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# ACCURACY AND ARTISTRY IN HRYHORIY KOCHUR'S TRANSLATION OF *HAMLET*

**Vera Rich**

Presented in the paper is an in-depth vision of a subtle correlation between artistry and accuracy in the process of translation which is attainable by considering the minute details of a literary work as well as the wealth of its vertical context.

*Key words:* Kochur's legacy, accuracy, artistic translation.

The theme of this conference is Kochur's work in the context of the 21st century, so at first glance it may seem strange that I have chosen to speak about his version of a text more than 400 years old, with a Weltanschauung very different to that of our time. As a leading 20th-century Shakespearian scholar reminds us: "Hearing voices from a higher world belongs mainly in the realm of abnormal psychology. Revenge may be common but is hardly supportable. The idea of purifying violence belongs to terrorist groups. Gertrude's sexual behaviour and remarriage do not seem out of the ordinary"[3].

This however is a superficial approach. At the symbolic level, Hamlet clearly speaks to the contemporary world – both at the personal (psychological) and the societal-political levels. The Prince of Denmark is a potent symbol, instantly recognizable far beyond the bounds of the literary elite. To cite but two examples from 21st century mass-culture: in 2001, when it seemed possible that the scheduled UK Parliamentary election might be postponed due to an epidemic of foot-and-mouth disease, the London *Evening Standard* cartoonist drew a black-clad Prime Minister Blair, holding a sheep's skull, over the caption "To run on May 3rd or not to run on May 3rd [4]," while a detective novel that has reached the mass-circulation paperback market has a subtext in which the first-person narrator tries to reconcile his view of Hamlet's character with that propounded by Sigmund Freud [12]. Nor are such 21th-century applications confined to the Anglophone world: at this very time, there is a fervent debate in the Polish print and electronic media on the corporal punishment of children – under the slogan "Bić czy nie bić" ("to beat or nor to beat") – a pun on the Polish rendering of Hamlet's famous question ("Być czy nie być") which Shakespeare himself would surely have relished.

At times, indeed, the play can acquire strangely modern overtones. Roman Zawistowski's Kraków 1956 production can be viewed in retrospect as one of the precursor shocks of the fall of the communist imperium. Writes Jan Kott: "Th[e] date has its particular significance. It was three years after the death of Stalin; the time of the 20th Congress in Moscow... the première was in September, the same September that was followed by the Polish October".

The lines that everyone knew by heart, that were until now only literature, suddenly sounded frightening. "Something is rotten in the state of Denmark" was the first chord of

the new meaning in *Hamlet*, and then the words "Denmark's a prison" thrice repeated. *Hamlet* became from the first scene to the last a political drama. Of all Shakespeare's words the most audible was "watch". At Elsinore Castle, someone is hidden behind the every arras; Guildenstern and Rosenkrantz, friends of Hamlet, behave like agents of the secret police... Politics lie heavy over every sentiment and there is no escape from it. Hamlet's "To be or not to be" may signify "To act or not to act". The Polish Hamlet of 1956 was both an angry young man and a rebellious Communist [9].

In retrospect, this production can be viewed as one of the early "dominoes" in the row whose eventual fall, three and a half decades later, would bring about the end of the communist imperium, so that one of the minor spin-offs from the Zawistowski production could well be my own presence in Lviv today!

Hamlet, by the way, was first staged in this city back in 1797 – a Polish version with Wojciech Bogusławski as director and in the title role. The first Ukrainian translation (by Mykhailo Rudnyts'kyi) was staged here in 1943 – both events, one may note, under a recently imposed foreign occupation. Kochur's version, made in 1964 for the Shakespeare quatercentenary was staged only in Lviv in 1996.

Staging it could, indeed, raise practical problems. No less than three early versions of the play claim to be the "true" version of Shakespeare's play – known from their format as the First Quarto (Q1) published 1603, the Second Quarto (Q2) published 1604 – 5 and the First Folio (F1) – 1623. The precise relationship between these versions is a matter of ongoing scholarly controversy.[1] Kochur's version is effectively based on Q2 – which runs to an unwieldy 3798 lines, far too long for a normal theatre – and *a fortiori* for the public theatres of Shakespeare's time[2]. Kochur's version also includes text from F1 – notably in 3.2 the "Denmark's a prison" passage (30 prose lines) and the "little eyasses" passage (25 prose lines) three lines at the end of Horatio's "Rose of May" speech (F1 IV.i = Q2 IV.v.) and fourteen lines of dialogue between Hamlet and Horatio immediately before the entry of Osric in V.ii. All this would add around another ten minutes to acting time[3].

Kochur, presumably, found these additions in the edited English text he took as his original – circumstances have prevented me, so far, from ascertaining which edition this was. However, there is an additional complication with Shakespeare texts. For the early printings all survive in more than one copy, and different copies of the "same" text contain variants. It seems that when in the course of a print-run the 17th century printers discovered a typographical error, they corrected it but did not discard the uncorrected pages. So any given page of an early edition may be "corrected" in one surviving copy but not in another. There are also obscurities due to the lack of an agreed spelling convention in Shakespeare's

[1] For a synopsis of the main arguments, see [1]

[2] A rule of thumb for those planning poetry recitals in English is that a pentameter takes 4 seconds to recite. The complete Q2 Hamlet – consisting largely of pentameter verse, would therefore require some four to four-and-a-half hours of "speaking time" – plus perhaps another half-hour to allow for ceremonial entrances and exits, the "dumb show" in III.ii. and the fight in V.ii. According to a ruling issued by the Lord Chamberlain in 1594, plays were to start at 2.00 pm and end "between four and five p.m.". Although in the course of time, plays did get longer, and if performed in full must have over-run the 5.00 p. m. deadline (see: [5]), in the open-air theatres of Shakespeare's day which depended on daylight, the full Q2 text would have been effectively unstageable for almost six months of the year. Consequently, some scholars have speculated that the Q2 text was published as a play for reading, rather than performance, and contained material which Shakespeare's theatrical company, the "Lord Chamberlain's Men" had been obliged to omit for reasons of time.

[3] Kochur's version also adds – as indeed, do virtually all "edited" texts, the Q1 stage directions for both Laertes and Hamlet to leap into Ophelia's grave. In Q2 and F1, only Laertes leaps into the grave – and then climbs out again to grapple with Hamlet. Hamlet's leap, with his challenging shout "It is I, Hamlet the Dane" is undoubtedly fine theatre – but it does not significantly affect acting time whether the fight takes place in or beside the grave.

day and/or the printers' difficulty in deciphering his handwriting. Scholars have emended these in various ways; a good modern edition normally lists at least the most significant suggestions. Hence, whatever text Kochur used, there would be passages offering a choice of interpretation – and where even the scholarly experts disagree, the translator has to rely on his own insight and intuition.

Consider for example (I.i. 62-63), where Horatio says of the deceased king:

> So frowned he once, when in an angry parle
> He smote the **sleaded Pollax** on the ice.

(Here Q1, Q2 and F1 all read "Pollax", F1 has "sledded", instead of the "sleaded" of Q1 and Q2).

Most editors emend "Pollax" to "Polacks", i.e. natives of Poland – and "sleaded" to "sledded" – i.e. using sleds or sledges. This fits the context of the play: the word "Polack" occurs three times later in the text[4], sledges make sense of the reference to "ice" and the allusion to Poland here would subconsciously prepare the audience for the significance of Fortinbras's Polish campaign later in the play. Some editors however argue [4, p.271] that the Danish King was not *fighting* the Poles at that point but holding talks ("parle") with them – presumably out of doors – to avoid a battle, and that, growing angry, he hit the ice with his "pole-axe" – a hammer-like weapon, which was "leaded", or perhaps "studded" to increase its lethal qualities! To which supporters of the "Polish" interpretation may respond that "angry parle" (i. e. "angry conversation") is ironic litotes for a battle[5]. Kochur's rendering here is interesting:

> Такий похмурий¸ наче того дня¸
> Коли, урвавши мову, він у гніві
> З саней на лід він поляків поскидав.

The Poles and the sledges are there – and so is the "parle" in the sense of talks – but the Danish king has broken those talks off, and in anger, launched an attack. Kochur's insight thus provides a resolution of this notorious textual crux that is logical, comprehensible and – in my opinion at least – elegant.

Similarly with the problematic adjective "mobled" (II.ii. 533, 534) which in Q2 (and also Q1), the First Player uses to describe Hecuba. Commentators usually explain this as "muffled" or "veiled", though as Thomson and Taylor[4, p.271] observe "generations of playgoers must have found it a vaguely impressive word without knowing what it meant". Here, however, Kochur chooses the F1 reading "inobled", which editors who favour it take to mean either "ennobled" or "ignobled" – i. e. degraded. Taking the latter sense, Kochur renders "mobled queen" as "зганьблену царицю" ("царицю" rather than "королеву" to suit the elevated "theatrical" language of this speech).

Such insight and sensitivity is particularly important in translating the text of *Hamlet.* For this is a text where word-play, puns and subconscious allusions are highly significant, and a translator who renders merely word for word and superficial sense for superficial sense is achieving, at best, only a facile, surface accuracy. One characteristic form of Shakespearean word-play is repetition of a single word with, each time, related but subtly varying meaning. How well such word-play can be translated depends to some extent on the availability of a similarly supple word in the target language, though the ingenuity of the translator also plays a significant role. In the dialogue between Ophelia and Polonius (I.iii. 98-103), where "tender" is used twice as a noun and twice as a verb, Kochur evokes three of the repetitions (subject to the accidence of the Ukrainian language)

[4] II.ii. 63, 75, IV.iv. 22, V.ii. 360.

[5] In support of this view, it may be noted that Shakespeare twice uses the verb "to speak" in the sense of "to engage the enemy in battle" (*Coriolanus* I.iv. 4 and *Antony and Cleopatra* II.vi. 25).

"освідчувавсь", "освідченням", "освідчиш", but the ambiguous "Tender yourself more dearly" becomes

Ти себе дорожче
Цінуй.

Such word-play depending on etymologically related words on occasion transfers perfectly – or almost perfectly – to the target language (IV.ii. 109-110)

POLONIUS: I did enact Julius Caesar. I was killed i'th Capitol. Brutus killed me.
HAMLET: It was a brute part of him to kill so capital a calf there.

In Kochur's version:

ПОЛОНІЙ: Я грав Юлія Цезаря. Мене вбивали на Капітолії. Брут убивав мене.
ГАМЛЕТ: То велика брутальність – убивати таке капітальне теля.

Here the minor play on words ("part" = both "action" and "theatrical role") has vanished, but the major puns Capitol/capital and Brutus/brut(ality) are preserved.

Much more challenging to the translator are puns involving "accidental" homonyms, where there is no etymological connection, where the meaning of the words has diverged considerably from their original common root, or where some colloquialism is involved. In modern usage, such punning is considered solely as a source of humour – and rather weak humour at that! In Shakespeare's day, however, it could be used, and was appreciated as, a tool of irony, that could underscore the mordancy of the author's message.[6] However, the very fact that these homophones *are* accidental makes the likelihood of them being matched by a similar pair of homophones in the target language very low – and one may expect, therefore, that even the most brilliant translator will have problems with such passages.

Thus, in Kochur's rendering Hamlet's dialogue with Ophelia before the performance of "The Murder of Gonzago" (III.ii. 252-264) retains some sexual innuendo, but the subliminal allusions to the sex organs implicit in "*count*ry matters" and "no*thing*" have been lost.

And in the graveyard scene (II.i), which is particularly challenging in its word-play, Kochur's version reduces the Gravedigger's triple pun on Adam's "arms" (weapons, heraldic device, limbs) to a simple interpretation of "зброї" to mean "tools" (the "pick-axe" and the "spade" of the Grave-digger's song) rather than "weapons" – in effect, converting the pun into a simple metaphor; while Hamlet's triple pun on "fine" (payment, splendid, consisting of small particles) with its additional overtones of *fin*ality has vanished entirely.

On the other hand, it is interesting that, in this pun-laden scene, Kochur appears to have identified a kind of embryonic pun that probably would strike very few Anglophone readers. A pun is, essentially, a play on two homophones, or near homophones, that (in English) are either distinguished by spelling or which have identical orthography and rely for their meaning on context. One example of the latter is the word "spring" – as a noun it can mean a season of the year, a water-source, a resilient coil of metal, or a leap, as a verb, it means to leap or – of a plant – to send up its first shoots, and hence, metaphorically, to originate. But selecting from the semantic diversity of this word is so routine a matter for the average Anglophone that a play on the various meanings would lack the element of surprise that seems intrinsic to the successful pun.

Kochur, however, seems to have perceived (whether consciously or subconsciously) a possible pun in Laertes's speech over the dead Ophelia:

... from her fair and unpolluted flesh
May violets spring.

[6] Perhaps the most famous non-humorous Shakespearean pun is Gratiano's "Not on thy sole, but on thy soul... Thou makest thy knife keen" (*The Merchant of Venice*, IV.i. 123-124).

In Kochur's version

Хай на весні фіалки
Із тіла чистого її ростуть.

"Ростуть" renders Shakespeare's "spring" (the verb), but "на весні" ("in spring" – the season) is Kochur's addition. Since Ukrainian words are, in general, longer than their English equivalents, the translator from English poetry into Ukrainian who wishes to preserve the rhythm of the original, may on occasion find it necessary to omit or condense his source material – it is the translator from Ukrainian to English who often must add a word or two to fill out the rhythm. So any addition by a Ukrainian translator is likely to have been made for reasons other than rhythm – to expand, perhaps an allusion which Ukrainian audience might otherwise find baffling.

This, however, is hardly the case here. Kochur could surely count on the vast majority of his audience knowing that violets bloom in the spring-time – and even if they did not, their ignorance would hardly detract from the impact of Laertes' words. I cannot help wondering therefore if, after the frustration of having to abandon the multiplicity of meanings of "arms" and "fine", Kochur, consciously or subconsciously, seized on "spring" as a similarly multi-valent word, of which, in this instance, he could render at least two of the meanings.

Even more challenging are instances when the word-play is implied, not overt. In this case, the translator must exercise his ingenuity to render if not the superficial sense, the significant "subtext". Such a case is Hamlet's verse (III.ii. 297-300)

For thou dost know, O Damon dear.
This realm dismantled was
Of Jove himself, and now reigns here
A very, very pajock.

This becomes, in Kochur's version:

Тут царював, Дамоне мій,
Юпітерів орел,
Тепер царем в державі цій
Справжнісінький... павич.

Kochur here favours the interpretation of the obscure "pajock" as "peacock"[7], and his replacement of Jupiter, king of the gods, by the bird traditionally associated with him – the eagle, might seem at first glance simply an elegant balance, the royal bird of Jupiter contrasting with the showy but vain peacock[8]. One may note here, in passing, Kochur's elegant use of the capacity of the Ukrainian language to create diminutives; he renders the "very, very" of the original by what one might term the multidiminutive "справжнісінький", with an additional derogatory-diminutive implicit in "павич".

[7] Other proposed interpretations include "patchcock" or "patchock", (a word used uniquely by Edmund Spenser with reference to the degeneration of the English in Ireland), which Jenkins (Op. cit. – P. 509–510) defines as "a contemptuous diminutive of "patch" – a clown, "paddock" – a toad (which is what Hamlet calls Claudius at III.iv. 192), and "puttock" – a kite (the bird, a lesser kind of hawk, also apparently used as a term of reproach or denigration." – Jenkins, loc. cit). But these interpretations imply only the replacement of one derogatory term for another, whereas the sense seems to demand a substitution that is, at least superficially, a euphemism.

[8] It is interesting in this connection, that in the earliest known collated edition of *Hamlet* (1770) produced under the patronage of the gentleman-scholar Charles Jennens, the (anonymous) editor notes that Alexander Pope "conjectures *peacock* and that Shakespeare alludes to a fable of the birds chusing [sic] a king; instead of the eagle, a peacock".

However, there is a further subtlety. The inverted word-order of line 2 suggests that – like so many such inversions in English poetry – it has been made for the sake of a coming rhyme, and, indeed, Horatio's reaction:

You might have rimed,

surely implies that "pajock" is an ironic euphemism for some more derogatory term that would rhyme with "was". And, as many critics have noted, there is one obvious word which, in the pronunciation of Shakespeare's time[9], would have provided a perfect rhyme for "was", namely "ass". And Kochur's "орел" likewise suggests "осел".

Less common, but occasionally significant, are the problems generated by Ukrainian grammatical gender. In the opening scene the sentries and Horatio, consistently speak of the ghost as neuter "What, has this thing appeared again tonight" (I.i. 21) "Tush, tush 'twill not appear" (I.i. 30), "Thou art a scholar, speak to it, Horatio" (I.i. 42) etc. Save for one reference (I.i. 43) to the Ghost (by Barnardo as "a" (a dialectal variant of "he"), the ghost remains an inhuman "it", until I.ii, 189-191, where Horatio declares:

My Lord, I think I saw him yesternight... the King your father.

Horatio's change of pronoun at this point is significant – the ghost is no longer an unidentified visitant from another world that *looks* "very like" the dead king – the initially sceptical "scholar" is now prepared to identify *him* with the dead king.

In Act 1, scene 1, Kochur manages to keep the neuter at I.i. 20

Ну, знов приходило цієї ночі?[10]

but later in the scene (since "привид" is masculine) the pronoun used is "він". This – to my mind at least somewhat diminishes the impact of Horatio's "him" at I.ii. 188.

Grammatical gender also poses a problem at IV.v. 22, when the (now mad) Ophelia, coming into the presence of the Queen, asks

Where is the beauteous majesty of Denmark?

This line is ambiguous in the original: is she asking for the Queen – who is in fact standing in front of her, for the current King, the dead King (earlier alluded to by Horatio at I.ii. 47 as the "majesty of buried Denmark"[11]) or for some abstract "majestic" quality which had disappeared with the death of the former King – or perhaps with the death of her own father? The ambiguity is compounded by the fact that it is not clear from the text how far Ophelia in this scene recognizes the people around her (at line 72 she addresses a predominantly male gathering as "Sweet ladies") – and different actresses and directors have interpreted the scene in different ways. The ambiguity of her opening remark, it seems, will not survive translation: Kochur opts for the most obvious choice:

Де та прекрасна королева Данська?

which implies that Ophelia's awareness of her surroundings is very slight indeed!

As noted above, one challenge for all translators of English poetry into Ukrainian is the generally greater length of Ukrainian words. If the translator believes (as Kochur clearly did) that it is the translator's duty to render form as well as content of the verse, the discrepancy in word-

[9] The pronunciation of Shakespeare's day is a large and complex subject. We may note here, however, that the modification of vowels following "w" had not yet taken place, and that "a" seems to have been pronounced in a "flatter" manner than in modern "received standard" UK English, similarly to modern US or Yorkshire/Lancashire diction. One may note, in particular, that in *The Rape of Lucrece* (lines 393 and 1764) Shakespeare rhymes "was" (which here he spells as "wass") with "grass" and "glass".

[10] Following Q1 and F1, Kochur gives this line to Marcellus; Q2 gives it to Horatio.

[11] Kochur renders this as "король покійний" – again replacing the abstract by the personal.

length often necessitates a slight condensation or cutting of the original to preserve the prosody. Thus in Marcellus's "Bird of Dawning" speech (I.i. 158-164)

> Some say that ever 'gainst that season comes
> Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated
> This bird of dawning singeth all night long,
> And then, they say, no spirit dare stir abroad,
> The nights are wholesome, then no planet strikes,
> No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm,
> So hallowed and so gracious is the time.

"No fairy takes" has disappeared (and with it the parallelism with the "witch" – a parallelism to which I shall return later), however, the overall effect of the passage is, to my mind, excellently conveyed:

> Говорить дехто, ніби перед святом
> Різдва Христового, цей птах світанку
> Співає, не вгаваючи, всю ніч.
> Тоді не сміє жоден дух блукати,
> Цілющі ночі, приязні планети,
> Прихильні зорі, відьми не чаклують,
> Такий це час святий та благодатний.

Dropping "no fairy takes", incidentally, also eliminates an allusion that could prove difficult for the Ukrainian reader. The reading "takes" in Q2 and Q1 (F1 has "talkes") is a unique use by Shakespeare of this verb without an expressed object; but appears to be a reference to the legend of fairies *taking* a human child from its cradle, and leaving in its place a fairy child – a changeling[12].

Since *Hamlet* is, after all, a play, and Kochur presumably intended his version (at least in a cut form) to be amenable to staging, the elimination or glossing of such minor allusions to specifically "English" phenomena as the "changeling" legend may be considered justifiable since, in the theatre, one cannot explain obscurities by footnotes! In a similar manner, those most typical of 16th–17th-century English wind instruments, the "recorders" (III.ii. 227) becomes simply "flutes"[13], "the crowner has sat on her" (V.i. 4) becomes "розглядав слідчий", and "crowner's quest law" (V.i. 23) – "слідчий закон"[14]. And in Gertrude's account of Ophelia's death "mermaid-like" (IV.vii. 177) becomes "ніби ту русалку".

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[12] Like, for example, the Indian boy who becomes the cause of the quarrel between Oberon and Titania in *A Midsummer Night's Dream.*

An alternative interpretation of "takes" is put forward –and rejected – in [13], namely, "□'affect with evil', as a disease might affect or *take*". The Oxford English Dictionary, (2nd Edition, 1989), vol. 17 m, p. 558, gives this meaning (definition B7) for "take" as used as a transitive verb referring to "a disease, a pain, an injurious or dissimilar agency, natural or supernatural, magical etc". However, it cites only a single example of such use in the absolute sense, without an object – namely, this passage from *Hamlet*.

[13] The recorder, the name of which derives from the obsolete verb "to record" meaning, "to practice a song or tune…to sing of or about something,,… to sing or warble", see *The Oxford English Dictionary*, *Record* (verb) definitions 2a, 2b, 3b, differs from the true flute in that it is held for playing in front of the player's mouth – whereas the true flute is held to the side. Moreover, the holes in the recorder are closed directly with the fingers, and not by keys. However, other languages which do have a specific term for this instrument treat it as a variety of flute – it is Blockflöte in German and "flute anglaise" in French.

[14] The office of coroner (nowadays, the form "crowner" survives in active use only in certain dialects, but remains familiar to all educated Anglophones precisely from its use in this scene of *Hamlet*) was established in 1194 as "custos placitorum coronae" – "custodian of the pleas of the crown", with the duty of ensuring that the royal coffers received all money due to it. Since the property of suicides was forfeit to the crown, and a fine for *murdrum* was imposed on a community where the murder of an unknown person took place, the duty of the coroner included the investigation

However, omissions or contractions of the text for metrical reasons can at times be problematic. An instance of this occurs in Kochur's rendering of the graveyard scene (V.i. 229-132)

LAERTES: Lay her i'th'earth,
And from her fair and unpolluted flesh
May violets spring. I tell thee, churlish priest,
A ministering angel shall my sister be
When thou liest howling.
HAMLET (*aside to Horatio*): What, the fair Ophelia?

Kochur renders this as:

ЛАЕРТ: Спустіть труну! Хай на весні фіалки
Із тіла чистого її ростуть.
Знай, підлий попе, – ангелом у небо
Вона злетить, тобі ж у пеклі вити.
ГАМЛЕТ: Це що? Невже Офелія?

In the original, Hamlet's question is clearly one of shock and incredulity – he presumably knows that Laertes had only one sister Ophelia, and hence realizes who is dead but does not want to believe it. Likewise, Kochur's "Невже Офелія?" conveys the same impression – but is the preceding "Вона" sufficient for his shocked certainty? After all, Laertes could be referring to some other woman dear to him – his betrothed, perhaps? Psychologically, however, Kochur's version does seem justified – Hamlet instinctively interprets "Вона" as referring to the one woman close to Laertes *and* dear to himself. And certainly, in performance the passage would pass unchallenged.

Which is, perhaps, the most important consideration. For, although as I have indicated, the complete Q2 text seems too long for today's "mainstream" theatre – let alone a conflated version of Q2 and F1[15]. Different directors will make different cuts, according to which aspects of the play they wish to focus on. And from time to time, a specialist venue and audience of devotees can be found willing and able to tolerate a running time of close on five hours. So, ultimately, the success or otherwise of the translation of a play has to be how well it conveys not individual phrases or lines – significant as these may be – but the overall impact of the characters and situations.

For Shakespeare's theatre – open-air, with no scenery in the modern sense and minimal "properties", language had to perform the tasks now done by the stage-designers and electricians. Night-time could be conventionally indicated by characters carrying torches or lanterns – but the gradual approach of dawn could hardly be indicated by a sudden extinguishing of those lights. Hence, we have such lovely passages as Horatio's

But look, the morn in russet mantle clad

of suspicious deaths – which is now the main duty of the coroner in English law and those systems based on it, including that of the USA. It is interesting to note that in the dialect play Пінска Шляхта, traditionally attributed to the Belarusian Vincuk Dunin-Marcinkievič (1808–1884) but for which a Ukrainian authorship has recently been postulated (see: [10]) the characters consistently – and incorrectly – refer to a legal – the Assessor as "Karona" – a term which in my translation of this play ([2]) I ventured to render as "Crowner".

[15] Such a conflated version has occasionally been staged in special contexts such as Shakespeare festivals. In theatrical circles it is formally termed "the entirety"; actors who have taken part in it refer to it jestingly as "the eternity".

Notable attempts at staging "the entirety" include those of Frank Benson (Stratford, 1899), Peter Hall (The Old Vic, London, 1975), and in film from Kenneth Branagh (1966).

Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastward hill

(I.i. 165-166) beautifully rendered by Kochur as

Та от світанок у плащі багрянім
Прямує з гір зі сходу по росі.[16]

Likewise, although the Elizabethan/Jacobean stage did not exclude violent action in the manner of the ancient Greeks, some incidents were beyond their ingenuity to show on scene – and, indeed, had to await the coming of film to be presented to the audience in visible form. Hence one of the most famous "set-pieces" of this play: Gertrude's account of the death of Ophelia (IV.vii. 164-181):

There is a willow grows askant the brook
That shows his hoary leaves in the glassy stream,
Therewith fantastic garlands did she make
Of crowflowers, nettles, daisies and long purples
That liberal shepherds give a grosser name
But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call them.
There on the pendent bows her crownet weeds
Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke,
When down her weedy trophies and herself
Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide
And mermaid-like awhile they bore her up,
Which time she chanted snatches of old lauds
As one incapable of her own distress,
Or like a creature native and endued
Unto that element. But long it could not be
Till that her garments, heavy with their drink
Pulled the poor wretch from her melodious lay
To muddy death.

In Kochur's translation:

Де над рікою хилиться верба,
В потоці чистім сивий лист відбивши,
Туди прийшла вона, уся в вінках,
Заквітчана химерно у стокротки,
В жовтець, у кропиву, в багряне зілля,
Яке так грубо пастухи назвали,
І пальцями мерців дівчата звуть.
Вона хотіла на похилі віти
Розвішати вінки, та заздрий сук
Вломився, і в плакучу течію
Вона упала, бідна. Сперш убрання,

[16] "Багрянім" ("багряний") is an "artistic" rather than a literal translation of "russet", which normally means a "reddish-brown" or "yellowish-brown colour". However, as Jenkins points out, op. cit., p. 432, dawn's "russet mantle" was traditional in Elizabethan poetry. The suggestion of Dover Wilson ([11]) that since the colour "russet" derives its name from a coarse homespun cloth, this passage "pictures Dawn as a labourer mounting the hill to his work of the day, his mantle thrown over his shoulder", apart from the fact that personification of Dawn in English poetry is conventionally feminine, seems out of key with the "elevated" style of that Shakespeare generally adopts for such chronographic scene-painting.

Що розпростерлось широко на хвилях,
Її тримало, ніби ту русалку.
Вона пісень співала старовинних,
Немов не відчуваючи біди.
Аж ось, намокши, одяг обважнів
І бідолашну від пісень затяг
У смертну каламуть.

Now, apart from announcing the fact of Ophelia's death[17] (which will in effect trigger the "catastrophe" of the drama), the tender beauty of the description evokes in the audience a new sympathy for Gertrude, whom hitherto they have viewed in an essentially hostile light, so that her own death, when it comes, will move them to at least some pity, rather than a simple callous "serves her right". Gertrude's description, in the original, is loaded with adjectives, and goes into a great detail about the flowers Ophelia gathers – as if she is deferring the moment when she has to describe the drowning itself, and by her "elevated" language trying to gloss over the horror. (This reluctance to face the unpleasant fits what we have already seen of Gertrude; her shock in the "closet scene" at Hamlet's words (III.iv. 7)

A bloody deed – almost as bad – good mother,
As kill a king and marry with his brother

surely indicates that until that moment she has managed to close her mind to any suspicion about her first husband's death. Likewise at IV.iv. 1, her first reaction to news of Ophelia's madness is a reluctance to see her. Kochur's version of the drowning contains less adjectives than the original (as one might expect, see above): the "cold maids" are simply "дівчата", the "melodious lay" is "пісень", but enough remains to preserve the sense of a lush and detailed picture. The "glassy stream" remains onomatopoeic – "в потоці чистім", the willow still has "hoary" – "сивий" – foliage, the "fantastic garlands" (with a change from adjective to adverb) are woven "химерно". The sliver ("сук") which causes the unfortunate girl to fall, remains "envious" – "заздрий". The 16th–17th-century plant-names (which to the modern Anglophone audience often seem obscure) are beautifully rendered. "Crowflowers", according to Thomson and Taylor, can be either "buttercups" (which are yellow) or "ragged robin" (which is pink); Kochur opts for the former, rendering them as "жовтець", while the problematic "long purples" become "багряне зілля", slight archaisms: "стокротки", "сук" (rather than "сучок") and "обважнів" give a sense of the "elevated" style of the original.

The linguistic "style" of the various characters is of considerable importance in this play: the fussy pomposity of Polonius, the demotic of the gravediggers, the high-flown rhetoric of the First Actor's "Pyrrhus" speech, the broken inconsequences of the mad Ophelia, Hamlet's wild rant over the dead Ophelia, the formal rhyming couplets of "The Murder of Gonzago". Particularly significant is the formal diction of Claudius. A number of commentators have observed that, in moving the setting of the play from the "dark" ages of the original story to the early Renaissance, Shakespeare creates a subtext of a changing society, poised between old and new – the old Sorbonne versus the new Wittenburg,

[17] It would be inappropriate in this paper to attempt to solve what Jenkins termed "one of the unanswered questions provoked by the play: who could have witnessed Ophelia's drowning without attempting to save her" (Jenkins. Op. cit. – P. 123). In fact Gertrude never says that she herself has witnessed the drowning, and if it were reported to her by peasants who had seen it, they could have been reluctant to flout the superstition that rescuing someone from drowning meant that the rescuer would then "owe the water a death". For film it would be possible to present the speech as a voice-over superimposed on shots of an attempted rescue (with, perhaps, Ophelia, lost in her madness, totally ignoring the outstretched hands or thrown rope of would-be rescuers). But on the stage, the action of the play carries the audience forward with such pace that the question does not arise – at least at the time.

foreign relations conducted by battle (Old Hamlet, Old Fortinbras) versus diplomacy (Claudius). And one of the many ironies of this play is that our first view of the murdering, usurping, incestuous Claudius (I.ii) is in the setting of what appears to be a solemn and official assembly of the court – possibly the first after his coronation, where Shakespeare gives him the discourse of a competent "modern" ruler, concerned for the good of his country and anxious to avoid unnecessary war. So much that one eminent scholar – George Wilson Knight, goes so far as to perceive King Claudius – at least in the early scenes – as a "life-force" and Prince Hamlet as a "death-force"[7]. Jenkins, however, calls this assessment "a critical aberration"[18], and I would agree with this. In my opinion, Claudius's speeches in I.ii are an example of what political jargon now calls "spin" – the technique of presenting the doubtful or even indefensible in the least damaging light. And he does this by subtle use of a feature of Shakespeare's language – a feature which has been termed "doubling" – a rhetorical parallelism of either contrasting or near-synonymous words [6]. This is, of course, not confined to *Hamlet* (examples occur throughout the entire corpus of Shakespeare's work). Nor, indeed, is it a purely Shakespearean trait – examples of such "doubling" run through the whole history of English literature[19], and – via the splendid rhetoric of Cranmer's Book of Common Prayer and certain conventional phrases – has preserved into contemporary English a number of otherwise obscure or archaic words. However, *Hamlet* exhibits doubling and parallelism at a number of levels; thematically, it contrasts action with inaction, being with seeming, the ancient (and essentially non-Christian) tradition of vengeance with the ethics of Christianity. Throughout the play, there is a constant questioning:

> 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,

Hamlet asks the Ghost (I.iv. 41-43) – a question effectively answered only by the guilty reaction of Claudius to the staging of "The Murder of Gonzago".[20] The most famous soliloquy of the play begins with the unanswered "To be or not to be?", the very import of which itself is ambiguous: is it a choice between life and death, reality or seeming, action or inaction.[21] So prevalent is this questioning that one scholar considered the leit-motiv of *Hamlet* to be "that everyone analyses everything that turns up" and stated that he had made a list of no less than 170 analyses or critical discussions in the play [8]. There is a remarkable doubling of characters, from the indistinguishable pairs of minor characters – the students Guildenstern and Rosenkrantz, and the ambassadors Voltemand and Cornelius (who speak together) to such significant doublings as: the two night-time appearances of

[18] Jenkins. Op. cit. – P. 146.

[19] Although the double heritage of Middle and Modern English – Anglo-Saxon and Norman-French has provided the language with a huge supply of synonyms, rhetorical "doubling" was well-established in pre-Conquest literature – in the writings of King Alfred and the sermons of Ælfric for example. And many of the formulaic expressions still in current use derive both elements from Anglo-Saxon roots; e. g ."kith and kin", "hearth and home".

[20] Hamlet's remark to Horatio "Touching this vision here / It is an honest ghost" (I.v. 136-137), suggests that he has resolved the question. If so, his answer is only temporary – or perhaps dissimulation. Certainty only comes with his declaration "I'll take the Ghost's words for a thousand pounds" (III.ii. 278-279). Thomson and Taylor (Op. cit. – P. 222) suggest that "honest" at I.v. 137 may simply mean "genuine".

[21] The term "soliloquy" may be disputed, since Hamlet is not at this point alone on the stage, Ophelia is waiting to encounter him "as if by accident", and the King and Polonius are within earshot, hiding behind the arrays. However, the speech is usually presented on stage as if Hamlet were speaking to himself, as if alone (or in film versions, as a "voice-over") and the two London productions in which he addressed the speech directly to Ophelia (Old Vic, 1977; Royal Court Theatre, 1980) evoked considerable controversy from critics and reviewers.

armoured Ghost on the battlements, two dead kings (Old Hamlet and Old Fortinbras), whose thrones have passed to their brothers and not to the sons who bear their names, two students (Hamlet and Laertes), both of whom in I.ii wish to return to university, who, in the course of the play learn that their fathers have been murdered, and even two presentations of "The Murder of Gonzago" – first in dumb-show and then (albeit interrupted) in rhymed verse – while this play-within-a-play itself "doubles" the plot of *Hamlet* itself. So the linguistic doubling – which occurs in the discourse of virtually all the characters forms an appropriate and significant linguistic echo of expression of this thematic leit-motiv.

How did Kochur deal with this phenomenon? As has already been noted, the generally greater length of Ukrainian words can constrain the verse-translator to condense his text slightly in order to preserve the prosody – so that, as mentioned above, in the "Bird of Dawning" speech, Kochur has sacrificed the parallelism between "No fairy takes" and "Nor witch hath power to charm". How many such sacrifices did he feel obliged to make?

One must note, first of all, that, in fact, the linguistic doubling in *Hamlet* is of two kinds – the doubling of contrast, including irony and the rhetorical figure of oxymoron, and the doubling of likeness and parallelism, a single concept expressed by two synonyms or near-synonyms. Now a careful reading of the text reveals significant as both forms are *stylistically*, their thematic importance is different. "Likeness" doubling heightens its artistic impact of the verse, or on occasion may add to the character-drawing[22], "contrast" parallelism delivers or underscores its message.

The speeches of Claudius to his court (I.ii) use doubling in a particularly telling manner. Not only do they present to the audience two key facts of the plot (he has succeeded his dead brother as king, he has married his brother's widow); it reveals his character as a master of "spin". It should be recalled that although the marriage of Hamlet's uncle and mother was a datum of the story dating back at least to the *Danorum regum heroumque Historiae* of Saxo Grammaticus (c. 1200 A.D), such a marriage, to Shakespeare's audience, was incestuous[23] – and the contrasts and oxymorons of his discourse underline the questionable nature of the union. Beginning with the paradox that the accession of a new King will normally generate conflicting emotions – grief at the death of the former monarch and the formalities of court mourning contrasting with rejoicing in the coronation of the new, Claudius moves smoothly on to the greater contradiction of his marriage:

> Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's death
> The memory be green, and that it us befitted
> To bear our hearts in grief, and our whole kingdom
> To be contracted in one brow of woe,
> Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature
> That we with wisest sorrow think on him
> Together with remembrance of ourselves.
> Therefore our sometime sister, now our Queen,
> Th'imperial jointress to this warlike state,

[22] In particular, the speeches of Polonius abound in doublings, repetitions and hendiadys – which, as Kermode ([6, p. 106]) points out "for the most part... are meant to represent pompous tediousness".

[23] Although the date of the writing and first performance of *Hamlet* cannot be established unequivocally, current scholarly opinion postulates a first performance not later than 1600–1601, i. e. during the last years of the reign of Elizabeth I (For the evidence and arguments concerning dating, see: Thompson and Turner. Op. cit. – P. 36–59). Since Elizabeth's legitimacy and therefore her right to the throne, depended on the validity of her parents' marriage, political correctness demanded the rejection of her father's first union (with his brother's widow) as incestuous and hence invalid. To query this publicly was tantamount to treason. Shakespeare could therefore count on his contemporary audience – or at least the vast majority of it – sharing Hamlet's disgust at such a union.

Have we, as 'twere with a defeated joy,
With an auspicious and a dropping eye,
With mirth in funeral and with dirge in marriage,
In equal scale weighing delight and dole,
Taken to wife. (I.ii. 1-14).

In Kochur's version:

Хоча про смерть улюбленого брата
Ще досі свіжа пам'ять. Хоч належить
Журитись нам і вся держава мала б
Нахмуритись одним чолом скорботним,
Та розум наш подолує природу, –
Ми з мудрим сумом брата споминаєм,
Не забуваючи й себе самих.
Тож з радістю, затьмареною горем,
Урівноваживши журбу і втіху,
Зі сміхом в оці, зі сльозою в другім,
Весільний спів з'єднавши з похоронним,
Ми братову колишню, королеву,
Законну спадкоємицю держави,
Дружиною своєю нарекли.

The style is highly rhetorical, appropriate to the dignity of a king, yet with the long parenthesis (lines 11-13) between subject and predicate by which the passage builds to its climax suggesting a certain lack of spontaneity – a planned enunciation of the new "political line".

The complexities of this passage must have posed Kochur with a major challenge. His version shows some slight changes. The past tense "Discretion fought" becomes the present tense "розум наш подолує" – but the change in the verb from "fight" to "overcome" justifies the change in tense. The oxymoron "defeated joy" loses a little of its compression, becoming, literally "joy eclipsed by sorrow" "радістю, затьмареною горем", and "In equal scale weighing delight and dole", loses its alliteration as "Урівноваживши журбу і втіху," as too does "With mirth in funeral and with dirge in marriage" "Весільний спів з'єднавши з похоронним", but a compensating alliteration is introduced in "Зі сміхом в оці, зі сльозою в другім." And, although Kochur has slightly rearranged the order of lines (so that the aforesaid parenthesis between subject and predicate is reduced to a single line), the passage still builds up to the climax: "Дружиною своєю нарекли". One may note, moreover, that by using the precise Ukrainian term "братову" (instead of translating literally Shakespeare's vaguer "sister") Kochur's version not only pinpoints the theme of incest, but also strengthens the parallel – the funeral of the brother set against marriage to the brother's wife.

It would be impractical within the scope of this paper to list all the doublings in *Hamlet* – much less to discuss in detail Kochur's renderings of them all. One may note, however, that Kochur frequently condenses "likeness" doublings into single words or phrases. To take but one example, asked by Claudius: "What wouldst thou have", Laertes replies (I.ii. 51-57)

Dread my lord,
Your leave and favour to return to France,
From whence though willingly I came to Denmark
To show my duty in your coronation.
Yet now, I must confess, that duty done,
My thoughts and wishes bend against toward France

And bow them to your gracious leave and pardon.

This becomes, in Kochur's version

Грізний мій владарю,
Я дозволу ласкавого просив би
Вернутися до Франції. Прибув я
На вашу коронацію, щоб цим
Обов'язок свій виконать, а нині
Знов лину я до Франції думками.
На це я ласки вашої прошу.

Here what Kermode describes as "some very courtly doubling" is largely lost: "leave and favour" is rendered simply by "ласкавого", "thoughts and wishes" contract to "думками", "gracious leave and pardon" becomes "ласки". The only repetitions which remain are "ласкавого/ласки" and "до Франції" – though a repetition implicit, but not expressed, in the original is introduced: "просив/прошу", while the (quite fortuitous) rhyme "Франції/коронацію" in the Ukrainian provides repetition of a different type.

Yet, to my ear, in spite of these losses, the passage does preserve the atmosphere of formality and "courtliness" of the original, helped, perhaps, by the lofty style of "нині" rather than the everyday "тепер", and "лину думками" – the latter phrase, far more consciously "poetic" than Shakespeare's "tend", serving, again, to compensate in part for the similarly "poetic" doublings.

How conscious Kochur was of the prevalence of doubling in *Hamlet* is unclear. As Kermode points out (in a paradox oddly akin to those in the play itself); "[s]o numerous are these doublings that it is easy to ignore them", while Shakespeare's use of a particular form of doubling – hendiadys – was not addressed by scholars until 1981 – as George T. Wright himself observed with some surprise in his ground-breaking study of this figure [14]. And if generations of scholars for whom Shakespeare's texts – and *Hamlet* in particular – lay at the focus of their life's work, one could hardly blame Kochur if, indeed, he failed to take note of a phenomenon that, at the time he was translating *Hamlet* (the early 1960s), the said scholars had either failed to notice or else deemed unworthy of their attention. Nevertheless, independently of the findings of scholars, a sensitive translator may well respond intuitively to the subtleties and nuances of the text, even before the scholars address them intellectually.

So it is not surprising that while Kochur was seemingly prepared to condense what I have called "likeness" doublings into a single significant word, the "contrast" doublings that underscore the paradoxes of the plot are more likely to be reproduced. Thus the old King is (I.v. 74-79)

by a brother's hand
Of life, of crown of queen at once dispatch'd,
Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,
Unhousel'd, disappointed, unaneal'd,
No reckoning made, but sent to my account
With all my imperfections on my head

від братньої руки
Життя позбувсь, корони й королеви.
Мене підтято в розквіті самому

Гріхів моїх, без сповіді й причастя,
Рахунків ще не всигши звести мусив
Я з тягарем всіх вад своїх іти
Складати звіт за всі свої діла.

Here Kochur preserves almost in its entirety the complex pattern of repetitions and "likeness" doublings (or rather triplings). One element of the "last sacraments", the anointing ("annealing") has been replaced by confession "сповіді" which is not explicit in the original, but which may be taken as implicit in "disappointed" (i. e. unprepared) – but the over-all effect of the repetitions, hammering home, as it were, the full implications of the murder is well replicated.

Likewise, in the bitter dialogue of the "Closet" scene (III.iv. 9-12)

QUEEN: Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.
HAMLET: Mother, you have my father much offended.
QUEEN: Come, come, you answer with an idle tongue.
HAMLET: Go, go, you question with a wicked tongue.

although, for some reason, Kochur has replaced the indicative by the rhetorical-interrogative in the first exchange, the basic pattern of repetition is well caught:

КОРОЛЕВА: Чому ти Гамлете, образив батька?
ГАМЛЕТ: Чому образили ви батька, мамо?
КОРОЛЕВА: Говориш марнослівним язиком.
ГАМЛЕТ: Питаєте гріховним язиком,

although the exact parallelism of "question/answer" has become somewhat attenuated, and the Queen's significant switch from "thou" to "you" has been lost. This loss is, to my mind – unfortunate. For although the vast majority of modern Anglophone audiences will not fail to perceive its significance – a Ukrainian audience would surely have done so: Gertrude first addresses Hamlet in the second person singular – in Shakespeare's time, the familiar form appropriate for a mother addressing her son[24] – and then, in response to his angry accusation, distancing herself from him with the formal "you".

No translation – except perhaps of a scientific or technical text – can be perfect; in the translation of a literary text is seems inevitable that something must be sacrificed. And, on occasion, literal translation may prove meaningless in the target language; if it depends on an allusion specific to the culture of the original, it is the translator's task to find an allusion in the target language that will be similarly evocative. This is a well-established principle; more than 1100 years ago, one of the pioneers of translation – King Alfred – rendered into the English of his day some of what he termed "the books most[25] needful to know", and explained that he had rendered the original sometimes word for word and sometimes according to the *ondgiet* – a word which embodies the concepts of both content and context, according to how seemed to him most appropriate. His words seem to me to summarize the whole essence of translation theory: word-for-word accuracy, blended, where necessary, with adaptation and paraphrase, so that artistic and emotional effect is replicated – with the translator's skill shown not in mechanically establishing a word-for-word correspondence (nowadays a computer can do as much – with often ludicrous results),

[24] The perception of the second person singular to the modern Anglophone has undergone a major change. Outside the areas of northern England where it survives in dialect, it is encountered mainly in the context of formal prayers, hymns, and also in poetry (especially love poetry), where its use survived into the early years of the 20th century. This ambience, however, caused a misperception: the use of the "Thou" forms to address the Almighty became interpreted not as a sign of the intimate child-to-father relationship advocated by scripture, but as a special "lofty" form; likewise, its survival in love poetry was perceived as reflecting not intimacy but adoration.

[25] In his preface to the translation of the *Cura Pastoralis* of Pope Gregory I.

but in recognizing and replicating the artistic effects that speak to the audience and reader at a level far more profound and meaningful than the superficial sense. And in this brief paper, I have tried to give at least a general outline of in what way, and with what success Kochur tackled this dual task.

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## ТОЧНІСТЬ ТА ХУДОЖНІСТЬ У КОЧУРОВОМУ ПЕРЕКЛАДІ *ГАМЛЕТА*

**Віра Річ**

У статті подано роздуми про тонке співвідношення між художністю й точністю у процесі відтворення першотвору, яке передбачає врахування навіть найменших особливостей оригіналу, а також усього багатства його вертикального контексту.

*Ключові слова:* спадщина Григорія Кочура, точність, художній переклад.

## ТОЧНОСТЬ И ХУДОЖЕСТВЕННОСТЬ В ПЕРЕВОДЕ *ГАМЛЕТА* ГРИГОРИЯ КОЧУРА

**Вера Рич**

В статье приведены размышления о тонком соотношении между художественностью и точностью в процессе воспроизведения первоисточника, которое предполагает учитывание текста оригинала до мельчайших подробностей , а также всего богатства его вертикального контекста.

*Ключевые слова:* наследие Григория Кочура, точность, художественный перевод.

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