

**“A SEA-CHANGE INTO SOMETHING
RICH AND STRANGE”:
Shakespeare Studies in Contemporary Ukraine**

Edited by
Nataliya M. Torkut and Yurii I. Cherniak

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*To the memory of Vitalij Keis
with sincere gratitude
for the encouragement and support*

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EDITORS' NOTE

The title of this collection has been inspired by a quote from the second stanza of “Ariel’s song”, a verse passage from William Shakespeare’s play *The Tempest* (Act I, Scene II), its metaphoric brilliance and solemn magic. Here these mesmerizing lines are used to emphasize the pivotal transformative role that the Great Bard has played in shaping the cultural landscape of the modern civilization – from his native England’s shores to the Ukrainian vast steppes, from open-air performances in Central Park in New York to a gathering of the tribe elders in the bush, from operas and ballets to computer games and manga comic books.

The words said by Ralf Waldo Emerson about two centuries ago have turned out to be prophetic: “Now, literature, philosophy, and thought are Shakespearized. His mind is the horizon beyond which, at present, we do not see. Our ears are educated to music by his rhythm. Coleridge and Goethe are the only critics who have expressed our convictions with any adequate fidelity; but there is in all cultivated minds a silent appreciation of his superlative power and beauty, which, like Christianity, qualifies the period”¹. Today, Shakespeare’s mind is not only the horizon beyond which we do not see, his works make the very notion of a horizon – a literary, intellectual, cultural, and, finally, axiological horizon – legitimate and relevant in the world of changing paradigms and overwhelming skepticism.

Though Ukraine became acquainted with Shakespeare much later than other European countries (the first encounters occurred only in the 19th century), the Bard is not a stranger here. Today we are happy to salute the ubiquitous presence of Shakespeare in all spheres of our cultural life – from the theatre and print editions to the school curriculum and literary criticism. All the texts of Shakespearean Canon have been translated into Ukrainian and some of the plays including *Macbeth*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Othello* can boast more than three translations. *Hamlet*,

¹Emerson R. W. Wisdom and The Philosophy. URL: <https://books.google.com.ua/books?id=2tCSDwAAQBAJ&pg=PT631&lpg=PT631&dq=Ralph+Waldo+Emerson%E2%80%9CNow,+literature,+philosophy,+and+thought+are+Shakespearized&source=bl&ots=mCvd1eR5b2&sig=ACfU3U3HSI3Fzt2k8ppe48SquXiy54hxTg&hl=uk&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEWj6qO2RhZDoAhXh-yoKHSKiB8AQ6AEwAHoECAYQAQ#v=onepage&q=Ralph%20Waldo%20Emerson%E2%80%9CNow%2C%20literature%2C%20philosophy%2C%20and%20thought%20are%20Shakespearized&f=false>.

the greatest among Shakespeare's great tragedies, is represented in the Ukrainian Shakespeareana by ten translated variants, each of them rich in original creative finds and brave structural and semantic choices. Nowadays Ukrainians can enjoy fifteen editions of the entire cycle of Shakespeare's *Sonnets* rendered by gifted poets. Since the beginning of the 20-th century, the theatres all over the country have been performing Shakespeare's plays and the number of experimental stage productions is growing rapidly. Shakespeare has become an inspiration for many prominent Ukrainian poets including Lesya Ukrainka, Maksym Ryl'sky, Mykola Bazhan, Vasyl' Stus, Oksana Zabuzhko, and many others. Without a doubt, Ukraine has been thoroughly Shakespearized.

This undeniably productive intercultural dialogue has found a consistent reflection and a profound conceptualization within the area of Shakespeare studies in Ukraine which have significantly intensified over the last decade. The Ukrainian Shakespeare Centre founded in Zaporizhzhia in 2009 has become a coordinating institution for the Shakespeare-related activities in Ukraine. The Centre aims at promoting Shakespeare studies and popularizing the Bard's works through a wide range of Shakespeare-focused initiatives. Its members have initiated regional and international scholarly events that have involved the representatives of various European and American universities into fruitful discussion and cooperation. The Centre has been launching different educational and scholarly projects, the latest of them being this collection meant to continue the tradition started by the journal *Shakespearean Discourse* a decade ago.

The three issues of *Shakespearean Discourse* were published in 2010, 2011 and 2013. Their publication was inspired by such indefatigable advocates and popularizers of the Ukrainian Shakespeare studies as Balz Engler (Switzerland), Mark Sokolyansky (Germany), Mary Elisabeth Smith (Canada), Vitalij Keis (The United States), Paul Franssen (The Netherlands), Michael Dobson (Great Britain), Boika Sokolova (Bulgaria – Great Britain), Alexander Shurbanov (Bulgaria), Michael Hattaway (Great Britain), Nicoleta Cinpoș (Romania – Great Britain), George Volceanov (Romania). These prominent scholars not only supported the idea of launching the first *Shakespearean* scholarly journal in Ukraine with their publications and essential recommendations but also gave us something much more important – their profound conviction of the need for such an initiative and their belief in our capabilities.

So, on behalf of all contributors of the present collection which is an intellectual successor of the journal *Shakespearean Discourse* we wish to dedicate this edition to the memory of our brilliant colleague Vitalij Keis (1936–2014)² whose “gracious light” is still guiding us along our steep and toilsome ways.

The articles collected in this edition reflect a wide spectrum of contemporary Shakespeare studies in Ukraine ranging from the examination of various aspects of Shakespeare’s plays and their translations to the analysis of Shakespearean intertextuality and mechanisms of appropriating the Bard in different national and temporal dimensions. The collection brings together eight analytical essays covering a wide chronological range from the Late Renaissance to the beginning of the 21st century and highlighting many seminal issues connected with Shakespeare’s texts and their cultural resonance.

We divided the collection into three sections to accentuate the continuity of the problematic and the synergistic effect of the approach which allows the reader to observe the similarities of the relevant cultural phenomena and common traits of appropriating Shakespeare in similar political contexts. The first section “**Shakespeare Without Borders**” includes literary criticism on the play *Julius Caesar* and the poem *Venus and Adonis*. The second section “**Shakespeare Within the Borders**” offers a survey of Shakespeare reception in Ukrainian cultural and socio-political contexts. Articles in the third section “**Shakespeare Beyond the Borders**” examine the intertextual and inter-semiotic projections of Shakespeare’s works in literature, theatre, cinema, and translation.

Nataliya M. Torkut,
Yurii Cherniak.

² Гутарук Н. В. Віталій Кейс і українське шекспірознавство: вектори, виміри та продуктивність діалогу. *Наукові праці. Науковий журнал ЧНУ. Серія «Філологія. Літературознавство»*. Миколаїв. 2019, Т. 325, Вип. 313, С. 27–31.

1. SHAKESPEARE WITHOUT BORDERS

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W. SHAKESPEARE'S *JULIUS CAESAR* AND ELIZABETHAN POWER DISCOURSE: THE SPECIFICS OF CORRELATION

Kseniia V. Skakun

INTRODUCTION

Tense domestic political situation in Britain at the end of the 16th century, which was to some extent conditioned by the strategic miscalculations of the late Elizabeth policy, could not but affected the general intellectual and spiritual atmosphere in society as a whole, and literature and art in particular. In its turn, the art of the word, as an influential culture-making factor, not only acted as a carrier of anti-government propaganda, but was also a kind of voice of the artists' public position. Literature and theater – not the last in importance constituents of power discourse – prepared the recipients for the perception of certain political events from a certain axiologically coloured angle.

The dialogical relations between theatrical practice and politics were realized through several special mechanisms, among which the explication of responses to current political events in dramatic works of the time is noteworthy. The influence on social moods was also due to the historical parallels with the past of Britain or the Roman Empire, which was perceived by the Renaissance people as an almost perfect political formation. In some cases, playwrights resorted to openly encouraging citizens to take decisive action. Given that the emergence of anti-government ideas in the mass consciousness was a clear threat to the state prosperity, any public criticism of the ruler's errors was punished under the requirements enshrined in statutes.

It should be noted that for the analysis of William Shakespeare's attitude to the political context of his time, scholars have mostly chosen historical chronicles, whereas Roman plays were not involved in the study of this discourse. Therefore, it is time to find political implications in this genre of the Shakespearean canon.

1. W. Shakespeare's "Julius Caesar" in the Context of Political Intrigues of the Elizabethan Age

The play *Julius Caesar* by William Shakespeare first was presented to the public in 1599 on the stage of the Globe Theater when Count Essex, on behalf of the Queen and the Government, carried out a diplomatic mission in Ireland. At that time, the rivalry between the two most powerful factions in the Privy Council intensified. The fact was that until the news of the truce that the Earl had been forced to sign with the rebels of the Irish Tyrone had reached London, it was very difficult to predict the consequences of the Essex's expedition to Ireland. In the event of conflict resolution in favor of England, Essex could count on restoring the monarch's good attitude and his image of a national hero. In case of a negative resolution of the problem of the acute relations with the rebellious Irish provinces, the count was expected to fall into disgrace and fade away from public affairs and the royal court.

Therefore, it seems quite logical that Shakespeare, given the diametrically opposite expectations of the representatives of the warring camps and for own safety, outlined the ethics of his literary work in a rather ambivalent way. There is no doubt that the Bard was careful enough to handle the parallels to the present. He avoided one-sided direct assessments, expressed support for monarchical values, ancestral throne inheritance, and stability while demonstrating certain restraint toward Roman republicanism. Political censorship was rather harsh in those days and anti-monarchical views were cruelly eradicated.

Analyzing the play through the prism of popular modern methodologies, including new historicism and cultural materialism, it is possible to find out how exactly the parallels between English and Roman reality, available in "Julius Caesar", could hypothetically influence the mass consciousness of the Elizabethans.

It is worth noting that the expediency of drawing analogies between ancient Roman events and the life of the Elizabethan people is determined by the very text of this Shakespeare's play and by historical information about its scenic representations of those days. Notably, for example, such theatrical means as scenery and costumes represented not ancient Rome, but modern for the author English realities. So, the actors who played historical figures of the past, for the most part, were dressed according to the Renaissance fashion. It is symbolic, for instance, that the performer who acted as Julius Caesar was dressed in a camisole and not in a toga, as mentioned in the text of the play:

“... when he perceived the common herd was hungry he refused the crown, he plucked me ope his *doublet* and offered them his throat to cut”¹.

The Roman play *Julius Caesar* is traditionally considered the most political literary work in Shakespeare’s canon, and the statements of its characters peculiarly relate to the political situation at that time. The intricate political atmosphere of the last years of Elizabeth Tudor’s reign is somewhat reflected in the Bard’s play. For a more complete understanding of the specific correlation of artistic discourse and discourse of power, let us draw a panorama of Britain’s political life in those days.

From a distant perspective, Bishop Goodman described the second half of Elizabethan “golden age”: “the general public is already tired of the rule of an elderly woman”². The decline and stagnation of the late years of Queen’s reign are illustrated by the phrase of the modern British historian Haigh: “the Court which had been the scene of Gloriana’s splendour became a sordid and self-seeking playpen for overgrown and ill-tempered children”³.

Under the influence of certain socio-political factors, the politics of collegiality gave way to a politics of competition⁴. According to historians of the epoch, political life of Elizabethan Britain was based on the constant struggle between rival factions⁵. The expert on the history of the Elizabethan era J. Neal wrote, “The place of party was taken by faction, and the rivalry of the factions was centred on what mattered supremely to everybody: influence over the Queen, and, through that influence, control of patronage with its accompanying benefits”⁶. The court observer Sir

¹ Shakespeare W. *Julius Caesar*. *The Cambridge Dover Wilson Shakespeare*. Cambridge, 2009. P. 16.

² Hurstfield J. *Freedom, Corruption and Government in Elizabethan England*. London, 1973. P. 105.

³ Morris T. A. *Tudor Government*. London, 1999. P. 28.

⁴ *The Reign of Elizabeth I. Court and Culture in the Last Decade*. Cambridge, 1999. P. 45.

⁵ Read C. Walsingham and Burghley in Queen Elizabeth’s Privy Council. *English Historical Review*. 28. 1913. P. 34–58; MacCaffrey W. T. Place and Patronage in Elizabethan Politics. *Elizabethan Government and Society: Essays Presented to Sir John Neale*. London. P. 95–126; Shapiro J. *A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare*. 1599. London, 2005. 414 p.

⁶ Neale J. E. *The Elizabethan Political Scene. Essays in Elizabethan History*. London, 1958. P. 70.

Robert Naunton called the two ideologically opposing factions the swordsmen and the bureaucrats⁷.

Supporters of a pro-government faction led by father and son Cecils held the opinion that, as in ancient Rome, serving a ruler who embodies the principle of Caesarism, i.e. unity, is the highest goal of any decent citizen. For example, Robert Cecil said: “Herein I am most blessed that I am a Vassal to her Celestial Creature ... I have no other purpose of lyving but to witness what I would performe if I had power ... if I could doe as much as all the world it were neither praise nor thanks worthy in respect of the duty I owe and the princesse whom I serve”⁸.

In his turn, the elder Cecil, Baron Burghley, in one of his last letters to his son, urged him to serve exclusively the king because to serve others means to serve the devil⁹. In Tudor times the monarch was the viceroy of God on Earth, so he was not to obey and be responsible to no one.

The opposition faction consisted of aristocrats who were not satisfied with the Queen’s politics and who considered themselves deprived of her attention. Supporters of the rebellion leader Count Essex concluded that the queen’s capriciousness, her unreasonably volatile attitude toward the favorites, were indicative of tyranny¹⁰. It is not surprising, therefore, that since 1595 an open rivalry prevailed in the court – a confrontation between Robert Cecil and Count Essex¹¹.

The motive system in *Julius Caesar*, its leading conflict and some collisions contain numerous implicit references to the historical context in which this play was written and its first productions were performed. Among the motives of the literary work are those in which one can notice allusions to modern for Shakespeare events. So let’s take a look at them, revealing the author’s position in interpreting conflicts or ambiguous situations.

One of the starting points of the conflict in *Julius Caesar* is the confrontation between a tyrannically inclined monarch and his opponents,

⁷ Shapiro J. A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare. P. 44.

⁸ The Reign of Elizabeth I. Court and Culture in the Last Decade. P. 50.

⁹ Ibid. P. 78.

¹⁰ Salmon J. H. M. Renaissance and Revolt. Cambridge, 1987. 306 p.; Salmon J. H. M. Seneca and Tacitus in Jacobean England. *The Mental World of the Jacobean Court*. Cambridge, 1991. P. 169–188; Levy F. Hayward Daniel and the Beginnings of Politic History in England. *Huntington Library Quarterly*. 50. 1987. P. 1–34.

¹¹ A Companion to Tudor Britain. Ed. by R. Tittler and N. Jones. Oxford, 2004. P. 54.

who prefer the republican form of government. The very idea of the existence of opposition-oriented political forces, of course, proved to be acute for the Elizabethans. Present in Shakespeare's play division into two warring camps to a certain extent resembles a shaky balance of power at the court of Queen Elizabeth I.

Note that there are words in the play that almost directly sent to Essex-led conspiracy:

... for Romans now

Have thews and limbs like to their ancestors,

But – woe the while! – our fathers' minds are dead,

And we are governed with our mothers' spirits.

*Our yoke and sufferance show us womanish*¹².

It is obvious that the Elizabethan public easily captured in this passage allusions to contemporary reality. Here, on the one hand, the masculinity of the Roman world in *Julius Caesar* is emphasized, and on the other hand, the woman's power is criticized, her right to influence and authority in society is questioned. In support of this assumption, it is advisable to quote the words of Andre Hurault, the French ambassador at the court of Elizabeth: "Her government ... is little pleasing to the great men and the nobles; and if by chance she should die, it is certain that the English would never again submit to the rule of a woman"¹³.

Throughout this Shakespeare's play, as well as through many historical chronicles, goes the motive of tyranny. However, in *Julius Caesar* the personification of the idea of tyranny is thought to have a definite anti-Elizabethan sound. The following lines in the play have clear parallels between the aging Caesar and Queen Elizabeth, who did not want to carry out military campaigns and thus did not allow the aristocrats to demonstrate their skills and satisfy their ambitions:

... Ye gods! It doth amaze me

A man of such a feeble temper should

So get the start of the majestic world

*And bear the palm alone*¹⁴.

¹² Shakespeare W. *Julius Caesar*. *The Cambridge Dover Wilson Shakespeare*. Cambridge, 2009. P. 20.

¹³ Hurault A. *De Maise: a journal of all that was accomplished by Monsieur de Maise, ambassador in England from King Henri IV to Queen Elizabeth, anno Domini 1597*. Bloomsbury, 1931. P. 11–12.

¹⁴ Shakespeare W. *Julius Caesar*. P. 12.

The only method of restoring masculine prowess is proclaiming the elimination of the cause of its mutilation (accordingly, the deprival of aging Caesar of the power). So Brutus urges the conspirators to get rid of Caesar:

*But if these [motives] –
As I am sure they do – bear fire enough
To kindle cowards, and to steel with valour
The melting spirits of women, then, countrymen,
What need we any spur but our own cause
To prick us to redress?*¹⁵.

The lack of masculinity in Elizabeth's political decisions at a later stage in her reign raised many complaints. It is not surprising, therefore, that in the circles of conspirators preparing for the Essex-led uprising, the determination to fight Elizabeth's tyranny was proclaimed one of the must-have knightly virtues of a true courtier – the patriot of his country. Interestingly, one of Elizabeth's favorites, Walter Raleigh, apparently aware of such sentiments, expressed concern about too many aristocrats in the state, especially warlike towards the ruler¹⁶.

Another motive of the play, in which the echo of modern for Shakespeare reality is heard, is the motive to fight tyranny. According to a Soviet Shakespeare scholar A. Anikst, "the conflict is played out here under the banner of openly declared political principles ... If for Caesar he is the beginning and the end of everything, then the ideal of the republic is the basis of Brutus"¹⁷. The researcher does not agree with the validity of seeing in the tragedy of Brutus a personal tragedy (torment of conscience due to the murder of Caesar, to which he was much obliged)¹⁸.

Instead, many Shakespeare scholars often interpret Julius Caesar's political conflict in relation to the inner world of the characters, with an allusive but obvious connection to the sentiment that led to Essex's rebellion. Like Cassius and Brutus, Essex had his personal image of a monarch. The Earl did not want to obey the woman's orders, to recognize her authority, so he headed a group of like-minded people to remove the Queen from the reign and carry out political reform. This is evidenced in

¹⁵ Ibid. P. 27.

¹⁶ Raleigh W. Maxims of State. *The Works of Sir Walter Raleigh; Together with his Letters and Poems*. London, 1751. P. 9.

¹⁷ Аникст А. Юлий Цезарь. *У. Шекспир. Полное собрание сочинений: в 8 т.* Москва, 1958. Т. 5. С. 610-611.

¹⁸ Ibid. С. 616.

his own words: “When nobility is suppressed, all government is subverted”¹⁹.

As it turned out at the trial, the plot of conspiracy against the queen, which was finally unmasked in 1601, arose just before the performance of *Julius Caesar* in 1598. Shakespeare allegedly sympathized with the conspirators, but, drawing on Plutarch’s source of the plot, sketched the outcome of the play in the negative key for Republicans. He outlined the shortcomings of the rebels’ plan and thus drew the attention of Essex supporters. Cassius is allusively connected with the Earl of Southampton, to whom the Bard allegedly advises to influence the plot leader more strongly.

According to O. Alekseenko, in those times “the problems highlighted in the tragedy – the personality of the ruler, the nature of the government, the right to overthrow the tyrant, the role of the people in the life of the state – could not but excited the keen curiosity of the audience”²⁰. A similar opinion is given by the Russian scholar D. Nikolaev, who proclaims the anti-tyrannical mood of the play to be dominant²¹.

A certain correlation with the Elizabethan context is visible in the system of images in *Julius Caesar*. A curious coincidence is quite interesting: in the play, Julius Caesar appears in public in a nightgown, which in itself is quite strange for a respected military leader. It is no coincidence that in the very year when the play was most likely to be written, an event took place that shook the court life of the Elizabethan people – Count Essex, trying to justify himself before the Queen for the defeat in Ireland, hurriedly entered Her Majesty’s room when she was not yet dressed to receive visitors, and saw Elizabeth in a nightgown and with no makeup. The indignant queen deprived the disgraced favorite of some privileges that she once gave him²². So it can be assumed that in this way Shakespeare hinted at the events that stirred the English court and gave rise to many rumors.

Some parallels can be drawn not only between the aforementioned Cassius and Southampton, Caesar and Elizabeth but also between the fates of Brutus and Essex. It is known from the play’s text that Brutus

¹⁹ Shapiro J. A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare. 1599. P. 256.

²⁰ Алексеев О. Юлий Цезарь. Післямова. *Шекспір В. Твори: в 6 т.* Київ, 1986. Т. 4. С. 644.

²¹ Юлий Цезарь. *Шекспир. Энциклопедия.* Москва, 2007. С. 420.

²² Tudor Queenship. The Reigns of Mary and Elizabeth. New York, 2010. P. 90.

concluded that Caesar should be eliminated for the sake of public good only through the intrigues of Cassius and his associates:

*Into what dangers would you lead me, Cassius,
That you would have me seek into myself
For that which is not in me?*²³.

From the work of Jacobin historian John Speed, we learn that Essex was also pushed to the antimonarchy revolt by like-minded people: “Neither were these his grievances lessened by his military followers, who daily watered these ill-set plants with their exasperated complaints till they were sprung to some height”²⁴.

It is known that the aristocrat Essex publicly boasted of his noble origin, especially emphasizing the fact that his ancestor was King Edward III, thereby indicating his rights to the throne²⁵. Shakespeare’s play repeatedly mentions the origin of Brutus, whose family roots go back to Junius Brutus, who expelled the despot Tarquinius from Rome:

*My ancestors did from the streets of Rome
The Tarquin drive, when he was called a king*²⁶.

It is possible to draw parallels between the text and non-textual reality and in terms of the popularity of Essex in Britain and Brutus in Rome. According to Francis Bacon, Essex was dangerously known in popular circles. The philosopher even urged the Earl “to take all occasions to speak against popularity and popular causes vehemently”²⁷. In the play, we have a favorable attitude of the people towards Brutus. Cassius even uses people’s love as a stimulus to awaken the conscience of Brutus, whose glory ancestors prompt decisive action:

*O, he sits high in all the people’s hearts;
And which would appear offense in us,
His countenance, like richest alchemy,
Will change to virtue and to worthiness*²⁸.

Despite such obvious mass affection towards both public figures, fate still appeared very capricious and played with them an evil joke. Just as Brutus was betrayed by ancient Romans (“*We’ll burn the house of*

²³ Shakespeare W. Julius Caesar. P. 9–10.

²⁴ Speed J. From the History of Great Britain. *Baker H. The Later Renaissance in England. Nondramatic Verse and Prose, 1600–1660*. Boston, 1975. P. 844.

²⁵ Shapiro J. A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare. P. 90.

²⁶ Shakespeare W. Julius Caesar. P. 25.

²⁷ Shapiro J. A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare. P. 128.

²⁸ Shakespeare W. Julius Caesar. P. 23.

Brutus. / *Away, then! Come, seek the conspirators*"²⁹), the Earl of Essex was misled by the Londoners, who supposedly supported the nobleman, but on the day of the rebellion (8 February 1601) feared punishment for supporting the disgraced Earl and the revolt failed.

The American Shakespeare scholar W. Rehorn calls the Elizabethan nobleman an example of "suicidal flamboyance"³⁰. The Earl of Essex, like the leaders of the anti-Caesarian revolt Brutus and Cassius, placed first honor and dignity among all the virtues. Here is an example from the play: Cassius constantly draws Brutus' attention to his honor and noble origin, so later Brutus himself takes decisive action to achieve and maintain the appropriate status in the eyes of the Roman society.

If the dignity of the country as a whole and of its citizens in particular was endangered, it had to be protected, without neglecting even violent means. Essex's supporters admired his courage and daring, his unwillingness to yield to his principles, even for the sake of the ruler. Such an absolutization of virtues, a kind of moral idealism, has long since aroused respect and admiration in society. For example, the English poet Gervase Markham in the work "Honor in his Perfection" (1624), illustrating the thesis of the exceptional status of nobles, which for many centuries has been arousing admiration, wrote: "What is the most memorablest and most glorious Sun which ever gave light or shine to Nobility? ... never let their feet slip from the path of nobility, never knew a true eclipse of glory, never found declination from virtue, never forsook their country being wounded, or their lawful King distressed, never were attainted, never blemished, but in the purity of their first garments and with that excellent white and un-spotted innocency wherewith it pleased the first Majesty to invest them, they lived, governed, and died, leaving the memory thereof on their monuments, and in the people's hearts"³¹.

Researcher M. E. James called the Essex rebellion "the last honour revolt" and its head – the embodiment of aristocratic virtues³². In evaluating Essex's actions and strategy, it is difficult to determine whether he was guided more by altruism or vice versa. In his own words,

²⁹ Ibid. P. 60.

³⁰ Rehorn W. A. The Crisis of the Aristocracy in Julius Caesar. *Renaissance Quarterly*. 43.1. 1990. P. 101.

³¹ Gervase Markham: Honour in his Perfection. URL : <http://www.anonymous-shakespeare.com/cms/index.327.0.1.html>.

³² James M. E. Society, Politics and Culture: Studies in Early Modern England. Cambridge, 1988. P. 416.

the only catalyst for any of his actions has always been the effort to benefit the society, which should become the aristocrat's foremost motivation³³.

In fact, Essex is the most illustrative example of the victim of socio-political conditions in the Elizabethan England. He never managed to get his place in this system, and constant failed attempts to do so eventually propelled him into a corner. In one of his letters, a contemporary of these events, John Donne, described Essex as a person who did not understand his time³⁴.

It seems right to characterize Shakespeare's Brutus in the same way. The play's protagonist replaces his essence, playing a public role that is entrusted to him by others and to which, unfortunately, he has no grip. Self-deception forces Brutus to change his character from a common man to a politician, to kill Caesar according to his reasoning, to pose as a leader without the proper qualities of character, to persuade the crowd without understanding the needs of the people, to use the means he despises. According to S. Burkhardt's apt remark, Brutus's fault is not that he chose the wrong philosophy, but that he failed to keep up with the times³⁵. His noble ideals find no justification in reality. Death frees him from these moral bonds, this double life.

Essex's death is the death of a true nobleman as well. John Chamberlain thus depicted the last moments of the rebellious count's life: "I never saw any go through with such boldness, and show of resolution, and contempt of death"³⁶. It is possible to draw parallels with Shakespeare's Brutus, who, having renounced the Stoics' beliefs, chooses suicide rather than captivity:

*For Brutus only overcame himself,
And no man else hath honor by his death*³⁷.

The parallels between ancient Rome and Elizabethan England are felt not only at the level of motives and images but also in some episodes of the play. It should be noted that Shakespeare scholars find in *Julius Caesar* allusions to the religious status of the English society in those

³³ The Reign of Elizabeth I. Court and Culture in the Last Decade. P. 85

³⁴ Shapiro J. A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare. 1599. P. 333.

³⁵ Holmes C. Time for the Plebs in "Julius Caesar". *Early Modern Literary Studies*. 7.2. September, 2001. P. 5.

³⁶ Letters Written by John Chamberlain during the Reign of Queen Elizabeth. Westminster, 1861. Letter XXXVIII. P. 105.

³⁷ Shakespeare W. *Julius Caesar*. P. 91.

days. Already at the beginning of the play, the intersection of Anglo-Roman time-spatial planes is captured. Researcher J. Shapiro analyzes the episode when the tribunes Marullus and Flavius remove decorations from Caesar statues across the city, condemning the crowd celebrating Caesar's triumph over Pompey, whose triumphs they had no less cheered only a few years ago:

*Wherefore rejoice? What conquest brings he home?
What tributaries follow him to Rome
To grace in captive bonds his chariot wheels?
You blocks, you stones, you worse than senseless things,
O you hard hearts, you cruel men of Rome,
Knew you not Pompey? Many a time and oft
Have you climbed up to walls and battlements,
To towers and windows, yea, to chimney tops,
Your infants in your arms, and there have sat
The livelong day with patient expectation
To see great Pompey pass the streets of Rome*³⁸.

In this passage, the scholar finds parallels with the Elizabethan Puritans, who were very negative about any festive activities and ceremonies. Radically-minded Catholics often defamed symbolic things with the Queen's image. For example, in 1591, religious extremist Hacket stabbed Elizabeth's portrait with a knife³⁹.

At first glance, this episode is not very important in the unfolding of the ideological-thematic plan, but it gains weight if we remember close attention of the rulers of any country and epoch to their image, which is described in numerous historical writings of the Tudor period⁴⁰. For example, it is known from reliable sources that Elizabeth always took care of what others perceived of her. As a rule, court painters were engaged in the creation of the image, so they were ordered to depict her as a young and attractive woman. Once, I. Oliver realistically portrayed the Queen, that is, as an elderly woman. Immediately by order of the Privy Council, all such portraits were removed and destroyed, and what happened to their authors can only be assumed⁴¹. Shakespeare scholars also make their

³⁸ Ibid. P. 6.

³⁹ Shapiro J. A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare. 1599. P. 156.

⁴⁰ Торкут Н. М. Школа політики і школа моралі: епістемологічні засади англійської ренесансної історіографії. *Ренесансні студії*. Запоріжжя, 2013. Вип. 20–21. С. 225–250.

⁴¹ Shapiro J. A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare. 1599. P. 157.

assumptions on what is meant by the phrase “put to silence”⁴² about the Roman tribunes that impeded the national celebration of Caesar’s return.

Besides, the historical parallel to this statement is found in the work of the Elizabethan R. White wrote that many priests who publicly prayed for Essex in their churches were commended to silence because of dubious speeches with anti-government appeals⁴³.

Another religious allusion is found by a contemporary British scholar C. Esquith, who notes that storms in Shakespeare’s works are usually a symbolic embodiment of the Reformation and its related debates. In *Julius Caesar*, this is exactly the scene where Cassius and Casca argue about the significance of the storm on the night before Caesar’s assassination⁴⁴. The literary critic sees Protestants in conspirators and compares their mistakes with those of the English Reformers. Like the Roman aristocrats, who preferred to overthrow the dictator and ultimately only contributed to the collapse of the republican system, so did the Protestants, by destroying the medieval church, they further corrupted it⁴⁵. According to the concept of the scholar, Julius Caesar resembles an immovable medieval Catholic church⁴⁶.

2. Verbal and conceptual allusions in W. Shakespeare’s “Julius Caesar”

It should be noted that allusions are constructed not only at the level of plot and characters, but also at the level of language: the epithets “heroic”, “virtuous”, “noble”, “honourable”, “well-given”, “worthy”) at that time were associated with aggressive Protestant-oriented groups.

In Shakespeare’s play, Cassius pushes Brutus to dare to commit a revolt against Caesar, saying:

*And it is very much lamented, Brutus,
That you have no such mirrors as will turn
Your hidden worthiness into your eye...⁴⁷*

In another episode, Antony describes Cassius as a “noble Roman, and well given”⁴⁸.

⁴² Shakespeare W. *Julius Caesar*. P. 16.

⁴³ Shapiro J. *A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare*. 1599. P. 122.

⁴⁴ Asquith C. *Shadowplay. The Hidden Beliefs and Coded Politics of William Shakespeare*. New York, 2005. P. 35.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.* P. 130.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.* P. 132.

⁴⁷ Shakespeare W. *Julius Caesar*. P. 9.

In contrast, the semantic groups associated with sleep, fascination, idleness, referred to exhibited national security and stability, which are quite conventional. For example, Shakespeare's Caesar, while expressing great political insight, states:

*Let me have men about me that are fat,
Sleek-headed men, and such as sleep a-nights*⁴⁹.

In the same scene, a rebel Cassius says of Casca that he only "puts on this *tardy* form"⁵⁰. Subsequently, these words are prophetic when Casca becomes one of the rebels. The conspirators toss Brutus a letter, which eventually becomes one of the key impulses that prompt the previously indecisive Brutus to lead an anti-Caesarean rebellion:

*Brutus, thou sleep'st; awake, and see thyself.
Shall Rome, &c. Speak, strike, redress.
Brutus, thou sleep'st; awake*⁵¹

As we can see, a dream for Republicans signifies an imaginary reality that overshadows real being, depresses human nature. In the text of the play, we come across a vivid metaphor of "murderous *slumber*"⁵², which signals the danger posed by the seeming tranquility.

In addition to linguistic allusions, several concepts related to political discourse play an important role in the structure of this literary work. Among them are the concepts of power, monarchy, tyranny, republic, betrayal. Let's take a closer look at each of them.

The concept of "power" is implemented in the text through metaphorical images. For example, at the beginning of the play the tribune Flavius warns that Caesar seeks power that will enable him to rise above the rest of the Romans:

*These growing feathers plucked from Caesar's wing
Will make him fly an ordinary pitch,
Who else would soar above the view of men
And keep us all in servile fearfulness*⁵³.

Power as a staircase, which is climbed by a person, is also perceived by Brutus who is the main opponent of the undivided rule:

But 'tis a common proof

⁴⁸ Ibid. P. 14.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid. P. 17.

⁵¹ Ibid. P. 25.

⁵² Ibid. P. 76.

⁵³ Ibid. P. 7.

*That lowliness is young ambition's ladder,
Whereto the climber upward turns his face.
But when he once attains the upmost round,
He then unto the ladder turns his back,
Looks in the clouds, scorning the base degrees
By which he did ascend. So Caesar may*⁵⁴.

It is power that gives a person an advantage over others, elevates him to the highest degree, pushes to be guided solely by his instincts, disregarding advice or any external factors. For example, Caesar repeatedly notes that he has so much power that he can fear nothing:

*Danger knows full well
That Caesar is more dangerous than he.
We are two lions littered in one day,
And I the elder and more terrible.
And Caesar shall go forth*⁵⁵.

If in such a social system as a republic power is distributed among several persons, then the monarchy implies granting one person broad, sometimes even unlimited, power. The concept of "monarchy" in the text of Shakespeare's play includes such constituents as "the Crown" ("*Crown him that, / And then I grant we put a sting in him / That at his will he may do danger with*"⁵⁶), greatness ("*Why, man, he doth bestride the narrow world / Like a Colossus, and we petty men / Walk under his huge legs and peep about / To find ourselves dishonorable graves*"⁵⁷) and superficiality ("*I could be well moved if I were as you. / If I could pray to move, prayers would move me. / But I am constant as the northern star, / Of whose true-fixed and resting quality / There is no fellow in the firmament*"⁵⁸).

It is noteworthy that during Caesar's life, when the republican system was established, the monarchy was identified with tyranny:

*So let high-sighted tyranny range on
Till each man drop by lottery*⁵⁹

In turn, the antithetical to monarchy concept – the concept of republic – is represented in the text through such constituents as freedom ("*I was born free as Caesar. So were you. / We both have fed as well, and*

⁵⁴ Ibid. P. 24.

⁵⁵ Ibid. P. 36.

⁵⁶ Ibid. P. 24.

⁵⁷ Ibid. P. 12.

⁵⁸ Ibid. P. 44.

⁵⁹ Ibid. P. 27.

we can both / Endure the winter's cold as well as he"⁶⁰), nobility ("Rome, thou hast lost the breed of noble bloods!"⁶¹) and patriotism ("Who is here so base that would be a bondman? If any, speak – for him have I offended. Who is here so rude that would not be a Roman? If any, speak – for him have I offended. Who is here so vile that will not love his country? If any, speak – for him have I offended. I pause for a reply"⁶²).

Although Republicans at first glance appear to be noble avengers, the path they take to eliminate the potentially threatening Caesar is morally unjustified. The concept of "conspiracy" repeatedly comes to the fore in the play's text. For example, Cassius urges Brutus to lead the plot and repeat the feat of his ancestor, who once drove the tyrant from Rome:

*Well, Brutus, thou art noble. Yet I see
Thy honorable mettle may be wrought
From that it is disposed. Therefore it is meet
That noble minds keep ever with their likes,
For who so firm that cannot be seduced?*⁶³

However, the conspirators interpret its nature differently. This is an "enterprise of honorable-dangerous consequence" for Casca⁶⁴, whereas Brutus initially considers it an unworthy act for a noble person:

*O conspiracy,
Shamest thou to show thy dangerous brow by night
When evils are most free? O, then by day
Where wilt thou find a cavern dark enough
To mask thy monstrous visage? Seek none, conspiracy.
Hide it in smiles and affability*⁶⁵

The concept of "conspiracy" is superimposed on the concept of "republicanism", coloring the latter with negative axiology. Mark Anthony is openly mocking the conspirators, reiterating that they are noble people, but their actions deny all their nobility. After all, even the ordinary inhabitants of Rome capture the essence of irony:

*They were traitors! "Honorable men"!*⁶⁶

⁶⁰ Ibid. P. 11.

⁶¹ Ibid. P. 12.

⁶² Ibid. P. 53.

⁶³ Ibid. P. 17.

⁶⁴ Ibid. P. 22.

⁶⁵ Ibid. P. 26.

⁶⁶ Ibid. P. 58.

This shift of accent on the concept can be explained by the reluctance of the author to represent one of the warring factions in an exceptionally positive way. As it was already noted, the praiseworthy representation of the persons who deprived the life of the ruler could lead to the playwright's punishment.

CONCLUSIONS

The political implications of the play *Julius Caesar* are realized through four textual strategies. First, it is the author's introduction of several motives (opposition between supporters and opponents of the monarchy, resistance to tyranny, the overthrow of a weak monarch). Second, the creation of images that evoke certain associations with the real figures of the Elizabethan imperious Olympus (Brutus – Essex, Caesar – Elizabeth, Cassius – Southampton). Third, there are some episodes in the play with obvious religious allusions. Fourth, the presence and development of the concepts of the power discourse (power, monarchy, republic, conspiracy) in the textual space of the play.

The study of the correlation of *Julius Caesar* with the political realities of the Elizabethan England and the hermeneutical analysis of the power discourse in the play allowed for a partial reconstruction of the dramatist's worldviews. At the same time, the position of the author's neutrality, established in Soviet Shakespeare studies, was to some extent updated due to the correlation of ideas embedded in the literary work with the sociocultural context, which has been thoroughly studied by historians and culture researches. Thus, the place of action of the play can be regarded as a socio-symbolic space, which draws a kind of boundary between the "norm" and deviations from it, that is, draws vectors that go beyond the specific work of art. The playwright appears as a person whose political sympathies are on the side of the republic. However, since the outspoken explication of anti-monarchical sentiment during the late Elizabethan reign was extremely dangerous, he refrained from declaring his position, giving preference to allusions, hints, historical analogies. The potential of the political narrative of *Julius Caesar* can be illustrated with the words of Roland Barthes: "the book creates meaning, the meaning creates life"⁶⁷.

⁶⁷ Barthes R. *The Pleasure of the Text*. New York, 1975. P. 36.

SUMMARY

The article deals with revealing the nature of the interaction of Shakespeare's play *Julius Caesar* with the political situation of those times (in particular, with Count Essex's uprising) and finding out the specifics of correlation of Shakespeare's motives, images, concepts (power, betrayal, monarchy, republic) with the power discourse. The political atmosphere in England 1590–1603 is outlined. The main mechanisms for the implementation of dialogical relations between the theatrical practice of that time and politics are analyzed through the prism of political implications in *Julius Caesar*. Special attention is given to the verbalization of politically coloured concepts in the text of *Julius Caesar* that enable tracing the correlation of the playwright's position with social moods.

Keywords: Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*, Essex, Elizabeth, power discourse, politics.

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**“THE SWEET AND WITTY SOUL OF OVID LIVES
IN MELLIFLUOUS AND HONEY-TONGUED SHAKESPEARE”:
INTERPRETATION OF THE ANCIENT PLOT
IN SHAKESPEARE’S *VENUS AND ADONIS***

Hanna M. Blondel (Khrabrova)

INTRODUCTION

The myth of Venus and Adonis achieved tremendous popularity in the Age of the Renaissance. It inspired the great artists, in particular Titian (“Venus and Adonis”, 1554), Paolo Veronese (“Venus and Adonis”, 1580) and Annibale Carracci (“Venus, Adonis and Cupid”, 1595), whose masterpieces make part now of the collection of Madrid’s Museo del Prado.

The story about the goddess’s affection for a young mortal, who prefers hunting to love, was very influential in the Elizabethan Age. The Elizabethan men of letters aspired to compose their poetic treatments of the ancient myth in an *original and exceptionally ingenious manner*. For example, in Spenser’s *The Faerie Queen* (first published in 1590), the tale of Venus and Adonis was represented on an extraordinary tapestry in the Castle Joyous (Book III). In Marlow’s *Hero and Leander* (first published in 1598) it appeared as embroidered on the sleeve of Hero’s gown.

At last, the story of Venus and Adonis constituted the background for Shakespeare’s erotic narrative poem, which made a great contribution to the development of erotic poetry writing of the period.

The poem *Venus and Adonis* (1593) holds a special place in the Shakespeare canon. In his dedication to Henry *Wriothesley*, Earl of Southampton, the author calls it “the first heire of my inuention”. At first glance, these Shakespeare’s words might seem a little strange, as *The Henry VI* trilogy (1590–1592) had been written since before the narrative poems. However, it becomes clear when one remembers that the ‘fine art connoisseurs’ of those times recognized as true only ‘pure’ poetry, which was regarded as the guarantor of a solid literary reputation, while theatrical plays were treated as a low *métier* intended for the common people¹.

¹Морозов М. М. Встреча с графом Саутгэмптоном. “Венера и Адонис”. “Лукреция”. *Шекспир*. Москва, 1956. С. 25.

In addition, it should be noted that this poem was the first printed work by Shakespeare, and due to it he owed both an amazing rise in popularity (it was reprinted 10 times during 10 years, between 1593 and 1613²) and a significant improvement in his financial situation (a generous reward of the Earl of Southampton who was a noble patron of the arts, laid a solid foundation for the future playwright's well-being).

1. Literary critical reception of the Bard's poem

A remarkable success of Shakespeare's poem was evidenced by his contemporaries' literary appraisals. Some of them testified that it was phenomenally *successful among young people*. The Elizabethan man of letters Gabriel Harvey, for example, wrote that "the younger sort take much pleasure in *Shakespeare's Venus and Adonis...*"³. There were also echoes of its amazing popularity in the second Parnassus Play of the trilogy, staged by the students at St. John's College, Cambridge, in 1598–1601. The character Gullio declared his love for "sweet Master Shakespeare" and announced: "*Let this duncified world esteem of Spenser and Chaucer, I'll worship sweet Mr. Shakespeare, and to honour him will lay his Venus and Adonis under my pillow*"⁴.

It was thanks to *Venus and Adonis*, as well as his other poem *The Rape of Lucrece*, that W. Shakespeare got a coveted title of 'the Ovid of England'. The Elizabethan critic Francis Meres praised Shakespeare's poetry in *Palladis Tamia, Wits Treasury (1598)*: "As the soul of Euphorbus was thought to live in Pythagoras, so the sweet witty soul of Ovid lives in mellifluous and honey-tongued Shakespeare, witness his Venus and Adonis, his Lucrece, his sugared Sonnets among his private friends"⁵.

Richard Barnfield in his collection *Poems in Diverse Humours (1598)* published a poem headed *A Remembrance of Some English Poets*, where he also addressed his lines to Shakespeare in a high *strain of panegyric*, referring specifically to his poetry:

*And Shakespeare thou, whose honey-flowing Vein
(Pleasing the World), thy Praises doth obtain.*

² Greenblatt S. Will in the World. How Shakespeare became Shakespeare. London, 2004. P. 245.

³ The New Oxford Shakespeare: The Complete Works / ed. by G. Taylor, J. Jowett, T. Bourus, G. Egan. Oxford, 2016. P. 639.

⁴ Wells S. Shakespeare For All Time. London, 2002. P. 68–69.

⁵ Ibid. P. 54.

*Whose Venus, and whose Lucrece (sweet and chaste)
Thy Name in fame's immortal Book have placed.
Live ever you, at least in Fame live ever:
Well may the Body die, but Fame dies never*⁶.

John Weever's epigram *Ad Gulielmum Shakespeare* (1599) dedicated to the "honey-tongued" poet, declared that "Rose-cheek'd Adonis with his amber tresses", "Faire fire-hot Venus charming him to love her" and his other characters seem the creations of the god Apollo "and none other"⁷.

However, even during the life of the author, the reception of *Venus and Adonis* was rather ambiguous. Some Renaissance masters of the word considered the poem as a herald of fornication. Thus, in one of the epigrams written in 1614, Thomas Freeman stated:

*Who list read lust, there's Venus and Adonis,
True model of a most lascivious lecher*⁸.

A similar opinion was expressed by the poet John Davies (1569? – 1626) in the work "A scourge for paper-persecutors. Or Papers Complaint, compil'd in ruthfull Rimes Against the Paper-spoylers of these Times", complaining that the "immortal poems" serve as a powerful propaganda of lust in the image of Venus, who compels Adonis to satisfy her love passion:

*Another (ah Lord helpe) mee vilifies
With Art of Loue, and how to subtilize,
Making lewd Venus, with eternall Lines,
To tye Adonis to her loues designes*⁹.

Further, Davies explained that the poems contained an exquisite wit, but it would have been more refined not to put on lustful attire:

*Fine wit is shew'n therein: but finer twere
If not attired in such bawdy Geare*¹⁰.

Some centuries later, the famous English critic William Hazlitt (1778–1830), regarding Shakespeare's poems as "cold and glittering", compared them to "ice houses"¹¹.

⁶Gililov I. *The Shakespeare Game, Or, The Mystery of the Great Phoenix*. New York, 2003. P. 126.

⁷Srinivasa Iyengar K. R. *Shakespeare: His World and His Art*. Delhi, 1984. P. 293.

⁸Wells S. *Shakespeare. A life in Drama*. New York – London, 1997. P. 120.

⁹Srinivasa Iyengar K. R. *Shakespeare: His World and His Art*. P. 294.

¹⁰Ibid.

In modern times the Great Bard's poems have been on the margins of research attention, significantly inferior to dramaturgy and sonnets both in the number of publications devoted to them and in the intensity of the scholars' appeals. The whole set of works, focused on Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*, can be divided, with a certain degree of convention, into two main categories: representative-review papers and proper analytical ones.

The first category is mostly represented by the prefaces to numerous editions of the poem and contains, as a rule, a summary list of Shakespeare's contemporaries' reviews of his work, a brief excursion into the history of the functioning of the mythological plot that inspired 'the Bard of Avon', as well as plot retelling supplemented by comments. The value of such research papers is that they "fit" Shakespeare's text into the general literary panorama of the era and highlight the nature of the interaction between tradition and innovation.

For example, Vasily Botkin, the Russian Shakespearean scholar of the 19th century, pointed to the Bard's use of a new approach to the representation of love in comparison with his predecessors: "Love depicted before him by English and Italian authors in their mythological poetry was nothing more than an artificial intricacy of thoughts of love, framed in sophisticated forms, which were more polished by phrases than by the intrinsic truth of feeling. In Shakespeare's poem, on the contrary, love is 'a spirit all compact of fire', madness and passion – and this concept of love flows through all the manner of representation"¹².

Noteworthy is V. Botkin's comparison of *Venus and Adonis* with paintings. The researcher reveals that this poem "is reminiscent of mythological pictures of the Flemish, depicting ... a goddess of beauty with excessively magnificent and delusional forms. This naive and sweet anachronism is reflected in all the arts of the time, including the most ingenious Italian paintings"¹³.

It should be noted that the scholars quite often resort to comparing *Venus and Adonis* with paintings. For example, Mikhail Morozov, the

¹¹ A Companion to Shakespeare Studies / ed. by H. Granville-Barker, G. B. Harrison. New York, 1960. P. 104.

¹² Боткин В. П. Литература и театр в Англии до Шекспира. *Полное собрание сочинений В. Шекспира в переводе русских писателей: в 3 т.* / под ред. Д. Михаловского. Санкт Петербург, 1899. Т. 3. С. 5–41. URL : http://az.lib.ru/b/botkin_w_p/text_0110oldorfo.shtml.

¹³ Ibid.

Soviet literary and art critic who devoted himself to the study of Shakespeare, pronounces that “Shakespeare wanted to write a work worthy of the sophistication of Sydney and Spenser. However he could create with his brush much more saturated colors. Reading some fragments of the poem gives the impression that it was the full-blooded Flemish who made a copy from a light Italian painting”¹⁴.

*The important Soviet Shakespearean scholar, Aleksandr Anikst expresses the thought sounding in unison: “Due to Shakespeare’s pen, the ancient myth acquires a sensual completeness and picturesqueness making us recall the Italian Renaissance painters’ masterpieces ... A pastoral landscape with green fields and dense forests emerges before the reader. There are birds singing in the trees and beasts penetrating through the thickets. All nature is spiritualized, and we see two gorgeous creatures within it. They are endowed with all the features of bodily beauty”*¹⁵.

The Ukrainian researcher Olena Alekseenko, in her afterward to *Venus and Adonis*, contained in the six-volume edition of the complete works of Shakespeare in Ukrainian (1984–1986), draws parallels between Shakespeare’s poetic debut and the love poetry of the other Renaissance men of letters (Francesco Petrarca, Giovanni Boccaccio, Torquato Tasso, Thomas Campion, George Gascoigne, Edmund Spenser), and she also highlights that “the poem *Venus and Adonis* is constructed in the same way the Renaissance paintings were made ... It is pierced with bright light and opened to the outside”¹⁶.

On O. Alekseenko’s opinion it is interesting to emphasize the irony of the author’s attitude to Adonis and the fact that the death of the character is a natural consequence of his violation of the law of nature: “Disharmony is becoming worldwide. The embodiment of the destructive forces of nature is death. However, it is not the Fatum of ancient tragedies that haunts the heroes. The very death that comes in the form of a wild boar is natural here. This is the part of nature that has lost its harmony”¹⁷.

¹⁴ Морозов М. М. Встреча с графом Саутгэмптоном. “Венера и Адонис”. “Лукреция”. С. 22.

¹⁵ Аникст А. А. Поэмы, сонеты и стихотворения Шекспира. У. Шекспир. Полное собрание сочинение: в 8 т. / под ред. А. Смирнова, А. Аникста. Москва, 1960. Т. 8. С. 570.

¹⁶ Алексеевко О. Венера і Адоніс / пер. з англ. О. Мокровольського. Шекспір В. Твори : в 6 т. Київ, 1986. Т. 6. С. 770.

¹⁷ Ibid. С. 771.

The Russian Shakespearean scholar Valentina Komarova tells about the allegorical interpretation of beauty, embodied by a young hunter: “The death of Adonis is one of beauty, without which the world loses its most important treasure”¹⁸.

The original observations on the style of Shakespeare’s poem are contained in the preface included in the so-called Bevington edition of *The Complete Works of Shakespeare* (1997). A prominent American scholar of Shakespeare, David Bevington convincingly argues that Venus and Adonis being mouthpieces for contrasting attitudes toward love, “debate a favorite courtly topic in the style of John Lyly. Both appeal to conventional wisdom and speak in sententiae, or aphoristic pronouncements ... In substance, their arguments are equally conventional ... The debate is, in a sense, an ingeniously elaborate literary exercise, yet it also allows for reflection on contrasting views of love as sensual and spiritual, absurd and magnificent, funny and serious”¹⁹.

We can’t but agree with D. Bevington’s statements concerning the narrator’s ambivalent attitude to the debate and the role of irony in the poem’s artistic space, which is “also suffused with the rich pathos of sensuous emotion ... The sensuousness would cloy without the ironic humor, whereas the humor would seem frivolous without the pathos”²⁰. His reflections on the significance of allegory in the poem are also beyond doubt: an allegorical interpretation of the image of Venus who “represents herself as the goddess not only of erotic passion, but also of eternal love conquering time and death ..., elevates the seriousness, adding poetic dignity to what might otherwise appear to be an unabashedly erotic poem”²¹. All this justifies the conclusion that “we should not minimize the sexual teasing or fail to acknowledge our own erotic pleasure in it”²².

In the context of this research paper, it is appropriate to cite the opinion of Michael Dobson, the Director of the Shakespeare Institute in Stratford-upon-Avon and Professor of Shakespeare Studies at the University of Birmingham (since 2011), who sets down the uniqueness of

¹⁸ Комарова В. П. Чувственность и разум в поэмах “Венера и Адонис” и “Обесчещенная Лукреция”. *Метафоры и аллегории в произведениях Шекспира*. Ленинград, 1989. С. 28.

¹⁹ Bevington D. Venus and Adonis. *The Complete works of Shakespeare* / ed. by D. Bevington. New York, 1997. P. 1608–1609.

²⁰ Ibid. P. 1609.

²¹ Ibid. P. 1608.

²² Ibid.

this poem to the unusual distribution of gender roles. According to his observation, “it remains one of the few major works in world literature to depict the passionate pursuit of a male object by a female subject”²³.

The second category of research works includes the articles highlighting a specific issue related to the poetics of Shakespeare’s “Venus and Adonis”, as well as the papers in which analytical observations on the poem are interwoven into a wider research space. For example the works of T. W. Baldwin and Geoffrey Bullough gather together all those texts that could have served original sources for Shakespeare’s writing.

G. Bullough in his anthology of prose and verse *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare*, traces the genetic connection of Shakespeare’s poem not only with the classic version of the myth of Venus and Adonis by Ovid, but also with the other stories recounted by the Roman poet in *The Metamorphoses*. The scholar proves that in addition to the well-known tenth book, including the tale of *Venus’s* love for *Adonis*, Shakespeare also used two other plots from Ovid’s magnum opus, namely the story of Salmacis and Hermaphrodites (Book IV), and one of Narcissus and Echo (Book III)²⁴.

So, such narrative threads as *Venus’s amorous eagerness and sexual initiatives*, *the descriptions of Adonis’s appearance*, who flushes with embarrassment caused by the obscene suggestions of the goddess of love (lines 49-50; 76-78), *the disputes about kisses* (lines 84-89; 115-128) and *hugs* (lines 52-72; 225-30), as well as *the handsome hunter’s resistance* (lines 379; 710), are influenced by the fourth book of the Latin narrative poem (IV. 285-388)²⁵.

From the story of Narcissus and the nymph Echo (III. 341-510) Shakespeare borrows the accusations of self-admiration that Venus uses as an argument, aspiring to lure Adonis²⁶.

T. W. Baldwin reveals the ideological connection between Shakespeare’s poem and the works by Erasmus of Rotterdam. The scholar

²³ Dobson M. *Venus and Adonis. The Oxford Companion to Shakespeare* / ed. by M. Dobson, S. Wells. Oxford, 2008. P. 510.

²⁴ Bullough G. *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare*. London, 1975. P. 161–165.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ *Ibid.*

remarks that the very idea of discussing different views on procreation became popular in England thanks to the author of *The Enchiridion*²⁷.

Iurii Shvedov, one of the leading representatives of the Soviet studies of Shakespeare, analyzes *Venus and Adonis* in the context of all Shakespeare's work. The scholar attributes the basis of the conflict in the poem to "the clash of two ethical principles represented by Venus and Adonis. The goddess is a passionate defender of free love., an adherent of the Renaissance moral values, who opposes the medieval asceticism to the pursuit of happiness not in the otherworld, but here on the Earth... Adonis avoiding Venus's caresses acts as a carrier of opposite moral principles²⁸".

Rather original observations on the poetics and semantics of Shakespeare's poem belong to the Russian poet and translator Grigori Kruzhkov. While working on the translation of *Venus and Adonis*, he carefully reconstructed the sociocultural context of the poem, its edition history, its connections with the mythological source, as well as with ethical, philosophical and aesthetic theories of the epoch.

Emphasizing on Shakespeare's unique ability to create the impression of harmony in the distribution of dark and light spots, G. Kruzhkov draws a number of parallels with the picturesque and stylistic techniques. He writes: "Shakespeare's poem moves from love to death with the inevitable logic of a Spanish romance or a Scottish ballad. How *is it possible to believe* that Adonis who offends the Goddess of Love could get away with it!²⁹".

Quite unusual and convincing at the same time is G. Kruzhkov's assumption about the correlation of *Venus and Adonis* with politics. He identifies several levels of such correlation. First, "any love poem, whose protagonist was a goddess or princess, certainly acquired a political aspect in the Elizabethan period ... Not only politics were eroticized, but love poetry was also largely politicized: the anxieties and sorrows of love were often expressed in the terms of court service³⁰".

²⁷ Baldwin Th. W. On the Literary Genetics of Shakespeare's Poems and Sonnets. Urbana, 1950. P. 183–186.

²⁸ Шведов Ю. Ф. Творчество Шекспира. *Вильям Шекспир. Исследования*. Москва, 1977. С. 278.

²⁹ Кружков Г. М. Лекарство от Фортуны. Поэты при дворе Генриха VIII, Елизаветы Английской и короля Иакова. Москва, 2002. С. 191.

³⁰ Ibid. С. 199.

Secondly, Elizabeth I herself was regularly associated with Venus, and her love for hunting enables to find out in Shakespeare's descriptions of the skills of Venus that the author compared to Diana an allusion to the Queen of England³¹. The Elizabethan literary critic George Puttenham, in his address to the queen, said "she was Venus in countenance, in life Diana...", and this metaphorical image of Elizabeth I, on G. Kruzhkov's opinion, could hypothetically be referred to Shakespeare's popular poem of that time³².

James H. Lake in his polemic article *Shakespeare's Venus: An Experiment in Tragedy*, notes that the scholarly reception of the poem has been rather ambivalent. Some researchers, particularly, C. S. Lewis (*English Literature in the Sixteenth Century: Excluding Drama*), R. Putney (*Venus Agonistes*), B. E. Cantelupe (*An Iconographical Interpretation of "Venus and Adonis", Shakespeare's Ovidian Comedy*), M. C. Bradbrook (*Beasts and Gods: Greene's Goats-Worth of Witte and the Social Purpose of "Venus and Adonis"*) consider Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis* as a tedious failure poem aimed at satisfying the tastes of the Earl of Southampton³³.

The other scholars, as H. T. Price (*The Function of Imagery in "Venus and Adonis"*), R. P. Miller (*Venus, Adonis, and the Horses*), A. Ch. Hamilton (*Venus and Adonis*), J. W. Lever (*Venus and the Second Chance*), K. A. Muir (*"Venus and Adonis": Comedy or Tragedy?*), N. Rabkin (*Shakespeare and the Common Understanding*) generally share the ideas of one of the pioneers of *romantic poetry* S. T. Coleridge (*Biographia Literaria*, 1817), who related Shakespeare's poem to the manifestation of the great instinct that had already worked on a hidden level and subsequently would lead the Bard to dramaturgy³⁴.

James H. Lake obviously supports the points of view of Coleridge's followers and consistently asserts that there are two streams in the poem – the comic one, which colors the behavior of each of the characters in some episodes, and the tragic stream, which becomes dominant after Venus has learnt of Adonis's intentions of hunting the boar³⁵. The tragic element attains power and reaches its climax in the

³¹ Ibid. C. 202.

³² Ibid. C. 202.

³³ Lake J. H. Shakespeare's Venus: An Experiment in Tragedy. *Shakespeare Quarterly*. 1974. Vol. 25. № 3 (Summer). P. 352.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

goddess's final address to the flower that has grown from the hunter's blood. The very presence of the tragic constituent makes the image of Venus rise in the recipients' estimation³⁶.

In the essay *The Shakespearean Venus and Adonis* the Canadian Shakespearean scholar Nancy Lindheim proclaims this poem to be "a pivotal work in the author's technical as well as intellectual development" since it sheds new light on the issue of love and offers the original strategies of its literary representation basing on the use of the new techniques involving tonal shifts. The scholar thinks that "in *Venus and Adonis* ... we see the poet's very early attempts to manage considerable tonal complexity: he integrates comedy with tragedy, parody with straight representation, all the while manipulating our response to Venus so that by the time she comes to fear and then know Adonis's death, *Shakespeare has moved us* from ridicule to sympathy³⁷".

On N. Lindheim's opinion "Venus is there to tell us that love is love even if it incorporates sexual desire, jealousy, anxiety, and other such negative feelings as the humiliation, cruelty and frustration of Marlowe's poem, or the powerlessness and self-abasement that Shakespeare will touch again in the sonnets³⁸". As for Adonis with his obsessive articulation of difference between love and lust, "the poem does not present him as the embodiment of any spiritual or intellectual position whatever. His governing principle instead is immaturity. He is simply too young to value another experience more highly than his games and his sleep³⁹".

The paper of the American scholar William R. Streitberger *Ideal Conduct* in "*Venus and Adonis* contains a number of original observations on the conflict in the poem. Examining Shakespeare's work in the broad literary context of that period, the scholar draws parallels between the ideas, put into the protagonists' words, and the ethical maxims that were popular in the time of Queen Elizabeth and espoused in most of authoritative sources, particularly, Thomas Elyot's treatise *The Boke*

³⁶ Ibid. P. 351–355.

³⁷ Lindheim N. The Shakespearean Venus and Adonis. *Shakespeare Quarterly*. 1986. Vol. 37. № 2 (Summer). P. 191.

³⁸ Ibid. P. 193–194.

³⁹ Ibid. P. 196.

named *the Governour* (1531), providing a discussion of the basic principles of the notion of “virtue”⁴⁰.

William R. Streitberger resting upon Elyot’s book explains that Venus attempting to persuade Adonis to give up the hunt of the boar for the rabbit, in other words, to choose safe hunt instead of dangerous one, undermines his status of a nobleman. So, “Venus presents a moral threat to Adonis despite the fact that he is too young to love, that her attempt to persuade him from the noble to the easy hunt would destroy his virtues and make him an unfit gentleman, and that the striking similarities between Elyot’s and Shakespeare’s treatment of the material point to the fact that the seduction attempt is of real dramatic interest and is not merely example of Shakespeare playing with literary conventions⁴¹”.

Summarizing the research works that give an overall impression of the state of studies of Shakespeare’s *Venus and Adonis*, it is worth declaring that the issues such as the genetic sources of the poem, its compositional structure, the peculiarities of the plot and the system of images have repeatedly been explored. As for those aspects of poetics that are correlated in a certain way with gender-oriented issues, they still need detailed analysis, the fruitful ground for which is laid in the writings of D. Bevington, W. R. Streitberger, M. Dobson, G. Kruzhkov, as well as in the works of culturologists who study the specificity of gender relations in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

2. The Peculiarities of Shakespeare’s interpretation of Ovid’s version of the myth

In Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, which served as a main source for the English author’s poem, the priority is given to three key events: Venus falls in love with the young handsome Adonis; the hunter dies from a *boar’s* attack; Venus turns the body of her beloved into a flower⁴². Keeping Ovid’s plot outlines, Shakespeare creates effectively a new plot, the main features of which are the aesthetization of physical love and the poetization of an erotic component.

Due to Shakespeare’s original interpretation, Ovid’s plot turns into a kind of treasury of Renaissance ideas. This is evidenced by the

⁴⁰ Streitberger W. R. Ideal Conduct in “Venus and Adonis”. *Shakespeare Quarterly* 1975. Vol. 26. № 3 (Summer). P. 285–291.

⁴¹ Ibid. P. 291.

⁴² Овидий. *Метаморфозы* / пер. с лат. С. В. Шервинского. Москва, 1977. С. 78–100.

rehabilitation of sensuality which was considered as a sin during the Middle Ages, by the voluminous description of erotic motives as well as by the panoramic image of the naked human body that became an object of apologetic interest and enthusiastic contemplation in the Renaissance.

Shakespeare's poem impresses, first, with the courage of the creative intentions of the author, who ventured into outright apologetics of physical love. The audiences, who had already been accustomed to the courtly stereotypes cultivated by the knightly novels, were shocked to some extent by the representation of the concept of corporality. At the same time, the form of this representation proved to be so virtuosic that the number of the poem's admirers far exceeded the number of its critics.

The body conceptions reflected in *Venus and Adonis* accumulate the experience of antiquity and the Middle Ages. This experience is renewed with the life-affirming pathos of anthropocentrism peculiar to the Renaissance.

The focus on the natural-bodily vision of the world, which is clearly evident in the poem, seems to bring the Renaissance text closer to its ancient sources. However, Shakespeare pays attention not only to the depiction of the human body, but also to the detailed descriptions of various bodily practices, making this epic work one of the best examples of the erotic poem of the Renaissance.

Adonis becomes the mouthpiece of ascetic views of the human body as a source of lust that destroys in the human soul the feeling of true love – the love to God. Trying to free himself from Venus's hugs and kisses the hunter constantly glooms ("Still is he sullen, still he lours and frets"⁴³), sulks ("Pure shame and awed resistance made him fret"⁴⁴) and scolds her ("... now doth he frown, / And 'gins to chide"⁴⁵). His feelings and sexual desires are 'frozen' ("frosty in desire") even when he flushes with embarrassment ("red for shame"), pushing the goddess away. She, by any means, tries to melt his heart of flint:

*'O, pity, ' gan she cry, 'flint-hearted boy!
'Tis but a kiss I beg ; why art thou coy?'*⁴⁶

⁴³ Shakespeare W. *Venus and Adonis. Shakespeare's histories and poems.* London; New York, 1953. V 2. P. 729.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid. P. 728.

⁴⁶ Ibid. P. 729.

After all, Venus realizes that the object of her love is even more solid than stone, as any naturally solid matter has the ability to soften under the influence of raindrops:

*'Art thou obdurate, flinty, hard as steel ?
Nay, more than flint, for stone at rain relenteth :
Art thou a woman's son, and canst not feel
What 'tis to love? how want of love tormenteth ?'⁴⁷*

Venus and Adonis appear as the antipodes: if the young man personifies 'cold' ('frozen') beauty, the goddess embodies the beauty marked by the deep need for passionate love. She refers indeed to the Renaissance ideal of beauty rich in sensuality being the main attribute of corporality. Shakespeare anthropomorphizes Venus endowing her with boundless sensuality. Her every word is an incredibly shrill sound of passion. Embraced by an ardent, even mad love, the goddess resembles an eagle tearing ruthlessly her victim's feathers:

*Even as an empty eagle, sharp by fast,
Tires with her beak on feathers, flesh and bone,
Shaking her wings, devouring all in haste,
Till either gorge be stuff'd or prey be gone'⁴⁸.*

But Venus's love has not been cultivated only within passion and sexual affection. It is a powerful force that may lead to a harmonious whole formed by the combination of corporal and spiritual bonds, to give happiness, the impulse to a new life, and the feeling of full realization of vital strengths.

Nothing can stop Venus, neither Adonis's indifferent look, nor his rejection of her advances, because "*she cannot choose but love; / And by her fair immortal hand she swears, / From his soft bosom never to remove*"⁴⁹. She wills to do anything for achieving her main purpose – to overcome the resistance of her proud beloved. She hereby is ready to enchant him with her sweet words, fly like a fairy and dance as a graceful nymph:

*'Bid me discourse, I will enchant thine ear,
Or, like a fairy, trip upon the green,
Or, like a nymph, with long dishevell'd hair,
Dance on the sands, and yet no footing seen :*

⁴⁷ Ibid. P. 732.

⁴⁸ Ibid. P. 728.

⁴⁹ Ibid. P. 729.

*Love is a spirit all compact of fire,
Not gross to sink, but light, and will aspire*⁵⁰.

It's interesting to note, that in Shakespeare's tragedy *Romeo and Juliet* we also find the comparison of strong love with the fiery substance which was considered, during the Renaissance, to be the lightest and highest of the four constituent elements of the world (earth, air, water and fire): "*Love is a smoke made with the fume of sighs; / Being purged, a fire sparkling in lovers' eyes*"⁵¹.

The ability of the goddess's body to carry out various transformations is a kind of allusion to a full development of the Renaissance personality and to the peculiarities of his/her corporality which, as the Russian philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin claims, "unites and accommodates all the diversity of the universe"⁵².

Since Adonis refuses natural corporal pleasures, the goddess cannot unlock the full potential of her corporality and fulfill her dream. She seems to lose her divine omnipotence and changes into an earthly sensual woman wooing endlessly and desperately her rebellious beloved, suffering and imploring him to accept her love. Excessive emotional stress provokes in her body the processes proper for any mortal person's organism such as lacrimation (... *with her contending tears, / Which long have rain'd, making her cheeks all wet*⁵³; *And now she weeps ...*⁵⁴; *With tears, which chorus-like her eyes did rain*⁵⁵) and sweating (... *the love-sick queen began to sweat*). *Any nervous shock occasions the change in the color of her skin, and that is also natural for the human body (... her cheek was pale, and by and by / It flash'd forth fire ...*⁵⁶; *The silly boy ... / Claps her pale cheek, till clapping makes it red ...*⁵⁷). The author of the poem, as we can see, blurs the boundaries between the goddess and the woman to a certain extent.

Thus, in Shakespeare's poem there is an obvious change in the semantics of the ancient (Ovid) plot, since the pivotal motive for the

⁵⁰ Ibid. P. 731.

⁵¹ Shakespeare W. *Romeo and Juliet. The complete works of Shakespeare* / ed. by D. Bevington. New York, 1997. P. 983.

⁵² Бахтин М. М. Творчество Франсуа Рабле и народная культура Средневековья и Ренессанса. Москва, 1990. С. 404–405.

⁵³ Shakespeare W. *Venus and Adonis*. P. 729.

⁵⁴ Ibid. P. 732.

⁵⁵ Ibid. P. 736.

⁵⁶ Ibid. P. 735.

⁵⁷ Ibid. P. 738.

Renaissance poet is represented by Venus's desire to get any response to her feelings from the indifferent Adonis. In addition, the description of the heroine's natural sensual beauty can be regarded as a self-contained element of the poetics of Shakespeare's work, and this innovation completely corresponded to the requests of the Renaissance.

The whirlpool of passions and the real explosion of eroticism, which characterize Venus, destroy the ethical standards of sexual relations formed in the Middle Ages, and virtually affirm the new goodness of the Renaissance: hedonism, ability to enjoy life, the generous expression of emotions, freedom of actions, as well as the vigour of the mind and self-confidence as key factors in achieving any purpose. The human being placed by the new age (the Renaissance) in the centre of the cosmic hierarchy has the right to a full-blooded sensual love offering terrestrial pleasures and providing future generations.

In the aesthetic space of the poem *Venus and Adonis* the sensual element gives rise to a high level of corporal communication. At the same time during this communication the body of the goddess acts as a living mechanism that affects Adonis. His movements are a peculiar reaction to Venus's actions, and his words reflect his inner psychological perception of the situation, in which he has found himself because of the goddess' desire for him:

*And now Adonis, with a lazy spright,
And with a heavy, dark, disliking eye,
His louring brows o'erwhelming his fair sight,
Like misty vapours when they blot the sky,
Souring his cheeks, cries, 'Fie, no more of love!
The sun doth burn my face ; I must remove'⁵⁸.*

Tactile forms of expression play a very significant role in creating the communicative potential of the poem. Touch was, in the opinion of José Ortega y Gasset, "the original sense from which the others were gradually differentiated. From our more and more radical point of view it is clear that the decisive form of our intercourse with things is in fact touch"⁵⁹. Therefore the Spanish philosopher claims that "touch and contact are necessarily the most conclusive factor in determining the

⁵⁸ Ibid. P. 731.

⁵⁹ Ortega y Gasset J. *Man and People* / transl. by W. R. Trask. New York, 1957. P. 72.

structure of our world”⁶⁰. Leonardo da Vinci expressing his opinion on the role of tactility in the process of acquiring the qualities of having experience wrote: “The more you speak by means of skin, clothing of feeling, the more you will acquire wisdom”⁶¹.

Venus’s bodily actions towards Adonis are very important instruments of her sensuality and love language. She may surely get pleasure from his physical appearance and voice due to sight and hearing but these two senses won’t be able to satisfy her main desire which consists of overcoming the corporal barrier between them. The goddess becomes obsessed with the idea of the direct communicative act, embedded in the very nature of tactility. For Venus, nothing can destroy this distance and bring her to the realization of her ultimate goal but the tactile actions:

*Though neither eyes nor ears, to hear nor see,
Yet should I be in love by touching thee*⁶².

Even the plant organisms of nature kingdom surrounding the main characters of the poem, express the desire to speak in a tactile language:

*And as she runs, the bushes in the way
Some catch her by the neck, some kiss her face,
Some twine about her thigh to make her stay,
She wildly breaketh from their strict embrace*⁶³.

The goddess thinks to make important steps on the path to the possession of Adonis’s body by resorting to the kisses being a special form of corporality. Kissing the hunter, she tries to tell him ‘without words’ about the unwavering power of her feelings and the unbearable desire to penetrate the innermost depths of his corporal world.

So Venus is eager to kiss her beloved endlessly (*Even so she kiss’d his brow, his cheek, his chin, / And where she ends she doth anew begin*⁶⁴), to lie eternally in order to get his kisses (*He kisses her ; and she, by her good will, / Will never rise, so he will kiss her still*⁶⁵) or give her heart for a thousand kisses (*A thousand kisses buys my heart from me*⁶⁶).

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Calle-Gruber M. Jacques Derrida, la distance généreuse. Paris, 2009. P. 45.

⁶² Shakespeare W. Venus and Adonis. P. 737.

⁶³ Ibid. P. 748.

⁶⁴ Ibid. P. 728.

⁶⁵ Ibid. P. 738.

⁶⁶ Ibid. P. 739.

She is sure that the kiss is a nourishing source that can offer a full-fledged life to this “lifeless picture” or “well-painted idol”, as the goddess metaphorically calls Adonis. Thus, the touches and kisses in Shakespeare’s poem give sense to the entire bodily existence of the characters.

One could refer the sexual attraction of Shakespeare’s heroine to ephrophilia (the sexual attraction an adult feels toward a mid-to-late adolescent) that was one of socially acknowledged cultural practices in the ancient world. The topic of sexual preferences for adolescents gained great popularity in ancient Greek literature, as witnessed, for example, by the Dialogues of Plato (*The Banquet* and *The Rivals*) and Xenophon (*Banquet*), the collection of Straton’s epigrams etc.

Taking therefore into consideration the nature and intensity of penetration of such socio-cultural phenomena of antiquity into the bosom of the Renaissance culture, it will be mistaken to regard Venus’s sexual behavior as a sexual deviation.

It is noticeable that Shakespeare’s art of representation of corporality and bodily practices raises the whole poem almost to the level of the theatrical performance, the action of which is unfolding right before our eyes. This effect is created by the device of the sequence of bodily poses: ‘*she seizeth on his sweating palm*’; ‘*she push’d him*’; ‘*she stroke his cheek*’; ‘*Sometimes she shakes her head, and then his hand, / Now gazeth she on him, now on the ground; / Sometimes her arms infold him like a band ...*’; ‘*With one fair hand she heaveth up his hat, / Her other tender hand his fair cheek feels...*’; ‘*He wrings her nose, he strikes her on the cheeks, / He bends her fingers, holds her pulses hard, / He chafes her lips...*’; ‘*Her arms do lend his neck a sweet embrace; Incorporate then they seem; face grows to face*’; ‘*Their lips together glued, fall to the earth*’⁶⁷.

The change of various poses seems “enliven” the poem’s artistic space, transforming its text into an inexhaustible source of readers’ imagination. The kaleidoscopic images of body movements do not interfere with the logical structure and cause-and-effect relationship between scenes of the poem. On the contrary, it seems that not a sequence of events contributes to the mobility of the bodies, but a number of different corporal manifestations.

⁶⁷ Ibid. P. 727–755.

Thus, corporality provides a major impetus for the plot of Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*, and the 'parade' of bodily movements can be considered as a communicative structure that is more expressive than mere verbalization of the series of events, collisions, etc. The desire to attain specific aims (to excite, enchant, provoke bodily sensations, give pleasure, etc.) encourages the author to activate the reader's memory and recall bygone feelings (including tactile ones) and emotions.

CONCLUSIONS

The poem *Venus and Adonis* by William Shakespeare was enormously successful during his life time. It was reprinted more frequently than any other of his works, with ten editions issued between 1593 and 1613. Due to it Shakespeare was known above all as "a sweet master", "the Ovid of England", a "witty" "mellifluous" and "honey-tongued" man of letters.

Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis* was much admired by his contemporary readers and fellow writers. For example, Francis Meres, Gabriel Harvey, Richard Barnfield and John Weever praised this poem in a panegyric style.

However the literary evaluations of *Venus and Adonis* weren't unanimous. Some Shakespeare's contemporaries as Thomas Freeman and John Davies found the poem to be the promoter of lust.

Most of Shakespeare's contemporaries, while alluding to *Venus and Adonis*, paid attention not so much to the plot of the poem that was well known in Elizabethan England, but rather to the peculiarities of the Bard's interpretation of the ancient myth and the poetic innovations of his own.

The 20–21st centuries research works, making survey of Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*, can be broadly classified into two main categories: representative-review papers and proper analytical ones.

The first group of works mostly includes the prefaces to numerous editions of the poem, the references of Shakespeare's contemporaries, brief companions to the genesis of the mythological plots inspiring the English poet, as well as the descriptions of the plot lines of Shakespeare's poem, accompanied by critical comments. The authors of such papers as, in particular, V. Botkin, M. Morozov, A. Anikst, V. Komarova, O. Alekseenko, D. Bevington, M. Dobson and others, "fit" Shakespeare's text into the general literary panorama of his age and highlight the character of inter-communication between traditions and innovations.

The second category of research works consists of the articles examining specific issues of the poetics paradigm of Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*, the texts considered as original sources for Shakespeare's poem, and the analytical observations interwoven into a large research context. Among the scholars aimed at these issues are T. W. Baldwin, G. Bullough, I. Shvedov, G. Kruzhkov, J. H. Lake, C. S. Lewis, R. Putney, B. E. Cantelupe, M. C. Bradbrook, H. T. Price, R. P. Miller, A. Ch. Hamilton, J. W. Lever, K. A. Muir, N. Rabkin, N. Lindheim, W. R. Streitberger, and others.

In spite of the fact Shakespeare's poem is inspired by and largely based on stories found in Ovid's narrative poem *The Metamorphoses*, it differs greatly from the Roman poet's version and can be considered innovative. These innovations have been mostly connected with the shift of semantic accents from the event to the form of event representation. In other words, Shakespeare has transformed the famous ancient myth about Venus's love to the young hunter Adonis into a virtuoso artistic interpretation of sensual love, depicted through the prism of corporality.

Thus, corporality, I regard as a key ideological and artistic concept of Shakespeare's poem, completely renews the classic version of the myth. So, the plot borrowed from Ovid's *Metamorphosis* becomes imbued with juicy and lively representations of corporality.

Manifesting the rights of natural sensual beauty, the poetization of which is one of the main factors forming the plot, Shakespeare, in effect, makes a kind of ethical and aesthetic breakthrough. He convincingly demonstrates to both readers and his fellow writers that the erotic and corporeal components, which have long been tabooed by public morality and not allowed on the pages of literary works, may serve as a source of creative inspiration and generate poetic imagery elevating them to the level of sublime poetry.

SUMMARY

The author of this paper makes a survey of the critical reception of Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*, illustrating the literary comments of the Bard's contemporaries as well as exploring the modern critical discourse aimed to the poem. The peculiarities of the reception of the antique plot about the love of the goddess Venus for the young hunter Adonis in the poem by W. Shakespeare are also under consideration in the article. In the scholar's opinion, the English Renaissance poet together with preserving the frame of the antique myth creates a new plot at the same time.

Aestheticization of corporal love and poetization of bodily practices clearly come out in Shakespeare's poem.

Keywords: critical reception, erotic poem, sensuality, corporality, bodily practices.

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2. SHAKESPEARE WITHIN THE BORDERS

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SHAKESPEARE'S ENGAGEMENT IN UKRAINIAN CULTURAL RENAISSANCE OF THE 1920s-1930s

Lada V. Kolomiyets

INTRODUCTION

In the 1920s–30s the craft of translation experienced its heyday alongside other forms of verbal and non-verbal art both in the so-called Central Ukraine (then Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic, which factually comprised the Central, Eastern, and Southern parts of Ukraine) and Western Ukraine (most of whose territories passed over to Poland and the rest to Romania and Czechoslovakia in 1921). The 1920s have gone down in the history of Ukraine as the decade of National Renaissance, when hundreds of translations from dozens of languages (both classical and contemporary ones) were brought out, including multi-volume and reprinted editions, and large-scale publications in a considerable number of periodicals both in Central and Western Ukraine.

The provenance of Ukrainian cultural revival harkens back to the collapse of the Russian Empire in February 1917. The February Revolution in Russia triggered national liberation movements all over the country. The anti-tsarist state of public opinion and strong national liberation feelings together with numerous peasant uprisings against landlords had led the Ukrainian population into the turmoil of political upheavals and civil war (March 1917 – March 1921). After the Bolsheviks attained an epoch-making victory over the Ukrainian governmental elite and influential political parties, they could not but underestimate the moving force of national revival idea for the oppressed nationalities as well as the importance to put this idea into service for their rule over the former Russian colonies¹.

¹ Pauly M. D. *Breaking the Tongue: Language, Education, and Power in Soviet Ukraine, 1923–1934*. Toronto; Buffalo; London, 2014. xx+456 p.

Therefore, in 1923 the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks declared governmental support of the Ukrainian language and its usage in all domains of social, administrative, economic, scientific, and cultural life in the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic by launching the “policy of Ukrainization” of the Republic’s bureaucratic apparatus and its major state-financed institutions, but actually keeping in mind a policy of strengthening their own power in Ukraine. The period of so-called “active Ukrainization” lasted until 1929. Although aborted, the policy of Ukrainization greatly influenced all areas of cultural life, and its favorable consequences survived until the late 1930s despite the fact of actual elimination of the policy for maintenance of national languages started in the late 1920s – early 1930s. Further denunciation of the supportive policy towards national languages in the USSR and its condemnation as a “nationalistic fallacy” would bring about rigid censorship, arrests, death, and oblivion for the hundreds of Ukrainian public leaders, intellectuals and translators among them.

It is noteworthy that translations of Shakespeare’s works into Ukrainian have played a formative role in protecting the Ukrainian nation language and culture from dissolution in the ocean of Russian predominance. At all times of the struggle for Ukrainian national self-identity and survival, i. e., in the pre-Soviet, Soviet, and post-Soviet period, translations from Shakespeare have been viewed as a sign of cultural maturity and competence of the Ukrainian people as European nation.

1. Shakespeare’s cultural agency amidst the boost in translations in the 1920s

The factor of cultural agency brings forward the idea of the translator’s mission, a conscious act of translating grounded in the feeling of interconnection between creativity and social change. As formulated in the Synopsis of the book *Cultural Agency in the Americas*, “‘Cultural agency’ refers to a range of creative activities that contribute to society, including pedagogy, research, activism, and the arts”².

In the auspicious atmosphere of the decade of National Renaissance (from the early 1920s to the early 1930s), dozens of writers, university professors and literary critics made efforts in literary

² Sommer D. (ed.) *Cultural Agency in the Americas*. 2006. URL : <http://www.amazon.co.uk/Cultural-Agency-Americas-Doris-Sommer/dp/0822334992>.

translation. Numerous translations, including reprints, were put out in the market as separate editions or were included in literary, socio-cultural, political and purely propagandistic periodicals, or both. This fact testified to the weight the translated discourse found then in the professional and public domains, in the political debate, in the million-strong readership, and to what had become the people's popular pastime.

In the 1920s, thus, the bulk of translations from dozens of languages testified to the vim and vigor of the Ukrainian national and cultural revival. Although the exact reasons for choosing the source texts and languages for translation were quite different, ones just for Russian-language and others for English-language authors, the common goal was the enrichment and flourishing of Ukrainian language and culture.

At that time, several competitive publishing houses were represented by professional teams of editors, who successfully cooperated with a wide range of educated and responsible translators, and those qualified editorial boards, truly devoted to the highest standards of book-publishing, could guarantee the realization of long-term multi-volume translation projects. And most importantly, doing translations, together with all the accompanying translation activities such as editing and publishing translations, was no less prestigious than being engaged in the original creative writing.

Translations performed the role of cultural agents both for Central and Eastern Ukraine, or Velyka Ukraina (the Ukrainian heartland, as it was called), which became Soviet from the early 1920s, and for Western Ukraine, or the so-called Polish Ukraine, or Galicia. Burning issues of national and linguistic survival united the two parts of Ukraine, politically divided, into a culturally unified nation. Books in Ukrainian and translations into it, forbidden by tsarist censorship in the pre-communist Russia, found their way to publication in Western Ukraine, as was the case with the translations of Shakespeare's plays by Panteleimon Kulish in the late 19th century.

Yaroslav Hordynskyi (1882-1939), a competent Shakespearean scholar and textual critic of the Kulish translations of Shakespeare's plays,³

³ See Hordynskyi's research article entitled *Kulishevi pereklady dram Shekspira* [*Kulish's Translations of the plays by William Shakespeare*]: Гординський Я. Кулішеві переклади драм Шекспіра. *Записки Наукового Товариства імені Шевченка у Львові*. Львів, 1928. Т. 148. С. 55–164.

which were printed in Lviv,⁴ translated himself several of the plays, of which only “Son litnioii nochi” (*A Midsummer Night’s Dream*) was published: first in the Lviv journal “Literary and Scholarly Herald” (1927, vol. 92)⁵ and later that year as a separate book.⁶ In view of the authoritative poet-translator Hryhoriy Kochur, Hordynskiy’s translation was a scrupulously accurate work, although not a highly poetic one. Other three translations by Hordynskiy from Shakespeare – plays “Buria” (*The Tempest*), “Venetskyi kupets” (*The Merchant of Venice*), and *Richard III* – were not published at all.

Shakespeare’s plays *Othello* and *Hamlet*, which were translated for theatrical performance by Mykhailo Rudnytskyi (1882–1975), an acclaimed author, translator, and educator of his time, did not appear in print either.

Nevertheless, the record of translation endeavors demonstrates the fact that in the interwar decades both Central and Western Ukraine resonated with a trend to retranslate and modernize Shakespeare.

Rudnytskyi’s translation of the tragedy *Othello*, done in 1923, was intended for staging by *Ukrainska Besida* Theater in Lviv, which was subsidized by the *Ruska Besida* Society, a Ukrainian cultural and educational club in Galicia, known in the 1920s as *Ukrainska Besida*. In this translation, the characters of *Othello* spoke in Ukrainian for the first time in the history of Ukrainian national theater. The play was directed by a famous Russian and Ukrainian actor, stage director, and theater teacher Alexander Zagarov.

In Soviet Ukraine, the Kharkiv Publishing House “Rukh” printed in 1924 Shakespeare’s early play “Komediia pomylok” (*The Comedy of Errors*), adapted for contemporary theater by writer, ethnographer, and musicologist Hnat Khotkevych, a victim of the Yezhov Terror (1877–1938)⁷.

⁴ Шекспірові твори: З мови британської мовою українською поперекладав П. А. Куліш. Том первий: Отелло; Троїл та Крессида; Комедія помилок. Львів, 1882. 418 с.; Шекспір У. Гамлет, принц данський / Переклад П. А. Куліша; Виданий з передмовою і поясненнями Др. Ів. Франка. Львів, 1899. 172 с.; Шекспір У. Міра за міру. Переклад П. А. Куліша / Видав і пояснив д-р Іван Франко. Львів, 1902. 127 с.

⁵ Шекспір В. Сон літньої ночі / Перекл. Я. Гординський. *Літературно-науковий вістник*. 1927. Т. 92. С. 24–37, 120–135, 208–223, 305–317.

⁶ Шекспір В. Сон літньої ночі / Перекл. Я. Гординський. Львів, 1927. 64 с.

⁷ Шекспір В. Комедія помилок / Пристос. для театру Гнат Хоткевич. Харків, 1924. 46 с.

The play *Othello* appeared in print in Kharkiv in 1927. It was translated by writer, critic, and linguist Mike (Mykhailo) Yohansen (1895–1937), a victim of Stalin’s purges, too, in cooperation with V. Shcherbanenko, and published by the State Publishers of Ukraine (DVU)⁸.

In 1928 the Publishing House “Rukh” printed Shakespeare’s comedy “Susidochky z Vindzoru” (*The Merry Wives of Windsor*), remade and adapted for contemporary theatre performance⁹, and also – separately – the comedy “Pryborkannia norovystoi” (*The Taming of the Shrew*), although without mentioning the name of the translator¹⁰. New editions of earlier translations of Shakespeare’s plays were published that year as well. In particular, the Knyhospilka cooperative union printed a new edition of the play *Hamlet* (edited and with the editorial notes by Andriy Nikovskyi), based on the translation done in the 1870s by librettist, playwright, and actor Mykhailo Starytskyi (1840–1904), who went down in history as the coryphaeus of Ukrainian professional theater¹¹. That year, a modernized version of Kulish’s translation of the play *Romeo and Juliet* saw the light of day in the Publishing House “Ukrainiivskyi robotnyk”. The adaptation was done by poet, actor, and stage director Mykola Voronyi (1871–1938), a founder of Ukrainian National Theater in 1917, who fell victim of Stalin’s purges.¹²

It is worthwhile to pinpoint the editorial work of Andriy Nikovskyi, the general editor of Starytskyi’s translation of *Hamlet*, printed by the Knyhospilka publishers in 1928. The first printing of Starytskyi’s *Hamlet* took place in 1882. Nikovskyi, thus, had to considerably review and refresh the text of translation as well as supply it with thorough explanatory commentaries. His approach was substantiated in the foreword entitled “A Ukrainian translation of *Hamlet*”¹³.

⁸ Шекспір В. Отелло / Перекл. М. Йогансен та В. Щербаненко. Харків, 1927. 270 с.

⁹ Шекспір В. Сусідочки з Віндзору. Переробл. і пристос. для театру Гнат Хоткевич. Харків, 1928. 74 с.

¹⁰ Шекспір В. Приборкання норовистої. Харків, 1928. 68 с.

¹¹ Шекспір В. Гамлет / Перекл. М. Старицького; ст. С. Родзевича; ред., ст. та прим. А. Ніковського. Харків, 1928. XXXVIII, 192, XXXIV с.

¹² Шекспір В. Ромео і Джульєтта / Перекл. Панько Куліш, у переробці Миколи Вороного. Харків, 1928. 151 с.

¹³ Шекспір В. Гамлет / Перекл. М. Старицького; ст. С. Родзевича; ред., ст. та прим. А. Ніковського. Харків, 1928. С. I-XXXVIII.

In 1930 Shakespeare's play *Macbeth* was published by DVU (Kharkiv-Kyiv) in the translation of a highly talented expressionist poet Todos Osmachka (1895-1962),¹⁴ who was declared to have been mentally disordered in the mid-1930s. As a mental patient, Osmachka managed to survive Stalin's purges. After several failed attempts to emigrate from the USSR, he successfully moved to Lviv in 1942 and eventually emigrated to the West in 1944. For political reasons, a new translation of *Macbeth* had to be done in Soviet Ukraine, and it appeared in the Kyiv Publishing House "Mystetstvo" in 1940,¹⁵ performed by poet and journalist Yuriy Koretskyi (born 1911), who died on 19 September 1941 in WWII in the battle of Kiev (Kyiv).

A Reader of Western European Literature for High School Students, printed by the Kyiv Publishing House Derzhlitvydav in 1936, under the general editorship of classicist scholar Oleksandr Biletskyi (1884–1961),¹⁶ included a new translation of *Hamlet* by the neoclassical poet and literary critic Oswald Burghardt (1891–1947). This translation also entered the next edition of the *Reader* in 1937. That same year a new translation of the play *Romeo and Juliet*, done by theater expert and musicologist Abram Gozenpud (1908–2004), who lived and worked in Saint-Petersburg since 1953, saw the light of day in the Kyiv Publishing House "Mystetstvo".¹⁷

Further I will dwell on new translations of the play *Hamlet* in more detail.

On 26 March 1930 Oswald Burghardt (pen name Yuriy Klen) signed an agreement with the Kharkiv State Publishing House of Literature and Arts, which formally commissioned him a translation of the play *Hamlet*. This agreement was preceded by a decade of search for the new forms in staging Shakespeare in Ukraine. The pursuit was initiated by the performance of *Macbeth* in the Kyiv Drama Theater under the directorship of Les Kurbas (1887–1937), a highly talented stage director-experimenter and actor, who was also the male lead in this play. *Macbeth*, staged by Kurbas in the style of "classical expressionism," has taken deep root in Ukrainian theatrical consciousness of the 1920s. An influence of stage expressionism, cultivated by Kurbas, reverberates in Burghardt's

¹⁴ Шекспір В. Макбет / Перекл. Т. Осмачка. Харків – Київ, 1930. 150 с.

¹⁵ Шекспір В. Макбет / Перекл. Ю. Корецький. Київ, 1940. 165 с.

¹⁶ Хрестоматія західноєвропейської літератури для середньої школи / За редакцією О. І. Білецького, 1936.

¹⁷ Шекспір В. Ромео і Джульєтта / Перекл. А. Гозенпуд. Київ, 1937. 197 с.

translation of *Hamlet*, as well as in his later translation of *The Tempest* (“Buria”)¹⁸.

In the 1920s Ukrainian theater was developing amazingly quickly. One could come across an experimental and modernistic performance as well as a classical one. In addition to the already mentioned productions of Shakespeare’s plays, it would be appropriate to speak briefly of some more. For instance, the Taras Shevchenko Theater in Kyiv staged *The Taming of the Shrew* in 1922 (under the title “Pryborkannia hostrukhy”) and *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (“Son litnioii nochi”) in 1927. The Maria Zankovetska Theatre in Lviv performed *Othello* in 1926. Still intriguing remains a question of the choice and preparation of the texts for these theatrical performances. Regarding the 1926 performance of *Othello*, which was staged by Panas Saksahanskyi (1859–1940), a famous director from the cohort of the founders of Ukrainian professional theater, it is known that Saksahanskyi’s niece Maria Tobilevych (1883–1957), a writer, translator, and theater producer, who worked as the secretary to Saksahanskyi, helped him to verify the available Ukrainian translations with the original.

A Ukrainian branch of Shakespeare Studies was practically founded in the 1920s. Among the best research papers on Shakespeare topics, one should mention an article by Hanna Chykalenko (1884-1964) entitled “Suchasnyi stan Shekspirivskoi doby” (The Contemporary State of Shakespeare’s Epoch) and published in the Lviv sociopolitical journal “Literary and Scholarly Herald” in 1929. A daughter of the noted patron of Ukrainian culture from the Kherson region Yevhen Chykalenko, Hanna received an excellent education (she studied in Odessa, Lausanne, Edinburgh, and Geneva)¹⁹. She was lucky enough to escape Stalin’s purges and from 1931 lived in Tübingen (Germany), where she worked at the university library.

But still a clear need for newer and modern translations of Shakespeare’s plays remained, and especially for the renewed translation of *Hamlet*, which would be responsive to the requests of wider audience. The author of introductory essays to Burghardt’s translation of the two plays, *Hamlet* and *The Tempest*, which were published in the fourth

¹⁸ Шекспір В. Буря / Пер. з англ. Ю. Клєна. *Клєн Юрій. Твори: В 4 т.* – Торонто, 1960. Т. 4. С. 247–387.

¹⁹ Chykalenko-Keller, Hanna [Text]. *Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine*. URL : <http://www.encyclopediaofukraine.com/display.asp?linkpath=pages%5CC%5CH%5CChykalenko6KellerHanna.htm>.

volume of the 4-volume edition of his works in Toronto in 1960²⁰, Valerii Revutskyi has aptly remarked that Burghardt's aim was to give the Ukrainian audience a translation at the level of European culture and to find the "bridges" that would lead this audience to a deeper understanding of Shakespeare's texts²¹.

For the first time Burghardt's translation of *Hamlet* appeared in print in the abovementioned *Reader of Western European Literature for High School Students* (1936), edited by Biletskyi. The translation was anonymous and abridged. In fact, all translations in the *Anthology* were printed anonymously, although in the preface Biletskyi mentioned the names of those translators whom he still could mention. As for the rest of the names, he just explained that had availed himself of all the accessible material having substantially revised the included texts. It was an act of courage on the editor's part to have included certain translations even with such a reservation because there was a danger that the regime might discover that the volume contained translations by a purged author.

Interestingly, Ukrainian high school students of the 8th grade studied *Hamlet* in Burghardt's abridged translation while the name of this writer-émigré was strictly forbidden in the USSR.

The first full translation of *Hamlet* by Burghardt saw the light of day only in the year 1960, in the aforementioned 4-volume edition of Burghardt's works in Toronto.

Rudnytskyi's translation of *Hamlet* had its first printing in 2004 – in a theater studies journal of the Ivan Franko National University of Lviv "Proscenium," with an introduction by Roksoliana Zorivchak²². This translation which was expressly intended for the stage performance, in view of Prof Zorivchak, "comprises very interesting interpretative findings and interesting word combinations"²³.

The text of *Hamlet* in Rudnytskyi's translation was found in the archives of the Ukrainian Museum in New York City and handed over to

²⁰ Клен Ю. Твори: В 4 т. Торонто, 1960. Т. 4.

²¹ Ревуцький В. До історії українського «Гамлета». *Клен Юрій. Твори: В 4 т.* Торонто, 1960. Т. 4. С. 11.

²² Шекспір В. Гамлет / Пер. з англ. М. Рудницького. *Просценіум.* Театрознавчий журнал. 2004. № 1–2 (8–9). С. 131–206.

²³ Quoted in: Мілянчик Ю. Віднайдений переклад «Гамлета»: До 120-річчя від дня народження Михайла Рудницького. *Каменяр: Інформаційно-аналітичний часопис Львівського національного університету імені Івана Франка.* 2009. № 1-2 (січень-лютий). URL : <https://kameniar.lnu.edu.ua/?p=1346>.

Ukraine in the early 21st century thanks to the efforts of Prof Bohdan Kozak. This version of translation lacked the last scene of the first act and the final scene. But it was this very text that formed the basis for a distinguished performance in Lviv in 1943, staged by the leading Ukrainian theater actor and director Yosyp Hirniak (1895–1989). The translation was commissioned to Rudnytskyi by the art director of the Lviv Opera House Volodymyr Blavatskyi. Working on the staging of *Hamlet* in 1943, Rudnytskyi gave lectures and guidelines to the actors of the Lviv Opera House who were preparing this performance. These lectures are held nowadays by the Rudnytskyi Archive.

In commemoration of the 120th anniversary of Rudnytskyi, the Ivan Franko National University of Lviv published his translation of *Hamlet* as a separate volume, prefaced by a research article of Anastasiia Vasylyk-Furman, in which the scholar analyzes Rudnytskyi's translation works, and with an afterword of Prof Kozak, who highlights the history of the premiere performance of this translation²⁴. The text of translation in the 2009 edition differs from the previous publication in “Proscenium” in that it is complete (the text was granted by the translator's widow, Liudmyla Rudnytska, from Rudnytskyi's private archive).

2. Shakespeare's plays between a rock and a hard place of Soviet censorship and terror

During the decade of the “Great Terror” in the 1930s, many Ukrainian intellectuals, and the translators among them, had to pay with their own lives for their indisputable literary and translation-related achievements.

An outburst of political repressions against Ukrainian literati, scholars and academicians that started in the late 1920s and reached its peak in 1937 did not succeed in crushing the accelerative development of translation activities at once, though it became typical of the late 1930s that the names of translators recently subjected to repressions would simply disappear from their newly published translations, as well as from many reprinted editions. After all, just a handful of Ukrainian cultural figures were lucky enough to escape trumped-up charges and prosecutions.

²⁴ Шекспір В. Гамлет: Трагічна історія принца Данського. Трагедія на 5 дій / Пер. з англ. М. Рудницького. Львів, 2008. 192 с

Despite this fact, translated discourse became organically integrated into the national literary and cultural polysystem as the means for protecting and enriching the Ukrainian literary language in its expressive potential, register variability, stylistic sophistication, and emphatic force.

Concurrently, starting from the mid-1930s, the Communist Party's propaganda machine has been treating translations from Western classics – selected and censored ones – as ideological weapon in the “class struggle” for Soviet rule. By the late 1930s, Soviet censorship managed to transform the works of certain Western classics into such a mighty ideological weapon. And Shakespeare's plays were in a focus of concern for the Party propagandists and their printed press. It should be noted in this regard that, for instance, an excerpt from the play “Dvanadtsiata nich” (*The Twelfth Night*), translated by one of the best Ukrainian poets Maksym Rylskiy, was first published in the Soviet weekly “Literaturna hazeta” (Literary Newspaper) in 1939²⁵ before they play appeared in print in the full length.

Another example deals with the Kyiv annual collection “Radianske literaturoznavstvo” (The Soviet Literary Studies), where in 1939 first appeared an excerpt of Rylskiy's translation of the play “Korol Lir” (*King Lear*)²⁶, and only after this test the full new translation of the play was printed as a separate edition in 1941²⁷.

In the essay “Mykola Zerov and his poetry,” written in the 1960s as a foreword to the Russian-language edition of the works of Mykola Zerov (1890–1937), which was published for the first time only in 2008²⁸, Kochur argues that Zerov, a friend of Rylskiy and virtuoso translator of Roman classics, who became famous as the leader of a group of Kyivan poets representing the Neoclassical School, was planning on translating Shakespeare's works, and first of all the plays *Winter's Tale*, *The Tempest*, and *Julius Caesar*. Zerov's plans were thwarted in the mid-1930s by his arrest and exile to the Solovki special prison, and the

²⁵ Шекспір В. Дванадцята ніч (уривок) / Перекл. М. Рильський. *Літературна газета*, 1939, 23 квітня.

²⁶ Шекспір В. Король Лір (уривок) / Перекл. М. Рильський. *Радянське літературознавство*. 1939. № 6. С. 4–7.

²⁷ Шекспір В. Король Лір / Перекл. М. Рильський. Київ, 1941. 240 с.

²⁸ Кочур Г. Микола Зеров и его поэзия. *Кочур Григорій. Література та переклад: Дослідження. Рецензії. Літературні портрети. Інтерв'ю* / Упоряд. А. Кочур, М. Кочур; Передм. І. Дзюби, Р. Зорівчак. Київ, 2008. Т. 1. С. 339–349.

eventual execution by firing squad in the forest of Sandarmokh, Karelia, on 3 November 1937 – together with Les Kurbas and almost three hundreds of other prominent Ukrainian writers, dramatists, and translators executed in a single day.

Below I will keep track of Ukrainian translations of *Hamlet* in the 1930s-early 1940s. It is quite revealing that for the Soviet policy makers the plays of the world's pre-eminent dramatist turned out to be a tough nut to crack and convert into their ideological weapon. Therefore, there was a gaping hole in new translations of *Hamlet*, as well as other Shakespeare's plays, throughout the entire decade.

An accomplished poet and translator Leonid Hrebinka (1900–1942) finished the full translation of the play in 1939. Until then, he had been intensively studying English and working on this translation for several years. Trouble is that the Soviet press started to chastise Hrebinka as the original author as early as the beginning of the 1930s. Devoid of the possibility to publish his poems and hoping to escape impending arrest by the Soviet secret police, Hrebinka moved to Moscow in 1933, where he worked as a journalist in several newspapers. With the flow of time, he found in the occupation with literary translation a way out for his poetic talent. During the years 1939–1941, until his arrest by the NKVD agents, he studied at the Maksim Gorky Literary Institute of Moscow (Department of poetry)²⁹.

Hrebinka's translation of *Hamlet* was highly evaluated by both Ukrainian literati and English language specialists. From the memoirs of his contemporary, English language teacher Yevgenia Snesarivna – a sister of Aleksandr Snesariov, Hrebinka's fellow student at the Gorky Institute and the landlord of the lodging that he rented in the suburbs of Moscow. Ms Snesarivna recalls that from time to time Hrebinka recited for her as an expert in English the excerpts from his translation of *Hamlet*. She characterizes his speech as emotional, cultivated, and rich in synonyms and metaphors³⁰.

²⁹ Hrebinka's further fate is well known by now. After his arrest on 24 June 1941, he was sentenced to death penalty on 17 November 1941. He died of exhaustion on 14 April 1942 in the Saratov Prison – a little before the news about a Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the USSR, by which the capital punishment was replaced with ten years of imprisonment, has reached the Saratov Prison.

³⁰ Припутень О. 70 років загибелі Леоніда Гребінки. *Місто Гребінка: Новини*. URL : <http://www.grebenka.com/>.

Mrs. Valentyna Yurchenko, the wife of Hrebinka's elder brother Vadym, told to Hrebinka's biographer Rostyslav Dotsenko that Leonid had recited to her the excerpts from his translation of *Hamlet* in Kharkiv in 1934–1935 and that she had been amazed at their excellence and the beauty of language³¹.

When Hrebinka brought the typewritten translation to Kyiv in 1939, he handed it over for staging at the Ivan Franko Ukrainian Drama Theater of Kyiv. But the typewritten text got lost. Based on this translation, the Franko theater troupe was going to perform *Hamlet* – for the first time on the Ukrainian stage – although the fact that the play *Hamlet* was already staged at that time by one of the Russian-language theaters in Kyiv prevented this plan from implementation. Hrebinka's translation wasn't lucky with the print either. Despite its appreciation by renowned poet, editor, and translator Maksym Rylskyi, who was trying to promote its publication, the translation remained unpublished. This happened to a great extent due to the fact that another translation of *Hamlet* was being printed at that time. It was the translation by Soviet avant-garde and futurist poet Viktor Ver (1901-1944; real name Viktor Cherevko), who came to praise in his works the Bolsheviks' regime, the idea of collectivization of farmers, and the policy of industrialization together with the enthusiasm of the first five-year plan. Since 1935 he lived and worked in Kyiv. Participant of the WWII, Ver died in May 1944.

In 1941 his translation entitled “Трагедія про Гамлета, принца датського” (*The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*) appeared in print³². The Soviet press endorsement of this translation was not long in coming³³. After WWII it was staged by the T. H. Shevchenko Ukrainian Drama Theater of Kharkiv in 1956 and by the M. Zankovetska Ukrainian Drama Theater of Lviv in 1957. Hryhoriy Kochur, in his day, did not commend Ver's translation comparing it with the translation by Hrebinka, which he considered a masterful one. Hrebinka's translation indeed had had a very good reputation in the literary and theatrical circles of Kyiv prior to the publication of Ver's work, but because of the absurd

³¹ Доценко Р. «За Україну його замучили колись...» (З циклу «Україна без українців»). *Нові дні*. 1995 (липень). С. 14.

³² Шекспір В. Трагедія про Гамлета, принца датського / Пер. з англ. В. Вера. Редакція і післямова А. Гозенпуда. Київ, 1941. 269 с.

³³ See a review by Родзевич С. Шекспір у нових українських перекладах. *Комуніст*. 30 березня 1941 р.

accusations of Hrebinka in anti-Soviet activities, it was the translation of Ver that was destined to see the light of day in print at that time.

In the contemporary translation studies, however, there is an opinion about Ver's interpretation of the play as the one being overtly literalistic³⁴.

As for Hrebinka's translation, it was found only in the 1970s and handed over to the Archive-Museum of Literature and Arts of the UkrSSR in Kyiv. As a manuscript of the repressed person, it was assigned to the closed-for-public department of the Archive. The manuscript had been stored for about 30 years in rather unfavorable conditions in the attic of a country house of Ukrainian émigré writer Ihor Kostetskyi³⁵. It was passed over to Hryhoriy Kochur, who handed it on to the Archive.

Hrebinka's translation of *Hamlet* was published for the first time in the journal of literary translations "Vsesvit" in 1975, № 7³⁶. The manuscript turned out to be damaged because of its former inappropriate storage, and it was difficult to read in some places. Textual analysis of the manuscript and its preparation for publication, conducted by Shakespeare scholar Maria Azhniuk, required a scrupulous restorative work. It was decided to replace the lost parts of the text with the respective places from Ver's translation.

Kochur promoted its publication in the 6-volume edition of *The Works of William Shakespeare* (Kyiv: Dnipro, 1984–1986). Eventually, Hrebinka's translation of *Hamlet* was included in the 5th volume, but it was tangibly corrected (actually, cliched in numerous places) by the volume editor Mykhailo Tupailo. Thus, until the year 2003, when the authentic Hrebinka's translation of *Hamlet* was printed in a separate book by the Kyiv Publishing House Osnovy, his translation had been known to the public in the corrected and places unrecognizable version.

In the early 1940s, there was an evidence of existent translation of another Shakespeare's play, *The Merchant of Venice*. The translation, entitled "Venetsiiskyi kupets," was done by a fruitful and recognized translator from English, French, Spanish, and German Mykola Ivanov (1890–unknown). On page 75 of the first number of anti-Soviet Ukrainian

³⁴ Стріха М. Український художній переклад: між літературою і націстворенням. Київ, 2006. С. 223.

³⁵ Доценко Р. «За Вкраїну його замучили колись...» (З циклу «Україна без українців»). *Нові дні*. 1995 (липень). С. 15.

³⁶ Шекспір В. Гамлет. Трагедія / З англ. пер. Л. Гребінка. *Всесвіт*. 1975. № 7. С. 97–166.

journal of national intelligentsia “Ukrainskyi zasiv: Chasopys Natsionalnoi Inteligentsii,” published in Kharkiv in 1942 (when the city was occupied by the Germans), one could come across the following mention: “... A well-known in Ukraine translator of belle-letters from Kharkiv, M. O. Ivanov has finished translating from English into Ukrainian *The Merchant of Venice* by Shakespeare. At the meeting of the literary section of “Prosvita” Society, Associate Professor Yu. V. Sheveliov substantially analyzed the translation and commended its high quality (my translation – *L.K.*)”³⁷.

At the beginning of WWII, Ivanov supposedly moved to Western Ukraine and later to Germany, where his trace was lost. Researchers assume that he most likely became a victim of Soviet “human hunters” and was brought back to the USSR after the War, where he was executed or died in imprisonment.

CONCLUSION

For many interwar Ukrainian literary figures, public and political leaders, educators, scholars, and scientists in Central and Western Ukraine, separated from each other by a political boundary until 1939, translation activities became inseparable from their original creative writing practices as a device for strengthening the national language authority and broadening its recognition and daily usage by reading audiences. Moreover, literary translation served both as a powerful guardian instrument aimed at the protection of the Ukrainian language from Russification and degradation, as well as a gateway for the Ukrainian people to European cultural and civilizational values.

It was the national idea that inspired a rapid development of literary and non-literary translation in the National Renaissance period, both in Soviet and Polish Ukraine. The central position that translations occupied in the processes of literary development and canon formation, the people’s enlightenment and nation-building in the 1920s and early 1930s, testified to the real renaissance scope of strengthening the Ukrainian language and culture at that time, against all the odds.

³⁷ Український засів: Часопис національної інтелігенції / Ред. В. Петров (Домонтович). Харків, 1942. № 1 (жовтень). С. 75. This rare edition was found by Ukrainian librarian and bibliographer Nadiia Strishenets and first quoted in her book about the Ivanov family: Стрішенець Н. В. Бібліографічна спадщина Юрія Меженка. Київ, 1997. 144 с. URL : www.nbuv.gov.ua/books/19/97megen/5.htm.

In Western Ukraine of the interwar period, Yaroslav Hordynskyi and Mykhailo Rudnytskyi have been working most intensely on Shakespeare's dramaturgy. In the 1920s in Soviet Ukraine, the renewed, modernized editions of the earlier translations of Shakespeare's plays belonging to classical Ukrainian writers Mykhailo Starytskyi and Panteleimon (Panko) Kulish appeared in print. Several theatrical adaptations by a "living classic" Hnat Khotkevych were also published at that time. Some new translations by Mike (Mykhailo) Yohansen, Todos Osmachka, and Oswald Burghardt (Yurii Klen) saw the light of day as well. In the 1930s-early1940s, the new translations by Maksym Rylskyi, Abram Gozenpud, Yurii Koretskyi, and Viktor Ver (Cherevko) were published. The work of Leonid Hrebinka would be published only in the late Soviet period. The translation of Mykola Ivanov hasn't been found yet.

The pre-WWII decade in Soviet Ukraine witnessed a recession of translation activity, or to be more precise, an ideological shift in the publishing policy towards translations, which was caused by the external factor of Stalin's political terror. The ideological turn in the mid1930s also resulted in certain changes in the attitude to translating Shakespeare's plays.

The study of translated Shakespeare as a means of cultural agency contributes to a better understanding of cultural processes in Ukraine of the 1920s–1930s. The attempted survey of Ukrainian translations of Shakespeare's plays published in the 1920s–1930s and early 1940s, as well as of those that remained unpublished, marks the beginning of a systematic study of Ukrainian translation practices and translated discourses of the National Renaissance period. A broader historiographic research should include more biographical sketches, an account of translators' strategies and publishers' policies, as well as the depiction of the socio-cultural and political atmosphere of that time both in Central (Soviet) and Western Ukraine.

SUMMARY

The article offers a general overview of Ukrainian translations of William Shakespeare's plays in the 1920s–30s and until the early 1940s. It briefly discusses the changing socio-political environment and the role of translators as cultural agents in Central (Soviet) and Western (Polish) Ukraine during the decade of Ukrainian National Renaissance (or Revival) of the 1920s and early1930s (which has been termed the

“Executed Renaissance”) and the subsequent decade of the Yezhov Terror (aka the Great Stalinist Purge). Both the printed translations and the manuscripts, which either remained unpublished or appeared in print in the post-Stalinist time, have been equally taken into consideration. The discussion focuses on the works of Yaroslav Hordynskiy, Mykhailo Rudnytskyi, Hnat Khotkevych, Mike (Mykhailo) Yohansen, Todos Osmachka, Oswald Burghardt (Yurii Klen), Leonid Hrebinka, Maksym Rylskiy, Abram Gozenpud, Yurii Koretskyi, Viktor Ver (Cherevko), and Mykola Ivanov, among others. The study reveals the dynamics of Soviet translation policy during the interwar period. The data on Ukrainian translations of Shakespeare’s plays have shown the Stalinist regime’s attempts to openly regulate literary expression in translated books, including textual choices and translation strategies.

Keywords: translation policy, translator’s strategy, the cultural agency of translation, Soviet Ukraine and Western Ukraine in the 1920s–1930s.

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KEY TOPOI OF THE UKRAINIAN SHAKESPEAREAN DISCOURSE OF THE LATE 19TH – MID 20TH CENTURY

Yurii I. Cherniak

INTRODUCTION

The Shakespearean discourse is a field structure at the epicenter of which the figure of the English renaissance genius William Shakespeare is located. In the collective memory of the peoples the stereotypical vision of the author is formed employing certain literary conventions: metaphors, apt statements, motives, established ways of artistic representation or interpretation of a creative personality. Such conventions generate topoi. The term “topos” is used here to refer to a stock of rhetoric devices that are often repeated in a particular social context and produce ideologemes. Julia Kristeva proves that ideologemes (the units through which the social space supplies ideological values to any particular text) link the various translinguistic practices of a particular society, thus crystallizing the prevailing ideology¹.

Exactly the topoi give the figure of the author – in this case, William Shakespeare – axiologically marked characteristics that provide him with some argumentative status in the communication process.

The purpose of this research is to identify and analyze the key topoi of the Ukrainian Shakespearean discourse in the early stages of its development, which is extremely important to understand the national model of reception of the figure and works of the Bard.

The hypothesis is that the specificity of the collective ideas of the Ukrainian nation about the great English dramatist was determined by the interaction of various semiotic spaces, at the intersection of which the Bard entered the intellectual and spiritual continuum of Ukrainians. These spaces include: literary and artistic (the topos “Shakespeare as a genius of all times and nations”), sociocultural (the topos “Shakespeare as the mirror of the world” in the context of the resistance to imperial practices of cultural colonialism) as well as political and ideological (the topoi

¹ Kristeva J. *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*, Oxford, 1980. P. 60.

“Shakespeare as a people’s dramatist”, “Shakespeare as a realist”, “our Soviet Shakespeare”², which were consonant with communist ideology).

1. Shakespeare as “the mirror of the world”

At an early stage in the development of the Ukrainian Shakespearean discourse, the birth of which occurred much later than in Germany, France, the United States, or Poland³, in the topos paradigm the borrowed ones prevail. The key one among them was the topos of Shakespeare’s timeless genius.

This topos born in the womb of the Western European Romanticism became an epistemological derivative of reflections on nature and essence of genius, which were characteristic of the romantic artistic thinking. It programmed an orientation to the aesthetic imitation of Shakespeare and consolidated in the mass consciousness the idea that his artistic decisions should be exemplary and worth following.

The cornerstones of the topos “Shakespeare – the genius of all ages and nations” began to be laid in the playwright’s lifetime, and were subsequently metaphorically verbalized in the First Folio, a complete edition of his dramatic works, published in 1623. Shakespeare’s friend and a talented playwright Ben Johnson wrote in the Preface to the First Folio:

*Triumph, my Britain, thou hast one to show
To whom all scenes of Europe homage owe.
He was not of an age but for all time!
And all the Muses still were in their prime,
When, like Apollo, he came forth to warm
Our ears, or like a Mercury to charm!
Nature herself was proud of his designs
And joy’d to wear the dressing of his lines,
Which were so richly spun, and woven so fit,*

² This topos is explored in my article: Chernyak Y. Shakespeare as a Sovietism: the red lines on the map of the Ukrainian Shakespeareana. *Romanian Shakespeare Journal*. București, 2013. P. 12–17.

³ For an overview of the history of the Ukrainian Shakespearean discourse see my entry in *The Oxford Companion to Shakespeare*: Cherniak Y. Ukraine. *The Oxford Companion to Shakespeare* / Ed. by M. Dobson, S. Wells, W. Sharpe and E. Sullivan. Oxford, 2015. P. 542-543.

*As, since, she will vouchsafe no other wit.*⁴

Some metaphors used by Ben Johnson (“Soul of the age!”⁵) manifested the highest appreciation of Shakespeare by his contemporaries, and some others (“The applause, delight, the wonder of our stage!”, “star of poets”⁶) proclaimed him to be the universal genius.

Shakespeare’s poetic gift was highly appreciated by John Milton, the author of the famous epic poem “Paradise Lost”, for whom the myth of the Divine nature of word became a key point of the creativity concept. In his dedicatory poem “*On Shakespeare*” (1630) John Milton called his great predecessor “son of Memory, great heir of fame” and emphasized the powerful influence of Shakespeare’s style on the art development:

*For whilst to th’ shame of slow-endeavouring art,
Thy easy numbers flow, and that each heart
Hath from the leaves of thy unvalued book
Those Delphic lines with deep impression took*⁷.

The specific features of the national modifications of this topos have always reflected the particular historical circumstances in which the English playwright was being integrated into the intellectual and cultural continuum of other nations. The semantic potential of the topos of Shakespeare’s everlasting poetic genius was in special ways assimilated by the representatives of other cultures. “In Germany, its contents were perceived within the framework of ethnic and cultural self-identification, which caused appropriating the playwright’s figure (“our Shakespeare”) and contributed to forming the concept of the national German psyche⁸. A well-known German poet F. Freiligrath in his poem “*Deutschland ist Hamlet*” (1844) compared the emotional atmosphere of contemporary Germany with the psychological state of Shakespeare’s protagonist and proclaimed the similarity between them. “Since then metaphor Germany – Hamlet has been used to characterize the historical political state of Germany. ... The poem by Freiligrath reflects the notion of Hamlet’s

⁴ Johnson Ben. To the memory of my beloved, the author, master William Shakespeare and what he hath left us. *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare* / ed. by A. H. Bullen. London, 2005. P. x.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Milton J. On Shakespeare. URL : <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/46453/on-shakespeare-1630>.

⁸ Черняк Ю. Національні модифікації романтичного топосу геніальності Вільяма Шекспіра. *Ренесансні студії*. Запоріжжя, 2012. Вип. 18–19. С. 195.

disease which is understood as suffering from one's doubts and passivity"⁹.

In the USA the English playwright became the embodiment of the transcendent poetic perfection, while his work was proclaimed the symbol of Poetry, the gauge to measure the achievements of one's national literature. In France where the mentioned topos became an important factor of men of letters' artistic and aesthetic self-identification, its culture-forming potential was fulfilled to the most significant extent. Shakespeare's genius here acted as a catalyst for new aesthetic views emergence, as a symbol of new aesthetics – that of Romanticism"¹⁰. Thus everywhere the topos of William Shakespeare's genius acquired a current cultural shade, a new axiological tone or even certain ideological coloring. And the Ukrainian modification of this topos is not an exception. Its specificity was determined by a colonial character of the Shakespearean discourse in Ukraine in the second half of the 19th – early 20th century.

At this time, Shakespeare was perceived by Ukrainians as an unattainable genius, and comprehension of his creative achievements was considered to require a high cultural level. Ukrainians could not borrow the concept of "our Shakespeare", characteristic of the West European romanticism, in its full meaning. Here appeared the original cognitive metaphor of Shakespeare as "the mirror of the world". It was introduced by Panteleimon Kulish (1819–1897), a well-known Ukrainian writer, critic, and translator. He was the first person who translated the whole text of the Bible into the modern Ukrainian language. Moreover, he had an ambitious plan to translate all of Shakespeare's plays into Ukrainian. O. Teterina argues: "The problem of translation of Shakespeare's works into Ukrainian is interpreted in connection with the question of the ways of further national literary development, specifically in the context of polemics about the boundaries of existence of the Ukrainian literary language, – from the theory of "literature for domestic use" (M. Kostomarov) to approval of translation as an important factor in the

⁹ Kolpakova S. G., Khafizova A. A. Yusupova A. Y. German Political History Through the Prism of Hamletianism (On the Novel by A. Doeblin Hamlet). *The Journal of Social Sciences Research*. 2018. Special Issue 1. P. 363-366. URL: https://arpgweb.com/journal/journal/7/special_issue DOI: <https://doi.org/10.32861/jssr.spi1363.366>.

¹⁰ Черняк Ю. Національні модифікації романтичного топосу геніальності Вільяма Шекспіра. *Ренесансні студії*. Запоріжжя, 2012. Вип. 18–19. С. 195.

progress of the native language and literature (M. Drahomanov, P. Kulish, I. Franko)”¹¹.

Kulish’s reception of Shakespeare is a problem that deserves special research. Here it is worth mentioning the powerful resonance produced by his Shakespeare-centered activity in Ukraine. Panteleimon Kulish made the translations of thirteen plays by Shakespeare. He often wrote about the Bard and his plays in the numerous letters¹² and devoted some poems to Shakespeare. The Shakespeare-related metaphors suggested by Panteleimon Kulish generated fundamental basic ideas that became very important for the early-period Ukrainian Shakespearean discourse¹³.

In Kulish’s poems *Shakespeare* (1882) and *Homer and Shakespeare* (1893), the English playwright appeared as the most prominent figure of the world poetic Olympus, whose creativity could “turn any nation on the road of culture”. Panteleimon Kulish called Shakespeare “the luminary of creativity”, “Homer of the new world”, “the greatest voivode of cultural people”, emphasizing not only the scale of his personality but also his influence on the development of other nations’ culture. He appealed to the English genius asking him “to take care of Ukrainians” and help them “get rid of their barbarism, / To get better feelings and plans”¹⁴.

Interestingly, Panteleimon Kulish addressed Shakespeare: “Our father who is a native to all nations.” And here, as we can see, the folklore mythological poetical tradition of metaphorizing the concept of the highest authority in the image of the father is combined with the emphasis on the universal significance of Shakespeare. In this accent, there was a noticeable echo of the ideas of a famous German Shakespearean Georg Gotfrid Herwinus, whose fundamental work in four volumes *William Shakespeare* (1848–1852) Panteleimon Kulish had translated into

¹¹ Тетеріна О. Шекспір у Кулішеві концепції поступу національного письменства (літературно-критичний контекст). *Ренесансні студії*. Запоріжжя, 2014. Вип. 22. С. 48.

¹² Лучук О. Шекспір у листах Пантелеймона Куліша. *О. Лучук. Діалогічна природа літератури*. Львів, 2004. С. 65–71.

¹³ For a thorough consideration of the Shakespeare-related metaphors, see Торкут Н. Шекспір як культурна метафора в контексті пошуків європейської ідентичності. *Шекспірівський дискурс*. Запоріжжя, 2010. Вип. 1. С. 188–189.

¹⁴ Куліш П. Твори : у 2 т. / упоряд. Є. К. Нахлік. Київ, 1994. Т. 1. Прозові твори. Поетичні твори. Переспіви та переклади. С. 384.

Ukrainian, hoping to preface the first of his translations of Shakespeare's plays.

For G. G. Hervinus, Shakespeare was a genius who went beyond his era and his nation, a moral teacher and a guide of humanity. Panteleimon Kulish borrowed the idea of perceiving Shakespeare as a timeless genius, popular in Europe at the time, but expressed it in the form of a metaphor familiar to Ukrainians.

In the poem *To the native people, giving them Ukrainian translation Shakespeare's Works* (1882) Panteleimon Kulish declared his vision of the cultural civilizational perspective of Ukrainians. Such vision provoked sharp criticism of a famous Ukrainian poet Ivan Franko, who is considered the Founding Father of Shakespeare studies in Ukraine¹⁵. During the Soviet period, Kulish's position in the discussions on the further development of Ukrainians was generally interpreted as an outright manifestation of so-called "bourgeois nationalism".

According to Panteleimon Kulish, the works of the English genius translated into Ukrainian should serve as the mirror which will contribute to the moral improvement of the Ukrainian people:

*Take the mirror (it is universal), and look around,
And understand, what a poor Asian you are,
Do not be proud of your widely known robbery,
Forget your path; the Cossack passage is dark,
And return to Vladimir's cultural way*¹⁶.

The concept of the mirror actualizes several important meanings here. Firstly, there is a clear allusion to Hamlet's famous instructions to the actors to "hold the mirror up to nature" (III, 2) dealing with the essence and high mission of the arts. Secondly, it is the world's mirror that will allow Ukrainians to see their cultural face by comparing the achievements of national history and culture with the best foreign models.

In this context, it becomes clear that Panteleimon Kulish was aware of the distance between the English genius whose works had been written for humanity as a whole (the thesis suggested by G. G. Hervinus), and Ukrainians who must understand their current backwardness and the need to learn from a great Englishman.

¹⁵ Франко І. Твори : в 20 т. Київ, 1955. Т. 17. Літературно-критичні статті. С. 182–183, 185, 188, 191.

¹⁶ Куліш П. До рідного народу, подаючи йому український переклад Шекспірових творів. *П. Куліш. Твори : в 2 т.* Київ, 1989. Т. 1. Поезія. С. 188–189.

And thirdly, Shakespeare as the mirror, according to Panteleimon Kulish, was to become a kind of model-guide for the Ukrainian people as a nation to find the right direction for future development. P. Kulish considered translation into his native language an important step along this path as it would make the brilliant masterpieces accessible to a wide range of Ukrainians, and the Ukrainian language would also get a chance for improvement and development.

In one of his letters to V. Shenrock, he wrote that Ukrainian had more grammatical forms than Russian and its formative potential was extremely high¹⁷. Panteleimon Kulish's translating strategy, according to L. Kolomiets, was following the romantic concept of translation principles, in which aesthetics was organically combined with ethics, and translation was an effective means of artistic re-creation the native language¹⁸.

It is quite understandable that Kulish who saw the importance of Shakespeare's figure for the further rise of his native culture and the development of the Ukrainian language compared his mission to that of the pioneer:

I'm not a poet or a historian, either!

I am a pioneer with a heavy ax:

I cut down with the laboring hand

*A barbed terrain on my native land*¹⁹.

According to Panteleimon Kulish, if Ukrainians absorbed the best achievements of world culture and looked into Shakespeare's work as "the world mirror", they would be able to overcome their cultural barbarism. So he urged his compatriots to do so. Although, on the whole, the cultural position of P. Kulish was not shared by the majority of the Ukrainian intelligentsia, his translation work was praised rather highly, and his role in promoting Shakespeare in Ukraine became widely recognized²⁰.

¹⁷ See Шаповалова М.С. Шекспір в українській літературі. Львів, 1976. С. 62.

¹⁸ See Коломієць Л. Українські перекладачі «Гамлета» В. Шекспіра: Пантелеймон Куліш, Юрій Клен, Леонід Гребінка, Михайло Рудницький, Ігор Костецький, Григорій Кочур, Юрій Андрухович. *Ренесансні студії*. Запоріжжя, 2009. Вип. 12–13. С. 164–166.

¹⁹ Куліш П. Піонер. *П. Куліш. Твори : в 2 т.* Київ, 1989. Т. 1. Поезія. С. 217.

²⁰ Лучук О. Куліш і Франко – інтерпретатори Шекспіра. *О. Лучук. Діалогічна природа літератури*. Львів, 2004. С. 80–85; Лучук О. Чого стоїть Шекспір як зеркало всесвітнє: нотатки напередодні конференції «Шекспір і Україна». *О. Лучук. Діалогічна природа літератури*. Львів, 2004. С. 60–62; Коломієць Л. Шекспірові

The concept “Shakespeare as the universal mirror of the world” displays the piety to the English genius, typical of those times, as well as understanding the importance of getting acquainted with his works to overcome the cultural backwardness of Ukrainians. For Ukrainians of the late 19th century, whose self-consciousness was shaped by colonial and cultural oppression, Shakespeare could not yet be “their own”, which Western Europeans and Americans considered him to be. The Bard was seen here as an unattainable genius, and understanding of his works served as an indicator of a high intellectual and cultural level of the ethnic group.

The corresponding re-accentuation within the framework of the topos borrowed from European romantics (“Shakespeare as the genius of all ages and nations”) was provided with a certain metaphorization of basic concepts. It stimulated the intensive development of those cultural practices that aimed to justify the right of Ukrainians to have their own Shakespeare – translated into their native language and staged in their theaters.

Illustrative in this sense is Mykhailo Staryts’ky’s confession in the preface to his translation of Hamlet: “I thought of translating the best Shakespeare’s works into the Ukrainian language to popularize the great playwright and psychologist, as well as to improve my mother tongue in the highest classical models... Recently P. Kulisch, the glorious warrior of our word, ... undertook to print abroad in his translation into the Ukrainian language of all Shakespeare; however, I thought it would be advisable to print my translation of Hamlet, because the more works of this kind, the more consequences this modern movement will have for the development of our language... I will be happy to find friends who want to work in one field with me; and even when my mistakes will be useful to them, I would say, with a negative example, I will be happy too”²¹.

After the abolition of restrictions on theatrical productions in the Ukrainian theaters (1905), it was finally possible to put world classics on its own stage in the Ukrainian language. Many translations of Shakespeare’s plays appeared in 1890-1940 thanks to the creative efforts of Marko Kropyvnytskiy and Panas Saksahanskiy, Panas Myrnyi,

драми в перекладах П. Куліша крізь призму романтичної перекладацької школи. *Шекспірівський дискурс*. Запоріжжя, 2010. Вип. 1. С. 103–120.

²¹ Старицький М. Передмова до перекладу трагедії «Гамлет» В. Шекспіра. *М. Старицький. Твори : в 8 т.* Київ, 1965. Т. 8. Оповідання. Статті. Листи. С. 355.

Ivan Franko, Yuriy Klen, Leonid Hrebinka. The cultural potential of the topos of Shakespeare's timeless genius began to become more conscious by the intelligentsia in Ukraine, and later by the Soviet ruling elite.

During the prohibition period²², according to Irena Makaryk, “the classics, including Shakespeare, would become associated with national and cultural revival”²³. In 1917–1919, when the Young Theater (Molodyi teatr) headed by Les' Kurbas led an active search for new purely Ukrainian forms of stage representation, “foreign Shakespeare and Western European classics were thus paradoxically regarded as tools for recovering, discovering, and forming an integral part of the national self, a more authentic and truer self than had hitherto been permitted”²⁴.

Les' Kurbas aimed to create a new theater that would be free from the melodramatic character that prevailed on the Ukrainian stage at that time, as well as to educate a new audience capable of thinking critically. In 1924, Les' Kurbas manifested his approach to Shakespeare: “The restoration of Shakespeare in the manners and customs of his time is formally impossible and in essence unnecessary. The whole value of the scenic embodiment of a classical work in our day lies namely in the ability to present a work in the refraction of the prism of the contemporary world view”²⁵. Shakespeare took priority in the creative pursuits of Les' Kurbas, and it was no accident. He had an ambitious dream to stage all plays by the English genius, and he managed to prepare only four of them (*Romeo and Juliet*, *Macbeth*, *Othello*, *King Lear*). His four variants of *Macbeth* confirmed the ability of the Ukrainian theatre to stage classics. The most radical among these variants was *Macbeth* staged in 1924 by Berezil in Kyiv. Irene R. Makaryk in her article *Heresies of style. Some paradoxes of Soviet Ukrainian modernism* proved this production to be “almost identical to those of Edward Bond's *Lear*” for whom ‘wrong’

²² In accordance with *Valuev Circular* (1863) and Ems Ukaz (1876) it was prohibited to stage plays and translate classical texts in Ukrainian. See Remy J. The Valuev Circular and Censorship of Ukrainian Publications in the Russian Empire (1863-1876): Intention and Practice. *Canadian Slavonic Papers*. 2007. Vol. 49, No. 1/2. P. 87-110. Ems Ukase. *Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine*. URL: <http://www.encyclopediaofukraine.com/display.asp?link>.

²³ Makaryk I. R. Shakespeare in the Undiscovered Bourn: Les Kurbas, Ukrainian Modernism and Early Soviet Cultural Politics. Toronto, 2004, P. 14.

²⁴ *Ibid.* P. 42.

²⁵ quoted in Makaryk I. R. Heresies of style. Some paradoxes of Soviet Ukrainian modernism. *Shakespeare and Modern Theatre: The Performance of Modernity* / Ed. by M. Bristol, K. McLuskie, Ch. Holmes. London, 2001, P. 142–143.

Shakespeare is academic or ‘museum’ Shakespeare while right Shakespeare is a transformed and contemporary Shakespeare”²⁶.

As “the mirror of the world”, the English genius was called upon to help Ukrainians “overcome the double provincialism”²⁷. Thus, Kurbas’s work on Shakespeare’s plays (first at the Young Theater and later at Berezil) convincingly demonstrated that Shakespeare became a kind of field of creative experimentation for contemporary theater practitioners. In the process of theatrical explorations of the 1920s, Shakespeare gained the reputation of an author who caused high expectations for an aesthetic breakthrough.

2. Soviet modification of the topos “Our Shakespeare”

In the second half of the 1920s – early 1930s, a new interpretation of the figure and creativity of the English playwright emerged in the Soviet Shakespearean discourse under the influence of ideology, which eventually became dominant. The topos “Shakespeare’s timeless genius” also acquired new connotations.

In the context of the deliberate cultural policy of the Soviet regime, which proclaimed the country of Soviets the most progressive and humanistic community in the history of mankind, the world classics were subjected to a rigid ideological revision. The literary canon formation was carried out in the light of political expediency. Only those artists whose creativity could be put to the service of the ideas of the proletarian revolution and building a socialist state were included for the Soviet iconostasis.

The desire of the Soviet power to use the authority, name, and works of Shakespeare in the ideological project of building a new socialist country and creating a new man generated the strategy of attributing to Shakespeare those characteristic features that corresponded to the demands of the political situation. According to the cultural policy of the government, which proclaimed the proletariat dictatorship its ruling principle, the literature was to be an element of the propaganda of the class ideology. As Vladimir Lenin insisted in his famous article *Party Organization and Party Literature* (1905): “It is not simply that, for the socialist proletariat, literature cannot be a means of enriching individuals or groups: it cannot, in fact, be an individual undertaking, independent of

²⁶ Ibid. P. 142.

²⁷ Курбас Л. Філософія театру / упоряд. М. Г. Лабінський. Київ, 2001. С. 668.

the common cause of the proletariat. Down with non-partisan writers! Down with literary supermen! Literature must become *part* of the common cause of the proletariat, “a cog and a screw” of one single great Social-Democratic mechanism set in motion by the entire politically-conscious vanguard of the entire working class. Literature must become a component of organized, planned and integrated Social-Democratic Party work”²⁸.

Following the October Revolution of 1917, through which the Bolsheviks established a new political regime, the directions outlined by Lenin in this article became mandatory instructions to be followed. Thus, Shakespeare “was turned into an iconic figure, which occupied the central place in the newly-built Soviet literary iconostasis”²⁹.

In 1924–1930 Shakespeare appeared to be at the epicenter of aesthetic confrontation, which unfolds mainly in the realm of theatrical practices. The cultural position of Ukraine in both the former Russian Empire and the USSR remained colonial, thus the domestication of the English genius, which was in line with the national policy of the Soviet power, was firmly entrenched on the Ukrainian stage. The domestication strategy represented Shakespeare as a playwright whose plays are close to the hearts of working people as he was a “realist” and a “people’s dramatist”.

In 1926, P. Saksahansky staged his melodramatic version of *Othello*, which pleased the public, broadly responding to the party prescriptions of “authentic Shakespeare realism” and organically fitting into the ethnographic aesthetics of the theater of luminaries (the Coryphée’s Theater), which condemned Les’ Kurbas’s aspirations to modernize classics. As I. Makaryk argues: “The process by which Shakespeare became domesticated and allied with popularly, nationally, and ethnographically. Shakespeare in the Undiscovered Bourn based notions of theatre in the second half of the 1920s and early 1930s was a complex and deeply ironic process that will require some unpacking. It came about not only because of the gradual imposition of a Stalinist view of art from above – an interpretation generally found in theatre histories which cover this time – but also because of pressures from below, in the

²⁸ Lenin V. I. Party Organization and Party Literature. URL: <https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1905/nov/13.htm>.

²⁹ Chernyak Y. Shakespeare as a Sovietism: the red lines on the map of the Ukrainian Shakespeareana. *Romanian Shakespeare Journal*. București, 2013. P. 14.

form of the entrenched, perceived or imagined demands of the spectator. In other words, the revolution, at least in the theatre, was, as we shall see, vanquished to some degree by what, in the West, was called the box office and by its rallying call for a 'realistic' theatre and an 'authentic' Shakespeare. In the Ukrainian context, it meant the victory of narodnytstvo or populism over modernism and the avant-garde"³⁰.

In the course of the literary debates of 1934, socialist realism was proclaimed to be the official and the only correct artistic method, and the tradition of Shakespeare representation introduced by the theater of luminaries began to dominate. Kurbas's plays disappeared from the repertoire; he was stripped of the title of People's Artist of Ukraine and soon repressed and killed.

The director of Ivan Franco theater in Kyiv Hnat Yura, whose first performances, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1927) in particular, were marked by a significant influence of the aesthetics of modernism, abandoned the formalist experiments and declared that he would continue to focus on the traditions of the Russian realistic theater and put the plays in a romantic-heroic-realistic manner.

When the totalitarian regime strengthened its position Shakespeare became the object of purposeful ideological mythologization in literary criticism. The thesis of the only correctness of the Soviet understanding of the Bard's works became commonplace in the Shakespearean discourse of the late 1920s – 1940s. The idea of Shakespeare coherence with the values of the new social formation – the world's first country of socialism – was actively introduced into the mass consciousness.

At that time, Soviet modification of the concept of "our Shakespeare" was structured. It differed significantly from the Western European romantic analogues in both axiological nature and cultural productivity. Shakespeare's appropriation in the Soviet Union as a whole, and Ukraine in particular, was carried out as an integral part of cultural policy under Stalin's regime. It was accompanied by a widespread involvement of ideologized discursive strategies in the process of interpreting his literary heritage, as well as in the creation of the Soviet myth of Shakespeare. The Bard was proclaimed a 'realist' and a 'people's dramatist', whose sympathies were always on the side of the working masses. Of course, only Soviet literary criticism, armed with the only

³⁰ Makaryk I. R. *Shakespeare in the Undiscovered Bourn: Les Kurbas, Ukrainian Modernism and Early Soviet Cultural Politics*. Toronto, 2004. P. 113–114.

correct methodology of Marxist-Leninist analysis, could grasp the depth of his creative ideas.

The conscious and constant accentuation on the benefits of the Soviet literary studies over the Western bourgeois Shakespeare scholarship became an indispensable component of research articles and newspaper publications of that time. Recurrences of such methodological confrontation can be found even in the works of the 1960s. Thus, in the preface to the three-volume edition of Shakespeare in 1964 we read: “It should be noted that in Ukraine, the struggle for Shakespeare from the very beginning was part of the struggle of revolutionary-democratic literary studies with bourgeois nationalism and decadence of all kinds ... and the struggle of the best representatives of the Ukrainian Soviet criticism and theater for realism and humanism in the arts ... Vulgar sociologists at all costs wanted to make him either a “representative of the bourgeoisie” or a “herald of the aristocracy”. But this impulse, based on methodological immaturity, ignorance, or a misconception of innovation, plunged into oblivion, overcome by a faithful, based on Marx-Leninist methodology approach to the evaluation of Shakespeare’s work”³¹.

In the works of the Ukrainian Shakespeare scholars of the time, there were often polemical passages aimed at interpreting the value semantics of Shakespeare’s works solely from the standpoint of class, populism or so-called “narodnist”, and realism. Some scholars even denied the involvement of Shakespeare in the creation of basic ideological humanistic ideas, and his humanism itself was interpreted as “far from ‘the spiritual aristocracy’ of Petrarch or other Italian humanists of the XV – XVII centuries” because the sources of Shakespeare humanism were deeply rooted in the people’s soul³².

The concept of Shakespeare’s realism was based on the repercussions of Friedrich Engels’ famous controversy with Ferdinand Lassalle, in which Shakespeare as a realist opposed Friedrich Schiller, whose characters appear as mere mouthpieces of the spirit of the times³³.

³¹ Модестова Н. Уільям Шекспір. *Шекспір У. Твори : в 3 т.* Київ, 1964. Т. 1. С. 42–43.

³² Родзевич С. І. Вільям Шекспір. *Вільям Шекспір. Збірка статей.* Київ, 1939. С. 27, 22.

³³ For the controversy, see Burns E. *Character, Acting and Being on the Pre-modern Stage.* London, 1990. P. 216.

Such Ukrainian Soviet scholars as Olexander Biletsky³⁴, Serhiy Rodzevich³⁵, Olexander Borschagovsky³⁶ referred to the concept of realism suggested by classics of Marxism-Leninism and treated Shakespeare's method as renaissance realism. They proclaimed such writers as Honoré de Balzac, Alexander Pushkin, Taras Shevchenko as Shakespeare's followers in the aspect of the method. Irene R. Makaryk correctly pinpoints: "In criticism, Marx's and Engels's love of Shakespeare is cited in all preliminary remarks. Western views of *Hamlet* are labeled as Freudian, Protestant, melancholic, romantic or aesthetic – that is, as simplifications; and "shallow psychological interpretations" are vigorously attacked, while Soviet views are lauded for stressing the plebeian origins of Shakespeare, emphasizing the "realism" of his work, the use he made of folk elements (songs, superstitions, rites, and fables), and the class struggle of the Renaissance"³⁷.

It is noteworthy that despite frequent references to the authority of Ivan Franko, who wrote much about Shakespeare's works, his position regarding the artistic method of the English playwright was almost completely ignored by the Soviet literary critics. It should be reminded that Ivan Franko avoided the term "realism" towards the Bard.

Even today, it is difficult to say unequivocally the extent to which the concept of Shakespeare's realism in the writings of the Soviet scholars of the 1930s – 1940s was the result of political pressure, and to what extent it reflected the real views of these scholars. It should not be forgotten that for many scholars of the time the commitment to Marxist methodology, which was interpreted as a modification of the sociological method, was a conscious and sincere worldview. At the same time, it can be assumed that the presence of these clichés in a Shakespearean discourse made possible and somewhat "legitimized" the very reflections on Shakespeare's work. The presentation of new literary observations and their public manifestation were justifiable only when they fitted into the

³⁴ Білецький О. І. Передмова. *Вільям Шекспір. Збірка статей*. Київ, 1939. С. 7–11.

³⁵ Родзевич С. І. Вільям Шекспір. *Вільям Шекспір. Збірка статей*. Київ, 1939. С. 13–63.

³⁶ Борщаговський О. М. Шекспір і національний театр. *Вільям Шекспір. Збірка статей*. Київ, 1939. С. 127–176.

³⁷ Makaryk I. R. Periphery Against Centre: *Hamlet* in Early Soviet Ukrainian Poetry. *Living Record. Essays of Memory Constantine Bida* / ed. by Irena R. Makaryk. Ottawa, 1991. P. 289–290.

general conceptual sphere of the authorities' perceptions of the so-called literary cause. Reading the works of the Ukrainian scholars included in the first-anniversary collection *William Shakespeare* (Kyiv, 1939), we cannot but admit that in a careful selection of facts, information completeness, depth and originality of some interpretations of Shakespeare's texts, they are not inferior to the works by their foreign contemporaries. However, the polemical component of these articles turned out to be extremely ideologically involved: everything that did not fit into the procrustean bed of the main interpretive line (Shakespeare – 'people's playwright', 'realist', 'humanist', and 'historical optimist') was cut off, subjected to annihilation. Literary analytics, if it contradicted the Communist party directives in the sphere of literature and criticism, was dangerous. So it often gave way to pathos and language rhetoric.

Thus, the scholarly value of the Shakespearean discourse of the 1930s and 1940s was mainly shaped by an interpretive component that focused attention on texts, not Shakespeare's method or personality. The analytical and ideological components were undoubtedly interconnected; quotes from Shakespeare's plays often acted not only as objects of literary interpretation but also as illustrative passages designed to prove the correctness of a particular ideogeme. In this context, it is appropriate to cite the considerations of a theatrical expert Alexey Bartoshevich as for the nature of the correlation of aesthetic and ideological components in Shakespeare's productions of the Stalin's period. He argues: "The directors were staging, the actors were playing Shakespeare, enjoying the opportunity to touch the great drama. When they tried to define the social meaning of their work in words, they immediately switched to the official language of official ideology. But the living matter of their art could not be completely dissolved in the schemes of totalitarian mythology. The essence of art 'precipitated', existed outside of ideological schemes and thus aided the spiritual survival of the nation"³⁸.

The further development of the Ukrainian Shakespearean analytics turned in the direction of widening the thematic range, more tolerant reception of achievements of foreign colleagues and overcoming the vulgar-sociological simplicity of proletcult slogans and clichés. But even in the 1950s and 1960s, these clichés were still widespread in the media

³⁸ Бартошевич А. В. «Арденский лес» в сталинской России: комедии Шекспира в советском театре тридцатых годов. *Шекспировские чтения. 2004* / отв. ред. И. С. Приходько. Москва, 2006. С. 30.

discourse where ideological accents prevailed. William Shakespeare was featured on the pages of newspapers and magazines as a ‘people’s playwright’, close and understandable to every Soviet person. In the course of public communication, there was frequent repetition and constant reproduction of evaluative metaphors and ideologically colored attributes about Shakespeare, such as the ‘human rights wrestler’, ‘the foremost artist of humanity’, ‘the true son of the English people’, ‘mighty realist’, ‘heroic entourage’. In a jubilee newspaper article (“Literaturna Ukraijina”, April 24, 1964) O. Levada wrote: “Shakespeare is not a foreigner for us. Even in the West, no one denies it. And recognizing that our great country has become the second homeland for Shakespeare, the West must analyze why the greatest titans of the human spirit find their second homeland precisely in a socialist society”³⁹.

In Ukraine as well as in other republics of the Soviet Union there were a lot of various popularization practices aimed at approving in the mass consciousness the definite stereotypes as for particular authors. As M. Pavlyshyn emphasizes: “In Eastern Europe, the object of worship in literature has often been not the text but a person, or, more precisely, the totality of a writer’s biography, his writings, and historical role. There are cults of writers – Pushkin, Tolstoy, and Dostoevsky in Russia, Shevchenko, Lesya Ukrainka, and Franko in Ukraine, Kupala, and Kolas in Belarus – who, by their ability to evoke pietism and ritual, have no equivalent in the West. Literary canonization in the Soviet Union takes on forms that in some ways resemble the canonization of a church saint. The writer (the personotext!) takes place in a series of similar ‘personotexts’, which is more useful to consider not as a canon, but as an iconostasis”⁴⁰.

Throughout the Soviet Union, Shakespeare Jubilees were solemnly celebrated in 1939 (375 years since Shakespeare was born), 1964 and 1966 (350 years after Shakespeare’s death). Commemorative events, memorable celebrations, and diverse parties dedicated to Shakespeare were regularly held in large cities and small villages, at universities and secondary schools, at theatres and country clubs confirming Bard’s special closeness with the Soviet people. The concept of “our Shakespeare” gradually began to take on the signs of topos.

³⁹ Левада О. Раготорець гуманізму. *Літературна Україна*. 1964. 24 квітня. С. 4.

⁴⁰ Павлишин М. Канон та іконостас. URL: <https://vpered.wordpress.com/2015/12/21/pavlyshyn-canon/>.

It is present not only in public discourse of the time but also in literary works of the Ukrainian writers. Very indicative in this sense is Mykola Bazhan's poem *In Stratford-upon-Avon* (1948), the plot of which was structured as an artistic representation of "our Soviet Shakespeare" topos. Written after visiting Bard's homeland, this poem combines descriptiveness with strong and vivid ideological accents.

Per Mykola Bazhan, Shakespeare – a poet from the people and for the people – found his second homeland in the multinational country of Soviets, where his work is highly appreciated by the Tajik who descended from the mountains to listen to Hamlet's monologue, and by the "shepherd from the Sakartvel valleys", deeply concerned by Shakespeare's tragedy, and by the "weavers and blacksmiths" who came to "listen to the old pity"⁴¹.

Thus, as we can see, Mykola Bazhan quite frankly articulated claims for the appropriation of the Bard, which had been formed by the Soviet modification of the "our Shakespeare" topos. This modification emphasized two important points. The first is the coincidence of Shakespeare's ideas and the ideals of the socialist society. The second is the claim of communist propaganda that only Soviet people are capable of the correct understanding of the works of the Bard.

CONCLUSION

Shakespeare's discourse in Ukraine, which originated much later than in Western Europe, the United States or Russia, has its specificity, which was determined primarily by political circumstances. In the Western world of the early 19th century, the concept "our Shakespeare" became particularly popular. In Germany, it accentuated the unity of the German spirit and the closeness of the German mentality to Hamlet. American poet and philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson proclaimed the English Renaissance genius as "the father of the man in America". For Ukrainians, at this time he remained a "great stranger" whose works were available to them only in German, Polish and/or Russian translations.

During the 18th and the first half of the 19th century, Ukraine, torn between two empires, had no national theater, and the use of the Ukrainian language in the sphere of culture, including translations of world classics, was strictly forbidden under Valuev Circular and Ems

⁴¹ Бажан М. П. У Стратфордї на Ейвонї. *Бажан М. П. Твори в 4-х т.* Київ, 1984. Т. 1.: Поезії та поеми 1923–1983. С. 324.

Ukaz. In the context of total political and cultural colonialism, Shakespeare's appropriation by Ukrainians was impossible: he was perceived here as an unattainable genius, and understanding of his works served as an indicator of the recipient's intellectual capacity. That is why the topos of Shakespeare's timeless genius, initiated by his younger contemporaries, in Ukraine correlated with the struggle for national identity, acquiring specific conceptual color and acute relevance. The Ukrainian elite understood the urgent need for Shakespeare and verbalized his possible impact on the cultural and even political life of Ukrainians in numerous public disputes over the further directions of the nation's development.

In the course of discussions about the expediency of Shakespeare's translations into Ukrainian in the presence of Russian translations, the concept of "Shakespeare as the mirror of the world" emerged, and during the 1880–1900 it acquired the characteristics of the cultural topos. Panteleimon Kulish, the creator of this metaphor, considered that the nation should follow the Western countries with their highly developed culture appreciating Shakespeare as its common-shared value. In his opinion, acquaintance with the translations of the Bard's works would fulfill a civilizing function, promote the development of the Ukrainian language and culture as a whole.

Shakespeare's ability to stimulate a radical renewal of the national theatrical tradition was well understood by the charismatic director Les' Kurbas, whose "Macbeth" became one of the most original modernist productions. Les' Kurbas appreciated Shakespeare as a consummate artist who can sound contemporary and relevant, and thus nurture a new theatrical audience. In this way, the western romantic topos of a timeless genius organically merged with the purely Ukrainian topos "the mirror of the world".

In 1930–1950, in Soviet Ukraine, Shakespeare occupied one of the most honorable places in the cultural iconostasis, whose construction was carried out under the clear guidance of the Communist Party and controlled by the repressive organs of the state. Due to the performances of the Bard's plays on the Ukrainian stages, which aspired to domestication and melodrama, the reception of the author as a people's dramatist was fixed in the collective consciousness of the viewers. Soviet literary criticism of the time always drew attention to the fact that Shakespeare was not an aristocrat but a glover's son who clearly articulated his sympathy for the working masses. His method was defined

as realism. These ideas were actively promoted through newspaper publications, school programs, numerous celebrations of Shakespeare's anniversaries, etc. In the end, the topos "our Shakespeare" was formed. It became widespread throughout the Soviet Union, including Ukraine. The idea of the only rightness of the Soviet understanding of Shakespeare caused by vulgar sociologism in the Soviet literary studies of that time was crystallized in controversy with so-called bourgeois Shakespeareans. This idea found an effective poetic representation in Mykola Bazhan's poem "In Stratford-upon-Avon". Thus, in the Soviet topos "our Shakespeare", the idea of the class and spiritual affinity of the English genius with the working people was combined with a claim to the only correct Soviet understanding of the Bard's work.

SUMMARY

The article deals with the peculiarities of the reception of William Shakespeare on the Ukrainian lands, which for more than two centuries had been torn between Russian and Austro-Hungarian empires and then for some decades till 1991 were a part of the Soviet Union preserving its colonial status. The author identifies and analyzes the key topoi of the Ukrainian Shakespearean discourse in the early stages of its development, which is extremely important to understand the national model of reception of the figure and works of the Bard.

The scholar proves the hypothesis that the specificity of the collective ideas of the Ukrainian nation about the great English dramatist was determined by the interaction of various semiotic spaces. As a result of the influence of some ideological, political and sociocultural factors the Bard entered the intellectual continuum of Ukrainians as "the mirror of the world". The appearance of his works in the Ukrainian translation and on the Ukrainian stages was appreciated as a form of resistance to imperial practices of cultural colonialism.

In 1930th – 1960th the topos "our Shakespeare" was structured and actively promoted through newspaper publications, school programs, numerous celebrations of Shakespeare's anniversaries, etc. This topos included the idea of the class and spiritual affinity of the English genius with the working people and an ideological claim to the only correct Soviet understanding of the Bard's work.

Keywords: William Shakespeare, topos, the Ukrainian Shakespearean discourse the value semantics, reception, ideologue.

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3. SHAKESPEARE BEYOND THE BORDERS

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RUSSIAN RACINE'S *HAMLET*: “MODERNIZATION” OF W. SHAKESPEARE'S TRAGEDY IN RUSSIAN LITERATURE OF THE 18TH C.

Iryna Ya. Pavlenko

INTRODUCTION

The second third of the 18th century in Russian literature was marked by the emergence of the aesthetics and genre system of classicism. One of the leading places in the development of theoretical foundations, the creation of samples of different genres works belongs at that time to Alexander Petrovich Sumarokov. He wrote epistles, odes, satires, parables, songs, but above all the contemporaries appreciated his dramaturgy; not without a reason was he so proud of the title of Russian Racine.

The active search for model Western European authors, whose works his plays could be based on, attracted his attention to the great English playwright. It had been long known, that he was the first Russian writer in 1747 to mention the name of a great playwright in the poetic tractate *Epistola on Poetry writing*: “Shakespeare, though ignorant”¹, and in 1748 he wrote the play *Hamlet*², which was first staged in 1750. It was the author's second tragedy, and it stood out in his literary heritage. Other plays, written in the late 1740s – early 1750s, focused on events and names drawn from the history of Ancient Russia. This fact, on the one hand, was motivated by the concept of its antiquity, on the other, this concept proved and stated the possibility to draw inspiration and plots from his own country.

¹ Сумароков А. П. Эпистола II (о стихотворстве). *Русская поэзия XVIII век*. Москва, 1972. С. 663.

² Сумароков А. П. Гамлет. Трагедия. Санкт-Петербург, 1748. URL: <mailto:bmn@lib.ru>.

The question that it was Sumarokov who introduced Shakespeare in the “thesaurus of Russian culture” has already been a subject of consideration. Researchers, reviewers and critics (from A. Pushkin and S. Glinka, V. Lebedev, P. Florensky, L. Vygotsky and N. Yevreyinov, to Y. Stennik, V. Lukov, N. Zakharov, Y. Levin³, and others) often write that in the tragedy *Hamlet* Sumarokov “perfected” “barbarian” Shakespeare and adjusted his work following the requirements of the French classicist tragedy. The fact that it was a Russian literary work is rarely mentioned. Even rarer, perhaps only in Yu. Stennik’s⁴ works, we can find the opinion that the play by Sumarokov fits into the general socio-cultural context of Yelizaveta Petrovna’s reign and corresponds to the level of Russian literature development, which gradually was turning

³ Пушкин А. С. О народной драме и драме «Марфа Посадница». *Пушкин А. С. Полное собрание сочинений: В 10 т.* Ленинград, 1978. Т. 7. Критика и публицистика. С. 149; Глинка С. И. Очерки жизни и избранные сочинения Александра Петровича Сумарокова: в 3-х частях. Ч. 1–3. Санкт-Петербург, 1841; Выготский Л. С. Психология искусства. Москва, 1986. 573 с.; Евреинов Н. Н. Ложноклассический театр в России и его главнейшие деятели. *История русского театра.* Москва, 2011. С. 9–373; Алексеев М. П. Первое знакомство с Шекспиром в России. *Шекспир и русская культура.* Москва – Ленинград, 1965. С. 9–69; Стенник Ю. В. Драматургия петровской эпохи и первые трагедии Сумарокова (К постановке вопроса). *XVIII век. Сборник 9.* Ленинград, 1974. С. 227–249; Стенник Ю. Сумароков-драматург. *А. П. Сумароков. Драматические сочинения.* Москва, 1990. С. 62–65. URL: http://az.Hb.ru/s/sumarokow_a_p/text_0250.Shtm; Стенник Ю. В. Драматургия русского классицизма. Трагедия. *История русской драматургии XVII – первая половина XIX века.* Ленинград, 1982. С. 58–82; Луков Вл. А., Захаров Н. В., Гайдин Б. Н. Шекспировские штудии IV: Гамлет как вечный образ русской и мировой культуры. Москва, 2007. 86 с.; Захаров Н. В. Рецепция Шекспира в творчестве Сумарокова. *Тезаурусный анализ мировой культуры: Сборник научных трудов. Выпуск 13.* Москва, 2007. С. 74–78; Захаров Н. В., Луков Вл. А. Шекспир и шекспиризм в России. *Знание. Понимание. Умение.* 2009. № 1. С. 98–106; Захаров Н. В., Луков Вл. А., Гайдин Б. Н. Гамлет как вечный образ мировой культуры. *Тезаурусный анализ мировой культуры.* Москва, 2008. Вып. 16. С. 15–28; Захаров Н. В. Концепция шекспиризма в русской классической литературе. *Знание. Понимание. Умение.* 2011. № 2. С. 145–150; Захаров Н. В. Начало культурной ассимиляции Шекспира в России. *Знание. Понимание. Умение.* 2010. № 3. С. 144–147; Захаров Н. В. Шекспиризм в русской литературе. *Знание. Понимание. Умение.* 2007. № 3. С. 175–180; Захаров Н. В. Вхождение Шекспира в русский культурный тезаурус. *Знание. Понимание. Умение.* 2007. № 1. С. 131–140; Левин Ю. Д. Шекспир. *Русско-европейские литературные связи: Энциклопедия.* Санкт Петербург, 2008. С. 244–247.

⁴ Стенник Ю. В. Драматургия петровской эпохи и первые трагедии Сумарокова (К постановке вопроса). *XVIII век. Сборник 9.* Ленинград, 1974. С. 227–249; Стенник Ю. Сумароков-драматург. *А. П. Сумароков. Драматические сочинения.* Москва, 1990. С. 62–65. URL: http://az.Hb.ru/s/sumarokow_a_p/text_0250.Shtm.

to the European mainstream. One more important fact, but which is hardly taken into account in literary discourse, is that the play met the level of views, tastes and requests of Russian viewers, their aesthetic and political needs, and their national traditions.

It has long been believed, that the first Russian professional playwright knew this Shakespeare play only due to its French prose translation. In response to criticism of V. Trediakovsky, the future Russian Racine himself asserted: “My Hamlet, he says, I do not know whom I have heard it from, was translated from the French prose of the English Shakespeare tragedy, and he was mistaken. My Hamlet ... it is hardly, hardly resembles a Shakespeare tragedy”⁵. This A. P. Sumarokov’s quotation, repeatedly cited in various literary works, is not given due attention to, as it shows his acquaintance not only with the French prose translation but also with Shakespeare’s work itself. Modern scholars prove his familiarity with the English primary source by referring to the library list of books taken by the Russian writer, but this document, unlike *Otvet na kritiku* (*Answer to Criticism*), written and published in 1750, became known to scientists only in the early 21st century⁶.

The researchers drew attention to urgent political needs, a kind of political order for the work that legitimized in the eyes of society the reign of Yelizaveta Petrovna, and the reflection in two *Hamlets* of different worldviews, which greatly influenced the nature of the conflict, the development of the plot, the system of characters, etc. In the preface to the modern edition of Sumarokov’s tragedy, A. Amelin points out: “Shakespeare’s Hamlet follows the Protestant model of behavior, personally confronting the hostile world and perishing in this confrontation. Sumarokov’s Hamlet is an Orthodox one, considering himself to be only a punishing instrument in the hands of Providence, devoid of doubt and reflection, alien to inaction and reflection. The punishment of evil is predestined, and it only contributes to the execution of the heavenly sentence”⁷. However, generally accepted and verbalized, for example, in the work of Yu. D. Levin, has become the idea that in the middle of the 18th century. “... The Russian theatre has not yet matured enough for Shakespeare ...”. To my mind, it is important to note that it has

⁵ Сумароков А. Ответ на критику. *Критика XVIII века*. Москва, 2002. С. 297.

⁶ Амелин М. Александр Сумароков. Гамлет. Пьеса. Вступительная статья. *Новая Юность*. 2003, № 4 (61). С. 6. URL: http://magazines.russ.ru/nov_yun/2003/4/amel.html.

⁷ Ibid.

not matured, but it strained after; and the fact that Shakespeare's comedies influenced Catherine II's playwright testifies it.

In general, the causes and factors of such a free-spirited treatment of Shakespeare's tragedy by A. P. Sumarokov have not been the subject of separate research.

1. Literary canon and socio-cultural markers

Turning to the creative activities of the Russian playwright, one must constantly remember the socio-cultural context and place of this author in the Russian literary process of the mid-18th century: he was the first Russian professional writer for whom creativity became a matter of life, and the main tasks were to acquaint readers with the theory of classicism, to prove the idea that works of different genres can be written in Russian, to create a repertoire of Russian theatre, and to make this repertoire competitive in modern language terms. At the same time, all these efforts could have been wasted, since there was no reader and spectator in Russia prepared for the perception of classic literature in general, and dramaturgy in particular.

A. Sumarokov himself knew well the history of Russian dramaturgy of Peter I's times, he understood that to teach the viewer to perceive the tragedy is a difficult matter, since the public ("the watcher" – as Sumarokov himself called the viewers for a long time) was not prepared for the perception of a serious stage action; it enjoyed watching the interludes, related to current political news or well-known issues, and did not percept translated comedies at all and was not accustomed to classic tragedy. Such a situation is reproduced in A. Sumarokov's comedy *Rogonosets po voobrazheniyu* (*The Cuckold by Imagination*), which female main character came to watch the interlude, but found herself at the performance of A. Sumarokov's first tragedy *Khorev* and lost consciousness while watching because she decided that Osneld was poisoned in public.

In the preface to the tragedy *Dimitry Samozvanets* (*Dimitry the Impostor*), Russian Racine wrote: "You who traveled, who has been to Paris and London, tell me! Do they chew nuts there during the performance, and when the performance is in a full swing, do they thrash drunken quarreling coachmen to the dismay of the whole stalls, loges and theatre?"⁸. This is rather a painful reaction of the playwright to the level of the audience's culture. He was forced to some extent to adapt to the

⁸ Сумароков А. П. Избранные произведения. Ленинград, 1957. С. 457.

public, to its worldview and abilities to perceive certain topics, reflections, plots, which, along with the fascination with the theory of classicist tragedy, largely led to the transformation of Shakespeare's work. At the same time, A. Sumarokov thoroughly educated his audience (as for him "Theatre is a school for vagabonds along with man's life"⁹), instilling in it not only certain political preferences but also morality, nobility, and artistic taste.

N. V. Zakharov, for example, noted that Hamlet of A. Sumarokov had "educational significance for the public in the sense that the characters of the play expressed the lofty ideas, prevailing in European literature at that time, about honor, duty, love of the motherland and the portrayal of passions was clothed in a refined and sophisticated form"¹⁰. This statement can be extrapolated to all drama works by A. Sumarokov. That is why, working in different genres, he chose the works of Racine, Corneille, Molière, Voltaire, La Fontaine, etc. as the model; A. Sumarokov is the first to introduce Shakespeare to the Russian reader and viewer, but in a form that could be understood at least by some of those who watched his plays. He was well aware of how different his "watcher" was, not only from his contemporary Western European public but also from those who saw Shakespeare himself on the stage.

The reduced number of characters attracted the attention of nearly everyone who turned to the consideration of Sumarokov's Hamlet, but no explanation can be found as to why the Russian playwright practically ignored many characters of Shakespeare's work. It seems to be not a simple desire to "correct" Shakespeare.

The analyzed plays have a different primary characterization of the characters, which is important for further interpretation of Sumarokov's tragedy. Claudius is immediately characterized as an "illegal King of Denmark", which is different from the simple statement "the King of Denmark". The attitude of the author to the character and the situation is initially imposed on the reader/viewer, and this characterizes the thought of Claudius maleficence, which has been a mystery to viewers of Shakespeare's work for some time.

In the flawless Russian translation of the Shakespearean tragedy, Hamlet, "Son to the former, and Nephew to the present King", the family

⁹ Письма русских писателей XVIII века. Ленинград, 1980. С. 121.

¹⁰ Захаров Н. В. Рецепция Шекспира в творчестве Сумарокова. *Тезаурусный анализ мировой культуры: Сборник научных трудов. Выпуск 13*. Москва, 2007. С. 75.

ties of the characters were revealed, with the first being a “son and a nephew” and then a social status that corresponded to the author’s concept of the hero. In Sumarokov’s work – “Hamlet, the son of Gertrude”. This is a dramatically different characteristic. The matter is not only, that in Russian play, Claudius is not a relative of Hamlet; he got the throne by marrying Gertrude. It is not said that Hamlet is the son of a previous king, it is emphasized that he is the son of the queen from a previous marriage. This is a change of place in the line to the crown, and therefore a possible fate of the character and the plot development. This view is confirmed by the characteristic of Gertrude. In Sumarokov’s work, she is “his wife” (referring to Claudius), not “the Queen of Denmark, Hamlet’s mother”. This is a fundamentally different characteristic, which has exclusively marital status and no social status. Consequently, the king has no legal right to power, and Gertrude and Hamlet are removed from it.

Polonius functions have been changed: in the tragedy by A. Sumarokov, instead of a chief advisor, he becomes the main confidant, who, according to the laws of the tragedy of that time, knows everything better than his ward, often directs his actions, and interferes in affairs and so on. More than that, it was Polonius, who kills Gertrude’s husband at the request of Claudius.

Thus, even the change in the primary characteristics of those Shakespearean characters who “remained” in the play by Sumarokov, testifies to significant changes in the interpretation of the plot, related not only to its formal “straightening”.

Even more significant is the absence of certain characters in the tragedy of Shakespeare. It is a signal to the attentive reader/viewer, as it is an important form of the work’s adaptation in another “cultural thesaurus” and a cultural code change in the process and for adjusting to a new environment¹¹.

Shakespeare’s tragedy has a friend and former Hamlet University mates, which is a sign of the particular intellectual and spiritual environment the character is associated with. This is also the background of Hamlet, who got a good education, who is familiar with the contemporary philosophy, culture, who saw the world outside Denmark and so on. It is symptomatic that the university mates are “former” and

¹¹ See more details: Павленко І. Я. «Гамлет» В. Шекспіра та О. Сумарокова: зміна культурного коду (деякі спостереження). *Ренесансні студії*. Запоріжжя, 2015. Вип. 23–24. С. 50–68.

not only because the university times have passed, but Horacio stays with him.

Sumarokov's Hamlet is completely lonely, he is out of any community, which deepens the tragedy of the hero; he is deprived of the past, that is why his genesis is left without the attention of the playwright and the viewer. At the same time, the Sumarokov's "reduction" of the hero's friends was caused by Russian realities: there was no habit of giving university education to the heirs to the throne, especially abroad. The first Russian university was opened in 1755, that is, after writing the play by Sumarokov, but the representatives of royal lineage did not study there. Thus, the motive of Hamlet's university education abroad for the Russian viewer was unusual and alien.

There are no characters related to any mentioning of foreign events since during the work on the play the issues of home political life deeply disturbed Sumarokov. For him, the principle of dynastic throne inheritance, the transfer of power in the family, was important, so the appearance of Fortinbras, the Prince of Norway, who eventually becomes the King of Denmark, was simply impossible in a play written during the active struggle for the Russian throne. The Russian viewer should have realized that the only legitimate heir to the crown could have been the direct descendant of the assassinated king, hence Elizabeth Petrovna's crowning was natural since she was the only one entitled to Peter's inheritance. Not accidental in the play are "slips of the tongue", which the researchers did not pay attention to Hamlet's father is sometimes called the King, Hamlet is often called the Prince. Gertrude in repentance says to Claudius:

*Ты в ненависти, Князь, мой сын любим в народе,
Надежда всех граждан, остаток в царском роде”
Ты в ненависти, Князь, мой сын любим в народе,
Надежда всех граждан, остаток в царском роде¹².*

There is no Laertes (the son of Polonius and the brother of Ophelia) in the tragedy by Russian Racine. His absence became possible because in the Russian way of life the main role in a girl's fate was played by the father; a duel with an heir to the throne was simply impossible in any case, and therefore the presence of such a character was optional.

The refusal of Laertes' image is a sign of irrelevance of family values for Sumarokov, the marginalization of the universal ones, the

¹² Сумароков А. П. Гамлет. Трагедия. Санкт-Петербург, 1748. URL: <mailto:bmh@lib.ru>. The following is a link to this source.

manifestation of the state-centricity characteristic of Sumarokov and all Russian culture of his time, since his focus is the idea of the state and the transfer of power, and the love conflict is a secondary one. The protection of the honour of a common, uncrowned person and family is irrelevant for Sumarokov.

In Shakespeare's play, Laertes is disturbed by the violent death of his father, the failure to perform burial rites, which is essential in traditional culture. He tries to avenge Polonius' death and, due to these attempts, becomes Hamlet's counterpart.

In Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, three characters – Hamlet, Laertes, Fortinbras – find themselves in a close situation: their parents are killed and they need revenge. Sumarokov's Fortinbras and Laertes do not exist because in some way the situation is reversed, which generates branching of the plot and deviation from the unity of action, which, according to the Russian playwright, is unacceptable. In his *Hamlet* options for the development of the situation disappear (Laertes, unaware of reflection, is eager to revenge, Fortinbras refuses it). Getting rid of "counterparts" Hamlet of Sumarokov is also deprived of the possibility of choice (and hence the motive "to be, or not to be"), his revenge and victory over the murderers of his father become inevitable.

The absence of actors in the characters list, and therefore the motive of the theatre is symptomatic. For Shakespeare, "the whole world – theatre". All the characters in the play are well-acquainted with the theatre. Polonius praised highly the actors who came to Elsinore: "The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral, scene individable, or poem unlimited"¹³. He names theatrical genres and their varieties, which the Russian audience has not even been unaware of. In Shakespeare's play, theatre is a form of entertainment, an intellectual life, a sign of culture, a creator of new meanings, a form of communication with the viewer, a literary technique. Hence the correlation of life and scene, the performances in the play and the stage reality. Besides, characters often deliberately play a certain role, wearing a mask and becoming hypocrites in ordinary life. For Sumarokov such vastness is impossible, understanding of the theatre is radically

¹³ Shakespeare W. The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark. URL: https://www.opensourceshakespeare.org/views/plays/play_view.php?WorkID=hamlet&Scope=entire&pleasewait=1&msg=pl.

different. Each of his plays corrected the fate and educated his contemporaries, tragedies taught to subdue passions and reminded of the destructive power of feelings in human life.

In Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, performance is a part of a system of mirrors that reproduces a situation similar to the one in the Danish kingdom, and art helps to percept the reality, and verify pieces of evidence as for old Hamlet's death. The actors, without suspecting it, exposes the hypocrite, reveal the theatricality of his behavior. In the Sumarokov's tragedy, the theatre motive was removed, since the Russian audience was only about to be involved in this art, it could not yet watch the plays and perceive the underlying meanings in them; so the literary-theatrical allusions to which Shakespeare's Hamlet appeals for exposing Claudius turned out to be unnecessary.

The Russian playwright refused from the images of gravediggers, as well as from all the "cemetery" scenes and motives. Formally, this can be explained by the fact that Ophelia remains alive, by the attempt to preserve the unity of place, action and so on. But such a refusal led to the neglecting of certain philosophical motives of Shakespeare's play, such as the motive of uncertainty and changeability of everything that now seems significant and grand, the equality of everyone before death and general laws of being.

Scenes on the cemetery, which were similar to Shakespeare's ones, could not have been in Russian works of the time. For the West European culture, clearing the place on a cemetery for new burials was a common case that could not embarrass or scare anyone. In the Eastern Slavic tradition, it was forbidden to ruin the graves, even very old ones, to remove and throw away human remains. Singing and talking at the cemetery would be considered as sacrilege, blasphemy by Russian viewers. So this change was largely determined by the nature of audience reception.

The attention of Shakespearean scholars and Russianist has been often drawn to the fact that Sumarokov's play lacks the ghost of Hamlet's father. This is interpreted differently. For example, one of the best historians of the Russian theatre, N. Yevreyinov thought that the refusal from supernatural in Sumarokov's work was connected with the fact that the classic drama abandoned it and it became the purely epic sphere, that is why "the Spirit, at the request of pseudo-classicist tragedy, Sumarokov changed into a fancy, a dream"¹⁴. Modern expert on Russian historical

¹⁴ Евреинов Н. Н. Ложноклассический театр в России и его главнейшие деятели. *История русского театра*. Москва, 2011. С. 121

drama V. Bochkaryov writes: "... the story about the prophetic dream appears in the tragedy *Hamlet*, replacing the scene with the Ghost of Hamlet's Father, which A. Sumarokov, who was brought up in rationalist philosophy of the eighteenth century, considered impossible to include in his play"¹⁵, explaining the changes by author's worldview peculiarities. A researcher of Shakespeare's reception in Russian literature said: "The Ghost of Hamlet's Father is represented by a trivial dream"¹⁶.

All attempts to compare the tragedies of the two playwrights were carried out in the context of the literary perception of the era, but one must also take into account the traditional one, connected with the informal culture, which was largely present in everyday life, relationships, predetermined daily behavior, and often this very culture was dominant in the non-official spheres of life.

The refusal of the Ghost's appearance on stage is predetermined by both the genre canon, which the playwright was directed by, the views of the author, and the fact that there were no ideas about ghosts in Russian traditional culture. According to the traditional knowledge of the viewers, Sumarokov "moved" the image of Hamlet's father from the stage reality into the dream of the hero, actualizing the traditional for the Eastern Slavic culture image of prophetic dream and the secret knowledge that comes while sleeping, the idea of "undead".

Thus, the creation of Sumarokov's version of a well-known in Europe plot was determined by several factors: the need to "straighten" and "polish up" Shakespearean drama following the requirement of classical theatre, to bring the content of the play closer to the viewers' worldview and to educate them, to interpret the current events in Russia of that time and to warn the Queen veiledly against false steps.

2. Characters and the throne in Sumarokov's tragedy

An illustrative story of the work preparation for publication. It is known that for the deviation from the unity of action in the first tragedy *Khorev* A. P. Sumarokov was subjected to sharp and meticulous criticism of his constant rival – opponent V. K. Trediakovsky¹⁷. *Hamlet*,

¹⁵ Бочкарёв В. А. Русская историческая драматургия XVII – XVIII веков. Москва, 1988. С. 135.

¹⁶ Захаров Н. В. Рецепция Шекспира в творчестве Сумарокова. *Тезаурусный анализ мировой культуры: Сборник научных трудов. Выпуск 13*. Москва, 2007. С. 71.

¹⁷ Тредиakovский В. К. Письмо, в котором содержится рассуждение о стихотворении, поныне на свет изданном от автора двух од, двух трагедий и двух

from the point of view of classic aesthetics, can be blamed by the same fact.

Before the publication, the author had to show the work to M. Lomonosov and V. Trediakovsky, which he did, however, giving them only one day each for studying and reviewing. The reviewers treated *Hamlet* rather loyally, that for some reason were not mentioned by the researchers, and didn't pay attention to a clear branching of the plot and "two untying, ... of two knots, and hence not the single, but a double representation"¹⁸. This can hardly be explained by the lack of time, according to M. Amelin¹⁹, a modern researcher and the publisher of Sumarokov's *Hamlet*. They read the play carefully, as V. Trediakovsky made a few comments about style, and M. Lomonosov burst out with a famous epigram about the incorrect, in his opinion, use of the word "trogat" ("touch")²⁰. It is impossible to see such things at a cursory reading. However, the violation of one of the glorious three unities did not bother them. It may have happened because the play was necessary not only for Sumarokov, as it raised questions that were of concern to the whole community.

The problem of power and its dynastic inheritance in the after Peter I reign became more urgent than ever and runs through all the 18th century Russian culture, which was clearly state-centric in nature. While Shakespeare's play focuses on a character, a person, a personality, Sumarokov focuses on the interests of the state and the legitimacy of the throne that is why viewers regarded the play as an affirmation of the legality and justice of the throne inheritance by Elizaveta Petrovna. Obviously, the tragedy was intended not only to assert the legitimacy of rising to power (through a military coup) of Peter I's daughter but also to warn of the danger of a morganatic marriage that could lead another impostor to the throne. Probably, this is what made M. Lomonosov and Trediakovsky agree to its publication and staging, and "not see" the obvious drawbacks. The allusions to reality and the desire to teach the empress a lesson proved to be stronger than the aesthetic principles and concern about the preservation of the genre canon.

эпистол, писанное от приятеля к приятелю. *Критика XVIII века*. Москва, 2002. С. 100.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Амелин М. Александр Сумароков. Гамлет. Пьеса. Вступительная статья.

²⁰ Ломоносов М. В. «Женился Стил, старик без мочи...». *М. В. Ломоносов. Избранные произведения*. Ленинград, 1986. С. 258.

Somewhat surprisingly, Sumarokov's *Hamlet* became consonant not only with recent and current events (for Sumarokov at the time of writing) but also with those that occurred later: the coming to power of Catherine II. For contemporaries, she initiated the removal of her husband from the throne. The idea that they killed Peter III at her behest, or with her tacit consent, entrenched in the public consciousness. Too long regency, practically absolute power, gave reasons to associate Paul, who had lost his father and was sidelined from the crown for a long time, with Russian Hamlet²¹. According to Ye. K. Makarenko, "... the Shakespearean plot of Hamlet in the Russian culture of the late eighteenth century, because of the current historical and political situation, was related firmly to the theme of imposture. Sumarokov's tragedy also acquired a different sound and meaning in comparison with the time of its creation by the author"²². Sumarokov's play seemed to foresee the future, so after first performances, it could be neither published nor put on stage for a long time.

The absence of the tragedy in the repertoire of Russian theatres during the reign of Catherine II is symptomatic. The Queen proclaimed: "The theatre is a folk school; it must be under my supervision, I am a headteacher in this school and for the morals of the people, I'll be answerable to God"²³. Sumarokov's *Hamlet* was not part of this school curriculum.

The work that could support the thought of the illegality and criminality of Catherine II reign, the tragedy of her son's fate, and the ever-present danger of a new tyrant coming to power through a morganatic marriage, was expelled from the scene and only returned after the Empress died when Ya. B. Knyazhnin, M. P. Nikolev, V. O. Ozerov, and others were ruling in the theatre; only then the play became a frequent spectacle, the "watcher" changed, and Shakespeare came to the viewer and the reader in Russian translations. In two issues of the magazine *Moscow Telegraph* headed by M. O. Polyevoy in 1827 the fragments of *Hamlet* translation, made by M. Vronchenko were published, and a year later the full text of the translation was published in a separate edition. As

²¹ Жилкин В. С. Русский Гамлет. URL: <http://www.russdom.ru/2004/200410i/20041012.html>.

²² Макаренко Е. К. Роль шекспировского театра в формировании русской исторической трагедии. *Вестник ТГТУ (TSPU Bulletin)*. 2014. № 7 (148). С. 172.

²³ Quoted from the book: Дризен Н. В. Материалы к истории русского театра. Москва, 1905. С. 98.

a result, there was no sense in the staging of Sumarokov's *Hamlet* anymore. The tragedy was mentioned very rarely and was referred to as the first unsuccessful attempt at the reception of Shakespearean dramaturgy in Russia. It was judged from the perspective of that time, but not of Sumarokov's era in dramaturgy. The work was banished from the mainstream of Russian literature.

The motive of banishment also appears in the work itself, which is associated with heroines whose images are dramatically re-interpreted. The characters live a completely independent life, in which the motives and plot situations of Shakespearean drama are inherited unusually. The lines of Gertrude and Ophelia in the play by Sumarokov practically do not intersect; they never appear on stage at the same time. Gertrude does not mention Ophelia, and she, in turn, believes her father that his wife killed the eldest Hamlet.

Depending on the requirements of the time, the conflict of sense and feelings, duty/honor and passion are at the heart of Sumarokov's tragic plot. The author's conception of passion as a force destroying but equal to sense and honor is obviously the only motivation of Gertrude's behavior. Judging by individual remarks, it is passions that govern her actions, which Claudius made use of, inflaming her jealousy and distrust to her husband, and then self-love. Under the influence of destructive feelings, she becomes Claudius' wife and grant him admittance to the throne.

*Lyubov' proizvelo vo mne tvoye zlodeystvo!
Supruzhestvo moye s tobou – prelyubodeystvo”.*
*“Kak chest' moyu lyubov' skverneysha poglotila,
A ya tebya na tron monarsheskiy pustila”*
*“Любовь произвело во мне твоё злодейство!
Супружество мое с тобой – прелюбодейство”²⁴.*
*Как честь мою любовь сквернейша поглотила,
А я тебя на трон монаршеский пустила”²⁵.*

This way, the favorite idea of Sumarokov-dramatist is realized. He considers that passions destroy the person and his destiny, encourage crimes, so it is necessary to subject them to common sense.

Gertrude feels guilty under the influence of the son, whom she loves most and is afraid to lose. The mother's feelings are intensifying, as

²⁴ Сумароков А. П. Гамлет. Трагедия.

²⁵ Ibid.

she is disappointed in Claudius, as he, having become the King, sees no more reason to be hypocritical wearing a mask. If the Shakespearean female lead tries to reconcile her new husband and Hamlet, then in Sumarokov's play the Queen turns her back on her husband when she realizes his crime, his detrimental effects on her, the threat to herself and her son. It awakens her common sense that leads to remorse and reflect on honor and duty.

Since these thoughts haunt Gertrude, who, after the death of her husband, is to preserve the throne for her son and be a worthy regent, the words about just and wise rule are not accidental to the heroine:

*Tsar' mudryy yest' primer vsej oblasti svoey,
On pravdu pache vseh podvlastnykh nablyudayet
To pomnya zavsegda, chto kratok smertnykh vek,
Chto on v velichestve takoy zhe chelovek.
Царь мудрый есть пример всей области своей,
Он правду паче всех подвластных наблюдает
То помня завсегда, что краток смертных век,
Что он в величестве такой же человек²⁶.*

The play by Sumarokov is Gertrude's tragedy that killed the husband and allowed the tyrant to ascend to the throne; later she understood her crime, repented, and reflected about the atonement of sins²⁷.

Shakespeare's Hamlet, disappointed in his mother, and hence in all women and humanity, advises Ophelia to go to the monastery. For him, a monastery is a way of preserving purity, a form of eternal exile, an opportunity not to multiply the sinfulness of the world. In the play by Sumarokov, Armand invites Gertrude to seclude herself for redemption.

Hermitage in Orthodoxy is a cloistral separated and remote settlement from a monastery in a deserted area where laws are tougher and living conditions are more difficult than in conventional monasteries. Here, far from the vanity, people prayed for the remission of sins. Such exile life is perceived by the heroine as law, necessity, care for her soul, salvation from the possibilities of new temptations.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷This is partially covered in the article: Павленко І. Я. «Остави свѣтъ другим, и плачь в пустыняхъ въ вѣкъ», ... Гертруда: шекспірівські героїні в художній системі трагедії О. П. Сумарокова «Гамлет». *Ренесансні студії*. Запоріжжя, 2016. Вип. 25–26. С. 46–63.

She is ready for it because she must atone for her crimes and hopes for a moral rebirth. In the context of all the work, such a fate of the ruler, who also is not loved by the husband, is not accidental. In Russia, the monastery has repeatedly become a place of exile for the widowed queens or even for those queens who were not loved by their crowned husbands.

Sumarokov knew Russian history well, repeatedly referred to it in his creative activity; the evidence of it are his studies *The Brief Moscow Chronicle*, *The First and Chief Streletsky Rebellion*, *The Second Streletsky Rebellion*, *The Brief History of Peter the Great*. He knew about the fate of many Russian queens who could be sent to a convent for infertility or for being boring for their husbands; many of the queens died unexpectedly, often at the request of husbands, sometimes by the will of the nobles, which could have happened with the first and probably the only beloved wife of Ivan Grozny (Ivan the Terrible).

The motive of Gertrude's monastic life in the play is also motivated by the fact that her tyrant husband has considered marrying Ophelia. Numerous marriages with girls from boyar families were known in the history of Russian rulers, and the bride's choosing could take place when the official wife was alive and had been sent to the monastery in advance. History knew such marriages of Ivan the Terrible, the second marriage of Peter I, etc., so for the Russian viewer, it was a familiar, condemned, but quite a usual situation.

Gertrude's fate thus fits into the history of the Russian monarch families, however, in Sumarokov's work the queen herself longs for monastic life. The thought of hermitage haunts the heroine, but in a play setting limited by three unities, she doesn't leave the place, but only declares its intentions. Gertrude cannot distance herself from public affairs until the authorities return to their rightful heir, Hamlet.

Since, after the murder of Hamlet's father, she must become a regent, the only mother can and should transfer power to the real king. This is also a well-known situation in Russian history, as there were precedents of Elena Glinskaya, Natalia Naryshkina, Catherine I, and hence women's rule – the Regency did not surprise the Russian viewer. Moreover, the play was written during the reign of Peter I's daughter. Besides, rumors were spread about her morganatic marriage, so, there was a threat of seizure of power by her husband. Thus, the fate of the literary heroine is to some extent altered by historical realities.

In Sumarokov's tragedy Claudius' cruelty, hypocrisy and desire for boundless power is a natural phenomenon, that neither education nor breeding could overcome. He has nothing to do with the Hamlet dynasty, so he may be the husband of the queen, but not the king. Having no rights to the throne, he temporarily usurps and tries his best to retain power. His fate in the play is a symbolic and transparent enough warning to all who aspire to the hand of Elizabeth.

In the artistic time of the play, Claudius' extreme cruelty and craftiness are also caused by the fact that the stepson has learned the truth and become dangerous. Under the reign of Gertrude, Claudius is a legal co-regent. If she fulfills the threats and goes away to pray for forgiveness, he will completely lose his right to power, as the throne will be given to Hamlet, the legitimate ruler. That is why Claudius intends to kill Gertrude and stepson and remain the sole lord of Denmark. As the husband, he will inherit the fortune of his wife, which will not be the case if Gertrude goes to the convent and Hamlet remains alive.

Sumarokov's work has no motive of imaginative madness since Russian history has had "weak in the head" rulers and heirs to the throne. The motivation of Polonius – madness because love – is an impossible phenomenon in the Russian tsarist way of life: his wife was chosen, as a rule, to continue the dynasty. It was a state task; it was not about love.

It should be mentioned that the Prince of Sumarokov does not leave the place, and Claudius does not try to take him anywhere. They are trying to kill Hamlet at home, which also corresponds to the Russian reality of the time when unlucky heirs were imprisoned and take the monastic vows, whole families were sent to the North or Siberia, so sending somebody away to foreign lands to kill him was unclear to the viewer: you can do it at home. Everyone still remembered the fate of Sophia, from the family of Anna Leopoldovna, and, which is even more important, of Ioan Antonovich, the legal heir to the throne.

At the same time, the Prince, realizing Claudius' hostility, hopes for a while to avoid direct confrontation. He and Ophelia dream of leaving the city and living away from the atrocities of their stepfather. In difficult times of salvation, young people, whose parents and Claudius know about their love, see themselves in voluntary exile.

Lovers dream of the humble life of ordinary people, far from the city bustle and struggle for the throne, they are well aware of the

difficulties of life in which they will become different, even change names, but eventually, they will be happy. Such metamorphoses are avoided, but Ophelia faces the problem of exile. It is Hamlet's expulsion from her heart (something that the hero longs for, at least for a while), as her father is a tyrant's abettor.

The revenge of Sumarokov's Hamlet is aimed at both Claudius and the executor of his will, Polonius, so he tries to change his attitude towards Ophelia, the enemy's daughter. In obedience to his duty, he is obliged to punish the offender and all his family members (in the 18th century Russia it was accepted to punish the whole family of the guilty in the crime against the throne). This fact Sumarokov uses as the explanation of Hamlet's emphasized cruel attitude to his beloved. At this time, she is threatened with real banishment – exile. However, Hamlet's feelings are opposed to common sense, he cannot turn his back on Ophelia.

Shakespeare's character considers his chosen one to be the daughter of Jephthah, who was sacrificed at her father's will. In Sumarokov's tragedy, the motive of child sacrifice is set in a classic conflict between feeling and obligation. Ophelia must sacrifice her fortune for the sake of her father, and such sacrifice is a difficult and costly one for her (she refuses to marry Claudius).

A rather interesting, partly mirroring, situation arises: Hamlet lives with the thought of revenge for his father, and this is what guides his attitude towards Ophelia. Polonius committed suicide because he could no longer resist Hamlet, but Ophelia did not think of revenge: her father was a criminal, and so he made his choice himself. He is punished by God, and so the daughter must mourn over him and bury.

After discovering all the evils of Claudius and the suicide of Polonius, all obstacles to the happiness of Ophelia and Hamlet disappear, and at the same time with the crown, the legal heir to the throne gets the opportunity to marry his beloved. Her path to the convent is tabooed: the family of the ruler must continue. The throne goes to the legal heir and must be passed on to his son. This is the logic of Sumarokov's tragedy.

Despite the laws of the genre, the play by Sumarokov lacks a tragic final; reason, justice, and a good win. In the process of plot development, the main character of Sumarokov gradually expands his idea about the duty. He must first seek revenge for his father's death. The father was the king, so it is necessary to return the throne and the

law to his country; so, the duty of the son is manifested not only in the revenge to Polonius and Claudius but also in the wise and lawful rule of the state. In Shakespeare's play, this motive is absent; moreover, after the death of all characters who could in any way claim the throne of Denmark, it is occupied by a representative of another dynasty. In Sumarokov's tragedy, following Russia's political situation at the time, a legitimate heir receives the throne. This is the justification of Elizaveta Petrovna's reign.

Happy-end contradicts the genre canon, but even the strictest critics – Lomonosov and Trediakovsky, apparently, for reasons far from literature, did not make any comment about it.

The allusions to reality turned out to be stronger than the genre canon.

CONCLUSIONS

Thus, the comparison of the tragedies by Shakespeare and A. Sumarokov *Hamlet* shows that one of the essential reasons for the transformation of the classic, already at the time, work, along with the desire to "edit" the work of "barbarian" under the traditions of the French tragedy of that time, was adapting the work to the cultural needs and abilities of the Russian viewer. Cultural code changing resulted in the changes of characteristics and actions of the characters, in reducing their number and, accordingly, in the loss of motives and storylines that were not clear to the viewer of a country whose professional theatre was had only been born; and the first Russian professional playwright was to form the audience along with the writing of plays.

The analysis of Shakespeare's motives in the Sumarokov's tragedy makes it possible to say that the problem of exile was manifested in the content of the work (the transformation of the convent motive and the need to remove Gertrude to the deserts for repentance, the possibility of Hamlet and Ophelia's escaping from the place, Hamlet's temporary attempt to forget Ophelia), and in the destiny of the work itself, which, under the influence of external circumstances (primarily political ones), was removed from the Russian theatre repertoire and was not staged for a long time. The dramatic transformation of Shakespeare's characters was motivated not only by the classic dramaturgical canon but also by the historical

and socio-cultural situation, as the Russian playwright hoped that the play would have an impact on the Empress.

Shakespeare and Sumarokov's plays were created during the reign of Elizabeth and Elizaveta Petrovna, but had different focuses. Sumarokov's goal was not to demonstrate the disharmony of the world and society but to affirm the legitimacy of Peter's daughter crowning.

SUMMARY

The article compares the tragedies of the same name by Shakespeare and A. Sumarokov and refutes the popular belief that the play by the Russian playwright was merely an attempt to "edit" the tragedy by Shakespeare according to the canon of French classic aesthetics. It is emphasized that the play Russian Racine corresponded to the level of Russian culture development and the formation of the contemporary playwright; more than that, it was, among other things, a way of educating the public. The analysis of the characters system in the Russian play proves its predetermination by the Russian socio-cultural and everyday realities, the system of allusions to socially significant events and phenomena, little known and unclear to the descendants, which led to the re-coding of the Shakespearean plot and heroes. It has been suggested that the transformation of the main characters' images and their fates is caused by the problem of throne inheritance in the post-Peter's era, by the attitude of the playwright to the reign of **Yelizaveta Petrovna**, and by the efforts to influence the Empress. Shakespeare's and Sumarokov's plays were in different directions. Sumarokov's goal was not to demonstrate the disharmony of the world and society but to affirm the coronation legitimacy of Peter the Great's daughter, which largely determined the content and form of his tragedy.

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SHAKESPEAREAN TEXTS AND THE IMAGE OF BARD IN THE CONTEXT OF TURKISH CULTURE

Iryna V. Prushkovska

INTRODUCTION

The essence of the study is to analyze, synthesize, systematize information regarding the functioning of Shakespeare's creativity in Turkish culture, incorporating exploration, reception, and interpretation of Turkish-language literary works already performed by the author of this study, grouping separate areas of revealing the influence of The Bard of Avon to the Turkish cultural sphere.

As we know, each nation has an inherent identity, particularly in culture. The widespread promotion of cultural achievements is necessary for the full functioning of the people at every historical stage; it preserves it, defines the identity between other peoples, which is a kind of regulation of socio-cultural processes. However, the processes of interaction between nations and ethnic groups happen and predetermine the synthesis of the cultural and artistic process, enrich national cultures. The same thing happened with the Ottoman state, on the territory of which different peoples with different languages and denominations lived, and also, under certain political and historical conditions, interaction with the West took place. One of the best assets of such interaction is the interaction of English literature and culture with Turkish. The Ottomans became acquainted with English literature through Shakespeare's work. The Shakespearean context has an important ideological, formative, aesthetic function in Turkish culture. Due to the numerous translations and the presentation on the Turkish stage of the work of the great English dramatist, Turkish culture has at its core a solid "brick" of English culture.

First of all, it is worth noting the importance of the influence of Western culture in general on the traditional, centuries-old culture of the Ottoman state. Touching on certain historical points, the full perspective of the entry of Western models of art into Turkish literature, theater, and media sphere will be drawn. So, the influence of Western tendencies became significant at the beginning of the 19th century in the Tanzimat period (the era of Ottoman reform). Previously, only the canons of Oriental literature, mainly Arabic and Persian, influenced the

development of Turkish culture. The connection of the Ottoman Empire with Europe, first of all with France, took place even before the reforms of 1839 by Suleiman Aga and Yirmisekiz Celebi Mehmet Effendi. Signed between France and the Ottoman state in 1740, the so-called “capitulation” document for a long time was the basis of privileges for France: the French were given the right and freedom to trade in the territory of the Ottoman state under the full protection of the Sultan, the French consuls had judicial power, there were no restrictions on religious and cultural plans.

Shakespeare’s creativity is characterized by a “wonderful aura of unreasonable mystery and magical appeal”¹, despite the vast amount of scientific exploration, theatrical interpretations, imitations, stylizations, adaptations. Shakespeare’s word became a part of Turkish culture and literature, in particular with the formation of the Turkish author drama of the European model (after 1859), with the formation of genres such as comedy (*Independent Guest, Chatting Hairdresser, Beauty and Tragedy* by Ali Haidar Bey (1836–1914); *Homeland or Silistra, Black Trouble* by Namik Kemal (1840–1888), modeled on genre clichés of Western European drama.

1. Empathy for Shakespeare through translations

The stage of acquaintance of Turkish society with the English playwright was primarily due to the active work of translators. Considering the powerful influence of the French Revolution (1789–1799) on the Ottoman political and, above all, cultural system, the popularity of French language and literature in the Ottoman state, it is worth noting that Shakespeare’s first work, which was included in Turkish dramaturgy, was *Othello*, translated (1870s) into Turkish by Hassan Bedreddin Pasha and Manastirli Mehmet Rifat. Subsequently, three parts of *Hamlet* appeared, translated from French by Mehmet Nadir Bey, mathematics by education. Subsequently, Nadir Bey presented to the Turkish reader forty-two sonnets of Shakespeare (1887–1888). Under certain political conditions, Shakespeare’s works did not spread to the Ottoman states during the first stages of cultural reform (from 1839). According to historical sources, the Ottoman ruler Abdulaziz (1830–1876) was concerned with the integrity of the country, so any attempt to

¹ Торкут Н. М. Шекспірознавчий дискурс ХХ століття: специфіка і тенденції. *Ренесансні студії*. Запоріжжя, 2003. Вип. 9. С. 73.

destroy this unity was punished by him rather cruelly. During his reign, the translations of Shakespearean dramas, which involved the murder of members of the ruler's family because of a lust for power, were negatively regarded².

With the coming to power of Abdulhamid II (1876–1909), the situation with the development of the new dramaturgy was worsening. Literary works were subjected to severe censorship, actors were thrown into prisons, and theaters were closed and burned at the behest of the sultan³. But despite the political harassment, the Turkish drama, albeit slowly, paved the way.

Thus, in 1884–1887 the translations of the Ottoman scholar, Orikagasizade Hassan Sirri Bey, Shakespeare's drama *The Merchant of Venice* and *The Comedy of Errors* were published. In 1886, a civil servant, Mihran Boyadzhan, translated the plays *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, and the same year published a separate publication in the Jivelekian publishing house. In 1912, the tragedy *Othello* (published by Manzumi Efkar) was translated into English by M. Boyadzhi, although the translation was completed as early as 1896, but the publication was not authorized⁴Abdulkhak Hamit Tarhan (1852–1937) actively worked on the adaptation for the Turkish scene of the works of Shakespeare and Hugo: *Ashber, Ilhan, Sensitive Girl*⁵.

Politician, physician, public figure, active revolutionary Abdullah Dzhevdet (1869–1932) in 1908–1910 actively translates Shakespeare (*Julius Caesar, Hamlet, Macbeth, Romeo and Juliet*). A. Dzhevdet's fascination with Shakespeare's work began in medical college. In 1884 he wrote a poem that reflected the author's emotions from reading Shakespeare's plays⁶. Turkish researcher Sevda Ayluchtarhan states that A. Dzhevdet's interest in English literature is not a mere coincidence⁷. In her opinion, he regarded the British as a superior race, and everything concerning the Anglo-Saxons was a priority for him. In this way, he differed sharply from his contemporaries, since at the end of the

² And M. Osmanlı tiyatrosu kuruluşu gelişimine katkısı. Ankara, 1976. S. 171

³ Aldağ Z. Ş. Türk tiyatrosunda Kurtuluş savaşı. İstanbul, 2008. S. 27.

⁴ Ayluchtarhan S. Dr. Abdullah Cevdet's translations (1908–1910): The making of materialist "culture repertoire" in a resistant ottoman context: Thesis master of arts in translation studies. İstanbul, 2007. S. 38.

⁵ And M. Osmanlı tiyatrosu kuruluşu gelişimine katkısı. S. 173.

⁶ Ayluchtarhan S. Dr. Abdullah Cevdet's translations (1908–1910). S. 40.

⁷ İbid. S.42.

nineteenth century. In Ottoman society, the palm of primacy was occupied by French culture and literature in particular (from 1860 to 1896, 79 dramas were translated from French, while only 8 were translated from English)⁸. A co-organizer and a member of a secret union that fought against the dominant ideology of the Sultan, A. Dzhevdet tried different ways of the anti-sultan movement, including literary translation. When translating Shakespeare's dramas, A. Dzhevdet was primarily driven by the desire to convey to the Ottomans European values and to oppose the sultanate, rather than the desire to create a translation masterpiece. Perhaps this is explained by the fact that among the literary experts of the time, A. Dzhevdet's translations were ambiguous. Thus, in the memoirs of the famous writer Suleyman Nazif, we come across a sharp criticism of A. Dzevdet's translations: "Nazif, I am very scared that I can die without translating Shakespeare," A. Dzevdet refers to a friend. "On the contrary, I'm afraid you will die *after* you translate it all. Everyone thinks that Shakespeare's work is immortal, and you make them dead by your translations"⁹. Despite this, A. Dzevdet's translations have their place in the history of Shakespeare's entry into Turkish culture, since they are the first, numerous. A. Dzhevdet was delighted with the works of the Bard of Avon, tried to present as much as possible from them to Turkish reader and viewer. And this is his great merit. One of the drawbacks of his translations is the rather complicated language (so much so that his Ottoman texts were first written in Latin and published in Turkey only in 2017), as well as his "presence" in Shakespeare's works. As a translator, he should dissolve into the translation, transposing the original as much as possible, but his style is very noticeable in translations, which sometimes makes him and Shakespeare distinguish¹⁰.

An important role in the introduction of the Ottomans with the work of Shakespeare played a translation of the Turkish work of Victor Hugo *William Shakespeare*. According to Turkish researcher Inci Enginun, this book had an even greater impact than single translations of

⁸ Enginün İ. Tanzimat devrinde Shakespeare: Tercümelere ve tesiri. İstanbul, 1979. S. 29.

⁹ Avcı Z. Şekspir'den Shakespeare'e: Üstadın Anadolu macerası. *BBC Türkçe*, 7 Mayıs 2014. URL: http://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler/2014/05/140507_shakespeare_anadolu_zeynep_avci.

¹⁰ Torbalı Ö. Y. Çeviri ve tarihsel hafıza. *Çeviribilimde Güncel Tartışmalardan Kavramsal Sorgulamalara Monografi*. İstanbul, 2018. S. 244-245.

Shakespeare's works from French to Turkish¹¹. The weakening of political oppression and the active Europeanization of Turkish society contributed to the creation of theatrical unions and theaters. Finally, it was time to introduce Shakespeare on the Turkish stage. Thus, in 1912, the famous Turkish actor Muhsin Ertugrul, on the stage of a local Turkish theater, presents viewers of Shakespeare's play *Hamlet* in his translation and the lead role. It is worth saying that *Hamlet* in the performance of Muhsin Ertugrul had great success on the stage of Turkish theater. Original costumes, great actors (Ismail Galip, Shazie Hanim, Bedia Hanim), a well thought out script – all contributed to the success, every day during half a month all tickets were sold and seats in the theater were filled with grateful spectators¹².

In 1914, the Daryulbedai Institution was founded, which was later renamed the Istanbul Local Theater. The institution aims to teach theatrical art and present works by both Turkish and European authors to a wide range of viewers¹³. Kamil Riza – one of the first students of Daryulbedai traveled with his troupe almost all Anatolia with the performance *Revenge of the Arab* based on the play of Shakespeare *Othello*. Kamil Riza even nicknamed himself after the name of the character he represented many times on stage – Othello Camil.

We suppose that the functioning of the translated works of Shakespeare in the artistic consciousness of the Turks was harmonious, since the use of allegories, vivid metaphors in the English text very much resembled the language of poets of Indian style (Sebki-Hindi), close to the Turks. After all, the main features of the Indian style are the sophistication of metaphor, original comparisons, manner, complex symmetry of images, fantastic as an artistic reception, new meanings and interpretations of life realities, likeness, hint, symbols¹⁴.

In favor of the assertion that Shakespeare's figure gradually echoed in Turkish society in the first half of the twentieth century, the fact of the emergence of single works, poetic works devoted to the great national poet of England. In 1921, the poem *Shakespeare* appears from the pen of the famous Turkish poet Tevfik Kolayli (Neyzen Tevfik, 1879–1953):

¹¹ Enginün İ. Türkçede Shakespeare. İstanbul, 2008. S. 11.

¹² Karataş H. Türkiye'de Hamlet olmak. *Arka Kapak Kitap ve Kültür dergisi*. Mayıs 2018, sayı 32. S. 35.

¹³ Çeşitli İ. II. Meşrutiyet dönemi Türk edebiyatı. Ankara, 2007. S. 235.

¹⁴ Прушковська І. В. «Краса і Любов» Шейха Галіба (до проблеми індійського стилю у турецькій літературі) [Монографія]. Київ, 2008. С. 34–37.

*Şekispir'in bütün asarına değil, birine
Feda imiş Britanya o hikmet efserine.
Ne muhteşem, ne derin bir mehabet-i takdir,
Yeter bu İngiliz'in ilme aşkını tasvir.
Revân eder acı sözlerle tayf-ı hikmetini,
Bu serzeniş ile sezmiş vatan muhabbetini
Britain is leaning toward creativity
This crown of knowledge.
What a wonderful praise,
what a love of the British for science
And it melts in the depth of time
This sadness and love for the motherland.*

In 1934 Jenap Shahabettin publishes the book *William Shakespeare*, which first presents the biography, life and career of Shakespeare in Turkish¹⁵. Representation of Shakespeare to a Turkish reader/viewer was done by well-known Turkish writers: Halide Edip Adivar, Sabahattin Eyuboglu, Ulku Tamer, Can Yucel, Mina Urgan, Berna Moran, Talat Sait Halman. In particular, Halide Edip Adivar (1941), Orhan Veli Kanık (1949), Sabahattin Eyüpoğlu (1965) translated *Hamlet*, and each translation was distinguished by own interpretation of the known text.

In the '60–'70s of the 20th century Turkey is experiencing a decline in interest in Shakespeare's creativity through the renewal of the national drama model, a radical rethinking of traditional cultural values and the weight of national identity. In time, the ideas of B. Brecht's epic theater.

The events of 1980 (the military coup in Turkey) became the starting point for political and cultural changes that provoked the acquisition of "blocked character" literature and contributed to the growing of interest in world dramaturgy: Shakespeare (*King Lear*, *Hamlet*), C. Goldoni (*The Servant of Two Masters*), M. Gogol (*The Government Inspector*), E. Ionesco (*Exit the King*). At this time, Turkish play writers resort to the language of allusions, trying to identify artificially and outline the current situation. In that period Turkish literature and dramaturgy, in particular, are experiencing a "thematic" crisis caused by political and economic problems. Censorship, repression, bans have spread not only to the political sphere but also to the cultural

¹⁵ Avcı Z. Şekispir'den Shakespeare'e: Üstadın Anadolu macerası.

sphere. The government restricted any expression of freedom of thought, so it banned many writers and even tried to strike out such words as “revolution”, “nation”, “organization/union”, etc.¹⁶. September the 12th is called “the bloodiest period in the life of the republic” when there were attempts to “completely reshape Turkish society” through torture, repression, oppression, high-profile court cases¹⁷.

Complex political conditions have displaced dramatic works that have raised important social issues, closed theaters, released actors and theater executives. In an atmosphere of constant prohibitions and obstacles, artists lost their ability to create. Only private theaters held positions, but given the material damage, they favored the plays of one actor. Theaters lost viewers who gradually switched to television programs¹⁸. Such a dramatic change in the repertoire vector, on the one hand, demonstrated the “escape” of the playwrights from real events into the world of allusions, caused by the inability to openly express their opinion on the political situation in the republic, on the other hand, such a condition contributed to the expansion of theatrical repertoire, an increase in the number of translations into Turkish world masterpieces, it was an opportunity to take on the experience of famous playwrights once again.

Turkish theaters returned the play *Hamlet* with new interpretations. In 1997, on the stage of the Kocaeli Municipal Theater, the director Ishil Casapoglu presented his vision of *Hamlet* in full: the play lasted six hours, as the director felt it necessary to leave the text unchanged and without cuts. Despite the length of the play, it was a success and positive reviews of theater critics¹⁹.

Shakespeare’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* was first introduced to a Turkish reader in 1936 by Nareddin Sevin (‘Yaz ortasında bir gece rüyası’). Almost fifty years later, a translation by Can Yücel (1981) and a translation by Can Dogan (2005) was published. The Turkish version of Shakespeare’s famous comedy, translated by the Turkish poet Can Yücel (1926–1999), is of interest from the standpoint of originality and coherence with the concept of “artistic translation”. As a writer, Can

¹⁶ 12 Eylül ve Edebiyat. 12.09.2009. URL: <http://www.sabitifikir.com/dosyalar/12-eylul-ve-edebiyat>.

¹⁷ Türkeş A. Ö. Darbeler; Sözün Bittiği Zamanlar. *Hece Hayat, Edebiyat, Siyaset*. İstanbul, 2004. Özel Sayısı: S. 90/91/92. S. 430.

¹⁸ Şener S. Cumhuriyet’in 75 yılında Türk tiyatrosu. Ankara, 1998. S. 223.

¹⁹ Karataş H. Türkiye’de Hamlet olmak. *Arka Kapak Kitap ve Kültür dergisi*. Mayıs 2018, sayı 32. S. 35.

Yücel is known for his colorful, vernacular, which he rewrote on Shakespeare's comedy, replacing the author's style with his own. Turkish literary critics (O. Duman, J. Ozkaya, D. Ustter), analyzing C. Yücel's *Spring Equinox*, agree that he created his play based on Shakespeare's works, which is only partly based on original²⁰. At the same time, the author of the play is confirming self-presentation and self-positioning as a translator, thereby directing us to a comparative analysis of the original and the second work. First of all, it is worth noting the structural discrepancy between the original and the translation: the Shakespearean play has 5 acts in two scenes, while C. Yücel's comedy consists of two actions (5 and 4 scenes), respectively, and one part of the play is reduced by reducing individual dialogues, scenes.

The plotlines of the original and the second creation are almost unchanged. However, as noted, C. Yücel replaced the Shakespearean style of writing on his own, which brings the language of the heroes closer to the Turkish language as much as possible, allowed himself and certain substitutions in the personal sphere. The hero of the central plot motif – Lysander, in love with Hermia, C. Yücel transforms into Iskender (Alexander the Great), elves – into gins, bringing German mythological connotations closer to Turkish ones. In the play of C. Yücel, heroes with ancient names sing Turkish folk songs (*Bülbülün ninnisiyle, Güllerin nefesiyle, E yavruma, e e e e*)²¹, speak as commoners, their language is replete with Turkish constant expressions, sayings, colloquial vocabulary (*Hadi fırla, Filostarta; bu namuzsuz da alem etti, kallem etti, kızımı kendine benzetti; cicibici, incik-boncuk, takıldak-bon bon; kulusun, avucunda onun bir tutam balmumusun; Dimitri denen atsız süvari; akıl defterime yazmıştım; kırklara karışıyor sevgi; ağzını öpeyim, Hermiya! Fesüphanallah!*)²². C. Yücel successfully incorporates into the text canvas and Turkish folklore, cultural peculiarities, bringing the work as close as possible to the Turkish recipient (*Philostratus: "And the wedding will last forty days and forty nights"*²³; *Theseus: "On this Path of the Sacred pilgrimage ... "*²⁴," *The first act ends with the Mendelssohn march* ²⁵.

²⁰ Duman O. Bir Yaz Gecesi Rüyası ve Bahar Noktası'nın çeviri açısından karşılaştırılması. *Çeviriblog*. URL: <https://www.ceviriblog.com/2016/08/30/bir-yaz-gecesi-ruyasi-ve-bahar-noktasinin-ceviri-acisindan-karsilastirilmesi/>.

²¹ Shakespeare W. Bahar Noktası. Türkçe söyleyen Can Yücel. İstanbul, 1981. S. 28.

²² İbid. S. 29.

²³ İbid. S. 8.

²⁴ İbid. S. 9.

Despite the “indulgence” of the Turkish style of Shakespeare’s play *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* by Can Yucel, the translation succeeds in retaining, albeit indirectly, the author’s intention of presenting a unique combination of the real and the fantastic, the lyrics and the humor. C. Yucel, by transforming the text of the original, has achieved the preservation of the main events of the comedy and symmetrical gradations of tension. In general, C. Yucel managed to attract the attention of the Turkish community to the works of Bard from Avon, given the popularity of the scene of the *Spring Equinox* in Turkey. The interest of Turkish writers in the work of the great Bard is further evidence that Shakespeare’s works are an inexhaustible source, with no national or religious boundaries.

2. Shakespeare’s word in Turkish dramaturgy

In addition to the stage adaptations of Shakespeare’s works, for the first time, the works of the Bard of Avon begin to function in Turkish literature as an intertext. Thus, the famous Turkish playwright Bilgesu Erenus (1943) in the play *Joy of Pain* (1991) develops one of the traditional themes of world literature – the theme “man at the turn of history”, his self-identification, moral choice – and deliberately appeals to Shakespeare’s artistic experience understanding this problem.

The plot is based on the events of September 12th, 1980 and their impact on the fate of four young men. For the first time in the history of Turkish dramaturgy, this work presents an extensive storyline: several storylines are developed in parallel, related to the fate of each of the characters, who have points of intersection at the same time. The play begins with an intrigue around a photograph of three young men. All three are for the democratization of society, for change of political institutions. The position of the fourth man, a filmmaker is unknown. This is also one of the new techniques introduced by B. Erenus: an intrigue that is not revealed until the end of the play. Images of historical time conditionally divide the work into two parts: before the military coup and after. This makes it possible to incorporate elements of the detective into the work: the girl who finds the photo card is trying to find out what happened to those young people as their life turned out. The intersection of each of the storylines is dramatic, as the military events in Turkey have changed the lives of the people forever. The first young man turns into an antihero,

²⁵ Ibid. S. 38.

becoming, after the known events, a richer man who is ready to sell the soul for dollars. The second cuts through his veins without suffering abuse in prison and the third gets used to alcohol, realizing that all his efforts to produce a revolutionary magazine have come to naught. To create a message to the younger generation and to “soften” the tragic ending, the author develops an optimistic version: the girl tries to return dreams and hopes to a third of the young men, believing that it is easier to cure the soul-sick of alcoholism than to make the rich regain consciousness. The play is not only contemporary in content but also nationally accentuated, and its plot is linked to a key moment in Turkish history.

In *The Pleasures of Pain*, B. Erenus offers several plausible behavioral patterns (passivity, aggression) in a political crisis, and at the same time creates a symbolic image of the girl as the highest judge of the future, enriched by Shakespeare’s vital wisdom. But this girl is a Turk, who witnessed a military coup in Turkey in 1980, and who seeks to help her nation stand on the path of destroying values. The play *Antonius, Cleopatra* by Orhan Güner (1992) is an allusion to the tragedy *Antony and Cleopatra* by Shakespeare. Antonius of O. Güner is a great conqueror, in love with Cleopatra, speaks at least two Western languages – French and English. A somewhat ironic image of the “heroic” commander is formed by widely known communicative clichés in both languages:

Cleopatra: Start you.

Antonius: No, please.

Cleopatra: I beg.

*Antonius: Ladies first!*²⁶.

Both Antonius, Cleopatra, and even Caesar, despite their recognizable names, are masks that hide the images of contemporaries. Yes, Caesar cares about the state of the Turkish theater, dramaturgy, trying to convince others of the importance of maintaining a high level: “*Caesar: Hold on, you can’t kill the viewer. Do you think it’s easy to educate real art connoisseurs today? These are the kind of whimsical people who can enjoy something interesting everywhere: in supermarkets, in stadiums, and on TV*”²⁷. Orhan Güner’s play can be described as a postmodernist play in tragedy that lacks a well-defined conflict, acuteness, and deep philosophical content. In 1990, Necati Jumali introduces fragments of world intertext, including allusions to

²⁶ Güner O. Toplu oyunları 1. İstanbul, 1996. S. 90.

²⁷ *İbid.* S. 92.

Shakespearean tragedies, into the character's replicas, thus revealing the literary atmosphere of the depicted era, extending the temporal limits of perception.

Kemal (To Melik): How are you? Why are you standing on the threshold, not passing?

Hey, Melika, Melika

Why are pockets leaky?

(Laughs) Is it better:

Hey, Melika, Melika,

*Who confused you?*²⁸

In the preface to most of his works, the famous Turkish playwright M. Baydur (1951–2001) expresses his gratitude to both Turkish artists and representatives of the world culture, in particular Shakespeare, thus outlining his proofreading and noting that he is grateful to the writers of the world for their enormous influence on his literary writings: “*I express my sincere thanks to Emo, Suat Nafiz, Oguz Atay, Nebi, Nafi, Nietzsche, Carl Orff, Van Gogh, Omer Kirshan, Cervantes, Orhan Veli, Metin And, Aziz Nesin, Shakespeare. If it were not for their heritage, there would be no play ‘Lemon’*”²⁹.

Ozdemir Nutku's Turkish drama *Call Me William* (2010) reveals the theme of psychological trauma and traumatic memory, based on stories from the life of the protagonist, Oscar, who conveyed throughout his years the love of Shakespeare's creativity and desire to be a part of his dramatic world. Traumatic memory of the protagonist is formed in childhood and adolescence: he did not know the mother's love, because his mother died in childbirth, he kept an image of his father, who arranged for him to work in a circus cleaner, he blamed himself for being fascinated by the scene and works of Shakespeare: “*After three years of cleaning up the crap, I was offered the job of Assistant of the Chief Clown Olof Bab. Olof had so many books about theater. I read and re-read them every night. It was then that I read Shakespeare. I would rather not read. Inside, I had a terrible desire to be on stage. And this desire grew every day*”³⁰. Over time, Oscar manages to get into the theater and play his first role – Oswald of *King Lear*. However, Shakespeare's admiration gives rise to the next trauma, the most decisive in Oscar's private life – the

²⁸ Cumalı N. Bütün oyunları 2. İstanbul, 2004. S. 636 .

²⁹ Baydur M. Tiyatro oyunları. İstanbul, 2009. S. 12.

³⁰ Nutku Ö. Bana William Deyin. İstanbul, 2011. S. 15.

rejection of a loved one, the inability to start a family, the doom of loneliness. The situation is rather banal: Oscar asks his beloved Lisa's father for her hand. Father agrees but if Oscar leaves the theater and finds a decent job. The trauma of the situation is exacerbated by the fact that, after giving up his beloved, Oscar will wait for forty years for his role in Shakespeare's plays, unable to fulfill the dream of a lifetime. Dramatic and traumatic is the opening finale of the play: Oscar is offered a new role at the end of his life – the role of the clown from *King Lear*: Theater director says to Oscar "Can I call you William? I have a surprise for you. From now on you will play the clown. We are waiting for you at the rehearsals of the performance ... The actor is not moving, he is frozen in place. It is darkness ..." ³¹.

Thus, the traumatic memory of the protagonist is the result of the preservation and reproduction of the traumatic experience, which consists of memories of traumatic events. The ability to comprehend traumatic events, to live them consciously saved the hero from a post-traumatic stress disorder and the love of Shakespeare's work added decisive meaning to the continuum of life.

Summarizing the need to improve the perception of the Turkish youth of dramaturgy, the need to educate the Turkish young generation on the examples of national literature and centuries-old world masterpieces, continuing the centuries-old traditions of the world interpretation of Shakespeare's work, New York, Shakespeare's Children's Theater, Turkish playwright, actor Nafiz Uslu transforms Shakespeare's prose into a small play for children (67 pages). In a preface to *The Storm* of Nafiz Uslu, psychologist educator Umit Görgül states: "There is no drama for children in Shakespeare's work. Aware of his great responsibility, Nafiz Uslu reworked Shakespeare's play into a play for children, thus creating the opportunity for children to know the masterpieces of the Bard of Avon" ³². It should be added that the choice of N. Uslu was not accidental. After all, Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, in comparison with his other works, is maximally saturated with elements that easily arouse children's imagination: a fascinated island, travel, a magician, a spirit, a loving couple, and also has a strong didactic basis, which touches on issues of good and evil, fantasy and reality, comic and serious. Conscious of the complexity of transferring a large volume of a multilayer original work to

³¹ Ibid. S. 49.

³² Uslu N. *Fırtına* (W. Shakespeare). Çocuk oyunu. İstanbul, 2015. S. 8.

another plane, N. Uslu takes as its basis a separate storyline *The Tempest*, hyperbolizing it. The exposition of the play by Uslu informs the reader/viewer at the beginning of the action (the Prospero monologue addressed to Miranda, in which he recounts the story of his exile). The action begins with Prospero on the remote island freezing in the air because of a failed use of magical power and asking for Ariel's help. Upon seeing the ship from afar, Prospero asks not only to help him land but also to make sure that the ship's passengers are on the island. Ariel's storm brings Alonzo (King of Naples), the main culprit of Prospero's exile, and his son Ferdinand. The organization of events in the work is devoid of intrigue, the plot unfolds in four acts. The development takes place through Prospero's conflicts with Ariel, Ferdinand, Alonzo, and Caliban. Prospero's meeting with Alonzo, the return of his temporary memory to the King of Naples, and his plea for forgiveness are the culmination of the drama of N. Uslu. The last stage in the development of the conflict is Prospero's decision: forgive everyone, give freedom to Ariel, bless Miranda for marriage and return home. There is only one test scene in the Turkish *Storm* – Ferdinand's detention and his hard work. There are no tragic episodes involving Sebastian and Antonio, Stephano and Trinculo in the play. The meaning of N. Uslu's drama is lacking in important information, such as geographic locations (Tunisia, Bermuda), mythical elements (spirits, except Ariel, deities). However, special attention was paid to the romantic relationship between Ferdinand and Miranda. Simplifying the plot of N. Uslu's play accordingly leads to a decrease in the number of actors. Prospero, Ariel, Alonzo, Ferdinand, Miranda, and Caliban are the main characters of the Turkish *Storm*. The image of the Turkish Prospero is distant from the original work, and the readers/viewers are incapable of great magic, a somewhat rude, awkward elderly man: Prospero: "*What about me? How clumsy I am, what a shame. I can not use simple magic ... I have no strength. I already lose the ability to charm. I was not like that before ... Help! .. Help! Arielle!!!*"³³ It is not worth mentioning about the nobility and Christian forgiveness that Shakespeare laid in the image of the protagonist, analyzing Prospero of N. Uslu: "*Where are you, Ariel? Where are you, dirty gin?...*"³⁴. "*What the hell are you munching on, Arielle?*"³⁵, "*Your tongue became*

³³ *ibid.* S. 12.

³⁴ *ibid.* S. 13.

³⁵ *ibid.*S. 14.

something long”, “*Shut up, don’t confuse me*”³⁶, “*Ah, thank you, but quickly do what I say to you until I have roasted you like a chicken*”, “*Ah, you are mad*”³⁷. The choice of the author, namely – the rude image of Turkish Prospero, which emerges because of his behavior and replicas, is difficult to justify. It is unlikely that such a method should be used to educate Turkish youth on the examples of world literature, as N. Uslu says. We can only assume that N. Uslu transferred Shakespeare Prospero’s attitude to Kaliban to Ariel’s attitude in the Turkish version. However, if Shakespeare’s such behavior of the protagonist is explained by the inability to change the rude nature of Caliban (who also encroached on Miranda’s honor) only through the methods of education, then in the Turkish *Storm* Prospero’s attitude to the spirit, which helps him all over, is puzzling. At the same time, due to certain replicas from the play, it seems that the Turkish author implicitly expresses his attitude towards the political leaders, whose collective image is Prospero. By the way, this practice of hidden politically colored context was intensified in Turkish dramaturgy in the totalitarian 80ts of the 20th century, but it was not the first time that it was applied in children’s drama. Miranda, trying to find out who was to blame for the storm, questioned both her father and Ariel whether the spells were used and for what purpose:

Miranda: You couldn’t help but hear this storm. Probably, if you are so calm, then one of you put your hand up.

Ariel, Prospero: No, what are you talking about?

Miranda: If not for the hand, then at least the finger has gotten into the thing.

Prospero: How do you know who and what finger mixed this porridge with, you ask, as if in a child’s play with palms: “I gave it to porridge, I gave it, and I didn’t give it. Who did not give the porridge, he became angry and began to scream, “And me?”.

Ariel: This is usually the little finger. He is small, he needs someone to feed him. Well, the inferiority complex, inferiority – because of the short growth.

*Miranda: It’s clear! Father, why, why?*³⁸.

In the Turkish ‘*Storm*’, there is no clear distinction between the characters in the positive and negative, each character has ambivalent

³⁶ Ibid.S. 17.

³⁷ Ibid. S. 18.

³⁸ Ibid.S. 26.

character traits. Yes, Prospero in the play finale keeps his words and gives Ariel his will, forgives his enemies, expresses his desire to continue to educate Kaliban, avoids rude things. Ariel – the only character who has a talent for true magic, forcibly helps Prospero retaliate against the abusers, he has a poignancy of words and reason. At the same time, his remarks contain a mockery of the characters of the drama and manifestation of arrogance and arrogance. Ariel also acts as the narrator:

*Appears on stage. Watching the turmoil on the island, one movement seems to stop the action. "That's better. Hold your breath for a while. I have to think. Let's see what's up. Prospero wants to take revenge on Alonzo for forced exile; Alonzo lost his memory, though he remembers it a little; Caliban proclaims himself king on this occasion; Miranda and Ferdinand fall in love with each other. Ariel was destined to unravel it all. But first, we confuse even more, and there we will see"*³⁹. Alonzo does not arouse harsh criticism over the offense, and his half-insane state due to memory loss and head trauma causes sympathy and thought about the inevitability of punishment. However, he is a semi-comic hero, his childish sweet cues, the songs entertain: *"My lean camel died of obesity. He died neither on earth nor in heaven. An hour before sunset, he died in the morning"*⁴⁰. *"I sing songs / I rejoice and I jump / Where will I see the flower? I collect honey there / La la la, I work"*⁴¹. Miranda is the epitome of beauty, youth, kindness. However, the heroine has a royal temper:

Prospero: My dear daughter, now you understand why I caused the storm?

Miranda: No, I still don't understand.

Ariel: This baby is in no hurry.

*Miranda: I'm talking to my dad ... Dad, tell something to this gin ...*⁴².

Prospero: They ended up on this island for me to punish.

*Miranda: That's good, Dad, so they should*⁴³.

Ferdinand is a romantic image, a prince who, for love's sake, is ready to be tested by the common man. But Ferdinand has one flaw – he's a coward. Suddenly, when he meets with Caliban, he escapes with a cry:

³⁹ *Ibid.* S. 55.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* S. 47.

⁴¹ *Ibid.* S. 57.

⁴² *Ibid.* S. 8.

⁴³ *Ibid.* S. 29.

“Mom, save!”⁴⁴. *Caliban, despite the instability of character, indifference, ingratitude, brutality, has a “pure heart”*⁴⁵.

Despite the inevitable simplification of the plot and the omission of many central scenes, N. Uslu manages to preserve, albeit indirectly, the philosophical content of the original. The young Turkish viewer has a chance to admire the world of the classics, to immerse himself in the content, to express himself in the views on the vital issues of power, freedom, friendship, betrayal. N. Uslu’s dramatic work has a didactic focus, creates an atmosphere of fairytale that contributes to the happy resolution of the tragic conflicts. In general, Nafiz Uslu managed to attract the attention of the Turkish youth to the works of Bard of Avon.

3. Shakespeare in the media space of Turkey

Today, Shakespeare’s works have firmly entered the scientific and media discourse of Turkish society. There are explorations of Shakespeare’s works on Turkish literature (O. Esemeli, H. Yazidzhi, M. K. Chalishkan, A. Dagistani, C. Panther), translation studies (N. Demirkol, M. S. Sarma, N. Ichoz), comparative studies (M. Ozturk), psychology (F. Artukoglu, M. Koch). In today’s Turkish media space, Shakespeare is first and foremost a symbol of English culture (his images are actively used in advertising), as well as the author of the difficult life dilemma of “To be or not to be – that is the question”. Given the multifaceted functioning of this expression in the Turkish media space (in newspaper articles, blogs, news, advertisements of a social, political character, advertising of goods and services, fiction, periodical, philosophical literature), it is recognizable and culturally marked⁴⁶. For example, social advertising on the October 26, 2017, *Haber aramızda* news portal reads: “Whether or not to be vaccinated against the flu is the question”⁴⁷.

The use of Shakespeare’s statements in the professional field by Turkey’s bloggers, identification with the young modern generation of historical figure characterizes the linguistic and cultural space (Blog of NETVENT Marketing Consulting Company “Whether to be a YouTube

⁴⁴ İbid. S. 55.

⁴⁵ İbid. S. 65

⁴⁶ Engin’in İ. Tanzimat devrinde Shakespeare: Tercümelere ve tesiri. İstanbul, 1979. S. 10.

⁴⁷ Grip aşısı olmak ya da olmamak, işte bütün mesele bu! 27 Ekim 2017, Cuma. URL: <https://www.haberaramizda.com/grip-asisi-olmak-ya-da-olmamak.html>.

or not – that is the question”). Hamlet’s monologue does not go beyond even the football field of modern Turkey. For example, in the sports commentary in the *Akdeniz Manshet* newspaper on March 5, 2019, regarding the critical situation around the match between Galatasaray and Antalyasport, it sounds eternal “To be or not to be – 90 minutes will decide the fate of teams”⁴⁸.

The Justice and Development Party (AKP) is a powerful political party in Turkey. Its symbol is a glowing lamp used on a poster 2013 (election period) with the inscription: To be or not to be? Here’s the thing!. Shakespeare’s semiotic heritage is palpable and one of the most common areas of Turkish business – gastronomic. The Shakespeare chain of restaurants in Antalya, Alanya, Diyarbakir, Bursa, Izmir, Kayseri, Kemer, Manavgati is replete with the names of the heroes of the great Bard plays. The menu includes dishes with Shakespeare’s allusive names: “Romeo” – the main meat dish with vegetables and soy sauce; “Juliet” is a chicken breast with vegetables; from the desserts – “Othello” – chocolate pudding, brownies, cocoa, and biscuits⁴⁹.

Turkish researcher Zeynep Avcı in her article “From Shakespeare to Shakespeare: Anatolian Adventures of the Master of the Word” (2014) cites interesting facts related to the functioning of Shakespeare’s work in Turkish dramatic and television spaces: Ayla Algan – one of many actresses. For example, from 1962 to 1965, she played both Hamlet and Ophelia at the Istanbul Local Theater, directed by Muhsin Ertugrul⁵⁰. In 1976, a film by Metin Erksan’s *Woman Hamlet or the Angel of Revenge*, starring Fatma Girik, appeared on television. The film has been recognized both at home and abroad through its participation in international film festivals⁵¹. The plot of the film is set in Turkey, all the characters bear Turkish names, except for the main one – Hamlet-woman. The movie is full of irony, absurd scenes, dramatic and comic scenes.

Romeo and Juliet’s story is also reflected in the Turkish cinema. The films of Orhan Aksoy *Bitter Life* (1973), Kartal Tibet *Children of Paradise* (1977), Remzi Jöntürk *Once Upon a Time* (1982) are based on Romeo and Juliet’s love story, but none of the films mentioned, according

⁴⁸ Varlı Ö. Zorlu 90 dakika iki takımın da kaderini belirleyecek Olmak ya da Olmamak. *AkdenizManşet*. 5.03.2019. URL: <https://www.akdenizmanset.com.tr/spor/olmak-ya-da-olmamak/157138/>.

⁴⁹ Shakespearebistro. *Menu*. URL: <http://shakespearebistro.com/>.

⁵⁰ Avcı Z. Şekspir’den Shakespeare’e.

⁵¹ İbid.

to film critics does not convey the full depth of Shakespeare's creative idea.

Bulent Emin Yarar is the only Turkish actor to have played all the roles of Hamlet in one play (2003, Istanbul State Theater). According to Ishil Casapoglu, the director of the play, the work on Shakespeare's text was full of emotions, new assets, new experiences: "There is a lot to learn from the actors and the whole directing team from Shakespeare and we are going this way"⁵².

In 2013, director Gulschah Ozdemir Korkyurek presented to the public a short documentary film *Being Shakespeare in Turkey*, which begins with the symbolic phrase: "To be or not to be?"⁵³ There have been many reviews of this film in Turkish newspapers and to this day almost every year, this film is presented at various festivals and cultural events.

CONCLUSIONS

The Turkish cultural sphere, having a strong centuries-old eastern background, opened the door to the West in the 19th century, allowing most currents, directions, and cultural changes to affect the Ottoman state, and later the Turkish Republic. For two centuries, Turkish culture has been catching up, developing, applying in its fields what has been characteristic of Western trends. Analyzing the enormous positive impact of Western literature on Turkish literature, we can safely say that the interaction of Eastern and Western cultures, in this case, has the most positive effects. Acquaintance of the Turkish nation with the works of French, English, German, Slavic authors opened new literary possibilities, new trends for Turkey, directions, types of literature, a new vision of the world.

An important role in this cultural interaction was played by the individual, the creator of all times, for all peoples – Shakespeare. The material presented in this study demonstrates the depth of Shakespeare's word penetration into the Turkish cultural space, from the dramatic sphere to the scientific and media sphere.

Turkish dramaturgy opens new possibilities for literary and stage interpretation of Bard, enriched in the perception of Shakespeare's word. The emergence of a dramatic discourse on Turkey, in particular in

⁵² Kasapoğlu I. Hamlet, Dümeni kırık gemi misali rüzgara göre yön alıyor. *Arka Kapak Kitap ve Kültür dergisi*. Mayıs 2018, sayı 32. S. 39.

⁵³ Avcı Z. Şekspir'den Shakespeare'e.

children's dramaturgy, of the tendency to approach Shakespeare proves once again that his creativity is an inexhaustible source of humanism, democracy and the truth of life that have no national or religious boundaries. The functioning of Shakespeare's image and his work in other than Turkey's cultural spheres asserts the fact that the Turkish nation, both older and younger, knows and honors Bard, is familiar with his texts at almost a subconscious level and continues to promote his creativity, creating new plays, films, prose interpretations.

SUMMARY

The article is devoted to the study of the functioning of Shakespeare's image and his work in the Turkish cultural space. The focus is on the stages of Shakespeare's entry into Turkish culture – primarily translations from French, later English, artistic interpretations of famous Turkish authors (stories, novels), stage adaptations of Turkish directors. Particular attention is focused on the scientific and media space of Turkey, in which Shakespeare's creative work is quite versatile. The results of the study prove that the Turkish nation is well aware of Shakespeare's works since the 19th century and to this day the creativity of the Bard is widely represented in Turkish culture, a new generation of the Turkish community trying to instill a love for Shakespeare, affirming the immortality of his thoughts and ideas.

Keywords: Shakespeare's literary works, adaptations, translation, Turkish culture, dramaturgy, media space.

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“IS WHISPERING NOTHING?”: ANTI-TOTALITARIAN IMPLICATIONS IN GRIGORI KOZINTSEV’S *HAMLET*

Nataliya M. Torkut

Introduction

In May 2016, Cultura.ru, a popular internet portal, released a video-lecture dedicated to the film adaptation of Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* directed by Grigori Kozintsev (1964)¹. This 20-minute video is aimed at introducing the contemporary Russian teen audience to this masterpiece of the Soviet cinema. The lecturers are Sasha Frank, a renowned contemporary filmmaker, and professor Boris Lyubimov, an authoritative Russian theatrical expert. As an integral part of an ambitious project *One Hundred Lectures. The History of Native Cinema*, specifically designed for school students, this video lecture popularizes both, the most famous Shakespeare’s tragedy and its successful screen version made by the prominent Soviet film-maker. The lecturers see Grigori Kozintsev’s *Hamlet* as a powerful instrument of stimulating the young generation’s interest in Shakespeare.

Appealing to the cinema in the process of teaching literature has become a popular strategy within the contemporary educational paradigm. As M. T. Burnet points out in his monograph with a self-explanatory title *Filming Shakespeare in Global Marketplace*, “Shakespeare films are widely taught in schools, colleges, and universities; indeed, they are increasingly the first port of call for a student encounter with the Bard². R. Gibson offers convincing arguments about the effectiveness of using the so-called ‘active, critical viewing’ of films and videos in teaching Shakespeare. The scholar also outlines the purposes of this approach which “involves close study of particular scenes, actions or speeches”: “Student inquiry should focus on how a Shakespeare film has been constructed, how its meanings have been made, and whose interests are served by those meanings. It should identify the underlying values and

¹ <https://www.cultura.ru/movies/3082/gamlet-grigorii-kozincev-1964>.

² Burnet M. T. *Filming Shakespeare in Global Marketplace*, Edinburgh, 2012. P. VII.

ideology (or more simply, point of view), and the film techniques and forms of representation used”³.

Thus, the very concept of the video-lecture made by Sasha Frank and Boris Lyubimov is worth of high appreciation. Yet, the explicit educational vector of this project calls for special consideration and attention to details with respect to the image of Grigori Kozintsev created in the lecture and the interpretation of his film. Some important aspects of the video should be looked at through the prism of the aims and the consequences taking into consideration the hidden covert influence of ideological issues on the axiological priorities of the authors of the lecture.

The lecturers are retelling the story of how the film was conceived and created with sincere admiration, paying particular attention to praising the director and the actors as well as to some interesting or even amusing details of the shooting process. The verbal narrative is interspersed with several episodes from the film, mostly those that should intrigue the viewers and stimulate them to watch Kozintsev’s film. The semantic palette of the video-lecture is based on three interconnected messages that represent the answers to the following questions: why we should watch Kozintsev’s *Hamlet*; how it correlates with the text of Shakespeare’s tragedy; and last, but not the least, what makes this film a real masterpiece of the world screen Hamletiana. Obviously, the interpretation of Kozintsev’s film is worth looking at.

The first idea, which is distinctly articulated by the lectures, is that Kozintsev’s film is the best screen version of *Hamlet* to teach students about the plot of the tragedy with the help of the language of the cinema. But what are the main reasons? According to Boris Lyubimov, *Hamlet* by Kozintsev is clear and understandable (quite unlike Shakespeare’s text, I should add!), “no half-tones, no ambiguities”⁴. The lecturers emphasize that the film accurately reproduces all plot collisions, and consider the main achievement of the filmmakers to fully preserve the plot of Shakespeare’s play. They do not even mention the complicated existential problems raised by both genius thinkers, Shakespeare and Kozintsev. As it seems, this interpretation completely overlooks the conflict zones created by the complex interaction of various motives within the tragedy

³ Gibson R. Teaching Shakespeare. Cambridge, 2008. P. 200.

⁴ <https://www.culture.ru/movies/3082/gamlet-grigorii-kozincev-1964>.

and ignores all the nuances which made Kozintsev's version a vibrantly social reading. Just the plot!

The numerous successful directing decisions and interesting finds of Kozintsev and his cast, the set of impressive cinematic metaphors and acting as a powerful means of forming implicit meanings do not come into focus in this video-lecture. The commentary on the specificity of visualizing chronotope, which is surely worth speaking about, is replaced here by the funny story about the Elsinore Castle being made specifically for the film from metal containers for milk transport⁵.

The idea that Kozintsev's *Hamlet* is very close or even precise in reproducing its literary source is repeated several times in the video and evaluated as the main positive characteristic of this screen version. Although Sasha Frank reminds us about Kozintsev's book *Nash Sovremennik Viliam Shekspir (William Shakespeare, Our Contemporary)* the contemporaneity of the film is not being elucidated by her and her collector. Moreover, there are three remarks by Boris Lyubimov accentuating that the whole film deals only with medieval Denmark in which, as all of us know, something is rotten. Following this interpretation, one may start to think that Kozintsev's *Hamlet* had nothing to do with the life experience of the director himself and the tragic destiny of his generation. But that is not true. On the contrary, it is well-known that Kozintsev himself considered his *Hamlet* to be a direct response to contemporary Soviet reality⁶.

It is, indeed, evident that the lecturers carefully avoid even the slightest hints at the political implications or anti-totalitarian messages in Kozintsev's *Hamlet*. Such oblivion of the ideological issues inconvenient for any totalitarian regime is rather symptomatic. It

⁵ As Jack Jorgens the author of the work *Shakespeare on Film* concludes, "Kozintsev's Prince inhabits a crowded castle which has a history and is the center of a society rooted in nature – sky, stone, plains, and sea. The castle becomes, in effect, one of the *Dramatis Personae*" Jorgens J. *Shakespeare on Film*. Bloomington, 1977. P. 218.

⁶ Alexander Etkind writes: "After the success of *Hamlet* Kozintsev was invited to spend a year in England to make another film. The trip never happened but his widow remembers a revealing dialogue. Let's go to England, she said, at least we will spend a year in decent conditions. But Kozintsev responded that he would never have made such a *Hamlet* there in England. His wife rendered his explanation: 'Indeed, he could do it only here, because his *Hamlet* was a direct response to our life'. Etkind A. *Mourning the Soviet victims in a cosmopolitan way: Hamlet from Kozintse to Riazanov. Studies in Russian and Soviet Cinema*. 2011. Vol. 5. Num. 3. P. 394-395.

demonstrates or at least points to the similarity of the atmosphere in contemporary Russian society under Putin's rule with the one under Stalin's regime. The interpretation of Kozintsev's *Hamlet* without regard to the Thaw context and free from anti-totalitarian implications looks superficial and even dangerous, especially today when authoritarian tendencies are increasing rapidly in Russia and some other countries.

In this context, the responsibility of the intellectual elite and the role of culture as the powerful source of axiologic senses should be adequately understood and clearly articulated. The prophetic mission of art must not be either ignored or underestimated. The masterpieces of literature and their inter-semiotic projections including screen versions appeal to our minds and hearts to warn mankind against catastrophic mistakes. In the case of the video-lecture created by the two Russian intellectuals, we face either superficial interpretation of the remarkable film which has become classics of the world cinema or conscious simplification of its senses caused by the general ideological climate in their country today.

These considerations made me return to the topic I had analyzed in one of my previous articles⁷. to clear up some points that seem to be of great importance today. So, this paper aims at identifying the anti-totalitarian implications in Kozintsev's *Hamlet* as a vivid manifestation of the axiological potential of Shakespeare's greatest tragedy.

1. Hamlet discourse as a spider web of ambiguous meanings and polar codes

Shakespeare's *Hamlet* has always been in the center of the conflict of interpretations as one of the most enigmatic figures in world literature⁸. Numerous critics in the 19th century followed Goethe's famous interpretation proclaimed by his character Wilhelm Meister: "A lovely, pure, noble, and most moral nature, without the strength of nerve which forms a hero, sinks beneath a burden which it cannot bear, and must not cast away. ... Impossibilities have been required of him; not in themselves impossibilities, but such for him. He winds, and turns, and

⁷ Torkut N. 'Hamlet is not a mirror, but a mine-detector': Kozintsev's Film at the Crossroads of Polar Interpretations. *Romanian Shakespeare journal* / editor-in-chief Dr. George Volceanov. Bucharest. 2014. Vol. I, Is. 1. P. 88–112.

⁸ See: Торкут Н. М. Трагічне крещендо Шекспірової музи. *Шекспір В. Трагедії*. Харків, 2004. С. 28–32.

torments himself; he advances and recoils, is ever put in mind, ever puts himself in mind; at last, does all but losing his purpose from his thoughts; yet still without recovering his peace of mind”⁹. Others, such as William Hazlitt, Ralf Waldo Emerson or Matthew Arnold, echoed the interpretation of Hamlet’s nature suggested by Samuel Taylor Coleridge. He viewed Shakespeare’s protagonist as “a man living in meditation, called upon to act by every motive humane and divine, but the great purpose of life defeated by continually resolving to do, yet doing nothing but resolve”¹⁰.

At the same time there appeared and strengthened a transnational tendency of criticizing Hamlet as a personification of the specific life attitude characterized as ‘an ennui’ or even ‘nausea’ towards the world. Such an attitude to Shakespeare’s hero was evident in the works by Jules Laforgue and some other French symbolists. A famous Russian writer Ivan Turgenev called Hamlet ‘the superfluous man’ and manifested his understanding of the Prince’s character in several works (*A Hamlet of Shchigrov District, Hamlet and Don Quixote, Sketches from a Hunter’s Album*). In Russian literature and social life of 1860-1880, the name of Hamlet turned into a common noun with a strong political connotation. It meant a specific social-psychological type of a totally frustrated man which had been formed in the political context of Tsarist Russia and described in many literary works (Alexander Herzen, Apollon Grigoryev, Ivan Turgenev, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Ivan Goncharov, Anton Chekhov, Vsevolod Garshin) and journalism (Nikolay Mikhailovsky, Pyotr Jakubovich).

In Shakespeare scholarship of the 20th century, Hamlet was identified with a pathological personality incapable of action¹¹ or ‘the frustrated mind’¹². A similar view was expressed by H. B. Charlton who gave the following explanation of Hamlet’s character: “His supreme gift

⁹ Quoted in *Perspectives on Hamlet*. Ed. by W. G. Horzberger and P. B. Waldeck. London, 1975. P. 103.

¹⁰ Coleridge S. T. *Lectures 1808-1819: On Literature*. In 2 vols. / ed. R. A. Foakes. Princeton, 1987. Vol. 1. P. 390.

¹¹ See Eliot T. S. *Hamlet and His Problems* / T. S. Eliot. *T. S. Eliot. Selected Essays, 1917-1932*. London, 1932. P. 121–126; Wilson J. *What Happens in Hamlet*. New York, 1935. P. 52–60; Campbell L. B. *Shakespeare’s Tragic Heroes: slaves of passion*. New York, 1952. P. 121–128. This concept is consonant with famous words of German Romantic poet Ferdinand Freiligrath proclaimed Hamlet as ‘poor old dreamer’ whose ‘boldest acts is only thinking’ (cited in *Hamlet. A New Variorum Edition of Shakespeare* in 2 vols. / edited H. H. Furness. New York, 1963. Vol. 2. P. 376–378.)

¹² Granville-Barker H. *Prefaces to Shakespeare*. Princeton. 1946. P. 250.

for philosophic thought allows him to know the universe better than the little world of which he is bodily a part. ... his mind has distorted for him the particular objects of his actual environment"¹³. G. Wilson Knight considered Shakespeare's protagonist to be 'a diseased soul' who spreads destruction in the world which otherwise could be healthy and harmonic¹⁴. R. Battenhouse expressed the idea about Hamlet as a perverse imitation of Christ: "As a 'scourge' Hamlet imitates inversely Christ's role as a suffering servant"¹⁵.

At the same time, in literary criticism and fiction there appeared antipodal interpretations aiming at moral rehabilitation of Hamlet. A lot of scholars interpreted him as a tragic character and highly appreciated his morality and inner force of his personality. G. R. Elliott, I. Ribner and some other Shakespeareans proclaimed him to be a true minister of God¹⁶. P. Cruttwell compared the prince pulled in a game of higher powers contrary to his will with a soldier during the war¹⁷. G.K. Hunter¹⁸ and B.N.S. Gooch¹⁹ called him a 'hero' and convincingly proved their high appreciation of his courage and virtues. Even the titles of some articles vividly express the position of their authors. Very indicative in this regard are the works *The Double Dichotomy and Paradox of Virtue in Hamlet* by D. G. Campbell²⁰ and *Art of Judgement, Art of Compassion: The Two Arts of Hamlet* by M. Hunt²¹.

The image of the prince of Denmark has become the inexhaustible source of inspiration for several generations of men of letters and artists.

¹³ Charlton H. B. *Shakespearean Tragedy*. Cambridge, 1952. P. 102–103.

¹⁴ Knight G. Wilson. *The Wheel of Fire. Interpretations of Shakespearean Tragedy with Three New Essays*. London, 1949. P. 35–36.

¹⁵ Battenhouse R. *Shakespeare's Christian dimension : An Anthology of Commentary*. Bloomington, 1994. P. 402.

¹⁶ Elliott G. R. *Scourge and Minister: A Study of Hamlet as Tragedy of Revengfulness and Justice*. Durham, 1951. xxxvi + 208 p.; Ribner I. *Patterns in Shakespearean Tragedy*. London, 1969. 205 p. P. 66-67.

¹⁷ Cruttwell P. *The Morality of Hamlet*. *Stratford-upon-Avon Studies*. Stratford-upon-Avon, 1963. No. 5 Hamlet. P. 128.

¹⁸ Hunter G. K. *The Heroism of Hamlet*. *Stratford-upon-Avon Studies*. Stratford-upon-Avon, 1963. No. 5 Hamlet. P.

¹⁹ Gooch B. N. S. *Hamlet as Hero: The Necessity of Virtue*. *Hamlet Studies*. 2001. Vol. 23. P. 50–58.

²⁰ Campbell D. G. *The Double Dichotomy and Paradox of Virtue in Hamlet*. *Hamlet Studies*. 2001. Vol. 23. P. 13–49.

²¹ Hunt M. *Art of Judgement, Art of Compassion: The Two Arts of Hamlet*. *Essays in Literature*. 1991. Vol. 18. P. 3–20.

Among those who created their works as a result of an inner dialogue with the author of the great tragedy and Hamlet's numerous apologists and/or critics, there are a lot of talented prose writers such as James Joyce and Boris Pasternak²², Iris Murdoch²³ and John Updike²⁴, David Wroblewski and Matt Haig²⁵. The incomparable poetic texts with an evident or implicit reference to *Hamlet* were written by Lesya Ukrainka²⁶, Aleksandr Blok, Anna Akhmatova, Marina Tsvetaeva, Thomas Eliot, Maksym Ryl'sky²⁷, Mykola Bazhan²⁸, Constantine Cavafy, Vasyl' Stus²⁹,

²² About Hamlet's reception in Pasternak's novel *Doctor Zhivago* see: Маринчак В. Феномен Гамлета в інтенційності Пастернака: спрямованість, осягнення, ціннісний синтез. *Ренесансні студії*. Запоріжжя, 2011. Вип. 16–17. С. 181–216; Быков Д. Борис Пастернак. Москва. 2007. С. 690.

²³ See: Лазаренко Д. Гамлетівські алюзії в романі А. Мердок «Чорний принц». *Ренесансні студії*. Запоріжжя, 2009. Вип. 12-13. С. 232–249.

²⁴ See: Лазаренко Д. М. «Гертруда і Клавдій» Дж. Апдайка: від гри з образами до гри смислами. *Літературознавчі студії*. Київ, 2009. Вип. 24. С. 239–243; Торкут Н., Лазаренко Д. «Гертруда і Клавдій» Дж. Апдайка як текстоцентрична літературна проекція «Гамлета» В. Шекспіра. *Ренесансні студії*. Запоріжжя, 2010. Вип. 14–15. С. 234–254; Лазаренко Д. М. Образ замка Ельсінор в романі Дж. Апдайка «Гертруда і Клавдій». *Актуальні проблеми слов'янської філології. Серія: Лінгвістика і літературознавство: міжвуз. зб. наук. ст. / відп. ред. В. А. Зарва. Бердянськ, 2010. Вип. XXIII. Ч. IV. С. 47–55.*

²⁵ These texts have been thoroughly analyzed through the prism of Hamlet's intertext by Darya Lasarenko, see: Лазаренко Д. М. «Гамлет» В. Шекспіра як метатекст пізнього Ренесансу та його літературні проекції: дис. ... канд. філол. наук: 10.01.04. Київ, 2010. 221 с.; Лазаренко Д. М. Специфіка функціонування гамлетівського сюжету в культурному просторі сучасного соціуму. *Літературознавчі студії*. Київ, 2009. Вип. 23. Ч. 1. С. 257–261; Лазаренко Д. Метатекстуальний потенціал Шекспірового «Гамлета» і особливості його реалізації. *Ренесансні студії*. Запоріжжя, 2011. Вип. 16–17. С. 100–124.

²⁶ See: Makaryk I. R. Ophelia as a Poet: Lesya Ukrainka and the Woman as Artist. *Canadian Review of Comparative Literature*. 1993. V. 20. 3/4 (September – December). P. 337–354; Одарченко П. Леся Українка та Шекспір. *Славутич Яр. Українська шекспіріяна на Заході. Том 2*. Едмонтон, 1990. С. 5–22; Черняк Ю. І. Специфіка актуалізації ціннісної семантики «Гамлета» В. Шекспіра в українському шекспірівському дискурсі: дис. ... канд. філол. наук: 10.01.05. Київ, 2011. С. 164.

²⁷ About allusions and reminiscences from Shakespeare's *Hamlet* in the texts of these poets, see: Черняк Ю. І. Специфіка актуалізації ціннісної семантики «Гамлета» В. Шекспіра в українському шекспірівському дискурсі: дис. ... канд. філол. наук: 10.01.05. Київ, 2011. С. 164–167.

²⁸ Ibid. С. 167–171.

²⁹ See: Черняк Ю. Гамлетівська інтертекстуальність у поемі В. Стуса «Ця п'єса почалася вже давно». *Ренесансні студії*. Запоріжжя, 2013. Вип. 20–21. С. 199–210; Маринчак В. Гамлетизм поетичної інтенціональності В. Стуса: від самовтрати до самовигнання. *Ренесансні студії*. Запоріжжя, 2016. Вип. 25–26. С. 107–118.

Vladimir Vysotskiy, Oksana Zabuzhko³⁰, and many others³¹. Tom Stoppard and Boris Akunin made rather successful attempts of polemic re-thinking of *Hamlet* the text as well as Hamlet the prince in their plays³².

It is *Hamlet* that owns the palm of primacy in cinematic Shakespeareana. Today there are more than 50 screen adaptations of *Hamlet* and most of them are worth watching. Since *Le Duel d'Hamlet* directed by Clément Maurice hit the screens in 1900³³ the possibilities and techniques of cinematography, as well as artistic standards, have changed a lot. So, it is natural that the screen history of *Hamlet* is extremely rich in bold experiments, unexpected directing decisions, and bright stars. The genre paradigm of film *Hamlets* is also diverse. It includes different established film genres, parodies, animated abridgments³⁴, films adapted from the successful theatre performances³⁵, theatrical performances within films.

Harry Keyishan, the author of profound analytical review "Shakespeare and the movie genre: the case of *Hamlet*", concludes that four the most renown film *Hamlets* represent various cinematic traditions: *film noir* (Laurence Olivier's *Hamlet*, 1948), action adventure movie (Franko Zeffirelli's *Hamlet*, 1994 (starring Mel Gibson, an icon of 'revenge entertainment')), the cinematic model of the epic (Kenneth

³⁰ See: Лебединцева Н. Офелія як контекст: коло «вічного вигнання» у поетичній інтерпретації О. Забужко. *Ренесансні студії*. Запоріжжя, 2016. Вип. 25–26. С. 119–132.

³¹ See: Лазаренко Д. М. «Гамлет» В. Шекспіра як метатекст пізнього Ренесансу та його літературні проєкції : дис. ... канд. філол. наук : 10.01.04. Київ, 2010. 221 с.; Черняк Ю. І. Специфіка актуалізації ціннісної семантики «Гамлета» В. Шекспіра в українському шекспірівському дискурсі : дис. ... канд. філол. наук : 10.01.05. Київ, 2011. 225 с; Torkut N, Cherniak Y. Ukrainian Hamlet and «hamletizing» Ukraine: «Will you play upon this pipe?» *Ренесансні студії*. Запоріжжя, 2014. Вип. 22. С. 98–115; Grob Th. 'One Cannot act Hamlet, One Must be Hamlet': The Acculturation of Hamlet in Russia. Shakespeare and Space. *Theatrical Explorations of the Spatial Paradigm* / Edited by I. Habermann and M. Witen. London, 2016. P. 191–227.

³² See: Лазаренко Д. М. «Гамлет» В. Шекспіра як метатекст пізнього Ренесансу та його літературні проєкції. С. 139–143. .

³³ French film with Sarah Bernhardt playing Hamlet was two-minutes in length.

³⁴ For instance, S4C's *Shakespeare: The Animated Tales* by Natalia Orlova.

³⁵ Such as Royal Shakespeare Company production directed by Greg Doran which was produced for BBC in 2010 or National Theatre Live's film (2015) with Benedict Cumberbatch playing the main role.

Branagh's *Hamlet*, 1996) and metageneric 'media-savvy' (Michael Almereyda's *Hamlet*, 2000)³⁶.

One of the most successful film adaptations of *Hamlet* was made by Grigori Kozintsev in 1964. The triumphal movie premiere caused a stir. Since then, this film has always been in the focus of multiple discussions in the circles of cinema critics, literary scholars, political experts, and even psychologists. As Thomas Grob insightfully points out, "Kozintsev's lavish film transported Hamlet into the post-Stalinist era"³⁷. The interpretation of Hamlet's character in the film is unique, as it incorporates both a deep understanding of Shakespeare's tragedy and a profound analysis of the real tragedy of life under a totalitarian regime.

2. Grigori Kozintsev's *Hamlet*: the story of the movie and its resonance in culture and scholarship

In the Soviet Union, *Hamlet's* status as a universally recognized and generally acknowledged masterpiece made it impossible either to ignore this work of literature or to transform its semantics *in corpore*. So, the totalitarian discourse scrutinized the wide spectrum of its semantic valences trying to single out those of them which could be used for carrying out relevant ideological or aesthetic objectives. At the same time, in the flood of officially approved visions of Shakespeare's tragedy³⁸ there existed a thought-provoking stream of contrary interpretations. The life-giving energy of this stream was radiated by gifted translators (into Russian – Michail Lozinsky, Boris Pasternak, into Ukrainian – Yuri Klen, Leonid Hrebinka, Mikhaylo Rudnytsky, Grigori Kochur, into Belorussian – Yuri Havruk, into Georgian – Konstantin Gamsakhurdia), as well as literary scholars (Michail Morozov, Alexander Anikst, Leonid Pinsky, Oleksandr Biletsky, Dmytro Zatonky, Dmytro Nalyvaiko) and writers who exploited

³⁶ Keyishian H. Shakespeare and the movie genre: the case of *Hamlet*, The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare on Film / ed. by R. Jackson. New York, 2007. P. 75–83.

³⁷ Grob Th. 'One Cannot act Hamlet, One Must be Hamlet': The Acculturation of Hamlet in Russia. Shakespeare and Space. *Theatrical Explorations of the Spatial Paradigm* / Edited by I. Habermann and M. Witen. London, 2016. P. 219.

³⁸ This "progressive" trend of interpreting Hamlet as a strong personality putting the imperatives of socially-oriented activity into practice is represented by the productions of *Hamlet* in the Second Moscow Art Theatre in 1924, 1925, in the Moscow Vakhtangov Theatre, 1932, in Moscow Mayakovsky Theatre, 1954, in Kharkiv Shevchenko Theatre, 1956.

intertextuality rooted in Shakespeare's text (Alexander Blok, Maksym Ryl'sky, Boris Pasternak, Anna Akhmatova, Marina Tsvetaeva, Eugen Pluzhnyk, Mykola Zerov, Leonid Pervomaiskiy, Zynoviy Krassivskiy, Vasyl' Stus, Vladimir Vysotskiy, and others).

Being involved in the process of ideological molding, the Soviet theatre directors found themselves in a rather dangerous position. They had to choose between the two axiological alternatives: to be responsive to the demands of the authorities, or to be true to Shakespeare. The Bard's iconic status often dictates directors the necessity to stay as close to the original as possible. Still, the original itself is so obscure and enigmatic that staying close to it may mean rambling off in any direction or just as well going round in a circle.

The issue of the appropriateness of the adaptation has been ascertained as most irrelevant as, in the words of V. Roloff, "the director has the opportunity to shine in the creativity of the transformation, the tension, and discrepancy between text and image, rather than the proximity to the literary source"³⁹. In this respect, Grigori Kozintsev's screen version of *Hamlet* can be called 'a touchstone'. This metaphor is open to two interpretations at once. The film is certainly a touchstone, a sample, and a standard when dealing with the perfect artistic balance between recreation, interpretation, and transformation. As this screen adaptation does not just mirror the text, but picks up one of the play's multiple masks and turns it into a living face of a contemporary. This aspect determines the second meaning of the metaphor – Kozintsev's *Hamlet* is a certain 'touchstone of the debate' of the interpretations, the first swallow announcing a brand new kind of cinematographic adaptations, which is, on the one hand, not just a copy or a recital, and, on the other hand, not an 'illegitimate child' having nothing to do with the source text, but an independent work of art, rightfully called Kozintsev's *Hamlet*. This film is an integral part of Hamletian discourse, as it is without a doubt one of the most successful screen versions of Shakespeare's tragedy, at the same time it is an insightful diagnosis of the pathologic state of the Soviet intelligentsia.

³⁹ Roloff V. Film und Literatur. *Theorie und Praxis der intermedialen Analyse am Beispiel von Bunuel, Truffaut, Godar und Antonioni in Volker Roloff / Zima P. V.* (ed.). Darmstadt, 1995. P. 269–309.

The production of Kozintsev's film was launched in 1963, and the actual release took place in 1964. Such dates were not occasional and there were at least three major factors that prompted the appearance of the first Soviet *Hamlet* movie. The first one was determined by ideological shift in official attitude towards the Bard's tragedy, which took place in 1953. The death of Joseph Stalin made 'rehabilitation' of the very status of this Shakespeare's tragedy, that had a reputation of undesirable for the Soviet society, possible and even required.

The role of Joseph Stalin's attitude in the theatrical destiny of *Hamlet* in the Soviet Union has been the point of debates for some decades. As Irene R. Makaryk, an expert in Soviet Shakespeare, argues, "*Hamlet* in particular attracted scorn in official discourse and was tacitly banned up until Stalin's death in 1953"⁴⁰. This statement has recently been challenged by Michelle Assay during the Conference in Elsinore. The scholar makes an attempt to prove that during Stalin's lifetime the productions of this tragedy were not prohibited as Sergey Radlov undertook one in his studio in Leningrad (1938) and there were two more productions of *Hamlet* in Voronezh and Vitebsk. Ronan Paterson whose opinion is consonant with Michelle Assay's position states that "*Hamlet* was never explicitly banned"⁴¹. To my mind, there is no real controversy between these statements. Although *Hamlet* was never formally banned by the Soviet authorities (no documentary rulings were made), under Stalin it was considered an extremely dangerous text that could cost lives for those who dared to deal with it. It was a real tactic of 'text banishment' or 'text exile' which proved to have been no less influential than official directives of the Soviet power. Even an oral negative evaluation of a literary work or its author by 'Comrade Stalin' was enough to exclude it from the Soviet cultural environment. In a totalitarian society, the leader's thought always triggers self-censorship mechanisms that operate no less effectively than laws and directives.

There is an indisputable argument in favor of this position. It is an impressive episode with a prominent Soviet actor Boris Livanov who had

⁴⁰ Makaryk I. R. *Wartime Hamlet. Shakespeare in the Worlds of Communism and Socialism*. ed. by Makaryk I. and Price J. Toronto, 2006. P. 119–135.

⁴¹ Paterson R. *Send in the Clowns. Shakespeare on the Soviet Screen. Shakespeare in Between* / Edited by Jana B. Wild. Bratislava, 2018. P. 206.

to refuse to play Hamlet just because of such an informal ban⁴². One of his friends remembered that during their conversation, “Boris Nikolaevich suddenly gets distracted from the topic, without a shadow of a smile on his face says: ‘Shakespeare wrote the anti-Soviet play *Hamlet*, and Comrade Stalin at a reception of artists of the Moscow Art Theater said: ‘I do not advise you to stage this production’. And I abandoned the role”⁴³.

Russian scholar N. Chushkin writes: “It is enough to recall that an offhand remark by Stalin in the spring of 1941 questioning the performance of *Hamlet* at that time by the Moscow Arts Theatre was sufficient to end rehearsals and to postpone the performance indefinitely. In the following years, the very idea of showing on the stage a thoughtful, reflective hero who took nothing on faith, who scrutinized intently the life around him in an effort to discover for himself, without outside ‘prompting’, the reasons for its defects, separating truth from falsehood, the very idea seemed almost ‘criminal’”⁴⁴.

During the Thaw when the intensification of intellectual activity of Soviet intelligentsia replaced a long period of total spiritual oppression and mighty political dictatorship, the interest in *Hamlet* rapidly grew and brought to life a set of critical and theatrical interpretations. As Mark Sokolyansky observes, “in Soviet Shakespeare criticism of the Thaw the centrality of *Hamlet* was undeniable. In the twilight of that era and on the eve of Shakespeare’s 400th anniversary, there appeared many essays on the play, a book by Israel Vertsman, chapters in the monographs of Alexander Anikst, Alexander Smirnov and other scholars; in

⁴² Some controversial details about the famous conversation between Boris Levanon and Stalin one can see in Сталин и Шекспир. URL : <https://sergeyvetkov.livejournal.com/809828.html> and Пастернак Б. Л. Полн. собр. соч. : в 11 т. Москва, 2005. Т. XI. С. 574. Some convincing facts about the political reasons which caused abandoning the production of Hamlet in the Moscow Art Theater in February, 1945 (when the work over the performance had been almost completed) are mentioned by Vasily Livanov’s memoirs about his father. See: Ливанов В. Невыдуманный Борис Пастернак. Воспоминания и впечатления. Москва, 2002. С. 30–31.

⁴³ Quoted by Шварц А. Думая о Булгакове. URL : <https://magazines.gorky.media/slovo/2008/57/dumaya-o-bulgakove.html>.

⁴⁴ Чушкин Н. Н. Гамлет – Качалов. Москва, 1966. С. 309.

Shakespearean Survey of 1961/1964 a special set of essays on *Hamlet* took a central position⁴⁵.

It should be noted that Kozintsev successfully staged *Hamlet* at the Pushkin Theatre in 1954 and this concept of the Bard's play that faced quite an ambivalent reception by Soviet Shakespeare scholarship stipulated his further considerations on the tragedy. In general, it is quite possible to say that at the beginning of the 1960s Kozintsev, at last, got all the necessary opportunities to express his life-long ponderance on *Hamlet*. Being a well-known Soviet film-director, he was lucky enough to find himself in the situation when his artistic ambitions and cherished dreams coincided with the social inquiries of the day. Sergey Yutkevich shot *Othello* that used to be a stage-favorite in the USSR during the previous decades, and when *Hamlet* turned out to be the key play in the Soviet Shakespeareana, there arose the necessity to make a screen version of this very tragedy as well. Kozintsev whose previous professional experience included both rather successful staging of *Hamlet* and extremely praised filming career appeared to be the best candidate for such a mission.

Kozintsev himself regarded the possibility to shoot *Hamlet* as a unique chance to reach two goals simultaneously: to express his artistic vision of Shakespeare's great tragedy and involve an extremely wide audience of cinema-goers into the dialogue with the Bard. It can be considered as the second factor which enabled the appearance of the Soviet *Hamlet* by Kozintsev in 1964. . The choice of *Hamlet* as a lifetime project meant to most fully state and express the director's artistic and social position was not occasional. As Mark Sokolyansky points out, "Kozintsev's road to his two Shakespeare films⁴⁶ was long and not very easy. It passed through three channels, the first of which was the theatre – the director's earliest passion. As early as 1923 the young Kozintsev was planning to perform *Hamlet* as a pantomime in the 'Factory of the Eccentric Actor' (FEKS), the experimental group he created with Leonid Trauberg and Sergei Yutkevich, but this plan was not realized. Seventeen years later, already a well-known film director, he returned to Shakespeare on stage. ... The most important event in the history of Kozintsev's interpretations of Shakespeare was his *Hamlet* in the Pushkin

⁴⁵ Sokolyansky M. *Hamlet in the period of the Thaw*. *Hamlet East-West* / ed. by Marta Gibinska and Jerzy Limon. Gdansk, 1998, P. 118–119.

⁴⁶ In 1971 the film-director released his film *King Lear*.

Theatre in 1954. ... The second channel of Kozintsev's approach to Shakespeare was literary criticism. He published several critical essays on Shakespeare and a seminal book, whose Russian title is *Nash Sovremennik Viliam Shekspir – 'Our contemporary William Shakespeare'*⁴⁷. ... Most important, though not as remarkable in terms of quantity, was the third channel of Kozintsev's Shakespearean interpretation, the cinema"⁴⁸.

Alexander Kozintsev, the son of the artist, recalls that his father "considered that a director was shooting the same, his 'own', film for all his life. The same fixed image was descending from one his movie to another: a whipped-up haunted person is surrounded by heehawing and whooping crowd; he is beaten, poured over with slops"⁴⁹. It's obvious that the director chose to chant not 'the wide masses' but singles who oppose themselves to injustice and wickedness of the society. And whom could Kozintsev choose but *Hamlet* – an individualist, and a crowd-skeptic– to be the most convincing spokesperson for the director and the epoch he lived in? It was also the age that dictated the choice of the hero – in times of totalitarianism when double-coded language was the only means to express your ideas and survive – it was far safer to appeal to world classics rather than to try and interpret the contemporaneity. Online *Encyclopedia of Native Cinema* emphasizes that "Kozintsev's reference to great literary works was dictated by the interest in eternal philosophic questions of humanity and it was risky, or even impossible, to solve them with the help of contemporary material. 'Personality versus Crowd' was the topic which Kozintsev was always interested in"⁵⁰.

The third factor, which stipulated the production of this film, was closely connected with the typical USSR cultural practices. The commonly known fact is that Soviet authorities were fond of different kinds of jubilees – those of Communist leaders, world-famous writers,

⁴⁷ The English translation of this book, published in 1966, is known as *Shakespeare, Time and Conscience*. Such renaming was deliberate to avoid confusion with the recently-published work *Shakespeare our Contemporary* by Jan Kott.

⁴⁸ Sokolyansky M. Grigori Kozintsev's *Hamlet and King Lear*. The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare on Film / Ed. by Russel Jackson. Cambridge. 2007. P. 203-204.

⁴⁹ Козинцев А. В очах души. Г. Козинцев. *Время трагедий*. Москва, 2004. С. 8.

⁵⁰ Экранизации в отечественном кино. *Энциклопедия отечественного кино* / под редакцией Любви Аркус. URL : http://www.russiancinema.ru/index.php?dept_id=15&e_dept_id=6&text_element_id=45.

composers, painters and the like. Certainly, ‘the most progressive country of the world’ could not miss the quatercentenary anniversary of the Bard – it was celebrated here through many different events and projects including organizing scientific conferences, publishing papers, editing and re-editing various translations of Shakespeare’s texts into the languages of Soviet republics, printing different sorts of collectibles, etc. In this context, the appearance of a Soviet Shakespeare movie, especially of a version of one of his ‘great tragedies’ was extremely desirable. But one of the crucial virtues of Kozintsev’s film was its unique capability to break the limitations of an anniversary event. It triggered both an inexhaustible interest of the audience and a continuous process of disputation concerning the director’s approach, the main message the film conveys and the axiological essence of the protagonist.

In general, Kozintsev’s film met a warm reception of spectators and was highly approved by the authorities. The work of the film-director and acting by Innokentiy Smoktunovskiy (Hamlet) were rewarded with the highest and the most prestigious Soviet award – Lenin Premium. At the same time, this version was highly appreciated by criticism not only in the USSR but also abroad. The film-review discourse of May 1964 was overloaded with the profusion of compliments towards ‘Russian Hamlet’. *Glasgow Gerald* acknowledged mighty and powerful Kozintsev’s work as the best achievement of the year of Shakespeare’s jubilee⁵¹. *Financial Times* wrote that the film by Kozintsev was surely the cleverest and, of course, the most perfect interpretation of Shakespeare on the screen. It was obvious that there is no Hamlet who can fully satisfy everyone. Albeit Kozintsev’s *Hamlet* was much closer to this perfection than all the previous variants on screen and stage.⁵² An estimated expert in this area *Films and filming* proclaimed magnificent Kozintsev’s film “the most remarkable screen-version of Hamlet comparing to which Olivier’s movie seems to be theatrical and static”⁵³. The outstanding film-director Peter Brook was so much delighted with the work by his Soviet colleague that called it the best Shakespeare film he had ever seen⁵⁴.

⁵¹ Добин Е. Гамлет – фильм Козинцева. Ленинград – Москва, 1967. С. 129–130.

⁵² Ibid. С. 130.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Sokolyansky M. Hamlet in the period of the Thaw. P. 122.

Kozintsev's affection for *Hamlet*, excellent cast (Innokentiy Smoktunovskiy (Hamlet), Mikhail Nezvanov (Claudius), Elza Radzina (Gertrude), Yuri Tolubeev (Polonius), Anastasia Vertinskaya (Ophelia)), highly professional film crew, perfectly fitting music by Shostakovich, beautiful scenery – all these factors secured the success of the film – it received a massive international recognition – the Golden Lion of Venice film festival, BAFTA award, different prizes of several well-known film festivals.

But the general triumph of the Soviet picture was accompanied by the heated polemics considering the director's message inherently bound with his interpreting of Hamlet's quintessence. One of the opinions shared by both Soviet and foreign critics was that Hamlet of Smoktunovskiy and Kozintsev was unusually active. A reviewer from *Esquire* even compared Soviet Hamlet to Richard Burton: "This is a Hamlet who rides and duels a lot more than he reflects, – Smoktunovskiy looks a little like Burton and plays the part in the Burton style, as a vigorous type much more at home with horses and women than with ideas"⁵⁵. Soviet reviewers also pointed out unconventional interpretation of Hamlet's image though alongside emphasized the democratic character of this very Prince of Denmark – this traditionally complex character can now be understood by everyone: "This Hamlet doesn't require specific knowledge in Shakespeare studies and volumes of critical guides – he is comprehensible to any spectator. This is a 'generally accessible' Hamlet in the noblest meaning of this phrase ... This is that very Hamlet who already knows ... He knows what is good and what is evil, and he also knows that evil is cunning and elusive"⁵⁶.

Another review of this category attributes to Hamlet such a previously inconceivable quality as decisiveness: "the Prince belongs to those people who are not afraid of taking responsibility for everything which is happening around them ... He dies as a soldier and Fortinbras for a reason orders to give to dead Hamlet all the honors, to bury him as a hero..."⁵⁷ Efim Dobbin even proclaimed Kozintsev, the artist nurtured by the Great Revolution, to be the restorer of Hamlet's true nature, based on eager enthusiasm and intense perseverance: "Weak Hamlet

⁵⁵ Brode D. Shakespeare in the Movies. From the Silent Era to Shakespeare in Love. Oxford, 2000. P. 128.

⁵⁶ Туровская М. Гамлет и мы. *Новый мир*. 1964. № 9. С. 227.

⁵⁷ Погожева Л. Гамлет. *Искусство кино*. 1965. № 3, С. 143.

was a certain barometer of social relations and attitudes. He was the sign of the challenges of the century, extreme difficulties on the way to the liberation of humanity. Kozintsev – the artist who was raised by the great revolution – possessed the historic vision necessary to free Hamlet from temporal additions returning him to the genuine Shakespearean scale”⁵⁸.

The second opinion as for axiological dominant of Kozintsev’s Hamlet played by Innokentiy Smoktunovskiy was quite different, or even opposite. A friend of the film-director, Sergey Utkevich, who himself had great success in making films, insisted on the fact that the image of the protagonist should be interpreted only in the context of Kozintsev’s whole conception. He emphasized that the film-creator underwent the deep influence of Russian classics, Dostoevskiy, Blok and Pasternak in particular. “Smoktunovskiy’s Hamlet is neither a philosopher, nor a warrior, nor an avenger, but a poet. This fact explains his constant striving to nature, to the intercourse with it, and his reflection is more lyrical than dramatic”⁵⁹.

Though the majority of critical opinions, which appeared just after the premiere of the film, agreed in acknowledging a principal difference of this new Hamlet from the gallery of ‘weeping, effeminate Hamlets’, there existed a set of various views on this essential difference. Some scholars perceived the source of Hamlet’s activeness to be in his sincere desire to overcome the social evil at Elsinore. This very point was dominating in the numerous letters of film admirers to Kozintsev which were published as a special chapter of his book *Nash Sovremennik Viliam Shekspir*. Others considered the prince of Denmark to be an embodiment of moral force. This idea was brilliantly expressed by Maya Turovskaya in her article *Gamlet i my* (“*Hamlet and we*”): “Is he a doughty hero – the image which we sometimes for no reason attribute to the prince of Denmark? Certainly not, otherwise, we would have to admit that the actor has shifted away from Shakespeare on that illicit distance where notorious ‘*strong*’ Hamlets, paying no attention to the time that was out of joint, turned into campaigners for the throne. However, non-romantic Hamlet of Smoktunovskiy reveals moral strength which allows keeping courage and the presence of mind on the dangerous edge of

⁵⁸ Добин Е. Гамлет – фильм Козинцева. С. 22.

⁵⁹ Юткевич С. О трех «Гамлетах», одной Офелии, двух клоунах и призраке. *Шекспир и кино*. Москва, 1973. С. 58.

Claudius's world – specific heroism of this specific character, which was created by the playwright three and a half centuries ago and has not lost its relevance. When *Hamlet* was released, some people were disappointed: they thought that Kozintsev's production did not give any innovative solution of 'Hamlet's problem'. On the contrary, others found that the film solved all the problems of the tragedy once and forever – this is a very ardent compliment not likely to flatter the artist and the scholar who knows the secret of Shakespeare's immortality"⁶⁰.

Although more than half a century passed after the film release, it still catches the attention of the audience and criticism inspiring the new waves of polemics⁶¹. Boika Sokolova remarks, "Kozintsev blended the visionary Russian hero and the Soviet fighter against social evil into something uniquely his own and of his own time, a synthesis that has given us the masterpiece we have"⁶². Mark Sokolyansky considers Hamlet in Kozintsev's film as "not only the centre of the whole action but also its leader. The hero's nervousness was played without any affectation, shown in nuances, but it made clear the intensity and scale of his inner shock..."⁶³ The scholar treats this kind of leadership as a moral phenomenon: being 'a keen philosopher'⁶⁴, the Prince personifies 'an unsleeping conscience'⁶⁵. Mark Sokolyansky quotes the words of a British critic Roger Manvell who wrote: "Kozintsev portrayed the tragedy of a whole society where real justice was impossible"⁶⁶. One can observe that the tendency of analyzing this screen-version in the axiological paradigm becomes more and more popular among the critics of the XXI century. Alexander Etkind sees in Kozintsev's *Hamlet* "not only an allegorical protest against a criminal state but also a play of mourning for its victims"⁶⁷.

⁶⁰ Туровская М. Гамлет и мы. С. 230.

⁶¹ See, for instance, Moore T. A. C. Kozintsev's Shakespeare Films: Russian Political Protest in Hamlet and King Lear. Jefferson, 2012. 202 p.; Hudgens M. Th. The Shakespeare Films of Grigori Kozintsev. Cambridge, 2017. xi+146 p.

⁶² Sokolova B. Between Religion and Ideology: Some Russian Hamlets of the Twentieth Century. *Shakespeare Survey*. 2001. Iss. 54.: Shakespeare and Religions. P. 151.

⁶³ Sokolyansky M. Grigori Kozintsev's Hamlet and King Lear. P. 207.

⁶⁴ Ibid. C. 210.

⁶⁵ Ibid. C. 207.

⁶⁶ Ibid. C. 208.

⁶⁷ Etkind A. Mourning the Soviet victims in a cosmopolitan way: Hamlet from Kozintse to Riazanov. P. 396.

The next point of an on-going discussion about Kozintsev's movie deals with the religious position of the film-director. Boika Sokolova insists that Soviet artist suppressed religious references of the Bard's tragedy and diminished the importance of Hamlet's appeals to God. The Ghost's presence is carefully reduced to one, though mighty, visual encounter and the text in 1.5 is cut so that all references to purgatory or a heaven to be entered with one's reckoning made, or a power which will pass judgment on Gertrude, are removed. The Ghost is a pagan force, come back to seek its right, without imposing moral limitations on the son. Hamlet's references to God are also dramatically minimized. To give only one example of many: in 1.2, the little that remains of his speech elides "the everlasting", "God" or meeting "one's dearest foe in heaven". The only religious outburst in the film belongs to Claudius and is provoked by fear. Nor is it composed as a prayer proper by kneeling at an altar. The King rather considers his chances to obtain forgiveness only to find that he is not up to it. Hamlet is not present, and as a consequence, does not have to consider his actions in a religious context. The only altar ever seen is the one where Laertes pledges silently to avenge his father's death and the only priest is the one who refuses to give Ophelia full funeral rites⁶⁸. The secularizing character of Kozintsev's approach is confirmed by Alexander Etkind who writes: "Like many of his friends, Kozintsev was a convinced atheist, a belief system that was necessitated not only by his Soviet allegiance but also by his hybrid Russian-Jewish experience"⁶⁹.

The polar position in the discussion as for the role of religious references in the film is expressed by Tiffany Ann Conroy who insists that "religious imagery pervades Kozintsev's *Hamlet*, in which Hamlet and Ophelia are associated with Christianity"⁷⁰. She discovers Orthodox implications in some symbols used by Kozintsev: "... the images of the broken cross in the graveyard and the subservient cleric at Ophelia's funeral bring to mind Khrushchev's persecution of the Church and his appointment of clerics he could control"⁷¹. It is rather difficult to agree

⁶⁸ Sokolova B. *Between Religion and Ideology: Some Russian Hamlets of the Twentieth Century*. P. 150.

⁶⁹ Etkind A. *Mourning the Soviet victims in a cosmopolitan way: Hamlet from Kozintse to Riazanov*. P. 394.

⁷⁰ Conroy T. A. "Speak what we feel, not what we ought to say": political dissent in Grigory Kozintsev's Shakespeare. Boston, 2009. P. 101.

⁷¹ Ibid.

with this opinion because all the mentioned elements of the film can be interpreted in the other way. The broken cross may be decoded as a sign of dereliction of the cemetery, for, following the Christian tradition, the persons who committed suicide were buried beyond its confines. Ophelia's "death was doubtful ... shards, flints, and pebbles should be thrown on her"⁷², so she should not have been buried near her noble relatives. Using the broken cross as well as some other signs of dilapidation, Kozintsev depicts the setting itself and creates an atmosphere of sheer neglect: for more than two or three decades nobody has been buried there and the unearthed skull of Yorick is a vivid manifestation of the total decay. As for the priest, he did not do anything unusual or contradicting Shakespeare's words.

3. Grigori Kozintsev's *Hamlet* as a mine-detector on the fossilized field of Soviet mentality: a lesson of artistic resistance

The long-lasting discussion revolving around Kozintsev's masterpiece has a key-point shared by the majority of modern interpreters. It is the admittance of the overall anti-totalitarian message in Kozintsev's approach to interpreting Shakespeare's text. It also should be noted that some scholars found the elements of criticism of the Soviet regime even in Kozintsev's stage version of *Hamlet*. Moreover, Arthur P. Mendel believes that the Leningrad performance of *Hamlet* directed by this artist in April 1954 stipulated "the arduous and tortuous efforts of Soviet society to liquidate Stalinism"⁷³.

It is necessary to emphasize that the shooting of Kozintsev's *Hamlet* took place when the tendencies of the Thaw perceptibly weakened. The general atmosphere of that time was characterized by the premonition of returning half-forgotten communist dictatorship in all the spheres. When the regime started eliminating those elements of democracy and creative freedom that were characteristic of the Thaw, explicit declaration of anti-totalitarian ethos became rather perilous. So, the artists were to search for new strategies of expressing the opinions defying the prescribed official course. According to Gregg Redner, Kozintsev's "interest in *Hamlet* grew directly from his understanding of

⁷² Shakespeare W. *Hamlet, Prince of Denmark. The Complete Works of Shakespeare* / ed. by David Bevington. New York, 1997. P. 1110.

⁷³ Mendel A. P. *Hamlet and Soviet Humanism. Slavic Review*. 1971. Vol. 30, No. 4, P. 734.

the play's relation to contemporary Soviet life"⁷⁴. The director himself remarked that "they often stage *Hamlet* in modern dress, but tell a tale of ancient life. The tragedy must be played in sixteenth-century costume but must be dealt with as a modern story"⁷⁵.

But at the same time, it is quite difficult to agree with the key idea, expressed by T. A. Conroy who interprets Kozintsev's *Hamlet* as if it were cinematographic realization of Aesopian language for voicing political disagreement with Soviet regime. She reasonably insists on the fact that "Soviet audience was trained to look for and to understand Aesopian discourse. ... The special 'languages' artistic and critical works employed to communicate meaning must be decoded and then juxtaposed against official history, propaganda and dogma before one can comprehend their political potency"⁷⁶. But her statement about the deciphering of Aesopian language as the main strategy in interpreting *Hamlet* on the screen looks rather farfetched. The creative method of Grigori Kozintsev is much more complicated, subtle and far from direct allegorizing and simplified parabolic character. The essence of his anti-totalitarian implications is formed employing numerous ontological reminiscences deeply rooted in Soviet reality. Kozintsev who considered his rendition of *Hamlet* not as a mere screen version of the great tragedy, but as a "cinematographic poetry"⁷⁷ insisted on the necessity for any film-director to avoid "brisk dialogue with the burning problems of the day"⁷⁸.

The overall anti-totalitarian message of the film does not mean that every single symbol or detail used by the director was loaded with special political pathos, as T. A. Conroy insists. Interpreting several film episodes as political allegories, she compares Hamlet, who was dispatched from Elsinore, to Vyacheslav Molotov who was sent to be the USSR ambassador in Mongolia and to Georgiy Malenkov who was sent to head a Siberian power station.⁷⁹ Moreover, the scholar draws parallels between

⁷⁴ Redner G. *Deleuze and film music: Building a Methodological Bridge Between Film Theory and Music*. Chicago, 2011. P. 77.

⁷⁵ Козинцев Г. Наш современник Вильям Шекспир. Ленинград – Москва, 1966. С. 237.

⁷⁶ Conroy T. A. "Speak what we feel, not what we ought to say": political dissent in Grigory Kozintsev's Shakespeare. P. 16, 19.

⁷⁷ Козинцев Г. Наш современник Вильям Шекспир. С. 287.

⁷⁸ Ibid. С. 291.

⁷⁹ Conroy T. A. "Speak what we feel, not what we ought to say": political dissent in Grigory Kozintsev's Shakespeare. P. 96.

the Cuban missile crisis which happened just before the film's release and the director's emphasis on Norway's military preparations and the arrival of Fortinbras' soldiers which should, in her words, "evoke the violent suppression of dissent within the USSR and the international Cold War standoff"⁸⁰.

The scholar tries to attribute the use of Aesopian language not only to symbolic episodes but also to filming technique Kozintsev used while presenting the main character's soliloquies – Hamlet on the screen remains silent and his words are given in a voice-over. T. A. Conroy explains this peculiarity of the film using the Soviet political context: in 1964 the infamous KGB was in the prime of its power and "Kozintsev's film accordingly dramatizes an Elsinore full of spying and secret plots where people like Hamlet have to guard themselves carefully. Many of Hamlet's monologues take place in voiceover – he cannot speak aloud his thoughts for fear he is being listened to"⁸¹. In fact, such a politically-focused interpretation of the film arouses discussion. Mark Sokolyansky offers an alternative interpretation: "Kozintsev preferred the off-screen reading of the soliloquies accompanying silent behavior. This device was contemplated in Russian film-making as far back as the 1930s by Sergei Yutkevich, who had planned several Shakespeare films many years before his 1956 *Othello*. The device was used by Olivier in his 1948 film of *Hamlet*"⁸².

While the anti-totalitarian dimension of Kozintsev's rendition of *Hamlet* never comes into the foreground of the film, it is implicitly present in the profusion of subtle details of film direction which are interspersed on the screen for the attentive viewer to notice.

The first peculiarity of the film's anti-totalitarian background that deserves special attention is the choice of the translation. Kozintsev selects Pasternak's version and one can name at least two valid reasons for that. The first and foremost is the unique "Russianness" of Pasternak's text. The originality of Pasternak's translation consists of his avoiding the faithful following of the original. The originality of Pasternak's translation involves a strategy to avoid closely following the original. G. Redner writes, "Instead Pasternak employed an artistic and poetic approach to his translations – one that made use of twentieth-century

⁸⁰ Ibid. P. 95.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Sokolyansky M. Grigori Kozintsev's *Hamlet* and *King Lear*. P. 207.

colloquial Russian. By doing this, he succeeded in making the plays completely accessible to the Soviet audiences of his day”⁸³. In Anna Key France’s opinion, Pasternak’s translation of *Hamlet* broke away from the practice of translating words and metaphors and, instead, focused on a translation of thoughts and scenes⁸⁴. Such a bald artistic shift was not accidental in any way. G. Redner points out that “by doing this he allowed himself the freedom to turn *Hamlet* into a distinctly Russian work – one that took the Bard out of sixteenth-century Denmark and placed him firmly into the post-Stalin twentieth-century Soviet Union”⁸⁵. Pasternak’s original approach to translating the great tragedy allowed Kozintsev to use this version as the textual basis to fill the film with implicit anti-totalitarian messages which were palpable and perceptible for Soviet intelligentsia suffering in the ideological, cultural and political prison. Pasternak’s translation served not only as a means of interlingual communication but also “as a means of personal creative expression at a time when other avenues of artistic self-expression were closed to him because he could not express himself freely or hope to have his work published in the Soviet Union”⁸⁶.

So, the second reason which inspired Kozintsev’s choice was the reputation of Pasternak in the sixties in his native country. The writer was reviled and banished by the Soviet critics and governors. Regarded as hostile to the state machine, Pasternak simultaneously became the symbol of democratically oriented Soviet intelligentsia which suffered from the constant suppressing control. So, Kozintsev’s choice of the translation by Pasternak may be viewed as a certain act of artistic solidarity – the film, which won the Lenin Prize, helped to ameliorate the reputation of the writer who fell out of grace with the Soviet regime.

A crucial role in creating anti-totalitarian overtones in the film is performed by the powerful imagery which encapsulates and actualizes the concepts vital for Kozintsev. The dominants of the visual universe of the screen version are water, stones, iron, and fire.

⁸³ Redner G. *Deleuze and film music: Building a Methodological Bridge Between Film Theory and Music*. Chicago, 2011. P. 78.

⁸⁴ France A. K. *Boris Pasternak’s translations of Shakespeare*. Berkeley. Los Angeles. London, 1978. P. 11.

⁸⁵ Redner G. *Deleuze and film music: Building a Methodological Bridge Between Film Theory and Music*. P. 79.

⁸⁶ France A. K. *Boris Pasternak’s translations of Shakespeare*. Berkeley. Los Angeles. London, 1978. P. 6.

Water and seascapes become visual leitmotifs of the film. All the crucial scenes (encounter with the Ghost, soliloquy *To be or not to be*, Hamlet's death to name the few) take place on the beach. The sea-scenes perform not only the function of the emotional counterpoint of Hamlet's reflection, they symbolize moral and intellectual freedom. Hamlet mournfully follows the flying seagull, because this creature can leave Elsinore and see the distant horizon of unending natural space, whereas Hamlet in soliloquy *To be or not to be* is deprived of this view – hearing the sound of waves he cannot look at the sea hidden by a rock. Saviour Catania emphasizes the interrelation of sea-scenes, pointing out that “the beach death-sequence synthesizes the visionary essence of earlier seascapes and thus accrues their ‘inner dynamism’”⁸⁷. Moreover, in the screen version, Kozintsev uses the effect of framing – at the beginning and the end of the film one can see the rough sea with a shadow of a rock on which the castle stands. This ominous shadow looming over the seascape implies the virtual inviolability of the rotten superpower: the waves of nature are unable to ruin the shade of the castle of human making. No matter how noble are the natural aspirations of human beings, he cannot destroy the might which is a product of diabolic mind the autocratic power is endowed with.

In his vision of Elsinore, Kozintsev accentuates stones and lathings – obligatory markers of a prison. In the film, both of them acquire additional symbolic meaning – they serve as tokens of extreme barrenness and infertility. Gerald Moore notes that when at the beginning of the film horsemen thunder into the castle, the draw-bridge, “photographed from road-level, begins rising terribly against the eyes of the spectator. As it rises higher, a portcullis at the top of the screen and begins to descend in front of it. After this sequence we scarcely need the words, “Denmark’s a prison”. Over and over again the detail of this film’s direction reveals the same clarity and strength”⁸⁸. The prison-like character of Elsinore is also made visible through some very subtle light techniques – after Hamlet’s arrival into the castle, the sun-beam we see on the brick-wall of the well under the entrance bridge gradually dies out as the gate of the castle

⁸⁷ Catania S. ‘The Beached Verge’: On Filming the Unfilmable in Grigori Kozintsev’s Hamlet. *Enter Text: An Interactive Interdisciplinary E-Journal for Cultural and Historical Studies and Creative Work*. 2011. Vol. 1.2. P. 314. URL : https://www.brunel.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0012/111315/Saviour-Catania,-The-Beached-Verge-On-Filming-the-Unfilmable-in-Grigori-Kozintsevs-Hamlet.pdf.

⁸⁸ Moore G. The Russian Hamlet. *Transition*. 1965. No. 20. P. 56.

closes, thus showing symbolically the death of hope caused by the waning of the Thaw tendencies.

The spectators also encounter flickering flame rather early in the film: in the opening credits, one can see a flambeau with the fire burning into black smoke erasing the names of the filming crew and the cast. The burning flame serves as the image leitmotif of truth: it flares in the fireplace when Horatio recounts his affronting the Ghost (when Claudius passes it one can see only charred firewood), the cressets are enkindled during the performance of the “Mousetrap”. Hamlet enters the hall for secret meetings also with a flambeau but throws it away no sooner than he sees Claudius. After this, he slowly passes all the authorities sitting at the round table, thus challenging them for never being candid, for playing into the king’s hands. So, the fire in Kozintsev’s version suggests sincerity and truth which were becoming extinct in the totalitarian society.

In his diary, Kozintsev wrote, “it is strange that people always strived to film *Hamlet* in the pavilions, but it seems to me that only in nature one can find the key to turning of Shakespeare’s words into visual images”⁸⁹. The images of nature, sea, and fire which, according to Yutkevich, become “not the foil, but the organic ferment of the film”⁹⁰ form one of the grand artistic victories of the Soviet director. But the natural landscape confronts in the movie with the insincere and pompous world of human making. This stone and iron space is confined by the walls of Elsinore – the non-natural prison-state overloaded with the numerous signs of power. Practically in every castle shot the eye of a spectator is caught by coats of arms, ominous bas-reliefs, bronze monuments and statues, busts and portraits. At the beginning of almost every scene, the film-director makes use of a visual anaphora – the multiple signs of honor and adoration of the power appear in the first seconds as the accents of the setting. Such abundance is by no means casual – in such a way Kozintsev unfolds totalitarian honorific discourse.

Pervaded with the obtrusive elements of the discourse of power glorification, Elsinore becomes a spiritual jail for Hamlet, that is why he feels his perfect loneliness so palpably. This estrangement from

⁸⁹ Юткевич С. О трех «Гамлетах», одной Офелии, двух клоунах и призраке. С. 50.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

surrounding reality is underlined by his clothing – in several scenes, Hamlet’s costumes are quite different from those of people surrounding him. Though a representative of the nobility, he never wears the luxuriant court collar; his apparel looks more like that of a philosopher or a monk (in the cemetery scenes) than of a prince. This contrast is even more conspicuous on the Soviet poster of the film. On it, the protagonist is depicted in a snow-white costume which sharply contrasts the darkly clad Claudius’ allies. Hamlet stands distinctly aloof from the authorities of Elsinore over whom a bloody crown-grid looms. To convey the grand scale of the prince’s loneliness Kozintsev employs the whole palette of visual devices – the spectator can note how impressively change Ophelia’s apparel and hairstyle when she starts to participate in Polonius and Claudius’s plot, in the relations of Hamlet and Horatio a certain distance is perceived. These stunning visual details are supported by Shostakovich’s score which evokes the atmosphere of solitude in the crowd of conceited and arrogant allies of Claudius. Smoktunovskiy’s expression greatly adds to this dramatic effect, Gerald Moore, for instance, even suggests that “he is Hamlet almost before he speaks”⁹¹. So, the film realizes the director’s conception stated in his pre-production notes from the diary where he writes, “in Shakespeare we have ... loneliness in the ebullition of court life. Hamlet is suffocated not by the castle’s architecture but by the life organization, spiritual atmosphere of the century”⁹². Kozintsev’s success in showing perfect isolation of Hamlet adds dramatically to the revelation of the tragedy of an intelligent sensible personality in hostile surroundings.

Kozintsev, who lived and worked in the USSR, occasionally modifies the manner of representation of Shakespeare’s text to evoke the associations with the Soviet reality. He deliberately gives Claudius’s words concerning “the rules of mourning” to the king’s public crier. This alternation allows us to see how indifferently but with fright people react to the words of the herald – another decision of the al-mighty governor. The director also shows the mourning for the dead king as feigned and affected: the black flags appear some moments before Hamlet’s arrival; the black blind on the window is being rolled only when Hamlet enters the castle. One more step away from the conventional approaches is the

⁹¹ Moore G. *The Russian Hamlet*. P. 56.

⁹² Козинцев Г. *Наш современник Вильям Шекспир*. С. 316/

deliberate focus on the flute soliloquy⁹³. This emphasis is not accidental: Kozintsev wanted to decidedly accentuate the paramountcy of spiritual freedom of a human being – one of the virtues that the totalitarianism-infected Soviet society lacked so much.

The revelation of one more Soviet scourge – constant espionage – is a significant part of Kozintsev’s screen version. The director’s emphasis on this motif is rather well-considered. In his book *Nash Sovremennik Viliam Shekspir*, the director writes: “The architecture of Elsinore – not walls, but ears in the walls. There are doors so that one can eavesdrop behind them, windows so that one can spy through them. The guards are the walls. Every sound gives birth to echoes, reverberations, whispers, rustling... Fear – a general, mutual guarantee – is the very air of Elsinore”⁹⁴. The spies intrude into the private life of people: entering his room Hamlet finds the papers on the table in disorder, he is kept under the vigilant eye of king’s surveillance agents. Such fear and desire to spy inevitably occur in the totalitarian society, they thrive in the atmosphere of harassment and aggression. And one of the most ingenious artistic inventions of the Russian film-director is developing Claudius’s cult of personality. In the course of the film, one can see his full-scale portraits, miniatures, busts. A new monument to him appears between the bronze lions in the castle when Hamlet was sent to England. Polonius has the king’s portrait on the medallion and his bust is triumphantly placed on the wardrobe.

CONCLUSION

Grigori Kozintsev’s *Hamlet* turned out to have been used as one more column in the colonnade that supported the topos ‘our Shakespeare’⁹⁵, one of the ideological products of Soviet cultural politics. But at the same time, this film with its anti-totalitarian implications was destroying the key point of the myth about the Soviet Union as ‘the country of socialism with a human face’. Appropriating Shakespeare was

⁹³ See *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ *Ibid.* C. 276, 320.

⁹⁵ On this topos see: Chernyak Y. Shakespeare as a Sovietism: the red lines on the map of the Ukrainian Shakespeareana. *Romanian Shakespeare Journal*. București, 2013. P. 12–17; Cherniak Y. Ukraine. *The Oxford Companion to Shakespeare* / Ed. by M. Dobson, S. Wells, W. Sharpe and E. Sullivan. Oxford, 2015. P. 542. and the article *Key Topoi of the Ukrainian Shakespearean Discourse of the late 19th –mid 20th century* by Yurii Cherniak in this edition.

crucial for the Soviet authorities, as the Bard symbolized not just English literature, but the whole Western canon, preserving in his works the essence of Europeaness. Kozintsev's interpretation was all the more opportune for the regime as it turned out to be a world-level masterpiece proving the immense possibilities of the Soviet cinema. In this way, it became a useful tool in making Shakespeare's tragedy an integral part of the socialist ideology and a convenient instrument for implementing its values both at home and abroad. This was certainly not what Kozintsev had strived for, but at least such vision of the film's message secured him from being sent to the camps.

Further history of the Soviet Union and Putin's Russia has shown that Kozintsev's cinematic metaphors proved prophetic. The Thaw period came to the end soon after the film was released. In the fall of 1964, Nikita Khrushchev, who carried out the de-Stalinization of the Soviet Union and liberal domestic policy reforms, was removed from both political posts (the first secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and chairman of the Council of Ministers). After Leonid Brezhnev became the first secretary of the Communist Party, the overcoming of the effects of totalitarianism stopped and soon came to naught. As Mark Sokolyansky puts it, "the role of the party's dictatorship increased considerably in cultural and spiritual life. It is enough here to mention the several notorious trials sentencing writers to imprisonment, the dismissal of the editorial boards of progressive periodicals, the banning of many books, theatrical performances, films and so on"⁹⁶. In contemporary Russia, the situation with democracy and freedom of speech is much worse than at the sunset of the Soviet Union or even under Leonid Brezhnev. So, Grigori Kozintsev's *Hamlet* is of acute topicality again.

All the signs of anti-totalitarian discourse in Kozintsev's film which are often mentioned in modern criticism could not have been examined from this angle by Soviet cinema critics and scholars. It was equally dangerous for the film-maker, the critics and the further destiny of the film. It was equally dangerous for the film-maker, the critics and the further destiny of the film. So, the criticism in the USSR considered it safer to represent vices of Elsinore as essentially Danish and medieval, rather than native and contemporary features. As this has been shown in the introduction to this article, a similar interpretation is offered to the

⁹⁶ Sokolyansky M. Grigori Kozintsev's *Hamlet* and *King Lear*. P. 208.

young generation in contemporary Russia where the totalitarian tendencies are getting stronger. Yet analysis of particular cinema metaphors and semiotic signs used in Kozintsev's film helps us to identify the ideological implications of the film and appreciate the political courage of the director as well as his high skill in making classics contemporary.

SUMMARY

The article deals with the film adaptation of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* directed by Grigori Kozintsev (1964) and aims at identifying the anti-totalitarian implications in it. The author argues that though this film turned out to have been used for supporting the topos 'our Shakespeare' as an ideological product of Soviet cultural politics, the anti-totalitarian implications were destroying the key point of the myth about the Soviet Union as 'the country of socialism with a human face'.

Being a vivid manifestation of the axiological potential of Shakespeare's greatest tragedy Kozintsev's film raises the complicated existential problems and outlines the conflict zones created by the complex interaction of various motives within the tragedy. The numerous successful directing decisions, interesting finds of Kozintsev and his cast, as well as the set of impressive cinematic metaphors form an implicit layer of the film and make it a vibrantly anti-totalitarian reading of Shakespeare's great tragedy.

Keywords: Grigori Kozintsev, Hamlet, contrary interpretations, axiological potential, film adaptation, cinematic metaphors, anti-totalitarian implications.

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**“...THERE IS NOTHING EITHER GOOD OR BAD BUT
THINKING MAKES IT SO”¹: SHAKESPEAREAN
INTERTEXTUALITY IN M. HAIG’S LITERARY PROJECTION
*THE DEAD FATHERS CLUB***

Darya M. Lazarenko

INTRODUCTION

Being in its essence “words, words, words” (*Hamlet*, 2.2.210)², Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* is at the same time an absolutely unique cultural phenomenon. Since its first staging, this tragedy, endowed with considerable metatextual potential, has become the center of an extensive network of intertextual connections. The vibrant and impressive discourse spinning around the play can be viewed as a sign of Shakespeare’s genius ability to speak to his audience over the boundaries of time, geography and culture. In the words of F. David Martin and Lee A. Jacobus, “the long-term success of works of art depends on their ability to interpret human experience at a level of complexity that warrants examination and reexamination”³. If this be true, *Hamlet* may be rightfully considered the most successful literary work of the Western canon: there are more instances of scholarly, critical and creative interpretation of the play than there are lines in it.

When the German philosopher Georg Lichtenberg visited London in the 1770s and attended *Hamlet* starring David Garrick, he described his impressions of the great monologue “To Be, or Not to Be” in his memoirs saying that a large part of the audience not only knew it by heart as well as the Lord’s Prayer, but also listened to it with such a feeling of jubilation and godliness that could not be understood by those who did not

¹ Shakespeare W. *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*. Edited by Barbara A. Mowat and Paul Werstine. Folger digital texts, URL : www.folgerdigitaltexts.org/html/Ham.html. (Last accessed 29.02.2020).

² Ibid.

³ Martin F. D., Jacobus L. A. *The humanities through the arts*. New York, 2015. P. 4.

know England⁴. Since then, this reverent admiration for *Hamlet* has conquered the whole world. Over the years the play has not lost its magnetic appeal: from 1879 to 2004, only the Royal Shakespeare Company and its predecessor, Shakespeare Memorial Theater, staged *Hamlet* eighty-two times; and there are more than seventy-five screen versions of the tragedy⁵. G. Lichtenberg wrote in his memoirs that in England aphorisms from Shakespeare's works can be heard everywhere, people sing about Shakespeare and borrow songs from his works, and, as a result, many of the English children learn about him before they learn the alphabet⁶. But Shakespeare's works are not only the foundation of the English culture, they speak a universal language and today *Hamlet* is as relevant as hip-hop or street art.

Hamlet's universal metatextual functionality can be actualized in many ways, one of them being a literary projection – one of the varieties of active creative interpretation of the pretext that leads to the emergence in the new historical and cultural context of a self-contained work of art, which preserves the plot and character coordinates of the source text⁷. In this case, canonical dominant leitmotifs can be specified, undergo re-accentuation or become modified, narrowing, expanding or transforming the semantic continuum of the pretext⁸. Matt Haig's *The Dead Fathers Club* (2006) is a vivid example of such a creative transformation of the canonical tragedy. This novel has not yet been selected as an object of focused and systematic academic consideration. The study of this literary experiment may yield interesting results in terms of a more profound understanding of the way the modern literature eagerly appropriates Shakespeare's works on different levels: the plot, characters, themes and motifs, imagery, etc. Thus, the main **aim** of the paper is to analyze the structure and the functions of the allusive paradigm of *The Dead Fathers Club* as a literary projection of *Hamlet* and examine the ways in which the

⁴ Lichtenberg G. C. On David Garrick as Hamlet in his own adaptation at the theatre Royal, Drury Lane, London. *Shakespeare in the theatre. An anthology of criticism*. Oxford, 1997. P. 26.

⁵ Hunt M. W. Looking for Hamlet. New York, 2008. P. 2.

⁶ Lichtenberg G. C. On David Garrick as Hamlet in his own adaptation at the theatre Royal, Drury Lane, London. P. 26.

⁷ Лазаренко Д. М. «Гамлет» В. Шекспіра як метатекст пізнього Ренесансу та його літературні проєкції : автореф. ... канд. філол. наук. Київ, 2010. С. 8.

⁸ Лазаренко Д. М. Специфіка конструювання літературної проєкції гамлетівського сюжету в романі Д. Вроблевські «Історія Едгара Сотеля.» *Нова філологія*. Запоріжжя, 2011. № 3. С. 16.

metatextual potential of the great tragedy is being realized through its adaptation.

1. Matt Haig's novel in the paradigm of contextual literary projections

The literary projections of *Hamlet* differ from other forms of intertextual actualization of the play's metatextual potential by the entirety and systematic character of the interpretation which is based on the key structural and semantic elements of the tragedy. The projection comprises three main levels:

– the plot (the son takes revenge for the death of the father; the murderer is the protagonist's uncle, who seeks to take a higher place in the social and family hierarchy);

– the characters (the main characters on which the projection is based are Hamlet, the Ghost, Claudius, Gertrude; a greater degree of variability is allowed with respect to secondary characters – Ophelia, Polonius, Laertes, as well as Horatio, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, Fortinbras, etc.)

– the problems (power and society, religion, morality, art, thinking, personal self-identification, etc.).

Quite often, the main touchpoints that provide a metatextual connection between *Hamlet* and its literary projections are those elements of the tragedy that are genetically connected with Shakespeare's writing strategies, e. g. metatextual fragments, high semantic valence of the key concepts and polyvariety of readings, metaphoricality of the narrative thinking, etc. Due to the stereoscopic nature of Shakespeare's creative vision and the multifaceted interpretation field of *Hamlet*, this type of metatextual connection is, in our view, the most representative and yielding in terms of exploring the metatextuality of the great tragedy and the multiple ways in which it can be employed by the authors to examine the burning issues of the day.

Literary projections as a form of creative intertextual interpretation of the pretext have two main semantic vectors: they can be text-orientated / text-centric (e. g., works by W. Gilbert, T. Stoppard, C. Cavafy, B. Akunin, J. Updike) and contextual (e. g., works by M. Haig, D. Wroblewski, I. Murdoch, etc.)⁹. Though such a division is provisional, it facilitates

⁹ Лазаренко Д. М. «Гамлет» В. Шекспіра як метатекст пізнього Ренесансу та його літературні проєкції. С. 12–13.

classification of the many varieties of intertextuality and allows for better understanding of the mechanisms of transformation. This dichotomy is applicable in most cases of creative reworkings of Shakespeare, including the cinema, visual arts, and music. For example, *Romeo and Juliet* (1968) directed by F. Zeffirelli is a text-centric projection. This rather close-to-text adaptation aims at visualizing the unique world of Shakespeare's masterpiece, reaching its semantic depths, reviving its atmosphere and breathing life into it. In the more recent B. Luhrmann's film *Romeo + Juliet* (1996), the text-centric vector also prevails: though the film can boast profound and rather stylish modernization, yet, its main function is to bring the classical text closer to the modern recipient, to overcome more than four hundred years that separate the audience from the original. At the same time, due to modernization, the contextual vector is gaining more weight in this case. Finally, *The West Side Story* (1961) directed by Robert Wise and Jerome Robbins is characterized by the predominance of the contextual vector, which makes it possible to interpret the contemporary context by drawing on the images and motifs of Shakespeare's masterpiece.

All in all, literary projections are quite heterogeneous. Their functions vary depending on the author's intentions and many other factors, such as the nature of the pretext, the form and mechanisms of projecting the key plot and image coordinates of the source, the specific background assumptions of the receptive consciousness. However, a certain functional range is common to all types of projections. It is related to providing the recipient – text – culture circulation, transcoding cultural messages into various languages and semiotic systems, facilitating the dialogue of various cultural and temporal layers.

M. Haig's novel *The Dead Fathers Club* can be defined as a contextual literary projection. This type of projecting Shakespeare's works into new creative contexts started to actively develop with the arrival of the Romantics onto the literary scene. Having discovered the unique versatility of Shakespeare's genius, they began to regard the Great Bard as an equal interlocutor in their discussions about the key challenges and philosophical issues of their time. It is the cult of Shakespeare's personality and works, created within the pre-Romanticism and Romanticism, that predetermined the place that the dramatist occupies in the worldview of people of the twentieth and twenty-first century and the literary hierarchy of the Western canon. As N. Dyakonova notes, Coleridge, Hazlitt, Shelley, Keats opened the way to the academic study of the literary heritage of the playwright and spoke of his genius as a

synthesis of all that is beautiful, majestic and eternal, not only in literature but also in nature¹⁰. The list of Shakespeare's perfections, compiled by the Romantics, constitutes not only an enumeration of the especially brilliant aspects of the playwright's mastery but also certain requirements applied to any true work of art: the theoretical provisions of the Romantics, their interpretation of Shakespeare's work put forward criteria that became normative at the end of the nineteenth century and have not been refuted since then¹¹.

German Romanticism, within which the formation of Shakespeare's cult began, transformed Hamlet into a type, teaching the readers to identify themselves with the protagonist of Shakespeare's tragedy. Hamlet became a symbol of a person unable to act and hiding behind the wall of words, melancholy, and despair from a cause that simply cannot be completed. According to H. Gorenok, "trying to explain the character of Shakespeare's protagonist, based on their current social conditions, they [German Romantics – *D. L.*] drew parallels between the prince and their compatriots, sought to interpret his behavior as the behavior of a real person residing in Germany (J. W. von Goethe, F. Schlegel, A. W. Schlegel, G. W. F. Hegel, F. Freiligrath, G. G. Gervinus, etc.)"¹². Thus, it was during this period that the process of appropriation of Shakespeare in general and *Hamlet* in particular began. The appropriation was conducted not only by individuals (philosophers, critics, translators, writers, directors, actors, etc.) but also by entire European nations, resulting in the appearance of specific national interpretations of *Hamlet*. Another important consequence was the formation of the concept of 'hamletism'¹³, the structuring of which largely depended not only on the evolution of critical and academic approaches to Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, but also on the development of intellectual trends in the recipient culture and the socio-political processes within it.

The transformation of Hamlet into a symbol was a necessary prerequisite for the development of contextual projections: this process

¹⁰ Дьяконова Н. Шекспир и английская литература XX века. *Вопросы литературы*. 1986. № 10. С. 73.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Горенок Г. Ю. Гамлет і Гамлетизм у європейській літературі першої половини XX століття : автореф. ... канд. філол. наук. Тернопіль, 2007. С. 6.

¹³ For more information on the history and essence of hamletism see Черняк Ю. І. Специфіка актуалізації ціннісної семантики "Гамлета" В. Шекспіра в українському шекспірівському дискурсі : автореф. ... канд. філол. наук. Київ, 2011. 20 с.

opened up opportunities for new creative experiments with the ‘implantation’ of the image into a new chronotope. The romanticist vision of Shakespeare as a timeless genius offered the next generations of writers the possibility to use Shakespeare’s images as universal tools for exploring contemporary reality. *Hamlet*, with its amazing ability to adapt to almost any cultural and historical context, has often been perceived by readers as a reflection of their own intellectual and spiritual problems. So, since the middle of the XIX century the process of modernization began to gain increasing popularity, the aim of which was, as a rule, to bring the historical background of the tragedy closer to the modern reader, to make it clearer and more relevant. Such a modernization first occurred in P. Bourget’s novel *André Cornélis* (1887)¹⁴. Later, this technique was used by A. Döblin, I. Murdoch, D. Wroblewski, and many others. It is the technique of modernization that underpins *Hamlet*’s numerous contextual projections in contemporary literature and cinema, for example, the iconic film version of *Hamlet* directed by M. Almereyda (2000).

The Dead Fathers Club, the second novel of the British writer Matt Haig, is a fairly representative and extremely interesting example of a contextual literary projection of Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*. Today, 14 novels and several non-fiction works by this author have been published, many of them dedicated to the literary study of family and parenting issues. In an effort to present a new perspective on the eternal problems of growing up and dealing with adolescence, bullying, depression and a variety of other psychological challenges, Haig resorts to a combination of an unusual narrative framework and Shakespearean intertextuality. For example, in his first novel *The Last Family in England* (2004), which became a best-seller in the UK, the narrator is a pet Labrador named Prince, torn between a sense of duty to his master and sympathy for Falstaff, his Spaniel friend. Even more Shakespearean is Haig’s second novel, *The Dead Fathers Club*, in which a charming and highly unreliable storyteller Philip Noble, an eleven-year-old boy with a strange aversion to punctuation, tells a story of the tragedy that shook and almost ruined his family when his father died in a car crash. The novel is explicitly and thoroughly Shakespearean, yet, in the words of Gerard Woodward, *The Guardian* literary reviewer, “Haig borrows from Shakespeare in the same spirit that Shakespeare borrowed from his own sources. One is never sure

¹⁴ Frenzel E. Stoffe der Weltliteratur: Lexicon dichtungsgeschichtl. Lägsschnitte. Stuttgart, 1983. S. 281.

where the story is going next, and that's what makes this book such sad fun"¹⁵. This contextual projection takes the reader on an intriguing 'what-if' journey which explores possible real-life implications of Hamlet's iconic lines "... there is nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so" (2.2.269)¹⁶.

2. Shakespearean allusions in *The Dead Fathers Club* as the foundation for the literary projection

The world of *The Dead Fathers Club*, imbued with implicit and explicit allusions to the text of Shakespeare's great tragedy, is essentially built upon the foundation of the source plot: a young man seeks revenge on his uncle, who is a hypothetical murderer of the protagonist's father. This manifestation of intertextuality is intentional, since the author deliberately constructs intertextual parallels, and the prototype is explicit, that is, verbalized. The type of intertextuality used is allusive: without a precise citation it 'hints' at a well-known pretext. This intertextual technique can be defined as a scenario allusion that preserves the plot frame of the pretext. In this case, the allusion is comparative, because it is important for the reader to compare the storyline of the novel with the source, *Hamlet* by W. Shakespeare.

It should be noted that this intertextual connection on the plot level includes a transformation as in the process of re-interpretation the chronotope is being modernized. The action is transferred from medieval Denmark to 21st century England, the era of teenagers fascinated by the music of Beyonce¹⁷ and the adventures of Spiderman¹⁸ and Wolverine¹⁹. The main location is not Elsinore, but a pub called *Castle and Falcon*, whose owner – 'the king of the castle' – is the father of the main character, Brian Noble. The reader, familiar with Shakespeare's tragedy, has an exciting opportunity to imagine a modern English boy in the situation of Prince Hamlet. Haig's protagonist loses his father in a car accident and is forced to watch the unfolding of his mother's love affair

¹⁵ Woodward G. Hamlet, is that you? *The Guardian*. 2006. URL : <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2006/jul/01/featuresreviews.guardianreview17> (Last accessed 29.02.2020).

¹⁶ Shakespeare W. *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*.

¹⁷ Haig M. *The Dead Fathers Club*. New York, 2007. P. 35.

¹⁸ *Ibid.* P. 41.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* P. 37.

with his uncle. Shortly after the funeral, the boy sees the Ghost calling on him to take revenge and kill Uncle Alan.

There are obvious Shakespearean plot and character allusions in the text. They actualize such significant structural and semantic coordinates of *Hamlet* as:

- the system of motifs: revenge for the death of the father, possible fratricide, betrayal of the mother, traitor friends, etc.;
- magistral conflicts: the appearance of the Ghost, the intervention of the Ghost in the affairs of the living, unintentional murder, the suicide of a young female character;
- key concepts: death, revenge, memory, imagination, art, language, etc.

However, it is important to say here that in Haig's novel, motifs and conflicts are often dramatically re-thought and transformed. For example, the suicide of the young heroine has undergone profound reinterpretation: Leah, Philip's girlfriend, remains alive after an attempted suicide thanks to the intervention of the protagonist and his uncle Alan. The book is aimed at young readers and has educational and 'therapeutic' functions, therefore, a re-interpretation of the *Hamlet* plot is crucial for the young reader to develop a more positive picture of the world and a psychologically resilient attitude. In the words of F. David Martin and Lee A. Jacobus, "the subject matter of art ... is not limited to the beautiful and the pleasant, the bright sides of life. Art may also include and help us understand the dark sides – the ugly, the painful, and the tragic"²⁰; thus, art helps young people "come to grips with those dark sides of life."²¹ Haig's novels are not just fiction, they are fictional equivalents of self-help books that use various cultural archetypes to support young readers and help them get through the hardest of times. The author's noble mission has been praised by a variety of critics. Stephen Fry wittily writes about Haig's newest novel: "Take *Notes on a Nervous Planet* twice daily, with or without food. The book is crammed with wisdom, insight, love and wit"²², while Bel Mooney from *Daily Mail* pays well-deserved compliments to Haig's previous book: "Haig's bestseller *Reasons to Stay Alive* was an engaging self-help memoir which mined personal trauma for

²⁰ Martin F. D., Jacobus L. A. The humanities through the arts. P. 3.

²¹ Ibid.

²² The Dead Fathers Club: Reviews. *Matt Haig: Books are our maps*. 2020. URL : <http://www.matthaig.com/thedeadfathersclubreviews/> (Last accessed: 29.02.2020).

valuable life lessons. This follow-up is a rag-bag of personal experience, thoughts and feelings ... some thought-provoking, some pertinent and important ... He's a smart operator who knows his readership and genuinely wants to help them ... I reached the last page admiring the author's inventive energy and insight"²³. The author's design accounts both for the choice of such a literary icon as *Hamlet* as a pretext and his way of profoundly rethinking it. Ultimately, Haig's aim is to work with archetypes that define the overall modern perception of the world and often predetermine the choices of young readers.

In addition to the comparative script allusion working on the plot level, Haig's novel also contains numerous comparative allusions-references. Almost all of the main characters in the novel are twins of Shakespeare's characters: Philip Noble is definitely Hamlet, Brian Noble is King Hamlet, Carol Noble is Gertrude, Alan Noble is Claudius, Mr. Fairview is Polonius, Leah is Ophelia, and, finally, Ross and Gary are Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. Most of these allusions are rather monovalent than ambivalent or polyvalent, since they are associated with their denotates mainly through some functional trait dealing with behavior. At the same time, the image of Philip Noble is built on an ambivalent allusion because the author attributes to him not only Hamlet's behavior, but also certain personal characteristics and ideological subtexts.

M. Haig's novel contains basic compositional elements of Shakespeare's tragedy, yet, they are subjected to a serious re-thinking. For example, the finale undergoes significant changes: the novel ends with a scene of a total psychological transformation of the protagonist, who, after a series of tragic episodes (Philip sets fire to the workshop, causing Mr. Fairview to die; Leah falls into a state of depression and her brother tries to kill Philip; Leah and Philip find themselves in a river bend, Uncle Alan rescues them and dies), realizes that he must rely solely on his own life experience.

While using a variety of Shakespearean allusions, M. Haig employs a range of transformation strategies. Sometimes the author retains the authentic essence of a certain artistic element genetically rooted in Shakespeare's work. So, for example, the movie that Philip proposes to watch with his uncle and mother is a functional analog of the *Mousetrap*. Sometimes the element itself is transformed, acquiring a new coloring,

²³ Ibid.

being modernized and thus raising a whole new wave of burning issues. For instance, the relationship between Philip and Leah, reminiscent of Hamlet and Ophelia's relationship, is to some extent a plot inversion of the Shakespearean prototype. In Shakespeare's tragedy, Hamlet's status serves as a certain defense mechanism for him and his madness: though the Prince goes beyond the ordinary behavioral norms, he by no means becomes a mockery. At the same time, teenage Philip, who does not have such a high social status within modern English society, is transformed into an outsider, the object of humiliating abuse. Leah, whose name is phonetically consonant with the name of Shakespeare's heroine, stands up for Philip displaying masculine qualities. If Shakespeare's Ophelia lacked determination, life experience, and independence, Haig's Leah not only devises a rescue strategy for Philip but also successfully implements it.

Sometimes, however, an element of the Shakespearean world is radically rethought, demonstrating the productivity of the dialogue between the contemporary culture and the canon. The ending of M. Haig's novel is a vivid example: the young seeker of truth finally realizes that Uncle Alan is not guided by the evil impulses attributed to him by his tortured imagination and inspired by the Ghost's words. The young man understands that he was mistaken when he looked at his uncle as a personal enemy who wanted to take a higher place in the social and family hierarchy (to become the sole owner of the pub and the sole object of Carol's love). Alan's tragic death, which turned him from a Cain figure into a martyr, a victim of his own nobility, demonstrates to Philip the deceptive nature of prejudice towards his uncle. Having been magnetically influenced by the words of the Ghost, Philip becomes a hostage to his own emotions and memories. His perception of reality is defined not so much by real-life experience, as by the reactions of an unsteady teenager's psyche to the dramatic events (tragic death of his father, his mother's second marriage, loss of trust in friends). In such a shift in focus, there is a clear echo of modernity with its increased interest in issues such as the social isolation of the individual, adolescent conflicts, the moral and ethical confusion of a young person who is unable to find adequate role models.

One of the means of delineating the semantic field of *The Dead Fathers Club* is M. Haig's strategy of using the cognitive potential of Shakespeare's famous metaphors. For example, Haig uses the metaphor of 'sin as a disease' when the ghost of Philip's father says to his son, "Dont hate your Mum Philip. She cant see the rotten Cancer she is letting

into this place. Its unnatural but she is too weak”²⁴. Another metaphor is built around the image of the seducer as a snake: the Ghost begs his son to take revenge upon his uncle saying, “Dads Ghost closed his eyes and then said Kill him Philip. Hes a snake. If you ever loved me youll kill him”²⁵. These images add color to the speech of the Ghost, make it more somber and sinister. M. Haig also resorts to Shakespeare’s image of weeds as a symbol of forgetfulness and sin. In *Hamlet*, the Black Prince says, “’Tis an unweeded garden / That grows to seed. Things rank and gross in nature / Possess it merely” (1.2.139-142)²⁶. The garden is one of the images crucial for Christianity, so, an abandoned garden is akin to a lost paradise, which forms associations with such concepts as forgetfulness, guilt, conscience, shame, self-disgust. Philip reflects on the death of his own father and the father of Leah and Dane, while looking at the plants under the bridge: “At the bottom of the bridge wall there were weeds under the old bricks but not under the new ones. The new bricks didnt have any holes and no room for weeds. But one day the weeds will find a way into the new bricks because weeds can grow anywhere Dad told me”²⁷. Here weeds serve as a symbol of how the recollections about parents will gradually be erased from the memory of children, and their place will be occupied by mundane everyday thoughts.

Interestingly enough, Haig often visualizes metaphors: for example, he combines two phrases that are used by Shakespeare to characterize Claudius (“Thoughts black, hands apt,” 3.2.280)²⁸ within the visual image of his character. There is a key feature in Alan’s appearance – his black hands, which are always dirty with the oil from the workshop. Shakespeare’s metaphors of the world as a prison and the man as an animal are similarly visualized. One of Philip’s teachers, Mr. Wormwood (his name is also allusive), makes such visualization possible decorating the classroom in a peculiar way: “He has put black tape on the glass in his Science Lab door and the tape is in bars like a prison and he has a sign on the door that says DO NOT FEED THE ANIMALS”²⁹. As one can see, these allusions are somewhat semantically reduced, even travestied. They belong not to the world of philosophy, but

²⁴ Haig M. *The Dead Fathers Club*. P. 92.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ Shakespeare W. *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*.

²⁷ Haig M. *The Dead Fathers Club*. P. 265–266.

²⁸ Shakespeare W. *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*.

²⁹ Haig M. *The Dead Fathers Club*. P. 150–152.

to the world of everyday life, and are shown from an ironic perspective. However, they prompt young Philip to philosophical reflections on the essence of the human nature: “He thinks it is funny but its not because children are animals and so are grown ups so he is not a zookeeper he is just an older animal. Children dont change into different animals when they grow up. It is not like they are caterpillars going into butterflies. They just get taller and wider and less funny and do jobs and tell more lies like Uncle Alan”³⁰.

Particularly noteworthy is the fact that following in the steps of Shakespeare, M. Haig also dives into the depths of the speech and language domain in order to create new meanings with the help of puns and words that reveal their hidden nuances only to the attentive and eager reader. A striking example is the interplay of anagrams “Brian” – “Bairn”, “Brian” – “Brain”. “Brian” is the name of the father of the protagonist. “Bairn” is a dialectical word for “a son” used by Philip’s grandmother. When Philip says “I am not a little bairn”³¹, it seems that he is not merely declaring his own adulthood, but protesting against being identified with his father, Brian, whose place he must now take and whose responsibility he must heave upon his own young shoulders.

Even more significant is the anagrammatic parallel “Brian” – “Brain”. All the misfortunes that happen in the novel are brought to life by the death of Philip’s father, Brian, and his orders for his son to take revenge. Interestingly, the notion of consciousness, often featured in Shakespeare’s tragedy and having an ambivalent semantic structure there (as consciousness and as conscience), is replaced in Haig’s novel by the biological term “brain”, which generally reflects the semantic simplification that occurs in the novel. Taking into account the phonetic and graphic similarity of the words “Brian” and “Brain”, one can better understand the message, which is more clearly manifested towards the end of the novel and finds a reflection in the words of Philip’s teacher who says, “we believe in what we want to believe.”³² The teacher’s comment is a paraphrase of Shakespeare’s “... for there is / nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it / so” (2.2.268-270)³³. Indeed, Shakespeare pays much more attention to what is happening in the mind

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid. P. 2.

³² Ibid. P. 304.

³³ Shakespeare W. *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*.

of Hamlet, than to his revenge mission. In the words of Marvin Hunt, “the fact that it [the play – D.L.] relocates reality from outside the human mind to within it, taking us from a medieval mindset that held reality to be objective, anterior, and superior to human experience, to a modern, or more precisely, an early modern view that holds reality to be in large part, if not entirely a function of subjective experience”³⁴. Thus, it is possible to say that the key conflict that is mesmerizing the viewer in *Hamlet* is not happening on the stage, but in the mind of Hamlet and the audience. Consequently, the key themes of the play are not those of revenge and betrayal, but rather a much more complex problem – the essence of being human. In Haig’s novel, the teacher’s utterance, the validity of which is finally confirmed by the final scene of the novel, acquires the status of an ideological verdict of the work. Modern writers have developed Shakespeare’s brilliant idea and taken it to the extreme: for example, Cavafy portrays Claudius as a wise and skilled politician, a good king³⁵, and Stoppard shows Hamlet to be cruel and selfish³⁶. Matt Haig in his own turn brings a teenage version of the Black Prince into the limelight focusing on the issues relevant for the contemporary young audience.

Thus, *The Dead Fathers Club*, the leitmotif of which is consistent with the main collision of Shakespeare’s tragedy, and the finale is an inversion of the pretext, can be considered a contextual literary projection of *Hamlet*. The similarity of the plot structure, which is often found in text-centric projections, performs a very different function here. M. Haig’s purpose is not to interpret Shakespeare’s text (though this design is also present, and sometimes even clearly visible in the text), but to explore contemporary reality, in particular, the problem of family relations, through the involvement of elements of *Hamlet*’s semantic compendium. *Hamlet*’s plot, character and metaphor coordinates are used by Haig as a starting point in his own reflections on those life situations and conflicts that worry the modern readers.

3. Intertextual polyvalency as M. Haig’s writing strategy

In M. Haig’s novel, Shakespearean allusions act as predicative intertextuality, that is dominant, structure-forming intertextual connections. However, the text of the work also contains a large number

³⁴ Hunt M. W. Looking for Hamlet. P. 8–9.

³⁵ Cavafy K. King Claudius. *Collected poems*. Princeton, 1992. 304 p.

³⁶ Stoppard T. *Rosencratz and Guildenstern are Dead*. New York, 1971. 126 p.

of other pervasive, recurrent allusions that have a relativistic, fragmentary character and do not seem to be pivotal to the narrative, yet, still play an important role in the process of shaping the semantic landscape of the novel. These reminiscent, rather than comparative, allusions are intended to diversify the cultural palette of the narrative, to detail the portraits of the characters, to make the chronotype more realistic, etc. Moreover, one can observe the subtle connection that binds these allusions in a synergistic unity with the Shakespearean intertextuality. Thus, it would be interesting to look at the main manifestations of intertextuality in the given novel that are included into the Shakespearean intertextual framework as a text within a text and form a complex intertextual paradigm.

By typology, most of the allusions found in the text of the novel are intentional, explicit, reminiscent. They are easy to recognize because they reflect the narrator's deliberately naive and straightforward thinking. It would be most convenient to consider these instances of the intertextual dialogue by dividing them into three contingent groups: a) historical allusions (related to outstanding figures and events of the past); b) cultural allusions (those not directly related to the diachronic development of civilization, but reflecting its cultural diversity); c) literary allusions.

A significant group is constituted by historical allusions. Of particular note are the references to the history of ancient Rome, which fascinated Philip. Shakespeare's *Hamlet* also contains a number of references to the same historical period, especially, the rule and fall of Julius Caesar. Historical allusions in Haig's novel serve as a leitmotif that runs through the whole story and reflects the moral and intellectual pursuits of the protagonist. The key image here is such a historic fortification of Roman Britain as Hadrian's Wall³⁷. This construction symbolizes the alienation of the young man, his loneliness and otherness: "Imagine what it must have been like! After years spent in warm sunshine having to cross the rough English Channel to a country which was known to be very unfriendly. There was not only the bad weather and the hills but many Britons hated being part of the Roman Empire and would throw stones or vegetables or even spit on the new soldiers"³⁸. For Philip, such a wall separates his world and the world of his peers. In a similar manner,

³⁷ Ibid. P. 28–32.

³⁸ Ibid. P. 29.

the wall of the battlement on which Hamlet encounters the ghost of his father separates him from all the other characters in the play.

This intertextual connection is strengthened through the use of an attributed quote, which is graphically highlighted in the text: “I tried to act normal and so I had my book on the Romans in Britain by Graham Fortune but I could only read one sentence. The sentence was ‘For the Roman soldier Hadrian’s Wall was more than just a defence against the Caledonian tribes – it was also the dividing line between the known world of order and civilization, and the unknown world of chaos and barbarism’”³⁹. Quotations are rarely used in the text of this novel, which is why this case is particularly significant. The boy’s choice of the quote reflects his emotional state: his life is now divided into a *Hamlet*-like opposition of two separate worlds – a harmonious and orderly world before his father’s death and a chaotic, dangerous world after the car crash.

Subsequently, Philip begins to use allusions to the ancient history realia and episodes as cognitive tools that help him explore and better understand himself and the world around him. Philip methodically looks for parallels between his situation and ancient history, which is, in general, highly reminiscent of the Renaissance way of thinking. The boy writes, “I knew everything about Rome because it was my favourite bit of History and I had all the books from the library ... I knew that Romulus was like Uncle Alan because he killed his brother and became the first King of Rome 2800 years ago”⁴⁰. His confused mind tries to use antique images to grasp the difficult life-threatening collision in which the protagonist finds himself. One of the key images for this intellectual and spiritual search is Emperor Nero – a whole section is devoted to his story, told by a teenager in simple and understandable terms (“Emperor Nero and Emperor Neros Mum”⁴¹). As a result of these reflections, the boy draws an important conclusion which runs, “once you do one bad thing everything changes and you end up doing more bad things like Emperor Nero”⁴². Initially, the image of Nero is extremely negatively coloured and the narrator associates it with uncle Alan⁴³. But as the plot develops, it is the image of Emperor Nero that allows the boy to understand the entire

³⁹ Ibid. P. 63.

⁴⁰ Ibid. P. 179-180.

⁴¹ Ibid. P. 210-213.

⁴² Ibid. P. 210-213.

⁴³ Ibid. P. 133.

relativity of his subjective judgments, and therefore his own injustice to his uncle: “I blamed him like Emperor Nero blamed the Christians and the Romans blamed Nero”⁴⁴. After all, it is the ancient allusions that help Philip express his feelings, guilt and desire to change for the better. This idea is clearly reflected in the boy’s monologue when he says, “I did a prayer in my head and then after the prayer I wished I was a Roman because they had more Gods and they could keep saying prayers until there was a God who could help”⁴⁵.

So, as one can see, the historical allusions comprise quite a broad spectrum in the text of the novel: these are allusions-references that build a connection with particular historical realities, descriptive allusions, which help to better understand the character of the protagonist, and scenario allusions within which the development of the plot is paralleled with historical counterparts. Historical allusions perform a wide range of functions – from informational and evaluative to entertaining and decorative: they give information about the protagonist’s inner world, reflect his value system, the specifics of his personal evolution, make the story more interesting to a young audience, bringing out its relevance, connection with the real world and the contemporary school curriculum.

The next group of allusions worthy of consideration is cultural allusions. Most of them are fragmentary and relational. They are relevant to a particular fragment of the novel and intended to enhance its expressiveness. For example, when Philip first sees the Ghost, he portrays this image in an allusive way, saying, “Dad was pale and see through like the ghosts at the Haunted Mansion in Disney World and he had blood running down from his hair”⁴⁶. A combination of the mention of Disneyland and the naturalistic depiction of a bloodied face enhances the dramatic effect and reflects the young protagonist’s perception of the world in all its childlike immediacy and paradoxicality. Another interesting example is a predicative allusion to Spiderman. For the first time, a mention of this comic hero is made when describing the Ghost: “Dads Ghost looked at me with the most serious face I had ever seen like Norman Osborn in the first Spiderman when he has the nerve gas before he becomes the Green Goblin”⁴⁷. This allusion has an important

⁴⁴ Ibid. P. 290.

⁴⁵ Ibid. P. 313.

⁴⁶ Ibid. P. 4.

⁴⁷ Ibid. P. 41.

prognostic function – it hints that the image of the ghost cannot be seen as exceptionally positive, because it will bring the protagonist a lot of trouble and suffering in the future. The reference to the Green Goblin⁴⁸ also actualizes the heated controversy around the function of the Ghost in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* which quite possibly became one of the sources of inspiration for Matt Haig.

The allusive paradigm is supplemented later when the boy starts to identify himself with a superhero (e. g., “I made myself think of the Spiderman and I made myself stronger”⁴⁹). Just like Hamlet, Philip is looking for a role model. The boy finds it in the image of a comic book hero: “When I kissed her I tried not to think about the Horrible Things about mouths and the one million little creatures that live in mouths and the two pints of spit that a mouth makes every day and my mouth was slower and I thought of Spiderman and Peter Parker kissing Mary Jane and I felt good and I wondered if Mrs Fells kissed like Leah”⁵⁰. Spiderman's image allows the teenager to recover lost social reference points, become more flexible and adapt to the social environment. However, gradually Philip realizes that the world is much more diverse and complex than comics or cinema: this is discussed in a separate chapter called “Spiderman 2”⁵¹. This completely Shakespearean realization of the need to distinguish between the imaginary and the real becomes a kind of a moral compass for the protagonist. No wonder he ironically comments upon his contemporaries' passion for the PlayStation game console, calling it a “PrayStation”⁵². Just like Claudius's prayer keeps Shakespeare's Hamlet from acting, the PrayStation prevents the boys from living a real life. Built with a series of cultural allusions, this leitmotif acquires further development in the last chapter of the novel where Philip says, “I thought life is not like a film or a Christmas play or a TV with only one channel. There are more channels. You can change the story and turn over or do something different it is up to you”⁵³. Thus,

⁴⁸ “Be thou a spirit of health or goblin damned, / Bring with thee airs from heaven or blasts from hell, / Be thy intents wicked or charitable, / Thou com'st in such a questionable shape / That I will speak to thee.” (1.4.44-1.4.49) Shakespeare W. *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*.

⁴⁹ Stoppard T. *Rosencratz and Guildenstern are Dead*. P. 43.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.* P. 75.

⁵¹ *Ibid.* P. 95-97.

⁵² *Ibid.* P. 120.

⁵³ *Ibid.* P. 287.

cultural allusions perform important functions in the text of the novel, structuring not only the general cultural background of the narrative but also acting as triggers for social and philosophical reflections on problems that profoundly resonate with Shakespeare's great tragedy.

The central element of the novel's semantic mechanism is literary intertextuality. Apart from Shakespearean allusions, one can find references to a variety of other significant texts semantically connected with Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. For example, R. Kipling's poetic lines are discussed in Philip's class. These lines are accurately cited, attributed and graphically highlighted: "‘If any question why we died, / Tell them, because our fathers lied.’ / Common Form, ‘Epitaphs of the War (1914-1918) / Rudyard Kipling (1865–1936)⁵⁴". In his usual manner, the protagonist begins to look for parallels with his own fate and, as it seems, finds them. However, his teacher draws the boy's attention to an important aspect – the need to understand the boundary between reality, poetry, and fiction ("She said that is History Philip not Imagination. In fact its a poem so its both"⁵⁵). R. Kipling's lines give the teenager food for thought, he ponders the problems of war and peace, as he puts his own intellectual experience as a matrix on the world around him.

Another literary source that is mentioned many times in the novel is a book called *Murder Most Foul* by Horatio Wilson. The book describes mysterious deaths of famous historical figures, stars, and writers (Marvin Gaye, Napoleon Bonaparte, Edgar Allan Poe, Marilyn Monroe, Princess Diana, Christopher Marlowe, etc.). The latest is a fictional story of Hollywood celebrity Lana Turner: her boyfriend is killed by Cheryl Crane, the actress' daughter, trying to protect her mother. This story seems particularly telling to Brian and pushes him to take action, just as Hamlet was motivated by a conversation with an officer in the Norwegian army.

CONCLUSIONS

All in all, M. Haig's novel *The Dead Fathers Club* exhibits an extremely wide range of intertextual connections. To a greater extent, these are allusions, including allusions-references, allusions-descriptions, and allusions-scripts of literary, historical and cultural types. Also, there are several attributed quotes. This intertextual specificity is entirely

⁵⁴ Ibid. P. 53.

⁵⁵ Ibid. P. 56.

consistent with the novel's orientation to the young, inexperienced reader, on the one hand, and the connoisseur of intellectual literature able to appreciate the stylistic and psychological authenticity of the representation of adolescent consciousness, on the other hand.

Shakespearean allusions, which form the semantic and structural framework of the novel, work together with other groups of intertextual references to create a synergistic metatextual construct – a complex and highly functional literary projection, which can both intrigue the young readers and teach them to use classical literature as a toolkit to help them deal with the daily challenges and traumas.

The analysis of the functioning of particular contextual literary projections of Shakespeare's tragedy can form a basis for some observations about their general nature and peculiarities. Although a contextual projection (as well as a text-centric one) is characterized by an interpretive vector, the dominant strategies here are the adaptation and modernization. So, Shakespearean images (often represented in a reduced, stereotyped, travestied form) are often used as certain cognitive 'tools.' As a result, even when the author preserves the key elements of the storyline, the prerequisite is a transformation of the chronotope, as well as a significant development of the character images, the emergence of new motifs. However, an important role in this type of projection is played by a connection with the source text as a means of semantically enriching the target text and bringing collisions and images to a new level of generalization.

SUMMARY

The paper employs the strategy for analyzing metatextual nature of a literary work to explore the metatextual potential of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* realized in the play's literary projections. Two types of literary projections of *Hamlet* are distinguished: text-orientated / text-centric (e. g., W. Gilbert, T. Stoppard, C. Cavafy, B. Akunin, J. Updike) and contextual (e. g., M. Haig, D. Wroblewski, I. Murdoch). A study of these two modifications makes it possible to identify those factors due to which Shakespeare's great play steadily maintains the central position in the world literary canon and manages to generate a powerful *Hamlet* discourse. *The Dead Fathers Club* by Matt Haig is viewed as a vivid example of a contextual literary projection. The investigation of this novel's intertextual paradigm allows to better understand the

transformational mechanisms that shape the semantic landscape of this type of creative reworkings of the iconic pretext.

Keywords: metatext, metatextuality, literary projection, intertextuality, allusion, Hamlet discourse.

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