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## Between History and Translation: Transformation of Historical Meanings in Hungarian Version of Pavlo Zahrebelnyi's *Yevpraksiia*

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Статтю присвячено комплексному аналізу відтворення культурно-специфічної лексики в угорському перекладі історичного роману Павла Загребельного *Євпраксія*, здійсненому Палом Мішлеї (1980), а також дослідженню впливу перекладацьких стратегій на репрезентацію історико-культурної ідентичності Київської Русі в угорському культурному дискурсі. Актуальність дослідження зумовлена недостатньою розробленістю проблематики українсько-угорського художнього перекладу, зокрема відсутністю системних праць, присвячених аналізу культурно маркованих одиниць та їх історико-семантичних трансформацій у процесі перекладу.

*Метою статті* є виявлення впливу перекладацьких стратегій на історико-семантичні зсуви у сприйнятті українських культурно-специфічних одиниць в угорському перекладі, а також визначення закономірностей і наслідків цих трансформацій для репрезентації історико-культурної ідентичності Київської Русі.

Теоретико-методологічну основу дослідження становлять положення перекладознавства та лінгвокультурології, зокрема підходи до аналізу культурної маркованості, стратегій одомашнення та очуження, а також інтерпретації безеквівалентної лексики. У роботі застосовано комплекс *методів*, серед яких провідними є перекладацький аналіз, порівняльний аналіз тексту оригіналу та перекладу, лексико-семантичний аналіз, історико-культурний коментар та елементи дискурс-аналізу.

Матеріалом дослідження слугує угорський переклад роману *Євпраксія*, виконаний Палом Мішлеї та виданий у спільному проєкті будапештського видавництва «Еурора» та ужгородського видавництва «Карпати», при цьому угорський текст було звірено з українським оригіналом за участю Ласло Шандора.

У результаті проведеного аналізу встановлено, що перекладач використовує широкий спектр стратегій, серед яких транслітерація, описовий переклад, семантична нейтралізація, часткова адаптація та модернізація. Хоча ці стратегії сприяють підвищенню комунікативної доступності історичних реалій Київської Русі для угорського читача, вони водночас зумовлюють виникнення історико-семантичних зсувів і часткову редукцію культурної специфіки тексту оригіналу. Дослідження показує, що найбільш відчутні трансформації відбуваються у сфері ономастики, етнімів, соціально-політичної лексики та сакральних назв, які виконують функцію ключових маркерів історичної ідентичності. Їх переклад часто супроводжується узагальненням, функціональною заміною або адаптацією, що призводить до зміщення історичних смислів і формування альтернативної моделі культурної пам'яті. Водночас переклад індивідуально-авторських новотворів засвідчує тенденцію до стилістичної нейтралізації, що знижує рівень відтворення авторської мовної своєрідності.

Узагальноючи результати дослідження, можна стверджувати, що адекватне відтворення культурно-специфічної лексики в художньому перекладі потребує не лише стилістичної точності, а й глибокої історико-культурної компетентності перекладача. Саме перекладацькі рішення визначають характер репрезентації історичного минулого в іншомовному середовищі та впливають на формування культурної ідентичності в рецептивному дискурсі.

*Ключові слова:* культурно-специфічна лексика, культурна маркованість, художній переклад, українсько-угорський переклад, перекладацькі стратегії, Пал Мішлєї, Павло Загребельний, історичний роман.

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## Introduction

In contemporary translation studies, the issue of reconstructing culturally specific elements occupies a central position, since literary translation involves not only conveying denotative meaning but also representing the historical and cultural experience of the community that speaks the original language. The complexity of this task arises from the uniqueness of each culture and the asymmetry of cultural codes, which do not always have direct equivalents in a foreign-language context. Such elements contribute to the authentic flavour of the text, at the same time complicating its comprehension for readers who lack sufficient knowledge of the historical, geographical and socio-cultural realities of the community in question [Slavova, Borysenko, 2022, p. 60].

This problem becomes particularly acute when translating historical novels, where linguistic elements serve as conveyors of cultural memory, collective identity and the worldviews of a particular era. Even if the objects or phenomena they refer to disappear in real historical time, in a literary text they remain important markers of historical authenticity and means of constructing an image of the past. The historical novel is an integral part of historical culture, as it not only represents the past but also contributes to its symbolic interpretation within a specific cultural and ideological framework. As Larysa Nagorna points out, the concept of “historical culture” encompasses the entire system of conveying historical knowledge to society, particularly through literature and the arts [Nahorna, 2014, p. 17]. Consequently, the literary translation of a historical novel acquires particular significance, as it can influence the formation of historical perceptions within the target culture. Working on such a text requires the translator not only to possess linguistic competence, but also a thorough knowledge of the historical and cultural context of the era, as well as the ability to convey the national and cultural elements of the source language’s lexical system appropriately.

Pavlo Zahrebelnyi’s novel *Yevpraksiia* as an artistic reconstruction of the era of 11th-century Kyivan Rus’ is rich in culturally marked vocabulary—sacred proper nouns, ethnonyms, titles, historical realities, archaisms and the author’s own neologisms.

In the Hungarian translation, these elements undergo a variety of transformations—ranging from transliteration and partial adaptation to neutralisation, modernisation and semantic reduction. These translation choices give rise to historical and semantic shifts, particularly in the realm of ethnonyms and titles, which in turn influence the perception of the historical and national identity of Kyivan Rus’ within foreign-language cultural contexts. In this case, translation acts not only as a tool for conveying a literary text across languages, but also as a key factor in the interpretation of historical experience, capable of shaping an alternative, partly anachronistic model of historical memory, adapted to the cultural context of the target audience.

In this article, we examine translation as a space where historical accuracy and cultural reception interact, where every transformation of lexical units reflects the specific characteristics of Hungarian receptive culture and traditions of mediation. This approach allows us to assess not only the actual changes, but also their implications for the formation of historical memory.

Consequently, there is a growing need to examine the limits of translation adaptation in the case of historically marked texts, as well as the implications of the translation strategies employed

for the representation of Ukrainian history within foreign-language cultural discourse. In this context, the following questions arise: how do translation strategies in the translation of historical novels influence the representation of historical and national identity in the target culture? Where does the line run between the communicative accessibility of a text to a foreign-language reader and the historical and semantic transformation of its content. These studies of cultural translation deepen the understanding of the interaction between languages and cultures and are of great importance for the development of translation studies [Petukhova, Hovorun, 2024, p. 220].

Despite the considerable body of research on the translation of culture-specific vocabulary, the problem of representing historical memory in translations of historical prose—particularly within the Ukrainian-Hungarian translation discourse—remains largely unexplored, which is why this study is of relevance in both theoretical and practical terms.

Translation practice proves that translations already produced often acquire the status of established conventions and are perceived as fixed linguistic patterns, leading to a tendency to reproduce them mechanically in subsequent translation work. The younger generation of translators often relies on existing translations, reproducing them without critically re-evaluating them or considering the historical and cultural context of the original. This inertia within the translation tradition can lead to the establishment of inaccurate or anachronistic interpretations of culture-specific elements and, consequently, to the prolonged reproduction of distorted perceptions of historical and cultural realities within the target culture.

### Literary review

The problem of translating culture-specific units has been examined in the works of Ukrainian and international researchers within the fields of translation studies and linguoculturology [Zorivchak, 1989; Klaudy 1994; Heltai 2013; Lyubimova, Tomasevich, Mardarenko, 2018; Slavova, Borysenko, 2021; Slavova, Borysenko, 2022; Borysenko, Slavova, Kodubovska, Matushevskaya, 2024; Petukhova, Hovorun, 2024]. Academic studies focus on the challenges of defining culture-specific terms, their cultural connotations, methods of transliteration, as well as strategies for domestication and foreignisation. At the same time, most studies focus primarily on translations from Ukrainian into English and from English into Ukrainian, with translations between other language pairs—particularly Hungarian and English—being less common. In this article, we do not aim to focus on clarifying theoretical issues relating to definitions. We are particularly impressed by Pal Heltai's approach, according to which "culture-specific can be considered those linguistic elements, constructions, and ways of language use which, by their referential and connotative meanings, the encyclopedic knowledge associated with them, or features of functioning in speech, relate to a certain culture and are explained by it, whereas in other language-cultural communities taken for comparison, they are either absent or substantially different" [Heltai, 2013, p. 49]. However, it shall be noted that, in the context of our study, culturally specific units with historical and ideological connotations acquire particular significance, as their semantic transformation in translation may lead to a shift in historical perspective and cultural identification.

The Ukrainian-Hungarian translation of literary texts remains an under-researched field in both theoretical and applied terms, particularly with regard to the reconstruction of culturally marked vocabulary. At present, one of the few works devoted to this subject is a study by Oksana Tashkovich "Possible practical applications of the Hungarian-Ukrainian cultural dictionary, based on the example of the Hungarian translation of Panteleimon Kulish's novel *The Black Council*," which examines the question of translating Ukrainian cultural realities into Hungarian [Taskovics, 2021]. At the same time, academic discourse lacks a specific analysis of the translation of the novel *Yevpraksiia* from the perspective of the reconstruction of culturally specific vocabulary. This article represents the latest stage in our research into Hungarian-Ukrainian and Ukrainian-Hungarian literary translation [Talabirchuk, 2022, 2023].

In this study, we proceed from the assumption that the translation of a historical novel serves not only as a means of conveying the text across languages, but also as a mechanism for the cultural interpretation of historical experience. Translation choices relating to the representation of culturally specific vocabulary can lead to changes in the ways in which historical reality is portrayed, particularly through the modernisation, neutralisation or reinterpretation of historically

charged concepts. As a result, translation is capable of shaping a different, partially transformed model of historical memory, adapted to the cultural context of the target audience. It is for this reason that the analysis of the Hungarian translation of Pavlo Zahrebelnyi's novel *Yevpraksiia* is considered in this article not merely as a description of translational transformations, but as an attempt to examine their implications for the representation of the historical and cultural identity of Kyivan Rus' within a foreign-language cultural discourse.

*The aim* of this article is to identify the impact of translation strategies on historical and semantic shifts in the perception of Ukrainian culture-specific elements in Hungarian translations, as well as to determine the patterns and consequences of these transformations for the representation of the historical and cultural identity of Kyivan Rus'.

To achieve this aim, the following *tasks* are to be implemented:

1. To examine the translation-related changes to the novel's title and dedications in order to assess the impact of translation choices on the reception of historical memory.
2. To identify the characteristics of the transmission of toponyms and anthroponyms, thereby enabling the identification of changes in the reproduction of historical accuracy.
3. To identify strategies for the reproduction of ethnonyms and their semantic implications for the formation of national identity in a receptive culture.
4. To describe the translation of titles and military-administrative terminology in order to assess its impact on the historical and semantic context of the text.
5. To examine the ways in which sacred onyms are transmitted in order to determine the extent of religious and cultural adaptation.
6. To identify the characteristics of the translation of original neologisms and stylistically marked vocabulary in order to assess the preservation of the author's intended semantics.
7. To determine the extent to which the text has been historically and semantically neutralised or modernised, in order to assess the overall impact of the translation on the formation of an alternative historical memory.

The theoretical and methodological framework of this study is based on principles of translation and linguoculturology, in particular approaches to the analysis of cultural marking, strategies of domestication and alienation, and the interpretation of non-equivalent vocabulary. The study employs a range of *methods*, the main being translation analysis, a comparative analysis of the original text and the translation, lexical-semantic analysis, historical and cultural commentary, and elements of discourse analysis.

The subject of this study is the Hungarian translation of P. Zahrebelnyi's novel *Yevpraksiia*, translated by Pál Mislei and published in 1980 as a joint project between the Budapest-based publishing house "Európa" and the Uzhhorod-based publishing house "Karpaty." The editor-in-chief of the publication was Shara Karig, and the Hungarian text was cross-checked with the Ukrainian original by László Sándor.

The creative figure of P. Mislei as a translator attracted the attention of the researcher of Hungarian-Ukrainian interliterary contacts, Angelina Gedesh, who dedicated an article to him titled "Ukrainist from beyond the Danube" [Gedesh, 1986]. The literary scholar provides some biographical details about the translator, noting in particular that, alongside Hungarian, he studied Russian at the University of Debrecen, where, after completing his studies, he also taught Ukrainian on an ad hoc basis. Later, whilst in Kyiv, P. Mislei became interested in Ukrainian literature and established creative contacts with contemporary writers [Gedesh, 1986, p. 162]. The scholar provides a list of translations of Ukrainian fiction into Hungarian by P. Mislei available at that time, including his translation of the historical novel *Yevpraksiia* by P. Zahrebelnyi, noting that "the novel was published in the series 'Century and People'—one of the most popular among Hungarians—and quickly disappeared from bookstores" [Gedesh, 1986, p. 163]. A. Gedesh speaks highly of P. Mislei's work as a translator, highlighting his fluency in Ukrainian and his in-depth knowledge of the history of Ukrainian literature and culture.

Evelina Balla, a contemporary scholar specialising in the translation of Ukrainian fiction into Hungarian, focuses primarily on the reception of works by writers of the 1960s [Balla, 2019]. Her academic interests also include the translations produced by P. Mislei. For instance, in the article "The Prose of Hryhoriy Tiutiunyk in Hungarian Translation," the author analyses the Hungarian translations of Hryhoriy Tiutiunyk's short stories and novellas, produced by P.

Mishlei [Balla, 2020]. In her study “Valeriy Shevchuk’s Novel *The Rooster’s Crow at Dawn* in Pál Mislei’s Translation,” the scholar also draws attention to the translator’s literary-critical output, emphasising that he actively published articles on the Ukrainian literary process in Hungarian-language periodicals and prepared biographical references about authors for various editions of works by Ukrainian writers [Balla, 2022, p. 176]. Consequently, in academic works, the translation of *Yevpraksiia* is mentioned merely as one of the translator’s achievements, without any specific analysis of its particular features.

## Results and discussion

The title is one of the key elements of any text, as it serves as a kind of semantic guide for the reader, acting as an interpretative framework that directs the process of perceiving and comprehending the author’s intention. To adequately understand the ideological content of a literary work, it is first and foremost necessary to interpret its title, that is, to recognise the meaning that the author presents in a condensed and generalised form. As A. Nyamtsu notes, the title of a work often functions as a primary ideological and semantic signal that prepares the reader for the author’s vision of the plot, image or motif, and in some cases also outlines possible directions for their further reinterpretation [Nyamtsu, 2001, p. 63].

In translation, the title of Pavlo Zahrebelnyi’s novel *Yevpraksiia* was expanded and took the form of *Eupraxia császárné pokoljárása*, which can be rendered in Ukrainian as *Ходіння по пеклу імператриці Євпраксії*<sup>1</sup> (Empress Yevpraksiia’s walk through hell). Thus, right from the title, the translator provides a functional clarification by introducing additional information derived from the text’s content. This transformation can be explained by a compensatory translation strategy, since for a Hungarian-speaking reader unfamiliar with Ukrainian history, the name of the main character alone does not carry sufficient semantic weight and does not provide the necessary cultural and historical context for understanding the work. Therefore, in translation, the novel’s title establishes a communicative connection not only with the text but also with the potential reader, guiding them towards the novel’s central thematic and conceptual focus.

The novel contains two dedications: the first takes the form of a quotation from the *Izbornik* of 1073, and the second is taken from Pavlo Tychyna’s poem *War*. On the back of the title page of the Hungarian translation, it is stated that the poetic excerpts included in the work were translated by *Dezso Tándori*. The quotation from the *Izbornik* is presented in literary Ukrainian, featuring distinct elements of Old Slavonic vocabulary; this is due to its origin and serves as a stylistic marker, bringing the work’s historical and cultural context to the forefront. For clarity, let us compare the quotation from the *Izbornik* with its Hungarian translation:

*Поруганіє же є слово лицемірно,  
от супротивного супротивноє явленіє являє;  
поруганіє же образі ђ: поруганіє,  
похухнаніє, поіграніє, посміяніє;  
і поруганіє єсть слово с укором гаголемо*<sup>2</sup>  
[Zahrebelny, 2002, p. 26].

*Az irónia kétértelmű dolog,  
valamiről az ellenkezőjét állítja;  
az iróniának alakja négy: gúny,  
csúfolódás, játék, kinevetés;  
s az irónia szemrehányással kimondott dolog*  
[Zahrebelnij, 1980, p. 5].

As can be seen, the Hungarian translation is simplified and does not capture the culturally specific features of the original. In particular, the lexeme *poruganie*, which means mockery, humiliation and contempt, has been rendered by the translator as *ironia* (*irony*), which radically alters the semantic tone of the text. In the first line of the translation, this lexeme is rendered as “*irony—an ambiguous thing*,” whilst in the third line it is translated again as *irónia* and as *gúny* (*mockery, ridicule*), which also fails to convey the full range of meanings of the Old Slavonic word and loses its archaic flavour. Other words in the original, such as *pohuhnanie*, *poigranie*, *posmianie* are partly rendered in Hungarian as *csúfolódás* (*sneers, mockery*), *játék* (*game*), *kinevetés* (*ridicule*). Hence, the translation of this rather

<sup>1</sup> Ukrainian translation is ours

<sup>2</sup> Mockery [poruganie] is a hypocritical word; from the opposite it manifests the opposite; mockery [poruganie] has the form [d.]: mockery [poruganie], sneering [pohuhnanie], derision [poigranie], ridicule [posmianie]; and mockery [poruganie] is a word spoken with reproach.

complex passage from a historical text written in Church Slavonic does not do justice to the original and fails to capture the cultural and historical context of Kyivan Rus' that P. Zahrebelnyi brings to life in his novel *Yevpraksiia*. The writer's use of a quotation from the *Izbornik* of 1073 is no coincidence, as the kniazivna—and later Empress—Yevpaksiia was born around this time, which highlights the historical accuracy and chronological context of the novel. It is obvious that the translator of this passage was not sufficiently familiar with the historical, literary and linguistic context and may possibly have neglected to give due consideration to the correct interpretation of Old Slavonic lexemes and their organic connection with the text of the work. At the same time, the translation of the quotation from P. Tychyna's poem *War* more accurately conveys the meaning of the original, which demonstrates the translator's greater familiarity with the vocabulary of modern Ukrainian:

Тільки й єсть у нас ворог –  
наше серце.  
Благословить, мамо, шукати зілля  
Шукати зілля на людське божевілля<sup>3</sup>  
[Zahrebelnyi, 2002, p. 26].

Az ellenség bennünk lakik –  
szívünk az.  
Áldásod add, anyám, leljek füvekre,  
Leljek füvekre, írul szörny szivekre  
[Zahrebelnij, 1980, p. 5].

The Hungarian translation generally preserves the moral and philosophical meaning of the passage but features a number of semantic and figurative changes. In particular, the translator resorts to concretisation, the neutralisation of culturally marked vocabulary, and the partial replacement of imagery, which results in a certain shift in emphasis: the concept of *human madness* is interpreted through the metaphor of *horrible hearts*, whilst the folklorically coloured lexeme *potion* is reduced to the neutral *herbs*.

Overall, an analysis of the title and dedications illustrates the patterns of translation in historically marked texts: compensatory strategies and simplifications can ensure communicative accessibility for a foreign-language reader, but at the same time lead to a transformation of the cultural and historical context, manifested in the loss of the archaic stylistic flavour of the quotation, a semantic shift in key concepts (in particular, the replacement of the lexeme *poruganie* (*mockery*) with the word *irónia*), as well as in the partial neutralisation of the religious-literary tradition characteristic of the texts of Kyivan Rus'. This highlights the need for a critical examination of translation choices and their impact on the formation of historical memory within the target culture.

An analysis of the translation of quotations clearly demonstrates how the lexical and historical-cultural features of the original—in particular, archaic Church Slavonic vocabulary, words with folkloric connotations, the semantics of historical concepts, and the stylistic markers of sacred discourse—can be lost in translation. Similar difficulties arise when rendering onyms, as proper names carry extralinguistic information necessary for the adequate conveying of denotative meaning and cultural context. As M. Vozna, L. Slavova and N. Antoniuk rightly point out, “the link between onomastics and historical science is close, since the latter serves as a source of extralinguistic information about referents, which translation scholars use to determine translation methods” [Vozna et al., 2024, p. 56]. Citing M. Torchynskyi, they note that “the structure of such information has specific features for each individual type of proper name; however, in general, it consists primarily of components that indicate the place and time of the object's origin or existence, as well as certain qualitative and quantitative characteristics” [Vozna et al., 2024, p. 56]. Thus, effective translation of onyms requires not only linguistic competence but also a deep understanding of the historical and cultural context, which enables the preservation of the significance of the original text's identifying and cultural markers.

In the Hungarian translation of the novel *Yevpraksiia*, one of the most illustrative examples of an ideologically and historically problematic translation is the inconsistent rendering of the name *Rus'*. For the most part, P. Mishlei uses a relatively neutral equivalent *Rusz földje*, which refers to *the land of Rus'* and formally replicates the structure of the original; furthermore, towards the end of the novel, a more accurate translation appears in the text *Kijevi Rusz*. However, the passage quoted presents a version of *Oroszföld*—which literally means *Russian land*:

<sup>3</sup> The only enemy we have is our own heart. Bless me, mother, to seek potion. To seek herbs for human madness.

“[...] *поліг у битві під Черніговом і похований урочисто Всеволодом у Софії, так ніби мав перед землею Руською щонайвищі заслуги*” [Zahrebelnyi, 2002, p. 61] is translated as: “*Vsevolod pedig nagy pompával temette el a Szófia-székesegyházban, mint olyan személyt, akinek nagy érdemei vannak Oroszöldön*” [Zahrebelnij, 1980, p. 55] (our emphasis).

The translation of the name *Rus'* as *Oroszöld* historically inaccurate, as it equates Old Rus' statehood with the later Russian national-state tradition. This approach creates an anachronism and leads to an ideologically coloured distortion of historical meaning. By contrast, the form *Rusz földje* is far more appropriate, as it retains the historical name without altering its meaning. But the best option is a transliterated translation *Kijevi Rusz*:

“[...] *ось чому змагалися в своїх зазіханнях на Русь, і Рим, і Царград*” [Zahrebelnyi, 2002, p. 61] – “*Ezért versengett Róma és Konsztantinápoly a Kijevi Ruszért*” [Zahrebelnij, 1980, p. 368].

We are still unclear about the reasons for such variation in the translation. What guided the translator in choosing such different forms to render the same toponym? We might suggest that the factors behind this variation could have been:

1) The influence of the Hungarian historiographical tradition, in which the term *orosz* was frequently used as a generalised marker for the East Slavic region. As modern historiography notes, in medieval Hungarian sources the ethnonym *Rus'* (*Rutheni*) is interpreted in different ways depending on the context and genre of the text—it appears as a designation for a specific political and cultural community of Eastern Slavs, particularly in documents from the territory of the Kingdom of Hungary. It was not until the second half of the 20th century that the consistent use of the term *Rusz* was established in Hungarian historiography: “One of M. Font’s significant contributions is the introduction of the term *Rusz*, into academic usage; Hungarian historians had previously not used this term, instead employing the word *Orosz*, which literally means ‘Russian’. Historically, this distinction is the most appropriate, a point on which M. Font wrote a separate book” [Voloschuk, 2021, p. 48].

2) The inertia of translated exonyms, whereby the established form *Oroszöld* automatically supplants the historically more accurate variant.

3) The lack of clear editorial unification of terminology, which has led to the coexistence of several forms within a single text.

We believe that the inconsistency in the rendering of the place name *Rus'* is not a mere stylistic variation, but rather an indication of a tension between a historically accurate transliteration strategy and a modernising interpretation that creates an anachronistic effect.

Thus, the inconsistent rendering of the toponym *Rus'*, ranging from the transliterated *Kijevi Rusz* to the politically charged *Oroszöld*, creates an anachronism and potentially influences historical and cultural interpretation. Hence, the translation under consideration serves as an example of how translation choices can not only convey but also modify the cultural and historical content of a text, thereby influencing the formation of historical memory and national identity in the target culture.

A similar shift can be observed in the excerpt below, where the ethnonym *Russian* is used instead of *Rus'*:

“*Германський хроніст захоплено розповідав, що Бурхард ‘вернувся від короля руських з такими багатими дарами в золоті й сріблі й дорогих одежах...’*” [Zahrebelnyi, 2002, p. 60] – “*A német krónikás lelkesedve meséli el, hogy Burchard ‘az orosz királytól gazdag ajándékokkal megrakodva tért haza...’*” [Zahrebelnij, 1980, p. 53].

<sup>4</sup> “[...] he fell in battle near Chernihiv and was solemnly buried by Vsevolod in Saint Sophia’s, as if he had the highest merits before the Rus’ land”.

<sup>5</sup> “[...] this is why Rome and Constantinople vied in their claims on Rus’.”

<sup>6</sup> “The German chronicler enthusiastically recounted that Burchard ‘returned from the king of the Rus’ with such rich gifts in gold and silver and precious garments...”

In the original text, the term *Rus'* clearly refers to the political community of Kyivan Rus'. By contrast, the Hungarian term *orosz király* means *Russian king*, that is, the ruler of Russia in the modern national sense. The translation of *Rus'* as *orosz* reflects a tendency towards the modernisation and nationalisation of Old Rus' reality. As a result, the historical ethnonym *Rus'* is being replaced by the modern ethnonym *Russian*, which creates an anachronism and alters perceptions of the political and cultural identity of Kyivan Rus'. Such a translation of the ethnonym *Rus'* not only distorts the original meaning of the historical text but may also foster an alternative perception within the target culture regarding the political and ethnic affiliation of the Old Rus' territories. Such changes demonstrate that translation serves as both a communicative and an ideological tool.

Attention is devoted to the translation of the novel *Yevpraksiia* and the rendering of the toponym Kyiv in Hungarian as *Kijev*, which reflects the influence of the Russian language. The Hungarian language lacks a letter to represent the vowel sound [и], so it is usually rendered as [i]. The vowel sound [i] is rendered as [j], and the suffix -ev has been added under the influence of Russian. This rendering alters the phonetic character of the proper name and, to some extent, modifies its perception by Hungarian readers. This form of spelling is still used in Hungarian language practice today, as it is established by orthographic tradition, which is particularly evident against the backdrop of contemporary political and historical realities. At the same time, there is an increasingly active discussion in contemporary international discourse regarding the need for a more accurate rendering of Ukrainian toponyms in accordance with their original pronunciation. In view of this, we propose the transliteration *Kijiv* as the option that best reflects the Ukrainian phonetic form of the name. Although the process of changing established spelling conventions is a complex one, we believe that a gradual re-evaluation of translation practices is necessary in the context of contemporary cultural and political realities. It is also worth noting that in the latest edition of the Hungarian spelling rules, the form *Kijev* is accompanied by a note in brackets *ukránul Kijiv* [Keszler, 2015, p. 350], whereas the adjective *kijevi* (Kyiv) is given in only one standard form.

Thus, the choice of the form *Kijev* in translation reflects not only the established orthographic norm of the Hungarian language, but also a historically developed model of reception of Ukrainian realities, within which the Russian linguistic and translation tradition has long played an intermediary role.

A similar influence of the Russian language can also be observed in the transliteration of the following toponyms, namely *Bilhorod* transliterated as *Belgorod*; *Irpın* conveyed as *Irpeny*; a historic district of Kyiv that served as the residence of the Kyivan princes—*Krasnyi Dvir* transliterated as *Kraszniy dvor*; *Chernihiv* given as *Csernyigov*; *Tsarehrad* conveyed as *Cárgrád*. The hydronym *Dnipro* is transliterated as *Dnyeper*. Such transformations indicate that the translator partially adapts the place names to the Hungarian phonetic and orthographic system; however, this simultaneously undermines their connection to the Ukrainian historical and cultural reality. This, in turn, affects how the text is received by Hungarian readers, as it may create a false impression of the national and cultural affiliation of the relevant settlements and rivers. At the same time, these place names could have been rendered in accordance with their Ukrainian phonetic form, for example *Bilhorod*, *Irpiny*, *Krászniy dvir*, *Csernyihiv*, *Dnipro*, which would have facilitated a more accurate representation of their national and cultural identity in the foreign-language translation.

The identified features of the rendering of toponyms in the translation of the novel *Yevpraksiia* suggest a systematic nature to the transformations of proper names, determined not only by the phonetic and orthographic norms of the target language, but also by the indirect influence of foreign-language (primarily Russian) traditions, which in turn affects the reader's receptive model of historical memory.

Similar trends can be observed in the rendering of anthroponyms—the names of historical figures and characters in the novel, which carry significant cultural, symbolic and identity-related weight. An analysis of how these are rendered in the Hungarian translation allows us to trace how translation choices influence the preservation or levelling of the original's national and cultural specificity.

The anthroponyms in the novel *Yevpraksiia* are, for the most part, rendered in the Hungarian translation in accordance with the phonetic principle and with reference to the original form.

Thus, names *Zhuryna* (*Zsurina*), *Vsevolod* (*Vszevolod*), *Sviatoslav* (*Szvjatoszslav*), *Malusha* (*Malusa*), *Mal* (*Mal*), *Olha* (*Olga*), *Yaroslav the Wise* (*Bölcs Jaroszslav*), *Izjaslav* (*Izjaszslav*), *Mstyslav* (*Msztyiszslav*), *Rostyslav* (*Rosztyszslav*), *Yasen* (*Jaszeny*) are rendered fairly accurately. At the same time, in most of the examples given, there is inconsistency in the rendering of the vowel [a], despite the fact that the corresponding grapheme exists in the Hungarian alphabet. The rendering of the anthroponym *Maria* is also indicative: in the Hungarian translation it is given as *Maria*, without using the long vowel [á], although Hungarian has the corresponding grapheme capable of accurately conveying the sound [a]. A diacritical mark—a circumflex (á)—is used above the Hungarian letter denoting a long vowel; however, this option was not utilised in the translation. Once again, this rendering demonstrates inconsistency in the spelling of anthroponyms and confirms that the translator focused not on phonetic accuracy in the target language, but on established intermediary forms of names.

Meanwhile, the anthroponym *Volodymyr* is rendered as *Vladyimir* in the translation, *Volodymyr Monomakh* is transliterated as *Vladyimir Monomah*, and *Horislavovych* as *Horiszlavics*, which even more clearly demonstrates the variability in methods of rendering proper names. Such inconsistency indicates the absence of a single principle for the transliteration of anthroponyms and is probably due to the translator's tendency to rely on established foreign-language forms of proper names—primarily Russian ones—rather than on the direct Ukrainian original.

The researchers M. Vozna, L. Slavova and N. Antoniuk have noted similarities in the rendering of Old Rus' anthroponyms in Ukrainian and English, pointing out that academic works in English often use the Russian phonetic form instead of the Ukrainian one [Vozna et al., 2024, p. 58]. They rightly point out that “such an approach may be ideological in nature—equating Old Rus' history with Russian history,” and also that “the problem lies in the disregard for, or ignorance of, the peculiarities of Ukrainian spelling and pronunciation” [Vozna et al., 2024, p. 58]. We agree with these conclusions and highlight that the Hungarian translation of the novel *Yevpraksiia* exhibits a similar tendency: inconsistent transliteration of anthroponyms not only affects phonetic accuracy but also partially distorts the historical and cultural identity of the characters and the Old Rus' environment, creating a risk of anachronistic or ideologically coloured interpretations in the reader's mind.

Whilst the rendering of toponyms and anthroponyms reveals a degree of variation and a tendency to follow intermediary (Russian) traditions, the translation choices regarding the rendering of ethnonyms are no less revealing. Unlike the proper names of individuals, ethnonyms are directly linked to categories of national identity, historical memory and cultural self-identification; therefore, their translation acquires special significance.

In the novel *Yevpraksiia*, ethnonyms serve as artistic devices that outline the historical landscape of Kyivan Rus' and reflect the relationships between different ethnic communities. Therefore, an analysis of how they are rendered in the Hungarian translation makes it possible to determine whether the national and cultural specificity of the original has been preserved, or whether it has been neutralised or transformed.

*The Polovtsians* are represented as *polovecek*. This variant is a transliteration and retains phonetic similarity to the original. At the same time, in Hungarian historical tradition, the established name for this people is *kunok* (*Kuns*). Consequently, the translator did not use the historically appropriate Hungarian exonym but opted for a form closer to the Slavic tradition. This strategy helps to preserve the ‘foreignness’ of the ethnonym, but at the same time may sound less natural to a Hungarian reader.

Polotsk Prince *Vseslav* is rendered as *Vszeszslav polocki fejedelem*. Here, the transliteration of the name is combined with the adjectival modifier *polocki*. This again demonstrates a preference for the Slavic form rather than full integration into the Hungarian linguistic system.

In contrast, the *Saxons* are rendered as *szászok*, *the Pechenegs* as *besenyők*, *the Bohemians* as *boemannok*, and *the Prussians* as *poroszok*. In these instances, the translator employs established Hungarian exonyms that have their own historical tradition within the Hungarian language. This choice is functionally justified, as these names are firmly established in Hungarian historiography.

The ethnonyms *Slavs* and *Polianias* are rendered in the Hungarian translation as *szlávok* and *polanok*, which are standard and generally accepted equivalents. The translator follows a transliteration strategy adapted to Hungarian phonetics when rendering ethnonyms such as the

*Wagrians – vagrok, the Obotrites – obodritok, the Lutici – ljuticsok, the Polabians – polabok, the Kessinians – kucsinok, the Linones – lingonok, the Warnabi – varnabok, the Ukrani – ukrjanok, the Hevelli – kicinek, the Circipani – circipanok, the Tollesians – tholenzek, the Redarians – ratarok, the Doxani – dokszanok, the Wilini – vilinek, the Stodorans – sztoderanok, the Retarii – riadurok, the Lusatians – luzsiciak.*

This variation indicates that there is no single principle governing the rendering of ethnonyms. In some cases, the translator preserves the historical foreignness of the terms; in others, they integrate the names into the Hungarian historical and cultural framework.

Thus, an analysis of the rendering of ethnonyms in the translation of the novel reveals similar trends to those observed in the rendering of toponyms and anthroponyms: the translator combines transliteration with the use of established Hungarian exonyms, demonstrating variability and inconsistency in the choice of strategy. In some cases, the historical “foreignness” of ethnonyms has been preserved, whilst in others they have been adapted to Hungarian cultural and historical traditions. This approach reflects an endeavour to strike a balance between the accuracy of the Ukrainian original and the Hungarian reader’s perception of the text, whilst not excluding the potential influence of historical and ideological factors on the formation of ethno-national identity within the receiving culture.

The translation of titles is particularly illustrative in the context of capturing ethnocultural specificity. For example, the title of *kniaz’* (*prince*) is rendered in Hungarian as *fejedelem*, and that of *velykyi kniaz’* (*grand prince*) as *nagyfejedelem*. From a formal point of view, this choice can be considered functionally appropriate, since the lexeme *fejedelem* in Hungarian has several meanings: 1) generally, a ruler; 2) a person who rules over a smaller territory without the full range of royal attributes or rights, or who is in a vassal relationship to another ruler; 3) head, tribe chief, clan or their confederation [Bárczi, 1959–1962].

At the same time, this correspondence is not entirely equivalent in a historical and cultural sense. The Ukrainian title *kniaz’* (*prince*) operates within the specific system of political organisation of Kyivan Rus’, whereas *fejedelem* is semantically linked to the model of Hungarian statehood. In particular, the second dictionary definition shows that, in modern Hungarian usage, *fejedelem* can refer to a ruler of lower status than a king or emperor, and sometimes even one who is subordinate to them. The third, *tribe chief*, brings to mind associations with a tribal organisation of power.

Thus, the semantic complexity of the Hungarian lexeme *fejedelem*, despite its formal similarity to the Ukrainian word *kniaz’*, partially shifts the historical and political context, since in 11th-century Kyivan Rus’ it refers to an already established state structure rather than a tribal confederation.

This historical-semantic shift is even more evident in instances where the translator renders the term *Rus’* as *orosz*. In the passages cited below, which, incidentally, follow one after the other:

“[...] зате чужі навперейми хапаються повідомити про прибуття до Саксонії доньки славетного руського царя, зятя ромейського імператора<sup>7</sup>, ...” [Zahrebelnyi, 2002, p. 67]

“[...] hogyan érkezett meg a hercegnő Szászországba, és azt sem hallgatják el, hogy Eupraxia atyja, a dicső orosz király” [Zahrebelnij, 1980, p. 65];

“[...] донька руського царя приходить в сю землю з великою пишністю, [...]. (Верблюд був таким дивозглядом, що, потрапивши, скажімо, до чеського міста Пільзень, як дарунок руського князя, навіки зостався в гербі цього міста)<sup>8</sup>” [Zahrebelnyi, 2002, p. 68]

“az orosz király leánya nagy pompával érkezett meg a szász földre [...]. (A tevét annyira megcsodálták, hogy amikor például a kijevi fejedelem egy tevét ajándékozott Plzen városának, az állatot örök időkre a város címerébe foglalták)” [Zahrebelnij, 1980, p. 65]

the historical ethnonym is replaced by the modern national one. In the Ukrainian text, *Rus’* refers to the political and cultural community of Kyivan Rus’, whereas the Hungarian *orosz*

<sup>7</sup> “[...] in contrast, foreigners eagerly report the arrival in Saxony of the daughter of the illustrious Rus’ tsar, son-in-law of the Roman emperor, ...”

<sup>8</sup> “[...] the daughter of the Rus’ tsar arrives in this land with great pomp. [...] (The camel was such a marvel that, upon arriving, say, in the Czech city of Pilsen as a gift from the Rus’ prince [kniaz’], it remained forever in that city’s coat of arms.)”

denotes *Russian* in the modern ethno-national sense. This results in an anachronistic notion of the existence of a Russian king in the 11th century, which does not correspond to historical reality. However, where the original text refers to a *Rus' kniaz'*, the translator uses the form a *kijevi fejedelem*, that is, *the ruler of Kyiv*. This demonstrates not only a substitution of the ethnonym, but also an inconsistency in the translation strategy, which is also evident in the fact that on several occasions the titles *Kyiv tsar* and *Rus' tsar* are translated identically as *kijevi uralkodó—ruler of Kyiv*. Such a translation leads to the semantic neutralisation of titular distinctions. In the translation, both the sacred-imperial connotation of the lexeme *tsar* and the ethno-political marker *Rus'*—which in the original denotes membership of the historical community of Kyivan Rus'—disappear. As we can see, the translation of the ethnonym *Rus'* in the novel is one of the most problematic areas, where historical and cultural semantics undergo a significant shift.

No separate lexeme was used to render the title *kniahynia* (*princess*) in the Hungarian translation, which can be partly explained by the absence of a grammatical category of gender in the Hungarian language. In the fragments cited, the translator renders this title descriptively—as *hitvese* (*wife, companion*) or *fejedelemné* (*ruler's wife*):

“*Князь і княгиня, верховні ієреї церкви, мужі київські старші й молодші*<sup>9</sup> [...]” [Zahrebelnyi, 2002, p. 30];

“*A nagyfejedelem és hitvese, a magas egyházi méltóságok, a kijevi főemberek és az alacsonyabb rangúak* [...]” [Zahrebelnij, 1980, p. 11];

“... тоді як свою справжню матір Анну – ‘княгинєю’<sup>10</sup>” [Zahrebelnyi, 2002, p. 37];

“*De a valódi anyját, Annát, ‘fejedelemné’-nek hívta*” [Zahrebelnij, 1980, p. 22].

This translation technique results in a narrowing of the title's meaning, as the Ukrainian term *kniahynia* denotes not only marital status but also the socio-political position of a woman as the holder of a title of authority. In contrast, the Hungarian terms *hitvese* and *fejedelemné* emphasise exclusively the marital relationship, eliminating the authoritative component of the meaning. Thus, the translation neutralises the titular connotation, which partially undermines the character's socio-historical status and diminishes the representation of the female role of authority within the context of the state structure of Kyivan Rus'.

Inconsistencies are also evident in the translation of the title *kniazhna* (*princess*). The translator renders it inconsistently, using equivalents such as *hercegkisasszony*, *hercegnő*, and the descriptive phrase a *fejedelem lánya* (*the ruler's daughter*) in different contexts. Such variability indicates the absence of a consistent approach to rendering this title.

According to the Hungarian dictionary, *hercegnő* refers to a woman of ducal rank. Consequently, this solution cannot be considered entirely adequate for rendering the Old Rus' title *kniazhna*, since in the Hungarian historical and titular system, *herceg/hercegnő* corresponds to the Western European model of *duke/duchess*, rather than to the Old Rus' structure of princely power. The use of the form *hercegkisasszony*, meanwhile, further emphasises the aristocratic social connotation characteristic of the Hungarian-Austrian tradition.

The descriptive rendering a *fejedelem lánya* partially conveys family affiliation yet removes the titular connotation and narrows the meaning to a biological connection, failing to capture the status-related component inherent in the lexeme *kniazhna* (*princess*). Thus, the translation exhibits either a shift of the title towards the Western European aristocratic model, or its semantic simplification, which diminishes the historical and cultural specificity of the original. By analogy with the translation of the title *kniazhna* (*princess*), the title *kniazhych* (*prince*) is also rendered in the novel as *herceg*.

Therefore, an analysis of the translation of titles in the novel *Yevpraksiia* reveals a systematic shift in the historical and cultural semantics of Ukrainian titles within the Hungarian text. Formally similar equivalents, such as *fejedelem* or *nagyfejedelem*, do not always capture the political and social specifics of the princely system in Kyivan Rus', whilst the use of *orosz* instead of *Rus'*

<sup>9</sup> “The princess [kniaz'] and princess [kniahynia], the supreme church hierarchs, and the elder and younger men of Kyiv [...]”

<sup>10</sup> “... while calling his own true mother Anna “princess” [kniahynia]”

creates an anachronistic impression of the ethnopolitical realities. Certain feminine titles—such as *kniahynia* and *kniazhna*—are rendered gender-neutral or adapted to the Hungarian/Western European model in translation, thereby diminishing their historical and political connotations. As such, the translation of titles reveals both inconsistencies in the strategy of transliteration and adaptation, and the risk of ideological and cultural interpretation of the original, which affects the reader's understanding of the historical context. Given the specific nature of the historical novel genre, it would be advisable to render titles using transcription, for example: *knyáz*, *knyáhinyá*, *knyázná*, with additional explanations provided in footnotes or comments. Such an approach would not only preserve the historical and political significance of the titles but also provide Hungarian-speaking readers with important cultural and historical information, thereby enhancing the overall understanding of the work.

The translation of the socio-military term *druzhyna*, which in the novel refers to a specific institution of princely power in Kyivan Rus', warrants special attention. Unlike with titles, where the translator sought to find functional equivalents, the case of the *druzhina* presents the challenge of rendering a concept that has no direct equivalent in the Hungarian historical tradition.

In Ancient Rus', the *druzhyna* was a community of the prince's comrades-in-arms, which formed his standing army and, at the same time, performed important administrative and political functions. Originally, the term meant *companions*, *friends* and referred to a group of warriors personally loyal to the ruler who resided at his court. From the 11th century onwards, the *druzhyna* took on the form of an organised, predominantly mounted military unit and gradually evolved into a high social class whose duties included military service and the support of princely authority [Vilkul, 2004]. Therefore, when translating this term, it is important to preserve its historical and cultural specificity.

In P. Mishlei's translation, this term is rendered as *kijevi vitézek*—Kyivan warriors. This choice captures the military aspect of the *druzhyna*, but does not fully reflect the historical, political and social specificities of the institution, as the Hungarian term *vitész* emphasises only the warrior status, thereby downplaying the significance of the *druzhyna*'s administrative, political and social roles within the context of Kyivan Rus'. At the same time, the translator shows inconsistency in the rendering of the term *druzhyna*. Depending on the context, certain passages are rendered descriptively: for examples, *druzhyna on horseback and on foot* is translated as *lovascsapat és gyalogosok*—*mounted groups and infantry*. This translation retains only the military aspect of the formation; as a result, Hungarian-speaking readers tend to view the *druzhyna* primarily as an ordinary military unit, which partly undermines its role as a permanent military-political corps attached to the prince.

A military title *voivode* is translated in a novel as *hadnagy*. This translation is not entirely accurate, as the Hungarian term generally refers to an officer's rank within the modern military hierarchy or carries other historical and class-based connotations characteristic of Hungarian tradition [Bárczi, 1959–1962]. As a result, the status of the Old Rus' title is partially diminished, and a historical and cultural shift occurs.

Equally significant is the reproduction of ecclesiastical titles, which play a key role in the novel in illustrating the socio-political structure of Kyivan Rus' and the interaction between princely authority and the clerical establishment. These titles serve both a nominal and an ideological function, as they define the status, powers and hierarchical position of the characters within the ecclesiastical hierarchy.

Translation presents difficulties due to the lack of direct historical and cultural equivalents in Hungarian. Thus, a title *archiereis* is rendered as *a magas egyházi méltóságok*—*high-ranking church officials*, which conveys the clergy's general status but does not reflect their specific functional and ideological role in Kyivan Rus'. Similarly, *the hegumen of the Pechersk* is rendered as *Barlangkolostor főnöke*—*the head of the Pechersk Monastery*. The use of the universal word *főnök* (*leader*, *head*) undermines the ecclesiastical hierarchical context, for although the meaning of *head* is formally equivalent, it does not convey the spiritual and ritual connotations of the title, nor does it reflect the hegumen's special status within the monastery's administrative system. Following the same pattern, the lexeme *ihumenya* (*abbess*) is translated as *kolostor főnöknője*. We believe that in this case it would be more appropriate to use a transliteration strategy—*Ihumen*, *ihumenyá*—with a possible accompanying explanation in the notes. Such an approach

would allow the historical and confessional specificity of the titles to be preserved, avoid their semantic neutralisation, and ensure a more accurate representation of the church hierarchy, whilst broadening the cultural and historical awareness of the receptive reader.

The rendering Metropolitan Ioann as *Ioann metropolita* is lexically equivalent and consistent with the historical and cultural context. Unlike previous instances of the neutralisation of sacred semantics, here the ecclesiastical terminology and the status of the church figure have been preserved.

Hence, the translation of ecclesiastical titles retains some of their nominal meaning but loses their historical, cultural, and functional-semantic specificity, which affects Hungarian readings of the clergy's role.

For Ukrainian culture, St Sophia's Cathedral in Kyiv holds exceptional significance: ever since the days of Kyivan Rus', it has served not only as a religious centre but also as a symbol of spiritual identity and state integrity. As the philosopher S. Krymskyi notes, "The main cathedral of Kyiv—Saint Sophia—was not only a place of worship but also a symbol of the ethical order of the Cosmos, the centre of the value- and meaning-based Universe of the Eastern Slavs" [Krymskyi, 2008, p. 24].

Thus, the name *Sofia* functions in the text not merely as a designation for an architectural structure, but as a cultural code that embodies historical memory, a religious worldview and national identity. In such cases, the translation of such lexemes requires particular care, as even a slight shift (descriptiveness, generalisation, or the replacement of a historical name with modern terminology) can lead to a loss of symbolic depth.

Therefore, when rendering sacred onyms, the translator should preserve not only their denotative meaning but also their historical and cultural significance. Insufficient attention to this aspect leads to a reduction in meaning: a monument, which in the Ukrainian tradition stands as a spiritual centre and a symbol of civilisational independence, may in translation become merely a "cathedral church" without any additional cultural significance. This is precisely what happened in the translation of the novel *Yevpraksiia*. In the text of the work of fiction, the author uses this name more frequently and without the modifier cathedral, as it is clear to Ukrainian-speaking readers what is being referred to. The translation provides a formal clarification of the type of church, *Szófia székesegyház*, which means *St Sophia's Cathedral*; in other words, on the one hand, this is a positive feature of the translation—the administrative and ecclesiastical aspect has been preserved. However, such a translation partially undermines the site's proper-noun and sacred character. Consequently, in Hungarian, the cathedral is presented as a generic church building, which diminishes the historical and cultural uniqueness of Kyiv's central cathedral—Saint Sophia's.

As S. Krymskyi notes, during the era of Kyivan Rus', the names of cathedral churches served as distinctive markers of the political and ideological aspirations of the principalities. The dedication of a church was no accident—it represented a model of an ordered Christian cosmos and symbolically cemented the city's place within the hierarchy of the Rus' lands. Thus, the dedication of the Chernihiv cathedral to Christ (the Transfiguration Cathedral) corresponded to Chernihiv's claim to a leading role among the Rus' centres [Krymskyi, 2008, p. 25].

In the novel, this object is named *the Saviour Cathedral in Chernihiv*, thus preserving the indication of cathedral status (*sobor*), the proper name component (*Spasa*), and the location.

Instead, the translation of *a Megváltó temploma* (*Church of the Saviour*) results in several shortcomings, namely: the cathedral status is lost—*templom* does not convey the meaning of a cathedral as the principal church of a diocese—and the proper name is lost, as the historical name is replaced by a descriptive construction. Furthermore, the political and symbolic significance is diminished, as the translation fails to convey the ideological significance that the consecration of the temple had in the medieval state system.

As a result, this sacred monument of Kyivan Rus' appears in translation as a generic "Church of the Saviour," stripped of its historical identity and symbolic significance. Thus, the translation choice diminishes the cultural and ideological potential of the name and weakens the semantic code which, in the Old Rus' context, served as a marker of political and spiritual identity.

Therefore, an analysis of the translation of ecclesiastical titles and sacred onyms in the novel *Yevpraksiia* reveals a tendency towards the partial neutralisation of their historical, cultural and

symbolic meanings. This confirms that the rendering of sacred vocabulary in literary translation requires not only lexical accuracy but also a deep understanding of its cultural and historical role, since even minor shifts can lead to a reduction in meaning and a weakening of the symbolic code embedded in the original.

In his translation work involving culturally marked vocabulary, P. Mishlei employs various strategies—ranging from neutralisation to descriptive translation—which have varying effects on the stylistic and historical texture of the text. The translator employs semantic neutralisation of titles and symbolic designations; for example, *vasilevs* (*mighty basileus*) is rendered as *mindenható uralkodó*, meaning *almighty ruler*. The lexeme *vasilevs* has a distinct Byzantine, imperial-sacred connotation. The translation *mindenható uralkodó* conveys the idea of power, but loses the specific cultural and historical title, replacing it with a generalised concept; in other words, the historical marker is de-concretised.

We can observe a partial reduction of political semantics in the translation of *velykokniazivskiyi stil* (*Grand Prince's throne*) as a *nagyfejedelmi székhely*, that is, the Grand Prince's chair. In the Old Rus' tradition, *stil* signifies not merely a seat, but a throne, power, and a political centre. The translation *székhely* is formally close, but semantically simplified.

The domestic and spatial realities in the novel have been rendered more faithfully to the original, though some of the word's meaning has been lost. The loss of socio-cultural nuance can be seen in the translation of *kniazivskiyi babynets* (*Princely wome's quarters*) as *fejedelmi udvar*, i.e. *kniazivskiyi dvir* (*the princely court*). *Kniazivskiyi babynets* refer to the part of the residential/palatial space that constitutes the women's quarters. A court is a much broader concept that does not convey the gender-spatial specificity.

The reality *knyazivska lozhnitsia* (*princely bedchamber*) is conveyed more closely to the original as *fejedelmi ágyasház*. In this case, the translator opts for a descriptive approach, as *ágyasház* means *a house or room for a bed*, though the archaic nature of the word is somewhat diminished.

When translating archaisms and obscure vocabulary, P. Mishlei avoids little-understood realities, selecting words that are more accessible to Hungarian readers. For instance, he translates *slastoliubstvo* (*sensual indulgence*) as *sóvárgás*, which means to yearn intensely for something or someone that is usually out of reach for that person; to desire ardently, to crave intensely [Bárczi, 1959–1962], and does not necessarily carry a morally negative connotation, whereas the Ukrainian word has a hint of sensual debauchery. In other words, the ethical judgement is softened here.

The historical stylisation is partially modernised in the translation of the phrase *sidlo yedvabne* (*silk saddle*) [Zahrebelnyi, 2002, p. 308] as *a nyege virágos selyemből készült* [Zahrebelnij, 1980, p. 364], which means *made of patterned silk*. Here, explicative translation is used: the material—silk—is explained, and the adjective *flowerly patterned* is added.

A distinctive feature of the novel, apart from its culture-specific elements, is the work's rich use of the author's own neologisms and Zahrebelnyi's imaginative word-creation, which forms the stylistic fabric of the work. In the Hungarian translation, there is a tendency towards semantic expansion, normalisation or reduction.

The translator renders the lexeme *hlybokodumnist* (*profoundness*) as *mély bölcsesség*, which means *profound wisdom*. In other words, the meaning of the term is conveyed descriptively; here P. Mishlei employs semantic explication. However, it is worth noting that, within the context of the novel, it has an expressive quality and sounds archaic, whereas in translation, its unusual word formation and stylistic expressiveness are lost.

One of the few cases of adequate reproduction of poetic complexity is the translation of the phrase *vohnystooka divchyna* (*fire-eyed girl*) as *tűzes szemű leányzó*. In this case, *tűzes szemű* literally means *with fiery eyes*, whilst the lexeme *leányzó*—used to refer to a girl—is stylistically somewhat elevated. Thus, in this instance, both the emotional intensity and the imagery of the original text are preserved.

The word *chervonomordist* (*red-facedness*) is rendered with two lexemes using descriptive translation as *a piros ábrázatú*—*with a red face*: “Саксонці відзначалися червономордістю”<sup>11</sup> [Zahrebelnyi, 2002, p. 38] — *a piros ábrázatú szászok* [Zahrebelnij, 1980, p. 22]. The translation is accurate in terms of denotation, but the stylistic roughness and expressiveness are lost.

<sup>11</sup> “The Saxons were noted for their red-facedness”.

Let's look for examples of semantic reduction through omission in the text of the novel. Thus, in the cited fragment, the lexeme *zlovchennia* (*perfidious doctrine*) has been omitted: “*Він спробував її втішати, спростовуючи зловчення*”<sup>12</sup> [Zahrebelnyi, 2002, p. 196] — “*Az apát vigasztalni próbálta*” [Zahrebelnij, 1980, p. 227]. In this case, the element of deception and intrigue is lost.

Partial omission, which leads to a simplification of the figurative gradation, can be observed in the translation of P. Zahrebelnyi's individually authored neologisms: “*Раділа своїй стрункотілості, білолікотності, білоколінності*”<sup>13</sup> [Zahrebelnyi, 2002, p. 198] — “*Őrült karcsú termetének, fehér bőrének*” [Zahrebelnij, 1980, p. 230] — *She rejoiced her slender figure and fair complexion*. In the example given, the expressive effect arises not only from individual composites, but primarily through their amplificatory accumulation [Holikova, 2017, p. 129]. In the translation, two of the three elements have been retained, the morphological consistency has been lost, and the rhythmic tripartite structure and the physically detailed component have also disappeared (*bilokolinnist*).

The loss of expressiveness in the author's neologism is also evident in the translation of the phrase *veselozubo* (*flashed his cheerful teeth*) as *megvillan fogsora*, which means *flashing teeth*. The Ukrainian version is a vivid, original neologism, whereas the Hungarian translation is a neutral description. The event is conveyed here, but the ironic and figurative novelty is completely lost.

Thus, the analysis of the translation of culturally marked vocabulary, archaisms and author-specific neologisms in the novel *Yevpraksiia* tends towards semantic simplification, explanatory elaboration or the neutralisation of stylistically marked units. Such translation choices ensure the text's comprehensibility for Hungarian readers, yet at the same time result in a partial loss of the historical stylisation, morphological originality and expressive imagery characteristic of P. Zahrebelnyi's literary style.

## Conclusions

This study demonstrates that the translation of culture-specific vocabulary in a literary text fulfils both an adaptive and an interpretative function, directly influencing the formation of a historical and cultural model in the reader's mind. An analysis of the Hungarian translation of Pavlo Zahrebelnyi's novel *Yevpraksiia* suggests that the chosen translation strategies systematically alter the semantic emphasis of the text and, as a result, shape an alternative image of Kyivan Rus' within a foreign-language cultural space. An overview of the results obtained shows that the key trend in translation is the combination of strategies of adaptation, neutralisation and partial modernisation. While ensuring that the text is communicatively accessible to Hungarian readers, these strategies simultaneously reduce the level of cultural specificity and historical accuracy. In this regard, it can be concluded that the predominance of adaptive strategies leads not only to local semantic shifts, but also to a systemic transformation of the historical narrative. It is advisable during the translation process to consciously regulate the balance between “foreignisation” and “domestication” strategies, giving preference to the former in cases involving conceptually significant elements of historical reality.

Particularly significant are the transformations of culture-specific units that serve as markers of historical identity. In the process of translation, they often undergo semantic generalisation or are replaced by functionally similar equivalents, leading to a loss of their distinctive character. This applies primarily to proper names, ethnonyms, titles and sacred vocabulary, which in the original form a coherent system of historical coordinates. Accordingly, when translating, the focus should be primarily on the functional role of the unit within the text, whilst retaining those elements that ensure cultural identification. An analysis of the onomastic space of translation leads to the conclusion that inconsistency in the rendering of toponyms and anthroponyms, as well as the indirect use of other linguistic traditions, results in the partial desemantisation of these units. As a result, they cease to serve as repositories of historical memory. In this context, it is important to

<sup>12</sup> “He tried to comfort her by refuting *perfidious doctrine* [*zlovchennia*]”.

<sup>13</sup> “She rejoiced in her *slender figure* [*strunkotilosti*], *white arms* [*bilolikotnosti*], and *white knees* [*bilokolinnosti*].

adhere to the principles of systematicity and source-based approach, that is, to rely on the Ukrainian forms of proper names rather than on secondary traditions of their rendering. In cases of high cultural significance, it is advisable to include comments to compensate for any potential loss of meaning. When translating ethnonyms, there is a tendency for meanings to shift throughout history. Such transformations result in modern or more recent ideas about ethnic identity being projected onto the Old Rus' context, thereby distorting the historical perspective. In such cases, it is advisable to avoid anachronistic equivalents and strive to preserve the historical specificity of terms, even if this requires additional explanation. The priority in this instance should be accuracy, not simplification.

The translation of socio-political and military-administrative terminology reveals another pattern: replacing culturally specific concepts with functional equivalents from a different tradition creates misleading associations. As a result, the reader interprets the system of government in Kyivan Rus' through the lens of models with which they are familiar. This highlights the need for a cautious approach to such terms: the translator should avoid complete replacement and, where possible, retain the original terms with minimal explanation. Similar processes are observed in the translation of sacred vocabulary, where the loss of proper-noun status and symbolic meaning leads to the desacralisation of the text. This reduces the depth of the cultural code and weakens the ideological impact of the work.

To summarise, it can be asserted that translation, in the case under study, shapes an alternative version of historical memory, where culturally specific elements are partially integrated into a different frame of reference. This confirms that the translator acts not only as a cultural mediator but also as an interpreter of historical reality. This is precisely why the adequacy of the translation of culturally marked vocabulary must be based on a combination of linguistic accuracy, historical awareness and an understanding of the responsibility for representing another culture.

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## Between History and Interpretation: Transformation of Historical Meanings in Hungarian Translation of Pavlo Zahrebelnyi's *Yevpraksiia*

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**Key words:** *culture-specific vocabulary, cultural marking, literary translation, Ukrainian-Hungarian translation, translation strategies, Pál Mislei, Pavlo Zahrebelnyi, historical novel.*

The article is devoted to a comprehensive study of the rendering of culture-specific vocabulary in the Hungarian translation of Pavlo Zahrebelnyi's historical novel *Yevpraksiia*, translated by Pál Mislei (1980), as well as an analysis of the influence of translation strategies on the representation of the historical and cultural identity of Kyivan Rus' in Hungarian cultural discourse. The relevance of this study arises from the insufficient exploration of the field of Ukrainian-Hungarian literary translation, particularly the lack of systematic works analysing culturally marked units and their historical and semantic transformations in the translation process.

*The aim* of this article is to identify the impact of translation strategies on historical and semantic shifts in the perception of Ukrainian culture-specific elements in Hungarian translations, as well as to determine the patterns and consequences of these transformations for the representation of the historical and cultural identity of Kyivan Rus'.

The theoretical and methodological framework of this study is based on principles from translation studies and linguocultural studies, in particular approaches to the analysis of cultural marking, strategies of domestication and alienation, and the interpretation of non-equivalent vocabulary. The study applies a combination of *methods*, the main ones being translation analysis, a comparative analysis of the original text and the translation, lexical-semantic analysis, historical and cultural commentary, elements of discourse analysis.

The study is based on the Hungarian translation of the novel *Yevpraksiia*, performed by Pál Mislei and published as a joint project between the Budapest-based publishing house "Európa" and the Uzhhorod-based publishing house "Karpaty", with the Hungarian text having been cross-checked against the Ukrainian original with the assistance of László Szándor.

The analysis reveals that the translator employs a wide range of strategies, including transliteration, descriptive translation, semantic neutralisation, partial adaptation and modernisation. Although these strategies help to make the historical realities of Kyivan Rus' more accessible to Hungarian readers, they simultaneously give rise to historical and semantic shifts and a partial reduction of the cultural specificity of the original text. Research shows that the most significant changes occur in the sphere of onomastics, ethnonyms, socio-political vocabulary and sacred names, which serve as key markers of historical identity. Their translation is often accompanied by generalisation, functional substitution or adaptation, which leads to a shift in historical meanings and the formation of an alternative model of cultural memory. At the same time, the translation of original works by individual authors reveals a tendency towards stylistic neutralisation, which diminishes the degree to which the author's linguistic distinctiveness is conveyed.

To summarise the findings of this study, it can be concluded that the adequate rendering of culture-specific vocabulary in literary translation requires not only stylistic accuracy but also the translator's in-depth historical and cultural knowledge.

It is precisely translation choices that determine how the historical past is represented in a foreign-language context and influence the formation of cultural identity in the receptive discourse.

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