

Games Names Play: Translating Onomastic Comedy in *Ulysses*

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Abstract: The discussion deals with the translation in various languages of a number of characters' names in *Ulysses* whose primary relevance is their overtly comic potential. Jokes are notoriously difficult to translate, and the same is certainly true of joking names. Some of the ways are explored in which translators of *Ulysses* in several languages react to the implied onomastic challenge of two overtly comic catalogues of names in «Cyclops,» the first involving the (invented) «Friends of the Emerald Isle» (*U* 12.555-69) and the second the (invented) attendees of the (invented) «Forest Wedding» (*U* 12.1268-80).

Keywords: *Ulysses*; comic naming; translatorial challenges.

Modern translation theory, as is well known, discourages the translation of proper names, but comic names clearly constitute a significant exception to that rule. The present discussion deals with the translation in various languages of a number of characters' names in James Joyce's *Ulysses* whose primary relevance is quite clearly, in a spirit of pure onomastic fun, their overtly comic potential. Jokes are notoriously difficult to translate, and the same is certainly true of joking names. Here we explore some of the ways in which a particular group of more or less randomly selected translators of *Ulysses* in several languages react to the implied onomastic challenge. The discussion concerns the various translations of two of Joyce's overtly comic catalogues of names in “Cyclops,” the first involving the (invented) Friends of the Emerald Isle (*U* 12.555-69) and the second the (invented) attendees of the (invented) Forest Wedding (*U* 12.1268-80) respectively.² The discussion is limited in each case to a selection of the more interesting and more amusing renderings of the particular name.

I

A delegation of the “Friends of the Emerald Isle” presented in “Cyclops” (*U* 12.555-69) as allegedly in attendance on a particular solemn occasion includes a number of highly colourfully and parodically named invented international dignitaries. They are all, by definition, foreigners, and therefore, in the bigoted world of the denizens of “Cyclops,”

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² On names and naming in Joyce, see Culleton; on names in *Ulysses*, see Vors, and Palme; on translations of *Ulysses* in general, see O'Neill (158-177).

naturally deeply suspect. A central function of the catalogue is thus its onomastic echo of the flaunted xenophobia of the chapter, spicing cultural references of various kinds with highly unflattering national stereotypes, personal slurs, and very broad comicy. As Marie-Danièle Vors observes, however, its real point is the pure pleasure of playing with the ludic possibilities of ostentatiously foreign names and naming conventions (286). Translators (most of them of course also foreigners) have responded with varying degrees of enthusiasm and ingenuity to the challenge of responding to these names, of which the following is merely a selection.³

Commendatore Bacibaci Beninobenone, the leader of the deputation, has a pseudo-Italian name that translates roughly as “Commander Kisskiss Pretty-well-very-well” (Gifford 1988: 334) or just “Kisskiss Goodgood.” His name, suggesting a personal disposition that is kindly and benign (*benigno*), provides a caricature of a complacently smiling public man, a political animal kissing hands and babies while cynically and provisionally approving all positions, however conflicting, taken by potential supporters and voters. Italian *commendatore* (“commander”) is also the appropriate title for a Knight Commander of an order of chivalry – who in this case turns out a few pages later to be a thieving Italian pickpocket (*U* 12.584-91). Words, in this case, apparently fail our panel of a dozen translators, not one of whom attempts to translate either the commendatore’s benignly oscular given name or opportunistically placatory family name.

Monsieur Pierrepaul Petitépatant is evidently of French origin, and while it is obvious (*patent*) that his stature is small (*petit*), and that he apparently just pitterpatters along, no doubt occasionally robbing Peter to pay Paul, he is clearly amazing (*épatant*) in at least one way. More precisely, his claim to distinction is due to his little man, his penis, his *petit* in French slang (MacArthur 529). The small but amazingly endowed gentleman is of course in jocular accord with the popular stereotype of the French as great lovers. Of the dozen translators considered here, eleven leave him to enjoy his natural advantages. One, however, Salas Subirat, who minimally but with considerable effect renames him “Petitépatan” in Spanish rather than “Petitépatant,” is very unimpressed, evidently considering Pierrepaul as just a good-for-nothing lout (*patán*) with manners that are offensively rude and boorish (*patán*).

The Grandjoker Vladinmire Pokethankertscheff is evidently of Slavic extraction. The Russian given name Vladimir, originally made famous by the eleventh-century St

³ Page references for translations considered here are as follows: Morel (vol. 1, 443) and Aubert (382-383) in French; Goyert (345-346) and Wollschläger (425-427) in German; Salas Subirat (239), Valverde (382-383), García Tortosa (352-353), and Zabaloy (307) in Spanish; de Angelis (299-300) and Terrinoni (371-372) in Italian; Palma-Ferreira (343-344) in Portuguese; and Mallafrè (319) in Catalan.

Vladimir, Grand Duke of Kiev, is composed of the Old Slavonic elements *vолод* (“rule”) and *мери* (“famous, glorious”) (Hanks 643). In Joyce’s coinage, “Vladinmire,” not just a joker but a grandjoker, has definitely strayed off such paths of glory, is now flat in the mire, and appears to be in urgent need of a pocket handkerchief to clean off his ugly mug (Italian *ceffo*). He attracts more than a little attention from our translators. Morel’s French renames him as “Vlalekroumir Tiremolardoff,” the first name combining *voilà l’écrou* (“here’s the nut”) and the “-mir” of *Vladimir*, the second playing in highly uncomplimentary fashion on *tire-jus* (“snotrag”) and *mollard* (“gob of spit”) as well as hinting at a *voleur à la tire* (“pickpocket”). Aubert’s “Vladinmire Mouchardeposcheff” leaves Vlad in the mire while equipping him with a *mouchoir de poche* (“pocket handkerchief”) and suggesting in passing that he may be a *mouchard* (“informer, police spy”). Three of four Spanish translators (the exception being Zabaloy) more charitably restore “Vladinmire” to “Vladimiro,” hispanicizing the Slavic given name and thus implicitly liberating him from the mire. Salas Subirat’s “Vladimiro Bolsipañueloff” provides him with a Spanish handkerchief (*pañuelo*) for his pocket (*bolsillo*); García Tortosa’s “Vladimiro Bolsimokeroff” likewise, if in different words, provides a handkerchief (*moquero*) for his pocket (*bolsillo*); Mallafrè rebaptizes him along much the same lines as “Bledemir Mocadorixeff,” characterizing him as stupid (*bleda*) while likewise also equipping him with an onomastic handkerchief (*mocador*). Valverde’s “Vladimiro Sparragof,” meanwhile, perhaps thinking that vituperation has gone far enough, renames him, without offering a handkerchief, as just a long, lanky galoot with muscles like those of an asparagus (*espárrago*). De Angelis also seems to feel that a change of name is called for, his “Vladimiro Bruttoceff” likewise liberating our man from the mire – though at the same time less than charitably renaming him for his ugly (*brutto*) fat face (*ceffo*).

The Russian delegate thus comprehensively dealt with, it is the turn of the splendidly named Archjoker Leopold Rudolph von Schwanzenbad-Hodenthaler, the name satirically invoking an archduke of the old Austro-Hungarian aristocracy (Senn 153n1) while combining the given names of Bloom, his father, and his son. The suffixes *-bad* (“spa, bath”), *-tal* or *-thal* (“valley”), and *-taler* or *-thaler* (“valley dweller”) are common in German place names and family names (*Karlsbad, Rosentaler*). Since *Schwanz* and *Hoden* translate in colloquial usage as “penis” and “testicles” respectively, an approximate English parallel on a similar stylistic level would be something like “Cockbath-Ballsdale.”⁴ Eleven of twelve translators are understandably happy to leave the name and the matter alone. Aubert’s French substitutes French aristocracy for Austro-Hungarian with a quasi-

⁴ Gifford’s “Penis-in-bath Inhabitant-of-the-valley-of-testicles” is both inaccurate and unnecessarily ponderous (334).

Proustean “Leopold Rodolphe de Baindequeue de Périné,” retaining an exact French rendering (*queue*) of German *Schwanz* elegantly and pseudo-discreetly combined with the perineum rather than the testicles.

Countess Marha Virág Kisászony Putrápesthi is clearly a Hungarian lady whose name classifies her as bovine (Hungarian *marha* “beef”) on the one hand, while suggesting a combination of a Bloomean flower (*virág*) and a Circean virago on the other. She is a little (*kis*) woman (*asszonys*), unmarried (*kissasszony* “Miss”), and her forebears apparently hailed from Budapest (*budapesti* “from Budapest”), a place here robustly characterized interlingually as both putrid and pestilential. It is unclear whether the likewise interlingually implied “kiss ass only” describes an active or a passive preference on her part, but in either event it is evocative of the Blooms’ topsy-turvy sleeping arrangements. “Marha” also suggests both “Martha” and “Maria,” and three translators, Salas Subirat, Zabaloy, and Palma-Ferreira, actually read the name as “Martha Virág Kisászony Putápesthi,” thus unambiguously evoking Martha Clifford while charitably dispensing with the bovine resonance. Aubert’s French “Marha Virág Kisászony Putápesthi,” meanwhile, leaves “Marha” unchanged, but suggests robustly that she is both a virago à la Bella Cohen and a pestilential Budapest whore (Spanish *puta*). Mallafrè’s “Comtessa Marha Virág Besátjony Putrápesthi” is assigned more specialized sexual interests, for she appears, as “Besátjony,” no longer just to “kiss ass only” but, more specifically, kisses (*besat*) the yoni of a no doubt appropriately grateful recipient.

Hiram Y. Bomboost, bombastically American, bears a biblical given name once borne by a highly effective tenth-century Phoenician king of Tyre, an ally of King Solomon, which may well contribute to giving our modern-day Hiram something of a psychological boost. Since relatively few male names begin with the letter *y*, however, Hiram’s middle name may be a culturally corresponding “Yoram,” borne in the Bible by a king of Israel who, unlike Hiram, came to a distinctly bad end (Hanks 890). Aubert chooses to celebrate the achievements of “Hiram Y. Bombanst,” even giving him an additional boost with a round of French applause (*ban*). Salas Subirat’s “Hiram Y. Boomboost” seems more preoccupied with the inevitability of any boom being inevitably followed by a bust, as apparently does also Mallafrè’s “Hiram Y. Bombust.”

Count Athanatos Karamelopoulos is clearly Greek. His given name provides resonances both of Athens and of Homer’s immortal gods (*athanatoi*). Onomastically deathless (*athanatos*) himself, he is bathetically a descendant (-*opoulos*) not of any Olympian being but of an ancestor sweetly named Sweetmeat. Both French translators correct Joyce’s Greek with “Athanatos Karamelopoulos,” while others preserve a respectful

silence – other than Palma-Ferreira’s orthographical adjustment to “Caramelopoulos” and Mallafrè’s to “Athànatos Karamelòpulos.”

Ali Baba Backsheesh Rahat Lokum Effendi evidently hails from Arabia. His name begins with that of Ali Baba, known to all from the *Arabian Nights*, followed by an echo of the English children’s rhyme “Ba, ba, black sheep” and the introduction of the inevitable gratuity (*baksheesh*) expected of western travelers by stereotypically grasping Oriental locals. It continues with what Gifford calls the Turkish title of *rahat lokum effendi* and translates as “serene effulgent master” (334). While Turkish *efendi* is indeed a title of respect (“lord, master”), however, *rahat lokum* is merely one of the terms used for Turkish Delight, thus constituting a humorous textual link to the immediately preceding Athanatos Karamelopoulos. Only one translator varies the formula other than in details of spelling: Salas-Subirat, perhaps inadvertently, substitutes “Rabat” for “Rahat,” thus enhancing (or at any rate diversifying) the cultural context by introducing the capital of Morocco into the onomastic mix.

The six components of Ali Baba Backsheesh’s name are immediately trumped numerically by the no fewer than nine components constituting the name of his successor, Señor Hidalgo Caballero Don Pecadillo y Palabras y Paternoster de la Malora de la Malaria. Don Pecadillo is a Spanish gentleman suffering not just from the occasional ill-advised lapse of judgment but also from onomastic hyperinflation, with four honorifics introducing one individual enjoying five names. Spanish naming conventions are adjusted to assign him an alliterative given name suggesting minor transgressions followed by a palaver of long-winded excuses and prayerful repentance and a family name combining an “evil hour” (*mala hora*) and an attack of malaria. Since the Triestine *malora* means “hell” – as in “go to hell” (McCourt 53) – the segment *Paternoster de la Malora* means “Our Father who is in Hell.” Stunned by such onomastic excess, ten of twelve translators just leave the matter alone. Only one version, Valverde’s “Señor Hidalgo Caballero Don Pecadillo Palabras y Paternoster de la Malahora de la Malaria” tactfully improves Joyce’s Spanish, clarifying in accordance with Spanish onomastic conventions that “Pecadillo” is the given name and the remaining four elements constituents of the family name, while Palma-Ferreira gives his titles a Portuguese flavour with “o Senhor Fidalgo Cavaleiro Dom Pecadillo.”

The next following name, Hokopoko Harakiri, suggests a Japanese who sometimes engages in ceremonial hocus-pocus and sometimes, no doubt for relaxation, dances the hokey pokey. Since both these phrases are occasionally associated, rightly or wrongly, with *Hoc est corpus* – from the liturgical formula of the Mass *Hoc est enim corpus meum*

(“This is my body”) – it has a certain appropriateness that the hocus-pocus involved should precede a significant bodily ritual, namely suicide by self-disembowelment. García Tortosa’s rendering as “Abricadabri Harakiri” suggests, entering into the spirit of the thing, a stage magician’s flourish, “abracadabra,” to accompany the ritual opening up (Spanish *abrir* “to open”) of what will very soon be a corpse (*cadáver*). All other translators are content to leave well enough alone.

Hi Hung Chang is undoubtedly Chinese. Mr Chang appears onomastically predestined to end his days on the gallows high. Assiduous detective work on the part of Joyce scholars has established that one Li Hung Chang (1823-1901) was a real-life Chinese dignitary who paid a formal visit to London and the Court of St James in 1896 (Benstock and Benstock 28, 66). Mallafrè, departing from standard English-language romanization conventions for Chinese names, catalanizes the name as “Hi Hung Xang,” while Aubert’s considerably more radical version of the name, “Hi Han Chang,” helpfully assigns Mr Hi to his proper ethnic group, the Han Chinese, while simultaneously suggesting, less than respectfully, that he is really, all things considered, a bit of a donkey, French *hi-han* translating the English “heehaw.”

Returning to Europe, Olaf Kobberkeddelsen is undoubtedly Danish. On the face of it, Olaf, punningly (“oh, laugh”), is a descendant either of a copper kettle or of one who acquired the nickname Kobberkeddel from dealing in them. Etymology doubly supports the pun: the Old Norse personal name Kettil referred to a sacrificial cauldron or kettle (Hanks 801), and the English noun *copper* denotes a large vessel for washing clothes or the like, likewise referred to as a kettle. Olaf’s name is not without its Irish connections: his given name is also that of the ninth-century Danish founder of Dublin, Olaf the White. The informal Australian *cobber*, meanwhile, of undetermined origin, means “friend,” and one of Joyce’s fellow students and friends at UCD was Thomas Kettle (1880-1916), whose family name also derives from the Old Norse *Kettil* (Hanks 341), and who was killed in France as a British soldier during the Battle of the Somme in September 1916. Kettle’s insistence that a new Ireland would have to be a European Ireland (Ellmann 62-63) may well have inspired the name of the Scandinavian stalwart referred to here. Only García Tortosa ventures a partial transposition of the name, with “Olaf Kobrecalderesen,” combining Spanish *cobre* (“copper”) and *caldera* (“cauldron, kettle”).

Mynheer Trik van Trumps is evidently a tricky Dutch gentleman much given to card games and presumably always holding a good hand. Morel’s much altered version, “As van Roidam,” shows him, in fact, as in principle holding all of the ace (French *as*), king (*roi*), and queen (*dame*) in any given suit. Aubert evidently suspects darkly that

this “Trik van Tromps” is not above cheating (French *tromper* “to cheat”), a suspicion also adumbrated in Mallafrè’s “Mynherr Truk van Trompis.” García Tortosa’s “Triki van Traque,” meanwhile, is definitely a tricky character, possibly also good at backgammon (Dutch *triktrak*), no doubt often drunk (Spanish *traqueado*) and consequently of threadbare appearance (*traqueado*), but evidently still a bit of a firecracker (*triquitraqe*), apparently determined to go out with a bang (*traque*).

Pan Poleaxe Paddyriský is undoubtedly of Polish origin, his first name even evoking Shakespeare’s King Hamlet who allegedly “smote the sledded Polacks on the ice” (*Hamlet* I.1.63; Craig 871), his second name evoking that of Jan Paderewski (1860-1941), renowned Polish pianist, composer, diplomat, and eventually, briefly, Prime Minister of Poland. Polish *pan* (“lord, master”) is a title of respect, while pseudo-Paderewski is accompanied by echoes of Irish Paddies riskily wielding poleaxes – and no doubt enjoying the occasional shot of Paddy Irish whiskey. Aubert’s “Merlin Pan Paddywhisky” coincidentally evokes the Merlin of Arthurian romance while putting a poleaxe (*merlin*) in the all too belligerent hands (*pan!* “pow!, bam!”) of Paddy-drinking Paddies. Goyert’s “Pan Polacks Paddyriský” identifies the poleaxe as definitely belonging to Polacks, while his slavicized Paddies involve, possibly inadvertently, less risk than before. García Tortosa’s “Pan Polonhacha Paddyriský” likewise assigns the axe (Spanish *hacha*) to a Pole (*polonés*), while not discounting the element of Paddy-fueled risk. Possibly worried by the pervasiveness of the tricky Irish risk factor, Morel’s “Pan Pasderiski” engages in discreet dehibernicization, resulting happily in a complete lack of risk (*pas de risque*).

Goosepond Prhklštř Kratchinabritchisitch is certainly of Czech origins. This eastern European comrade (Russian *gospodín*), apparently of rural origins and involved with the rearing of geese, with an unpronounceably avocalic Czech given name, is discovered scratchin’ a prickly britches itch in a flurry of Slavic affricates. Morel’s “Patapon Prhklstr Kratchinabritchisitch” is deprived of diacritics and political affiliation alike and consequently keeps a low profile, just pitter-pattering along very quietly (French *à petit patapon*). Aubert’s “Canmare Prhklstr Kratchninabritchchisitch” is a comrade (*camarade*) associated with a duck pond (*mare aux canards*) rather than a goose pond and is compensated for the loss of diacritics in his first name by the acquisition of a number of additional letters in his second. García Tortosa’s “Gospedon Prhklstr Kratachinabritinich” combines an English goose pond, a Russian *gospodin*, and, with the comrade evidently unrestrained in his social behaviour, a Spanish fart (*pedo*) in his first name, possibly motivating the editorial epithet “jerk” (*rata*) in his reconstituted second.

Borus Hupinkoff is another Russian, apparently suffering from whooping cough as well as from a personality likely to “bore us” – but who may occasionally also, like the sixteenth-century tsar Boris Godunov, be of a belligerent turn of mind, his given name suggesting the Slavic element *bor* (“battle”), as in the name Boris (Hanks 716-17). The Slavic element *rus*, meanwhile, suggesting other battles in other times, originally referred to Swedish Vikings and only later to Russians. While Borus is left alone by ten of our twelve translators, García Tortosa’s “Borus Tosferinkoff” hispanicizes his whooping cough as a Spanish *tos ferina*, preserving the physical ailment while abandoning any echo of Boris Godunov, whether in real life, in Pushkin’s play, or in Mussorgsky’s opera. Mallafrè, meanwhile, opts for “Boris Arriakoff,” suggesting a Boris no longer necessarily boring but plagued by an unrelenting hacking cough (*arriar* “to drive, to urge on”).

Herr Hurhausdirektorpresident Hans Chuechli-Steuerli is clearly of Swiss German origins. Herr Chuechli-Steuerli is marked by his name as having a taste for little Swiss cakes (*Chuechli*) and no doubt rather less of a taste for little Swiss taxes (*Steuerli*). The fact that he has also attained to high office in the administration of a brothel (a presumably also Swiss *Hurhaus*) earns him the distinction of an appropriately bourgeois title. Herr Chuechli-Steuerli remains untransformed by any of our phalanx of translators other than Mallafrè, who renames him as “Chuechli-Staberli,” the Swiss-German name Staberli substituted for Swiss income taxes.

National gymnasium museum sanatorium and suspensoriums ordinary privat docent general history special professor doctor Kriegfried Ueberallgemein’s extraordinarily impressive title pokes serious fun at German titular hyperinflation. If titles confirm distinction, then few even among the most eminent German academics can be as distinguished as Professor Ueberallgemein, who exercises his historical expertise in an impressive range of educational and other associated institutions. His quasi-Wagnerian given name Kriegfried, echoing *Siegfried*, exhibits a Tolstoyan combination of war (*Krieg*) and peace (*Frieden*) – reminiscent of the pairing elsewhere in *Ulysses* of “Brother Aloysius Pacificus and Brother Louis Bellicosus” (U 12.1707-08) – a combination that history has shown to be not only all too general (*allgemein*) but all too general everywhere (*überall*). Kreutzer (224) also notes that the name can in fact be read as based either on “über-allgemein” or on “überall gemein,” translatable respectively as “even more than universal” and “just plain nasty (*gemein*) everywhere.” He also notes the parodically deflating titular presence of the noun *Suspensorium* (“jockstrap”) (Kreutzer 243).

Gifford notes an apparently obvious link in the name “Ueberallgemein” to the German national anthem, *Deutschland über alles* (335) – but it has been pointed out

that Hoffmann von Fallersleben's 1841 poem of that name was officially declared the German national anthem only in August 1922, thus six months after the appearance of *Ulysses* (Palme 147). Since many readers will nonetheless continue to see the connection, however erroneously, this constitutes an excellent example of how literary texts may develop new possibilities of meaning retrospectively. Other than Salas Subirat's highly garbled "Kriegried Uebaralligemein," the worthy professor's name is adjusted only in Aubert's "Paixtriste Tousensemble," which suggests that peace (*paix*) essentially makes the all too Germanic Kriegfried sad (*triste*), just as it does a lot of no doubt similarly minded people, *tous ensemble* ("all together").

The lawyer (*avvocato*) who eventually comes to the legal aid of the thieving Beninobenone, meanwhile, Avvocato Pagamimi, has a name that humorously suggests the introduction of an Italian set piece. Niccolò Paganini (1782-1840), Italian violin virtuoso and composer, was reportedly known to have suffered from syphilis and was consequently rumoured because of his technical virtuosity to have sold his soul to the devil. The Italian composer Giacomo Puccini's opera *La Bohème* (1896) features a flirtatious but mortally ill seamstress Mimi, who, to her lover's despair, duly dies (lustily singing the while) of tuberculosis. Our likewise Italian lawyer (*avvocato*), less romantically inclined, prefers simply to pay (*pagare*) for sexual services from a whore (French *mimi*) (MacArthur 529), who may well be cute (*mimi*) and may even offer an occasional little kiss (*mimi*), but whose professional mantra is the Italian *paga mi* ("pay me"). Salas Subirat's and Palma-Ferreira's opting in both cases for "Avvocato Pagamini" almost identifies the Italian *avvocato* with the Italian virtuoso. Kreutzer suggests tongue in cheek that, given Paganini's diabolical reputation, Pagamimi may be considered an "*advocatus diaboli*" (154).

The distinguished group of the Friends of the Emerald Isle are even honoured in *Ulysses* by their very own personal acronym, "F.O.T.E.I." (U 12.573, 12.583). Perhaps "honoured" is not quite the right expression, however, for Enrico Terrinoni has observed in an interview (Kearns 2017: 175) that the acronym is actually a mischievous play on the Italian *fotei* ("I fucked").

II

The forest wedding episode in "Cyclops" has been called by Fritz Senn, in a particularly happy formulation, "a dendronymous arabesque," a "dryadic flourish" (166, 171). The episode is a bravura example of an onomastic catalogue satirizing social conventions but ultimately undertaken once again essentially for comic effect. Its *raison*

d'être, as Stuart Gilbert suggested, is very likely because the *Odyssey*, in its narrative of the encounter of Ulysses and Polyphemus, provides “an unusually precise description of the poplars on the island and of ‘the tall pines and oaks with high crowns of leaves’ which encircled the cave of the Cyclops” (275). The list of guests satisfies multiple criteria, as Alastair Fowler observes: “arboreal or horticultural connections (appropriate to the bridegroom’s being ‘grand high chief ranger of the Irish National Foresters’); class associations; celebrity (like Mimosa San, of *The Geisha*); nationalist overtones; and erotic suggestions” (218). As Anthony Burgess puts it: “It is in such onomastic joy that Joyce seems already to be anticipating the mad name-calling of *Finnegans Wake*” (130). Translators are once again faced with a variety of transpositional challenges, and some at least rise with considerable enthusiasm to the challenges involved.⁵

Miss Fir Conifer of Pine Valley, the forest bride, becomes “Miss Epicea Conifère de la Sapinière” for Morel, changed to a conifer of a different colour in order to take advantage of the fact that while French *épicéa* means “spruce,” the adjective *épicé* means “spicy, hot,” a characteristic of the sylvan bride left unmentioned in Joyce’s English. She becomes an equally elegantly phrased “Mlle Sapin Conifère de la Vallée des Pins” for Aubert and retains her aristocratic aura in Goyert’s German “Fräulein Föhre Conifere von Fichtental,” though mutating in the latter from a fir to a spruce (*Föhre*) once again. She becomes a plain middle-class “Miss Föhra Konifere” for Wollschläger. In Spanish, she is “señorita Abeto Conífero del Valle de los Pinos” for Salas Subirat and “señorita Piña Conífera de Valdepinos” for Valverde, retaining her arboreal status as a fir (*abeto*) for the former but now transformed for the latter into a pine cone (*piña*), and an unlucky one (*piña*) at that. In García Tortosa’s “Miss Pinabety Conífera de Valdepino” she is a slightly anglicized dryadic hybrid, partly pine (*pino*) and partly fir (*abeto*). In Italian, de Angelis has her more closely match her arboreal and aristocratic surroundings by transforming her interlingually into “Miss Pine Conifer di Pine Valley,” while Terrinoni changes her back into a fir again, “Miss Abete Conifera di Pine Valley,” for, oddly enough, an Italian *abete* is a fir, while a Spanish *abeto* is a spruce. For Zabaloy, attentive to gender, she is a feminized spruce as “Miss Abeta Conífera del Valle de Pino”; for Palma-Ferreira, she is likewise a spruce, though no longer feminized, as “Miss Abeto Conífera de Val de Pinheiros”; while for Mallafrè she is transformed in quasi-Ovidian manner into an entire pine grove (*pineda*) as “Miss Pineda Conífer de la Vall dels Pins.”

⁵ Page references for the dozen dendronymous renderings considered here are as follows: Morel (vol. 1, 471-472) and Aubert (405-406) in French; Goyert (367-368) and Wollschläger (454) in German; Salas Subirat (253), Valverde (401-402), García Tortosa (375), and Zabaloy (324-325) in Spanish; de Angelis (318) and Terrinoni (392) in Italian; Palma-Ferreira (362-363) in Portuguese; and Mallafrè (339) in Catalan.

Miss Larch Conifer, the bride's sister and bridesmaid, evidently a more stable type, is allowed to remain a larch in all of Morel's "Mlle Laryx Conifère," Aubert's "Mlle Mélèze Conifère," Goyert's "Fräulein Lärche Conifere," Salas Subirat's "señorita Alerce Conífero," Terrinoni's "Miss Larice Conifer," Zabaloy's "Miss Alerce Conífera," Palma-Ferreira's "Miss Larício Conífera," and Mallafrè's "Miss Alerç Conifer." In all of these cases her given name is (or suggests) the relevant vocabulary word for "larch": Latin *larix*, French *mélèze*, German *Lärche*, Spanish *alerce*, Catalan *alerç*, Portuguese *larício*, and Italian *larice* all meaning "larch." Only in de Angelis's "Miss Sylvia Conifer" and García Tortosa's "Miss Fuensanta Conífera" is she renamed, "Sylvia" resonant of Latin *silva* ("forest"), while "Fuensanta" transforms her quite unexpectedly into a "holy well," presumably of the kind likely to be encountered in a forest.

As the plot thickens, Miss Spruce Conifer, the bride's other sister and bridesmaid, remains, as "Mlle Épinette Conifère," a spruce (*épinette*) for both Morel and Aubert – and may well also have some degree of musical talent, possibly even proficiency on the spinet (*épinette*). Spruce she remains also in Goyert's "Fräulein Spruce Conifere," Salas Subirat's "señorita Spruce Conífero," Zabaloy's Spanish "Miss Abeto Conífera," Palma-Ferreira's "Miss Abeto Conífera," García Tortosa's Spanish "Miss Picea Conífera" (*picea* "spruce"), and Mallafrè's Catalan "Miss Pica Conífer" (*pica* "spruce"). Wollschläger's rather more complex "Miss Rottännelein Konifere" likewise retains her spruce credentials, even specifying more narrowly that she is a "Norway spruce" (*Rottanne*), while in addition generously assigning her an alternative south German given name, the diminutive *Annelein* ("Annie"). Showing a momentary lack of onomastic attention, Terrinoni names her "Miss Abete Conifer," transforming her from a spruce into a fir (*abete*) – and consequently giving her the same name as her sister the bride. For Valverde's Spanish, however, she is neither spruce nor fir, but as "señorita Ciparisa Conífera," she unexpectedly becomes a cypress (*cipariso*), a metamorphosis she also undergoes in de Angelis's Italian, as "Miss Ciparissa Conifer."

The bride's father, and patriarch of the family, is ceremoniously named "the M'Conifer of the Glands," the initial article suggesting that he is a traditional Irish Chief of the Name, while "of the Glands" plays on "of the Glens," title of the O'Donoghue of the Glens, a hereditary Munster chieftaincy – as well as on the fact that Latin *glans*, appropriately in the sylvan context, means "acorn," while English *glans* refers to the tip of the penis. A selection of the M'Conifer's renamings include Morel's quasi-Proustean "Chevalier MacConifère de la Sapinière des Glandiers"; Goyert's staunchly German "Herr M'Conifer von Eichenwald" names him for a poetically German oak wood; Salas-

Subirat's "el Caballero M'Conífero de las Bellotas" and Zabaloy's "M'Conífera de Bellotas" both opt for the implied sexual connotations of "acorns" (Spanish *bellotas*), as does Palma-Ferreira's "o senhor M'Conífero das Bolotas," Portuguese *bolotas* likewise meaning "acorns." De Angelis opts for "il M'Conifer delle Ghiande," Italian *ghiande* meaning both "acorns" and "glands," and Mallafrè similarly renames the patriarch as "M'Conífer dels Aglans," conflating Catalan *gla* ("acorn") and *glàndula* ("gland").

Among the numerous forest wedding guests, of whom we may content ourselves with just a select few, we find Mrs Barbara Lovebirch, who shares a name both arboreal and flagellatory with James Lovebirch, fictional author in *Ulysses* of *Fair Tyrants* (U 10.601-03) and pseudonymous real-world author of *Les cinq fessées de Suzette* (1910), anonymously translated as *The Flagellation of Suzette* (1925) (Gifford 271-72). While the title of *Suzette* in both languages clearly identifies the lady as the (willing or unwilling) recipient, in *Fair Tyrants* the birch is wielded by the lady, presumably to Bloom's approval. Mrs Barbara Lovebirch's more interesting renamings include Morel's "Mme Barbara de la Verge du Bouleau," where *verge* and *bouleau* both mean "birch" –and *verge* is also a colloquial "penis." Aubert's "Mme Barbara Aimé Laverge" suggests that Barbara "loved (*a aimé*) the rod" and the penis alike. Palma-Ferreira's "a Senhora Bárbara Amordevidoeiro" and Mallafrè's "Mrs Bárbara Aimabedoll" both make it abundantly clear that Barbara does indeed love the birch (Portuguese *vidoeiro*, Catalan *bedoll*), presumably as recipient in both cases, while Valverde's "señora Bárbara Abedul" leaves it unclear whether she preferred to wield or suffer the birch (*abedul*).

A Greek resonance is provided by the name of Miss Daphne Bays, playing on the myth of Daphne, transformed by the gods into a laurel tree (Greek *daphnē* "laurel, bay"). She appears variously as "Mlle Daphné Dulaurier" (Morel); "Fräulein Daphne Lorbeer" (Goyert); "la señorita Dafne Laurel" (Valverde); "Miss Dafne Del Laurel" (Zabaloy); "Miss Dafne Loureiro" (Palma-Ferreira); "Miss Dafnis Llorer" (Mallafrè), and "Miss Daphne Allori" (de Angelis). The transposition is unproblematically straightforward in all these cases, since French *laurier*, German *Lorbeer*, Spanish *laurel*, Portuguese *loureiro*, Catalan *llorer*, and Italian *alloro* all mean "bay, laurel." Wollschläger's "Miss Daphne Lorbert," on the other hand, humorously inventing a verb coined on the noun *Lorbeer*, plays on the fact that Miss Daphne's original name may be read as either a plural noun or, given appropriate but tactfully unspecified circumstances, a singular verb, primarily evoking vocal rather than arboreal connotations.

Miss Dorothy Canebrake is linked to Mrs Barbara Lovebirch by the potentially flagellatory pun on "canebreak" – though in normal usage the term literally means no more

than a dense thicket of canes or bushes. Dorothy, onomastically a gift of God, appears variously as Morel's “Mlle Dorothée Desroseaux” (*roseau* “reed”); García Tortosa's “Miss Dorotea Cañas” (*caña* “cane”), and Mallafrè's “Miss Dorothy Canyisser” (*canya* “cane”) all suggesting variations on flagellatory possibilities. Palma-Ferreira's “Miss Dorothy Canaverde” involves a cane (*cana*) that is still green (*verde*) and presumably thus more likely to break when vigorously wielded. Aubert's “Mlle Dorothée des Ajoncs (*ajonc* “furze, gorse”) and Valverde's “señorita Dorotea del Rosal (*rosal* “rosebush”) both prefer more thorny possibilities. Zabaloy's “Miss Caña de Helecho” evokes, for whatever reason, bracken (*helecho*) as well as a cane (*caña*), while Goyert's “Fräulein Dorothea Rohrbruch” plays on the combination of *Rohr* (“reed”) and *Bruch* (“break”) – while humorously evoking also the domestic plumbing disaster that in normal usage is a *Rohrbruch* (“burst pipe”).

Mrs Helen Vinegadding undoubtedly owes her name to the reference in Milton's *Lycidas* to “Woods, and desert Caves, / with wilde Thyme and the gadding Vine o'ergrown” (Patterson 41). Defined by her gadding, she appears variously as Morel's “Mme Hélène Follavoine” (*folle avoine* “wild oats”) and Zabaloy's “Mrs. Helen Avenafatua” (*avenafatua* “wild oats”). In more vinous terms, Palma-Ferreira's “a Senhora Helen Videira” (*videira* “grapevine”), Mallafrè's “Mrs Helen Vinyerrant” (*vinya* “vine”; *errant* “wandering”), and Valverde's “señora Elena de la Parra (*parra* “grapevine”) likewise imply unrestrained gadding. Wollschläger's “Mrs Helen Weinreich” plays on the adjective *weinreich* (“rich in wine”) and simultaneously on the attested German surname *Weinreich*, which, at least according to Bahlow (539), has nothing to do with wine, but rather with an ancestor who was a “powerful friend.”

De Angelis transposes Mrs Vinegadding in Italian as “Mrs Helen Rampicanti” (*rampicante* “climbing, creeping”), thus establishing a coincidental family relationship with her fellow wedding guest Miss Virginia Creeper, who in fact becomes Terrinoni's “Miss Virginia Rampicanti.” Virginia also appears as Aubert's elegant “Mlle Virginie des Glycines (*glycine* “wisteria”), Morel's “Mlle Virginie Vignevierge” (*vigne vierge* “Virginia creeper”), Palma-Ferreira's “Miss Virginia Trepadeira” (*trepadeira* “creeper”), and Mallafrè's “Miss Virgínia Enfiladissa” (*enfilarse* “to climb”). Zabaloy alters the botanical tone somewhat with his “Miss Virginia de Lahiedra” (*hiedra* “ivy”).

Miss Bee Honeysuckle owes her name to a sentimental popular song of the early 1900s, “The Honeysuckle and the Bee.” Honeysuckle is the name of a family of shrubs with flowers rich in nectar, a great favourite with bees, while “Bee” is a popular pet form of “Beatrice.” Miss Honeysuckle appears variously as Morel's “Mlle

Reine Chèvrefeuille,” promoted from mere worker bee to queen bee (*reine* “queen”; *chèvrefeuille* “honeysuckle”); Valverde’s “señorita Abeja Madreselva” (*abeja* “bee”; *madreselva* “honeysuckle”); and Palma-Ferreira’s “Miss Abelha Madressilva” (*abelha* “bee”; *madressilva* “honeysuckle”). These three versions translate *bee* and *honeysuckle* literally and separately. Three others rename the lady more specifically as herself the bee who sucks honey: thus Salas Subirat’s “señorita Abeja Chupamiel” (*chupa* “sucks”; *miel* “honey”); Zabaloy’s “Miss Reina Sorbemiel” (*sorbe* “sucks”); and Mallafrè’s “Miss Abella Xuclamel” (*xuclamel* “honeysuckle”; *xuclar* “to suck”).

Miss Timidity Aspenall’s name plays on the attested English surname Aspinall (Hanks 34), named like her for the aspen or trembling poplar. Her timidity, shaking like an aspen in a breeze, is variously reflected in Morel’s “Mlle Modeste du Tremble” (*tremble* “aspen”), Salas Subirat’s sensitive “señorita Modesta Sensitiva,” Zabaloy’s “Miss Modesta Temblorosa” (*álogo* “poplar”; *álogo temblón* “aspen”), Palma-Ferreira’s “Miss Timidez Álamo” (*álogo* “poplar”; *álogo tremedor* “aspen”), Terrinoni’s “Miss Timida Tremulpioppo” (*pioppo* “poplar”; *pioppo tremolo* “aspen”), and Mallafrè’s “Miss Modesta Totrèmol,” all aquiver (*trèmol* “aspen”).

Mrs Kitty Dewey-Mosse, finally, bears a name whose sexual overtones are very overt. The slang term *kitty* formerly referred to the female genitalia; the name Mosse originally referred to propinquity to a damp peat bog (Hanks 439); the name Dewey is of uncertain origin (Hanks 170), but in the present context likewise humorously implies dewy dampness. Among translated renditions are Morel’s “Mme Kitty Mousse de Rosée” (*mousse* “moss”; *rosée* “dew”); Valverde’s “señorita Cati Musgo de la Fuente” (*musgo* “moss”; *fuente* “fountain, spring”); Palma-Ferreira’s “a Senhora Kitty Musgo Orvalhado” (*musgo* “moss”; *orvalhado* “dewy”), and de Angelis’s “Mrs Kitty Muschi-Roridi” (*musco* “moss”; *rorido* “dewy”). Zabaloy tactfully goes his own way with “Mrs. Kitty Musgo de Rosal,” leaving untouched the moss (*musgo*) but discreetly replacing the dew (Spanish *rocío*) by a rosebush (*rosal*).

III

“What’s in a name?,” as *Ulysses* repeatedly asks (*U* 9.901, 9.986, 16.364). The answer, clearly, is quite a lot, including when the names in question may appear to be no more than just amusing, and certainly including also when those names are transformed in multilingual renderings for the amusement of other readers in other languages and other cultures. The overtly comic names in *Ulysses* are certainly designed primarily to

amuse readers, but they also pose a very distinct challenge to translators – whose varied and frequently ingenious efforts to meet that challenge constitute one more indication of just how complex and worthy of scrutiny Joyce's onomastic practice can be. My purpose here has been to discuss just some of the implications of effects generated by Joyce's particular choice of (invented) characters' names, by particular choices made by individual translators in rendering these names, and by particular interpretive choices available to individual readers encountering these names, whether in the original or in one translation or another. The guiding intention has been the opening up rather than closing off of interpretive possibilities, implicitly examining the degree to which onomastic features of the Joycean text can serve, and can be made to serve, to suggest a variety of unexpected dimensions of that text, whether in the original or in translation or both, and in so doing to extend the boundaries of Joyce's textual universe.

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