

The Problem of Englishness, Modernism, and Gender—The Critical Reception of Virginia Woolf in Hungary

Nóra Séllei

In the English-speaking world, Virginia Woolf has been considered a *female modernist* for about three decades. Both attributes are crucial: her modernism (which is not a novelty) and the reference to her gendered positioning within apparently “unmarked,” but as it transpires after a careful scrutiny, rather *male* modernism. The question is whether her critical reception in Hungary follows the tendencies in English-American criticism, and if not, where that difference is rooted, and what reasons can be discovered for that difference. These questions are all the more urgent as ninety-three years after the publication of her first novel (1915) and sixty-seven years after her death and the posthumous publication of her last novel (both in 1941), all her major works are available in Hungarian translation: all her novels, her two seminal feminist essays *A Room of One's Own* and *Three Guineas*, two short stories (“Mark on the Wall” and “The Legacy”), thirty-three shorter essays in the volume *A pille halála* (the title is a translation of her essay and volume title *The Death of the Moth*) and most of the texts from her autobiographical writings *Moments of Being*, even though the bulk of her letters and diaries is still missing. So at this moment, it seems worth taking a glimpse of how her *oeuvre* has been contextualised in Hungary,¹ both in professional terms and in the eyes of the reading public.

As a starting point, I assume that cultural translation is never an easy and simple process. What is involved is never the textual body in its pure form (there being no such thing), but both the source culture and the target culture, which are deeply involved in the process. Whereas one cannot deny an element of randomness as to why certain works are translated into a particular language, there is also a portion of inevitability in how, at what time, and which texts are transported into another culture (or, to use Raymond Williams’s phrase rooted in his concepts of cultural materialism: which texts are turned into cultural export goods [230]). Furthermore, the form and mode of this “exportation” might bear a relevance to a text’s presence in a “foreign” environment. In this sense, apart from, or rather in addition to, considering the process of how Woolf became established as a widely acknowledged writer of (female) modernism in the English-speaking world, one must also consider the cultural climate of the “importing” country, in this case Hungary in the twentieth and early twenty-first century.

Englishness

Traditionally, Hungary is not an Anglophone country, a feature that is more

than detectable in cultural communication. As Mihály Szegedy-Maszák claims in his inaugural talk at the Hungarian Academy, not even in the most innovative journal of the early twentieth century, *Nyugat* [West], whose explicit aim was the modernization of Hungarian literature, was there a great awareness, let alone emphasis on literatures in English. As he points out, it is indicative that American literature, for instance, was not differentiated from European literature (Szegedy-Maszák, “A *Nyugat*” 6). The years of the Great War only weakened the possibility of the entry of English-language cultures into Hungarian consciousness as we were on the “other” side, so even literal censorship created an obstacle in transporting texts into Hungary, into Hungarian (11), and the randomness of the English texts selected either for review or any other presentation remained a feature of the journal up until the thirties (Szegedy-Maszák, “A *Nyugat*” 17-18). Virginia Woolf fell victim to this haphazard selection. In addition, as Szegedy-Maszák calls to our attention, several factual errors made her entry into Hungarian literature even less smooth: Magdolna Rosti, who first mentions Woolf in *Nyugat*, makes the mistake in 1930 of calling “Monday or Tuesday” a novel, whereas Aladár Schöpflin claims in the same journal nine years later that the time span of *To the Lighthouse* is just two or three hours (qtd. in Szegedy-Maszák, “A *Nyugat*” 18). Let me add to these, that when in his introduction to the 1945 edition of Orlando² Albert Gyergyai claims that Woolf became a part of the Bloomsbury group on account of her publisher husband and of her books (245), it is a statement that grossly reverses the logic and chronology of Bloomsbury;³ it is also a mistake of Gyergyai’s to call *The Years* Woolf’s last novel. In war conditions he could not be aware of *Between the Acts*, but these are statements never corrected in either of the further publications of this essay.⁴ Even decades later there are factual errors in Hungarian Woolf-criticism, when e.g. Marcell Benedek misspells Woolf’s name (“Woolff”), and thinks that *Mrs Dalloway* takes place in one hour (130)—or in 2008, when Édua Reményi declares “Kew Gardens” to be a novel (“Szedett” 332).

One could easily wave the early-twentieth-century factual mistakes away with an offhand gesture, but they are symptomatic of the historic lack of accessibility of Woolf texts in Hungary (no longer the case in 2008): the authors of the early articles cannot have read, or even looked at these texts, yet they vindicate the right to introduce Woolf’s texts to the Hungarian reading public. Lajos Pál Bíró, e.g., who seems to have disappeared from the history of literary criticism, wrote a monograph on modern English literature (1890–1941) in 1942 in which he makes several errors in his summary of Woolf. Among other errors he calls “Monday or Tuesday” a novel (perhaps in the footprints of Rosti), thinks that *Orlando* was published in 1931 (instead of 1928), and that *To the Lighthouse* is about expecting a *scientific* expedition (237)—an error I cannot even see the cause of unless he derives this conclusion from the fact that a boat trip is planned all through, and that Mr. Ramsay has something to do with the academia (the Hungarian language does not make a difference between a scholar and a scientist).

Bíró, however, goes beyond dictionary entry-like statements, and wants to

introduce literary terms like stream-of-consciousness, but when he translates the phrase, he ends up with the equivalent of stream-of-*self*-consciousness (“az öntudatosság folyama” [235]), which obviously did not help the readers to understand Woolf’s writing technique. Nor does he shed much light on Woolf’s texts by saying that she functions as a “common-sense mediator” between James Joyce and D.H. Lawrence (Bíró 235), without any further specification of what that means. Interestingly, in his evaluation Bíró makes contradictory statements: in his view Woolf, on the one hand, is enchanted by Joyce, but surpasses him, whereas on the other hand, he claims that she does not produce any original work (237); partly he states that Woolf goes into extremes in experimentation, and for that reason “she” will not last, while partly argues that her impact is undeniable (239).

This looks a confusing presence, all the more so because at this time only one novel by Woolf had appeared in Hungarian translation: *The Years* (Évek 1940). The review in *Nyugat* mentioned above by Aladár Schöpflin, one of the most prestigious literary critics of the age, was republished as a preface to the Hungarian translation of *The Years*.⁵ Apart from the factual error concerning *To the Lighthouse* (see above), his text is to be appreciated because this is the first elaborated (eight pages) and knowledgeable interpretation of some of Woolf’s major novels (*Mrs Dalloway*, *To the Lighthouse*, *Orlando*, and *The Years*), and its statements are acceptable even today. What he emphasises is Woolf’s treatment of time; he makes a rhetorical contrast between her texts and the realist novel (Schöpflin 5-6), while he also points out the specificities of these novels in their treatment of time. Whereas one may not agree with some of his claims (e.g. that only *The Years* is concerned with humans as social beings, surrounded by friends, enemies, relatives and strangers [Schöpflin 12], which reinforces the contestable idea of the solipsism of Woolf’s characters), on the whole this text provides a key to Woolf’s novels.

These evaluations are slightly modified by Antal Szerb’s major monograph on the history of world literature, where he puts Woolf in the context of Joyce while emphasising the feminine atmosphere that he thinks differentiates Woolf from earlier women writers, who wanted to forget their femininity (*Világirodalom* 890-91). This rather general, enigmatic, and as such slightly dubious interpretation of Woolf’s female forerunners, made in Szerb’s authoritative and to this day popular monograph, calls the readers’ attention to a specificity in Woolf’s text: her femininity. The idea, however, is further elaborated in an earlier but less widely-read essay of his on post-WWI English literature from 1935 (let us not forget that at this time the Woolfian *oeuvre* was still unfinished, and Woolf was alive). Here, in spite of the fact that he makes an error in the title of *To the Lighthouse* (“Up to the Lighthouse”), he gives a valid and justifiable evaluation of Woolf, calling attention to her narrative and time technique, to the poetic qualities of her texts, creating links between *Mrs Dalloway*, *To the Lighthouse* and *The Waves* in terms of narration (although considering the last of these a failure), and distinguishing *Orlando* for the same reason (Szerb, *Hétköznapiok* 134-36). As a further train of thoughts, Szerb positions Woolf in the literary history of

women writers by making a difference between Woolf and not only her “masculine” forerunners like George Eliot or George Sand and even Zelma Lagerlöf, but also between Woolf and popular and middle-brow writers (138-39). What is more, Szerb is among the first critics to make a link between Woolf and Katherine Mansfield (140)—a connection that was rediscovered by Woolf-criticism only recently even in the English context.

1945 saw the translation of *Orlando*, still current, by Nándor Szávai with an introduction by Albert Gyergyai.⁶ Apart from the factual errors mentioned above, the text is a rhetorical masterpiece inasmuch as it approaches the novel via biography and literary history, and although it claims that neither of these can explain *Orlando* as a masterpiece, these two attempts function as personal and intellectual background (parents and Bloomsbury) and as a grounding of Woolf in literary history (modernism, literary impressionism). What is more important, though, is Gyergyai’s interpretation of *Orlando* as a critique of gender, as a puzzling history of England, as the history of literary styles, as a satire of the genre of biography (248), and while emphasising the iconoclastic elements in the Woolfian *oeuvre*, he never loses the idiosyncretic charm of *Orlando* as a very entertaining text with an appeal to the common reader.

Modernism

After these promising introductions to Woolf, what comes in the postwar period is a nadir in the Hungarian reception of Woolf: Marxist literary criticism. As the political change to communism took place in 1948, the 1947 first translation of *Mrs Dalloway* (*Clarissa*) and that of *Flush* went completely unnoticed in critical terms. The major aesthetic priority was social realist fiction, which by definition was supposed not only to provide a critique of capitalism and bourgeois society but also to show the way out of social (class) oppression. Parallel with the term social realism, the notion of critical realism (the equivalent more or less of nineteenth-century realism) was also developed on a political basis: the elements critical of capitalist society made these texts acceptable in a climate fully permeated with Marxist ideology. For a while, this ideological backdrop did not prove favourable for modernism in general and modernist literature in particular because its basic features like subjectivization, fragmentation, the focus on the individual consciousness did not meet the aesthetic requirements of Marxist grand narratives, and modernism as such was labelled bourgeois. As one might expect, Woolf was considered to be “indifferent to current issues in her society” (Benedek 130), and only *Flush* can be saved on account of its playfulness and “airy realism” that suits so much the “secrets of women writers” (Konrád 1116).

The very fact, however, that *Flush* was republished in 1957, a year after the Hungarian “1956” (which marked the end of the darkest period of communism in the country), and the fact that a review could be published about this novel in *Nagyvilág* (the title meaning “the world at large,” not coincidentally launched in 1956), a journal devoted to world literature indicates that some opening could be expected in Woolf-

criticism even if not in the near future. It was only in 1965 that Albert Gyergyai published a collection of essays in which the reprint of his introduction to the 1945 edition of *Orlando* came out, and the very same essay functioned as the postscript to the new publication of *Orlando* in 1966. In both cases the essay is complemented by a text almost as long as the original, which was consciously left intact. Here, Gyergyai recognises that Woolf is “alive” among artists, critics and readers alike (256), and compares her to the Baudelairean albatross as a genius (257). The focus is shifted, though, on Woolf as a woman writer in a tradition that goes back to Jane Austen, and Gyergyai attributes the poetic qualities and the love of a multivalent reality to her femininity.

In 1971, two more Woolf novels were published in Hungarian: *Mrs Dalloway* and *To the Lighthouse*, the latter accompanied by an introduction written by its translator, Sándor Mátyás, a knowledgeable Woolf scholar. His text creates a complex cultural context for Woolf that includes a reference to Woolf’s “Modern Fiction,” to narrative techniques by writers like James Joyce and Dorothy Richardson (Mátyás 7), to contemporary theories of Freud, Jung, and William James as well as to contemporary sister arts like Russian ballet, modern painting and Russian authors (Mátyás 8); not only does he refer to the mental effects of the Great War, but also how young writers responded to this new experience in their writings by relying on the unconscious, the irrational, the mystical, and on dreams and visions (Mátyás 8-11). Neither is Woolf’s parental home omitted from the introduction as a backdrop to the novel (even though I do not fully agree with the statement that the life of Woolf’s family is revealed in *To the Lighthouse* in its movingly pure and unambiguous beauty [Mátyás 12-13]). Mátyás clearly has a crystallised concept of the Woolfian *oeuvre*, though, emphasising the symbolism and the stream-of-consciousness technique in her texts (16, 17), and that each and every Woolf novel can be considered an attempt at renewing fiction (14). All these statements might sound obvious from our contemporary perspective (particularly from an English context), but in the Hungary of 1971 it was a new voice, shedding light not only on certain narrative specificities of Woolf’s *oeuvre*, but also on high modernism in general.

All this could well be interpreted as the beginning of a success story in literary reception. Introductions, however, comprise a minor, ephemeral and marginalised genre usually written by fans (often translators) of the authors. No matter how appreciative these remarks are, they are overwritten by more dominant discourses of the age both in terms of more prestigious publications, and in terms of the theoretical-critical approach. Mihály Sükösd’s *Változatok a regényre* (1971) could be considered such an authoritative monograph and a new milestone in the dominant approach to literature in the 1970s, which was Marxist literary criticism. One must be aware, though, that not even Marxist literary criticism comprises a homogenous unity, because obvious distinctions can be made between its phase up until 1956 (the most rigid doctrines), the phase between 1956 and the early 1970s (when there was an aesthetic opening and tolerance of texts not necessarily concerned with the working classes and socialist

doctrines), and the period from the 1970s on. This latter shift is related theoretically to a major change in Hungarian Marxist literary criticism, the time when György Lukács's idea of an extended realism ["nagyrealizmus"] was accepted and applied to the interpretation of modernist texts. Lukács's use of this notion could accommodate modernist modes of fiction too, like that of Thomas Mann (but not Joyce, e.g.), and the application of this term by other literary critics opened the way for modernist texts to enter the otherwise narrow canon of literature.

For several reasons Sükösd's 1971 monograph should be seen in this context as a major breakthrough. First of all, it focuses on modernist texts by Marcel Proust and William Faulkner among others, that is, on texts that certainly had not been part of the Marxist canon of literature; second, his approach moves away from the canonised thematic-ideological indoctrination into the direction of a structuralist approach, with chapter titles like "Space and time" and "The structural components of the novel." In this way, the monograph can be considered as the first chance for modernist world literature en bloc to enter socialist Hungary in a comprehensive monograph which, in turn, became authoritative and definitive in its evaluations. How he treats Woolf, however, is neither flattering, nor professional, in spite of the fact that many of the general statements on modernism make the monograph quite usable even today. Woolf is only mentioned in two chapters, and in passing. In one case, she is an addendum to Proust, and in a very negative way at that. She is declared to be a Proust-epigon on account of taking over the Proustian method but not filling it with material that is sufficiently substantial. At the same time—in an unexplained and to me inexplicable way—, in terms of the narrative method an identification is made between Woolf and Huxley (Sükösd 136), which is hardly supportable, and raises serious questions if the author was familiar at all with the writers concerned. His value judgement is all the more weird because he creates a taxonomy in which the first two categories are "the novel of a new reality" and "the stream-of-consciousness novel," and relegates Faulkner into the first one, together with writers like Dreiser, Hemingway, Steinbeck or the Polish Reymont, whereas Woolf makes her way into the second one, in the company of Gide, Cocteau, Huxley and Powys.

In my opinion, the two lists make up a motley crew, and can hardly be explained unless we suppose that—similarly to George Lukács, who extended his notion of realism simply for the sake of accommodating Thomas Mann in his concept of "realism"—Faulkner was a favourite of Sükösd's, and Sükösd wanted to include him among the writers who were *comme il faut* from the perspective of socialist ideology. For this reason, he leads the reader through an intellectual-ideological *tour de force*, and claims that Faulkner's treatment of time (which is, let us not forget, basically the same as that of Woolf) creates a saturated moment, characterised by a co-existence of past, present and future, which made Faulkner one of the greatest writers of the age (Sükösd 136). So far so good, there is no denying that. All the more troubling is how the critic does away with the writers of his second category, the "stream-of-consciousness novelists," with Woolf among them. What hails back here

is the ideological cliché of Woolf et al. as bourgeois writers whose novels go against the current (social realist) notion of the novel, and as such insufficient because of their meagre experiential basis, “pale speculativeness,” and lack of information. Sükösd declares that in these novels form is more important than content (an argument that has its own history within the framework of Marxist aesthetics), and for this reason this type of novel is doomed to failure (39-40).

There is no need to further emphasise the illogical leaps in this argumentation: two authors, using basically the same narrative technique, end up in two utterly different categories, and the two ends also mark opposite value judgements. Faulkner is “rescued” from the irrelevancy of formal experimentation by attributing to him a contentwise intensive moment on the basis of the implied Lukácsian extended notion of realism, whereas Woolf looks ideologically unredeemable as a representative of pointless, decadent, bourgeois experimentation with narrative forms. And this is not a very promising start for a modernist female author whose novels were at that time not really accessible in Hungarian (a revised translation of *Orlando* came out in 1966, *Mrs Dalloway* and *To the Lighthouse* were published in the same year as Sükösd’s monograph, but the previous editions of *The Years* [1940] and *Flush* [1947] were out of print, let alone other texts by Woolf), and the reading public behind the Iron Curtain had neither sufficient reading skills in English, nor access to copies of Woolf’s texts in her native tongue.

In the canonisation of Virginia Woolf (and of modernist literature in general), this was not an easy beginning. Yet, whereas in the 1970s no more major mainstream monographs were published on modernism, there exists an undercurrent of minor publications on individual authors, among others on Woolf, and also some monographs on English literature, preparing the way for her entrance into the modernist canon of world literature as conceptualised in Hungary.⁷ Of these texts, the first worth considering is László Németh’s essay on *Orlando*. This is a republication as well, originally published in the first volume of Németh’s one-man-show journal, *Tanú* (1932-37), which he devoted to elaborating his ideas on literature, culture and society. When first published, this short essay did not create an intellectual stir, or rather the focus of the essay was understood as a critique of the provincialism of contemporary Hungarian fiction, but its 1973 republication in the volume *Európai utas* [European traveller] finds a different context on account of the growing accessibility of Woolf’s novels in Hungarian.

In this respect, two volumes on English literature (a volume of joint authorship [Szenczi-Szobotka-Katona] encompassing the whole of English literary history from the beginning [1972], and a collection of essays focussing on twentieth-century English literature only [1970]) are just as crucial, even if they relegate Woolf to the confines of English literature as opposed to the broader vistas of world literature. In spite of the strict chronological order of these volumes, Woolf gains a more modern and appreciative treatment in the latter one. In the bulky volume by Szenczi-Szobotka-Katona, only three of the seven hundred pages are devoted to Woolf (593-96), and

whereas she is acknowledged as an innovative writer technically, what is emphasised much more is the narrowness and the oversensitivity of her fictional world. This is, again, almost the same accusation as David Daiches's evaluation of Woolf, but in the context of early 1970s socialist Hungary, these phrases have a special connotation: Woolf is deemed irredeemably "bourgeois," and as such decadent, confined to a narrow aestheticism (Szenczi-Szobotka-Katona 594). The narrowness and the solipsism of her fiction is also supported by the statement that Woolf always writes "herself" (a claim that will return later on), presuming that her own world can gain a universal significance, which is declared a fallacy (Szenczi-Szobotka-Katona 596).

Compared to this almost cliché-like text, the chapter on Woolf in the 1970 volume on twentieth-century literature sounds refreshing. The main idea of the volume (or more exactly *series of volumes*, as there were similar publications, among others, on French and German literature) was to introduce individual writers in not more than about twenty pages, but as much as possible in their entirety. In Woolf's case, for example, this is the first time that beyond a coherent life story, all her novels are enumerated and analysed to some extent. The chapter, written by Mihály Szegegy-Maszák, also takes account of Woolf as an essayist, and this is the first time that both her major feminist essays (*A Room of One's Own*, *Three Guineas*) are mentioned. What is more, in his evaluations, one cannot discover the ideologically loaded echoes implicated in the Marxist criticism of the age that one can so clearly discover in the 1972 volume on English literary history. Szegegy-Maszák's statements and evaluations seem to reflect in a concise form the state of the art of Woolf-criticism in the English context as well, and at the same time it seems to be the starting point for a new phase in the Hungarian reception of Woolf that reaches its peak much later, in the 1980s, after the first translation of *The Waves* (1978).

What does this new phase consist of? Primarily, what we can see from the 1980s onward is that the clichés of Marxist criticism lose their coercive power over the rhetoric of literary criticism whereas, at the same time, there is a revived interest in Woolf's major modernist novels. In 1987 a joint volume of the "trilogy" (*Mrs Dalloway*, *To the Lighthouse*, *The Waves*) appeared in Hungarian by Európa publishing house, but another publisher beyond Hungary's borders (Kriterion in Romania) started to publish Hungarian translations of Woolf's novels as well, in addition to which a collection of her essays was also published in 1980 (*A pille halála* ["The Death of the Moth"]). All these translations, coupled with a quantitative and qualitative increase in scholarly work on Woolf, seem to be symptomatic of a general interest in Woolf, and her "promotion" in our region into a major modernist.

The most significant figure in this process is Ágnes Bécsy, whose scholarly output has shaped Woolf's presence in Hungary. In 1980, not only did she edit and write a postscript to the collection of Woolf's essays mentioned above, but she also published the first monograph in Hungarian on Woolf. Issued in the series "Írók világa" [Writers' worlds], it was both a combination of scholarship and popularising literary scholarship, and a combination of biography (all the volumes are illustrated

with photographs) and literary interpretation. The series itself was a significant act in cultural politics as it reflected the policy of opening in the direction of world literature, that is of “western” literature. English modernists like Conrad, Mansfield, Joyce, and Woolf made their way on to the reading lists of an educated readership via the series, whereas the monographs could also function as study material for students of English, among others. These volumes relied on research even if they did not necessarily reveal new findings (they functioned much rather as cultural transmissions). In their form, however, they catered for the convenience of the common reader: apart from a relatively thin bibliography, the statements of text do not document their sources, which makes reading enjoyable, but does not make the evaluation of the authors’ contribution to scholarship easy. In this way, the monograph on Woolf should, instead, be interpreted in the context of what it meant at that particular historical moment, how it approaches its theme, and what aspects of the Woolfian oeuvre it emphasises.

In the case of Ágnes Bécsy, there is no denying that she has done her job professionally. Her text no longer echoes explicitly the clichés of Marxist criticism (whereas some implied residues linger on), nor does it get too much involved in biographical criticism. Quite the contrary, all through the text she maintains a delicate balance of biography and an interpretation of the texts that works at an abstract level of structuralist and philosophical approach. To give just a few examples: Bécsy presents Septimus Warren Smith as Clarissa Dalloway’s double linked to her via a system of symbols (*Woolf* 148), whereas Clarissa still figures as an upper-class social hostess petrified into the formalities and externalities of her social standing (*Woolf* 146); she also acknowledges that Woolf’s apparently individual-centred texts go beyond their literal relevance in terms of social concerns and human significance; and even today one can encounter absolutely valid analytical-critical statements claiming that, for example, Orlando is the parodistic deheroisation of the past (*Woolf* 249). The basic impression the interpretations make is a philosophical and literary-analytical sophistication that elevates Woolf to a level equal to the (male) giants of modernism.

With all this acknowledgement, the text seems at the same time to be dated in some sense. Written in 1980, and in a Hungary that was still subsumed in the ideological influence of socialism, I suppose it was an act daring enough to choose a writer who was implicated in what was considered “bourgeois” and “mere aestheticism,” and as a result, some evaluations seem to be informed by, and fall back upon, current ideological notions. This is particularly tangible in how the text interprets Woolf’s feminism. *Three Guineas* is accused of short-sightedness, of an anachronistic feminism, of revealing a political practice paralysed by the writer’s intellect (Bécsy, *Woolf* 242); similarly, Woolf’s feminism in *A Room of One’s Own* is declared to be “dusty” (Bécsy, *Woolf* 188). Not only are the evaluations of her major feminist essays contestable, though, but among others the interpretation of *Between the Acts* as a text of affirmation (Bécsy, *Woolf* 244). These qualifications may have been derived from the very ideology that the monograph basically rejects, yet is implicated in: a socialist-Marxist world view that could conceptualise women’s issues only in the framework

of class struggle, and as such “devoured” the first-wave feminism of which Woolf was a part. Furthermore, these comments may be read not only in the context of Woolf’s feminism, but also in the context of how socialist Hungary looked upon the emerging second-wave feminism of the 1970s. As for the evaluation of *Between the Acts*, apparently once the Woolfian oeuvre was championed as a special critique of bourgeois society, it was supposed to conclude with some affirmation. Yet, with all these slips the monograph is a milestone in Hungarian Woolf-criticism (unparalleled even today as there are no more monographs to date), as is the collection of essays (*A pille halála*) in the same year with a postscript written to the volume by Ágnes Bécsy, the editor. Besides the inestimable value of the volume in making thirty-three essays by Woolf available in Hungarian (“Street Haunting,” “The Death of the Moth,” “Lives of the Obscure,” “Jane Austen,” “The Leaning Tower,” “The Narrow Bridge of Art,” “Modern Fiction,” “Mr Bennet and Mrs Brown,” among others), the postscript creates a meaningful bridge between the essays and Woolf’s fiction.

Apart from Ágnes Bécsy’s work, the 1980s abounded in monographs on modernism and on English literature: it looks as if this area of scholarship had meant some refuge from what was considered political. English-language cultures seem to have played an ambivalent role because studying English literature did not belong to the mainstream, so it was both marginalised and tolerated. What is more, in this area certain claims could be made without triggering repressive responses from the side of the political establishment. The peripheral status of what was called “modern philology” (the study of modern non-Hungarian literatures) created a discursive space within which modernism played a special role. For a long time, high modernism functioned as “apolitical,” as the embodiment of “the aesthetic,” and as such almost by definition functioned as a safe haven from ideological inscriptions; that is, as an area of (passive) resistance. In my view, it is for these reasons that from the late 1970s we can see a boom of monographs on modernist world literature.

The first sign of this (I would call) paradigmatic shift is Tamás Ungvári’s more than three-hundred-page long monograph on time and the novel (1977). In spite of her obvious relevance, though, Woolf deserves only two passing references to how Big Ben relates to Mrs Dalloway’s subjective time (Ungvári, *Regény* 256, 261). Apparently, Woolf does not fit Ungvári’s discursive frame as in another volume of his, a collection of essays on modern literature, he puts Woolf under the label of “the avant-garde of the twenties.” Paradoxically, in spite of emphasising Woolf’s innovative aspects with the label avant-garde, in Ungvári’s presentation Woolf’s significance is much more evident from her contrast with the writers she famously calls “the materialist Edwardians” than from what and how she actually wrote. Apart from a far too concise (and for that reason confusing) passage on allegory, and some comments on the treatment of time in *Orlando* (Ungvári, *Modern* 222-23), not even Woolf’s writing technique is mentioned, and she is rather vaguely defined as a modernist not belonging to any tendency (Ungvári, *Modern* 234).

Other critics ventured to write monographs on modern literature as well: 1981

saw Annamária H. Szász's *A modern regény mesterei* [Masters of the Modern novel] and in 1987 Miklós Szabolcsi's *A világirodalom a 20. században: Főbb áramlatok* [World literature in the 20th century: main tendencies] were published. Both are small volumes, at least compared to the scope of the undertaking, and they follow different trajectories. Szabolcsi's all-encompassing overview allows only a three-sentence reference to Woolf, concentrating on *Orlando* and *The Waves*, on how characters merge into each other playfully, but also mentioning that in the 1930s Woolf's tone darkened (94). As a result of these passing references, Szabolcsi's text does not change Woolf's basic status within modernism: she does not figure as a major modernist. As opposed to this, the structure of H. Szász's text allows for a different handling of the material. She chooses seven novels (one each by André Gide, Virginia Woolf, Alfred Döblin, Alain Robbe-Grillet, Nathalie Sarraute, William Golding and Heinrich Böll), and presents them as representatives of various types of fiction in the modernist paradigm, extending its relevance up until the 1950s. Her selection undeniably puts Woolf into a prestigious environment, and we must also take into consideration that *Mrs Dalloway* features as one of seven major novels from the twentieth century. What H. Szász emphasises, though, in the introduction is that she consciously decided not to write about the most canonised triumvirate of modernists: Marcel Proust, James Joyce and Franz Kafka, and that her aim is to call attention to writers who had been given less attention to in the Hungarian context (22). In this sense her monograph is symptomatic of the fact that in 1981 Woolf was still on the margins of the modernist canon of world literature in Hungary.

Nevertheless, I consider H. Szász's book of major importance, and not only because she analyses *Mrs Dalloway* with a scholarly sensibility whose focus ranges from the poetic quality of the text to the stream of consciousness technique, from Peter Walsh's character to an explanation why Clarissa is both content and unhappy in her marriage, from analysing the Septimus-line as a subplot, to the interpretation of the *leitmotifs* as structural elements (48-77). The significance of this volume lies just as much in the interpretation as in how the book found its way to the reading public. Published in a series by the authorised and authoritative textbook publishing house (Tankönyvkiadó), its aim was primarily educational, and targeted a readership consisting of teachers of Hungarian literature (which traditionally has a very strong comparative literature component) to be used as a handbook teaching aid, it was also meant to be read by secondary-school students preparing for the university admission exam, as well as by the general, educated reading public. Apparently it did reach its readership, enjoying three publications (1981, 1985, 1987). The number of copies surpassed 10,000 (a huge number for this book market), which indicates perhaps also a change in Woolf's elevated status from a minor to a major modernist in Hungary.

In the year of the third edition of H. Szász's monograph, *The Waves* was published in Hungarian by Kriterion in Romania, with a postscript by Júlia Szilágyi. She bases her argument on the statement that the modern novel starts off with Virginia Woolf and her contemporary, James Joyce (Szilágyi 215) not only in English, but also

in world literature, emphasising the complexity of her work, which consists not only of her innovative narrative technique but also of her feminism and pacifism (Szilágyi 216). What she emphasises in *The Waves* is the treatment of time, its musicality, the Ionesco-like speech acts (Szilágyi 222-23). In addition, Szilágyi's title playing a pun on Luigi Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author*: "Six Novel Protagonists Have Found their Author," contextualises Woolf in a broader field of the literary heritage.

In the very same year Hungary's most prestigious publisher of world literature, Európa Press published a joint volume of the "trilogy" (*Mrs Dalloway, To the Lighthouse, The Waves*) with a long postscript by Ágnes Bécsy, who renews her perspective compared to that found in her monograph. This time she takes account of Woolf's reception history, and stresses that Woolf is an internationally acknowledged pioneer of modernism; she focuses on her cultural background: both on her family and Bloomsbury, emphasises her liberal humanist values as a merit (Bécsy, "Utószó" 719), and enframes her as "our contemporary" in the paradigm of neofeminist, anti-imperialist, bourgeois disobedience (718), where *Three Guineas*, for instance, is no longer labelled short-sighted and anachronistic but is understood as a sign of passive resistance (725). She moreover clearly rejects in her interpretation what modernism used to be accused of: sheer individualism and solipsism, and the analyses shift away from the level of philosophical abstraction to the concreteness of cultural semiotics (Bécsy, "Utószó" 731-36). The last sentence of the postscript inserts Woolf into two kinds of literary heritage: that of women writers like Austen, the Brontës and George Eliot on the one hand, and that of (male) modernists like Kafka, Hermann Broch, Robert Musil, and James Joyce on the other (Bécsy, "Utószó" 736). In addition to these evaluations that posit Woolf both in the modernist mainstream and in a literary matrilineage, *Nagyvilág*, the monthly journal of comparative (world) literature published a selection (by Sándor Maller) from Woolf's diary in October 1988, stating that her diary entries comprise a crucial aspect of her oeuvre, and that they tell us a lot about her social and cultural environment.

With all this, Woolf seems to have irretrievably arrived in Hungary as a major modernist. Interest in her never wavered after this, and when in 1996 a volume of interpretations of twenty-five novels in English was published, Woolf was "naturally" included: this time an interpretation of *To the Lighthouse*. The chapter was written by Mihály Szegedy-Maszák, who had first presented the whole of her oeuvre in Hungary in 1970. As one can expect from a scholar who had been familiar with Woolf for decades, the analysis is knowledgeable and continues what by this time had become a tradition: the interpretation of Woolf as a modernist. The basic argument is that *To the Lighthouse* is an autobiographical novel originating in Woolf's ambiguous relationship with the Victorian period, a reason why she felt an internal compulsion to write about her parents. This is coupled, though, with another, and contradictory inner drive that the parents' legacy must be denied by each generation of artists. Although one might contest some statements like the one that disputes the text as a *Künstlerroman*

(Szegegy-Maszák, *A világitótorony* 219), the overall argument goes in the direction of the multiple embeddedness of *To the Lighthouse* in the culture of which it is a product. If there is an impression that something is amiss, that is much rather due to the original concept of the volume because its intention was to provide the typical Woolfian common reader with analyses of well-known texts from a new interpretive angle, and the novelty of the interpretation looks less obvious. The very same text later found its way into another volume by Szegegy-Maszák, this time integrated into an essay with a broader perspective, where Woolf is matched with Henry James, and the focus is on the tradition of innovative language use in modern fiction (“A nyelvhasználat”). The title and the structure suggest a parallel between James and Woolf, which could well be supported, but since in Woolf’s case the focus remains much more on the autobiographical aspects of the text and on cultural reflections, the shared concern of James and Woolf with language is not fully revealed.

In line with all this, Woolf as a modernist goes on faring well in Hungarian literature: in her monograph (*A csend retorikája*, 2002), Edit Zsadányi, explores the metaphors of silencing among others in Woolf’s *Mrs Dalloway*, and holds the view that tropes of silencing can be led back to, and at the same time reveal epistemological questions of what can be uttered and articulated (65). She lays emphasis on the disruptions in Woolf’s stream of consciousness that create elliptical structures, similar to silences (Zsadányi 66). Yet, she claims that in a number of cases communication works at other levels: either at the level of thoughts or at the level of metacommunication (Zsadányi 67). She also discusses the significance of the pronoun “something,” a favourite of Woolf’s, and draws the conclusion that it indicates limits of articulation and utterability (Zsadányi 70). As a further question, Zsadányi explores how the relationship between the part and the whole can be observed and theorised in its paradoxical nature in Woolf’s text (71-77). In this way, the chapter focuses on aspects in Woolf’s oeuvre that are relevant to her modernism, and implicitly acknowledges Woolf as a major modernist dealing with epistemological questions and with issues of life and death in a narrative form that in itself dramatises these questions. What is utterly missing, though, is any mention of how Woolf’s silences are also gendered silences in many of the cases: the chapter much rather discusses the general human, and as such, it can be ranked among texts appreciative of Woolf as a (general) modernist.

Gender

This is an intriguing omission (or *silence*) particularly in the case of a scholar who at about the same time turned into a major feminist theorist and critic in Hungary—yet this aspect is missing from her discussion of Woolf. Being familiar with the cultural context hostile to feminist literary criticism one is not surprised, though, either at Zsadányi’s omission or at the fact that a concise history of literature devoting six pages to Woolf, no matter how professionally it discusses the modernist

features in her oeuvre (stream of consciousness, self-reflexivity, concept of art, role of the narrator, textual organisation), does not even mention gender, femininity, or feminism in 2007 (see Gintli, Schein). This treatment betrays a definite blind spot in Woolf's reception in Hungary despite the fact that the first Hungarian feminist reading of Woolf goes back to 1996, and is related to Ágnes Bécsy again, who is obviously capable of re-reading her own readings, and of assuming newer and newer angles (as can be seen from the implied self-reflections on her monograph in her postscript to the publication of the trilogy). This text is yet another groundbreaker because although Bécsy published the translation of *A Room of One's Own* in 1986 in a prestigious series of philosophical thinking (Mérleg könyvek) by Európa Press, apart from passing references, the gendered aspects of Woolf's life and works never before had made their way into the Hungarian cultural discussion of her significance. This phenomenon is best seen in the light of second-wave feminism in the English-speaking countries, which by this time had gone back to a history of about three decades, and a decade after Elaine Showalter and Toril Moi's famous debate (see Works Cited), Woolf undoubtedly entered feminist literary theory and criticism as a mother figure.

In this text of hers ("Alkotás és önvédelem" [Creation and self-defence]), Ágnes Bécsy takes account of this belatedness and admits that when submitting the manuscript of her monograph (1977) she had no access to crucial sources related either to Woolf's personal (sexual) history or to the beginning of her writing practice. The text of "Alkotás" should be seen in this light: as a compensation for the necessary lack that was also typical of Woolf-criticism in England in the preceding periods. The article is an eye-opener in that it presents a complexity made up of personal history and a symptomatic interpretation of Woolf's early writing "A Terrible Tragedy in the Duckpond" and one of the last pieces, "A Sketch of the Past." Bécsy patiently guides the reader through an intellectual *tour de force* arguing that Woolf became a major writer as a *woman* writer because, as her *metaphors* testify, writing had always functioned not only as a metaphor of life, but also as *life* itself, as "self-creation, as self-destructive self-rescue" ("Alkotás" 137). Bécsy also emphasises that Woolf's recent feminist re-interpretation presents a shockingly new image, and locates the source of her trauma in the previously idealised Victorian familial framework, which when unveiled is better metaphorised by Jack the Ripper ("Alkotás" 136). What Bécsy does here to the Hungarian readership is duly comparable to what her primary reference, Louise deSalvo did to her own American reading public in 1989 with the publication of *Virginia Woolf and the Impact of Childhood Sexual Abuse on Her Life and Work*. And whereas I fully appreciate Bécsy's daring text with its utterly innovative approach, and her repeated acts of intellectual self-renewal, my only—yet, unfortunately, major—problem is that her basic argument in this article far too closely echoes deSalvo's flow of thoughts without acknowledging at any point the undeniable influence except for mentioning deSalvo's bulky volume in passing on the last page but one, as if simply for the sake of drawing a parallel between the shocking effect of

deSalvo's monograph and her own article. The parallel, however, probes a lot more deeply—to the point that I would dare to claim this text by Bécsy is a review-like summary of deSalvo's arguments.

Yet both the article and the volume it appeared in (*Szerep és alkotás* [Roles and Creation]) articulate notions in a professional way that had never before found their way to Hungarian literary criticism: gender and creation. Parallel with this, Woolf moved more and more to the centre-stage of an emerging feminist (gender-conscious) criticism in Hungary. In the same year as Bécsy's article was published for the second time, a young critic, György Kalmár combined psychoanalysis, deconstruction and feminism in his analysis of *Orlando*. He focusses on the otherness of *Orlando* in comparison with other major Woolf-texts, and reads it in a Barthesian manner as a text of pleasure (and as the pleasure of the text) in which the textual gaps both reveal and invite desire. Via an inspired close reading, he connects *Orlando* to the metonymical language of the body, and to the theories of new French feminism.

From this moment on, Woolf can no longer be put back into the pure framework of abstract modernism. The period between 1999 and 2007 is characterised by an increasing interest in her work, partly precipitated by Michael Cunningham's *The Hours* (translated into Hungarian in 2002, almost parallel with the success of the film adaptation [2003]). In these eight years, first her autobiographical writings were translated (*Egy jó házból való angol úrilány* [*Moments of Being*, 1999]), then a series devoted to her oeuvre followed with the publication by Európa Press of several of her novels that had never before been translated into Hungarian (*The Voyage Out*, *Night and Day*, *Jacob's Room*, *Between the Acts*), the retranslation of some texts with old translations (*The Years*, *The Waves*), and with some effort, Európa could even be persuaded to publish the translation of *Three Guineas* (2006) in the same series as *A Room of One's Own* had been published in two decades earlier (Mérleg könyvek). Whereas not all of these translations were received with unanimous acclaim,⁸ the accessibility of all the major texts in such a spectacularly short time rendered Woolf visible not only to the most erudite scholarly community but created an unprecedented popularity of Woolf's texts.

The publication of the primary texts was to a certain extent accompanied by scholarly interpretations. I myself added an introduction, an appendix and a great number of footnotes based on my research to the volume of autobiographical texts (*Egy jó házból való angol úrilány*), and emphasised the gendered implications of the cultural context that is relevant in Woolf's case both at 22 Hyde Park Gate and in Bloomsbury, while I also pointed out the specificities of Woolf's various, self-reflexive textual solutions to autobiography as a genre ("Bevezetés"). The latter idea is elaborated on in more detail in two further versions of my research: my basic argument in "Virginia Woolf és az önéletírás (lehetetlensége)" is based on Paul de Man's concept of de-facement, and in a close reading I point out how the text deconstructs itself via the self-reflexive generic comments of the narrator, and how the textual organisation of "A Sketch of the Past" defies the concept of the unified I,

and replaces it with metonymical substitutes. Here I also raise another question: the relationship between autobiography and the female body. This topic, however, is more fully elaborated in the revised version of this article in my monograph on women's autobiographical writings *Tükröm, tükröm* (chapter "Az önéletírás [lehetetlensége]. Virginia Woolf: 'Vázlat a múltról'"), where my text is restructured, and the third part is fully devoted to the exploration of gender and genre, autobiography and the body. In this respect, my central statement is that "A Sketch" both originates and ends in (the impossibility of) writing the (female) body.

On the publication of my other Woolf-translation, *Three Guineas*, I felt that this text required as much interpretation as her autobiographical writings: both autobiography and (feminist) essay are marginal genres to which, as I thought, the readers needed more guidance than to novels in general, so I provided a postscript ("Utószó") to *Three Guineas*. I draw a parallel between *A Room of One's Own* and this late feminist essay considered by many as enigmatic, utopistic and naive. Embedding it in the context of World War II and the personal threat experienced by the Woolfs, I argue that the text proposes a deeply ethical—and feminist—position which rejects slavish affiliations of all kinds, and rather assumes a position that may be utopistic, although in the dominant system of power relations only the Outsiders' Society can offer a solution detached enough to preserve intellectual independence and resistance to being implicated in dominant mechanisms of power. But similarly to the case of her autobiographical writings, the text is far too intriguing for me to be content with a postscript, so in another article I analyse the (feminist) rhetorical implications of the Woolfian narrator in *Three Guineas*, how her dialogic subject position is central, at the level of textuality, to the arguments of the essay inasmuch as a thematic focus of the text is on how the female subject can turn into a political subject with a voice of her own—theoretically, historically and practically alike ("A levelező nő").

At this point it seems more or less obvious that my readings of Woolf's feminist self-reflexivity reflect on myself and on my own thinking just as much as on her writings. So when I planned to write my monograph on feminist literary scholarship in Hungary (*Mért félünk a farkastól?*), Woolf and her seminal essay *A Room of One's Own* had to figure as central. Woolf and her echoes permeate the text from cover to cover: the title reverberates Woolf's name in Hungarian ("farkas"), whereas the back cover shows Gustave Doré's illustration to Little Red Riding Hood, with her and the wolf sharing a bed. The title has further Woolfian repercussions: it is a reformulation of, and pun on, Edward Albee's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* by paraphrasing it into a version of the Hungarian title of the play. From *Nem félünk a farkastól* meaning "We are not afraid of the wolf" I transformed it into *Mért félünk a farkastól?* meaning "Why are we afraid of the wolf?", where "wolf" metaphorically figures as all those ideas of cultural feminism that seem far too threatening even in and for contemporary Hungarian literary discourse—ideas that Woolf seems to embody.

Apart from these paratextual devices, a whole chapter (entitled "Egy anyafarkas" ["A mother wolf"]) is devoted to *A Room of One's Own*, where I analyse

in how many ways Woolf's text foreshadows and is implicated in feminist literary criticism. The points made range from ideas parallel with some of her forerunners (Mary Wollstonecraft, John Stuart Mill) to the imperative shifts in gendered value judgements, and from the analysis of gendered spaces like the rectangle, the library, the DNB and Whitehall to the rhetorical self-positioning (and self-destabilisation) of the narrator resulting in the deconstruction of the authoritative position of the speaker. Relying also on Woolf's reviews of Dorothy Richardson's novels and her ponderings on what she calls "the psychological sentence of the feminine gender" ("Romance" 51) I relate her feminist textuality to what came to be later called new French feminism, writing the body and *écriture féminine* (*Mért félünk?* 48-49). As a conclusion, I open up Woolf's Room as a homely, habitable and partly inhabited, feminine space that by its capaciousness offers itself to accommodate a so far unheard-of, gendered cultural dialogue (*Mért félünk?* 54).

Yet all this is still a relatively focussed presence of Woolf's, closely related to her texts. In her 2005 comprehensive monograph on the history of *American* literature, however, Enikő Bollobás opens a new phase in how Woolf can be present in Hungarian literary discourse. Being a "genuine" English writer, some eyebrows may be raised on seeing that this volume contains a great number of references to Woolf, which, apart from the more obvious ones (like Michael Cunningham's *The Hours* [Bollobás 727], a Mrs Dalloway intertext, and Edward Albee's *Who is Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* Bollobás [748]), range from Shakespeare's fictitious sister in *A Room of One's Own* (Bollobás 205) to how Woolf is related to Henry James's innovative writing technique (Bollobás 236, 248), from her reinterpretation of masculine and feminine values (Bollobás 263) to her central position in modernism (Bollobás 286), from her review of Hemingway through the concept of female modernism (Bollobás 424) to Sylvia Plath's poetry (Bollobás 518), and beyond: how Woolf is present in Robert Duncan's "feminine" poetry (Bollobás 544), or how she is implied in Toni Morrison's *Jazz* (Bollobás 680). This spectrum, broad both in thematic and in temporal terms (from Emily Dickinson to contemporary literature), indicates how "Woolf" (and whatever "she" means) has saturated the discourse on literature and culture, how her notions and metaphors have helped to conceptualise and articulate ideas that never had a name (like female modernism), and how her impact makes her uncontainable within the rigid boundaries of traditional frameworks and categories.⁹

Conclusion

In the long run, ultimately, Woolf seems to have made her way to Hungary by overcoming all the obstacles: first, her Englishness that did not function very favourably either in the first half of the century in a non-Anglophone Hungary, or in the fifties, when the country was submerged in anti-West, anti-capitalist, communist ideology; this latter discourse worked not only against Woolf's Englishness, but up until the 1980s even against her modernism that by definition was declared subjective,

individualistic and solipsistic as opposed to the collectivist and social/critical realist aesthetic ideals of the age. But even after modernism came into vogue as an assumed refuge from the political, Woolf had to emerge from a minor to a major modernist. Furthermore, due to the ideological indoctrination that encompassed women's emancipation in the general struggle against capitalist oppression, feminism as a valid discourse was also discredited, and as a result neither Woolf's subtle cultural feminism, nor its multi-faceted impact on feminist literary criticism could be heard decades after all this was a truism on her home ground. With the accessibility of her major texts in Hungarian, and with an emerging criticism of Woolf that takes her Englishness, her modernism and her feminism alike into consideration, nevertheless, her life and works seem to have taken root in Hungary, too. What is more, they have thrown roots in all critical directions.

Notes

¹ When defining Woolf's Hungarian reception, I delimit the term in two ways: I will not consider texts by foreign authors in Hungarian translations (Erich Auerbach, Malcolm Bradbury, Joan Rockwell, David Daiches, Miglena Nikolcsina, E.M. Forster); nor will I include texts by Hungarian authors in English (Orsolya Frank; Nóra Séllei, *Mansfield and Woolf*). This may be a contestable position, but in the case of English critics what seems to be symptomatic is much rather when a text was allowed to enter the Hungarian literary scene and perhaps in *what kind of a publication*, not *what* these texts actually state about Woolf; whereas in the case of Hungarian authors writing about Woolf in English one can hardly discover any impact on the Hungarian reception of Woolf.

² The page numbers here and subsequently refer to the postscript to the 1966 edition of *Orlando*, where the first version is reprinted (243-54) and complemented by a text almost as long as the original one (254-63). There is also some confusion in dating the original text: the 1966 version claims 1943 as its date, whereas the 1965 text dates the original one as 1945. As I did not find any publication of Gyergyai's on Woolf from the year 1943, I am using 1945 as the date of the first publication: that was the year when *Orlando* came out in Hungarian (see Works Cited).

³ The origins of the Bloomsbury Group go back to 1905 or 1906 whereas Leonard Woolf joined them only in 1911 after his return from his job as civil servant in Ceylon; the Hogarth Press was established by the Woolfs in 1915, in the third year of their marriage, and it was in the same year that the first novel by Virginia Woolf was published. So the Bloomsbury Group pre-dates all the three factors: Virginia Woolf's writings, Leonard Woolf's membership, and the establishment of Hogarth Press (and thus, of Leonard Woolf's turning into a publisher).

⁴ A further mistake of Gyergyai's is the claim that Vita Sackville-West's main literary output was landscape descriptions and idylls (246). Actually, her most famous novels: *The Edwardians* (1930) and *All Passion Spent* (1931) are much rather novels of upper-middle class and aristocratic society.

⁵ The page numbers refer to the introduction to the Hungarian translation of *The Years* (see Works Cited).

⁶ The text has various editions (see Works Cited); the references above are to the 1966 postscript.

⁷ At this point, one must not forget that Woolf's positioning within the canon of modernism was not evident for a long time in English literary scholarship either: for instance, David Daiches's 1960 monograph, *The Novel and the Modern World*, translated into Hungarian perhaps uncoincidentally in this very period, in 1978, defines Woolf as a minor modernist compared to Conrad, Joyce and Lawrence, emphasising only her technical innovations, but denying the thematic relevance and significance of her fictional world.

⁸ Currently, I have no space to analyse either the reviews or the translations themselves; I simply refer to the controversy. In my view, of all these texts, Dezső Tandori's translation of *Between the Acts* is the most problematic (for details see Séllei, "Az utolsó").

⁹ This, of course, does not mean that no one wants to put her back into abstract, disembodied modernism and into an "objective" discursive framework that denies crucial gendered and personal aspects in Woolf's case. A recent example is Édua Reményi's article on the history of the Hogarth Press, which partly abounds in factual errors, partly disregards a whole area of Woolf studies (for the details of the debate see: Reményi, "Szedett és vetett," Séllei, "Szedett és vetett" and Reményi, "Aki Farkast").

Works Cited

- Auerbach, Erich. "A barna harisnya" ["The Brown Stockings"]. *Mimézis: A valóság ábrázolása az európai irodalomban* [*Mimesis. The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*]. Trans. Kardos Péter. Budapest: Gondolat, 1985. 514-41.
- Bécsy, Ágnes. "Alkotás és önvédelem. Virginia Woolf írói indulása" [Creation and self-defence. Virginia Woolf's beginnings as a writer]. *Szerep és alkotás: Női szerepek a társadalomban és az alkotóművészetben* [Roles and creation. Women's roles in society and artistic creation]. Ed. Beáta Nagy and Margit S. Sárdi. Debrecen: Csokonai, 1997. 125-37 [First published in *Liget* (July 1996)].
- . "Utószó" [Postscript]. Virginia Woolf. *A pille halála. Esszék* [The death of the moth. Essays]. Trans. Ágnes Bécsy, Mária Borbás, Levente Osztovits, Ádám Réz, Mihály Szegedy-Maszák, Tibor Szobotka, and Tünde Vajda. Ed., postscript, and annotations Ágnes Bécsy. Budapest: Európa, 1980. 537-59.
- . "Utószó" [Postscript]. Virginia Woolf. *Mrs. Dalloway. A világitótorony. Hullámok* [*Mrs Dalloway. To the Lighthouse. The Waves*]. Trans. Sándor Mátyás, Dezső Tandori. Budapest: Európa, 1987. 715-36.
- . *Virginia Woolf világa* [Virginia Woolf's world]. Írók világa. Budapest: Európa,

1980.

- Benedek, Marcell. *Az olvasás művészete* [The art of reading]. Budapest: Bibliotheca, 1957.
- Bíró, Lajos Pál. *A modern angol irodalom története, 1890-1941* [The history of modern English literature, 1890-1941]. Budapest: Hungária, 1942.
- Bollobás, Enikő. *Az amerikai irodalom története* [The history of American literature]. Osiris tankönyvek. Budapest: Osiris, 2005.
- Bradbury, Malcolm. "Virginia Woolf." Trans. János Széky. *Nagyvilág* 33.10 (Oct 1988): 1533-46.
- Cunningham, Michael. *Órák* [*The Hours* 1998]. Trans. András Tóti. Budapest: Ulpius, 2002.
- Daiches, David. *A regény és a modern világ* [*The Novel and the Modern World*, 1960]. Trans. Erzsébet Zombory. Budapest: Európa, 1978.
- Daldry, Stephen, dir. *The Hours*. Miramax, 2003.
- DeSalvo, Louise. *Virginia Woolf and the Impact of Childhood Sexual Abuse on Her Life and Work*. New York: Ballantine, 1989.
- Forster, Edward Morgan. "Virginia Woolf." Trans. Ádám Réz. *Írók írókról: Huszadik századi tanulmányok* [Writers about writers. Twentieth-century essays]. Ed. György Szekeres. Budapest: Európa, 1970. 279-301.
- Frank, A. O. *The Philosophy of Virginia Woolf*. Philosophie Doctores series. Budapest: Akadémiai, 2001.
- Gintli, Tibor, Gábor Schein. *Az irodalom rövid története II: A realizmustól máig* [A concise history of literature II. From realist to contemporary]. Pécs: Jelenkor, 2007.
- Gyergyai, Albert. "Virginia Woolf." Intr. to Virginia Woolf. *Orlando*. Budapest: Révai, 1945.; Reprints: *Kortársak: Esszék* [Contemporaries. Essays]. Budapest: Szépirodalmi, 1965. 186-96.; and "Virginia Woolf." Postscript to Virginia Woolf. *Orlando*. Budapest: Európa, 1966. 243-63.
- H. Szász, Annamária. *A modern regény mesterei* [Masters of the modern novel]. Műelemzések kiskönyvtára. Budapest, Tankönyvkiadó, 1981.
- Kalmár, György. "Orlando öröme avagy a vágy beszéde és a szöveg örömei" [The pleasure of Orlando, or the language of desire and the pleasures of the text]. *Szöveg és vágy. Pszichoanalízis—irodalom—dekonstrukció* [Text and desire. Psychoanalysis—literature—deconstruction]. Belépő. Budapest: Anonymus, 2002. 62-87. [First publication: *Literatura* 1997.4]
- Konrád, György. "Virginia Woolf: Flush." *Nagyvilág* 2.7 (Nov 1957): 1116-17.
- Mátyás, Sándor. "Előszó" [Preface]. Virginia Woolf. *A világítótorony* [*To the Lighthouse*]. Trans. Sándor Mátyás. Világkönyvtár series. Budapest: Magvető 1971. 5-20.
- Moi, Toril. "Introduction: Who is Afraid of Virginia Woolf?" *Sexual/Textual Politics. Feminist Literary Theory*. London: Routledge, 1985. 1-18.
- Németh. László. "Woolf: Orlando" [1932]. *Európai utas* [European traveller].

Budapest: Magvető, 1973. 480-82.

- Nikolcsina, Miglena. *Jelentés és anyagyilkosság: Virginia Woolf Julia Kristeva olvasatában* [Miglena Nikolchina. *Meaning and Matricide: Writing Theory in Kristeva and Woolf*, 2000]. Trans. from Bulgarian Lenke Csíkhelyi. Feminizmus és történelem series. Budapest: Balassi, 2004.
- Reményi, Édua. “Aki Farkast kiált . . . (Válasz Séllei Nórának)” [Whoever cries Woolf . . . (A response to Nóra Séllei)]. *Jelenkor* 51.6 (June 2008): 734-36.
- . “Szedett és vetett betűk: Kilencven éve alapította Virginia és Leonard Woolf a Hogarth Press-t” [Set letters. The Hogarth Press established by Leonard and Virginia Woolf nineteen years ago]. *Jelenkor* 51.3 (March 2008): 331-37.
- Rockwell, Joan. *A valóság a regényben: Az irodalom felhasználása a társadalom módszeres tanulmányozásában* [*Fact in Fiction. The Use of Literature in the Systematic Study of Society*, 1974]. Trans. Mária Szabó. Budapest: Gondolat, 1980.
- Schöpflin, Aladár. “Virginia Woolf”. *Nyugat* 32.10 (Oct 1939): 251-55. Revised publication as introduction to Virginia Woolf: *Évek* [*The Years*]. Budapest: Franklin, 1940. 5-12.
- Showalter, Elaine. “Virginia Woolf and the Flight into Androgyny.” *A Literature of Their Own: British Women Novelists from Charlotte Brontë to Doris Lessing* [1977]. London: Virago, 1991. 263-97.
- Séllei, Nóra. “Bevezetés” [Introduction]. Virginia Woolf. *Egy jó házból való angol úrilány: Önéletrajzi írások* [Virginia Woolf. *Moments of Being. Autobiographical Writings*]. Trans., intr., annotations, and appendix Nóra Séllei. Debrecen: Csokonai, 1999. 7-22.
- . *Katherine Mansfield and Virginia Woolf: A Personal and Professional Bond*. Frankfurt: Lang, 1996.
- . “A levelező nő mint diszkurzív szubjektum Virginia Woolf *Három adomány* című esszéjében” [The corresponding woman as discursive subject in Virginia Woolf’s *Three Guineas*]. *A nő mint szubjektum, a női szubjektum* [Woman as Subject, the Female Subject]. Ed. Nóra Séllei. Orbis Litterarum. Debrecen: Kossuth Egyetemi, 2007. 315–25.
- . *Mért félünk a farkastól? Feminista irodalomszemlélet itt és most* [Why are we afraid of the wolf? Feminism and literature here and now]. Debrecen: Kossuth Egyetemi, 2007.
- . “Az önéletrajz (lehetetlensége): Virginia Woolf: ‘Vázlat a múltból’” [The (im) possibility of autobiography: Virginia Woolf’s “A Sketch of the Past”]. *Tükröm, tükröm . . . : Író nők önéletrajzai a 20. század elejéről* [“Mirror, Mirror on the Wall . . .”: Women Writers’ Autobiographies from the Early Twentieth Century]. Orbis Litterarum. Debrecen: Kossuth Egyetemi, 2001. 53-97.
- . “Szedett és vetett—avagy szedett-vedett—betűk: Egy tanulmány ürügyén” [Set—or upset—letters. By way of an article]. *Jelenkor* 51.6 (June 2008): 727-33.

- . "Az utolsó felvonás. Virginia Woolf: *Felvonások között* [The last act. Virginia Woolf's *Between the Acts*]. *Jelenkor* 49.5 (May 2006): 561-8.
- . "Utószó" [Postscript]. Virginia Woolf. *Három adomány* [*Three Guineas*]. Budapest: Európa, 2006. 369-77.
- . "Virginia Woolf és az önéletírás (lehetetlensége)" [Virginia Woolf and (the impossibility of) autobiography]. *Alföld* 52.9 (2001): 47-71.
- Sükösd, Mihály. *Változatok a regényre* [Varieties on the novel]. Budapest: Gondolat, 1971.
- Szabolcsi, Miklós. *A világirodalom a 20. században: Főbb áramlatok* [World literature in the 20th century. Main tendencies]. Budapest: Gondolat, 1987.
- Szegedi-Maszák, Mihály. "A nyelvhasználat megújításának hagyománya a modern regényírásban" [The tradition of renewing language in the modern novel]. *Irodalmi kánonok* [Literary canons]. Alföld könyvek. Debrecen: Csokonai, 1998. 94-124.
- . "A Nyugat és a világirodalom" [The *Nyugat* and world literature]. Székfoglalók a Magyar Tudományos Akadémián series [Inaugural speeches at the Hungarian Academy series]. Budapest: Akadémiai, 2000.
- . "Virginia Woolf." *Az angol irodalom a huszadik században*. I [World literature in the twentieth century. I.]. Ed. László Báti, István Kristó-Nagy. Intr. László Báti. Budapest: Gondolat, 1970. 245-62.
- . "Virginia Woolf: *A világítótorony*" [To the *Lighthouse*]. *Huszonöt fontos angol regény. Műelemzések* [Twenty-five crucial novels in English. Literary interpretations]. Ed. Júlia Kada. Budapest: Maecenas-Lord, 1996. 210-27.
- Szenczi, Miklós, Tibor Szobotka, Anna Katona. *Az angol irodalom története* [The history of English literature]. Budapest: Gondolat, 1972.
- Szerb, Antal. *Hétköznapok és csodák: Francia, angol, amerikai, német regények a világháború után* [Weekdays and wonders. French, English, American and German novels after the Great War]. Budapest: Révai, 1935.
- . *A világirodalom története* [The history of world literature, 1941]. 5th ed. Budapest: Magvető, 1973.
- Szilágyi, Júlia. "Hat regényhős megtalálta a szerzőt" [Six novel protagonists have found their author]. Virginia Woolf. *Hullámok* [*The Waves*]. Trans. Sándor Mátyás. Bukarest: Kriterion, 1987. 215-28.
- Ungvári, Tamás. *A modern irodalom válaszútjain: Irodalmi tanulmányok* [The options of modern literature. Essays on literature]. Budapest: Gondolat, 1984.
- . *A regény és az idő* [Time and the novel, 1977]. Gondolat: Budapest, 1988.
- Williams, Raymond. *Culture*. 1981. London: Fontana, 1989.
- Woolf, Virginia. *Clarissa* [*Mrs Dalloway* 1925]. Trans. István Nagypál. Budapest: Franklin, 1947.
- . *Egy jó házból való angol úrilány* [*Moments of Being* 1976—except for "Reminiscences"]. Trans., intr., annotations, and appendix Nóra Séllei. Artemisz Könyvek series. Debrecen: Csokonai, 1999.

- . *Éjre nap* [*Night and Day* 1919]. Trans. Dezső Tandori. Budapest: Európa, 2007.
- . *Évek* [*The Years* 1937]. Trans. András Hevesi. Intr. Aladár Schöpflin. Budapest: Franklin, 1940.
- . *Az évek* [*The Years* 1937]. Trans. Dezső Tandori. Budapest: Európa, 2006.
- . *Felvonások között* [*Between the Acts* 1941]. Trans. Dezső Tandori. Budapest: Európa, 2003.
- . *Flush* [*Flush* 1933]. Trans. György Rónay. Budapest: Révai, 1947 (multiple editions by other publishers as well).
- . "Folt a falon" ["*Mark on the Wall*" 1917]. Trans. László Gy. Horváth. *Ellenfelek: Angol elbeszélők a két világháború között* ["*Opponents. English short stories between the two world wars*"]. Ed. István Géher. Budapest: Európa, 1982. 255-63.
- . *Három adomány* [*Three Guineas* 1939]. Trans. Nóra Séllei. Mérleg Könyvek series. Budapest: Európa, 2006.
- . *Hullámok* [*The Waves* 1931]. Trans. Sándor Mátyás. Budapest: Európa, 1978 (multiple editions by other publishers as well).
- . *A hullámok* [*The Waves* 1931]. Trans. Dezső Tandori. Budapest: Európa, 2004.
- . *Jacob szobája* [*Jacob's Room* 1923]. Trans. László Gy. Horváth. Budapest: Európa, 2005.
- . *Messzeség* [*The Voyage Out* 1915]. Trans. Dezső Tandori. Budapest: Európa, 2007.
- . *Mrs. Dalloway* [*Mrs Dalloway* 1925]. Trans. Dezső Tandori. Budapest: Európa, 1971 (multiple editions by other publishers as well).
- . "Napló" [*Selections from her Diary*]. Trans. Júlia Képes. Ed., intr. Sándor Maller. *Nagyvilág* 33.10 (Oct 1988): 1496-513.
- . *Orlando* [*Orlando* 1928]. Trans. Nándor Szávai. Budapest: Révai, 1945. Revised trans. Piroska Szávai. Budapest: Európa, 1966 (multiple editions by other publishers as well).
- . "Az örökség" ["*The Legacy*" 1941]. Trans. István Géher. *Ellenfelek: Angol elbeszélők a két világháború között*. Ed. István Géher. Budapest: Európa, 1982. 264-76.
- . *A pille halála: Esszék* ["*The death of the moth. Essays*"]. Trans. Ágnes Bécsy, Mária Borbás, Levente Osztoivits, Ádám Réz, Mihály Szegedy-Maszák, Tibor Szobotka, Tünde Vajda. Ed., postscript and annotations Ágnes Bécsy. Budapest: Európa, 1980.
- . "Romance and the Heart." *A Woman's Essays*. Ed., intr., annotations Rachel Bowlby. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1992. 50-52.
- . *Saját szoba* [*A Room of One's Own* 1929]. Trans. Ágnes Bécsy. Mérleg Könyvek series. Budapest: Európa, 1986.
- . *A világítótorony* [*To the Lighthouse* 1927]. Trans. Sándor Mátyás. Világkönyvtár series. Budapest: Magvető 1971 (multiple editions by other publishers as well).

Zsadányi, Edit. *A csend retorikája: Elhallgatásalakzatok vizsgálata huszadik századi regényekben* [The rhetorics of silence. Tropes of silence in twentieth-century novels]. Pozsony: Kalligram, 2002.