

Considerations on the Translation of Shakespeare's Titles into Romanian

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This paper has emerged out of the conviction that the rendition of titles into the TL is one of the most exciting and difficult challenges the translator has to respond to while translating a literary work. As Christiane Nord (1995) claims, if titles are recognized as textual units forming a text-type which is intended to realize several specific functions, then the translator has to reconcile the conditions in the target culture with the communicative intentions of the source-title sender. In order to produce a functional title, the author and the translator are expected to fulfil the same functions, but both are limited by the further constraint of the number of words and the syntactic structures they can use in keeping with the type of text the title “labels”. If the text was produced for the stage, as in the case of Shakespeare's plays, the length of the title was additionally affected by the actual size of the playbills and posters, of the flags hoisted at the theatres and by the actual possibilities of the participants in the drum processions. Upon the examination of Shakespeare's titles in their Romanian translation, it becomes clear that, from the first versions proposed around 1840 to the most recent, the translators have been constantly striving for coming up with the optimal solutions. Through discussing the Romanian versions, this research highlights the importance of the translator's linguistic and cultural competence in the SL and the TL when dealing with Shakespeare's titles that comprise the essence of his absolute mastery over both language and human nature.

Keywords: title structure; title translation; Shakespeare's titles; Shakespeare's titles in Romanian.

Introduction

For products that are sold, labels serve key purposes¹ such as brand identification², product description³, use, grading⁴, and promotion, intended to provide relevant and reliable information quickly and clearly by using graphic visual representations. Similarly, the titles of both fictional and non-fictional texts⁵ function in broad lines as labels and, like the labels applied to any goods, they first identify the product, then attract and inform the prospective reader.

¹ Identified as such in *Beyond Just the Name – The Different Functions of Product Labels* (LabelsOnline, 2012).

² “The visible elements of a brand (such as colours, design, logotype, name, symbol) that together identify and distinguish the brand in the consumers' mind” (Luthra, 2011).

³ “[...] who made the product, when and where it was made, what the contents comprise of, and how it is to be used safely. Hence you can find wine and beer labels, medical product labels, CD/DVD labels, shipping labels as well as bar code labels” (LabelsOnline, 2012).

⁴ “Grading is the process of sorting individual units of a product into well-defined classes or grades of quality” (Lakhotia).

⁵ Here, texts are taken in the sense of “products”, i.e. the result of creative labour.

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Thus, together with the need for relevance and reliability, most of the purposes above can be recognized in the titles of text products, where title “truthfulness” varies with the type of text between two polar extremes. At one extreme are the scientific texts, whose elaborate titles (i.e. “Preparation and stability investigation of tamsulosin hydrochloride sustained release pellets containing acrylic resin polymers with two different techniques”, in *Asian Journal of Pharmaceutical Sciences*, Volume 12, Issue 2, March 2017, by Rui Fan, Yinghua Sun, Bing Li, Ruyi Yang, Wenrui Ma, Jin Sun, pp. 115-208) identify the brand, describe the content and use of the article and name its “producers”, the publication date and journal in which they appeared. Although in full it is even longer than the previous example, Daniel Defoe’s *The Life and Strange Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe, of York, Mariner: Who Lived Eight and Twenty Years, All Alone in an Un-inhabited Island on the Coast of America, Near the Mouth of the Great River of Oroonoke; Having Been Cast on Shore by Shipwreck, Wherein All the Men Perished but Himself. With an Account how he was at last as Strangely Deliver’d by Pyrates. Written by Himself* (1719), like many other narrative titles used in literature until the last part of the 18th century, cannot be situated at this same extreme because, as a literary title, it lacks factual truthfulness, i.e. it cannot be actually informative about an imaginary character. Additionally, ambiguity and metaphoric devices commonly place literary titles at the opposite extreme due to their intentional lack of exactness, while newspaper headlines stand somewhere in between.

Such functions and features of the fictional title are included in Grivel’s formulation of its definition of fictional titles as “[a] set of linguistic signs ... that may appear at the head of a text to designate it, to indicate its subject matter as a whole, and to entice the targeted public” (*apud* Genette, 1997: 76). With regard to the targeted audience of a literary product as the sum of the customers who either buy a book or attend a theatrical performance or a film, Genette and Crampé note that the title has a much larger audience than the text itself, because “[i]f the recipient of the text is actually the reader, the recipient of the title is the public [...]. The title addresses itself to many more people than does the text, people who in one way or another receive and transmit it, and thereby contribute to its circulation” (1988: 707).

If texts were produced for the stage and not for readers *per se*, as in the case of Shakespeare’s plays, the length of the title was additionally affected by the size of the playbills and posters, of the flags hoisted at the theatres and by the actual possibilities of the participants in the drum processions. Before and during Shakespeare’s time,

performances by strolling players or guilds were announced by processions of the performers themselves, sometimes accompanied by vexillators – people carrying banners. Town-criers also announced performances, with actors beating drums or playing other instruments. For those who could read, brief hand-written details of performances were handed out and stuck to posts in towns, giving rise to the word “poster” [...]. The earliest posters or playbills measured about 17.5 x 7.5 cm. We know that some were printed by 1587, when a printer was granted a licence for “the only mpyrintge of all manner of bills for players.” (Theatre posters)

Genette and Crampé identify a tripartite assembly of titles (title, subtitle and genre classification)⁶ which will be applied further on to Shakespeare’s titles by recognizing the occurrence of these elements and their resulting combinations. Currently obsolete except for the circumstances in which authors choose to resort to parodical or imitational strategies, the use of autonomous indications of genre used to be customary in the classical period, when it basically affected the “major genres”, especially plays, which were always carefully labelled “tragedy” or “comedy” by a notation external to the title itself, in contrast to incorporated indications of the type *The Tragedy of King Richard the Second* or *The Comedy of Errors* (Genette, 1997: 95).

⁶ The authors illustrate it in *Zadig* (title), *ou la Destinée* (subtitle), *Histoire orientale* (genre classification) and note that the presence of the three elements at the same time “is the most complete state of a de facto system in which the only mandatory element, in our present culture, is the first one” (1988: 694).

In Bobadilla Pérez's view, the title is "an integral part of the rhetoric of the whole text". It is "unmediated by a narrative voice", so that "it may be, in fact, as close as we come within that text to an authorial voice" (2007: 117). With performed plays, titles are even more significant, as they are the only part of the text that is normally read on playbills only and not "spoken" on the stage by the actors. The same Bobadilla Pérez regards titles as "the most imprecise, capricious and subjective component of the whole narrative" (117), which turns them into a translation challenge that is described by Nord as follows: "the translator has to reconcile the conditions in the target culture with the communicative intentions of the source-title sender (= functionality + loyalty)" (1995: 261). In order to produce a functional title, the author and the translator are expected to fulfil the same functions, but both are limited by the further constraint of the number of words and the syntactic structures⁷ they can use in keeping with the type of text the title "labels".

Discussion

A discussion of the translation of Shakespeare's titles into Romanian should normally start from clearly stating the source material, i.e. the source language versions that have been used by the Romanian translators over time, beginning with the 19th century when they first appeared in print. However, such an approach would be quasi-impossible, for at least two reasons. First, as Shewmaker comments, Shakespeare's manuscripts did not

survive [...] to authenticate or corroborate the text of the plays that have come down to us. [...] We know them only through the printed editions of his day and the first collection of his works, familiar to us as the First Folio, published in 1623, seven years after his death. Since then, generations of editors have revised, emended, and theorized an endless number of editions into print, each with new-found confidence that this one corrects previous errors and misconceptions and presents Shakespeare as he would have had it. (2008: ix)

Shakespeare's own lack of interest in the publication of his plays is generally explained by the Bard's conviction that they were exclusively meant for the stage^{8,9}, probably because during his time, plays, as opposed to poetry, "were not regarded as literature; at best they were tolerated by the authorities as popular entertainments" (Schalkwyk, 2015: xiv).

Secondly, (especially, but not only) the older Romanian translations do not identify the source text they are based on, so that it is difficult to know if the Romanian version used the English original or a French, German or Italian version. Furthermore, in English, most of the plays are currently identified by a "short" variant, often without the subtitle or the gender identification, as in *Henry VIII* instead of *The Life of King Henry the Eighth* or *King John* for *The Life and Death of King John*. Even the most recent translations do not clearly identify the version they used, so the present article will discuss only the translated titles in the versions I could find.¹⁰ The argument

⁷ There are "six syntactic forms (nominal titles, verbal titles, sentence titles, adverbial titles, attributive titles, and interjection titles) and a limited number of microstructural patterns like "NP & NP" = nominal phrase + connective + nominal phrase, as in *John Jakes: Heaven and Hell*" (Nord, 1995: 282).

⁸ "[A]s far as we can tell [Shakespeare] didn't expect his plays to be read and never lifted a finger to assist their publication" (Jenkins, 1982).

⁹ Shakespeare himself was an actor, and he knew better than anyone how to write effectively for other actors. In fact the best possible advice on acting the plays comes from Shakespeare himself in the guise of Hamlet (3.2.1-2) when the young prince advises the players at length how he would like his lines spoken ("Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue"). Probably no more useful advice has ever been offered to actors (Shewmaker, 2008: 16).

¹⁰ The following sites provided some useful, if incomplete, information on Shakespeare in Romanian translations: shine.unibas.ch/translatorsromanian.htm, opensource-shakespeare.org/views/plays/plays.php, horiagarbea.blogspot.ro/2015/12/traduceri-din-shakespeare-editia.html, ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/List%C4%83_de_traduc%C4%83tori_rom%C3%A2ni_ai_operei_lui_Shakespeare.

concerns the titles of Shakespeare's sonnets, poems and plays.

Shakespeare's Sonnets

The above-mentioned lack of interest Shakespeare had in the publication of his plays appears not to apply to his 154 sonnets, collected in the 1609 Quarto edition published by Thomas Thorpe. As Ledger argues, "we should not take the absence of evidence about Shakespeare's publishing intentions to be indicative that he did not wish to have his Sonnets published". Ledger claims that the "the tripartite division of the work" broadly characterized by their themes builds a harmonious relationship between the sections and turns it into "strong internal evidence that the Sonnets were carefully prepared for publication (2009).

At first sight, the titles of the sonnets pose no problems to the translator, since they contain the genre classification (*Sonnet*) and the opus number assigned (I, LVI, etc.), which are obviously transferred into Romanian as such, even with the preservation of the Roman numerals. However, the discussion of Shakespeare's intention or lack of intention to publish his sonnets becomes relevant in light of Duncan-Jones's observations in "What Are Shakespeare's Sonnets Called?" regarding the title page of Shakespeare's Sonnets.¹¹ The author interprets the genitive in Shakespeare's name on the cover as an intentional "assertion of possession and authorship" that occurs "even before we are enlightened as to the genre of poems by (and about?) Shakespeare which are to ensue" (1997: 5). Subsequently, she argues that

If it is established that Shakespeare's sonnets should be properly and authentically entitled (in a modernized text) *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, some further consequences follow. Grammatically, for instance, the title, though plural, forms a single unit, and should be referred to in the singular. *Shakespeare's Sonnets* "is", not "are" a major non-dramatic text, just as *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* "is", not "are", an early comedy, and *The Merry Wives of Windsor* "is", not "are", a mature one. In an index or library catalogue it should appear, not as "Shakespeare, W., *Sonnets*", but as "Shakespeare, W., *Shakespeare's Sonnets*". [...] The title *Shakespeare's Sonnets* may imply, analogously, that the poems so labelled concern Shakespeare in some way, as well as being written by him. It may be this further implication, that Shakespeare is not merely responsible for the sonnets as verbal constructs, but is essentially present within them as their principal subject-matter [...]. (6)

If we are to agree with Duncan Jones, "that the grammatical form of the title, in which it appears that Shakespeare asserts his intimate relationship with his sonnets without the intervention of any visibly fictionalized name or persona" (7), the implications for the translation of the title of the collection of Shakespeare's sonnets is obvious: the Romanian version should be, instead of *Sonete*¹², de William Shakespeare, *Sonetele lui Shakespeare*, de William Shakespeare, strikingly reminiscent of Voiculescu's *Ultimele sonete închipuite ale lui Shakespeare, în traducere imaginară de Vasile Voiculescu* (1964).

¹¹ An approximate facsimile of title page of *Shakespeare's Sonnets* reads: SHAKESPEARES SONNETS, Neuer before Imprinted, AT LONDON, By G.Eld for T.T. and are to be folde by William Afpley, 1609 (Ledger, 2009).

¹² Gabriel Donna, *Sonete* (1940); Ion Frunzetti, *Sonete* (1964); Teodor Boșca, *Sonete*, (1974); Neculai Chirică și Dan Grigorescu, *Sonete și poeme* (1974); Gheorghe Tomozei, *Sonete* (1978, 1991, 1996, 2003); Mihaela Anghelescu Irimia, Nicolae Argintescu-Amza, Dan Grigorescu, *Opere complete [William Shakespeare] Vol. 9. Sonete; Poeme; Venus și Adonis; Necinstirea Lucreției; Phoenix și turtureaua; Jeluirea îndrăgostitei; Pele-rinul îndrăgostit* (1982); Henry Marcus, *Sonete* (1992); Mihnea Gheorghiu, *Opere*, vol. II, *Comedii. Poeme. Sonete: A douăsprezecea noapte* (2007); trad. colectiv, *William SHAKESPEARE – Opere. Sonete*, Vol. II, Academia Română, (2012); Violeta Popa, *Opere Vol. I. Sonete. Furtuna* (2010, 2016); Ștefănescu, Radu, *Sonnets. Sonete, Parallel Texts* (2015).

Shakespeare's poems

The motive behind the writing and the publication of *Venus and Adonis* (1593) and *The Rape of Lucrece* (1594), Shakespeare's two acclaimed poems written in the early years of his professional life, is, in Schalkwyk's opinion, the fact that an outbreak of the plague had closed the London theatres between August 1592 and the end of 1593 and Shakespeare was in need of money, "since these two poems are his only works that he published under his own supervision and was able to profit from directly" (2015: xiv). We may consequently infer that their titles were undoubtedly decided by Shakespeare himself, but even so the situation is complicated in the case of *The Rape of Lucrece*, which on May 9, 1594 "was entered in the *Hall Book of the Worshipful Company of Stationers*, the English government's pre-publication registry. Later in the same year, John Harrison of London published the poem in quarto form, and it became highly popular with educated readers. The poem was listed in the *Hall Book* under the title of *The Ravysbement [Ravishment] of Lucrece* but was published with the title *Lucrece*. *The Rape of Lucrece* was substituted as a title at a later date" (Cummings, 2010).

Even if we stick to the final title version, as the poem is commonly known, its translation still poses some problems. Thus, the title *Necinstirea Lucreției* appears in three Romanian collections¹³ because seemingly Dan Grigorescu's rendition is present in all of them.¹⁴ Grigorescu made an appropriate choice which, in translating a polysemantic word such as *rape* (meaning, at least from early 15th century in Anglo-Latin "act of abducting a woman or sexually violating her or both" (*cf.* Harper, 2012), must have considered the meaning of the initial title of the poem for disambiguation. Indeed, in Shakespeare's poem, Lucrece is not abducted, but actually ravished (*ravish* meaning "to commit rape upon" is recorded from mid-15th century (*cf.* Harper, 2012), so Grigorescu suitably chose to translate the 2nd meaning of *rape*, which is related to the theme of the poem. The morphological choice of the Romanian nominalized infinitive¹⁵ is appropriate both semantically and stylistically. Two synonyms for *necinstire* – *siluire*, proposed by Dan A. Lăzărescu¹⁶, and *pângărire* as my solution, come in the same morphological form and may be considered in future retranslations of the poem, but, unfortunately, the length of the present article does not allow for a more detailed discussion of the semantics of the present synonymic series.

The title *Venus and Adonis* (1593), on the other hand, contains characters from the Greek mythology, which makes the translation very obvious, so the title *Venus și Adonis* is present in all the Romanian collections.¹⁷ Things are different with *The Passionate Pilgrim* (1598), where the 1974 *Sonete și poeme*¹⁸ and the 1982 *Opere complete* Vol. 9 translate the title as *Pelerinul îndrăgostit*, while the 1966 *William Shakespeare* and the 2012 *Opere*, vol. II, as *Pătimașul pelerin*.¹⁹ According to Katherine Chiljan, the volume collecting twenty poems under the title *The Passionate Pilgrim* with the name "W. Shakespeare" on the title page is itself "a hornet's nest of problems for academic Shakespeareans", beginning with the fact that it was pirated and that the title choice remains unclear.

¹³ *Sonete și poeme* (1974), translated by Neculai Chirică and Dan Grigorescu, *Opere complete Vol. 9 (1982)*, translated by Mihaela Anghelescu Irimia, Nicolae Argintescu-Amza, Dan Grigorescu, and William SHAKESPEARE – *Opere. Sonete*, Vol. II, Academia Română, (2012).

¹⁴ Two of the collections do not state the name of the translator for each work separately.

¹⁵ "Infinitivul lung" in Romanian is a form preserved from the Latin infinitive. It adds the suffix *-re* to the bare infinitive form of the verb and can behave either as a verbal or a deverbal noun. The distinction between these two classes of long infinitives is relevant for the discussion of the translation of *A Lover's Complaint* and will be dealt with further on.

¹⁶ <http://atelier.liternet.ro/articol/8252/Dan-Amadeu-Lazarescu-William-Shakespeare/Introducere-la-Visul-unei-nopti-de-vara.html>

¹⁷ All the volumes enumerated above containing Shakespeare's sonnets and poems include the poem under this title.

¹⁸ In the *Biblioteca pentru toți* series.

¹⁹ In both volumes, the poem is translated by George Ciorănescu.

Why it was called *The Passionate Pilgrim* is unknown. It has been suggested that the title was publisher William Jaggard's attempt to fulfill public demand for Shakespeare's "sugar'd sonnets circulated among his private friends" that Francis Meres had recently mentioned in *Palladis Tamia*, or *Wit's Treasury*, also published in 1598 (2012: 74).

However, leaving these unanswered questions aside, the challenge for the title translation is obviously the premodifier *passionate* which beginning with early 15th century meant "angry; emotional"²⁰, and whose specific sense of "amorous" is significantly attested in the 1580s (cf. Harper, 2012). The adjective *passionate* is derived from the noun *passion* by suffixation with *-ate*. The two Romanian versions propose two different words with loosely synonymous senses: *îndrăgostit* and *pătimaș*, of which the former was obviously selected to translate the specific sense of "amorous". The Romanian *pasionat* is almost identical to the English *passionate*. It is the participle of the verb *a pasiona* and when describing people, it means "1. Care pune pasiune în tot ceea ce face, care acționează cu pasiune; fervent, entuziast, inimos. 2. Stăpânit, dominat de pasiuni sau de patimi" (dexonline.ro). One of its synonyms, namely *pătimaș*, is the solution proposed by Ciorănescu. It is an adjective formed from the noun *patimă* + *-aș*²¹ with two semantic directions, "1. Cuprins, stăpânit de o patimă, rob al unei pasiuni; Care exprimă, trădează patimă; determinat de patimă; pasiona" and "2. (Înv. și reg.) Bolnav, suferind, chinuit, nefericit, nenorocit, nesănătos, schingiuit, torturat" (cf. dexonline.ro). Of the second group, at least *chinuit*, *schingiuit* and *torturat* are reminiscent of the "passions of Christ" (in Romanian, *patimile lui Isus*), exactly like the English *passion*.²² In my view, the morphologic and semantic relation between *passionate* and *pătimaș* explained above makes the latter a subtler, finer solution for the Romanian rendition. For similar reasons, *împătimit*, another adjectival participle from the same family used as a premodifier for *pelerin* may be considered as a translation option (*Împătimitul pelerin*).

Besides coming up with two different lexical solutions that translate the noun phrase in the title, the translators opted for different NP word orders: H + postmodifier (Grigorescu) and premodifier + H (Ciorănescu). In fact, the typical NP word order in Romanian is the mirror image of the English NP, because attributive adjectives normally occur as postmodifiers and definite articles are attached to the end of the noun as enclitics ([*pelerin*_{noun}][*ul*_{def art}] [*îndrăgostit*_{adj}]). Alternatively, attributive adjectives can be placed in front of the head noun and, if the definite article is also present, the adjective takes the article instead of the noun, at the same time becoming more emphatic ([*pătimaș*_{adj}][*ul*_{def art}] [*pelerin*_{noun}]), this being yet another reason in support of Ciorănescu's solution.

Phoenix and the Turtle (1601) was translated into Romanian by Dan Grigorescu in 1982 as *Phoenix și turtureaua* and as *Phoenix și turturica* in 2012.²³ The words *turturea* and *turturică* are explained either as internal diminutives from *turtură* (dexonline.ro) or *turturică* as the diminutive of *turturea*. In Romanian, all three nouns are feminine, and their masculine counterpart is *turturel*, which was actually used in Lucia Verona's more recent rendition (2015) *Phoenix și Turturelul*. In English, the masculine is the generic gender for both phoenix and turtle as birds, while in Romanian the mythological bird is commonly referred to in the NP *Pasărea Phoenix*, which turns the Greek proper name *Phoenix* into a feminine in agreement with the gender of the head noun. Both translators decided to omit the head of the NP by deleting the noun *pasărea* and turn it into a proper

²⁰ From Medieval Latin *passionatus* "affected with passion" (cf. Harper, 2012).

²¹ The Romanian *-aș* is a polysemantic suffix that can indicate the agent (*coșaș, luntraș, poștaș*), form a diminutive (*copilaș, fluturaș, îngerăș*) or an adjective (*drăgălaș, mărginaș, năvălaș, pătimaș, pizzaș*).

²² In "the late 12th c., *passion* meant 'sufferings of Christ on the Cross'. Sense extended to sufferings of martyrs, and suffering generally, by early 13th c.; meaning 'strong emotion, desire' is attested from late 14c. Sense of 'sexual love' first attested 1580s; that of 'strong liking, enthusiasm, predilection' is from 1630s" (cf. Harper, 2012).

²³ Vol. 9. *Sonete; Poeme; Venus și Adonis; Necinstirea Lucreției; Phoenix și turtureaua; Jeluirea îndrăgostitei; Pelerinul îndrăgostit* (1982); William SHAKESPEARE – *Opere. Sonete*, Vol II, Academia Română, (2012).

noun, as in English. These observations point to the gender differences as the main issue the two translators had to face when translating this title, which is additionally complicated by the fact that Shakespeare himself resorts to some “innovations” regarding gender in the title nouns. Thus, as Barbara A. Mowat and Paul Werstine note, “[i]n Shakespeare’s poem, the phoenix is female and the turtle (that is, a turtledove) is male” (2006), which establishes Verona’s title as the appropriate choice. Verona, on the other hand, might have also considered preserving the customary locution *Pasărea Phoenix* due to its clearer idiomatical and cultural connotations in Romanian.

The title of *A Lover’s Complaint* (1609) is a NP with the structure determiner + premodifier + H, where the determiner is the indefinite article *a*, the premodifier is the noun *lover* in the possessive case, and the head is the noun *complaint*. Semantically, the agent noun *lover* designates “one who is enamored, person in love”, and at the beginning of the 13th century it was no longer marked for gender (i.e. the difference between Old English *lufend* for male lovers and *lufestre* for women was no longer made) (Harper, 2012). Towards the end of the 14th century, *complaint*, a deverbal noun, meant “lamentation, grief”, from Old French noun use of fem. past participle of *complaindre* (cf. Harper, 2012), with a gender implication that was probably still perceived by the speakers of that time. The fact that in Romanian gender is normally marked morphologically on nouns means that, unlike in English, the translator had to decide the gender of *lover* right in the title, but the content and characters of the poem make it clear enough that the lover is female. Consequently, the two Romanian renditions I could find contain the feminine noun *îndrăgostită*, in both instances in association with the noun *jeluire*: *Jeluirea îndrăgostitei* (Chirică/Grigorescu, 1974) and *Jeluirea unei îndrăgostite* (Dan Grigorescu, 2012).

The first noun is, in fact the more difficult for a translator. As the title suggests, the source text itself is a complaint poem, a genre popular in Shakespeare’s time, in which a woman is complaining to an old man about having yielded to a seducer. The genre itself is not consistently present in the cultured Romanian literature but, especially in folk music and poetry the pieces that deal with unrequited love, the loved ones’ departure, loss, death and the like are classified as *cântece* and *poezii de jale*. The pair *a jeli/a jelui* (verb) – *jale* (noun) has generated, on the one hand, the nouns *jelire* and *jeluire* by adding *-re* to the bare infinitive *jeli/jelui* and, on the other, the noun *jelanie* from the *jale* + the suffix *-anie*. All three are closely related semantically, but, unlike the third, the first two can be used both as deverbal nouns (in association with a noun in the genitive showing possession) and as verbal nouns (in association with a noun in the dative showing the destination of the action of the verb). The fact that in Romanian the nouns in the dative and genitive are identical in form leads to the ambiguity of the NP *jeluirea îndrăgostitei*, where it is unclear whether the structure is a deverbal noun in a subjective genitival structure (the subject performed an action, as in *somebody’s complaint*, meaning ‘somebody complained of something’) or a verbal noun in a verb – object relation.²⁴ For these reasons, *jelanie*, which carries no verbal implications and does not generate ambiguity, would be a better choice, yet not as good as *tânguire*. The latter, although a long infinitive as well, is formed from the intransitive verb *a se tânguie* and its intransitivity excludes the relation mentioned above for *jelire/jeluire*.

Shakespeare’s Plays

Shakespeare’s histories and tragedies have eponymous titles, many of them also containing parenthetical information that refer directly to the character’s name, such as *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*; *Cymbeline, King of Britain*; *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*; *The Tragedy of Othello, Moor of Venice*; *The Tragedy of Timon of Athens*. Since almost all the title characters are famous historical individuals (with the exception of Romeo and Juliet) or at least make-believe nobles (King Lear, Macbeth, Othello), the plays are identified by the name of their protagonists and genre: *The Life of King Henry the Fifth*, *The Life of King Henry the Eighth*, *The Life and Death of King John*. The presence

²⁴ Exactly like the English gerund in *Writing letters is pleasant*.

of the protagonists' names in association with colour-coding²⁵ as an “advertising” policy of the Elizabethan theatre made trigger words and elaborate titles redundant.

The Romanian translators' way of dealing with Shakespeare's character titles in histories and tragedies depended on the type of name involved. Thus, “the burden of the proper name” explored in *Troilus and Cressida*, *Romeo and Juliet* and the *Sonnets* (Schalkwyk, 2015: 64) puts a burden on the translators' shoulders as well. In broad lines, the Romanian translation practice is to preserve the ST²⁶ names in the TL²⁷ and adapt them phonetically, orthographically or culturally. In Shakespeare's titles there are two categories of title characters: names that have correspondents in Romanian and names that do not. The former group includes *The Tragedy of Julius Caesar* (that as early as 1892, in Barbu Lazureanu's translation, established itself as *Iulius Caesar*, after having been *Julie Cesar*²⁸ and *Iuliu Caesar*²⁹) and *Antony and Cleopatra* that, since Scarlat Ion Ghica translated it in 1893 as *Antoniu și Cleopatra* has been known like that.

As for the English names that do not have correspondents in Romanian, not only the more recent, but also some of the early translators preferred to preserve the spelling of the original names (Adolph Stern (1881) – *Regele Lear*, St. Băgescu (1850) – *Macbeth. Dramă în quinqui acte*, Scarlat Ion Ghica (1884) – *Viața și mărtea Regelui Richard III*). Other translators adapted the names, so that Ioan Barac (1848) proposed *Amlet, Prințul de la Dania* (which was soon replaced by *Hamlet*), Tudor Vianu (1963) – *Coriolan* instead of *Coriolanus* (which was preserved in all subsequent translations). One geographical name was treated in a similar way, so that *Denmark* first became *Dania* (see above) and *Danimarca* (D.P. Economu (1855), *Hamlet, principele Danimarcei*) then, after the name of the country was established in Romanian, it adopted its official name, *Danemarca* (Adolph Stern, (1877), *Hamlet, prințul Danemarcei*; Vladimir Streinu, (1965), *Tragedia lui Hamlet, prinț al Danemarcei*). For cultural reasons, *Athens* has been *Atena* from the start (*The Tragedy of Timon of Athens* was translated by Leon Levițchi *Timon din Atena*), while for *Pericles, Prince of Tyre* and *Cymbeline, King of Britain* the geographical references were dropped together with the royal titles.

Shakespeare's comedies

Shakespeare's comedies have much more elaborate titles than those of the sonnets, poems, histories and tragedies, so that their translation clearly brings about diverse types of difficulties, especially because what Sława Awedyk (1992) calls the “equivalent effect” of the translated title is much harder to achieve. He starts from the assumption that “[t]he title is a type of a text which has its concrete meaning and, similarly to other types of texts, it should evoke the intended effect” (1992: 60).

There are among Shakespeare's comedy titles two examples that contradict Awedyk's claim that in translation it is practically impossible to attain ‘total’ equivalence between the two texts. Awedyk argues that “in the case of such an ideal equivalence one would expect to obtain the original text when translating back from RL to SL” and that is prevented by “the differences between the structure of SL and RL”³⁰ since “there is only a certain degree of equivalence between the original and the translated text from the point of view of its communicative and functional content” (60). Nevertheless, with sentence titles of which some are (folk) sayings that already circulate in the culture of the target language, as in the case of *All's Well That Ends Well* (translated into Romanian *Totu-i bine când se sfârșește cu bine* by Ion Fruzetti and *Totul e bine când se termină cu bine* by Dan A. Lăzărescu) and *As You Like It* (translated from the very beginning *Cum vă place* by Petre

²⁵ Flags were hoisted on performance days and their colour served for genre classification: black was for tragedy, red for history and white for comedy.

²⁶ ST and TT will be used for source text and for target text, respectively.

²⁷ TL and SL mean target language and target text, respectively.

²⁸ *Julie Cesar. Tragedie în 5 acte*, translated by Stoica, S. (1844).

²⁹ *Iuliu Caesar*, translated by Stern, Adolph (1879) and by Tudor Vianu (1963).

³⁰ RL stands for “receptor language”.

Grimm, Virgil Teodorescu, Florin Nicolau, Violeta Popa), the SL and the TL have extremely similar clause structures, and, consequently, in both cases back-translation will yield the original titles. The only possible translation problem with *As You Like It* is related to the number of the personal pronoun *you*, whose translation may currently be either *âți* or *vă* in Romanian. However, in Shakespeare's time *you* was the polite form of address or served as the plural, while *thou* was the familiar form and served as an expression of affection among people of the same rank, so that all the translators appropriately chose *vă*.

Other titles are more problematic in translation and require more complex strategies. According to Viezzi, in dealing with titles translators may change the originals by presenting a different point of view, by highlighting a different aspect or character, by being more explicit, by adding genre information, by offering a different perspective or a different key to the interpretation, by suggesting a moral or a lesson to be learned, by adding the name of a (famous) character, by including intertextual/intertitular references, or by emphasizing the seductive aspect (2013: 81). Viezzi also claims that “[t]arget titles may differ in semantic content from one target language to another [...]; or even within the same language [...]”. Such changes produce “obvious consequences in terms of what is said to the potential user about the product and for what purpose” (381) and this is why title translation is at the same time more constricting and more demanding than other types of text rendition.

With Shakespeare, a consistent number of the comedy titles are nominal titles containing a genitive and, due to the complexity of the genitival relation in English³¹ and Romanian³², diverse types of translation challenges may be anticipated. Of these titles, *The Comedy of Errors*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* have the structure (det.) + (premod.) + H + postmod, in all of them the postmodifier being the prepositional phrase *of*+ NP. Except in *The Comedy of Errors*, the embedded NPs in the other three contain geographical references (*Venice*, *Windsor* and *Verona*) and together with *of* form genitives of origin that identify the title characters. The Romanian preposition *din* (which in similar contexts also expresses place or origin) is used by all translators except for Crețulescu (1899) who chose *Chețășia* for *The Merchant of Venice*, a title that omits the geographical reference, but focuses on one of the major themes in the actual play by resorting to an adaptation strategy. All the geographical names in these titles are treated according to the Romanian translation practice already mentioned: those which are part of the cultural knowledge, such as continents, countries, capitals, etc., are used in their established form which usually is a phonetic adaptation (as in *Venice* – *Veneția*). It is, actually, exactly the same adaptation procedure Shakespeare used for the names of the foreign towns *Venice* and *Verona*. The other two, as they do not include sounds that do not exist in Romanian, are used as in the form in the ST (*Windsor* and *Verona*).

In *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (translated *Nevestele vesele din Windsor* by Vlaicu Bârna, Florin Nicolau, Cristina Jinga, George Volceanov și Adriana Volceanov) the real challenge is the adjective *merry* for which the translator needs to look out for potential semantic evolutions (think of the dramatic change in meaning undergone by the adjective *gay* which in late 14th century simply meant “full of joy, merry; light-hearted, carefree”; and also “wanton, lewd, lascivious”, and which would have been Shakespeare's first choice to describe the wives of Windsor if they had really been full of joy). In Middle English, the adjective *merry* had much wider senses than those directly originating from Old English *myrge* (“pleasing, agreeable, pleasant, sweet”), and was used to express features such as “pleasant-sounding” (of animal voices), “fine” (of weather), “handsome” (of dress), “pleasant-tasting” (of herbs) (cf. Harper, 2012). At that time, *merry* was also part of

³¹ Based on the meaning relationship between the noun in the genitive and the head noun in English, Brinton & Brinton identify genitives of origin and of measure, possessive, subjective, objective, descriptive, partitive and appositive genitives (2010: 120-1).

³² Because in Romanian the genitive case is imposed on a noun either by another noun (*operele scriitorului*) or by a PpP (*înaintea/în timpul/în mijlocul conferinței*), the meanings of the genitival relation are also very diverse and do not express possession exclusively.

the NPs *meri ingland* (with the broader sense of “bountiful, prosperous”) and *merry man* (as “companion in arms, follower of a knight, outlaw, etc.”). In my view, for the proper translation of the NP *merry wives* we need to start from the structure *to make merry*, which is semantically related to what the two “merry wives” actually do to Falstaff by designing a plot to teach him a memorable lesson in exchange for the offence he has brought to them. In Romanian, someone who makes merry would be described as *glumeț, poznaș, șugubăț, gbiduș, hâtru, mucaliț* and any of these adjectives may be used in the translation of Shakespeare’s title by fronting the adjective and attaching the definite article to it (*Glumețele, Poznașele, Șugubețele, Gbidușele, Hâtrele, Mucalițele neveste din Windsor*).

As for *The Comedy of Errors*, the same PpP with the same *of* but with no geographical reference is a descriptive genitive expressed periphrastically and the equivalent to a descriptive adjective. The Romanian translations seem to have overlooked this particular genitive meaning and went for the all-purpose possessive, so that *Comedia erorilor*, the word for word translation of the SL title, is the only solution proposed (Dan Duțescu, Dan A. Lăzărescu, George Volceanov). The literal translation is not necessarily a bad strategy, but in this case it is unfortunate, because the English *error* (which meant in 1300 “a deviation from truth made through ignorance or inadvertence, a mistake”, also “offense against morality or justice; transgression, wrong-doing, sin”; and from late 14th century “deviation from what is normal; abnormality, aberration” (cf. Harper, 2012) and the Romanian *eroare* (1. Cunoștință, idee, părere, opinie greșită; ceea ce e greșit; greșeală. 2. Falsă reprezentare asupra unei situații de fapt ori asupra existenței unui act normativ. 3. Diferența dintre valoarea reală a unei mărimi și valoarea calculată a acestei mărimi, cf. dexonline) are false cognates.³³ In my view, we should consider a rendition like *Comedie cu încurcături* that renders the descriptive genitive in the SL appropriately and also offers an applicable lexical solution.

Other two nominal titles, *Much Ado about Nothing* and *Measure for Measure*, contain NPs with postmodifiers, but the PpPs have other prepositions as heads (*about* and *for*). From the translation perspective, the former poses no problem other than finding a correspondent for *ado*, for which both Leon Levițchi and Lucia Verona aptly chose *zgomot* (*Mult zgomot pentru nimic*). The situation is thornier with *Measure for Measure*, where the title expresses “the ancient argument of justice versus mercy” (Shewmaker, 2008: xx) as the elliptical form of *the measure you give will be the measure you get*³⁴, a notion that also appears in *King Henry VI, Part 3* as “Measure for measure must be answered” (2.4.54). The Romanian “cu ce măsură măsurăți, vi se va măsura” does not allow for a similar verbless contraction of the form, so two of the translators, Leon Levițchi and George Volceanov, preferred the word for word translation, *Măsură pentru măsură*. However, for cultural reasons, the “equivalent effect” of the translated title is not achieved in this case, because in Orthodox Christianity the Bible is not an object of study so the biblical allusion is lost with most of the Romanians. N. Argintescu-Amza on the other hand, chose to translate or rather adapt it as *După faptă și răsplată* by rendering the central idea of justice vs. mercy instead of the linguistic form. This strategy in translating titles is supported by opinions such as Viezzi’s, who notes:

Irrespective of the word used – “translation” or any other – the fact remains that source and target titles are often semantically unrelated and the reason lies in the very nature of titles. When translating a title, consideration is given to functions to be performed in another market and in another linguaculture. Translating a title, therefore, means *choosing* a title for a translated product: it is a form of creation, a form of re-writing, and the translated title is different because the conditions and intentions of its creation and reception are different. (2013: 379)

³³ It is true that the 1986 *Dicționar de neologisme* defines *eroare* “Greșeală, lipsă de concordanță între percepțiile noastre și realitatea obiectivă”, but even so the translation of *error* with *eroare* is not appropriate for reasons related to both meaning and register, as the majority of Romanian speakers still perceive *eroare* as a neologism or a specialized word.

³⁴ From the Bible, Matthew 7.1 and 7.2: “Judge not, that you be not judged. For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged and the measure you give will be the measure you get.”

The translations of the title of *Love's Labour's Lost* – *Zadarnicele chinuri ale dragostei* (Ion Frunzetti, Dan Grigorescu) and *Deșarte disperări din dragoste* (Horia Gârbea) seem both to have interpreted it as a nominal title consisting of a NP that contains two possessives (*love's* and *labour's*) occurring before the head (*lost*). Grammatically speaking, a participle cannot be the head for a noun in the genitive, so that only *love's* is a possessive (the 's is the mark of the genitive case), while *labour's* is the noun + the contracted form of *is/was*, as in *Love's Labour is/was Lost*. Consequently, Shakespeare's title is a sentence title with a copular/passive aux. *be*, which makes *Pierdute-s/Irosite-s chinurile dragostei* a better solution because it uses a participle and a contracted finite verb form of *a fi* in Romanian, exactly as in English, although in Romanian we are forced to opt between present and past for *a fi*. Stylistically, the fronted participle makes the whole structure more poetic, somewhat reminiscent of Constantin Gane's *Trecute vieți de doamne și domnițe* (1932-1939). The two translators have different lexical options for both *lost* and *labour*, although they use the same word classes to render the past participle (the fronted adjectives [*zadarnice*_{adj.}]^[le.def. art.] and [*deșarte*_{adj.}]) and the head noun (*chinuri*_n) and [*disperări*_n]). Even though the pattern copular *be* + adj. exists in English as well as in Romanian, in both languages the pass. aux *be* associates with a participle (that is, a past participle in English). The translation of the participle with an adjective, explainable by the translators' failure to recognize the SL morphosyntactic structure, misses all the verbal features the past participle retains as a verb form and damages the equivalence between the SL and the TL. As regards the noun choice, Frunzetti's choice of *chin* is very apt, because its sense implications of "suffering", "torture" and "pain" is closely related to *labour* whose meaning, among others, is "to take pains". Gârbea's choice, on the other hand, is at least surprising, considering that there is no plural form in Shakespeare's title and, moreover, that the noun *disperare* is definitely uncountable in standard Romanian.

Possessive structures are also present in the nominal titles *A Winter's Tale*, *The Taming of the Shrew* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, with two 's genitives and one *of* genitive. For the first title, Ion Frunzetti, Dragoș Protopopescu, Dan Grigorescu and Violeta Popa chose *Poveste de iarnă*, thus rendering the sense of the possessive structure as a descriptive genitive that does not indicate that "winter" has a "tale" (which in Romanian would have been *Povestea iernii*) but that the "tale" has to do with "winter". The structure of *The Taming of the Shrew* involves an objective genitive by expressing the same relation as a direct object (*the shrew*) does to a verb (*tame*). In Romanian this relation forms with a dative indirect object³⁵, *Îmblânzirea scorpiei* (Ion Vinea, Dan A. Lăzărescu, Violeta Popa). The choice of *scorpie* for *shrew* is perfect, since both SL and TL nouns are semantically marked [+female] and [+rowdy, rebellious, malevolent].³⁶

The title of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* has known the several renditions in Romanian, beginning with *Un vis în/din noaptea de Sânziene* (G. P. Sterian, 1893) and continuing with the more familiar *Visul unei nopți de vară* (Șt. O. Iosif, 1912; George Topîrceanu, 1921; Șt. Dan Grigorescu, 1964; Mihnea Gheorghiu; Nina Cassian; Florin Nicolau 1971) to Horia Gârbea's *Vis de-o noapte-n miezul verii* (2011). Shakespeare's actual title refers to Midsummer's Eve, the name for the night that marked the summer solstice on June 23rd. The title "captures the festive vibe of the play and even enacts some of its rituals" that celebrated "fertility (not just the successful planting and harvesting of crops, but also the kind of fertility associated with dating and marriage)" (Shmoop-Editorial-Team, 2008). As Shewmaker notes, people in Shakespeare's time even gave the name of *midsummer madness* to "a common malady brought on by the summer moon" which is mentioned in *The Twelfth Night* ("Why, this is very midsummer madness" 3.4.55) (2008: 343). Very similar folk beliefs are related to the Romanian celebration of the summer solstice, called *Noaptea de Sânziene*, some of which were exploited in Mircea Eliade's identically titled novel. The Romanian midsummer traditions that originated from the same solar cult that spread all over Europe are

³⁵ The arguments are similar to those in the discussion of *A Lover's Complaint* (see above).

³⁶ In Shakespeare's time, *shrew* already meant "peevisish, malignant, clamorous, spiteful, vexatious, turbulent woman" (cf. Harper, 2012).

still popular nowadays, so that the significance and symbols related to *Noaptea de Sânziene* make the presence of this locution absolutely essential in the translated version of Shakespeare's title. Surprisingly, only the earliest of the versions above recognized its importance and included it, at the same time being the only solution faithful to both the meaning and the structure of the original title. Thus, the title NP has the structure det + premod + H, where the indefinite article *a* specifies the grammatical indefiniteness of the head noun *dream*, while the premodifier is an embedded NP with the structure premod + H where the premod is the noun *midsummer* and the head is the possessive noun *night's*. In the embedded NP, *midsummer* and *night's* are separate words, but they form a single constituent (*midsummer night's*) that realizes the function of premodifier for the head noun *dream*. The embedded NP behaves like any proper name made up of two nouns and semantically identifies a single referent – the night of June 23rd, which in Romanian is appropriately rendered by Sterian as *din noaptea de Sânziene*. By omitting the exact reference to Midsummer and the indefiniteness given by the use of *a*, the second rendition, *Visul unei nopți de vară*, loses much of the original's evocative quality and, instead of expressing the reference to the kind of dream one has on a midsummer night, refers to the dream one has on some summer night. Gârbea's *Vis de-o noapte-n miezul verii* (back-translated "a night's long dream at the middle of summer") additionally provides the length of the dream, a reference Shakespeare never made in his title.

The Tempest (translated *Furtuna* by Dragoș Protopopescu, Leon Levițchi, Petre Solomon, Violeta Popa) and *The Twelfth Night* (translated *A douăsprezecea noapte* by Mihnea Gheorghiu, Violeta Popa) are two nominal titles that exhibit the structure det. + H. The former raises no translation problems, as the meaning of "violent storm" for *tempest* (in use since late 13th century, cf. Harper, 2012) is very similar to the Romanian *furtună* and, besides, the definite articles *the* in English and *-a* in Romanian are both used to identify a unique or fixed referent. This close semantic and categorical similarity between the ST and the TT makes the literal translation achieve an equivalent effect in Romanian. Disappointingly, this effect does not show in the translated version of the title of *The Twelfth Night, or What You Will*³⁷, which neither of the translators rendered completely.³⁸ For reasons similar to those in the discussion of *A Midsummer Night*, I maintain that we need to see the *twelfth night* as a compound as well, because it designates an important day, i.e. January 6, the twelfth night of the Christmas celebration, a time for parties and playing tricks in an upside-down ordered world. In the western Christian world, *The Twelfth Night* is usually considered to be a reference to Epiphany, to the magi bringing gifts to Baby Jesus and, for the English, to the popular song "The Twelve Days of Christmas". January 6 is significant for the Eastern Christianity as well, only here it is a fasting day with no manifestations of joy. Unlike in the Catholic and Anglican countries, in Romania it is an exclusively religious holiday, where nothing of the ancient Saturnalia festivities that celebrated the Winter Solstice has survived. Consequently, *Boboteaza* or *Epifania* – the Romanian words naming the Twelfth Night – cannot be considered as translation solutions due to the contrasting cultural implications they have. For this, the title *A douăsprezecea noapte*, although a literal translation is appropriate, because, even if it is much less significant in Romanian with regard to the cultural information it reveals, it has a mysterious quality, probably because it is reminiscent of the locution *în al doisprezecelea ceas* and confers the title a note of urgency.

Conclusions

In the present article I pay homage to a long line of dedicated Romanian translators. "By their fruits ye shall know them" (Matthew 7:20) and their "fruits" have brought the joy of otherwise inaccessible literatures to innumerable readers. My modest contribution draws on many years

³⁷ *The Twelfth Night, or What You Will* is the only one of Shakespeare's plays to have a subtitle. Significantly, the subtitle occurs twice in the text.

³⁸ The Romanian *Cum dorți* is a possible rendition for the subtitle, especially if we were to see it as the key given to the audience for understanding the meaning behind the chaos in the world in the play.

of loving literature and grammar alike in the form of the milieu in which they merge – language, the greatest gift and achievement of the human mind.

The idea of this study appeared from the celebration of Shakespeare that has been effervescing all over Europe in recent years. In Romania, it has led to projects like George Volceanov's *Un Shakespeare pentru mileniul III* and Lidia Vianu and C. George Săndulescu's publication of over 30 volumes of plays and sonnets by William Shakespeare as *Paralel texts*. I thought that an article that provides an in-depth overview of the translation of Shakespeare's titles into Romanian may contribute directly to such initiatives.

For the reasons shown above, I would dare say that if the title conveys the very essence of a literary work, the translated title needs to encapsulate as many drops of this essence as possible. This research has confirmed my assumption that Shakespeare's titles are so refined and so perfect due to his absolute mastery over both language and human nature that the translator's job is made easy: most of the Bard's titles can be translated literally, so there is no need for adaptation or other translation strategies. The translators only have to make sure they get the message right and transfer it in its entirety into the TL, by using equally limited resources as the originals and by valuing every clue they are given. And the most vital clue is given by Shakespeare himself in the words of John of Gaunt in *The Life and Death of Richard the Second*: "When words are scarce they are seldom spent in vain" (2.1.8).

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