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## PROBLEM AREAS IN OLGA BRAGINA'S TRANSLATION OF "FINNEGANS WAKE" BY JAMES JOYCE INTO RUSSIAN

**Summary.** This article brings into focus O. Bragina's faults to create a translation of "Finnegans Wake" by James Joyce that works at the paragraph structure, punctuation, deflected word forms, and underlying cultural meaning levels. The results of the current study show that Joyce's multidimensional work of fiction needs combined efforts of a good literal and a good literary translator.

**Key words:** translation of fiction, paragraph structure, punctuation, deflected word forms, hybridization

**Translation problem areas.** "Finnegans Wake" by James Joyce [6] is a text whose incomplete translation into the languages with the Cyrillic alphabet deserves explicit attention. This text appears to have difficulty finding the right translator, for its few published fragments are far from being considered as a successful translation. "Finnegans Wake" is renowned for Joyce's engagement in paronomasia and antanaclosis (mainly homonyms with opposing meanings) [1]. His apparent point of departure is vertical simultaneity of cross-referenced events and polysemy of experimental literary language. The translator faces up to the reality of a meta-fiction richly sprinkled with pastiche, parody, kitsch, and black humor [3]. Multiple self-reflections and self-allusions are interwoven at their highest, as the book "sums up the aesthetic experience conferred by all of Joyce's writings" [2, p. 152]. Joyce's use of multilingual material in "Finnegans Wake" [4] challenges translators with code-switching, which is complicated by a shift to the Cyrillic alphabet.

**This article's area of interest** is the only female attempt at translating "Finnegans Wake" into Russian [7]. At issue is the claim that O. Bragina, a poet and a professional translator from English and Ukrainian into Russian, has sacrificed Joyce's polyphonic and multidimensional textual construct for the sake of readability.

The study embraces **two objectives**: (1) it sheds light on the repeated obstacles to translate "Finnegans Wake" into the languages that use the Cyrillic alphabet; (2) it provides explanations for the boundaries of existing translations of this text into Russian.

**The purpose of this article** was to evaluate Olga Bragina's translation of "Finnegans Wake" [6, p. 3.1–6.8] into Russian [7]. The selected translation problem areas involve (1) paragraph structure, (2) punctuation, (3) deflected word forms, and (4) underlying cultural meaning.

**(1) Paragraph structure.** Newmark claims that the more important the translated text, the closer translation at all levels, including paragraph structure, it requires [5, p. 36]. From our findings, the translator makes changes in paragraph structure. The original text [6, p. 3.1–6.8] contains 7 paragraphs, whereas the translator increases their number up to 17 paragraphs. Joyce's fourth paragraph [6, p. 4.1–4.17] is divided into 9 paragraphs and Joyce's fifth paragraph [6, p. 4.18–5.4] is fragmented into 3 separate paragraphs. Hence, the holistic original construct is broken without any reason for that. The translator's disintegration of Joyce's paragraphs dis-

torts Joyce's intended rhythm and entity. The translator neglects probability that paragraph disintegration reduces translation quality and impedes linguistic networking on behalf of the reader.

**(2) Punctuation.** Similar to paragraph structure, the translator feels free to add commas or replace original colons with semi-colons. For example, the number of commas in the translated initial sentence of "Finnegans Wake" [6, p. 3.1–3] is doubled, as the translator adds a simile «удобный, как комод» [7] and a participial construction «описанный философом Вико» [7], which Joyce's original sentence also misses. The translation of [6, p. 3.4–3.14] replaces original colons with semi-colons. The original sentence [6, p. 3.18–3.24] contains two commas, whereas the Russian translation is burdened with eleven extra commas.

The translator uses descriptive translation with quotation marks to make allusive elements transparent. For example, the Russian reader comes across «не даровал нам «Числа» или книгу Гельвита «Второзаконие»» [7] as the equivalent of "had given us numbers or Helviticus committed deuteronomy" [6, p. 4.19–20]. Ascribing the second law to Helviticus, Joyce might have reminded of John Calvin whose intention was to rewrite the law. As it falls short of proof what Joyce's thought was, the translator would trust Joyce's writing the titles of biblical books with small letters. Besides, Joyce's spelling of Helviticus is allusive to Claud Adrien Helvetius, a freemason, whose book "On the Mind", which promoted atheist thinking, was burnt; it is also allusive to "Leviticus", the third book of the Old Testament. The verb "committed" links "Helviticus" with "deuteronomy", on the one hand, and the identified word "vicus" [6, p. 3.2], on the other. Hence, the translated name Гельвит may have a variant *Гельвико* or *Гельвицо* (*Гельвеций* + *Вико*). Joyce's capitalization of "Helviticus" makes the time and space of Helviticus and Vico different from that of the Old Testament.

Similarly, the translation of "all the guenesses had met their exodus" [6, p. 4.24] adds inverted commas alongside with capitalization: «весь «Гиннесс» Книги Бытия достиг своего исхода» [7]. Joyce gives the distorted form of Irish brewery, making it allusive to Genesis and Bernard Shaw's "In the beginning". Although the translator utilized descriptive translation to recognize the allusion, she made no difference between the names of biblical books that the original spells correctly (for example, Deuteronomy) and those whose name fused with something else (like "guenesses"). The use of inverted commas and capitalization may be in conflict with the original and reduces the reader's interpretation opportunities.

Joyce utilized distinctive punctuation; his lack of capitalization was deliberate as well. Although Joyce's individual-authorial punctuation sounded strange to the translator, loyalty to his original construct would be the best translation decision. Other wise, the translation text becomes fragmented and somewhat chopped.

**(3) Deflected word forms.** In her translation, Olga Bragina follows the principle of translation clarity as if she were screen-

ing Joyce's augmented meaning. The translation of Joyce's initial deflected word-form "riverrun" [6, p. 3.1] as «по течению реки» [7] signals the translator failed to consider Joyce's distinctive compounds special. As the translator regularly replaces a deflected word form with a standard word combination, one more problem arises. Joyce resorts to the words from many languages, so those roots that are found in Russian words have to be retained. For example, the translator loses Joyce's specifics of "aqua face" [6, p. 3.14] by translating it «над поверхностью вод» [7] (my variant: *аквагладь*). Also, Joyce's deflected word form "commodious" [6, p. 3.2] (Latin *commodus* "convenient" + *dius* "godly") is translated «удобный, как комод» (English "commode, chest of drawers"). However, "commodious" can be deciphered as a compound that includes "com", a Latin word-forming element that means "together", and "modius", a Roman bushel measure, the third part of an amphora. The allusion to a chest of drawers gives a vision of separate drawers, whereas Joyce's idea was to denote changeability: Commodus, the Roman emperor, was known for his love for changing names, which might be of interest to Joyce's endless switching of codes. Besides, in English "commode" denotes an over toilet chair (in Russian «стульчак») which is allusive to one of the scenes from Joyce's "Ulysses".

The translator conveys a descriptive translation equivalent for Joyce's deflected word forms that contain personal names. For example, "vicus" [6, p. 3.2] is translated «философ Вико» [7], which excludes referencing Dublin's Vico Road, ten miles southeast from central Dublin, known as Dublin's Beverly Hills, networked with "The Vico road goes round and round to meet where terms begin" [6, p. 451.11–12] (my translation: *Улица Вико кружит и кружит до встречи с пределом*). One of the most famous residents was Bernard Shaw, and his surname Joyce alludes to his patron Harriet Shaw Weaver who had concerns about "Finnegans Wake".

The translator may replace a deflected word form with a standard word. For example, Joyce's "wielder fight" [6, p. 3.6] is translated «продолжить». But the Germanic verb whose English form is "wield" has a Russian cognate "vladeti" ("make use of"). This etymological research points to Joyce's Slavonic layer in "Finnegans Wake" that needs retaining. Hence, the translation «чтобы продолжить свою пенисоционную войну на полуострове» [7] might be revised as something like «чтобы владычествовать за славу идам».

The translator prefers to replace long deflected word forms with word combinations. To illustrate the point: "sheb by choryish of unkalified muzzlenimi is sile hims" [6, p. 5.16] is translated «хористов царицы Савской в ветхих одеждах и нехалифицированных муэдзинов» [7]. It was a good translation decision to combine «халиф» and «неквалифицированный» in «нехалифицированный» to transfer the meaning of being unqualified. However, the translator reduces the deflected word form "muzzlenimi is sile hims" to муэдзин (the muezzin is a person who leads the call to prayer at a mosque not being considered a cleric). The lexeme "muzzle" that denotes projecting part of the head of an animal remains untranslated, leaving behind the meaning of being silenced by muzzling. The inclusion of Issi, the daughter's name of H. C. E., is omitted, although the distorted lexeme "muslin" can be associated with her muslin dress. The translator not only changes the order in Joyce's word combination but also replaces the preposition "of" with a conjunction that corresponds to "and". The meaning of a shabby choir of unqualified clerics whose shabbiness is silenced by their muslin clothes, like Issi's, is lost in an emphasis on Islam and Muslims.

Resorting to a standardized literary language, the translator involuntarily reduces Joyce's polyphony. For example, she translates "There extend by now one thousand and one stories, all told, of the same" [6, p. 5.28–29] as «к настоящему времени общее количество вариантов истории достигло тысячи и одной» [7]. Joyce mentions "One Thousand and One Nights", a collection of folk tales, or stories, not history, as it appears in the translated version. Actually, Joyce says that everything can be simultaneously told using these one thousand and one variants of the recirculating same. My proposed variant: *Вытягивается тысяча и одна выдумка, сказываемая разком, многажды*.

**(4) Underlying cultural meaning.** The translator is sensitive to famous works of art mentioned by Joyce. She correctly translates "Bygmester Finnegan" [6, p. 4.18] as «Строитель Финнеган» [7], reminding the reader of Ibsen's play "Bygmester Solness" («Строитель Сольнес»). Also, she finds a good variant of "our cubehouse" [6, p. 5.14] in the form of a descriptive word combination «наш дом из кубиков Каабы» [7]. Joyce alludes to the Kaaba "the Cube", the most sacred site in Islam whose sacred meaning is close to the Tabernacle. Similarly, the translator replaces "shebby" [6, p. 5.16] with «царицы Савской» [7] instead of using her name Shebba (Шеба). It makes the allusion explicit at the cost of underscoring Joyce's strategy of allusive simultaneity. The resulting translation is doomed to lose a multi-level cultural dimension through which his Irish identity reveals.

Joyce's famous abbreviation "Here Comes Everybody" (H. C. E.) is not retained in the translation of "Howth Castle and Environs" [6, p. 3.3] as «к Замку Хоут и окрестностям» [7]. For no clear reason, the translator avoids capitalizing "Environs". The H. C. E. initials are not retained in translating "Haroun Childreic Eggeberth" [6, p. 4.32] as «Гарун Хильдерик Эгберт» [7] as well. As this structural component is repeated across "Finnegans Wake", such cases need revising.

Multi-language incorporations are translation problem areas in "Finnegans Wake". For example, Joyce uses the French word "violer" (English "violate") in "violer d'amores" [6, p. 3.4] whose Russian variant is «игравший на виоле д'амур». Viola d'amore was a string instrument first mentioned in 1679, which questions the identity of a Tristram mentioned by Joyce. In her typical manner, the translator capitalizes the subordinate word in "top sawyer's rocks" [6, p. 3.7] («скалы Торсойер» [7]). In British English, the word "top sawyer" denotes someone in a position of advantage or eminence, whereas in slang "rock" stands for money. The translator improvises the name of a rock that Joyce's text does not contain. It is an open secret that the Irish immigrant Jonathan Sawyer founded American Dublin on the river Oconee in American Georgia. Joyce reminds the reader of this rich Irish immigrant who doubled Dublin on American soil.

As early as the first line of "Finnegans Wake", the translator assumes a strategy of "improving" Joyce. She restores the name of Dublin's Adam and Eve's church, whereas Joyce in "riverrun, past Eve and Adam's" [6, p. 3.1] deliberately reverted the backward order, meaning the flow of waters in the direction when the name is read from the last word, Eve.

Irish culture-specifics is not clear in translating "oranges have been laid to rust upon the green" [6, p. 3.23] as «апельсиновые деревья покоятся в зелени» [7]. Joyce implies the Orange order of Irish protestants. Translating the colors would be fine (my variant: *оранжевому суждено ржаветь на зеленом*), as it enhances the reader's awareness of the Irish cultural dimension that

is of Joyce's priority. One more disputable translation is resorting to "devlins first loved Livvy" [6, p. 3.23–24] as «термопластик влюбился в реку Лиффи» [7]. In Gaelic, Devlin denotes "fierce" («неистовый»). The reader can easily recognize the Liffey in "livvy" (Livy is a variation of Livia, one of the names of Anna Livia Plurabelle). What Joyce means is «речной девлин полюбил Ливви». In a similar vein, the translator uses an explanatory translation of two deflected word forms "Wallstrait old Parr" [6, p. 3.17] in her version «цитатели Уолл-Стрити старика Томаса Парра» [7]. Old Parr or old Tom Parr («старец Парр») was believed to die at the age of 152 years. The translator's inclusion of his full name is redundant. But the reference of a narrow passage of water, a strait with regard to the Scottish lexeme "parr" ("young salmon") might be worth considering.

**Default translation biases.** Some obstacles to authenticity of Olga Bragina's translation can be singled out. First, her play with Joyce's rhythm is not adequate when repetitions are reduced or, on the contrary, added. For example, she reduces the number of syllables in "Hahahaha" [6, p. 5.11] or "Hohohoho" [6, p. 5.9] from four to three [7]. Second, a one-dimension selection from Joyce's polyphony simplifies textual structure. For example, the translator utilizes the word «гаджо» to translate Joyce's "gorgio" [3.8] that denotes somebody who is not a gypsy. But it is only one implied meaning, for Joyce's "gorgios" is allusive to the name of the Greek rhetorician Gorgias who invented paradoxical thought and expression. It is worth noting that the owner of Howth Castle was married to Lucy Gorges who is known as Swift's blue-eyed nymph. The choice of «гаджо» fits poorly, as the interweaving connections Howth Castle and the St. Lawrence family, Swift and his mistresses, and the name of the Laurens country in the United States are lost. Hence, the translator's version «это не камни скалы Топсойер были отнесены рекой Окони к ногам гаджо графства Лоренс, попрошайничающих на дорогах, ведущих к Дублину» [7] can be placed with the following: *еще не перестарались сойеры-богачи, поселившиеся на Окони в американском округе Лоренс, горгианским красноречием наделив свой город именем другого Дублина*. Third, too much descriptive translation distorts Joyce's allusive simultaneity. Fourth, Joyce's deflected word forms are structural units that are networked thematically across "Finnegans Wake".

Finally, the biased use of realities unknown in Joyce's time can be questioned as well. To translate "carhacks" [6, p. 5.31] (the English lexeme "hack" denotes in Russian «мотыга»), the translator chooses «менгиры Карфакса» [7]. But Carfax was founded in 1984. Too many names hidden by Joyce are straight forwardly made the explicit. The reader has to accept «Светоний» (Suetonius) for "suits tony" [6, p. 6.7].

The translator was diligent to create the mosaics of Joyce's text. This strategy led to avoidance of deflected word forms, restoration of proper names, redundancy, and loss of augmented meaning. Sometimes it worked, sometimes it did not. On the whole, this translation can be read with pleasure and with a minimal interpretive effort. But would Joyce like it?

**Conclusion and perspectives.** "Finnegans Wake" appears to be a work of fiction that requires a philological analysis, functioning as

literal translation, as a prerequisite for empowering a good literary translator to recreate Joyce's linguistic hybridity. There is conflict with Russian-translation convention, so the transition to the Cyrillic alphabet requires strategic decisions with regard to fluid sentence structure and individual-authorial punctuation, tensions of distinctive compounds, and allusive simultaneity whose main component is, undoubtedly, Irish. One more translation is another version to confirm that Joyce's linguistic and cultural polyphony is reluctant to the Cyrillic alphabet. Olga Bragina was in search of her own consensus with Joyce and it is up to the reader to decide how fruitful it will be to continue translating this way.

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#### Фоменко О. Г. Проблемы переклада О. Брагіною «Фіннеганова поміна» Джеймса Джойса російською мовою

**Анотація.** Стаття досліджує переклад «Фіннеганова поміна» Джеймса Джойса, виконаного О. Брагіною, щодо структури абзацу, пунктуації, словоформ-відхилень та культурного підтексту. З результатів дослідження випливає, що багаторівневий текст Дж. Джойса потребує спільних зусиль буквального та літературного перекладачів.

**Ключові слова:** літературний переклад, структура абзацу, пунктуація, словоформа-відхилення, гібридизація.

#### Фоменко Е. Г. Проблемы перевода О. Брагиной «Поминок по Финнегану» Джеймса Джойса на русский язык

**Аннотация.** Статья исследует перевод «Поминок по Финнегану» Джеймса Джойса, выполненного Ольгой Брагиной, относительно структуры абзаца, пунктуации, словоформ-отклонений и культурного подтекста. Из результатов исследования следует, что многоуровневый текст Дж. Джойса требует совместных усилий подстрочного и литературного переводчиков.

**Ключевые слова:** литературный перевод, структура абзаца, пунктуация, словоформа-отклонение, гибридикация.