entire passages from classical and Byzantine Greek texts in his poems. His work seemed to stem from a learned poetic tradition, at a time when Greece was celebrating the popular heritage. Another difficulty in translating Cavafy arises from the fact that the poet rarely uses rhyme or rhythm in his verses but when he does, he uses these poetic devices very consciously. The translator has to decide and thus make compromises in such cases deciding either to give back the special metric and rhyme pattern of Greek or to try to be as exact as one can in reproducing the special word order and mood of the poems.

Having seen the difficulties when translating Cavafy's poems, I would like to give examples of how the poet's verses sound in Hungarian in different translations. First let me analyze the Hungarian translation of a poem entitled "Τείχη" (Walls). I chose this poem first because one of the main recurring motifs in the poet's oeuvre is loneliness.

Χωρίς περίσκεψιν, χωρίς λύπην, χωρίς αιδώ
μεγάλα κ' υψηλά τριγύρω μου έκτισαν τείχη.

Και κάθομαι και απελπίζομαι τώρα εδώ.
'Άλλο βεν σκέπτομαι: τον νουν μου τρώγει αυτή η τύχη'

διότι πράγματα πολλά έξω να κάμω είχαν.
Α όταν έκτιζαν τα τείχη πώς να μην προσέξω.

Αλλά δεν άκουσα ποτέ κρότον κτιστών ή ήχων.
Ανεπαισθήτως μ' έκλεισαν από τον κόσμο έξω.

In György Somlyó's translation into Hungarian:

Kímélet és kegyelem nélkül, szégyentelenül
magasba nyúló, vastag falat raktak körülöttem.

S most itt ülök, kétségbeesésemben egyedül,
s másra se gondolok, csak ez a végzet jár eszemben:

Hogy mennyi, mennyi tennivaló várna odakint!
Hogy is nem figyeltem, mikor e falakat rakták e tájon?

Nem hallottam pallérok kopácsolásait,
Észrevétlenül kifalaztak engem e világból.

Now I shall give my own English rough translation of the Hungarian translation:

Without consideration and mercy, without shame
High and thick walls they built around me.

And now I sit here in my despair alone,
Not thinking of anything else but this fate is on my mind:

How many things to be done are waiting for me outside!
How come I did not observe when these walls were built in this re-
gion?

I did not hear foremen's hammerings,
Unperceived I was bricked outside, out of this world.

The rhyme pattern of the original is AB AB A'A A'A. It is very interesting to see that certain rhymes, in this poem the last stanza, "rhyme" only in written form because in modern pronunciation there is no difference between the letters of omega (ω) and omicron (ο), therefore I signed them as "A" for omega and "A'" for omicron. In György Somlyó's translation the rhyme pattern is AB AB CD CD, signaling the difference between the line ending Greek letters. Such nuances cannot be and are not given back in Hungarian such as the last word of the send line in the first stanza is "τείχη" (walls) whereas the second line of the second stanza ends with "τύχη" (fortune, fate). These two words semantically give the main idea of the poem, and in Greek they not only rhyme but are pronounced in exactly the same way as *tixi*. The same phenomenon can be observed in the third and fourth stanza of the poem; the last words "είχον" (they had) and "ήχον" (echo, tone) are pronounced alike. In the translation the position of the words "τείχη" (walls) and "τύχη" (fortune, fate) is not given back, but Somlyó successfully managed to cope with the word choice of the last words of the first and the last stanza. In Greek it is "walls" and "out" whereas in Hungarian they are "körülöttem" (around me) and "világból" (out of the word). It is obvious that the translator strove for reconstructing the original, even the rhymes that cannot be heard only seen when reading the poem.

The other main motif in Cavafy's poetry is language, and Alexandria, so my next example will be an emblematic poem of this topic. It is translated by István Vas, who cooperated with Somlyó in translating Cavafy's poems for the first edition of them in 1968. The poem is "Για τον Αμμώνη, που πέθανε 29 ετών, στα 610" (*For Ammonis, Who Died at 29, in 610*). The Greek original text is the following:

Ραφαήλ, ολίγους στίχους σε ζητούν
για επιτύμβιον του ποιητού Αμμώνη να συνθέσεις.
Κάτι πολύ καλαίσθητον και λείον. Σὺ θα μπορέσεις,
εἶσαι ὁ κατάλληλος, να γράφεις ὡς αρμόζει
για τον ποιητήν Αμμώνη, τον δικό μας.

Βέβαια θα πεις για τα ποιήματά του –
αλλά να πεις και για την εμορφιά του,
για την λεπτή εμορφιά του που αγαπήσαμε.

Πάντοτε ωραία και μουσικά τα ελληνικά σου είναι.
Όμως την μαστοριά σου όλμνα τη θέμε τώρα.
Σε ξένη γλώσσα η λύπη μας κ' η αγάπη μας περιούν.
Το αιγυπτιακό σου αίσθημα χύσε στην ξένη γλώσσα.

Ραφαήλ, οι στίχοι σου έτσι να γραφούν
που νάχουν, ξέρεις, από την ζωή μας μέσα των,
που κι ο ρυθμός κ' κάθε φράσις να δηλούν
που γι' Αλεξανδρινό γράφει Αλεξανδρινός.

In Vas's translation into Hungarian:

Rafael, néhány verssort kérnek tőled,
sírfeliratul a költőnek, Ammonésznek.
Nagyon ízléses vagy, aki kellőképpen tud írni
Ammonészről, a költőről, aki közülünk való volt.

Beszélni fogsz persze a verseiről,
de a szépségéről is beszélj,
gyöngéd szépségről, amit szerettünk.

A te görög nyelved mindig finom és zenei,
de most egész tudásod kell nekünk.
Gyászunkat, szerelmünket idegen nyelvre szabd.
Egyiptomi érzésedet öntsd az idegen nyelvbe.

Rafael, a soraid úgy legyenek megírva,
őrizzenek, tudod, valamit életünkől,
s minden ütem és fordulat arról valljon, hogy itt
alexandriairól ír alexandriai.

My own rough translation of the Hungarian translation is the following:

Raphael, they ask of you for a few lines
As an epitaph of the poet Ammones.
You are exquisite and can write aptly
About Ammones, the poet, who was of us.

You of course speak about his poems
but speak also of his beauty,
of the delicate beauty that we loved.

Your Greek has always been beautiful and musical.
 But now we want all your mastery.
 Our sorrow and our love pass into a foreign tongue.

Raphael, your verses should be written
 so they contain you know, something of our life in them,
 and every cadence and every phrase demonstrate that here
 an Alexandrian writes about an Alexandrian.

What I would like to highlight in this Hungarian translation is the rhythm and tone of voice of the poem as a whole. Ammones is an invented figure by Cavafy and another poet in Greek language, Raphael is asked to compose elegant verses. The use of many end-stopping lines, which are rather long and yet mostly unrhymed, cause the poem to be read in long breaths that give it a tone of reverence. This becomes especially important when one considers the fact that this is a poem of commemoration, not only of the passing of a loved one, but of the felt loss of a natural mode of communication, the mother tongue of people living as a minority in a Diaspora. Talking from the minority status, the elegance of Greek is proclaimed, the reality of Greek as a foreign language to these Egyptians.

One of the main motifs of the poem is preserving one's mother tongue in a foreign culture and the imagined past of the never existed poet, Ammones, serves as an *à propos* for the poet to speak about the eloquence of Greek language. Vas transliterated the name of Ammones according to the Hungarian tradition of pronouncing and transliterating classical Greek and Latin proper names – with Erasmian pronunciation. This way of transliterating Greek proper names fits well into the reconstructional model. When Raphael, the poet is praised for his Greek, the poem says “Πάντοτε ωραία και μουσικά τα ελληνικά σου είναι” which translates as “Always beautiful and musical your Greek has been”. The Hungarian translator used a quite out of the common word order which is rather unusual in everyday speech, in the same way as the original Greek line. Although both in Hungarian and in Greek word order is much freer than in most Indo-European languages, there are usual word order patterns. This line is written and translated into Hungarian in an archaic sounding way characteristic of classical Greek or Latin. The last two lines of the third stanza are interesting to see in Greek and in Hungarian translation. In Greek the third line starts with “Σε ξένη γλώσσα” (into a foreign language) and the fourth line ends with “στην ξένη γλώσσα” (into the foreign language). This movement seems to be the key to the theme of the poem, as well as one of the stylistic elements that best conveys the elegiac tone of it. In the Hungarian translation, Vas put the phrase “foreign language” to the end of both lines. His translation seems to convey more of the tone when he started the third line with

the words of “our sorrow” and “our love” than the special arrangement of the phrase “foreign language”. As I said before, this poem does not rhyme but its special rhythm is given with the long end-stopping lines to express the feeling of reverence for the “past,” but more importantly, for one’s mother tongue. It seems to me that Vas in his Hungarian managed to grasp this feeling and tone.

After showing two examples of the translational method of reconstruction, I would like to give an insight into a different method used by Balázs Déri, the method of domestication. First I shall give an example of Déri’s translation on the poem entitled “Εἰς Ἰταλικὴν παραλίαν” (On an Italian Shore).

Ο Κήμος Μενεδώρου
 Ἰταλιώτης νέος,
 τον βίον του περνά
 μέσα στες διασκεδάσεις·
 ως συνειθίζουν τούτο
 οι ἀπ’ την Μεγάλη Ελλάδα
 μες στα πολλά τα πλούτη
 αναθρεμένοι νέοι.

Μα σήμερα είναι λίαν,
 παρά το φυσικό του,
 σύννουσ και κατηφής.
 Κοντά στην παραλίαν,
 με ἄκραν μελαγχολίαν
 βλέπει του εκφορτώνουν
 τα πλοία με την λείαν
 εκ της Πελοποννήσου.

Λάφυρα ελληνικά·
 η λεία της Κορίνθου.

Α σήμερα βεβαίως
 δεν είναι θεμιτόν,
 δεν είναι δυνατόν
 ο Ἰταλιώτης νέος
 νάχει για διασκεδάσεις
 καμιάν επιθυμίαν.

Déri’s translation into Hungarian:

Kémosz, Menedórosz fia,
 az itáliai görög ifjú,
 éli az életet,
 szórakozik,
 ahogyan szokták azok a
 Magna Graeciából való,

nagy gazdagságban
felnőtt ifjak.

De ma,
alaptermészete ellenére nagyon
gondterhelt és lehangolt.
Közel a tengerparthoz
végletes mélabúval nézi,
amint kirakodnak
a zsákmánnyal megrakott hajók,
a Peloponnészoszról.

Görög hadizsákmányok; préda Korinthoszból

Ó, ma bizony
megengedhetetlen,
ma nem lehet,
hogy az itáliai görög ifjúnak
bármilyen kedve legyen
a szórakozáshoz.

My own rough translation of Déri's translation into Hungarian:

Kemos, son of Menedoros,
the Greek-Italian youth,
lives his life
amusing himself,
as most do
from Magna Graecia
in luxury
adult youths.

But today
in spite of his nature
is preoccupied and distressed
near the shore
with fatal gloom he watches, as they unload
with booty loaded ships
from the Peloponnese.

Greek loot: booty from Corinth

Oh, today certainly
it is not right,
it is not possible
the Greek-Italian youth
to have mood
for entertainment.

It seems that Déri applies a lot from the method of reconstruction in his translation of the poem, for example he keeps the original space-breaks between the lines. Another reconstructive element is the translation of the name of the youth according to Erasmian pronunciation, which is an everyday practice of translating classics into Hungarian, so he transliterates the name as “Kémosz” (pronounced as Kemos) instead of the modern Greek pronunciation which would sound as Kimos. This gives the translation an uneven manner because in the title of the book, he transliterated the forename of the poet as “Konsztandinosz” (Konstandinos) – as it is pronounced in modern Greek, instead of the common practice of transliterating it as “Konsztantinosz” which sounds Konstantinos. This gives the reader a mixed feeling because it seems that ancient or ancient sounding Greek names are transliterated according to Erasmian pronunciation – an old habit in Hungarian culture – whereas modern Greek names are transliterated according to modern Greek pronunciation, which is alien from Hungarian practice; interestingly enough, Greek people living in Hungary have Latinized names which are different from their modern Greek pronunciation, like “Antigoné” pronounced as Andigoni. Another inconsistency seems to be the translation of “Μεγάλη Ελλάδα” with its Latin equivalent as “Magna Graecia”. For the erudite Hungarian who learnt Latin at school, the Latin phrase is comprehensible but for those who lack classical education, the phrase “Greater Greece” would have been a better choice. His keeping the space-breaks between the lines and his translating the proper names in the poem are devices taken from the reconstructive method.

What he does not use from reconstruction is the special rhyme patterns in his translation. It seems that the obtrusive use of spacing and the specific rhyme employed by the poet create a jagged poetic landscape that disrupts a smooth reading. Cavafy’s rhyme is uneven and bounces diagonally across and down the poem, a type of movement borne along with the aid of the spacing the poet uses mid-line. The wordplay links the themes of the poem much more forcibly than the simple meaning of the words, so it seems that translating this poem in prose, as Déri did, is too much of a compromise. In the first stanza, (i) rhymes connect the words “διασκεδάσεις” (entertainments), “πλούτη” (wealthy), “αναθρεμμένοι” (natives), and “νέοι” (youths), effectively linking these youths raised in wealth, usually amusing themselves, both thematically and poetically through these rhymes. In the second stanza rhyme is used again to connect the primary thematic elements of the poem. The (i) sound is repeated again five times four of which are perfect rhymes of two words with the same suffixes and two words being homonyms: “παραλίαν” (shore) and “μελαγχολίαν” (melancholy) end in the same sounds and are in the same case, the Accusative. The other pair is made up of “λίαν” (archaic word making emphasis, like “rather”) with “λείαν” (booty), which are pronounced exactly alike. Similar thematic connections are made in the last stanza with “θεμιτόν” (legitimate) that rhymes with “δυνατόν” (possible) further emphasizing the severity of the reac-

tion of the Greek youth to seeing these spoils being unloaded before his eyes. In Déri's translation the poem reads rather smoothly in everyday fluent Hungarian prose without the rhyme pattern that Cavafy consciously uses.

The word order as well, is rather unorthodox, even by Greek standards. The translation of “Ιταλιώτης” (Italiote) with two words is adequate because in Hungarian it is impossible to express that someone, a Greek person, lives far from the center in “Magna Graecia” (Greater Greece), more precisely, in Italy. Déri's word order is rather smooth with two exceptions. It seems that the poem in Hungarian is halfway between prose and poem; Déri kept the space-breaks between the lines but did not keep the rhyme; this translation preserves something of reconstruction and, at the same time, is on the way towards domestication.

The next poem I would like to compare to its Hungarian translation is “Του μαγαζιού” (Of the Shop)

Του μαγαζιού

Τα ντύλιξε προσεκτικά, με τάξι
σε πράσινο πολύτιμο μετάξι.

Από ρουμπίλια ρόδα, από μαργαριτάρια κρίνοι,
από αμεθύστους μενεξέδες. Ως αυτός τα κρίνει,

τα θέλησε, τα βλέπει ωραία· όχι όπως στην φύσι
τα είδεν ή τα σπούδασε. Μεσ στο ταμείον θα τ' αφήσει,

δείγμα της τολμηρής δουλειάς του και ικανής.
Στο μαγαζί σαν μπει αγοραστής κανείς

βγάζει απ' τες θήκες άλλα και πουλεί – περίφημα στολίδια –
βραχιόλια, αλυσίδες, περιδέραια, και δαχτυλίδια.

Déri translated it under the title “Nem eladó” (*Not for Sale*) in the following way:

Nem eladó

Becsomagolta őket gonddal, szép sorjában
drága, zöld selyembe.

Rubin-rózsák, gyöngy-liliomok,
ametiszt-ibolyák. Az ő ízlése szerint valók,

ő alkotta, szépnek látta őket; nem ahogy a természetben
látta vagy tanulmányozta. A páncélszekrényben hagyja,

merész és értő kezének műveit.
A boltba ha bejön egy vásárló,

mást vesz elő a tokból és – pompás ékszer mind –
karkötőt, láncot, nyakéket és gyűrűt kínál.

My rough translation of the Hungarian translation:

Not for Sale

He wrapped them carefully one after each other
in valuable green silk.

Ruby roses, pearl lilies,
amethyst violet. According to his taste

He created them, saw them beautiful; not as in nature
he saw or studied them. In the treasury he keeps them

the creations of his bold and able hands.
As a buyer enters the shop

takes from the case something else – superb ornaments all –
bracelets, chains, necklaces, and rings he offers.

The title of the poem in Greek is rather unusual (*Of the Shop*), implying that something or someone belongs to a shop. Déri gave it back in everyday Hungarian. It is interesting to have a closer look at the very special rhymes of the original. All lines rhyme and the way Cavafy masters the rhymes is a chef-d'oeuvre; με τάξι (me taksi) – μετάξι (metaksi) have different meanings in written form but in pronunciation they sound the same. The poet's word choice is interesting enough according to demotic modern Greek standards; in ordinary modern Greek “με τάξι” would be correctly written as “με τάξη” meaning “properly, in order,” but with a letter “ι” instead of “η” it looks more demotic, but in modern *dimotiki* the word written with a “ι” at the end rather means “taxi.” The two words sound the same because in Modern Greek, both letters of “ι” and “η” are pronounced as (i). It seems, however, that Cavafy's orthography plays a trick upon the reader. The other word, “μετάξι” means “silk” in English but sounds exactly the same as the previous two words. In the second stanza, “κρίνοι” (lily) and “κρίνει” (he judges) rhyme in pronunciation, and also, sound exactly the same, but the same ending (i) sounds are written in totally different ways. In the third stanza “όπως στην φύσι” (as in nature) looks weird to contemporary readers because the orthography of “φύσι” is according to *katharevousa* although in pronunciation there is no difference between the accusative case of the word in *dimotiki* and in *katharevousa*. It rhymes in an interesting way with “θα τ' αφίσει” (tha tafisi), another *katharevousa*

form meaning “he will leave/abandon them”. The word in the previous line (fisi) rhymes with the last two syllables of the last word of the next line (afisi). In the fourth stanza the two words rhyming are in *katharevousa* again, “ικανής” (ability) and “κανείς” (someone). This latter word is interesting because with such spelling in *dimotiki* it would mean “you make”, and it would not make sense to the sentence. In the last stanza the rhyming words “στολίδια” (jewels) and “δαχτυλίδια” (rings) are declined in *dimotiki*, providing the reader with a subtle game.

It seems to me that the creation of such rhymes and word choice, the playing with the alternation of words meaningful only in *katharevousa* and only in *dimotiki* within the same poem are themselves artful jewelry. Déri translated this poem without any rhymes, without a single try to give back the old-fashioned, artificial-sounding *katharevousa* but in fluent Hungarian prose. I am concerned that an averagely educated Greek person in the 21st century would not understand the poem fully so it seems sensible to translate this poem with domestication on the one hand, but on the other, with domestication the poem in Hungarian loses its uniqueness. One can read the poem as a genealogy of writing the verse: as the most beautiful jewels are made, so are created the lines with real bravura rhymes. One can argue that Déri admitted the fact that the Hungarian literary translator is not capable of doing everything, so he made a compromise to translate the poem in prose but as exactly as he could be. This translation sounds fluent everyday Hungarian – a typical domestication. Having read Déri’s further domesticating translations of the poet, one can ponder over the question whether the image of Cavafy in Hungarian culture – through the reconstructing translations of István Vas and György Somlyó – had resembled too much the poets belonging to the periodical *Nyugat* (West). It is all the more interesting to raise this question because Cavafy himself seems to have worked against the *Nyugat*-like poetics. This question seems also valid because independently from Déri’s translation, András Ferenc Kovács published his pseudo-Cavafy verses that are applications of Cavafy’s poems thus Hungary seems to have at least three types of Cavafy now.

As I see, Hungarian literary translation made a step away from the *Nyugat*-like translational paradigm towards using other methods as well. One may prefer Somlyó’s and Vas’s Cavafy, one may give preference to Déri’s. What I would like to emphasize is the importance of the plurality of translational methods because pluralism helps one understand the poems themselves and our national literature alike. I am concerned that the criticism of literary translations should not be normative because it would prescribe how “good translations” should be done. Contrary to the prescriptive stance, I would favor for the linguistic approach of translation criticism because it is descriptive, that is, reveals more about what exactly the translator does when he/she translates, as Kinga Klaudy also claims (1997, 23).

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