

Orange Juice for the Bears: Anthony Burgess in Hungary

by [Ákos I. Farkas](#)

Written as an anniversary homage to the memory of Anthony Burgess, the first, and longest, section of this paper was read at the 2003 conference of HUSSE, the Hungarian branch of the European Society for the Study of English. Although more has happened in Burgess' afterlife in Hungary since that date than one might expect to happen in two short years, I have decided, in the spirit of Burgessian economy, against throwing away the old just to make room for the new. What follows then in the first section below is a carefully revised and considerably expanded reproduction of the original conference presentation, supplemented with a newly written conclusion in section two bringing the story of Anthony Burgess' Hungarian reception up to the present.

[Note 1](#)

1. From the Page to the Stage: the early 1970s through the mid 1990s

To start *in medias res*, I would like to cite, in my own translation, two quotations to suggest the uneven standard of what has been printed in Hungarian about Burgess in the twenty-five years to be surveyed in the first part of this assessment. This period stretches from 1970 to 1996, the years that saw the publication of the first, necessarily incomplete, and then, a quarter-century later, the second, supplementary, entry headed "BURGESS, Anthony" in

Világirodalmi Lexikon

, Hungary's comprehensive, nineteen-volume Encyclopaedia of World Literature. However, my representative quotations come from elsewhere. The genre, if not the actual source, of each can easily be inferred from its style and substance. The chronology of their appearance might be less obvious, even if this much is revealed in advance: one came out shortly after the first, the other some time before the second date highlighted in the subtitle of this section. Here then are my representative bits of Burgess criticism in Hungary with the source and date deliberately suppressed for the time being:

He wrote books of a higher literary standard, too, treating subjects at least as substantial as that of (*A Clockwork Orange*). These include *Earthly Power* (sic) [. . .] and *The End of the World*

News

[. . .] he also wrote

about Keats and Napoleon. Some say that he was overproductive, that his works are sometimes overwritten, and that he was often unable to resist his urge to tell a rattling good story or to instruct the reader. On other occasions, as in his structural-anthropologist treatise based on the myth of Oedipus, he reached intellectual heights where no earthling could ever soar with him.

Anthony Burgess, a remarkably prolific writer and literary critic, whose style is animated by a sense of grotesque humour, and who also happens to be [. . .] an accomplished musical composer and expert amateur cook, has come up with another surprising idea. [. . .] Behind the harmony of the polyphonic composition of his (recent) novel *ABBA ABBA* appears the colourful world of Roman street life. [. . .] [T]he picture resulting from a bizarre configuration of verifiable historical facts bears a striking resemblance to the self-portrait emerging from (Keats's) authentic correspondence. What is most remarkable of all is that this biographical fantasia [. . .] is not only a highly readable but also a deeply stirring novel.

Were it not for the discussion of the novel *ABBA ABBA* as a recent work, together with the immediacy of present tense forms in the second one of these passages on the one hand and, on the other, the finality of the past in references to two later works by Burgess in the first, the order in which they were published would be far from obvious. Without those hints, one might easily be misled into believing that the piece quoted first must have been written first, too. Surely, the author of our first-quoted passage would have avoided embarrassing himself with all his ill-informed and yet patronizing unwisdom about a garrulous and incomprehensible Burgess in his obituary, as the piece quoted happens to be, had he been informed by the astute critical insight and reliable factual information characterising much of the commentary that had appeared on Burgess in Hungary since at least the second passage, a book-review, came out fifteen years before the first.

It may be unfair to expect from the London correspondent of a commercial daily—*Magyar Hírlap*

[
Hungarian Daily

] as the newspaper is called (Sárközi 1993)—the same erudition that can be taken for granted when the reviewer is one of Ágnes Péter's calibre. A leading Central-European authority on English Romanticism today, Professor Péter was, after all, a more than promising young scholar at the time she introduced

ABBA ABBA

to the readers of the literary monthly

Nagyvilág

[
The Great World

] in 1978. And yet, this admittedly lopsided comparison has implications much more significant than the unremarkable inference that a hurried newspaperman had not done his homework, while an ambitious young academic had.

The obituarist's journalistic lack of familiarity with the expertise his more knowledgeable

compatriots had to offer has been shared to this day not only by practitioners of his ephemeral trade but by many of Dr. Péter's fellow-academics, too.

[Note 2](#)

This is not to say that, working together or in isolation, Burgess's scholarly interpreters in Hungary had done all they reasonably could to render Britain's most interesting, if not in fact most significant, contemporary novelist available to the non-specialist reader—including the journalist I have singled out, somewhat unfairly perhaps, for censure. With a dozen and a half shorter and three longer pieces published on him in the twenty-five-year period considered in this section, the bulk of Burgess-related criticism written in Hungarian was as yet far from impressive. As for Burgess translated into that small and exotic native language of mine, the amount so far—three novels and a handful of shorter pieces out of more than fifty books written by Burgess—is even more disappointing, regardless of the quality the translators' work represents.

And yet the efforts of Hungary's Burgess devotees are not to be slighted. If unsatisfactory in its proportions, the body of criticism and translations produced by Hungary's writers, scholars and translators is at least suggestive, if not comprehensive or even truly representative, in terms of works rendered into Hungarian and issues presented to Hungarians. By the time the first translation of a Burgess novel appeared in Budapest in 1979, the attentive reader had been able to glean most of the essential information on its writer from the above-mentioned *Világirodalmi*

encyclopaedia and

Nagyvilág

magazine, supplemented by the annual short-story collection

Égtájak

[

Points of the Compass

]—publications meant to help Hungary's literate population keep abreast with the latest developments in world literature (or its segment deemed sufficiently "progressive" for Socialist consumption). Mention in these sources had been made of five novels, including

Honey for the Bears

, a modern picaresque set in Leningrad ridiculing the myth of the

homo Sovieticus superiorus

while suggesting the vertiginous depths of the Russian soul. That the politically less sensitive

A Clockwork Orange

was still taboo, was largely due to the publishers' philistine prudery, rather than their orthodox Marxism—unless the two were essentially the same. Two major non-fiction books of Burgess' had also been referred to: his

English Literature

and the classic

Here Comes Everybody

the latter a masterly introduction to James Joyce, whose work was still regarded by the academic hard-liners of Hungary as a prime exemplar of bourgeois decadence.

[Note 3.](#)

If a blunder or two revealing the authors' ignorance of some of the works surveyed or the life introduced went uncorrected by the otherwise ever vigilant editors—the title, for example, of the first piece in the "Malayan Trilogy" (

Time for a Tiger

) is repeatedly referred to as though the tiger in it was in fact the beautiful predator rather than the brand-name of Malaya's most popular beer and Burgess' "real" name is given, in the encyclopaedia at that, as

Anthony

Wilson (Tótfalusi 1970)—the major facts of Burgess's life and the nature of his achievement had more or less been reliably presented to the Hungarian reader by the late 1970s.

Not much, by way of translation, had yet been forthcoming, however. The dearth of actual reading matter by Burgess in Hungarian could as yet be explained by the enormous backlog that Hungarian publishers were toiling under until as late as the mid-seventies. Little, if any, contemporary Western literature had appeared throughout the fifties and early sixties.

[Note 4](#)

What can improve the overall impression is the fact that Burgess's two short stories translated did in fact give a foretaste of things to come. The surprise-ending, in the style of an already popular Roald Dahl, of the piece called "I Wish My Wife Was Dead" (translated by Edit Kincses as "Bárcsak meghalna a feleségem"), together with its thematization of the spicy British-vs-American issue was not uncharacteristic of Burgess's rapidly growing oeuvre, and thus the canny little story could not possibly fail to provide the kind of quality entertainment that its upper-middle-brow readers expected to find in *Nagyvilág* (Burgess 1969-70/1970).

Much the same can be said for "The Muse", a quasi-Elizabethan SF-story anticipating the by then familiar sub-genre embedded in apocryphal history (John Fowles's *The Maggot* or Martin Amis'

Time

s Arrow

spring to mind as well-known analogies) posing some disturbing questions about the reliability of historical knowledge and the whole scholarly-scientific enterprise it deals with. Small wonder that the piece was later singled out for praise by at least two of Burgess's major American critics

and that the writer himself appended the story, with some minor changes, to his novel *Enderby's Dark Lady*.

The editor of the 1973 issue of

Égtájak

certainly deserves praise for having discovered this as yet unanthologised piece in *The Hudson Review*

, a magazine far from readily available in this part of the world at a time copies of *Newsweek*

or

Time

were hard to come by on this side of the iron curtain.

Another six years passed without Hungary hearing anything much from Burgess before the first full-length novel, *One Hand Clapping*, was translated in 1979. Credit for the Hungarian version, called

Egy tenyér ha csattan, goes to the same Gabriella Prekop who had translated "The Muse". Ms Prekop, a knowledgeable literary historian as well as an excellent translator, wrote the afterword, too (Prekop 1979). What that

fifteen-hundred-word essay demonstrates is not only its writer's familiarity with all the major, and some of the minor, incidents in Burgess's life but also the fact that she had actually read the novels introduced in her afterword, which include one of Burgess's most challenging and rewarding works,

Like the Sun

Nothing

. And yes, the formerly unmentionable is also mentioned in Prekop's essay, so Hungarians uninitiated to the illicit cult of Stanley Kubrick's movie could now see in state-authorised print the quaint collocation

Felhúzható narancs

'winding orange' or, in a form much better known,

A Clockwork Orange

.

Prekop's remarks on that linguistic *tour de force* of a social satire had to be taken at their face value for quite some time to come. If one read English, the situation was different, however.

Due to some oversight explicable perhaps by the general slackening of the regime's totalitarian rigour (a process quickened by local traditions of Hapsburg-style

Absolutismus gemildert durch Schlamperei

), Budapest's only foreign-language library named for the Soviet writer Maxim Gorky had kept a tattered copy of

A Clockwork Orange

on its stacks since as far back as I can remember. Still, it took another eleven years and a complete change of political system—Hungary's Sulky Revolution of 1990—before the forbidden fruit was delivered in the shape of a Hungarian translation.

The work of discovering and rediscovering Burgess did not stop in the meantime, though. Two articles in *Élet és Irodalom* (*Life and Literature*, a cultural weekly airing moderately non-conformist sentiments at the time), and an appreciative if somewhat naive piece in the now defunct illustrated weekly called *Új Tükör* (*New*

Mirror

a kind of poor man's

Der Spiegel

) tried desperately to reinvent the Burgessian wheel (Farkas 1985; Köröspataki Kiss 1989). A more significant contribution was made by Tamás Bényei with his translation of "Enter Posterity", the comic opening sequence of

Inside Mr. Enderby

, together with a succinct introduction attempting to locate, for the first time in Hungary to my knowledge, Burgess's work in the broader context of European literary history (Bényei 1987).

Mention is to be made of the first theatrical adaptation of a novel by Burgess in this country with the musicalisation of *One Hand Clapping*. Entitled *Dupla vagy semmi* [*Double or Quits*], the play was performed by the company Rock Színház, now in Pesti Theatre, now in Katona József Theatre, both upmarket playhouses in the heart of Budapest's banking and entertainment district. Although the leading part was played by Enikő Eszenyi—an up-and-coming starlet at the time and a noted actress-cum-director now—and the music was composed and played by Dolly Roll, a Hungarian pop group whose popularity had just reached its apex, I have some very vague memories of the production, a lapse somewhat mitigated by the lack of any enthusiastic response locatable in contemporary reviews. Interestingly enough, Burgess himself found the performance worthy of note in his autobiography, on account of his share of whatever the production's proceeds remaining "sequestered" here (

You've Had

29). But then he believed to have reasons more substantial than the merely financial to feel irritated by the inappropriate success of this particular novel of his in "the old Soviet bloc". It seems Burgess was convinced that the only reason why the book had been translated and adapted to the stage and the television screen from East Berlin to Warsaw and Budapest was that Socialist critics had mistaken the work for a blanket condemnation of "the whole capitalist Western life" (

ibidem

). Whatever the bosses of Hungary's publishing houses may have thought of the book, it is clear from Prekop's afterword and from contemporary reviews of the stage version that the spiritual wasteland depicted by Burgess was believed, at least in Hungary if not in Eastern Germany or Bulgaria, to lie on

both

sides of the Iron Curtain. In 1989 we already felt to be part of all that Western decadence—something most Hungarians were proud and ashamed of at one and the same time.

In any case, the first greeting with which Hungary's Burgessians hailed the new, post-Soviet, dispensation was a novel thematically related to *One Hand Clapping*, that satire of consumer idiocy fed on television shows. The Hungarian translation of

The Doctor Is Sick

touched in some new features of the emerging portrait of Burgess. These included a much higher degree of linguistic awareness characterising author and quasi-autobiographical hero than anything the educationally challenged heroine-narratrix of the previously translated novel could, or would, muster up. In its comic malfunctioning very much unlike that of his creator, the mind of the novel's eponym Edwin Spindrift, doctor of philosophy rather than medicine, is just as well stocked with edifying and amusing miscellanea from Grimm's Law to

Finnegans Wake

as Burgess's awesome memory famously was. Pál Békés, himself a writer of considerable distinction in Hungary and a kind of last reserve resorted to by the editors of Európa kiadó (Európa House, one of Hungary's very few publishers of modern Western literature for decades) whenever the untranslatable had to be translated, did an excellent job of rendering in Hungarian the learned ribaldry that this urban picaresque of Burgess' revels in (

Beteg a doktor

1990).

The same historic year of 1990 saw the publication of the one book that Burgess's somewhat misconceived reputation as a "cult-writer" depends on to this day. Once again, Európa hired an old hand at quality literary translation in the person of László Gy. Horváth. If the resulting book, called *Gépnarancs* [*Machine Orange*, literally], does not really qualify as a genuine masterpiece (

A Clockwork Orange is indeed untranslatable), it served as a gap-stopper giving as it did a much more accurate picture of what Burgess was up to than a clandestine copy of Kubrick's cinematic adaptation made with a hand-held 8mm camera in a cheap West-Berlin cinema. The afterword, although twice as long as the one appended to the Hungarian translation of *One Hand Clapping*,

did less than its length suggests to enhance the Hungarian reception of Burgess. With its rehearsal of apocryphal biography and mistranslated titles, the piece has inspired untold numbers of term-papers submitted by generations of English majors to their unhappy professors at the various English Literature Departments of Hungary. The reductive interpretations of the past were hereby replaced with the writer of the afterword András Csejdi's own, equally one-sided, summary of the supposedly pessimistic message conveyed by a work whose comedy has as much to do with Dante as it has with Menippus. That, at least, is the critical consensus based on the original edition of the

A Clockwork Orange

, as opposed to the "uncompromisingly" bleak philosophy of the curtailed, American, edition that had inspired Stanley Kubrick. Despite a half-hearted curtsy he makes in the afterword to the all-important twenty-first chapter presenting little Alex as a harmless yet free adult ready to settle down, Csejdi obviously projects impressions originally formed by the shortened version, if

not indeed Kubrick's film, on the full-length original whose Hungarian translation he sets out to explicate.

Although not essentially different from Mr Csejdi's verdict in its assessment of the downbeat philosophy he assumes to be underlying *A Clockwork Orange*, Ferenc Takács's review essay shortly following the translation did much to improve the general standard of Hungary's Burgess-criticism. Whether one agrees or not with Professor Takács's conclusion that the three competing discourses that little Alex's case is submitted to completely cancel each other out, and that any "naïve" belief in man's eligibility for salvation is thoroughly purged from the reader's system by novel's end, one cannot help being overawed by the elegant logic, impressive erudition and delightfully appropriate wording that characterise the essay's reasoning. In any case, the theoretical assumptions implicitly underlying the review's argument—mainly Bakhtinian and Derridan in origin and thus refreshingly innovative in the Hungary of the early 1990s—are probably more important than any specific conclusion the article actually arrives at.

More immediately relevant, however, to the specific purposes of this paper is what Dr Takács has to offer to the student of Burgess's Hungarian reception. The article expounds the reasons—political, aesthetic and psychological—why Hungarian orange-fanciers had had so long to stand in line waiting for their favourite book to be rendered in their native tongue. (Incidentally, the reference to an orange-line in the title of the review—"Gépnarancs régi sorbanállóknek" or *A Clockwork Orange* for Veterans in a Queue—is a wryly humorous allusion to Socialism's scarcity culture where actual fruit, especially of the tropical kind, was as hard to come by as the proverbially forbidden type represented by the novel being reviewed.) Takács's reasons, except for the narrowly political, have an unchanging relevance to Hungary's reception of Anthony Burgess to this day. That we still have to do without
Nothing Like the Sun

,
MF

or
Earthly Powers

in Hungarian is because of our lingering doubts about the feasibility (or saleability) of non-realist experimentation

à la

Joyce—stale prejudices imported from a convention-ridden

TLS

as much as inherited from Georg Lukács's dogmatic disciples—and our laziness or timidity to take on the linguistic challenge of Burgess's more "writerly" prose.

As it is, the Hungarian reader looking beyond the three novels mentioned so far has very little to

read in his or her own language. Available in Hungary are now two passages from the as many *volumes*

of Burgess's "Confessions", together with an essay on Europe, published by

Nagyvilág

in Márton Mesterházi's masterly rendering, and—printed in the pages of

Magyar Lettre Internationale

—two more short pieces: a selection from

Mozart and the Wolf Gang

later followed by "Meeting in Valladolid" (the opening piece of Burgess's only short-story collection

The Devil's Mode

). The latter two ("Variációk Mozarra" [Variations on Mozart] translated by Péter Balabán and "Találkozás Valladolidban" ["A Meeting in Valladolid"] rendered Miklós by N. Nagy) are likely to have been selected more on grounds of their perceived political than their undeniable literary merits. No doubt, the topical treatment of the Middle-East problem in the one and the *topos*

of "our divided yet common European heritage" in the other is what one feels to be the reason why a Shakespeare pitting his wits against Cervantes' in Spain or the Grazioso

Quartet—Mozart and Mendelssohn's newest "celestial companions" blown by terrorists to heaven—have found their way to the Hungarian reader.

2. Innocence to experience: Hungary's Burgess in the 2000s

The original version of this paper was concluded with a promise made on behalf of a colleague at Debrecen University where my Burgess-related presentation was held. The colleague, Tamás Bényei, a youngish but already senior professor at my *alma mater* in the provincial city hosting the HUSSE event in 2003, was already an old hand at Burgessian scholarship. Besides his above-mentioned short translation and his astute comments on Burgess's place in the history of European letters appended to it, he had scattered his remarks on the master in his two book-length studies of postmodern fiction in English and Spanish left somewhat unfairly out of the foregoing (Bényei 1993; 2000). The substance of the promise, based largely on hearsay at the time, concerned the appearance of a truly major Hungarian-language assessment of post-war English fiction to be written by my good friend Tamás in the near future. What I did not realise at the time was the fact that the manuscript of the book that I thought of more as a plan than an actuality had in fact been completed. Not only that, but the usually sluggish work of editing, printing, and distributing the opus must also have been nearing completion. In any case, the volume with Tamás Bényei's name on its broad ridge hit the shelves of Hungary's major bookshops before the year was out, a copy to land on my desk shortly thereafter. More than a year has passed since and I am still recovering from the amazement with which I put down the bulky tome entitled

Ár

tatlan ország: Az angol regény 1945 után

[

The Innocent Country: The English Novel After 1945

] after a perusal of the chapters with the most alluring titles. Where, I asked myself in desperation, had this huge book of more than 500 pages, or 230,000 words, been written, at a time I kept running into Tamás at various formal and informal events—academic, social and ... erm ... convivial—in the three short years between its publication and the appearance of his previous, somewhat shorter but still substantial, study on the interplay of criminality, metaphysics and the postmodern in the novels of just about everybody in world literature from Wilde and Waugh through Orwell and Nabokov to Borges and Burgess? Well, the answer was, obviously: in between—in between doctoral dissertations evaluated, British Council sessions for young scholars chaired, conferences attended in England, Hungary and elsewhere on the Continent by this laddish-looking young professor ubiquitous in the seminar rooms, lecture halls, private apartments and popular student haunts of his native Debrecen.

The astonishment at my friend's no less than miraculous, and curiously Burgess-like, productivity may not in itself be sufficient reason for concluding this overview with the detailed discussion of his most recent contribution to Burgessian scholarship that is now to follow. The quality, as much as the quantity, of Bényei's insight into the precise nature of Burgess's contribution to the development of the English, and indeed world, literature of his time is my excuse for these comparatively elaborate comments.

Burgess's reputation as an outstanding twentieth-century practitioner of the novel genre seems to be secure enough and would thus hardly require the services of an "obscure" Hungarian academic. However, Bényei's repeated remarks on the lack of monographic studies truly worthy of Burgess's stature (John Stinson is the only one quite making the mark, with Ghosh-Schellhorn narrowly missing it) should give us pause. No less worrying, we are reminded, is the merely episodic part that Burgess plays in the definitive histories of contemporary English literature: even such fellow-writers and scholars on Burgess's own side give him cursory treatment as Malcolm Bradbury or David Lodge, which is not to mention the cold shoulder he is given by Bernard Bergonzi, Andrzej Gasiorek or Stephen Connor. The situation is exacerbated by the even more painful absence of the more daringly experimental novels (*MF* and *Napoleon Symphony* are the Hungarian scholar's examples) from the list of Burgess's novels readily available in recent editions. Can it then be taken for granted that Burgess's oeuvre occupies the pre-eminent position in the "canon" that its unique coupling of excitingly innovative technique with delightful readability would deserve? Is it only in far-away countries like Hungary or Poland where his only novel singled out for discussion in university seminars is

A Clockwork Orange?

As the answer in both cases is unequivocally in the negative, the next question suggesting itself to one as objectively partial to Burgess as Tamás Bényei is can only be this: What is one to do to change the situation? Before proffering an explicit answer, the writer of

Ártatlan ország

demonstrates, with the example of his own reading, re-reading or creative misreading, of Burgess's major works from the "Malayan trilogy" and the Enderby-novels through the Shakespeare-, Napoleon and Marlowe-biographies to

Earthly Powers

and back to

The Doctor Is Sick

, how Burgess can be rediscovered for the twenty-first century reader. In conclusion, Bényei sums up his recipe already applied in his analyses: Burgess can, and indeed should, be submitted to the same theoretically advanced interpretative procedures that have been accorded to others of his calibre. Besides being carefully re-examined through the lenses of structural and myth criticism, Burgess's oeuvre should be opened up to the equally legitimate poststructural, post-Bakhtinian, and postcolonial readings that Bényei not only promotes but himself practices. Although some of his suggestions might be familiar from elsewhere—Frank Kermode's seminal reading of

MF

as a work inspired by structural anthropology (Kermode 1983), Ferenc Takács's above-mentioned discovery of Bakhtinian multivocality in

A Clockwork Orange

or my own remarks on a Rabelaisian-Bakhtinian sort of richly corporeal "gigantism" in Burgess's novels would perhaps have deserved mention by Bényei himself—many of my Debrecen colleague's ideas are as original as they are revelatory. While there may be little radically new about his discovery of the omnipresence of the carnivalesque in Burgess or his reconfiguration of the mythical method in

A Vision of Battlements

or

Napoleon Symphony

, Bényei's discussion of how the various fallacies of Orientalism are satirised in the Malayan trilogy long before their exposure by Edward Said and, perhaps even more surprisingly, of the analogy between Burgess's brand of "serious comedy" and the Beckett-phenomenon lead one to conclusions hardly met in previous discussions of my favourite novelist.

These and related strategies of a postmodern re-reading of the Burgess corpus would prevent its marginalisation by poetically inappropriate or ideologically hostile misrepresentations of it as an exemplar of flawed realism or political incorrectness. Translated into English, the thirty-page Burgess-chapter concluding Tamás Bényei's phenomenally insightful and encyclopaedically comprehensive study of recent English fiction could certainly be used by the international Burgess-community as a conceptual template in assigning Burgess his well-deserved place in the ever-changing canon of the English novel. As it is, the Hungarian original provides Bényei's colleagues at home with a fresh vocabulary of practical and theoretical criticism in their own language with which to convince their literature-loving compatriots that the mission of rendering Anthony Burgess accessible to the Hungarian reader is far from accomplished.



Notes:

1. A transcript of the presentation that the first section is based on appeared in *Voices*, a collection of papers written by the staff of the Department of English for Teacher Education of the School of English and American Studies at ELTE University, Budapest (Farkas 2004). Acknowledgements for permission to use substantial parts of the material already in print are due to the editor of the special issue Dr. Zsuzsa N. Tóth of ELTE University.

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2. I am no exception here either—my book on Anthony Burgess's "Joycean negotiations" makes no mention of my fellow-Hungarians' contributions to the body of international Burgess-criticism. Among other things, this overview is meant to make amends for the oversight. As for my *Will's Son and Jake's Peer* (Farkas 2002), its language, which is English, and the person of its author exclude it from the scope of this assessment of Hungarian-language material written on Burgess by others. In any case, the book has been expertly reviewed by Andrew Biswell in an earlier issue of this newsletter (Biswell 2003).

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3. Modulating from unanimous derision and centrally orchestrated ideological rejection to academic overproduction and public indifference, the history of Joyce's reception in Hungary is surveyed in Márta Goldmann's doctoral dissertation *James Joyce kritikai fogadtatása Magyarországon* [The Critical Reception of James Joyce in Hungary], a work deserving a good English translation on the merit of its exciting subject matter alone. (Goldmann 2002).

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4. Fellow-travellers and socialist-realists of the Howard Fast and Albert Maltz category made an obvious exception. Jack London, Theodore Dreiser, Dos Passos and some other left-leaning novelists of a securer literary reputation had made their Hungarian-language debut by the 1930s. That, however, is another story. [Return to article](#)

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