

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

TO THE EDITOR:

The reason for this letter is the article “Behind the Scenes” in issues 49 no. 2 and no. 4 of your journal (of which only no. 2 was available to me). It deals with the history of the Russian translation of *Ulysses* and so is of direct concern to me as the co-author of this translation.

I feel it necessary to inform you that the facts concerning my work have been misreported although my interview with the author of the article, in which I explained them at length, was tape recorded. I do not wish to correct all the distortions since it would take several pages and the subjects in question are often more suitable for a gossip column than a literary study.

A few points must be stated clearly: “The question of the authorship of the translation is complicated. . . . The description of Bloom . . . must be Khinkis’s” (p. 186), etc. It is well-known to the author that the published text is my translation made in 1982–1988. Use of both the early draft by Viktor Khinkis and our joint draft was limited to his translations of three nicknames (Buck, Kinch, and Blazes) firmly accepted by us right from the beginning. Nevertheless I shall always keep Viktor’s name on the translation since the whole enterprise is our common odyssey started by him and inseparable from his ordeal and our friendship.

“Khoruzhii recalls that when Khinkis died only the first six chapters were finished” (p. 186). As I told the author quite clearly, no chapters had been finished by then (May 1981). After several months of intense work I prepared six chapters and tried unsuccessfully to have them published. This version was an awkward combination of Viktor’s and my text, which I later rejected.

These and all other facts concerning the history of the text are easily verifiable since all the manuscripts, both Viktor’s and mine, have been carefully preserved by me and are available for anyone to study or copy. In particular, they were available to the author of the article who never expressed any wish to consult them.

YOURS SINCERELY,  
S. KHORUZHII  
MOSCOW

### PROFESSOR TALL RESPONDS

Sergei Khoruzhii claims, first, that I misrepresented and distorted the facts concerning the translation of *Ulysses*, and, second, by implication, that I did so willfully (since the facts were “well-known” to me).

My information concerning the authorship of the translation was based on two interviews, one with Ekaterina I. Genieva and one with Khoruzhii. Genieva stated that she was not sure that Sergei had redone the whole thing and that “conceptually everything connected with Stephen—intellectualism and scholasticism—is Sergei’s” while “the description of Bloom in Russian is so tender and poetic that I think Sergei couldn’t have changed it.” She added that “Viktor [Khinkis] left the ‘keys’—not the words but something of the perception.” In any case, she concluded, she would never try to separate what was done by one from what was done by the other because “it is a spiritual phenomenon.”

It seems to me that Genieva’s remarks do not necessarily contradict Khoruzhii, since they referred to the conceptual and “spiritual” levels of the translation and not to the actual words. Both Khinkis’s and Khoruzhii’s names are on the translation, which certainly would lead one to think that Khinkis had some part of it. When I wrote the article Khoruzhii had not told me that he was keeping Khinkis’s name on the translation only because “the whole enterprise is our common odyssey . . . and inseparable from his ordeal and our friendship.” In my article I did not attempt to explore the question of authorship at length, just to raise it. Perhaps it would be satisfactory to say that the original inspiration was Khinkis’s and the execution, Khoruzhii’s.