ON ROMANIA'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE *GREAT FEAST OF LANGUAGES*: SHAKESPEARE WORLD TRANSLATION CONFERENCE, COLOGNE, 4–8 JUNE 2016

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ABSTRACT
This article is not what one might expect it to be in terms of "Shakespeare research" but, rather, a narrative, or a diary, covering the events that took place in Cologne, Germany, from June 4th to 8th June 2016, during a Shakespeare Translation Conference aimed at celebrating, in a peculiar way, the tetra-centenary of the Bard's posthumous life under two mottoes: *Shakespeare Lives in 2016* and *A Great Feast of Languages*. Romania held a privileged position, as one of the just three European countries invited to attend this unique, spectacular event. The article presents both the team leader's personal views and the opinions voiced by members of the Romanian translators' team.

KEYWORDS: Shakespeare, conference, translation, adaptation, performance, consensus.

Prologue

In late April 2016, after I had just returned from the International Shakespeare Festival organized every two years in Craiova, I got a surprising invitation from the British Council (personified by Alis Vasile, project director) to accept the leadership of a Romanian group of literary translators invited to a "Shakespeare conference" in Cologne, in early June. The more surprising it was, considering the fact that after my six consecutive participations (between 1996 and 2001) in the annual British-Romanian literary seminars and a translation award (for my Romanian version of Lawrence Durrell's *Prospero's Cell*, conferred in 2001) the Council had seemed to neglect me and my work in the past fifteen years.

The then forthcoming conference was part of a wider project, *A Great Feast of Languages*, advertised on several British Council webpages around the world as "a year-long international focus on translating Shakespeare for performance," involving "a series of up to eight translation workshop programmes and a chain of public panel discussions between British and international translators, writers, academics and practitioners"; the project centred "around five-day translation workshops bringing together translators, writers, actors, directors and academics to explore the challenges and complexities of translating Shakespeare's plays and poetry."

The project was jointly developed by the British Council, Globe Education, Writers' Centre Norwich (WCN) and the British Centre for Literary Translation

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(BCLT). Step one was the Cologne translation conference at issue, which aimed at bringing together "translators and theatre practitioners in Cologne for an intensive week of workshops and discussions focusing on translation for performance in German, Polish and Romanian." This event was heralded as part of a series of workshops focusing on translation of Shakespeare taking place around the world, in countries including Qatar, Germany, Brazil, India and the UK.

The five-day translation workshop took place, as planned, in Cologne, at two venues, Alte Feuerwache and Schloss Wahn from 4th to 8th June 2016. It was preceded by a briefing meeting for the *faculty* on 3rd June. Thus did I come to learn that *faculty* signifies a body of competent people conferred power, authority, or prerogative to act in given circumstances. The members of the faculty included Duncan Large (British Centre for Literary Translation), Patrick Spottiswoode (Director of Globe Education—text advisor), Elke Ritt, Eva Rhiemeier and Will Kemp (British Council), and the "inspiring workshop leaders in each language" (as, again, advertised on the website of the British Council), i.e. Michael Raab (English-German workshop leader), Marta Gibinska (English-Polish workshop leader) and George Volceanov (English-Romanian workshop leader).

The targeted participants were early- to mid-career translators, working under the supervision of a text advisor and a workshop leader, whether a theatre translator and drama critic (Michael Raab), a distinguished, renowned Shakespeare scholar (Marta Gibinska), or a literary translator and Shakespeare editor (G. Volceanov).

The Romanian participants and the opening night

Unlike their German and Polish colleagues, who chose to advertise the conference and select participants on the basis of a set of criteria, the Romanian British Council officer in charge with the project built the team on the basis of individual invitations sent to several translators and experts on translation studies. Violeta Popa (a dramaturge at the National Theatre of Bucharest, and co-founder of the "Shakespeare for the Third Millennium" translation project) and Rareş Moldovan (an award-winner translator with previous experience of Shakespeare translation for the stage, materialized in a *Hamlet* staged at the State Theatre in Sibiu) were among those who declined the invitation. Invitations were, rather randomly, sent out to several universities and, in the end, the team was made up, by and large, by a group of academics who answered *yes* instead of *no*; hence the heterogeneous line-up of the Romanian team, with nearly no previous experience whatsoever, with the notable exception of Anca Tomuş, who has produced in recent years a new stage version of *Romeo and Juliet* for the same State Theatre of Sibiu. The other seven members recruited by the British Council were Radu Andriescu (a poet and literary translator) and Dana Bădulescu (both from Al. I. Cuza University of Iaşi), Loredana Pungă (a teacher of translation studies) and Andreea Şerban, a Shakespeare scholar (both from the West University of Timişoara), Bogdan Radu Stănescu (a film-script translator at the national TVR corporation), Violeta Baroană (the editor of an on-line publishing house of the University of Bucharest) and Eliana Ionoaia (an

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assistant teacher at the University of Bucharest). Before the Cologne workshop I had had the opportunity to organize and conduct three seminars of literary translation from Hungarian into Romanian at the Hungarian Translators' House in Balatonfüred, back in 2012, 2014 and 2015; so, I was aware that what our team needed as a valuable asset was a versatile versifier able to cope with the Elizabethan iambic pentameter and with the rhyming pattern of the Shakespearean sonnet. That is why, as a workshop leader, I asked the British Council to invite Alexandru Călin, a young polyglot translator (from Catalan, Latin, Hungarian and English) and skilled versifier, to join our team—and in the long run my suggestion turned out to be judicious.

The organizers of the conference encouraged the team building process by inviting the three delegations to *Shakespeare und die Musik*, a concert by Collegium Musicum, followed by drinks.

Day one: Alte Feuerwache—objectives, methods and *Hamlet*

The first day of the conference opened with the presentation of the thirty participants from the three European countries, followed by an introductory discussion aimed at setting the wider context for the translation workshop. The discussion focused on issues such as "who we are translating for—audience, reader, Shakespeare scholars" and "the differences between literary and theatre translation." At Patrick Spottiswoode's suggestion, the participants examined the pros and cons of translating into historical or contemporary language. As for myself, I strongly endorsed the idea of translating for present-day audience and readers in "contemporary, modern language." I argued that the largest part of Shakespeare's audience in the London theatres of his time must have been young people (the London apprentices). A general consensus was reached as regards the need to translate into contemporary language. Patrick Spottiswoode insisted that Shakespeare should not be regarded as an icon or a statue, he *is alive* and he is a human like all humans, and his thoughts and words must be treated accordingly. Next, he reminded the participants that Shakespeare wrote for the stage and, accordingly, he must be translated *for performance*.

In fact, that was the *raison d'être* of a text advisor representing the Globe. Moreover, the fact that the translations were not intended for the *page* (for a reading session and publication) but for the *stage* was emphasized by the presence of the Polish, German and Romanian actors who joined the translators on the last day of the conference and performed the newly wrought versions in front of a multi-ethnic audience and the British Council cameramen. By the time the translators started to work on their first assignment, they knew that they were supposed to use their skills in exploring the challenges of translating for performance—such as translating poetry, dialogue, wordplay and humour. They also knew that alongside the practical, hands-on workshops there would be panel discussions focusing on various aspects of Shakespeare and translation.

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Duncan Large and Patrick Spottiswoode pointed out, in their introductory speeches, that

> the main focus of the week is the workshop on translation for performance, designed to encourage *collaboration* and *peer learning* for emerging literary and theatre translators. The workshop will explore different Shakespearean texts and cover different translation challenges. The groups will discuss any existing variant translations of each text and then produce their own consensus translation.

Consensus became the keyword and guiding principle of the five-day team work.

Patrick Spottiswoode provided a short film of a Globe actor performing the "To be or not to be" soliloquy in *Hamlet*, so that this could be viewed as part of the workshop. The film included discussions between the director and the actor, aimed at clarifying the meaning of the speech and the choice of acting style.

Spottiswoode then took upon himself to act as text advisor, working with the translators on a close reading of the text. In the case of existing translations of the plays from which excerpts were to be translated anew, the translators could, in his opinion, explore them at the outset of the workshop, before embarking on their consensus translation.

The organizers of the conference made it clear that the aim of the consensus translation was for participants to work together collaboratively to produce one shared version of a text. The group would work their way through each extract, proposing translations and weighing the pros and cons of various solutions. In each session, one person was to be assigned to type up the translation as the discussion progressed, with the text projected on a screen so that the whole group could see it. Eliana Ionoaia acted as typist of the Romanian group.

The point of departure of the idea of consensus was the hypothesis that participants are likely to have many opinions about how to translate; the workshop offered a space for them to share their ideas and discuss their different options, with the text in front of them. Hence, the focus was on exploring the process of translation, through discussion and hands-on practice, rather than on the end product. The participants in the conference were, therefore, encouraged to discuss in detail all the challenges, with the workshop leaders, the Globe Education text advisor, the actors and each other.

The workshop leader's main tasks in this process were setting the pace for the workshop and ensuring that all participants join in and have their say, without any individuals dominating the discussion. It was workshop leader's role to facilitate the conversation, encouraging the group to discuss all the possible translation options and solutions to particular challenges within the text, in discussion with the Globe Education text advisor. Another interesting viewpoint expressed by Duncan Large and Patrick Spottiswoode during the preliminary discussions was that "Although we will aim to produce a consensus translation, the workshop leaders should encourage participants to recognize that there is never *one single correct answer*, but that there are *many ways to translate*."

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As for participants, they were encouraged to explore in depth all elements of the text and discuss any translation issues that arise, from cultural and historical context to linguistic issues, right down to the use of punctuation.

And day one continued with the first attempt of each group to grapple, in separate rooms (or, rather, halls) with "To be or not to be." It lasted from 11:30 to 17:00, with a half hour lunch break between two workshop sessions. I quote from Dana Bădulescu's later recollections:

> George Volceanov, the "captain" of the Romanian translation team, hardened in tournaments and used to fight spears demands that we should say something (rather intelligent, if possible) in iambic pentameters. It's "piece of cake," that's the way we speak (in) Romanian all the time! Well, I'm not sure I've spoken in pentameters before but for me this is the initiation test. [...]
> The "Captain" approaches it with ease. Shakespeare has got off his pedestal followed by his characters, with their language and all. When you translate Shakespeare, he must sound natural – in the iambic pentameter used by the Romanians since dawn to midnight. Consensually, the Romanian translation of Hamlet's soliloquy, a touchstone of any translator, sounds really good.
>
> (Bădulescu)

The Romanian group originally opted for revisiting some of the older translations and even had Vinea's version projected on the left side of the screen. The right side was to be filled in with the consensus translation. After a good, promising start, the translation stalled towards the mid-section of the soliloquy. Everybody started to dig deeper and deeper into the layers of the text, solutions piled one upon another and the workshop leader had to keep raising his voice to remind his colleagues that the end product should not be an over-sophisticated philosophical manifestation of intellect but words that must be comprehended by audience at first hearing. What I/we came to learn by the end of the first day was that Vinea's version had become an obstacle; it diverted the translators' attention from their task and their original solutions instead of proving helpful.

The mood of the day was saved by a trip to the Globe Theatre in Neuss (a perfect replica of the London playhouse) where the conference participants could watch an excellent Berliner ensemble production of *Zwei Herren aus Verona*, i.e. *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*.

Day two: Alte Feuerwache—from *Hamlet* to *Romeo and Juliet*

The three groups started their second workshop day at the same venue, the former building of the Cologne Fire Brigade. The whole morning and midday were dedicated to Hamlet's soliloquy. Participants were supposed to finish the soliloquy before lunch break but all groups were lagging behind schedule and an extension of deadline was negotiated. This meant that the final session of the day, dedicated to the consensus translation of the shared sonnet of *Romeo and Juliet*, was cancelled. However, there still was plenty of time for what the organizers called "sharing

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session of challenges faced by each group." It was a great opportunity to compare notes and exchange ideas. It turned out that each group had to cope with different challenges, depending on various *formae mentis*, cultural traditions and the specific features of each target language. German workshop leader Michael Raab was amazed to see the bulky dictionaries of synonyms used by the Romanian translators, suggesting the wide range of possibilities Romanian provides translators with.

The second day ended with a Globe short film presenting the lovers' shared sonnet in *Romeo and Juliet* followed by a second, interrupted one (*sonetus interruptus*, as Patrick Spottiswoode termed it), and with the text advisor's guidelines for the next day's assignment.

As for the depth to which the semantics of "To be or not to be" were explored by the Romanian group, here is a testimonial to the group's interpretative and literary skills, in the form of a commentary signed by Andreea Șerban and Dana Bădulescu on the conference blog specially created by the British Council.

> Word of the Day: "shuffle off this mortal coil"
>
> [...] we [...] started the translation of this problematic phrase towards the end of the final session on day 1. We first discussed the meaning of the individual words in English.
>
> The entire line "When we have shuffled off this mortal coil" is an image that reinforces Shakespeare's approach to everything there is in maritime terms. Of course, what accounts for this metaphoric propensity is a cast of mind forged by the culture of an island. If life with all its hardships is *a sea of troubles*, death is *shuffl[ing] off this mortal coil* – a metaphoric image which suggests that the body unwraps its coils of rope as a ship would. The syntagm is based on a contrast which contains in a nutshell the series of oppositions in Hamlet's soliloquy: while *shuffl[ing]* off implies the idea of getting out of or avoid a responsibility or obligation, *coil* is a word which in Latin *(colligere)* means *bring together*. Therefore, "When we have shuffled off this mortal coil" is an extremely strong visual expression of Hamlet's mind tugged between conflicting thoughts.
>
> As regards translation, we first tried some more religious versions as equivalents, all of them centring on the soul leaving the body (e.g. "când sufletul se desprinde de trup"/ *when the soul separates from the body*) but we found them all inadequate because they did not render Shakespeare's original idea. We knew that Shakespeare used several sea-related metaphors, and the *coil* itself is one of them, so we also considered Romanian equivalents such as "parâmă" *(rope, coil)* and Alex promised to tell us a joke related to this at the end, after we have found the best option.
>
> Then we looked at earlier translations, which used a more archaic and poetic language, but we also found them inadequate, because they particularly used the word "hoit" *(corpse)*, which has an undesired connotation of decomposition. We finally decided on "trup muritor"/ *mortal body* and played with collocations related to it: "când trupu-ti lași în urmă"/ *when you leave your body behind*, or "când te desprinzi de trupul muritor"/ *when you detach from your mortal body*, only to finally settle on "când scapi de-a trupului povară"/ *when you get rid of your body's burden*, which seemed to best fit the iambic pentameter rhythm and was in accordance with the rest of Hamlet's soliloquy.

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> And now, the joke we promised. [We assume it's an actors' dry joke, which would probably make more sense in Romanian.]
> Two sailors are talking. The one on the dock yells in Romanian: "Throw me the coil so we can tie the ship." The one in the look-out position, high up on the mast, replies in English: "I'm sorry, I don't understand what you're saying. I don't speak Romanian." The one on the dock gets irritated and says: "Throw me the damn coil so we can moor the ship." The other one replies: "What? I don't understand what you're saying." The former gets really angry and shouts back: "Do you speak English?" "Yes, of course I do." To which the former answers in Romanian again: "Then throw me the damn coil so we can moor the ship."
> Our conclusion to this joke would be that, in performance, what you say is less important than how you say it. So, if we were wrong in any of the versions we suggested, it's the actor's job to mend it. [Wink, wink; nudge, nudge.]
>
> (Şerban and Bădulescu)

Day three: Schloss Wahn—*Romeo and Juliet* and public event

The last three days of the conference unfolded at a different venue, an eighteenth century castle located some forty kilometres from Cologne. The accumulated fatigue induced by commuting was partly compensated for by the beautiful yard and the green scenery surrounding the castle, which took us back in time to an age that resembled Shakespeare's days. The third day was dedicated to the translation of the shared sonnet. The day before the "Captain" had decided to split the group into smaller units, allowing the participants to choose their own line-ups. Team 1 included Radu Andriescu, Dana Bădulescu and Eliana Ionoaia; Andreea Şerban, Loredana Pungă, Violeta Baroană and Bogdan Stănescu were the members of Team 2, while Alex Călin and Anca Tomuş teamed up as a competitive duo. Although Team 1 proposed an inspired translation of Juliet's concluding line *You kiss by the book* ("Săruți meșteșugit"), the Captain awarded the laurels of the day to the members of Team 2 and Team 3. Two days later, the Romanian actors invited by the British Council to perform the translations opted for the version produced by Team 2. Meanwhile, both versions have been published in the on-line professional journal *Revista de traduceri literare* (Issue 9, 2016.) The word of the day was discussed by Anca Tomuş and Alexandru Călin as follows:

> Word of the Day: "You kiss by the book"
> The phrase became the subject of heated debate among team members mainly for three reasons:
> Firstly, it was challenging enough to translate because it is only a half-line. Moreover, it is part of an exchange between the two lovers—it is Juliet's reply to Romeo's request for another kiss. It is also part of a rhyme scheme that had to be preserved in the Romanian version. This posed another challenge to each work group, mainly because we were also trying to avoid resorting to solutions used in previous translations.
> Secondly, it is so ambiguous that it invites several possible interpretations and, therefore, translations: does it mean *you kiss by the rules*—i.e. observing all codes of propriety and rules of gentlemanly courtship – or *your kiss feels just like those I've read*

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> *about in books*? Since Juliet is only thirteen, going on fourteen, with no first-hand romantic experience and since we have reasons to assume that she has only vicariously experienced love-making and kissing by reading about them, some of us went for the second reading of the phrase and proposed the Romanian equivalent "Săruți ca în cărți." In terms of prosody, however, the only difference between the two Romanian readings, rendered as "ca la carte" / "ca în carte," respectively, lies in the choice of prepositions, which probably would have made our work much easier than it usually is in other target languages, because it entails no change in the rhythmical pattern. The choice that we had to make was between two different interpretations, none of which would have had a significant impact on the meter. That being said...
> Thirdly, when one has to render the whole half-line, *kiss*-es included, and verbs come into play, things get a little bit trickier. As mentioned earlier, the possible literal translations would be "săruți ca la / în carte." Well, when a verb is added, none of them seems to meet the rhythm anymore! In the verb (i.e. "săruți") the stress falls on the second syllable, while in "carte" it falls on the first. One doesn't have to be a maths genius to notice it doesn't fit.
> So, in a way, this phrase posed a double threat to us. Even in prose, we weren't exactly sure what "kissing by the book" would translate to in Romanian. While the aforementioned literal translations retain the original ambiguity of the line, they fail to meet the meter. On the other hand, an adaptation of this phrase meant we would have had to settle for one of its two possible meanings.
> The two versions our team eventually came up with reflect both these solutions: the first slightly adapts the original to "săruți meșteșugit" (which more or less means "you're a damn good kisser," derived from the first of the two possible readings); the other one, "Săruți chiar ca la carte"—which, thanks to an extra monosyllabic word, added there for metrical reasons, translates as "you really kiss by the book"—manages to capture both meanings and, at the same time, to preserve the ambiguity of the original.

Day three was a long day, indeed. After the sharing session on challenges faced by each group, dinner was served at 18:00 and the conference participants reconvened at 19:30 for a panel discussion, a round table on "The Reception of Shakespeare in Germany, Poland and Romania" chaired by Duncan Large, with the participation of P. Spottiswoode and the workshop leaders. The merry crew got back to the hotel in Cologne at a very late hour.

Day four: Schloss Wahn—Falstaff on "honour"

The texts chosen for translation by the organizers of the conference covered blank verse, rhyming verse and prose. After "To be or not to be" and the shared sonnet, Falstaff's brief speech (soliloquy) on honour was assigned for translation. The soliloquy runs in the form of a catechism session, consisting of questions and answers. The answer to all questions throughout the speech is invariably *No*. Unlike the other teams, the Romanians chose to use several negative adverbs instead of monotonously repeating the negation "Nu." From the two *Henry IV* plays we learn that Sir John is, at the same time, a college graduate and a leader of the London underworld, that he is constantly mixing the high style with the low style, Biblical

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allusions with swearwords and slang. That is why the use of several negative adverbs added some extra colour to Falstaff's colourful speech. As D. Bădulescu was to confess later,

> Oh, yes! You turn the sack of words inside out and find about six ways to say no but it's worth doing so! Falstaff speaks like a thug, his language sounds colourful, but in German it sounds like trundling boulders. But when you say "no" in six different ways, including onomatopoeic ones, it's as if you really let language roll freely.
>
> (Bădulescu)

However, there were other decisions to make, too. The commentary below illustrates how carefully the team prepared the translation of an eight-line prose speech:

> Word of the Day: "prick"
>
> Day 4 of our workshop was dedicated to Falstaff's famous speech on honour. Before we started to translate the selected text we had an introductory discussion about Falstaff's place in the Shakespeare canon, with references to Harold Bloom (*The Western Canon*) and Jonathan Bate (*The Genius of Shakespeare*). We also discussed the way in which Shakespeare handles various stylistic registers to present the characters living at the Court, in the London underworld, and in northern England. *1 Henry IV* is probably the Shakespearean play with the largest number of curses and swearwords, while *2 Henry IV* abounds in bawdy terms.
>
> After this background warm-up, we moved on to the text and translated Falstaff's speech in short, colourful phrases. The word of the day was *prick*, which generates the pun based on *prick on* and *prick off* (meaning *urge* and *mark one for death*, respectively). We were aware that *prick* in this context had no sexual connotation whatsoever. We contrasted this word to another famous bit of speech from the same play, Hotspur's "it is no time to play with mammets and tilt with lips." [...]
>
> Back to Falstaff's *prick*, we decided, after some deliberation, that what we should do is to look up two Romanian idiomatic phrases constructed around the same verb and with the same meaning as the English word. It was rather easy to find them: "a da ghes," meaning to *urge* / to *be urged*; and "a da în cap"—the literal meaning of the latter phrase is to *knock smb. on the head*, but its figurative secondary sense is to *kill, destroy, do away with*. In a fit of enthusiasm, we then overdid things by trying to create our own pun by further using the word "cap" (*head*) in another idiomatic phrase meant to translate *when I come on*. After some more deliberation we decided that the repetition of the word "cap" impinged on the overall effect of the passage, so that we dropped the second "cap" and kept things simple, translating *come on* as "ies la atac," i.e. *attack*, or *charge*. After these alterations the whole passage reads as follows: "În fine, onoarea îmi dă ghes. Da' dacă îmi dă în cap taman când ies la atac?" The Romanian actor working with us, Mr Joan Pascu, proves to be an excellent Falstaff and our translation fits him like a glove – we were relieved to see that our translation needed no brush-up and rewriting.
>
> (Volceanov, "Word of the Day: Prick").

As usual, the day ended with a late afternoon sharing session.

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Day five: Schloss Wahn—reviewing, editing, public event

The last day was devoted to reviewing and editing the translations of all three excerpts, with a final visit from the actors to perform all the edited translations in advance of the evening performance. The organizers also planned a wrap-up discussion with the workshop leaders, exploring the challenges they had faced during the week in translating Shakespeare. At the last moment it was replaced by series of collective interviews conducted by Duncan Large and filmed by British Council cameramen for the archives of the project.

It was yet another very long day, with the public event (*Performance of The Great Feast of Languages* new translations likewise filmed for the archives) scheduled at 19:30 and a very late departure for Cologne. Although the Romanian actors, unlike their Polish and German colleagues, were discriminated and were not given time and space to rehearse their parts in front of the cameras, Joan Pascu, along with Andrea Schweighoffer (the Romanian Juliet), came up with a memorable performance. Anca Tomuş later wrote that "Falstaff's soliloquy on honour, in Joan Pascu's interpretation, was the climax of the evening, a Falstaff that could make envy him all the great actors who played the role in the past, from Orson Welles to Robbie Coltrane" (Tomuş).

Dana Bădulescu likewise praised the Romanian actor lavishly, writing that "Pascu is a fabulous Falstaff! The Poles are watching the screen on which the Romanian text is projected and decide that Romanian is the most expressive language [of all three]. It feels great to translate into such a language! Shakespeare included? Well, yes!" (Bădulescu)

Conclusions, echoes, impact, coverage of the Cologne conference

Reports about the Cologne conference have appeared, so far, in two printed weekly journals, *Opinia naţională*, issued by Spiru Haret University (Volceanov, "Shakespeare 400"), and *România literară* (Volceanov, "Retraducându-l pe Bard"), as well as in the on-line monthly magazine *Revista de traduceri literare*, which published a collage of six articles written by Anca Tomuş, Alexandru Călin, Dana Bădulescu, Radu Bogdan Stănescu, Violeta Baroană and Loredana Pungă under the heading "Impresii" ("Impressions"), a leading article (Volceanov, "Conferința de la Köln: Shakespeare nu e o statuie"), plus the three texts translated during the workshop in Cologne. The Falstaff scene was inserted by G. Volceanov in his forthcoming translation of *Henry IV*, Part One, with the acknowledgment of his fellow-translators' contribution.

The general consensus reached by ALL the participants in the conference was that everyone had profited from attending the event and everyone had had something to learn. The conference allowed me to arrive at some conclusions of my own; it allowed my Romanian and foreign colleagues to arrive at their own conclusions. Every representative of a given culture did learn *something* from the other cultures

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involved in the conference. The event and the organization of the event certainly impacted on the participants and the participants, in turn, impacted on the organizers. Bringing together translators from various cultures contributed to the development of a multicultural community of young academics and translators from Germany, Poland and Romania. Dana Bădulescu created the *Translating Shakespeare* Facebook page which was soon joined by twenty out of the thirty participants in the conference.

The views expressed by P. Spottiswoode, D. Large and the workshop leaders converged with the "poetics" of the New Romanian Shakespeare edition, laying emphasis on the need of new, stage-oriented translations, written in contemporary language. In fact, the much reviled *No Fear Shakespeare* edition has set a new trend in the Anglo-Saxon world; several Canadian playwrights have been commissioned by the organizers of the International Shakespeare Festival in Ontario to rewrite the Bard's plays in comprehensible present-day English, to thus avoid the alienation of audience from his work. The workshop I lead made me learn that Romania has some talented translators with a potential for translating Elizabethan drama in verse. Alexandru Călin and Anca Tomuş have already joined the team involved in the *Shakespeare for the Third Millennium* project: they have been assigned the translation of several scenes from the collaborative play *Sir Thomas More*, the Romanian version of which is likewise going to be the result of the collaborative effort of Horia Gârbea, Lucia Verona, George Volceanov and the aforementioned younger translators. Călin and Tomuş will also contribute to the new Romanian edition with a joint translation of *Romeo and Julia.* Other participants have also proved a latent potential for the translation of drama and verse and they could become important contributors to a wider project concerning the publication of a five- or six-volume anthology of Elizabethan and Jacobean drama in the years to come.

In their memories and impressions about the Cologne experiment, the participants voiced their initial anxieties, fear of Shakespeare, and the revelations they had during the process of learning, the revelation that Shakespeare is translatable, after all, and they possess latent skills they have been unaware of, skills that can be improved through practice.

Al. Călin later recollected that during the presentation of the participants on day one he boasted himself "the native speaker of an awesome language," as he

> knew too well, from previous versified translations, the prosodic versatility of our language. On the last day of the workshop, after the Polish and German colleagues had heard Juliet, Romeo, Falstaff and Hamlet speak Romanian, the German workshop leader told me: *I thought you'd exaggerated your praise of Romanian. Now I realize that you were right*. Michael Raab was thrilled not by the prosodic flexibility of Romanian [...]; he was thrilled by its rich vocalism, by its natural flow, which avoids jostling consonants, allowing the actor to give his best. But, for me, Raab's most precious statement was the fact that he found the Latinity of Romanian simply striking. Throughout the workshop, Mr Volceanov [...] insisted that we should privilege the use of modern Romanian and shun the Slav, Hungarian and Neo-Greek archaic words that

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> earlier translations are riddled with. Michael Raab was fascinated and, probably, surprised by the Latin quality of Romanian; only then did I fully realize how useful such a translation policy can be and how marvellous secondary effects it may trigger.
>
> (Călin)

In her recollections about the Cologne conference, Anca Tomuș refers to her strong excitement and anxieties, notwithstanding her previous experience of a translator for the stage, and to her awareness about the goal of the translations produced by the three teams: performance.

> I was going to remind my colleagues over and over again that the text "must suit the actor's natural speech"; that it is essential that we should apprehend the gestures required by words and, at the same time, preserve the musicality of the original text by the use of the iambic pentameter.
> What happened in Cologne on the very first day of the workshop came as a great surprise: everything [...] was so dynamic, effervescent, enthralling, so full of ardour and zest that I had to drop all of my previous anticipations and convictions. From the moment Mr Volceanov challenged us all to introduce ourselves speaking in iambic pentameters on all differences – in age, training, experience – melted away; focus on work and team spirit replaced them.
>
> (Tomuș)

Tomuș, like several other participants, learned a precious lesson:

> a challenge becomes a worthy chance of individual development when you do not regard it as an invitation to prove your skill and competence, but, on the contrary, view it as an opportunity to learn from others and to discover unexpected potentialities within yourself.
>
> (Tomuș)

Loredana Pungă shares the same ethical and moral values in acknowledging her anxieties and her "growth":

> I was almost certain I will be the most unsuitable person in the most inappropriate place. Being an academic trained in linguistics and translation studies (but not literary translation!), I thought that the challenges of rendering Shakespearean texts into Romanian will be too much [...] for someone who had never let her pencil scribble iambic pentameters. [...] It isn't always easy to make Shakespeare, who wrote nearly half a millennium ago, sound well in your present-day language. But it isn't impossible, either [...] if you are surrounded by people nourished in literature and theatre, [...] who want to teach you and know how to do it. [...] when I arrived at Cologne I considered myself unfit, but I revised my opinion when it was time to depart thence. I was fit – as an honest apprentice bent on learning. And I learnt a lot!
>
> (Pungă)

In the very title of his article Bogdan Radu Stănescu voiced similar anxieties later supplanted by the "discovery of the fascinating world of Shakespeare

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translation for the theatre," an "area previously unknown to me, that I came to explore [...] and now I find quite familiar." Stănescu is confident that during the workshop he "did evolve as a professional" and this statement "is not a mere cliché." Stănescu confesses that he misses his "brothers-in-arms" and would accept further invitations that would bring him together "with special people, in wonderful settings, alongside special persons, event organizers, translators and actors, in short, distinguished personalities you can learn from" (Stănescu).

All in all, the Romanian participation in the Cologne translation conference was, alongside the International Shakespeare Symposium held in Bucharest from 12th to 14th April 2016, the International Shakespeare Festival held in Craiova in April 2016, and this very special issue of the Ovidius University *Annals*, edited by Monica Matei-Chesnoiu, one of the major events by which Romania celebrates the Shakespeare tetra-centenary.

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