

УДК 81'255.4=161.2:821.111-25Шекспір7.03

**IHOR KOSTETSKYI'S TRANSLATIONS OF
WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS "ROMEO AND JULIET" AND "HAMLET"
AS A MEANS OF UKRAINIAN LITERATURE MODERNIZATION**

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The article researches the key features of Ihor Kostetskyi's translations of William Shakespeare's plays *Romeo and Juliet* and *Hamlet* considered through the prism of the translator's undertaken mission of Ukrainian culture revival through the modernization of the Ukrainian language and literature. Ihor Kostetskyi's translation strategy vastly relied on his general linguistic and cultural concepts and the slogan of *non-returning* in particular.

Keywords: Ihor Kostetskyi, William Shakespeare, modernization of Ukrainian literature, translation strategy, drama translation.

Ihor Kostetskyi (1913–1983) considered Ukrainian theatre the weakest aspect of Ukrainian culture and therefore aimed at modernizing it through his original plays and translations of the masterpieces of world drama. Taking into consideration his linguistic and culture concepts, the analysis of Kostetskyi's translations of William Shakespeare's dramas *Romeo and Juliet* and *Hamlet*, being the only translations of Shakespeare's plays I. Kostetskyi performed, allows for an attempt to estimate their value and the place they occupy in the Ukrainian literary polysystem. The article aims at researching the interpretative position of I. Kostetskyi as actualized in these translations.

Being literary and culturally active within Ukrainian Diaspora in Germany, I. Kostetskyi, with his significant and unique contribution to the development of Ukrainian literature, and translation in particular, has been, nevertheless, generally overlooked by critics and Translation Studies scholars. Although lacking systematic research, his translations have been the focus of studies by such scholars as H. Kochur, S. Pavlychko, L. Kolomyets, S. Matviyenko and M. R. Stekh, the representative of the Ukrainian Diaspora in Canada. While the latter scholar defends the artistic standpoint of I. Kostetskyi, S. Pavlychko heavily criticizes the "nihilistic modernism" of the translator. L. Kolomyets, in particular, refers to Kostetskyi's interpretation of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* as apocryphal if compared with its canonic translations. Such contradictory views on Kostetskyi's translations reiterate the need for more profound and extensive research of his literary heritage as a translator.

Yu. Sheveliov described I. Kostetskyi as the "revelation of God and Devil" [9, p. 25]. Such metaphorical comparison highlights the diverse range of Kostetskyi's views, sometimes

synthesizing quite polar opposite approaches of his and combining them into an unprecedented phenomenon of I. Kostetskyi.

The very name of I. Kostetskyi is closely associated with Ukrainian Modernism [4, p. 345]. In fact, the latter became his world vision and even the undertaken mission, especially if considered through the prism of his role as an initiator, co-founder and active member of The Artistic Ukrainian Movement (MUR), the aim of which was to create “the great national style” as a response to the stylelessness, eclecticism and denationalization of literature in the Soviet Ukraine in the 1930s [8, p. 14–15]. His speech “Ukrainian Realism of the 20th Century” delivered at the first congress of The Artistic Ukrainian Movement suggested the slogan of “non-returning” (*неповорот назад*) which first and foremost presupposed the denial of at that time existing classical tradition of national realism and became the starting point of Kostetskyi’s unconventional and non-national discourse that later overtook the name of Modernism [4, p. 330]. The slogan of “non-returning” appears to underlie Kostetskyi’s approach towards literature in general.

The year of 1957 may be marked as the year of Shakespeare in Kostetskyi’s lifetime. When on August 25, Ukrainian Shakespeare Society was founded in Heidelberg, I. Kostetskyi took up the post of its general secretary. The Society targeted at establishing relations between Renaissance and Ukrainian literatures, European reception of Shakespeare and the introduction of European Shakespeare Studies resources (renowned around the world) into Ukrainian literary studies [2, p. 223]. In the same year, in his publishing house “On the Mountain,” I. Kostetskyi published his interpretation of *Romeo and Juliet* followed by the first full Ukrainian translation of Shakespeare’s sonnets in 1958. However, diligent work on these translations had been undertaken long before 1957. In his letter to O. Izarskyi from April 10, 1955, I. Kostetskyi mentioned being already in the homestretch of translating Shakespeare’s sonnets into Ukrainian. He also shared his plans as to the “important translations” which he intended to perform in two years time, *Hamlet* and “some other Shakespeare’s things” being among them [3, p. 221]. Nonetheless, to our knowledge, the latter proved to be limited by *Romeo and Juliet* only. Separate excerpts (Act 2, Scene 2 and Act 3, Scenes 1–2) of Kostetskyi’s translation of *Hamlet* were published in the periodical *Suchasnist* in 1963 and 1964.

The introductory notes expressed in the preface to Kostetskyi’s translation of *Romeo and Juliet* lay a good foundation for better understanding of the translator’s linguistic choices. The translator argues for the use of a rich variety of lingual resources as related to the problem of the creation of theatrical style as well as of unique and distinct theatrical masks of the characters in his interpretation of the tragedy. This translation contains many aspects which are unacceptable in the philological sense but prove to be justified in terms of staging a lively performance [11, p. 11].

As it is noted in the title of Kostetskyi’s translation, the renowned Shakespeare’s tragedy is presented in a new Ukrainian interpretation: *Презнаменита й прежалісна трагедія Ромео та Джульєтти. По-українському наново переказана*. Such phrasing, whether intentionally or not, induces the reader to prepare for an unexpected, fresh interpretation of the well-known play. From the first pages of the translation, it becomes obvious that the title was by no means misleading. The characters amaze the reader with their unique idiolects, the diversity of their voices and consequently the vividness of their personalities. Almost equal prominence is given to both protagonists and functional characters, therefore there seem to be no literally *functional* characters in the translation. However, there may be traced a clear distinction between the idiolects of the characters of noble and non-noble origin.

Obvious Polonization of vocabulary may be observed to a greater or lesser degree in the speech of such characters as Capulet, Lady Capulet, Prince and Friar Lawrence. The latter adopts the name of *Брат Лаврін* in the translation and his idiolect is endowed with distinct lingual characteristics.

As Romeo comes to Friar Lawrence with the request to secretly give marriage to him and Juliet, the monk in his greeting to the young man, says:

*Therefore thy earliness doth me assure
Thou art up-roused by some distemperature;
Or if not so, then here I hit it right:
Our Romeo hath not been in bed to-night* [15, p. 48].

Contrary to the speech of Lady Capulet and other characters, Friar Lawrence's idiolect is characterized by the use of dated forms of auxiliary verbs "doth", "art" and "hath" for modern "does", "are" and "has" respectively as well as such forms of personal pronouns as "thou" and "thy". The pronoun "thou" and its cases "thee", "thine", "thy" were used in ordinary speech in Old English up till the period of Middle English when they were gradually superseded by the plural "ye", "you", "your", "yours" in addressing the superior and, later, an equal, though they were long retained in addressing the inferior. "In recent times, except for special uses, "thou" and its cases have become archaic and obsolescent" [13, p. 1 136].

Notwithstanding the general tendency towards shifting to the use of personal pronoun "you" in the nominative case as well as in the objective case already at the end of the Middle English period, it was still frequently replaced by the form "thou" and its derivatives in the plays of Shakespeare, who was the representative of the Early New English period. "Thou/thee is still used in Shakespeare's works, but the rules, or regularities as to the use of this pronoun are rather indistinct. So, for instance, in *Romeo and Juliet* the servants address each other using *thou*, Juliet and her mother use *you*, addressing each other; first meeting of Romeo and Juliet is entirely marked by addressing each other in *thou*, but finally while Juliet sticks to it, Romeo occasionally switches to *you*" [1, p. 171, 172].

Thus, the selective use of the obsolete forms of pronouns combined with the abstract noun "earliness" in the meaning of "early visit" and a dated lexeme "distemperature" for an "ailment, disorder, malady" [12] endow Friar Lawrence's speech with prudence of a wise person with high moral principles and rich life experience that comes with age. These features appear to be represented in the archaic and Polonized translation of Friar Lawrence words:

*Отож, гди чуваси отак-о вже зрання –
Єсм певен: мелянхолія тебе збудила з снання.
Альбож, гди не так, то видять мої очі:
Вогулі не знав ліжка наш Ромео тої ночі* [11, p. 44].

The extensive use of words of Polish origin like *гди* (instead of its Ukrainian equivalent *якщо*), *єсм* (as a Polish variant of the verb *to be* in the first person singular – *я є*), *альбож* (which corresponds to the Polish *albo ż*; the Ukrainian equivalent is *або ж*), *вогулі* (which is an adapted Ukrainian form of the Polish *w ogóle* meaning *зовсім*) and many others are characteristic of Friar Lawrence's Ukrainian idiolect in general. The lexeme *мелянхолія* with the palatalized sound [л'] by its phonetic characteristics resembles the pronunciation of the Polish noun with identical meaning – *melancholia*. Due to objective historical circumstances, some of

the Polonized Ukrainian forms still exist in separate parts of the western regions of Ukraine and, thus, their use in the translation might create an impression of the monk coming from one of the local communities in Halychyna.

Besides Polish macaronisms, I. Kostetskyi also embellished Friar Lawrence's speech with the dated and colloquial vocabulary. The lexeme *чуваєш* is determined as an old-fashioned word with the meaning of staying awake: *не спати; пильнувати* [6, v. 11, p. 372]. The colloquial element of these lines is added by the lexeme *отак-о* which is the informal variant of the stylistically neutral adverb *отак*.

The English expression “here I hit it right” is rendered as *видять мої очі*. Although the direct meaning of the original phrase is not reflected in the translation and the image of hitting is not preserved, the figurative meaning of “being/doing something right” is still present in the translation. The Ukrainian phrase acquires the following meaning: “my eyes see and it is the proof that my guess was right”. The lexeme *видіти* is a dialectal word for *бачити* [6, v. 1, p. 388] which, in its turn, adds some Ukrainian colouring to the speech of this personage in the translation. Another colloquial expression may be observed in the last line of this excerpt: the adverbial modifier of time in the source text “tonight” is rendered as *мої ночі* instead of the common for this context translation – *цієї ночі, сьогодні вночі* etc.

The speech of Romeo and Juliet in the translation by I. Kostetskyi is much more moderate and corresponding to the literary norms of the Ukrainian language than the speech of other characters. When speaking with his friends Benvolio and Mercutio, Romeo is often witty; his lines are characterized by an abundance of puns, which is clearly and strongly reflected in the translation by I. Kostetskyi. However, in his dialogues with Juliet at Capulet's house, the young man acquires a rather poetic and eloquent voice:

*If I profane with my unworhiest hand
This holy shrine, the gentle sin is this:
My lips, two blushing pilgrims, ready stand
To smooth that rough touch with a tender kiss* [15, p. 31].

These lines constitute a fine example of elevated and elegant English with bright images and metaphoric expressions. Juliet's hand, as opposed to the *unworhiest hand* of Romeo, is compared to a *holy shrine*. Although the very lexeme *shrine* already presupposes something divine and sacred, it is additionally described by the attribute *holy*. Besides this metaphor (*holy shrine*), this sacred, spiritual discourse is supplemented by the verb *profane*, which is often used in the context of creed and religion, as well as the nouns *sin*, as the basic religious notion, and *pilgrims* – people making a pilgrimage (*i.e. a journey to a shrine or sacred place as an act of devotion, in order to acquire spiritual merit, or as a penance*) [16, p. 666]. The *sin* which Romeo is about to commit is described as *gentle* and, therefore, may be considered a metaphor for “a kiss”, which, in its turn, is further explained in the fourth line of this excerpt. In the third line, Romeo introduces a highly poetic and metaphoric description of his lips, creating a certain break in the sentence by means of detachment – *My lips, two blushing pilgrims, ready stand...* Such expressive syntax of the given line also adds to the high-flown mode of the utterance.

From the perspective of prosody, this quatrain is also characterized by its poetic meter – an iambic pentameter, vastly used in Shakespeare's sonnets and plays. I. Kostetskyi managed to preserve the meter in his translation, however, while Shakespeare finishes some of the lines with a masculine (stressed) ending, the Ukrainian translator makes them feminine:

*Якщо я недостойною рукою
Знечещу святощ, – гріх не йду в рахунок:
Уста-прочани те, що грубо скою,
Злагіднять, червоніючи, в цілунок [11, р. 31].*

The religious motif of the original text is also reflected in the translation via the introduction of the images created by the following lexemes: *знечещу, святощ, гріх, прочани*. The contracted form of the noun *святощі* used by I. Kostetskyi makes the text sound more solemn and, therefore, compensates for the omitted attribute *holy shrine*. While in the original, the *gentle sin* was an obvious metaphor for “a kiss”, in the translation this hint is lost, saying instead that the sin will not count as such. However, in the following lines, it is clear what the topic of the previous sentence was.

The detachment in the third line of the original text is rendered as an apposition: *уста-прочани*. However, the separating and accentuating stylistic effect of the detachment is to a certain extent preserved in line four in the form of a participial phrase – *червоніючи*. The Ukrainian lexeme *злагіднити* is commonly used as an intransitive verb, i.e. without an object. However, in the translation by I. Kostetskyi, it is attributed an object – *те, що грубо скою*. The verb *злагіднити* is given a new meaning in a new contextual usage and, thus, may be regarded as an occasional semantic neologism.

While the speech of the functional characters of noble origin is characterized by the extensive use of Polish macaronisms, dialectal words and archaisms, the speech of the protagonists is rather eloquent and mostly rendered with adherence to the standards of the literary Ukrainian language, as well as with the preservation of original prosodic properties of the text and its most prominent stylistic features. However, besides the characters of noble origin, there are also servants, pages and nurses whose idiolects in a similar way hint at the lack of their education and lower social standing. One of the brightest examples of such personages is Juliet’s Nurse in the play *Romeo and Juliet*.

In their conversation with Lady Capulet and Juliet, Nurse shares her memories about her late husband and little Juliet’s childhood saying:

*I warrant, an I should live a thousand years,
I never should forget it. “Wilt thou not, Jule?” quoth he.
And, pretty fool, it stinted and said “ay” [15, р. 19].*

Nurse’s words obviously lack refined aristocratic eloquence characteristic of the idiolects of the characters of noble origin. Lexically, it sounds rather simple and even colloquial. Additional expressiveness is created on the syntactic level – with the help of parenthetical sentence (*an I should live a thousand years*) and phrase (*pretty fool*) constructions used in the middle of their respective main sentence. The use of the conjunction *and* in the form of *an* in the first parenthetical clause first and foremost emphasizes on the fast pace of speech and additional clarifying nature of the inserted expression. Combined with the shortened form of Juliet’s name – *Jule*, it simultaneously hints at the colloquial mode of these lines. The use of direct speech, one of the instances of which is an interjection, also endows the lines of Nurse with additional expressiveness of spoken English.

In the translation by I. Kostetskyi, these three lines appear to correspond to the same level of expressiveness as the original ones, thus from the point of view of pragmatics, the function of the source text is rather adequately rendered:

*Ніколи не забуду, хоч би й ще
Я прожила сто год. А правда ж, доню?
Він шутить, а вона йому – “авез” [11, р. 22].*

Although the parenthetical constructions are not preserved in the translation, there may be observed other means that compensate expressiveness in the translation. The question *А правда ж, доню?* stands out from the rest of Nurse's words. While these three lines are shaped in the form of a narrative (the woman tells the story of the past days) rather than an address to other characters, the question is an obvious address to Juliet. At first site, it creates an impression that it is Nurse turning to Juliet in the middle of her short narrative, however, if we have a closer look at the original text, it becomes clear that this question is the equivalent to Nurse citing her late husband: *“Wilt thou not, Jule?” quoth he*. The absence of quotation marks in the translation causes a substantial shift in the overall understanding of these lines, attributing the words of her husband to Nurse and changing the narrative form of her brief story into an interactive dialogue with other characters, particularly Juliet (however, in the original, this part of the conversation involves Lady Capulet and Nurse only).

The shortened form of Juliet's name *Jule* is substituted by a common noun *доню* used in the Vocative Case, which is regarded as a structural and connotative realia in the Ukrainian-English binary opposition. The Vocative Case is an inevitable part of the Ukrainian language and one of its characteristic features that make it unique and melodious.

The absence of quotation marks also impacts the understanding of the following line which reads: *Він шутить, а вона йому...* It may appear bewildering to the reader that the man is supposed to have made a joke while in the translation his words are completely omitted (i.e. not separated by quotation marks). This example may presumably support the idea that the translation was done for theatre, where the spectator, hearing the intonation of Nurse and seeing the actual performance, will be in charge of deciding who this question was targeted at and who it initially belonged to.

The use of Russian macaronisms *сто год, шутить* instead of normative Ukrainian lexemes *сто років/літ, жартує* immediately strikes the reader's attention. Such lexical choices point at possible lack of education and lower social status of the character speaking a pidgin language – surzhyk that combines elements of Ukrainian and Russian.

The English interjection *ay* is rendered as *авез* which is the way young children pronounce the lexeme *авжеж* in Ukrainian. The exclamation *ay* (or its alternative form *aye*) is marked as an old fashioned or dialectal word said to express assent [16, p. 53]. The Ukrainian equivalent is defined as a particle with the following meaning: *“Уживається для ствердження якої-небудь думки (найчастіше при відповідях)”* [6, v. 1, p. 9]. The word is marked as colloquial. Although the connotation of being archaic or dialectal (English *ay*) and colloquial (Ukrainian *авжеж*) do not coincide, the translation appears to adequately render the denotative meaning of the source text.

While Nurse is a functional character in Shakespeare's tragedy *Romeo and Juliet*, Hamlet is the title character and protagonist of the play *Hamlet*. Despite his noble origin, the speech of Hamlet in Kostetskyi's translation shares more common features with the functional characters of non-noble origin from the play *Romeo and Juliet* than it does with the characters of noble origin of the same play or the very drama *Hamlet*.

Among others, Hamlet's idiolect in Kostetskyi's translation may be characterized by the use of occasional neologisms that are often created on the basis of the method of “harsh combination”

that presupposes the fusion of two or more words into a single lexical unit [5, p. 99]. The English word combination *express and admirable* is rendered as *довершено, подивугідно*, the later being the fusion of the expression *гідно подиву*. Other similar bright examples include *дядькобатько* for the English *uncle-father* and *тітконенька* as the Ukrainian equivalent for *aunt-mother*. Interestingly enough, while the first two examples (*подивугідно* and *дядькобатько*) are created by simply writing two words as one, the occasionalism *тітконенька* is created with the help of the typical Ukrainian word-building affix -o-.

Ukrainian literary and folk motifs may also be traced in the speech of Hamlet in the translation by I. Kostetskyi. As Polonius is trying to inform Hamlet about the arrival of actors, Hamlet says: *You say right, sir. O' Monday morning, 'twas so indeed* [14, p. 112] which is rendered into Ukrainian creating an allusion to a well-known poem by Taras Shevchenko “Рано-вранці новобранці”, put to music by a prolific composer Kyrylo Stetsenko: *В понеділок дуже вранці, бранці, тра-та-та, ланці* [10, p. 58]. Such wording makes an impression that Hamlet is actually singing a line from the song but does not remember its lyrics very well and thus inserts *тра-та-та* instead of the expected word.

A bright example of referring to Ukrainian folklore in the translation may be observed as Hamlet reacts to Polonius commenting on the performance of the invited actors:

POLONIUS:

This is too long.

HAMLET:

It shall to the barber's, with your beard.—Prithee, say on. He's for a jig or a tale of bawdry, or he sleeps. Say on. Come to Hecuba [14, p. 116].

Shakespeare's play on words, as Hamlet says that it is Polonius' beard not the actors' play that is too long, is adequately rendered in the translation by I. Kostetskyi. However, already in the following sentences one may notice certain deviations from the original text:

ПОЛОНІЙ:

Занадто довго.

ГАМЛЕТ:

Занадто довга ваша борода. Стрижій на неї вже чекає. Промовляй далі, прошу. Цьому треба бугі-вугі або сороміцької коломийки. Бо інакше засне. Промовляй далі. Тут перехід до Гекуби [10, p. 61].

The image of *коломийка* serves as a domesticating element of the translation while *бугі-вугі* (*boogie woogie*), an originally American swing dance, produces quite the opposite effect. The lexeme *стрижій* is an old-fashioned word denoting *перукар* [6, v. 9, p. 769]. These several lines of the translation illustrate Kostetskyi's tendency towards verbal and stylistic experiments.

Upon the departure of the actors and all other characters, Hamlet remains alone and speaks to himself in a 59-lines long soliloquy which is shortened to 25 lines in the translation by I. Kostetskyi. Apart from slang and pejorative expressions, the translator introduced some specifically Ukrainian images:

А я?

Придуток, що гойдається в байдарці

Івасиком-телесиком таким,

І човен води повен [10, p. 62].

The fairy tale about Ivasyk-Telesyk is one of the oldest Ukrainian folk tales. The last line of this excerpt is taken from a well-known Ukrainian folk song “Пливе човен води повен”. The

translation of this soliloquy also includes the phraseological unit – *ні пари з уст*, which means *нічого не говорити, затято мовчати* [7, p. 140] and a calqued and partially transformed Russian idiomatic expression *мімік погорілого театру* (originally – *артист погорілого театру* as an ironic way of saying that someone has not come up to someone's expectations). The pejorative lexeme *прідурок* adds obviously colloquial mode to the translation.

Such excessive colloquialization of style is characteristic of Hamlet, as well as of the personages of non-noble origin of Shakespeare's tragedy *Romeo and Juliet* in Kostetskyi's translation. The speech of these characters of *Romeo and Juliet* is obviously abundant in Russian macaronisms, which is less typical of Hamlet's speech. Both translations include domesticating elements and allusions to Ukrainian folklore and literary tradition.

While the speech of the functional characters of noble origin in *Romeo and Juliet* is characterized by the extensive use of Polish macaronisms, dialectal words and archaisms, the speech of the protagonists is rather eloquent and mostly rendered with adherence to the standards of the literary Ukrainian language, as well as with the preservation of original prosodic properties of the text and its most prominent stylistic features.

Through the vast variety of linguo-stylistic means, which, in fact, raises much controversy, I. Kostetskyi aimed at the actualization of a wide range of resources of the Ukrainian language which would serve the main task of his translations – the development and modernization of the Ukrainian language, literature and culture in general.

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Стаття надійшла до редколегії 26.08.2015 р.
Прийнято до друку 14.09. 015 р.

**П'ЕСИ ВІЛЬЯМА ШЕКСПІРА “РОМЕО ТА ДЖУЛЬЄТТА”
І “ГАМЛЕТ” У ПЕРЕКЛАДІ ІГОРЯ КОСТЕЦЬКОГО
ЯК ЗАСІБ МОДЕРНІЗАЦІЇ УКРАЇНСЬКОЇ ЛІТЕРАТУРИ**

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Працю присвячено головним особливостям п'єс Вільяма Шекспіра *Ромео та Джульєтта* і *Гамлет* у перекладі Ігоря Костецького. Переклади розглянуто крізь призму місії модернізації української культури через модернізацію української мови і літератури, якою керувався перекладач. Перекладацьку стратегію Ігоря Костецького значною мірою побудована на основі загальних мовно-культурних концепцій перекладача, особливо на його гаслі *неповороту назад*.

Ключові слова: Ігор Костецький, Вільям Шекспір, модернізація української літератури, перекладацька стратегія, переклад драми.