



## Mr Povondra's Collage in Hungarian Concepts of Translation and Text

Anna STEINBACHNÉ BOBOK

University of Szeged (Hungary)  
Department of Comparative Literature  
anna.bobok.steinbach@gmail.com

**Abstract.** Karel Čapek's *The War with the Newts* combines a wide assortment of textual forms and genres to portray the assumed history of the newts in close connection with that of the human race. Newspaper articles, scientific studies, notes of drunken sailors, and other inserts form a unique collage in style as well as in layout. In the various editions of the originally 1948 Hungarian translation of the novel, the textual arrangements of the most composite part of *The War with the Newts* – the second book – are significantly altered compared to the Czech edition. Moreover, the introductory sentences of the inserts, the typefaces, and the stylistic differences tend to suggest that there is a different notion of text and reading underlying the Hungarian versions. Other unifying tendencies traceable in the translation, e.g. standardized language use or concepts of character identity, can be correlated with these features. As the borders of various text-types within the Czech text are reorganized and re-established in the translation, a different position of the reader and a different idea of the literary text emerge. My aim is to demonstrate the translational differences and try to account for them with an underlying concept of text and translation embedded in the Hungarian variant.

**Keywords:** translation, text layout, genre mixing, supplementarity

### 1. Introduction

Mr Povondra is the porter in the office of G. H. Bondy – who is a financial highflier in Prague, funding various commercial projects on a large scale – in the 1936 novel *The War with the Newts* by Karel Čapek (1890–1938). Thus, the character is closely connected to the financial enterprise called Salamander trade, which evolves as a world-shaping force throughout the text and leads to the hypothetical destruction of mankind. At one point, when this undertaking seems to become a success, Mr Povondra decides to collect any newspaper article connected with

newts which he encounters. These excerpts form the basis of a study on the history of newts, which appears as the second chapter of the second book. In this study, I endeavour to present and analyse the features of textual arrangement in the 1936 Czech edition compared to two Hungarian editions of the translation by László Szekeres (from the years 1948 and 2009).

## 2. Collage in the novel

When Aleš Haman summarizes the most important features of Čapek's prose, he concludes that the fundamental method of composition is the montage as the duality of viewpoints he recognizes in most of the novels is supported by this structure (Haman 2014: 20). The terms montage and collage seem interchangeable. However, I find it more useful to rely on collage in the case of *The War with the Newts* as montage is sometimes associated with blurring the borderlines of the items applied, while in Čapek's texts the various insertions seem to be more discernibly separated.

The recording and representation of the development of newt industry is comprised in a self-proclaimed scientific study in the 1936 edition. The layout of the text is characterized by footnotes and inserts quoting newspaper articles. Regarding the reliability and incomprehensive nature of these data, the narrator observes:

This means that the material we have available concerning the history of the newts is very fragmented, like the land records of the eighth century A.D., or the selected writings of the poetess, Sappho; but some documents, here and there, did happen to survive about this phase of the great history of the world, and despite all the gaps we will do our best to summarise them under the title *The Rise of Civilisation*. (Čapek 2002: n.p.)

The collection is exposed to the cleaning activities of Mrs Povondra and the haphazard selection performed by her husband. The problematic relationship between events and their recounting is thus presented through the chapter, exposing the historian as a reader and interpreter of the fragments of information that he compiles. The study aims to appear as a coherent recitation of the events, while the footnotes ostensibly emphasize the fictional reading process underlying it. Accordingly, the reading process of the actual reader is moved more into the focus of the text, showcasing the responsibilities of the interpreter.

Looking at the motley collection of newspaper articles – not mere texts; they are sometimes accompanied by a picture and featuring various typefaces –, they seem to form a collage on the pages of the novel. According to Louis Aragon, in

the cubist collage, the object, e.g. a piece of newspaper or cloth, or a matchstick, can be seen as a point of departure, a firm point to which the work of art can be anchored, and thus the relationship between reality and representation is firmly established. However, this very same object introduces the acknowledgement of the hopelessness of ever capturing, representing anything – as much a bottle of Suze, as a thunderbolt (Aragon 1969: 8). Not only is the concept of representation called into question by inserting objects into a painting but also the position of the painter and their individuality. This practice introduces the concept of chosen individuality, something dissociated to a certain extent from a biographical author, thus emphasizing the presence of other sources at the production and possibly at the reception of a work of art (Aragon 1969: 73).

However, inserting a non-painted object in the painting is only the first possibility. The collage opens up to its own imitation, as in Max Ernst's works. This procedure inevitably reflects on the nature of painting in general, namely representation being constructed and mediated, regardless of using more traditional, e.g. paint only or more subversive, e.g. collage methods (Aragon 1969: 20).

As for the possibility of collages in literature, Aragon argues the case mostly through his own texts, witnessing himself listening to telephone conversations and inserting them into his novels allegedly without any modification (Aragon 1969: 69). The question of authenticity is raised in a somewhat different manner in connection with collages on paintings and in literary works. A torn piece of newspaper glued onto the painting seems more closely and unarguably connected to the world outside the work of art; however, a printed line of text resembles the next one much more, regardless of the source, and the author even seen only as a transmitting medium – as in Aragon's case – still generates the texts.

These instances of literary collage are more dubitable than straightforward quotations, which are also incorporated in the concept in the introduction of Aragon's book (Aragon 1969: 14). Similar to the collage in painting, a quotation can be marked as something alien within the text. This markedness might simply be indicated with quotation marks; however, there is a wide range of other possibilities. In Čapek's novel, footnotes and seemingly reprinted newspaper articles and clippings introduce fictive other sources or other speakers into the text. The different source is clearly expressed through the different typefaces, columning and pictures, not to mention the introductory sentences to these excerpts, explaining the relationship between the study and its source texts. The relationship between fact and fiction, references to factual events within the narration of the study are thus brought into the foreground and posited as a point of dispute.

### 3. Three textual variants

Karel Čapek's novel, *Válka s mloky* (*The War with the Newts*) was originally published in parts on the pages of *Lidové noviny* – an independent daily paper supporting the Masaryk era's official democratic principles and edited among others by Čapek – at the bottom of the page containing miscellaneous short news. As Hansági observes, “a report can be structurally and stylistically similar below and above the line”<sup>1</sup> (2014: 233). Consequently, the act of citing fictitious newspaper articles takes on a parodistic and ironic feature placed next to real articles in a daily paper. The narrator's occasional derogatory remarks concerning the press are emphasized through the medium in which they appear. Mixing genres and establishing hierarchies regarding the texts belonging to them within one single chapter lead to a book format edition where this playful and ironic reference to the press still operates, even though in the absence of the surrounding of the newspaper it can be perceived as less forceful.

The first book format edition dates back to 1936, published by František Borový in a series of the Čapek brothers' writings. This edition portrays the second chapter of the second book in widely differing typefaces. Accordingly, the pages of the chapter show a mixture of texts at a first glance, visibly demarcating text types and the corresponding authors with the line above the footnotes. Crossing over this borderline is first and foremost performed by the introductory sentences to the clippings. The narrator of the study is in charge and indicates how the articles could be related to the so-called history of the newts. These introductory sentences are worth investigating as they are responsible for the incorporation of the footnotes into the main text.

The first footnote serves to ensure the interpretation of the main text as a scientific study, conforming to the expectation of citing other scientific works – in this case, comprehensive works on newts in five languages. Most of the following footnotes, however, are related to the main text in a different manner. They are being referred to as documents (Čapek 1936: 170), serving as the basis of the historian's inferences. When identifying these texts, the introductory sentences emphasize their reliability recurrently, through marking them out as witnesses (Čapek 1936: 171), news, an allegedly objective genre (Čapek 1936: 173), or objective descriptions of the given situation (Čapek 1936: 176). These introductory notes are thrown into sharp relief by more ironic sentences referring to the more interesting and illuminating – usually shorter – clippings, predominantly in unidentified or incomprehensible languages, as in footnotes no 8, 22, or 27 (Čapek 1936: 175, 231, 246 respectively). On the one hand, emphasizing the reliability of the sources and, on the other, showcasing texts labelled crucial to the understanding of newt history while completely incomprehensible forms

1 <sup>1</sup> The translation is my own.

a strong contrast and calls into question the fictitious veracity of the study and the process of relying on texts to understand historical events. Interestingly, there is one footnote, the second, which refers to a previous part of the novel (Čapek 1936: 169), thus creating a metalepsis, and while intertwining different levels of the narration, further problematizing the status of written words, newspaper articles, and scientific studies.

In the 1936 edition, most of the articles cited in the study appear in footnotes; however, there are some – usually longer ones – which are quoted in the main text, e.g. the article on S-Trade (Čapek 1936: 176) or the report on salamander piracy, *Bukanýři XX. století* ‘Pirates of the Twentieth Century’ (Čapek 1936: 184). These articles are separated from the main text only by their title and italicizing. A considerable amount of the texts cited are further linked to contemporary press through the acronyms or names of news agencies or publicists. Contemporary celebrities are also represented, e.g. when answering to the question whether newts have spirits (Čapek 1936: 199–201). Similarly, social and political movements appear through their endeavour to win the newts’ attention (Čapek 1936: 230). These instances of literary crossover – in this case between fiction and historical characters (Benyovszky 2016: 389) – more emphatically incorporate the world of the daily papers and the political-historical background of the undefined but perhaps not undefinable times of the 1930s. However, the playful and parodistic uses of historical elements, e.g. a reference to Curtius’s language-teaching book carrying the title resembling Comenius’s famous work – *Janua linguarum aperta* (Čapek 1936: 206) –, constantly undermine the identification of any more or less precise time. Crossover seen as manipulation with characters (Benyovszky 2016: 393) is a powerful tool to blend realistic elements into the fictitious world of the novel. The documentary inclination traceable in the footnotes of the study appeals to credence through it. This illusion of documentarism draws further attention to the problem of telling a historical story reliably, especially thanks to the sensational nature of the press and the celebrities associated with it.

Those cases of crossover and fictitious articles which rely on Czech characters pose a more challenging task to the translator than that of more internationally renowned people. References to the nineteenth-century poet Boleslav Jablonský do not convey much information to the Hungarian reader. However, the elevated style parodied in the report in which he is mentioned seems more transferable (Čapek 1936: 210–215). These examples will be examined in detail in case of both Hungarian editions.

In the first edition of the Hungarian translation (1948), the second book of the novel comprises four chapters instead of the original three. This change is due to the handling of the original footnotes: the newspaper articles cited do not appear on the page where they are being referred to but in a separate chapter. The text of the study forms the second chapter with footnotes directing the reader to the

next. However, this treatment is not prevalent in all cases. Some of the shorter excerpts are presented in their original place, e.g. the newspaper clipping written in an unidentifiable language (Čapek 1948: 140).

In some instances, whole articles or paragraphs are missing from the translation. This happens in the case of a short news item concerning Great Britain's approach to the newt business. The missing paragraph covered the issue of the colonies and the acceptance of employing newts there as opposed to their strict refusal on the British Isles (Čapek 1936: 171–172, Čapek 1948: 180). The completely omitted articles include a report on the conference of French scientists concerning newts and their intelligence and an article about Czech travellers who met a Czech-speaking newt on the Galapagos Islands. In the latter case, a study is used to introduce the article and depict the upheaval of teaching Czech language to newts. This study has only been translated into Hungarian partially with a considerable amount of omission (Čapek 1948: 161). As for the articles in the third chapter, all of them are emblazoned with a title in the same font, regardless of their having a title in the Czech text or not.

In this first version of the translation, Czech surnames and geographical names are very often domesticated. They are translated into Hungarian in the case of some first names. Lesser-known geographical names, e.g. parts of Prague, are substituted with more general expressions, and less obvious references to Czech culture are substituted by more famous ones, e.g. *Šárka*, the name of a boat is converted into *Moldva*, the Hungarian name for the River Vltava (Čapek 1948: 117).

The currently available edition of 2009 contains most of the missing parts of the 1948 edition. These amendments date back to the edition in 1956, published by *Európa*, a publishing house releasing primarily foreign literature. While most of the Czech text is thus translated, the layout of the chapter is even more unified than in the first edition. All the cited articles are incorporated into the main body of the text, and the introductory sentences of the footnotes are usually added to the preceding paragraph of the study. This method leads to some strangely displaced expressions, e.g. *Vesd össze* 'cf.' as the predicative of a sentence in the study (Čapek 2009: 133). Incorporating these typically footnote-style sentences into the main text results in a less convincing mimic of a study on history.

All the newspaper clippings appear in the same format, they are divided from the main text with lines, and their titles are in the same font. Similar to other parts of the novel, footnotes explaining non-Hungarian expressions are added to the text, while the foreign words are italicized in the body of the study.

In the 2009 edition, references to Czech culture are more often retained in their original form than in the 1948 edition. Names are used in their Czech form with appropriate spelling. The article concerning the Czech-speaking newt is not omitted. Interestingly enough, no footnotes elucidate the references to Czech history or grammar despite the tendency otherwise prevalent in the edition to

supply the reader with information on anything not in Hungarian. It appears that only those elements were treated as foreign and possibly unknown to readers which appeared as foreign in the context of the original.

In the 1948 edition, the supplementary chapter raises the question of visibility. How do the references in the footnotes operate? Does a separate chapter emphasize the importance of the insertions or does it reduce their visibility through the readers' presumed tendency not to look up the references? The fact that ideologically problematic parts are readily deposited in the third chapter, e.g. a parody of the Communist Manifesto, subscribed by Molokov, a reference to Molotov, in Czech (Čapek 1936: 228–229) and in Sz. ALAM ANDRA<sup>2</sup> in Hungarian (Čapek 1948: 189), a name devoid of any reference to contemporary Soviet leaders, may point to the latter interpretation. As the uniform supplementary articles appear detached from the text that uses them as points of reference, the connection of these textual counterparts is more remote than in the case of the Czech text.

The 2009 edition's tendency to explain foreign expressions indicates a wish to provide the reader with all the necessary information that they probably lack. The foreign, mostly English but occasionally French, words are italicized even in those cases when the Czech edition does not highlight them. This phenomenon gains importance mostly in other parts of the novel, where the character of Captain van Toch is portrayed through his speech integrating words of more than one language, thus indicating that his identity is not connected to only one nation or language. In this captain's case, separating words from different languages via the layout of the text seems to draw attention away from the utterances as wholes, forming part of a dialogue where understanding is at stake between the characters – and not primarily between reader and text – and where this understanding unfolds despite the difficulties in the second chapter in the first book (Čapek 1936: 28–38, Čapek 2009: 20–27).

#### 4. Do newts have a soul?

To exemplify the differences prevalent in the three textual variants described above, the newspaper excerpt on the question of the soul of newts will be examined here. The survey of the *Daily Star* is represented in the chapter as evidence of the change traceable in the approach to the newts. According to the main text:

[I]t was entirely natural that the newts stopped being a sensation, even though there were now as many as a hundred million of them; the public interest they had excited had been the interest of a novelty. They

<sup>2</sup> The name read in one word means 'newt' in Hungarian.

still appeared now and then in films (Sally and Andy, the Two Good Salamanders) and on the cabaret stage where singers endowed with an especially bad voice came on in the role of newts with rasping voices and atrocious grammar, but as soon as the newts had become a familiar and large-scale phenomenon the problems they presented, so to speak, were of a different character. (Čapek 2002: n.p.)

The turn from sensation to omnipresent workforce resulted in the emergence of the newt question. On the one hand, the survey in the footnotes illustrates the character of this question, while following the progress of the main text the problem of education for newts arises, on the other (Čapek 1936: 200). These two lines of questioning run next to each other throughout three pages in the 1936 edition, the survey occupying more than two-thirds of the latter two (Čapek 1936: 199–201). The respondents include such celebrities as Mae West, Toscanini, or G. B. Show. The answers to whether newts have souls range from elevated through ironic to derogatory. In the meantime, the main text embarks on portraying the story of the committed and zealous Louise Zimmermann, propagating appropriate education for newts. This introduction is not lacking in slightly ironic remarks either, e.g. “[n]ot for the first time in the history of mankind, the most vigorous activist in the Newt Question was of course a woman” (Čapek 2002: n.p.).

The survey of the *Daily Star* very clearly exemplifies the approach that animals are a means of self-definition for mankind. The question is turned inside out by most of the respondents as the centre of their answer turns out to be the definition of soul. A clear example is Colonel John W. Britton’s answer: “[a] friend of mine, the Reverend H.B. Bertram, and I observed some newts over a long period while they were building a dam in Aden. We also spoke with them on two or three occasions, but we found no indications of any higher feelings such as Honour, Faith, Patriotism or interest in Sport. And what else, may I ask, is there that could be seen as an indication of a soul?” (Čapek 2002: n.p.). A perhaps more provocative notion of the soul is attributed to Mae West: “They ain’t got no sex-appeal. And that means they ain’t got a soul” (Čapek 2002: n.p.).

The humorous, ironic, or evasive answers, e.g. Tony Weissmüller’s, who does not seem to be interested in the question of soul but much rather in that of swimming techniques, illustrate a contrary approach to newts compared to Louise Zimmermann, though one of the contributors, Madeleine Roche, doting on her Chinese dog seems to look upon animals with a similar eye. However, the miscellaneous nature of the responses, the various approaches they represent form a very different standpoint than in the case of this enthusiastic and elevated pedagogue, fighting for the recognition of her own point of view. The narrator of the study, however, relies on the diversity of approaches and relates somewhat ironically to the ambitious project of newt education.



Consequently, the quoted survey is related to the main text of the study in a dual way. On the one hand, there is an opposition as the subject of the study is elevated and aspiring to redeem the world, whereas the newspaper excerpts suggest an almost general frivolity towards the newts, concentrating first and foremost on mankind. On the other hand, the irony displayed in certain answers as well as in their juxtaposition is in parallel with the narrator's standpoint. The physical proximity of the texts belonging to very different genres testifies the variety of imaginable approaches, while the layout of the pages, where three to six lines are devoted to the history of newt education and all that is left showcases newspaper clippings, suggests the larger influence or incidence of the popular press.

In the Hungarian translation from 1948, the reference to the survey of the *Daily Star* precedes the subject of newt education, in accordance with the Czech text. However, thanks to the structure of the edition, the reference leads to a text physically completely separate from the following sentences of the main text (Čapek 1948: 166, 182–183). Thus, the consecutive nature of the act of reading is not complemented by the simultaneity of the visible page as in the Czech edition, resulting in a reading more exclusively relying on a cause and effect structure: the frivolous approach to newts leading to the campaign for education. Consequently, there is more room for a grand narrative explaining newt history than for the portrayal of different perspectives coexisting and contradicting each other.

In the 2009 edition of the Hungarian text, a different editorial solution leads to similar effects (Čapek 2009: 156–158). The introductory sentences from the footnote of the original are moved to the main text of the study. The newt issue is thus exemplified by the question of soul, which leads to the conundrum to what extent should newts be regarded as and treated similarly to humans. The following paragraphs embark on the introduction of newt education, with a possibility of deducing this phenomenon from the question on the status of newts. This logic is not absent in the Czech text; however, it receives much more emphasis in the Hungarian variants thanks to the layout of the chapter.

## 5. The supplementary in translation

In the examined chapter of the Čapek novel, the main text of the historical study and the reports, news items, slogans, etc. cooperate to construct a story, to a certain extent independent of the previously mentioned human characters, focusing on the appearance and spread of newts on the globe and in the press. The genres deployed in the supplementary texts indicate various possibilities of approaching the newt question, ranging from providing allegedly objective information on industrial development to pathetic pictures of human pedagogues offering literary delicacies to the salamanders.

According to Derrida, the supplement has a dual nature. On the one hand, “[t]he supplement adds itself, it is a surplus, a plenitude enriching another plenitude, the *fullest measure* of presence”, while on the other “[i]t adds only to replace, it intervenes or insinuates itself *in-the-place-of*; if it fills, it is as one fills a void” (Derrida 1992: 83). From the narrator’s standpoint – taken up as that of the historian – the texts cited attest to his statements in the main text, functioning as source and evidence at the same time. The various genres provide a wide choice of approaches to newts and events connected to them. These excerpts evoke a fullness of sources and viewpoints, portraying the newts in different situations, ranging from saving people at sea through being victims of black trade to learning languages. However, the constant presence of these supplementary texts poses the question of the reliability of the study and historical discourse in general. The dual nature of supplements analysed by Derrida is present in this text as well.

The 1948 edition of the Hungarian translation hides the articles into another chapter, and thus the connection between the text of the study and that of the supplements is less apparent. Most of the footnotes refer with almost identical sentences to relevant parts of the following chapter. Naturally, these newspaper clippings still operate in the way described by Derrida; however, the dual nature of the supplement is only visible to a lesser extent as the comparatively less ironic text of the study and the considerably more often ironic articles cannot interact as immediately as in the case of the Czech edition.

A more radical approach to presenting the articles and the study can be detected in the 2009 edition. In this case, most of the articles are inserted into the main text. The result of the titles and the lines dividing the different texts is a more continuous and integrated text, where the supplementary articles work similarly to quotes. Thus, the excerpts seem to coincide more unequivocally with the logic of the main text. Accordingly, they function as a supplement to a lesser extent as the distance between the supplement and the supplemented is less perceptible. Moreover, the fullness of the surplus is not represented as visibly as in the Czech variant thanks to the unified typeface.

When examining the significance of the supplement, Derrida states that it permeates the so-called reality to such an extent that our perception of it is always already supplementary, and the meaning cannot be located outside the text as “there is nothing that completely escapes the general qualities of textuality” (Derrida 1992: 102). The fictitious articles, manifestos, slogans, etc. refer to the constructed textual nature of the presumed outside of the text since they represent the desired objectivity of historical investigation exposed to the mediation and narration inherent in texts.

“[T]here have never been anything but supplements, substitutive significations which could only come forth in a chain of differential references, the ‘real’ supervening, and being added only while taking on meaning from a trace

and from an invocation of the supplement” (Derrida 1992: 102). Criticism on unconditional reliance on texts reaching out to reality is a crucial point in the Čapek text. The outwardly supplementary construction of the chapter in question supports this line of interpretation proportionately, which is downplayed in the less emphatically supplementary layout of the new Hungarian edition.

## 6. Endeavours and possibilities – The reader

The unity of the text would appear as a central question of the chapter. Different parts are identifiable as shorter texts belonging to various genres, while this compilation aims to fashion a history of the newts, as the narrator testifies in the subtitle of the chapter. The layout of the Czech text strongly supports this diversity and the subversive approach to the text as a whole. When Hajdu reviews the concept of unity and its history with regard to the novel, he comes to the conclusion that as most of the literary texts cannot be seen as a complete whole, unity is not immanent in the novel. Thus, he points out unity as the effort of the reader, a tendency to discover unity in the text (Hajdu 2003: 20).

When examining the perception of a literary text, Iser infers that the reader is characterized by a wandering viewpoint as they endeavour to construct a whole, but the consecutive reception of the various parts of the text modifies this whole; moreover, the already existing viewpoint modifies the reception of the upcoming parts of the text (Iser 1978: 108–109). Iser does not detect any problem in connection with the denotative operation of a text as opposed to Derrida; however, his approach can be important as it emphasizes the creative activity of the reader.

The examined chapter of *The War with the Newts* in its Hungarian translation appears as posing less challenge to the possible unifying activities of the reader. As the typeface is more unified in both editions, though to a somewhat lesser extent in the 1948 edition, the diversity of the text is less apparent at a first glance. More importantly, the first edition of the translation reproduces the text of the study as uninterrupted by the immediate presence of the articles. The footnotes referring to the next chapter’s newspaper clippings direct the reader to these texts, and it could be argued that this way the reception of the chapter must be more interrupted thanks to the back and forth movement between the two chapters. However, the repetitive and practically unchanging sentences in the footnotes can easily be ignored, while the overall text looks like a monolith on the pages. As for the 2009 edition, the integration of almost all articles into the main text of the study enhances the possibilities of a more unified interpretation and less regard for the divergent tendencies in the text – various genres with different approaches to the referential world.

Investigating the presence of the narrator's viewpoint, Iser points out that titles – in the Thackeray example, chapter titles – can be the instrument of focalization (Iser 1978: 113). When looking at both editions of the Hungarian translation, it can be seen that in some cases the newspaper clippings are supplemented with a title which does not appear in the Czech edition. These instances of addition orientate the reader, on the one hand, and, on the other, tame the excerpts to the extent that they seem to be integrated into the text by being labelled, enhancing the impression that there is one single narration that permeates the chapter.

Based on the examination of the two editions of the Hungarian translation, it can be determined that a reading process with a tendency to unify faces less challenge than in the case of the Czech text. The approach to narration and text itself seems to encompass less ambiguity, interpretational possibilities are more forcefully governed by the relative omnipotence of the narrator, and irony resulting from different viewpoints gains lesser importance.

## **7. A concept of translation and its concept of the text**

According to Gideon Toury, concepts permeating in a literary polysystem can be traced to their originals based on the approach of translations. Similarly, the concept of translation can be inferred from the choices and solutions of the translator (Toury 1995: n.p.). In the case of Čapek's *The War with the Newts*, based on the examination of the second chapter in the second book, the Hungarian translation seems to approach translation itself as a process of presenting a book easily approachable for home audiences. Omitting or generalizing references to presumably unknown elements of Czech culture go hand in hand with a tendency to simplify the variety of viewpoints present in the original. Self-referential gestures in the text are emphasized to a lesser extent, similarly to the reduction of linguistic diversity. The result is a less problematically consumable text, where less effort is expected on the interpretational side: a less avant-garde text, relying more on the smooth continuity of narration.

## References

- Aragon, L. 1969. *A kollázs*. Transl. by Endre Bajomi Lázár. Budapest: Corvina.
- Benyovszky K. 2016. Keresztül-kasul a szövegeken: Szempontok az irodalmi crossover meghatározásához. *Helikon* 3/2016: 388–397.
- Čapek, K. 1936. *Válka s mloky*. Prague: František Borový.
1948. *Harc a szalamandrakkal*. Transl. by László Szekeres. Budapest: Anonymus.
2006. *The War with the Newts*. Transl. by David Wyllie. <http://gutenberg.net.au/ebooks06/0601981h.html> (last accessed on: 16 May 2018).
2009. *Harc a szalamandrakkal*. Transl. by László Szekeres. Budapest: Alinea.
- Derrida, J. 1992. “...That dangerous supplement...” Transl. by Gayarti Chakravorty Spivak. In: Derek Attridge (ed.), *Acts of literature*. New York–London: Routledge.
- Hajdu P. 2003. A regény egységességéről. In: Ildikó Józán–Ernő Kulcsár Szabó–Mihály Szegedy-Maszák (eds), *Az elbeszélés módozatai*. Budapest: Osiris. 9–27.
- Haman, A. 2014. *Tři stálice moderní české prózy: Neruda, Čapek, Kundera*. Praha: Karolinum.
- Hansági Á. 2014. *Tárca–regény–nyilvánosság: Jókai Mór és a magyar tárcaregény kezdetei*. Budapest: Ráció.
- Iser, W. 1978. *The act of reading. A theory of aesthetic response*. London–Henley: Routledge–Kegan Paul.
- Toury, G. 1995. *Descriptive translation studies – and beyond*. John Benjamins Publishing. <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=360936> (last accessed on: 16 May 2018).