

## 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”<sup>1</sup>. 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 19<sup>th</sup> 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*,

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<sup>1</sup>Emerson 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)<sup>2</sup> 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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.

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<sup>2</sup> 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.