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**TEXT THROUGH TIME:
TIME-DISTANT ORIGINALS, TIME-DISTANT
TRANSLATIONS
(JOHN MILTON’S “SAMSON AGONISTES” AND ITS
TRANSLATIONS INTO UKRAINIAN BY IVAN FRANKO
AND INTO SLOVAK BY MARIÁN ANDRIČÍK)¹**

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The paper is dedicated to John Milton’s poem “Samson Agonistes” (published in 1671) and its two translations: the Ukrainian translation was done by Ivan Franko (1912; published in 1913), and the Slovak translation was rendered by Marián Andričik (2022). The translation strategies applied in both target texts illustrate the ways and limits of the reception and perception of common European – sometimes predominantly Christian – poetics among modern readers. Local divergences can contribute to the integral theory of textual recreations in reader-oriented translation strategies. The focus of the paper is on three hypotheses: 1) older translations have poorer quality than newer ones. The time span of a century is usually a period which can cause some linguistic changes turning an actual text into an outdated one; 2) Milton is a product of a monarchical society. Franko, as a citizen of an empire (Austro-Hungarian Empire), could better understand the monarchical expression than Andričik, as a citizen of a republic (Slovak Republic); 3) both Ukrainian and Slovak have similar problems and solutions for dealing with the high-flown style of Milton’s text.

The political dimension of high-flown style can be traced throughout Milton’s poem: it gives some specific but not decisive flavour to the text. The storyline focus is still on the biblical plot, and its violation can threaten the correct understanding of the poem. Despite the time span between Franko’s publication and today’s reader, this translation does not sound outdated, and it can satisfactorily perform all informative and aesthetic functions. Andričik’s translation is very precise: the brevity of his style impresses, while he manages to keep equilinearity in his translation. Moreover, the use of abstract nouns instead of specific high-flown lexemes can serve as efficient advice for other translators who have to cope with the lingual asymmetry.

Key words: translation theory, equivalence, political vocabulary, cultural norms, biblical phrasing.

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Introduction. As every author, John Milton was a spring of his epoch, full of vibrant Republican and Puritan ideas, which possess both universal appreciation and local forms. Universal appreciation opened a way to the understanding of the values respected and cherished in Milton’s writings, although their local forms were uniquely associated with the British milieu and history of the 17th century. This is why a reader is always on the balancing skate between acceptable universalism and hidden localism.

Neighbouring nations often share the same difficulties, but long for different solutions. History offered the Slovaks opportunities for translating European masterpieces into their native language quite late: mainly, the Romanticism opened the door for translations of writings which had become classical and circulated in West European cultural space for centuries. Slovak culture was very active in reception. Ukrainian literary history is similar in many aspects to Slovak history. This is why it is mutually beneficial to explore how culturally similar milieus or intelligentsias resolved the same questions while building national states and languages.

Previous research in the area: History of texts and studies. The object of this study is Milton’s poem “Samson Agonistes” (published in 1671) along with its two translations: the Ukrainian translation was done by Ivan Franko (1912; published in 1913), and the Slovak translation was rendered by Marián Andričik (2022). The translation strategies applied in both target texts illustrate the ways and limits of the reception and perception of common European – sometimes predominantly Christian – poetics among modern readers. Local divergences can contribute to the integral theory of textual recreations in reader-oriented translation strategies.

Ivan Franko (1856–1916) was a Ukrainian writer, scholar, political and civic leader, and publicist. Like Taras Shevchenko, he is one of Ukraine’s greatest creative geniuses. Possessing many talents, encyclopaedic knowledge and unusual capacity for work, Franko made outstanding contributions to many spheres of Ukrainian culture. He defended a doctoral dissertation at Vienna University and was even appointed a lecturer in the history of Ukrainian literature at Lviv University, but failed to get the position because of opposition from vicegerent and reactionary circles in Halychyna. He translated from 14 languages and 37 national literatures. Among Anglophone authors, he translated poetry and prose by William Shakespeare, John Milton, Robert Burns, George Gordon Byron, Charles Dickens, Mark Twain and even Australian authors.

He translated only one large poem by John Milton – “Samson Agonistes”. Although it was published more than a century ago, it did not enjoy much attention from translation critics. As a fact of literature, it was known and mentioned regularly. However, a serious study of translation assessment was never performed specifically. An exception paper is that by Olha Lehka who considered various aspects of two creative biographies – those of John Milton and of Ivan Franko – and referred to some translation matters [10]. A more insightful examination of semantic correspondences between Milton’s original and Franko’s translation is performed in the article by Olena Poriadna [7]. She confirms that I. Franko rendered Milton’s poetics successfully, as the target text has no omissions of the original information, semantic equivalents are exact, and the translation conveys the dynamic and expressive nature of the original.

Marián Andričik (b. 1964) is a Slovak literary scholar, translator and educator. A graduate of the Comenius University in Bratislava, he experienced a life as a university teacher at the Universities in Prešov and Košice. He is a very prolific translator, and his contribution to Slovak culture is really great due to his translation anthologies of John Keats, William Blake as well as the Beat poetry. The society honoured these deeds with several literary prizes. His most recent feat is the first and complete translation of Milton's three key poems: "Paradise Lost", "Paradise Regained" and "Samson Agonistes".

The translation studies of Milton's writings in Slovak have not been the object as research as no translations existed. "Samson Agonistes" was published in 2022, and serious criticism is still to be published in the future.

In global translation studies, the general interest in translating Milton's writings was summarized and boosted by the collection "Milton in translation" [5], albeit only one chapter is dedicated to "Samson Agonistes" where Hiroko Sano describes the Japanese context and some of her own translation experiments [5, p. 459–475]. In Miklós Péti's book, a chapter on "Samson Agonistes" belongs to translation history and contains scarce elements of translation criticism [6, p. 65–89]: the author draws the lines of reception and interpretation (carefully explaining the 'socialist' interpretation) of this poem and its translations in Communist Hungary. His anthropological observations are important for future translation quality assessment of those target texts.

Methodology. The assumptions of this paper are grounded within contemporary views of translation theory in general and cultural translation in particular. When it comes to rendering elements of the author's text and context, the issue of achieving equivalence in the target text deserves prior attention which can be justified and verified by the methods of lexical, etymological, contextual and interpretational analyses.

Before initiating the consideration over the successfulness of translation strategies, we can formulate three hypotheses, which will help us to assess the translations from various perspectives:

1. Older translations have poorer quality than newer ones. The time span of a century is usually a period which can cause some linguistic changes turning an actual text into an outdated one. In our study, we have to eliminate another theoretical observation: the first translation is worse than the second or third one. This observation is not relevant for us, as we are to deal with the text which was translated only once in both cultures.

2. Milton is a product of a monarchical society. Franko, as a citizen of an empire (Austro-Hungarian Empire), could better understand the monarchical expression than Andričik, as a citizen of a republic (Slovak Republic).

3. Both Ukrainian and Slovak have similar problems and solutions for dealing with the high-flown style of Milton's text.

Results and Discussion. Social and political lexis. Since the biblical story of Samson was one of the most favourite and retold parables, it thus acquired a number of closer and more distant interpretations in mass culture. The biblical motifs should not be misleading: the moral virtues of the story do not limit it to the domain of moralising and ethics. This is absolutely true while one has to refer to Milton: "In his capacity as both polemicist and poet, Milton was acutely concerned with the nature of the public realm and the meaning of

political action within that sphere” [4, p. 39]. The social and political reverberation, imposed on this biblical story, makes it the state-building vision and a fit for modernity.

Samson’s saying “Why was my breeding order’d and prescrib’d / As of a person separate to God” (Lines 30-31)¹ can be interpreted from the viewpoint of tribal life (moral associations) or from the viewpoint of a more sophisticated state-like life (legal and political associations). The latter is traced in the following senses of the lexeme “order”: “To set or keep in order or proper condition; to adjust, dispose, or carry on according to rule; to regulate, direct, conduct, rule, govern, manage; to settle” and “To bring into order or submission to lawful authority; hence, to inflict disciplinary punishment on; to correct, chastise, punish” (OED). Similar are the senses of the word “prescribe”: “To write or lay down as a rule or direction to be followed; to appoint, ordain, direct, enjoin”, or “To lay down a rule; to dictate, appoint, direct. Of a law or custom: To be of force”, or “To make a claim by prescription; to assert a prescriptive right or claim” [15]. Although these senses are quite close, they can equally represent moral and political perspectives.

In Franko’s variant – “І по що той наказ і розпорядок / Плекать мене як вибранця Єгови” (page 487), – the lexemes “наказ” and “розпорядок” are like absolute synonyms for an “order” [18; 19], and they both designate an official paper with instructions, thus being a symbol of bureaucracy, which is a quintessential part of the state. Although the verbs have a very long history, the derived nouns seem to have been shaped in the 19th century. Thus, they reflect the social order of modern states.

Andričik’s version reads in a more divine manner: “Prečo ma predurčila výchova / byť zasvätený Hospodinovi”. The word “predurčiť” means “to predestine” [16] that immediately pushes the reader to the domain of Destiny, Divinity and partly divination. The moral parameter dominates while the political one is not in existence. Identically, “zasvätený” (“dedicated, consecrated”) fully corresponds to the ecclesiastical sphere, though its newer sense is connected with informativity [16]. In other words, this piece is exclusively religious and offers no space for political associations.

The lexeme “disposition” does have a legal sense which could contribute to the social hierarchy of power and authority: “The action of disposing of, putting away, getting rid of, making over, etc.; bestowal; spec. in Law, the action of disposing; bestowal or conveyance by deed or will” [15]. Therefore, Samson’s phrase “Appoint not heavenly disposition, Father” (373) reflects his understanding of the power hierarchy as well, and he shows no implication of his personal willingness or unwillingness, his predestination or fatality. In Franko’s “О тату, не став приписів до бога!” (498), the word “припис” can designate a demand, an instruction, a canon, a regulation, but it also has a sense of a governmental ruling which again fits the worldview of state machinery. Andričik’s “Nie Božie riadenie viň z toho, oťče” (373) has more moral and emotional values, grouped around the key idea of accusation: “viniť” (accuse) can be interpreted as an act of transferring one’s own responsibility to somebody else or as an act of resisting or accepting no order from a higher authority; “riadenie” has a wider meaning, although its religious sense focuses on fate and

¹ In the references, lines will be indicated in the original and the Slovak translation [according to: 11; 12]. The Ukrainian translation will show pages [according to: 13].

destination. Thus, this context is out of the political context, but remains completely in the religious and moral milieu.

The Church and the State share the same intention of social control. This is why their institutions apply similar senses. As an author of political and religious rhetoric, Milton extracted a desirable sense from the widely-circulated words: “Milton lived and intellectually thrived in an historical period and a national environment of linguistic and cultural adventuring. Language, and cultural attitudes which created and responded to that language, strenuously tested the boundaries of tradition, of conformity, of respectability” [3, p. 44]. The word “dispensation” has a lot of senses from distant domains, but in the context of Milton’s poem, two directions are enacted: first, it is an orientation at Providence (like “A special dealing of Providence with a community, family, or person, dispensing blessing, affliction, or other event” [15]); second, it is an orientation at an institution, being either ecclesiastical or governmental (e.g. “A religious order or system, conceived as divinely instituted, or as a stage in a progressive revelation, expressly adapted to the needs of a particular nation or period of time” vs. “The orderly administration of things committed to one’s charge; the function or office of administrator or steward; stewardship” [15]). These contemplations provide ground for seeing a state-like perspective in the phrase “I must not quarrel with the will / Of highest dispensation” (60–61). The Slovak translation stays within the limits of designating Providence: “Nesmiem sapriet’ s najvyššou / vôľou, má možno take zábery” (60–61). The Ukrainian translation is more varicoloured: “Не слід мені напружувати з вишнім / І суд його відсуджувати” (488). It is not only the matter that the lexeme “суд” (judicial court) triggers the image of a political system in a modern reader, but Samson was the last judge of ancient Jews from the succession line described in the Book of Judges. The verb “відсуджувати” (to return by judgment), which is added by the translation, has even the contextual meaning that Samson has no theoclastic intentions but completely subjugates. Thus, the position of Samson in the governmental hierarchy is highlighted in a very delicate manner.

A number of passages in “Samson Agonistes” are really like political manifestos. Here is one of them:

But what more oft in Nations grown corrupt,
And by thir vices brought to servitude,
Then to love Bondage more then Liberty,
Bondage with ease then strenuous liberty (268–271).

Та що ж ми часто бачимо в зіпсутих Народах, що за проступки свої Рабами робляться, як тільки те, Що люблять більш рабство, аніж свободу, Гнилу неволю більш, як вільну волю, Ділами сильну? (494)	No často pre skazené národy, čo do otroctva uvrhol ich hriech, je bližšie jarmo ako sloboda, ľahké je jarmo, ťažká sloboda. (268–271)
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The author elucidates how corruptness (first of all, moral fall which leads to financial and other criminal felonies) ruins states. The closeness of the synonyms “servitude” and “bondage” indicates some empowering gradation, though it is extremely difficult to claim

that “bondage” is emotionally stronger than “servitude”. The translators kept the gradation and introduced two synonyms into their texts: “рабство”–“неволя” and “отрочтво”–“jarmo”. The final stress is on the contrast of bondage and liberty. The Slovak variant sounds like an aphorism: “ľahké je jarmo, ťažká sloboda”. The Ukrainian text is more packed with emotional lexis: “bondage” gets the epithet “гнилий” (rotten); liberty is not just “strenuous” (vigorously active), but empowered with “сильні діла” (strong deeds). Franko is felt to have had more painful experience of struggling for the independence of the Ukrainian nation, and perhaps, he wanted to express this opinion with larger verbosity.

Another aspect should not be missed: Milton writes “vice” which is a more moral word than legal or political (cf. “Depravity or corruption of morals; evil, immoral, or wicked habits or conduct; indulgence in degrading pleasures or practices” [15]). Religious is the Slovak term “hriech” (sin) which is a very good contextual equivalent. However, these senses contradict to the idea of the fragment. Franko slightly changed the storyline by applying the legal term “проступок” (offence) when the awareness of unavoidable punishment dominates over moral behaviour.

“Bonum publicum” is a fundamental idea in the following passage:

... at length that grounded maxim
So rife and celebrated in the mouths
Of wisest men; that to the public good
Private respects must yield (865–868).

Священний заповіт, що воля одиниці
Все відступити мусить перед благом
Загальним (514–515).

... Napokon tá stará
zásada, ktorá často znela z úst
múdrych, že nad osobným zreteľom
verejné blaho stojí (865–868).

Franko eliminates the reference to the “wise men” as the highest authority. For him (or his character), the public good is “священний заповіт” (sacred testament): it is not connected with the human judgement, but it is purely divine. Milton and Andričik appeal to different values: for Milton, general acceptance and firm establishment (“grounded maxim”) serve a key role; for Andričik, “stará zásada” (old principle) is sanctioned by the old age of this idea. Both Milton and Andričik seek for additional authority which is found in the approval of the wise men.

Summarizing the search for the political perspective, one asks a question: can the selection of special political lexis be caused by a translator’s pro-active political stance? Contrasting Franko and Andričik, one easily deduces that they both perfectly serve as sample of academia. Andričik is a full professor at Košice University; Franko was never permitted to teach at Lviv University, but he was a productive literary critic as well as a prolific researcher at the Shevchenko Scholarly Society (being de facto the Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences at the turn of the 20th century). Furthermore, Franko was a founding member of the Ukrainian Radical Party, and his idealistic and romantic dreams of political nature may have influenced his ability to see political prospects in translated poetry. Otherwise, we can reverse the question: while translating “Samson Agonistes”, should a translator be more political or more religious? Subconsciously or consciously, both

translators chose their own strategy: Franko sounds more political; Andričik, more religious. In his preface, Franko highlights that Milton transformed a careless strong man into a national hero who is aware of his mission. Unfortunately, Franko was already physically ill and could not write (he dictated, like Milton after getting blind), and he did not compose commentaries for his translation. Andričik composed numerous comments, and it is visible how deep in religion he is.

In any case, the political rhetoric of this text should not be underestimated. Concerning Milton's epics, "the general assumption is that the metrically like-minded will also turn out to be politically like-minded" [8, p. 109]. Thus, it is worth searching this type of rhetoric in high-register lexis.

People and their titles. Titles represent both people's personal achievements and their position in the system of social hierarchy. It is important to remember that titles in the original and in the translation should be part of the same social or state-like organization; however, at the same time, the titles themselves are culturally-marked and are treated as unique for the source culture and political regime. In Milton's writing, they are rooted in the monarchical mindset, and this controversy is known among his commentators: "Some critics make the laughable mistake of thinking that Milton the republican must harbour some sort of opposition, of the unconscious variety perhaps, towards the absolute monarch of heaven. The whole point is the opposite: he wants to show that his republicanism is rooted in his form of religious absolutism. God alone is the absolutely authoritative ruler, criticism of whom is sinful" [2, p. 144]. Social titles are important signs of such a political hierarchy.

The term "officer" is extremely multifunctional in business, official and bureaucratic discourse when one has to unify the specific conditions of a vacancy. It seems to be an umbrella term for white collars, but not only. The OED records one of its senses: "One who holds a public, civil, or ecclesiastical office; a servant or minister of the king, as one of the great functionaries of the royal household, etc.; a person authoritatively appointed or elected to exercise some function pertaining to public life, or to take part in the administration of municipal government, the management or direction of a public corporation, institution, etc. In early use, applied esp. to persons engaged in the administration of law or justice". This general sense is a good basis for numerous and more specific senses. When Milton mentions "Public Officer" (1305), it is very difficult to attribute an exact position, but simultaneously, it provides enough space for a translator to find a close correspondent word from a target culture. In addition, the supportive word "public" sounds tautological in some contexts, though the fundamental division between governmental and ecclesiastical offices explains the logic of applying the supportive word. Franko translated the word almost literally: "державний урядник" (532). On the one hand, it is an extremely good option. In Middle Ukrainian (14th to 18th centuries), the lexeme "уряд" was more polysemantic than in New Ukrainian where it denotes only the administration of secular power. On the other hand, the supportive word "державний" does look like a tautology from the viewpoint of a contemporary speaker. This is why Andričik opted for the one-word equivalent "úradník" (1306) which is even more economically-oriented both in the historical and contemporary perspectives than the phonetically close Ukrainian word. Nevertheless, there is no suspicion of tautology in the Slovak translation.

Another polysemantic word, which stimulates translator to linguistic creativity, is the term “lord”. In religious poems, a reader is eager to expect its sense as a title of God. In “Samson Agonistes”, this sense is not involved, and its main sense is connected with the administration of civil and other power: “One who has dominion over others as his subjects, or to whom service and obedience are due; a master, chief, prince, sovereign” [15]. One should also pay attention to the use of the plural form “lords” which transforms a subject of power into an institution (i.e. nobility as a class). It is the very plural form which helped the translators opt for abstract nouns (e.g. Ukrainian “панство” and Slovak “vrchnost”).

Translators sometimes claim that it is desirable to translate one source-language word with the same target-language equivalent. It does not work especially in poetry translations. Consequently, the words “lord” and “lords” have more than one equivalent in both translations: the Ukrainian text contains “пани”, “старшина”, “панство”, “князі”; the Slovak piece comprises “vládcovia”, “vladári”, “páni”, “vrchnost”. Nobility may or may not be an ethnically-marked phenomenon per se. This is why it is so important to choose such lexemes for translation which would avoid the amalgamation of source and target cultures. Almost all the words have performed this function well with the exception of one: the Ukrainian “князі”. Semantically, it corresponds to the English sense of a sovereign, but, historically, it acquired some local colouring, especially reference to the early Ukrainian history when the Kyivan State of Rus existed and its highest rulers possessed the title “великий князь” (it is typically translated into English as a “grand prince”, but it is not the best variant, as it may be misinterpreted as a dauphin, while a king is meant; by the way, the English “king” and the Ukrainian “князь” derive from the same Proto-Germanic “*kuningo-z”).

Milton also referred to some other public positions, namely:

Original	Ukrainian translation	Slovak Translation
Governors	Старшини	Vladári
Heads of Tribes	Воєводи племен	Vodcovia kmeňov
Magistrates	Старшини	Správa

The term “governor” seems to contradict the biblical description of Samson’s office. According to the Book of Judges (15:20 and 16:31), he was a judge, but the very book describes the period before an Israelite monarchy was established, when these judges functioned as temporary or military leaders in times of crisis. Actually, Milton’s account could violate Samson’s status, but the older sense of the term proves that historically, this term is possibly applicable as well: “One who governs, or exercises authoritative control over, subjects or inferiors; a ruler” [15].

Similarly, the lexeme “magistrate” could sound anachronistic (especially for a Ukrainian speaker who attributes it mainly to the Late Middle Ages and the Early Modern Time, but also for a Slovak speaker who experiences this institution in today’s civil administration). However, the older sense is more neutral: “A civil officer charged with the administration of the laws, a member of the executive government” [15]. This word is registered in Wyclif’s 1382 translation of the Bible: “The magestratis of the peple clepid to gidere, Pilatseide

to hem” (Luke 33:14). Thus, the use of this term in its most neutral sense is justified for applying in the texts on ancient history.

This poetical treatment of the original author helped the translators to find the proper solutions for themselves. Leaving out all additional historical associations, they successfully used equivalents in the translations. Their historically-neutral senses secure the image of power without specific cultural references. The Slovak equivalent “*správa*” is remarkably efficacious, as its abstract nature stimulates the reader to think about power, but not about its executor.

The condensed trouble is hidden in the lines “Lords, Ladies, Captains, Councillors, or Priests, / Thir choice nobility and flower” (1653–1654). Most of them can designate quite specific posts in various historical societies and political regimes. Surprisingly, they all have neutral senses which are not connected with specific cultural phenomena. Reversibly, they are such hyperonyms which can suit social hierarchies in any historical period. The translators grasped this idea and implemented it: the Ukrainian version sounds as “*всіх панів, / Вельможних пань, старшин і воєвод, / Жерців і вибору та цвіту шляхти*” (547); the Slovak texts reads “*vladárov, vodcov, radcov, kňazov, dám / ich výkvet šľachty*” (1653–1654). The stumbling block in both texts is factually the same word “*шляхта / šľachta*”. Ukrainian and Slovak dictionaries refer to it as a phenomenon of feudalism, though it better fits the Late Middle Ages and the Early Modern Time. The Ukrainian academic dictionary [18] even localizes it within Poland, Ukraine, Belarus and Lithuania. The case of Slovakia shows that this word has a somewhat wider area of distribution, but it is still limited to East Central Europe. In Ukrainian, neutral terms are “*дворянство*”, “*знать*” or even the Latin borrowing “*аристократія*”. Likewise, the Slovak terms “*aristokracia*” and “*nobilita*” (albeit of Latin origin) do not have a specific reference to East Central Europe either.

Biblical phrasing. The Bible was a multifunctional source for the poetic structure of the source text: “For Milton, the Bible, with its distinct vocabulary, turns of phrase, and historical-prophetic narrative, was never mere grist for the mill of his poetic imagination (as his classical learning was), but the very life-blood of his creative impulse” [9, p. 198]. Due to the biblical origin of the story, a reader could expect large amounts of Hebrew or specifically biblical lexis. The title of the poem attributes the Greek-language epithet to Samson. The OED refers it to the word “*agonist*”, but explains in a general way (“A person engaged in a contest or struggle; a protagonist”), along with providing a very thought-provoking quotation (“The Agonist is the hero, who is attacked, is put on his defence, and comes off victorious”) [15; cf. 1, p. 180–182]. In addition, the Collins English Dictionary fixes the lexeme “*agonists*” with the definition “a person enduring an inner struggle” [14]. It even deepens the inner tragedy of the protagonist. Neither the Ukrainian “*борець*”, nor the Slovak “*bojovník*” possesses this width of semantic space. Both lexemes designate only a fighter, although, from a psychological perspective, a fighter is typically perceived to be victorious.

Interestingly, Milton clearly comprehended that he was writing about the mentality of the Old Testament. He did not apply the sense of “*Lord*” meaning God which is typical for Christian liturgical use (thus, the domination of the mentality of the New Testament). The use of the Ukrainian phrase “*Господь Бор*” and the Slovak “*Pán Boh*” is very typical for the Byzantine and Roman Liturgies (in other words, for Orthodox, Greek Catholic and Roman

Catholic texts). It is not that Lord and Jehovah are not mentioned in the Old Testament; however, in religious discourse, the usage frequency of these terms somehow shows the division between the Old Testament and the Byzantine and Roman Liturgies as well as the difference between the Byzantine and Roman Liturgies and the Protestant Liturgy. The translators avoided implementing the representative nouns of the Byzantine and Roman Liturgies. Franko took the advantage of the name “Єгова” which is not found in Milton’s text, but which is a sufficient equivalent of the history of Jewish religion. Andričik chose the lexeme “Hospodin” which is considered to be the Jewish and Christian name of God [according to 16]. However, according to the dictionary of contemporary Slovak [17], this lexeme means the name of God in the Evangelical (i.e. Protestant) Church, in Judaism and in the Slovak ecumenical translation of the Bible. This is why both variants seem to be successful equivalents of the name of God in the relevant translations.

Surely, the text contains a number of biblical allusions which are very vivid, because they denote cultural phenomena, like “Light the prime work of God” (Genesis 1:3), “the Jaw of a dead Ass” (cf. Judges 15:15–16) or “Scorpions tail” (cf. Luke 11:12). These references demand a good command of the Bible from the reader, although they pose no problem for the translators who may not extend the text in order to explain an additional biblical context but can always provide a footnote with relevant information.

More challenging is the vocabulary which directly correlates with the Bible, esp. the King James Version, but denotes general concepts. This is the case with the expression “a person separate to God” (31). The origin of Milton’s phrase remains in the contextual use of the verb “separate”: “When either man or woman shall separate *themselves* to vow avow of a Nazarite, to separate *themselves* unto the Lord” (Numbers 6:2). The second use of the verb means “to dedicate to God”. This occasional contextual sense is clear in the wider text describing people separated from others for ritual purity and piety and, thus, dedicated specially to God. In the Ukrainian and Slovak translations of the Bible, the lexeme “separate” is not typically deployed:

– “Чоловік або жінка, коли вирішиться скласти обітницю назіра, щоб **посвятити** себе Господеві” (translated by Ivan Ohiyenko);

– “Коли чоловік чи жінка врочисто обрікається назорейським обітом, щоб **посвятитися** Господеві” (translated by Mykola Khomenko);

– “Коли чоловік чи жінка захоче присвятити себе шлюбом назорейським, щоб **відлучившись віддатись** Господеві” (translated by Panteleimon Kulish, Ivan Puliui, Ivan Nechui-Levytskyi);

– “Ak nejaký muž alebo žena urobí nazirejský sľub a **zasvätiša** Pánovi” (Catholic translation);

– “Ak niektorý muž alebo žena zloží osobný nazirejský sľub, aby **sazasvätil** Hospodinovi” (Ecumenical translation);

– “Keby niekto, užčimuž a čižena, učinil zvláštny sľub, totiž sľub nazareja, aby **saoddelil** pre Hospodina” (translated by Jozef Roháček).

Although some translations do use the lexeme “separate”, they do not support the possibility of Ukrainian and Slovak speakers to elaborate the same occasional sense for interpreting Milton’s text. Andričik’s choice sounds “zasvätený Hospodinovi” (31), which

corresponds to some translations and renders the idea of the original. Franko's option – “вибранець Єгови” (487) – is poetical, but it renders a different idea. “Вибранець” (“a selected man”) changes the orientation of action in the very phrase: in the original (projected by the fragment from the Book of Numbers), a person decided to be dedicated to God, but in the Ukrainian translation, God decides to take Samson and empower him without checking his personal intentions. This type of mistake may have appeared because of the lack of proper commentaries and of the appreciation of the entire plot.

Biblical phrasing is acutely felt in occasional Church Slavonic expressions which are traced in Franko's translation: “напрюставати” (488), “притча в язичіх” (492), the newly-coined Church Slavonic-based “широкоглаголивий” (526). When Franko was translating “Samson Agonistes”, the Church Slavonic language of Ukrainian and Russian recensions dominated in Ukrainian churches (the Ukrainian recension in the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Russian recension in the Russian Empire). This is how some biblical idioms gained a wide currency in every-day speech. Franko considered them acceptable for including into his translations.

It is wise to verify how generally religious lexis is rendered in the target texts. For this reason, the focus is on the following fragment:

... A sin	
That Gentiles in thir Parables condemn	
To thir abyss and horrid pains confin'd. (499–501)	
... гріх, який би	Ten hriech už v podobenstvách pohania
Й язичника завів у саме пекло	Vydali večným mukám v podsvetí (500–501).
На найстрашнішу муку (502).	

The lexemes “sin”, “гріх” and “hriech” are closely connected with Christianity, but this may be a fallacious impression, as written records and Christianity overlap in the history of three nations. So, the act of wrong-doing could be named in the same way in the pre-Christian time, and etymological studies inspire this idea. Misguiding is the word “Gentile” which means non-Jewish in today's speech, but in Milton's time, it also denoted pagans, so “язичник” and “pohania” are justified equivalents. The Ukrainian translator omitted “Parables”, though “proverbs, maxims, or ancient saws” [15] correctly reflect any pagan doctrine. The word “abyss” is trickier. On the one hand, it is “the great deep, the primal chaos; the bowels of the earth, the supposed cavity of the lower world; the infernal pit” [15]. In this definition, underworld is quite a wide-spread concept in different religions, irrespective of time and territory. On the other hand, it is necessary to confirm its status of the main religion of the target culture. If it is a fundamental concept of a national religious doctrine, it acquires additional folk features and associations. The term became localized and slightly modified. The Slovak term “podsvetie” is good because of its neutrality. The Ukrainian term “пекло” looks like a Christian concept with specific ethnic features although the dictionaries do not register any Christian connection [18; 19].

A controversy is found in another fragment:

For him I reckon not in high estate
Whom long descent of birth
Or the spear of fortune raises (170–172).

The description of noble origin is in the high-flown style, and the very expression “high estate” is now tightly connected with the biblical style: “State or condition in general, whether material or moral, bodily or mental, now almost exclusively in Biblical phrases” [15]. However, the storyline goes to fortune which cannot be considered a Christian-based concept. It is often personified as a goddess, whose power is supposed to distribute much of life according to her own humour, and her emblem is a wheel, betokening vicissitude [15]. The collapse of Christian and pagan mentality is evident not only in the symbols and figures, but also in doctrinal clarifications: God granted a human with his/her own will to act, but Fortune / Fate limits a human’s liberty. This is why a reader faces a religious controversy on the levels of expression and understanding in this passage.

Бо не той стоїть високо,
Хто відроду благородний,
Кого колесо фортуни
На високість піднесло (491).

Nie ten je vysoko, kto mohol niest'
bohatý rodokmeň
či koleso od šťasteny... (170–172).

In both target texts, the opposition of biblical and non-biblical phrasing is not felt. The tang is rather practical because of a reference to historical cyclicity. The deployed symbol of Rota Fortunae brings no high religiosity to this fragment. In addition, it actually helped the translators to shape their phrases, as Milton does not mention the additional symbolic tool “wheel”.

Conclusions. Ivan Franko used to remark that “Samson Agonistes” is more patriotic, than religious. The political dimension of high-flown style can be traced throughout Milton’s poem: it gives some specific but not decisive flavour to the text. The storyline focus is still on the biblical plot, and its violation can threaten the correct understanding of the poem. Both translators were quite successful at resolving this task.

Despite the time span between Franko’s publication and today’s reader, this translation does not sound outdated, and it can satisfactorily perform all informative and aesthetic functions. Surely, some editing is always required in the domains of spelling, grammatical forms and punctuation, but no essential shift in the lexical expression of the worldview is observed.

Andričik’s translation is very precise: the brevity of his style impresses, and he manages to keep equilinearity in his translation. Also, the use of abstract nouns instead of specific high-flown lexemes can serve as efficient advice for other translators who have to cope with the lingual asymmetry: abstract nouns sound as hyperonyms for lacking hyponyms, and the reader does not notice great difference.

Milton was a product of a society which had created a splendid high register, suitable for serving the monarchical dignity and authorized by the King James Bible. Franko, as a citizen of an empire (Austro-Hungarian Empire), could better understand the monarchical expression than Andričik, a citizen of a republic (Slovak Republic), but in their linguistic display, the difference is not so deep: both translators properly appreciated the meaning of Milton’s poetic intention and the precision of his verbal tools.

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**ТЕКСТ КРИЗЬ ЧАС:
ЧАСОВІДДАЛЕНІ ОРИГІНАЛИ, ЧАСОВІДДАЛЕНІ
ПЕРЕКЛАДИ (“SAMSON AGONISTES” ДЖОНА МІЛТОНА
ТА ЙОГО ПЕРЕКЛАДИ УКРАЇНСЬКОЮ МОВОЮ
ІВАНА ФРАНКА
ТА СЛОВАЦЬКОЮ МОВОЮ МАР’ЯНА АНДРІЧИКА)**

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Статтю присвячено поемі Джона Мілтона “Samson Agonistes” (опубл. 1671 р.) та двом її перекладам: український переклад зробив Іван Франко (1912 р.; опубл. 1913 р.), а словацький – Мар’ян Андрічик (2022 р.). Стратегії перекладу, застосовані в обох цільових текстах, ілюструють шляхи та межі рецепції й сприйняття загальноєвропейської – часом переважно християнської – поетики серед сучасних читачів. Місцеві розбіжності можуть сприяти виробленню загальної теорії відтворення тексту в орієнтованих на читача стратегіях перекладу. У центрі розгляду статті три гіпотези: 1) старіші переклади мають нижчу якість за новіші. Сторіччя зазвичай є таким проміжком часу, за який можуть відбутися мовні зміни, що перетворюють наявний текст у застарілий; 2) Мільтон є продуктом монархічного суспільства. Франко, як громадянин імперії (Австро-Угорської імперії), міг краще зрозуміти монархічний стиль вислову, ніж Андрічик – громадянин республіки (Словацька Республіка); 3) і українська, і словацька мови мають схожі проблеми та шляхи розв’язання труднощів перекладу Мілтонового високого стилю.

Політичний вимір високого стилю можна простежити в усій поемі Мілтона: він надає певного, але не вирішального відтінку тексту. Сюжет все ж зосереджено на біблійній темі, і його порушення може загрожувати правильному розумінню поеми. Попри часовий проміжок між публікацією Франкового перекладу й сьогоднішнім читачем, цей переклад не звучить застарілим і задовільно виконує всі інформативні та естетичні функції. Андрічиків переклад дуже точний: вражає стислість його стилю, йому вдається зберегти еквіліварність у перекладі. Крім того, використання абстрактних іменників замість конкретних лексем із високого реєстру може бути дієвою порадою для інших перекладачів, яким доводиться долати мовну асиметрію.

Ключові слова: теорія перекладу, еквівалентність, політична лексика, культурні норми, біблійна лексика.