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Translation-Mutation-Inbetweenzone

In Hungary, my generation commonly speaks in Hungarian and bits and pieces of German and English. Writing in my third and weakest language, English, is therefore like using the DNA of Hungarian to create a human body in English while drawing life-support from German vocabulary. When I translate into English, I often think in German first, or, while performing the physical examination of the language, I parse words with a Hungarian scalpel. Take, for example, my translation of Barthes' *The Pleasure of the Text* from Deutsch into English: "The Text has the form? shape? of the human body, it is a character? figure? and an anagram of the body, so that the pleasure of the text is found in all those moments where my body follows its ideas"—like I'm doing now.

This spring I presented a paper in a workshop in Hildesheim, Germany focusing on "The Monstrous" in language. Instead of stigmatizing what we might call 'monstrous' texts because of their hybridity, we must instead recognize their 'super'-natural qualities—bringing language, like Frankenstein's monster, back to life through the assembly of organic and foreign limbs, or viewing language in the sense of an evolution toward a supernatural future not yet within reach. Actually, in this particular moment, we are creating The Monstrous together, in my translation and your reception, through the creation of a new textbody. If language is like a body, we must handle it with care. Translation is a blood-test ensuring the body is functioning—the checking of vital signs, substantives, and blood cell count just as nouns, adjectives, and verbs are constituent elements of a text. More important than these molecules, however, is an understanding of body chemistry: the application of science to ensure the text body functions as a whole. At this moment, for example, I'm wondering—should I write a DADA-poem? (That's a great idea, btw.) Or communicate in music and sound, which I often turn to when I despair at conveying the meaning?

Recently, I transitioned from focusing my microscope on my translations to performing this Frankenstein-work on my own texts. After translating my first two books into German and English I began experimenting with hybridity. I recently published a book in translation with sixty poems—twenty poems translated from Hungarian to German, twenty left mutating from Hungarian into German, and twenty that I "Boschcoded." Let me explain: Bosch is a German company in Europe, which manufactures day-to-day appliances like washing machines, lawn mowers, and prosthetic limbs. At Bosch's Stuttgart research field, I worked as an 'alien' artist placed in the creative zone to observe the future of drones and AI. There, they use codes instead of words when purchasing materials from foreign companies. In Stuttgart, if you say you want to sit in a chair, you actually sit in a VX20. My book, therefore, is a cyborg, comprised of three different evolutions: 1.) traditional translation into German; 2.) translation with one textleg in Hungarian and one texthand in German; and 3.) German with Boshcode parasites, which some day might symbiote with 'organic' language to reach the universal.

Nádasdy Ádám, a linguist and Shakespeare's voice in Hungary, wrote an open letter a couple of years ago entitled "The illness-metaphor"—a piercing, important, hilarious critique of Bárczi Géza. Bárczi Géza was a linguistics professor, who worried that foreign languages would infect the purity of Hungarian. He referred to this corrupting process as a "decomposition," or, more clearly, "the infection-alarm of the non-appropriate mode," and so on. He referred to foreign words as pathogens that language desperately had to dislocate, eject, or kill. In his critique Nádasdy points toward how dangerous the movement of this kind of puritanical thinking can be,

especially when viewed in the context of WWII, when these languages were inhabiting human bodies.

Why do I mention this? Because I cannot emphasize enough the importance of translation in our warning times. Today, more than ever, we must mutate. Let's find the music of it, the resonance, but also the Frankensteinian beauty on the operating table of the inbetween room, our selves.

Please watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l0V2Xzkg59U>