Sameness-in-Difference

Politics between Literary and Anthropological Translation

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A beloved children's book – indisputably a literary text – has evoked the kind of fierce discursive disputes in Hungary that anthropologists often analyse. This presents an opportunity to contrast and combine literary and anthropological approaches. The book in question is the lighthearted Winnie-the-Pooh, by A.A Milne (1882–1956), published in London in 1926 and translated into Hungarian ten years later by the writer and poet Karinthy Frigyes (1887–1938), with the title Micimackó. Like the English, the Hungarian book is cherished, its verses have become part of everyday language. The English book has sold over 50 million copies and has never been out of print; the Hungarian is now in its thirty-third edition and going strong. The stories have been commercialised, psychoanalysed, philosophised. Disney started merchandising the characters in the 1960s and bought the rights in 2001; their economic value has increased enormously. The stories and characters, however, have never seemed to have any specifically political significance. Yet, the Hungarian translation has been attacked and swept into nasty and repeated polemics in national level media since the end of communism. The book became the focus of fights about nationalism, xenophobia, and the sex politics of the current right-wing FIDESZ government. Readers and writers took political positions through their stances towards the text and its different versions over time. To be sure, anthropologists have

not paid much attention to literary translation.[1] Yet, this case shows how both literary studies and anthropology can benefit by an approach that analyses the social and political embeddedness of literary translation and, by implication, translation in other domains as well.

It seems self-evident in Euro-America that "a translation is no substitute for the original" (Bellos, 2011, p. 37). Yet my friends in Budapest – Hungarian-English bilinguals quite familiar with both versions of Winnie-the-Pooh – insisted that the Hungarian was a better book than the English. Such a de-valorisation of a literary "original" by readers may be unusual today – and I will return to it later – but it was common in post-Renaissance Europe (Leavitt, 2015, p. 269). Both notions are examples of what linguistic anthropologists call language ideologies: ideas and presuppositions about language and its use, along with the moral, aesthetic and political implications of such ideas for speakers (cf. Woolard, 2018). Language ideologies are not doctrines (not like liberalism or communism); they are not true or false (not false consciousness). Rather, they are frameworks that enable the interpretation of texts and talk. Speakers draw on their presumptions about how language and speech are connected to stereotypes of people and places, in order to be able to engage in everyday interactions, enact identities, and make judgements about cultural values. There are always multiple ideologies in any social setting, often in conflict or contradiction (cf. Gal & Irvine, 2019). Language ideologies invariably include ideas about translation: understandings about the relative value of particular languages in the social world, what kind of task translation is, who in society is able and allowed to do it, and how (cf. Gal, 2015).

The politicisation of Winnie-the-Pooh in Hungary can tell us about politicisation in general: how political oppositions are made, enacted and justified. With this aim, a first section outlines a linguistic anthropologist's approach to translation. The second analyses Micimackó in anthropological terms, sketching its ideological and sociocultural

1 The exception is bible translation, which has received much attention (see Gal, 2023). Some of the evidence in this chapter was presented earlier in Gal (2021). My thanks for helpful comments to the Michicagoan faculty group.

context. The third section takes up politicisation directly, tracking the translation's afterlife: three rounds of public debates, showing how Karinthy's work became implicated in vicious national politics, establishing social categories, factions, oppositional stances, and boundaries between categories.

1 A Linguistic Anthropological Approach

Anthropologists start by questioning seemingly self-evident commonsense notions. The Euro-American view of language starts with word-meanings, often claiming that some terms are untranslateable. By contrast, linguistic anthropology starts with pragmatics: the contrasting ways of speaking (including phonological, lexical, morphosyntactic differences) that are felt by speakers to be appropriate to contrasting social contexts and uses. How to express politeness or respect is a pragmatic issue, not necessarily a matter of differences between standard languages. For instance, even within the same language, rural politeness practices often differ from urban ones. Politeness is only one example of register differences: Linguistic differences that point to (they index and evoke) ethnic, racial and regional differences are register contrasts (cf. Silverstein, 2003). They present special issues for translation. How should one render the stylised speech of Southerners and Northerners in an American movie about the U.S. Civil War, when that movie is being dubbed into German or Turkish? What register contrasts could convey to German-speakers the social contrasts displayed or suggested by English regional dialects in that case? Register differences enact identities and invoke social scenes. These are the focus of the linguistic anthropological approach, as they were for the literary scholar M.M. Bakhtin:

> "[…] there are no 'neutral' words and forms – words and forms that belong to 'no one'; language has been completely taken over, shot through with intentions and accents […] All words have the 'taste' of a profession a genre, a party, a class, a particular work […] a particular person," (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 293)

Genre differences are also captured in Bakhtin's purview, as in that of linguistic anthropology. Both require making judgements about similarity and difference.

Any two texts have innumerable qualities that can be picked out as similar in some way. Linguistic anthropology asks: in what way(s) is this a translation of that, and for whom. What norms and ideological frames enable recognition of both similarity and difference. Euro-American ways of talking about translation are once again deceptive because they focus on differences among standard languages, emphasising the difference between "domesticating" translations that make the foreign text seem familiar to readers in the target language, and "foreignising" translations, that make the text sound foreign in the target language (cf. Venuti, 2010). This omits the role of registers and genres. For example, Japanese marks idealised women's speech with final particles on verbs, creating a "woman's language" (register) in a way English does not. In a Japanese translation of the US Civil War novel Gone with the Wind, white women's speech was given these particles, but black enslaved women's speech was not. For Japanese readers, racial difference was signalled by the presence or absence of gender particles (cf. Inoue, 2003). This was neither domesticating nor foreignising. It drew on non-equivalent, contrasting registers (gendered vs. racialised) in both languages. The domesticating/foreignising dichotomy presumes standard languages are fixed and translators merely adjust. More often, translation creates a juxtaposition of codes that demands the creation of new registers. Bible translation has often created new sacred registers in non-European languages. These sometimes extend a language's boundaries, but may also set up more rigid boundaries between what are, as a result of juxtaposition, seen as separate and inter-translateable codes (cf. Gal, 2023).

A related commonsense notion is that the goal of translation is to find equivalence of denotation or pragmatic effect. Yet, as philosophers have long argued, judgements of equivalence – even of mere similarity – are relative to the roles, situations and projects of those who make the judgements (cf. Goodman, 1972). The anthropological emphasis on difference-in-similarity aims to include situations in which the inter-

pretation of a message or text, its "uptake" or pragmatic meaning, are in contention. For instance, in 2001 there was a dispute about a mid-air collision of a Chinese and an American plane over the S. China Sea. It was resolved by a diplomatic memo from the US saying "very sorry" for loss of the Chinese pilot. The Chinese took this as the (pragmatic) speech act of "apology." The US claimed it was simply an expression of sorrow, and unlike an apology, implied no responsibility. The issue of interpretative uptake gains importance from the fact that no translation is final. There are always further translations, translations of translations. Drawing on Derrida's notion of citationality, Bakhtin's dialogicality, and developments in the semiotics of interaction, linguistic anthropologists argue that translation is a special case of recontextualisation – also called intertextuality or interdiscursivity or transduction (cf. Gal, 2015). Each recontextualisation is a reframing that emphasises or diminishes the inevitable "gap" between repetitions, across texts and across speech events (cf. Briggs & Bauman, 1992; cf. Agha & Wortham, 2005; cf. Nakassis, 2013). The ideological work of the (re)translator inevitably (re)conceptualises the work, for different audiences, in different contexts. Recontextualisers – translators – always and inevitably have different goals than the authors they translate. Any translation is simultaneously imitative and novel. It creates something new in the world.

Some of the differing goals of translation are nicely captured by statistical and theoretical works about the "world republic of letters" – the global circulation of translations (cf. Casanova, 2004). Like the anthropological literature on ethnographic translation (cf. Hanks & Severi, 2015), these works are interested in power differences. Languages with very large numbers of speakers – English, Spanish, Chinese – have overwhelmingly larger literary markets than demographically "minor" languages like Hungarian. It is a sign of differential power that more works are translated from these demographically large languages into smaller ones than vice versa. The large languages are said to dominate the smaller ones. Yet, this global view, though indispensable, ignores the disputes, social boundaries and linguistic differences *within* national contexts where the standard national language(s) might reign, but where genres and register differences are crucial. They can be used

to parlay the perceived international status of a national language and its writers into more local intra-national disputes. Such disputes create factions and contention among both writers and readers, factions that align readers and writers with broader political values and stances existing as possibilities in their social worlds. The case of Winnie-the-Pooh – now a transnational text – is well situated to illuminate how its translations in Hungary became a fulcrum for everyday politics, participating in the making and overstepping of social borders through the differential valuation of linguistic practices.

2 What Karinthy Did to Winnie-the-Pooh

For those not familiar with Winnie-the-Pooh nor with Micimackó, here are the basics: Both books consist of stories that the narrator tells about a 6-year old boy who is the presumed audience and, like the narrator (who is his father), is also a character in the stories. The boy plays with stuffed animals that come to life and have adventures in the woods around the family's summer house in the English countryside. In both books the animals become human types, endearingly depicted. Both books entertain children, while engaging adults by seeing linguistic practices (idioms, anaphor, narrative framings, complex words) through children's eyes. Despite these similarities however, when one reads the two side-by-side there are real differences in the narrator's voice and the characters of the animals. Although English and Hungarian are notably different in their grammatical structures, that will not explain these voicings, which are neither simply lexical nor syntactic. They are matters of register and genre. They are due to what the translator, Karinthy, took to be his task.

Why are language ideologies, especially registers, relevant to that task? An example will clarify. One might imagine that an American and an English child, both reading the first edition of Winnie-the-Pooh were reading the same book. Yet, for an American, street signs reading Wayin, Wayout, glass meaning mirror; deceive them meaning fool them; that's a pity meaning that's too bad would be comprehensible,

yet strange. Not to mention mysterious items such a gorse bush and towel horse. Unfamiliar turns of phrase have pragmatic (register) effect. American ideas (ideologies) about English variants, make the stuffed animals seem to exist in a world different from America. That is part of the book's appeal. For Americans, Winnie-the-Pooh is not written in American or British English but in an aspirational register that indexes a magical foreignness. English children and adults could not have read it this way. Instead, when it was first published, the book envisioned upper middle class life, with daily baths, and a summer house in the woods. Historians tell us that the book responded to a yearning for escapism after the First World War, and an exaltation of childhood as enchanted and innocent. It recalled a more secure period for the middle class before the war (cf. Bilclough & Laws, 2017). The space-time evoked for English readers was an imagined national past, certainly not foreign Otherness. Arguably, then, even for the initial readers, the book evoked different chronotopes, through different uptakes of register, on the two sides of the Atlantic.

What imagined worlds would be of interest to children and adults in 1930s Hungary? Hardly any children's books had been translated from English into Hungarian, so there were no obvious models for Karinthy to follow. But children's books are an old genre in Europe and the framing ideology in Karinthy's era was clear: be true to the content but not to the form. As noted by a memo to writers and librarians from the Hungarian Education Ministry: "The Grimm and Anderson tales, reworked, with Magyar names, Magyar turns of phrase, should give the impression, in the hands of a good writer, that they are original Magyar works," (cf. Farkas & Seres, 2017). Karinthy was faithful to this translation ideology, if certainly not always to Milne's text.

In keeping with faithfulness to content, Winnie-the-Pooh and Micimackó have the same storylines and characters. Karinthy invented new names, but they match Milne's. Like Winnie, Mici is gender-ambiguous and mackó is the general term for teddy bear. Eeyore/Füles (big ears), loses his tail, Piglet/Malacka, (pig+diminutive) is little and easily frightened, Kanga+Roo as Kanga+Zsebibaba (pocket baby) arrive as strangers, are at first feared, but are ultimately welcomed into the animal society of

the 100 Acre Wood. Moreover, many of Karinthy's linguistic inventions convey amusing effects much like Milne's. When Owl tells Pooh the "customary procedure" for finding Eeyore's tail, Owl says: "First, issue a Reward." Pooh thinks Owl has sneezed; ostensibly because the word "issue" sounds like a sneeze. Karinthy renders this as dijat kell kitűzni. Ennek pszichikus hatása van (We must offer a Reward. This has a psychological effect), pszichikus too sounds like a sneeze.

Yet, the overall effects and values the books convey are different. In Milne's stories there is an innocence, a gentle irony and understatement. The motives of the animals are only implied. The world is one of suburban comfort, leisure and the privilege of empire. The characters are the stuffed toys of the middle class, their activities suggest nothing of the barnyard. They take evening baths, have world-exploring adventures, birthday parties with cakes and balloons; with pencil holders and paints for gifts. Nothing in Milne's language hints at farms or the provinces.

By contrast, Karinthy's characters are not so gentle, subtle nor suburban. The narrator's voice is often reminiscent of rural, farmer-peasant usages, as in Hungarian folk tales. Some of these locutions are simply old-fashioned, others are stigmatised today but in the 1930s pointed to dialect speakers and village life. The rustic flavour of the narrator is in sharp contrast with the speech of the animal characters, which evokes an urban, modern world and stressful relationships. In place of Milne's understatement, Karinthy frequently describes the animals' inner states and feelings. Verbs of saying elaborate on the animals' reactions. The characters do not "say" their speeches, as in Milne, they "ask suspiciously" or are "forced to admit" or "bark triumphantly." Karinthy's animals seem excitable and conflicted, as in this segment's translation:

Milne: "What?" said Piglet, with a jump. And then, to show that he hadn't been frightened, he jumped up and down once or twice in an exercising sort of way.

Karinthy adapted the Milne passage like this, in my back-translation:

Karinthy back translated: Piglet jumped a big one in fright, but at the same time, he was ashamed of his own cowardice, and so that no one would notice what happened, he jumped a few more times and remarked

lightly that it was at this time in the mornings that he usually did his daily exercises.

Note how Karinthy endows Piglet with an explicit inner life of cowardice, shame, and white lies that are hardly even implied in Milne.

In addition to stressful reactions, Karinthy locates the characters in an urban adult world, with mentions of money, expense, business, offices, and technology that are absent in Milne. This is evident in the songs Karinthy invented that diverge considerably from Milne:

Milne:
Isn't it funny
How a bear likes honey?
Buzz! Buzz! Buzz!
I wonder why he does?

Karinthy:
Erdei körökben az a nézet
hogy a medve szereti a mézet,
ez nem csak afféle szerény
vélemény
ez tény, tény, tény.

Karinthy back translated:
In woodland cliques the general view
is that bears like honey,
it's what they do,
it's not mere opinion or modest act
that's fact, fact, fact.

Milne's four simple lines would be easy to render in Hungarian. Yet Karinthy instead hints at a citified café culture of gossip, cliques, argument, pretence. Overall, Karinthy's animals seem a more knowing lot, not the clueless innocents of Milne.

In a commentary on his own translation, Karinthy (1935) called Milne's verses "nonsense poetry" using the English words and adding: "in the speech of Budapest, I would call this stupid/jokey poetry," with

the slang term blődli – borrowed from German blöd – meaning "stupid." The contrast is striking: Most English readers find Milne's verses not stupid, but whimsical and fanciful rhymes on honey, the weather and afternoon tea.

Some have charged that Karinthy misunderstood Milne's book. It is true that he did not know much English; his sister did a rough translation first that he then reworked. Such double translation – rough followed by polish – was not unusual practice at the time and is still common globally. Yet, Karinthy's literary sensitivity was never at issue; it was recognised and admired by his large public. He is often compared by critics to his contemporaries Kafka, Musil, Hašek and Karl Krauss (cf. Szabó, 1982). His hilarious parodies of his contemporaries – poets and writers – made his reputation. He was famous and popular, very much a man of his time and place, a regular of 1920s and 30s Budapest cafés and active in Hungary's modernist movement that is still today a touchstone for artists of all kinds.

What moved Karinthy to change the text in such active ways, confident and immune to his supposedly marginal place in the global literary periphery, versus Milne at the centre? As one critic noted: In order to please an audience that was used to his ironies, Karinthy "mixed in his own particular language, tasting of the Budapest-coffeehouse, through which the little animals … became even more absurd, more humorous…" (cf. Kappanyos, 2015, 200). Indeed, Micimackó and his friends sound like denizens of a sophisticated Budapest. And Karinthy paired this register of the urban coffeehouse with the voice of rustic folk tales: the rural narrator and the citified animals; the provincial and the urban combined. Neither of these registers is present in Milne.

Karinthy was not mixing randomly. As part of the first generation of Europe-facing Hungarian modernists, Karinthy participated in the café-centred artistic scene that created the Budapest journal the Nyugat (1908–1941). The journal, though called "West" did not simply import Parisian or London artistic values and styles to Budapest. Its goal was to establish for Hungarian artistic projects a distinct aesthetic identity, their own place among European modernisms. To do this, they aimed to resolve what they saw as a contradiction of national identity that drew

on the traditions of peasant life as much as the ethnic mix of cities. They aimed for a combination of urbánus (cosmopolitan) and népies (folk) values and styles. The most admired literary artists – Ady Endre, Kosztolányi Dezső – succeeded at this. The composer Bartók Béla – a contributor to the Nyugat – was admired for creating, out of Hungarian folk tunes, a sophisticated modernist music recognised continent-wide in high culture circles. Karinthy likely saw his translation's pairings through this aesthetic.

The Nyugat's artistic ambition had a political counterpart. During the journal's heyday between the World Wars, European countries were increasingly divided politically between extreme right and extreme left-wing movements. The intellectuals of the Nyugat wanted a progressive, modern Hungary: cherishing its national identity yet neither communist nor right-wing nationalist. They saw themselves as a "bridge" between East and West. It is a position that is still evoked in public life by allusions to the long-defunct Nyugat. The cosmopolitan/folk dichotomy – in politics and aesthetics – re-emerged after the fall of communism in 1989 as a way of interpreting new political distinctions. Though transformed in many ways, the dichotomy is still vibrant, contrasting right-wing, conservative, nationalist parties on the one hand, and on the other hand parties of free markets and free speech (Gal, 1991). It continues to resonate as a way of distinguishing between those who want a liberal, civil society imagined as West-aligned as opposed to those who favour an "illiberal," Christian, national one, closer to Eastern models.

3 Afterlives: Scandals and Polemics

Only in the post-communist era, with the re-emergence of a somewhat changed cosmopolitan/folk dichotomy, did Karinthy's translation become a subject of debate. During 40 years of communism, Micimackó was beloved and widely read, but not much discussed. The previous section took up issues of ideology, register and genre in translation; this section turns to recontextualisations (citationality, interdiscursivity) to understand the politicisation of Karinthy's translation. By commenting

on a work, rewriting it, or parodying it, writers re-contextualise it (as Karinthy surely did), but also – crucially – locate themselves vis-a-vis the positions of others who are also responding to the work (Karinthy did this too). Divergent stances towards the work can reveal whole fields of debate, what linguistic anthropologists have called axes of ideological differentiation (cf. Gal & Irvine, 2019). When opinions about a text become signs of broader social distinctions, the text is effectively politicised.

Since the fall of communism, there have been three rounds of public debate in Hungary about Karinthy's translation. The first was in 1992 when criticism of all kinds flourished, English became more accessible and translation became a separate profession. The second occurred between 2005–7, under a centrist socialist government. The third was in the 2010s, when the rightist FIDESZ (Young Democrats) party came to power. Through the debates, writers evoked aesthetics and literary canons in the justification of their views, but also located themselves in opposing positions on political issues such as national identity and the cultural politics of FIDESZ, as the ruling party.

3.1 The First Debate

Published as the lead article in Kortárs, a prestigious literary journal in 1992, the first salvo in the first debate was a real shocker. It was a vicious, frontal attack against Karinthy's text, naming it a "literary crime" perpetrated by a translator who misread, corrupted, "distorted and disfigured" the original's uplifting purity and deep wisdom. Molnár Miklós (1992) – I will call him the Attacker for simplicity – was a minor writer and translator, 47 at that time – denounced Karinthy as a neurotic humorist hungry for punchlines, with no humility; an aggressive "vandal" willing to sell his country for a laugh. The book was a symptom of vacuous bolshevik word games, a "sick" literary world lacking in self-criticism, where a conspiracy between translators-editors-publishers allowed this pernicious "forgery" to continue for decades. The Attacker charged that these corrupt forces refused to let him do a truer re-translation. He charged that

Karinthy's translation was a symptom of the "fetishization" of a canon, that is of certain Hungarian authors, names and personalities.

This bitter diatribe, in its subtext, revealed a man who wished to enter a literary world that excluded him. The response to his article, printed in the same issue, was a light, humorous defence of Karinthy by two well-established literary elders, ten years older than the Attacker, one a prize-winner (cf. Orbán, 1992; cf. Kabdebó, 1992). They defended Karinthy, the canon, and the supposedly fetishised writers whom they identified as the Nyugat's heirs. The Defenders condescended to the Attacker implying he was a hack, a mere translator, one who forgot how to be a writer. Karinthy, in their view, had a certain genius. They pointed out the great gulf separating Milne, confident heir of Britain's global empire, and Karinthy, struggling in the 1930s in the chaos of a collapsed Habsburg realm. Karinthy bridged that gap, said the Defenders, by transplanting Winnie-the-Pooh to his own cosmopolitan Budapest, yet with a national flavour. The Attacker, they charged, was deaf to the modernist-national values of Micimackó. The debate about this translation implicated the literary canon, access to jobs, and the "health" of the nation.

3.2 The Second Debate

In subsequent years, Karinthy's translation was used for training translators (cf. Kamarás, 1998), for proposing alternative solutions, without undermining respect for his achievement. Country-wide discussion emerged only in 2007 when literary theorist Kappanyos András, then leading a committee on a new translation of Joyce's Ulysses into Hungarian, and working on a book about literary translation, stepped up to defend Karinthy again. The first Defenders had admitted that Karinthy made some mistakes. Kappanyos, with the credentials of a respected professional translator, argued that most divergences from Milne were actually improvements. Armed with new theories, Kappanyos rejected the Attacker's outdated translation ideology of "faithfulness," that is, literal word correspondences. Instead, he proposed that a translated text is a cultural object that should be judged by how well it is embedded

in the literary traditions of the receiving culture. All translation, he argued, is "adaptation" to the new context. All translation establishes links to precedents, but – echoing Bakhtin on dialogicality – he added that a good one also makes way for future works. Karinthy's Micimackó, he argued, was beautifully adapted. It has been deeply influential in Hungarian children's literature, enabling valuable works that otherwise would not have existed (cf. Kappanyos, 2007).

In his later book on translation theory, Kappanyos (2015) also rose to the defence of the literary canon and a national self. He noted that Karinthy has a higher status in the Hungarian literary world than Milne has in the English one. This is why, he added, educated Hungarians are sure that Micimackó is a better book than Winnie-the-Pooh; Karinthy a better writer than Milne. In short, he stated in writing what my Budapest friends had insisted to me in discussions years before. This view was more widespread than I had imagined. It was not only a return, as mentioned earlier, of the post-Renaissance language ideology that a translation may well be better than the original. It is also a double-barreled national claim. First, Karinthy's confidence was not arrogance and aggression, as the Attacker had charged. On the contrary, this position avers, the Hungarian literary canon is strong enough to counter works in dominant languages. Second, the western-facing intellectual world that aligns in this way with Karinthy stands against a domestic opponent too, namely writers like the Attacker. This domestic opponent devalues the cultural institutions that the western-facing social group controls. It is important to see that praising Micimackó is a retort in a domestic fight as well as an international one. It parlays the fight at one scale into the struggle at the other.[2]

2 It follows that this dynamic also implicates me, as a Hungarian-English bilingual living in diaspora, and makes it important that I value both books equally and say so. That opinion conveys volumes about my identity and politics.

3.3 A Third Debate

In the period between 2007–2010, the initial Attacker once again published criticisms, this time in a daily newspaper. His earlier complaint against bolshevism was now a complaint against capitalism. Monopolies had bought the rights to Micimackó, and in yielding to business interests, "we [Hungarians] have become stupid, governed by idiots," (cf. Molnár, 2007). That was a swipe against the liberal-socialist government then in power. In expressing his complaints, the Attacker also cited a new ally, the writer Orbán János Dénes, who seemed to agree with him, and who continued, in a different way, the attacks on Micimackó.

This Orbán (no relation to the Prime Minister), was a young poet and writer from Transylvania who was welcomed into Hungarian literary circles in the 1990s as a refreshingly iconoclastic voice, a parodist and norm breaker, an enfant terrible. It was an era in Budapest of great popular enthusiasm, even kitchy romance, for anything from and about the several millions of Hungarian-speaking minorities living in the states around Hungary's borders in Romania, Slovakia, Serbia and Ukraine. Orbán János Dénes, a product of minority life, was publishing parodies of Micimackó. This too was a comment on Karinthy's book, recruiting it via the intertext of parody to debates that became more pointed as the FIDESZ conservative party gained power in 2010 and moved considerably to the right.

The conceit of the parodic stories (cf. Orbán, 2012) was that Karinthy's book was a failure in the Székely region of Transylvania because it was not written in the Székely dialect of Hungarian and failed to support the region's ancient rural virtus, the provincial masculine prowess romanticised by metropolitan Hungarians. Orbán changed Micimackó to Misi, making him sound more masculine, or, as he wrote, less buzis (pejorative for gay). Further, the stories were written in non-standard spelling, lexicon and syntax that was supposed to represent the Székely dialect. Misi never speaks, he yells and bellows. There is an animus against Budapest, as when Misi says: "a proper Székely bear should not go out into the woods with a shit naked ass, like the Budapesters do." Indeed, the stories are full of harsh obscenities and ethnic and regional

slurs, as Misi issues threats and insults to his friends. Owl and Piglet instruct Misi about sex, specifically where, and into whom, he should (or should not) insert his newly erect penis. Misi is represented as dreaming graphically of having sex with Kanga, who is cast as a divorcee, because "those kind are easily available." And so on, in further insults.

At first glance this seems mildly amusing, like a fan-zine that puts a beloved hero in new, incongruous and taboo circumstances. It is a translation that does to Karinthy what Karinthy did to Milne's text: taking it into a different linguistic register (dialect) that indexes an imagined scene, here an eastern rustic one. The sex and violence in Orbán's version make Karinthy's animals seem innocent. Written by a Transylvanian author, these parodies are not directed against Székely readers. They aim to shock educated Budapesters. Orbán aims to provoke and ridicule the (Budapest) Hungarians who supposedly believe in the rough and tough Transylvanian. These are supposedly the same people who would be shocked by the depiction of sex and ethnic slurs in Micimackó because they revere Karinthy and his bear. An otherwise positive review in Kortárs, the prestigious literary journal, remarked that the constant profanity of Orbán's parody is "neither witty nor provocative, just crude," and the constant gay-bashing is hurtful and offensive (cf. Pécsi, 2014). The review failed to add that the parody was perfectly in tune with the government's policies against sexual minorities.

Indeed, in Orbán's (2018) journalistic essays, published somewhat later, he conspicuously supported the right-wing FIDESZ government. Fuming against the "boundless arrogance of the left," he chastised intellectuals he called "liberals" for their "political correctness," their support of Budapest Pride parades and feminist writings. By his own account, he was mounting a "culture war" against anyone who rejected the casual use of ethnic and sexual slurs. Such people he called "liberals" and they could be found among the intellectuals of Budapest who have consistently voted against FIDESZ and its anti-immigrant, anti-feminist, homophobic, and anti-EU policies. Against such people, Orbán took up what he called the "national" position. Ignoring that his own views matched right-wing voices in western Europe, Orbán ridiculed those he called "liberals" for blindly following European political and

artistic trends, continuing to respect the Nyugat and its heirs. Echoing the first Attacker, he accused Hungarian literary life of being an exclusivist club with a fetishised canon. He cast himself as a righteous outsider, supporting anti-immigrant, homophobic cultural policy. Yet, far from being an outsider, Orbán had been the darling of Budapest artistic circles and even before embarking on his "culture war," he was a conspicuous beneficiary of government largesse. He received generous state funding for the cultural organisations he established. Meanwhile, support was withdrawn from longstanding, prestigious cultural institutions (cf. Grecsó, 2017). In this way, Orbán the writer contributed to the plan of that other Orbán, the Prime Minister, who aimed to centralise and control the country's cultural life by selectively funding only those activities that were in line with government-approved opinions, while suppressing or starving others.

But, Orbán's parodies did not end the dialogue of translations; the recontextualisations continue. Karinthy's bear has recently been recruited to the opposite side of this political axis of differentiation, this discursive divide. In 2020, the Budapest Puppet Theatre opened its season with Micimackó. A reviewer wrote: "Thanks to Karinthy's translation [it] has become a Hungarian cultural treasure." In the puppet theatre, the names have been changed, yet the characters are recognisable. This is yet another re-translation, in another medium. Here there are no xenophobic slurs. When the Kanga character and her child show up in the 100 Acre Wood – as in the plot of both Milne's and Karinthy's stories – they are identified as migrants, and seen as strange by the other animals. But in both versions, as in the puppet theatre, they are soon accepted and invited to stay. This storyline, writes the reviewer (cf. Rádai, 2020), is a quiet reference to the recent harsh mis-treatment of migrants in Hungary. One does not even have to "read between the lines," the reviewer adds, as people did in communism, to see the puppet version of Micimackó as a quiet protest against the anti-migrant policies of the FIDESZ government.

4 Conclusions

Karinthy invented a Budapest Bear out of Milne's suburban English idyll, drawing on the language ideologies that supported the aesthetic and political commitments of Hungarian modernism. Orbán invented a Székely bear, playing on some of the same value-contrasts, but occupying the opposing positions on an axis of differentiation that had itself been somewhat transformed since the 1930s. In these literary creations, as in the articles of the Attacker, the Defenders and the production of the Puppet Theatre, politicisation took the form of aesthetic judgements that were understood equally as political ones. Writers and readers aligned with one faction as against another. They positioned themselves against others' aesthetic-cum-political views, always alert to national as well as international discussions, simultaneously watching the domestic literary world and continent-wide debates. Thus, multiple scales were invoked in each round of debate. Axes of differentiation are ideological contrasts, not social groupings, but they do establish the discursive basis for oppositions and thus the scaffolding for borders between categories of people that, ultimately, can be formed into factions and groups.

A linguistic anthropological analysis of translation processes, drawing as well on some literary theorists, shows how socially embedded is the formation of contrasting categories around literary works and their afterlives, their re-translations. In the making of these consequential differentiations, the text itself – while changed significantly – was still deliberately framed and understood as the "same" in some ways: another version of the beloved book. A linguistic anthropological approach enables one to see, in this series of scandals, the way politicization was achieved, both artistically and politically, through the ideological perception of sameness in a multiply reframed and changing text: sameness-in-difference.

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