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**Shakespeare's *Macbeth* in  
19th-century Russian Literature:  
An Intertextual Study of Social and  
Ideological Negotiation**

**Tesis Doctoral presentada por**

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**MARINA A. PERSHINA**

**THIS THESIS IS DEDICATED TO MY BELOVED PARENTS.**

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## NOTE ON CONVENTIONS

All references to *Macbeth* and other Shakespeare's plays are to *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare* (Wordsworth Library Collection, 2007). Pushkin's *Boris Godunov* is quoted and referred to from Alfred Hayes's translation (Dodo Press, 2008); *The Undertaker* from Ronald Wilks's translation (Penguin Books, 1998), and *The Queen of Spades* from Rosemary Edmonds's translation (Penguin Books, 2004). Dostoyevsky's *Crime and Punishment* and other fiction, non-fiction and criticism is quoted from the *Delphi Complete Works* (2014), except for *A Writer's Diary* (in 2 volumes) translated by Kenneth Lantz (Northwestern University Press, 1993-1994). Leskov's *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* is quoted and referred to from David Macduff's translation (Penguin Classics, 2015). All other primary and secondary sources written and published in Russian are reproduced in my own translations. The original passages are included in the Appendix in the order of their appearance, page by page, in the text of the thesis. Original titles of Russian literary works are translated and also transliterated; the titles of Russian-language scholarship in the references section are also transliterated. In the references section, the original Russian titles of both creative and scholarly works are given in square brackets after the transliterated title. Each in-text citation includes the author's name, year of publication, and page number(s). In the case of the anonymous essays published in nineteenth-century Russian periodicals, the periodical's title is placed in the author position. In quotations, an ellipsis within square brackets indicates that I have omitted some text; ellipsis without brackets is original to the text quoted.

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## Chapter 1: General introduction

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### 1A. GOALS

In 1828 Alexander Pushkin wrote a letter to the editor of *The Moscow Telegraph*, which was about to publish one scene from his tragedy *Boris Godunov*, informing him that he had organized his play “according to the system of our Father Shakespeare” (Pushkin 1937-1959: 162). “Father” was written with a capital letter. That “our” is ambiguous. In nineteenth-century Russian the first-person plural possessive could also denote “my”. Pushkin may therefore be invoking Shakespeare as his principal literary guiding spirit who, unlike Gavril Derzhavin, Vasily Zhukovsky, Voltaire or Lord Byron, never lost his salience in the poet’s creative work from the watershed of his intellectual crisis of 1823 until his death. Or, he may be alluding to Shakespeare’s adoption by a greater number of Russian writers as world literature’s most inspirational figure. Whichever is the case, Russian national drama would have developed much later had it not been for Pushkin’s interest in Shakespeare which led to the genesis of the Russian history play in the late 1820s; so too, if at all, would Russian romantic literature that in large part flourished due to the assimilation of Shakespeare.

Pushkin’s reference to the playwright was only one tiny episode in the giant narrative of Shakespeare’s international reception. By the nineteenth century he had already been published, performed, painted, translated, adopted, quoted and alluded to infinitely often. Since the late eighteenth century, the playwright had become “a living presence” (Marshall ed. 2014: 1) in European culture, ever available and resonating through its literature, theatre and art, which testified to his persistence and vivacity. Shakespeare’s interaction with his expanding audiences was symbiotic in that succeeding generations found his words immediately relevant to their situations and needs, while Shakespeare’s preeminence was corroborated, and his posterity underwritten in the various receptions and interpretations of his afterlife.

Since John Milton, who opposed Shakespeare’s innate brilliance to the learned, classical one of Jonson, the playwright had been praised for a natural poetic ability rooted in a national tradition what made him the British national poet. The indigenouslyness of his drama, free from the limitations of classical form, raised Shakespeare to the rank of a

genius, in the new sense of the word as consolidated in the romantic period. The aesthetic concept of “original genius” associated with the Bard became widespread both in mid-eighteenth-century Britain and Germany which was striving to emerge an equal national genius in the 1770s period of “*Sturm und Drang*”, the first full flourishing of European romanticism, whose ideological motto “Deutschland ist Hamlet”, coined by the poet Ferdinand Freiligrath, became “a leitmotif for the reception of Shakespeare” (Marx 2012: 115). Even neo-classicist France finally realized the flexibility and modernity of Shakespeare’s drama owing to Stendhal’s 1823 polemical essay *Racine and Shakespeare*, which spoke in favour of the rejection of Racine traditions by contemporary drama and was followed by Victor Hugo’s persuasive argument in the Preface to *Cromwell* that drama is Shakespeare. The French and German chapters of Shakespeare’s reception history are well known, as too, increasingly, the Italian and Spanish ones, not to mention the autochthonous reception among British writers, not only romantics but, further into the nineteenth century, the glorious line of realist novelists such as Charles Dickens, William Thackeray, George Eliot, Anthony Trollope and the Brontë sisters.

The European literary history of the nineteenth century is in large part the record of the consolidation of Shakespeare’s dramatic oeuvre, with its archetypical characters, plots, motifs, imagery and sayings but a set of models, literary, critical, and artistic, into an international lingua franca for creative authorship. And the Russian reception of Shakespeare is another chapter in the grand narrative which, as shall be seen, has yet to be fully written. This thesis is a contribution to filling that gap, concentrating on the nineteenth-century assimilation and appropriation of Shakespeare in Russia, rather than the more commonly explored reception of the twentieth century, and focusing on one play, *Macbeth*, which, as I shall argue, was particularly congenial to authors writing in the social and political turmoil of a nation making the transition from feudalism to modernity and destined to unprecedented political revolution.

The Russian romantics made of Shakespeare their national poet, hence, perhaps, Pushkin’s “our”. In the literary polemics of the 1860-70s Shakespeare became a symbol of art and an embodiment of transcendental human values. The nineteenth century as a whole is believed to be marked by the formation of Shakespeare Canon in Russian literature, while Hamlet is regarded as an iconic character deeply rooted in the very core of Russian culture and particularly crucial for the mid-nineteenth century when the Russian intelligentsia regarded him a reflection of its own essence and historical fortunes. The changing interpretations of Shakespeare’s tragedy by Russian writers showed with



extraordinary precision the evolution of Russian society and culture. To conceive the substance of any period in modern Russian history one need only enquire how people interpreted *Hamlet*. Nevertheless, it is hard to imagine that with such an enormous variety of unique and, at the same time, universal characters from numerous plays of different types, Hamlet was the only Shakespearian hero assimilated in Russia.

*Macbeth*, one of the playwright's four principal tragedies and a masterpiece of human psychology, has absorbed and fascinated European critics and interpreters since the eighteenth century. It has held the London stage since William Davenant's operatic adaptation of 1664. It has been subject to a wide range of critical opinions since Simon Forman's and Samuel Pepys's reminiscences of performances or Samuel Johnson's first scholarly analysis of the play's historical and psychological context in the 1745 *Notes on Shakespeare's Plays*. It "illuminated Romanticism into being" (Bloom ed. 2008: xi). The Victorians held it in their very "blood and bones" (Poole 2004: 1). Even in *Punch* it was a frequent target for textual burlesques, the most famous of which, Percival Leigh's thirty-one-line burlesque of the "Is this a dagger" speech, was reworked to comment upon the scandalous topical issue of vote-buying during the 1852 election campaign (Young 2006). As it picked its sometimes painful way between neo-classical adaptations, literal prose versions and poetic translations, the play contributed to the development of modern national literature in countries like Germany and France and, also Russia.

Although Russia cannot boast of such a long history of *Macbeth* appropriation, as I shall show, the play reverberated throughout many of the works of its major romantics and realists, from Mikhail Lermontov's poem *The Three Witches* (1829) and Wilhelm Küchelbecker's critical essay *Thoughts on Macbeth* (1830) to realist Nikolai Leskov's novella *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* (1865). Remarkable references to the tragedy include Pushkin's *Sonnet* (1830), in which he called Shakespeare the creator of *Macbeth* and Fyodor Dostoyevsky's deployment of the Weird Sisters in his famous argument with radical democrats that "boots are better than Shakespeare". The period's historical events made *Macbeth* of no less importance than *Hamlet* in Russia. In the first half of the century the rising tide of Russian nationalism in the wake of victory in the Patriotic War of 1812 was restrained by Nicholas I's assumption of the throne and the failure of the Decembrist revolt's in 1825, which ushered in decades of a tightened militaristic and bureaucratic regime of severe censorship and suppression of literary and artistic expression. The mid-century abolition of serfdom inaugurated the traumatic transition from patriarchal structure and household system to an urban capitalism which spelt the end for countless

rural communities and led to widespread impoverishment and the exacerbation of social inequality, growing despiritualization and an increase in crime. Brought up within the framework of Orthodox Christianity, Russian writers analyzed and tried to find solutions to social problems and the growing nihilism from the perspective of their religious views and moral values. In a century of turmoil, both romantics and realists turned to *Macbeth* to help articulate their perception of the age, of human nature and of the role of the individual in the history of humanity.

The pages that follow not only review the nineteenth-century reception and appropriation of *Macbeth* but also attempt to explain historically why the tragedy became such a crucial source text. In the process, they define the peculiarities of social and political conditions and problems in nineteenth-century Russia and their reflection in criticism, drama, and fiction of the major writers of that time; identify specific features of European romanticism and realism and gauge their impact on the development of Russian literature; assess the place and the role of Shakespeare in Russian literary history and social and political controversy; analyze the contribution of *Macbeth* to the transformation of political, religious and philosophical concepts, in the selected works of Russian romantic and realist writers and critics; and explore the recurrent use of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth figures to problematize issues of crime and punishment, humanism and personal responsibility.

## 1B. METHODS

The choice of methodology is a complicated issue for literary studies that, as we know, have no universally applicable analytical tools. There is no single, irreproachably correct, commonly used approach to all literary phenomena, for literary studies are not a monolithic science but a complex set of different forms of knowledge about literature, each of which differs from others in its brand theory of the text and its brand methodology. Although this thesis does not wear its theoretical postulates exoskeletally, it is nonetheless vertebrated by an interrelated cluster of methodological procedures, each with their own basis in theory. To achieve its goals, the thesis assumes the validity of “sociological positivism” as offering an account of how particular national literatures have particular characteristics; applies the cultural-historical method of perception, analysis and evaluation of a literary work; the methods of theoretical poetics in order to determine the compositional (plots, motifs, symbols, and images) and subjective (problems and themes); the hermeneutic method to study the reception of the play and its interpretation

by Russian writers; and the methods of intertextual analysis to determine a set of intertextual elements in nineteenth-century Russian literature which evince the assimilation of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* (the theme of regicide, problems of temptation and sin, fate and will; symbolical motifs and imagery of the supernatural; characters of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth; the plots involving crime and punishment).

The goals and objectives of a work of literary research in many ways determine a solution to the problem. In the case of a foreign source text's appropriation in a national literature, scholars usually apply a systemic comparative approach, and not without reason, because it is not only literary texts that enter into dialogue but cultures in a broad sense, with their own customs and traditions, historical developments, political situations, economic conditions, social environments religious beliefs, and moral values that shape the worldviews specific to a given author.

Such a systemic comparative approach as will be brought to bear on this analysis of *Macbeth* and its influence on nineteenth-century Russian literature entails, firstly, the cultural-historical method of perception, analysis and evaluation of a work of art within a cultural and historical framework, or "milieu" (Koller 1912: xxxix) that explains the impact of social background and historical conditions on the formation of writers' worldviews and, by extension, the peculiar features of a literary period. This sociological positivism, with roots in Johann Gottfried Herder and Madame de Staël (Koller 1912; DuPont 2002) and in many ways a precursor of historicism, was formulated in the second half of the nineteenth century under the influence of positivism in *Philosophy of Art* (*Philosophie de l'Art*, 1865-1882) by the French critic and historian, Hippolyte Taine. Taine believed that three such positive factors as nation and national character, environment and historical situation or time hold major sway over art. His idea of the impact of natural elements on the behavior of states and peoples was endorsed in the twentieth century by Russian philosopher Nikolai Berdiaev, who suggested the concept of "the landscape of the soul" when accounting for Russian great-heartedness in terms of the vastness of the Russian Plain in *The Fate of Russia* (*Sudba Rossii*, 1918).

While national landscape impacts national character, the latter, in turn, impacts national culture and art. The influence of different civilizations on the Russian tradition led Dostoyevsky in *Pushkin's Speech* (*Rech o Pushkine*, 1880) to highlight Pushkin's "world responsiveness" as typifying "the power of the spirit of the Russian nationality [which] is its aspiration (in its ultimate goals) to universality and pan-humanism" (qtd. Badalian 2020: 153). In the old Russian period, the source of the influence was Byzantium

and Greek civilization, while since the post-Petrine period it has been western Europe. The influence usually took the form of emulating an artistic style or genre because European literature was better developed. Nevertheless, on assimilating aesthetic models, Russian writers charged them with new meanings, for any literary phenomenon is associated with a certain historical setting that generates a specific cultural and historical context. This accounts for the importance of sociological positivism or historicism to this thesis, for it advocates the evaluation of each literary period within the framework of its contemporary traditions. The application of the method will help to identify the main themes of nineteenth-century Russian literature in its transition from pre-romanticism to romanticism and, further, to realism; also, the philosophical views of the authors, for it was a period of dramatic political struggles against tsarist dictatorship and economic changes when the nation was transformed from a feudal system centered on the household to another based on capitalism with its social contradictions and impoverishment of people and the consequent abandonment of spiritual and moral values and the rise of criminality.

Secondly, the analysis of *Macbeth* and its influence on Russian literature requires the use of theoretical poetics to determine the compositional (plots, motifs, symbols, and images) and subjective (problems and themes) structure of a literary work. This scientific paradigm developed in the ancient times, overcame a severe crisis at the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and was repeatedly revived in twentieth-century literary studies, such as the Anglo-American New Criticism, the Russian formalist school, and French structuralism (van Dijk 1972: 160-188; Todorov 1981: 3-74; Newton ed. 1997: 1-45; Harshav 2007: 216-237). Poetics examines the structure of a literary work and the system of aesthetic strategies and techniques it deploys. Its general *modus operandi* is to study the means writers have at their disposal to present their ideas, as well as the laws governing their combination according to generic constraints. Those means are arranged into a hierarchy of categories, with the idea itself at the highest level and its final verbal realization at the lowest. Its descriptive principle is aimed at recreating the path from the idea to the final text, thereby helping the reader to apprehend the author's conception. In this regard, various parts and levels of the writing are considered as a whole. This methodological approach will allow identification of the system of stylistic, linguistic and dramatic strategies and techniques used by Shakespeare to create a particular effect and convey particular meanings.

As the structure and the expressive means of a literary piece cannot be examined in isolation from its meaning, this research avails itself of the hermeneutic method to reveal possible deeper or hidden meanings of a literary work as part of its interpretation. This paradigm also originated in antiquity and for centuries took the form of ancient literary or biblical exegesis, though in the nineteenth-twentieth century literary studies it developed into a variety of theoretical and methodological alternatives. Since its origins, hermeneutics regarded an artistic work as an objective given which contained both an explicit meaning and a hidden one that needed to be deciphered. This idea was typical of the German romantic school of Friedrich Schleiermacher and, later, Wilhelm Dilthey (Mueller-Vollmer 1985: 1-54; Ormiston and Schrift eds. 1990: 39-114; Rush 2019: 65-86), as well as of Charles Augustin de Sainte-Beuve, French literary historian and among the founders of the biographical school of literary criticism (Jefferson 2007: 113-142; Prendergast 2007: 1-27). Later hermeneutics was enriched with psychoanalytical, Jungian, mythocritical and other approaches to literary interpretation along with the critical objectivity proposed by E.D. Hirsch in *Validity in Interpretation* (1967).

The hermeneutical method, which is often referred to as the art of understanding, for, according to Heidegger, “interpretation is existentially based in understanding” (qtd. Stassen 2003: 241), is crucial to studying the reception of Shakespeare’s drama. It provides a host of principles which offer critical insight into the how Russian writers, as readers of the source text, *Macbeth*, understood and interpreted Shakespeare. Its contextual principle dovetails with the cultural-historical method, as set out above, for not only writers but also readers and interpreters are bound to certain traditions and situated in certain cultural and historical contexts with their own hermeneutic or interpretative horizons. According to Dilthey’s hermeneutical circle, understanding is connected with the historicity of lived experience and thus “the ultimate goal of the hermeneutic process is to understand an author better than he understood himself” (Dilthey 1985: 250). At the same time, the hermeneutical circle in its progression and continuity indicates the possibility of multiple interpretations of the same literary work; in other words, depending on the worldview and the interpreter’s familiarity with characters and events described in a work, the content can be perceived by each reader in his own way. This partially explains the appearance of multiple national (English, German, French, Russian, etc.) Shakespeares, each belonging to its own historical moment (neo-classicist, romanticist, realist, etc.) as well as the infinity of interpretations

of the playwright's dramatic *oeuvre* as a whole and each constituent play, for no interpretation of a work is conceivable in isolation of the interpreter's personal and also national and historical aesthetic stance. Therefore, the hermeneutic method considers both a reader-interpreter's subjective personality and the objective situation of the time when the work was written and the influence of traditions and cultural context. The analysis of the work is completed not by determining the unity of the text's form and content, but by establishing a personal understanding between a literary work and a reader-interpreter which, in the case of the Russian authors to be considered here, manifests itself in their own literary productions.

This manifestation is obviously intertextual, and the theory of intertext and intertextuality is the fourth component of this thesis' methodological approach. As is well-known, these concepts are often associated with postmodernism, more particularly with that sphere where literature encounters critical theory. Intertextuality as a term was first used in Julia Kristeva's essays *Word, Dialogue and Novel* (1966) and *The Bounded Text* (1966-1967) which proposed the idea that a text is a dynamic site, an intersection of other texts where at least one other text can be read. These articles introduced Mikhail Bakhtin's work in France. Kristeva's concept of intertextuality referred to his theory of the polyphony of communication (later called dialogism in *The Dialogic Imagination*, written between 1937-1941, first published in 1975), the coexistence and interplay of different kinds of discourse. This characterized the novel as a truly dialogic literary genre by dint of its "plurality of independent and unmerged voices and consciousnesses, a genuine polyphony of fully valid voices" (Emerson 1984: 6). The initial approach to the phenomenon as a relation between utterances prompted the appearance of a wide range of attitudes towards the concept of intertextuality and attempts to formulate the definition of this term. Crucial contributions to the understanding of the problem and the development of the theory were made in the works of Michael Riffaterre (1984. 1987), Umberto Eco (1979. 1986), Michel Foucault (1972), Roland Barthes (1977. 1981), Jacques Derrida (1976) and others. The progressive dissolution of text which does not exist as a self-sufficient unit of meaning and does not function as a closed system finally led to the shift of emphasis from individual text to the way in which texts relate to one another.

Various classifications of forms and means of intertext or, in other words, "intertextemes" were introduced. As coined by Russian scholars V. Mokienko and K. Sidorenko (1999: 21), an intertexteme is an intertextual element or segment of a precedent

text used in the process of the formation of a new text. For example, the fundamental classification of Gerard Genette (1982) is a practical model for the analysis of intertextual connections based on the idea that a literary work is a coherent system which contains five hierarchical levels: intertextuality (“coexistence” in one text of two or more texts in the form of quotations, allusions, etc.), paratextuality (the relation of a text to its heading, epigraph, etc.), metatextuality (critical commentary on another text), hypertextuality (parody on a precedent text), and architextuality (genre connection of texts). This classification was extended by further division of intertextemes and the addition of stylistic and intermedial elements by Natalya Fateeva (2007). Meanwhile, Nathalie Piegay-Gros (1996) suggested the division of intertextual elements into those “in absentia”, which just correlate with the text, and those “in praesentia”, which are explicitly included in the text.

In this thesis, intertextual analysis will reveal the characteristic features of *Macbeth*'s assimilation in nineteenth-century Russian literature as an integral part of a wider Shakespearean text. The examination of intertextual elements will distinguish the variety and peculiarity of the writers' interpretations of the play through the prism of their world outlook and historical conditions of the era. In this respect, N.V. Zakharov and V.A. Lukov (2011) proposed two notions for the study of Shakespeare's impact on the subsequent development of Russian literature, theatre and other arts. They considered “Shakespearism” as the comprehension and appropriation of the basic ideas of the playwright's worldview and vision of history by Russian writers. For its part, they coined the term “Shakespearisation” to define the representation of the playwright's characters, motifs and plots in the assimilating cultural and literary environment. Thus, the Shakespearean text as a literary phenomenon becomes a “personal super-text”, a complicated system of integrated texts which have a common unity of language and meaning. It is a “collection” of literary works that includes all kinds of intertextemes (among them his creative work and biographical myth) in a system whose components are connected in different ways. Besides intertextual elements, the image of the playwright himself should be regarded as one of the key components of this system because, as we shall see, the attitude toward Shakespeare's drama changed in the course of the national literary development.

Thus, the systemic comparative approach, which implies the use of the cultural-historical method, the method of theoretical poetics, hermeneutical and intertextual research methods, makes it possible to identify and explore the factors conditioning the

appropriation of *Macbeth* by nineteenth-century Russian writers. These factors include: historical preconditions and such pivotal events as the Decembrist Revolt and the emancipation of the serfs which inspired Russian authors to create what became known as the Golden Age of Russian culture; the literary context of a rapid transition from neo-classicism to romanticism and, further, to realism, a comparison of which with the development of these movements in other European countries will permit further specification of Shakespeare's assimilation in Russian literature; while peculiarities of social changes and ideological controversies will bring to light special features of the authors' personal appropriation and representation of *Macbeth* in the intertext of their writings and thus contribute to the recognition of the play's crucial role in the interpretation of critical issues and in broadening the sense of Russian literature.

### 1C. LITERATURE REVIEW

Within European Shakespeare reception studies, Russia is still relatively uncharted territory. Most works have concentrated on the twentieth-century reception of the playwright, such as, for example, George Gibian's *Shakespeare in Soviet Russia* (1952) and P. Vykhodtsev's *Sovetskie pisateli o Shekspire* (1964). More recently, Ekaterina Sukhanova's *Voicing the Distant: Shakespeare and Russian Modernist Poetry* (2004) dealt with functions of the Shakespearean text in Russian literary modernism, Elena Demicheva's "*Shekspirovsky tekst*" v russkoy literature vtoroy poloviny XX – nachala XXI veka (2009) studied the Silver Age and postmodern interpretations of Shakespeare in Russian poetry and criticism, Aleksandr Pozdnyakov's thesis "*Functioning of Shakespeare's Plays in Russian Culture*" (2017) explored the twentieth- and twenty-first-century Russian theatrical and film adaptations of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and *Romeo and Juliet*, while Natalia Khomenko's articles *The Cult of Shakespeare in Soviet Russia and the Vilified Ophelia* (2014) and *Shakespeare After the October Revolution* (2020) examined Shakespeare's appropriation in Soviet Russia.

Only a couple of fully-fledged books are devoted to the history of Shakespeare's assimilation in the country. Both *Shekspir i russkaya kultura* (1965), edited by M.P. Alekseev, and Yu.D. Levin's *Shekspir i russkaya literatura XIX veka* (1988) provided a detailed description of how the playwright's drama was translated, adapted for the national stage, and perceived by Russian critics from the late eighteenth century until the early twentieth century. Despite the wealth of data presented, these publications lack an in-depth analysis of Shakespeare literary reception. They only treat in passing the views



of writers like Pushkin, Ivan Turgenev and Dostoyevsky, while other key figures of Russian Shakespearisation such as, for example, Nikolai Leskov are overlooked entirely. More recent works offered even more general insight into the issue. Irena R. Makaryk's essay "'The tsar of poets'? The Changing Fortunes of Shakespeare in Russia" (2019) gave a brief review of the history of translations, criticism, and theatre performances of Shakespeare's plays that were most popular in Russia during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Nikolai Zakharov's article "The Shakespearean Canon in the Russian Literature at the Turn of the 18th-19th Centuries" (2015) and two monographs, *Shekspirizm russkoy klassicheskoy literatury: tesaurusnyy analiz* (2008) and *Shekspirizatsiya* (2011, co-authored by V.A. Lukov) dwelt on the peculiarities of the formation of the national Shakespearean canon in comparison with other European countries.

Those two monographs paid special attention to the English playwright's reception by Pushkin, the most thoroughly researched Russian writer in modern Shakespeare scholarship. Most scholars have focused on Pushkin's drama *Boris Godunov* and his poem *Angelo* as Russia's first literary appropriations of Shakespeare (Herford 1925; Bobrova 1939; Wolff 1952; Alekseev 1972; Emerson 1987; Levin 1988; O'Neil 2003; Nikolai Zakharov 2003; Murphy 2011). Other Shakespearean researchers have studied either separate writers' appropriation of the playwright such as Turgenev, as the playwright's reader and translator (Waddington 1980; Sestov 2010; Volkov and Zhilyakova 2019; Volkov 2019); Dostoyevsky and his rendering of Shakespeare's humanism (Cox 1969; Levin 1974; Hunt 2016; Stepanyan 2018); and Leo Tolstoy's sustained attack on the playwright's drama (Gibian 1957; Burov 2019). Yet others have focused on particular Russian literary work, such as Turgenev's essay *Hamlet and Don Quixote* (Rinkus 1975; Shvetsova 2002; Müllerová 2011) and short story *A Lear of the Steppes* (Volkov 2018; Bellmunt-Serrano 2019), whose interpretations of Shakespeare's plays were regarded as essential to understanding the intellectual development of Russia since the 19th century, as well as the rise of some debates about the Russian cultural identity; or Dostoyevsky's novel *The Possessed*, in which Shakespearean reminiscences were considered the artistic means of satirizing nihilists, on the one hand, and presenting modern existential tragedy, on the other (Belknap 1984; Krinitsyn 2001; Kovalevskaya 2014).

The only play by Shakespeare whose Russian assimilation has benefited from sustained and detailed analysis is, predictably, *Hamlet*. Scholars have examined the

problem of “Hamletism” as a unique cultural-anthropological and sociocultural phenomenon (Rowe 1976; Gorbunov 1985; Semenenko 2007; Lukov, Zakharov and Gaydin 2010; Luludova 2015; Letina 2016). They have identified various historical personages and literary characters who embody Hamletism in the Russian cultural tradition of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and reached a common conclusion that the hero’s controversial nature boosted some nineteenth and twentieth-century aesthetic and ideological debates and the further Shakespeareanisation of national literature and criticism. However, despite the diversity and permanence of *Hamlet*’s reception in Russia, the national Shakespearean text cannot be, and certainly is not, reduced to this single play.

*Macbeth* has always been at the forefront of critical attention because of the ambivalence of its principal characters and the presence of the supernatural. The play’s European reception has long been the object of research. German *Macbeth* was examined through the prism of Schiller’s and Goethe’s Weimar adaptations (Burdorf 1908; Williams 1990 and 2004; Dröse 2018), Wieland’s and Tieck’s translations (Furness ed. 1873; Kofler 2016; Hörnig 2018) and twentieth-century theatrical interpretations (; Hortmann 1998; Höfele 2008; Rank 2010; Jones 2016). French Shakespeare studies have analyzed the play’s changing appropriation from Ducis to Ionesco (Brooks 1960; Morse 2004; Pemble 2005; Essif 2006). Italian *Macbeth* has been surveyed through Verdi’s, Ristori’s, and Guidi’s adaptations (Carlson 1985; Tempera 1999; Clausen 2005; Melchiori 2011; Massai and Guidi 2017). In Spain various publications by Clara Calvo, Keith Gregor and Ángel-Luis Pujante have provided critical insight into the history of *Macbeth* translations and adaptations for the stage from neoclassicist and romantic versions to modern theatrical performances (Calvo 2002; Gregor 2010; Gregor and Pujante 2011; Pujante ed. 2012; Pujante 2020).

As for Russia’s assimilation of *Macbeth*, it has been studied in relation to separate creative works, such as, first of all, Leskov’s novella *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* for its obvious reference to the play in the very title. Since Hugh McLean’s *Nikolai Leskov: The Man and His Art* (1976) scholars have regarded the Shakespearean text as one of the intertextual components along with documents, folklore, and other literary sources and focused on comparing and contrasting the novella to the play (Stolyarova 1981; Korobkova 2006; Kucherskaya 2009). *Macbeth* allusions are usually considered as literary devices which enhance the expressiveness of Leskov’s story: the source text “triggered reader’s special associations” (Pozdina 2012: 57) and “served as a literary

background” for the writer, “thus adding credit and symbolic depth to the events” he described (Kucherskaya 2010: 269). According to Manel Bellmunt-Serrano, it was the writer’s ideology that affected the way he appropriated Shakespeare, for he adapted the tragedy to a new context of nineteenth-century Russia “to denounce the situation of confinement and lack of freedom for women, especially in rural environments” (2019: 24). As a possible precedent text *Macbeth* has been mentioned in studies of Pushkin’s *Boris Godunov* (Gifford 1947; Dinega 1996; Sokolyansky 2003) and Dostoyevsky’s *Crime and Punishment* (Goddard 1960; Bloom ed. 2004; Bakhtin 2014; Stepanian 2014), whose protagonists are believed to recall those of *Macbeth*. However, unlike *Hamlet*, whose thorough scholarly investigation led to the formulation of the concept of Russian Hamletism, the Macbethian text in Russian culture remains drastically fragmentary and incoherent, although separate publications prove considerable interest on the part of nineteenth-century Russian authors in the play and thus prove its actuality, for the themes of regicide, murder, and spiritual struggle have never lost their urgency throughout the whole course of the country’s dramatic history.

This thesis builds on but also takes much further that research into the Russian reception of *Macbeth*. Not only does it trace, define and explain Shakespearism and Shakespearianisation in a far more numerous catalogue of nineteenth-century literary works, but it also traces their presence in literary and political polemics and charts a history of the play’s interpretation in criticism and journalism. What is more, it never loses sight of the broader European context of Shakespearean reception while providing the first comprehensive account not only of *Macbeth*’s fortunes in nineteenth-century Russian culture and society but also of its participation in, and its mediation by, the tumultuous events of nineteenth-century Russian history and the vexed arena of literary and, more broadly, intellectual debate.

#### 1.D. OVERVIEW AND PLAN OF THE THESIS

To study *Macbeth*’s literary reception in nineteenth-century Russia it is necessary to analyze the Russian state of art of the pre-romantic eighteenth century in its broader European historical context in so far as, according to modern historians, since Peter I’s modernization reforms, westernization has ranked alongside Orthodox Christianity and autocratic monarchy as one of the main features of a continuous and changeable process of the formation of the Russian identity and nationalism. This is the main goal of Chapter 2, which shows how, to close the gap with the western European advancement of science,

industry, and technology, Russia had to reform its political and economic structure as well as renovate its intellectual and social life (Auty and Obolensky 1991: 172-176; Riasanovsky 2005: 6-7; Polunov 2005: 12-17). The westernizing policy was continued by Catherine II by importing the European—mostly French—Enlightenment to Russia, mostly French, which made Voltarianism a dominant trend in the country's philosophy and culture (Trepanier 2010: 117-118; Burger 2013: 297) and determined Shakespeare's introduction to Russian stage through adaptations of French neoclassical adaptations (Levin 1998: 78; Stokes 2014: 298-299). Russia proceeded to assimilate European movements so that by the first quarter of the nineteenth century its culture represented a vivid blend of western European and native elements. After the Napoleonic War of 1812 the country strived for expanding cultural ties with Europe that led to the emergence of Decembrist romanticism, which was akin to the civic-minded European romanticism in its interest in history, patriotism and nationalism (Raeff 1966: 16-18; Leighton 1994: 16-21; Trigou 2009: 37-39), as will be shown in Chapter 3. In the mid-nineteenth century, Russia adjusted to other European countries in its literary development and entered the period of realism marked by intensive aesthetic debates in criticism and the nuanced examination of history, society and a human being in fiction which inspired writers to move beyond the objectivity of the Natural School and the psychological and ideological perspectives of critical realism (Becker 1963: 335-338; Brunson 2016: 23-25; Debashish 2020: 20-22). Realism the focus of Chapter 4.

As nineteenth-century Russian literature developed mostly within the framework of western literary tradition, its appropriation of Shakespeare *via* European intertexts was heavily reliant on the playwright's reception in Britain, Germany, and France. Different romanticisms and realisms looked for different things in Shakespeare in so far as they were historically and culturally conditioned. As we shall see, Russian romanticism drew strength from inheriting its European forerunners' salient features. Britain's liberal brand of romanticism came to the forefront of Russian culture and brought with itself Byronic celebration of the individual, the Lake poets' glorification of imagination and intuition, the supernaturalism of the Gothic genre, and historical romance of Walter Scott's prose (Frey 2010: 5-9; Lessenich 2017: 164-166; Duff ed. 2018: 8-9). German romanticism, associated particularly with Johann Gottfried Herder, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Friedrich Schiller, Friedrich and August Schlegel, and Ernst Hoffman equipped the coming Russian aesthetic revolution with the view of the poet as a genius in intimate contact with the deepest feelings of his community, the emphasis on national mythology,

and the rejection of artifice in favour of the natural, the awe of nature as an untamed spirit within man and the sublime (Behler 1993: 34-53; Koelb 2000: 40-46; Beiser 2003: 18-20). While the French romantic call for modernization and poetic freedom based on a rejection of neoclassical forms and a refusal to establish and apply norms reached Russia in literature and criticism of François-René de Chateaubriand, Madame de Staël, and Victor Hugo and triggered a revolt against firmly entrenched classicism (Havens 1940: 10-18; Smith 1981: 24-33; Rosen and Zerner 1984: 16-23; Hannoosh 2011: 450-452).

Despite a number of differences, all European romanticisms were united by a common esteem for Shakespeare as a literary eminence, an intellectual hero, and a scourge of the hegemonic tendencies of neo-classical culture; all were determined to defend his dramatic achievement against the disparagement of neo-classical critics (Bate ed. 1992: 8-13; Holbrook 2010: 92-95). Britain elevated Shakespeare to the very image of an original creative genius, the model of sublimity, and established him as the national poet (Bate 1986: 1-21; Marsden 1995: 103-104; Grundmann 2005: 31-33). So did Germany, where Shakespeare was “naturalized” and deemed a cultural compass who inspired continuing artistic productions, while *Hamlet* became an icon and model of what the man of the future, the modern man, should be like (Fennell 2010: 66-72; Grange 2011: 241-242; McCarthy 2018: 20-21). Later in France, the playwright embodied an unbridled romanticism in opposition to the refined literary taste of a fading classicism: the opposition of Shakespeare to Racine constituted a striking dichotomy which revealed the philosophical antagonisms, contrasting stylistic norms and fundamental linguistic differences that informed two major literary traditions (Pemble 2005: 95-104; Taylor 2009: 142-143).

The rise of romanticism and the growth of Bardolatry were parallel pan-European phenomena. In Eastern Europe, the turn of the nineteenth century converted the playwright into an inspiring symbol of national self-awakening, a spiritual ally in the search for distinct cultural identity (Davidhazi 1998: 187; Stribrny 2000: 64-65). Russia, on the one hand, due to the affinity to French culture and its enduring neoclassicist rejection of the playwright experienced a considerable delay in Shakespeare’s assimilation. On the other, the cultural influence of Britain and Germany had always been strong and lasting enough to consider them prime models for the playwright’s appropriation. Thus, the analysis of European romantic Shakespeares will bring to light the way he evolved from a one more foreign author in pre-romantic, neoclassical and sentimental Russia to imaginative genius during the period of romanticism and to national

poet at the turn to realism, for by the middle of the nineteenth-century the dramatist had already become Russia's own "flesh and blood", that "our" Shakespeare Pushkin spoke of, whose Hamlet embodied a contemporary sense of affinity with prevailing attitudes and spirits (Shurbanov and Sokolova 2001: 13; Isenberg 2012: 17-18) The mid-nineteenth-century Russian intelligentsia, those "superfluous men", associated themselves with Hamlet, as did the self-critical German intellectuals of the 1840s, who considered Shakespeare's hero as a mirror of the German national character and blamed the country and its Hamlet-like people of poets and thinkers for producing endless political theories without bringing about a revolution, thus, widening a range of meanings by presenting Hamlet in new philosophical, aesthetic, and political terms so that Hamletism gained currency as a symbol of the failings of intellectuals, political parties and nations (Pfister 1994: 78-79; Han 2001: 20-22; Foakes 2004: 19-27).

Russia's obsession with Hamlet ran rampant due to the flourishing of realism which, unlike Russian romanticism, developed alongside its European counterparts. Realists emphasized the importance of the accurate depiction of their nation's current life and strove for an accurate reproduction of the essential features of contemporary reality with sincerity and truthfulness of perception, pleading for social reasonableness and responsibility (Kearns 1996: 152-153; Travers ed. 2001: 69-73). Such a social and civic colouring became a general characteristic of mid-nineteenth-century European and Russian novels whose interpretations of social phenomena were assumed to be in step with history and to have prophetic power (Terras 1998: 190-192; Mirsky 1999: 178-181). Following in the footsteps of their romantic precursors, realists continually used Shakespeare, who by the mid-nineteenth century had emerged into a cohesive body of literary works whose poetic and theatrical material was remarkably labile and powerful medium through which to claim authority for their particular interests and valorize their own writings (Sawyer 2003: 18; Ortiz ed. 2013: 3). The realist novel examined the problems of the day through modifications of Shakespearean plot trajectories and used quotations and allusions as a way of establishing a bond between text and reader, while the playwright himself was venerated as a latter-day philosopher king and gained the status of something beyond human ken (Sillars 2013: 12).

However, as we shall see, there are several important features that distinguish Russian realism from its European counterparts and provide a perfect illustration of how *Macbeth* contributed to the construction and development of the aesthetic unity known as the Russian Shakespeare. In so far as romanticism emerged in Russia much later than in

the west of the continent, both it coexisted and made fruitful exchanges with realism for at least a decade after Pushkin's drama and fiction. Russian realism was born precisely from romanticism and shared many of its impulses: the centre of romantic realism lay in the "cardinal romantic tenet of the bestowing power of the imagination" and the sublime, and this enjoyed an after-life as the romantic supernatural, though rationalized, survived into Russian realism (Leighton 1975: 10-11; Fanger 1998: 12-13). Russian writers demonstrated an exceptional interest in the human inner life which was often disclosed by means of a fantastic dimension of dreams, a higher spiritual and poetic reality, opposed to oppressing social circumstances of the real world (Tyukhova 1987: 64-73; Jones 1990: 3-5; Zakharov 2008: 385-386; Makarevich 2011: 389-390; Lipich and Lipich 2015: 33-35); this is why the realism of Dostoyevsky and Leskov is often called "fantastic" or "magical", a century of more before Gabriel García Márquez or Isabel Allende. Moreover, as Russian realists considered their creative work as a pioneering study of human nature, Shakespeare's universal characters encapsulating timeless truths were exceptionally instrumental in creating realist typifications of human character. While Hamlet embodied the writers' self-criticism, Macbeth was employed as a political argument against tsarist tyranny and the infringement of liberty in the first half of the nineteenth century (McGrail 2002: 32-40; Hadfield 2004: 78-86; Bushnell 2005: 173-177; Howell 2008: 27-30; Drakakis 2013: 134-135; Gregor ed. 2014: 4-7) and as an aesthetic argument against nihilism (Muir ed. 1984: lii-liiii; Zamir 2007: 93-103; Bloom 2019: 130-132) in the idealist-materialist debates of the 1860-1870s, when the bourgeois freedoms were established that enabled the "new" people to violate laws, ethics and traditions and, thus, led to the rise of criminality (Hingley 1967: 46-47; Pozefsky 2003: 211; Tucker 2008: 22-26; Konyshev and Dorofeeva 2014: 164-166).

These distinctive characteristics define Russian *Macbeth* as the outcome of political, social, and ideological negotiations throughout the nineteenth century. The thesis that follows is indebted to extant scholarship, but in its attempt to expand the notion of the Russian Shakespeare it offers beneficial continuities across the researched period. Its body is divided into two main chapters (3 and 4), one on romanticism, the other on realism, more for convenience than for anything else, in so far as and perhaps more than other European realisms, Russian realism was, as noted, more consistently a continuation of romanticism and incorporated most of its salient features. Chapter 2 briefly examines the critical state of eighteenth-century Russian art to track the ways through which Shakespeare was brought to the country and penetrated its culture.

Chapter 3 focuses on *Macbeth*'s reception during Russian romanticism by studying the main media (adaptations and translations, critical essays published in popular periodicals and critics' and writers' diaries and personal letters) through which Shakespeare and *Macbeth* in particular, were both read and written about. The range of available primary sources will demonstrate the extent of Shakespeare's pervasiveness and the accessibility of his words and ideas to Russian audiences. The analysis of the historical background within its broad European context will show how the predominant aesthetic currents which shaped the image of the romantic Shakespeare in other countries influenced the construction of the Russian romantic Shakespeare which would become fundamental to the growth of a new Russian national identity. Due to the Russian romantics' obsessive interest in folk culture and preoccupation with the mystical, *Macbeth*'s Witches authorized the appearance on the Russian stage in the drama of Anton Delvig, Wilhelm Küchelbecker and Alexander Griboyedov of national folk beliefs, while Banquo's ghost as a literary device introduced and authorized the supernatural in Mikhail Lermontov's and Alexander Pushkin's fiction.

Chapter 4 is devoted to *Macbeth*'s reception during Russian realism. It assesses the transformation or complication of the cult of Shakespeare, as the literary idol with a profound grasp of human nature who was recalibrated as the idealists' symbol of art and simultaneously an object of derision for the radical revolutionists. In so far as character criticism came to the fore in Russian critical literature, fiction writers aimed at creating realistic human types and presenting current social life while referring to Shakespeare's characters for their universality and diversity. Macbeth and Lady Macbeth embodied their protest against lawless tsarist autocracy in Pushkin's *Boris Godunov* and the nihilist scorn for intrinsic human values in Dostoyevsky's *Crime and Punishment* and Leskov's fiction. The thesis ends with conclusions, references, and an appendix including the original texts of passages quoted from Russian.



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## Chapter 2: The Russian state of the art c. 1800

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### 2.A. PRE-ROMANTIC EUROPE

In the late seventeenth century and during the eighteenth, Shakespeare, who had lain relatively neglected since the restoration of the theatres, gradually became the supreme English creative genius. In Britain, during the period of Neoclassicism, John Dryden was the main adaptor of the playwright's drama and one of the main contributors to the return of Shakespeare's wide popularity. His adaptations *All for Love* (1677), which imitated *Anthony and Cleopatra*, and *Troilus and Cressida* (1679), proved that for Dryden Shakespeare was "the exemplar of original genius and divine inspiration", so much so, that "he disencumbered himself of rhyme" to write tragedies in blank verse (Bate 1998: 175). Yet, while giving Shakespeare credit for his classical drama, Dryden's "main objective was to show his own plays to be improvements [...] of the imperfections of the Shakespearean source" (Brady 2004: 186). Another noticeable trace of Shakespeare's return to the cultural agenda were musical works of Henry Purcell based on various tragedies and comedies, such as *The Fairy Queen* (an adaptation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 1692), *Timon of Athens* (1694), *The Tempest* (in the version of Dryden and William Davenant, 1695). A great contribution to the revival of interest in the playwright took the form of Nicholas Rowe's first published biography of Shakespeare (1709). Gradually, Shakespeare's plays (usually in altered forms) were constantly staged in English theatres, thus giving rise to the aesthetic dispute over Shakespeare in the English press of the early eighteenth century. Gradually, too, the English cult of Shakespeare began to emerge, according to which he most fully embodied the pre-romantic theory of a genius as the creator of literary masterpieces and, more generally, was regarded as a symbol of new art. It began with John Dennis' essay of 1711 *On the Genius and Writings of Shakespeare*, in which the author claimed that "Shakespeare was one of the greatest Genius's that the World e'er saw for the Tragick Stage [...] the Glory of Great Britain" (1903: 94). In the series of articles published in *The Spectator* during 1711-1712 Joseph Addison called the playwright "a King of Writing" admitting that "among the English,

Shakespeare has incomparably excelled all others” (Addison and Steele 1958: III. 300-301).

In British eighteenth-century literary criticism, the playwright was valued as a master of characterization, whose “greatest skill was in depicting characters of convincing depth and complexity” (Lynch 2012: 42). This new perception of Shakespeare replaced the ideas of seventeenth-century critics who had maligned the playwright for neglecting morality (e.g. Rymer 1693: 92). Joseph Warton examined Lear's character in a series of essays in *The Adventurer* published in 1752-1754 and found out that “in the judgment and art of the poet in describing the origin and progress of the distraction of Lear [...] he has succeeded better than any other writer” (Warton 1946: 254). In 1777, Maurice Morgann noticed a “strange art in Shakespeare which can draw our liking and good will towards so offensive an object” as Falstaff (1777: 10). In his *Philosophical Analysis* (1780) William Richardson praised the characters of the “genuine and original poet, peculiarly favoured by nature, and intimately acquainted with the constitution of the human mind”, who “detects the origin of every passion, traces its progress, and delineates its character” (1774: 1). Thomas Whately called the playwright “excellent beyond comparison. No other dramatic writer could ever pretend to so deep and so extensive a knowledge of the human heart; and he had a genius to express all that his penetration could discover” (1785: 7).

Moreover, Shakespeare inspired critics to re-evaluate the place of the rules in aesthetic theory (e.g. Montagu 1770). New critical essays proved the genius of the playwright and claimed that Shakespeare's deviation from the rules established by the classicists reflected the identity of British art. William Richardson admitted “unlimitedness” of the genius of Shakespeare, “the Proteus of the Drama”, who “changes himself into every character and enters easily into every condition of human nature” (1774: 26). Addison was also full of admiration for Shakespeare's genius and noted “that noble Extravagance of Fancy [...] made him capable of succeeding, where he had nothing to support him besides the Strength of his own Genius” (Addison and Steele 1958: III. 513). Joseph Warton coined the term “genuine poetry” to conceptualize the idea that imagination and inspiration as an authentic source of poetry stand above formal mastery (e.g. Warton 1756: 10). Edward Young in his *Conjectures on Original Composition* noted that “Shakespeare mingled no water with his wine, lower'd his Genius by no vapid Imitation” (1759: 78). Thus, it was the eighteenth-century criticism that made Shakespeare, as Jonathan Bates has said, “the archetypal Original Genius because the idea of original

genius emerged as a way of explaining the phenomenon of Shakespeare” (Bate 1998: 168).

For poets too, Shakespeare was “a byword for the natural, original genius, exemplifying poetry’s imaginative potential” and “was the magician whose wand could bring all the human passions to life and offer a language of authentic inspiration beyond formal mastery” (Ritchie and Sabor, eds. 2012: 11). Despite the opinion that the poetic influence of Shakespeare lagged behind that of Milton and Spenser and “was limited almost entirely to the drama” (Wasserman 1947: 84)—even his admirers like Alexander Pope did not consider him an essential member of the English poetic tradition: “Tis easy to mark out the general course of our poetry. Chaucer, Spenser, Milton, and Dryden are the great landmarks for it” (e.g. Spence, 1966: I. 178)—eighteenth-century poets referred to the playwright in various ways. There were a few direct imitations of Shakespearean blank verse and tributes to the playwright like *Imitations of Shakespeare* by John Armstrong (1726), *A Fit of the Spleen. In Imitation of Shakespeare* by Benjamin Ibbot (1725), *The Pleasures of Imagination* by Mark Akenside (1744), *An Ode to Shakespeare* by David Garrick (1769) and *Monody Written near Stratford-upon-Avon* by Thomas Warton (1777). Numerous allusions to Shakespeare’s characters and motifs were also made by poets to highlight the force of emotions or enhance the description of an image. For example, in William Collins’s *Epistle to Sir Thomas Hanmer* (1744) one can find reminiscences of *Julius Caesar*, while in Robert Lloyd’s poem *The Actor* (1760) there are reminiscences of *Hamlet*. A remarkable example of how simply the tone and mood of a poem can be twisted by the reference to Shakespearean characters and scenes is William Lisle Bowles’ *On Shakespeare* (1794), where the continuous introduction of short quotations from *The Tempest*, *Macbeth*, *Hamlet*, *King Lear*, *Midsummer Night’s Dream* and *As You Like It* adds colour, music and emotive associations to the lyrical writing. As David Fairer states, modern scholarship has underestimated the extent to which eighteenth-century poets drew from Shakespeare and how subtly they could respond to his drama: “In a wide variety of ways Shakespeare was absorbed into the poetry of the eighteenth century and became part of a more adventurous poetic vocabulary” (Fairer 2012: 113).

In the novels of the early eighteenth century, the use of Shakespearean texts as sources for allusions or quotations is not quite so obvious. It was Samuel Taylor Coleridge who proposed the influence of *Macbeth* and *The Tempest* on Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe*, though without any textual evidence to prove their position (Coleridge 1980: II .160; see

Moore 1968: 71-80). However, it is clear that Defoe alluded to and quoted from Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* in his pamphlets and poems such as *The Shortest Way with the Dissenters* (1702), *Jure Divino* (1706) and *The Political History of the Devil* (1726). A more concerted novelistic assimilation of the playwright started with Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* (1740) and *Clarissa* (1747-1748) whose protagonists constantly refer to various Shakespeare's plays, particularly *Richard II*, *Hamlet*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Measure for Measure*. All these "quotations, invoked by characters to construct authority for their beliefs, are intense instances of 'epistolary acts' that require the reader's careful appraisal" (Rumbold 2016: 69). A study of around seven hundred fifty English novels published from 1740 to 1780 concluded that "one novel in every seven contains some Shakespearean reference: a total figure, then, of just over a hundred" (Noyes 1953: 3), although most novelists quoted the same Shakespearean lines or even misplaced the quotations. Nevertheless, there were some notorious exceptions like that of Laurence Sterne, who alluded to Hamlet throughout both *Tristram Shandy* (1759-1767) and *A Sentimental Journey* (1768). Sarah Fielding gave her heroines Shakespearean names to highlight intertextual connections in the novels *The Cry* (1754) and *Ophelia* (1760). Henry Fielding created a satirical metatext in *The Tragedy of Tragedies* (1731) and *Tom Jones* (1749), which ridiculed a clichéd manner of quoting Shakespeare in novels. Gothic novelists like Ann Radcliffe "deployed Shakespeare in their pseudo-medieval and early modern tales of mystery and terror [...] for the evocative, over-worldly power of his sublime descriptions and emotive speeches, and for a varied cast of ghosts and fairies" (Rumbold 2016: 133). Epigraphs from *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* were normally used to create a creepy atmosphere and hint at the ghostly or murderous plots of their novels. Hence, by the end of the eighteenth century, "quoting Shakespeare was the novelists' golden apple, their fatal Cleopatra" (Keymer 2012: 119).

Dramatists and performers were influenced not by the original Shakespearean plays but by their Restoration adaptations as the assimilation of Shakespeare into English drama of the eighteenth century was, as we have seen, mostly through adaptations of his plays which updated the language, shortened plots and cleaned up dubious morality to satisfy the current public tastes and demands. Indeed, "as all Shakespeare was adapted Shakespeare, a habit built up of staging a fictional version of Shakespeare [...] the works and the person that they were able to make him be" (Stern 2012: 142). Almost each play had its Restoration and modern versions which were regularly performed (Wheeler 1985: 438-449). The Licensing Act of 1737 that "eliminated all but two theatres, required prior

governmental approval of all play texts and established severe penalties for non-compliance with its provisions” (Kinservik 2002: 9) made Shakespearean adaptations among other earlier approved plays even more popular on British stage. Remarkably, there a number of imitations of Shakespearean plays were written like Nicolas Rowe’s *Jane Shore* (1714) and Lewis Theobald’s *Double Falsehood* (1727), which were considered forgeries. More successful were historical imitations like William Havard’s *King Charles I, Written in Imitation of Shakespear* (1737) or William Shirley’s *Edward the Black Prince; or, the battle of Poitiers: an historical tragedy. Attempted after the manner of Shakespear* (1750). Nevertheless, imitations were still less popular than adaptations because eighteenth-century fashion imposed rigorous conditions to show Shakespeare at his best and keep him contemporary.

By the end of the eighteenth century, in England “admiration for Shakespeare was becoming a touchstone of taste: anyone who thought him less than divine could not, by definition, have a refined sensibility” (Lynch 2007: 254-255). For the eighteenth-century public as well as for eighteenth-century editors and scholars, Shakespeare’s texts were “insistently figured as sacred, reverend, scriptural, worthy of the pious respect that a scripture demands” (Walsh 1997: 117).

Interest in Shakespeare soon acquired a pan-European character. In the late 1720s, Voltaire, during his journey through England, was captivated by the work of Shakespeare and became the playwright’s first French propagandist. He devoted *On Tragedy*, the eighteenth of his *Philosophical Letters* (1733) to the English national style of drama and Shakespeare in particular, something he would later regret when he the neoclassical charge against the playwright in France. However, his real contribution to the assimilation of Shakespeare in forms of adaptations or imitations was rather slight. Along with some allusions to *Othello* in *Zaire* (1732), his only significant Shakespearean adaptation was *The Death of Caesar* (1733), which at first was set to be “a faithful enough translation of Shakespeare’s” (Voltaire 1969: III. 245) but finally turned out to be a pale imitation of Shakespeare’s play written within the framework of the classical tradition (Monaco 1974: 19). Much more prominent in this matter was Jean-Francois Ducis who adapted and readapted six of the playwright’s tragedies (*Hamlet, Romeo and Juliet, King Lear, Macbeth, King John* and *Othello*) between 1769-1792, which he altered by numerous omissions and additions to satisfy the rules of French neoclassicism.

Between 1745-1748 La Place published the *English Theatre* collection of prose translations, the first four volumes of which were devoted to translations of Shakespeare’s

plays. The most significant translation of Shakespeare into French was made three decades later by an outstanding pre-romantic translator, Pierre Le Tourneur, in a collection of twenty volumes published from 1776 to 1782. Interestingly, La Place's collection "had enjoyed no official favour nor even sanction, it had had to be produced anonymously and with a putative London imprint, in order to protect a publisher who had not obtained a royal privilege", whereas Le Tourneur's "volumes came from the press loaded with every honour that supreme authority and high society could bestow" (Pemble 2005: 83). Further evidence of the playwright's growing popularity in France was the reaction of the public and the court to Voltaire's *Letter to the Academy* (1776), in which he voiced the abrasive criticism of Shakespeare's tragedy set against the elegant French version. The letter was read to the Academicians but "it was futile to attempt to get official sanction for his views" because France was already "obsessed with Anglomania" (Green 1968: 152-153). When two years later Voltaire died, the new member elected to replace him in the Academy was Ducis who had gained popularity for his Shakespeare adaptations.

In Germany, Shakespeare became a force for the renewal of national literature with such major authors as Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, Johann Gottfried von Herder, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and Friedrich von Schlegel marking the various stages of Shakespeare's reception in the eighteenth century. However, from the first scattered references in Daniel Georg Morhof's *A Primer of the German Language and Poetry* (1682) to the 1750s, the English playwright had been little more than "a witness, a name to be quoted, where notions of creativity, inventiveness, imagination or fulness are to the fore" as there was not much "knowledge of the texts of his plays and even less desire to feel their full impact" (Paulin 2012: 315-316). Nevertheless, within only one or two decades, Germans evolved from scant awareness or general acknowledgement of Shakespeare to a broad appreciation of his talent and importance. It was Germany where the first translations of Shakespeare's drama into European languages appeared. In 1741, Wilhelm von Borck's poetic translation of *Julius Caesar* was the very first complete version which was not an adaptation or imitation. The first German collection of Shakespeare—twenty-two plays in adapted versions—was not published until 1762-1766 by Christoph Wieland. Between 1775-1777, the first complete collection of Shakespeare's drama was published in the German translation by Johann Eschenburg. Lessing, who witnessed the development of the playwright's reception from the first

reworkings of his plays on the German stage to Wieland's neoclassical adaptations and Eschenburg's translations, praised Shakespeare in his *Hamburg Dramaturgy* (1769).

During the period of so-called *Sturm und Drang* (1770-1780s), when German criticism considered the playwright a genius and spoke in favour of his timelessness and universality, in his speech *Shakespeare: A Tribute* (1771), Goethe called the playwright both a Prometheus and a fire which lightened his life (1949: 695). He "responded enthusiastically to Shakespeare's titanism and waved good-bye to the classical conventions of the theatre" (Mulvey-Roberts 1998: 70). In 1773, Herder published the essay *Shakespeare* in which he showed the way the playwright stood outside the prescriptive aesthetic systems of the Greeks. For him, Shakespeare was a model for German dramatists, the national poet who had lost his Englishness, and the historical hero to whom future generations would turn to measure and identify themselves historically and culturally (Herder 1949: 555). Johann Michael Reinhold Lenz devoted his essay *Remarks on the Theatre* (1774) to the irrelevance and obsolescence of Aristotle's rules and considered Shakespeare an unconscious poetic genius and the incorporation of divine creativity.

Along with criticism there were various examples of Shakespeare reception in German drama and novels like Schiller's allusions to *Othello* and *Macbeth* in *the Marauders* (1781) and Goethe's Wilhelm Meister's appropriation of Hamlet's features in *Wilhelm Meister's Mission to the Theatre* (1777) and later *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship* (1796). Generally, the appropriation of the genius of Shakespeare by German writers was "the result of a constant process of abstraction and personification of the meaning of genius", a process that stratified itself in "idealistic and still strongly elitist" late eighteenth-century German literature (Golinelli 2005: 152).

## 2.B. PRE-ROMANTIC RUSSIA

In Russia the assimilation of Shakespeare started due to the growing public interest in the playwright's literary work from the second half of the eighteenth century. However, it turned out to be a lengthy and slow process. First, due to the language barriers, most first translations of the Bard's plays were made from French or German adaptations and translations in prose. As we have already seen, those national literatures were able to take stock of Shakespeare much earlier while Russian audiences became acquainted with his heritage indirectly. Therefore, most early translations into Russian were inaccurate and in

prose, with the consequent loss of many important features of Shakespeare's poetics. The second obstacle to fast assimilation was the current state of Russian literature itself, which had been comparatively handicapped by its historical non-literariness. The comparison with European literatures reveals that the Russian literary evolution was completely different for several reasons. Since the nascence of writing in Rus after its Christianization in the tenth century, literature had been mostly ecclesiastical. The only secular genre was the annals, the Russian equivalent of European chronicles and, despite the use of poetical content, folklore allusions and figurative language, more historical than literary texts. Then, the Golden Horde Invasion and the Tatar-Mongol Yoke of the thirteenth-fifteenth centuries which devastated the country slowed down, indeed almost stopped, the development of Russian literature. Only thanks to the Europeanisation of Russian culture started by Emperor Peter I (1682-1725) and continued by Empress Catherine II (1762-1796), Russian literature was able to level off and synchronize with other European literatures. There was no truly secular literature in Russia until the Patriarch Nikon's *Raskol* or Schism, namely, the division in the Russian Orthodox Church in the mid-seventeenth century over reforms in liturgy and forms of worship.<sup>1</sup> Since then it went through a protracted process of formation which continued until the end of the eighteenth century and finished with the rise of the Romantic literary movement at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Russian secular literature, contemporary to the Shakespearian era, was not ready to appropriate his heritage.

The names of Shakespeare's characters first appeared in 1731 in the newspaper *Vedomosti* due to a translation error, which mentioned "respectable comedies by Hamlet and Othello"<sup>2</sup> (*Vedomosti* 1731: 318) instead of Shakespeare as an author. The Russian translator of a German translation of Addison's original *Spectator* article from *The Spectator* (no. 12, 14 March 1711) was simply unaware of the difference between the British playwright and his protagonists and even of that between comedies and tragedies. This first Russian reference to Shakespeare reveals the obstacles that attended the early assimilation of Shakespeare in Russia. First, it was circumstantial, appearing as it did, not in a piece of literary writing, but in a general interest article which was only indirectly relevant to Shakespeare: the subject of the article was the mental dissipation and how it

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<sup>1</sup> Nikon was a religious leader who unsuccessfully attempted to establish the primacy of the Orthodox church over the state in Russia and bring the Russian Church into compliance with the traditions of Greek Orthodoxy, which finally led to the split of the Church (Riasanovsky 2005: 85).

<sup>2</sup> As indicated in the Introduction, the original texts of passages quoted in translation in the body of the text are included in the Appendix.



could be overcome by speculating on diverse topics, both simple and thought-provoking, like watching puppetry and Shakespearean drama. Second, it reached Russia through German mediation: the English-language article was translated into Russian from its German translation. Third, its content was not fully apprehensible for Russians. The translator found the German phrase “comödie von Hamlet oder Othello” (comedy of Hamlet and Othello) that could be interpreted into Russian as either “comedy about Hamlet and Othello” or “comedy by Hamlet and Othello”. He chose the second option, possibly considering them to be ancient dramatists and therefore adding attributive “respectable”; this was published without any changes or criticism.

Thereafter, occasional Shakespearean allusions and quotations can be found in Russian publications of the eighteenth century, but without referring to the playwright himself. The first text to mention the name of Shakespeare was *Epistle on Writing Poetry* (1748) by Alexander Sumarokov, poet and playwright, who included Shakespeare, “though not enlightened”, in the ranks of great poets of the past because “despite the immensely bad he had the incredibly good” (1781: I. 335, 355). Such an appraisal, which derived from the neo-classicist views of the likes of Voltaire, was the only one that existed in Russian and was transmitted from one publication to another with only minor changes. For example, in his magazine *Hell Mail (Adskaya Pochta)*, Fyodor Emin, writer and journalist, wrote in his essay on dramatic art (1769) that “Shakespeare, tragedian adored by all Englishmen, was high-browed, witty and well-bred, but stubborn and with bad taste” and offered criticism of some scenes in *Julius Cesar* (1769: 270). The same idea was expressed in the essay *Theatre (Teatr, 1790)* by Pyotr Plavilshchikov, playwright and actor, who claimed: “Although an enlightened mind has never appreciated these strange changes in scenes, Shakespearean beauties look like lightning piercing the dark of the night” (Plavilshchikov 1792: 28). Apart from these scattered references, Shakespeare was little known, further evidence of which is the spelling of his surname in different Russian publications. Almost all authors used their own form. For example, Sumarokov called him *Shekespir*, Emin named him *Shakespir*, Plavilshchikov, *Cheksper*. “In publications of the eighteenth century we can find such spellings as Shakspir, Shakesper, Shakespear, and even such rare ones as Sakespear, Cheksbir and Shakespar due to the lack of one unified transliteration of his name” (Levin 1988: 12). Only in the late eighteenth century, thanks to the growing number of foreign critical essays translated from French and German, was sufficient information about the playwright collected to allow his assimilation to commence.

In 1748, Alexander Sumarokov published his happy-ending adaptation of *Hamlet*. It was a typical neoclassical tragedy based on Ducis's or, more probably, Pierre-Antoine de La Place's French translation (1745-1748) as "there is no evidence that he knew any English" (Gibian 1966: 728). In response to the criticism of his adaptation, Sumarokov asserted its originality: "Hamlet is mine, except the soliloquy in the end of the third act and Claudius' dropping to his knees; there is hardly any similarity with the Shakespearean tragedy" (1787: X. 103). The play was successfully staged, but after the early 1760s its performance was banned for political reasons on account of its parallels with the murder of Peter III in 1762. "For 34 years, under the eyes of all Russian society, a real, not a theatrical tragedy of prince Hamlet has been played out, with Prince Paul I as its protagonist" (Bardovsky 1923: 142). Prince Paul, the future Russian Emperor "appreciated Sumarokov's work because he saw in it, not without reason, similarity with his own fate: in Europe he was referred to as the Russian Hamlet" (Zakharov 2015: 375). Sumarokov represented Hamlet as a person of strong will and very determined in his actions, but like the majority of Sumarokov's characters, his Hamlet lacked any national identity. However, it was Sumarokov who introduced *Hamlet* to the Russian public and influenced the development of a European slant to Russian theatre and drama. His play "was of nutritional value to the audience in the way its heroes expressed elevated ideas about honour, devotion and love for the motherland, which dominated European literature" (Lyatsky 2002).

Then for some years there were almost no noticeable translations of Shakespeare in Russia until "the permissive interpretation" by Catherine II in her adaptation of Shakespeare's *Merry Wives of Windsor* called *This is How to Have Both the Basket and the Linen* (*Vot Kakovo Imet Korzinu i Belyo*, 1786). The empress probably used a German prose translation by Christoph Martin Wieland (1733-1813) (twenty-two plays were published from 1762 to 1766). Although as was the case of Sumarokov's *Hamlet*, all characters in the adaptation bear Russian names, for example, Falstaff was transformed into Polcadoff, or Haftun, there was nothing Russian about them. The aim of the piece was to satirize the inordinate love of everything French that prevailed among the upper classes of Russian society. Catherine's next Shakespearean adaptation, *The Spendthrift* (*Rastochitel*, 1786), was based on the German translation of *Timon of Athens*. She Russified the setting and the characters—Timon was turned into Tratov (the Russian for "spender") and Alcibiades into Bragin (the Russian for "sot"). Once again, the aim seems to have been to criticize some aspect of Russian society, the empress choosing this more

marginal play “to satirize the weakness of human nature and social morality” (Zakharov 2015: 377). The Empress also used Shakespeare’s history plays as a model to create her own history plays *From the Life of Rurik (Iz zhizni Riurika, 1786)* and *The Early Rule of Oleg (Nachalnoe upravlenie Olega, 1786)*, which proved to be as didactic as her comedies. Her main characters, ancient Russian princes, are mouthpieces conveying her own political and philosophic ideas, mostly moralistic and edifying. Like Elisabeth I, Catherine II appreciated theatre as an educational means. She wrote thirteen plays in all for staging at her Hermitage theatre. Although her adaptations were rough and artless, they reveal the rising interest in Shakespeare in late eighteenth-century Russia.

Due to the rise of new literary tendencies like sentimentalism and pre-Romanticism, which set the cult of nature and feelings against the rationalism of classical aesthetics, Shakespeare was reappraised: “His notorious lack of imagery is comprehended as a merit [...] he tramples on conventions being ‘natural’ in his feelings and thoughts” and he began to be appreciated as “an original and unique artist of the new age who managed to find way into the crypt of human nature and soul” (Levin 1988: 13). One of the true admirers of the playwright in Russia was Mikhail Muravyev, the writer who spanned two periods of Russian literature: Enlightenment and pre-Romanticism. He hailed the greatness of Shakespeare’s talent in the poem *Success of the British Muse (Uspekh britskoy muzy, 1778)*:

Equal to colossus, there comes a giant.  
As a powerful magus, upon the world he rises.  
Eminently great, a beloved son of a dream,  
The king of the British stage, he is named Shakespeare.  
Nature’s gift is for him a canon.  
He created Falstaff and Othello. (Muravyev 1967: 172)

In his numerous writings, despite criticizing the “constant mixing of the mean and the noble” and the “faulty presentation of ancient customs,” Muravyev stressed Shakespeare’s “eloquence of heart, so outstanding and full of truth, striking turns of sensations and marvellous richness of descriptions” (1819: 179-180).

The end of the century was also the time when full translations appeared. In 1787, historian Nikolay Karamzin, another admirer of Shakespeare who would later visit London, translated *Julius Cesar* in prose. He was the first to translate Shakespeare’s play from its original English text, using French and German translations to help him. In the

preface to the tragedy he called Shakespeare's drama "the theatre of Nature" on account of its diversity and unity and explained his admiration for the playwright's talent by the fact that there was almost no other dramatist who conceived human nature as deeply as Shakespeare did: "only few knew all the secrets of the human soul, its hidden motives, the distinctiveness of every passion, every temper and every way of life so well as this artist did" (Karamzin, ed. 1964: 79-82). In the same year, he devoted his poem *Poetry* (*Poezia*, 1787) to Shakespeare's greatness:

Shakespeare, Nature's friend! Who better than you has  
Cognized the human hearts? Whose brush with such skill  
Has drawn them? In the depth of the soul  
You found a key to all the mysteries of fate  
And with the light of your immortal mind  
You like the sun illumined the night pathways of life. (Karamzin 1966: 61)

Karamzin's notion of nature resembled modern views of reality. He valued Shakespeare's ability to depict life in all its diversity. Many scholars believe that such an approach to display the complexity and discrepancy of life was used by Karamzin in the making of *History of the Russian State* (*Istoria gosudarstva Rossiiskogo*, 1818), which was used by Pushkin, in his turn, while creating his drama *Boris Godunov* (e.g. Blagoy 1975: 233-234; Levin 1988: 37-38; Zakharov 2008: 65).

Karamzin was very ambitious in his plans and eager to translate all Shakespeare's plays, although he only produced a version of *Julius Caesar* (1787). Ignoring the existence of the various adaptations we have mentioned, he wrote that as none of Shakespeare's plays had been translated into Russian, "none of my compatriots who did not read Shakespeare in the original could be aware enough of him" (1964: 79). He also explained his choice of translation method: "As for my translation, I did my best to translate it right, besides trying to avoid expressions contradictory to our language [...] I did not change any author's idea as I consider it improper for a translator" (Karamzin 1964: 82). Karamzin pioneered the adequate translation of Shakespeare into Russian by moving beyond the tradition of "improving" the original text which had originated in France and spread to become almost dominant in Russia in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. He refused to substitute foreign names or household items with their Russian alternatives or to relocate settings, procedures which he defined as "adaptation to our (Russian) customs". He translated the play in prose to interpret the content of the

source as precise as possible, so his Julius Caesar proved to be rather faithful thanks to French commentaries and translations of the play.

However, the problem of accuracy was not uppermost in translators' minds at the turn of the nineteenth century. The main purpose for translators of that time was still to master world literature through the presentation of its forms and ideas. Adaptations prevailed, the most significant of which were those by poet Vasily Zhukovsky, the founder of Russian Romantic poetry, whose ballads were adopted from German and English literature (Schiller, Bürger, Goethe, Scott, Southey, etc.), for example *The Rural Cemetery* (*Selskoe kladbishche*, 1802), his adaptation of Thomas Gray's sentimental *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard* and *Ludmila* (1808), his rewriting of the German poem *Lenore* by Gottfried August Bürger, both of which were regarded as landmarks in the national poetic tradition. Zhukovsky's translation of Byron's *The Prisoner of Chillon* (1821) was immediately followed by Pushkin's narrative poem *Kavkazsky plennik* (*The Prisoner of the Caucasus*, 1821) "thereby initiating in Russia a vogue of Byronism" (Dabundo 2009: 504). It was Zhukovsky who set the standard for of early nineteenth-century Russian poetry, particularly its early subjective-lyrical subdivision. He was also among the first Russian writers to express personal feelings and experiences, "his subjective sensations" [...] meditations on the passing of youth, regrets over an unhappy love or the death of a beloved [...] or melancholy appreciations of natural beauty" (Altshuller 1996: 125). Thanks to Zhukovsky's poetry, ballads, elegies and romances became the principal genres of the Romantic lyric and vehicle for the sentiments of early Russian Romanticism. Moreover, the "poetic experience of Zhukovsky prepared Russian poetry for Shakespearean translations [and] influenced the process of Shakespeareanisation and the formation of Shakespeareanism in Russian literature" in the nineteenth century (Zakharov 2010: 107-108). Nevertheless, in pre-romantic Russia, Shakespeare remained generally unknown to readers and playgoers. The men of letters knew only common facts about the playwright. As Ivan Muravyev-Apostol rightly admitted, "to say that this colossal genius was one of the greatest artists of the human heart would be a repetition of what all educated people are aware of [...] but not every Russian reader is familiar with him" (1814: 45-46).

That observation leaves no doubt that Russia's appropriation of Shakespeare inherited, after some considerable delay, similar traits from other European countries. While for Britain the eighteenth century "created Shakespeare as a national export" (Ritchie and Sabor 2012: 8) and converted him into the supreme exemplar of the national

genius, for Russia it only prepared the ground for a general acquaintance with the playwright and left the question of how to treat his works wide open. Due to the strong classical tradition, on the one hand, and the boom of foreign criticism in translation, on the other, Russians found themselves unable to take a stand with either side of the cultural war or formulate any definite view on the “not enlightened” English dramatist. First, national critics merely agreed that Shakespeare had something immensely bad (they spoke against his “bad taste”, meaning that his drama did not fit the classical paradigm) and, at the same time, something incredibly good (or “the beauties” embodied in “natural”, true-to-life characters). Following the example of the French stage, the neo-classicalists began to “engage with Shakespeare’s dramatis personae as moral agents” (Bristol 2008: 14) adapted to Russian customs as a means of social propaganda. The pre-romantics appreciated the playwright’s originality in conveying human feelings, emotions and thoughts, an achievement they endeavoured to restore in their poetry and translations. Although Shakespeare was far from becoming a cultural and political phenomenon in eighteenth-century Russia, and even more so from developing into a model for Russian nationalism as he had in Germany, Shakespeare’s assimilation in the country had been set in motion. And that would open the way for national literature to synchronize with European literary trends and integrate itself into the global cultural context.

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## Chapter 3: *Macbeth* and Russian Romanticism

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### 3.A. EUROPEAN ROMANTICISM, SHAKESPEARE AND *MACBETH*

#### *Shakespeare*

Romanticism emerged in Europe in the late eighteenth century due to a dramatic series of political and social changes which started with the French Revolution of 1789 and were followed by the Napoleonic Wars, the industrial revolution and the Reform Act of 1832. “The Age of Revolutions” gave rise to a generation of intellectuals and artists who were inspired by a desire for liberty and challenged the ideas of rationalism and order of the preceding Enlightenment period by stressing the importance of the individual and human ideals.

The British romantics genuinely believed that their “mission” was to guide others through the tough period of changes. This entailed a new conception of the poet which William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge in the Preface to *Lyrical Ballads* (1798) defined as “a man who being possessed of more than usual organic sensibility had also thought long and deeply” (1991: 246) and was blessed with creative talent, in-depth historical insight and a visionary ability to interpret reality. In *A Defence of Poetry* (1821), Percy Bysshe Shelley also advocated the status of poets: “They measure the circumference and sound the depths of human nature with a comprehensive and all-penetrating spirit [...] Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world” (1977: 485). British poets had “a real sense of responsibility to their fellow men: they felt it was their duty to use their poetry to inform and inspire others, and to change society” (Forward 2014). It was in the imagination that the Romantics found a cure for the troubled hearts of struggling people. In their verse Blake, Wordsworth, Coleridge and Southey gave voice to the oppressed and marginalized social strata and turned to the environment as the sublime world of inspiration. The later romantics Byron, Shelley and Keats, as well as female poets and such writers as Sir Walter Scott, and gothic novelists championed similar ideas opposed to the ideals of the Enlightenment: the significance of individual thought and personal feeling, rejection of rationalism as a constraint on imagination, creativity and artistic autonomy, the predominance of natural forces and the supernatural

over social institutions. Moreover, romanticism brought to the forefront the issue of human and existential contradictions: Wordsworth displayed both optimism and pessimism in *Tintern Abbey* (1798), Blake two different perspectives on religion in *Songs of Innocence and of Experience, Shewing the Two Contrary States of the Human Soul* (1794) and *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (1790-1793), and Keats the conflict between imagination and intellect in *Ode on a Grecian Urn* (1819). The core features of the movement were reflected in much of the criticism and familiar essays of the period. In the wake of Coleridge's lectures and literary criticism, William Hazlitt, Charles Lamb and Thomas de Quincey made personal impressions and subjects from everyday life the central topic of their essays and created a series of valuable portraits of their contemporaries.

In Germany, the development of the Romantic movement started with a very short early period of *Frühromantik* or Jena Romanticism (1797-1802), though the origins of German romanticism can be traced back to its predecessors 'Sturm und Drang' and Weimar Classicism, on the one hand, and German idealist philosophy with its belief that "reality cannot be described independently of human thought processes" (Riou 2004: 34), on the other. Friedrich and August Wilhelm von Schlegel's philosophical writings re-evaluated the role of creative imagination in human life. Like the British, the German romantics "believed they were destined to usher in a poetic Golden Age, where science and religion, art and philosophy, society and the individual, would all be reconciled in a poetic synthesis based on the alchemy of the imagination" (Haddox 2010). The principal aim of the generation was "to overcome the split between mind and matter, rationalism and sentimentalism, reason and emotion", characteristic of the eighteenth century (Ziolkowski 1990: 5). However, the later romantics revealed the dubious nature of this synthesis, "hovering above unresolved contradictions and enthusiasm" (Schmidt 2009: 22), and became afflicted by a sense of discordant dualism which can be exemplified by tales of E.T.A. Hoffmann such as *Der goldne Topf* (*The Golden Pot*, 1814) and *Der Sandmann* (*The Sandman*, 1816), which portrayed the violent clash between the everyday world and mental illusions of creative genius.

Lyric poetry remained a dominant genre during the period, with Ludwig Tieck, Clemens Brentano and Joseph Eichendorff as its major figures. Poets were considered intermediaries between Nature and humanity or as transmitters able to hear 'the voice of nature' and interpret it by means of human language. Opposing the Enlightenment's belief in the power of rational thinking, they preferred more intuitive modes of thought



and were convinced that the unconscious has a pervasive impact on human motivation. So folk traditions, songs and legends gained particular attention and were realized in the forms of folk poetry and fairy tales like Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm's *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (*Children's and Household Stories*, 1812-1815), the poetry anthology *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* (*The Boy's Magic Horn*, 1805-1808), edited by Achim von Arnim and Clemens Brentano, Tieck's *Der blonde Eckbert* (*Blond Eckbert*, 1797), and Novalis' novel *Heinrich von Ofterdingen* (*Henry of Ofterdingen*, 1802). Another characteristic feature of German romanticism was the intense interest in the Middle Ages as a simpler and more integrated time which could be regarded a model for the new social, political and religious unity the romantics were looking for. This tendency was later criticized in the essay *Die Romantische Schule* (*The Romantic School*, 1833-1835) by Heinrich Heine, whose poetry with its simultaneous expression and critique of the early Romantic sentiment emerged from late romanticism and became influential in the 1830s. As in Britain, German romanticism tried to "depart from the traditions [...] of classical antiquity" and to "give art and literature a decisive role and function in the process of human history" (Schulz 2004: 33).

Paradoxically, in France, whose Revolution had triggered the rise of romanticism in Britain and Germany, the movement took a foothold only at the beginning of the nineteenth century, partly because French writers were more deeply involved in politics than their European contemporaries. Like other European Romantics, they sought poetic freedom and "new modes of expression [...] more appropriate to their view of the world than the formal literary constraints" imposed by neoclassicism (Smith 1981: 24). However, French romanticism had evolved from some late eighteenth-century pre-romantic ideas such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau's propositions of sentiment and subjectivity, which found early expression in the poetry of André Chénier and Alphonse de Lamartine. The essence of romantic sensibility, "the pain of the century" was embodied in the protagonist of François-René de Chateaubriand's short tale *René* (1802) who suffered from disillusion, disorientation, insecurity and a sense of loss. The story was included in *Génie du christianisme* (*Genius of Christianity*, 1802) which, due to its reconceptualization of religious faith and the role of nature as a source for spiritual renewal, was enormously influential, as was his late *Mémoires d'outre-tombe* (*Memoirs from Beyond the Grave*, 1848-1850), an autobiographical meditation on French history. Unlike Chateaubriand's conservatism, Benjamin Constant and Madame de Staël represented the liberal strain which stood for individual freedom and recognized that "the conduct of individuals could

not adequately be explained in terms of the morality of enlightened self-interest” (Crossley 1993: 22). In their prose and criticism, they examined the problems of post-revolutionary European society. Benjamin Constant’s autobiographic fiction *Adolphe* (1816) is a psychological novel whose analysis of individual and his weakness corresponded to the theme of moral sickness in Chateaubriand’s *René*.

In his *De la littérature (The Influence of Literature upon Society, 1800)* and *De l’Allemagne (Germany, 1810)*, Chateaubriand had highlighted the need for a new literature in France and held up the example of Germany as the land of romantic ideals. Victor Hugo also stood up for political liberty and declared the liberty of art and theatre in his plays *Cromwell* (1827) and *Hernani* (1830), which inspired the anti-classicist upheaval of new romantic drama. He was also a very prolific author of poetry and fiction, particularly historical novels such as *Notre-Dame de Paris (The Hunchback of Notre Dame, 1831)*. The historical novel eventually developed into the popular romantic novel in a historical setting such as *Les Trois Mousquetaires (The Three Musketeers, 1844)* by Alexandre Dumas père, who had also been famous for his romantic drama since *Henry II et sa cour (Henri III and His Court, 1829)* and *Antony* (1831). Other writers associated with the movement were the idealistic and pessimistic Alfred de Vigny, Alfred de Musset and Théophile Gautier, the founder of the “Art for art’s sake” movement, not to mention Prosper Mérimée and Charles Nodier.

Another dominant figure of nineteenth-century French literature was George Sand who created new images of heroic femininity in her early novels *Indiana* (1832) and *Lélia* (1833) and further developed an interest in humanitarian and sentimental socialism reflected in later works with realist elements such as *Spiridion* (1839), *Le Compagnon du tour de France* (1840; *The Journeyman Joiner; or, The Companion of the Tour of France*), *Consuelo* (1842), *La Mare au diable (The Enchanted Lake, 1846)* and *La Petite Fadette (Little Fadette, 1849)*. French romantic fiction testified to historical tragedies that racked a generation and mourned the world in which their authors “held tight to the trauma of memory, making sense of history as a story told about loss” (Matlock 1997: 33). The realist tendency deriving from romanticism found its expression in fiction of Stendhal, Honoré de Balzac, Alexandre Dumas fils and Gustave Flaubert. Such appealing propaganda for emotional self-expression, personal freedom and social commitment made romanticism a highly influential artistic movement. Nevertheless, unlike in Britain, Germany and France it penetrated other European countries, like Russia, with a considerable delay.

The features that determined the originality of Shakespeare's drama and its difference from French classicism demanded the creation of a brand new artistic and literary movement which would cause and reflect the subsequent changes in aesthetic taste and practice. It was romanticism that "elevated [the poetry] into a form of secular scripture, Shakespeare into God" (Bate 1998: 184). The romantics saw in the playwright, as William Lisle Bowles declared in his poem *On Shakespeare*, "Sovereign Master, who with lonely state [...] Dost rule as in some isle's enchanted land [...] thy all-creating wand" (Bowles 1805: 73, 76). Coleridge and Keats called him a magician whose genius "develops [...] from within [...] under laws of its own origination" (Coleridge 1989: 41) and "Chief Poet [...] of Albion" (Keats 1818: 190). There are obvious allusions to Shakespeare's plays like *King Lear* in William Wordsworth's poems *The Borderers* (1797), *Michael* (1798), *The Ruined Cottage* (1798) and to *Hamlet* in *Tintern Abbey* (1798). The latter play also influenced the poetry of Samuel Taylor Coleridge (*This Lime-Tree Bower My Prison*, 1797; *Frost at Midnight*, 1798; *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, 1798), Percy Bysshe Shelley (*Alastor, or The Spirit of Solitude*, 1815), John Keats (*Ode to a Nightingale*, 1819) and George Gordon Byron (*Don Juan*, 1819-1824). From *Hamlet*, "the Romantics derived [...] an appreciation of how thought might preclude action" (Shaw and Marshall 2014: 114). This appreciation gave birth to the idea which soon gained some popularity in Romantic circles that the genius of the playwright can be better perceived through reading than in theatre performance. As Charles Lamb stated, "the plays of Shakespeare are less calculated for performance on a stage, than those of almost any other dramatist whatever" (Lamb 1903-1905: I. 98). Besides, in their critical publications, the Romantics opposed Shakespeare to Milton. Samuel Taylor Coleridge, for example, in *Biographia Literaria* (1817) admitted that Milton "attracts all forms and things to himself, into the unity of his own ideal" whereas Shakespeare "darts himself forth, and passes into all the forms of human character and passion; the one Proteus of the fire and the flood" (1997: 191-192). The following year, in the lecture *On Shakespeare and Milton* William Hazlitt emphasized that the playwright "was the least of an egoist [...] nothing in himself; but he was all that others were, or that they could become. He not only had in himself the germs of every faculty and feeling, but he could follow them [...] through every change of fortune, or conflict of passion, or turn of thought" (Hazlitt 1930: V. 47). Shakespeare's historical plays, particularly *Henry IV* and *Henry V*, influenced Walter Scott's method of creating historical novels such as *Waverley* (1814) and the following 'Scottish' sequence which focused the plot on fictional

characters, mostly common people who were surrounded by real historical figures. Jane Austen used Shakespearean source ideas and core emotions in the modernised setting of her novels *Sense and Sensibility* (1811), which, according to Park Honan, resembles “comically the world of *King Lear* with its vicious or obtuse Gonerils, Regans, and Gloucesters transformed and made funny by an admirer of Shakespeare” (Honan 1987: 277-278), and *Mansfield Park* (1814), full of allusions to various Shakespeare’s tragic characters like Shylock, Richard III and Julius Cesar.

In the nineteenth century Shakespeare was acknowledged “as a byword for the regular or legitimate drama” (Swindells 2003: 33), that is, as a symbol of British national drama, for he “offered playwrights not just an inescapable model of what English theatre had been and what it must be, but indeed a powerful metonym of the drama itself” (Taylor 2014: 130). Since the end of the previous century the Romantics had been deeply engaged with Shakespeare in their verse tragedies: Joanna Baillie’s *Plays on the Passions* (1798) and *De Monfort* (1800) alluded to *Othello* and *Macbeth*, Coleridge’s poetic drama *Remorse* (1813) was full of Hamletian motifs, Percy Bysshe Shelley’s *The Cenci* (1819) comprised various reminiscences of *King Lear*, *Macbeth*, *Richard III* and *Measure for Measure*, and even Byron’s *Sardanapalus* (1821) alluded to *Antony and Cleopatra* while his *Marino Faliero* (1821) took in more than eighty references to eighteen of Shakespeare’s plays (Lansdown 1992: 237-244). Irish dramatist and actor James Sheridan Knowles gained fame for his Shakespearean mediations like as *Virginus* (1820) and *Caius Gracchus* (1823), which mediated *Coriolanus*, *The Hunchback* (1832), which alluded to *Richard III*, and *The Wife* (1833) which reworked *Othello*.

Shakespeare criticism saw a variety of essays and monographs as well as biographies, religious sermons and different reinterpretations of the playwright’s heritage (according to the British Library catalogue, over a thousand critical works were published in the period) within, for instance, dramatic tales of fiction or children’s stories, like *Tales from Shakespeare* (1807) by Charles and Mary Lamb, which contained twenty Shakespeare plays adapted for children. This was merely a novelistic retelling of the plays, for “there was no way in which the Lambs could have rewritten Shakespeare’s play scripts without narrowing the range of possible meanings and reinterpreting character and plot” in accord to the outlook of their own time rather than in accord to Shakespeare (Lamb 1995: x). Thomas and Henrietta Bowdler also published their version of Shakespeare for children called *The Family Shakespeare* (1818). Two educational books about the playwright’s heroines, Anna Jameson’s *Characteristics of Women, Moral,*

*Poetical, and Historical* (1832) and *The Girlhood of Shakespeare's Heroines* (1832) by Mary Cowden Clarke were devoted to acquainting young girls with Shakespeare's female characters, whom they could then imitate or excel in their lives.

In the latter part of the eighteenth century, Shakespeare was established not only as the English national poet but the German one too. For both countries he symbolised the native genius and new art which stood against the hegemony of the French classicism. As Jonathan Bate has put it, German literature of this period originated from “a combination of anti-French sentiment, Shakespearean inspiration, Young's articulation of the divisibility of genius and imitation, Herder's theory of national culture expressing itself in untrammelled poetry, and Goethe's own innate genius” (1998: 183). In the early nineteenth century, German writers found Shakespeare inspirational, particularly the image of Hamlet, which they considered a mirror of themselves. This perception would be encapsulated in the first line of the poem *Hamlet* (1844) by Ferdinand Freiligrath: “Germany is Hamlet” (1909: II. 71-73). Freiligrath's poem proposes an allegorical reading of Shakespeare's tragedy in which Hamlet was regarded “as Germany's unique malady, its inability to become a decisive force in European politics [...] like Shakespeare's dithering prince, Germany, still a loose confederation of princely states, simply couldn't make its mind up” (Dickson 2016). Since Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship* Hamlet had represented Romantic idealism in its oppositions of thought and action and inner and outer worlds. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, the representative of German philosophic idealism also opposed the pure spirit of Hamlet to the circumstances and the struggle with the outside world it is trapped in. In 1793, Ludwig Tieck honoured Shakespeare's genius in creating the characters of Hamlet and Ophelia and the integral composition of the play in the notes to his *Book about Shakespeare* (Tieck 1920: 61-66); the tragedy was “great alchemy” and its, and other plays', “use of the marvellous” was treated at some length (Tieck 1793; qtd. Bate, ed. 1992: 60). Later Friedrich Schlegel saw Hamlet as characteristic of modern poetry in general, disharmonious and unresolved, displaying a maximum of despair, ‘colossal dissonance’ as befits the crisis in modern culture. His brother August Wilhelm, on the other hand, in his essay *Etwas über William Shakespeare bei Gelegenheit Wilhelm Meisters* (*Some Remarks on William Shakespeare Occasioned by Wilhelm Meister*, 1796) took a much more positive view. His essay was in effect a canonization of Shakespeare as one of the “greats” of world literature, analogous with Goethe, the supreme representative of modern German (Paulin 2012: 322-323). Adam Müller also called Shakespeare “the

richest and the most powerful artist” as well as “a measure and a guiding principle for the rest” (Müller 1806; qtd. Bate, ed. 1992: 83).

In her essays *On Literature* (1800) and *On Germany* (1810) Madame de Stael had the courage to prophesy to the French “the approaching victory of the northern over the Roman literature; of serious thought over frivolity; of genius [...] over conventionality; of true overflowing vitality over the faultless cold creations of classical art originating in fixed rules” (Blennerhassett 2013: 390). She found the genius of Shakespeare not in imitating the ancients as Racine had done but in “painting moral affliction in the highest degree”: the English playwright “was the first who [...] found a much deeper source of emotion in a philosophical distress” and “he possesses the knowledge of the human heart even more than that of the theatre” (qtd. Bate 1992: 78, 82). However, due to the hegemony of classical culture, in France romanticism with Shakespeare as its idol came into fashion only in the 1820s.

It was Stendhal who made the first comparison of Racine and Shakespeare, associating them respectively with classicism and romanticism. In the critical essay first published in 1822 in the *Paris Monthly Review of British and Continental Literature* and expanded and reprinted the following year as the pamphlet *Racine and Shakespeare*, Stendhal spoke in favour of the modernity and flexibility of the English playwright’s drama. He considered romanticism “the art of presenting people the literary works which, in the present state of their habits and beliefs, are likely to give them as much pleasure as possible” while classicism “presents them literature which gave the most possible pleasure to their great-grandfathers” (Stendhal 1854: 32-33). For Stendhal, romanticism was “modernism, actualism and to some extent also realism” (Blum 1914: 254) or, in other words, contemporary art. Stendhal’s criticism used the response that a work of art aroused in the audience “as the foremost determinant of its merits, thereby making romanticism at once stand not only for all that is prevailing but also originally prevailing” (Tushar 2015: 22). Therefore, contemporary French drama had to surpass on the classical traditions of Racine and turn to the romanticism of Shakespeare, with its disregard for the unities of place and time and its combinations of verse and prose, the common and the heroic. Following Shakespeare and Walter Scott, Stendhal also created historical novels such as *The Red and the Black* (*Le Rouge et le Noir*, 1830) and *The Charterhouse of Parma* (*La Chartreuse de Parme*, 1839) which portrayed the lives and love affairs of fictional characters against a backdrop of real historical events.

After Stendhal's *Racine and Shakespeare*, Victor Hugo's preface to his historical play *Cromwell* (1827) became the second manifesto of the French romantic drama in which he developed similar points and principles like "calling for a drama in the new manner, the mingling of the grotesque and the sublime, the juxtaposition of light and dark, and the presence of the comic and tragic" (Beck 1962: 197). The essay was inspired by the performance of *Hamlet* and *Romeo and Juliet* by an English theatre company at the Odeon which generally catalysed the rise of French romanticism. Hugo claimed that "Shakespeare is drama" while drama itself "is characteristic of the third poetic epoch, the literature of the present" and Shakespeare, along with the Bible and Homer, is one of the three greatest sources of poetry (2003: 305). The theatrical success of his historical tragedy *Hernani* in 1830 was the result of the romantic transformation of French drama. Hugo valued Shakespeare for his ability to show history from both below and above. Finally, he summed up his ideas about the art and politics in the book he named after Shakespeare. It was published in 1864 and praised the playwright as the natural genius, "the sower of dazzling wonders": "the poet [...] is Nature. Subtle, minute, keen, microscopical like Nature; immense. Not discreet, not reserved, not sparing. Simply magnificent [...] Shakespeare has no reserve, no discretion, no limit, no blank [...] He overflows like vegetation, like germination, like light, like flame" (Hugo 1970: 214-215).

Francois Guizot turned to Shakespeare in the course of his political career because he "saw in theatre a fundamental resource for mobilization and articulation of the popular collective will" (Bristol 1996: 162) and "we find the entire world, the whole of human realities, reproduced by Shakespeare in tragedy, which, in his eyes, was the universal theatre of life and truth" (Guizot; qtd. Bate, ed. 1992: 214). In 1821, he urged the establishment in France of a new dramatic system which ought to be liberal and free and based on Shakespeare's system which "alone includes all those general or diverse feelings, the simultaneous conjunction and activity of which constitute for us, at the present day, the spectacle of human things" (qtd. Bate 1992: 216). Thus, in France as in Germany, "Shakespeare is imagined as not just an antidote to the prescriptions of Voltaire's classicism, but a saviour of the artistic spirit, a bringer of sight, feeling and freedom" (Bate 1998: 234).

*Macbeth* was one of the most regularly performed and discussed plays by Shakespeare in Britain and other European countries. Since the later seventeenth century, readers and theatregoers were highly conversant with its fast-paced plot and striking protagonists while critics and adapters displayed various interpretations of its all-

encompassing outlook on human values and practices. The provocative drama appealed directly to any person or society which feared treachery, shed blood due to selfish, gluttonous ambitions, and was tormented by a deep remorse for committing crimes against unsuspecting, innocent companions and allies. Such overarching themes were wrapped up in a fairy setting composed of supernatural agents, divinations, and spells that expand the conflicts beyond the scope of the common human interface and thus offer grounds for different, sometimes contradictory speculations.

### *Macbeth*

From the period of the Restoration, *Macbeth* was deemed a morally oriented play. The binary perspective of good and evil was intensified and modified from one age to the next and remained the dominant strand in the play's reception until the twentieth century whose scholarship suggested more profound and problematic interpretations. For three centuries *Macbeth* overcame diverse, versatile degrees of affiliation with either pole of the moral dichotomy. The diagnosis of the evil in itself ranged from ambition and its ultimate end of regicide to the loss of male dignity before female temptation or an even more radical view of the peril of the tyranny that the play warned against primarily. In the early 1660s, *Macbeth* was adapted and introduced to the Restoration public by Sir William Davenant. Undoubtedly, this performance was not the only source for *Macbeth*'s reception. In the early 1700s, new Shakespeare editions, more precise than theatrical performances in their rendering of the Folio, were published, among them, Nicholas Rowe's edition of 1709. Nevertheless, most of Shakespeare's eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century admirers were more familiar with the play's content from theatres than from literary publications, which makes Davenant's interpretation of *Macbeth* more significant still. The main outlines of his clearly moral and pro-monarchical ideological approach (Williams 2002: 57) were then picked up by the play's next significant theatrical interpreter, David Garrick, who staged it in London in the 1740s and reproduced Davenant's moralistic perspective by maintaining its conventional accent on ambition as the root of all evil (Wilders, ed. 2004: 213). Other eighteenth-century adaptations mainstreamed either *Macbeth* or his wife's retreat from the good, such as Hannah Pritchard's and Sarah Siddons's *Ladies Macbeth*, domineering, "powerful", and entirely evil malefactors (Kliman 2004: 25, 28).

Due to the American and French revolutions of 1776 and 1789, themes of regicide and tyranny acquired a political topicality they had lacked in England a century before,



though *Macbeth* was not liable to brutal censorship there, for Shakespeare had already achieved the status of the national genius. The play's performances responded to these radical movements differently. For example, from 1788 through 1816, J.P. Kemble's interpretation implicitly suggested conservatism and stood against any revolts (Prescott 2004: 87). On the contrary, Edmund Kean, who made Macbeth a pure unadulterated villain, contributed to the debunking of the honourable and virtuous reputation of Shakespeare's protagonist and proposed a more democratic view of his corruptness (Bartholomeusz 1969: 145). For his part, William Charles Macready's romantic Macbeth steered between the "hypersensitivity" of that of Garrick or Kemble and the "ruthless determination" of Kean's later version (Wilders, ed. 2004: 31). Shakespeare's canonical status in English culture allowed actors a certain license "to explore bold, potentially subversive interpretations and turn *Macbeth's* dualistic values against the established order", identifying evil with the monarchical system, while romantic writers started to apprehend "more ethically problematic possibilities" (Moschovakis, ed. 2008: 12-13). Since the eighteenth century, English critics had so focused their attention on Shakespeare's dramatic personages that Macbeth and Lady Macbeth along with other title characters became a living reality and, by the middle of the century, held a special place in the national mythos. The "change from the general criticism to examination of characters and motives" (Smith 1928: 80) was heralded by Samuel Johnson's *Notes on Shakespeare's Plays* (1745) and carried over in the essays of Joseph Warton, Arthur Murphy, Elizabeth Montagu, Francis Gentleman, William Richardson, and Thomas Whately, who praised Shakespeare's art of characterization for its excellence and universality. The criticism "had a strong moralizing streak" and regarded *Macbeth* "an edifying play" that taught a lesson on the danger of ambition: Macbeth was viewed as a noble man corrupted by ambition and Lady Macbeth as "the wicked instrument of this corruption" (Leggatt, ed. 2006: 39).

The romantics seemed to regard Macbeth as less blameworthy than psychologically divergent and found out that delusions and moral principles can be equally important. For this reason, literary critics considered Macbeth exemplary of imagination's prevailing over reason. This assumption paved the way for a new interpretation of the play which did not reduce it to a mere struggle between good and evil. William Hazlitt admitted that despite the original virtue, Macbeth is so "subject to all skyey influences" that he finds himself trapped between the world of reality and the world of fancy: "All is tumult and disorder within [...] his mind; his purposes recoil upon

him, are broken and disjointed; he is the double thrall of his passions” (Hazlitt 1820; qtd. Bate, ed. 1992: 430). Hazlitt hinted that the play might require a more sophisticated analysis beyond the traditional ethical evaluation. Coleridge proposed a similar clash between Macbeth’s tormenting conscience and his self-delusion, for the hero “mistranslates the recoilings and ominous whispers of conscience into prudential and selfish reasonings, and, after the deed is done, the terrors of remorse into fear from external dangers” (qtd. Bate, ed. 1992: 414). Moreover, he was one of the first critics to consider *Macbeth* a dramatic illustration of the mind’s ability, though only provisional, to mortify the moral claims of human nature as he emphasized Lady Macbeth’s fruitless efforts to “bully” and suppress conscience: while “she endeavours to stifle its voice, and keep down its struggles”, “her conscience so far from being seared, was continually smarting with her” (qtd. Bate, ed. 1992: 133), thus relating the play to theories of the unconscious. Thomas De Quincey suggested that “in Macbeth the stifle of mind is greater than in his wife” (qtd. Bate, ed. 1992: 433). He also assumed that Duncan’s death was designed to “throw the interest on the murderer” and his psyche as “we enter into his feelings and are made to understand them” (qtd. Bate, ed. 1992: 433). The psychological approach of the Romantics to Shakespeare’s dramatic rendition of human subjective experience was applied and developed by other nineteenth-century critics who, despite the continuing moralistic arguments against regicide and ambition, also took into account the problem of mental disorder or “excessive morbid irritability”, which George Fletcher in 1847 called “a great moral characteristic of Macbeth” (qtd. Furness, ed. 1873: 404). The foregrounded issue of the mind’s whims and fancies raised the question of the supremacy or pre-eminence of human passions over consciousness and reason, for it turned out that a person’s meditations are strongly inferior to his imagination and desires and, therefore, cannot be controlled rationally. This opened up new perspectives for further understandings of the play’s ambiguity and versatility. Despite numerous theatre adaptations and critical articles, literary allusions to *Macbeth* remained relatively scarce. For example, Joanna Baillie turned to the play in “the bloody climax” of her psychological drama *De Monfort* (1800) and accompanied the murder of Rezenvelt, one of the principal characters, with “the screech-owl cry” that had signalled Duncan’s taking off (Taylor 2014: 131).

In Germany, Shakespeare’s popularity ran riot in the eighteenth century with a growing number of critical articles and the first collection of prose translations by Christoph Martin Wieland (*Shakespear: theatralische Werke*, 1762). *Macbeth* was

published and staged in 1765. Although Wieland's translation contained frequent misunderstandings and omissions, and Shakespeare's characters became "insufferably prosaic"—Macbeth was interpreted as a simply heroic figure—the production was "a popular success [...] that appealed to Wieland's contemporaries" (Williams 1990: 55). Shakespeare's status benefited even more from the strong endorsements of Goethe and Schiller, both of whom adapted his plays. While Goethe staged *Hamlet* and *King Lear*, Schiller adapted *Macbeth* in 1800, "presenting an idealized version of the Enlightenment view of evil as aberrant" (Williams 2002: 124). Friedrich Schiller's approach to the play was aimed at "subjecting Shakespeare's text both to an aesthetical smoothing and to an ideological shifting" (Kofler 2016). The subtitle to his adaptation, "*To be staged at the Weimar court theatre,*" shows how the original play was adapted to meet the requirements of a certain German audience. Such an aim is directly related to Schiller's handling of the Witches scenes. The Weird Sisters seduced noble Macbeth whose heart was vulnerable to the evil manipulations. Unlike Shakespeare, Schiller's witches have a didactic function. Not purely malicious, as they are in Shakespeare, they "disturb the well-being of a poor but happy fisherman with vain dreams of gold, as if to preach, in the style of a moralistic fairy-tale, that to remain poor and happy one must not seek for riches" (Williams 2004: 62). Goethe, who complimented Wieland's translation, called Schiller's rendering of the witch-scenes "detestable" but tolerantly admitted that "it was his way; you must let every man have his own character" (Robinson 1869: II. 438). According to Peter Eckermann writing in 1836, Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, though not without its own shortcomings such as the uncertain issue remarked by Goethe of whether Lady Macbeth had any children, was, on the contrary, "a work of art that has been produced in a bold and free spirit" (qtd. Bloom, ed. 2008: 114). The later Schlegel-Tieck translation "with its far more polarized version of the moral universe" (Sanders 2012: 196) became the standard German Shakespeare translation and a "German classic in its own right" (Korte and Spittel 2009: 269), largely because of Schlegel's famous principle that Shakespeare can be both translatable and German because—"for Schlegel, poetic rendition was an absolute requirement, not an option" (Paulin 2003: 303). Schlegel's interpretation was regarded as the culmination of Shakespeare's identification with the German spirit, a process that had been started by Lessing (Gundolf 1911: 356), while "the formidable recreation of the English text coincided precisely with the time in which the German language was coming of literary age" (Steiner 2010: 156).

Both Schiller's and Schlegel's interpretations paid unprecedented attention to the Witches who, in compliance with the romantic psychologizing of the play, became a symbol of the delusion which led humans to ruin (Williams 1990: 94). Schiller himself admitted that the imagination has stronger impression and affects one's behaviour more than reason (LeWinter, ed. 1963: 72). While Schiller perceived the Weird Sisters as "fantasy's delusive workings" (Moschovakis, ed. 2008: 27), Schlegel named them "emblems of the hostile powers which operate in nature" who make the mental horror of the audience outweigh the repugnance of its senses and "throw a false splendour over crime" so that Macbeth is driven into it "in a tumult of fascination" (qtd. Bate, ed. 1992: 410-411). Later Heine developed Schlegel's idea of the Sisters' malicious character and identified them with the forces of hell, for they "give signs of a more evil and dissolute nature" than those of other English poets and, thus, are "the allurements", "the power of the devil" that "in unseen ways enmesh human hearts" (Heine 1838; qtd. Bate, ed. 1992: 449).

In France, Shakespeare came to prominence due to Voltaire and, more obviously, Ducis's neoclassical adaptations, even though "what passed for 'Shakespeare' was for many years so boldly adapted as to be not Shakespeare at all" (Morse 2004: 112). Unlike Germany, which staged Schlegel-Tieck's "exemplary" translation of *Macbeth*, France enjoyed an enormous variety of acting versions of the play. They contributed to the general recognition of the play's well-known plot of political crime and memorable images of witches, apparitions, and sleepwalking. Like other of his adaptations of Shakespeare, Ducis's *Macbeth* (1784; revised in 1790) was at once a corrective to "the wild, untutored genius" of the English playwright and a tribute "to the power of his dramatic situation", "Frenchified [...] in the style of Racine or Corneille", and "couched in the alexandrine, given a decorous 'unified' tone throughout" (Stokes 2014: 299), except for the ending, which was unusually left unchanged, for the death of the tyrannical usurper was regarded as happy in itself. Ducis's alteration gained considerable popularity across continental Europe and was taken as the standard in Spain, Italy, Poland, and Russia until challenged by romanticism. The prose translations of La Place and Le Tourneur did not add much to the comprehension of Shakespeare's original genius in France and Ducis's "traditional" interpretation of the play remained in production into the nineteenth century. The second version of the play ever to be performed on the French stage was "prolific literary hack", Augustin Hapd e's, *Les Visions de Macbeth, ou les Sorcihs d'Ecosse* (1812; forbidden by Napoleonic censorship, revised and performed in

1816), “a ‘Mélodrame a grand spectacle’ in three acts of rather curious prose, complete with melodrama-villain, hordes of bards performing on antique harps, storms, lighting-effects, transformation-scenes, machinery galore, and a full-scale ‘Palace of Illusions’ with which the Witches dazzle the eyes and ambitions of a somewhat bewildered hero” (Coe 1976: 41).

What united the French romantic re-evaluation of *Macbeth* with its earlier interpretations was its interpretation as a political play in a dangerous setting of tragic predestination, which advocated regicide and, therefore, was treated with extreme circumspection and altered with this preoccupation in mind. To soften the impact the altered versions of both Ducis and Hapdé suggested the increased sense of remorse which tormented Macbeth after the deed is done. What also distinguishes the French versions from Shakespeare’s original is the presentation of the Weird sisters as “a timeless Divine Will”: “They do not ‘predict’ a future, which awakens a slumbering desire in Macbeth, which [...] contributes to fulfilling the prophecy; they will a future, which then inexorably comes to pass, in spite of the resistance of the mortals involved” (Coe 1976: 54), and as a result, Macbeth is powerless to defeat his inexorable destiny. As for the character of Macbeth, in Ducis’s adaptation he is incontrovertibly and unmistakably evil from the start, guided to murder the king by his even more malicious wife or is, in Hapdé’s performance, literally possessed by an alien spirit. Macbeth’s evil nature was also emphasized by French critics in a pattern which would culminate in Hugo’s comments on “the hunger of ten monsters”, “a stone of ruin, flame of war, beast of prey”; all the human virtues “already lay dead within his soul” as “he kills the nobility, he kills the people, he kills his country” (1970: 207).

### **3.B. RUSSIAN ROMANTICISM**

Although romanticism as a movement first came to a head in eighteenth-century Germany, it quickly spread to different parts of Europe, whether fundamentally classical like France or Italy or already romantic in a loose sense like Britain or Spain. The need for cultural renewal represented by Romanticism was, therefore, universal; even though it assumed forms peculiar to each country, it united all of them and acquired a cosmopolitan, generally European character in the process. The seeds of Russian romanticism were sown in the 1810s and 20s. Social and historical changes after the

victory in the Napoleon war of 1812 caused dissatisfaction with the autocratic regime and serfdom and there were protests against political tyranny and economic backwardness among representatives of high social classes. The spread of ideas about freedom for peasants and the recognition of human rights gave rise to the Decembrist movement in the political sphere and progressive romanticism in the sphere of literature and art. These were two sides of one public process. Decembrist writers who started their literary career in 1810s proclaimed Romantic principles in literature and advocated the formation of a new Russian literature that would represent the national spirit and be unique in its national artistic form.

Thus in Russia, “some of romanticism’s ideological colouring derives from the political soil in which it was nurtured”—eighteenth-century German nationalism, French revolutionary orientation, English Byronic individualism— but, at the same time, it can be seen as “an attempt to address the revealed inadequacies of eighteenth-century rationalism and by implication the classical aesthetic that articulated it” (Reid 2005: 310). Compared to the European opposition of classicism and romanticism, in Russia, the latter became a natural heir of the former in its resuscitation of both artistic tropes and aesthetics, particularly the Russian ode of Mikhail Lomonosov (1711-1765) who during his lifetime was regarded an originator of modern Russian literature and language. In the late eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century he remained “the most widely recognized authority [so] even Pushkin could not avoid drawing upon the Lomonosovian legacy in his artistic quest” (Serman 1992: 61-62). In his narrative poem *Poltava* (1829), Pushkin employed some of stylistic devices of Lomonosov’s eulogistic ode whereas the patriotic poetry of the Decembrists echoed his glorification of military heroism.

After the victory in the Napoleonic war of 1812, Russia experienced a strengthening sense of national identity and, thus, the need to establish a Russian national literature. At the same time, neoclassical traditions of borrowing and assimilating western culture which began with the eighteenth-century modernization reforms of Peter I and Catharine II remained extremely strong (Riasanovsky 2005: 80). Russian romanticism as it grew out of this contradiction was initially split in two circles: the Arzamas group, which derived from 1790s sentimentalism, was centred around Nikolai Karamzin and advocated the further westernization of the country, and the conservative circle headed by Alexander Shishkov, which stood for the preservation of the original values of Russian

culture. The most significant writers of the transitional 1810s were associated with the Arzamas circle.

In the 1820s, several former members of the Arzamas circle joined the so-called *Pushkin Pleiad* including Zhukovsky; Anton Delvig, a close friend of Pushkin whose poetry was inspired by Zhukovsky and Russian folklore; Yevgeny Baratynsky, who was regarded a poet-philosopher; and Denis Davydov, a hero of the Napoleonic Wars and the founder of hussar poetry. Pushkin was also engaged with the group of the “Decembrist Romantics”. This movement (whose literary, political and social heterogeneity means that it has received various alternative names like “Decembrist Romanticism”, “Civil Decembrism” or “Decembrist Romantic Civicism), “comprises those actual members of the conspiracy<sup>3</sup> who wrote and whose works express the ideals they were attempting to realize through political action” such as Alexander Bestuzhev-Marlinsky, Wilhelm Küchelbecker, Alexander Odoyevsky, Vladimir Rayevsky, Konstantin Ryleev and others as well as their sympathizers like Pushkin, Piotr Vyazemsky or Alexander Griboyedov, who spoke up “for original, passionate, lofty, and free creativity, including the fullest expression of the ideals of patriotism and love of liberty [...] national originality [...] and thus the cultivation of folklore, legends, chronicles, and all other available sources of historical themes” (Leighton 1994: 16-17). Like many European Romantics, the Decembrists believed that literature carried a political weight and, therefore, was a means of opposing established authority. In Russia it was the oppressive policy of Nicolas I which forced them to struggle for the country’s democratization by adopting a constitution and liberating the serfs. Despite the failure, the Decembrist uprising had huge political and cultural after-effects. The horror of revolutionary ideas made the Russian state unwilling to learn the lessons of nineteenth-century European revolutions. Instead of answering the urgent need for political and economic reform, it “severely restricted public political space and refrained from taking steps to reform the agrarian-based economy” (Çiçek 2017). However, such a policy of retrenchment did not generate the expected results and ultimately led to the defeat in the Crimean War which opened the door to liberal reforms under Alexander II and the further westernization of the country.

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<sup>3</sup> The Decembrists plotted to start a revolution against Nicolas I, who they accused of seizing the throne. The plot, which turned out to be a complete failure, was enacted on 26 December 1825 when they assembled in Senate Square, St. Petersburg, proclaimed their loyalty to his brother Constantine and demanded the adoption of a constitution.

Russian romanticism proved to be a self-contradictory phenomenon with no unifying literary credo or anything like a common aesthetic program despite the numerous essays on aesthetic themes written by leading figures such as Vyazemsky, Zhukovsky, Pushkin, Nikolai Polevoy, Orest Somov and Ivan Kireyevsky, whose conceptions of the essence and the intended purpose of romantic poetry were in turn entirely different from those of later historians of literature. The Russian romantics of the 1820 and 30s made theirs any literature created independently of classical models and rules. This was the reason why various Europeans such as Shiller, Goethe, and Hoffman, Byron, Walter Scott, Shakespeare and Milton, Ariosto and Dante, Calderón and Cervantes, Hugo, Chateaubriand, and Beranger were regarded as Romantics. Russian aesthetic thought did not set up any chronological framework, but only asserted a continual dialectic between loosely defined romanticism and classicism. While the Romantics intended to renew the conventional order and “sought for shock, estrangement, and contrast effects”, classicism supposed “the maintaining of the order, privileging reflection and refinement” (Díaz Villarreal 2016: 123). Regardless, the contrast was both conceptual and historical, for “classicism was supposed to antecede romanticism” (Valéry 2002: 604). Both classicism and romanticism were the products of historical and cultural development which is cyclical and “has a characteristic way of knowing about itself” (Kuhn 1931: 112). The Romantics themselves had doubts concerning its consideration. In December 1824, Vyazemsky, who had already written several critical essays on Russian romanticism, such as *On The Prisoner of the Caucasus* (1822) and *Conversation between a Publisher and a Classicist from the Vyborg Side and Vasilyevsky Island: Instead of a Preface to The Fountain of Bakhchisaray* (1824) in which he praised Pushkin’s writings as “the advancements of our romantic poetry” (1996: 124) and defended romanticism as a new trend in Russian literature, very appealing but “unappreciated [...] because it has not got arbiters who swore indisputable and irrecusable allegiance to it yet” (1996: 154). In the letter to Zhukovsky he complained: “Romanticism is like a boggart: many people trust it; there is a belief that it exists, but where are its signs, how to identify it? How do you put your finger on it?” (Vyazemsky 1900: I. 193).

Much as critics were concerned about the existence and essence of Russian romanticism as a consistent unity, literary scholarship suggests that it was merely a projection of ideas about European literary development which included romanticism as a legitimate link in the chain of successive literary movements. According to Yuri Tynianov, most attempts of modern historians to define romanticism and classicism were



not judgments about real literary movements but a desire to enclose into these concepts diverse phenomena which do not at all fit in them and narrow them down to some apparent simplicity or unity: “By applying the ready criteria of classicism and romanticism to the Russian literary conditions of that time, we propose an imprecise definition to the diverse and complex phenomena, and the result is confusion” (Tynianov 1968: 24). In other words, “the illusion” of the existence of a single Russian romanticism is based on the fact that “in the total amount of literary texts of the era we will certainly find the total amount of the usual signs of romanticism, but this summation will still remain eclectic” (Virolainen 2015: 63).

The variety and, hence, self-contradictory nature of Russian romanticism lies in the fact that Russia was simultaneously assimilating features of English, French, and German Romanticism which, despite their association under the generic name, did not add up to a single configuration. English Byronic romanticism represented the pathos of individualism, the glorification of a strong, extraordinary personality who stands alone against the world and against God. It was imbued with an exotic flavour and romantic irony that fused lyrics with epic, and self-reflection of poetic form. But English romanticism was also the Lake Poets with their ideas of pantisocracy, equality of all beings in a world filled with divine life and its atmosphere of mystery, vulnerability to evil forces and the dream of restoring and liberating the primordial beauty and well-being. French romanticism was mainly focused on the inner life in the melancholic poetry of Alphonse de Lamartine or Alfred de Vigny, but it also revealed vigorous passions. In the novels of Victor Hugo, for example, it was multi-figured compositions, contrasting juxtaposition and collisions of equally powerful forces. There was no Byronic “vertical” dimension, but there was a widely extended “horizontal” projection of social themes. German romanticism was much more metaphysical. From the individual as in Byron’s poems or from the community as in Hugo’s writings, the interest here was shifted to the arrangement of the world as such and—only through this—to a person. German romanticism fought against the perception of the world trapped in a dead certainty, immobility, and stagnation. It undermined any clear outlines, whether the outline of things or human personality like that in the drama of Tieck or tales of Hoffman. On the other hand, there were completely different Swabian and Heidelberg romantics with their fondness for folklore and patriarchy and dreams of an idyllic life. Thus, in England, France, and Germany, despite some dualism, romanticism shared some common traits and national colouring. On the contrary, Russian romanticism was particularly

individualistic. Those writers who were generally impressed by the movement, chose this or that European variant which they found more appealing.

Thus, any lowest common denominator picture of Russian romanticism will inevitably be extremely eclectic. Undoubtedly, it is much more complicated than the concise description offered above. But if the focus is lifted from certain details, plots, motifs or character borrowings to broader aesthetic characteristics, a preference for either English, German or French versions of romanticism becomes easier to discern. The difference is also multiplied by varying degrees of commitment to the legacy of Classicism and Enlightenment. This is the reason why it is so hard to find one critical essay which might be considered a manifesto of Russian romanticism. However, there is one exception to the general rule, namely, Zhukovsky's essay *Rafaeleva Madonna* (*Raphael's Madonna*, 1821). Written originally as a private letter, it renders both personal emotional experiences and psychosomatic cohesion and manifests itself as a source of aesthetic feeling in a much greater extent than a simple retelling of the legend of Raphael's inspiration: "I was alone; it was quiet all around; at first, with some effort, I entered myself; then I began to feel clearly that the soul is enlarging; some touching feeling of greatness was reaching it; the undepictable has been depicted for it, and it was where it can be only in the best moments of life [...] And precisely, it comes to mind that this picture was born in a moment of miracle: the curtain was drawn apart and the mystery of heaven uncovered to the eyes of a person" (Zhukovsky 2004: XIII. 189). In fact, these few lines comprise the elements of almost the entire aesthetic credo of Zhukovsky: the curtain which hides the mystery of heaven, the chance to overcome the world duality with the help of a miracle, the expression of the inexpressible, the need for personal spiritual and physiological effort to achieve the aesthetic goal, the principle of uncertainty and the need to go beyond the clear and familiar. It seems a quite complete, though briefly expressed, Romantic program that truly reflects the artistic creativity of Zhukovsky, even though it is extremely close to German romanticism. Nevertheless, it is significant that to create his ballads Zhukovsky used the writings of not only Uhland and Southey (there being common ground between the poets of the German Swabian and English Lake schools), but also Goethe and Walter Scott, Schiller and Goldsmith. Regardless of their national origin, these sources constituted the integral ballad world of Zhukovsky which to some extent reflects the essence of Russian romanticism, though it does not display any clearly defined national identity but seems to adopt the generalized concept of a romanticism that united all literatures in opposition to classicalist norms.

It could seem that the same thing happened in Europe, when, for example, the German Romantics declared Shakespeare their national poet. But in Germany this was carried out simultaneously with the formation of the national romantic movement—authors of other times and countries were declared romantic if their writings revealed any features that were valuable from the point of view of the philosophical aesthetics of German romanticism. In Russia, on the contrary, the romantic movement was too broadly conceived from the start for the disparate features of its aesthetics and poetics to crystallize into more or less definite national unity. On the other hand, such a diversity of borrowings became a distinctive feature of Russian romanticism. Another unifying principle for all Russian romantics remained their unanimous opposition to a broadly defined classicism as well as everything connected with an interest in history and national identity.

### 3.C. SHAKESPEARE AND RUSSIAN ROMANTICISM

The rise of romanticism was the major catalyst of the popularization of Shakespeare in Russia. Russia's romantic cult of Shakespeare was largely due to the influence of pre-romantic European literature. In the fight against the old-fashioned canons of classicism and its imitativeness the romantics stood for the free development of an author's personality and creativity and took as their reference Shakespeare, whose reputation as a genius who feared no authority and knew no limits had already a strong toe-hold in Russia. This new image of the playwright which was cultivated in the Decembrist literary circles and associations became the basis for his further assimilation in the critical articles of Belinsky and the drama and poetry of Pushkin. Thanks to the romantics, Shakespeare stood alongside other European majors like Goethe, Shiller, Byron, and Walter Scott. However, there was absolutely nothing new or original in Russian criticism compared to that of other European countries or even of its national pre-romantic precursor, for it mostly repeated widespread ideas about Shakespeare's genius. For example, Alexander Bestuzhev-Marlinsky, writer and active participant of the Decembrist movement, who started learning English in 1824 and was soon able to read Shakespeare, Byron, and Scott in original, quoted *Othello* in the epigram to his short story *Traitor (Izmennik)*, 1825): "Never pray more; abandon all remorse" (1981: 157). The quotation was provided with a prose translation. Bestuzhev-Marlinsky adored Shakespeare for "his every play comprises

the unity of one great idea which is important for human passions despite the dirty fluff of details more typical of the time than of a man. I know no other writer in the world who had stronger language and greater variety of ideas. Remember, he made a way for Goethe” (1951: 525). In a letter to Nikolay Polevoy, he called Shakespeare and Homer “two heart-seers who learnt the secret of the human soul” (1861: 328). For his part, Prince Piotr Vyazemsky, whose early poetry was devoted to the life of Russian common people and would later develop into hostile political rhetoric directed at the liberation of serfs in such poems as *Negodovanie* (*Resentment*, 1820), *Sankt-Peterburg* (*St. Petersburg*, 1824), *Russkiy bog* (*The Russian God*, 1828) and critical essays which contributed to formulate a theoretical basis of Russian Romanticism, dwelled on *Hamlet*, *Midsummer Night’s Dream*, *Macbeth*, and *Otello* and called Shakespeare “the morning of English literature” (Vyazemsky 1963: 121).

It was common practice among the Decembrists to use art as a means of strengthening the moral principles of society. In this respect, “Shakespearean ideology” suited the movement’s civic virtues and ideals. In his speech at the meeting of the Free Association of Russian Literature Admirers in 1821, Nikolay Gnedich, poet and dramatist, best known as the translator of Homer's *Iliad*, said: “To make his name outlive times and peoples a writer should devote his work to such topics which always leave food for thought and heart at all times and for all peoples! He should write not for a man but for mankind. Platos and Homers, Shakespeares and Dantes, Racines and Shillers, whatever colours and forms the oral lore gets, would forever be feeders of mind, imagination and feelings” (Gnedich 1821: 143).

The name of Shakespeare soon appeared in romantic proclamations calling for the emancipation of literature from any canons or adaptations. One of them was the proclamation *On Romantic Poetry*, inspired by Madame de Stael’s *On Literature and On Germany*, by Orest Somov, poet, prose writer and critic, member of the Free Association of Russian Admirers of Literature and one of the editors of the *Enlightenment and Charity Competitor* magazine (*Sorevnovatel prosveshchenia i blagotvorenia*, 1818-1825), In it, Somov he tried to justify historically and theoretically the new direction in Russian literature and maintain the principles of national character and national distinctiveness. He wrote about the need to create a Russian national literature following the example of foreign poets like Shakespeare who was a genius-creator, not subject to any conditions, who on his own created the rules for himself or even did not follow any rules but listened to his heart and imagination while writing [...] an attentive observer and skilful portrayer

of human nature [... whose] power of encompassing imagination, although making chimeras, fascinates us and makes us believe in their existence [...] a genuine historian of customs and manners of those times and places which he took the subjects for his dramas from (qtd. Frizman, ed. 1978: 243-244). Somov believed that, as a true romantic writer, the playwright was national as “all people in England love Shakespeare and adore him” (qtd. Frizman, ed. 1978: 271).

Shakespeare was also mentioned in the critical essay *On the Direction of Our Immensely Lyrical Poetry of the Last Decade (O napravlenii nashei posii, osobenno liricheskoi, v poslednee desiatiletie*, 1824), by the Decembrist poet Wilhelm Küchelbecker, who spoke in favour of authentic romantic literature, determined which foreign writers deserved to be imitated and blamed critics for “placing on the same shelf great Goethe and unripe Shiller, the titan among the titans Homer and his apprentice Virgil, tremendous Shakespeare and unvaried Byron” (qtd. Frizman, ed. 1978: 196). He explained his contrasting of Shakespeare and Byron in another essay, *Conversation with F.V. Bulgarin (Razgovor s F.V. Bulgarin*, 1824), which was published as a polemical riposte to Thaddeus Bulgarin’s criticism of Küchelbecker: “*The Giaour, The Corsair, Lara, Manfred, Childe Harold* of Byron are repetitions of the same terrible face. I cannot liken him to Shakespeare who knew everything: both heaven and hell, sky and earth – Shakespeare who was the only one in all ages and peoples equal to Homer, who like Homer is the universe of images, feelings, thoughts, and ideas, inexhaustibly deep and unlimitedly diverse” (qtd. Frizman, ed. 1978: 203).

However, it was not enough to study the playwright’s oeuvre to master Shakespearean poetics. Writers had to learn how to interpret reality through the prism of historical and cultural background, to understand from different perspectives social relations and human psychology, something which the early Russian romanticists were hardly able to do it. Even Küchelbecker, in his anti-tyrannical tragedy *Argives* (1822-1825), did not dare to follow Shakespeare. As Yuri Levin has pointed out, “Shakespearean complexity of relations and characters, objectivity in depicting heroes and places was antithetical to the poet-Decembrist who aimed at creating an agitational drama imbued with oratorical lyrical pathos” (Levin 1988: 26). Although *Argives* contained some reminiscences of Shakespeare’s *Julius Cesar* and *Coriolanus* and Küchelbecker was one of the first Russian dramatists to blend rhymed and blank iambic pentameter, classical principles still made up the basics of his play. Nevertheless, Küchelbecker did not tire of introducing Shakespeare to a wide audience and showing his

own admiration of the playwright. He referred to the playwright in the dramatic joke *Shakespearean Spirits* (*Shekspirovskie dukhi*, 1824; published in 1825),<sup>4</sup> in which he “mixes fantastic characters from the playwright’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* and *The Tempest*, relocating them to the national cultural ground and giving them Russian zest” (Zakharov 2008). The joke reflected his views on romantic poetry and mythology. In the preface, Küchelbecker explained his intention: “Romantic mythology, especially tales about natural (elemental) spirits has not been developed enough: nevertheless, it deserves the attention of poets because it stands closer to European folktales, superstitions and customs than the rich and cheerful, but alien, Greek mythology” (Küchelbecker 1967: II. 143). Thus, drawing upon Shakespeare, Küchelbecker tried to acquaint Russian readers with Shakespeare’s supernatural which would proliferate in his own poetry and drama.

*Shakespearean Spirits* terminated the period of the “naïve romantic” Shakespeareanism of the Decembrist poets and writers before the 1825 Decembrist Revolt. Shakespeare as a historical dramatist and political observer was still alien to them. The only exception was Pushkin, who completed his historical drama, *Boris Godunov*, in 1825 and, possibly, Alexander Griboyedov, diplomat, playwright and poet, who, according to the recollections of his friends, “already in the mid-1810s learnt by heart nearly all the works of Shiller, Goethe and Shakespeare” (Begichev 1980: 9). In 1828, Griboyedov wrote in one of his letters that “it is a shame to read Shakespeare in someone’s translation [...] because like all the greatest poets he is unrenderable” (Polevoy 1980: 160). Griboyedov was not only an admirer of Shakespeare but also one of the first researchers into the playwright’s creative method and artistic devices. In the letter to his friend and literary critic, Ksenofont Polevoy, he admitted: “Shakespeare wrote simply. He thought little of the exposition and complication and took the first plot but developed it in his own manner. In this work he was great” (Polevoy 1980: 160). Griboyedov used Shakespearean poetics such as broad-scale presentation of historical events or the free sequencing of acts in his heroic drama *1812* which remained only as a draft written during 1825-1827.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> The main character of the joke is a poet who is absorbed in his imagination and dreaming of seeing fantastic Shakespearean creatures. The hero refuses to make up a poem on the occasion of his elder sister’s birthday. Then his younger sister decides to play a trick on him and with the support of other disguised relatives shows him *Shakespearean Spirits* – Oberon, Titania, Puck, Ariel, and Caliban that would make him write this poem. The mischief worked, though eventually the poet realized he had been tricked and justified himself in a soliloquy raising one of the key themes of Küchelbecker’s philosophy – the higher purpose of a poet and his contempt for the daily commotion.

<sup>5</sup> According to Yuri Levin, broad-scale presentation of historic events in the drama devoted to the Patriotic War of 1812, their adjustment to private life of characters, participation of the people’s masses in the

Some intertextual connections can be also traced in Griboyedov's verse comedy *Woe from Wit* (*Gore ot uma*, written in 1823, first published in 1825). Griboyedov supported the Decembrists and revealed his conviction of the rectitude of their ideals in his protagonist. Like the Decembrist romantics, the hero Chatsky condemns serfdom, iniquity and harassment in the army, demands respect for the nation's past and is repelled by blind imitation of all things foreign. Griboyedov's comedy was a turning-point in Russian drama. Despite its formal preservation of the classical unities of place and time, it introduced various off-stage characters who remained in their local and chronological space but helped to create a panorama of the past and the present centuries as well as to expand and deepen the depiction of modern society. Moreover, the image of Chatsky became a prototype of a Russian literary hero-fighter. He embodies the key idea of the need for changes and the philosophical theme of mental emancipation, as manifested in his lyrical digressions. Spiritual slavery, according to Griboyedov, is a consequence of political slavery. The comedy satirizes the society of post-Napoleonic Moscow with the help of allusions to *Timon of Athens* and *Hamlet*. There are some similarities between the actions and positions of the protagonists. Chatsky deludes himself "concerning the current age while Timon deceives himself only with loyalty of his friends till a certain moment"; "Chatsky is looking for the cure for his broken heart whereas Timon – the revenge to Athens and eventually his death", while "in the curses which the heroes direct to their cities can be found similar words and even phrases" (Mikhailovsky 1881: 86). As for reminiscences of *Hamlet*, Griboyedov "was able to create in his play the typical situation of the epoch – a clash of the person with progressive views and the trite conservative environment" (Florinskaya 1977: 41). The situations are alike: the protagonist returns home and is disappointed to be confronted with the betrayals of his relatives. What unites both plays is "betrayals of their lovers who belong to the antagonistic world (in *Hamlet* it is the inability of the heroine to repudiate her family) and the loneliness of the hero in his fight with the world" (Savchenko 2015: 65). *The Tempest*, Griboyedov's favourite play, may be another source for his *Woe from Wit*. There is a hypothesis that the similarity of two plays is based on the symbolic meaning of the time of action. Specificity of the time

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dramatic acts, introduction to the play of such historical figures as Alexander I and Napoleon with their associates, the free sequencing of acts and scenes which take the audience from the Red Square in Moscow to a village or from Napoleon's headquarters to the streets of the burning city, substitution of the formal unity of action with the conceptual unity of the historical event, the use of blank iambic pentameter in the survived extract – all this proves Griboyedov's original and creative mastery of Shakespearean poetics (Levin 1988: 30-31).

of action in plays is not a tribute to classical canons but has a symbolic significance: “the time is given to test the heroes: Chatsky must save Sofia from the house of Famusov while Ferdinand should pass the tests of Prospero to obtain a permit to marry Miranda” (Kozlova 1998: 116).

Like their German counterparts, the Russian romantics recruited Shakespeare as a model for Russian nationalism for they strived to create an original Russian literature with its own national ethos. Undoubtedly, the most significant of them was Alexander Pushkin who followed the Decembrists and studied Shakespearean drama and poetry. However, for him it was not a simple keeping up with literary fashion. Pushkin’s Shakespeareanism is more philosophical than literary. The poet considered the playwright congenial, the soulmate who influenced his world outlook. He became acquainted with Shakespeare’s plays in the 1820s. His first reference to Shakespeare is in a letter of 1824, probably to Küchelbecker, in which the poet wrote: “While reading Shakespeare and the Bible, the Holy Spirit is sometimes in my own heart, but I prefer Goethe and Shakespeare” (Pushkin 1937-1959: XIII. 92). Boris Tomashevsky doubted that Goethe and Shakespeare had ever been referred to in Pushkin’s letters before this one: “It is more likely that they characterize not Pushkin’s own interests but the interests of his intended recipient” (Tomashevsky 1956: 669). Yet there is evidence that the poet read Shakespeare much earlier. His library had a copy of Guizot’s 1821 collection of Shakespeare’s works<sup>6</sup> while in the second chapter of *Eugene Onegin*, written in 1823, “Returning to his home, young Lensky / Went to pay his fond respects, / At his neighbour’s grave, and truly / Paid tribute with a tear. ‘Who’s next? / *Alas, poor Yorick!*’ he lamented, / ‘In his arms I played, contented’” (2:38). In his own comment, Pushkin explained: “*Alas, poor Yorick* is exclamation of Hamlet when he meets the fool’s skull (see Shakespeare and Sterne)” (Pushkin 1937-1959: VI. 192). This comment abbreviates Guizot’s in his edition: “*Alas, poor Yorick!* It recalls also the chapter of Sterne where he quotes this and the fact that in *Sentimental Journey*, he gave to himself the name of Yorick” (Guizot, 1821: I. 386-387). What is more, Stepan Shevryyov, literary historian and poet, recollected that: “Pushkin read Shakespeare not in the original but in French translations edited by Guizot, though he understood him brilliantly. He learnt English much later in St. Petersburg” (Maikov 1899: 330).

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<sup>6</sup> *Œuvres complètes de Shakespeare, traduites de l’anglais de Le Tourneur. Nouvelle édition, revue et corrigée par F. Guizot et A. Pichot traducteur du Lord Byron; précédée d’une notice biographique et littéraire de Shakespeare.*



The French Shakespearean edition of 1821 was the first source Pushkin used to start exploring the playwright's legacy. This collection plays a significant role in the history of both French and Russian Shakespeareanism despite its obvious drawback of consisting mostly of the "already archaic and old-fashioned" translations made by Le Tourneur in the late eighteenth century, even though the additions of F. Guizot and A. Pichot, "a good master of all the English idioms", improved the text a little and "made it closer to the original if not more poetic in its style" (Alekseev 1972: 244). Pushkin found Le Tourneur's translations unsatisfactory, believing that they did not meet the demands of his time: "Finally critics bethought themselves. They realized that Mr. Le Tourneur could have presented a wrong evaluation of Shakespeare and it was not so wise of him to remould in his way Hamlet, Romeo, and Lear. They began to demand from translators more precision and less sensitivity in treating the audience – wished to see Dante, Shakespeare and Cervantes as they are, in their popular dress" (Pushkin 1937-1959: XII. 173). However, the collection was widely diffused thanks to the introductory article by Guizot, *Life of Shakespeare*, which contained the playwright's biography as well as an analysis of his dramatic principles and common ideas of the origins of drama. The article became "the manifesto of the new artistic direction" (Reizov 1964: 157). It became so popular and well-known that references to it seemed unnecessary and it was treated as an equal to Stendhal's *Racine and Shakespeare* or Hugo's *Cromwell* (Alekseev 1972: 247). "Without this article it would be hard to understand the driving forces of romanticism, the social sense of its aesthetic theories and the pathos of the fight for the new art [...] this new interpretation of Shakespeare became the manifesto of both the literary school and the new, more or less democratic outlook" (Reizov 1964: 157). The essay had a profound influence on Pushkin's conception of drama as it evolved in the late 1820s. The poet borrowed Guizot's idea that drama originated in the popular classes and was designed to entertain the crowd: "Drama was born in the square and made up the people's entertainment" (Pushkin 1937-1959: XI. 178). Guizot's thoughts on generic peculiarities, the plays' dependence on English annalistic sources and his wide-ranging description of typical characters helped to form Pushkin's historical outlook.

Pushkin called Shakespeare's drama "true Romanticism" (Pushkin 1977-1979: X. 148) because in his view, it is art which correlates with the spirit of the age and the people. Pushkin strived to implement Shakespearean objectivism when portraying characters and events in the tragedy *Boris Godunov* (1825), in which he highlighted the moral problems of power and government: "Foregrounding the issues of authority and its interaction with

the people, Pushkin followed Shakespeare, and the results of this was not an imitation, but an evolution in his own original creative approach” (Zakharov 2015: 378). Straight after Boris Godunov, Pushkin wrote the poem *Count Nulin* (*Graf Nulin*, 1825), an adaptation of Shakespeare’s *The Rape of Lucrece*. His later narrative poem *Angelo* (1833) was at first meant to be a translation of *Measure for Measure* (he translated the first scene of the comedy in 1833 before giving up) and finally turned into a periphrasis.<sup>7</sup> Pushkin, like his predecessor and mentor Shakespeare, also took part in creation of the national literary language of his native country; the dialogue between them marks a significant part of the history of Russian literature (Zakharov 2015: 378).

Thus, the first third of the nineteenth century became the time of active assimilation of Shakespeare’s heritage in Russian literature and culture at the hands of writers like Pushkin, Küchelbecker, Griboyedov, Gnedich, Somov and Vyazemsky, who followed the Prussian romantic model of recruiting Shakespeare to the cause of a national literature and national spirit. Some scholars call this period “Shakespearean” because in the number of publications, translations, critical literature, and theatre performances Russia only trailed behind Britain, having surpassed both France and Germany (Zakharov and Lukov 2011: 86).

Although at the beginning of the nineteenth century Shakespeare’s works were still translated into Russian mostly from the French neo-classicist adaptations by Ducis (1733–1816)—*Lear* by Nikolay Gnedich (1808), *Othello* by Ivan Velyaminov (1808), *Hamlet* by Stepan Viskovatov (1811) and *Macbeth* by Piotr Korsakov (1815)—in the 1820s Russian men of letters began to realize the need for a genuine Shakespeare. Due to the development of Russian literary language and styles, the tendency of adapting the original gave way to literary translation which “could no longer be perceived as an autonomous and self-sufficient work of art: it had to be a maximal and strictly subordinated reproduction of the original” (Levin 1993: 78). New translations appeared, among them Mikhail Vronchenko’s scholarly translations of *Hamlet* in 1827, *King Lear* in 1832, and *Macbeth* in 1836. Vronchenko tried to convey the complexity of

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<sup>7</sup> Many Russian and foreign researchers share the common opinion that Pushkin’s rewriting of *Measure for Measure* is not only as good as the original, but even more complete than Shakespeare’s play. For example, Nikolai Zakharov believes that “Pushkin [...] gave the poem a new original spirit, with a Russian accent, wherein lies the most important part or even the embryo of his creativity. Nevertheless, most of the poem’s text consists of Shakespeare’s words and appears to be a free translation-recreation [...] Pushkin’s work on the poem *Angelo* reflects his need for spiritual growth and creative evolution. Pushkin’s main artistic aim during this period of his creative evolution was the embodiment of the national character in Russian literary tradition” (Zakharov 2015: 378).

Shakespeare's ideas while interpreting the content and poetics of his plays. "He had a well-organised translating system [...] he did his best to understand the real, true sense of [...] what the author thought and wanted to say, not what the author could think or want because only what is said and done can be translated" (Nikitenko 1867: 32-33). Even so, his translations were criticized for the use of Russian archaisms and complicated syntactic constructions which made them hard to understand. Pushkin said that "each line carries weights strapped to it" (qtd. Polevoy 1888: 274). Wilhelm Küchelbecker was dissatisfied with Vronchenko's far too literal translating: "Where [...] is Shakespearean strength and freedom? Everything is bound, constrained [...] the Russian language is raped" (Küchelbecker 1979: 306). But most critics considered them the best ever made. Belinsky praised Vronchenko for his ability to "reproduce the Shakespearean spirit": "When you are reading it, you are overwhelmed with the ideas and images of the king of world poets" (Belinsky 1953-1959: IV. 181). Turgenev also admitted the importance of Vronchenko's work: "His translations were highly beneficial: they acquainted the audience with significant literary works and inspired others [...] we cannot forget that it was he who made our readers fall in love with Shakespeare" (Turgenev 1961-1968: I. 255). Another noticeable Shakespearean translator in Russia was Vasily Yakimov who made word-for-word translations of some plays. However, only two of them *King Lear* and *The Merchant of Venice* were published, in 1833. Like Vronchenko he strove for precision in his translations even though it made them "uncouth, unpoetic, more likely to make people turn away from Shakespeare than be attracted to him [...] such a sin that outweighs the benefits of precision, scholarly comments, and references" (Levin 1988: 257). Both Yakimov and Vronchenko's translations were stylistically complicated, intended for thorough reading but unsuitable for theatre staging.

In the 1830s, only theatre adaptations of Shakespeare's *Richard III* by Yakov Bryansky and *Othello* by Ivan Panaev were performed on the Russian stage. Neither were successes and thus made no contribution to Shakespearean assimilation (Levin 1988: 261). Only Nikolay Polevoy's radical<sup>8</sup> *Hamlet* proved to be a turning point. Editor, writer and translator, Polevov was one of the most ardent adherents of French Romanticism. In the early 1830s, he spoke in favour of making such a translation that would upend the

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<sup>8</sup> Polevoy believed that Romanticism was the product of the French Revolution, had been initiated by Chateaubriand and Madame de Stael and that it was France from that the romantic transformation of literature had spread throughout Europe. Polevoy regarded Hugo as the full and perfect embodiment of French Romanticism (Polevoy 1990: 104-105, 127).

common assumption that “Shakespeare’s plays are written not for our times, are inappropriate for staging and will not get over the footlights among our spectators” (Polevoy 1888: 361). His translation, completed in 1836 and published as a separate book in 1837, was staged both in Moscow and in St Petersburg. Despite its inaccuracy, the tragedy turned out to be captivating and easy to understand. For the first time ever, Shakespeare’s characters spoke on stage everyday Russian language. Hamlet’s tragedy was close to the Russian public of that time and Polevoy’s translation expressed his generation’s dissatisfaction with Russia’s political and cultural situation. His ability to show the internal agony of the protagonist, which reflected the plight of his contemporaries, led to the creation of numerous Russian Hamlets. All this assured the success of the translation and its use for theatre performances. Not only was Polevoy’s *Hamlet* a precursor of a Russian Hamletism that would vie with the Prussian version, but most nineteenth-century readers and spectators could imagine Hamlet only as he had been was interpreted by Polevoy.

The success of Pushkin’s *Boris Godunov* and his interest in Shakespeare influenced the development of Russian historical drama. Two historical tragedies in particular—*Marfa Posadnitsa* (1830) by Mikhail Pogodin and *Dmitry Impostor* (1833) by Aleksey Khomyakov—followed Pushkin’s recipe for tragedy (historical conflict, psychological perspective, combination of iambic pentameter with prose), with its origin in Shakespeare’s history plays. After translating *Hamlet*, Polevoy also wrote the history play *Ugolino*, a reminiscence of Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet* and Dante’s *Inferno*, which was about Pisan eighteen-century military commander Count Ugolino della Gherardesca and his archenemy Archbishop Ruggieri. Political conflicts only served as the framework for the main theme of the tragic love of Nino, Ugolino’s nephew, for Veronika, Ruggieri’s niece. Most critics considered the play a parody of Shakespeare’s for its lack of fidelity in the poetical presentation of feelings. Belinsky wrote that it was “apparently an imitation or, better, a parody of love scenes between Romeo and Juliet” (Belinsky 1953-1959: II. 443). Apollon Grigoriev called the play “a lame parody”, for “the love of Romeo and Juliet lost everything, lost the freshness of the first kiss, lost its natural basis” (Grigoriev 1850: 169).

The more translations and adaptations were produced and staged, the more critical essays were published, among them critical reviews of those translations and their theatrical performances, as well as publications devoted to the playwright’s life and career. The popularity of Shakespeare spread thanks in the main to journals and

magazines, the leading ones being published in Moscow. After the defeat of the Decembrist revolt, the outrages perpetrated on its members and their persecution by the emperor Nicholas I meant that the center of cultural life temporarily moved from the capital, St. Petersburg, to Moscow. In periodicals like *The Moscow Telegraph*, *The Moscow Herald*, *Ateney*, and *The Telescope*, the number of articles devoted or somehow referring to Shakespeare grew year on year. Assuming the fact that Shakespeare had become “the order of the day”, Nikolay Gogol, who was more of a German than a British or French romantic,<sup>9</sup> criticized some reviewers for using the playwright’s name to authorise their own aesthetic preferences: “Any reviewer talking about any dull book will necessarily mention Shakespeare, whom he has not even read. But it has become a popular fad to speak of Shakespeare [...] meanwhile the book is a trifle written without any claim to be like one of Shakespeare’s; the only likeness is to the reviewer’s own taste and way of thinking” (Gogol 1937-1952: VIII. 174). Gogol’s irony not only touched upon the Russian fashion for Shakespeare but also attests the invocation of the playwright’s name by critic eager to justify their own aesthetic ideals.

### 3.D. *MACBETH* IN RUSSIAN ROMANTICISM: TRANSLATIONS AND CRITICISM

As we have seen, Shakespeare penetrated Russia later than in Germany and France, and this presence of previous experience of perception in countries with which the country had cultural ties, could not but reflect the nature of the first acquaintance of Russian people with the English playwright. The dominant style in the eighteenth-century European drama was classicism, and the desire to transform Shakespeare according to the classical canons was widespread. As we have also seen, neoclassicizing trends were particularly strong in France where nearly all Shakespeare’s drama was adapted by Pierre-Antoine de La Place (1707-1793), Pierre Le Tourneur (1736-1788) and Jean François Ducis (1733-1816). The latter created six adaptations during 1769-1792: *Hamlet*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *King Lear*, *Macbeth*, *John the Landless* and *Othello*. In his adaptations, Ducis

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<sup>9</sup> In Gogol’s fiction, one can hardly detect the traces of English or French romantic influences except for Walter Scott, Hugo and Jules Janin. German Romanticism was appealing to the Russian writer on account of its focus on depicting the world at the moment of its metamorphosis and its ability to precipitate such a metamorphosis almost by force. Gogol’s early fiction like the collection of short stories, *Evenings on a Farm Near Dikanka* (1831-1832), drew together genetically related variants of European folk stories from two different traditions, Ukrainian and Western European, as refracted through the prism of German romantic aesthetics, especially that of Tieck and Hoffman.

transformed Shakespeare's plays according to the spirit and form of the Voltairean drama which opened the playwright the way to the French stage. Translators used the form of an adaptation to improve as they thought original plays according to their beliefs, cut everything which seemed imperfect, inserted new pieces, etc. The earliest translations of Shakespeare into the Russian language appeared only in the late 1820s, and *Macbeth* was one of the first of the plays to be adapted and translated. Early adaptations of his drama in Russia had a very indirect relation to translation.

Unfortunately, the very first translation of *Macbeth* has not survived. It was the work of Andrei Turgenev (1781-1803), a gifted poet, translator and literary critic, and a passionate lover and propagandist of German and English literature. Goethe, Schiller, Shakespeare were the poets he constantly referred to throughout his short but brilliant creative career, full of tireless research and hard work. Drawing upon western European writers, Turgenev developed the principles of new (opposed to traditional, classical), national and original art which he defended at the meetings of the Friendly Literary Society (Druzheskoe literaturnoe obshchestvo, 1801), a literary circle, founded and headed by Turgenev, whose ideas preceded the Decembrist movement. At first, he was more interested in Goethe and Schiller, but gradually the name of Shakespeare began to appear more often on the pages of his letters and diaries.

In a letter to Vasily Zhukovsky and Aleksey Merzlyakov of January 30, 1802, he wrote that he had read Schiller's translation of *Macbeth* as well as his *Mary Stuart* and *Wallenstein*, said how he found it beautiful and captivating and declared his willingness to translate it: "Je suis tenté de le traduire. That would be nice. Only it ought to be certainly translated in verse, the most grasping and expressive!" (Turgenev 1802; qtd. Veselovsky 2016: 73). *Macbeth* itself was an inspiration for its terrifying plot and fantastic dramatization. The poet's *Diaries* testify that on April 24, 1802 Turgenev took up translating *Macbeth* himself. By the beginning of May, the first act of the tragedy was completed, and on May 17 Turgenev noted: "Yesterday I finished a rough draft of *Macbeth*. I started translating on April 24, pretty soon! But it would take me much longer to refine it" (qtd. Zaborov 1965: 84). As mentioned before, this translation was made from English. The existing opinion that Turgenev translated from German is not confirmed by any of his letters or diaries. Moreover, the letter of May 2, 1802 to his parents contains direct evidence that the basis of the translation was the original play. The German translation was used only as an additional source. The poet wrote: "After sending this letter I will take up my English tragedy whose first act is already translated [...] you

cannot imagine how pleased I am that I can study Shakespeare in English, though not without help” (Turgenev 1802 qtd. Lotman 1958: 75).

Concerning his translation of *Macbeth*, there was a curious dispute between Turgenev and Zhukovsky. The latter, in the no longer extant letter, suggested excluding from the tragedy all the witches’ scenes because he found them unnecessary and unreasonable. Turgenev strongly objected, for they were not simply a means for entertaining the audience but were also intended to reveal Macbeth’s nature. Obviously, Turgenev did not heed his friend’s advice and did not change anything in his translation. But the idea that his translation generally leaves much to be desired, tormented him constantly. As soon as he finished his work, he wrote to Zhukovsky: “A good idea has come to my mind today to translate *Macbeth* again, without haste [...] Despair grips me when I compare *Macbeth* in Russian with *Macbeth* in English. What power there is in the latter” (Turgenev 1802; qtd. Zaborov 1965: 85). That “good idea”, which Turgenev mentioned, never came to fruition. The only evidence of his further work on *Macbeth* is a diary note from October 6, 1802. Moreover, it remains unclear whether Turgenev’s translation was destroyed by the poet himself or lost afterwards. In any case, all scholars only quote his letters and diaries devoted to it. It is difficult to say what this first Russian *Macbeth* was like, but the literary talent of Andrei Turgenev, his deep interest in the work of the English playwright, and his persistent desire to understand the tragedy and convey its originality suggest that this was a very remarkable episode in the pre-romantic history of Shakespeare’s, and particularly, *Macbeth*’s assimilation in Russia.

A few years later, there was a spate of Russian versions of four of Shakespeare’s tragedies: *Othello* by Ivan Velyaminov (1808), *Lear* by Nikolai Gnedich (1808), *Hamlet* by Stepan Viskovatov (1811) and *Macbeth* by Petr Korsakov (1815; published only partly in 1817 in the journal *The Northern Observer (Severnyi Nablyudatel)*). The authors mainly used the adaptations of Ducis to adapt Shakespeare. However, Ducis was not an unquestioned authority for them either. They were free to change his adaptations too or combine some abstracts from Ducis’ plays with some pieces translated from the original Shakespeare (Levin 1993: 75). For example, Korsakov introduced several original Shakespearean scenes and about a hundred lines, translated from the original. But this was not done to introduce the original play but to improve it according to the adaptor’s neoclassical taste.

Korsakov’s *Macbeth* has not received any attention in reading circles. Due to censorship difficulties Korsakov was unable to publish the full text of his adaptation. Only

three relatively small abstracts were published in the first part of *The Northern Observer*, whose publisher and main editor was Korsakov himself. The opening entry of the adaptation in the periodical did not contain any reference to the original text, although the manuscript leaves no doubt about this. All the verse translated from English is highlighted by Korsakov himself. He had read *Macbeth* in the original English and used it to make his adaptation. Overall, however, his *Macbeth* had more to do with Ducis than with Shakespeare. Following Ducis, he limited the action of the tragedy in time (twenty-four hours) and space (Duncan's castle), although he cut the first act, which in Ducis' adaptation takes place (unlike all others) in the dense forest. On the other hand, he translated a few Shakespearean scenes (about a hundred of lines) including a dagger scene with a soliloquy of Macbeth (4.2). At the same time, Korsakov added a considerable amount of his own material. He wrote almost the entire fourth act with the council of thanes, Malcolm's soliloquies and, finally, his fight with Macbeth. In this regard, the relative prominence the heroes of the tragedy were altered, with Malcolm becoming a main character alongside Macbeth as the rightful heir to the Scottish throne. Korsakov might have wanted to turn the minor figure of Malcolm into one of the major protagonists in order to protect the tragedy from the theatre censors. But all his efforts were fruitless. Eventually, the adaptation was prohibited because the issue of regicide was still too hot to handle and any discussion of it was regarded as harmful and dangerous. In 1821, Korsakov somewhat reworked the tragedy, apparently with a view to presenting it once again for staging. However, there is no information about any production of *Macbeth* in the early 1820s, and it seems very unlikely that there was any because even fifteen years later, in 1836, the theater censorship still refused to allow the production (Levin 1961: 192). Later, after the appearance of various translations from the original English, Korsakov's adaptation grew hopelessly outdated and was completely forgotten.

Another unpublished translation of *Macbeth* from the original English was the work of the poet Wilhelm Küchelbecker. It was started straight after completion of his translation of Shakespeare's *Richard II* in September 1828 and finished three months afterwards. Many years later, exiled because of his participation in the Decembrist Revolt, Küchelbecker translated the first three acts of the tragedy again which, in his opinion, finally deserved publishing. As a translator, he set out to create the most accurate copy of the original (Levin 1983: 31). He was a pioneer in the original translation of Shakespeare, having no experience of predecessors, which could be relied on. The conditions of solitary confinement greatly complicated the work, depriving him not only of many necessary



benefits, but also the opportunity to communicate with other writers and translators and to check the correctness of his translations and comments. Nevertheless, he achieved a great deal. In general, his translations, although outdated in our time, were able to convey the scale, tragic pathos and poetry of Shakespeare's history plays and *Macbeth*. He also managed to recreate the naturalness and emotional force of the poetic speech of the characters in their soliloquies. Although in most cases it was an almost interlinear translation, there is no lack of poetic expressiveness.

Unusual imagery did not confuse Küchelbecker, who did his best to convey the expressive means of the play as accurately as possible, a case in point being, for example, the description of the night of Duncan's murder which preserved most epithets and metaphors with a slight change while translated, e.g. "the night has been roaring" ("unruly" in the original), "wild deadly scream" ("strange screams of death"), "the mournful times" ("the woeful time"), "the earth was shaken by fever" ("the earth was feverous and did shake") (2.3.50-59; qtd. Levin 1983: 37) or Macbeth's hallucinating a voice after the murder of Duncan, e.g. "Macbeth has murdered sleep, the innocent sleep / Sleep that unties the knots of care, / The edge of each day's life" ("Macbeth does murder sleep, the innocent sleep / Sleep that knits up the ravell'd sleeve of care / The death of each day's life", 2.2.36-41; qtd. Levin 1983: 39) and so on.

However, Küchelbecker was not able to overcome all the difficulties: to achieve equivalence, he introduced a lot of shortenings, missed out many functional words and pronouns, which made his translation so incomprehensible that sometimes without reading the original play it is impossible to understand the meaning, as when Macbeth says of Banquo, "They told him sons of tsars" ("They hail'd him father to a line of kings", 3.1.60; qtd. Levin 1983: 42) or explains to Lady Macbeth that he could not say "Amen", which in Küchelbecker's first translation turned into mere verbiage: "'God bless us' – one, another: 'Amen' / As though seeing that I'm standing in front of them / For fear ear-witnessing with a hangman's hands / To answer them I could not say 'Amen'" (2.2.28-31; qtd. Levin 1983: 46).<sup>10</sup>

Over time, Küchelbecker realized the drawbacks of this translation method. In 1834, in his diaries he criticized Vronchenko's translations, whose procedure he had once approved: "Although they are almost interlinear, are they good? Where is [...]"

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<sup>10</sup> In Shakespeare's *Macbeth*: "One cried 'God bless us!' and 'Amen' the other; / As they had seen me with these hangman's hands. / Listening their fear, I could not say 'Amen,' / When they did say 'God bless us!'" (2.2.26-29).

Shakespeare's power and freedom? Everything is bound, everything is forced, everything is clearly hard to read, everywhere the Russian language is raped" because Vronchenko, as he believed, conveyed only "the letter, the body of the original", but not its "soul, poetic sense" (Küchelbecker 1979: 306). The second version of the poet's *Macbeth* shows how he managed to modernize his translation. For example, he omitted archaic words ("vlas" was changed into "volos" ("hair"); "rassudil" into "schyol" ("considered"), "vran" into "voron" ("raven"), "neduzhen" into "bolen" ("sick"), "veshchali" into "govorili" ("spoke"), etc.) and Russianisms, such as "tsar" (instead of "king"), "barin" (instead of "master") or "kholop" (instead of "servant")<sup>11</sup> as his hand was forced by the evolution of his own poetic style towards the realism and simplified poetic language characteristic of his later poetry. Unfortunately, none of Küchelbecker's translations was published. Because of this, the acquaintance of Russian readers with Shakespeare's *Macbeth* was postponed by eight years and almost thirty years passed before the first complete verse translation of *Richard III* was published. Verse translations of *Richard II* and *Henry IV* appeared only in the late 1860s. The vast experience of Küchelbecker's translating Shakespeare could not be used by new generations of poets and writers as it was almost lost without trace.

In the late 1820s a new translation trend emerged. English literature began to be translated from the original, not via translations in other languages. That is why, when in 1830 Alexander Rotchev translated Schiller's adaptation of *Macbeth* and, what is worse, entitled it *Macbeth. Shakespeare's Tragedy. From Schiller's Writings*, it came in for severe criticism. For example, Andrei Delvig, poet and critic, wrote: "What does it mean *Macbeth. Shakespeare's Tragedy. From Schiller's Writings*? Has Schiller written Shakespeare's tragedy? Schiller translated *Macbeth* with some changes but how was he able to write something already written by someone else? It is beyond any understanding" (1830: 244). Delvig resented both Rotchev's ignorance of the English language and his complete indifference to Schiller's adaptation, whose poetical expressiveness completely disappeared in the Russian translation. The article in *The Telescope (Telegraf)* devoted to the publication of Rotchev's *Macbeth* was even more acerbic. The anonymous critic "could not look without indignation at this tyrannical torture called translation": "Poor Shakespeare! What fierce torments you had to endure" (*Telegraf* 1831: 125). Such harsh

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<sup>11</sup> Yury Levin compared two Küchelbecker's translations of the play and admitted that in the second one the translator strove to avoid archaization and literalism (Levin 1983: 30-58).

criticism was quite natural: at the turn of the 1830s, translating Shakespeare from German looked like an obvious anachronism.

The most significant translation of *Macbeth* into Russian in the early nineteenth century was Mikhail Vronchenko's verse translation from English. After publishing his first translation of *Hamlet*, which was received with open arms by many critics, in 1833, Vronchenko published a translation of the first act of *Macbeth* in *The Moscow Telegraph*. Three years later, he presented to the theatre censorship committee a complete translation of the tragedy. However, it was banned for staging, apparently because it contained the scene of regicide, despite Vronchenko's attempts to prove in the preface that the play conveyed a moral lesson: "this tragedy differs from all other Shakespearean works for the unique unity of its moral thought [...] the terrible fate of a man who impinged upon the life of God's Anointed" (Levin 1964). Probably, his appealing invocation which proposed "a double value of a literary work, when it, while giving intellectual pleasure, at the same time teaches mankind great lessons" (Levin 1964) finally convinced the committee because the following year the translation was published.

While translating *Macbeth*, Vronchenko mostly used the same translation methods and principles of conveying "the direct meaning of the original" he established earlier in his translation of *Hamlet*. However, this time he allowed himself more freedom, was more attentive to the language and rarely used complicated stylistics or archaic vocabulary. Sometimes he omitted particularly intricate Shakespearean metaphors, ignored end rhymes and changed the spells of witches. All these "liberties" (even though, very limited) were designed to make the translation easier to read, more natural and poetic. Belinsky twice called the translation excellent (1953-1955: IV. 67, 187) for, despite the apparent rigidity of its language, he believed that it "breathed the spirit of Shakespeare" (Belinsky 1953-1959: IV. 181).

Nevertheless, the translation was not successful and passed almost unnoticed. Belinsky admitted in the letter to Botkin of February 19, 1840: "*Macbeth*, translated by the famous writer Vronchenko, sold only five copies" (1953-1959: XI. 452). The importance of Vronchenko's translations for the development of Shakespearism in Russia was precisely defined by Ivan Turgenev who pointed out that they were "of great benefit as a preparatory work": "they introduced the public to the wonderful works, inspired and encouraged others; his *Macbeth*, his *Hamlet* have quite a certain coloring; we cannot forget that it was he who taught our readers to love Shakespeare" (1961-1968: I. 255).

Although Rotchev and, later, Vronchenko were able to publish their translations of the play, its staging was prohibited by the tsarist censorship, which is why the tragedy was rarely chosen as a subject of critical essays. During the Romantic period, Russian criticism was not mature enough to analyze and evaluate autonomously any literary writing. Despite the growing number of publications devoted to Shakespeare, Russians mostly translated or rendered popular sayings of famous European critics. German, French and, to a lesser extent, English criticism found wide resonance in Russia and was popularized by literary magazines, which would be the driving force behind Shakespeare's assimilation in national culture. In the 1820s, the name of the English playwright became well-known to the Russian reading public. Shakespeare was considered in the framework of Romantic ideas as an original dramatic genius and a master of characterization and psychologization. By the late 1830s, magazine and newspaper references to Shakespeare had turned into a fashion and the playwright was regarded as an aesthetic paragon and a model for Russian nationalism.

*The Moscow Telegraph* (*Moscovsky telegraf*) edited by Nikolai Polevoy published various translated articles by French Romantics such as Hugo, Alfred de Vigny or Victor de Broglie. Among them was the essay from Ferdinand Eckstein's newspaper *Le catholique* (*The Catholic*, 1826-1829) devoted to the rendering of Shakespeare in French on the example of Antoine Bruguière de Sorsum's translation of *Macbeth* and *Coriolanus* (Polevoy, ed. 1828: 339-364). There were also published two essays by the Scottish poet Thomas Campbell which discussed *Macbeth*. The first was *Two Chapters from the History of Scotland by Walter Scott*, the second chapter of which was devoted to the legend of Macbeth (1828: 323-338). The second was *The Historical View of English Poetry* which considered *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* among English poems of a Gothic or German origin (Campbell 1828: 254-271). In order to promote Shakespeare, *The Moscow Telegraph* also published translations of his works and reviews of them such as the extracts from *Hamlet*, *Macbeth* and *King Lear* translated by Vronchenko, act I of *King Lear* translated by Yakimov, as well as the review of *Hamlet* translated by Viskovatov and Vronchenko, *Macbeth* translated by Rotchev and *King Lear* and *The Merchant of Venice* translated by Yakimov. Although as a rule *The Moscow Telegraph* did not publish poetry, an exception was made in Shakespeare's case. It is significant that the only poetic work that appeared in the magazine in 1833-1834 was an extract from *Macbeth* translated by Vronchenko.

Other popular magazines, such as *The Moscow Messenger* (*Moscovsky vestnik*), *The Contemporary* (*Sovremennik*), *The Son of the Fatherland* (*Syn otechestva*) or *The Northern Bee* (*Severnaya Pchela*), also published various critical essays by the European Romantics translated into Russian as well as Russian criticism of Shakespeare translations and theatre performances. *Macbeth* was not an exception. For example, Anton Delvig published his critical evaluation of Rotchev's 1830 translation of Schiller's adaptation in *The Literary Newspaper* (*Literaturnaya gazeta*): he considered it a "disrespect to Shakespeare's genius masterpiece" (1830: 244). In the article devoted to the play's translation by Vronchenko, the editor of *The Contemporary*, Piotr Pletnev, emphasized that Shakespeare's supernatural had the same purpose as his whole oeuvre, namely, "to reveal all the secrets of human soul" for "he entered the fairy world as a conqueror [...], integrated it into the unity of his immeasurable kingdom, and reduced all its phenomena to natural causes" (1837: 434). Orest Somov emphasized the power of Shakespeare's sublime: "in his plays *The Tempest* and *Midsummer Night's Dream* he gives himself over to his willful imagination that changes as fast as nature coloured with a bright rainbow", while "in *Macbeth* and *Hamlet* this imagination gets darker and when it embraces with the power of feelings, it fills a soul with dread" (qtd. Frizman 1978: 243).

Probably because of *Macbeth*'s "dangerous" content, the number of critical essays devoted to the tragedy itself is relatively few. The first short article by Küchelbecker *Thoughts on Macbeth* (*Mysli o Makbete*) was published anonymously in Delvig's *The Literary Newspaper* in 1830. Küchelbecker admitted that he had to repeat the ideas of "the great critics" such as Lessing, Goethe and Schlegel as it was almost impossible to say something new about the play. In comparison with *Hamlet*, *Macbeth* was easier to understand, "has more power, movement, and sublimity" and was more Romantic; while the change of scenes from the murder to the Porter's "humorous" discourse of a commoner, unaware of "a secret path of doom" and a "smooth, polite, trite, routine" dialogue between the court nobles contribute to horrifying, striking dramatization (Küchelbecker 1830: 52-53). *Macbeth*, the essay by Ivan Kroneberg, one of the first Shakespeare scholars in Russia, was also based on German criticism, particularly Franz Horn's *Shakespeares Schauspiele erläutert* (*Shakespeare's Plays Explained*, 1826). The essay discussed several of the play's scenes and rendered most of Horn's ideas, like the rather paradoxical proposition that it was the passionate mutual love of the Macbeths which affected their behavior and murderous deeds (Kroneberg 1831: 83). Another

controversial opinion was expressed by Nikolai Nadezhdin who believed that the Romantics miscomprehended Shakespeare by noticing only some external elements, mostly dark and ugly, and reducing them to caricaturesque exaggerations, whereas “ominous gloom” was definitely not “the greatest Shakespeare’s merit”: “Does Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* owe its aesthetic value to the abominable witches and their terrible orgies?” (Nadezhdin 1830: 24).

### 3.E. *MACBETH’S WITCHES IN RUSSIAN ROMANTIC DRAMA*

#### *Romanticism, “fairy” and witches*

Little by little, then, in the first three decades of the nineteenth century and in the absence of any stage performance, Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* came to the attention of the reading public more perhaps thanks to articles in periodicals than its translations. This had an impact on his literary appropriation by Russian romantic writers which, if not generally very remarkable, was nonetheless interesting in its variety. If their general procedure was to incorporate Shakespearean characters and plots into their drama, poetry, and fiction, what particularly attracted them to *Macbeth* was its vivid “fairy” elements. In this they were no different from their European counterparts. Unlike the rational aesthetic of the Enlightenment, the romantics believed that reasons, ideas or necessities found no room for inspiration, intuition and sensibility. They appealed to what people could not control or apprehend such as hidden feelings and primitive emotions like fear or horror because both beauty and ugliness could have a strong emotional impact. The senses had to be rekindled if humanity was to see the magic and mysteries of nature, much as the early German romantics had tried to show nature’s power and present how it projected its mystery on people. To do so they turned to ancient myths and national folklore to reveal the inscrutable and indescribable riddles of the world. As for English writers, they had always been temperamentally inclined to continually look for a supernatural reality. No other nation has such a long tradition of Christian fantasy, from the Middle English *Pearl* to J.K. Rowling’s magical series: “The subject of the supernatural has vexed English philosophy throughout history” (Manlove 1999: 2); the same might be said of its literature. The significance of creativity and imagination led many of the English romantics towards fantasy in such writings as Coleridge’s *Kubla Khan* and *Christabel*, Shelley’s *Alastor* and *Prometheus Unbound*, Byron’s *Manfred*, Keats’s *Endymion*,

*Hyperion* and *Lamia*, which were sometimes laced with religiosity or demonology. Gothic literature concurrently displayed a new penchant for horror and mystery beyond the reach of logic which revealed the most hidden and unutterable emotions of human beings. “Romanticism is the primitive, the untutored, it is youth, life [...] but it is also [...] the mysterious, the supernatural [...] nameless terror, the irrational” (Berlin 2013: 20). *Macbeth* fitted naturally into the English romantic imagination.

In many senses, Western European romanticism was born in reaction to the aesthetics of classicism. Though relative late comers to the ensuing controversy, in the 1820s and 30s, Russian romantics polemized energetically with classicism’s basic principle that art was an imitation of nature and advocated the idea of the transformative role of art. This was predicated on the principle of the unlimited freedom of imagination, which issues in the rise of “fantastic” genres. For the first time the sublime represented by various supernatural elements became the dominant concept in the “fairy” writings of Konstantin Aksakov, Aleksandr Bestuzhev-Marlinsky, Aleksandr Veltman, Mikhail Zagoskin, Ivan Kireevsky, Mikhail Lermontov, Vladimir Odoevsky, Antony Pogorelsky, Nikolai Polevoy, Orest Somov and Vladimir Titov. In Russia, “the process of mastering fantastic material within the limits of pre-romanticism and romanticism was not homogeneous”; nevertheless, it had its own logic of development (Vasilyev 1990: 81). At its beginnings in England, this genre of fiction was still associated with the foundations of the rationalistic poetics of classicism in so far as the supernatural it evoked finally dispelled by rational explanation. Thus, in most novels by Ann Radcliffe, the supernatural turns out to be a simple mystification made up by their heroes to help them accomplish their plans. In Russia, the same method of constructing a fantasy world was used by Nikolai Karamzin in his so-called Gothic stories such as *Bornholm Island* (*Ostrov Borngolm*, 1794) and *Sierra-Morena* (1795). However, it should be noted that the growth of Russian “fairy” writing in this period was initially stunted due to the vast number of translations and publications of foreign fiction of this type, mostly Radcliffe’s novels which were enormously fashionable until the 1810s, when they started to lose popularity and give way to new takes on the supernatural in the genre of the ballad as developed by Vasily Zhukovsky. Following a national tradition of folk and literary fairy tales, Zhukovsky presented the sublime as a story within a story, hidden in the form of a dream or a legend and distanced in time. Thus, it was somehow stipulated, enfolded into the real and subordinated to it, even though the supernatural itself remained supernatural and could not be explained. In Zhukovsky’s ballads *Svetlana* (1813) and *Twelve Sleeping*

*Maidens* (*Dvenadtsat spiashchikh dev*, 1817), the fairy element is framed by the real. The notion of the “subordinate supernatural”, to use the term of Yury Mann (1973: 220), was further employed by Russian romantics like Bestuzhev-Marlinsky in the Gothic tale, *The Castle Eisen* (*Zamok Eizen*, 1825), Valerian Olin in the short story cycle, *The Tales Told at the Station* (*Rasskazy na stantsii*, 1839) and Aleksey Tolstoy in the Gothic dilogy of novellas, *The Family of Vourdalak* (*Semia vurdalaka*, 1839) and *The Meeting 300 Years Later* (*Vstrecha cherez trista let*, 1839). Later, Russian realist writers like Nikolai Leskov and Anton Chekov would operate on similar lines in their cycles of Christmas tales.

According to I.V. Semibratova’s classification of the “fairy” in Russian fiction of 1830-1840s, the category of “the fairy as a literary convention, where the supernatural is second-guessed, is an artistic assumption predetermined by an author and voluntarily shared by a reader”. It is a type of writing that “does not pursue the objective of depicting the fairy itself but aims at using it to disclose some facets of reality or prospects of the future” (1973: 14-15). Accordingly, “the fairy as a literary convention” is opposed to “the fairy as a fabulous reality [which] was based on the perception of the supernatural as the part of the national worldview and, therefore, treated fairy motifs and images as a self-explanatory fabulous givenness” (Semibratova 1973: 11). The last category is “the fairy as a psychological figment” in which “the supernatural was considered the result of the world outlook or sickness of a hero” (Semibratova 1973: 12). The two latter types, contrary to the first one, proved to be less productive and by the 1840s were mostly displaced from literary practice by the realistic method. Until that happened, however, fantasy literature with fairy elements fairly rules Russia’s literary roost. The new genre of the so-called “fantastic tale”, which appeared in Russian literature in the mid-1820s, quickly gained popularity among readers. Many romantics tried their hand at it. The founder of the genre, Pogorelsky, published his cycle of tales, *Dvoinik, ili Moi vechera v Malorossii* (*The Double, or, My evenings in Little Russia*) in 1828. This was followed by Nikolai Gogol’s *Vechera na khutore bliz Dikanki* (*Evenings on a Farm Near Dikanka*, 1831-1832), Odoevsky’s *Pyostrye skazki* (*Colorful Tales*, 1833) and Zagoskin’s *Vechera na Khopre* (*Evening on the Hoper River*, 1834).

A particular catalyst of the boom of Russian fantastic tales was translations of Hoffmann’s stories. In 1822, *The Notes of the Fatherland* (*Otechestvennye zapiski*) published his novella *Das Fräulein von Scuderi. Erzählung aus dem Zeitalter Ludwig des Vierzehnten* (*Mademoiselle de Scudéri. A Tale from the Times of Louis XIV*, 1820). By 1840, Russian magazines had published sixty-two of Hoffman’s stories, the motifs and



plots of which widely influenced Russian “fairy” prose along with the Gothic novels by Ann Radcliff, Washington Irving’s stories and Shakespeare’s supernatural, the latter playing a pivotal role due to the formation of the Romantic cult of Shakespeare in Russia in 1830s (Zakharov and Lukov 2011: 93). Russians became acquainted with Shakespeare as a fairy-writer owing to the essays of the European romantics which, as we have seen, were translated for publication in literary magazines and newspapers. They were aware of Addison’s *Spectator* 419 (July 1, 1712), in which the playwright was praised for “noble Extravagance of Fancy” and “the Strength of his own Genius” (1837: II. 150) and was named the master of what Dryden called in the Preface to his libretto for *King Arthur* (1691) “the Fairy kind of writing” (1808: VIII. 120).

Although at least half of Shakespeare’s dramas have something of the fairy in them,<sup>12</sup> *Macbeth* with its witches, ghost and apparitions stands out among those that deal directly with the supernatural. It has “the most pronounced atmosphere of evil” of any of Shakespeare’s plays and is “his darkest, his most poetic, most philosophically ambitious play, fantastical and imaginative beyond other tragedies” (Clark and Mason 2015: 1). Shakespeare tapped into national folk beliefs to prompt emotional response in his audience. In this respect, the witches served as perfect emotional appetisers to whet the appetites of his contemporaries for the great *fortissimos* of sublimity that were to come. In the early seventeenth century, much of humanity still had a “vision of the cosmos” which proposed that “the clockwork universe was leading into a conception of a distant clock-maker God”, and a Satan who worked through witches and the physical world was becoming outmoded (Poole 2011: 8). In early modern England, “justice, wavering as it does between a Christian conception and a more overtly magic way of thinking” was still deeply related to the supernatural (Lemercier 2001: 106). The presence of the Devil in the world was believed to be commonplace and something that the ordinary people experienced on a regular basis. From natural phenomena like thunderstorms to nightmares and spiritual unrest, he had an active hand in their lives. Early modern people could explain rationally seemingly irrational phenomena, for they simply considered all of them the work of the Devil. He was omnipresent and unavoidable. Despite the rise of scientific scholarship, the knowledge of natural matters had not advanced far enough to replace old superstitions. People still believed and feared the supernatural forces.

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<sup>12</sup> Puck and his fairy companions in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*; Prospero, Ariel, Caliban and the motley sprites in *The Tempest*, vengeful ghosts in *Hamlet*, *Julius Caesar*, and *Richard III*; Joan of Arc’s fiends in *Henry VI*, Jupiter in *Cymbeline*; Time in *Henry V* and *The Winter’s Tale*; etc.

Shakespeare, as a popular and experienced playwright “in his mythopoeic creativity”, seems to rely on some of the basic beliefs of his age (Faas 1986: xxi). Shakespeare’s attitude towards religious supernaturalism was uncritical and conformist while “towards superstition he retained his right to give free rein to his imagination, to criticize, repudiate, or confirm, as his artistic talent or literary expediency dictated” (Clark 1971: 11). In Shakespeare’s time such “superstitious supernaturalism” took the shape of demons, fairies, ghosts, and witches with their prophesying and divination. Shakespeare was able to make his immortals not only believable, but meaningful and impressive.

In *Macbeth*, the playwright collected and combined assorted legends and superstitions concerning witchcraft, the very problem of which was a burning issue, for the play was written in the peak time of the witch-hunt in Europe or, in another words, “witch-mania” (Kapitaniak 2016: 42), the period from 1570 until 1630. In *Macbeth*, the Witches “are given many of the conventional attributes of both Continental and English witch lore [...] above all, they traffic in prognostication and prophecy” (Greenblatt 1994: 31). Despite the existence of several theories about the origin of the Weird Sisters, a valid answer to this question cannot be given. They could be witches, demons or, more broadly speaking, personifications of some truly supernatural evil. Scholars lack the means to make it obvious. Shakespeare had to take into account “the contemporary experience both in regard to the existence and persecution of witches and in regard to the writings of the time” (Pujante 2012: 10). King James I himself was the author of a compendium on witch lore called *Daemonologie* (1597) which condemned witches for “being enticed either for the desire of revenge or of worldly riches”, for “their whole practices are either to hurt men and their goods or what they possess, for satisfying of their cruel minds” (qtd. Miola 2004: 203). The original story of Macbeth and the Weird Sisters was probably rooted in Wintoun’s Scottish vernacular chronicle, reproduced in Latin by Hector Boece in his chronicle of Scotland (1527) which, in its turn, was translated into English by Holinshed for his *Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland* (first published in 1577 and practically unchanged in its second edition of 1587). “The fact that the *Chronicles*’ witches and *Macbeth*’s witches play a similar role [...] supports the idea that Shakespeare uses Holinshed’s *Chronicles* as a blueprint to integrate the witches into *Macbeth*” (Jaworski 2015: 8). In Holinshed’s story, now more legend than real history, Macbeth and Banquo suddenly met “three women in strange and wild apparell, resembling creatures of elder world” who “were either the weird sisters, that is [...] the goddesses of

destinie” or “some nymphs or feiries, indued with knowledge of prophesie by their necromanticall science” (Furness, ed. 1873: 387).

Although the Weird Sisters are never called witches on stage, they are definitely something other, or at any rate “something more, than the malevolent old women of Jacobean witch superstition”, yet many of their characteristics are those traditionally associated with European witchcraft (Biggins 1976: 256). Moreover, even though in early modern England the existence of witches like the existence of the Devil was an established truth, there were rival views concerning their nature. They were believed to be women in communion with Satan, or real demons impersonated in human witches, or humans subject to the Devil and used for his purposes. They did evil to people or tempted them to do evil themselves. Shakespeare never revealed what he believed to be true about witches. The audience could only accept the supernatural as such and believe in its phenomena as shown. But they could take no convincing account of what his Three Witches truly were because “the identity of these ladies was as equivocal as their prophecies” (Hunter 1966: 4).

Nevertheless, scholars have not ceased to search for an answer to this question and the number of theories is constantly growing. Since the late nineteenth century some Shakespearean scholars have shared the opinion that “when Shakespeare made use of the marvelous, he did so in a purely symbolical sense, using the two materials of truth and nature [which] carry with them an irresistible force” (Robinson, ed. 1904: 9). The Weird Sisters were considered nothing “but a personification, a dramatizing, of those dark promptings which swarm in every soul that is secretly inclined to ‘evil’” (Tolman 1906: 102), “the embodiment of inward temptation” (Gervinus 1892: 592); while their prophecies were “the internal workings of Macbeth’s own mind in an imaginative form” (Snider 1877: I. 194), “very real subjectively, but objectively nonexistent” (Paul 1950: 62). According to another interpretation, the Weird Sisters are in reality demons, for they have a “curious majesty and even sublimity [...] not at all characteristic of ordinary witches” as well as the demonic power which they wield or represent or symbolizes (Curry 1937: 54, 60). While all the other phenomena of evil in *Macbeth* could be attributed to human fears and passions, “the case for demonic agency [...] has to stand or fall with the meaning the Weird Sisters can have” (West 1968: 70). Other researchers disagree, though admitting some demonic aspect of the Three Witches, because their powers are too limited to make them seem as fully-fledged demons or devils. They may deceive and tempt Macbeth but have no authority to do harm to his human will : “the

Weird Sisters' malice is evident in all their traffickings with him, yet nowhere are we shown invincible proof of their power over him" (Biggins 1976: 256). The Witches seem "the traditional powers of spiritual wickedness" because the play presents some of the features of Renaissance demonology, therefore its superhuman evil "seems plainly that which the times attributed to hell's kingdom and rationalized in the Christian account of the devil and his angels" (West 1968: 71). Unlike the opinion that the Witches are only "instruments of darkness" (Bradley 1920: 273) who do not have the power to determine events because "any argument that they are directors of fate rests on the fact that Shakespeare brought the term 'weird sister' into the play" (Farnham 1963: 101), the opposing theory suggests that "they act as agents of remorse and despair like the classical Furies, their aim being to ensure Macbeth's damnation" (McGee 1966: 66). The witches have come to meet with Macbeth "like the furies of classical myth [...] they plan to bewitch him by undermining his deepest moral convictions and bringing about a metamorphosis that will change the course of history" (Truax 1989-1990: 359).

The contradictory views concerning these characters gave way to the scholarship which suggested the double nature and double role of the Witches. They could be treated as both human witches and the classical Fates: "They are not only Scottish witches [...] they are also, and primarily, the three 'Weird Sisters,' that is, exemplars of the Roman Parcae [...] who knew one's fate or destiny and could control it" (Whalen 2012-2013: 59-60); or they are both the Fates and the Furies: the Weird Sisters who were "formerly as the three Parcae or Fates, foretelling Macbeth's future", at the later stage of the story became "the Erinyes, avengers of murder, symbols of the tormented soul" that deluded and maddened him with their apparitions and ghosts (Knight 2001: 176).

As can be seen, the treatment of the supernatural in *Macbeth* is deliberately imprecise and defining the nature of the Weird Sisters would be an idle endeavour. They embody goddesses of fate, witches, demons and spirits which represent the demonic powers. But if, as has been said, they are demons, why do they use magical rites? And, if they are, what need do they have of familiars? Shakespeare has not afforded any conclusive grounds and made readers and playgoers view the Weird Sisters and their involvement in Macbeth's fall as mysteries which can be felt and observed but not unriddled. The supernatural in the play is more descriptive than explanatory. However, all this ambiguity fulfills a dramatic function "as it involves these beings in a mystery that suits the tone of the play: The Weird Sisters, witches, magicians, demons, they are surely

more fearsome and disquieting because we do not know what they are” (Pujante 2012: 13).

Nevertheless, in the stage directions they are called witches, and their appearance and activities resemble those described in contemporary writings on witch-lore. The play begins with the Three Witches appearing in the middle of thunder and lightning and ends when they “hover through the fog and filthy air” (1.1.13). On the one hand, we are shown four features of the Scottish landscape, but knowing the powers that were attributed to the witches, one can suppose that such weather conditions have been caused by the Three Witches themselves. Their conversation is in rhymed verse with a rhythmic character that resembles the rhythm of clapping hands or drums, especially in the scene of the apparitions (4.1), which conforms to the language of witchcraft charms and rites. They know when the end of the battle will be and they declare their intention to meet Macbeth after it, what will happen in the third scene of the first act. Finally, they express themselves by means of paradox and ambiguity, typical of the mysterious language of sorcerers and magicians, which make their later prophecies tremendously thought-provoking. “Fair is foul and foul is fair” (1.1.12) is the statement that establishes the foreshadowing and bares considerable weight of meaning as it reveals the true colours of the play’s world full of disguise and perverted values (fair ought to be fair and foul ought to be foul). The cauldron scene adds even more impressiveness to the image of the Witches. The early part of this “one of the most celebrated witch scenes in Shakespeare’s plays” when they “rehearse a ‘grocery list’ of repulsive ingredients for their evil brew” makes the setting more “atmospheric, as well as perpetuates the characterization of the witches as grotesque and unnatural hags” (Ryken 2013: 44-45).

But what makes the Weird Sisters a cornerstone of the play’s movement is their prophecies which first tempt Macbeth to fulfil his malign ambitions and during their second meeting inspire him with a false resilience to retribution for crimes that drives him into a new cycle of the evil deeds. Thus, they are not simple “specimens of popular witch-lore introduced at random but material to the plot” (Clark 1971: 42). It is their ambivalence and their amazing theatricality that made Shakespeare’s Weird Sisters a great asset to Russian playwrights who adopted fantastic plots and characters of national and foreign literature and folklore and integrated Romantic and mythological traditions in their drama. Yet their *Macbeth* was not ours. Today’s readers will associate the play with pangs of conscience, with the moral fall of a noble hero, with reflections on how power corrupts a person. However, Andrei Turgenev, the first translator of the play in

Russia, saw its sublime as a method of “theatrical horror” (qtd. Veselovsky 2016: 73). He retold the play as a thriller, in modern terms. *Macbeth* was a story of crime and punishment, intertwined with witchcraft and supernatural elements, which captured the audience’s attention from the beginning; its vertiginous action maintained interest until the end. Its dramatic treatment of the evil was what made *Macbeth* both dark and disquieting and, at the same time, vigorous, fascinating, and appealing to the Russian Romantics.

Witches and other supernatural have always been an integral part of Russian and Slavic folklore, which has a rich history of beliefs that splice together the natural world and the supernatural. This is a culture that “believes in many supernatural and fantastic beings, from dragons to one-eyed or multiheaded monsters, from shape-changing wolves to soulless beings” and, at the same time, is “a curious mix of the pagan and the Christian”, for even though Russia adopted Christianity as the state religion in 988 AD, paganism remained popular until the end of the nineteenth century (Dixon-Kennedy 1998: ix). The word *vedma*, the Russian for “a witch”, is derived from the verb *vedat’* (“to know”, “to be aware of”). It means that such a woman has superhuman knowledge which she uses to harm other people or for sake of enrichment (Vinogradova and Levskievskaya 2010: 36). Similarly to European beliefs, Russian witches are usually human women who either gain their supernatural knowledge from their mothers, grandmothers and other witches or from the Devil to whom they sell their soul. Girls sometimes became witches to charm a guy. All they needed was to sign a contract with the Devil who gave them occult powers. However, demoniac practices were more often associated with old, wizened, horrific hags, the servants of Satan on Earth who were usually seen with a black cat as their familiar what originated a belief that the evil happens to a person if a black cat crosses his/her road. Witches were more active on Yuri’s Day, the Baptism of Jesus and Kupala Night. Then they gathered on the bald mountains. The most well-known coven took place on the Bald Mountain on the right bank of the Dnieper in Kiev, where witches flocked from everywhere, which is why Kiev witches, as the mistresses of this gathering, were considered the most skillful (Kononenko 2013: 96-97).

All kinds of strange powers were attributed to them. Like European witches who were believed to ride through the air, control the elements, raise storms, vanish at will, and render themselves insensible to pain, Russian witches could steal the rain to cause a drought or the moon to make a night dark. Not all the witches were bad. *Znakharki* were proficient in the healing arts and helped people in time of loss or danger. Others fell back

on divination to satisfy their clients. They peered into the future by reading secrets in water, air, fire or the client's palm, or consulting the souls of the dead. However, they were all the same regarded with apprehension as all witches were considered evil by nature and treated with hate and fear, especially in times of domestic tragedy, for which they were thought to be responsible. "The influence of sorcery on the psyche of the Russian peasant was overwhelming [...] If something went wrong in a family, be it crop failure, drought, family discord, infertility, epidemics, or illness – it was attributed to sorcerers and witches" (Ivanits 2015: xi). These beliefs were reflected in *Povest o volkhovanii* (*The Tale about Divination*) written in the early sixteenth century which was inspired by *Malleus Maleficarum* (*The Hammer of Witches*, 1486) and became the first national treatise on witchcraft.

Sorcery was feared not only by peasants. The clergy, the nobility, and even the household of the tsar feared it too. Since the beginning of the seventeenth century until the end of the nineteenth century it was considered a crime against the tsar and the state. The accusation of witchcraft was used to get rid of opponents in the struggles of political parties that always raged around the royal throne. So many people were tortured in such cases that by the late eighteenth century it had already become a popular belief that burning for witchcraft was a common and legitimate practice (Kantorovich 1896: 38). Nevertheless, the prosecution of witches in Russia did not reach the scale it did in Western Europe. The number of instances was smaller and the punishments somewhat milder: instead of burning at the stake they could have been sent fleeing into exile or kept in close confinement or lunatic asylum, according to the Penal Codes of 1770 and 1842. Regardless, even the nineteenth century still continued to face high-profile witchcraft cases. For example, in 1824 the citizen of the village Aksyonovka and his wife were accused of bedeviling their neighbours and punished with whipping (Efimenko 1883; qtd. Kantorovich 1896: 39).

As literary characters witches often appear in Russian Romantic fiction, poetry and drama. For example, Baba Yaga,<sup>13</sup> the most well-known witch of Russian folklore,

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<sup>13</sup> In Old Russian the word *baba* meant a midwife, sorceress or fortune teller while *yaga* could be derived from one of Old Slavic languages like Slovenian *jeza* ("anger") or Czech *jeze* ("witch" or "nymph") (Johns 2010: 9-12). The first appearance of Baba Yaga in Russian literature dates from the eighteenth century, when she was mentioned by Mikhail Lomonosov in the notes to *Ruskaia grammatika* (*Russian Grammar*, 1755) as one of the figures of the national folklore and superstitions. She also appeared a literary antagonist in Vasily Levshin's fairy tale *Povest o dvorianine Zaoleshanine, sluzhivshem Kniazuiu Vladimiru* (*The Tale of the Noble Zaoleshanin, a Knight in the Service of Prince Vladimir*, 1780), where she kidnapped a beloved of a hero for which he fought and killed her. She is usually portrayed as a hag who flies in a mortar, using

features prominently in most Russian tales. A witch was the main character in Pogorelsky's seminal fantastic tale, *Lafertovskaia makovnitza* (1825). Vasily Zhukovsky published an adaptation of Robert Southey's poem, *A Ballad, Shewing How an Old Woman Rode Double, And Who Rode Before Her* (1799), which he called, almost without altering the original title, *Starukha iz Berkli. Ballada, pokazyvaiashchaia, kak odna starukha ekhala verkhom vdvoyom i kto ekhal pered nei* (*The Old Woman of Berkley. A Ballad, Showing How an Old Woman Rode Double, And Who Rode Before Her*, 1831). The setting of the ballad was Russified, and the old lady was turned into a witch of Russian folklore. Alexander Pushkin also portrayed a scene of a witch coven in the poem *Gusar*<sup>14</sup> (*The Hussar*, 1833).

Shakespeare's three witches first entered Russian literature through its late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century adaptations of French and German adaptations of the playwright's drama. More precisely, it was in the poem *Tri vedmy* (*The Three Witches*, 1829) by Mikhail Lermontov, a loose translation of a part of Schiller's *Macbeth* adaptation. Schiller's witches speak in regular rhyming octosyllabic couplets, an effect that highlights the artificiality of their show, converting it into a play within a play. Lermontov might have been more thrilled with the story the witches tell than with the witches themselves. The poem is just a short extract from the witches' scene in Schiller's adaptation which maintains the original's form of a dialogue in rhyming couplets. Yet even such a short passage, which in Schiller's adaptation encapsulated the composition of the entire play and reflected its core principles, provides insight into the character of the Weird Sisters who represent "the power of a passionate imagination to obscure moral truths and distinctions that reason itself might have discerned" (Moschovakis 2008: 13). In Lermontov's

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the pestle as a rudder and sweeping away her tracks with a broom made from silver birch. She is nearly always a character to be feared and is constantly presented shrouded in mystery" (Bolton, ed. 2010: 140).

<sup>14</sup> The protagonist spends the night in the hut of a witch Marusya and witnesses how the mistress, having drunk some portion, flies into the chimney. He repeats her actions and finds himself at the coven of witches on a mountain where everybody is singing and dancing. The poem takes its origin from the old Ukrainian fairy tale which also provided the basis for the plot of *Kievskie vedmy* (*The Kiev Witches*, 1833), the fantastic tale by Orest Somov where a Cossack marries a daughter of a witch. The original is emotionally neutral, for there is neither the irony of Pushkin nor the horror introduced to the story by Ukrainian romanticism of Orest Somov (Belyakov 2016: 153). Folk stylizations in fiction of Somov who has mastered new ways of artistic use of the fabulous, the marvellous in the depiction of reality, in their turn, influenced Nikolai Gogol (Troitsky 1985: 142). In Russia he is regarded a writer who brought to perfection the romantic art of translating the ordinary into the extraordinary, turning the real into a dream, a fairy tale" (Khusainova 2014: 592). Witches figure in his fantastic stories with amazing regularity: in both parts of the cycle *Vechera na khutore bliz Dikanki* (*Evenings on a Farm Near Dikanka*, 1831-32) in such stories as *Vecher nakanune Ivana Kupala* (*St. John's Eve*), *Mayskaya noch, ili Utoplenitsa* (*May Night, or The Drowned Maiden*), *Noch' pered Rozhdestvom* (*Christmas Eve*) and in the tale *Viy* of the collection *Mirgorod* (1835).



adaptation, they remained fantasy's delusive beings who, at the same time, taught the reader a moral lesson and, thus, manifested the conflict of good and evil, one of the crucial themes of Lermontov's early writings.

### *Anton Delvig*

In the wake of Lermontov's poem, the Russian romantics reinterpreted the image of the witches in compliance with national folk traditions. Shakespeare's Weird Sisters were alluded to in three plays written in 1820-1830s by Anton Delvig, Wilhelm Küchelbecker and Alexander Griboyedov. The drama *Noch na 24 iyunya (The Night of the 24<sup>th</sup> of June)* was started by Delvig in his latest years between 1828-1830 (in January 1831 he died of typhus). There is no direct evidence in his letters or diaries which can point out the exact date of the beginning of its writing. However, from 1828, and the Hamletian ending of his idyll, *Konets zolotogo veka (The End of the Golden Age)*, the poet had displayed a specific interest in Shakespeare.<sup>15</sup> *Macbeth* turned out to be one of the most significant plays for Delvig. In 1830, in *The Literary Newspaper* he published the critical review of Rotchev's translation of *Macbeth* made from Schiller's adaptation. The choice of the subject can be explained by his friendship with Küchelbecker who, while in prison in 1828, made his own translation of Shakespeare's tragedy, as we have seen. At the beginning of 1830, he managed to publish anonymously Küchelbecker's essay *Thoughts on Macbeth*, but "was not able to publish the good quality writing of Küchelbecker" as he complained in the letter to A.P. Elagina-Kireevskaya of June 18, 1830 (Delvig 1986: 343). In *The Night of the 24<sup>th</sup> of June*, Delvig mixed the Shakespearean and traditional Russian supernatural. The name of the play speaks for itself. It refers to Kupala Night, a traditional Slavic holiday celebrated during the shortest night of a year from 23 to 24 of June, according to the Julian calendar. The Slavs believed that on Kupala Night, supernatural forces come to life and various miracles take place. It is not coincidental that the same setting was chosen by Nikolai Gogol for his fantastic tale, *Vecher nakanune Ivana Kupala (St. John's Eve, 1830)*. At the same time, Delvig's work alludes to Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and the Greek legend of Adonis and Aphrodite which mark this time as a celebration of the first joy of the new or reunited

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<sup>15</sup> For example, the ending of his idyll was inspired by the fourth act of *Hamlet* as Delvig himself admitted: "The readers will notice in the ending of this idyll the close imitation of Shakespeare's description of Ophelia's death. The author revering the poetic gift of the great British tragedian is glad that he was able to replicate one of his most adorable creatures" (1829: 172).

love. Hence, the title *The Night of the 24<sup>th</sup> of June* introduces both themes of the superhuman interference into humans' life and of love affairs.

As an epigraph, Delvig chose Hamlet's famous statement, "There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, / Than are dreamt of in your philosophy" (1.5.166-167) quoted from Vronchenko 1828 translation,<sup>16</sup> which not only foreshadows the unusual plot of the drama but also pays a tribute to the vogue for Shakespeare in Russian Romantic literature, for this quotation has become a cliché used by authors to introduce fantastic events in their writings. The first scene serves as an exposition. It is set in the village graveyard where a cemetery caretaker digs up a tomb and exhumes the dead nurse of a princess threatened with death. The princess is supposed to die soon due to the curse of her sister-in-law Maria who she had worked to death. He reminds the corpse that on Maria's deathbed she had sworn to help her bring the wicked princess to burial – "to bring to the graveyard the snake I brought up and lull her asleep in the tomb" (1.1.47-48). The cemetery caretaker tells the nurse it is time to keep her promise to Maria who has not been laid to rest because she had put a curse on the princess.<sup>17</sup> Here in this scene Delvig integrates two fabulous elements of both Russian and European folklore: a hobby lantern and a disinterment. Hobby lanterns, also known in Russian mythology as fen fire, were believed to be ghostly lights seen at night in the forests, swamps and graveyards and attributed to spirits, fairies, ghosts and souls of the drowned, children and people died by violence who were stuck between the worlds. In the stage direction, the introduction of a pale fire which flies around a grave, then stops, bursts into a blaze and lights up a dark human figure (1.1) is probably intended to make the setting of the drama more mystical and atmospheric whereas the raising of the dead nurse directly impacts the complication of the plot.

Unlike Shakespeare, Delvig puts the witches' scene second. It presents the coven on the mountain and starts with what is at first glance a simple and funny song. If in the opening scene Delvig is playing with Shakespearean blank verse by applying unrhymed iambic pentameter to prose and, thus, making the speech of the graveyard caretaker complex and eloquent, like that of Macbeth and other Shakespearean nobles, his witches,

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<sup>16</sup> "There are many things in nature, friend Horatio, / That our thinkers have not dreamt" (1.5.166-167; Vronchenko tr. 1828).

<sup>17</sup> Her curse is eventually leading to a deadly accident—"the enraged horses are now carrying your princess away; the servant fell to the ground and was crushed by the wheel; the coachman, entangled in the reins, was dragged a long time along the stream and drowned, the carriage will break into flinders at the cemetery!" (1.1.51-53)— that is why they must hurry up.

like the Weird Sisters, sing in rhymed couplets. The first half of the song is indeed very cheerful:

The waters flooded  
Into four fords:  
At the first ford  
A wood is blooming,  
A philomel is juggling;  
At the second ford  
The summer is chasing off the spring  
And a cuckoo is groaning. (1.2.1-8)

Such a lyrical description of weather and nature resembles more traditional Russian folk songs or the lullabies of fairies in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* when they are putting Titania asleep: "Philomele, with melody, / Sing in our sweet lullaby" (2.2.13-14). However, in the second half it turns into a fatal prophesy:

At the third ford  
The light-footed horses  
Will flip off the road.  
At the fourth ford  
A beauty is crying  
Marrying the unequal,  
Scenting a disaster. (1.2.9-15)

The third irregular couplet repeats the divinations of the cemetery caretaker, who is also endowed with supernatural powers of foresight and resurrecting the dead—in the play he calls himself *Chyorny Barin* (*Black Master*)—that the princess must soon get into an accident and die: "The light-footed horses / Will flip off the road" (1.2.10-11). The fourth couplet is less clear. On the one hand, it presents a routine situation when, possibly, a young and poor woman is getting married with a rich man and is foreboding tragedy—"A beauty is crying / Marrying the unequal, / Scenting a disaster" (1.2.13-15)—because she will be treated badly by her relatives-in-law and her marriage will not be happy. On the other hand, it serves as a flashback to the story of Maria and her death to make grounds for the plot's complications with Maria avenging herself and her dead-born child in her afterlife.

There has been no exact description of the witches yet. The stage direction presents sketchy information: “The Bald Mountain near Kiev, on the top there is the dead body of Maria, the mountain is crowded by old and young witches, in the middle of the scene the full moon appears. The witches are singing” (1.2). The drama remained unfinished. Delvig was not able to complete even the second scene of the first act which ends up with the greetings of three witches that render the beginning of the third scene of the first act of *Macbeth*: “Where hast thou been, sister?” (1.3.1).<sup>18</sup> However, small details allude to the traditional image of witches. To greet each other they use such vocatives as *kumushka*, a pet form of the word *kuma* (the closest English alternative is “my good woman” if it is used as a mode of address to an elderly woman or “godmother” in case of the proper meaning), *svatia* (this word is ambivalent too; it can be interpreted as “honest broker”, or “match-maker”, or “mother-in-law”) and *sestritsa*, a diminutive of *sestra* (the Russian for “sister”) which makes a sense of kinship that unites women of one vocation. They are used to gathering on the bald mountain at night to do evil. The cemetery caretaker spoke of their ability to manipulate human minds: every night the witches dragged the body rejected by the earth to the Bald mountain and “as soon as the moon awakened the sleepy life in it with a dull light, they nourished the fire of vengeance in it, kindled and cherished it” (1.1.50-51). Delvig portrays them as occult creatures, probably human as witches are normally regarded by the Romantics, endowed with magic power to harm people.

As Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* illustrates the fall of a soul corrupted by sin, the witches’ scene at the start of the play eerily foreshadows the earthly and spiritual fall of Macbeth. The supernatural soliciting given by the Weird Sisters and its subjective interpretation by Macbeth provides the main source of moral challenge for the hero. Shakespeare never used the supernatural for its own sake, only for the aims of the plot. The witches of *Macbeth* are the “most important factor” in the plot and “the motive power of the drama” (Clark 1971: 42). Neither are they merely a theatrical device in Delvig’s play. The combination of Russian folk traditions and Shakespeare’s supernatural benefited in the twofold witches’ song, cheerful in its sound but spooky in its content. As with the witches’ scenes in *Macbeth*, “if the audience were ready to accept the Witches as malevolent creatures with a supernatural power to harm and prophesy, a simple, improvised staging could have uncanny effect” (Brown 2005: 12). On the one hand, the

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<sup>18</sup> First witch: Hello, my good woman! Second witch: Hello, honest broker! Third witch: Where have you come from, sister? First witch: Oh, I’m tired, I’m tired! (1.2.16-19).

chosen format of a folk song makes the scene light and easy to pass. On the other, the witches picture a reality, namely, the action of supernatural evil in the human world.

### *Wilhelm Küchelbecker*

Witchcraft provided Shakespeare with “a rich source of imaginative energy, a collective disturbance upon which he could draw to achieve powerful theatrical effects” (Greenblatt 1994: 29). Shakespeare’s supernatural, in its turn, along with national folklore gave a helping hand to the Russian Romantics. Delvig’s initiative was followed by Wilhelm Küchelbecker, the poet who translated Shakespeare’s plays and assimilated his poetics. During his imprisonment between 1828-1834 for participation in the Decembrist Revolt he read and studied Shakespeare’s drama, which in his diaries is called “the daily bread” (Küchelbecker 1832; qtd. Levin 1963: 286), while the playwright himself “a friend [...] who always sticks around” (286). In the letter to his niece of 29 July 1834 he called Shakespeare “my Willy”, who “is the greatest comedian, just like the greatest tragedian who ever lived, who lives, and (I’m almost ready to say) who should live” (Küchelbecker 1954: 433). In prison, Küchelbecker translated *Macbeth*, *Richard II*, *Henry IV* (the first part and one and a half scenes of the second), *Richard III* and the beginning of *The Merchant of Venice*. None of his translations were published in his life-time despite Delvig’s efforts to publish *Macbeth* in *The Literary Newspaper* in 1830 straight after the publication of Küchelbecker’s critical essay *Thoughts on Macbeth*, possibly written along with the translation of the play in 1828, whose publication was supported by Pushkin and Somov. Yuri Levin suggests that this essay was nothing less than a preface to Küchelbecker’s translation, printed without any changes, in which the poet stated his translation principles (Levin 1961: 191). In this respect, the reason for the strict anonymity of the publication becomes clear: Küchelbecker wrote Delvig that “if his name as the author of the publication was known [...] he would lose a pen and ink, the only joy that remained in his life” (Bartnev 1881: 140). Nevertheless, it was the first original Russian critical essay devoted entirely to *Macbeth*. The poet praised “the beauties” of the play “which everyone [...] must admit despite their prejudices and must feel, though definitely not to the same extent” and compared it to *Hamlet*: “If in *Hamlet* [...] there is more thoughtfulness, in *Macbeth* there is by far more strength, motion and spiritual elevation” and while “in *Hamlet* Shakespeare mostly shows himself as a philosopher, in *Macbeth* he is the first and, possibly, the greatest Romantic poet” (Küchelbecker 1830: 52).

In 1832, Küchelbecker wrote another critical essay *Rassuzhdenie o vosmi istoricheskikh dramakh Shekspira i v osobennosti o Richarde III* (*The Discourse on Shakespeare's Eight Histories and Richard III in Particular*). It was devoted to Shakespeare's history plays and should have served as a Preface to his translation of *Richard III*. The essay comprises the critical analysis of Shakespearean drama, social journalism and political issues. The poet explained his views of both artistic peculiarities of the plays and their content, which he believed was relevant in the political scene of the day (Levin 1963: 288). Shakespeare's historical drama attracted Küchelbecker both as an object of translation and as a creative model. Taking a cue from Shakespeare, Küchelbecker along with Pushkin referred to the darkest historical period in Russia – Time of Troubles (1598-1613), the period of the continuous struggle for power, change of the dynasty, wars and the great famine (1601-1603) that killed one-third of the population. This period was chosen as a setting for Küchelbecker's poetic drama *Padenie doma Shuiskikh* (*The Fall of the House of Shuisky*), written probably in the late 1820s but non-extant, history play *Gregory Otrepiev* which remained as a plan of 1834, and tragedy *Prokofy Lyapunov* written in 1834. In the latter work, Küchelbecker, like Shakespeare and Pushkin, sought to create a historical tragedy based on political conflicts.

He also wanted to translate *King Lear* as well as *The Tempest* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, which he found significant for their supernatural as it was also one of the focal points of his poetry and drama, though finally he did not fulfil his ambitions. However, Shakespeare's supernatural has found its way into Küchelbecker's drama. After the pilot Shakespearean comedy *Shekspirovy dukhi* (*Shakespeare's Spirits*, 1825) in which Küchelbecker alluded for the first time to the playwright's drama, particularly to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, during 1826-1833 he was writing the Romantic drama mystery play *Izhorsky*. "Inspired by Goethe's *Faust*, this mystery, which combines different genres and stylistic features and is neither bound nor limited to any staging conditions, is included in a number of similar writings of world literature including Byron's *Manfred* and *Cain*, *Prometheus Unbound* by Shelley, *Dziady* by Mickiewicz" (Levin 1988: 66). Although Küchelbecker "opposed *Izhorsky* to Shakespeare's drama and intentionally highlighted in the Preface that he did not model his mystery play after Shakespeare and his followers" (Levin 1988: 66), he based his multifaced romantic demonology on Russian folklore and foreign literature, including in it Ariel and Titania, who act similarly to their Shakespearean prototypes. Moreover, he endowed Kikimora, an evil spirit from Russian folk tales who would play the role of Mephistopheles along

with Faust-Izhorsky, with some features of Puck. In the play, Kikimora is described by another spirit as the one who “Wines a drunkard, / Calls a blusterer’s bluff, / Makes spouses fight; / Moving head over heels / He bowls over haughty girls; / He puts horns on the jealous, - / His bliss is noise and thunder” (1.1.53-59). Such a description is analogous to the characterization of Puck by a Fairy: “he / That frights the maidens of the villagery; / Skim milk, and sometimes labour in the quern / And bootless make the breathless housewife churn; / And sometime make the drink to bear no barm; / Mislead night-wanderers, laughing at their harm?” (2.1.34-39). Shakespeare’s Puck keeps up with the traditional beliefs in such spirits who were playfully malicious, yet kindly in their way: they would mislead the traveler in the shape of a false light and enjoy his dismay, yet for a bowl of milk would thresh as much corn in a night as nine men could do in a day; or they would clean up the house for the maids, if plentifully fed with cream, but this rendered superfluous Pucks an expensive luxury” (Robinson 1904: 24). Curiously enough, the Russian Romantics regarded such spirits of national folklore as “domovoy or leshy [...] airy, ignorant, mischievous, like Shakespeare's Puck and Ariel” (Bestuzhev-Marlinsky 1958: II. 601).<sup>19</sup>

Another comedy with “fairy” elements, *Nashla kosa na kamen (Diamond Cut Diamond)*, an adaptation of *The Taming of the Shrew* written in 1831 and anonymously published in 1839), deployed romantic irony in its deliberate mixture of different plot elements and stylistic devices: Shakespeare’s story line, images from Russian folklore, modern cultural and everyday realities (Levin 1988: 68). Then, Küchelbecker returned to the character of Kikimora in the drama *Ivan, kupetsky syn (Ivan, the Merchant’s Son)*, 1832-1842). He appears in the first scene of the second act which resembles the beginning of the same scene in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* when Puck meets a Fairy who tells him about the wanders: “Over hill, over dale, / Thorough bush, thorough brier, / Over park, over pale, / Thorough flood, thorough fire, / I do wander everywhere, / Swifter than the moon’s sphere” (2.1.2-7). Kikimora participates in “a sabbath of spirits” who, like the Fairy Puck met, tell him where they have come from. However, the detailed descriptions of scary and gloomy places—a hot windy southern veld, a dark northern icefield, eastern rocky mountains, a thick forest and cities of endless labor and sufferings—create a spooky atmosphere, more similar to the Three Witches’ story exchange of their mischiefs in

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<sup>19</sup> In Slavic folklore, the *domovoy* are household spirit both protective and naughty who hide things, scare hosts and guests, break the dishes, eat the food left, etc. The *leshy* are deities of forests who are believed to have a propensity to lead travelers astray and abduct children.

*Macbeth*. Remarkably, one of the spirits in the sabbath is Shakespeare's Puck who has arrived from London's theatre to tell the story of how he ruined the tragical atmosphere of *Othello* performance by making Garrick sneeze: "All of a sudden, Othello sneezed; a change, / Which I could not expect of them, / In the pit this sneeze has made! / All hiss and laughter were let loose, / And after laughter whistling broke loose, / And after whistling there were bangs and noise: / The actor stood up shaking like a leaf / With shower of apples he was pelt" (2.1.123-130). In the Russian play, imitating his speech in Shakespeare's comedy, Puck speaks in rhymed couplets. Kikimora who, since *Izhorsky*, remained playful and spiteful, first criticized the tricks of other spirits—they are "indeed, very witty, but / (All would agree) not very funny" (2.1.82-83) while Puck's "tale is wonderful but a little long" (2.1.131)—and then asks for their assistance in his own prank.

In this scene Kikimora also acts as Chorus although there is Chorus of spirits too. Küchelbecker, probably, adopted this theatrical technique from Shakespeare's history plays where Chorus introduces the play to the audience like, for example, in *Henry V*: "for the which supply, / Admit me Chorus to this history; / Who prologue-like your humble patience pray, / Gently to hear, kindly to judge, our play." (1.1.31-34), for the name of the king is mentioned in the message to the audience: "I comprised the whole chorus / But not the tragical one, the chorus of Aeschylus / Or Sophocles but the one that / In his immortal Harry Willy Shakespeare / Has entertained you" (2.1.165-169). In the Russian drama, Kikimora reminds playgoers or readers that they have already got familiar with him in Küchelbecker's earlier play *Izhorsky*: "And by the way my respect to you, gentlemen! / It seems we have already met: / Have you forgotten? We were brought together by / Now deceased Lev Petrovich Izhorsky; / I served him as a fool" (2.1.158-162). Then he highlights his role as a chorus which serves both to entertain the audience and explain the playwright's intentions. As before in *Izhorsky*, Kikimora is going to entertain the audience with a fascinating story, which combines both features of comedy and tragedy, Shakespearean allusions and Russian folklore. He is a Russian Puck who serves the demands of the public for thrilling plot complications. Another allusion to *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is that he makes the Bukhara Princess Andana fall in love with the Russian merchant Ivan. Unlike in Russian folk tales, Ivan is handsome but a coward whose is concerned only with making financial profit. He agrees to take Andana with him to Russia because she has much gold and jewellery. He also pays ransom and frees from imprisonment a bogatyr (a term for an Eastern Slavic hero akin to a Western European knight-errant) Bulat, a famous warrior to guard him during the journey back



home. All this is plotted by Kikimora (he retells the exposition of the first act of the play using iambic blank verse).<sup>20</sup>

When the Prince learns that his daughter left home with a Russian, he rushes to return her but is captured by Bulat, has to give his blessing for her marriage with Ivan and, finally, dies in the fight with a nomad band. Next night when Ivan and Andana are sleeping, Bulat meets his ghost which comes out of the mist. The ghost of the Prince might embody both the spirit of vengeance like Shakespeare's Ghost of Old Hamlet or Julius Caesar and, at the same time, the personification of guilty conscience like the spirits of Richard III's victims or the ghost of Banquo. He appears before Bulat when the warrior remains awake. His "heart beats and trembles" (3.1.9), so he asks himself: "Why is there the cold unknown thrill / In my broad, heroic chest?" (3.1.11-12). The ghost asks a rhetorical question: "Are you righteous and pure in mind if you've played hell with me?" (3.1.20). The Prince accuses the bogatyr of his death (if Bulat had not made him leave his daughter with the merchant but had returned with him and her home, the Prince's army would not have been defeated and the Prince himself would have survived in that battle) and, thus, curses Bulat to turn into a stone if someday he once again pleads innocent. Although the curse echoes traditional warnings of Russian fairy tales, in the course of the play it proves out to be premonitory, like the apparitions' prophecies of in *Macbeth*. When in the end of the forth act Bulat kills Ivan's stepmother-to-be Amfiza who has morphed into a snake to murder her stepson and Andana in their sleep, he has to defend himself by saying that he has used a sword to kill a witch, not intended to hurt the couple, and this turns the bogatyr into a stone. It is of interest that Bulat is not the only character who is haunted by remorse. The princess Andana feels her guilt for the warrior's tragic demise.<sup>21</sup> Like Lady Macbeth who walks in her sleep and "is troubled with thick-coming fancies, / That keep her from her rest" (5.3.38-39) for having a hand in her husband's crimes, Andana lives like a ghost that cannot find peace and, finally, commits suicide stabbing herself and her small child to death.

The last element of Shakespearean supernatural in Küchelbecker's play is the Witches. The exciting abilities of the grotesque characters to vanish in the air, cast spells,

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<sup>20</sup> "Among the Russians with misery and pain / I found a coward (he is the only one; / You won't find any other there). / My coward is handsome, so a Bukhara princess's / Fallen in love with him. Now from Bukhara / To Rus he's coming back; the princess with him / As well as a big-hearted bogatyr Bulat. / I drew them all together: I forced a lion bow to a hare / And I made Philomela date a goose" (2.1.134-140).

<sup>21</sup> "For three long and hard nights / Her glassy eyes have been awake, / She hasn't eaten anything. / Like a shadow she walks / And nowhere can find rest. / She looks ugly, ghastly, pale" (5.4.1-6).

foretell the future, make portions and invoke spirits attracted the attention of the Russian playwright, who referred to Shakespeare and national folklore to create the image of Amfiza. She is a typical evil witch of Russian and European beliefs. The first time she appears in the drama is in the second scene of the third act set in Novegorod, in the house of Ivan's father, a wealthy merchant. Amfiza seems happy because she managed to bewitch the old merchant ("I have allured the merchant", 3.2.1); she will soon get married ("The old buzzard has conceived the idea to marry me", 3.2.2) and will begin a new rich life in her new home ("I'll live happily in his house", 3.2.6), which she is going to inherit as well as all merchant's fortune after his forthcoming death ("It's time, sickly grey beard, to pass away: / It's enough for your lifetime! / But your hour has not yet struck; / To talk about you, my dear / Now, as you can see, is too early" 3.2.17-21). The first obstacle on her way is Ivan—"Now I must only get rid of the bonny lad, / His son and prevent him / From coming back home!" (3.2.3-5)—who she wants to kill by means of her magic powers.

Amfiza carries out a ritual to summon her father, the demon Beelzebub. She is hiding herself in the home chapel so that nobody can disturb her there. She turns holy icons around to face towards the wall ("In the corner the sacred images, / First of all, must be turned around. / Nicolas' eyes are just burning me." 3.2.25-27). Here, Küchelbecker points out that devilry has nothing to do with the Lord and religion. Even an image of a saint is powerful enough to avert her evil charms. Moreover, she needs to put out an icon lamp. Then she draws a circle on the floor, another significant characteristic of black magic and wizardry. The ritualistic making of a portion is an obvious allusion to *Macbeth's* cauldron scene (4.1).<sup>22</sup> In Shakespeare's play, "into the cauldron go some of the most outlandish ingredients imaginable": a sweating toad, eye of newt and toe of frog, a bat's fur, a dog's tongue, a lizard's leg, scales of dragon, a wolf's tooth, dried flesh from a corpse, the contents of a shark's stomach, a goat's gall bladder, a Turk's nose, a Tartar's lips, a Jew's liver, a tiger's guts, the finger of a stillborn baby and a piece of hemlock root—all cooled with the blood of a baboon (Whalen 2012-2013: 66). Küchelbecker adapted *Macbeth's* mysterious operation with a similar burning fire and a bubbling

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<sup>22</sup> "On the stove I will make a fire, / To the fire I will put close a pot, / And in the pot, I will put a dry powder / Made of human bones; / Don't forget, young lady, to add / A gush of your own blood! / The gush from under the left breast / Strain off into a yellow skull of a Jew; / Mash with fly agaric – and pour: / It has flashed, it has lit up! / The fire pops and crackles... / It smells! A magic smell! / Let's begin, / Around / Wave / The knife! / How many? Three times: / Once – / You lose an eye. / Twice – / You die. / The third – a bug... / Bug, bug, bug-plague, / The bug is my aunt, the plague is my godmother!" (3.2.31-72).

cauldron. However, his witch is provided with less varied, but no less impressive ingredients, more typical for national witch lore: a powder made of human bones probably robbed from an unhallowed tomb, fly agaric which is one of the most poisonous mushrooms that grow in Russian forests, blood and a Jew's skull, which gorily coincides with the Jew's liver *Macbeth's* three witches toss into the pot along with a Turk's nose and a Tartar's lips). Like Shakespeare's Witches, she can use nothing Christian. The process of making the evil brew is accompanied by thunderclaps which are intensifying when Amfiza starts dancing to their rhythm making a spell. The monosyllabic couplets ("Nachnyom, / Krugom / Makhnyom / Nozhom! / Skolko? Tri raza: / A raz – / To glaz. / Drugoi – / Uboi. / Trety – zaraza" (3.2.62-70)) turn into the lines "Zaraza, zaraza, zaraza-chuma / Zaraza mne tyotka, chuma mne kuma!" (3.2.71-72), which are rhythmically similar to the charms of Shakespeare's Witches dancing around a steaming cauldron: "Double, double toil and trouble / Fire burn, and cauldron bubble" (4.1.10-11).

However, the purpose of the ritual is different. While in *Macbeth*, the witches make a potion to raise ghosts of the dead who will tell the fortune of Macbeth, Amfiza is conjuring to call for the help of her demonic father. That is why the scene ends with the summoning of the demon<sup>23</sup> and the conversation in which Amfiza asks Beelzebub to make a cart that she will send to take Ivan and his companions to hell instead of home. His agreement to aid in this matter is a canonical Faustian bargain. According to their pact, the demon will make a carriage to drive the merchant to hell instead of his home whereas the witch will dance with him and later will bring her daughter to dance with him at the next coven. Although, as was usually believed, the agreement of a witch and a demon includes sexual intercourse, Küchelbecker softens it down to a mere dance.

There is another witches' scene in the play. In the second scene of the fourth act two witches meet somewhere in the air. The old one is riding a broom while the young one is riding an oven fork. Küchelbecker makes play with two more wide-spread European beliefs, namely, that witches can fly or, like Shakespeare's Weird Sisters, "hover through the fog and filthy air" (1.1.13) normally by means of brooms or other household utensils; and that they are of different ages, not only old hags but also young beauties, although they address each other with the vocative *kuma* (*kumushka*), which is more often used as a mode to address an elderly woman. However, in the case of witches,

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<sup>23</sup> "A steam arose: / By the power of words / By the power of spells / I made a potion... / My feast is ready; / My call is strong: / It reached, / Oh, Beelzebub! / Your dark home. / To your servant / With your horned forehead / Make the way; / In the smoke, in the fire / Show yourself to me!" (3.2.74-87).

it probably symbolizes close relationships or membership of some sort of sodality. In contrast to *Macbeth*, they begin by asking one another about their destinations. The first says, “Hello! Hello! Where are you going, my good lady?” while the second answers, “Ah, my good woman! I don’t know myself” (4.2.1-2). The story told by the witches in both Shakespeare’s and Küchelbecker’s plays are revenge narratives, at first glance, very comical. In *Ivan, the Merchant Son*, the witches regard the case both as “funny and tragic”, though, because they are evil, what they find laughable is in fact dreadful. The young one called forth demons to torture a man to death for only having pretended he had love affairs with her. A much more regrettable thing for her is that her father heard the story told by that man and locked her up at home, so she had to escape by flying away.<sup>24</sup> Unlike Shakespeare’s Weird Sisters who speak in rhyming couples, Küchelbecker’s alternate couplets with four-line stanzas which are more typical of Russian Romantic poetry. The tale of the witch is both amazing and poetical. She broods over the “fun” or, in other words, the pleasure of being a witch: it makes her able to fly in the sky, dance under the stars, and “get drunk” on the freedom flight affords (4.2.13-16).

As for the old witch, she is returning home to her cottage nearby from a coven.<sup>25</sup> The coven seems to be essential (and it is essential in relation to the plot, for it offers a hint about the play’s climax) because the evil forces were summoned there to debate an urgent issue of Amfiza’s fate. This witch says that Amfiza is going to “conjure without the help of the spirit”, in other words, she wants to perform magic without recourse to the powers of hell because her father’s support has not helped her to kill her stepson-to-be. However, it is physically impossible for a witch to undo the treaty with the Devil. Moreover, everything a witch does immediately comes to his notice and if she tries to cheat, she will be sentenced to death. However, just as Macbeth is convinced of his invincibility by his misinterpretation of the prophecies of the apparitions, Amfiza does not fear the demon. At the same time, here Küchelbecker applies Shakespeare’s method of dramatic irony: the characters, not the audience of both plays, are deceived. Previously,

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<sup>24</sup> Second witch: I, maiden, was once made boast of / By a hungover young man at the merry meeting. / For this, my father shut me in the tiny cell: / That tiny cell was so unpleasant... / But there is not much fun in being a witch; / To fly in the open air, / To prowl and dance under the star, / To catch fickle delight on the fly, / To get drunk with one spare minute... First witch: This is, my good woman, because you are young! / You had no choice but to summon the host of hell / And torture that boaster to death. / To be a gentle witch is funny and tragic... Second witch: I can’t but agree (4.2.3-16).

<sup>25</sup> Second witch: And where are you rushing to? First witch: I’m flying back to my cottage around the corner. Second witch: From where? First witch: From the coven of the leshies and bogeys; / There were quite a lot of witches and demons there... / We discussed a very important matter... / It was resolved unanimously. (4.2.16-22).

Beelzebub gives the first clue after dancing with his daughter by sending Kikimora, who remained invisible, to warn Ivan and his companions. This is probably an allusion to *The Tempest* when Ariel sings in the ear of Gonzalo to wake Alonso and, thus, foils Sebastian's plot – Kikimora takes the form of a bird and sings to Bulat about Amfiza's plan. Beelzebub says, "It will please me a hundred times more / If brave Bulat dies / Than to scatter the misery ashes / Of all Ivans of the universe" (3.2.231-234). The conversation of the witches clarifies the fortune of Amfiza.<sup>26</sup> The only thing which remains ambiguous after the scene is how she will finally die.

In the Preface to the play, Küchelbecker pointed out that his idea to create a tangled tale (or "*Imbroglia*") would hardly be appreciated by critics, whom he dubbed ironically "the honorable class who have evaluated so fairly, shrewdly and thoughtfully Grigoyedov's *Woe from Wit*, Pushkin's *Poltava* and Veltman's *Heart and Head*" because "it is too inconsistent", "there is no classical unity", for "you cannot expect [...] harmony" from the combination of "satire and elegy, tale and drama, comedy and tragedy, lyrical poetry and fairy tale, ideal and grotesque, laughter and horror, enthusiasm and prose of existence" and, thus, "it looks like jugglery" (1967: I. 560). Nevertheless, such a juxtaposition of mixed genres (Küchelbecker himself names the play a fairy tale drama), folk beliefs and Shakespearean poetics, on the one hand embodies the ideas of Russian Romanticism and, on the other, adumbrates their later reinterpretation by the realists. Despite all the supernatural elements, at the end of the drama there remains only greedy penny-wise Ivan, a travesty of the famous Russian character of fable, who sells the statue of Bulat to a foreigner and is going to marry an ugly daughter of another merchant for her huge marriage dowry. The character of Ivan adds up to the formation of the new literary type of soulless "new" men which came into Russian literary fashion along with the concept of "the superfluous men", another by-product of Nicholas' I tough regime (the term which was used for alienated heroes of Russian fiction starting with Pushkin's *Onegin* (*Eugene Onegin*, 1833) and Lermontov's Pechorin (*A Hero of Our Time*, 1840), young people who do not fit into social norms). Küchelbecker has brought into Russian literature "the suffering egoist", further transformed from a mean soulless merchant to a cold-blooded killer in the novel *The Last Colonna* (1843), debunking his pride,

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<sup>26</sup> Second witch: Could I dare ask you, aunty, / What that very important matter was? First witch: The matter was that with the power of magic / Amfiza decided to conjure without the help of the spirit; / An evil crone is angry at the demon / Because her attacks don't succeed... / Thus, for his and our fun / The devil will help her, / Satan will please her one more time; / And then she will bloodily die (4.2.23-32).

selfishness, cowardice, cruelty, neglect of spiritual values and morality. Originated from Shakespeare's Macbeth as well as his other soulless villains, such as Richard III and Edmund,<sup>27</sup> this literary type was developed in the characters of the 1840-50s positivist naturalists and later in the 1860-70s nihilists of Russian realist fiction. Thus, the supernatural in the play not only determines the development of the plot but also helps the playwright reveal insights into the type of "the soulless egoist" in a universal way.

### *Alexander Griboyedov*

Another interpretation of the Weird Sisters was provided by Alexander Griboyedov, who interfused Shakespeare's superhuman with Georgian folk beliefs. Griboyedov was working on the tragedy *Gruzinskaya Noch (The Georgian Night)* during his stay in Georgia from September 1826 to May 1827, though it was first published only in 1859 in *Russkoe slovo (The Russian Word, No. 5)*, thirty years after Griboyedov's death. In the letter of December 9, 1826 to his friend S.N. Begichev, he admitted: "I'm toying with some writing" (Griboyedov 1959: 585). When he arrived in St. Petersburg on the 14<sup>th</sup> of March 1828, Griboyedov brought the play with him and read it to his friends there, as Fyodor Bulgarin recounted to Nikolai Yazykov in April 1828: "Griboyedov has written a tragedy which has never existed before under the sun – *The Georgian Night*" (Petukhov 1913: 354). The plot of the tragedy is also known thanks to Bulgarin, who rendered the story as a romantic thriller with an oriental setting and the use of supernatural forces as its driving motive.<sup>28</sup> According to Bulgarin's memoir, Griboyedov wrote only the plan of

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<sup>27</sup> *Macbeth, King Lear* and Shakespeare's history plays, which Küchelbecker translated, influenced the writer's late fiction. *Ivan the Merchant's Son* was finished in 1842 when realist tendencies were already apparent in Küchelbecker's creative work.

<sup>28</sup> Bulgarin described the history of the play's composition: "During his military and diplomatic service Griboyedov, at leisure, flew away in his thoughts to the world of fantasy. During his last stay in Georgia, he composed a plan of a Romantic tragedy and several scenes in free verse with rhyme. He called the tragedy *The Georgian Night*; he drew its subject from the folk tales as well as the character and customs of the Georgians"; and presented as many details of its content as he remembered: "Here is the plot: one Georgian Prince gave another Prince as a ransom for his favourite horse an adolescent boy, his slave. This was an ordinary affair, and therefore the Prince did not think of the consequences. Suddenly the boy's mother, the former nurse of the Prince and the nurse of his daughter, appears; reproaches him for an inhuman act, recalls her service, and demands either the return of her son or permission to be a slave of another master, and threatens him with the vengeance of hell. The Prince is angry at first, then promises to buy back the son of his nurse, and, lastly, by a princely custom, — forgets his promise. But the mother remembers that her offspring is torn from her heart, and, like an Asian woman, plans a cruel revenge. She goes into the forest, calls Dels [Als], evil spirits of Georgia, and makes a hellish alliance to kill the kind of her master. A Russian officer appears in the house, a mysterious being in his feelings and way of thinking. The nurse forces Dels [Als] to infuse love to the officer into the heart of her pupil, the daughter of the Prince. She leaves her parents' house with her lover. The Prince longs for vengeance, seeks lovers and finds them on the top of St. David mountain. He takes a gun, aims at the officer but Dels [Als] carry a bullet in his daughter's heart. The vengeance of the embittered nurse has not yet been accomplished! She demands

the tragedy and several scenes (the first of two extant fragments of the play is the beginning of the first act which Griboyedov read to Bulgarin and others). However, S. N. Begichev, to whom Griboyedov also read some scenes from *The Georgian Night* in middle of June 1828, dwells on the tragedy as a finished work.<sup>29</sup> There is also the evidence of D. G. Eristavi (in his Preface to the Tiflis edition of *Woe from Wit*, 1879) that Griboyedov ended his tragedy.<sup>30</sup> Unfortunately, this tragedy has not survived in its entirety and we can judge this work only by fragments and by Bulgarin's retelling of the plot.

The two surviving scenes contain a dialogue between a nurse and a Prince and her appeal to the spirits of vengeance, or *Als*. *Als* is the name of a class of demons universally encountered in the folklore of the Caucasus, Iran, Central Asia and in the southern parts of Russia. They belong to the category of evil beings whose main function is to prevent the normal course of demographic growth. In other words, the sphere of their demonic activities includes childbirth and reproduction of the human race (Asatrian 2001: 149). The Central Asian *als* are usually depicted as ugly hairy crones with sagging breasts who carry a woollen bag on one shoulder with a heart or a liver of their victims inside (Murodov 1979: 56-69; Toropov 1981: 145-154). In Caucasian folklore an *al* can be involuntarily made a slave of the lucky one who cuts off her hair when she is combing it on a deserted bank of a river. Griboyedov follows this legend to endow his protagonist with the power to control the spirits: "The secret sign – / These five hairs – / Was taken from you / By your sly, brave enemy, my sibling / When he was wondering / At the mossy tops of the remote cliffs" (1.2.13-18). In the rough drafts of the drama, *als* prove the

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a gun to strike the Prince — and kills her son. The cruel Prince is punished by heaven for his contempt for the parental feelings and learns the cost of losing the offspring. The wicked nurse is punished for defiling a noble sentiment with vengeance. They die in despair. The tragedy, based, as it was said above, on the Georgian folk tale, if it had been finished the way it was started, would become a jewel not only of Russian but also of all European literature. Griboyedov recited some passages to us and the coldest people were touched by complaints of a mother demanding her master to return her son. This tragedy died with its author!" (Bulgarin 1830: 28-30).

<sup>29</sup> "On the way to his destination, Griboyedov stayed with me for three days. In our conversations, incidentally, I asked him if he had written a new comedy or if he had a new plan yet. 'I told you at our last meeting,' he answered, 'that I would write no more comedies; my gaiety is gone, and without gaiety there is no good comedy. But I have written a tragedy.' And he immediately told the contents and recited the scenes he had read in Petersburg... But despite my requests he did not agree to read the entire tragedy. 'I am still passionate about it now' he said, 'and I promised myself not to read it for five years, and then, when I become more indifferent, I will read it as someone else's work, and if I am satisfied, I will publish it'" (Piksanov 1929: 14).

<sup>30</sup> "It is known that an autograph of *Woe from Wit* by Griboyedov was kept by Prince Alexander Tsereteli. Famous Georgian poet Akaki Tsereteli Rostopovich told us that he himself had seen the manuscript at Prince Alexander Tsereteli's home, together with the finished poem *The Georgian Night*" (Fomichev 2007: 163).

existence of such a magic power themselves: “You are here! But you, the spawn of ash, / Where did you steal the hairs? / They are our power and soul, / Give them back... / And die of terror.” (1.2.36-40). Also, Griboyedov has left the alternative with two additional lines for “I am losing nerve, my tongue is chained! / The earth, don’t split apart under my foot” (1.2.41-42), when the heroine displays her fear of the spirits: “Ah, here they are! My tongue is chained! / But I won’t die of fright. / Here are your hairs... this is your fateful justice: / The one who has them you will serve” (1.2.41-44).

However, Griboyedov’s *als* are not simply the evil spirits of Asian folklore, even though they do share several traditional features. Their nature seems to be more complicated, like that of the Weird Sisters. Griboyedov was known to praise Shakespeare’s ability to elaborate simple subjects and plots, particularly the playwright’s presentation of the supernatural elements in *Macbeth*, which he helped Piotr Korsakov to translate (Fomichev 2007: 381), and *The Tempest*, which he called “the outstanding beauties” (qtd. Polevoy 1980: 170). *The Georgian Night* is “a romantic tragedy in Shakespeare’s manner” (Zakharov and Lukov 2011: 93). Griboyedov imitated Shakespeare’s blank verse (sometimes combining it with rhyme) by using mostly iambic pentameter in his drama. Both the Prince (“No sam ya razve rad tvoey pechali? / Vini sebia i starost let svoikh”, 1.1.1-2) and the nurse (“Rugatsya starostiu – to v liutykh vashikh nravakh. / Stara ya, da, - no ne ot let odnikh!” 1.1.4-5) speak this way. The second scene of the first act begins with the nurse’s soliloquy which, in its turn, starts with the denouncement of human beings: “Oh, humans! Who gave the name of human to the spawns of hell, / Whom from uterine blood / The doom has given birth / To make the wreck, the bane of their kind!” (1.2.1-4). The allegorical metaphors (“the spawns of hell”, “born by the doom”, “the wreck/bane of their kind”) both reveal the evil nature of the mankind and take up the theme of fate that directs people’s lives. Griboyedov portrays a common belief that evil is a reality which exists inwardly within human beings and personifies outwardly in specific spiritual beings. The way the nurse summons the *als* resembles how Shakespeare’s Joan of Arc pleads for help of the fiends when France is losing the battle in *Henry VI Part I* (“Now help, ye charming spells and periapts; / And ye choice spirits that admonish me / And give me signs of future accidents”, 5.3.2-4). Both women are full of despair, for the spirits do not respond. The nurse calls for them to fly from any deadly and gruesome place they could be: from “where on a dark night ghosts come”, “snowy mountains”, “wild holes”, “masses of decay and destruction”, “sleepy muddy ripples”, “those multi-grave deserts where worms are feasting the remains



of the righteous and the malicious” (1.2.23-31). However, unlike the familiar spirits of Joan of Arc, the *als* do not appear immediately (they need time to arrive from their various distant locations), which makes the Nurse fear that they will not obey and “will not answer my salute” (1.2.32-33).

Moreover, the *als* in *The Georgian Night* are supernatural creatures who have power over nature and assist the wicked to commit crimes.<sup>31</sup> The way they control the weather as they bring with them “wind, whiff and howl” alludes to the common European belief that witches could control natural forces, which is also reflected in the Weird Sisters’ ability to control winds (“I’ll give thee a wind”, 1.3.13), wish on illnesses (“Sleep shall neither night nor day / Hang upon his pent-house lid”, 1.3.19-20) and send down calamities (“Here I have a pilot’s thumb, / Wreck’d as homeward he did come”, 1.3.28-29). Griboyedov provides the Christian interpretation of the fiends. They are diabolic by nature as the sign of the cross is a reliable protection from them: “I defended myself from you with the sign of the cross, / I was a happy mother that time, / But now I am left alone in the grief!” (1.2.19-21).<sup>32</sup> A deal with the spirits like a pact with the Devil signifies the fall of a person whose soul will get to hell after his/her death. That is why the nurse asks herself a question: “Are sufferings of this and that lives equal?” (1.2.22) wondering what is in store for her in her afterlife.

Nevertheless, the *als* retain the ambiguity of the Weird Sisters who can be treated as both the women pledged their loyalty to evil or to evil spirits or as tangible embodiment of these spirits. Their appearance in the play resembles a conflation of the first and third scenes of the first act of *Macbeth* in which “uniquely among Shakespeare’s tragedies, and probably shockingly,” the action begins with the noise of thunder and a lighting effect introducing to the audience three unusual figures who come together to speak in unison, “using an alliterative, rhyming, metrically irregular couplet of emphatic and yet mysterious import” (Brown 2005: 11). They prophesy: “Fair is foul and foul as fair”, then “hover through the fog and filthy air” (1.1.11-12). Griboyedov learns Shakespeare’s lesson of dramatization. His *als* are flying in the fog at the foot of the hill (they use the mist to hide themselves, as do the Witches before Macbeth and Banquo appear in 1.3) and show up in the thunderstorm when “clouds are running in the sky / And the wind is

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<sup>31</sup> “But there are higher forces! Get the hell off fairness and fear! / Night wonders! Ali! Ali! / Show me your affection, / Which you always showed / To those who betrayed the faith and law, / On the inside sinful and helpless, / Light my way with the tomb fire, / Bring the wind, whiff and howl, / Squads of Ali!” (1.2.5-13).

<sup>32</sup> These lines have the alternative too, though the means of protection remains unchanged: “I defended myself from you with the sign of the cross, / I was kind that time, I had a son” (1.2.19-20).

howling” (1.2.34-35). The spirits first come into the spotlight speaking the rhymed quatrain:

In the evening steams, before the  
Rise of the joyless, maiden moon,  
We march out round dancing  
From the boundless abyss doom. (1.2.36-39)

The place where they come from is literally “the deep which cannot be overlooked”, an evocative name for a habitat located beyond human vision and understanding. Although the nurse is trying to hide herself behind the rock, the *als* say that they can see everything in the dark.<sup>33</sup> At first, their words also serve as a warning to the protagonist in their metaphorical playing on the well-known saying, “revenge is a dish best served cold”, which in the context of the play highlights the idea that everybody will get their just desserts and the one with evil intentions will be punished afterwards. Then they proceed to riddle: “The unexplainable will happen: / Then a mother will find her son / And the fellow will lose the fellow” (1.2.53-55).

From Bulgarin’s written account of the play’s plot, we know that in the end both the Prince will shoot down his daughter and the nurse will kill her son by a mistake that can be regarded as fate’s punishment for the evil, or the *als*’ mischief, or both. There is no actual proof of how the nurse treats the prophecy, whether she misinterprets it like Macbeth or simply ignores it, for the tragedy remained incomplete. The scene ends with the *als*’ discussion, which resembles the beginning of *Macbeth*’s third scene of the first act when the Three Sisters take their time to exchange accounts of their doings. The *als* ask all together: “Where are we *als* going? This night / Peace is getting off the eyes” (1.2.56-57). After that, one by one, they start talking about their plans and destinations.<sup>34</sup> Their conversation takes the form of questions and answers in a cyclical pattern of quatrains with rhymed alternate lines. Just as Shakespeare contrasted the Witches’ manner of speaking to that of the other characters, Griboyedov opposed the simple and straightforward speech of the *als* to the iambic blank verse of the main characters. The

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<sup>33</sup> “The gloomy deep hides / Affronts of the irreconcilable / Which are fruiting in the silence / Until the day of the resolute revenge; / But the one whose plot is not concealed / Like the dark abode of the coffins / Will never quench the feud, / A restless avenger” (1.2.42-49).

<sup>34</sup> One of the *als*: I’m rushing to rescue a lying-in / To strangle the sin at its birth. Others: We are going abroad / Where bloodsuckers are feasting. / The last / Where is a castle... I will sit down / On the deathbed of a patricide (1.2.58-63).

*als*' plans throw into relief their ambivalent nature one more time. Although the first will perform a traditional role of the evil spirits, who are believed to harm expectant mothers, others are going abroad to visit "the banquet of bloodsuckers" and "the deathbed of a patricide". Similarly to *Macbeth*, whose Porter's words are often regarded by critics in connection with the Gunpowder Plot which intended to blow up the king in the Parliament in 1605, while the Witches' revenge on the sailor's wife is connected with one of the voyages set out for the Far East in which the Tiger's Whelp ship survived a storm (Braunmuller, ed. 1997: 5; Cerezo Moreno 2005: 307-308), these fabulous narratives might be covert reminiscences of particular historical events such as the bloody reign of Nicolas I or the Russo-Persian War of 1826–1828 between the Russian Empire and Iran. However, it is hard to identify if the playwright meant anything particular by these images or they are just exciting stories to entertain. What is certain is that the *als* "serve as concrete evidence of the existence of evil and how it may influence humanity to pursue evil (as the witches influence Macbeth)" (Curry 1977: 32). Unlike other Russian romantics, Griboyedov was able to single out the ambivalence of the Weird Sisters and incorporate it in the spirits in his play. Although *The Georgian Night* remained unfinished, it is obvious that amusing spirits observed the protagonist's evil inclinations and responded to her request, while cuing the audience to hold her responsible. Following Shakespeare, whose ambivalence about the Weird Sisters and the phenomena related to them "preserves awe and mystery" and, at the same time, "expresses our general assurance of the existence of a thing that we may sense to loom above us but whose economy we have no means really to know" (West 1968: 79), the Russian playwright showed us evil with unparalleled objectivity and filled it with dramatic meaning.

The assimilation of Shakespeare's Weird Sisters in Russian drama was determined by the dawn of Romanticism in 1820-30s. Like Shakespeare, who wrote *Macbeth* at the beginning of the seventeenth century when interest in witchcraft teetered on the edge of hysteria and the activity itself was made a capital offence, the Russian romantics searched for inspiration in popular foreign literature, national folklore and contemporary belief and practice. Shakespeare's *Macbeth* was a breath of fresh air for those playwrights who strived to create a national drama based on ancient Russian beliefs. The purpose of introducing witches into the plot was mostly entertainment, for they knew that readers and playgoers would be captivated by the mystery of these both horrific and fascinating beings. As we have seen, the comparison of the plays reveals almost no direct intertextual

references, and there is no consistent reinterpretation of Shakespeare's tragedy. *Macbeth* taught the Russian playwrights how to dramatize the supernatural. Russian stage witches, like Shakespeare's, endowed with an ability to control natural phenomena, made their entrances in thunder and flashing lights, worked magic while flying in the air and brewed potions in cauldrons bubbling with some of the most outlandish ingredients imaginable to summon devils and raise the dead; and then, they shared their experience in brief discussions of their horrid deeds and horrifying plans. Their stereotypical portrayal as ugly hags, sometimes accompanied by young beauties, who gathered at covens on bald mountains left the audience in no doubt about their connection with the forces of evil. The language of witches also revealed their mysterious and other-worldly nature. They spoke in verse, mostly in rhyming couplets or quatrains, in contrast to the iambic blank verse of other characters. The use of a shorter metre toned up their speech and highlighted their power to impact the lives of human beings. In general, the Russian witches in no way rank with the Weird Sisters in terms of ambiguity of the Weird Sisters, with the exception of Griboyedov, who adapted their ability to foresee/shape the future to some traditional characteristics of Georgian spirits of vengeance. Nevertheless, enriched with national folk features, they revealed themselves as both core constituents of the plays' fabulous reality and the driving force of the complications.

### **3.F. BANQUO'S GHOST IN RUSSIAN ROMANTIC PROSE WRITINGS**

#### *Banquo's and other ghosts*

Shakespeare's "fairy writing" or dramatic presentation of the supernatural has often been regarded as one of his greatest achievements in which he "incomparably excelled all others" and "most powerfully displayed his peculiar talents" (Abrams 1971: 275). This view, first formulated in the eighteenth century, found numerous followers in the nineteenth century among the Russian romantics. On the one hand, what critics find most remarkable is "how Shakespeare gave his supernatural agents all the vitality and discreteness of his most lifelike characters" (Faas 1986: 151). On the other, the essential ambiguity of Shakespeare's dramatization motivates a double attitude towards the unearthly. Even when the dramatist's fairies, ghosts and witches appear at their most genuine, they may in some cases still be suspected of being mere fantasies of the human characters. Naturally, Shakespeare was neither the only nor the first playwright who made

apparitions act in his drama. However, their diversity and the way the ghosts affected the other heroes of the plays and playgoers find no parallel elsewhere in Elizabethan and Jacobean drama as both unique and brand new. “What there is again and again in Shakespeare, far more than in any of his contemporaries, is a sense that ghosts, real or imagined, are good theater” (Greenblatt 2002: 200). As is generally known, Elizabethan theatre was hugely influenced by the plays of Seneca whose ghosts were “dramatic, vengeful interventionists in human affairs” (Davies 2007: 217). In the hands of Shakespeare, Seneca’s ghosts received substantive modification. The apparitions were no more a mere voice of vengeance but a character “with a new dignity and endowed [...] with a new purpose” (Moorman 1906: 95).

Shakespeare’s references to ghost-lore can already be found in his early plays like *Henry VI* or *Romeo and Juliet*, whose ill-fated heroine hallucinates about her cousin’s vengeful “ghost / Seeking out Romeo, that did spit his body / Upon a rapier’s point” (4.3.55-57). The ghosts in *Richard III*, the victims of Gloucester’s crimes, are “something more than Senecan spirits of vengeance”: they are designed “as the instruments of that primeval, amorphous power of Nemesis which will not let the criminal triumph in his wickedness, but demands an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth” (Moorman 1906: 193). Richard’s victims are the first apparitions Shakespeare created for performance on stage as each of them are the symbolic reminder of his murderous deeds and foreshadow the killer’s own death, which confronts him in his sleep on the eve of Bosworth Field and orders him to “Despair and die” (5.3.126). Although on waking, Richard himself considers them a nightmare caused by his troubled mind (“I did but dream. / O coward conscience, how dost thou afflict me!” 5.3.178-79), they also come to the sleeping Richmond, telling him to “Live and flourish” (5.3.131), thereby developing the idea of nemesis. The plots of the other histories and comedies evade any direct appearance of ghosts, which are mentioned only occasionally. Disheartened, Richard II ponders the unenviable fate of kings: “How some have been deposed, some slain in war, / Some haunted by the ghosts they have deposed; / Some poison’d by their wives: some sleeping kill’d; / All murder’d” (3.2.1567-1570); in *Henry IV Part 2*, Lady Percy rebukes Northumberland’s neglect of Hotspur at Shrewsbury: “Never, O never, do his ghost the wrong / To hold your honour more precise and nice / With others than with him!” (2.3.1193-1195). Only in Shakespeare’s tragedies do ghosts evolve further in characterisation and function.

Julius Caesar's ghost comes to Brutus on the eve of the battle. The murderer remains sleepless, while his servants are asleep, thus, allowing to regard him as the hallucination of the restless mind. Though the "monstrous apparition" (4.3.277) is an obvious allusion to Plutarch's *Life of Brutus* where, as in *Julius Caesar*, it tells the leading character that he is "thy evil spirit" who he will see again "at Philippi" (4.3.282,284), Shakespeare specified in the stage direction that this is 'the Ghost of Caesar', Brutus's victim. This suggests a new interpretation of the apparition which is not merely a spirit of revenge but the personification of the hero's sense of failure and the inevitability of his imminent defeat. Brutus himself doubts the authenticity of the ghost, first, asking it of its nature: "art thou any thing? / Art thou some god, some angel, or some devil, / That mak'st my blood cold and my hair to stare? (4.3.278-280), and then, when it exits, waking up his servants: "Didst thou see any thing?", "Saw you any thing?" (297, 305). He feels haunted by his victim as the battle thickens around him: "O Julius Caesar, thou art mighty yet! / Thy spirit walks abroad and turns our swords / In our own proper entrails" (5.3.96-98) and believes that the reappearance of the ghost is the sign of his inescapable fate: "The ghost of Caesar hath appear'd to me/ Two several times by night, at Sardis once, / And this last night here in Philippi fields: / I know my hour is come" (5.5.17-20).

The nature of the Ghost in *Hamlet* is even more ambivalent. Here "we find the very uncertainties of Shakespeare's contemporaries about the nature of ghosts turned into drama" (Mullan 2016) as the spirit is no longer visible only to the protagonist of the play but to four separate witnesses. The ambivalence of the spirit reflects all the current beliefs in ghost in Elizabethan England. On the one hand, it can be considered a real ghost since Horatio, Marcellus and Bernardo see it and, like a typical spirit, at the sound of "the morning cock [...] it shrunk in haste away, / And vanish'd from our sight" (1.2.218-220). Hamlet expresses a Christian belief that the apparition may be a demon or less likely an angel when he tells about it: "If it assume my noble father's person, / I'll speak to it, though hell itself should gape / And bid me hold my peace" (1.2.242-244) and later when he sees it himself: "Be thou a spirit of health or goblin damn'd, / Bring with thee airs from heaven or blasts from hell, / Be thy intents wicked or charitable" (1.4.40-42). However, further on, he starts questioning its veracity as if it is not a devil itself ("The spirit that I have seen / May be the devil: and the devil hath power / To assume a pleasing shape", 2.2.572-574), but the result of his diabolically instigated melancholy ("yea, and perhaps / Out of my weakness and my melancholy, / As he is very potent with such spirits, / Abuses me to damn me", 2.2.574-577). In the Queen's closet scene, Gertrude, who unlike

her son cannot see the Ghost, also points at Hamlet's melancholic distemper: "Alas, he's mad!" (3.4.101), "This the very coinage of your brain: / This bodiless creation ecstasy / Is very cunning in" 134-136). To some extent, this refers back to Horatio's initial skepticism when he regards the apparition as a "fantasy" or "illusion" (1.1) and other popular belief that visions are the results of melancholy as "the ideas of ghosts [...] import calamity and distress and [...] overwhelm with horror" the melancholic mind (Burton 1626: 74). Thus, the feeling of ambivalence persists throughout the play. What seems real at first, can be regarded as hallucination or vice versa, neither possibility cancelling out the other.

Macbeth hallucinates Banquo's ghost<sup>35</sup> at the feast after the murderers have told him that Banquo is dead but that his son escaped Macbeth's plot to become king. It appears twice—both times precisely at the moment when Macbeth mentions Banquo—highlighting that the vision of his victim is subjected to Macbeth's thinking about him. Banquo's ghost, unlike that of King Hamlet, is visible only to the protagonist. This ghost is required in the tragedy due to the peculiar character of its viewer's mind. From the very beginning of the play its audience and readers grow familiar with the susceptibility of Macbeth "heated imagination" (Reed and Jones, eds. 1812: 2) to visual and auditory hallucinations such as the air-drawn dagger and the voice crying "Sleep no more, Macbeth doth murder sleep" (2.2.35-36). The apparition, therefore, seems more like a figment of the character's diseased imagination than a "true" ghost despite the Elizabethan belief in the real existence of the supernatural and the classical concept of ghosts as spirits of the dead who come back to the world of the living to do something missed in life, mostly to avenge or haunt a person guilty of their death.

Just as the apparitions of Richard III's victims are the fabrications of his awakened conscience and Julius Caesar's spirit is the personification of Brutus's sense of the horrible mistake made by slaying Caesar, the ghost of Banquo is "the projection of Macbeth's paranoid fear and insecurity" (Sadowski 2010: 160), as Lady Macbeth realises: "This is the very painting of your fear: / This is the air-drawn dagger which, you said, / Led you to Duncan" (3.4.61-63) as he lives in constant horror of losing his power. Banquo's ghost can be considered a representation of Macbeth's conscience or guilt because it "is there to taunt" him (Gewirtz 1964: 55). The presence of the blood upon his face "could be entirely in Macbeth's guilty imagination and another sign of his haunted

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<sup>35</sup> According to some critics, it could be equally the ghost of Duncan or even two ghosts, one a-piece for each of Macbeth's murder victims, for the ghost appears twice (Furness, ed. 1873: 169-171).

conscience” (Brown 2005: 52). Like Brutus, Macbeth fails in his scheme due to his nature that originally has forbidden murder and his agonized conscience that determines his fall and “the sleepless agony of spiritual division finds rest and unity in the vaster sleep of death” (Knight 2005: 15-16). The murder of Duncan, the first murder, is a violation of Macbeth’s “conscience, in the old double sense of ‘consciousness’ as well as ‘knowledge of right and wrong’” and his encounter with Banquo’s ghost could show that his conscience surfaces again (Calderwood 2010: 22). In other words, Macbeth’s emotions are the struggles of conscience, just as his agonies are the agonies of remorse, for, as Elizabeth Montagu admitted, “they are lessons of justice, and warnings to innocence” (Montagu 1770: 160).

On the other hand, the ghost can be regarded not as the projection of Macbeth’s guilt but “a nightmare activated by ambition and fear” (Brown 2001: 288) or “a delusion brought about by his initiate fear” to taunt Macbeth with disappointment of his hopes for the future, for “the ghost causes Macbeth neither to repent nor to regret his crimes” (Held 2014). Although modern scholars doubt the primary role of ambition in Macbeth’s reasonings and deeds, it should not be forgotten that in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, ambition was widely blamed to be the root of the hero’s evil. William Richardson wrote that it was “ambition grown habitual and inveterate in the soul of Macbeth” which troubled his mind with the idea of assassinations and his imagination with visions (1774: 74). Samuel Taylor Coleridge spoke of Macbeth’s ambition as hope, “the master element of a commanding genius” which meets with an active intellect and imagination of such a degree of vividness that “disquiets and impels the soul to try to realize its images” (1987: I. 137). To his mind, Macbeth “becomes unwittingly a prey” to such images of ambition (Donohue 1970: 308). William Hazlitt also spotted Macbeth’s subordination to ambition, for his “blindly rushing forward on the objects of his ambition [...] or his recoiling from them, equally betrays the harassed state of his feelings” (qtd. Bloom, ed. 2008: 85). Thus, ambition, in its inherent opposition to heredity and the established order, became “the enemy of all life, especially that of the ambitious man himself” (Watson 2005: 75).

However, Banquo’s ghost is interpreted, there is no doubt that it and the other apparitions take possession of Macbeth’s mind. The appearance of Banquo’s ghost not only intensifies the dramatic tension – the protagonist cannot stay calm and almost lets his guilt come to light – but also indicates the downturn of Macbeth’s power and foreshows the vanity of his rule as the ghost takes Macbeth’s seat at the head of the table



like his descendants will ascend Macbeth's throne. Like the ghosts of the previous plays, it can be regarded as a powerful instrument of nemesis used to bring about the murderer's ruin. Hegel supposed that Banquo's ghost symbolizes the law that strikes back and exacts retribution. According to Hegel, the illusion of trespass, its belief that it destroys the other's life and is enlarged thereby, is dissipated by the fact that the disembodied spirit of the injured life comes on the scene against the trespass, just as Banquo who came as a friend to Macbeth was not blotted out when he was murdered, but immediately thereafter took his seat, not as a guest at the feast, but as an evil spirit. The trespasser intended to have done with another's life, but he has only destroyed his own, for life is not different from life, since life dwells in the single Godhead. In his arrogance he has destroyed indeed, but only the friendliness of life; he has perverted life into an enemy. It is the deed itself which has created a law whose domination now comes on the scene; this law is the unification in the concept, of the equality between the injured, apparently alien life, and the trespasser's own forfeited life. It is now for the first time that the injured life appears as a hostile power against the trespasser and maltreats him as he has maltreated the other. Hence punishment is the equal reaction of the trespasser's own deed, of a power which he himself has armed, of an enemy made an enemy by himself (Hegel 1996: 229-230).

By taking Banquo's life, Macbeth ruins the harmony and equality of life, its "friendliness". Macbeth's murder of Banquo turns life itself into his enemy and creates a law that boomerangs against Macbeth by means of retribution as he must lose the same right he has violated. This idea has been further developed in Hegel's theory of action which states that a person's action may achieve a result that is fundamentally different from what they desired or intended to achieve because its hints and consequences impact the doer. Hence, a crime returns to haunt the culprit and finally destroys him, thereby reversing the primary deed and restoring justice (Hegel 1975: 75). According to the law of equality, the Ghost of Banquo executes the retribution because Macbeth acts under the "illusion of trespass", in Hegel's terms, striving to profit from his malefaction and escape the penalty. His illusion violates the harmony of the world and, finally, ruins his own life. This concept coincides with Aristotle's theory of recognition which perceives the moment of reversal as the point of discovery or, in the case of Macbeth, a tragic self-recognition that asserts his guilt and exposes his illusions: the character realizes that he has gained nothing while having lost the right to live and his life. By murdering Banquo Macbeth creates the situation of inequality and injustice which violates the world order. That is why the law hits back and overrides Macbeth: "It coerces and maltreats him as he has

maltreated Banquo [...] the purpose of the second coercion is to reestablish the original equality and reciprocity [...] Punishment is not a coercion in this primary sense. Instead punishment is a coercion directed against coercion, a second coercion that cancels the first” (Williams 1997: 164). Here Hegel develops Kant’s idea of punishment as the second coercion when “right entails the authority to apply coercion to anyone who infringes it” (Kant 1991: 134). Thus, in the case of Macbeth, punishment cannot be considered an evil. It is what the character deserves to get. When he meets the ghost (or, perhaps, the evil spirit in Banquo’s shape sent by the witches, or, more probably, the product of his own troubled imagination – there is no way of telling and no need to tell which), he gives voice to “the basic rift in his own subjective world [...] world of swift and terrible justice, in which dead victims rise again to push murderers from their stools” what makes him convinced that “he is living in a macrocosm which implacably requires his destruction” (McElroy 2005: 46).

Curiously, the ghost of Banquo is the only one in Shakespeare to have become an appellative that stands for “someone from the past who is present at an event and reminds a person of their past crimes” (Delahunty 2010: 35) or “a troubling reminder of past crimes and misdeeds; someone or some memory that appears to materialize out of thin air, welcome or not” (Webber and Feinsilber 1999: 40). The ambivalence of its nature, on the one hand, and certainty of its dramatic function, on the other, have germinated various literary allusions.

### *Alexander Pushkin*

Generally, ghosts began to appear in Russian Romantic literature due to the vast popularity of Gothic fiction, particularly of Radcliff, Hoffman and Walter Scott as well as an abiding admiration for Shakespeare’s plays. One of the greatest admirers of the playwright’s drama was, as we know, Pushkin. Pushkin’s fairy writing developed during the 1820-1830s alongside the literary trends of Russian Romanticism. He is well-known for fairy tales written and published in 1830-1834 (*Skazki*), the narrative poem *Ruslan and Ludmila* (*Ruslan i Liudmila*, 1820), his last verse drama *The Mermaid* (*Rusalka*, 1829-1832) as well as the poetic cycle, *The Songs of the Western Slavs* (*Pesni zapadnykh slavian*, written in 1833-1834 and published in 1835). The “fairy” here serves to render the national philosophy of life with its folk superstitions and beliefs and to play the key role in the unravelling of the plot (Semibratova 1977: 156). The “fairy” is most significant in *Ruslan and Ludmila* which is full of fabulous motifs combining several interrelated

storylines such as Ruslan's journeys or Ludmila's adventures in the castle of the wizard Chernomor and constitute the unity of a fairy world equal to the real world (Sazonova 2014: 280). In *The Mermaid*, the fabulous is also the driving force of the action. Pushkin even planned to rotate domestic and fantastic scenes (the drama remained incomplete) thus equating the fairy-tale world of popular beliefs even more with the world of reality (Bondi 1941: 410). Therefore, the fairy fabulous is used as an artistic device to form the basis of the plot. Another kind of the fabulous in Pushkin's fairy writing is subjective. The story still comprises folk motifs but is told in the form of a legend. It is not an objective fairy reality, manifest to the author-narrator and the reader, but a rumor, a dream, or a character's own belief. The poem *The Hussar (Gusar, 1833)* is the retelling by the title character of the fantastic events he was involved in. The first-person narration and the humorous tone stylize the tale into a joke and, hence, exonerate the author's responsibility for the poem's fairy content. The ballad *The Drowned Man (Utoplennik, 1828)* refers to the popular belief to explain the appearance of the supernatural. The apparition of the drowned man serves as a climax, punishing the hero who has not discharged his public duty in regard to the dead.

Pushkin used the "fairy" as a motif of retribution for a character's crime in both poetry and drama, thus giving it a Hegelian moral function. In the so-called little tragedy, *The Stone Guest*, the role of the reanimating statue in the action is rather restricted. The appearance of the Commander does not actually signify the interference of the supernatural forces (such plot rendering is characteristic in Pushkin's fairy tales); rather, it helps forward the triumph of justice and assert the rightness of morality by any means. As the "fairy" is used merely as a literary device and remains subjective, it can be interpreted quite realistically. The supernatural elements are often introduced in the plot in a hero's dream. The motif of a dream becomes one of the most common motifs in "fairy" writing because everything can happen in a dream, a dream can justify any miracle. However, in Pushkin's writings the oneiric functions as a psychological marker offering insight into the most secret traits of a character's personality and revealing those fears, aspirations and assumptions that he himself is not familiar with, as they remain unconscious and unperceived (Ershenko 2006: 13). The use of the oneiric is typical of Pushkin's psychologically motivated "fairy" writing.

Pushkin's progress towards realism expelled the "fairy" from his plots. Unlike *Ruslan and Ludmila*, *The Fairy Tales*, and *The Mermaid*, where the role of the supernatural in the plot complications is major, in the verse novel, *Eugene Onegin*, the

poem, *The Bronze Horseman*, and the short stories, *The Undertaker* and *The Queen of Spades*, the supernatural is present but whittled down to a single storyline or a motif. This downgrading of the “fairy” was typical not only of Pushkin but of other writers such as Gogol, Odoyevsky, Veltman. It is a trend which can be explained by the general transition to realism and, hence, the evolution of the fairy writing which must interact with the realistic method in literature by adjusting and modifying its forms. The presence of the fabulous in Realist fiction requires a certain justification because “the proud nineteenth-century reader does not agree to believe in a miraculous event he is told about” (Odoevsky 1913: 15). In addition to the dream motif, the introduction of the “fairy” can be justified by the sickness of a hero, his delusions, hallucinations or madness. This is the madness of Eugene that gives account for the fantastic revival of the statue in *The Bronze Horseman*. The liveliness and brevity of this scene in the poem make Pushkin’s fiction even more convincing. The “seeming” and the real are almost inseparably fused together: the pose of the statue, illuminated by the moon, is very realistic and can be regarded as fantastic only because it seems to Eugene to be moving (Ivanitsky 2001: 18).

In Pushkin’s writings of the 1830s, there are some elements which may have been “caused by Shakespeare’s direct impact or represent the poet’s unintentional responses to certain Shakespeare’s scenes, verses and expressions he kept in mind”; hence Shakespeare, who might be “an unintentional trigger for Pushkin’s substantive thread of thoughts”, is not mentioned (Alekseev 1972: 272). Pushkin’s writing and editing of *The Belkin Tales* went hand in hand with his active study of Shakespeare, which had started earlier in 1820s and first resulted in the drama, *Comedy about Tsar Boris and Grishka Otrepiev* (*Komediya o nastoyashchei bede moskovskomu gosudarstvu, o tsare Borise i o Grishke Otrepieve*, 1825; in its published and censored 1830 version the title was shortened to *Boris Godunov*). Since 1825 Shakespeare’s poetics is the subject of Pushkin’s constant theoretical speculations, the most famous of which is presented in a letter to Nikolai Rayevsky-son of 1825: “Likelihood of conditions and credibility of dialogues — that’s the real rule of tragedy. I have read neither Calderon nor Vega, but how wonderful Shakespeare is! I cannot get over it” (Pushkin 1959-1962: IX. 178). On the play’s publication in 1830, the controversy around *Boris Godunov* gained more intensity. Some critics doubted the originality of the drama regarding it the imitation of Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* or history plays; others, on the contrary, considered it not Shakespearian enough. Piotr Pletnev’s letter to Pushkin dated May 21, 1830 indicates that Pushkin was going to write a preface to *Boris Godunov*, which should have turned into

an essay on Shakespeare (Pushkin 1994-1997: XIV. 93). Perhaps it was only Pletnev's proposal because Pushkin never wrote any essay on Shakespeare although he left many brief notes on the poetics of the playwright. Instead of any critical writing, in the fiction of *The Belkin Tales* Pushkin presented a subtle and sarcastic rebuke to the polemicists, who often did not really read Shakespeare. In other words, the tales could have been a parody on national Russian Shakespearism.

In December 1830, Pushkin mentioned *The Belkin Tales* for the first time in the letter to Pletnev (1994-1997: XIV. 133). According to his letters, he was editing the tales until the autumn of 1831, for in the letter of September 5, 1830 he wrote about the epigraphs to *The Shot* (Pushkin 1994-1997: XIV. 221-222). This is what he stated in the letter of July 3, 1831: "I rewrote my five tales and the preface, i.e. the writings of the deceased Belkin, good fellow" (Pushkin 1994-1997: XIV. 186). *The Undertaker* (*Grobovshchik*, published with the other stories of the cycle in 1831) was the first tale dated 9 September 1830. However, it was subsequently moved to the middle of the cycle and made central. This justifies paying special attention to it. It is also the only story in which Shakespeare is explicitly, and significantly, referred to. "The enlightened reader knows that Shakespeare and Walter Scott both portrayed their grave-diggers as cheerful, jocular characters so that the contrast might strike our imagination all the more forcibly. Out of respect for the truth we are unable to follow their example and have to admit that the temperament of our undertaker harmonized perfectly with his lugubrious vocation" (Pushkin 1998: 35-36). It is not merely a reference to Shakespeare, but also an intervention in literary polemic. Walter Scott, too, is not accidental: the mention of the name of Shakespeare and Walter Scott side by side had become a stable Romantic cliché: Belinsky generally considered them equal in degree of talent. However, the reference is clearly a trick. Although scholars have found similarities between *The Undertaker's* protagonist and the characters of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and Walter Scott's *The Bride of Lammermoor* (Yakubovich 1928: 115) or noted a reference to contemporary comparisons and contrasts (Antonyuk 2017: 4-6; Esipov 2006: 379-386), the reference made by Pushkin, or rather by Belkin, his narrator, has nothing to do with them as characters. Not only were Scott's and Shakespeare's characters gravediggers, not undertakers, but they were comic rather than tragic: Pushkin's protagonist is usually "immersed [...] in unhappy thoughts" (Pushkin 1998: 36) and lugubrious concern about the profit-earning capacity of his occupation. Rather, the seemingly far-fetched reference is introduced for another reason. Notoriously, the clowning scene was a significant element of Elizabethan

drama which was used to provide an alternate viewpoint by interrupting the main action of the play and providing “the shift in focus necessary to convey more effectively the theme of the dramas” (Culwell 2005). At the same time, the scene provided comic relief. The same effect was designed by Pushkin who sought to enshrine in comedy the problem of life and death, “more precisely, the life that feeds on death” (Penkovsky 2005: 225).

Unlike the main character of Belkin’s story, the undertaker Adrian Prokhorov does not kill people directly, although their death is beneficial to him, and he wants them dead by all means. An invitation to the feast of the dead, and not just the dead, but those in whose death the inviter was interested, is a plot that easily slips from the tragic into the comic. A number of explicit correspondences between Pushkin’s tale and Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* are immediately noticeable. The hero’s misadventures start with the death of the brigadier, in a possible reminiscence of Banquo. More significantly, *Macbeth* is alluded to in “the motif of death at the feast of life” (Felperin 2005: 59), where the interchange is literal. The scene of the feast in the draft of the story was even more coloured by the sentiments of *Macbeth*. Following Shakespeare, Pushkin did not specify the nature of the ghosts, whether objective or subjective—in other words, whether they are real or the figments of the protagonist’s imagination. Initially, the text contained a faint hint of ambiguity in the interpretation of what actually happened to Adrian: instead of “the undertaker arrived home drunk and angry” (Pushkin 1998: 38) Pushkin wrote “sober and angry” (1994-1997: VIII. 631). The final version suggested a more rationalist explanation of the portrayal of the supernatural. Pushkin probably subscribed to the psychological interpretation of the ghosts as mere projections of disturbed or guilty minds, much as the banquet scene in *Macbeth* was regarded as “one of the strongest proofs that a GHOST or APPARITION proceeds either from GUILT or FEAR or is a mixture of both” (Murphy 1754; qtd. Clery and Miles 2000: 31).

Just like the vision of the dagger, Banquo’s ghost might seem a realization of Macbeth’s guilt and fear. In the course of the play the guilty conscience caused by his crime makes Macbeth experience a loss of appetite and sleep and suffer from nightmares. The apparition that no one else can see manifests the exasperation of his mental disorder as the second murder takes a huge toll on Macbeth’s sanity and makes him hallucinate. As for Pushkin’s undertaker, he is enjoying his neighbour’s banquet until the moment when all the guests begin to drink to the health of their customers. In the printed version of the story Adrian feasts nonchalantly. However, in the draft the scene looks different: “Suddenly one of the guests, a fat baker, raised his glass and exclaimed, To the health of

those we work for [...]!” (Pushkin 1998: 38) is the final version’s shortening of “But suddenly his former sullenness took possession of him again, and for this reason. One of the guests, a fat Baker proposed the following toast” (Pushkin 1994-1997: VIII. 630). Adrian feels the abnormality of his position immediately. The tension is only further prompted by the ambiguous remark of his friend Yurko “Well? Drink, sir, to the health of your corpses” (Pushkin 1998: 38), which made the protagonist feel awkward. The undertaker could have taken a joke and laughed at it like all the other guests. Instead, he took it as a personal offence and left home upset. Despite his previous attempt to make his own reception and invite to it his neighbors, in a fit of temper he invites his “patrons – the true believing dead”: ““What did you say? Cross your heart! Invite the dead to your new house! That’s terrible!’ ‘With God as my witness I will invite them,’ Adrian continued. ‘Tomorrow. I am pleased to announce, my dear sirs, that tomorrow I am going to have a feast. I will serve you all that God has sent me’” (Pushkin 1998: 39).

In Shakespeare’s banquet scene Macbeth’s sham wish that Banquo should attend the event and intimate hope that he should be prevented from doing so provide the context for the appearance of the ghost, “equivocally answering both of Macbeth’s demands” (Leggatt, ed. 2006: 96). Similarly, Pushkin’s protagonist neither wanted nor supposed to be visited by his dead clients. However, the next day, when he was summoned to organize the funerals of the merchant’s widow Tryukhina and traded on the credulity of her son— “The heir thanked him distractedly, saying that the price did not worry him, and that he would rely completely on the undertaker’s conscience. The undertaker, as he usually did, swore that he would take nothing more than his due; he exchanged a discreet and knowing glance with his assistant and left to make arrangements” (Pushkin 1998: 39)—on his return home he found the dead there. In his castle Macbeth was obliged to offer safe accommodation and provisions as a host, and his “most sacrilegious murder” of the king, his guest, disturbed the good order of the realm, a condition manifest in the intrusion of Banquo’s ghost and Macbeth’s inability to preside over a feast for his own court: the banquet intended to embody the sanctity and order of Macbeth’s reign is disrupted by his “duplicitous invocation” of murdered Banquo what makes the meal “descend into chaos, permanently redirecting the suspicion of murder and apostasy onto himself and undermining the same power his social efforts had sought to consolidate” (Keller 2006: 163). Pushkin makes play with Shakespeare’s metaphor of the violation of the global order and its restoration through retribution against the perpetrator, as expressed by Macbeth: “If charnel-houses and our graves must send / Those that we bury back, our

monuments / Shall be the maws of kites” (3.4.71-73). Pushkin’s undertaker hoaxes his clients and batters on their grief while swearing by God; therefore, he deserves divine punishment. The brigadier, whose death was retrospectively included in the exposition of the story, becomes a direct correspondence of Banquo here. He is the first to appear before Adrian after the undertaker recklessly invites the dead to a housewarming. The visitors seem to have no intention to hurt him but, nevertheless, scare the host by their mere presence. Pushkin provides a vivid description of the dead<sup>36</sup> to convey the terror of the undertaker who believes they are real. The roles of offender and victims are reversed: prostrate with fear, the former remains silent while the latter greet him: ““So you see, Prokhorov,’ said the brigadier, who spoke for the whole company, ‘We all rose at your invitation; the only ones still at home are those who are simply unable, who have gone all to pieces, yes, those who have only bones left, no skin—but even one of these was unable to restrain himself, so much did he want to see you”” (Pushkin 1998: 40). The victims proceed to draw Adrian’s attention to themselves, thus reminding him of his misdemeanors. The skeleton of a man buried long ago asks: ““You don’t recognize me, Prokhorov [...] Do you remember the retired sergeant at arms Peter Petrovich Kurilkin, the very one to whom, in the year 1799, you sold your first coffin pretending it was oak instead of pine, no less?”” (Pushkin 1998: 41). The end of the scene is truly comic. The dead sergeant tries to embrace the undertaker but Adrian, “gathering all his strength”, pushes him off so that he falls and shatters into pieces. The corpses “stood in defense of their comrade’s honor, hurling curses and threats at Adrian”, who is “deafened by their cries and practically knocked to the ground” before finally losing his nerve, falling down on the bones of the sergeant and fainting (Pushkin 1998: 41).

In *The Undertaker*, there are few explicit intertextual correspondences with *Macbeth*: the Shakespearean presence is more evoked than inscribed. Belkin, the narrator, was very unfortunate with *Macbeth*: until 1830, this tragedy had not been published in Russian, except for small magazine abstracts of Petr Korsakov’s adaptation. The general

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<sup>36</sup> “It seemed to Adrian that there were people milling around in his house. ‘What the Devil!’ he thought and rushed inside [...] at which point his legs gave way beneath him. The room was full of corpses. The moonlight streaming through the window illuminated their blue and yellow faces, their sunken mouths, their cloudy, half-closed eyes and jutting noses. With horror, Adrian recognized among them people that he had buried; he saw that the guest who had entered with him was the brigadier who had been buried in the pouring rain. All of them, women and men, surrounded the undertaker, hailing him with greetings and bows, except for one poor soul who, bashful and ashamed of his rags, did not approach, but stood shyly in a corner. All the others were well dressed: the lady corpses in caps and ribbons, the gentlemen corpses of the official class in uniforms, but with their beards unshaven, the merchants in their holiday tunics” (Pushkin 1998: 40).



public was not acquainted with it; neither was Belkin. He might have heard Andrei Turgenev's retelling of *Macbeth* on the basis of French translations. Schiller's adaptation, although more precise than that of Ducis, was considered outdated and ridiculous at the time Pushkin was writing *The Belkin Tales* (Delvig 1830: 244). Pushkin, prior to the publication or even before writing the tale, might have discussed with Delvig a common practice, so naively formulated by Rotchev. Playwrights of those years, instead of translating Shakespeare, took his French alterations, adapted them in their own way and then called these, in fact, independent re-writings of Shakespeare's drama. There is no record of anyone trying to rewrite *Macbeth* with a happy ending: at the turn of the nineteenth century, to a reader, brought up on Racine, it was already happy because it contained edification in that villainy was punished and Macbeth was guilty of his own death. But Belkin is not in favour of the tragic. Therefore, the key sources of horror for Shakespeare's admirers—crime and the phenomenon of ghosts—are imaginary. Adrian Prokhorov does not kill anyone—he just wants people dead; imaginary crime fits the punishment—the phenomenon of accusing him of the deaths takes place in a dream, and Adrian wakes up unharmed. In the printed version of the tale, there is no doubt that all the horrors that took place were just a nightmare. The appearance of the dead in the undertaker's house is motivated quite realistically: it is just a drunken dream of the hero. Hence, Pushkin shows us how easily tragic stories, when they are interpreted by the Belkins, slip into comedy.

The ambivalent portrayal of the supernatural can also be found in Pushkin's later tale, *Pikovaya Dama* (*The Queen of Spades*, written in 1833, published in 1834). According to Dostoyevsky, this tale was "the ultimate in fairy art" because Pushkin was able to make the "fairy" get so close to the real that it is impossible not to believe it.<sup>37</sup> Such ambiguity as he "provides us [...] with the fragments of codes [...] that tantalize but do not quite add up [...] and teases the reader with partial keys" (Emerson 1992: 35) is, probably, deliberately intended by Pushkin to satisfy both romantic and realistic tastes. The basic plot of the story would have been familiar to readers of the pulp fiction of the day. For example, Piotr Mashkov's *Tri kresta* (*Three Crosses*, 1833) was just one of a long line of card-playing stories, usually involving a fool-proof winning formula of

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<sup>37</sup> "Pushkin, who presented us with almost all forms of art, wrote *The Queen of Spades* which is the ultimate of the fairy art. And you believe that Hermann really had a vision conformable to his outlook. However, at the end of the tale, that is when you finish reading, you do not know what to think: whether this apparition is the result of Hermann's nature or he is really one of those who has come in touch with the other world of the evil and hostile spirits. That is true art!" (Dostoyevsky 1938: 351).

supernatural origin, a love intrigue, and a twist at the end. Pushkin radically reworked this tired formula. *The Queen of Spades* is Pushkin's final formulation of the tragedy of the usurper, which he had first articulated in *Boris Godunov*, the fabula of which has murder at its centre, a dominant motif of guilt and, at its end, the death or madness of the character. While in *Boris Godunov* the murder is not shown directly but emerges through the remorse that scourges the murderer, in *The Queen of Spades* the means of the hero's elevation is enrichment – the tragedy of the usurper is contaminated with the romantic fabula of the fatal game (the fight with fate) – Hermann is destroyed by his indelible humanity and unconscious remorse that generates the psychosis of the killer (Nazirov 1995: 27). The concept of the tragedy of the usurper was further developed by Dostoyevsky in the novel *Crime and Punishment* with the changed denouement of the penitence of the murderer and his return to “the living life” (the spiritual rebirth and reintegration of a person within society).

As soon as Hermann hears a rumour about a secret formula of an old countess for winning a fortune at the gambling game of Faro, he is haunted by the idea of finding out this secret. He pretends to be in love with Lizaveta, the countess's young ward, so that she will help him enter their house. Once inside, he threatens the countess with a gun but scared to death, before she can reveal the gambling formula, she suddenly dies of a heart attack. After her funeral, her ghost visits Hermann. The obscure character of the apparition lends itself to a twofold interpretation. The only detail which may militate against Hermann's having seen a real ghost is that shortly before its appearance the hero “drank a great deal of wine, contrary to his habit, in the hope of stifling his inner agitation” (Pushkin 2004: 226). The setting of the scene seems to be adopted from a Gothic story. Pushkin introduced the chapter with an epigraph: “That night the dead Baroness von W. appeared before me. She was all in white and said: ‘How do you do, Mr. Councilor?’” The epigraph is taken from Emanuel Swedenborg, a Swedish philosopher and mystic who was known for his theories of afterlife and reincarnation in the spiritual world. The epigraph which “refers to the ghostly visitation of a dead woman dressed ‘all in white’ arouses an expectation in the reader that some event linked to ghostly visits will be described” and, hence “encourage[s] the reader to expect the incursion of the irrational into the world of the rational” (Cornwell 1999: 115). Dressed in white, the dead countess comes to the hero at night when “the moon was shining into his room” (Pushkin 2004: 226). The vividness and literalism of her appearance make Hermann take her for, successively, a stranger, his servant and his nurse as she, first, looks into his window,

unlocks the door to let herself in and slides towards him scuffing on her way.<sup>38</sup> Although the story points out that the protagonist's "sleep had left him", his vision can still be interpreted psychologically. As he got to bed drunk and immediately fell asleep, he did not sleep much and woke up even more exhausted than the day before. The dead countess visits Hermann straight after he sits up on his bed and starts thinking about her funeral, as Macbeth sees the ghost of Banquo when he learns about his death. Pushkin created a type of a highly imaginative character—"one prone to think in terms of visual images"—and, like Macbeth, capable of the "feverish creation of mental pictures" (Scragg 1996: 190). Hermann's letters to Lizaveta at the start of his plotting celebrate "the disorder of an unbridled imagination" (Pushkin 2004: 211). The wine also "served to excite his imagination" (Pushkin 2004: 226). When he approaches the coffin at the funeral and bends over the corpse, "at that moment it seemed to him that the dead woman darted a mocking look at him and winked her eye" (Pushkin 2004: 225).

Like Macbeth, who "is visited by clear hallucinations born of near madness, first in the form of the dagger, then in Banquo's ghost" (Thiher 1999: 80), Hermann slips into madness. Further hallucination of the countess reflects the growing disorder in his thoughts and feelings. Banquo's ghost is "more persistent and more disturbing than is usual in the setting of bereavement": for a murderer to experience such a full recall of his victim while awake, although credible, would be unusual, so the ghost is better considered as a "symptom of the more general disorder, of which another symptom is the fearful imagery that the dead, sent back from 'charnel houses' and 'graves', rise again and 'push us from our stools'" (Davis 1982: 220-221). Macbeth considers it real because it is the visible proof of his fears that he will lose his power and Banquo's heirs will take his throne. That is the reason why he leaves to see the Witches again to get rid of his gnawing feeling of unguardedness. However, the Weird Sisters "produce spirits to instill in him a false sense of confidence, and the bursting of that bubble of imagined security is Macbeth's final agony" (McElroy 2005: 33). Similarly, the apparition of the countess is the projection of Hermann's fears about the futility of his efforts to learn the gambling secret: "One thing only horrified him: the irreparable loss of the secret which was to have

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<sup>38</sup> "Just then someone in the street looked in at him through the window and immediately walked on. Hermann paid no attention. A moment later he heard the door of his ante-room open. Hermann thought it was his orderly, drunk as usual, returning from some nocturnal excursion, but presently he heard an unfamiliar footstep: someone was softly shuffling along the floor in slippers. The door opened and a woman in white came in. Hermann mistook her for his old nurse and wondered what could have brought her at such an hour. But the woman in white glided across the room and stood before him – and Hermann recognized the countess!" (Pushkin 2004: 226).

brought him wealth” (Pushkin 2004: 221). When he achieves the formula, “‘the three, the seven, the ace’ soon drove all thought of the dead woman from Hermann’s mind” (Pushkin 2004: 228). He trusts his vision without questioning. His obsession with the idea of his success issues in a renewed plethora of metaphorical images which once again made his imagination dominate his consciousness: “‘Three, seven, ace’ were perpetually in his head and on his lips. If he saw a young girl he would say, ‘How graceful she is! A regular three of hearts!’ Asked the time, he would reply, ‘Five minutes to seven.’ Every stout man reminded him of the ace. ‘Three, seven, ace’ haunted his dreams, assuming all sorts of shapes. The three blossomed before him like a luxuriant flower, the seven took the form of a Gothic portal, and aces became gigantic spiders. His whole attention was focused on one thought: how to make use of the secret which had cost him so dear” (Pushkin 2004: 228).

The ambivalent nature of the dead countess manifests itself most vividly in her message to Hermann. She tells the hero that she has come to him against her will, but she is commanded to grant his request. The apparition might be the product of Hermann’s both fear and conscience as the latter troubles his heart throughout the story. First, when he betrays Lizaveta’s confidence and love in the countess’s house: “for a moment something akin to remorse assailed him but he quickly hardened his heart again” (Pushkin 2004: 214). Then, before the funeral, “though he felt no remorse he could not altogether stifle the voice of conscience which kept repeating to him: ‘You are the old woman’s murderer!’” (Pushkin 2004: 224). In this case, this is definitely his guilty conscience which tells him that the countess will forgive him her death if he marries her ward, Lizaveta. Alternatively, it is equally legitimate to regard the apparition as a spirit sent by some evil forces to destroy the protagonist as he finally loses everything, including his mind. Or, equally possible, it might be the instrument of nemesis. Hermann is a killer. He did not intend to murder the old countess, but he did and has no regrets about his deed and no intention of confessing it as a good Christian: “Having very little religious faith, he was exceedingly superstitious. Believing that the dead countess might exercise a malignant influence on his life, he decided to go to her funeral to beg and obtain her forgiveness” (Pushkin 2004: 224). As it is not faith or sincere repentance that made him beg for forgiveness, he does not deserve salvation but must be punished. Moreover, Hermann is a gambler and whoever fights against his fate never wins. “Chance spared him the trouble” (Pushkin 2004: 228) is how Pushkin ironically sums up the hero’s destiny. When Hermann makes the mistake of choosing the queen over the ace, “it seemed

to him that the queen of spades opened and closed her eye and mocked him with a smile. He was struck by the extraordinary resemblance” (Pushkin 2004: 232). The plotter, traitor and murderer gets his just deserts. The epilogue tells in short that Hermann “went out of his mind” and remained in the asylum “returning no answer to questions put to him but muttering over and over again, with incredible rapidity: ‘Three, seven, ace! Three, seven, queen!’” (Pushkin 2004: 233). Similarly to Macbeth, whose mind is “helpless when confronted by the strength and prevalence of his fantasy, which does his thinking, judging, and feeling for him” (Bloom, ed. 2010: 3), imagination that troubles Hermann’s mind is his worst enemy. It “has revealed nothing to him”, left “no compensatory wisdom”, only led the hero to “clinical insanity” (Rosenshield 1994: 996). Thus, *The Queen of Spades* has every reason to be called “a tragedy of the imagination” as Harold Bloom once termed *Macbeth* (Bloom 1998: 517).

#### *Mikhail Lermontov, Vadim*

While Pushkin was the first among Russians who alluded to Shakespeare in the poem *Sonnet* (*Sonet*, 1830) as “the creator of Macbeth” (1959-1962: II. 288), the very first explicit reference to the play itself in Russian fiction can be found in Mikhail Lermontov’s early novel *Vadim* (1832). To try your hand at prose was a common phenomenon in the 1830s. In Russia, it had a special meaning. The demands of intellectual life could no longer be fully satisfied by literature which consisted of merely poetic works. The narrow framework of poems and elegies did not fulfil the new needs. This was noted by Pushkin, whose own oeuvre can be taken as an example of such a transition from poetry to prose. The imaginary narrator Roslavlev of the eponymous novel (1831), reflecting the author’s criticism of the commitment of Russian people to the French language and their neglect of Russian, argued: “Our literature seems no older than Lomonosov and is still extremely limited. Of course, it presents us with some great poets, but you cannot demand affection to poetry from all the readers” (Pushkin 1983: 139). In his comparison of Russia with other European countries, the narrator came to a deplorable conclusion: “While in France, England, and Germany books, one more remarkable than the other, follow one another [...] we are compelled to draw everything, news and concepts, from foreign books” (Pushkin 1983: 139).

Romantic prose, and in a narrower sense, the novel arose from the need to reflect thoughts and concepts in literature: it was novels and prose that had to meet the broad cultural needs of the time and respond to ideological demands. Hence, the prose of this

period obtained “a peculiar flavour”: the writings of broad ideological scope became predominant; novels of a psychological and philosophical character followed one another in Western literatures (Tomashevsky 1941: 469). Russian literature faced the need to create the same ideological prose on a national basis using European historical experience. In the 1820s, the most popular prose writings were the historical novels of Walter Scott. The historical novel had its own era of absolute domination in the literature. In France, imitators of Scott produced an infinite variety of novels, mostly set in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. These historical novels were influenced not only by Scott but also by the Gothic novel, that is, forms of prose associated with extreme romantic fascinations. The social and political situation in France made plots from the history of the civil wars one of the favourite themes of novels like Prosper Merimee’s *A Chronicle of the Reign of Charles IX* (1829), Alfred de Vigny’s *Cinq-Mars* (1826), devoted to the conspiracy during the reign of Louis XIII, *Les Chouans* by Honoré de Balzac (1829) and *Les Francs-Taupins* by Paul Lacroix (1833), set in the era of Charles VII. If these and similar novels did not always feature episodes of the civil war of one period or another, they often contained equivalent motifs of robbers or “outcasts” of various kinds. This type of novels includes *Notre Dame* by Victor Hugo (1830).

Approximately at the same time Lermontov wrote his first novel *Vadim*. He could not rely on the Russian tradition in prose and, naturally, transferred elements of the west European novel to his own (Tomashevsky 1941: 473). On the one hand, a novel in the style of Walter Scott was a natural path for a young author. On the other hand, just as natural was the layering on the scheme of the historical novel of all the latest influences, and especially the features of the French novel, which in these years was firmly on the ascendant in literary. As a historical novel needed a national setting, Lermontov set his novel in the time of Pugachev’s Rebellion (1773-1775), the principal revolt in a series of popular rebellions that took place in the Russian Empire after Catherine II seized power in 1762 (Polunov 2005: 19). It began as an organized insurrection of Yaik Cossacks headed by Yemelyan Pugachev, a disaffected ex-lieutenant of the Imperial Russian Army, against a background of profound peasant unrest and war with the Ottoman Empire. After initial success, Pugachev assumed leadership of an alternative government in the name of the assassinated Tsar Peter III and proclaimed an end to serfdom. The theme of the peasant uprising after the riots of 1830-1831 was extremely topical. No wonder Lermontov coincided in this topic with Pushkin, who was writing *The Captain’s Daughter*. Lermontov was probably unaware of Pushkin’s project. For the urgency of the

subject matter, the coincidence seems quite natural and legitimate. It should be also borne in mind that for Lermontov, as well as for Pushkin, the immediate impulse to choose the era for the historical novel could be the tale *The Story of My Grandmother* published in *The Nevsky Almanac* in 1832. However, this story could only serve as a pretext for choosing the setting. The author of the tale calls the leaders of Pugachev's movement demons and evil spirits. Lermontov persistently develops the theme of demonization of his hero though in the romantic, Byronic way. In the very first chapter, it is reported that the friends of Vadim feared and respected him for "the strength of his soul" and his passion: "they respected in him some greatest vice [...] a demon [...] in his eyes there was so much fire and wit, so much that was unearthly" (Lermontov 1988-1990: II. 276). The sobriquets "demon", "Mephistopheles" and the like accompany the name of Vadim throughout the novel. The hero's passion is poured into in hatred of the landlord Palitsyn, who destroyed his family, and later of his son: "Vadim blushed... and from that moment the name of Yuri Palitsyn became hateful to him... What to do! He could not escape his demonic nature" (Lermontov 1988-1990: II. 302).

The laws of contrast require pairing a demon with an angel. Such an angel in *Vadim* is Olga. To make the contrast even more palpable, Lermontov made Vadim Olga's brother. The corresponding description of Olga is given at the moment of her appearance: "It was an angel expelled from Paradise for being too sorry for humanity" (Lermontov 1988-1990: II. 279). In the novel, these characteristics of demon and angel, hell and heaven are constantly crossed: "Oh! What the wonders of nature are; are a brother and a sister distant? – but what a difference! These angelic features, that demonic appearance... However, have not an angel and a demon come from the same origin?" (Lermontov 1988-1990: II. 288). For Lermontov, these contrasts were significant because his task was to write an ideological, philosophical novel. The images of a demon and an angel embodied the problem of good and evil: "what is the greatest good and evil? — Two ends of the invisible chain that converge away from each other" (Lermontov 1988-1990: II. 295). This ideological background of the novel evokes a characteristic rhetorical sententiousness that permeates the entire writing.

First, Olga promised her brother to take vengeance on the Palitsyn family for their parents but then she falls in love with the son of the landlord and quits her primary intentions. Lermontov uses a simile comparing the heroine's heat of passion with the emotional upheaval of Macbeth when he sees Banquo's ghost:

Olga, by her efforts to conceal her love, revealed it even more; Yuri was experienced, often loved, more often was loved, and was accustomed to read in her eyes more than she dared to read in her own soul. She was thinking about him and was afraid to think about her love: horror embraced her heart when she dared to inquire it because the past and the future then turn up in Olga's uneasy imagination; such was the terror of Macbeth when being ready to sit on the royal throne, with the bustling sounds of the banquet he saw the blood-stained ghost of Banquo on it... but this horror did not lessen his ambition, which turned into a morbid delirium; the same happened to Olga's love. (Lermontov 1988-1990: II. 308)

Lermontov, like Pushkin, has almost got the very gist of Macbeth's condition. This consists, first of all, of the uneasy imagination and deadly terror that trouble the minds of the protagonists. Interestingly, Lermontov believed that in Macbeth's case it was his ambition that "turned into a morbid delirium", the perception established in Russia owing to numerous publications of European romantics' essays, such as those by Coleridge and Hazlitt on Macbeth. Lermontov designed the novel in a spirit of Romantic ideals and thus chose for one of the characters an image of a lovesick heroine who faced the "chaos of all heavenly and earthly feelings, a whirlpool, an uncertain ecstasy that not everyone has experienced and no one can explain" (Lermontov 1988-1990: II. 310)—a chaos which drove her to the limit in the relations that could cost her life. The Shakespearean reminiscence was meant to intensify the dramatic tension in the description of the heroine's emotional outburst. As we have seen, *Macbeth* was particularly favoured by the Russian romantics for its supernatural elements, so it is not surprising that Lermontov referred to the moment when Macbeth saw Banquo's ghost at the feast—"the very painting" of his fear, as Lady Macbeth defined it (3.4.61)—for it was the ghost that made Macbeth, who was already repelling the consequences of his crimes to escape from reflection on them and meditating new mischiefs to banish remorse for the past, lose his temper: the "horrible shadow" trembled his nerves and blanched his face with fear (3.4.101-102, 105, 116). The allusion also serves as a hint of further complications in the plot concerning the heroine. In the case of Macbeth, his vision helped him to realize how deep he had plunged into blood and "stepped in so far that, should I wade no more, / Returning were as tedious as go o'er" (3.4.137-138) and thus convinced him to pursue his murderous path, for he was "yet but young in deed" (3.4.144). Similarly, Olga was by no means ready to abandon the struggle for her love despite its devastating consequences for her life and family relationships. It would be intriguing to learn how the



story turned out, whether the lovers escaped with their lives or the writer designed a more tragic ending. As the novel was left unfinished, the last thing the reader learns about the couple is that they try to hide from Olga's vindictive brother, who joined Pugachev's Rebellion to wipe up Yuri's family.

Thus, while *Macbeth's* Witches enhanced Russian romantic drama, the appropriation of Banquo's ghost enriched the creative powers of the prose writers. Since Pushkin's undertaker and Lermontov's Olga, the ghostly was used as a literary device to intensify dramatic tension and display heroes' profound feelings, particularly the devastating fear which, like Macbeth's on seeing Banquo's ghost, overwhelmed them. Allusions to *Macbeth* proved to be a powerful instrument for revealing the moral and psychological resources of the characters and became a decisive factor in problematizing the justice of their passions and crimes.

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## *Chapter 4. Macbeth and Russian Realist Literature*

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### **4.A. EUROPEAN REALISM, SHAKESPEARE AND *MACBETH***

Realism emerged in the 1820s and 30s in Europe and developed into a separate literary movement in the second half of the nineteenth century. In contrast to romanticism, realism sought to depict the objective, real world; unlike classicism, it did not proceed from pre-established ideas about the world. It stemmed from direct, unbiased perceptions and claimed a true reflection of reality and of people as its core constituent. Its characteristic principle of human sociality contested the romantic view of the individual as a self-confident and active hero who confronts the environment and designs his life on his own. Realists, on the contrary, regarded a person as a social being inscribed in the context of social life and all its manifestations and conditioned by social circumstances. Such “a tendency towards an all-encompassing modelling of the relations between society and the individual” (Flaker 1986; qtd. Kvas 2020: 23) was particularly characteristic of the era of realism. Positivism is usually considered to lie at the basis of realism. Positivist theory, which aimed at discovering the laws that govern society and its members, originated in western European thought at the beginning of the nineteenth century. It proposed an idea that the social world is guided by the same laws which determine the life of nature, and therefore everything that happens to a person in society can be explained by natural, objective causes which comprised the peculiarities of national character, geographical and climatological environment, historical situation and, most importantly, a person’s social status and social context. In order to identify and describe these patterns, positivists turned to the latest result of modern scientific research in the field of history, ethnography, and natural sciences. Historiography from the 1830s and 40s supplied them with the idea of the social class structure which allowed an explanation of human behavior to be formulated on the grounds of class affiliation; for their part, the rapidly developing natural sciences were a key to expound diverse features of European life of that time, such as the spread of market relations, the formation of the middle class, bourgeois revolutions, production and urban growth, by means of Darwin’s evolution theory. In this respect, literature became a “scientific” form of knowledge about people and the world.

Realism's objective paradigm set forth a complex of aesthetic principles conceptualized by Roland Barthes as "the reality effect" (Barthes 1986: 141-146): the principle of determination which implies a description of a person as a being whose fate is entirely determined by social factors, such as his origin and living conditions; the principle of typification which represents a hero as a certain social or psychological type; the analytical principle which emphasizes the realist writers' attitude to their contemporary reality and their desire to grasp the hidden meaning of life by studying its roots and causes; the principle of universalism whose purpose was the most complete portrayal of public life. Within the framework of this aesthetic, realist literature developed several common features, such as in-depth psychologism (the revelation of a hero's inner emotions and experiences), critical pathos (a profound and often tragic depiction of a person's position in the bourgeois world), and a highly detailed elaboration of the depicted reality. At the same time, its universal aesthetic principles took were implemented in many different and original ways in the fiction of European writers "with the new sensibility" who sought the free expression of individual sensations, thoughts and feelings (Guentner 2011: 504). Prose genres traditionally considered minor, preeminently the novel, came into vogue.

In France, realism began to flourish in the 1830 and 40s in fruitful interaction with romanticism. This synergy is to be detected in the fiction of Stendhal and Honoré de Balzac, neither of whom considered themselves realists. For one thing, the term that defines the movement today appeared much later, with the publication of Jules Champfleury's *Le Realisme* in 1857 and was only retrospectively applied to previous writers of fiction. Both Stendhal and Balzac used romantic techniques in the portrayal of the characters and developed the common romantic theme of an individual's protest against society, yet Stendhal's romanticism had a truly realist slant: in the essay *Racine and Shakespeare* he defined romanticism as art that should satisfy public demands for an understanding of modern life and thus be aware of all its problems and contradictions (Stendhal 1854: 10). His novels like *Le Rouge et le Noir* (*The Red and the Black*, 1830) or *La Chartreuse de Parme* (*The Charterhouse of Parma*, 1839) provided an objective account of social life in France in all its psychological and historical spectrum. Similarly, Balzac's fiction, particularly *La Comédie Humaine* (*The Human Comedy*, 1799-1850), like Stendhal's unfiltered presentation of post-Napoleonic French society, was marked by keen observation of details and multi-faceted characters in "a striving for

contemporaneity” (Kvas 2020: 23), for he believed that a realist writer must be a chronicler of contemporary society and social relations.

By the mid-nineteenth century, realism had become the dominant literary mode in France where it maintained its hegemony until the mid-1890s. The term was loosely applied to works of various genres and authors, such as, for example, Gustave Flaubert’s *Madame Bovary* (1857), Baudelaire’s *Les Fleurs du Mal*, and the social dramas of Alexandre Dumas fils. There was some disagreement about the purpose of realist fiction. Louis Edmond Duranty, novelist, art critic and editor of the journal *Réalisme* (1856), believed that realism must serve a social purpose and thus novels should be devoted to ordinary people and easy to understand for them. Champfleury, however, emphasized the need for a careful study and documentation of contemporary life and denied any possible didactic purpose. The writers who most fully realized Champfleury’s ideal of a documentary presentation of the day-to-day, Edmond and Jules Goncourt made their own Champfleury’s idea of a documentary portrayal of reality but also advocated an aesthetic excellence of style, rejected by Duranty and Champfleury himself. The aesthetic principles of realism fully manifest themselves in Flaubert’s novels. *Madame Bovary* (1857) and *L’Éducation sentimentale* (*Sentimental Education*, 1869) proclaimed “his nauseous contempt for the ignoble reality he forced himself to depict” (Brombert 1968: 4). Flaubert’s brilliant style and peculiar authorial presence, “the author’s fingerprints [...] traceable but not visible” (Wood 2008: 29), both grimly analytical and acidly ironical, were an attempt to establish realist narration and “achieve quality in literary art” (Chandler 1958: 17).

Similar tendencies appeared in lyric poetry. Charles Baudelaire’s influential poems displayed “the transitory, fugitive, contingent” experiences of modern urban life (Baudelaire 1964: 13). Around mid-century, French theatre turned to realism in popular melodramas, the bourgeois farces of Eugène Marin Labiche and the moral dramas of Dumas fils, among them *Les Idées de Mme Aubray* (*The Ideas of Madame Aubray*, 1867), and Émile Augier, such as *Le Mariage d’Olympe* (*The Marriage of Olympia*, 1855) and *Les Effrontés* (*The Shameless Ones*, 1861). In the later decades of the century, the controversy intensified between writers emphasizing the dominant role of the material world and those who disputed the meaningfulness of physical experience in its lack of any reference to some spiritual or intellectual ideal. While Baudelaire and Flaubert incorporated both attitudes in their writings, other novelists and poets who followed them reduced one of the two trends to extremity. The turn of the century was marked by the

rise of various movements which emerged from realism: naturalism, decadence, symbolism, and others.

In Britain realism became a distinct tendency of the Victorian novel which “laid down the law, policed us, and taught us all how to be realistic” (Freedgood 2019: xiv). Although the term was first used by George Eliot who defined realism as “the doctrine that all truth and beauty are to be attained by a humble and faithful study of [...] definite, substantial reality” (Eliot 1856: 627), Dickens’s fiction since his early novels had already reflected “the essential condition of social relations within a whole society [...] seen as a social organism” (Brown 1982: 14) and therefore was even closer to the modernity in which his readers lived because most of his novels had contemporary settings while many Eliot’s and other Victorians’ novels were set in the past, such as Thackeray’s *Vanity Fair* (1847-1848), Emily Brontë’s *Wuthering Heights* (1847) or Charlotte Brontë’s *Jane Eyre* (1847). Nevertheless, most novelists were hugely interested in addressing current social problems: Dickens’s *Nicholas Nickleby* (1838–1839) portrayed cruelty and neglect toward children at the Yorkshire schools, Elizabeth Gaskell’s *Mary Barton* (1848) exposed the conflict between factory workers and owners, Charles Kingsley’s *Yeast* (1848) disclosed the issue of rural poverty whereas Anne Brontë’s *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* (1848) flouted social conventions by “expressing what was culturally inadmissible: female desire” (Langland 2002: xix). Although the English realists “exploited the ordinary, the down-to-earth, rather more consistently than had their continental colleagues” (Becker 1963: 15), some of their fiction combined realism with Gothic or melodramatic elements. The so-called sensation fiction of Wilkie Collins who “strove to outdo Dickens at the kind of novel Dickens thought he did best” (Meckier 1987: 2), for instance, often introduced the supernatural in the life of Victorian households, such as, for example a female apparition in *The Woman in White* (1859). The same combination of the realistic and the unearthly was incorporated by the Brontë sisters: *Wuthering Heights*, in which “Bronte implicates her readers in a bivalent world” (Kearns 1996: 175) begins and ends with ghostly visions that have suggest natural explanations; in *Jane Eyre* the heroine believe she hears Mr. Rochester calling to her from a very far distance; the heroine of *Villette* (1853) thinks that she has seen the ghostly nun. Such plot turns added some mystery to the plain circumstances of everyday life.

Other ways in which Victorian fiction displayed its interest in the real world was representation of the speech patterns of single English regions and social groups and the use omniscient third-person narration. Anthony Trollope mastered narration which

reflected contemporary society back to the reader in *The Way We Live Now* (1875) whereas George Eliot championed a method of approaching characters rather than inventing them. One more skillful earlier example of omniscient narration was Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* (1847-1848), designed as a satirical morality play and combining the writer's "awareness of his reader with a demonstration of his sensitivity to [...] the inequalities in human relations" (Salmon and Crossley 2016: 182). Generally speaking, Victorian realism demonstrated an all-encompassing concern with the commonplaces of contemporary of middle, lower and working-class life, portrayed its characters as socially produced, and made environment the key element in plot movement. However, later writers were disaffected by realism's excessive emphasis on external reality. Some, most remarkably Henry James, turned to psychological realism with its close examination of mind and consciousness.

In the Victorian period the scale of the engagement of poetry, drama and visual arts with Shakespeare increased as the playwright, respected and appreciated ever since the Romantics for his poetic imagination and psychological intuition, turned into the figure of the national Bard. In the nineteenth-century novel, Shakespearean drama entered a new phase of renewal and reinterpretation. It is not surprising that in his essay devoted to George Eliot, Peter Bayne claimed, "were Shakespeare now alive he would write novels" because they are "really adapted in an extraordinary degree to afford play to a versatile, inventive, all-comprehending mind" (Bayne 1867: 141). The Victorians took the playwright as the unquestionable authority who might help them to establish their own credentials as creative writers. Thomas Hardy's novel, *The Return of the Native* (1878), shows itself as a good example of a centonical text comprised of frequent reminiscences of Shakespearean scenes and allusions to his plays. The living conditions of the protagonist Eustacia remind the reader of *King Lear*, her behavior and love affairs refer to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, while her "passionate theatricality is given a voice by Shakespeare [...] those elements in her which most lend themselves to a Shakespearean articulation – her passion, her cross-dressing, her scheming and her willful ambition – and which determine her tragic ending" (Marshall 2014: 97) evoke both Lady Macbeth and Ophelia. Hardy's imagination is similar to the Brontë's, "behind [whose] heaths and moors [...] lie the great landscapes of *King Lear* and *Macbeth*, with their visions of what it means to be abandoned, houseless, beyond the pale" (Poole 2004: 143). George Eliot's fiction, especially her later novels such as *Felix Holt* (1866), *Middlemarch* (1871-1872) and *Daniel Deronda* (1876), also echoes Shakespeare in the way it

dramatizes the life of their female characters who adopt the roles of the playwright's heroines. In creating female characters, she followed the tradition of women's rewriting of Shakespeare started by Mary Lamb and Anna Jameson and continued with her own allusions to Ophelia in her characterization of Hetty in *Adam Bede* (1859) and Maggie Tulliver in *The Mill on the Floss* (1860), or to Cordelia in the title-character of *Romola* (1863).

In general, Shakespeare's "psychological insights, his recognition of the weaknesses which attend upon, and are indeed produced by, the best aspirations" appealed to the Victorians, who sought "their own ways of articulating the nuances of relationships that could be transmitted in such detail in the form of the novel" (Marshall 2014: 104). In the nineteenth century the theatrical novel became and remained for a long time a popular genre whose wide-spread, though sometimes inconsistent, references to Shakespeare display an illustrative interplay of theatre and fiction, in particular the assimilation of the image of Juliet in actress-heroines of such novels as *My Sister the Actress* (1881) by Florence Marryat, *Only an Actress* (1883) by Edith Drewry, *Through the Stage Door* (1883) by Harriett Jay and *Miss Bretherton* (1884) by Mary Ward.

The Shakespearean was plumbed deep in Anthony Trollope's *He Knew He Was Right* (1869) and, above all, the novels of Dickens. The "great inimitable" may have known Shakespeare by heart because "words and phrases and scenes are so deeply rooted in his imagination that there is no telling when they may break the surface of his writing" (Poole 2004: 118). In 1833 he composed a burlesque Irish version of *Othello* for his family and friends. His letters, fiction and non-fiction such as *Travelling Abroad* (1861) are full of quotations, allusions and reminiscences of Shakespeare present in the form of inversion or travesty. The most essential play for Dickens as for other nineteenth-century novelists was *Hamlet*, mostly for its protagonist as a prototype of a young man searching for his place in the world. Imagery and motivic parallels with Shakespeare's tragedy are obvious in his *Nicholas Nickleby* (1838-1839), *David Copperfield* (1849-1850) and *Great Expectations* (1860-1861). Equally, in novels from *Dombey and Son* (1846-1848) to the unfinished *Edwin Drood* (1870), the writer turned to darker aspects of Shakespeare's plays such as the horrors and hauntings in *King Lear* and *Macbeth*.

Character criticism was one of the most prolific forms of nineteenth-century Shakespearean interpretation, which culminated in A.C. Bradley's scholarly and influential *Shakespearean Tragedy*, published at the very start of the twentieth century in 1904: "the way [Bradley] considered the life of the characters in their own existence

rather than as subordinate to the play as a whole can be seen as a product of the nineteenth-century focus on the play as textual, rather than performative, experiences” (Hollingsworth 2014: 44). Another widespread form of literary criticism was moral criticism, both prescriptive and descriptive, which attempted to read Shakespeare’s works as a guide for ethical living. Examples include Thomas Grinfield’s *Remarks on the Moral Influence of Shakespeare’s Plays: with Illustrations from Hamlet* (1850), Reverend H. Baar’s *On the Moral Ideals of Shakespeare* (1864), Charles Plumptre’s *The Religion and Morality of Shakespeare’s Works* (1873) and Arthur Gilman’s *Shakespeare’s Morals: Suggestive Selections, with Brief Collateral Readings and Scriptural References* (1879). In contrast, proponents of “Art for Art’s Sake” found no moral purpose in Shakespeare’s plays; vocal among them was Oscar Wilde, whose *The Portrait of Mr. W. H.* which can be considered both as a critical essay (further extended and published as a separate book in 1921) and a story that argues for the validity of different perceptions of art and Shakespeare in the nineteenth century.

The Victorians’ enduring admiration of Shakespeare led to the foundation of Shakespearean literary societies, among the first to be created in Britain. The first, the *Shakespeare Society*, was founded by critics John Collier, Thomas Amyot, Alexander Dyce, James Orchard Halliwell and Charles Knight in 1840; at its meetings the members discussed critical papers on the playwright’s heritage and published the results of their own research in *Shakespeare Society Papers*, an organ that contributed greatly to the development of Shakespeare scholarship. The second, *New Shakspeare* [sic] *Society* was found by F.J. Furnivall in 1873; like its predecessor it took a scientific approach to studying Shakespeare and published its scholarship in the journal *Shakspeare Society’s Transactions*.

In the wake of Stendhal’s famous *Racine and Shakespeare* and Hugo’s 1864 book *William Shakespeare*, though only partly devoted to the playwright, Shakespeare became for French novelists “a model for the kind of inclusive vision that could comprehend a complex society in all its moods” (Stokes 2014: 301). Gustave Flaubert stated in the letter to George Sand that by Shakespeare’s side “everything else looked mediocre” (Flaubert 1988: IV. 997). Belgian Maurice Maeterlinck, poet, critic and dramatist, in his essay *The Awakening of the Soul* spoke of Hamlet as a truth-seeker and the reflection of the time (Maeterlinck 1903: 38). Other Europeans, for example, Italians, “embraced Shakespeare as a symbol of more than artistic freedom in their fight to throw off the foreign yoke” (Poole 2004: 207). The best example of such an appropriation is Verdi’s *Macbeth*.



Nevertheless, apart from the English Victorians, the most massive impact Shakespeare had on the mid-nineteenth-century realist writers and critics was in Russia.

The revolutionary events in France towards the end of the eighteenth century inaugurated in decades of political, religious and social agitation. If not on everyone's lips, the subject of regicide was at the back of many people's minds and it was natural that attention was drawn towards one of Shakespeare's most politically provocative plays, *Macbeth*. As a political play involving the assassination of a ruler, *Macbeth* was associated with several other tragedies and history plays, such as *Hamlet*, *Richard III*, *Julius Caesar*. Macbeth's hallucination of the voice which cried "Sleep no more" (2.2.35) and nightmarish vision of "the multitudinous seas incarnadine, making the green one red" (2.2.59-60), which is echoed in *Coriolanus*'s monstrous image of the crowd, "the many-headed multitude" (2.3.16), became a symbol of revolutionary unrest. In *The French Revolution* (1837), Thomas Carlyle described the 1790s events as "the self-shaking" of "the whole People" that woke up "suddenly out of long death-sleep, and will thenceforth sleep no more!" (1884: 148); this French people was "multitudinous", "the seas of people still hang multitudinous" (1884: 202) and there was "the general outburst of multitudinous Passion" (1884: 148, 202, 338). William Wordsworth's *The Prelude*, written after the September massacres of the French Revolution of 1793, evoked the poet's memory of sleepless nights incorporated in the trance and apocalyptic voices, such as "a voice that cried, / To the whole city, 'Sleep no more!'" (1850: 270).

The tragedy's striking plot and principal characters along with the themes of murder and conscience became a model for many Victorians to portray violent passion and endless guilt accompanied by social isolation and simmering madness. Lady Macbeth became an inevitable model for plots combining women and crimes. At one point, Thackeray's Becky Sharp in *Vanity Fair* blends Lady Macbeth and Clytemnestra for "the Clytemnestra she plays in the charades at Gaunt sounds very like Lady Macbeth" and it is as if Becky were "picking up the scattered allusions" to Lady Southdown looking like Mrs. Siddons, famous for performing Lady Macbeth, to Lord Steyne's spouse "being as gay as Lady Macbeth", and to "the Lady Grizzel Macbeth who is so much more respectable than her great ancestor" (Poole 2004: 101). The vengeful, mad Lady Macbeth came to light in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* in the scene when, in the middle of the night, Bertha Mason burst into Jane's room dressed in white, with a candle in her hand. The contradictory Lady Macbeth was reincarnated in Mary Braddon's Lady Audley, whose good looks and manners were always in contrast with her conduct: "The nerves

with which Lady Audley could meet unmoved the friend of the man she had murdered, are the nerves of a Lady Macbeth who is half unsexed” (Rae 1865; qtd. Skilton 1987: xviii). Braddon’s Aurora Floyd resembled both her bigamist predecessor and Lady Macbeth troubled with guilt; she also displayed good knowledge of Shakespeare: when asked if she needed a doctor’s help, she answered, “Do you remember what Macbeth said to his doctor? There are diseases that cannot be ministered to” (Braddon 1998: 149).

It is well-known that *Macbeth* was one of Dickens’s favourite Shakespeare plays (Litvak 2018: 31; Poole 2004: 123). The writer even compared himself with Macbeth to express his anticipation on starting a new novel, remarking that he was “as infirm of purpose as Macbeth, as errant as Mad Tom, and as rugged as Timon” (qtd. House, Storey and Tillotson 1965-2002: VII. 608) as well as to indicate his reaction to President John Tyler’s compliment: “I would have returned the compliment; but he looked so jaded, that it stuck in my throat like Macbeth’s amen” (qtd. House, Storey and Tillotson 1965-2002: III. 111). From one novel to the next, his characters also alluded to Macbeth. In *Bleak House* Mr. Turveydrop pined that he was “falling into the sear and yellow leaf, and it is impossible to say how long the last feeble traces of gentlemanly Deportment may linger in this weaving and spinning age” (Dickens 1876: 163); in *David Copperfield*, Steerforth exclaimed to Daisy, “And now for dinner! If I have not (Macbeth-like) broken up the feast with most admired disorder” (Dickens 1876: 156); and in *Barnaby Rudge*, the narrator recalled Macbeth’s meditations to point the contrast between the sweet innocence of children’s sleep and the waking nightmares of the slumbering world around (Dickens 1873: 210). The Weird sisters that fascinated the writer in particular were recalled in *Great Expectations* where a housekeeper’s face looked to Pip “as if it were all disturbed by fiery air, like the faces I had seen rise out of the Witches’ cauldron” (Dickens 1874: 293) while in the letter to his sister-in-law he noted that his friend’s moustache begins “at the corner of his mouth like those of the Witches in *Macbeth*” (qtd. House, Storey and Tillotson 1965-2002: VII. 175). The writer’s happy-ending stories had their “darker side” (Miller 1958: 27), which, reinforced by *Macbeth*’s terrors, as the novels grew darker, looked more and more apposite.

George Eliot’s attitude to *Macbeth* as “the play of various, nay, contrary tendencies” (Eliot 1876: 43), as it is called in *Daniel Deronda*, reflected the writer’s contradictory, broadly construed perception of Shakespeare with admiration, on the one hand, and suspicion, on the other. In her dialogue with Shakespeare, she “compels the reader’s sympathy” (Welsh 2001: 66) by directing attention to the aspects in which her

own characters, plots, and dilemmas coincide with those of the playwright in both similarity and difference. This is the likeness between her and Shakespeare's females and the treatment of such issues as feelings, marriage, and tragedy. For instance, an episode in *Middlemarch* alludes to *Macbeth*—"Pity, that 'new-born babe' which was by-and-by to rule many a storm within her, did not 'stride the blast' on this occasion" (Eliot 1878: 15)—to highlight the absence of pity Dorothea feels for her spouse and shed light on the murderous intensity of her reaction. *Macbeth* is one of the leading voices drawn by Thomas Hardy from Shakespeare to convey the writer's own concerns and "explorations of reality" (Saxena and Dixit 2001: 17). In *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, Angel Clare's careful deliberation of rural stereotypes ended up with a pessimistic conclusion that all men "walked in his own individual way the road to dusty death" (Hardy 1912: 152), in reminiscence of *Macbeth*'s "all our yesterdays have lighted fools / The way to dusty death" (5.5.22-23); later in the same novel, Tess's reflects upon what it actually means to walk the hopeless road to the grave, when "you seem to see numbers of to-morrows just all in a line" (Hardy 1912: 159), an allusion to *Macbeth*'s last monologue "To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow" (5.5.19). Many other Hardy characters walked the same dusty road of death, like the young people on the way to Weydon-Priors depicted at the beginning of *The Mayor of Casterbridge*. In *The Return of the Native* Shakespeare's Witches echoed in the mysterious figure of Reddleman who rises from the earth and disappears weirdly and unexpectedly; "omnipresent and all-watchful over the destinies of the other persons of the drama, he [...] interferes at all crises like the finger of a deity" (Duffin 1916: 43).

In British realism's larger accommodations of the romantic supernatural and renewed attention to female sexual identity, as well as in more local allusions, *Macbeth* was a vital touchstone. Unsurprisingly, perhaps, in the context of British political pragmatism and the expansion of an unparalleled empire under the watchful eye of one of the nation's most enduring and popular monarchs, the political frisson of the play's engagement with regicide went unnoticed.

#### 4.B. RUSSIAN REALISM

In Russia, realism in its standard form developed as a literary movement in the 1840s and maintained its hegemony until the end of the nineteenth century. As in France, for about a quarter of the century, until the beginning of the 1850s, romanticism and realism had

coexisted on equal terms, when the latter finally superseded the former as a more valid type of thinking and a more useful stance towards. However, Russian realism evolved in a quite different historical situation and at a fundamentally different, pre-bourgeois, stage of social evolution. Therefore, its realism comprehended and portrayed a different historical reality, for it emerged in the still patriarchal society when epochs were just starting to change and old and new to come into collision. In the second half of the century Russia sensed the impetuosity of historical development and faced the inevitability of change (Polunov 2005: 67). Whereas in western Europe realism had set itself the task of describing and analyzing a long-established modernity, in Russia it turned its hand to transforming the world and the individual. Studying the laws of life in the novel was not to critique a status quo but a necessary condition and a prelude to a future renewal, social, spiritual, and moral. This is what makes Russian realism more synthetic than its other European counterparts in its connection with previous literary trends, such as neo-classicism, sentimentalism and especially romanticism, which even in the mid-1840s was still bursting forth as lyrical, meditative and female poetry and prose, including “fairy” elements, such as Vladimir Odoevsky’s *the Russian Nights*, Aleksey Tolstoy’s *The Vampire*, Fyodor Dostoyevsky’s *The Double* and *The Landlady*. An enduring romantic thirst for social reform and individual metaphysics, reflected in the writings of Alexander Pushkin, Nikolai Gogol, and Mikhail Lermontov, as well as an intense quest for a better life, became the key features of classic Russian realism. Russian realism was romantic and revolutionary in its conception and remained revolutionary until its grave.

The 1840s were the period of aesthetic breakthrough and a bracing interaction of various ideological and artistic systems from which realist principles emerged to take hold of poetry and prose. The second and third decades of Nicholas I’s reign imposed harsh conditions on the serfs and saw a crackdown on freedom of thought. In what Herzen called “the time of external slavery and internal liberation” (qtd. Shatalov 1980: 27), philosophical, religious and literary controversy escalated and often took a bitter turn. The issue of the country’s past, present and future as well as the manner of its evolution and its role in world history divided the educated Russian minority into the Westerners and the Slavophiles. The former, led by Vissarion Belinsky, Aleksander Herzen, and Timofey Granovsky, considered the paradigm of western civilization universal and thus believed that Russia should have adopted it and assimilated European culture along with it; the latter, among them Aleksey Khomiakov, Ivan Kireevsky, Konstantin Aksakov, were convinced that “historical-cultural differences between Russia and the West

indicated Russia's superiority and the radically different nature of Russian society and history" (Horuju 2010: 27). It was the Westerners who made realism a principal artistic method and converted reality with all its diversity of unpoetical, ordinary, vulgar phenomena into an object of aesthetic experience. Belinsky was the first to advance the need for "real" or "realistic" (not "realist"; this term was introduced in the 1850s by A. Grigoriev) literature whose principles were incorporated in the writings of the Natural School, so-called because of its "fondness for depicting life in the raw" (Harper 1956: 400). Representatives of the school were united by the belief "in a decisive role of external influences on a man's life" (Čiževskij 1974: 5) and analytical interest in the effect of social mores on people, especially the lower and middle classes. A dominant genre was sketches, short feature stories which depicted true-to-life events that happened to people of various social, professional, ethnographic types. In fact, the sketch was the first genre to embrace two core principles of the Russian realist method: the creation of typical historical characters that embody essential, generic features of a certain environment, epoch or social order; and the quest for objectivity or authenticity in the portrayal of reality and a recreation of life in its natural course and lifelike forms. Sketches collected into books remained commonplace into the 1850s, among them Ivan Turgenev's *A Hunter's Album* (*Zapiski okhotnika*, 1852), Mikhail Saltykov-Shchedrin's satirical *Provincial Sketches* (*Gubernskie očerki*, 1856-1857) and Goncharov's *The Frigate "Pallada"* (*Fregat "Pallada"*, 1858). Gradually, they took second place to the novel which became the leading genre of Russian fiction, as it was in European realism. In Russia, the novel made its appearance in the later 1840s in the shape of Herzen's *Who Is to Blame?* (*Kto vinovat*, 1846) and Ivan Goncharov's *A Common Story* (*Obyknovennaya istoriya*, 1847).

The 1850s with their so-called Gloomy Seven Years and tightened censorship despite "the lack of precipitating factors" (Novikov and Perfilova 2012: 7) and simply motivated by the revolutionary events of 1848, came to an end with Nicholas I's death in 1855. Yet it had not marked a pause in Russia's literary development. There had been an endless for new artistic principles (mostly psychological) for presenting reality and people. Many writers had already realized the insufficiency of explaining human complexity solely in terms of environmental factors. The need to portray a person in his connections with the world required mastering new literary genres that would embody these relationships, such as the memoir and autobiographical fiction. These years saw the publication of Leo Tolstoy's trilogy *Childhood*, *Boyhood*, and *Youth* (*Detstvo*,

*Otrochestvo*, *Yunost*, 1852-1856), Sergei Aksakov's *The Family Chronicle* (*Semeinaya khronika*, 1856) and Herzen's *My Past and Thoughts* (*Byloe i dumy*, started in 1852), among others. The 1850s saw, then, the literary debuts or second births of almost all major Russian prose-writers of the second half of the nineteenth century: Turgenev, Goncharov, Dostoyevsky and Tolstoy (Korovin 2017: 318). At the same time, they were the period of a burning debate over the role of art between radical democrats (Nikolai Chernyshevsky, Nikolai Dobrolyubov, Nikolai Nekrasov), who struggled for revolutionary social changes and saw art as an aid to this struggle, and representatives of the "Art for art's sake" movement led by Alexander Druzhinin, who defended the autonomy of art and its independence from the current concerns: "art is and should be a purpose for itself" (2013: 664). In critical essays and political satire, revolutionary democrats stigmatized those writers who glorified the beauty of nature, love, universal human values for their indifference to social vices and contemporary problems. Such a quest to make literature an instrument of their social struggle, thereby reducing its independent significance, self-worth and self-sufficiency and subjecting it to purely utilitarian goals, fostered the rise of the so-called anti-nihilist novel (Dostoevsky, Leskov, Goncharov, Pisemsky) that criticized the materialistic ideology promulgated by the "new" people, the characters who hogged the limelight in the radical fiction of 1860-1870s. The term was coined by Chernyshevsky in the 1863 novel *What Is to Be Done?*, an instance of the writer's "curious and ill-digested amalgam of crude Feuerbachian materialism and determinism, Benthamite Utilitarianism, and Utopian Socialist perfectionism" which demonstrated the inability of his doctrine to solve all the major problems of social and human life (Frank 1990: 194). This literary controversy was also reflected in critical spats between revolutionary democratic (*The Contemporary*, *The Russian Word*, *The Whistle*) and liberal conservative (*The Russian Thought*, *The Herald of Europe*, *The Time*, *The Epoch*) periodicals.

In the mid-1850s, Turgenev published his first novel *Rudin* (1857) which rapidly spawned a brood of novels in the late 1850s and early 1860s such as Aleksey Pisemsky's *One Thousand Souls* (*Tysiacha dush*, 1858), Goncharov's *Oblomov* (1859), Turgenev's *A House of Gentlefolk* (*Dvoryanskoe gnezdo*, 1859), *On the Eve* (*Nakanune*, 1860), and *Fathers and Sons* (*Ottsy i deti*, 1862), and Dostoyevsky's *Humiliated and Insulted* (*Unizhennye i oskorblionnye*, 1861) and *The House of the Dead* (*Zapiski iz miortvogo doma*, 1862), This was the beginning of the Russia's two great novel producing decades, the 1860 and 1870s.

While the novels of the 1860s and 1870s staged the unabated controversy between the materialist ideals of nihilists or “new people”, on the one hand, and Christian virtues and the psychologizing approach to individuals (deemed as rather more complicated than the mere product of a certain time and environment) like Dostoyevsky’s hero-ideologists, Leskov’s righteous people or Tolstoy’s truth-seekers on the other, late nineteenth-century fiction was marked by the lack of progressive ideas. It was characterized instead by a sense of the chaotic confusion, complexity and incomprehensibility of life as a whole and its tragedy, regardless of social circumstances or political regime, which prompted a search for a discrete worldview (Gurevich 2003: 491). Russian literature of the 1880s interacted with philosophy to develop new aesthetic and ethical principles (Vladimir Solovyov, Konstantin Leontiev, Vasily Rozanov). The most characteristic feature of this process was the almost complete disappearance of the novel and the flourishing of small prose genres—essays, short stories, novellas—the most famous of which were Anton Chekov’s creative works. A naturalistic trend re-emerged (Piotr Boborykin, Dmitry Mamin-Sibiriak), as did a growing longing for expressiveness in poetry, which led to the formation of symbolism in the early twentieth century. Another peculiar feature of the period was the vigorous development of drama (Alexander Ostrovsky’s and Leo Tolstoy’s last plays, Chekov’s *Ivanov* (1887) and *Uncle Vanya* (1898)).

#### 4.C. SHAKESPEARE AND RUSSIAN REALISM

##### *Shakespeare in criticism, translation and literature*

Shakespeare’s influence on Russian culture reached its peak in the 1840s in the works of the so-called post-Pushkin generation of writers born in the second two decades of the century and formed spiritually and philosophically in the 1830s. The events of December 1825 were just childhood impressions for them. They had not been participants nor were directly connected with the Decembrist movement. However, the consequences of the Revolt had a significant effect on their life and outlook. The results of tsar Nicholas’s repressions turned out to be much more complex than was to be expected. Alexander Herzen claimed that “Nicholas aimed only at constraint; he cannot be blamed for the benefit he made but it was made [...] Those people who came to the stage<sup>39</sup> were sad but

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<sup>39</sup> Here Herzen means the writers of the post-Pushkin generation.

graceful, they realized their righteousness and powerlessness, their alienation [...] but did not give up nevertheless” (Herzen 1954-1965: XIV. 157). These writers had different worldviews and met with different fates: some like Nikolai Stankevich and Aleksey Koltsov died in the early 1840s; others continued writing until the 1880s (Dostoevsky, Turgenev) and 90s (Leskov, Goncharov). Among them were many critical writers, philosophers, and political activists like Herzen, Nikolay Ogarev or Apollon Grigoriev. However, despite all the differences there were some features that united all of them, one of which, for various aesthetic and social reasons, was the cult of Shakespeare. Piotr Annenkov indicated the playwright’s impact on his contemporaries: “Shakespeare gave the whole generation a chance to [...] understand historical problems and important conditions of human life” (1874: 298).

There are various references to Shakespeare around the Russian mid-century. For example, Belinsky, one of the major literary critics of a westernizing tendency, became interested in Shakespeare while studying at Moscow University. There, he became a member of the university philosophical society, run by Stankevich. This society made a significant contribution to the formation of the ideological thinking of Russian young people in the 1830 and 40s. As for its literary preferences, “Shakespeare, Goethe, Shiller have always been on the lips of these passionate admirers of art, with the first above all, the object of adoration” (Pynin 1876: I. 104). This statement is a reminder of the letter of Belinsky to Stankevich in which, as we saw, he praised the playwright: “Shakespeare is the tsar of poets, the only one, outstanding” (1953-1959: I. 306); “He is the tsar of dramatic poets, crowned by the whole mankind who had and would never have any competitors” (1953-1959: II. 254); “I am overwhelmed with Shakespeare’s drama” (1953-1959: XI. 407. clxxxiv); “He has no peers among poets” (Belinsky 1953-1959: VI. 369); “He is the thoughtful reader of the human heart, the world grasping observer whose works are so astonishing with their versatility and variety of genres” (1953-1959: VII. 314). Commenting on Vasily Botkin’s critical review of the translation of *Antony and Cleopatra* Belinsky wrote: “My goodness, Botkin, tell me whether Shakespeare has written something, I would not say bad, but what is not great or divine (1953-1959: XI. 540). Belinsky himself wrote several reviews of newly published translations of Shakespearean plays, among them two *Hamlet* translations by Nikolai Polevoy (1838) and Andrey Kroneberg (1844). The most noteworthy of Belinsky’s critical essays on the playwright is *Hamlet, Shakespeare’s Drama. Mochalov Starring as Hamlet* (“*Gamlet*”. *Drama Shekspira. Mochalov v roli Gamleta*, 1838). It “was inspired by reflections on



Mochalov's romantic stage interpretation" of Shakespeare's protagonist (Makaryk 2008). According to the critic, "Hamlet [...] is a human life, a man, you and me, every one of us, more or less in the high and cheerful but always in the sad and petty sense" (Belinsky 1953-1959: II. 254). He often referred to Shakespeare in connection with current literary-aesthetic issues; many Shakespeare theatre performances "received his sympathetic response"; his critical reviews stimulated more translations of Shakespeare into Russian and a growth of interest in the playwright in the 1830-1840s (Levin 1988: 114).

Other members of Stankevich's society were also full of praise for Shakespeare. The historian and future founder of mediaeval studies in Russia, Timofey Granovsky wrote to his sisters that "since Shakespeare nobody pleased him so much" and that *The Tempest* is "a wonderful thing which should be read two or three times to see its true value" (Granovsky 1897: II. 107). Journalist Mikhail Katkov translated *Romeo and Juliet*. Essayist and critic Vasily Botkin became one of the first Russian Shakespearean scholars. He translated the article of German theatre critic and theorist Heinrich Theodor Rötcher, *Four New Dramas Attributed to Shakespeare* (1840), and several chapters of the book by English art historian Anna Jameson *Shakespeare's Heroines* (1841). Later he published several essays devoted to Shakespeare: *Shakespeare as a Person and Lyric Poet* (*Shekspir kak chelovek i lirik*, 1842), *Literature and Theatre in England before Shakespeare* (*Literatura i teatr v Anglii do Shekspira*, 1853), *First Dramatic Experiments of Shakespeare* (*Pervye dramaticheskie opyty Shekspira*, 1855). In his letters he also extolled the playwright, as in his comment on *Richard II*: "What a dramatic life, what a depth and plentitude of characters, and what ethereal, striking poetry" (qtd. Egorov 1963: 39). Vasily Krasov composed *Stanzas to Desdemona*, two poems—*Why did you come so late* (*Zachem tak pozdno ty yavilas*, 1838) and *Oh, you are kind, you are the angel of kindness* (*O, ty dobra, ty – angel dobroty*, 1840)—devoted to desecrated love, in which the poet addresses his beloved whom, like Othello, he believes has betrayed him. In 1840, another poet, Aleksey Koltsov, wrote a so-called *duma* (the Russian verb "dumat" means "to think", "to consider"). This philosophical poem, initially called *Shakespeare* but eventually published under the title *Poet*, compared himself and his contemporaries with the playwright and generally embodied the ideas of Stankevich's society.

This was not the only Moscovite society which admired Shakespeare. Herzen and Ogarev turned to the playwright when they moved beyond their youthful romantic passion for Shiller's poetry. In his first collection of autobiographical stories, *Notes of a Young Man* (*Zapiski odnogo molodogo cheloveka*, 1840-1841), Herzen wrote that to understand

Goethe and Shakespeare “one needs to learn the life, needs the experience, needs to feel the tortures of Faust, Hamlet, Othello” (1954-1965: I. 278). Herzen often mentioned Shakespeare in his letters. For example, in 1839 after seeing a performance of *Hamlet*, he told his wife: “Shakespeare is great and immense [...] what a powerful genius to see life in all its immensity from Hamlet to gravediggers! [...] Goethe is right: Shakespeare creates like a deity, there is nothing to add or object to here” (1954-1965: XXII. 65). In another letter written in 1864 he taught his son: “Goethe and Shakespeare are equal to the whole university course. By reading, a person lives out the centuries” (Herzen 1954-1965: XXIV. 276). Herzen did not devote any particular publication to Shakespeare, but Ogarev wrote a poem *Shakespeare* in which he presented the playwright as a man of destiny sent to the world to help mankind learn and understand itself:

Take out their soul and in a new creating  
Give them it back in the reverberant words.  
These words won't disappear from their tales  
And will forever be preserved in thoughts. (1956: 64)

Ogarev also started translating *Hamlet* but did not finish it so it was not published. However, Shakespeare translations by other members of Herzen and Ogarev's circle were published, among them *The Tempest* (1840), by Nikolai Satin, the poet and translator, during his exile in Siberia. In the preface to the translation he inserted his own poem on the play:

Doom removed me from the world here,  
Where in the loneliness I opened, hence,  
The magic world of magical Shakespeare  
With all its great and vivid elegance. (Satin 1840: 5)

Later Satin also translated *Midsummer Night's Dream* while his friend Nikolai Ketcher translated twenty-eight Shakespearean plays in prose. In the middle decades of the century, many new Shakespeare translations were published. Ketcher's translations were very precise; he tried to preserve every word of the original text but due to their prosaic form they lacked the “spirit of poetry of the original” (Botkin 1841: 48). The aim of other translators such as Alexander Druzhinin, Nikolay Satin, Apollon Grigoriev or Piotr Veinberg was to render Shakespeare's style adequately. “The work of these new Shakespeare translators was steeped in scholarship. They spared no pains to study the

source texts [...] and no longer wanted to cater for ‘the enlightened taste’ of groups of prospective readers and spectators [...] they attempted to reproduce Shakespeare’s artistic conception” (Levin 1993: 78). Eventually, in 1865-1868 the complete collection of Shakespeare’s plays came out under the title *Shakespeare’s Dramatic Works, Translated by Russian Authors*, later reprinted more than once (in its wake, more than a dozen editions of *Complete Works* were published). It gained extreme popularity among Russian readers.

Novelist and short story-writer Ivan Turgenev (1818-1883) was considered one of the greatest Shakespearean experts in mid-nineteenth century Russia. He made some attempts to translate *Othello* and *King Lear* while studying philosophy at St. Petersburg and Berlin Universities where his friend and fellow-student, Timofey Granovsky, presented him with a volume of the playwright’s collected works signed “With fear I hope you will start learning father Shakespeare” (Turgenev 1961-1968: I. 188). Philosopher and publicist Piotr Lavrov noted Turgenev’s “remarkable knowledge of Shakespeare, almost by heart” (Petrov and Fridliand, eds. 1969: I. 399). According to the memoirs of the playwright Alexander Ostrovsky, “in 1869, answering the questionnaire of one French magazine, Turgenev listed Shakespeare among his favourite poets, *King Lear* as one of his favourite literary heroes and Juliet as the only favourite heroine” (1929: 365). Turgenev himself gave a glowing account of Shakespeare whom he called “a giant and demigod” in his essay *Hamlet and Don Quixote* (1860): “Everything human is within the power of this English poetic genius [...] astonishing with titanic might of triumphant inspiration [...] fertility and puissance of his imagination, brilliance of the most elevated poetry, depth and vastness of enormous intelligence” (Turgenev 1961-1968: VIII. 185-186). In the anniversary speech of 1864, Turgenev compared Shakespeare with Nature: “Like Nature, he is simple and complex, both, as they say, plainly visible and profoundly deep, free to break any fetters and always full of internal harmony and that steady regularity, logical necessity which underlies all existence” (1961-1968: XV. 51). In his letter to the poet Afanasy Fet, Turgenev wrote: “If the door opened and Shakespeare came in, I would fall on my knees and kiss the ground” (Petrov and Fridliand, eds. 1969: I. 215).

In his memoirs Leo Tolstoy recalled Turgenev as an “undiscriminating admirer of Shakespeare” (1928-1959: XXXV. 573). The writer praised Shakespeare for his knowledge and understanding of his motherland, its history and struggles. In the critical essay devoted to Stepan Gedeopov’s drama *Death of Lyapunov* (1846), Turgenev gave

the example of Shakespeare's "Henries" and "Richards" as the images of "true patriotism [...] reflection of people's everyday life, sympathy with the ancestors. Old England lives and breathes in these undying plays" (1961-1968: I. 271). One of the most appealing features of Shakespeare's art for Turgenev was its humanism. The writer was a committed opponent of serfdom who championed the idea of a person free from any oppression. He contrasted Shakespeare's moral victories over public minds with military triumphs: "The whole world is conquered [...] and these victories are stronger than those of Napoleon and Cesar" (Turgenev 1961-1968: XV. 50). In his letters Turgenev wrote of Shakespeare's spiritual freedom and his humane attitude. For example, in a letter to Belinsky he quoted *Julius Caesar*: "Nature might stand up and say to all the world, this was a man" (5:5) – "this was a man [...] the highest tribute of our admiration to the glorifying genius" (Turgenev 1961-1968: XIV. 62). Turgenev particularly emphasized the objectivity of Shakespearean drama. Writing to young writer Adelaida Lukapina, he remarked: "In a Shakespearean play you will never find the playwright himself, only the life drawn so faithfully that you get to see all this firsthand" (Petrov and Fridliand, eds. 1969: II. 204).

None of Turgenev's views on Shakespeare are unique or original to him: he was not, for example, the first writer to speak glowingly of the playwright's objectivism. However, this feature was to form the basis for his own creative method. Shakespearean allusions can be found in Turgenev's fiction, essays, and letters. Even his first dramatic narrative poem, *Steno* (1834), took its epigraph from *Timon of Athens*. Although considered an imitation of Byron's *Manfred*, the poem is "enclosed within a Shakespearean ring": *Timon of Athens* is quoted in the epigraph ("fly, whilst thou art blest and free", 4.3.591) and its final line, "The secret has come true. Silence! Silence!" (3.3.159), echoes the last words of Hamlet "the rest is silence" (5.2.347) (Shvetsova 2005). There are other evocations of *Hamlet* in the poem such as the soliloquy when the hero takes the skull, images of Laertes and Ophelia (Jacopo and Julia in Turgenev's poem) or the theme of suicide. Hamlet became a key precedent character in Turgenev's fiction and criticism. Hamlet motifs appear in *The Hamlet of Shchigry District (Hamlet Shchigrovskogo uezda*, 1849) and other stories in the collection *The Hunter's Sketches* and his critical essay *Hamlet and Don Quixote*. Another Shakespearean hero is recalled in the novella *King Lear of the Steppes (Stepnoy Korol Lir*, 1870). In the preface to his collected novels, Turgenev quoted Shakespeare to explain his aims and intentions: "I did my best to scrupulously and objectively depict and embody sufficient types in heroes and

what Shakespeare calls ‘the body and the pressure of time’” (Turgenev 1961-1968: XII. 303) – this is the writer’s own loose translation of Hamlet’s words to the Players “to show [...] the very age and body of the time his form and pressure” (3.2.22-24).

Poet Nikolai Nekrasov (1821-1877) supported translations of Shakespeare in Russia. He edited the first publication of *Shakespeare’s Complete Works translated by Russian writers* (1865-1868). Like many other admirers of the playwright, he praised him in essays and letters. In his early critical essays on theatre performances of the early 1840s, he called one of them “truly wonderful”: “If I say that it is Shakespeare’s *Coriolanus*, there will be nothing better to add” (Nekrasov 1948-1952: IX. 454). In his letter to Botkin, he compared Shakespeare with the “colossi who portray a human in such a way that the portrait gets clear and amazing to everyone irrespective of place and time” (Nekrasov 1948-1952: X. 247).

Novelist and short story-writer Nikolai Leskov (1831-1895) was deeply conversant with English literature. His fiction, essays, and letters are replete with quotations and allusions to more than thirty authors, though most often he referred to Shakespeare, Dickens, Byron and Sterne. He respected Shakespeare’s talent, declared him “worthily glorified” (Leskov 1956-158: X. 88) and gave advice to read the playwright, for example, in the letter to Zinaida Akhochinskaya (1891): “Read all of Pushkin, then Shakespeare and then Victor Hugo. This is necessary even for your reputation among well-educated people” (Leskov 1956-1958: XI. 481). He often drew a comparison with Shakespeare’s plays and characters. Praising Ostrovsky’s drama in the essay *Russian Dramatic Theatre in St. Petersburg (Russky dramaticheskyy teatr v Peterburge, 1867)*, Leskov wrote that “Ostrovsky barely fell short of Shakespeare in significance” (Leskov 1956-1958: X. 26). Commenting on Gogol’s funeral, he berated the premature death of the worthy and quoted *King Lear*: “Why should a dog, a horse, a rat have life and thou no breath at all?” (Leskov 1956-1958: XI. 69). In his 1885 letter to Sergey Shubinsky, he spoke in favour of the new story by Aleksey Suvorin and compared its principal female character’s passion with that of Lady Macbeth: “She was rubbing her hands (like Lady Macbeth), to wash away the smell of his disgusting touch. This her new habit until the climax of the story would increase the force of something happening inside her. A very deep and vivid tale!” (Leskov 1956-1958: XI. 307). On the other hand, in a letter to Suvorin (1887), he criticized Leo Tolstoy’s drama *The Power of Darkness*: “There is something ‘Shakespearean’, but it is only the power of roughly depicted passions. This play will not enjoy longevity” (Leskov 1956-1958: XI. 334).

As for Leskov's fiction, Shakespeare works are alluded to on the intertextual and paratextual levels. Intertextually, quotations and allusions perform various functions in the writer's novels and short stories. Most often Leskov quoted from the tragedies *Hamlet*, *King Lear*, *Macbeth*, *Otello*, and *Timon of Athens*, less frequently from comedies like *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Merry Wives of Windsor*. It was his usual practice to employ non-attributed quotations and precedent images of Shakespearean heroes and heroines to add expressiveness to the characterization of his own protagonists and antagonists. Parallels are often created through metaphoric naming. For example, in the story *Laughter and Sorrow* (*Smekh i gore*, 1870) Leskov discussed moral and social problems in the form of a conversation between the narrator and a district police officer, Vasilyev, who likened himself to King Lear due to his doubts about the morality of the Russian legal and judicial system: "To tell the truth, I haven't decided yet whether the crime originated the law or the law originated the crime. And when I think of myself as somebody's judge, I'm thinking in my right mind like King Lear in his madness: as soon as you probe deep into the history of crimes, you see: 'None does offend'" (Leskov 1956-1958: IV. 487). In his hesitation the character quoted King Lear's speech on corruption in justice, its victimization of the poor and favoritism of the rich, in which Lear's "None does offend" (4.6.168) implies that nobody has a right to judge others since no one is innocent. An allusion to Othello can be found in the story *The Man of Kolyvan* (*Kolyvansky Muzh*, 1888), where Leskov portrays the type of a hot-tempered ingenuous Russian who, despite his evident weaknesses, gains his listeners' sympathy: "Again like the Moor of Venice I'm saying something" (Leskov 1956-1958: VIII. 414). A comparison with Othello who won Desdemona's love by telling the stories of his adventures emphasizes the hero's extraordinary ability to grip attention and win the hearts of his female neighbors. The heroine of the story *Destiny* (*Yudol*, 1892), Princess D, is compared with Titania by the narrator and other characters. At first, her prejudice against peasants and fear of their riots lead her to be likened to "pre-dawn Titania, who does not see yet that in the dark she kissed... the donkey!" (Leskov 1956-1958: IX. 307). Later, when she realizes her unfair treatment of her friend Polly, who helped poor people survive a lean year, the princess looks like Shakespeare's fairy queen when the charms are dispersed: "Titania – so undecayed and miserable [...] who was suddenly overshadowed by the sun: it was unpleasant and painful to behold, but at the same time she felt she was unable to avert her gaze" (Leskov 1956-1958: IX. 308).

As for paratexts, Leskov often quoted Shakespeare in the epigraphs of his stories. For instance, the words of Flavius when he enters Timon's house with two servants: "All broken implements of a ruin'd house" (4.2) foreshadowed the tragic fate of the main characters in his story *Kotin Doilets and Platonida* (1867), in which the protagonist Kotin lost all his hard-earned property when unjustly accused of kidnapping the merchant Deev's daughter, Platonida. The repeated reminiscence of Hamlet's "There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy" (1.4) in the preface to the short story *White Eagle (Bely orel, 1889)* served, on the one hand, to mock the authors of fantastic tales who used the name of Shakespeare to hide their own incompetence and, on the other, to show Leskov's own interest in abnormal phenomena: "There are things on earth. This is usually used to start such stories to find protection the arrows of wit behind the shield of Shakespeare, for whom there is nothing unknown. I, however, believe, 'there are things', very strange and weird, which are sometimes called supernatural, so I listen to such tales with pleasure [...] I'm sure 'there are things dreamt of in philosophy' and I'm extremely curious of what they imply for others" (1956-1958: VII. 5-6).

Dostoyevsky (1821-1881) had admired Shakespeare from his youth: in an 1840 letter to his brother, he regarded the playwright's drama as "the highest expression of the heart of romanticism" in its combination of poetry and "validity of nature" embodied in "great characters" (1972-1988: XXVIII. 70). Later, in 1860, while planning the series of essays *Utility and Morality (Poleznost i npravstvennost)*, he defended Shakespeare in the controversy with the nihilists: "Shakespeare was studied by civil servants, scholars, and historians" (Dostoyevsky 1972-1988: XX. 152). In the rough drafts of the novel *Demons*, thinking about Shakespeare helped him define his own creative perspective. "Concerning Shakespeare. This is beyond any direction, but everlasting and preserved [...]. Shakespeare is a prophet sent by the Lord to proclaim the mystery of a human and human soul" (Dostoyevsky 1972-1988: XI. 237). In his own fiction, Dostoyevsky aimed to revealing the secrets of the human heart. In 1880 he wrote: "They call me psychologist. It is not right. I am just a realist, eminently so, who depicts the depths of the human soul" (qtd. Miller, ed. 1883: 373).

Dostoyevsky considered Shakespeare as an icon of supreme creativity. In *A Writer's Diary (Dnevnik pisatel'ia, 1877)* he noticed that "in the chaos of modern public life it is impossible to find any serviceable rule or guideline even for an artist of Shakespearean dimension" and asked the question "who can light up just a little of this

chaos even without dreams of taking a guideline” (Dostoevsky 1972-1988: XXV. 35). Here the writer was doubting his own abilities to measure up to Shakespeare despite their common ground as artists confronted with epochal change and searching for a way out of the crisis. His reasoning about the “decomposing” contemporary life which raised the question of the one who could “point out” “new jointing fundamentals” (Dostoyevsky 1972-1988: XXV. 35) alluded to Hamlet’s “The time is out of joint. O, cursed spite / That ever I was born to set it right” (1.5.190-191). The reason Dostoevsky saw similarities between the times of Shakespeare and his own is clear. They both lived and wrote during periods of “enormous breakdown, enormous shifts and clashes of social patterns and such frames of mind as have never come in touch with each other before”, which was why “Dostoevsky like Shakespeare showed the devastation of all common, natural connections: children endanger the life of their father, servants make head against their lords, friendship turns into envy and competition, love into jealousy and hatred, etc.” (Lunacharsky 1957: 280). In 1876, the writer expressed his concerns about literature and morality: “Ancient tragedy is worship and Shakespeare is desperation. More desperate than Don Quixote. The beauty of Desdemona is sacrificed [...] The Shakespeare of our times would also amount to desperation. But in Shakespearean times faith was strong. Today everybody wants only happiness” (Dostoevsky 1972-1988: XXIV. 160). According to Dostoyevsky, desperation stands for crisis, the destruction of ancient harmony, and he found it in Shakespeare, Cervantes and in his own fiction. “The Shakespeare of our times” is probably Dostoevsky, and those of his contemporaries who had to struggle with their doubts and overcome the despair which was reflected in their writings. What is remarkable about Dostoevsky is that when considering any philosophical or aesthetic problem, he always invoked some human genius or established authority, mostly Shakespeare. For example, he claimed: “A single person is not able to find an everlasting, quite universal ideal – even if he is Shakespeare himself” (Dostoevsky 1972-1988: XVIII. 102). In the rough drafts of *Crime and Punishment* he wrote: “Such an idea often came to my mind that a man who turns up the soil can be Newton or Shakespeare” (Dostoyevsky 1972-1988: VII. 197) to emphasize that seemingly ordinary people can have Shakespearean potential and talents.

Shakespeare plays a key role in the spiritual life of the heroes of the novella *Uncle’s Dream (Diadiushkin son, 1859)*. Zina, daughter of “the first lady of Mordasov city”, Maria Moskaleva, falls in love with a poor teacher, Vasya, despite social superstitions. They read Shakespeare together which leads to their liberation from the



pressure of hypocritical moral principles exerted by their surroundings. In contrast, the older generation resists the playwright, whose views seem to contradict the established public order. Maria calls her daughter's feelings "romanticism evoked by this damned Shakespeare who, as if on purpose, sticks his nose where it does not belong" (Dostoevsky 1972-1988: II. 324) and explains Zina's reluctance to take part in her machinations on the grounds that "she overread this fool Shakespeare with her foolish teacher" (Dostoyevsky 1972-1988: II. 384). The playwright is responsible for her daughter's free thinking. She also blames Mozglyakov, a young man who proclaims "some newest ideas": "Last time you said you would set free your peasants and that something should have been done for our age, all this is because you have read too much of that your Shakespeare" (Dostoyevsky 1972-1988: II. 307). Twelve years later, the writer returned to the problem of generation gap in *Demons* (1871) now turning people of the 1840s into an older generation which still admires Shakespeare. The main representative of this generation in the novel is Stepan Verkhovensky, "a clear and ideal pro-westerner with all the beauties", as Dostoyevsky described him in his drafts for the work (1972-1988: XI. 65). Verkhovensky speaks in favour of the playwright. He tries to explain to Varvara Petrovna the behavior of her son with the help of Shakespeare's history plays; he retells *Hamlet* to Liza Tushina. At the end of the novel, when after several years of seclusion he has the chance to speak in front of the big audience, he commences his speech with words about Shakespeare and, in response to heckling from his audience, exclaims, "I declare that Shakespeare and Rafael are higher than the liberation of the peasants, higher than nationality, higher than socialism, higher than the young generation, higher than chemistry, higher almost than the whole of humanity, for they are already the fruit, the genuine fruit of the whole of humanity, and, perhaps, the highest fruit that can exist" (Dostoyevsky 1972-1988: X. 372-373). Worth noting too are the *Othello* allusions in the drafts of *The Idiot*, *Demons*, *The Meek One*, and *A Raw Youth*: "the play was most often in Dostoevsky's mind as he conceived his characters" (Lantz 2004: 394).

The variety of references to Shakespeare is proof of the playwright's significance for Russian people of the 1840s. Moreover, unlike before, the passion for Shakespeare spread among all social classes, not only the intellectuals. The early 1840s were perhaps the period of Shakespeare's greatest popularity, and particularly of *Hamlet*. "Here a fancy for Shakespeare comes close to mania. Although among all the possible manias this one is the most excusable" (Stroyev 1842: 111). Even "the pitiless censorship of tsar Nicholas" treated new translations of the plays "with reverential respect" and allowed

them to be published unchanged because “Shakespeare belongs to classical writers of the newer literature and is translated into all languages without the slightest change as a creator and representative of the new drama” (Levin 1964: 199).

### *Russian “Hamletism” and “superfluous” men*

From the late 1840s Shakespearean heroes, above all Hamlet, gained critical importance for Russian writers who sought to create an image of a Russian national hero for their times. The tragic scenario of Russian public life gave birth to numerous Russian Hamlets (Lukov, Zakharov and Gaydin 2010: 3-4) who, like Shakespeare’s, realized the inhumanity and hostility of the social realm and were confronted with the task of fighting it and their inability to do it. Such dramatic collisions and the reasons which caused them—whether the intrinsic motives of the character or external circumstances—sparked many and varied interpretations of the Shakespearean hero in Russian criticism and fiction and would later issue in the concept of “Hamletism” (Semenenko 2007: 70). The sufferings of the Prince of Denmark were now an allegory of the spiritual life of an entire generation or sometimes even the of whole Russian nation as it attempted to overcome its historical crisis (Letina 2016: 91). Thus, Russian Hamletism came to take on a life of its own. Writers digressed from the original play to use the concept to depict the reality and reflect the interests and needs of their time. In the process, Russian Hamlets were divorced from all details of the original Shakespearean plot. Unlike other iconic characters whose significance was always tied of with aspects of their respective storylines, Hamlet became a diegetic free agent. In rewritings, the name of Othello always designated a jealous man who killed his wife, that of King Lear, an old man betrayed by his heirs. But Russia’s new breed of Hamlets did not seek vengeance for their murdered fathers or vie for the throne but stood for the moral and psychological issues and conflicts that were incarnated in Shakespeare’s hero.

The creative assimilation of Hamlet in Russia had commenced in the 1820s, in the early days of Russian romanticism. Hamlet had been used as an image of a strong-willed and determined person: he was, for instance, the prototype of Chatsky, the protagonist of the verse comedy, *Woe from Wit*, written by Alexander Griboyedov in 1825. In the play, Chatsky became a social outcast due to such “Hamletian” features as intelligence, self-reflection, criticism, recklessness and his menace to the ruling authorities (Florinskaya 1977: 39-41; Savchenko 2015: 64-65). Alexander Pushkin had created a parodic, comical image of Hamlet in Lensky, the young, sensitive and poetical character which his verse

novel, *Eugene Onegin* (1823-1831), pitted against a cold-hearted, world-weary social cynic Onegin, whose character combined some features of Hamlet and Byron's Childe Harold (Lotman 1995: 427). Until the early 1830s Hamlet remained topical for Russian literature and often connected with the Decembrists who were sure about their right and ability to distinguish and change the fate and the future of their motherland according to their beliefs. Though often prey to contradictions, even doubts—Hamletian to that extent, no amount of thinking would paralyze them or deter them from their actions. Even after the defeat of the movement, they continued to believe in the possibility of materializing their ideals and aims.

From 1839 and the appearance of Pechorin in Mikhail Lermontov's novel *The Hero of Our Time*, Hamlet became associated with the image of the "superfluous man". The term was introduced by Turgenev in the story *Diary of a Superfluous Man* (*Dnevnik lishnego cheloveka*, 1850), although this literary type with such characteristic features as spiritual lassitude, self-reflection, skepticism, recklessness and defiance of ruling authorities actually started its literary formation with Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin* and Lermontov's *Pechorin*. The period of transition from romanticism to realism and beyond to mid-century and the reign of tsar Nicholas was characterized by the absence of any hero whom writers could invoke when attempting to find answers to questions about the country's image, its fate and mission in the world. Russian Hamlet as a social type turned into an inactive, reflective, sensitive, critical, selfish, unhappy personality, who was useless for society and could not find his place in the world around. Such a new perception was popularized by Nikolay Polevoy's translation of the tragedy, which deliberately adapted the original play to the public mood of the 1830 and 40s. In 1834 his journal *The Moscow Telegraph* was banned by the government and the editor found himself isolated in solitude, all hopes dashed and absolutely powerless to change the situation. All his disillusionment and anger manifested themselves in his meticulous translation. In the opening speech of the first performance in the Moscow Theatre, Polevoy called Shakespeare "a prophet who managed to foresee 300 years ahead", while "Hamlet with his world outlook and moral character [...] is the man of our time, the child of the nineteenth century [...] we love Hamlet as our brother despite his weaknesses because his weaknesses are ours too, he feels with our heart and thinks with our head" (qtd. Solovyov 1877: 266).

His interpretation of Hamlet was based on Goethe's conception of weakness of will in the face of duty,<sup>40</sup> which transformed the Prince into a paltry, negligible person. For example, in his self-flagellating soliloquy after the meeting with Players, Shakespeare's Hamlet reproaches himself as "a rogue and peasant slave", "a dull and muddy-mettled rascal", "a coward", "a villain", "an ass" (2.2.520, 539, 543, 544, 556). Shakespeare's abuse is morally oriented, whereas Polevoy's is more existential in its emphasis on Hamlet's pettiness: "What a pitiful creature I'm", "Such a naught, a misbegotten man" (2.2.520, 532). The translator even adds on his own: "Hamlet, Hamlet! Shame on you!" (2.2.546-547). Nothingness becomes a leitmotif of Polevoy's *Hamlet* from the very first soliloquy. While Shakespeare's Prince considers "all the uses of this world" "weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable", in the Russian translation they simply turn into the naught, null ones: "So naught a person's deeds on the earth are" (1.2.121-122). An existential nothingness recurs in Polevoy's version of "Frailty, thy name is woman!" (1.2.146), which becomes, "Oh, women! Nonentity is your name" (1.2.131).

Unlike Shakespeare's Hamlet, Polevoy's Prince is unruly, acerbic and despises all mankind. The epithets he applies to his surroundings have strongly negative connotations. For example, speaking with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern he says, "I abominate man", substituting hyperbolic spleen for the measured litotes of the original, "man delights not me" (2.2.304). Again, commenting on the queen's decision in *The Mousetrap* to marry her husband's murderer, Hamlet tells Ophelia, "this is miching malhecho, it means mischief" (3.2.132), which Polevoy changes to "What should we expect of people! Any villainy" (3.2.65). On the other hand, Polevoy's Hamlet grieves over the people's lot. When the Prince condemns his mother, he says "You put to death belief in a person's soul" (3.4.125) and ends his soliloquy with "I fear / for a man I fear" (3.4.151-152). This latter interpolation expressed the Russian people's fear for their lives and for the violation of human dignity during Nicholas' rule. It was picked up by many critics, who took it as encapsulating to core meaning of Shakespeare's tragedy. Belinsky wrote: "This ending belongs to the translator but Shakespeare himself would mistake it for his own as it suits here perfectly, in keeping with himself" (1953-1959: II. 432). Polevoy also intensified social motifs. In scenes mentioning Denmark, he replaced the name of the country with

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<sup>40</sup> The germ of Goethe's sentimental view of Hamlet may be found in a phrase: "A lovely, pure, noble and most moral nature, without the strength of nerve which forms a hero, sinks beneath a burden which it cannot bear and must not cast away" (Goethe 1875: 227). While Hamlet's "most moral nature" imbues him with a great anxiety to do right, the "too hard present" makes his "holy duties" impossible to be fulfilled what torments the hero and prevents him from "recovering his happiness" and peace of mind (Goethe 1875: 227).

the word “motherland” to make the play resonate more with Russian audience. Meanwhile, he fudged the tragic contradictions which beset Shakespeare’s Hamlet for his own protagonist makes no attempt to fight breaches of justice but simply mourns in impotent grief.

This interpretation of Shakespeare’s hero made Hamlet symbolize the Russian intelligentsia whose members were afflicted with political powerlessness and melancholy. It reflected a time when “melancholy [...] became some fashionable disease, so many people embraced modern Hamletism wholeheartedly” (Leonidov 1888: 231). According to Belinsky, Russian society was trapped in the “Hamlet condition”: “to lose self-confidence, to see your beliefs in complete discordance with your life is a loss, a terrible loss” (1953-1959: II. 292). His apprehension of “Hamlet’s collision” transformed Belinsky’s criticism from romantic idealism to a self-absorption and realism, personified in Hamlet, which was rooted in the critic’s deep dissatisfaction with his inability to enter “the desperate showdown with the unjust regime”: “There are so many reasons for Hamlet to avenge dreadfully and relentlessly! He knows what he has to do, what his fate demands from him, but he quails before his gest, fears the horrible challenge, and is only speaking instead of acting in his shameful hesitancy” (1953-1959: VII. 313). Similarly, Herzen considered Hamlet an image of his generation’s historically contingent dubitiveness. In the essay *Whims and Doubt (Kaprizy i razdumie, 1842)* he wrote: “We do not want to take even one step without thinking it over, we incessantly stop over like Hamlet to think more. We have no time to act. [...] This is the illness of a transitional epoch” (Herzen 1954-1965: II. 49). In his next essay, *My Past and Thoughts (Byloe i dumy, 1856)*, he emphasized that “the character of Hamlet appears especially in times of doubts and questioning, times when ill-doings are comprehended” (Herzen 1954-1965: IX. 37). Other critics considered Hamlet a symbol of their lost generation. For example, in a letter of 1845, Botkin told Ogarev: “Reflection killed our ability to feel fully [...] Life seemed to me, as Hamlet said, an empty field [...] with death over it as the most welcomed friend. I greatly fear, Ogarev, such a state of mind” (qtd. Vetrinsky 1894: 65).

### *Shakespeare in literary-political controversy*

The rise of Hamletism in Russian literature went hand in hand with the consolidation of realist psychologism. The name of Hamlet became a genetic term which included features of a particular social and psychological complex. In fiction it was first evoked in Turgenev’s story *Hamlet of the Shchigry District*, published in the *Sovremennik*

periodical in 1849. The sketch was written in Paris and inspired by the February Revolution which had put an end to monarchy in the country and led to the creation of the French Second Republic. These revolutionary events were not described directly in the story. However, they influenced the development of Turgenev's Hamletism, whose conception was later disputed in the essay *Hamlet and Don Quixote* (1860). Events in France proved that it was possible for some democratic forces in society to rebel, thereby getting the moral better hand of self-absorbed, inactive Russian Hamlets. Because Turgenev felt the need for change and for action, "in Hamlet he saw the tragedy of a man whose will was so paralyzed as the result of introspection that he was doomed to practical inaction" (Rinkus 1975: 81). In this his critique found common ground with Russian nineteenth-century intellectuals in general. The second part of Turgenev's *Hamlet of the Shchigry District* was devoted to the confessions of a poor landlord, a former member of a philosophical society, who reproached the meaninglessness and futility of his life, as well as his self-absorption and alienation. In other words, "it is the self-revelation of a figure finding refuge in his sense of superfluity" (Peace 2008: 260). Wrapped up in his self-reflection, he was "barren and unable to love, to act, or to create" (Patyk 2017: 56), which made him ashamed of himself. In *Hamlet and Don Quixote*, the writer contrasted the "superfluous" and the "doers", comparing Shakespeare and Cervantes' heroes. The former were regarded as Hamlets, "thoughtful, versatile, firm in their opinions but [...] not useful [...] and] condemned to passivity", while the latter were "semi-insane Quixotes who are useful and make things and people move just because of the fact that they see the only goal (which often does not exist) and become attached to it" (Müllerová 2011).

Turgenev continued to use Hamlet as a social and psychological type in his fiction. His Hamlets displayed themselves as individuals who differed greatly from each other but were united by some common features. Hamletian traits can be detected in most of his "superfluous" characters, such as the narrator of the *Asya* story (1858), Litvinov in the novel *Smoke* (*Dym*, 1867) and Sanin in the novel *Torrents of Spring* (*Veshnie vody*, 1872). However, the closest to *Hamlet and Don Quixote* is the novel *On the Eve* (*Nakanune*, 1860). Early in the essay, Turgenev pitted two characters against each other: a self-reflecting egoist and a self-sacrificing quixotic enthusiast. Hamlet was recast as the artist Shubin who reckoned himself one of the "small fry, nibblers, Hamlets on a small scale, self-absorbed" (Turgenev 1928: 244), selfish and skeptical people. Don Quixote was reborn as Insarov, a Bulgarian who was ready to make any sacrifice for the liberation of his motherland. Later, the writer assumed that both Hamletism and Quixotism could

conjoin in one person or literary character since Hamlet fights with his long-standing enemies, evil and deceit, which aligns him with the Cervantine hero. Various combinations of Hamletism and Quixotism are to be diagnosed in the leading characters of the novels *Rudin* (1855) and *Fathers and Sons* (1862).

Turgenev's view of Hamlet as "a victim of contrasting social and psychological tendencies" (Diakonova 1998: 103) signalled the end of the early romantic idealization of the Shakespearean hero who was reinterpreted within the realist framework and associated with a "superfluous man". However, Shakespeare's *Hamlet* came in for considerable criticism, was widely parodied and, as a literary image, was generally extinguished from mid-century, when Hamlets or "superfluous men" were challenged by the "new men" in the form of revolutionary commoners or self-employed plebeians ("ranzochinty"). In the political heat of the 1860s, Hamlet lost all social topicality and Shakespeare was shelved for some time with the other classics, ousted by more urgent literary debates. Some Russian writers, especially radical democrats, were determined to dethrone Shakespeare. For example, Nikolay Chernyshevsky called on his readers to "leave off all fake reverence for Shakespeare" and claimed, "half of any drama of his to be unfit for aesthetic enjoyment nowadays" (1939-1953: I. 50, 283). Since his youth the writer had questioned the playwright's authority. In an entry from his diaries of 1848-1850 he wrote of the "superstition that makes me consider great those who are believed to be great, like Shakespeare and others" (Chernyshevsky 1939-1953: I. 135). Although Chernyshevsky admitted Shakespeare's intellectual capacity, the plays left him indifferent: "he that gives them voice is rather intelligent but still there is nothing special" (on *The Merchant of Venice*; 1939-1953: I. 111); "There is nothing special, absolutely nothing but intellect strikes the eye" (on *The Taming of the Shrew*; Chernyshevsky 1939-1953: I. 241). Later, he would recognize the objectivity of Shakespeare's drama along with its emotional diversity: "Shakespeare's poetry responds to all feelings, but it is not subject to any of them [...] neither sadness nor joyfulness or passion will ever enslave it" (Chernyshevsky 1939-1953: IV. 96). However, such objectivism was antithetical to a critic who was convinced that the assessment of life in literature and criticism led to its improvement: "Hardly am I, a man of firm and settled convictions, able to write as Shakespeare did: he depicts people and life revealing nothing of his opinion about the problems which are solved by his characters" (Chernyshevsky 1939-1953: XII. 683). Later, in his treatise *Aesthetic Relations of Art to Reality* (*Esteticheskie otnosheniya iskusstva k deistvitelnosti*, 1855) and some philosophical essays of 1853-1855,

Chernyshevsky used Shakespearean allusions to demolish the principles of idealistic aesthetics, which he used as a foil for revolutionary humanism. He paid particular attention to the problem of the tragic, which was intimately associated with the life of society. Although, at first, he treated the tragic one-sidedly, defining it as something terrible and accidental, he later came fully to appreciate the historical conditions behind the sufferings and death of Shakespeare's characters. In 1857, polemizing with Sergey Dudyskin, one of the apologists of the "art for art's sake" theory, he highlighted the tragic conflict, first formulated by Hegel, that underlies Shakespearean drama between the heroes that embody the lofty ideal of a human being and the hostile circumstances which they find themselves in and have to overcome: "Why should the ideal necessarily be presented in his reconciliation with the reality? [...] Hamlet and Ophelia, Romeo and Juliet, Othello and Desdemona – all of them caused many troubles and griefs both to themselves and others; none of them was put by Shakespeare into 'harmony with the background'" (Chernyshevsky 1939-1953: IV. 697). However, admitting the historical importance of the Shakespearean heritage, Chernyshevsky critic pointed out its divorce from reality. He spoke in favour of its aesthetic reevaluation as a critical task of realist literature.

From 1854 Chernyshevsky called on his readers to treat Shakespeare "without downright servility" because "there is no necessity to give Shakespeare an uncontrolled ascendant over our aesthetic beliefs and quote his tragedies in season and out of season due to their perfection" (1939-1953: II. 283). In his treatise he claimed that Shakespeare was already out of fashion, for he "is appreciated only when we take ourselves back to the times of his scheme of things" (Chernyshevsky 1939-1953: II. 51), while his drama reflects "the taste of the epoch" which makes "half of each play of Shakespeare unable to satisfy the aesthetic wants of today" (Chernyshevsky 1939-1953: II. 50). He even proclaimed the need to improve Shakespearean drama: "Shakespeare is bombastic and pompous; the literary composition of his plays might pass muster only if some changes were made" (Chernyshevsky 1939-1953: II. 51). Inimical to the theory of "art for art's sake", Chernyshevsky stood for the traditions of Belinsky and Gogol and believed that the accomplishments of a writer and any other public figure could be "estimated by his merits to the fatherland" and "his community spirit" (Chernyshevsky 1939-1953: III. 137). Chernyshevsky's criticism revealed the dominant approach to literature in 1860s Russia. Various ideological conflicts, political tension, social unrest and the engagement of literature and art in the social-political arena required only that sort of art which



reflected modern contradictions and showed the active position of its author. Radical critics and writers were sure that Shakespearean drama lacked urgency due to its timeless and universal character. Chernyshevsky and his disciples were unable to realize the importance of the background, historical and national conditions that had given birth and decided the fates of Shakespeare's characters for they were blind to the crisis in Shakespearean England where one historical paradigm replaced another one.

In contrast, another revolutionary critic, Nikolay Dobrolyubov, spoke up for Shakespeare's historical significance. In the essay *Ray of Light in the Dark Realm* (*Luch sveta v tyomnom tsarstve*, 1860), he also disputed the problem of a writer's relevance. Although he believed that "literature is a support facility of some worth for its function as propaganda and valued for the means, the subject and the way it propagates", Dobrolyubov distinguished several writers of genius who were able to "figure out and give shape to the truths which philosophers could only guess at in theory". Those geniuses represented "supreme human consciousness at a certain time" for "they rose above the servile role of literature and entered the range of historical people who helped mankind realize in all lucidity its living powers and natural inclinations" (1934-1941: II. 325). Dobrolyubov considered Shakespearean characters to be "the ideal of a whole person" and called his plays "discoveries in the field of human heart" because the playwright managed to "raise the collective identity of a people to a much higher level than anybody else had ever reached and which some philosophers had only gestured at": therein lay Shakespeare's "world significance" (Dobrolyubov 1934-1941: II. 325).

However, like Chernyshevsky, Dobrolyubov was drawn by Shakespearean humanism. Dwelling upon the character of King Lear, the critic considered him "the victim of an ugly development": "this is a truly strong personality" trapped in "barbarously senseless conditions"; only when he turns into "an ordinary man" can we see "the strengths of his soul [...] generosity, tenderness, sympathy to wretches, and even humane justice". Though, at first, we "have a hatred for this dissolute tyrant", in the end "we are angry not at him but for him and the whole world at those horrible inhuman conditions which can destroy even such strong personalities like Lear" (Dobrolyubov 1934-1941: II. 70-71). By "inhumane conditions" he understood an unnatural social order that saps a person's strengths and thus reveals its own anti-humanist nature. Shakespearean examples helped the critic to present the principles of modern literature, particularly the principle of the intrinsic dependence of subject formation on its surroundings and social environment. Moreover, both critics quoted the same words of

Hamlet, which proved the lingering relevance of Shakespearean heritage in Russia. In 1857 Chernyshevsky admitted: “Shakespeare’s highest accolade for the strongest and best person of all was the words ‘he was a man’” (1939-1953: IV. 770). In his essay of the following year, *On the Participation of the Folk in Russian Literature (O stepeni uchestia narodnosti v russkoi literature, 1858)*, Dobrolyubov agreed: “Even in barbarous sixteenth-century Europe we could hear remarkable words, ‘He was a man’, which expressed a Genius’s idea about people’s virtues” (1934-1941: I. 213). Later, in the essay *Strangled People (Zabitye liudi, 1861)*, the critic called Shakespeare “a true artist [...] whose creations are true to human nature as it should be” (Dobrolyubov 1934-1941: II. 374).

However, the views of revolutionary democrats on all issues including politics, social life, aesthetics and Shakespeare came under heavy fire from the liberal conservatives, whose leader was Alexander Druzhinin, a writer, critic, literature historian, and translator, author of an “artistic theory of independent and free art”, or “art for art’s sake” as it was called by the radicals, which opposed the idea of art’s didactic purpose. Shakespeare was one of the crucial figures for this movement. Paradoxically, at first, Druzhinin criticized the playwright’s drama for being overfilled with metaphors which made it hard to perceive.<sup>41</sup> For example, analyzing *Richard III* as translated by G. Danilevsky in 1850, he stressed “one element, which is the most unpleasant for a Russian person of our time, Shakespeare’s unnaturally flamboyant style, his boisterous metaphors, and lofty speeches” (Druzhinin 1865-1867: VI. 347). Another obstacle to understanding Shakespeare was “a whole sea of years, historical events, peculiarities and superstitions” (Druzhinin 1865-1867: VI. 349) that set up a gap between his and Russian modernity (interestingly, this idea was consistent with Chernyshevsky’s criticism that sought to prove out Shakespeare’s out-of-datedness). In 1854, Druzhinin started a thorough research of the playwright’s heritage and found out that “among all the greatest he struggles with only Shakespeare”: “I must confess ruefully [...] I have been familiar with Shakespeare since long ago but I honor him mostly with my wits, not with my heart [...] I have to work more at myself and only in case of failure will I be able to step aside knowing that a lot has been done” (1986: 314-315). There were only few things in the

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<sup>41</sup> Druzhinin’s atypical attitude towards Shakespeare’s metaphor was not unique though. His complaint goes back at least as far as Dr Johnson’s criticism in *Preface to Shakespeare* (1765) of the playwright’s “inordinate fondness for the effects of multiplied metaphor” (Norris 2010: 49), for Johnson believed such a “quibble [...] has some malignant power” over Shakespeare’s thought and “is sure to lead him out of his way” far from the subject and truth (Johnson 1818: 227).

history plays that he truly admired, such as the character of Hotspur in *Henry IV* and Richmond's speech to the army before the battle in *Richard III* which he believed would help him to "break the back of Shakespeare": "Here shows itself the greatness of Shakespeare [...] all is new, all is deeply artful and deeply ingenious" (Druzhinin 1986: 317. cclxxvii). However, other plays did not appeal to the critic. The beginning of *Twelfth Night* was "not at all his cup of tea"; after that he "began reading *Anthony and Cleopatra* and laid the book aside with a yawn"; *The Winter's Tale* left him "displeased. There is nothing living and poetic here", while in *Hamlet* "turgidity is in full swing" (Druzhinin 1986: 317, 345, 349, 350).

Although his private opinion, concealed in his diaries, coincided with Chernyshevsky's, his public position was quite the opposite for social and political reasons. As a conservative, Druzhinin nodded to tradition by familiarizing himself with Shakespeare and doing his best to find delight in the playwright's drama. He never revealed his misgivings in public. Only in the preface to the translation of *King Lear* did he claim: "we could not recognize all magnificence of Shakespeare at once" (Druzhinin 1865-1867: III. 7), explaining his personal rejection of Shakespeare as the fault of his own narrowmindedness. Shakespeare became a symbol of his fight with democrats over "Art for art's sake". In essays published in the *Sovremennik (The Contemporary)* and *Biblioteka dlya chteniya (The Reader's Library)* magazines from 1848 to 1854, Druzhinin called the playwright "great", "vastly great", "never dying", and "diverse genius" (qtd. Levin 1988: 209). In the article *Pushkin and the Latest Edition of His Works (Pushkin i poslednee izdanie ego sochineny, 1855)*, which set out the principles of "art for art's sake", he considered Pushkin as a "kindly, loving, great poet" and compared him with Shakespeare, alongside Dante, Milton and Goethe—poets who transcended the borders of their country and time: "in Alexander Sergeevich the world was creating a poet of the highest distinction, the brother of [...] Shakespeare" and "only death prevented Pushkin from becoming the Russian Shakespeare" (Druzhinin 1865-1867: VII. 61, 72, 78).

In his next article *Criticism of the Gogol period of Russian literature and our relationship to it (Kritika gogolevskogo perioda russkoi literatury i nashi k ney otnoshenia, 1856)*, Druzhinin turned to Shakespeare for polemical purposes to respond to Chernyshevsky's *Essays on the Gogol period of Russian literature (Ocherki gogolevskogo perioda russkoi literatury, 1856)*. Here Druzhinin pointed out two "opposing theories" that dominated Russian literature of 1850s: the "didactic", whose followers brought "their poetic talent in sacrifice to the interests of the so-called

modernity”, and the “artistic”, which declared “that art serves and should serve itself as a goal” (Druzhinin 1865-1867: VII. 214, 217). In favour of the second movement he described Shakespeare as “a great poet, remote from any didactic thoughts”, “an Olympian in relation to poetry”, “the man of the moment, the philosopher of the present”, “a peaceful and cheerful observer of all that was going on around him” (Druzhinin 1865-1867: VII. 218). In the *Notes of a St. Petersburg tourist* (*Zametki Peterburgskogo turista*, 1855), Druzhinin declaratively opposed the playwright to modern reality. One of the chapters scolds his brother for neglecting profitable acquaintances in his fascination for Shakespeare. On the contrary, the Petersburg tourist (Druzhinin’s protagonist) kisses the young man and tells him: “I justify your choice [...] you were captivated by the image of Cordelia, you witnessed the quarrel of Cassius with Brutus; you were weeping when the mother of Coriolanus fell to her knees to her defiant son; you sang a serenade under the marble balcony of Juliet; you were feasting in a tavern with Sir John Falstaff, the greatest expert in the black magic! He says you cried and laughed at fantasies – do not believe this: this fantasy is beyond any reality” (Druzhinin 1865-1867: VIII. 191). As a conservative, Druzhinin translated and highlighted the significance of *Coriolanus*, “a course in political wisdom” (1865-1867: VII. 217), and *King Lear*, explaining the king’s behavior as the detrimental effect of his social environment: “loving, fair, wise by nature he is spoilt by the all-engulfing servility” (1865-1867: III. 15).

In the mid-1860s, the democratic movement in Russia underwent a severe crisis. It was suppressed by the tsarist authorities and deprived of its leadership: Nikolai Dobrolyubov had died in 1861, while Nikolai Chernyshevsky and other leaders of the movement were imprisoned. The leading democratic magazine *Russkoe slovo* (*The Russian Word*) was closed down in 1866. In their battle against the culture of serfdom, its ideologues and critics, Dmitry Pisarev (imprisoned from 1862 to 1866 but still able to publish his essays) and Varfolomey Zaitsev proclaimed “the destruction of aesthetics” (the title of an article by Nikolai Pisarev published in 1865) and, in this regard, the need for a radical revision of the literary heritage “to look more closely, from our point of view, at those old literary idols that are used by our very fierce, very cowardly persecutors to hide themselves” (1955-1956: III. 364). This idea was later expressed in Pisarev’s article entitled *Pushkin and Belinsky* (1865), which denied the importance of Pushkin for the present and declared him a “frivolous versifier”, unable to “understand the great social and philosophical matters of our century” (1955-1956: III. 415). The paradoxical nature of Pisarev’s ideas, exaggerations, and controversial judgments sparked disputes in literary

circles. The overthrow of literary idols undertaken in *Russkoe slovo* was subjected to parody, while the nihilistic attitude to Pushkin was ridiculed and sometimes transposed to Shakespeare. It seemed to the parodists that the indisputable authority of the English playwright clearly exposed the absurdity of Pisarev's judgments.

For example, in 1865, satirist Dmitry Minaev wrote a parodic poem *Eugene Onegin. Novel in Verse (shortened and corrected according to the essays of critics-realists of Russkoe Slovo)* in which a hero-nihilist "was able to taunt his enemy: / 'Your Shakespeare is no more than a burdock'" (Minaev 1955: II. 377). An anonymous lampoon, *The Thinking Realist on Shakespeare's Hamlet (Mysliashchy realist o Gamlete Shekspira)*, published in the literary magazine *Otechestvennye zapiski (Notes of the Fatherland)* in 1865, was a parodical response to Pisarev's analysis of *Eugene Onegin* and criticized his essay as follows: "The thinking realist called Shakespeare's tragedy 'a quackish dishrag' and claimed 'I said that Shakespeare was a goose. In conclusion I can add that he also had webbed feet'" (*Otechestvennye zapiski* 1865: 57). When Zaitsev, one of the leaders of the nihilist flank of the Russian literary left, in his bibliographical essay claimed that "any craftsman is more useful than any poet in the same degree as any positive number, however small it is, is bigger than zero" (1864: 64), he was met with derision by the editors of the monthly periodical *The Reader's Library*: "Thus, there is no floor buffer, there is no gongfermor who could not but be endlessly much more useful than Shakespeare" (Boborykin, ed. 1864: 34).

In 1865, on the back of the first publication of *the Complete Collection of Shakespeare and Goethe*, the liberal newspaper *Golos (The Voice)* published an article saying that "such great personalities as Shakespeare and Goethe will show the readers all the triviality of loudmouthed literary pygmies" (1865: 1). Maxim Antonovich, the leading essayist of the journal *Sovremennik* in the polemic essay *Pseudo-realists (Lzherealistsy, 1865)* criticized Pisarev: "if this ascetic realist had a little common sense, he would know that Shakespearean dramas kindle cerebration much better and faster than a cigar" (Antonovich 1961: 270). This was a riposte to Pisarev's meditation on Chernyshevsky's *What is to Be Done?* in which Pisarev considered that "a new hero feels no need in aesthetic pleasures such as watching Shakespearean drama as his only indulgence is a good cigar without which he cannot think properly" (1955-1956: III. 11).

On the other hand, the *pochvenniki*, representatives of the Russian literary and social movement of the 1860s, mostly the *raznochintsy* (intellectuals of no definite class) writers who were grouped around the journals of the brothers Dostoevsky, *Time (Vremya,*

1861-1863) and *The Epoch* (*Epokha*, 1864-1865), believed that critics of both democratic magazines *The Contemporary* and *The Russian Word* were birds of a feather united by the general concept of nihilism. They attributed a narrow utilitarianism (polemically calling it the “belly”) and, consequently, a complete denial of art, including Shakespeare, to all revolutionary democrats. It was in 1862 when Apollon Grigoriev published in *Time* the essay *Nihilism in Art* (*Nihilism v iskusstve*), in which he argued that “nihilism in art means simply the pure, naked denial of art and its phenomena as the things which are absolutely unnecessary for life and should not exist” (1862: 55). The critic used *Romeo and Juliet* as an example of “something undeniable in art” whose value was denied by nihilists (Grigoriev 1862: 55-57). Later, in the essay *Theory of Benefits and Profits* (*Teoria polzy i vygody*, 1864) published in *Epokha*, seizing on Pisarev’s remark about the cigar, another critic Nikolai Solovyov gloated: “the cigar therefore rises above Shakespearean drama” and reproached Pisarev: “You have a common denominator, whatever you call it, it still comes out as the belly. Even the cigar you spoke of earlier is also the belly” (1864: 14). Continuing the dispute in the essay *Discord* (*Razlad*, 1865), Solovyov added: “This is nonsense [...] to make Shakespeare produce something directly useful and practical by his writings. There is something greater than a benefit—it is truth and beauty, which in mutual fusion constitute, so to speak, an eternal benefit” (1865: 2). Not only that, but he countered Zaitsev’s judgments about the uselessness of Shakespeare and Molière by accusing him of “tailoring a narrowly practical view of life”, for poets “constitute a kind of science of life [...] which, like Shakespeare, is studied by entire societies” (Solovyov 1865: 27-28). The writer and translator Dmitry Averkiev devoted the essay *William Shakespeare* (1864), published in the *Epokha* magazine, to the three-hundredth anniversary of the playwright. He could not resist attacking the nihilists: “Shakespeare was not a knight of progress, according to our modern perception, he was a pathetic conservative who did not stand toe to toe with modern science, he went in for portraying the acts of human stupidity, such as love and jealousy” (1864: 199).

Dostoevsky also joined in the controversy. However, he was able to distinguish the attitudes of the revolutionary democrats to Shakespeare and to Pushkin and reflected this in the lampoon-novel, *Shchedrodarov*, included in the pamphlet *Mr. Shchedrin, or a Schism among the Nihilists* (*Gospodin Shchedrin, ili Raskol v nihilistakh*, 1864), in which the characters’ speaking names Shchedrodarov (in Russian, similar in meaning to “generous”), Pravdolyubov (“truth lover”) and Skribov (from Latin, *scriba*, a public notary or clerk of a higher rank) were derived from the surnames of Shchedrin,

Dobrolyubov and Pisarev. It also parodied the way *The Contemporary* gave instructions to its new employees: “Hereafter you have to make a rule of it that boots in any case are better than Pushkin because it is very possible to do without Pushkin, but it is impossible to do without boots in any way, and consequently, Pushkin is a luxury and a humbug”; his irony extended to Shakespeare, who was “a luxury and a humbug too [...] but note, young pen! [...] Shakespeare can be spared and saved, of course, for later” (1972-1988: XX. 109). In the autumn of 1864, in his sketch for the layout of the essay *Socialism and Christianity*, Dostoyevsky replaced the name of Pushkin with Shakespeare: “Socialists go no further than the belly [...] they are proud to admit it: boots are better than Shakespeare, it is a shame to speak about the immortality of the soul, etc., etc.” (1972-1988: XX. 192-193). Even though the essay was not finished, the anti-nihilist formula “boots are better than Shakespeare” was picked up by the press because the juxtaposition of the acknowledged higher spiritual values embodied in the English playwright and the profane material items whose natural territory is mud and dust was impressively eye-catching. Supporters of the “Art for art’s sake” movement used it to pillory nihilists until the 1870s.

### *Decline and Tolstoy’s revolt*

In the 1870-1880s, Shakespeare’s significance in literary circles and in theatre decreased. According to the data collected by A.I. Wolf, from 1856 to 1881 the number of Shakespearean performances fell year after year (Wolf 1884: 75-79). Among one thousand one hundred and one plays staged in St. Petersburg, only eight (less than one per cent) were by Shakespeare, receiving a total of one hundred thirteen performances. In this respect, Shakespeare was inferior not only to Ostrovsky and Gogol, but also to lesser important Russian playwrights. Although *Hamlet* remained the most popular of Shakespeare’s plays, in that twenty-five-year period, it was played only forty-three times, whereas in the previous eighteen years (1837-1855) it had been staged seventy-nine times. Shakespeare’s loss of relevance was manifested, in particular, in the fact that the study and interpretation of Shakespeare's work began to acquire an academic character, passing from the hands of writers and critics into the hands of professional historians of literature. For example, Nikolai Storozhenko (1836-1906) gained well-deserved fame as the founder of Shakespeare scholarship in Russia and author of various internationally recognized publications about the English Renaissance playwrights: *Shakespearean Criticism in Germany* (1869), *Shakespeare’s Henchmen. Lyly and Marlowe (Predshestvenniki*

*Shekspira, Lili i Marlo*, 1872), *Macbeth* (1889), *Prototypes of Falstaff (Protipy Falstafa*, 1891) and *Psychology of Love and Jealousy in Shakespeare's Drama (Psikhologia liubvi i nenavisti u Shekspira*, 1899), subsequently published as a collection with the title *Experiments in the Study of Shakespeare (Opyty izuchenia Shekspira*, 1902). Written from the standpoint of the cultural and historical school and making extensive use of a comparative historical method, these essays were a valuable contribution to the study of drama of the English playwright. Critic and literary historian Vladimir Chuiko (1839-1899) also wrote copiously about Shakespeare. His essays eventually came together as an extensive monograph, *Shakespeare, His Life and Works (Shekspir, ego zhizn i proizvedenia)*, which was published in St. Petersburg in 1889. Moreover, several professional translations were published. However, there is no evidence that any of these works caused the sort of literary stir sparked by those of Belinsky or Turgenev.

In the 1870s the first Russian Shakespearean societies were organized in Moscow and St. Petersburg. The founder of the latter, the director of a private educational institution in Moscow, L.I. Polivanov, pursued some ideological aim: to use the society “to protect young men from the revolutionary moods” (Rovda 1964: 593).

The aestheticist nature of Shakespeare worship was reflected in the novels of several conservative writers: N.A. Chaev (*Latent Forces*, 1870; Russian: *Pospudnye sily*) and B.M. Markevich (*A Quarter of a Century Ago*, 1878; Russian: *Chetvert veka nazad*). At this time, a certain part of the intelligentsia shared a cult of Shakespeare, in which their reverence of the playwright marked their desire to oppose his works to pressing literary and social issues. In contrast, the successors of the revolutionary democrats spoke against Shakespeare. For example, M.A. Protopopov stated that “it is immoral and dishonest to tell a reasonable person about the great beauties of Shakespeare's works” (1890: 24). Such attitudes penetrated democratic literature. In Alexander Mikhailov's novel *Necessity (Gol*, 1882), the advocate Orlov blames his interlocutor for conducting research into Shakespeare's rhyme: “How could you write about this in a country where hundreds of thousands of people are starving, where millions live almost in poverty” (1882: 48). Others considered the morality of Shakespeare's time outdated. The liberated heroine of the story *From the Notebook: A Tale (Iz zapisnoi knizhki: Rasskaz*, 1877) by Nadezhda Zayonchkovskaya-Khvoshchinskaya (pen-name, V. Krestovsky) exclaimed: “God, preserve us from different Desdemonas, who stretch the neck: ‘will you, please, sir, suffocate me...’. A woman of our time would not have died so foolishly” (1877: 114).



In this context, Peter Lavrov, one of the leading ideologues of populism and expert and lover of the English playwright, published an essay *Shakespeare and Our Time* (*Shekspir i nashe vremia*, 1882). Written when the collapse of the populist movement was just beginning, this essay was an attempt to use the emotional power of Shakespeare's creativity for propaganda purposes. Realizing that the playwright belonged to a different time and country, Lavrov raised the question of what Shakespeare could give the people of today. He used examples to show that Shakespearean events develop not according to the laws of "dramatic justice" or on the principle of retribution "for deeds and merits", but according to "the laws of domination of the greatest force that can be found in these conditions" (1882: 65). He believed that those Shakespearean characters who were not ready to fight died and, therefore, that "we must act and fight; that is all we learn from the dramas of Shakespeare [...] we must always be ready for action and struggle; and when the moment of dramatic conflict comes [...] we should be determined to meet the inevitable" (Lavrov 1882: 86). Lavrov emphasized that the goals of the fight changed with each generation but the need to participate in it remained "and each new generation finds in Shakespeare's dramas those impulses of energy which anyone who is able to take part in the historical life of his time needs." (1882: 90). However, Lavrov noted those ideas of the playwright which did not dovetail with the tasks of the modern revolutionary movement. It was Belinsky who, on the contrary, used Shakespeare as an example to claim that everyone, even those on the lowest social level, deserved to be portrayed. But since Belinsky's day the requirements for democracy in literature had increased. The question was raised not only of whom to portray, but also how to portray them. Lavrov was not satisfied with Shakespeare's presentation of ordinary people, particularly the depiction of the Roman plebeians opposed to Coriolanus and the interpretation of Jack Cade's rebellion in *Henry VI*: "We can take aesthetic pleasure in the majestic figures of Henry and Coriolanus, but their attitude to the surrounding 'lower' world causes involuntary moral disgust" (1882: 96). He believed that the playwright's drama showed the "contempt for any protest of the people against the arrogance of cultural, dominant figures" which made it "obsolete" for the nineteenth-century Russia (Lavrov 1882: 97-99). This was the position of the leader of the populist movement, who sought to use Shakespeare as a means of revolutionary agitation. His criticism of the playwright also revealed one of the aspects that was further developed by Leo Tolstoy.

Tolstoy's revolt against Shakespeare, which resulted in the form of a critical essay *On Shakespeare and on Drama* (*O Shekspire i o drame*, 1903-1904, published in 1906),

absorbed the anti-Shakespearean trends that had built up not only in Russian but also in world literature and journalism, including *Shakespeare's Attitude toward the Working Class* by Ernest Crosby (1902) and the numerous anti-Shakespearean remarks of Bernard Shaw. Written in 1904 and published in 1906, Tolstoy's criticism made all his contemporaries gasp. He argued that "Shakespeare can be regarded as neither a genius, brilliant, nor an average writer" (1928-1959: XXXV. 217). This polemical assertion was corroborated by his biased analysis of *King Lear*, in which he tried to show that Shakespeare's drama suffered from the lack of genuine dramatic conflicts; that although "formally characters are placed in a collision with the outside world and struggle with it [...] their struggle does not arise from the natural course of events or from the characters themselves but is arbitrarily set by the author", while all Shakespeare's heroes "live, think, say and do is absolutely inappropriate to time and space" and all "always speak one and the same Shakespearian, pretentious, and unnatural language" (Tolstoy 1928-1959: XXXV. 237-240). Furthermore, Tolstoy argued that the playwright's worldview "is the most vile, vulgar world-view which considers the external height of the good and the great a real privilege of people, which despises the masses [...] denies all sorts, not only religious and humanitarian, of aspirations to change the existing order" (Tolstoy 1928-1959: XXXV. 258). Tolstoy saw Shakespeare's harm in that he deviates the drama from its main purpose—"understanding of religious consciousness"—which alone is able to connect people and improve the life of mankind; therefore, "the sooner people are freed from the false praise of Shakespeare, the better" because then they would understand that his works and those of his imitators "cannot be teachers of life and that the doctrine of life, as long as there is no true religious drama, should be looked for in other sources" (1928-1959: XXXV. 271-272).

The question of Tolstoy's attitude to Shakespeare has been the subject of frequent research, and the mainly socio-ethical and aesthetic reasons for his hostility have now been clarified. The social problems alluded to in Tolstoy's essay are directly related to his ethical teaching, proclaimed after the spiritual turning point of the 1870s and 1880s, when the writer embraced patriarchal peasantry. He rejected Shakespeare as part of an irreligious, and therefore immoral, alien and hostile culture of the ruling classes, against which he already spoke in the essay *What Is Art? (Chto takoe iskusstvo?, 1898)*. The socio-ethical aspect of the essay is the most obvious one. However, the whole complex of ideas associated with this aspect was inherent in Tolstoy only in the last decades of his life. The hostile attitude to Shakespeare developed in 1850s as the writer admitted in his

letter to V.V. Stasov on October 9, 1903, while working on the essay: “I had to express what had been welling up in me for half a century” (Tolstoy 1928-1959: LXXIV. 202). The condemnation of Shakespeare from the socio-cultural point of view was layered on his previous aesthetic rejection as he pointed out: “It is not the aristocracy of Shakespeare, but the perversion, through the praise of non-artistic works, of an aesthetic taste” (Tolstoy 1928-1959: LXXIV. 202). There had been periods when Tolstoy had nothing against Shakespeare, as in the 1850s when he arrived in St. Petersburg and was inspired by his friends to read the playwright’s drama; in a letter of December 26, 1856, Druzhinin told Turgenev, “Leo Tolstoy, without bias, becomes an excellent writer, more and more intelligent and educated. He already understands Lear and has drunk a toast to Shakespeare” (qtd. Izmailov 1930: 202). Later, in his letter to Tolstoy of January 13, 1857, Turgenev was pleased to admit: “Your acquaintance with Shakespeare or better say your fancy of him gratifies me” (1961-1968: III. 75-76). The same was true of the 1870s when he began to reread Shakespeare; his wife admitted in her diary that he “talked a lot about Shakespeare and admired him very much; and recognizes his great dramatic talent” (Tolstaya 1928: 31), Tolstoy's was a love-hate relationship which persisted throughout his life.

Tolstoy’s essay was a significant landmark in the history of the Russian assimilation of Shakespeare. On the one hand, it proves the extent to which the playwright had become a key and contested counter on the checkerboard of Russian politics, to an extent, perhaps, unrivalled in other European countries. On the other, while never completely destroying the image of Shakespeare or diminishing his impact on readers and audiences, it did away with the sort of reckless, irresponsible and blind admiration of his drama which had turned into a fawning cult; thus, it cleared the way for a more scientific and historical evaluation of the playwright’s *oeuvre*. Tolstoy’s demonstration that Shakespeare’s work did not square with the realistic psychology of the nineteenth century was a prerequisite for the elucidating Shakespeare's method for creating characters. Finally, by disproving Shakespeare’s relevance to nineteenth-century Russia but failing to overthrow his significance, Tolstoy forced people to wonder what the secret of his impact was. When he excluded poetry from the retelling of *King Lear* and turned the great tragedy into a set of ridiculous actions and speeches, regardless of his intentions, he irrefutably proved that Shakespeare does not exist outside his system of poetry and images. Tolstoy marked a decisive end to the nineteenth-century interpretation of

Shakespeare as a psychologist and gave birth to the new twentieth-century one of comprehending the poetic system of the playwright's drama.

#### 4.D. *MACBETH* IN RUSSIAN REALISM: THEATRE, TRANSLATIONS, CRITICISM

In 1849 the Bureau of Censorship lifted the ban on theatrical performances of *Macbeth*. Even so, it took more than ten years to introduce the play to Russian audiences. In 1861, theatregoers enjoyed the first-ever Lady Macbeth on the national stage, performed by famous Italian actress Adelaide Ristori during her European tour. The following year, the entire play was put on in Moscow's Maly Theatre with Ira Aldridge as Macbeth. While Russian actors spoke in Russian, Aldridge performed his role in English. His Macbeth was "a natural soldier, a noble, commanding figure" before the idea of the king's murder; in its aftermath he was "haunted by cowardice, guilt, ghastly visions, self-torture, and doubt" (Lindfors 2013: 124-125). In the 1870s and 80s, the play was not produced except for rare performances by foreign theatre companies. In 1891 and 1896, the Maly Theatre staged two productions remarkable for the "psychological veracity" and "romantic energy and passion" of Macbeth, played by Alexander Yujin (Anikst 1950: 11), who was accompanied by leading Russian actresses Glikeria Fedotova and Maria Ermolova in the role of a newly "feminine" Lady Macbeth. Ermolova sought to justify the heroine's villainies on the basis of her love for Macbeth: "Her ambition, titanic as it is, is all centered around a halo of glory, power, and greatness of the dearest being next her heart – her husband" (Kicheev 1955: 424).

In the 1840s, various new translations of the play were published. Vasyli Lazarevsky, future senior official in the Ministry of Internal Affairs and in the mid-1840s a resident tutor to a landlord's family, translated *Macbeth* along with *Othello* and *King Lear* but was able to publish only the latter, for his translations were found to be rough, "ungrammatical and tongue-tied" (Belinsky 1953-1959: IX. 323) and, therefore, condemned by critics. Nikolai Ketcher's attempt to translate all Shakespeare's drama in prose was the most significant translation enterprise of that time. At first, volumes came out in the form of separate issues which contained only one play; four issues comprised a volume. Ketcher started with the history plays, which (except for *Richard III*) had never been published before in Russia. In 1841, eight issues (volumes 1 and 2) were published: *King John*, *Richard II*, *Henry IV* (two plays), *Henry V*, *Henry VI* (three plays); the

following year four issues came out (volume 3): *Richard III*, *Henry VIII*, *The Comedy of Errors* and *Macbeth*.<sup>42</sup> The main principle of Ketcher's translations was accuracy. He was averse to changing any line of the original and tried to render every word. Owing to his careful study of the plays, their German translations and the comments of other translators, he was able to avoid semantic mistakes. However, his prose translations lacked the emotional intensity of Shakespearean poetry, as comparison makes clear:

<p>Methought I heard a voice cry "Sleep no more! Macbeth does murder sleep", the innocent sleep, Sleep that knits up the ravell'd sleeve of care, The death of each day's life, sore labour's bath, Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course, Chief nourisher in life's feast. (Shakespeare: 2.2.36-41)</p>	<p>It seemed to me a voice cried: Don't sleep more! Macbeth is murdering sleep, the innocent sleep – sleep which uncoils the snarl of worries, this death of the life of each day, this bath of the sore labour, this balm of the tortured souls, this second course at the table of nature – the nourisher in the feast of life. (Ketcher, 1862: III. 324)</p>
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The soliloquies became flat and expressionless and the literalism of the translations often made them unreadable. Nonetheless, the collection was a great achievement of Russian culture. Of the eighteen plays Ketcher published between 1841 and 1850, thirteen appeared in Russia for the first time and Russian readers were able to acquaint themselves with all Shakespeare's history plays. However, in the 1850s, interest in prose translations of Shakespeare gradually diminished and in 1865-1868 was published the *Complete Collection of Dramatic Works by Shakespeare, translated by Russian writers and edited by N. A. Nekrasov and N. V. Gerbel*, which consisted entirely of verse translations.

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<sup>42</sup> The fourth volume containing *All's Well that Ends Well*, *Coriolanus* and *Othello* and the fifth, with *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Timon of Athens* and *Julius Caesar*, came out in the late 1840s and 1850s. During 1862-1864, Ketcher reissued five existing volumes. The publication of the next four volumes with seventeen remaining plays was finished only in 1879.

Andrei Kroneberg undoubtedly played a bigger role in the history of the assimilation of Shakespeare in Russia than Ketcher, even though he translated only four of his plays. But these were poetic translations that became canonical and retained their importance until the twentieth century. Kroneberg began translating Shakespeare's plays in the mid-1830s. In 1836, abstracts of *Macbeth* came out in *The Collection of Verse and Prose* published in Kharkov. In the mid-1840s, he retranslated the tragedy, and the complete translation was published in 1846 in Nekrasov's *Peterburgsky Sbornik*. Kroneberg's versions of *Macbeth*, *Hamlet*, *Twelfth Night* and *Much Ado about Nothing* established new normative principles for Russian verse translation of Shakespeare. After excessively free neoclassical adaptations and reader-unfriendly, word-for-word romantic translations, it was necessary to find new ways to reconcile the contradiction between form and content, Shakespearean poetics and Russian realist aesthetics of the mid-nineteenth century. Kroneberg, as well as Satin who worked with him, carried out this act of reconciliation. The essence of the innovation was the systematic simplification of Shakespeare's language. Translators believed that his metaphors, familiar to Englishmen, were alien to Russian readers and spectators and would not make the same impression. Therefore, unusual images were often replaced by more familiar ones or just omitted. Translations became easy to read, for they were freed from archaisms. Kroneberg added nothing of his own and only simplified Shakespeare's text after a careful study. Kroneberg's poetic talent was limited. This was characteristic of the mid-nineteenth century verse-translators, who were skilled versifiers but lacked poetic originality. Large tracts of their versions, though, quite correct and easy to pronounce, are mechanical in their monotony, while the simplicity of the language sometimes slips into banality. They were able to achieve adequateness by sacrificing the complexity of Shakespearean poetics, such as, for example:

Methought I heard a voice cry “Sleep no more!	I heard
Macbeth does murder sleep”, the innocent sleep,	A scary cry sound: “Sleep no more! Macbeth stabbed sleep,” innocent sleep,
Sleep that knits up the ravell’d sleeve of care,	Stabbed the savior of care,
The death of each day’s life, sore labour’s bath,	Healing balm for a soul hurt,
Balm of hurt minds, great nature’s second course,	Great ally of nature,
Chief nourisher in life’s feast.	Host in life’s feast.
(Shakespeare, 2.2.36-41)	(Kroneberg, 1:360)

And yet, despite the drawbacks, Kroneberg’s translations were a great step forward in the development of Russian Shakespeareanism. Compared with the free adaptations and word-for-word translations, they combine a certain accuracy with an ease of comprehension. Belinsky, along with other critics, called the translations “classical, quite worthy of the original” (1953-1959: IX. 575-576). Moreover, they were chosen for publishing in *The Complete Collection of the Dramatic Works by Shakespeare* edited by Nekrasov and Gerbel and other collections edited by Vengerov and Gruzinsky. Kroneberg’s *Macbeth* continued to be published until the 1920s and was used for the first theatre performances of the play in 1860s. Of all Shakespeare translations of the nineteenth century, Kronenberg’s enjoyed the longest life.

Regardless, word-for-word translations continued publication in the second half of the century. In 1854, a new *Macbeth* came out, in which literalisms were already a consequence of the translation paradigm. Mikhail Likhonin, who in 1830s was an ardent supporter of German philosophy and translator of Goethe and Schiller, decided to translate *Macbeth* because the existing translations of Vronchenko and Kronenberg did not correspond to his “concepts of how Shakespeare should be interpreted” (1854: 29). He used Shakespearean iambic pentameter and “did his best to retain both the poet’s metaphors [...] and antitheses, interpreting zeugmas with the most possible accuracy” (Likhonin 1854: 29). As the result, the translation turned out to be unreadable and incomprehensible. Many critics blamed it for extreme literalism because by setting himself the task of accurately reproducing a foreign original, the translator was distracted

from the main goal of making his translation understandable for readers who did not speak the language of the original. For example, the editor of the *Pantheon* magazine pointed out that literal interpretation of Shakespeare was impossible and incorrect: “Shakespeare’s exquisite and strained metaphors [...] while literally translated into Russian, will be incomprehensible, wild and funny [...] we regret that so much time and effort has been spent on unsuccessful and useless work” (1854: 21-22). Druzhinin criticized Likhonin’s translation methods by drawing a comparison with his own adequate translation of *King Lear* (*Sovremennik* 1854: 25-29). In reply, Likhonin emphasized the fact that Shakespearean metaphors are “an expression of the true, not fictional relationship of a human and nature” and if we “put off this spiritual clothing from his creations”, “Shakespeare will no longer be what he is” (*Moskovityanin* 1854: 45). Likhonin showed considerable insight in highlighting the fact that Shakespearean metaphors are much more than just tropes, but he did not bother himself with making them understandable for readers, so his translation did not achieve any great success.

Fyodor Ustrialov, who published his word-for-word translation of *Macbeth* in 1862, defended the principle of accurate translation on other grounds. He believed that adaptations were outdated, because “at present most Russian readers [...] cannot be confused by similes, tongue twists and expressions, which are so often typical of Shakespeare and constitute one of the most striking features of his drama”; for that reason, Shakespeare translation “should be a sculpture, a picture in which the slightest touch of a rough hand can disturb the harmony of the whole composition” (Ustrialov 1862: 1). In theory, Ustrialov wanted to make his translation both equivalent and adequate, but in fact it turned to be one more word-for-word *Macbeth* translation, very accurate in terms of expressive techniques but lacking in all artistic merit and very hard to read. The translation was thoroughly analyzed in *The Russian Word* and the unfavourable conclusion of the reviewer, who hid behind the signature “-d”, was: “He who is willing to grow acquainted with *Macbeth* after reading this translation even two or three times will still not recognize any of the colors which Shakespeare used to depict his hero. And there is no chance of his seeing the greatness of Shakespeare himself—I can vouch to that” (*Russkoe slovo* 1862: 77).

Literal translations have never been popular among critics and readers in Russia. So, it is not surprising that *Macbeth*’s simplified but adequate translation by Kroneberg was chosen for publication in the first complete collection of Shakespeare’s plays edited, as mentioned, by Nekrasov and Gerbel (1865-1868). However, the publication of this



collection did not put an end to Shakespeare translations in the country. On the contrary, growing demand for the playwright's drama stimulated the work of translators.<sup>43</sup> In the 1890s two new complete collections of Shakespeare came out. The first was the prose translations by Pavel Kanshin, published in 1893. The second collection was called *Shakespeare Translated and Edited by A.L. Sokolovsky*, comprising eight volumes published between 1894-1898 (*Macbeth* came out in 1894). Alexander Sokolovsky expanded the original text with numerous interpretative notes. He tried to distinguish himself from other translators by changing some established translations of well-known words of the key characters, sometimes in a rather stupid way, so that Hamlet's "to be or not to be", for example, became "to live or not to live" (3.1.55). His hard work was awarded the Pushkin Prize of the Academy of Sciences. Nevertheless, despite the emergence of new translations, in the late nineteenth century, the main means of acquaintance with Shakespeare for the Russian readers was *The Complete Collection* edited by Nekrasov and Gerbel. By the end of the century it had run into four editions and was found in the private libraries of major Russian writers such as Dostoyevsky<sup>44</sup> (Grossman 1922: 31), Goncharov<sup>45</sup> (Nikitina, Sukailo and Kukueva, eds. 1987: 98, 117) and Leskov<sup>46</sup> (Afonin 1977: 144-145).

The number of translations of *Macbeth* proves the enduring cultural significance of the play throughout the Russian nineteenth century. The collected data show, for example, that in the first four decades of the century it was adapted and translated five times, in the three published versions of Korsakov (1815, incomplete), Rotchev (1830) and Vronchenko (1836), and the two non-published ones of Turgenev (1802) and Küchelbecker (1828). In this sense it surpassed its closest rivals, *Hamlet* and *King Lear*

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<sup>43</sup> Sergei Yuriev translated *King Lear* (1882), *Macbeth* (1883), *Anthony and Cleopatra* (1886), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1889) and *The Tempest* (1889). Dmitry Min, well-known for his translation of Dante's *The Divine Comedy*, translated *King John* (1882), and the translator of Byron's *Don Juan* and *Manfred* Pavel Kozlov translated *Julius Caesar* (1880) and *Pericles* (1889). P.P. Gnedich (1891), D.V. Averkiev (1895), and Prince Konstantin Konstantinovich (1899) translated *Hamlet*.

<sup>44</sup> It was a four-volume edition of 1867-1877.

<sup>45</sup> Goncharov's library contained several Shakespeare books such as separate editions of *Coriolanus* (1858) translated by Druzhinin, *King Lear* translated by Druzhinin (1857) and by Lazarevsky (1865) and the 1865-1868 edition of *The Complete Collection* published by Nekrasov and Gerbel as well as *The Plays and Poems of Shakespeare in seven volumes, with the Life and Portrait of the Poet* published by Bernhard Tauchnitz (Leipzig, 1843); the latter was also found in the home libraries of Turgenev (Volkov 2019: 98) and Tolstoy (Arkhangelskaya 2001) who preferred to read Shakespeare in English.

<sup>46</sup> Like Goncharov, Leskov had the first 1865-1868 four-volume edition in which he highlighted several passages. In *Macbeth* the writer underlined "The sowing was evil so we shall reap the evil too" (3.2.58) translated by Kroneberg from the original "Things bad begun make strong themselves by ill" (3.2.55) to emphasize "an idea that the evil inevitably gives birth to new atrocities, which, however, are inevitably followed by retribution" (Afonin 1977: 144).

by one translation a-piece.<sup>47</sup> In 1840-1850s, the period that saw the consolidation of the Shakespeare cult in Russia and a boom in new translations, the play continued to hold the lead in terms of the number of translations. Of a total of thirty-six translations of five plays, four were of *Macbeth*: one non-published translation by Lazarevsky (1840) and the three published ones by Ketcher (1842), Kroneberg (1846) and Likhonin (1854). It was one of the few plays translated in the 1860s and 70s, when Shakespeare's popularity in Russia was in temporary decline (one translation by Ustrialov in 1862), while it enjoyed three new translations by Yuriev (1883), Kanshin (1893) and Sokolovsky (1894) in the 1880s and 90s, when Shakespeare's topicality for Russia was reappraised.

Despite the number of translations, *Macbeth* remained a rare object of Russian critical literature. Nevertheless, writers' remarks on the play reveal several tendencies of Russian realist Shakespeare criticism, such as a psychologizing approach to the analysis of his principal characters and the integration of the playwright as a symbol of art into the ideological controversy of the 1860s.

In his critical essay devoted to a new publication (1840) of Griboyedov's *Woe from Wit*, Belinsky emphasized the fact that "negative side of life when it comes to life in power and terror [...] in great scale [...] and passion, in crime [...] and villainy" can also become a subject of tragedy (1953-1959: III. 447). To explain his idea, he used *Macbeth* as an example of "those horrible abnormalities that only mighty and deep souls are capable of" (Belinsky 1953-1959: III. 447). In his opinion, *Macbeth* was such a person. Although a villain, he generates sympathy instead of repugnancy: "You see in him a person that embodied the same possibility of a victory as that of a fall, who in another turn of events could be a different person" (Belinsky 1953-1959: III. 447). On the other hand, there are "human demons" such as Lady *Macbeth* who gave her husband a dagger and inspired him with the "satanic greatness of her repudiation of all that is human and feminine, her demonic triumph over the laws of human and female nature, and the infernal composure of her resolution upon a gruesome villainy" (Belinsky 1953-1959: III. 447). The critic believed that a "weak female tabernacle" cannot harbour "the satanic spirit" and "madness of the heart" causes "dementia of the mind" (Belinsky 1953-1959: III. 447), which is why the reader feels no pity for Lady *Macbeth*. In contrast, *Macbeth*

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<sup>47</sup> There were four translations of *Hamlet* (1748, 1811, 1827, 1836) and of *King Lear* (1808, 1833, 1836, 1837). Other plays translated or adapted were: *Othello* (1808, 1836), *The Merchant of Venice* (1834, 1835), *Richard III* (1832, 1833), *Julius Caesar* (1787), *Richard II* (1828), *Henry V* (1830), *Romeo and Juliet* (1839).

faced death as a great person and thus made peace with the audience that “conceives his fall as a triumph of morality”, for we can accept and enjoy the presence of such “human demons” only in the case of their greatness and defeat (Belinsky 1953-1959: III. 447).

While Belinsky emphasized Macbeth’s outstanding nature, Goncharov focused on the hero’s typicality. In the essay *Hamlet is Represented Again on the Russian Stage* (*Opyat Gamlet na russkoy stsene*, 1875), devoted to the essence of Hamlet’s character, its staging and other issues of theatre art, Goncharov addressed the problem of typification. He admitted that types are propagated in the ordinary environment of the contemporary society. Gradual repetitions of vital phenomena are layered and form various “species”, distinguished in the crowd by their peculiar features. However, only Shakespeare was able to cast all the countless types of individuals into such “huge” figures as Hamlet, King Lear, Othello, and Macbeth. Concerning the typicality of the latter, he is “this random villain, brought to evil by an extraneous female will, and then cowardly, pathetic, already fallen long before the onset of punishment and retribution”; “such a personality in its variation exhibitions is a frequent participant of criminal proceedings”; it is “eternal, typical human drama” because you can easily predict how Macbeth (and Lear, and Othello) will behave in any situation (Goncharov 2017: 4-5). Contrary to Belinsky’s exonerating criticism, Goncharov discloses the hero’s weaknesses. However, it is weaknesses that represents the vividness and verisimilitude of his nature. Accordingly, Macbeth’s typicality highlights Shakespeare’s relevance for Russian realism as a creator of such a realistic character.

In the 1860s, *Macbeth* along with other Shakespeare’s plays became a subject of heated debate between radical democrats and liberal conservatists on the role of art. Chernyshevsky, who included Shakespeare among the poets of “art for art’s sake”, blamed the playwright for “having no particular intentions to work for the good of the fatherland”: “He as a poet [...] served art not the fatherland, it was not political aspirations but psychological issues outspoken by Macbeth and Lear, Romeo and Othello” (1939-1953: III. 137). Such “psychological issues” could not be regarded as a creative merit for they had no utilitarian benefit and could not be used as a means of revolutionary propaganda. Therefore, Chernyshevsky called *Macbeth* a worthless, unexceptional play: “There is nothing special in it; I cannot appreciate its benefactions” (1939-1953: I. 327). This narrow-minded attitude to the play’s, and by extension, Shakespeare’s perspicuity was taken to an extreme by Dostoyevsky: “Shakespeare himself is a luxury and a humbug [...] because you can even find witches there and witches are the last degree of misoneism

(1972-1988: XX. 109). *Macbeth* was probably chosen for its variety of “fairy” elements and thus served a better example of liberated art attributed to Shakespeare that became a symbol of anti-nihilists’ struggle against radical materialism of democrats and their denial of universal spiritual values.

Turgenev followed Dostoyevsky in the defense of Shakespeare’s enduring significance, for the playwright embodied the power of art which goes beyond all faceless social norms and customs. He alluded to *Macbeth* along with *Hamlet*, *King Lear* and *Richard III* in the sketch *Enough* (*Dovolno*, 1864), a “series of fragments” which comprised the author’s memories presented in the form of testimony and philosophical speculations on social life and art history (Briggs 1980: 195). Turgenev referred to *Macbeth*’s supernatural (“the witches, phantoms, apparitions”) before dwelling on the problem of life’s vanity and emptiness from a materialist perspective: “Alas! No ghosts, no fantastic, unearthly powers are terrible [...] What is terrible is that there is nothing terrible, that the very essence of life is petty, uninteresting and degradingly inane” (2018: 165-166). Turgenev stressed the fact that without the sort of mysteries that cannot be explained by scientific theories or the lofty ideals that were recriminated by the positivists, life turns into a determined order of formalities. For this reason, he quoted *Macbeth*’s last soliloquy, “Life’s but a walking shadow” (5.5), to highlight “the eternal creative power of life that so marvelously can make the great out of nothing” (Shestov 2016: 135). The sketch’s representation of Shakespeare’s characters as an expression of the beauty of human aspirations and heart-searching encapsulates Turgenev’s idealism and faith in the power of art.

On the contrary, Leo Tolstoy, “the most famous of Shakespeare’s detractors” (Makaryk 2001: 405), referred to *Macbeth* in his stringent criticism of the playwright. As we have seen, the writer considered Shakespeare a mediocre scribbler and believed that the generalised Russian admiration for the playwright was nothing more than a simple striving to keep abreast of Europe and an absurd habit of adopting other people’s opinions. He deliberately named *Macbeth* one of the greatest of Shakespeare’s plays in order to stress how immensely overrated it was as, in fact, it was unable to bestow any aesthetic pleasure: “When I read one after another his best-regarded plays, such as *King Lear*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, and *Macbeth*, I did not get a thrill out of it; on the contrary, I was extremely disgusted, bored, and uninterested” (Tolstoy 1928-1959: XXXV. 216).

#### 4.E. ALEXANDER PUSHKIN, *BORIS GODUNOV*

The play's positive critical reception translated into Russian realist fiction, whose founding father is regarded to have been Pushkin. Pushkin was the first to convey the contradictory essence of the most significant events and figures of Russian history for he believed that "the highest subject of art" is "the presentation of the major historical phenomena of people's lives, major people who represent historical forces and movements of the era" (Asmus 1968: 342). Pushkin called himself "the poet of reality" because of his orientation towards a realistic, "true rendering of people and time, the development of historical characters and events" (1937-1959: VII. 116, 73). Opting for realism as an artistic creative method as well as a psychologizing approach to the portrayal of his heroes, he was able to deepen the analysis of the characters' inner experiences, to enrich and broaden their inner world, and thus to achieve more vivid and true-to-life characterization. The method was efficiently applied in the tragedy *Boris Godunov*, written in 1825, when Pushkin explored the theatrical genre of the history play, turning to do so to Shakespeare's drama. There, a state's political problems are put in the foreground to become the core of the dramatic action and direct the disclosure of the characters, who "are coloured by the age" and whose personal destinies "evoke the impression of a great historical change" and reflect the country's historical development (Lukács 1983: 118).

The focus of the tragedies set in the same historical locations is on character. This does not imply the complete neglect of the factual historical conditions in which the characters operate. Shakespeare keeps standing firmly on the grounds of reality and conveys its "taste" (Nuttall 1981: 37). His tragedies provided a deep insight into the core of conflicts and vividly demonstrated the consequences of historical events and personal deeds with a great artistic impact on readers and playgoers. The ability to reveal the inward processes of vital change to the utmost degree of realistic typification made them resonant for Russian realists, in particular *Macbeth* in which the playwright enclosed "personal tragedy in a universe that is not only morally comprehensible but even shares our ethical sympathies" (Snyder 2010: 74). The play struggles with the inner crisis of a hero whose passions are determined by the complex social relations of the era. Social reality is not merely a setting for a story; it directly influences what the character feels, thinks, and does. His inner world is inextricably linked with the society he lives in. For he finds himself at the very top of the social pyramid and evil takes possession of his

heart, the whole social edifice is gradually demolished by the crimes he commits, by his faults and mistakes.

Moreover, it is not only the country and its citizens who are caught up in the flow of tragic events. When evil takes hold of the hero's soul, nature itself writhes in agony. When Macbeth kills his liege, the outworld, "as troubled with man's act" (2.4.6), reacts fiercely with storms, earthquakes and unnatural animal behavior. The day after Duncan's murder, the sun refuses to shine, night prevails over day—"tis day, / And yet dark night strangles the travelling lamp" (2.4.7-8)—and for dramatic purposes, darkness blankets the country until the end of the usurper's destructive reign.

Another important clue to the tragedy's characters and plot complications is the Three Witches, who, as we have seen, are neither a simple bandwagon of the Jacobean era nor a stereotypical representation of the supernatural whose existential purpose is to inflict suffering on human beings and do violence to the world. Banquo questions their nature—"What are these / So withered, and so wild in their attire, / That look not like th' inhabitants o' th' earth, / And yet are on 't?" (1.3.39-42) or "The earth hath bubbles as the water has, / And these are of them" (1.3.79-80)—invoking the earth to "concentrate the opposition in the witches", in their natural presence but, at the same time, unnatural character (Sallis 2000: 140). For him, the Weird Sisters are something that nature has torn out of the earth's interior, something alien and ambivalent. While Banquo prudently dismisses the prophesy as a temptation to "win us to our harm" (1.3.123), Macbeth is "unable to control the ever-swelling flow of ambitious thoughts, experiencing, for a time at least, an acute dilemma" between moral scruples and social-political ambition (Sadowski 2010: 152-4). Macbeth is less suspicious, though, at first, he too sounds problematically unable to identify the Witches' promises: "This supernatural soliciting/ Cannot be ill, cannot be good" (1.3.129-30). He regrets that they disappear too quickly without clarifying the details of his faith predicted. What was vaguely hidden in his heart suddenly comes to light and shows itself to him in all its dazzling seduction boiling his passions and arising the bubbles of his ambition. However, Macbeth understands that his desires contradict the laws of nature and humanity so he finds support for his aspirations in a belief in the destiny prophesied by higher forces that would justify his actions in his own eyes and the eyes of others. The poetic symbolism of the tragedy emphasizes the struggle between good and evil from the very beginning. The Witches' dance which ends the opening scene with the pivotal "Fair is foul and foul is fair" (1.1.12) is echoed in the

first words of Macbeth “So foul and fair a day I have not seen” (1.1.39) who personifies the motif by himself.

This is a worm of ambition in his mind that makes him desire more than he already possesses, makes him feel that his human dignities are not truly appreciated. Nobody can outdo him, even the king himself, with his kindheartedness and respect for others’ merits, and, thus, his worthiness to be monarch. However, there is no straight and honest path to the throne for Macbeth; rather, two obstacles bar his way, Duncan and his heir, Malcolm. Such circumstances foment a rebellion in the hero’s mind which now is “full of scorpions” (3.2.40). Although Macbeth is often regarded as the embodiment of ambition, as Othello is a walking symbol of jealousy or Hamlet of hesitation, ambition, in fact, is not the essence of the hero’s character. From the first soliloquies he explores the moral and political consequences of murdering a king and can, in fact, present no personal reason for doing so. Lady Macbeth says he longs to be a king, though her speeches reveal that this is mostly her own desire. Perhaps, it should be taken as a given that power is an all-human passion, for Macbeth does mention “vaulting ambition” which is the only “spur to prick the sides of [his] intent” (1.7.25-27) and after all the flamboyant rhetoric that precedes it, its dry-eyed matter-of-factness may indicate its ultimate causal efficacy. On the other hand, Macbeth says nothing about how he would reap the sweet fruits of an earthly crown, so it looks more like a kind of obligation than something truly wanted, for the crime is ultimately committed “in horror and without the faintest desire or sense of glory [...] as if it were an appalling duty” (Bradley 1920: 358).

The hero’s natural trait is the free exertion of human dignity, which, by a twist of fate, is not aligned with his social status. Although he has no legal claims on the crown, he believes he has a natural right on the strength of his personal merits. Macbeth’s ambition is not born out of empty, groundless self-exaltation. It is the same perverted notion of human dignity which makes King Lear suffer. Nevertheless, whereas Lear is already tormented by false perceptions that he is finally liberated from through suffering and catharsis, Macbeth’s tragedy is that he takes the path of crimes which defile his soul by making him sink into the slime of inhumanity. And yet he remains human. It is this nature, “too full o’ the milk of human kindness” (1.5.18), that Lady Macbeth fears. This “weakness” is what makes the hero human and causes his tragic mental anguish. Shakespeare’s Machiavellian villains do not appreciate human values. They do not believe in love, friendship, duty, or honor—all this is nothing but empty words. Macbeth, on the contrary, knows its worth. When they do evil, Richard and Iago have no other

feeling than satisfaction with their guile bearing fruit. They trample on humanity without fear or doubts, whereas Macbeth shudders at the very thought that he could violate moral laws. He can clearly see the evil but, being prompted by his wife, he agrees to do it and goes on, “until he is so habituated to evil that he can let his heart and hand speak for him automatically” choosing again and again to pay the price for doing so (Calderwood 2010: 24).

But the point is that he has already confused the true and false values. This is the reason why Lady Macbeth can influence his ultimate decision. She does not tempt him into attaining power but appeals to his proud belief in his human dignity when she says: “What beast was’t, then, / That made you break this enterprise to me? / When you durst do it, then you were a man; / And, to be more than what you were” (1.7.47-50). His struggles against his wife and against his own ambition “generated the conflict in the play and enabled the audience to share his doubts and hopes regarding the resolutions to come” (Gamboa 2014: 51). He strives for social and political ascendance as a man of dignity but chooses the wrong way to accomplish it, as his heart presages from the beginning. Macbeth perceives the news that the king has given him a title of the thane of Cawdor as a first step on his ladder to the crown. He asks himself if he should reckon prophecies as fair or foul. This is the moment when the word “murder” appears in his soliloquies. This “imaginary” murder is those “horrid images” which make his “seated heart knock at his ribs” and “unfix his hair” (1.3.135-136). Mere thought about such a crime “shakes” Macbeth’s “single state of man” (1.3.140). A short internal soliloquy is completed with a figurative conclusion: “Present fears / Are less than horrible imaginings” (1.3.137-138), in other words, prophecies forged the ambitious dreams of the character and at the same time horrified him so that their realization is “smothered in surmise, and nothing is / But what is not” (1.3.141-142). The epigrammatic paradox defies any interpretation, though if this tropology is converted into logical language, it lends itself to a plausible explanation. The interjection “If chance will have me king, why, chance may crown me, / Without my stir” (1.3.144-145) proves out Macbeth quit of these intentions.

The play is designed to bring to the fore the inner clash of a greatly moral mind and a profoundly amoral will, the terrifying discrepancy between its hero’s conscience and actions. The tension between reason and will, when the hero is well aware that his course is morally unacceptable but “strains frantically against that knowledge lest it impair his obsessive pursuit of the course”, torments and utterly destroys him (Twere 1964: 94). Macbeth is his own most formidable foe, for he comes through all his felonies



with his eyes and heart wide open, his illusions shattered, his moral principles fighting fit. His imagination serves as a “violent instrument by which his intellect attempts to make itself heard over the all but indomitable voice of his will” (Pack 1956: 536). He willfully ignores the honest insights and divinations, though he is never able to do away with them. More than any other of Shakespeare’s protagonist, he has a crystal-clear apprehension of his own nature and place in the universe as well as a distinctive potential to envision both the material and spiritual consequences of his deeds. His crimes steep Macbeth in complete misery when he is no longer capable of tolerating himself: “To know my deed, ’twere best not know myself” (2.2.93). His is a product of his action, dreadful and horrific. His tragedy is a tragedy of self-abomination which leads to spiritual termination. This is not the fear of being unmasked that makes him horror-struck but a perfect recognition of what his deeds have turned him into as he is no more a human but a predatory animal. He realizes full well the enormity of the loss he has inflicted on himself: by murdering a gracious, “divine” king, he has murdered the quiet of his mind and sinned his soul to eternal perdition as the voice cries in his head: “Sleep no more! / Macbeth does murder sleep” (2.2.46-47). Macbeth perceives murder as an absolutely atrocious thing. The idea of murder is so frightfully appalling that it ruthlessly captures him and plunges his mind in chaos. His guilt makes the heart of the play, for only the hero’s “constant knowledge that he is doing wrong accounts for his misery, petulance, wrath, and desperate and suicidal end” (Parker 2006: 21). As an allegorical tale, *Macbeth* reveals the internal struggle between the hero’s “faculties of Reason and Imagination for control over his Will”: while he believes he fights for control over Scotland, the true struggle is for his very soul (Stout 2008: 49).

Macbeth commits a moral crime that entails even more evil. Duncan’s murder is only the first in the row of villainies, soon to be followed by the murder of the king’s servants, Banquo, Macduff’s wife and son, as regicide turns into a bloody massacre of the innocents. He does not kill all of them himself, but this does not diminish his guilt. The blood of his victims blots his heart. While the assassins commit the ordered crimes with cruel indifference, Macbeth feels the moral burden of the atrocities. The third murder is narrated to the audience with the most excruciating intimacy as it “brings us to the peak of horror, the breaking of the deepest taboo, which violates the very rudiment of selfhood and of social bonding” (Reid 2010: 126). If the murders of Duncan and Banquo can be somehow justified by political reasons, the slaughter of Macduff’s family signifies the nadir of Macbeth’s fall, for he desecrates the very sanctuary of human society, the purest

essence of life. Macbeth's crimes, from first to last, become "costly violations of the procreative cycle" (Watson 2005: 87). As he breaks that childlike nucleus in himself, the protagonist also relinquishes what remains of his own humanity.

The result is the most horrible tragedy. The hero remains a hero. He retains all the external attributes of an outstanding personality: courage, uncrushable will, energy, wit, analytical skills. The only thing that he lacks is the purpose and meaning of existence. Macbeth has destroyed what he lusted to gain—instead of comprehending his humanity, he feels a yawning emptiness and absurdity that attend his success. He realizes that he has condemned himself to the most terrible loneliness—the loneliness of a man forever cut off from other people: "that which should accompany old age, / As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends, / I must not look to have" (5.3.24-26). And when he asks the physician if he can free Lady Macbeth from madness, he reveals his awareness of the incurable disease that has afflicted his own soul, for what he needs is to "minister to a mind diseased, / Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow, / Raze out the written troubles of the brain / Cleanse the stuff'd bosom of that perilous stuff / Which weighs upon the heart" (5.3.40-45). He hoped that the day would come when the agony of his own deeds would cease but the countless "to-morrows" turned out to lead only to the fatal moment when death is coming, and nothing can be changed. It turned out that he was burning out himself so that only a pathetic, decaying stub was left in the end. Looking back at all the villainies he has committed to satisfy the equivocal prophecy of power, he realizes that everything he has done was for nothing. His heedless pride is reduced to a slavish crawl, for he discovers his human mortality and comprehends himself as a helot to time and the self-delusion of glory that he was seduced by. He recognizes the brevity of life and triviality of his actions. Finally, Macbeth reaches a state of indifference, but his desire is abated not by satisfaction but prostration. Life has ultimately lost its meaning, becoming a ghost, that is why he compares himself with an actor who briefly shows off and disappears while nothing remains of the person whose role he played. This is how Macbeth estimates his life shortly before his death: "it is a tale / Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, / Signifying nothing" (5.5:26-28). His last refuge is courage. Although everything is against him and he has nothing to fight for, he does not give up. He does not rush into battle to find death. He strives to stand and win although he is aware that has nothing to defend but his empty self. However, even his courage leaves him when he learns that Macduff is not "of woman born" (4.1.91), for his assurance has turned inside out "becoming dependent not on the fact that all men are, after all, born of woman but on

the fantasy of escape from this universal condition” (Adelman 2010: 33). His evil deeds finally catch up with him with a vengeance that the hero had prophesied for himself before any crime had been committed: “this even-handed justice / Commends the ingredients of our poison’d chalice / To our own lips” (1.7.10-13). At the end of the play Macbeth loses all forms of power and is killed.

The death of the hero is death without the moral purification. Macbeth is isolated from both characters and audience and left “shrinking, cornered, tyrannical, and gradually bereft of both complexity and fascination” (Tynan 1961: 98). Despite a tough, constructive principle of penalizing justice in the play’s dramatical movement, this is what, rather paradoxically, constitutes the tragedy’s exceptional sense of gloom and vanity. There is an impression that justice is less real and remarkable than the issues it challenges. Although the forces of “good” have triumphed, their victory is “strangely hollow, almost devoid of any power to mitigate the reality of evil or reconcile humanity to its condition” (McElroy 2005: 33). In this sense, Macbeth is the darkest Shakespeare’s tragedy, for it represents the complete destruction of a human.

For Pushkin’s contemporaries and subsequent readers, the dependence of *Boris Godunov* on Shakespeare’s drama was obvious. This issue has been the subject of enduring controversy and specialist studies due to sometimes contradictory opinions on the play that have undergone very significant changes since romantic criticism and scholarship. It is well-known that *Boris Godunov*<sup>48</sup> was published six years after it had been written because of the censorship ban. With great difficulty Pushkin managed to obtain the lifting of the prohibition imposed on his drama by Nicholas I in 1826 due to a secret critical analysis.<sup>49</sup> When in 1831 the play was finally published with several corrective modifications,<sup>50</sup> the critics were not able to understand the play. They criticised

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<sup>48</sup> Initially the play was entitled *Comedy about the Real Trouble for Muscovy, about Tsar Boris and Grishka Otrepiev* (*Komedia o nastoiashchei bede moskovskomu gosudarstvu, o tsare Borise i o Grishke Otrepieve*, 1825). Here the term *comedy* “served to counter the tendency to compare the work to the accepted type of tragedy based on the three unities, underlining the novelty of the genre of the work. The mention of the two heroes corresponded to the ‘bifocal’ nature of the plot and tended to meet the criticism that as a tragedy about Boris Godunov the work lacked unity. In other words, the original title contained important indices about how the work should be read, and also what it was not” (Clayton 2004: 16).

<sup>49</sup> In the essay *Who Was the Censor of Boris Godunov?* G.O. Vinokur proved that this official critic was Faddei Bulgarin who advised the tsar to order Pushkin to improve the play and transform it into a historical novel which would resemble Walter Scott’s fiction. Bulgarin was inspired by the topic Pushkin had chosen for his drama and was going to write his own novel *Dmitry the Pretender*, thus, seeking to prevent or, at least, slow down the publication of *Boris Godunov* so that later Pushkin could not accuse him of plagiarism (Vinokur 1936: 203-214).

<sup>50</sup> Modern scholarship even considers *Boris Godunov* only the derivative, revised version of the original play because *Comedy about Tsar Boris and Grishka Otrepiev*, written in 1824-1825 in exile, was “smuggled into the capital, and recited in a thrillingly unpretentious manner by the poet himself at several

it for its fragmentariness and unsuitability for staging, for they doubted both the psychological depth of the play and the adequacy of Pushkin's historical knowledge (Feldman 1975: 199). Some critics like Faddei Bulgarin berated it for imitating Shakespeare;<sup>51</sup> others, on the contrary, reproached its scant resemblance to Shakespeare's plays. For example, I.V. Kireevsky recriminated Pushkin for his negligence of the readers and their ability to catch the meaning of his drama: "If instead of displaying the actual consequences of the regicide Pushkin had developed more its psychological influence on Boris like Shakespeare in *Macbeth*; if instead of the scene with a Russian monk passing a sentence of fate and legacy upon Godunov in the dark abode, Pushkin had shown us Shakespeare's witches [...] then he would have been appreciated and admired with more enthusiasm" (Kireevsky 1996: 534-535). The parallel with *Macbeth* is not surprising as both tragedies deal with the problem of power usurpation, which in Pushkin's time was very urgent.

This theme, despite the seeming fragmentariness of the play's scenes and the obscurity of the author's idea, integrates the drama and becomes its mainstay. It is evident that both Boris and the Pretender, Russia and Poland, the people and the courtiers, the monastery cell and the State Council – all the characters and scenes of the tragedy are developed only in one respect: in relation to the consequences of regicide. The shadow of the murdered Dmitry presides over the tragedy from beginning to end, controls the course of all events, serves as a link between all the characters and scenes, puts all the separate groups into one perspective, and "gives different colours one common tone, one bloody shade" (Kireevsky 1996: 534). Pushkin's tragedy displays the consequences of Boris's deed and therefore his crime "takes the form not of an action, but of a force, a thought that is gradually revealed in the whispers of the courtier, in the quiet reminiscences of the hermit [...] and then finally in the deafening overthrow of an unjustly ruling house"

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private gatherings in St. Petersburg" (it was "an immediate oral experience and a sensation"; the poet "was hailed as a daring radical in his history and his dramaturgy") while the 1831 *Boris Godunov* was "a silent in-print affair received in a perfunctory way" (Emerson and Dunning 2006: 3-4). The new editions published after Pushkin's death revealed that he had cut three acts and changed the original ending from "Hail to Tsar Dmitry" to the ambiguous silence of people when they were announced that Boris' son after his death had committed suicide and Dmitry had come to power (See more about the differences between the original and published versions of the drama in Fomichev 1993: 236-249).

<sup>51</sup> Bulgarin was also one of the critics who blamed Pushkin for imitating Shakespeare because he considered the English playwright out of date what he admitted in his essay *Theatre Memories of My Youth*: "Today everybody speaks only about Shakespeare, but I believe that Shakespeare cannot be taken after and should not be. For our century Shakespeare should be not a model to follow but only a historical figure. Our age requires a different language, different ideas, different structuring of a tragedy and a completely different plot" (Bulgarin 1840: 91).

(Clayton 2004: 15). The idea of regicide as a driving force of the drama is paramount for Pushkin's speculations on power and autocracy in Russia.

The play develops very specific themes from Pushkin's verse: his portrayal of historical figures and his reflections on their destiny. Like the Decembrists, Pushkin used the archaic style to criticize the tsar and the state. One of his last odes *Volnost'* (*Liberty*, 1817) caused his banishment to the south as it denounced the way Alexander I had come to power and compared him to another usurper, Napoleon. Correspondingly, *Boris Godunov* displays the conflict between two usurpers – one has already become the tsar of Russia and the other is going to invade the country to usurp the power of the usurper. The play was written “at the crucial moment” when Pushkin's “thinking about revolution had reached an advanced stage” and “encompassed a number of issues: his dislike of regicide; the legitimacy of rulers; the morality of assassination (the dagger) as an antidote to despotism<sup>52</sup>; freedom as an ideal; the role of the *narod*; and the fate of the poet in revolutionary times” (Clayton 2004: 78).

The play is not only a simple evolution from poetry to prose and from romanticism to realism but a desire to try his hand at theatre too. Pushkin had already used dramatic dialogic form in some of his earlier poems starting with *Ruslan and Liudmila* (adapted for staging and performed in 1821), *The Conversation of a Bookseller with a Poet* (1823) and *Scene from Faust* (1823). This method reached its peak in *Boris Godunov* and continued in the so-called *Little Tragedies* as well as in the narrative poem *Count Nulin*. Even in his early creative career, Pushkin showed considerable interest in drama and attempted to write a comedy *The Philosopher* (started in 1815, it has not survived). In 1824, *Ruslan and Liudmila* was dramatized again by Shakhovskoy and staged under the title *The Finn* as were other Pushkin poems such as *The Prisoner of the Caucasus*, *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai*, *The Gypsies* and the tale *The Queen of the Spades*. The dramatic versions of his poems played a significant role in his growing popularity, which might have encouraged the poet to design *Boris Godunov* specifically for the theatre. Pushkin was motivated by the desire to analyse more thoroughly the political side of Russian history and the foundations of the Russian autocracy, as well as by the need to reform Russian theatre, particularly tragedy. It was the new romantic theatre of Goethe

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<sup>52</sup> It is not coincidental that Douglas Clayton encompassed “the morality of assassination” into the image of a dagger that since Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, where it represents the bloody course on which Macbeth is about to embark, converted into a symbol of regicide that Pushkin opposed as a solution to the problem of despotism, for he believed it leads “not to a freedom but to a new, more terrible tyranny” (Clayton 2004: 78).

and Schiller, which took as its model Shakespeare's practice of writing plays about important events in national history, that provided Pushkin with a chance to draw a convincing historical canvas and depict historical events without ideological biases.<sup>53</sup> Thanks to Shakespeare, Pushkin became interested in the past of his own country, learned how to draw the bloody dynastic feuds and created a drama, fundamentally real like life itself (Herford 1925: 453-480). However, Pushkin was not able to overcome the influence of classicism as his drama contains several devices of classical poetics which are at odds with from the views of the romantics and the practice of Shakespeare. The scenes are mostly composed of long dialogues whereas the action, as in Senecan tragedy, takes place offstage. Such a mixture of innovations and archaisms constitutes the uniqueness of Pushkin's play that marked the switch from classicism to romanticism in Russian culture. Such a shift gets more transparent with the changes of the play made for its final publication as the playwright ditched the archaic elements in favor of a greater conformity with the Shakespearean model.

Pushkin's own perception of the drama changed once *Boris Godunov* had been written. In the years preceding its publication, he already referred to it as a tragedy instead of a comedy as a matter of the ancient Russian convention, assimilating it to the Shakespearean tradition by the use of unrhymed iambic pentameter. Although Pushkin retained the caesura in the second foot, which resembles French classical verse, the abandonment of rhyme was a definite move toward Shakespearean practice and an innovation with few precedents in Russian versification. One of the most significant features adopted from Shakespeare is the variety of language. Pushkin's drama has blended various stylistic and linguistic registers of all its characters: courtiers, clergy, soldiers, commoners. In the original version it combined prose with the iambic pentameter as well as other meters. The language side opposes the play to the limited vocabulary and the noble tone of French classicism that predominated in Russian classical tragedy as well.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Pushkin along with other nineteenth-century intellectuals called for a new type of Russian historical drama, which demanded improvement and refreshment because current history plays were patriotic, historically inaccurate, and prone to portray tyrants as benevolent rulers instead of "reviving the past in all its truth" (Pushkin 1937-1959: VII. 218). During the Romantic period, Shakespeare's plays were re-estimated and considered the model of realistic and vigorous historical drama. That was the reason why Pushkin turned to Shakespeare for inspiration.

<sup>54</sup> However, despite its linguistic variety, the language of Pushkin's play is very laconic; it lacks Shakespeare's poetic richness and metaphoricity: "Although Pushkin had applied his mature poetic skills with assiduity it became clear that he had produced, unusually for him, a constrained kind of verse two and a half thousand iambic pentameters which, curiously, renounced the fluidity of the English type for the viscosity of the French" (Briggs 1983: 158).

The study of Shakespeare's dramas, started by Pushkin in Odessa and continued in exile in Mikhailovskoe, put before the poet many important and very topical historical, political and psychological questions and at the same time forced him to think hard about what Russian national historical drama should be. Pushkin had been fascinated by the task of creating a national Russian tragedy<sup>55</sup> since the end of 1824 and wrote the rough drafts of the first five scenes of *Boris Godunov* at the beginning of 1825. He planned to create a huge drama based on thoroughly examined authentic documentary sources and to portray a broad picture of Russian historical life in the early seventeenth century, which would provide the setting for the problem of political and moral responsibility for crimes committed in the past. Pushkin repeatedly admitted that one of the tasks of *Boris Godunov* was the reform of the Russian theatre: "Our theatre should adopt national laws of Shakespeare's drama"; "The spirit of the age requires important changes on the dramatic stage" (Pushkin 1937-1959: XI. 141). Following the methods of Shakespeare<sup>56</sup> seemed to Pushkin both true and fruitful, as he stressed repeatedly in letters to his friends (Alekseev 1972: 249): "I composed my tragedy [*Boris Godunov*] according to the system of our Father Shakespeare having sacrificed to him and put on his altar two of the classical unities and having barely preserved the last one" (Pushkin 1937-1959: XI. 66); "Like Shakespeare, I have concentrated on depicting the era and its historical figures, and paid no attention to stage effects, romantic pathos, etc. The style of tragedy is mixed" (Pushkin 1937-1959: XIV. 46); "Being free from any secular influence I imitated Shakespeare in his free and broad portrayal of characters, in the careless and simple composition of types" (Pushkin 1937-1959: XI. 140). In 1826, on his arrival in Moscow with the manuscript of *Boris Godunov*, not yet printed, Pushkin repeatedly recalled Shakespeare while reading his play in the salons of friends and acquaintances and exchanging opinions about the play.

Although scholars agree it is impossible to restore the sequence of how Pushkin read Shakespeare during 1824-1825, it is known that by that time Pushkin had already

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<sup>55</sup> However, the idea of the national drama, which would meet the public demands and aspirations of modernity, opposed the conventions and traditions of the Russian stage. Moreover, because of the stringent demands of theatrical censorship, Pushkin could not speak directly and freely express his views on the national history. This contradiction possibly made him later completely indifferent to the genre of history play and turn to the chamber drama of the *Little Tragedies*.

<sup>56</sup> Nikolai Zakharov along with other scholars admits that Pushkin adopted Shakespearean techniques in the creation of his history plays: "Pushkin assimilated his conception of characters, the personality magnitude of his heroes whose breadth is generated not by the mere rationalism but by the power of passions and the boldness of actions. His characters possess both lively naturalness and speech individuality" (2003: 47).

studied all the major plays as well as his poetry and probably his sonnets.<sup>57</sup> Pushkin found Shakespeare highly pertinent to the Russia of his day because of the various subjects approached in his plays, such as the problem of usurpation of power, relations between people and rulers, crime and punishment, individual guilty conscience and the commonwealth, or love and hatred in different social environments. Traces of his careful reading can be found in many of his writings from *Boris Godunov*. Its diverse range of Shakespearean elements makes this tragedy a starting point for studying the English playwright's impact on Pushkin that was further extended to the poem *Count Nulin* (1825), the *Little Tragedies* (1830) and the poem *Andzhelo* (1833). *Boris Godunov* is, first of all, Shakespearean in its overall formal conception. Shakespeare's history plays were taken as a model because Pushkin "needed precisely [the Shakespearean] untrammelled sequence of separate scenes that taken together created imperceptibly an imposing picture of a historical event, a popular movement: Pushkin wanted neither to produce a grouping of events around a tragic hero, nor to do violence to the historical material; he did not need to dramatize or theatricalize history, for the history itself was already sufficiently dramatic" (Bondi 1978: 193).

More specifically, of Shakespeare's history plays, scholars have singled out the influence of *Richard III* and *Henry IV*. Boris' soliloquy on his accession to the throne resembles the scene in Baynard's Castle with Gloucester pretending he does not desire the crown but finally accepting it (*Richard III*, 3.7), while from his deathbed, Boris addresses Prince Fyodor as the dying Henry IV addressed his successor Prince Hal (*Henry IV Part 2*, 5.5) and his soliloquy, "I have attained the highest power," was "created under the very close influence of Shakespeare" (Timofeev 1887: 71-76).<sup>58</sup> *Julius Caesar* is believed to be evoked in the scene of a fake refusal of the throne, the conspiracy scene between Vorotynsky and Shuisky (Pushkin's Brutus and Cassius), Gavrila Pushkin's speech to the crowd on the model of Antony's, and the portrayal of common people.<sup>59</sup> Dmitry the Pretender, for whom Pushkin displays some liking, is compared with Prince Hal for his ability to modulate his speech to suit the audience. The well-known scene from *Henry V* when Hal's troops speak in their different dialects is alluded to in *Boris*

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<sup>57</sup> For a detailed review, see Alekseev 1972: 249-250.

<sup>58</sup> This Shakespearean "echoing" was mentioned several times in nineteenth and twentieth-century scholarship (Chuiko 1881: 194-233; Pokrovsky 1910: 1-20; Lirondelle 1912: 142-143; Bobrova 1939: 69-80; Gifford 1947: 152-160; Alekseev 1972: 240-280; Levin 1974: 59-85).

<sup>59</sup> Verkhovsky 1937: 191; Bobrova 1939: 72-73; Gifford 1947: 155; Wolff 1952: 97; Barbour 1953: 195; Emerson 1987: 117; Greenleaf 1994: 172-175; O'Neil 2003: 38-42.



*Godunov* in the scene when the foreign officers are trying to reassemble their heedless and unhelpful Russian soldiers.<sup>60</sup> The tavern scene is reminiscent of the Falstaff scenes in *Henry IV Part I* or the gravedigger in *Hamlet*. Pushkin implemented Shakespeare's method of paralleling opening and closing scenes by contrasting the unenthusiastic response of the common people to Godunov's accession to the throne with their enthusiastic cheer for Tsar Dmitry in the final scene, although cheer was muted to silence in the published version.<sup>61</sup> Other echoes include the power-lusting Marina Mniszek, who has been associated both with Lady Macbeth and Cleopatra; the "Fountain Scene", in which Mniszek's encounter with the pretender is seen as a parody of the "Balcony Scene" in *Romeo and Juliet*; the holy fool revives the fool in *King Lear* or, perhaps, the prophet Peter in *King John*; and *Macbeth* and *Richard III* are sometimes mentioned as analogues for the slaughter of innocents and consequent retribution (O'Neil 2003: 30-32).

However, the principal Shakespearean feature in *Boris Godunov*, which stands over and above localised borrowings of motifs and situations, is the portrayal of character, the aspect of Shakespeare that seems to have most impressed Pushkin: "Read Shakespeare – this is what I'm constantly repeating – he is never afraid of compromising his hero; he makes him speak naturally and unconstrainedly, for he is sure that when the time and the place are due he will make this hero find a language adequate for his character" (1937-1959: XIII. 197-198). Pushkin did his best to create well-rounded, believable characters that would not merely embody a single personality trait and were neither totally good nor evil. Indeed, in his comparison of Shakespeare's plays with Pushkin's tragedy, Vsevolod Meyerhold has claimed that Pushkin "surpassed "his teacher" in the elegance of the plan, the likeliness and vividness of the depicted characters, the dramatic nature of the situations, and the elaborateness of the action" (Meyerhold 1936: 205). That may be going too far, but the Shakespearean genetics of *Boris Godunov* cannot be doubted.

Two plays, *Macbeth* and *Richard III*, merit special attention in connection with *Boris Godunov* because they share with Pushkin's tragedy the thorny issue of the accession to power by means of murder. An attractive idea is that Pushkin could have

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<sup>60</sup> Bobrova 1939: 72-73; Gifford 1947: 153; Wolff 1952: 97; Emerson 1987: 102; Greenleaf 1994: 188, 191.

<sup>61</sup> Pushkin was going to use the same method in the sequel *Dmitry the Pretender* which remained only as a plan. The drama might have started with the scene on the Red Square with Shuisky about to be beheaded but then saved at the very last moment by what Pushkin referred to as Tsar Dmitry's lightheaded generosity and finish with the scene of Dmitry's own assassination on the Red Square by Shuisky's henchman. Shuisky pretended the tsar was murdered by the Polish who had arrived in Moscow to celebrate his wedding with Marina Mniszek. A few days later, he proclaimed himself the new tsar, but he was never able to get rid of Dmitry's ghost that followed him prompting his crime in the third play of the planned trilogy.

chosen these Shakespearean usurpers as models for his own two heroes, Boris and Dmitry. The need for two protagonists was conditioned by the setting of the drama in the turbulent period of Russian history known as the “Time of Troubles”, when the country was actually ruled by two usurpers struggling against each another. Indeed, *Boris Godunov* has been regarded as “telescoping Shakespeare’s two great plays into one and exploring the consequences of their interaction” (Dinega 1996: 529). Both *Macbeth* and *Boris Godunov* are afflicted with the murder of the innocent that broke the royal lineage and undeservingly brought them the crown; both Richard and False Dmitry are “the authors, plotters, creative artists of their own lives and the lives of others as, untroubled by any pangs of conscience, they slowly but surely claw their way to the throne by deception and wiles” (Dinega 1996: 529). However, the characters are not identical and differ in many remarkable ways.

The Pretender is a much more ambivalent character than Gloucester, who is a cunning, cruel, sadistic “wholly conventional villain; the evil that he constitutes is also conventional: it is wholly negative” (Held 2014). Dmitry is not so noticeably evil. In fact, he is perceived as a young, bold adventurer whose reckless scheme nevertheless led to many deaths, even if more as so-called “collateral damage” than the direct consequence of his own actions. According to Belinsky, while *Boris Godunov* is a title character that deserves the reader’s attention as the entire plot complications in the play emerge from his recollections, fears and deeds, the Pretender, on the contrary, is an unclear entity, childish and impulsive, “full of empty oration”, “incapable of something great”; as such, he cannot be regarded as a “historical agent” (1953-1959: V. 59).<sup>62</sup> Indeed, as did Schiller in his unfinished play *Demetrius*, which Pushkin may have read in a French translation (Dunning 2006: 69), the Russian writer sympathised with “False” Dmitry, dismantling the official, propagandistic image of an evil man, a rapist, and a tool of Catholic Poland’s intervention in Russia. Unlike “the distrustful and ever doubting Boris, whose actions are dictated by reason and calculation and who wants to usurp God’s providence, Grigorii has faith and confidence” and “believes in prophecies of poets and in his fate” (Evdokimova 1999: 60-61). In this, the resemblance is greater with *Macbeth*. Moreover, taking into account the fusion of Shakespeare’s two plays and two usurpers within a single

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<sup>62</sup> Belinsky’s idea took a hold of subsequent Russian scholarship and has been summarised as follows by Emerson and Dunning: Dmitry is “a metaphor for ahistorical creativity rather than as a historical agent” and “might have appealed to Pushkin as a courtier, as a chameleon, as a warrior and lover in the Western style, as a surrogate for Romantic self-fashioning, and a symbol of poetic inspiration, but not as a serious contender for political power with a progressive agenda of reforms” (2006: 10).

Pushkin tragedy, when “the boundaries become blurred” and “the opposite character pairings can be seen as well”, False Dmitry might be compared with Macbeth for his temporary loss of willpower and “his receptivity to the hard-headed urging of the ambitious and single-minded Marina Mniszek, who is reminiscent of Lady Macbeth” (Dinega 1996: 530). In the “Fountain Scene”, when the Pretender suddenly reveals himself as a sentimental lover who is ready to jettison his plan of seizing the Russian throne for the sake of Mniszek’s love,<sup>63</sup> she blames him for childish passion, lost dignity and forsaking his destiny.<sup>64</sup> A latter-day Lady Macbeth, Mniszek very much wants to become Dmitry’s partner in crime, longing to become his “spouse, and worthy helpmate of the tsar of Moscow” (14:40-41). If Lady Macbeth confronts her husband’s masculinity to deliver on the plan of the king’s murdering, Mniszek challenges the Pretender’s maturity and urges him to go on in his political plot to accomplish her own ambitious dreams. However, even though Mniszek is cold, forceful and power-hungry, she is not an instrument of cruelty. Whereas Lady Macbeth’s lust for power reveals “the implacably fierce resoluteness of her evil”, Mniszek’s ambition is simply confined to pragmatism without any malevolent intentions (Kramer 2011: 194). Her “haughty admonitions that the Pretender can swear by neither God’s name, nor his honour, nor the tsar’s word seem incommensurate with Lady Macbeth’s overt wickedness” because “the Pretender’s oath explicitly recorded in the play [and] his vows to keep his true identity hidden do not carry the same weight as a promise to commit murder” (Murphy 2011: 130). This is the principal moral difference between Shakespeare’s and Pushkin’s heroines.

For his part, Boris Godunov resembles Richard III, as has already been mentioned, most prominently in the opening scenes when he sanctimoniously refuses several times to ascend the throne. Yet he is not purely malicious like Gloucester, although the boyars call him “son / By marriage of Maliuta, of a hangman, / Himself in soul a hangman” (1:64-66). Like both Richard and Macbeth, Godunov is a good plotter: he gives bribes, sends assassins to kill tsarevich Dmitry, looks calm and shameless dismaying those who suspect him of murder (1:31-32,40-41). He almost never unmask himself in public. Only

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<sup>63</sup> “What is Godunov? / Is thy sweet love, my only blessedness, / Swayed by Boris? Nay, nay. Indifferently / I now regard his throne, his kingly power. / Thy love—without it what to me is life, / And glory’s glitter, and the state of Russia? / On the dull steppe, in a poor mud hut, thou— / Thou wilt requite me for the kingly crown; / Thy love” (14:56-64).

<sup>64</sup> “For shame! Forget not, prince, thy high / And sacred destiny; thy dignity / Should be to thee more dear than all the joys / Of life and its allurements. It thou canst not / With anything compare. Not to a boy, / Insanely boiling, captured by my beauty-- / But to the heir of Moscow’s throne give I / My hand in solemn wise, to the tsarevich / Rescued by destiny” (14:64-72).

once, in the face-to-face conversation with the boyar Shuisky questioning him about the circumstances of the infant tsarevich's death (and whether he was dead indeed), does Boris nearly reveal his secret: "when first I learned this child / Had been—" (11:103) slips his tongue—here he has managed to stop himself before pronouncing the word "murdered" or one of its synonyms (similarly Macbeth is reluctant to name his deed directly a "murder" (1.3.139) and an "assassination" (1.7.2), as he calls it in his monologues, in public, even alone with his wife, changing it for euphemistic "let that be which the eyes fear" (1.4.52-53), "this business" (1.7.31) and "terrible feat" (1.7.80)) thus, revealing his own involvement in the crime—so that he has to correct himself by telling "this child had somehow lost its life" (11:104). At first, unlike Macbeth whose guilt and paranoia makes him hallucinate Banquo's ghost and give himself away, Godunov is ostentatiously mocking the news that Dmitry has been declared alive: "Have you ever heard / That the dead left their graves / To question tsars" (11:112-114), referring to Macbeth's reasonings "graves must send those that we bury back" (3.4.71-72) so that "they rise again [...] and push us from our stools (3.4.80-82). However, Shakespeare's metaphorical allusion to the returning dead performs a similar function in Pushkin's tragedy. It shows the tsar's concern about his future and, within the plot of the play, signifies the beginning of his defeat. The short conversation of Godunov with a holy fool Nikolka discloses the tsar's guilt. When the tsar is coming out from the cathedral, Nikolka, whose is hurt by children, begs Boris to punish them: "The boys are hurting me... Give orders to slay them, as thou slew the little tsarevich" (18:25). The boyars propose to seize him, but the tsar asks the fool to pray for him. Godunov sees Nikolka "made holy by foolishness and humiliation, and thus a vehicle for expressing [...] truths" (Rosenshield 2003: 113). In Russian Orthodox culture Foolishness in Christ was regarded as one of the forms of sanctity. The holy fools were believed to be wonderworkers and prophets who could save other people's souls for their "great act of faith [...] made out of love for God" (Kovalevsky, ed. 1902: 2). In Pushkin's tragedy Nikolka represents "the Highest Truth" (Nepomnyashchy 2001: 205). He is the voice of God in the world God presides and whose history is Divine Providence, for Pushkin believed in the providential nature of the history of mankind (Kurkin 2019: 4-5). The fool's argument eliminates the ambiguity of Godunov's crime. If earlier the readers were given only clues to Boris's culpability in the gossiping of Shuisky and Vorotynsky<sup>65</sup> or Boris's own veiled remarks, now there is no

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<sup>65</sup> Vorotynsky: What if our ruler / Be sick in very deed of cares of state / And hath no strength to mount the throne? What / Say'st thou? Shuisky: I say that in that case the blood in vain / Flowed of the young tsarevich,

doubt left. Because the play does not provide any evaluation of Nikolka's words, "the hero is raised to an unattainable altitude: he is holding court proclaiming the objective truth" (Moteyunaite 2000: 112). His refusal to pray for the tsar – "No, no! It is impossible to pray for tsar Herod; the Mother of God forbids it" (18:28) – denotes his guilt before God's face and hints at the forthcoming retribution.

The holy fool is the most "fairy" element in the tragedy; otherwise there is no evident presence of the supernatural, unlike the witches or ghosts and apparitions in *Macbeth*, although we learn from the dialogue between the tsar's attendants in the first Palace scene that Godunov is constantly consulting with "Sorcerers, fortune-tellers, necromancers. / Ever he seeks to dip into the future / Just like some pretty girl. Fain would I know / What 'tis he would foretell" (7:4-7) There is something of Macbeth here; even the comparison of Godunov with "some pretty girl" aligns him with the anxieties about manhood<sup>66</sup> that prey on Macbeth's mind. There is also something of Macbeth, and of Richard, in Boris's guilty conscience and dread of the future. This is conscience that communicates with visions—the ghosts of Richard's victims, the dagger of Macbeth's mind, Banquo's ghost, blood on the hands of Lady Macbeth—and confronts the murderers in their solitude: "If the mind is to be medicated [...] surely no means are so well adapted to that end, as a strong and lively representation of the agonizing struggles that precede, and the terrible horrors that follow wicked actions" (Montagu 1770: 159). In Pushkin's perception, Shakespeare's plays conveyed the idea that as soon as a person starts committing evil deeds, worries afflict and distract him. Such terrors torture Boris Godunov's in the tragedy's central soliloquy, "I have attained the highest power". Here, the tsar confesses he is restless and disconsolate even though it is already the sixth year of his sovereignty and it has been prophesied that he will rule peacefully for much

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that Dimitry / Might just as well be living. Vorotynsky: Fearful crime! / Is it beyond all doubt Boris contrived / The young boy's murder? Shuisky: Who besides? (1:23-30).

<sup>66</sup> *Macbeth* is the tragedy of a man destroyed by the conflicting conceptions of masculinity at war within him (Ryan 2016). The play's obsession with manhood is brought into particular focus by Lady Macbeth's continuous questioning of her husband's male power when, first, she has to reinforce masculine notions of ambition and desire due to his hesitation to murder the king—"What beast was't, then, / That made you break this enterprise to me? / When you durst do it, then you were a man" (1.7.47-49)—and then, at the banquet, when she scorns his fear of Banquo's ghost—"Are you a man?" (3.4.57)—and tells him sarcastically that his "flaws and starts, / Impostors to true fear, would well become / A woman's story at a winter's fire, / Authorized by her grandam. Shame itself!" (3.4.62-65), that he is making a fool of himself and is behaving as a nervous woman, not a man at all. Like Macbeth, whose behaviour is "antithetical to notions of heroic masculinity and threatens to endanger the very fabric of masculine power and authority" (Howell 2008: 16), Godunov's masculine imperative of reason and volition is compromised by his timid reclusion and consulting with magicians to learn his fortune instead of the urgent preparation of the city's defense and courageous readiness to face off with the invaders.

longer.<sup>67</sup> His reign is blackened by the shadow of his crime. Despite all his attempts to win the people's love, "to satisfy my people in contentment, in glory" (7:20)—at hard times of a famine he "made them free of the granaries, scattered gold among them, found labour for them" and when "a fire consumed their homes" he "built for them new dwellings" (7:28-32)—they blame him for their misfortunes and indict him for various crimes: "Whoso dies, I am the secret murderer of all" (7:40-41). He lives in constant fear of punishment, his "heart vibrates to the people's groans", and angst "empties" his hopes (7:22,26). The only thing that can save a ruler (here Boris expresses Pushkin's own opinion) is a clear conscience, but "naught can give us peace mid worldly cares" because "Healthy, she [conscience] triumphs over wickedness, / Over dark slander; but if in her be found / A single casual stain,<sup>68</sup> then misery" (7:44-48) The tsar is tormented by the pangs of guilt:

With what a deadly sore my soul doth smart;  
 My heart, with venom filled, doth like a hammer  
 Beat in mine ears reproach; all things revolt me,  
 And my head whirls, and in my eyes are children  
 Dripping with blood; and gladly would I flee,  
 But nowhere can find refuge--horrible!  
 Pitiful he whose conscience is unclean! (7:49-55)

Just as Macbeth and Lady Macbeth see the bloody ghost of Banquo and king Duncan's blood, Boris Godunov hallucinates the bloody corpse of tsarevich Dmitry assassinated by his order. The visions capture the tsar's mind and haunt him through the course of the play. First, the boyars presume that the "monstrous misdeed" and "remorse already gnaws the murderer" and "the blood of that same innocent child hinders him from mounting to the throne" (1:59-60). Then the tsar admits it himself in his soliloquy and later after the conversation with Shuisky: "For thirteen years together I have dreamed / Ever about the murdered child" (11:133-134).

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<sup>67</sup> "I have attained the highest power. Six years / Already have I reigned in peace; but joy / Dwells not within my soul. Even so in youth / We greedily desire the joys of love, / But only quell the hunger of the heart / With momentary possession. We grow cold, / Grow weary and oppressed! In vain the wizards / Promise me length of days, days of dominion / Immune from treachery--not power, not life / Gladden me; I forebode the wrath of Heaven / And woe. For me no happiness" (7:9-19).

<sup>68</sup> The idiom of the blot on conscience might allude to Lady Macbeth's hallucinations of blood on her hands: "Yet here's a spot [...] Out, damned spot! out, I say!" (5.1.36,39).

The ending of the second Tsar's Palace scene resembles Macbeth's struggle with his fears during the banquet when, instead of being "hard as marble or rock, securely based and as free as the enclosing air [...] he is shut up in the cabin of himself, cribbed like an animal in a stall, imprisoned by insolent doubts and fears" (Bloom 2019: 56). Godunov is scared stiff by the news that the Pretender is coming for him: he is choking, trying to take his breath; the blood surges to his face and then leaves it white. The distempered imagination of both murderers makes them mount a challenge to the shadows of their victims. Macbeth appeals to courage so that his "firm nerves shall never tremble" and he will "dare" and "approach [...] like the rugged Russian bear, / The arm'd rhinoceros, or the Hyrcan tiger" the "horrible shadow" of Banquo (3.4.102-109). Godunov, in his turn, tells himself to be "fast resolved" and "show no sign of fear" (11:142-143). He calls his "terrible antagonist" Dmitry "an empty name, a shadow" (11:136-137) that should not be afraid of: "Blow on this phantom--and it is no more" (11:141) like Macbeth's "unreal mockery" (3.4.110).

Nevertheless, neither of the protagonists can regain inner peace in their fear of blood-for-blood retribution.<sup>69</sup> Both are prompted to additional villainy: Macbeth orders the murders of Banquo with his son and Macduff with his family; Godunov executes the boyars who secretly toasted the Pretender, while "tongues" and "heads" "have been cut off" and —"Each day [is] an execution" (19:19-22). Their respective trajectories of murder are fuelled by devastating concerns that if their rivals should inherit the throne, they will have sacrificed their virtues and defiled their souls in vain. Ultimately, the divine scourge overtakes the villains because murdering innocent children is an unforgivable sin. Pushkin deliberately creates the image of a saint out of the dead Dmitry to highlight the gravity of Boris's crime riddled with the sin of both infanticide and regicide. Shuisky is the first who noticed the infant's corpse had not been corrupted: "The childish face of the tsarevich / Was bright and fresh and quiet as if asleep; / The deep gash had congealed not, nor the lines / Of his face even altered" (11:125-128).<sup>70</sup> The saintly image of the murdered tsarevich echoes Shakespeare's "metaphysically startling" presentation of dead Duncan "in terms of the opulently gilded iconography of martyrology" (Forker 2012: 207): "Here lay Duncan, / His silver skin laced with his golden blood, / And his gashed

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<sup>69</sup> The Pretender repeats Macbeth's statement when he is reported about the tsar's new delinquencies: "But blood for blood! And woe to Godunov!" (12:74).

<sup>70</sup> Later, the Patriarch tells Godunov a story of one blinded man who was visited by Dmitry's spirit in his dream that told him: "I am the tsarevich Dimitry, whom the Heavenly Tsar hath taken Into His angel band, and I am now A mighty wonder-worker" (16:75-78).

stabs looked like a breach in nature / For ruin's wasteful entrance" (2.3.104-107). Kingly sanctity "defines the awful proportions" of the crime and aggravates "psychological burdens" of Macbeth's consciousness (Ide 1975: 347). His equally foul deed seizes Godunov with remorse and terror so that he hides himself in his "gloomy" palace; he is "grim and somber"; "sickness gnaws him: Hardly hath he strength / To drag himself along, and--it is thought-- / His last hour is already not far off" (12:76-80). After the meeting of the Duma (the Counsel of the tsar), he "turned pale, "from his face there poured a mighty sweat" (16:127-128). Finally, "Upon the throne /He sat, and suddenly he fell; blood gushed / From his mouth and ears" (21:49-51). Thus, his sustained anxiety eventually triggers a blood-stroke which becomes the reason of the tsar's death. However, Pushkin declares that "God's judgment hath struck down Boris" (23:7-8), thereby establishing the law of nemesis, which would become the core principle of his further usurper tragedies.<sup>71</sup> Godunov's final deathbed monologue is laden with guilt and the forlorn hope that his son will be happier and more successful. The guidance he leaves for tsarevich Fyodor alludes to another Shakespearean usurper, Bolingbroke, whose career resembles that of Boris (and, perhaps, even that of the Pretender, had Pushkin had fulfilled his plan to write a sequel) and who died a similar death in *Henry IV* (Gifford 1947: 152-160). Similarly, the crown is not inherited by a legitimate heir.<sup>72</sup> The throne is seized once again: False Dmitry wins over the Russian army's commander Basmanov, orders to kill Boris's wife and son, and is proclaimed a new tsar.

Accordingly, what reconciles *Boris Godunov* with Shakespeare's history plays is the "concern with a historical process and its focus upon cause and effect", while like *Macbeth* it "traces the destruction of a human soul and centres upon the inner life of

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<sup>71</sup> However, some scholars call into question the providential character of the play's portrayal of history as it does not finish with the restoration of a legitimate dynasty and order (the Romanovs as the hope of the country are mentioned only once among other noble families persecuted by Godunov in the speech of the minor character Afanasy Pushkin in the middle of the play) but with the murder of the Boris' family and the Pretender Dmitry ascension to power. They contend that Pushkin has bought into Schlegel's idea about the equivocal role of chance in history because despite "many characters believe in retribution for their crimes and responsibility for their actions (as Boris clearly does), the action of the play does not necessarily support their fear as no misfortune befalls these characters as a result of their actions" (O'Neil 2003: 49). Hence, *Boris Godunov* "presents a highly volatile historical atmosphere – one that increases the impact of chance and special influences" (Evdokimova 1999: 62).

<sup>72</sup> Although some scholars believe that the ending of the tragedy acknowledges "the failure of Shakespeare's model" in the Russian context as the order in the country is not restored yet (Dinega 1996: 49-50; Emerson 1987: 131-137), Shakespeare's historical teleology is not as triumphal as it used to be thought (especially at the height of empire and during and between the two world wars). In the first tetralogy, the Lancastrian claim of Henry VII is no more legitimate than that of the House of York, while in the second, Bolingbroke is a usurper and even the glorious fulfilment of Henry V is vitiated by the epilogue which looks forward to the disaster of Henry VI.



individuals” (Scragg 1996: 190). In both Pushkin and Shakespeare, the comprehension of historical events flows through the personalities of the characters and their complex psychologies (Bobrova 1939: 74). Therefore, Shakespeare can be considered as “just another starting point”, like Karamzin’s *History of the Russian State*<sup>73</sup> because Pushkin transforms both material and genre to achieve something quite distinctive and original. Partly inspired by Shakespeare’s and Schiller’s drama, Pushkin took an innovative approach to compose a drama with experimental form, language, and versification which would express his radical views of Russian history. The result of his experiment was “a remarkable tour de force and a major but decidedly risky achievement in the history of Russian drama” (Dunning 2006: 60). Through *Boris Godunov* Pushkin managed to rehabilitate and restore Shakespeare's dramatic principles in a new way. “Pushkin's interpretation of Shakespeare was a new stage in the development of the heritage of the great English playwright. Pushkin more fully and deeper, than his predecessors, uncovered the national-historical character of Shakespearean drama. This is its originality; this is its international significance” (Verkhovsky 1937: 187). It is not surprising that Belinsky named the play “a creation, worthy to head the list after Shakespeare's dramas” (1953-1959: V. 59). The study of Shakespeare, Karamzin, Schiller and old Russian chronicles helped Pushkin stage one of the most dramatic periods of Russian history, thereby “resurrect[ing] a past century in all its truth” (Foxcroft 2014). Of foremost importance was not only what Pushkin had to say about a particular subject but his multifocal approach to the problems of historical reality, his methodological innovativeness and honesty that fostered the complementarity of ideas and forms of representation, questioned fixed formulas and accommodated difference in context, distance, and point of view—such a “multifocal approach teaches us how to avoid history’s blind spots” (Evdokimova 1999: 240).

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<sup>73</sup> Karamzin presented Boris Godunov as a power-hungry hypocrite who boldly stabbed the holy infant Dmitry to steal the Russian crown (Karamzin 1843: 129-130). In Pushkin’s interpretation the tsar retains “his ambition, courage, a serious slate of complaints and reforms, desperate negotiations, and a death that was both disfiguring and ennobling – much of Karamzin’s complex psychological and political portrait of Boris remains in place, although shorn of Karamzin’s moralising conclusions” (Emerson and Dunning 2006: 10-11).

#### 4.F. FYODOR DOSTOYEVSKY, *CRIME AND PUNISHMENT*

Thanks to Pushkin, Shakespeare had a huge impact on Russian literary realism. Dostoyevsky appreciated Shakespeare's plays almost as keenly as the Bible. The notes taken while writing *Demons* prove that Dostoyevsky regarded the playwright as "the elect, the prophet of God anointed to disclose the mystery of a human being" (1972-1988: XI. 157). Elsewhere, the writer extended his idea about Shakespeare as a prophet: "This is not a mere reproduction of the existential [...] the reality goes deeper than the existential, for a great part of it is contained in the form of a yet hidden, unspoken, future word. Occasionally, there appear prophets who guess and utter this very word. Shakespeare is a prophet sent by God to tell us the secret of a human being and his soul" (Dostoyevsky 1972-1988: XI. 237). Dostoyevsky compared Shakespeare to ancient prophets: "There is so much that is sacred, great, and genuine on earth: Moses and Shakespeare" (1972-1988: XXVIII. 63). As a prophet, it was Shakespeare's function to render the will of God and warn people that the failure to fulfill it will entail inevitable punishment because the playwright not only had "presented a chronicle of his time but depicted the process of European spiritual decay" (Syromiatnikov 2012: 330).<sup>74</sup>

Dostoyevsky's work on *Crime and Punishment* coincided with the discussion in the Russian and European press on the issue of the system of punishment, as a result of which much attention was paid to the study of a criminal's personality. Dostoyevsky himself polemized with the defenders of the theory of moral statistic and argued against its principle of a constant crime rate (see Kogan 1979: 481-482). The writer was eager to find out, as he investigated by means of "physical analysis which occupies the foreground in the majority of his romances and constitutes their chief power and value" (Hapgood 1902: 166), whether the predisposition to criminality is a natural phenomenon or is socially conditioned. On the one hand, the contemporary historical background played a key role in Dostoyevsky's experiments insofar as contemporary social arguments impinged on his characterization; on the other, by alluding to Shakespeare, Dostoyevsky placed the subjects of his literary testing in a far broader diachronic and cultural context, thus making them new participants in the eternal pursuit for divinity which embraces the whole European civilization.

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<sup>74</sup> Dostoyevsky's famous statement is that Europe is "a graveyard which the costly deceased" (1972-1988: XIV. 210), though it "has made a lot of Christian [...] the Christianity has not died there at once. It has been dying for a long time and has put itself on record" (1972-1988: XXVII. 57).

Most critics and scholars have singled out *Macbeth* and *Crime and Punishment* as among Shakespeare's and Dostoyevsky's greatest works for their exploration of the psychological, social, and moral implications of murder.<sup>75</sup> Both masterpieces "treat murders in gloomy rooms linked with the great ambitions of men of high promise, preceded by agonizing hesitation and followed by hallucinatory tortures of conscience" (Belknap 1984: 64). Shakespeare and Dostoyevsky are "the two greatest creators of [...] 'round' characters – complex, multifaceted, inwardly motivated beings who resemble people like ourselves" (Paris 2008: xi). Both created types of criminals that are "extremely rare in literature and hard to study"; before the discovery of criminal anthropology, only the genius of Shakespeare in *Macbeth* and Dostoyevsky, through his personal observation of the convicts in Siberia were aware of the existence of such offenders (Ferry 1896: 11). They were able to create a picture of the inner driving force of crime and of the concatenation of moral particles in which this force meets its opposition (Koni 1881; qtd. Kogan 1979: 481). Mention might also be made in this connection of Thomas de Quincey, whose celebrated essay *On Murder Considered as One of the Fine Arts* (1827) discussed the murders of John Williams, who also crops up in his penetrating essay "On the Knocking at the Gate in *Macbeth*" (1823).

Praising Dostoyevsky's talent, Boris Pasternak<sup>76</sup> emphasized its artistic power and compared *Crime and Punishment* to *Macbeth*: "The presence of art on the pages of *Crime and Punishment* is more impressive than Raskolnikov's crime"; "the tragic tension of Dostoyevsky's novels can be compared only with Shakespeare's tragedies"; "*Crime and Punishment* is the original Russian version of *Macbeth*"; "the tragedy of *Macbeth* could be legitimately called *Crime and Punishment*. I could not stop thinking about the similarities with Dostoyevsky's novel while translating it" (1990: 279). Pasternak spoke of murder as a desperate, dangerous initiative that requires a good deal of thought to

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<sup>75</sup> The literary reception of Russian realism proves that *Macbeth* was one of the most influential of Shakespeare's plays along with *King Lear*, *Othello*, and *Hamlet*, the latter remains a persistent subtext in Dostoyevsky's oeuvre; see Givens 2016: 767-768; Stepanian 2014: 53-77; Syromiatnikov 2012: 330-337; Letina 2016: 90; Makarichev 2016: 298-308. However, it is *Demons* (or *The Possessed*), not *Crime and Punishment*, that modern scholarship considers Dostoyevsky's most openly Shakespeare-oriented novel for the variety of intertextual elements from different Shakespeare's plays, including such as *Hamlet*, *King Lear*, and *Henry IV*, etc. (e.g. Belknap 1984: 64-70; Norman 1962: 99-116; Levin 1974: 108-134; Alekseev 1965: 595-597; Krinitsyn 2001; Kovalevskaya 2018: 58-76).

<sup>76</sup> In Russia Pasternak is regarded not only as one of the country's greatest post-revolutionary poets and prose writers (for his novel *Doctor Zhivago* he was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1958) but also a prominent literary translator of Goethe, Schiller, and Shakespeare. *Macbeth* was the last among eight Shakespeare's plays that he translated in 1938 preceded by *Hamlet*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Anthony and Cleopatra*, *Othello*, both parts of *Henry IV*, and *King Lear*.

foresee all the possibilities before its commitment. He noted that both Shakespeare and Dostoyevsky endowed their protagonists with foresight and imagination equal to their own because “both authors and their heroes possess the same ability to clarify some points at the right time” – this is what he called “the double, advanced realism of a detective story or a murder mystery, delicate and cautious as a murder itself” (Pasternak 1990: 279). Harold Bloom compared the reader’s journeys with Raskolnikov into his consciousness and Macbeth into his heart of darkness and named them “authentically frightening tragedies that do not purge us of pity, let alone of fear” (ed. 2004: 3). It is this sharing in “Macbeth’s terrible sublimity” that allows *Crime and Punishment* to “transcend depressing us, as we [...] begin to feel that in Raskolnikov’s Petersburg, as in Macbeth’s bewitched Scotland, in which [...] a nightmare phantasmagoria becomes reality [...] we too might commit murders” (Bloom, ed. 2004: 3).

Thus, despite the difference in the literary traditions from which they stem and the disparity between the techniques of drama and fiction, Shakespeare’s and Dostoyevsky’s handlings of the criminal heart and mind mirror each other at several points. This is not to say that Macbeth is the sole source of Raskolnikov. On the one hand, Dostoyevsky’s character is another in the line of Russian “superfluous men”, successor to Pushkin’s Onegin and Lermontov’s Pechorin; on the other, his novel belongs in a more west European tradition of novels that problematize social, philosophical and ethical issues (Veselova 2011: 187-188). He is also, of course, elder brother to heroes in Dostoyevsky’s own early writings, starting with *The Double* (1846) and *The Landlady* (1847), in which the novelist aimed to depict Russian types of the late 1840s and to express new ideas concerning the mystery of human existence through a series of dreamers, whose solitude and aloofness lead them to belief in their own elitism and exceptionality. In this they align themselves with Shakespeare’s tragic heroes, most of whom are social misfits, sociopaths, titans in the land of ordinary mortals, condemned to transcendence through self-annihilation instead of reconciliation to their fleshly, mundane and human immanence. Raskolnikov’s inner world, like that of his literary predecessors, is full of ambiguity and contradictions. As a result of committing a real crime, his internal duality becomes highly aggravated. This is emphasized by the character’s very surname.<sup>77</sup> The self-explanatory

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<sup>77</sup> In Dostoyevsky studies the name of the hero is interpreted differently. The most common point of view is that the word *raskol*—the Russian for “split”—manifests an ethical division between Raskolnikov’s selfless love for others, his sympathy to their misfortunes, on the one hand, and his bloody crime, the invasion of a human life, on the other (Askoldov 1924: 2; Bem 1933: 409-433). Another popular opinion relates his name to “schism”, a social and religious movement that did not accept the Church reforms of the seventeenth

name figuratively expresses Dostoyevsky's own attitude to its bearer. Despite having perpetrated a double murder, he still remains sympathetic. His positive personality traits and decent, human impulses make readers empathize with his struggles. Malignity, as deeply rooted in Svidrigailov as in Iago and Edmund, "has little place in the psyches of Raskolnikov and Macbeth, which makes their descents even more terrifying" (Bloom 2001: 170). By contrast to criminology with its brutal, primitive types of criminals whose sleep is not interrupted by disturbing dreams and whose behavior and oration have no signs of despair, remorse or penitence, Raskolnikov and Macbeth are prostrate with terror of what they are going to do before they actually commit it. Raskolnikov refers to a murder as "hideous, loathsome, filthy, and disgusting, two of the four adjectives [hideous and filthy] being identically Macbeth's" (Goddard 1960: 114). However, temptations are fascinating. They "define the moral design" of both the play and the novel, as the protagonists gradually come to clearly understand how wrong the murder would be (White 2018: 120).<sup>78</sup> Macbeth grapples with his conscience at first, though the conversation with his wife makes him surrender to the temptation of usurping power by means of violent regicide. Raskolnikov, in his turn, is "drawn on the day of the murder in a stunned daze toward his crime" (Beckett 2006: 614). He is led by a power that he cannot control, much as Macbeth is directed by the air-drawn dagger so that both find themselves trapped in the sequence of terrifying nightmares. They live as Macbeth describes it "in the affliction of these terrible dreams / that shake us nightly" (3.2.21-22) because it is "better be with the dead, / Whom we, to gain our peace, have sent to peace, / Than on the torture of the mind to lie / In restless ecstasy" (3.2.22-25). In Shakespeare's and Dostoyevsky's writings dreams, nightmares, and hallucinations serve as metaphorical markers that bear a hidden meaning. Dostoyevsky himself emphasized the extraordinarily strange nature of dreams: "It seems that dreams are the work not of mind but of desire, not of the head but of the heart; and what complicated things my mind has sometimes contrived in a dream! In a dream, things quite incomprehensible come to pass" (Dostoyevsky 2014: 5416). Dostoyevsky portrayed dreams "through their likening to

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century and opposed the official Russian orthodoxy, which in the novel acts as a symbol of the hero's stubbornness, his obsession with one thought and fanatical belief in the validity of his idea (Altman 1975; Belov 2010).

<sup>78</sup> Macbeth offends against goodness and justice on multiple levels, for Duncan is his king, his kinsman, and his guest, to whom he owes, consequently, obedience, loyalty and hospitality. Moreover, Macbeth has recently been promoted by the king to Thane of Cawdor, so he demonstrates the lack of recognition of his merit. In murdering his liege in his sleep Macbeth also violates the warrior ethos of honour (Ordway 2017: 90-91).

reality”, so that “events in them manifest themselves sometimes terribly clearly in comparison with the perceived reality” (Laut 1966: 96). Such a method, which Dostoyevsky himself is believed to have called “the fantastic realism”, of making the real-world look like a dream, when the story is presented so ambivalently that both heroes and, to lesser extent, readers are constantly brought to doubt the reality of what is happening, dominates the writer’s fiction. When real life turns into a dream, it is always horrible and painful for the heroes as it projects their spiritual disorder and neuroses.

Dostoyevsky creates a whole hierarchy of dreams that reflects particular psychophysical conditions—oblivion, delirium, hallucination—whose essence and purpose is very precisely defined in *Crime and Punishment* by Svidrigailov’s reflection on ghosts<sup>79</sup>: “as soon as the normal earthly order of the organism is broken, one begins to realize the possibility of another world; and the more seriously ill one is, the closer becomes one’s contact with that other world, so that as soon as the man dies he steps straight into that world” (Dostoyevsky 2014: 1785). In this sense, a dream loses its common meaning of a symptom of a simple neurosis and gains the new meaning of an intermediary between the inner world of a person and other “fantastic” worlds. In other words, Dostoyevsky makes it a symptom of a spiritual disorder as “not those who are ill mentally but those who are ill spiritually, ideologically are the subject of his artistic analysis” (Saraskina 1990: 134). The special mental conditions of the heroes and their self-reflection are designed to reveal the inner struggle of good and the evil or, viewed in terms of religion, the fight between God and the devil for their soul. The evolution of an oneiric semantics from the symptom of mental illness to the sign of spiritual disorder commenced in Dostoyevsky’s early pre-Siberian and Siberian writing periods, particularly from the novella *The Double*, in which the hero switches between dreaming, drowsiness and reality, and “received its full and complete expression in *Crime and Punishment*” where “the hierarchy of dreams, namely, the consistent and psychologically accurate unfolding of the ‘mythological’ disease” was established (Kondratiev 2013: 100).

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<sup>79</sup> Svidrigailov confesses to Raskolnikov that he saw ghosts of the people dead through his fault. The first was his wife Marfa Petrovna whom it is rumoured he had poisoned, the others were a young lady he had raped and a bad-mouthed servant Filip, both of whom had committed suicide. All three “would be assigned in popular belief to the category of *zalozhnye pokoiniki*”, that is, the visitors “from that ‘other world’ who cross the threshold of life and death in order to return and trouble the conscience of the man they hold responsible for their deaths” (Leatherbarrow 2005: 78-79).

The dreams, the “other worlds”, serve both as prophesies and epiphanies. Although they take the form of a nightmare or hallucination, they, on the one hand, foresee the future and, depending on whether heroes understand them or not, indicate what life changes should be made; on the other, the oneiric helps heroes realize their own nature by coming to understand their thoughts, intentions and behavior, like the fourth dream of Raskolnikov. This is the dream in which he “kills” the dead old woman when, as he believes, “the devil led me on then and he has shown me since that I had not the right to take that path [...] He was mocking at me” (Dostoyevsky 2014: 1899). At first, the hero cannot distinguish between the dream and reality. He is drowsing in his room and suddenly finds himself in the street. The setting is quite mysterious: it was the late evening when “twilight had fallen, and the full moon was shining more and more brightly” (Dostoyevsky 2014: 1774) and predisposes the appearance of the supernatural. Raskolnikov is going somewhere with some hasty intention, but he does not exactly remember why. This oblivion resembles the situation of the real murder when he was going to kill the elderly pawnbroker while unconscious. It is not his reason but the devil who guides him: “it was the devil that killed that old woman, not I” (Dostoyevsky 2014: 1899). The devil appears in the realm of the dream in the form of a stranger who has already met Raskolnikov in real life and called him a murderer (Dostoyevsky 2014: 1770-1771). He embodies the supersensible power that manipulates the hero because the dream is the reflection of the real events. Even in his mind-wandering, when the hero is guessing who this stranger could be and how he could have discovered that it was Raskolnikov who had committed the crime, he calls him “the man who sprang out of the earth” (Dostoyevsky 2014: 1772) highlighting his non-terrestrial nature as Banquo called the Witches “the earth bubbles” (1.3.181). The commoner led the protagonist again to the house of the elderly pawnbroker and left there alone with “a huge, round, copper-red moon [...] that makes it so still, weaving some mystery” (Dostoyevsky 2014: 1775).

The mystery of the prophetic dream soon reveals itself, both outwardly and inwardly. In the corner of the bedroom (a bedroom is a place to sleep and therefore a point where the oneiric and the real worlds intersect) Raskolnikov finds the old hostess and rushes to kill her once again; this time, unlike his unconscious and unwilling real murder, he does it deliberately and eagerly. However, he strikes her with his axe to little effect: “she did not stir, as though she were made of wood” (Dostoyevsky 2014: 1775). Like Shakespeare’s ghost of Banquo and Pushkin’s Countess in *The Queen of Spades*, the apparition of the pawnbroker personifies the horror of the protagonist. Like all murderers,

Raskolnikov fears that the truth of his crime will be revealed. That is the reason why he dreams a lot of other people in the house except the old lady. However, his greater terror is the fruitlessness of the committed murder. That is why the apparition bursts into laughter: “the old woman was sitting and laughing, shaking with noiseless laughter, doing her utmost that he should not hear it”. The more he stabs her, the more she laughs: “He was overcome with frenzy and he began hitting the old woman on the head with all his force, but at every blow of the axe the laughter and whispering from the bedroom grew louder and the old woman was simply shaking with mirth” (Dostoyevsky 2014: 1775). The troubled mind of the hero mocks his attempt to prove his theory of prominent individuals who ‘have the right to kill’ by his own example. Moreover, the second, more intentional murder signifies his own spiritual death which the ghost of the pawnbroker makes him realize: “Did I murder the old woman? I murdered myself, not her! I crushed myself once for all, for ever” (Dostoyevsky 2014: 1899). Similarly, the bloody ghost of Banquo comes to the banquet to disrupt the quiet of Macbeth’s consciousness by showing him that the world he shattered relentlessly leads to his own destruction, for “blood will have blood” (3.4.151).

Both Macbeth and Raskolnikov are self-punishers whose mental tortures are utterly inconsistent with their ostensible desire to be rulers, superhumans, demigods or even deities—Napoleons in Dostoyevsky’s/Raskolnikov’s terms. The issue of the relation of an outstanding personality to ordinary people had engrossed Dostoyevsky’s mind since his *Notes from Underground* (1864) which explored “the possibility of a world where all the props for [...] morals and mores have crashed to the ground” (Cotkin 2003: 166). In his diary in April 1877, the writer opposed masses who cannot comprehend the truth and live by ready-made ideas to individuals they are “destined to serve [...] “who later lead all the others, who take control of the movement, who give birth to an idea and leave it as a legacy to the teeming masses of people” (Dostoyevsky 1994: 931). There is something similar in the writer’s and hero’s observations, one would think. Dostoyevsky’s conception of the role of an individual can be clarified with the help of Bakhtin’s term of a “supra-judicial crime” introduced, as makes perfect sense, in relation to Shakespeare’s Macbeth. Bakhtin considered that Macbeth was “no criminal, the logic of all his deeds is the necessary iron logic of self-crowning [...] This is the supra-judicial crime of any self-asserting life [...] the deep tragedy of individual life itself, condemned to be born and to die, born out of another’s death and by its own death fecundating another’s life” (Bakhtin 2014: 528). Accordingly, the “judicial crime” is necessary to



reveal the potential criminality of any self-asserting individual. A person “tamed by law” is not fit to be the hero of a tragedy because he does not “actualize the depths hidden behind the normal [...] course of life, he cannot reveal the subatomic contradictions of life” (Bakhtin 2014: 529). This is most clearly visible in Dostoevsky’s fiction and, therefore, can be used to vindicate Raskolnikov. For it opens the way to an interpretation in which it was God who made Raskolnikov take the path he had never used before to get home when he had prayed to be shown the way after abandoning his “bloody dream” in the wake of his nightmare about the horse that was battered to death. Taking that new route home, Raskolnikov heard the dialogue between a tradesman and Lizaveta and learned that next day the old moneylender would be alone, which would be his chance to carry out his plan. In short, viewed this way, it was God who sentenced him to an “extraordinary” life journey. Nevertheless, such a handling of the problem does not crack one mystery of human soul which is at the core of Dostoyevsky’s conception of the individual. Like Macbeth, Raskolnikov is “sufficient unto himself”; both their lives may be called “a tragedy of fear (the fear inherent in everything that lives)” (Bakhtin 2014: 529, 533). If a person refuses to recognize the existence of the absolute center of the universe, he invariably finds a center in himself (at least for assessing and decision-making) and believes that his world outlook is the only true one. If this person is also concerned about the end of his or her earthly life, he or she strives to attain an immortality on earth, or posterity, which demands dynamic actions to change the world so that his contribution to the change will preserve not only the memory of this person but the person himself through the vitality of his or her worldview. In the essay *Unsubstantiated Statements* published in December 1876 in *A Writer’s Diary*, Dostoyevsky wrote that “without faith in one’s soul and its immortality, human existence is unnatural, unthinkable, and unbearable [...] Little by little the thought of his own aimless existence and his hatred for the unresponsiveness of the stagnant life around him leads to the inevitable conviction of the utter absurdity of human existence on earth” (Dostoyevsky 1993: 733). The attempt to escape from such unnaturalness and purposelessness predetermines the “supra-judicial crime”. Each person has something unique in him: “he is not a composition of mere reactions, for as Dostoyevsky admitted in his *Diary*, a person belongs to the society, but not entirely” (Tiapugina 2014: 176). Both Shakespeare and Dostoyevsky realized that each person desires to show his worth, to approve his distinctive personality and will. That is what Dostoyevsky called a “natural law of any individual” – the need to assert and make yourself know, to distinguish yourself from the

others and excel. If a person has special intellectual, psychological and physical abilities, this striving to stand out can turn into breaking the order and committing “juridical crime”.

By collapsing time through the portrayal of historical events of the Middle Ages, Shakespeare showed how people’s behavior and their attitude to morality and responsibilities do not change. Shakespeare’s characters “assign themselves the functions of Providence”: they are aimed at establishing new standards of justice and determining the earthly and posthumous fate of others; being “outwardly urged to action by the lower representatives of the other world” (by the Ghost in case of Hamlet or the Weird Sisters in case of Macbeth), they hold fast to their own beliefs and values and follow their own moral compass (Stepanyan 2016: 171). Macbeth, “enters the space of tragedy in the heroic-romantic halo” but eventually becomes a murderer, sacrificing other characters’ lives to “please [his] ambitions” (Stepanyan 2015). His path relies on “the willful manifestation of a human will which is the image and likeness of God and which is used in a single transgressive act in order to make a human a god” (Kovalevskaya 2014: 84). Prone to transgressing divine law, he is overtaken by the illusion of his own divinity. That is the reason why Macbeth so easily believes the apparitions’ prophesy of his safety from any “born of woman” (5.7.3) because in his interpretation he is no longer human and, thus, he cannot be killed by a human being, though at the end of the play he finds himself less than human: “They have tied me to a stake; I cannot fly, / But bear-like I must fight the course” (5.7.1-2). He is no longer an infinite god but a finite creature. Similarly, Raskolnikov debates between the extremities of super-humanity and bestiality: “Am I a trembling creature or have I the right?” (Dostoyevsky 2014: 1899). According to Raskolnikov’s theory, only the one who goes straight to his goal unhesitatingly has the right to gain power and deserves to be called a man. Others are merely lice, non-humans. The protagonist raises his dream of higher social justice to an ideological level. His idea, which initially pursued progressive, humane goals, clashes irreconcilably with the hideous, anti-human and anti-Christian means chosen for its implementation. He is deluded that the murder of a “louse”—as he terms people who are the most useless to society— will turn him into a man, a Napoleon. By means of such a crime Raskolnikov dares to overcome the most outstanding, moral and spiritual barrier, for murder is not only unlawful but inherently inhumane and unacceptable.

This is the reason why both crimes are preceded by a deep sense of guilt generated by the characters’ intrinsic moral stances. When Macbeth is left alone before the murder,

he reflects upon “dark and deep desires” and “an action which will, like all decisive and violent acts, be incapable of controlling its consequences” (McLuskie 2004: 9), for crime is never “done, when ‘tis done” (1.7.1). He realizes that his deed will have “toxic sacramental consequences” (McCoy 2004: 29). Crime must pay: “bloody instructions, which being taught return / To plague the inventor” (1.7.9-10) and the “even-handed justice / Commends the ingredient of our poisoned chalice / To our own lips” (1.7.10-12). He enumerates all the factors (host obligations, kinship, Duncan’s virtues) that should prevent him from committing the regicide, leaving him “no spur / To prick the sides of my intent” (1.7.25-26), so that his “vaulting ambition [...] o’erleaps itself, / And falls on th’other” (1.7.27-28); before, that is, Lady Macbeth comes to persuade him. His short lines with weak arguments—when the dignified “I dare do all that may become a man; / Who dares do more, is none” (1.7.46-47) changes for the timid “If we should fail?” (1.7.59)—have nothing to challenge her lengthy, resolute and compelling reasoning. In his own “agonizing inward struggle” Raskolnikov notices one peculiarity of all the final resolutions taken by him in the matter of murder—“they had one strange characteristic: the more final they were, the more hideous and the more absurd they at once became in his eyes” (Dostoyevsky 2014: 1589). Nevertheless, both heroes have no power over themselves, for they suffer from overwhelming prophetic imagination which makes them experience the murder as having already been committed, with all the collateral consequences. With such overactive imaginations, the real crime simply looks like a copy or a mere repetition of what has already been done in the heroes’ mind. Macbeth hallucinates a dagger, “a false creation, / Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain” (2.1.39), that shall become an instrument of his crime. When he looks closely at it, “on thy blade and dudgeon gouts of blood” (2.1.46) appear to “inform” that he is bound to have his “bloody business” (2.1.48) executed. Raskolnikov is raving about how he will seize an axe and bring it back after the deed is done. He is constantly experimenting (Dostoyevsky highlights this word to emphasize the hero’s imagining of a murder) before coming to a terminal decision: “Come, let us go and try it — why dream about it!” (Dostoyevsky 2014: 1589). Before that, the hero feels he has “no more freedom of thought, no will” and that everything is “suddenly and irrevocably decided” (Dostoyevsky 2014: 1582). Finally, as “regards the moral question”, it seems to him that his “analysis” is complete—“his casuistry had become keen as a razor, and he could not find rational objections in himself”—and he is “ceased to believe in himself, and doggedly, slavishly sought arguments in all directions, fumbling for them, as though someone were forcing

and drawing him to it” (Dostoyevsky 2014: 1590). Raskolnikov excels Macbeth at that, for after the actual murder he commits it again in his dream. Raskolnikov kills to assure himself that he is a Napoleon, though he has every reason to realize that it is anything but true.

Although he does successfully win power, as he thinks at the moment of the murder, unconscious remorse prevents him from achieving the absolute, godlike indifference he longs for. Guilt torments him, deriding his futile, senseless attempt to prove himself. Dostoevsky designs the hero’s unconscious to antagonize him and reveal his entire humanity—for a true Napoleon, such guilt-ridden dreams would be quite out of the question. The guilt personified in the dead old moneylender haunts Raskolnikov, reminding him of his pure heart and compassionate nature. The hero might have been able to restrain his guilt, but he can never escape it; indeed, it grows fat on the energy expended on its suppression and manifests itself in unconscious symptoms. Raskolnikov’s pointless efforts resemble Lady Macbeth’s endeavors to make herself act beyond her nature, as if she can get around the natural law without personal consequences. For the murder of Duncan, she acts as an inspirational driving force. her voice’s “demonic single-mindedness” sways “the duality, the inner duologue in Macbeth’s mind” and becomes the vehicle of Macbeth’s change of mind (Kennedy 1983: 88-89). After the murder, she is afflicted with nightmares provoked by the guilt she divulges through her neurotic attempts to wash away the king’s blood. Her conscience is the living hell she cannot escape. “Hell is murky” (5.1.35) sets the tune of the heroine’s sleepwalking. Various references to hell carry considerable weight in forming the tragedy’s atmosphere; hell is a leitmotif joining the Witches (“Like a hell-broth boil and bubble”, 4.1.19), Malcom (“Nay, had I power, I should / Pour the sweet milk of concord into hell”, 4.3.99), Macbeth (“Not in the legions / Of horrid hell can come a devil more damn’d / In evils to top Macbeth”, 4.3.58) and Young Siward (“thou call’st thyself a hotter name / Than any is in hell”, 5.7.23).

While the Scottish hell on earth is murky, Raskolnikov’s St. Petersburg is hot-as-hell—so hot, stuffy, stinking and dusty (the latter is attributed by Macbeth to death that shadows the “brief candle” of life, 5.5.23) that people’s thoughts and actions are inevitably affected. Shakespeare’s play is “structured around this sense of infection: the colors of the tragedy contaminate the spiritual world of the protagonists as Macbeth, in particular, is infected by bloody and gaudy hues” (Chiari 2019: 69). Similarly, the “infectious” environmental background unfolds externally in the infernal space of St.

Petersburg and internally in the stifled mind of Raskolnikov, whose behavior and observations seem odd, insane, even threatening. The air gains special attention in the last part of the novel when the “contamination”—the stuffiness and, accordingly, the inner spiritual discord of the protagonist—reach its maximum. First, in the conversation in the hall by the stairs, Svidrigailov, peering inquisitively at Raskolnikov’s sick face, ends their seemingly accidental meeting with a sudden hint that sounds strange and ominous: “Ah, Rodion Romanovitch, what all men need is fresh air, fresh air... more than anything!” (Dostoyevsky 2014: 1916). Next day, when Raskolnikov meets Razumikhin, he says out of turn revealing his concern: “Yesterday a man said to me that what a man needs is fresh air, fresh air, fresh air. I mean to go to him directly to find out what he meant by that” (Dostoyevsky 2014: 1919-1920). Finally, the same idea is expressed by Porfiry Petrovich in his last, long, nervous conversation with Raskolnikov in his flat: “What you need now is fresh air, fresh air, fresh air!” (Dostoyevsky 2014: 1934).

Raskolnikov’s reaction resembles Macbeth’s anxiety upon the first divination of the Weird Sisters whom for the ambivalence of their “prophetic greeting” he called “imperfect speakers” and charged to speak and “say from whence / You owe this strange intelligence” (1.3.70-78); it is “the horror of such, truly Shakespearean, Macbethian prophecy” (Tunimanov 2004: 331). He shudders and cries out: “But who are you? what prophet are you? From the height of what majestic calm do you proclaim these words of wisdom?” (Dostoyevsky 2014: 1934). Meanwhile, it is Porfiry Petrovich who explains to Raskolnikov the very meaning of these confusing words and gives him vital advice: “You have long needed a change of air” (Dostoyevsky 2014: 1933) or, in other words, to confess. The final confrontation between Raskolnikov and Ilya Petrovich that gives away all the murderer’s pent-up frustration parallels Lady Macbeth’s sleepwalking scene as the climax which replaces the long-sustained tension and makes the characters “touch depth”: when “the fundamental issues of their lives have been probed to the depths, Lady Macbeth and Raskolnikov [...] have moved to new ground in their meetings with life and its significance” (Haddick 1995: 181). However, even after the confession, Raskolnikov does not recant his “heresy”, for nihilism is as deeply ingrained in his mind as in Russian society at large.

What makes Shakespeare’s and Dostoyevsky’s heroes soulmates is nihilism, mostly existential, for it is life whose value is rejected by the heroes. Shakespeare presented nihilism “as existential hollowness, as a reaction to life that persistently bypasses the possibilities for meaning” (Zamir 2000: 545). In one of his last monologues

Macbeth calls life “a walking shadow” (5.5.24) thus making it lose all its vitality. There is no presence, for it “creeps in this petty pace from day to day”, from “our yesterdays” to endless “tomorrow[s]” (5.5.19-23), only a hollow “way to dusty death” (5.5.23) which is also its only possible ending. The further use of theatrical metaphors adds up to life’s artificiality—it is no longer existence but a “stage” performance—and meaninglessness—the “tale” is told by “fools”, “signifying nothing” (5.5.22-28). Since the Witches’ prophecy which has shaken Macbeth’s “single state of man”, or “the inward soul” (Luis Martínez 2010: 80), his outlook and self-understanding are inverted so radically that “nothing is but what is not” (1.3.140-142). The neglect of human values leads him to crimes, makes him “think darker thoughts, go deeper into the evil, for there is no evil” (Desmond 2001: 82). The murders he commits exasperate his nihilism. The “taste of fears” (5.5.15), he consistently suffered, disappears and merges into “the embracing nothingness of everything else” (Zamir 2007: 102). Even the death of his wife, the only person he must have cared for, induces no emotions—his only indifferent remark is that “she should have died hereafter” (5.5.17)—instead “we hear a nihilistic death march” (Bloom 1998: 541) full of frustration and despair. Macbeth realizes eventually that he is “sick at heart” (5.3.19); he is “the yellow leaf” which “must not look to have honour, love, obedience, troops of friends” but, in their stead, curses” (5.3.23-26). The weight of the crimes upon his heart is so huge that the only cure he can get is “some sweet oblivious antidote” which can “pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow” (5.3.41-45). His harrowing understanding of it is how Shakespeare “restores meaning to life” that Macbeth has “robbed” by his felonies (Muir, ed. 1984: lii).

For his part, Dostoyevsky makes his hero work a similarly thorny path to acknowledge life’s value. The novel argues against nihilism by emphasizing Raskolnikov’s self-absorption and essential dissatisfaction that result in his flagrant Napoleonism which divided all the people into a few individuals who have the right to determine the world order, and masses of insignificant “lice”. Raskolnikov becomes “a frightening account of the consequences of nihilist thought” (Kjetsaa 1988: 189). The devil of his nihilism drags him to the house of the old moneylender to rob and murder her. Although Raskolnikov is corrupted by the evil intent, he is convinced that he does not act for his own benefit (not without plenty of self-deception) but for the love of others, for the treasures he steals will financially support his family. However, Raskolnikov stays far away from Dostoyevsky’s ideal of a person because, in fact, he commits a crime for his own sake to satisfy his Napoleonic ambition. The murder communicates the

“unwelcome truth” (Reilly 2003: 16): the hero is a “louse” in the same way his victim was. Nihilism has drowned him in “the abyss of his own nothingness” (Sandoz 2000: 182). Only self-assertive love of Sonya was able to rescue him from this abyss and convince that “philosophical deicide, in its more deluted forms [...] leads to violence” and “assaults upon human dignity” (Osborn 2017: 125). According to Dostoyevsky, “love founded on self-renunciation” is humanity’s salvation when each human being “break[s] from the desire to gratify his or her ego and reconstruct his or her personality by partaking in others’ suffering” (Avramenko and Ying 2013: 78). In *A Writer's Diary* Dostoyevsky admitted his own “unbounded faith in our people of the future and in those who are already beginning now [...] if they set forth on the true path and find this truth at last, they will draw everyone else after them, and not by force but freely” (Dostoyevsky 1994: 884). This is the destiny of individuals: to be role models for others in their pure-heartedness, self-control, and self-mastery. United by mutual love and service they will create the society with no condition for committing crimes.

*Crime and Punishment* continued *Macbeth*’s “most tremendous quest in literature to find a sense of human identity” (Holbrook 2002: 69). Both *Macbeth* and Raskolnikov are neither congenital villains nor innate murderers. They become criminals due to volatile misconceptions and false theories. Their nihilism is “not a despicable and wild phenomenon, but, in the tragic sense, a corruption of a soul accompanied by severe suffering” (Strakhov 2000: 102). Shakespeare was able to show how destructive is any person’s crime to the universal order. *Macbeth*’s crimes upset the natural order “by th’ clock [...] dark night strangles the traveling lamp” (2.4.6-7): a “falcon, towering in her pride of place, / Was by a mousing owl hawked at and killed” (2.4. 13-14); horses “[t]urned wild in nature, broke their stalls, flung out, / Contending ‘gainst obedience, as they would/ Make war with mankind” (2.4.15-17) and “eat each other” (2.4.18). Two hundred and fifty years later Dostoyevsky recalled the idea in his novel, where “self-loathing, despair, disdain for authority, alienation, and the lonely sense of impending death are the rocks scattered across the existential nihilist landscape” (Cotkin 2003: 166). *Macbeth* and Raskolnikov tread a similar path germinated by a transcendental ambition, experience the same fears and suffer to the equal extent. Although the former is attached to power while the latter, as a student, is detached from any of its forms, “the synchronicity of their destinies shows us that this is purely an aesthetic divergence”: while the rulers’ destiny determined that of their people, a common person’s actions affect the life of his surroundings (Kamčevski 2010: 154). Dostoyevsky “like the great English

dramatist” molds his work skillfully and gives it a coherence which can only mystify the reader who is willing to settle for anything less than the whole vision that informs both the novel and the play and makes them equally genial and noteworthy (Cox 1969: 139). In his novel the writer “created a new artistic reality [...] which reflected the Shakespearean spirit” (Zakharov 2006). His true insight into the secrets of Shakespeare’s drama lay not in any surface, imitative following of his artistic discoveries or in direct allusions, borrowings and reminiscences, but in the revival of the playwright’s characters and existential plights.

#### **4.G. NIKOLAI LESKOV, ANTI-NIHILISM AND LADY MACBETH**

Throughout the history of Shakespearian criticism, a great deal of attention has been placed on the playwright’s ability to create vibrant and credible characters who, rather than plots, live in readers’ imagination and transcend, “in the fullness of their conception, the dramatic context from which they derive” (Scragg 1996: 143). Criticism was used to looking on the character of Lady Macbeth as one of the most petrifying and immoral ever created by Shakespeare. Ambition and a thirst for power saturate her heart, thereby casting doubt on whether she truly loves her husband or uses him as an instrument to achieve her goal. She treats Macbeth with kindness and inspiration, for she cannot succeed on her own. However, when her enchanting solicitations finally conquer his noble mind, vanquishing moral doubts and ethical principles, and coax him onto a trajectory of violence from which there is no turning back, she shows no sympathy for his unfortunate condition which she herself has caused. The vicious queen “rises before our amazed eyes like a spectre from the air” or “a meteor from an unknown world” prompting us keep track of her destructive path “in ignorant affright and amazement” (Pfundheller 1873: 2). Nothing in the play indicates her terrifying origin. The playwright does not give any explanation about what motivates her evil purpose or deprives her of femininity and humanity, with their softness and kind-heartedness. Her murderous resolution unsexes the queen, demonstrates her manly firmness and stamina. Although she invokes the dark forces, she does not actually need any encouragement or support. Just a faint hint dropped by Macbeth in the letter sparks her murderous plotting of the king’s homicide. Duncan’s visit seems the perfect occasion, even though he is her liege and kinsman, coming to her castle as a guest and friend. When she hears the raven



croaking, she considers it an ill-omen for the royal guest who is soon to arrive: “The raven himself is hoarse / That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan / Under my battlements” (1.5.37-39). Regardless of the sacred laws of hospitality, she commits herself and her husband to the criminal act. She receives the king with remarkable sangfroid, practicing deception and schooling Macbeth in the same, fiercely commanding him not to let his facial expressions give the game away. Her hypocritical speech of welcome invokes the sense of duty and loyalty and loving humility. She refers to the honors which Duncan has heaped upon her house, humbly protesting, with lying lips, “We rest your hermits” (1.7.19), meaning “We remain as beadsmen to pray for you”.

Most critics believe that the queen is the more villainous member of the Macbeth partnership. Her appearance in the tragedy creates an impression of a cruel temptress with wicked words falling from her relentless tongue as she goads her husband into sin. Malcolm is not without reason when he refers to the couple as a “butcher and his fiend-like queen” (5.7.98). Nevertheless, although at the time of the murder Lady Macbeth is certainly hard, cruel and relentless, she could possibly have forced herself to become such because of her blind devotion to her husband. In the drama the heroine is not given her own name, which may mean that “she has pleasantly sacrificed her own identity and associated it with Macbeth’s. Such is the extent of her love for her husband” (Choudhury 2004; qtd. Uddin 2014: 220). On the other hand, her love for him may be “for the fact that Macbeth is the best medium that can function according to her wish”, for she just “feels she is the wife of the fittest person, Macbeth” (Uddin 2014: 220); it does not replace her own ambitiousness. Having learnt about her husband’s new title of Thane of Cawdor and the Witches’ foretelling, Lady Macbeth, as she says, becomes “transported beyond the ignorant present” (1.5.55-56) and sees, or thinks she sees, the future in the present. She is determined for Macbeth’s sake to have the prophecy fulfilled and to spare no means, either fair or foul, to help him achieve what he desires the most. In this respect, she proves to be a truly loyal partner and a perfect accomplice. Correspondingly, all her villainies, all loss of humanity and womanhood may be determined not by her immorality but by her tremendous will, as she schools herself to perform the fiend-like part not for herself but for her beloved spouse. Therefore, she only sacrifices ethical principles in favour of others.

The fact that this promise of kingship probably comes from the devil through his earthly representatives, does not disturb her at all. Rather, she responds “as swiftly, deceptively, and violently as necessary to fulfill a supernatural prophecy” (Bloom, ed.

2008: 26). She welcomes their prophecy and begins at once to prepare Macbeth for the horrid deed, fearing that he will relent because his better nature, “too full o’ the milk of human kindness / To catch the nearest way” (1.5.15-16) may obtain the mastery of him, for he has not become that “Devilish Macbeth” (4.2.117), a traitor to his of his own country, and the “Hell Hound” (5.8.4) that Macduff would behead for the slaughter of his family. Human kindness stands for humanity, human nature. The deed Lady Macbeth is to prepare her spouse for is, on the contrary, an inhuman one which violates all the laws of human nature. The queen “posits an alternative morality”, reproaching her husband for a lack of valour as he “harbors desires but stops short of acting them out” and challenging him to become a greater man, referring to the virtues of bravery, reliability, and sense of honor to remove Macbeth’s scruples (Plaisier 2012: 83). As his confidant, she is aware of how to make her argument most appealing to him. She sees his ambition and, like many misguided people since, she thinks he must be unscrupulous to win. Her “obdurate strength of will and masculine firmness” will give her “the ascendancy over her husband’s faltering virtue” (Richardson 1780; qtd. Bloom 2008: 68).

She never looks far enough ahead to see that it might also forebode the destruction of her own peace and her own certain death. Indeed, it might be argued that she lacks Macbeth’s foresight and imaginative powers—a lack she makes up for by her strength of will: her “willed submission to demonic powers, her unequivocal resolve to lay her being open to the invasion of witchcraft, is held in dramatic contrast to the painful, casuistic deliberations of Macbeth” (Merchant 1977: 51). She transforms herself into a fiend, turns her into an unruly, chaos-inducing witch, “an intimate of evil, a communer with murdering ministers, fatal ravens, spirits who will give her suck” (Wills 2004: 75), make thick her blood, take her milk for gall, and “stop up th’ access and passage to remorse / That no compunctious visitings of nature/ Shake fell purpose” (1.5.42-44). She fears that her woman’s nature may gain the better of her and she strengthens herself to commit the crime herself if it is necessary; but despite her best efforts, she is soon to find that she cannot do it. She realizes that the only weapon available to her is her venomous tongue, for later, when she approaches the bedside of the sleeping king to strike the fatal blow, her courage fails her, and she flees because Duncan looks to her too much like her father: “Had he not resembled / My father as he slept, I had done’t” (2.2.12-13). This demonstrates that she is not purely and entirely evil and means that she must rely on Macbeth to strike the blow. Nevertheless, she is ready to go the whole way. She goes boldly to the murdered Duncan’s side, dips her fingers in his blood and smears the faces

of the sleeping grooms with it. Macbeth could not have done that because he was overwhelmed with horror at the deed done. Lady Macbeth, feeling the matter more deeply now than she felt it earlier and seeing the awful effect it has on her husband, tries to calm him down: “These deeds must not be thought / After these ways; so, it will make us mad” (2.2.33-34). She remains almost undisturbed, for she has nerved herself for the terrible occasion. She hears the owl and the cricket, nothing more. While he is obsessed with imaginings, prophesying “Sleep no more” (2.2.35), she is literal-minded. She chides him for talking crazily and urges him to wash his bloody hands. However, like Macbeth, though she does not speak of it, she foresees their future misery, condemned to conceal their dreadful secret to the end of their days.

If, arguably, evil stems from Macbeth’s very soul and the Witches are only the external embodiment of his passions and channel of the desires and plans already formed in his mind, Lady Macbeth, serves as a second, more realistic and psychological trigger which helps him to move into an active phase (O’khara 1992; Shvedov 1975). Therefore, she can be considered the projection of Macbeth’s sublime. He loves her because she gives him a chance to acknowledge and face up to those his qualities that he would never accept in himself. Such a projection of Macbeth’s psychological factors reveals that the recognition of one’s own violence is an endless unbearable agony. The hero’s internal torment bursts out in the poignant scene of the queen’s sleepwalking when Lady Macbeth has an ominous dream which comprised a painful confession (“Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him” 5.1.33-34), a physical experience of being guilt-stained (“Here’s the smell of the blood still: all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand” 5.1.43-44), and a racking comprehension of the irreversibility of the crime committed (“What’s done cannot be undone: to bed, to bed, to bed!” 5.1.57-58).<sup>80</sup> It is “the conscience that she cannot silence” that makes Lady Macbeth “wonderful” rather than her “revolting” prototype in Holinshed, a merely ambitious, evil woman (Kiefer 1996: 68). Some sort of despair echoes even before the sleepwalking scene: “Nought’s had, all’s spent, / Where our desire is got without content; / ’Tis safer to be that which we destroy / Than by destruction dwell in doubtful joy” (3.2.4-7). Four lines

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<sup>80</sup> According to Siddons’s *Remarks on the Character of Lady Macbeth*, written sometime after 1815 and published in Thomas Campbell’s *Life of Mrs. Siddons* (1834), Lady Macbeth’s duplicitous and ambitious persona is ultimately softened and counteracted by her madness and breakdown. The sleepwalking scene, Siddons claimed, should be seen not as the confession of a guilty murderess, but rather as the triumph of Lady Macbeth’s femininity and compassionate nature (Engel 2008: 240-241). Such character’s reception became dominant among British Victorian and Russian late nineteenth-century actresses.

pronounced in complete loneliness, when the queen was waiting for her husband, bring to light her severe spiritual suffering. Even earlier than Macbeth, Lady Macbeth admits the vanity of the deed which has not brought the anticipated content and joy. The “sheer sense of failure and frustrated hopes” as well as the “slow poison of brooding regret” have joined to make her “this wraith-like figure of despair” (Carrington 1952: xxxii). The sleepwalking scene, in its turn, is a replay of the deep horror she felt when plotting and being party to the murder of Duncan. This is the reason why an individual, so bent on power and ambition, wishing to be “topfull of direst cruelty” (1.5.43) turned into “a guilt-ridden somnambulist” (Ancona and Thompson 2008: 1), walking evidence of the law uttered by Macbeth towards play’s end that “unnatural deeds / do breed unnatural troubles” (5.1.68). Unnatural behavior, completely reversed in the case of Lady Macbeth, her denial of femininity, caused, arguably, by her current childlessness,<sup>81</sup> destroys the natural order, the lives of others and her own life. Her blind desire to see her husband’s apparent destiny fulfilled ends fatally for both. Her better nature remains present and feebly asserts itself, tormenting her heart in the process. When the deed is done, she tries to dismiss it from her mind. She has not, however, quenched its fires. It will rise again and be a flaming hell within her before the day of judgment. When Lady Macbeth “made the gigantic effort to repress her conscience”, she apparently felt the need to do so only for the period in which the murder was to be committed (Gewirtz 1965: 112). She never speaks of the need to suppress it later. It looks as though she thought that as soon as the deed is done and the crown is attained, her guilt would be mitigated. She also might believe that her conscience, once repressed, would stay the same. While during the day she still can maintain “the dignity of the whole body” (5.1.46), at night her conscience rips her apart from the inside with exhausting fears and tiresome memories, for she cannot stop meditating upon the awfulness of what she has done which finally turns into mental agony. The last scene the reader hears of her is when she commits suicide which becomes a final escape, the only means left to control the conscience she so strongly and easily believed she could repress.

Both protagonists have worked together until Macbeth is chosen king. Lady Macbeth’s feelings, thoughts, and actions reflect on those of her husband throughout the play, so that their “continuous duologue” discloses “the steps by which the decision to commit the crimes is reached, rejected and then ratified” and reveals the effects of having

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<sup>81</sup> On Lady Macbeth’s experience, or otherwise, of motherhood, see Bradley 1920: 380-381; Knights 1964: 15-54; Bristol 2000: 19-34; Rutter 2004: 38-53; Clayton 2010: 85-99.

undertaken these steps (Brown 2001: 299). In many ways the characters are alike. They are both ambitious, they have neither sense of patriotism nor of loyalty to anyone outside their own family. Macbeth has a more powerful imaginative and deeper desires whereas Lady Macbeth possesses the stronger will. Fears of the supernatural do not disturb her, and she does not brood over the terrible consequences. Had she done so, the crime would never have been committed. Their own act is soon to teach them by its dreadful consequences that the wages of sin are always death. It can be only supposed whether Lady Macbeth knew that her husband had hired assassins to murder Banquo and his son Fleance, the prophesied heir of the Scottish crown, because Macbeth does not tell her about it. Neither does he ask for her help in further crimes. He just pours all his feeling of distress into her overburdened mind. While his thoughts, the scorpions of his mind (3.2.36), grow more and more evil, his wife has had enough crime and sin; she has sown the wind and is reaping the whirlwind. Lady Macbeth finds herself separated from her husband who is driven to more crime, almost heartless in his neglect of the one he called his “dearest love” (1.5.67) so that no tender message comes from him now when she descends into the valley of the shadow of death, no encouragement or comfort as she gave him before the king’s murder. All her cherished hopes have “made themselves air into which they vanished” (1.5.4) like the Witches in the desert place. She violated all the laws of morality to help her treasonous spouse, but when she saw him wearing a fruitless crown, she realized, but all too late, that “nought’s had and all’s spent, where our desire is got without content” (3.2.4-5). Lady Macbeth’s better nature awoke too late, for it found the undying worm gnawing at her soul and discovered that she could not climb back to the heights from which she had fallen so that her sorely charged heart cried out in the saddest of wails: “Oh, oh, oh!” (5.1.43). All of this makes of Lady Macbeth “a product of early modern observations and conventional wisdom about unstable womanhood and the madness that manifests from that condition” (Preston 2009: 69).

Lady Macbeth has become an iconic image which fostered a long list of “manipulative [...] ladies, all suspected of exerting undue influence on their husbands” (Quarmby 2014: 117), As we have seen, Victorian novels made her an obligatory model for plots which joined women and crime. In Russian realist fiction of the nineteenth century, the typification of female characters was mastered by Turgenev, Goncharov, Tolstoy, and Leskov. Although Leskov started his career as a fiction writer relatively late, he had already published numerous articles and critical essays in various periodicals and since 1862 was a regular contributor to the newspaper *The Northern Bee* (*Severnaya*

*Pchela*). His publications focused inevitably on issues of public or critical interest, a lowest common denominator being the problem of self-determination of the individual and the nation in so far as most of them took a tilt at vulgar materialism and nihilism. Along with Dostoyevsky and Tolstoy, Leskov was concerned with what was perceived as the increasing dehumanization of the Russian subject; in its turn, that made him address the concept of an ideal Russian. Leskov rested his hopes on the spiritual awakening of an individual which he associated with the enormous possibilities of a person's life. As he put it in a letter of 1877 to Fyodor Buslaev, art historian and philologist: "there still remains good in every heart – no sooner do they see a child trapped by the flames of burning fire than everybody will wish him to be saved. I have realized and advocate this and thanks to it I found warm corners in cold hearts and illuminated them" (Leskov 1956-1958: X. 451). The problem of an individual's dehumanization, particularly of a woman's, conventionally "a guardian of moral values, peace, home, and family" (Berezina 2016: 81), made Leskov explore the inner world of a female—her mental capacities for thinking and reasoning, on the one hand, and, on the other, her special ways of her interacting with the outer world and herself through feelings, memory and other psychic activity which cannot be rationally explained and controlled. Leskov never idealizes an individual but seeks to affirm that any person can resurrect spiritually after a fall. The exploration of a person's interaction with the external and inward worlds gave the writer a chance to prove the human capability for inner evolution. Therefore, in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* and *At Daggers*, Leskov's attention to an individual, in both case a female criminal, was determined by the current, more generalised fear of dehumanization and the writer's own creative searching.

It should be noted that all Leskov's major writings contain at least one reminiscence of *Macbeth* and other plays by Shakespeare (Pershina 2013: 85-111), even if *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* is the only novella studied by modern scholars. The variety of intertextual elements in the writer's fiction hints at his contribution to the 1860-70s polemic between the revolutionary democrats who advocated the utilitarian role of an art that "must string along with life and serve the cause of the improvement of people's material surroundings and the perfection of social relations" (Tsimbaev 2010) and the liberal conservatives who defended more cultural and spiritual values. The symbolic motto of the confrontation can be regarded as Dostoyevsky's aphorism that of a pair of

boots more worthy than the entire *oeuvre* of Pushkin and Shakespeare.<sup>82</sup> His critical essay published in *The Epoch* periodical (No.5, 1864) satirized the aesthetics of the nihilists and the so-called “real” critics. Shakespeare’s drama is sarcastically named “the humpback and luxury” because there “even witches show up and witches are the high noon of retrogradism; they are especially harmful for Russian youths who, without so much as Shakespeare’s help, get infected with witches” (Dostoyevsky 1972-1988: XX. 109). Dostoyevsky exploits the allusion to *Macbeth*’s Weird Sisters to emphasize the topsy-turvy public values. Indeed, it is not Shakespeare’s artistic method that is mocked. The witches, the real evil presented by the reference, are nihilistic ideas that take possession of Russian young people’s minds.

After the death of the emperor Nicholas I, Russian domestic policy came under sharp criticism for its preservation of serfdom, the government’s numerous failures in the Crimean war, and the urgent need for reforms in all public spheres. The disaffection intensified due to several western influences: Russian critics were becoming familiar with utopian socialism and there was a crisis of idealistic philosophy at the same time as an onset of primitive materialism. In 1860, when Dostoyevsky returned to St. Petersburg from Siberia, he found himself in an atmosphere of “perturbation of minds” and the *prosveshchenstvo* (positivism, empiricism, and rationalism)<sup>83</sup> widely spread among various radical and anti-philosophical groups who called themselves nihilists. The term is believed to have been coined by Turgenev in the novel *Fathers and Sons* which associated nihilism with radical revolutionary movements whose representatives “exhibit[ed] callousness and one-sided dogmatism of fanatics” (Marmysz 2003: 17). While “Turgenev did his best to understand nihilism, Dostoyevsky was more concerned to crush it” (Hingley 1967: 46). He used the term in his critical essays published in the

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<sup>82</sup> See above (pp. 173-174). Later Dostoyevsky used the same irony in the anti-nihilist novel *The Possessed* when Stepan Trofimovich was joked for his declaration that “boots were of less consequence than Pushkin, of much less, indeed” and that “in the question of which is more beautiful, Shakespeare or boots, Raphael or petroleum” he maintained that “Shakespeare and Raphael are more precious than the emancipation of the serfs, more precious than Nationalism, more precious than Socialism, more precious than the young generation, more precious than chemistry, more precious than almost all humanity because they are the fruit, the real fruit of all humanity and perhaps the highest fruit that there can be” (Dostoyevsky 2014: 2925, 3340).

<sup>83</sup> The term *prosveshchenstvo* probably derives from “*prosvyashchenie*” the Russian equivalent of “enlightenment”. It encompasses anti-historicism, “wild arbitrariness” and “terrible subjectivism” which combines contradictorily a denial of universal values with “only absolute values justified by the pathos of serving” (Chizhevsky 2007: 283). The term was introduced in the early 1860s by N.N. Strakhov, who criticized the cult of rationalism and scientism, to satirize the Russian radicals’ dogmatism of thinking and reasoning in their “search for incontrovertible truth and easy solutions to complicated issues of life” (Chernyshova 2015: 24).

magazines *Time* and *The Epoch* as well as in the comments on his fiction in which he attacked “nihilism’s ethics of scientific egoism” (Edie, Scanlan and Zeldin 1960: 237). In fact, according to Dostoyevsky, *prosveshchenstvo* and nihilism were the same thing, for both were aimed at substituting a morality based on rationalism and materialism for “the ideals inherited from the Gospels” (Frank 2002: 65) A critical interpretation of the era that ended with the death of the emperor led to the emergence of new attitudes and ideals. The generation of nihilists were not sufficiently equipped theoretically to be capable of any sound analysis of the past: the teaching of philosophy at universities was forbidden because of its unproven benefit and possible harm. The evaluation of social relations, lacking the boundaries philosophical tradition might have provided, was left to the mercy of “liberated thought”, which tended to transcend all possible limitations or ignore them and, what is more, considered itself to be impeccable and in brilliant and consistent evolution.

The belief in the absolute accuracy and worth of their ideas, repudiation of their subjectivity (Fesenko 2009: 95) was the salient feature of nihilism, along with the opinion that those who thought differently were beset with misconceptions or, as they named them more radically, “prejudices”, that is delusions perceived as both logical errors and malicious deception. Nihilists’ primitive materialist worldview led to a similarly primitive interpretation of all forms of supreme being and “a sweeping denial of all conventional values, moral or political” (McNeill 1986: 551). Therefore, ethics was regarded as the result of primitive egoism, while knowledge was associated with primitive sensation. Likewise, art was nothing more than sensual enjoyment and “purely psychological pleasure” (Barsht 2000: 35), while religion was regarded as a product of basic emotions such as fear or a sense of one’s dependence and inferiority. Nihilists believed that basic goods should be appreciated more than objects of art--“boots are better than Shakespeare”. As Dmitry Pisarev, a radical writer and social critic, claimed: “baring teeth to a marble statue is a very stupid, fruitless, and ungrateful task”, while the creative artist was nothing but a freeloader and an impostor, for a musician, an artist or an actor’s occupation was merely “a sad habit of parasitism and drinking raw vodka” (2003: VI. 258; VII. 183). As literature must serve only useful purposes, fiction was condemned. As for religion, nihilism proclaimed a “spiritual death”, when thinking and creating ought to be prohibited and moral development must be stopped (Chizhevsky 2011: 185).

Nihilists’ critical observations take as their benchmark an object’s “utility” for the ordinary people, which “was declared the sole criterion of good” (Slocombe 2006: 14).



Regardless, quite what utility is was never explicitly stated or properly explained, for what nihilists only emphasized was the need for “the clearing away of what they regarded as rubbish” (Copleston 1986: 102). Their political and social arguments only seem to advocate the interests of people. This utilitarian criterion of usefulness, which turned other principles into fallacies and illusions and brought supreme values down to earth, became an aesthetic bone of contention between revolutionary democrats and liberal conservatives and idealists. Like Dostoyevsky, Leskov argued against such a form of “enlightenment” and referred to Shakespeare and *Macbeth* as he did so.

Leskov’s debut novel, *No Way Out* (*Nekuda*, 1864), which satirized the life and members of nihilist communes (most of its characters were caricatures of radical left activists and critics) and fostered Christian values and ordinary people’s virtues, was criticized for its conservatism and anti-democratism.<sup>84</sup> *No Way Out* was his first novel by means of which the writer joined the literary struggle against nihilism with Shakespeare as a symbol of universal values that oppose nihilist insensate materialism (there are various reminiscences of *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, and *Othello* there). In the novel, when characters discuss the utility of Shakespeare’s drama, nihilists call the playwright a “fool”, a “useless man of no account”, who had no proper ideas and only “made up stories” (Leskov 1989: II. 561-562). Their reception is contrasted to the protagonists’ view on verisimilitude and panhuman dramatism of Shakespeare’s plays (Leskov 1989: II. 162). In the novel, various reminiscences of *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, and *Othello* perform a characteristic function emphasizing the heroes’ salient features and, in the case of the nihilists, satirizing “crude barbarism” and “fictitious ideals” (Leskov 1988: 85, 88). For example, the revolutionary ideologist Ardalion Arapov is identified with *Macbeth*,

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<sup>84</sup> In the article *Pearls and Diamonds of Russian Journalism* (*Perly y adamanty russkoy zhurnalistiki*, 1864) Varfolomey Zaitsev called the novel “a monster which disturbs all the judgements so that when you are reading it you cannot believe your own eyes as it is pitch dark” (1864: 48). He also compared it to “the essays from German secretive newspapers and magazines such as *Baierischer Polizei Anzeiger* or *Deutsches Geheim Polizei Centralblatt*» (Zaitsev 1864: 47) pointing out that the novel was commissioned by the censorship committee. In *A Walk Around the Gardens of Russian Literature* (*Progulka po sadam rossiiskoi slovesnosti*, 1865) Pisarev equated Leskov with two other anti-nihilist writers Aleksey Pisemsky and Victor Klyushnikov whom he criticized in his previous essay *Angry Powerlessness* (*Serditoe bessilie*, 1865), named them all “the gentlemen that all rational people regard as hopeless” and wondered if any journal would dare to publish any new Leskov’s piece or any “fair writer” would work with such a journal that “glorifies itself by publishing his novels and tales” (1855-1856: III. 260). Mikhail Saltykov-Shchedrin admitted that *No Way Out* was “not a literary writing [but] a collection of rumours so it has no value at all” (1900-1911: VIII. 364-365). Such harsh criticism ruined Leskov’s reputation as he noted that when he “came in, people took their hats and went away; in restaurants they deliberately attacked *No Way Out* in my presence” (qtd. Faresov 1904: 60). He also responded to allegations that the novel had gone through the censor revision several times which “aggressively suppressed” it and “crossed out the whole chapters” from it so that the writer “lost [his] head and rued the hour when [he] had decided to create this ill-fated writing” (Leskov 1956-1958: II. 711-712).

horrified after murdering the king. The character, like his real-life prototype Perikl Argiropulo, took part in purchasing a printing press for a secret printing house and along with other students translated, lithographed and distributed forbidden books. Arapov returns home after his henchman Persiyantsev tells him his apartment has been searched by the police. They found nothing forbidden but were badly scratched by a badger that lived in the cellar. He takes a gun and shoots the animal down, an act that so shocks him that “he resembled Macbeth more than all modern actors distorting Shakespeare” because he “did not pretend a comedy” but “really was in the embrace of horrible terror” (Leskov 1989: IV. 375). This unexpected juxtaposition of the nihilist with Macbeth—ruthless murderers both, who leave their victims “all covered with blood” and are both driven to distraction—is a sardonic jibe at a typical representative of the radical movement. Arapov’s actions and feelings are reduced to utmost absurdity. Out of his mind with fear, he “himself did not understand why he had killed a poor animal” (Leskov 1989: IV. 375). He stumbles out of the cellar pale and wild, with his left hand on his heart and with the warm gun in his right hand and faints. When he comes round, he regrets that the latest hours of his life “have not been examined by at least Rozanov for his psychiatric doctoral thesis or a great dramatic talent for a typical creation of a hero of the modern comedy” (Leskov 1989: IV. 375). The allusion to Shakespeare, whom Leskov regarded as a “great dramatic talent”, helped the writer to create a character that embodied all the folly and nonsense of modern life—of what Leskov also called “the comic era” (1956-1958: X. 169).<sup>85</sup>

In the short novel *Laughter and Grief* (*Smekh i gore*, 1871), Leskov implemented his plan to analyze the results of the country’s development over the two crucial decades of the 1850s and 1860s and to comprehend the conditions of Russian life during that period of reform. The writer’s ironic assessment of the time is already evident in the subtitle – *A multifarious potpourri of a hard-bitten man’s motley memories, dedicated to all those people out of place and out of position* (Leskov 1871: 9). The novel contains various reminiscences of historical figures and events, the outcome of its need to reflect the mood of the era. The narrator-protagonist Vatazhkov is a so-called Russian European (a Russian who was born and raised abroad) who, on his return to the motherland, grapples with the “kaleidoscopic diversity of the Russian reality, in which the funny and

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<sup>85</sup> Commenting on the novel, the writer admitted: “I consider it the most honest work of my life, but I attribute its success not to my artistic skill but to the accurate perception of the time and people of ‘the comic era’” (Leskov 1956-1958: X. 169).

the ridiculous form a tailor-made anecdotal of Russian life” (Pisarevsky 2004: 8). The other characters he meets become the heroes of such “anecdotes”, the numerous short stories that constitute the novel. Allusions to *Macbeth* are introduced to satirize the Russification of the western provinces of the Russian Empire, among which the most challenging and problematic concern was Poland. The protagonist has an audience with a governor, Gregoire, and his wife, the latter sympathizing with the Polish because a fortune-teller, who was a swindler and Polish himself, intimidated her with her alleged kinship with the Poles. The governess, like the “bewitched” Macbeth, artlessly believes the soothsayer’s cunning “revelation”, feels her responsibility and starts helping the Polish to assimilate in Russia, for “these poor people die and we, looking at them, just say that their blood is on us” (Leskov 1989: V. 130). This “revelation” makes her sleep-deprived so “she, poor dear, even at night, like Lady Macbeth, kept walking around the Governor’s house moaning: ‘There is blood on us, blood! Go away, Gregoire, there is blood on you!’” (Leskov 1989: V. 136). This time the comical juxtaposition with Shakespeare’s heroine is used to scoff at Russian authorities obsessed with preposterous ideas: at one point, the weak-minded governess asks the protagonist to find out how to create children in capsules because she has read in one book that women have only themselves to blame for giving birth to their own oppressors. Another, similarly satirical allusion to *Macbeth* is brought into the nonsensical speculations of General Perlov, who wants to give Europe a good hiding for all its “guilt and falsehood”, its prodigality, foppery, and deception: “if we march like Birnam wood with rods, we will flog them all, free the Slavs [...] and establish the Paris Province” (Leskov 1989: V. 149). This is probably Leskov’s sarcastic reaction to the Paris Commune’s coming to short-lived power between March and May 1871. Its policies, later called “the dictatorship of the proletariat” (the term given by Karl Marx), were supported by the Russian radical democrats who Leskov opposed. Therefore, the *Macbeth* allusions, as a part of foreign intertext, reveal the grotesque mindset of the “new” Russians, the individuals who have abandoned universal values in favour of new senseless ideas, “the people of the time when everything is crumbling” (Golovko 2012: 123). Not only the protagonist with his logical European outlook is unable to understand them, but neither is the writer himself with his deep spiritual and moral worldview.

Likewise, in the novel *The Cathedral Clergy (Soboriane, 1872)*, *Macbeth* as a symbol of art is opposed to natural sciences. The teacher Varnavka, a typical representative of the “new” people, complains about the dire crisis of national education

as follows: “*Macbeth*? Nothing of the kind! We do not need *Macbeths*, we need sciences; but what can we do when it is impossible to study here” (Leskov 1989: I. 133). His malapropos reasoning stems from a joke of the protagonist Valerian Darianov who has mocked the teacher’s other ludicrous complaint about his ill-fated life, which commenced the moment his mother gave birth to him: “Cheer up, my dear friend, all men are born by their mothers. Only Macduff was cut from the womb so that Macbeth would not be defeated by the woman-born” (Leskov 1989: I. 133). The reference to Shakespeare helps to emphasize the inanity of the nihilists’ universal truth, or “immoral doctrine”, that makes a person “chase [...] power, influence, catering to his whims and passions without any moral struggle or sacrifice” (Leskov 1956-1958: X. 36-37). A travesty of *Macbeth* in the discourse and description of nihilists and “new” people—the “thinking” representatives of government, army, clergy, and civil services—becomes one of Leskov’s distinctive rhetorical resources. The intertext enables the author to shift the attention from the portrayal of the social sphere and a hero/heroine as a social type to the evocation of his/her benighted moral and religious stance.

The Christian vision of humanity and the belief in spiritual salvation determined Leskov’s particular interest in such types of female characters as “passionate” women and women “at a crossroads”, to adopt Natalia Starygina’s terms (2003: 204). *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*<sup>86</sup> is, first of all, the story about love passion, and its protagonist Katerina Izmailova is a “passionate” woman. The literary type of a “passionate” character embodies the idea of sinfulness and godlessness of the Russian Orthodox conception of passion and sin. A sin is lawlessness, as Varnava Belyaev, philosopher and bishop of the Russian Orthodox Church wrote in *Fundamentals of the Art of Holiness (Osnovy iskusstva svyatosti, 1928)*: it is “neither some human weakness or a consequence of a person’s narrow-mindedness nor a simple affliction or appetency, but a deliberate and voluntary act of abruption in favour of selfish proud self-centeredness and self-deification” (1998: I. 223). Adam’s fall resulted in the human predisposition to sin.

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<sup>86</sup> The novella owes its name to Turgenev’s *Hamlet of Shchigrovsky District* (1849) which “moved Shakespeare’s hero to a Russian province” and showed that “tragic collisions of Shakespearean dimension can be found in the thick of common people’s life” (Levin 1988: 155). Leskov also longed to prove “universal dramatism of Shakespeare’s plays” that he continued to defend in *No Way Out*’s discussion of drama in which a reference to *Lady Macbeth* was aimed at emphasizing the playwright’s transcendental value (Drugov 1957: 30-31). The novella was published by Dostoyevsky in his *Epoch* magazine under the title *Lady Macbeth of Our District* (1865) soon after the manuscript’s submission. Dostoyevsky was the first among other critics who appreciated the writing for its “true presentation of reality” (qtd. Leskov 1956-1958: I. 499). *Lady Macbeth* was a success within the contemporary public and had a long after-life: it was adapted by Dmitry Shostakovich for his opera (first performed in 1934), filmed by Roman Balayan (1989) and Brayan Oldroyd (2016) and has been regularly staged in Russia.

Humans inherited an awry image of God, their souls lack the Lord's grace so they become corrupted in their minds, hearts and will. When a sin reaches the pitch of its inclination to evil, it turns into a passion. In Russian Orthodox belief, passion is "already the very vice which has long been nesting in a soul and which, by means of a habit, has become, as it were, its natural trait so that the soul itself willingly strives for it" (John Climacus 1898: 115). A passionate, or sinful, state of a soul is abhorrent to human nature which is originally righteous and kind. In such a state a person is consumed with secular attractions: this can be an idea, or an object, or sexual enticement. In keeping with the Russian Orthodox conceptualization of a "passionate" person Russian fiction of 1860-70s, particularly the anti-nihilist novel, generated a corpus of female characters obsessed with sinful passions: money, power, social status, love or a "new" idea. These are Inna Gorobets in Klyushnikov's *Haze* (*Marevo*, 1864), Irina Ratmirova and Matrena Sukhanchikova in Turgenev's *Smoke* (*Dym*, 1867), Avdotia Bredneva in Avenarius' *The Wandering Forces* (*Bluzhdayiushchie sily*, 1867), Anna Barsukova in Avdeev's *Between Two Lights* (*Mezh dvukh ognei*, 1869), Sofia Belovodova and Uliana Kozlova in Goncharov's *The Precipice* (*Obryv*, 1869), Elena Zhiglinskaya in Pisemsky's *In the Vortex* (*V vodovorote*, 1870), Lidia Zats in Krestovsky's *The Bloody Bluff* (*Krovavyi puf*, 1869-74), Alina Figurina and Anna Skokova in Leskov's *At Daggers* (*Na nozhakh*, 1870-71) as well as several secondary heroines-nihilists. The writers did not strive after any sharp focus on characters' social typicality. They presented the common features which characterized each woman as "passionate" from the Orthodox point of view, typifying their spiritual nature. By denying the presence of God and diminishing the value of cultural wealth, these heroines lost their female principle, their naturalness, and became non-women.

According to Natalia Starygina, such a type of female characters is often opposed to "natural" heroines who "lead active inner life, their spiritual strengths are aimed at finding God in their souls what regulates their behaviour in family and society" (2003: 217). As the family theme gained more significance in the fiction of 1860-70s, the "positiveness" and "negativity" of heroines manifested itself in their capacity and, consequently, incapacity for family life and maternity. Such a way of life, when a woman was surrounded by her parents, husband, and children, was regarded as organic and righteous, for it revealed her true spiritual nature and femininity. Katerina Izmailova, the

Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk of the title,<sup>87</sup> is the first of Leskov's "unsexed", in other words unnatural, female characters in this Orthodox sense who are "divested of [their] womanly qualities" (Formanek 1990: 263) for undervaluing the significance of family and faith. Like her Shakespearean prototype, who sacrifices her woman's nature to satisfy her desire for royal power, Katerina "rejects her very nature as a woman" and "turns her aim from creation of life to its destruction" (Ewbank 1977: 55). From the very beginning of the novella, the heroine demonstrates a morbid lack of femininity. The narrator tells us that she married Zinovy Borisovich Izmailov, a rich merchant considerably older than herself, for convenience. Their five years of marriage brought her neither happiness nor the children that, as she believed, could have afforded her consolation. However, the complications of the story show that Katerina has no maternal drive. She is indifferent to the child she has by her lover, Sergei, whose name or sex is never disclosed (Kucherskaya 2009: 117), in contrast to her deep affection for Sergei. As Leskov puts it, "as is often the case with over-passionate women, her love for the father did not carry over to the child by one iota" (Leskov 2015: 159). She merely considers her pregnancy a matter of financial opportunity because it will help her to lay hands on her husband's fortune: "We'll get the capital, Sergei: I've an heir now" (Leskov 2015: 146). Burdened by her family and her marital status, she settles for loneliness and alienation. She takes part neither in her spouse and her father-in-law's business nor in the housekeeping; instead she is "left to wander idly about from room to room" and in the rare event that she needs to "accompany her husband on his rounds of the local merchants, she derives little pleasure from it" (Leskov 2015: 112). What is more, her inner world is as empty as her everyday life. Katerina is "no great reader" (Leskov 2015: 113). There are no books in the house except for the Kiev Lives of the Holy Fathers, which she does not read anyway, an indication of the heroine's irreligiousness. Holy days pass by to her utter indifference. On the surface she seems quite natural, "running down to the river with her pails, bathing in her chemise by the landing-stage or scattering the husks of sunflower seeds over the gate in the direction of any handsome young swain who happened to be passing" (Leskov 2015: 112); but her inability to love anyone or anything, be it her husband, child, God,

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<sup>87</sup> On the one hand, it can be simply regarded as "a nickname coined by townspeople to refer to Katerina Lvovna and describe her murderous actions" (Bellmunt-Serrano 2019: 17) because both heroines bear a goodly plenty of eminent differences. However, the fact that Lady Macbeth might be considered a nickname would be evidence of the extraordinary impact of *Macbeth* in the nineteenth century. The play became an archetypal model of a plot in which "crime" and "woman" are joined together. Leskov as a narrator deliberately introduced a straightforward Shakespearean allusion to define the nature of the crimes committed in the novella and emphasize their universal consequences

home or family life, makes her impotent as a woman in the Orthodox sense. Moreover, Leskov constantly highlights her masculine traits. Katerina herself acknowledges her own physical strength saying that when she was a girl, she “was [...] so strong [...] that] there were even some men who couldn’t get the better of” her (Leskov 2015: 116). This puzzles her servants: “Well now, that’s some woman for you!” (Leskov 2015: 116). While Lady Macbeth replicates the dog-eat-dog competition for preferment and power that is ostensibly inherent to masculinity (Alfar 2003: 113), Katerina’s spiritual impotence makes her vulnerable to sinful temptations which fill her empty heart with a voluptuary’s passion which leads her to the sin of conjugal infidelity. When her husband has to spend some time away from home to attend to the burst dam of one of his mills, , “the full force of her [...] character burgeoned, and she grew so determined that there was no stopping her” (Leskov 2015: 122). By losing, on the Orthodox view, the last remnants of her femininity, she loses those too of humanity in general. Her initial sin of betrayal will entail the further sin of murder.

For the sake of love Katerina kills eagerly and without compunction. The more crimes she commits, the more determined she becomes as she “completely let herself go” (Leskov 2015: 124). In this sense, Leskov also assimilates his heroine to Macbeth. However, unlike Shakespeare’s protagonist, who finds himself obliged to fulfil the Witches’ prophecy, her first homicide is accomplished out of real necessity. After catching Sergei leaving Katerina’s bedroom, her father-in-law, Boris Timofeich, lashed him fiercely with a whip, locked him in a storeroom and told Katerina that the next day Sergei would go to jail. Katerina put poison in her father-in-law’s supper, and he died the next morning after a long night of agony. While Shakespeare divides the roles of mastermind and perpetrator between the Macbeth couple, Leskov’s heroine encompasses both. She is as murderous as Macbeth and as cunning as Lady Macbeth. Sexual passion leads her to lose her humanity, but it never makes her lose her head. Boris Timofeich was served pickled mushrooms and porridge seasoned with rat poison. As the ingestion of poisonous mushrooms was a familiar cause of death, as Leskov is at pains to underline,<sup>88</sup> no suspicion attends his demise. When Katerina’s love affair is found out, she wins over all the servants, stewards and workmen by being “lavish with her tips” so that their

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<sup>88</sup> “Old man Boris Timofeich was buried according to Christian ritual, and no one suspected a thing. It never occurred to anyone to wonder whether there might have been anything unusual about the affair; Boris Timofeich had died, and he had died as a result of eating pickled mushrooms, just as many others had died before him” (Leskov 2015: 124).

“wonderment” fades away very quickly (Leskov 2015: 125). Blinded with love, she endeavours to blind others too. Nevertheless, everybody knows the truth and their statement of matters is prophetic: “It’s her business, and she’s the one who’ll stand to account for it” (Leskov 2015: 125).

Overrun by passion, Katerina turns increasingly deaf to and alienated from others. She lives in paradise – “Look, Sergei – isn’t this simply heavenly?” (Leskov 2015: 129) – blissfully unaware that the temptation she has yielded to is leading her straight to hell; and there is something devilish about Sergei, with his “tree timers damned” soul, “a devil for the lasses”, a “villain”, a “cheeky thief” who can have any woman he wants and “lead her into sin (Leskov 2015: 117). When courting Katerina, he sweet-talks her, first, paying her compliments and calling her his “matchless darling” and “sweetheart” (Leskov 2015: 120); then he expresses “jealous possessiveness” and his desire to marry her, for he still considers himself her inferior who will only be able to demonstrate how she must be properly respected by becoming her husband—a desire “which is always pleasing to a woman” (Leskov 2015: 132). The “bewitched” heroine is oblivious to all portents of a fatal end. When the day after the first murder the sweltering heat becomes unbearable, she hides herself in bedroom and falls asleep; when she dreams of a sinister cat that turns into the dead Boris, she dismisses it as of no importance

To the Macbethian template, repeatedly Leskov applies the ghost motif, which acts as structural element (Salakhutdinova 2011: 34), plot catalyst and, typically of Russian realist literature, a mirror of character development actualized in heroes’ dreams and hallucinations “which communicate the most intimate information about the unconscious life, the non-rational side of fictional characters” (Katz 1984: 142). As a window onto the heroine’s mind, the motif helps to explore the roots of the crimes committed by Katerina Izmailova and to mark out the complicated process of the awakening of her self-consciousness. The first time Katerina sees the apparition is sometime after the murder of her father-in-law. The setting dissolves the boundaries between reality and dream. Although it is day, the protagonist’s behaviour is more appropriate to night-time. There is something infernal about it because “the heat was sweltering”<sup>89</sup> and “tormented” her (Leskov 2015: 126). Katerina shuts herself off from the world around as she closes the shutters and drapes a woolen shawl over them in the bedroom, that twilight zone where natural and supernatural meet. There she drifts in and

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<sup>89</sup> In original text the author used the attribute *pioklyi*, the Russian for “torrid”, “scorching”, “sweltering”. The adjective is derived from the polysemic noun *peklo* which means both “heat” and “hell”.



out of sleep or dreams, in a “fitful” doze which evokes her own liminal state. The second time the apparition makes its appearance is before the murder of her husband. Now it is night-time. Again, the heroine fences herself off from the real world: “I took good care to lock the door, the window’s closed” (Leskov 2015: 134). In both cases Katerina sees a cat on her marital bed: “Katerina Lvovna turned over on her side and found herself stroking a cat. The cat was rubbing itself between Sergei and her, such an enormous, handsome grey tomcat, as fat as fat could be [...] it pressed its animal’s face against her; pushed its soft, round muzzle against her resilient breasts, maintaining all the while a quiet, musical purr, as though it were declaring its love for her” (Leskov 2015: 126). When, at first, she tries to seize hold of the cat and throw it out, it slips through her fingers as though made of thin air. The heroine immediately starts questioning the nature of the apparition: “How on earth did this big cat get in here? Oh, where has this cat come from? Oh, what is this? Is it a cat, or isn’t it?” (Leskov 2015: 126). She is not able to identify it and this “sense of utter confusion [...] jolted her out of her state of drowsiness and dispelled the dream altogether” (Leskov 2015: 126). Although at first Katerina is anxious because dreaming about a cat is believed to be bad luck, she quickly forgets the vision

The apparition lends itself to several interpretations. It can be regarded as “the personification of Katerina’s conscience which in the beginning does not bother the female protagonist, but suddenly appears to her in the image of cat” that in its second arrival has the head of the heroine’s father-in-law whom she killed with rat-poison added to mushrooms (Kucherskaya 2010: 282-283). According to dream books, a cat relates to marriage and family life. It stands for family quarrels and domestic problems or the death of a child. The common interpretation since ancient times views such dreams as a sign of adultery, the breaking of marital vows (Wigzell 1988: 628). All these suggestions have something in them, but the cat also conjures up the cat, Grimalkin, who was a familiar of Shakespeare’s *Weird Sisters*. As an eldritch fusion of Grimalkin and Banquo, the cat can be taken to symbolize Katerina’s dawning consciousness because at no point in the novels she does not actually show any remorse of conscience. The words of the cat prove this idea. In the second vision, the apparition claims that it is Boris Timofeich, her father-in-law she murdered. Leskov ironically contrasts the blindness of the dead man who is aware of her crime’s gravity and the heroine who still can see but refuses to accept her guilt. The situation resembles both Macbeth’s hallucination of Banquo’s ghost that appears to remind the murder that “blood will have blood” and the dreams of Raskolnikov who ignores the warnings (neither one nor two are enough as it turned out) which show him

that his criminal intentions contradict his own ethical nature and persists in his plans to commit the murder. Leskov's apparition is intended to open the heroine's eyes and show her that her blinding passion has led her into sin. Katerina herself considers her vision as a curse or a punishment: "Why has this cat been sent to plague me?" (Leskov 2015: 134).

It should be mentioned that Katerina is not the only one who has visions. After murdering Fedya Lyamin, an infant heir of her husband's fortune, Sergei is haunted by the ghost of Zinovy Borisych, Katerina's husband. Sergei is struck with a superstitious horror that almost drives him insane. As soon as the child died, "the walls of the quiet house, which had covered up so many crimes, were suddenly shaken by deafening blows: the windows rattled, the floors shuddered, the chains of the hanging icon-lamps quivered, and fantastic shadows went leaping over the walls" (Leskov 2015: 153). The hero is not aware of the actual source of the noise, namely, the crowd of people outside who saw Katerina and him committing the murder and want to enter the house to catch them red-handed. Leskov travesties Shakespeare's scene when Macbeth hallucinates the ghost of Banquo. Sergei, in stark contrast to Katerina, is not a sensitive person, capable of reflection, but ruled by common knowledge and ideas. The fear of divine justice makes the hero dash out of the room. The situation, unlike in *Macbeth*, is rather comical. Driven by terror, Sergei runs up the stairs in the dark, strikes his head on the half-open door, flies back down and starts seeing the ghost: "Zinovy Borisych, Zinovy Borisych! [...] Look, he's flying over us with a sheet of iron" (Leskov 2015: 154). The narrator points out that the vision made the hero "completely lose his head from superstitious terror" (Leskov 2015: 154) since he foolishly believes that their victims' ghosts return to haunt the murderers. During the trial "the very first words of the priest about the Last Judgement and the punishment of the unrepentant" (Leskov 2015: 157) are enough for Sergei to confess. However, he pleads guilty out of neither sincere repentance nor true religious devotion, but because of the superstitious nature of his superficial character.

In contrast, Katerina continues to ignore her visions. Her consciousness and conscience are so in thrall to her passion that she will stop at nothing to preserve's Sergei's love and is ready to follow him "through hell and high water, come what may" as her devotion for him knows no limits (Leskov 2015: 132). In such "an ecstasy of happiness" she promises to make her lover a merchant and live with him in an entirely proper fashion, even if that means murdering her husband. Thus, she kills her husband Zinovy Borisovich, who finally returns home at night amid expectations of walking in on his wife in bed with his steward. Although at first Katerina decides to rely on her surefire

method and poisons his tea as she had poisoned her father-in-law's dinner, her passionate nature rushes her into an action which will take a quicker effect. She asks Sergei to enter the room, kisses him and provokes an angry backlash from her husband by doing so. As the men fight, she hits Zinovy on the head with a heavy cast-iron candlestick and, when he falls, chokes him to death.

After the corpse is taken down to the cellar, Katerina starts cleaning a bloody spot on the floor. Manel Bellmunt-Serrano has recognised "the ironic reflection" of Shakespeare's original in Leskov's novella. Although Lady Macbeth supposes that she can easily cover up her and her husband's complicity in Duncan's murder ("a little water clears us of this deed", 2.2.83),<sup>90</sup> in fact, she is never able to get rid of the bloody spot on her soul, hence her sleepwalking and endless hand-rubbing ("What, will these hands ne'er be clean?—No more", 5.1.48). Her guilt and remorse fight their way out through the vision of her bloodstained hands which, bearing "the smell of the blood still" will not be sweetened by "all the perfumes of Arabia" (5.1.56-57). She reaps the harvest of the self-delusion that crime might pay: "Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him" (5.1.45-46). The abundance of Duncan's blood is in direct proportion to the guilt and remorse that overpower Lady Macbeth. Unlike Lady Macbeth, Katerina is never tormented by guilty conscience. She quickly cleans the floor with the same water she had used to poison her spouse and the patch of blood that his corpse had left there "washed away easily without a trace" (Leskov 2015: 143). The complete disappearance of the blood suggests the liberating effect the murder has had on Katerina, something Lady Macbeth was unable to experience. Unlike in Shakespeare's tragedy, in Leskov's story blood is never mentioned again: no blood, it seems, no remorse (Bellmunt-Serrano 2019: 21).

The minimal reference to the heroine's spiritual awakening is her dreams, of which she hardly takes any notice. Hardly does she realise the evil she does. Her values are reversed and twisted so much that she agrees to Sergei's proposition to kill Fedya Lyamin, Zinovy's little nephew and heir. This third murder alludes to Macbeth's slaying of Macduff's family. Macbeth is warned by the first apparition to watch out for Macduff, who has suspected Macbeth right from the moment he murdered the grooms: "Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth! beware Macduff; / Beware the thane of Fife" (4.1.71-72). When he

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<sup>90</sup> Macbeth, on the contrary, is convinced of its absolute impossibility: "Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood / Clean from my hand? No, this my hand will rather / The multitudinous seas in incarnadine, / Making the green one red" (2.2.75-78).

learns that Macduff has fled to England to stir Malcolm to turn his arms against the tyrant, he issues orders to seize the traitor's castle and "give to the edge o' the sword / His wife, his babes, and all unfortunate souls / That trace him in his line" (4.1.151-153). His decision to slaughter Macduff's family and entire household seems to have been taken in extreme haste and agony: there is no hesitation or attempt at concealment: "From this moment / The very firstlings of my heart shall be / The firstlings of my hand" (4.1.146-148). By this stage it is clear that he has given himself wholly over to evil. There is a chasm between the original "valor's minion" (1.2.19), baited by the Witches, and his new murderous incarnation that seeks out his victims on its own. A man previously "too full o' the milk of human kindness to catch the nearest way" (1.5.16-17) justifies the assassination of Banquo on the grounds that "Things bad begun make strong themselves by ill" (3.2.57) and, eventually, turns into the "fiend of Scotland" who orders the massacre of many innocent people. The senseless cruelty of mass murder he commands marks the nadir of Macbeth's fall.

Leskov depicts the lowest point of Katerina's downfall by grafting the image of a martyred saint onto the boy she is ready to kill. On the eve of his death, Fedya is lying in his bed, seriously ill and reading with admiration of the saintly life of his guardian angel, Theodore the Warrior. It is a cameo replete with spiritual light and purity. The boy is left alone waiting for his grandmother to return from Church and bring him a consecrated wafer from the service. In *Macbeth*, before being murdered, Duncan is similarly portrayed as a blessed, innocent person: "his virtues / Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongued, against / The deep damnation of his taking-off" (1.7.18-20) and "pity, like a naked newborn babe, / Striding the blast, or Heaven's cherubim [...] shall blow the horrid deed in every eye" (1.7.21-24). This is the perfect opportunity for Katerina. Katerina thinks of using poison again, her favorite method of murder. As her nephew is sick, all she will need to do to keep the murder secret is to say that the doctor has given him the wrong medication. Nevertheless, as earlier in case of her husband, she cannot wait, not even for a while. She is utterly lost to shame with nothing that can restrain her. She calls Sergei again to help her carry out the murder immediately. She "covered the invalid's childish face with a large feather pillow and leaned on it hard with her powerful, resilient bosom" while her lover was "keeping him flat so he can't struggle" (Leskov 2015: 153). The depth of the heroine's fall, like that of Macbeth, comes to light in all its horrific scale.

However, by contrast with Shakespeare's protagonist who with each new crime becomes increasingly deaf to the voice of his reason as he rushes "to crown [...] thoughts

with acts, be it thought and done” (4.1.149), Katerina’s consciousness is gradually restored with each new murder. The first time the narrator unveils her thoughts is when Sergei, the devilish instigator, presents her late husband’s unexpected heir, Fedya, as an obstacle to their happiness. Katerina’s mind is beset with doubts. Her initial genuine wonder at her lover’s excessive greed — “Surely you’ll get your fair share, Sergei?” (Leskov 2015: 147) — is soon replaced with pensiveness. The name of the boy has “ensconced itself firmly in Katerina’s mind and heart” and she cannot sleep, keep the house or even pray without the same thought “nagging her” (Leskov 2015: 148). The narrator likens her anxiety to demoniacal possession: “it was as if all the demons in hell had broken loose within her” (Leskov 2015: 149). This makes her reflect on all the harm the boy is doing her and how good it would be if he were not there at all. Finally, she lets her worst part convince her and the boy is murdered as a sacrifice to her passion; yet at least for the first time a small window has been opened onto her soul.

Katerina’s self-knowledge and awareness of all she has done reaches its greatest profundity when she becomes undeceived of Sergei’s love and is therefore freed of his devil-like hold over her. On their way to Siberia to serve their exile in a penitentiary, Sergei commences a new romantic relationship with Sonetka, another prisoner. After tricking Katerina out of her woolen stockings to please her rival, Sergei mocks and then insults her before finally confessing, “I don’t think I ever loved her” (Leskov 2015: 171). As soon as she realizes the enormity of her crimes, Katerina’s passion runs higher than ever before. So frantic is she with rage (“Her head was burning as if it were on fire; the pupils of her eyes were dilated, lit by a sharp, intermittent glitter”, Leskov 2015: 172) that she bends down, seizes hold of Sonetka by the legs and in one single movement hurls herself with her over the side of the ferry. This last murder may be interpreted as either an act of revenge on her rival and her treacherous lover, or as a desire to terminate the unbearable agony her life has become and which her new, unfamiliar self cannot endure. The heroine’s suicide may allude to Lady Macbeth’s sudden and unexpected passing, on the one hand, and Macbeth’s battle with the rebel Macdonald when the Scottish and Norwegian armies are fighting like “two spent swimmers that do cling together and choke their art” (1.2.8-9), on the other. In Shakespeare’s play water is opposed to blood as a symbol of spiritual purification. When Lady Macbeth commands her husband to “get some water, /And wash this filthy witness from your hand” (2.2.46-47), convincing him that his guilt about the murder can be washed away as easy as blood from his hands, Macbeth objects: “Will all great Neptune’s ocean wash this blood/ Clean from hand? No;

this my hand will rather / The multitudinous seas incarnadine” (2.2.60-62), for nothing is able to undo the past as he believes. While before the murder he finds himself “upon this bank and shoal of time” and decides to “jump the life to come” (1.7.6-7), the more crimes he commits the deeper and wider the river of blood he “stepped in” gets so that he can “wade it no more” (3.4.137). Leskov objectifies *Macbeth*’s metaphor in the Volga river which reveals the scale of Katerina’s guilt in so far that she, just as Shakespeare’s hero, cannot “wade”. Her lover’s betrayal breaks Katerina’s heart. Once the scales have fallen from her eyes, she is utterly sorrowful, grief-stricken and reduced to “wooden impassivity” like “a clockwork automaton” (168-170). Her guilty conscience is so overwhelming that she sees the ghosts of all her murder victims in the waves of the river the prisoners are crossing: “she fancied she saw the blue, swollen head of Boris Timofeich, and in another the swaying form of her husband, peeping out at her and embracing Fedya’s hanging head” (Leskov 2015: 172). Leskov reinterprets Macbeth’s idea that evil inevitably breeds new evil, that one crime leads to another, and that retribution--divine in the case of Katerina—is the final consequence: blood does have blood.

Katerina’s hallucinations in the river do not make her repent her crimes. On the contrary, they make feelings of spite and anger seethe up within her. She tries to pray but cannot. Instead, she whispers, “how we used to enjoy ourselves, how we used to sit together on those long autumn nights, how we dispatched your kinsfolk to a cruel death in broad daylight” – words which recall Sergei’s recent, sarcastic reminder of “how we used to enjoy ourselves, my joy, how we used to sit together on those long autumn nights, how we dispatched your kinsfolk to eternal rest without the assistance of priest or deacon” (Leskov 2015: 172, 171). Here Leskov refers to Shakespeare’s Macbeth who could not pronounce “Amen” when he heard Duncan’s servants waking each other and saying their prayers. While they cried: “God bless us!”, he who “had most need of blessing” could not pray – “Amen” stuck in his throat (2.2.33-36). If prayer is “a turning of the mind and heart toward God [...] that results in the fervor of charity, sweetness of communion, and salvation” (Miola 2006: 60), Macbeth and Katerina both know themselves to be so steeped in guilt that they are incapable of prayer and beyond benediction or salvation. Thus, what the narrator calls a “drama of love” (Leskov 2015: 168) comes to its truly Shakespearean ending. Thanks to his talents for adaptation and original creation, Leskov has contrived to regain for his heroine a certain portion of his readers’ sympathy, just as

Shakespeare's murderous hero like what the playwright achieved with Macbeth couple despite all their apparently monstrous crimes.

While Katerina Izmailova combines androgynously elements of both Macbeth and Lady Macbeth, Glafira Bodrostina, one of the major female characters in Leskov's novel *At Daggers* (*Na nozhakh*, 1870), is modelled more straightforwardly on the latter. Like Shakespeare's heroine, well-known for "her ability to manipulate others and to cold heartedly plan evil" (Stout 2008: 68), Glafira is a powerful, ruthless, ambitious mastermind. Although neither physically hurt anyone but always remain one step away from the violence, both are villainesses of their respective pieces. As he tells the standard tale of a rich husband whose murder is planned by a "passionate" woman, Leskov makes no explicit reference to Shakespeare's play, probably in order to keep the reader intrigued and maintain the suspense. Whereas Katerina is fraught with love passion, Glafira is a confirmed nihilist who desires to come into possession of the considerable fortune of her elderly spouse, the landlord Bordostin.

To do so, she pretends to be in love with two potential Macbeths. This brace of dupes, Pavel Gordanov and Yosef Vislenev, who eventually murder her husband, both want to marry Glafira for her riches. They are caricatures of typical nihilists who embody a positivist-materialist concept of an individual; they are "new" men who despise morality and Christian values and, thus, wallow in sin among the satanic host beyond the realm of God. Like other anti-nihilist writers, Leskov associated nihilism with a "living, painful presence of the evil forces in the world" (Trubetskoy 1989: 113). This may explain why, as in *Lady Macbeth*, demoniacal imagery is a major element of Leskov's characterisation of Glafira's henchmen. Vislenev, who cynically dismisses as "quackery" the nihilism to which he once subscribed, calls himself and others of his kind "dirty scum" and "dark forces" (Leskov 1989: IX. 127). When Vislenev and Gordanov arrive in the city, other characters, among them Vislenev's sister Larisa, think that "there is something ominous in this" (Leskov 1989: VIII.122). Although Leskov stands by the concept of natural human virtue – "good nature always remains good in any surrounding and at any doctrine" (VIII. 424) – and exemplifies it in such positive characters as Major Forov and Andrey Podozerov, his nihilists amount to a striking antithesis of this idea.

Vislenev's main trait is his spinelessness, the result of his incapacity to distinguish good from evil; deprived of moral virtues, he is adrift in the world without a compass and therefore liable to wrongdoing. He becomes "restless and fidgety", thinks nothing of "his family's peace and happiness" and is able "leave others suffering" (VIII. 108, 216, 427).

He has a need to be reckoned “fashionable”; like Macbeth, his “anxious imagination” vanquishes his reason and “replaced his feelings”; he has, too, a “carefree disrespect of everything commanding respect with its own nature” and a “total contempt for traditions”—as a “new man” he is pledged to a new, anti-natural order like that instituted in Macbeth on the murder of Duncan (VIII. 136, 216, 427). He is a passionate, “headily ardent” man, ready to sweep all the obstacles from his path – the path of denial and destruction (VIII. 428). He mortgages his family home where his sister lives, loses all his money at dice and makes mad efforts to avoid paying off the debts. In his grotesque mindlessness, he believes in Glafira’s love for him and imagines himself as her husband and landlord. Like Macbeth, he is apprehensive of crime, not so much because of its intrinsic evil, but for fear of being caught and punished, for “crime always exacts its retribution” (Leskov 1989: IX. 231).

Similarly inhuman, Pavel Gordanov’s name speaks for itself: his surname derives from the word *gordost*, the Russian equivalent for ‘pride’, one of the seven deadly sins; indeed, he is filled with “satanically engendered pride” in him (Leskov 1989: IX. 219). Possessed of a superiority complex, he is the self-proclaimed founder and messianic apostle of “nonhilism”, a comic offshoot of nihilism. Within the novel’s symbolic economy, Gordanov is another devil. He calls himself “Mephistopheles” (IX. 14) for he is going to make Vislenev his accomplice in murdering Bodrostin and lay all the guilt on him. Vislenev’s sister, who falls in love with Gordanov, sees him in her nightmare: “Gordanov was as scary as a demon [...] his black eyes and dark appearance [...] was flaring, changing from brassy to scarlet, and burning her” (IX. 216). Gordanov has tempted and seduced Larisa, who finally commits suicide, to draw public attention away from his former love affair with Glafira.

She herself calls Gordanov “a dark man” (IX. 165) for his duplicity and treachery. She chooses him as an instrument of her crime because she is aware of his financial hardships and is sure that his greed will help him see the matter through. Like her henchmen, she is “a dark spirit” (Leskov 1989: IX. 137). Darkness is Glafira’s permanent companion. The first time she appears in the novel in Gordanov’s apartment at midnight, when “the rooms were impenetrably dark” (Leskov 1989: VIII. 164), she is dressed all in black. She is called “penitential Bodrostina”, the “black and cunning woman” and her life is “a dark path” (IX. 104, 159, 401). Unlike Lady Macbeth, she has no need to summon the dark forces to support her in assassination but is already a dark force herself endowed with satanic power. She hardened herself to sin since long ago, when natural virtues made



way for the temptations of wealth, passionate love and “new ideas”. Her attraction to sin is the result of her family’s and of Gordanov’s influence: “in her childhood she was loved and dressed, in her youthhood she went on exhibit as a doll” to marry her to a man of fortune; Gordanov was avid for her and wanted to “parade her beauty” to gain authority in the Petersburg society; she “was neglected as a human”—“no one had ever cared for her soul, no one had loved her for her heart” (VIII. 345). The lack of true love, her parents and lover’s ignorance of her human dignity which turned her into the instrument of their materialist pursuit of wealth corrupted the heroine. Her mind and will have been defiled even since. Glafira “lives by her malevolent wits”, comprehending her sinfulness and deliberately choosing the path of evil by plotting a murder. Her atheism is a result of the internal alignment between her will and her passion (Starygina 2003: 222). Leskov uses Shakespeare’s method when Macbeth visualizes himself perpetrating the murder of the king to make his heroine realise the consequences of her intended villainy. Glafira, pondering how she will live once it is over, “was peering angrily at that horrible spiritual poverty threatening her after her plan’s execution”, “measuring the depth of her fall”, “condemning the one who [...] had distorted her ideals of simple kindness and simple happiness” (Leskov 1989: IX, 146).

The worries and doubts that take control over her mind are called “the penalty of negation”, by which the narrator emphasizes a dramatic difference between Bodrostina, who still retains some vestiges of humanity (that is why she can be regarded as a woman “at a crossroads”, for she remains “in the transit condition between naturalness and unnaturalness” which, despite her fall she is acutely aware of, “hints at a possibility of the heroine’s spiritual renewal and salvation”, Starygina 2003: 218), and Gordanov and other nihilists that have no “torments of spiritual misery” (Leskov 1989: IX.147). Before the murder is accomplished, the heroine remains “on the edge”, or “at a crossroads”, between good and evil: when Gordanov asks her what can prevent her from becoming his wife once Bodrostin is dead, she answers: “Conscience” (IX. 19). It is because her conscience is not yet extinguished that, , as Macbeth had the vision of the dagger and, possibly, of Banquo and Katerina in *The Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* came to have hallucination, Glafira is confronted twice with visions of her not yet dead husband wearing his old military parade jacket, the one that would be put on his corpse for the funeral. And, as is the case with Shakespeare’s Lady Macbeth, this clash between a submerged moral sense and a perverted reason is what drives Glafira. She has sudden fits of frenzy. When she cries, “Nature boils over what I am doing” (IX. 22), she

acknowledges how what remains of her humanity rebel against her choice of inhumane murder. She diagnoses her affliction as her conscience when it starts smiting her: “Yes, yes, yes, there is... there is no... but it exists, it does exist” (IX. 21). What “exists” is, the reader is left to suppose, her conscience. The chapters in which Glafira’s suffocated moral voice bursts out are titled *The Black Illness*, *The Dumb Confession*, and *Without Redemption*. In the first, she asks Gordanov to look at the corner of the room, for there is still one thing that can save them. In fact, she points at the icon of Christ, but Gordanov sees the green dress of the martyr Flora. This dress, as seen earlier by Vislenev and Glafira, is an objectivized symbol of an abstract notion of conscience (Sergucheva 2018: 40) that has no presence in the male character and that the female one tries to suppress. The delirious “it does not exist and yet it exists” proves that Glafira means not the dress but her sense of right. The “dumb” confession which recalls Macbeth’s and Katerina’s inability to pray is unvoiced or ineffectual because it expresses what the heroine cannot or does not want to confess, her irreligiousness.

There is no redemption for the characters, for they do not repent of their deeds and plans. Glafira has made sin the viceroy of her heart, her foibles have got the better of her conscience, and she is fully aware of her inability to fight the temptations. Leskov is firm in his conviction that that crimes should receive both moral and material punishment. When Vislenev and Gordanov eventually murder Bodrostin, they are spotted. The former loses his mind and is transferred to a mental asylum. The latter is injured and dies of an infected wound. For her part, Glafira is released from the prison with the help of Bodrostin’s secretary Ropshin, who marries her and becomes a landlord, so she ultimately achieves nothing more than a new tyrannical husband.

What makes Leskov’s novel truly Macbethian is its deeply imagined presentation of a person who is potentially good but who, deliberately and dolefully, chooses evil despite the vigorous warnings of her own conscience. The writer deployed Lady Macbeth in his artistic controversy with the nihilists’ “social perversion” (Pozefsky 2003: 163) of ideal womanhood, for, firstly, she is Shakespeare’s heroine and, as we have seen, Shakespeare was an anti-nihilist symbol of universal values. Secondly, she was the most famous literary female criminal, “everybody’s favourite she-abomination” (Angier 1999: 266). Moreover, the ambivalence of Shakespeare’s psychological portrait made Lady Macbeth a convincing life-like heroine who was therefore appropriate for realist fiction. The character of Lady Macbeth elicits both terror and sympathy “in proportion to the degree of pride, passion, and intellect we may ourselves possess” (Jameson 1879: 369).

Leskov's two types of female characters (a "passionate" woman and a woman "at a crossroads") are used for the same purpose of emphasizing the harmful effect nihilist ideas and a pernicious social environment have on human virtues and worldviews.

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## *Conclusions*

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By the time Shakespeare reached Russia in the period that concerns us, the Shakespeare cult was firmly established in Britain, where he was regarded as the original British genius, unconfined by the classical rules so beloved of the neoclassicists, particularly the French, and admired above all for his abundant fancy and his realistic characters. In Europe, there was a clear-cut division of opinions. In France, although considerable grudging admiration can be detected, Shakespeare was officially maligned for his incomppliance with the classical rules. In contrast, in Germany, more especially in Prussia, and thanks largely to the influence of Young's *Conjectures on Original Genius*, Shakespeare was admired for being an original genius and spokesperson of a particular people or *volk*. As such, he was taken as a model for German writers to follow in giving expression to their own national and political ideals. Worth emphasizing is how Shakespeare was for ideological ends recruited as a participant not only in the culture war between eighteenth-century Britain and France, but also as a model for German nationalism. What, then, of Russia?

Russia's appropriation of Shakespeare inherited, after some considerable delay, similar traits to other European countries. While for Britain the eighteenth century "created Shakespeare as a national export" (Ritchie and Sabor 2012: 8) and converted him into the supreme exemplar of the national genius, for Russia it only prepared the ground for a general acquaintance with the playwright and left the question of how to treat his works wide open. Due to the strong classical tradition, on the one hand, and the boom of foreign criticism in translation, on the other, Russians found themselves unable to take a stand on either side of the culture war or to formulate any definite view on the "not enlightened" (Sumarokov 1781: I. 335. ii) English dramatist. To begin with, national critics merely agreed that there was something immensely bad to Shakespeare, speaking out against his "bad taste" in its violation of classical paradigms, and, at the same time, something incredibly good—"the beauties" embodied in "natural", true-to-life characters—to him. Following the example of the French stage, Russian neo-classicalists began to "engage with Shakespeare's dramatis personae as moral agents" (Bristol 2008: 14), adapting them to Russian customs as a means of social propaganda. Russian pre-

romantics appreciated the playwright's originality in conveying human feelings, emotions and thoughts, an achievement they endeavoured to replicate in their own poetry and translations. Although Shakespeare was far from becoming a cultural and political phenomenon in eighteenth-century Russia, and even more so from developing into a model for Russian nationalism as he had in Germany, Shakespeare's assimilation in the country had been set in motion. And that, crucially, opened the way for Russia's national literature to synchronize with European literary trends and integrate itself into the global cultural context.

The "Age of Revolutions" gave rise to a generation of intellectuals and artists who were inspired by a desire for liberty. They challenged the ideas of Enlightenment and opposed them with new ideals, such as the significance of individual thought and personal feeling; the rejection of rationalism as a constraint on the imagination, creativity and artistic autonomy; and the predominance of natural forces and the supernatural over social institutions. Such an appealing propaganda of emotional self-expression, personal freedom and social commitment made romanticism a highly influential artistic movement. Nevertheless, unlike in Britain, Germany or even France, it penetrated Russia with a considerable lag, burgeoning only in the 1810s and 1820s, when Russia experienced a strengthening in its sense of national identity and, thus, the need to establish a national literature. The spread of ideas of freedom for peasants and recognition of human rights gave rise to the Decembrist movement in the political sphere and progressive romanticism in the fields of literature and art. These were two sides of one public process. The Decembrists, who started their literary careers in the 1810s, proclaimed romantic principles in literature and advocated the formation of a new Russian literature that would represent the national spirit and be unique in its national artistic forms.

At the same time, neoclassical traditions of borrowing and assimilating western culture, which had commenced with the eighteenth-century modernization reforms of Peter I and Catharine II, remained extremely strong. As a result, Russian romanticism proved to be a self-contradictory phenomenon. Russian Romantics of the 1820-1830s associated with the movement all literature created with no regard for the models and rules dictated by classicism. This was the reason why various European authors, including Shakespeare, were regarded as romantics. Russia was simultaneously assimilating features of English, French, and German romanticism. Thus, from its very beginnings, Russian romanticism cast its net too broadly for the disparate features it trawled to

crystallize into a more or less defined national unity. While in other European countries romanticism shared common traits and a national hue, in Russia it was particularly individualistic: writers, who were generally impressed by the movement, chose whichever European variant they happened to find more appealing. The unifying principle for all Russian romantics remained a unanimous opposition to broadly defined classicism.

That said, it was romanticism that elevated Shakespeare to divine status on account of the originality of his plays. In the nineteenth century the playwright was acknowledged as a symbol of British national drama, while European romantics engaged deeply with Shakespeare in their poems and tragedies, which contained countless evocations of his plays. In Russia, the romantic cult of Shakespeare emerged in the nineteenth century due to the pre-romantic influence of European literature. In the fight with the old-fashioned canons of classicism and its imitativeness, Russian romantics stood for the free development of an author's personality and creativity and took as their standard Shakespeare, whose reputation as a genius who feared no authority and knew no limitations had already become common knowledge in the country. Like German romantics, they recruited the playwright as a model for Russian nationalism, for they strived to create an original Russian literature with its own national ethos. Thanks to Europe's romantics, Shakespeare stood shoulder to shoulder with other major European writers like Goethe, Shiller, Byron and Scott. Although at the beginning of the century his plays were still mostly translated into Russian from French neo-classicist adaptations, from the 1820s, Russian men of letters began to realize the need for a more authentic Shakespeare. Due to the development of Russian literary language and literary styles, the tendency of adapting the original gave way to literary translation. Modern Russian scholarship calls this period "Shakespearean": in the number of publications, translations, critical literature, and theatre performances Russia surpassed France and Germany to trail behind Britain alone. Shakespeare had become "the order of the day" while his plays were regarded "instances of absolute sublimity, their classification as art seem[ed] hard to refute" (Sell 2013: 185). Critics referred to the playwright in season and out of season to attract attention to their essays and justify their aesthetic ideals. However, there was absolutely nothing new or original in Russian romantic criticism compared with that of other European countries or even of its national pre-romantic precursor, for it mostly repeated widely held ideas of Shakespeare's genius and originality.

*Macbeth* was one of the most regularly performed and evaluated Shakespeare's plays in Britain and other European countries. From the later seventeenth century readers and theatregoers were well conversant with its fast-paced plot and striking protagonists while critics and adapters presented various interpretations of its encompassing outlook on human values and practices. In Britain, from the period of the Restoration, *Macbeth* was deemed a morally-oriented play that taught a lesson about the danger of ambition: Macbeth was viewed as a noble man corrupted by ambition and Lady Macbeth as a wicked instrument of this corruption. The binary perspective of good and evil remained the dominant strain in the play's reception throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, with the German romantics fastening on the witches, the French on Macbeth. The Russians fastened on both. The political currency of the themes of regicide and tyranny exposed the play to brutal censorship. *Macbeth* was never performed during the romantic period, even though it was one of the first Shakespeare plays to be adapted and, later, translated to Russian, though not until the 1830s were Russian literary periodicals able to publish *Macbeth*, always accompanied by long prefatory remarks pointing out the play's edifying character and vindicating it in the eyes of censorship. Because of *Macbeth*'s "dangerous" content, the number of critical essays devoted to the tragedy itself was relatively few. Most critics retailed ideas about the use of the "fairy" as Shakespeare's peculiar method of striking dramatization, popular in German criticism. These ideas were reflected in the play's appropriation on stage. *Macbeth*'s Weird Sisters became an inspiration to those playwrights who strived to create a national drama based on ancient Russian beliefs. Their purpose in introducing witches into the plot was mostly entertainment, for they knew that readers and playgoers would be captivated by the mystery of these simultaneously horrific and fascinating beings. *Macbeth* served as an example of how to dramatize the supernatural by making it a core constituent of a play's fabulous reality and the driving force of its complications. At the same time, the appropriation of Banquo's ghost enriched the creative powers of prose writers. The ghostly was used as a literary device to intensify dramatic tension and display heroes' profound feelings, particularly a devastating fear which, similarly to Macbeth on seeing Banquo's ghost, they were overwhelmed with. Allusions to *Macbeth* proved to be a powerful instrument of art that revealed the moral and psychological resources of the characters and acted as a touchstone for the moral evaluation of their passions and crimes. Such reception of the play's supernatural, although rationalized, continued in "fantastic realism" of Russian realist fiction.

When in the 1830 and 1840s realism originated in Europe, it was not in opposition to romanticism; rather, they interacted fruitfully. Nevertheless, since it stemmed from direct, unbiased perceptions and aimed at a verisimilar reflection of reality with the human, regarded as a social being, as its core constituent, its characteristic principle of human sociality clashed with the romantic prioritization of the individual as a self-confident and active hero who confronts the environment and designs his life on his own. By the mid-nineteenth century, realism had become the dominant literary mode across Europe, with the novel as its major literary genre. In Russia, realism in its classical form developed as a literary movement in the early 1840s and maintained its hegemony until the end of the nineteenth century. For about a quarter of the century, romanticism and realism coexisted on equal terms until the beginning of the 1850s, when the latter finally superseded the former as a more relevant mode of regarding and conceptualizing reality.

However, Russian realism evolved in a markedly distinct historical situation and at a fundamentally different, pre-bourgeois, stage of social evolution. Therefore, its realism comprehended and portrayed a different historical reality, for it emerged in what was still a patriarchal society at a time of changing epochs and the collision of old and new worlds. In the second half of the century, Russia sensed the impetuosity of historical development and confronted the inevitability of change. The task of an artistic and analytical analysis of modernity, paramount for western European realists, was subordinated to the task of transforming the world and the individual. Thus, studying the laws of life was a necessary condition and prelude to a future renewal, social, spiritual, and moral. This is what made Russian realism synthetic and its connections with previous literary trends, romanticism among them, closer than in western Europe. The romantic thirst for social reformation and individual metaphysics, reflected in the early realist writings of the late 1830s, as well as an intense search for life improvement became one of the key features of classic Russian realism. The turn of the second and third decades of Nicholas I's rule with its harsh conditions of serfdom and the persecution of the freedom of thought escalated philosophical, religious, and literary polemic, which sometimes took the form of bitter ideological controversy. The issue of the country's past, present, and future as well as the ways of its evolution and its role in the world history divided the educated Russian minority into the Westerners and the Slavophiles. It was the Westerners, and their Natural School, who made realism a principal artistic method and took reality with all its diversity of unpoetical, ordinary phenomena as its object of aesthetic experience.



The Shakespearean influence on Russian culture reached its peak in 1840s, when the playwright's drama was discussed at the meetings of various philosophical societies, new translations were made, new critical essays were published. In the political heat of the 1860s, Shakespeare's drama took on a new significance. The controversy between radical democrats, who championed the utilitarianism of art, and "art for art's sake" theory's advocates, commenced in 1850s and made the playwright a symbol of liberated art. While the revolutionists criticized Shakespeare in their efforts to demolish the principles of idealistic aesthetics, the conservatives referred to Shakespeare's universalism in their efforts to preserve Christian values and human virtues that were vulnerable to the allure of the materialist life. The struggle was encapsulated by Dostoyevsky in the popular expression of "boots better than Shakespeare".

As for *Macbeth*, in 1849 it was released from any censorship restrictions for publication and staging. In theatre productions it was subjected to psychological interpretations, similar to its British Victorian reception. It was translated both in verse and prose and published separately and in the first collections of Shakespeare's drama, which in Russia were composed later than in other European countries. Despite a growing number of translations, *Macbeth* remained a rare bird in Russian critical literature. Nevertheless, the writers' remarks on the play revealed major principles of national realist Shakespeare criticism, such as a psychologizing approach to the analysis of his principal characters within the framework of typification as a primary mode of reality presentation as well as an integration of the playwright as a symbol of art into the ideological controversy of the 1860s. The same principles assimilated in Russian drama and fiction.

While in western Europe the subject of regicide gained topicality due to various revolutionary events, in nineteenth-century Russia it never lost its urgency. That is why *Macbeth* had held attention since the Decembrists poets and playwrights who, regardless, never referred to the play directly in their creative works for fear of censorship and persecution. It was Pushkin who dared to focus on the figure of a kingslayer in his dramatic experiment of actualizing national history. *Boris Godunov* became the first contribution to the typified Russian Macbeth with such features, commonly attributed to Shakespeare's hero, as ambition leading to the usurpation of power, wanton imagination and guilty conscience resulting in hallucinations; the hero's full comprehension of the lawlessness of the deed and fear of its vanity culminated in moral suffering and death as a condign penalty. Social changes in the second half of the century, which determined the spread of nihilist materialistic ideas, widened the gap between a hero's initial status and

his desire to fulfil “divine” destiny, thereby raising the issue of power usurpation to a new ideological level. Raskolnikov retained the same imaginative nature that served to awaken his consciousness hitherto confused by a nihilistic denial of universal values, such as the worth of human life. Spiritual hardship, which Dostoyevsky made his protagonist experience, became both a retribution and a reflection of the writer’s belief in humanity and ever-lasting virtues that preserve in each individual despite the destructive environment. The same idea was expressed by Leskov in his consideration of human passions by means of recalling Lady Macbeth in two types of his heroines (a passionate woman and a woman at a crossroads) who murdered for the sake of love (Katerina Izmailova) or riches (Glafira Bodrostina), repressed their consciences, manifested in the form of dreams/hallucinations and mental derangement, and eventually, gained deserved punishment for their crimes. References to Shakespeare’s play became an artistic argument in the writers’ moral controversy with nihilist materialism and its denial of Christian values and convictions.

Thus, the Russian reception of *Macbeth* proves to be the result of mutually imbricated and cross-fertilizing aesthetic and historical movements and factors. Throughout the thorny way of its cultural genesis, the Russian *Macbeth* remained on the frontline of the country’s political and ideological struggle. Owing to the revolutionary nature of both national romanticism and realism, whereas European realism was analytical in its descriptions and criticisms of a political and social status quo, Russian realism was pragmatic in attempting to contribute to establishing what elsewhere passed for bourgeois modernity in a land which was still essentially feudalistic. As the nation progressed slowly, Russian *Macbeth* morphed from a protest symbol against tsarist lawless tyranny into an anti-nihilist image of a Russian person who, on the contrary to the “new” people, a product of a modern opportunistic and unscrupulous frame of mind, had not lost yet his or her humanity in the Christian sense, who still sensed the gravity of ethical life and moral virtue and were therefore able to regain that human righteousness which Russian writers believed was a lifesaver to humankind. Though aspiring, late, to modernity, nineteenth-century Russia was still prey to that superstition and enchantment which elsewhere European enlightenments had undermined. Shakespeare’s play was peculiarly suited to embrace this dichotomy, and Russian *Macbeth* to act as a barometer of the contradictions, aspirations and obstacles to Russia’s political, social and moral development in the nineteenth century.

This thesis hopes to have deepened the existing knowledge of the Russian reception of *Macbeth* and, more broadly, of Shakespeare, and to have provided a more thorough understanding of a diverse cultural phenomenon known as the Russian Shakespeare. Nevertheless, there are several limitations in this study that could be addressed in future research. Firstly, the period studied is limited to the nineteenth century so that the full picture of the Russian reception of *Macbeth* is incomplete. Further study of twentieth-century and, possibly, twenty-first-century Russian literature will uncover how the play's appropriation evolved in the period of the Silver Age which, in the wake of the Socialist Revolution of 1917, succeeded realism, as well as during the Soviet and post-Soviet times. Secondly, the thesis has focused on the play's literary reception in criticism, drama, and fiction; research into its theatrical and film adaptations would show how text, theatre and cinema developed through their interactions and how much intermediality there has been between the Russian and world Shakespearean traditions since the very first performances with Ira Aldridge as Macbeth until William Oldroyd's 2016 film based on Leskov's *Lady Macbeth*. Third, *Macbeth* is only the second-most closely examined Shakespeare play in Russia; a comprehensive study of *Hamlet*'s reception history is sorely needed and although random critical essays and not infrequent theatrical performances indicate the importance of the rest of the playwright's drama as key constituents of the Russian Shakespearean text, their reception and assimilation have yet to be studied in any depth. There is, then, a wealth of Russian material for scholars and admirers of Shakespeare to explore. This thesis is intended merely as a first step in that direction.

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## *Appendix: Original Russian texts quoted*

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### Page 4.

«по системе отца нашего Шекспира» (Pushkin 1937-1959: 162).

### Page 26.

«и я при смотреии куколных игор или оперы с таким же вниманием быть могу; как при показании преизрядных Гамлетовых и Отелоновых комедий» (*Vedomosti* 1731: 318).

### Page 27.

«Шекеспир, хотя непросвещенный», «в котором и очень худова и чрезвычайно хорошева очень много» (Sumarokov 1781: I. 335, 355).

«Шакеспир, англичанами обожаемый трагик, весьма был высокомыслен, остроумен и учен, но упрям и нехорошего вкуса» (Emin 1769: 270).

«Чекспер вмещал в своих трагедиях такие лица и действия, которые унизили бы и самую простонародную комедию, и хотя он умел выкупать сии грубые уподления наиблагороднейшаими трагическими красотами, однако ж просвещенный вкус никогда не одобрял сих толико странных перемен в явлениях. Чексперовы красоты подобны молнии, блистающей в темноте ночной» (Plavilshikov 1792: 28).

«В изданиях XVIII в. можно встретить написания «Шаксппр», «Шакеспер», «Шакеспеар» и даже такие редкие, как «Сакеспеар», «Чексбир» или «Шакехспарь»» (Levin 1988: 12).

Page 28.

«Гамлет мой, кроме монолога в окончании третьего действия и Клавдиева на колени падения, на Шекспирову трагедию едва-едва походит» (Sumarokov 1787: X. 103).

«В России на глазах всего общества в течение 34-х лет происходила настоящая, а не театральная трагедия принца Гамлета, героем которой был наследник цесаревич Павел Первый» (Bardovsky 1923: 142).

«Гамлет» нес в себе «воспитательное значение для публики в том отношении, что в уста действующих лиц влагались господствовавшие в то время в европейской литературе возвышенные идеи о чести, долге, любви к отечеству и изображения страстей облекались в облагороженную и утонченную форму» (Lyatsky 2002).

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«Его пресловутая необразованность стала осмысляться как достоинство: считалось, что его «естественные» чувства и мысли не были скованы условностями. Шекспира начинают ценить как оригинального, неповторимого художника нового времени, проникшего в тайники природы и души человеческой» (Levin 1988: 13).

«Колоссу равен, там выходит исполин.  
Как некий сильный волхв, он действует над миром.  
Неправильно велик, мечты любимый сын,  
Владыка британских сцен, зовомый Шекспиром.  
Природы дар его устав,  
И им сотворены Отелло и Фальстаф» (Muravyev 1967: 172).

«беспреданное смешение подлого с величественным», «неверное изображение древних нравов», «красноречие сердца неподражаемое, горящее истиною, поражающие обороты чувствований и удивительное богатство описаний» (Muravyev 1819: 179-180).

«Немногие из писателей столь глубоко проникли в человеческое естество, как Шекеспир; немногие столь хорошо знали все тайнейшие человека пружины, сокровеннейшие его побуждения, отличительность каждой страсти, каждого темперамента и каждого рода жизни, как удивительный сей живописец. Все великолепные картины его непосредственно Натуре подражают [...] Драмы его, подобно неизмеримому театру Натуры, исполнены многообразия; все же вместе составляет совершенное целое» (Karamzin, ed. 1964: 79-82).

«Шекспир, Натуры друг! Кто лучше твоего  
Познал сердца людей? Чья кисть с таким искусством  
Живописала их? Во глубине души  
Нашел ты ключ ко всем великим тайнам рока  
И светом своего бессмертного ума,  
Как солнцем, озарил пути ночные в жизни» (Karamzin 1966: 61).

«До сего времени еще ни одно из сочинений знаменитого сего автора не было переведено на язык наш; следственно, и ни один из соотчичей моих, не читавший Шекеспира на других языках, не мог иметь достаточного о нем понятия» (Karamzin 1964: 79).

«Что касается до перевода моего, то я наиболее старался перевести верно, стараясь притом избежать и противных нашему языку выражений. Впрочем, пусть рассуждают о сем могущие рассуждать о сем справедливо. Мыслей автора моего нигде не переменял я, почитая сие для переводчика непозволенным» (Karamzin 1964: 82).

«Поэтический опыт Жуковского, несомненно, подготовил русскую поэзию к переводам Шекспира, оказал влияние на процесс шекспиризации и формирование шекспиризма в русской литературе» (Zakharov 2010: 107-108).

«Говорить, что этот исполинский гений был один из величайших живописцев сердца человеческого — было бы повторять то, что всем образованным людям известно но [...] он не всякому русскому читателю коротко знаком» (Muravyev-Apostol 1814: 45-46).

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«успехи нашей романтической поэзии» (Vyazemsky 1996: 124).

«многие не признают романтического рода потому, что он не имеет еще законодателей, обязавших в верности безусловной и беспрекословной» (Vyazemsky 1996: 154).

«Романтизм как домовый: многие верят ему; убеждение есть, что он существует, но где его приметыв, как обозначить его? Как наткнуть на него палец?» (Vyazemsky 1900: I. 193).

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«Подходя с готовыми критериями “классицизма” и “романтизма” к явлениям тогдашней русской литературы, мы прилагаем к многообразным и сложным явлениям неопределенный ключ, и в результате возникает растерянность, жажда свести многообразное явление хоть к каким-нибудь, хоть к кажущимся простоте и единству» (Tupianov 1968: 24).

«Иллюзия существования единого русского романтизма, по всей видимости, строится на том, что в общей сумме художественных текстов эпохи мы обязательно найдем и общую сумму привычных признаков романтизма — но такое суммирование все равно останется эклектичным» (Virolainen 2015: 63).

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«Я был один; вокруг меня все было тихо; сперва с некоторым усилием вошел в самого себя; потом ясно начал чувствовать, что душа распространяется; какое-то

трогательное чувство величия в нее входило; неизобразимое было для нее изображено, и она была там, где только в лучшие минуты жизни быть может [...] И точно, приходит на мысль, что эта картина родилась в минуту чуда: занавес раздернулся, и тайна неба открылась глазам человека» (Zhukovsky 2004: XIII).

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«Больше не молись; отбрось все угрызения совести; на голову ужасов нагромози еще ужасы: пусть твои поступки заставят рыдать небо и изумляться всю землю, ибо ничто другое не приведет тебя скорее к проклятью, чем это» (Bestuzhev-Marlinsky 1981: 157).

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«Каждая пьеса его сохраняет единство какой-нибудь великой мысли, важной для исторических страстей человеческих, несмотря на грязную пену многих подробностей, свойственных более веку, нежели человеку. Я не знаю ни одного писателя в мире, который бы обладал сильнейшим языком и большим разнообразием мыслей. Вспомните, что он проложил дорогу самому Гете» (Bestuzhev 1951: 525).

«двумя сердцеводами, постигшими в совершенстве тайну души человека» (Bestuzhev 1861: 328).

«утро английской литературы» (Vyazemsky 1963: 121).

«Чтобы имя писателя переживало веки и народы, да посвящает он перо свое предметам, которые составляют неизменную пищу ума и сердца во всех веках, у всех народов! Пусть он пишет не для человека, но для человечества. Платоны и Омеры, Шакспиры и Данты, Расины и Шиллеры, в какие бы новые краски и новые формы ни облекалось искусство словесное, будут вечными питателями ума, воображения и чувства» (Gnedich 1821: 143).



«сей гений-творитель, не подвластный никаким условиям, сам создал для себя правила, или, лучше, он не знал никаких правил и писал по внушению своего сердца и воображения»; «глубокое познание человеческого сердца [...] он разгадал в самых тайных его извилах»; он — «тонкий наблюдатель и искусный живописец человеческой природы»; «в пьесах своих *The Tempest* и *Midsummer Night's Dream* он совершенно предается сему своенравному воображению, столь же быстро изменяющемуся, как «стихия, на которой играют роскошные цветы радуги», а «в *Макбете* и *Гамлете* воображение сие является мрачнее и, будучи слито с силою чувствований, наполняет душу ужасом» (qtd. Frizman, ed. 1978: 243-244).

«простой народ в Англии любит Шекспира и восхищается им» (qtd. Frizman, ed. 1978: 271).

«ставят на одну доску... великого Гете и -- незрелого Шиллера; исполина между исполинами Гомера и -- ученика его Вергилия... огромного Шекспира и -- однообразного Байрона!» (qtd. Frizman, ed. 1978: 196).

««Гяур», «Корсар», «Лара», «Манфред», «Чайльд Гарольд» Байрона – повторения того же ужасного лица. Не смею уравнивать его Шекспиру, знавшему все: и ад, и рай, и небо, и землю, -- Шекспиру, который один во всех веках и народах воздвигся равный Гомеру, который подобно Гомеру есть вселенная картин, чувств, мыслей и знаний, неисчерпаемо глубок и до бесконечности разнообразен, мощен и нежен, силен и сладостен, грозен и пленителен» (qtd. Frizman, ed. 1978: 203).

«Шекспировская сложность отношений и характеров, объективность в изображении лиц и событий были чужды поэту-декабристу, который стремился создать агитационное произведение, проникнутое ораторским лирическим пафосом» (Levin 1988: 26).

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«смешивает фантастические персонажи пьес английского драматурга «Сон в летнюю ночь» и «Буря», пересаживая их на отечественную культурную почву, придает им русский колорит» (Zakharov 2008).

«Романтическая мифология, особенно сказания о стихийных (элементарных) духах, еще мало разработана: тем не менее она заслуживает внимания поэтов, ибо ближе к европейским народным преданиям, повериям, обычаям, чем богатое, веселое, но чуждое нам греческое баснословие» (Küchelbecker 1967: II. 143).

«знал почти наизусть Шиллера, Гете и Шекспира» (Begichev 1980: 9).

«Совестно читать Шекспира в переводе, если кто хочет вполне понимать его, потому что, как все великие поэты, он непереволим, и непереволим оттого, что национален» (Polevoy 1980: 160).

«Шекспир писал очень просто, не много думал о завязке, об интриге и брал первый сюжет, но обрабатывал его по-своему. В этой работе он был велик» (Polevoy 1980: 160).

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«Широкое изображение исторических событий в драме, посвященной Отечественной войне, совмещение их с событиями частной жизни, участие в драматическом действии народных масс, введение в пьесу исторических лиц — Александра I и Наполеона с их сподвижниками, свободное чередование сцен и картин, переносящих зрителя с Красной площади в Москве в деревню, из ставки Наполеона на улицы горящего города и т. д., замена формального единства действия идейным единством исторического события и, наконец, применение белого пятистопного ямба в сохранившемся отрывке — все это свидетельствует об оригинальном и творческом освоении шекспировской поэтики» (Levin 1988: 30-31).

«относительно века нынешнего», «он слишком оптимистичен, тогда как Тимон обманывался только в преданности своих друзей до определенного момента»; «уголок оскорбленному сердцу, Тимон – мести Афинам и, в конечном счете, могилы», «в проклятиях, которые адресуют герои родным городам, находят похожие места, даже фразы» (Mikhailovsky 1881: 86).

«Однако, судя по замечаниям Грибоедова о “Горе от ума”, сам поэт был далек от мысли сознательно связывать литературный тип своего героя с главным персонажем шекспировской трагедии. Но, как гениальный художник, он сумел в своем произведении воссоздать типичную ситуацию эпохи – столкновение человека передовых взглядов с пошлой средой консерваторов» (Florinskaya 1977: 41).

«Сходны ситуации измены возлюбленной, принадлежащей к враждебному миру (в «Гамлете» это неспособность героини отречься от семьи), и одиночество героя в борьбе с этим миром» (Savchenko 2015: 65).

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«время отведено на испытание героев, Чацкий должен успеть спасти Софью из дома Фамусова, Фердинанд – пройти испытания Просперо, чтобы получить согласие на брак с Мирандой» (Kozlova 1998: 116).

«читая Шекспира и Библию, святой дух иногда мне по сердцу, но предпочитаю Гете и Шекспира» (Pushkin 1937-1959: XIII. 92).

«Они характеризуют, видимо, не собственные интересы Пушкина, а интересы его корреспондента» (Tomashevsky 1956: 669).

«Соседа памятник смиренный,

И вздох он пеплу посвятил;

И долго сердцу грустно было.

«Poor Yorick! — молвил он уныло, —

Он на руках меня держал» (Pushkin 1937-1959: VI. 48). К английской цитате Пушкин сделал следующее примечание: «Бедный Иорик! — восклицание Гамлета над черепом шута (см. Шекспира и Стерна)» (Pushkin 1937-1959: VI. 192).

«Шекспира [...] Пушкин не читал в подлиннике, а во французском старом переводе, поправленном Гизо, но понимал его гениально. По-английски он выучился гораздо позже, в С.-Петербурге» (Maikov 1899: 330).

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«Они уже являлись архаическими и старомодными». Исправления, сделанные в ряде этих переводов Ф. Гизо и «А. Пишо, хорошим знатоком всех идиом английской речи», несколько улучшили текст, «приблизив его к оригиналу, но не сделали его более поэтическим по своему стилю и звучанию» (Alekseev 1972: 244).

«Наконец критика спохватилась. Стали подозревать, что г. Летурнер мог ошибочно судить о Шекспире и не совсем благоразумно поступил, переправляя на свой лад Гамлета, Ромео и Лира. От переводчиков стали требовать более верности и менее щекотливости и усердия к публике — пожелали видеть Данте, Шекспира и Сервантеса в их собственном виде, в их народной одежде» (Pushkin 1937-1959: XII. 173).

«манифестом нового направления в искусстве» (Reizov 1964: 157).

«Без этой статьи трудно было даже понять движущие силы романтизма, общественный смысл его эстетических теорий и пафос борьбы за новое искусство [...] Новая интерпретация Шекспира должна была стать манифестом литературной школы и вместе с тем нового, более или менее демократического мировоззрения» (Reizov 1964: 157).

«Драма родилась на площади и составляла увеселение народное.» (Pushkin 1937-1959: XI. 178).

«истинный Романтизм» (Pushkin 1977-1979: X. 148).

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«У него была строго обдуманная система переводов. старался сколь возможно точнее выразуметь прямой, настоящий смысл [...] что автор действительно думал или чего он хотел, а не то, что мог думать и хотеть, потому что переводить можно только сказанное, совершившееся, факт мысли и слова, а не ничто, у которого нет ни мысли, ни слова, ни образа, кроме тех, какие своевольно составляет себе фантазия толкователя» (Nikitenko 1867: 32-33).

«беда, что к каждому стиху Вронченки привешена гирька!» (qtd. Polevoy 1888: 274).

«Где [...] сила и свобода Шекспировы? Все у него связано, все приневолено, [...] везде русский язык изнасилован» (Küchelbecker 1979: 306).

«от этого перевода веет духом Шекспира, и когда вы читаете его, вас объемлют идеи и образы царя мировых поэтов» (Belinsky 1953-1959: IV. 181).

«Как работа приуготовительная, его переводы всегда приносили большую пользу: они знакомили публику с произведениями замечательными, возбуждали и поощряли других; его “Макбет”, его “Гамлет” отличаются довольно определенным колоритом; мы не можем забыть, что любовь к Шекспиру собственно им возбуждена в кругу наших читателей» (Turgenev 1961-1968: I. 255).

«В результате, при всей точности и смысловой верности оригиналу, стихи его получались корявыми, непоэтичными, способными скорее отвратить от Шекспира, чем привлечь к нему» (Levin 1988: 257).

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«сочинения Шекспира писаны не для нашего времени, не годятся для сцены и не могут иметь успеха перед нашею публикою» (Polevoy 1888: 361).

«явное подражание, или, лучше сказать, явная пародия на сцены любви между Ромео и Юлией» (Belinsky 1953-1959: II. 443).

«вялую пародию»; «любовь Ромео и Юлии лишилась всего, лишившись свежести первого поцелуя, лишившись своей естественной основы: в какую мещанскую сантиментальность, в какие маниловские отношения повел Нино и Веронику подоблачный романтизм» (Grigoriev 1850: 169).

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«рецензент, о какой бы пустейшей книге ни говорил, непременно начнет Шекспиром, которого он вовсе не читал. Но о Шекспире пошло в моду говорить, — итак, подавай нам Шекспира. Говорит он: “С сей точки начнем мы теперь разбирать открытую пред нами книгу. Посмотрим, как автор наш соответствовал Шекспиру”, а между тем разбираемая книга чепуха, писанная вовсе без всяких притязаний на соперничество с Шекспиром, и сходствует разве только с духом и образом выражений самого рецензента» (Gogol 1937-1952: VIII. 174).

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«На сих днях, прочел я Шиллеров перевод Макбета, его Марию Стюарт, его Валленштейна. Сколько красот и как все занимательно. Как выдержан Макбет и у Шекспира, и у него в переводе. Je suis tente de le traduire. Славное бы дело было. Только надобно непременно переводить иное в стихах, самых сильных и выразительных!» (Turgenev 1802; qtd. Veselovsky 2016: 73).

«Вчера я кончил Макбета переводить начерно. Переводить начал 24 апреля, довольно скоро! Но сколько надобно будет посидеть над ним» (qtd. Zaborov 1965: 84).

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«Отправив сие письмо, принимаюсь я за свою аглинскую трагедию, которой первое действие уже переведено. Как скоро будет она готова, то не премину доставить к вам; вы не можете себе представить, как я рад, что могу разбирать Шекспира на аглинском, хоть и не без помощи» (Turgenev 1802 qtd. Lotman 1958: 75).

«Отчаяние берет меня, когда я сравню Макбета на русском с Макбетом на английском. Какая сила в последнем» (Turgenev 1802; qtd. Zaborov 1965: 85).

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«Ночь шумная была. Где спали мы,  
Там трубы сорвало; и, говорят,  
Стон полнил воздух, дикий, смертный вопль» (2.3.50-59; qtd. Levin 1983: 37).

«Сдавалось, слышу голос: «Полно спать!  
Макбет зарезал сон, невинный сон,  
Сон, разрешающий узлы заботы,  
Грань ежедневного житья, купель  
Трудов лихих, больных сердец цельбу,  
Второй великий оборот Природы,  
Кормильца главного в пиру житейском!» (2.2.36-41; qtd. Levin 1983: 39).

«Ему поведали сынов царей» (3.1.60; qtd. Levin 1983: 42).

««Помилуй бог!» — один; другой: «Аминь!»,  
Как будто видят, что стою пред ними,  
Их страха послух с дланьми палача.  
Им в отповедь «Аминь!» сказать не мог я» (2.2.28-31; qtd. Levin 1983: 46).

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«Они, правда, почти надстрочные; но вернее ли? Где у Вронченки [...] сила и свобода Шекспировы? Все у него связано, все приневолено, везде виден труд, везде русский язык изнасилован». Вронченко, считает он, передает лишь «букву, тело своего подлинника», но не его «душу, поэтический смысл» (Küchelbecker 1979: 306).

«Что такое значит: Макбет, трагедия Шекспира, из сочинений Шиллера? Как Шиллер сочинил трагедию Шекспира? Шиллер перевел Макбета с некоторыми изменениями; он мог и сочинить трагедию Макбет, взяв для своей драмы один предмет с Шекспиром. Но как мог написать написанное другим — не понимаем» (Delvig 1830: 244).

«не мог без негодования смотреть на эту тиранскую пытку, названную переводом»: «Бедный Шакспир! Какие лютые муки довелось тебе вытерпеть» (*Telegraf* 1831: 125).

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«трагедия эта отличается от всех других Шекспировых произведений явственным единством моральной своей мысли: поэт огненными чертами изобразил в ней ужасную участь человека, посягнувшего на жизнь помазанника божия» (Levin 1964).

«Конечно, изящное служит само себе целию; но не вдвойне ли ценно литературное произведение, когда оно, доставляя наслаждение умственное, вместе с тем поучает человечество великим урокам» (Levin 1964).

«от этого перевода веет духом Шекспира» (Belinsky 1953-1959: IV. 181).

«“Макбета”, переведенного известным литератором — Вронченко, разошлось ровно ПЯТЬ экземпляров» (Belinsky 1953-1959: XI. 452).

«Как работа приуготовительная, его переводы всегда приносили большую пользу: они знакомили публику с произведениями замечательными, возбуждали и поощряли других; его “Макбет”, его “Гамлет” отличаются довольно определенным колоритом; мы не можем забыть, что любовь к Шекспиру собственно им возбуждена в кругу наших читателей» (Turgenev 1961-1968: I. 255).



«непочтение к превосходному творению Шекспира» (Delvig 1830: 244).

«В мир фантастический входил он как завоеватель, покорял его общим законам, дополнял им целостность неизмеримого царства своего и низводил все его явления до причин естественных» (Pletnev 1837: 434).

«В пьесах своих: «The Tempest» и «Midsimmer nights dream» он совершенно предается сему своенравному воображению, столь же быстро изменяющемуся, как «стихия, на которой играют роскошные цветы радуги». В «Макбете» и «Гамлете» воображение сие является мрачнее и, будучи слито с силою чувствований, наполняет душу ужасом» (qtd. Frizman 1978: 243).

«послѣ Лессинга, Гёте, Шлегеля и другихъ великихъ Критиковъ [...] о Макбетѣ почти еще труднѣе сказать что нибудь новое»; «Естественно, что подобная поэма легче можетъ быть понята, нежели Гамлетъ [...] въ Макбетѣ не въ примѣръ болѣе силы, движенія, возвышенности. Въ Гамлетѣ Шекспиръ является преимущественно Философомъ: въ Макбетѣ онъ первый, величайшій (можетъ быть) Поэтъ романтической»; «Сцена не перемѣняется: она та же, свидѣтельница величайшихъ ужасовъ, мелькнувшихъ передъ очами нашими; стукъ, пробудитель страха въ душѣ убійцы и злодѣйки жены его, продолжается. Между тѣмъ является привратникъ, ничего незнающій, ничего неподозрѣвающій, въ половину еще одержимый сномъ и винными парами; онъ хладнокровно острится, шутить, говорить нелѣпости. Зритель невольно вздрагиваетъ: шутки привратника размѣшатъ развѣ того, кто не видалъ, не слыхалъ ничего изъ всего, что мы видѣли, что мы слышали, при чемъ мы присутствовали. Насъ напротивъ онъ приведутъ въ болѣшій еще трепетъ: тлѣнность, ничтожество всего, и величайшаго земнаго, стѣснить сердца наши. Привратникъ предстанетъ намъ представителемъ вообще черни, незнающей, непостигающей хода таинственнаго рока, слѣпой и готовой упиться низкими наслажденіями, даже подъ ударами судьбы, которые грозятъ всему міру превращеніемъ. Слѣдующій за симъ разговоръ придворныхъ представляетъ подобную картину. Все въ этомъ разговорѣ гладко, вѣжливо, пошло

и ежедневно: между тѣмъ стѣна, одна стѣна отдѣляетъ ихъ отъ неслыханнаго, чудовищнаго!» (Küchelbecker 1830: 52-53).

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«зловещая мрачность» не «составляет высочайшее достоинство котурна Шекспирова»; «Отвратительным ли ведьмам и их ужасным оргиям одолжен своим эстетическим достоинством «Макбет» Шекспира?» (Nadezhdin 1830: 24).

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«процесс освоения фантастического материала в пределах предромантизма и романтизма не представлял однородной картины» (Vasilyev 1990: 81).

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«преследует цель не изображения собственно фантастического, а раскрытия с помощью фантастических средств некоторых сторон реальной действительности или перспектив будущего» (Semibratova 1973: 14-15).

«основана на понимании фантастического как части народного мировосприятия и поэтому принимала фантастические мотивы и образы как некую сказочную данность, не нуждающуюся в авторском объяснении (мотивировке)» (Semibratova 1973: 11).

«фантастика как психологическая фикция, где фантастическое выступало как порождение мирозерцания или болезненного состояния героя» (Semibratova 1973: 12).

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«все это как нельзя быть сильнее и сходнее с театральным ужасом» (qtd. Veselovsky 2016: 73).

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«довел до совершенства романтическое искусство перевода обыкновенного в необыкновенное, превращение действительного в сновидение, сказку» (Khusainova 2014: 592).

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«Читатели заметят в конце сей идиллии близкое подражание Шекспирову описанию смерти Офелии. Сочинитель, благоговей к поэтическому дару великого британского трагика, радуется, что мог повторить одно из прелестнейших его созданий» (Delvig 1829: 172).

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«не удалось напечатать добротного труда Кюхельбекера» (Delvig 1986: 343).

«Есть многое в природе, друг Горацио, / Что и не снилось нашим мудрецам» (1.5.166-167; Vronchenko tr. 1828).

«до кладбища дотащить змею, взлелеянную, мною, и мертвым голосом ее в могиле ублажать» (1.1.47-48; hereinafter qtd. in Delvig 1922).

«Твою княгиню, взбесившись, лошади теперь несут, слуга упал и колесом раздавлен, - кучер, в вожжах запутанный, тащился долго по ручью и захлебнулся, у кладбища в щепы карета разлетится!» (1.1.51-53).

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«Встань, старый грех! Пора! Разоспалась ты и позабыла клятвы! Им исполненье наступило» (1.1.1-2).

«Разлилися воды

На четыре броды:

Как на первом броде

Роща зацветает,

Соловей щелкает;  
На втором-то броде  
Лето весну гонит,  
А кукушка стонет» (1.2.1-8).

«Как на третьем броде  
Кони-легконожки  
Полетят с дорожки.  
На четвертом броде  
Свет-девица плачет,  
За неровню идучи,  
Сердцем лихо чуючи» (1.2.9-15).

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«Лысая гора близ Киева, на вершине ее лежит мертвое тело Марии, по горе  
толпятся старые и молодые ведьмы, в половине сцены показывается полный месяц.  
Они поют» (1.2).

1-я. Здорово, кумушка!  
2-я. Здорово, сватья!  
3-я. Откудова, сестрица?  
1-я. Ох, я устала, я устала! (1.2.16-19).

«только месяц бледным светом жизнь сонную в нем пробуждал, они огонь мщенья  
питали в нем, и разжигали, и берегли» (1.1.50-51).

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«хлеб мой насущный» (Küchelbecker 1832; qtd. Levin 1963: 286).

«Друг мой Шекспир [...] ведь он всегда со мною.» (Küchelbecker 1833; qtd. Levin  
1963: 286).

«Мой Вилли [...] величайший комик, точно, как и величайший трагик из всех живших, живущих и (я почти готов сказать) долженствующих жить!» (Küchelbecker 1954: 433).

«через таковое узнание могу лишиться пера и чернил, единственной отрады, которая осталась мне в жизни» (Bartnev 1881: 140).

«Макбетъ же, напротивъ, поразить съ самаго начала всякаго: красоты его большею частію таковы, что и престолюдинъ и ученый, и прозаикъ и поэтъ, и свободный романтикъ и даже подобострастный поклонникъ прежней Французской школы, должны ихъ признать, сколь бы тому ни противились ихъ предразсудки, должны ихъ почувствовать, хотя конечно и не въ равной степени, съ живостію не одинакою»; «Если въ Гамлетѣ -- въ чемъ нѣтъ сомнѣнія -- болѣе глубокомыслія; въ Макбетѣ не въ примѣръ болѣе силы, движенія, возвышенности. Въ Гамлетѣ Шекспиръ является преимущественно Философомъ: въ Макбетѣ онъ первый, величайшій (можетъ быть) Поэтъ романтическій» (Küchelbecker 1830: 52).

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«Вдохновенная «Фаустом» Гете эта мистерия, в которой объединены разные жанры и стилистические планы, не связанная и не ограниченная сценическими условиями, входит в ряд аналогичных произведений мировой литературы, включающий байроновских «Малфреда» и «Каина», «Освобожденного Прометея» Шелли, «Дядю» Мицкевича» (Levin 1988: 66).

«Особо противопоставлял он свой «способ изложения», субъективный и лирический, шекспировскому объективному, драматическому методу» (Levin 1988: 66).

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«Поит он пьяницу вином, / Толкает под бок забияку, / С женою мужа вводит в драку; / Катясь, кружась кубарем, / Сшибает с ног девиц спесивых; / Рогами красит

лоб ревнивых, - / Его блаженство шум и гром» (1.1.53-59; hereinafter qtd. in Küchelbecker 1967).

«домовые и лешие [...] воздушны, невещественны, проказливы, как Пук и Ариель Шекспира» (Bestuzhev-Marlinsky 1958: II. 601).

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«Вдруг чих Отелло; перемену,  
Какой и я не ждал от них,  
В партере произвел тот чих!  
Поднялись шиканье и хохот,  
За хохотом поднялся свист,  
За свистом стук, за стуком грохот:  
Покойник встал, дрожит, как лист,  
И градом яблок был засыпан» (2.1.123-130).

«очень остроумно, но / (Ты согласишься) не совсем смешно» (2.1.82-83).

«Рассказ прекрасный,- только длинноват» (2.1.131).

«Нет! целый хор в себе соединил,  
Но не трагический, не хор Эхила  
Или Софокла, а такой, каким  
В своем бессмертном Гарри Уйлли Шекспир  
Вас угостил» (2.1.165-169).

«А между тем поклон мой, господа!  
Мы, кажется, видались иногда:  
Неужто позабыли? - вас со мною  
Покойник Лев Петрович свел - Ижорский;  
Я должность шута исправлял при нем» (2.1.158-162).

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«В народе русском и с большим трудом  
Сыскал я труса (он у них один;  
Другого не найдете экземпляра).  
Мой трус красавец: что ж? в него влюбилась  
Бухарская княжна. Он из Бухары  
На Русь обратно едет; с ним княжна  
И богатырь Булат великодушный.  
Я свел их, льва я зайцу подчинил  
И гусю дал в подруги Филомелу» (2.1.134-140).

«Сердце бьется и трепещет» (3.1.9).

«Откуда холодный неведомый трепет  
В моей богатырской широкой груди?» (3.1.11-12).

«Душою прав и чист? - а я сгублен тобою!» (3.1.20).

«Три долгие, тяжкие ночи  
Без сна ее тусклые очи;  
Не ест трое суток она.  
Как тень, она бродит,  
Покоя нигде не находит,  
Страшна, безобразна, бледна» (5.4.1-6).

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«Я к себе прилучила купца» (3.2.1).

«Старый черт на мне вздумал жениться» (3.2.2).

«Заживу-ко тогда в их дому!» (3.2.6).

«Знай же, хворенький дедушка, честь:

Век не свой тебе жить не пристало!  
Но еще не пробил твой часок;  
Толковать про тебя, мой голубчик,  
Ныне, видеть изволишь, не срок» (3.2.17-21).

«Теперь только бы сбыть молодца,  
Его сына, не дать воротиться  
На сторонушку нашу ему!» (3.2.3-5).

«В уголку во святом образа  
Наперед обернуть надо задом...  
Так и жгут Николая глаза!» (3.2.25-27).

«На плите разложу огонек,  
К огонечку придвину горшок,  
А в горшок-то сухой порошок  
Из человечьих я брошу костей;  
Не забудь, молодница, прилей  
Струйку собственной крови своей!  
Струйку ту из-под левой груди  
В желтый череп жида нацеди;  
Подболтай мухомору - и брось:  
Вот и вспыхнуло, вот и зажглось!  
Затрещал, зазмеился огонь...  
Понесло! чародейская вонь!  
Начнем,  
Кругом  
Махнем  
Ножом!  
Сколько? три раза:  
А раз -  
То глаз.  
Другой-  
Убой.



Третий - зараза...

Зараза, зараза, зараза-чума,

Зараза мне тетка, чума мне кума!» (3.2.31-72).

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«Поднялся пар:

Я силой слов,

Я силой чар

Сварила вар...

Мой пир готов;

Силен мой зов:

Он достигнул,

О Вельзевул!

В твой темный дом.

К рабе своей

Рогатым лбом

Стезю пробей;

В дыму, в огне

Явися мне!» (3.2.74-87).

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1-я в е д ь м а

Здорово! здорово! - куда ты, кума?

2-я в е д ь м а

А, кумушка, так! я не вем и сама... (4.2.1-2).

2-я в е д ь м а

Мной, девушкой, раз похвалился с похмелья

На честной пирушке чужой молодец,-

И в келью лихой меня запер отец:

Противна душе моей тесная келья...

Но быть же и ведьмой не много веселья;

А разве по вольному воздуху порх,  
Под звездочкой ясной шнырять и кружиться,  
Хватать на лету ненадежный восторг,  
Минутной свободой допьяна напиться...

1-я в е д ь м а

Вот, кумушка,- то-то и есть: молода!  
Как тут не призвать, было, адские силы,  
Да мучить его, хвастуна, до могилы?  
Быть смирною ведьмою смех и беда...

2-я в е д ь м а

Не спорю. (4.2.3-16).

2-я в е д ь м а

А ты понеслася куда?

1-я в е д ь м а

Назад я лечу в свою избу за угол.

2-я в е д ь м а

Откуда же?

1-я в е д ь м а

С шабаша леших и пугал;  
Тут было довольно и ведьм и бесов...  
Мы тут обсудили преважное дело...  
Оно решено большинством голосов. (4.2.16-22).

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«Чтоб погиб лихой Булат,  
Мне приятней во сто крат,  
Чем развеять прах презренный  
Всех Ванюшек всей вселенной!» (3.2.231-234).

2-я в е д ь м а

Спросить тебя, тетка, не слишком ли смело,

В чем именно это преважное дело?

1-я в е д ь м а

А вот в чем: задумала силою чар

Чудесить Амфиза без помощи духа;

На беса-де бесится злая старуха:

Зачем ей не всякий удастся удар...

И что ж, для своей и для нашей забавы

Ее обернет, и не прошен, лукавый,

Потешит ее еще раз Сатана;

Потом же кроваво погибнет она (4.2.23-32).

«предоставляю за меня отвечать тому из моих критиков, у которого на то достает ума-разума и доброй воли; а сомневаться, чтобы между русскими рецензентами мог найтись такой не близорукий и честный человек, значило бы нанести смертельную обиду тому почтенному сословию, которое так беспристрастно, тонко и глубокомысленно оценило “Горе от ума” Грибоедова, “Полтаву” Пушкина, “Гротески” Гоголя и “Сердце и думку” Вельтмана. Охотно признаюсь и в том, что в моем Imbroglіo много такого, без чего бы можно обойтись, например, Интермедии; что вдобавок и в самых составных его стихиях слишком много разнородного, и что они потому никак не произведут стройного, классического целого. Возможно ли в самом деле спаять в одно: сатиру и элегию, рассказ и драму, комедию и трагедию, лирическую поэзию и сказку, идеал и гротеск, смех и ужас, энтузиазм и житейскую прозу, и - ожидать от всего этого гармонии?» (Küchelbecker 1967: I. 560).

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«Я на досуге кое-что пишу» (Griboyedov 1959: 585).

«Грибоедов написал трагедию, какой не бывало под солнцем, — «Грузинская ночь»» (Petukhov 1913: 354).

«Во время военных и дипломатических занятий Грибоедов, в часы досуга, уносился душою в мир фантазий. В последнее пребывание свое в Грузии он сочинил план романтической трагедии и несколько сцен вольными стихами с рифмами. Трагедию назвал он “Грузинская ночь”; почерпнул предмет оной из народных преданий и основал на характере и нравах грузин. Вот содержание: один грузинский князь за выкуп любимого коня отдал другому князю отрока, раба своего. Это было делом обыкновенным, и потому князь не думал о следствиях. Вдруг является мать отрока, бывшая кормилица князя, няня дочери его; упрекает его в бесчеловечном поступке; припоминает службу свою и требует или возврата сына, или позволения быть рабою одного господина, и угрожает ему мщением ада. Князь сперва гневается, потом обещает выкупить сына кормилицы, и, наконец, по княжескому обычаю -- забывает обещание. Но мать помнит, что у нее отторжено от сердца детище, и, как азиатка, умышляет жестокую месть. Она идет в лес, призывает Дели, злых духов Грузии и составляет адский союз на пагубу рода своего господина. Появляется русский офицер в доме, таинственное существо по чувствам и образу мыслей. Кормилица заставляет Дели вселить любовь к офицеру, к питомице своей, дочери князя. Она уходит с любовником из родительского дома. Князь жаждет мести, ищет любовников и видит их на вершине горы Св. Давида. Он берет ружье, прицеливается в офицера, но Дели несут пулю в сердце его дочери. Еще не свершилось мщения озлобленной кормилицы! Она требует ружья, чтобы поразить князя, -- и убивает своего сына. Бесчеловечный князь наказан небом за презрение чувств родительских и познает цену потери детища. Злобная кормилица наказана за то, что благородное чувство осквернила мстью. Они гибнут в отчаянии. Трагедия, основанная, как выше сказано, на народной грузинской сказке, если б была так окончена, как начата, составила бы украшение не только одной русской, но и всей европейской литературы. Грибоедов читал нам наизусть отрывки, и самые холодные люди были растроганы жалобами матери, требующей возврата сына у своего господина. Трагедия сия погибла вместе с автором!..» (Bulgarin 1830: 28-30).

«На пути к месту своего назначения Грибоедов пробыл у меня три дня. В разговорах наших, между прочим, спросил я его, не написал ли он еще комедии,

и нет ли еще нового плана. «Я уже говорил тебе при последнем свидании, - отвечал он, - что комедии больше не напишу, веселость моя исчезла, а без веселости нет хорошей комедии. Но есть у меня написанная трагедия», И тут же рассказал он содержание и прочел наизусть читанные им сцены в Петербурге... Но на убеждения мои прочесть всю трагедию он никак не согласился. «Я теперь еще к ней страстен, - говорил он, - и дал себе слово не читать ее пять лет, а тогда, сделавшись равнодушнее, прочту как чужое сочинение, и если буду доволен, то отдам в печать»» (Piksanov 1929: 14).

«Известно, что автограф «Горя от ума» Грибоедова хранился у князя Александра Церетели. Известный грузинский поэт Акаки Церетели Ростопович рассказал нам, что он сам видел манускрипт дома у графа Александра, вместе в законченной поэмой «Грузинская ночь»» (Fomichev 2007: 163).

«Знак условный –

Вот пять волос

От вас унес

Ваш хитрый, смелый враг, мой брат единокровный,

Когда бы он блуждал

На мшистых высотах уединенных скал» (1.2.13-18; hereinafter qtd. in Griboyedov 1988: 313-318).

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«Ты здесь! Но ты, исчадь праха,

Где ты украла волоса?

Они нам сила и душа,

Отдай их нам...

Умри от страха» (1.2.36-40).

«Робеет дух, язык прикован мой!

Земля, не расступайся подо мной» (1.2.41-42).

«Ах! Вот они! Язык прикован мой!

Но не умру с испуги.  
Вот ваши волоса... Вот суд вам роковой:  
Кто их имеет, тех вы слуги» (1.2.41-44).

«Первоклассные красоты» (qtd. Polevoy 1980: 170).

«романтическая комедия в шекспировском вкусе» (Zakharov and Lukov 2011: 93).

«О, люди! Кто назвал людьми исчадий зла,  
Которых от кровей утробных  
Судьба на то произвела,  
Чтоб были гибелью, бичом себе подобных!» (1.2.1-4).

«Отколе в темну ночь исходят привиденья,  
Из снежных гор,  
Из диких нор,  
Из груды тли и разрушенья,  
Из сонных тинистых зыбей,  
Из тех пустыней многогробных,  
Где служат пиршествам червей  
Останки праведных и злобных» (1.2.23-31).

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«Но нет их! Непокорны мне!  
На мой привет не отзовутся» (1.2.32-33).

«Но силы свыше есть! Прочь совесть и боязнь!....  
Ночные чуда! Али! Али!  
Явите мне свою приязнь,  
Как вы всегда являли  
Предавшим веру и закон,  
Душой преступным и бессильным,  
Светите мне огнем могильным,

Несите ветер, свист и стон,  
Дружины Али!» (1.2.5-13).

«Я крестным знаменьем от вас оборонялась,  
Я матерью тогда счастливой называлась,  
А ныне кинутой быть горько сиротой!» (1.2.19-21).

«Я крестным знаменьем от вас обороняла  
Тогда была добра, имела сына я» (1.2.19-20).

«Равны страдания в сей жизни или в той?» (1.2.22).

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«тучи на́ небе несутся,  
И воет ветер» (1.2.34-35).

«В парах вечерних, перед восходом  
Печальной девственной луны,  
Мы выступаем хороводом  
Из незримой глубины» (1.2.36-39).

«Таятся в мрачной глубине  
Непримиримых оскорбленья  
И созревают в тишине  
До дня решительного мщенья;  
Но тот, чей замысел не скрыт,  
Как темная гробов обитель,  
Вражды во век не утолит,  
Нетерпеливый мститель» (1.2.42-49).

«Неизъяснимое свершится:  
Тогда мать сына обретет  
И ближний ближнего лишится» (1.2.53-55).

«Куда мы, Али? В эту ночь  
Бежит от глаз успокоенье» (1.2.56-57).

Одна из них:

Спешу родильнице помочь,  
Чтоб задушить греха рождение.

Другие:

А мы в загорские края,  
Где пир пируют кровопийцы.

Последняя:

Там замок есть... Там сяду я  
На смертный одр отцеубийцы (1.2.58-63).

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«гордый читатель XIX-го века нисколько не приглашается верить безусловно в чудесное происшествие» (Odoevsky 1913: 15).

«В произведениях Пушкина 30-х годов существуют, однако, и такие места, которые, по-видимому, возникли под непосредственным воздействием Шекспира или представляют собой произвольные отклики поэта на запомнившиеся ему отдельные шекспировские сцены, стихи, выражения; при этом Шекспир, может быть явившийся бессознательным для Пушкина поводом к совершенно самостоятельному ходу мыслей, не упоминается» (Alekseev 1972: 272).

«Правдоподобие положений и правдивость диалога — вот истинное правило трагедии. (Я не читал ни Кальдерона, ни Веги), но до чего изумителен Шекспир! Не могу прийти в себя» (Pushkin 1959-1962: IX. 178).

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«Я переписал мои 5 повестей и предисловие, т. е. сочинения покойника Белкина, славного малого» (Pushkin 1994-1997: XIV. 186).



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«точнее жизни, живущей смертью» (Penkovsky 2005: 225).

«трезвый и сердитый» (Pushkin 1994-1997: VIII. 631).

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«Но вдруг прежняя угрюмость снова им овладела и вот по какой причине. Один из гостей толстый булочник предложил следующий тост» (Pushkin 1994-1997: VIII. 630).

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«Пушкин, давший нам почти все формы искусства, написал «Пиковую даму» - верх искусства фантастического. И вы верите, что Германн действительно имел видение, и именно сообразное с его мировоззрением, а между тем в конце повести, т. е. прочтя ее, Вы не знаете как решить: вышло ли это видение из природы Германна, или действительно он один из тех, которые И вы верите, что Германн действительно имел видение, и именно сообразное с его мировоззрением, а между тем в конце повести, то есть прочтя ее, Вы не знаете, как решить: вышло ли это видение из природы Германа или действительно он один из тех, которые соприкоснулись с другим миром, злых и враждебных человечеству духов. Вот это искусство!» (Dostoyevsky 1938: 351).

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«творец Макбета» (1959-1962: II. 288).

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«особый характер прозы этого периода: ведущими становятся произведения широкого идеологического размаха; романы психологические, философские следуют один за другим в западных литературах» (Tomashevsky 1941: 469).

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«они уважали в нем какой-то величайший порок, а не безграничное несчастье, демона, а не человека ... в его глазах было столько огня и ума, столько неземного» (Lermontov 1988-1990: II. 276).

«Вадим покраснел... и с этой минуты имя Юрия Палицына стало ему ненавистным... Что делать! Он не мог вырваться из демонской своей стихии» (Lermontov 1988-1990: II. 302).

«Это был ангел, изгнанный из рая за то, что слишком сожалел о человечестве» (Lermontov 1988-1990: II. 279).

«о! Чудна природа; далеко ли от брата до сестры? – а какое различие! Эти ангельские черты, эта демоническая наружность... Впрочем, разве ангел и демон произошли не от одного начала?» (Lermontov 1988-1990: II. 288).

«что такое величайшее добро и зло? – два конца незримой цепи, которые сходятся, удаляясь друг от друга» (Lermontov 1988-1990: II. 295).

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«Ольга старанием утаить свою любовь еще больше ее обнаруживала; Юрий был опытен, часто любил, чаще был любим, и выучен привычкой читал в ее глазах больше, чем она осмеливалась читать в собственной душе. – Она думала об нем и боялась думать о любви своей; ужас обнимал ее сердце, когда она осмеливалась вопрошать его, потому что прошедшее и будущее тогда являлись встревоженному воображению Ольги; таков был ужас Макбета, когда готовый сесть на королевский престол, при шумных звуках пира, он увидал на нем окровавленную тень Банкуо... но этот ужас не уменьшил его честолюбия, которое превратилось в болезненный бред; то же самое случилось с любовью Ольги» (Lermontov 1988-1990: II. 308).

«это был хаос всех чувств земных и небесных, вихорь, упоение неопределенное, какое не всякий испытал, и никто изъяснить не может» (Lermontov 1988-1990: II. 310).

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«эпоха наружного рабства и внутреннего освобождения» (qtd. Shatalov 1980: 27).

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«несмотря на отсутствие провоцирующих факторов» (Novikov and Perfilova 2012: 7).

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«искусство служит и должно служить само себе целью» (Druzhinin 2013: 664).

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«Николай имел в виду одно стеснение, он не виноват в пользе им сделанного, но она сделалась. [...] Печальны, по изящны были люди, вышедшие тогда на цепу, с сознанием правоты и бессилия, [...] чуждые всему окружающему, не знавшие будущего, они не сложили рук» (Herzen 1954-1965: XIV. 157).

«Шекспир дал возможность целому поколению чувствовать себя мыслящим существом, способным понимать исторические задачи и важнейшие условия человеческой жизни» (Annenkov 1874: 298).

«Шекспир, Гете, Шиллер были постоянно на языке у этих восторженных почитателей искусства; первый стоял превыше всего, как предмет безусловного поклонения» (Pynin 1876: I. 104).

«Шекспир — царь поэтов, единственный и несравненный» (Belinsky 1953-1959: I. 306).

«царь драматических поэтов, увенчанный целым человечеством и ни прежде, ни после себя не имеющий себе соперника» (Belinsky 1953-1959: II. 254).

«Я полон драмою Шекспира» (Belinsky 1953-1959: XI. 407).

«не имеет себе равного между поэтами» (Belinsky 1953-1959: VI. 369).

«глубокий сердцеведец, мирообъемлющий созерцатель», чьи «произведения удивляют своею многосторонностью и многообразием направлений» (Belinsky 1953-1959: VII. 314).

«Бога ради, Боткин, скажи мне, есть ли у Шекспира хоть что-нибудь, не говорю дрянное, а не великое, не божественное?» (Belinsky 1953-1959: XI. 540).

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«Гамлет [...] это жизнь человеческая, это человек, это вы, это я, это каждый из нас, более или менее, в высоком или смешном, но всегда в жалком и грустном смысле» (Belinsky 1953-1959: II. 254).

«Шекспировские постановки в театре обычно вызывали его сочувственный отклик» (Levin 1988: 114).

«После Шекспира мне никто не давал такого наслаждения»; «Буря» — «прекрасная вещь», которую надо «прочитать два или три раза чтобы оценить по достоинству» (Granovsky 1897: II. 107).

«Какая драматическая жизнь, какая глубина и полнота каждого характера и что за эфирная, поражающая поэзия» (qtd. Egorov 1963: 39).

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«для понимания Гете и Шекспира надобно познакомиться с жизнью, надобны грозные опыты, надобно пережить долю страданий Фауста, Гамлета, Отелло» (Herzen 1954-1965: I. 278).

«Велик, необъятен Шекспир! [...] Что это за сила гения так уловить жизнь во всей необъятности ее от Гамлета до могильщика! [...] Прав Гете: Шекспир творит, как бог, тут ни дополнять, ни возражать нечего» (Herzen 1954-1965: XXII. 65).

«Гете и Шекспир равняются целому университету. Читением человек переживает века» (Herzen 1954-1965: XXIV. 276).

«Ты вырви в них душу и в смелом созданыи  
Ее передай им ты в звучных словах,  
И эти слова не исчезнут в преданья  
И вечно в людских сохраняются умах» (Ogarev 1956: 64).

«Я отлучен судьбою был от мира,  
И там в тиши открылся предо мной  
Волшебный мир волшебника Шекспира  
С его живой, великой простотой!» (Satin 1840: 5)

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«утрата духа поэзии подлинника» (Botkin 1841: 48).

«Со страхом... и верою... приступите», по которому Тургенев изучал творения «отца Шекспира» (Turgenev 1961-1968: I. 188).

«замечательном знании Шекспира чуть не наизусть» (Petrov and Fridliand, eds. 1969: I. 399).

«В 1869 г., отвечая на анкету французского журнала, Тургенев назвал Шекспира в числе любимых поэтов, короля Лира — среди любимых литературных героев и Джульетту — как единственную любимую героиню» (Ostrovsky 1929: 365).

«Шекспир берет свои образы отовсюду — с неба, с земли — нет ему запрету; ничто не может избегнуть его всепроникающего взора»; он «потрясает [...] титанической силой победоносного вдохновения», «богатством и мощью своей фантазии, блеском высочайшем поэзии, глубиной и обширностью громадного ума» (Turgenev 1961-1968: VIII. 185-186).

«Как природа, он и прост и многосложен — весь, как говорится, на ладони и бездонно-глубок, свободен до разрушения всяких оков и постоянно исполнен внутренней гармонии и той неуклонной законности, логической необходимости, которая лежит в основании всего лживого» (Turgenev 1961-1968: XV. 51).

«если бы дверь отворилась и [...] вошел бы Шекспир [...] я упал бы ничком да так бы на полу и лежал» (Petrov and Fridliand, eds. 1969: I. 215).

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«знал как великого, слепого поклонника Шекспира» (Tolstoy 1928-1959: XXXV. 573).

«истинного патриотизма [...] понимания народного быта, сочувствия к жизни предков [...] и к народной гордыне [...] “Старая Англия” (Old England) живет и дышит в этих бессмертных произведениях» (Turgenev 1961-1968: I. 271).

«Целый мир им завоеван, — писал он о Шекспире. — его победы прочнее побед Наполеонов и Цезарей» (Turgenev 1961-1968: XV. 50).

«Человек он был!»; «вышей данью нашего благоговения к торжествующему гению» (Turgenev 1961-1968: XIV. 62).

«Вы у Шекспира нигде не видите его самого, везде перед вами только жизнь, так верно переданная, что вам кажется, будто все само совершается на ваших глазах» (Petrov and Fridliand, eds. 1969: II. 204).

«поэма «Стено» заключена в «шекспировское кольцо»: она открывается цитатой из Шекспира и последняя фраза «Тайна свершилась. Молчанье! Молчанье!» (действие третье, явление III ) оживляет в сознании гамлетовское «Последнее – молчанье!» (акт 5, сцена 2)» (Shevtsova 2005).

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«я стремился, насколько хватало сил и умения, добросовестно и беспристрастно изобразить и воплотить в надлежащие типы и то, что Шекспир называет “the body and pressure of time”» (Turgenev 1961-1968: XII. 303).

«Если я скажу, что она — “Корполан” Шекспира, то в похвалу ей почти нечего будет прибавить» (Nekrasov 1948-1952: IX. 454).

«колоссы, рисующие человека так, что рисунок делается понятен и удивителен каждому без отношения к месту и времени (таковы Шекспир, пожалуй, отчасти наш Пушкин и т.п.)» (Nekrasov 1948-1952: X. 247).

«воспрославленный по достоинству Шекспир» (Leskov 1956-158: X. 88).

«прочтите всего Пушкина, потом Шекспира, а потом Виктора Гюго. Это Вам необходимо даже для Вашего престижа при людях, имеющих образование» (Leskov 1956-1958: XI. 481).

«не оставлял не малейшего промежутка между значением г. Остроского и значением Шекспира» (Leskov 1956-1958: X. 26).

«Отчего и зачем «собака, кошка, мышь жива, а нет Корделии?»» (Leskov 1956-1958: XI. 69).

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«У нее явилось что-нибудь вроде не бывшей ранее страсти к духам... она все обтирала руки (как леди Макбет), чтобы от нее не пахло его противным прикосновением. Эта новая привычка до развязки рассказа увеличивала бы силу чего-то в ней совершающегося. Очень глубокий и сильный рассказ!» (Leskov 1956-1958: XI. 307).

«Шекспировское что-то есть. Это сила грубо поставленных страстей» (Leskov 1956-1958: XI. 334).

«Я ведь, если откровенно говорить, я до сих пор себе не решил: преступление ли породило закон или закон породил преступление? А когда мысленно делаю себя чьим-нибудь судьей, то я, в здравом уме, думаю как король Лир думал в своем помешательстве: стоит только вникнуть в историю преступлений и видишь: «нет виноватых» (Leskov 1956-1958: IV. 487).

«опять я уже, как оный венецианский мавр, рассказываю что-то» (Leskov 1956-1958: VIII. 414).

«Титания, дорассветная Титания, которая еще не видит, что она впотьмах целовала... осла!» (Leskov 1956-1958: IX. 307).

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«Я ее помню, эту «Титанию, - какая она была «нетленная и жалкая» [...] которую вдруг осветило солнце: ей было и неприятно и больно, и в то же время она чувствовала, что не может теперь сморгнуть в сторону» (Leskov 1956-1958: IX. 308).

«Есть вещи на свете». С этого обыкновенно у нас принято начинать подобные рассказы, чтобы прикрыться Шекспиром от стрел остроумия, которому нет ничего неизвестного. Я, впрочем, все-таки думаю, что «есть вещи» очень странные и непонятные, которые иногда называются сверхестественными, и потому я охотно



слушаю такие рассказы [...] В том, что «есть вещи, которые не снились мудрецам», я не сомневаюсь, но так такие вещи кому представляются – это меня чрезвычайно занимало» (Leskov 1956-1958: VII. 5-6).

высшее выражение «духа романтизма», под которым понимал сочетание поэзии и верности «природе», воплощающееся в «гигантских характерах» (Dostoyevsky 1972-1988: XXVIII. 70).

«по Шекспиру государственные люди, ученые, историки учились» (Dostoyevsky 1972-1988: XX. 152).

«Об Шекспире Это без направления и вековечное и удержалось. Это не просто воспроизведение насущного, чем, по уверению многих учителей, исчерпывается вся действительность. Вся действительность не исчерпывается насущным, ибо огромною своею частью заключается в нем в виде еще подспудного невысказанного будущего слова. Изредка являются пророки которые угадывают и высказывают это цельное слово. Шекспир — это пророк, посланный богом, чтобы возвестить нам тайну о человеке и душе человеческой» (Dostoyevsky 1972-1988: XI. 237).

«Меня зовут психологом, неправда, я лишь реалист в высшем смысле, т.е. изображаю все глубины души человеческой» (qtd. Miller, ed. 1883: 373).

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«в хаосе современной общественной жизни нельзя отыскать еще нормального закона и руководящей нити даже, может быть, и шекспировских размеров художнику»; «кто же осветит хотя бы часть этого хаоса и хотя бы и не мечтая о руководящей нити?» (Dostoevsky 1972-1988: XXV. 35).

«У нас есть бесспорно жизнь разлагающаяся и семейство, стало быть, разлагающееся. Но есть, необходимо, и жизнь вновь складывающаяся, на новых уже началах. Кто их подметит, и кто их укажет?» (Dostoyevsky 1972-1988: XXV. 35).

«Достоевский, подобно Шекспиру, запечатлел расторжение в этом мире всех привычных, «естественных» связей: дети посягают на жизнь отца, слуги восстают против господ, дружба оборачивается завистливым соперничеством, любовь — ревностью и ненавистью и т. д.» (Lunacharsky 1957: 280).

«Древняя трагедия — богослужение, а Шекспир отчаяние. Что отчаяннее Дон-Кихота. Красота Дездемоны только принесена в жертву [...] Шекспир наших времен тоже вносил бы отчаяние. Но во времена Шекспира была еще крепка вера. Теперь же все действительно хотят счастья» (Dostoevsky 1972-1988: XXIV. 160).

«Частный человек не может угадать вполне вечного всеобщего идеала — будь он сам Шекспир» (Dostoevsky 1972-1988: XVIII. 102).

«Часто рождалась во мне мысль мужик пашет, а он может Ньютон аль Шекспир» (Dostoyevsky 1972-1988: VII. 197).

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«романтизм, навеянный этим проклятым Шекспиром, который как нарочно сует свой нос везде, где его не спрашивают» (Dostoevsky 1972-1988: II. 324).

«слишком начиталась «этого дурака» Шекспира с «своим учительишкой» (Dostoyevsky 1972-1988: II. 384).

«Мало того: вы прошлый раз говорили даже, что намерены отпустить ваших крестьян на волю и что надобно же что-нибудь сделать для века, и всё это оттого, что вы начитались там какого-нибудь вашего Шекспира! Поверьте, Павел Александрович, ваш Шекспир давным-давно уже отжил свой век и если б воскрес, то, со всем своим умом, не разобрал бы в нашей жизни ни строчки!» (Dostoyevsky 1972-1988: II. 307).

«Портрет чистого и идеального западника со всеми красотами» (Dostoyevsky 1972-1988: XI. 65).

«я объявляю, что Шекспир и Рафаэль - выше освобождения крестьян, выше народности, выше социализма, выше юного поколения, выше химии, выше почти всего человечества, ибо они уже плод, настоящий плод всего человечества и, может быть, высший плод, какой только может быть!» (Dostoyevsky 1972-1988: X. 372-373).

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«У нас пристрастие к Шекспиру доходит до мании, но из всех возможных маний это самая простительная» (Stroyev 1842: 111).

«Даже беспощадная николаевская цензура проявляет к ним почтительное уважение [...] указывая, что Шекспир принадлежит к писателям классическим в новейшей литературе и переводится на все языки без малейшего его изменения как создатель и образец новой драмы» (Levin 1964: 199).

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«Шекспир, создавая образ принца, был не только великим поэтом, но и пророком, прозревшим на 300 лет вперед [...] Гамлет по своему мирозерцанию и по нравственному настроению [...] человек нашего времени, дитя XIX века [...] мы любим Гамлета, как родного брата, он мил нам даже и своими слабостями, потому что его слабости суть слабости наши; он чувствует нашим сердцем и думает нашею головой» (qtd. Solovyov 1877: 266).

«Какое я ничтожное созданье!» (2.2.520; hereinafter qtd. in Polevoy 1887).

«Ничтожный я, презренный человек!» (2.2.520, 532).

«Гамлет, Гамлет! Позор и стыд тебе!» (2.2.546-547).

«какъ ничтожны / Дѣянья человека на землѣ!» (1.2.121-122).

«О, женщины! ничтожество вамъ имя!» (1.2.131).

«Чего отъ людей ждатель! Какая нибудь мерзость!» (3.2.65).

«Ты погубила вѣру въ душу челоуѣка» (3.4.125).

«Страшно, / За челоуѣка страшно мнѣ!..» (3.4.151-152).

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«Это окончание принадлежит самому переводчику, но его и сам Шекспир принял бы, забывшись, за свое, так оно идет тут, так оно в духе его» (Belinsky 1953-1959: II. 432).

«меланхолия [...] делалась какою-то модной болезнью и многие прониклись современным гамлетизмом» (Leonidov 1888: 231).

«потерять веру в самого себя, увидеть свои убеждения в совершенном разладе с своею жизнью — это потеря, и потеря ужасная» (Belinsky 1953-1959: II. 292).

«Сколько причин для Гамлета мстить неумолимо, страшно!.. Он знает, что ему должно делать, на что его вызвала судьба, и он робеет предстоящего подвига, бледнеет страшного вызова и только говорит вместо того, чтобъ делать, в своей позорной нерешительности» (Belinsky 1953-1959: VII. 313).

«Мы не хотим шага сделать, не выразумев его, мы беспрестанно останавливаемся, как Гамлет, и думаем, думаем... Некогда действовать; мы пережевываем непрерывно прошедшее и настоящее, все случившееся с нами и с другими, ищем оправданий, объяснений, доискиваемся мысли, истины. Все окружающее нас подверглось пытающему взгляду критики. Это болезнь промежуточных эпох» (Herzen 1954-1965: II. 49).

«характер Гамлета» возникает «особенно в эпоху сомнений и раздумья, в эпоху сознания каких-то черных дел, совершившихся возле них, каких-то измен великому в пользу ничтожного и пошлого» (Herzen 1954-1965: IX. 37).

«В нас рефлексия убила возможность истинной полноты чувства [...] жизнь казалась мне, как говорит Гамлет, пустым полем, покрытым иссохшею травой, над которым носится смерть, как самый отрадней друг. Страшно, Огарев, такое состояние» (qtd. Vetrinsky 1894: 65).

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«без ложного подобострастия смотреть на Шекспира [...] половину каждой драмы Шекспира негодной для эстетического наслаждения в наше время» (Chernyshevsky 1939-1953: I. 50, 283).

«Я не уверен, что я сам, а не предрассудок заставляет меня считать великими многих из тех, кто считается великими, например Шекспира или т. п.» (Chernyshevsky 1939-1953: I. 135).

«вижу, что есть большая сила таланта и что действительно говорит так, что видно, что человек, заставляющий говорить, весьма умен, но особенного ничего» (Chernyshevsky 1939-1953: I. 111).

«ничего особенного, ровно ничего, но ум виден» (Chernyshevsky 1939-1953: I. 241).  
«на все чувства приветно откликается поэзия Шекспира, но не подчиняется она ни одному из них [...] ни грусть, ни веселье, ни страсть не сделают ее своею рабою, с величественным гомерическим самообладанием владычествует она равно над своим восторгом и над своим страданием» (Chernyshevsky 1939-1953: IV. 96).

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«Для меня, человека сильных и твердых убеждений, труднее всего написать так, как писал Шекспир: он изображает людей и жизнь, не высказывая, как он сам думает о вопросах, которые решаются его действующими лицами в таком смысле, как угодно кому из них [...] Понятно, я говорю о манере, а не о силе таланта» (Chernyshevsky 1939-1953: XII. 683).

«Почему ж идеал необходимо должен представляться примиренным с действительностью? Этого примирения в таком смысле, как понимается оно обыкновенно людьми, требующими его, нет даже у Шекспира, не только величайшего, но и спокойнейшего из всех поэтов. Ни один из его идеалов не умеет устроить свои дела так, чтобы жить да поживать в довольстве и благополучии. Гамлет и Офелия, Ромео и Джульетта, Отелло и Дездемона — все они наделали много хлопот и горя и себе, и другим, ни одного из них Шекспир не мог поставить “в гармонию с обстановкою”» (Chernyshevsky 1939-1953: IV. 697).

«нет необходимости отдавать Шекспиру бесконтрольную власть над нашими эстетическими убеждениями и, кстати и некстати, приводить в пример всего прекрасного его трагедии, находя в них все прекрасным» (Chernyshevsky 1939-1953: II. 283).

«многое у Шекспира уже устарело и понимается и ценится только тогда, когда мы перенесемся в прошедшее с его понятиями о вещах!» (Chernyshevsky 1939-1953: II. 51).

«половину каждой драмы Шекспира негодную для эстетического наслаждения в наше время» (Chernyshevsky 1939-1953: II. 50).

«Шекспир риторичен и напыщен, художественное построение драм его было бы вполне хорошо, если б их несколько переделать» (Chernyshevsky 1939-1953: II. 51).

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«измеряется его заслугами родине», «силою его патриотизма» (Chernyshevsky 1939-1953: III. 137).

«полнейшими представителями высшей степени человеческого сознания в известную эпоху, и, с этой высоты обозревая жизнь людей и природы и рисуя ее перед нами, они возвышались над служебного ролью литературы и становились в ряд исторических деятелей, способствовавших человечеству в яснейшем сознании его живых сил и естественных наклонностей. Таков был Шекспир» (Dobrolyubov 1934-1941: II. 325).

«его литературная деятельность подвинула общее сознание людей на несколько ступеней, па которые до пего никто не поднимался и которые только были изданы указываемы некоторыми философами»; «всемирное значение» Шекспира» (Dobrolyubov 1934-1941: II. 325).

«поступок его, полный гордого сознания, что он сам, сам по себе велик, а не по власти, которую держит в своих руках [...] служит к наказанию его надменного деспотизма». Но вот «из своего варварски бессмысленного положения» он переходит в «простое звание обыкновенного человека» и испытывает «все горести, соединенные с человеческою жизнью. Тут-то [...] и раскрываются все лучшие стороны его души; тут-то мы видим, что он доступен и великодушию, и нежности, и состраданию о несчастных, и самой гуманной справедливости. Сила его характера выражается не только в проклятиях дочерям, но и в сознании своей вины пред Корделиею, и в сожалении о своем крутом нраве, и в раскаянии, что он так мало думал о несчастных бедняках, так мало любил истинную честность»; «чувствуем ненависть к этому беспутному деспоту»; «исполняемся негодованием и жгучею злобой уже не к нему, а за него и за целый мир — к тому дикому, нечеловеческому положению, которое может доводить до такого беспутства даже людей, подобных Лиру» (Dobrolyubov 1934-1941: II. 70-71).

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«Шекспир высочайшею в мпре похвалою могущественнейшему и лучшему из людей признал слова: “человек был он”» (Chernyshevsky 1939-1953: IV. 770).

«Еще в невежественной Европе XVI века раздались знаменательные слова: “Человек был он”, и в них выразилось сознание гения о достоинстве человека» (Dobrolyubov 1934-1941: I. 213).

«истинным художникам», «мы до того подчиняемся творческой силе гения, что находим в себе силы даже из-под всей грязи и пошлости, обсыпавшей нас, просунуть голову на свет и свежий воздух и сознать, что действительно — создание поэта верно человеческой природе, что так должно быть, что иначе и быть не может» (Dobrolyubov 1934-1941: II. 374).

«один элемент, в особенности противный русскому человеку нашего времени», — «неестественно цветистый слог Шекспира, его громогласные метафоры, напыщенные выражения» (Druzhinin 1865-1867: VI. 347).

«целым морем годов, исторических событий, особенностей и предрассудков» (Druzhinin 1865-1867: VI. 349).

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«Из всех великих — Шекспир мне не дается, в том надо признаться с сокрушенным сердцем. О том, как мне претят его метафоры, я говорил где-то в печати [...] Шекспира я знаю уж как давно и чту его скорее головой, чем сердцем [...] Аристофан, в жалком французском переводе, повергал меня в пароксизмы хохота, а лучшая из Шекспировых комедий едва заставила меня раза три-четыре улыбнуться при ее чтении. Из всего этого следует, что моя способность понимать поэзию не ладит с поэзией Шекспира [...] Поработаем еще над собою и в случае неудачи отойдем от труда по крайней мере с сознанием того, что нами было немало сделано для его понимания» (Druzhinin 1986: 314-315).

«И тут-то оказывается величие Шекспира! Пишешь, пишешь и утомляешься, — все ново, все глубоко изящно и глубоко мудро!» (Druzhinin 1986: 317).

«совсем [...] не по вкусу»; «Пробовал раскрыть Шекспира, начал “Антония и Клеопатру”, отложил с зевотою. Почему мне всегда так трудно подступать к Шекспиру? [...] Не будет, кажется, Шекспир моей настольною книгою»; «остался недоволен. Тут уже нет ничего живого и поэтического»; «напыщенность [...] бьет в глаза» (Druzhinin 1986: 317, 345, 349, 350).

«Мы сами не с первого раза поняли Шекспира во всем его поражающем величии» (Druzhinin 1865-1867: III. 7).

«незлобного, любящего, великого поэта»; «В Александре Сергеиче готовился миру поэт высочайшего разбора, родной брат [...] может быть, Шекспиру»; «смерть ие дала сделаться русским Шекспиром» (Druzhinin 1865-1867: VII. 61, 72, 78).



«дидактическую», «свой поэтический талант в жертву интересам так называемой современности»; «артистическую», «что искусство служит и должно служить само себе целью» (Druzhinin 1865-1867: VII. 214, 217).

«Великий» поэт, «удаленный от всяких дидактических помыслов», «олимпиец в отношении поэзии», «человек минуты, философ настоящего, мирный и веселый зритель всего, что вокруг него творилось» (Druzhinin 1865-1867: VII. 218).

«Я тебя оправдываю вполне [...] ты провел месяц своей жизни в компании лиц, перед которыми прах все Антоны Борисычи и богачи Лимоыщиковы. Перед тобой прошел пленительный образ Корделии, ты присутствовал при ссоре Кассия с Брутом; ты рыдал, глядя, как мать Кориолана кидается на колени перед непреклонным сыном; ты пел серенаду под мраморным балконом Джульетты; ты пировал в таверне с сэром Джоном Фальстафом, величайшим искусником в деле чернокнижия! Тебе скажут, что ты рыдал и хохотал над фантазиями, — не верь подобной речи: такая фантазия выше действительности [...] Антон Борисыч есть фантазия, а Пук и Титания — действительность. И, наконец, резюмируя весь спор, можно сказать одно только: „ты был счастлив около тридцати дней сряду — пусть твои обвинители найдут в своей жизни за последний год [...] тридцать счастливых дней сряду!» (Druzhinin 1865-1867: VIII. 191).

«целым курсом политической мудрости» (Druzhinin 1865-1867: VII. 217).

«полный по природе своей любви, правосудия, мудрости», «испорчен общим поклонением»; «вследствие постоянных удач и всеобщего раболепства» (Druzhinin 1865-1867: III. 15).

«посмотреть повнимательнее, с своей точки зрения, на те старые литературные кумиры [...] за которые прячутся наши очень свирепые, по очень трусливые гонители» (Pisarev 1955-1956: III. 364).

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«понимать великие общественные и философские вопросы нашего века» (Pisarev 1955-1956: III. 415).

«Умел он в споре ядовито / Воскликнуть вслух: «Вот дураки-то!» / Умел врага отделать в пух: / «Шекспир ваш — то же, что лопух!» (Minaev 1865: II. 377).

«я сказал о Шекспире, что это был гусь. В заключение я могу прибавить, что он при том же — и лапчатый» (*Otechestvennyye Zapiski* 1865: 57).

«всякий ремесленник настолько же полезнее любого поэта, насколько всякое положительное число, как бы мало ни было, больше нуля» (Zaitsev 1864: 64).

«Итак, нет такого полотера, нет такого золотаря, который не был бы полезнее Шекспира в бесконечное множество раз!» (Boborykin, ed. 1864: 34).

«великие личности Шекспира и Гете покажут публике всю ничтожность крикливых литературных пигмеев» (*Golos* 1865: 1).

«если бы у этого аскета-реалиста была хоть капля здравого смысла, он бы знал, что шекспировские драмы возбуждают мозговую деятельность гораздо лучше и живее, чем сигара» (Antonovich 1961: 270).

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«есть только одна слабость: хорошая сигара, без которой он не может вполне успешно размышлять» (Pisarev 1955-1956: III. 11).

«нигилизм в искусстве значит просто чистое, голое отрицание искусства и его явлений, как вещей абсолютно ненужных жизни, не долженствующих существовать» (Grigoriev 1862: 55).

«У вас же общий-то знаменатель, как ни называйте его, все-таки выходит — брюхо. Даже сигара, о которой вы давеча говорили, — тоже брюхо» (Soloviev 1864: 14).

«Смешно [...] требовать, чтобы Шекспир своими сочинениями производил что-нибудь непосредственно полезное и практическое, есть нечто высшее, чем польза — это истина и красота, которые в обоюдном слиянии составляют, так сказать, вечную пользу» (Soloviev 1865: 2).

«портняжническом, узкопрактическом взгляде на жизнь»; «Поэты составляют собой как бы науку о жизни [...] над которою, как над Шекспиром, трудятся целые общества» (Soloviev 1865: 27-28).

«Шекспир не был рыцарем прогресса, — иронизировал он, — по нашим современным понятиям, он был жалкий консерватор, не стоявший в уровень с современной наукой, он занимался изображением человеческих глупостей, как например любви, ревности, народных типов» (Averkiev 1864: 199).

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«Отселе вы должны себе взять за правило, что сапоги во всяком случае лучше Пушкина, потому что без Пушкина очень можно обойтись, а без сапогов никак нельзя обойтись, а следственно, Пушкин — роскошь и вздор [...] Вздор и роскошь даже сам Шекспир [...] Но заметьте себе, молодое перо! О Шекспире можно и погодить [...] Шекспира можно и пощадить, конечно, до времени» (Dostoyevsky 1972-1988: XX. 109).

«Социалисты дальше брюха не идут [...] Они с гордостью в этом признаются: сапоги лучше Шекспира, о бессмертии души стыдно говорить и т.д. и т.д.» (Dostoyevsky 1972-1988: XX. 192-193).

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«оградить юношей от революционных настроений» (Rovda 1964: 593).

«Безнравственно и бесчестно говорить [...] разумному человеку о великих красотах шекспировских произведений» (Protopopov 1890: 24).

«Писать об этом в стране, где голодают сотни тысяч людей, где живут чуть не в нищете миллионы» (Mikhailov 1882: 48).

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«Избави нас бог от разных Дездемон, которые протягивают шею: “Извольте, барин, душите меня...”. Женщина нашего времени так бы глупо не кончила» (Krestovsky 1877: 114).

«драматической справедливости» и не по принципу воздаяния «по делам и заслугам», а по «законам господства наибольшей силы, способной обнаружиться в данных условиях» (Lavrov 1882: 65).

«надо действовать и бороться; вот все поучение, которое мы извлекаем из драм Шекспира; надо вооружаться для действия и борьбы; надо быть всегда готовым к действию и борьбе; и когда минута драматического конфликта наступает для каждого [...] надо решительно встречать неотвратимое» (Lavrov 1882: 86).

«и каждое новое поколение черпает в драмах Шекспира те побуждения к энергии, в которых нуждается всякий, кто способен участвовать в исторической жизни своего времени» (Lavrov 1882: 90).

«Мы можем эстетически наслаждаться величественными фигурами Генриха и Кориолана, но их отношение к окружающему их “низшему” миру в нас вызывает невольное нравственное отвращение» (Lavrov 1882: 96).

«презрительном отношении ко всякому протесту народа против высокомерия культурных, господствующих единиц»; «Вся эта сторона Шекспира для нас отжила» (Lavrov 1882: 97-99).

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«Шекспир не может быть признаваем не только великим, гениальным, но даже самым посредственным сочинителем» (Tolstoy 1928-1959: XXXV. 217).

«действующие лица по внешности действительно поставлены в противоречие с окружающим миром и борются с ним», «по борьбе их не вытекает из естественного хода событий и из характеров лиц, а совершенно произвольно устанавливается автором», «живут, думают, говорят и поступают совершенно несоответственно времени и месту», «всегда одним и тем же шекспировским, вычурным, неестественным языком», «нет изображения характеров» (Tolstoy 1928-1959: XXXV. 237-240).

«есть самое низменное, пошлое мирозерцание, считающее внешнюю высоту сплывших мира действительным преимуществом людей, презиращее толпу [...] отрицающее всякие, не только религиозные, но и гуманитарные. стремления, направленные к изменению существующего строя» (Tolstoy 1928-1959: XXXV. 258).

«уяснения религиозного сознания», «чем скорее люди освободятся от ложного восхваления Шекспира, тем это будет лучше», «никак не могут быть учителями жизни и что учение о жизни, покуда нет настоящей религиозной драмы, надо искать в других источниках» (Tolstoy 1928-1959: XXXV. 271-272).

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«Мне нужно было высказать то, что сидело во мне полстолетия» (Tolstoy 1928-1959: LXXIV. 202).

«Дело не в аристократизме Шекспира, а в извращении, посредством восхваления нехудожественных произведений, эстетического вкуса» (Tolstoy 1928-1959: LXXIV. 202).

«А Лев Толстой, говоря без всякого пристрастия, становится превосходным литератором, умнея и образовываясь с каждым днем. Уже он понимает Лира и пил за здоровье Шекспира» (qtd. Izmailov 1930: 202).

«Не позволяйте внешним несообразностям отталкивать Вас; проникнете в середину, в сердцевину творения — и удивитесь гармонии и истине этого великого духа» (Turgenev 1961-1968: III. 75-76).

«Хвала Шекспиру была кратковременно, в душе он его не любит» (Tolstaya 1928: 31).

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«психологическая достоверность», «романтическая энергия и страсть» (Anikst 1950: 11).

«Ее честолюбие, как оно ни титанически велико, все сконцентрировалось вокруг ореола славы, могущества и величия самого дорогого, самого близкого для нее существа — ее мужа» (Kicheev 1955: 424).

«шероховатый и тяжелый» (Belinsky 1953-1959: IX. 323).

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«Мне казалось, какой-то голос кричал: “Не спите более! Мэкет умерщвляет сон, невинный сон — сон, разматывающий спутанный моток забот, эту смерть жизни каждого дня, эту мыльню тягостного труда, этот бальзам душ растерзанных, эту вторую переменную за столом природы — питательнейшее блюдо на пиру жизни”» (Ketcher, tr. 1862: III, 324).

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«Я слышал, / Раздался страшный вопль: «Не спите больше! Макбет зарезал сон, невинный сон! / Зарезал искупителя забот, / Бальзам целебный для больной души, / Великого союзника природы, / Хозяина на жизненном пиру!» (Kroneberg, tr. 1:360).

«его перевод классический, вполне достойный подлинника» (Belinsky 1953-1959: IX. 575-576).

«понятиям о том, как должно передавать Шекспира» (Likhonin 1854: 29).

«старался всего более сохранить и самый метафоризм поэта, как он иногда ни казался странным [...] даже антитезы, игру слов старался передавать, по возможности, с буквальной точностью» (Likhonin 1854: 29).

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«Изысканные и натянутые метафоры Шекспира, допускаемые в подлиннике самым свойством английского языка, буквально переданные по-русски, будут непонятны, дики и смешны [...] Пожалеем, что столько времени и стараний потрачено на неудачную и бесполезную работу» (Likhonin 1854: 21-22).

«выражение истинных, а не вымышленных отношений духа человеческого к видимой природе и наоборот», «разоблачить его творения от этой духовной одежды», «Шекспир перестает быть тем, что он есть» (*Moskovityanin* 1854: 45).

«в настоящее время масса русской читающей публики уже развилась настолько в литературном отношении, чтобы не удивляться некоторым сравнениям, оборотам языка и выражениям, которые так часто встречаются у Шекспира и составляют одну из поразительнейших особенностей его произведений [...] Перевод Шекспира должен быть слепком, снимком, в котором малейшее прикосновение грубой руки может нарушить всю гармонию целого» (Ustrialov 1862: 1).

«Одним словом, труд г. Ф.Н. Устрялова, в своем роде очень добросовестный, может пригодиться начинающему читать Шекспира — для сравнений, может пригодиться переводчику — для справок. Но желающий ознакомиться с “Макбетом” после чтения, даже двукратного и троекратного, этого перевода все-таки не узнает ни одной из тех красок, которыми Шекспир обрисовал эту личность. А уж величия Шекспира — и подавно не увидит, за это можно поручиться» (*Russkoe Slovo* 1862: 77).

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«Посѣвъ быть золь, такъ и пожнемъ мы злое» (3.2.58; Kroneberg, tr.).

«мысль о том, что зло неизбежно порождает новые злодеяния, за которыми, однако, неотвратимо следует возмездие» (Afonin 1977: 144).

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«предметом трагедии может быть и отрицательная сторона жизни, но являющаяся в силе и ужасе, а не в мелкости и смехе, - в огромных размерах, а не в ограниченности, - в страсти, а не страстишках, - в преступлениях, а не в проступке, - в злодействе, а не в плутнях» (Belinsky 1953-1959: III. 447).

«те страшные уклонения от нормальности, к которым способны только сильные и глубокие души» (Belinsky 1953-1959: III. 447).

«вы видите в нем человека, в котором заключалась такая же возможность победы, как и падения, и который, при другом направлении, мог бы быть другим человеком» (Belinsky 1953-1959: III. 447).

«демоны человеческой природы», «сатаническим величием своего отвержения от всего человеческого и женственного, своим демоническим торжеством над законами человеческой и женской натуры, адским хладнокровием своей решимости на мрачное злодейство» (Belinsky 1953-1959: III. 447).

«слабого сосуда женской организации», «сатанинский дух», «безумство сердца», «помешательство рассудка» (Belinsky 1953-1959: III. 447).

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«в которого в его падении совершилось торжество нравственного духа» (Belinsky 1953-1959: III. 447).



«Типичен даже Макбет - этот случайный злодей, наведенный на зло посторонней женской волей - и потом малодушный, жалкий, уже падший задолго до наступления кары, расплаты. Такая личность в разнообразных размерах нередко мелькает в уголовных процессах... И везде одинаково, с различием в размерах, и отзовется эта вечная, типичная человеческая драма! (См. выше о Макбете.) [...] И в Лире, и в Макбете, и в Отелло можно предсказать, как поступят они в данном событии» (Goncharov 2017: 4-5).

«Он, как поэт [...] служил искусству, а не родине, не патриотические стремления, а только художественно-психологические вопросы были двинуты вперед Макбетом и Лиром, Ромео и Отелло» (Chernyshevsky 1939-1953: III. 137).

«особенного ничего нет, не могу понимать красот» (Chernyshevsky 1939-1953: I. 327).

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«Вздор и роскошь даже сам Шекспир, потому что у этого даже ведьмы являются, а ведьмы — уже последняя степень ретроградства» (Dostoyevsky 1972-1988: XX. 109).

«чувствуется присутствие вечной творческой силы жизни, так чудесно умеющей создавать великое из “ничто”!» (Shestov 2016: 135).

«Помню то удивленье, которое я испытал при первом чтении Шекспира. Я ожидал получить большое эстетическое наслаждение. Но, прочтя одно за другим считающиеся лучшими его произведения: “Короля Лира”, “Ромео и Юлию”, “Гамлета”, “Макбета”, я не только не испытал наслаждения, но почувствовал неотразимое отвращение, скуку и недоумение» (Tolstoy 1928-1959: XXXV. 216).

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«Искусству Пушкин указал, как его высший предмет, изображение крупных исторических явлений жизни народной, изображение больших людей и деятелей,

представляющих исторические силы и движения эпохи, изображение и сцены жизни народной» (Asmus 1968: 342).

«поэтом действительности»; «верным изображением лиц, времени, развитием исторических характеров и событий» (Pushkin 1937-1959: VII. 116, 73).

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«Теперь только и речей, что о Шекспире, а я той веры, что Шекспиру подражать не можно и не должно. Шекспир должен быть для нашего века не образцом, а только историческим памятником» (Bulgarin 1840: 91).

«Но если бы вместо фактических последствий царевубийства Пушкин развил нам более его психологическое влияние на Бориса, как Шекспир в «Макбете», если бы вместо русского монаха, который в темной келье произносит над Годуновым приговор судьбы и потомства, поэт представил нам шекспировских ведьм [...] тогда, конечно, он был бы скорее понят и принят с большим восторгом» (Kireevsky 1996: 534-535).

«Тень умерщвленного Димитрия царствует в трагедии от начала до конца, управляет ходом всех событий, служит связью всем лицам и сценам, расставляет в одну перспективу все отдельные группы и различным краскам дает один общий тон, один кровавый оттенок» (Kireevsky 1996: 534).

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«воскресить минувший век во всей его истине» (Pushkin 1937-1959: VII. 218).

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«Дух века требует важных перемен и на сцене драматической [...] нашему театру приличны народные законы драмы Шекспировой» (Pushkin 1937-1959: XI. 141).

«я расположил свою трагедию по системе отца нашего Шекспира и принеся ему в жертву пред его алтарь два классические единства и едва сохранив последнее» (Pushkin 1937-1959: XI. 66).

«По примеру Шекспира я ограничился изображением эпохи и исторических лиц, не гонясь за сценическими эффектами, романтическим пафосом и т. п. Стиль трагедии — смешанный» (Pushkin 1937-1959: XIV. 46).

«Не смущаемый никаким светским влиянием, Шекспиру я подражал в его вольном и широком изображении характеров, в небрежном и простом составлении типов» (Pushkin 1937-1959: XI. 140).

«Пушкин усвоил его концепцию характеров, масштабность личности его героев, чья широта обусловлена не простым рационализмом, а стихией чувств и дерзновением поступков. Его характеры обладают не только живой естественностью, но и речевой индивидуальностью» (Zakharov 2003: 47).

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«под самым близким влиянием Шекспира» (Timofeev 1887: 71-76).

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«Читайте Шекспира (это мой постоянный припев) [...] он никогда не боится скомпрометировать своего героя, он заставляет его говорить с полнейшей непринужденностью как в жизни, ибо уверен, что в надлежащую минуту и при надлежащих обстоятельствах он найдет для него язык, соответствующий его характеру» (Pushkin 1937-1959: XIII. 197-198).

«превозмог своего учителя стройностью плана, жизненностью и яркостью изображаемых характеров, превосходный драматизмом положения и блестящей законченностью действия» (Meyerhold 1936: 205).

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«не способном ни на что великое» (Belinsky 1953-1959: V. 59).

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«Юродство о Христе – один из труднейших и великих подвигов христианского благочестия, какие из любви к Богу и ближним принимали на себя особенные ревнители благочестия» (Kovalevsky, ed. 1902: 2).

«третье из лиц, представляющих в трагедии Высшую правду» (Nepomnyashchy 2001: 205).

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«персонаж возводится на недостижимую высоту: он вершит суд, провозглашая объективную Истину» (Moteyunaite 2000: 112).

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«Пушкинская интерпретация Шекспира была новым этапом в освоении наследия великого английского драматурга. Пушкин полнее и глубже, чем его предшественники, раскрыл народно-исторический характер шекспировской драмы. В этом — его оригинальность, в этом — его международное значение» (Verkhovsky 1937: 187).

«творение, достойное занять первое место после шекспировских драм» (Belinsky 1953-1959: V. 59).

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«Шекспир - это избранник, которого Творец помазал пророком, чтоб разоблачить перед миром тайну о человеке» (Dostoyevsky 1972-1988: XI. 157).

«Это не простое воспроизведение насущного [...] Вся действительность не исчерпывается насущным, ибо огромною своей частью заключается в нём в виде ещё подспудного, невысказанного будущего слова. Изредка являются пророки, которые угадывают и высказывают это цельное слово. Шекспир - это пророк, посланный Богом, чтобы возвестить нам тайну о человеке, душе человеке[ской]». (Dostoyevsky 1972-1988: XI. 237).

«Как много святого и великого, чистого [на] этом свете: Моисей и Шекспир» (Dostoyevsky 1972-1988: XXVIII. 63).

«представил хронику своего времени, сколько изобразил процесс духовного разложения современной ему Европы» (Syromiatnikov 2012: 330).

«Европа - кладбище, дорогие там лежат покойники» (Dostoyevsky 1972-1988: XIV. 210).

«сделала много христианского... Еще бы, не сейчас же там умерло христианство, умирало долго, оставило следы. Да там и теперь есть христиане, но зато страшно много извращенного понимания христианства» (Dostoyevsky 1972-1988: XXVII. 57).

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«Трагедия «Макбет» с полным правом могла бы называться «Преступлением и наказанием». Я не мог отделаться от параллелей с Достоевским, когда переводил ее»; (Pasternak 1990: 279).

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«Убийство дело отчаянное, опасное. Перед его совершением надо все тщательно обдумать, предусмотреть все возможности. Шекспир и Достоевский, думающие за своих героев, наделяют их даром предвидения и воображением, равным их собственному. Способность к своевременному уточнению частных здесь

одинаковая у авторов и их героев. Это двойной, повышенный реализм детектива или уголовного романа, осторожный, оглядывающийся, как само преступление. Макбет и Раскольников не природные злодеи, не преступники от рождения. Преступниками делают их ложные, головные построения, шаткие, ошибочные умозаключения. В одном случае толчком, отправной точкой служит предсказание ведьм, зажигающее в человеке целый пожар честолюбия. В другом — слишком далеко зашедшее нигилистическое допущение, что если Бога нет, то все дозволено, а значит, и совершение убийства, ничем существенным не отличающееся от любого другого человеческого действия или поступка» (Pasternak 1990: 279).

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«сновидения изображаются исключительно посредством их уподобления действительности. События в них проявляют себя подчас ужасающе отчетливо по сравнению с воспринимаемой действительностью» (Laut 1966: 96).

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«И вовсе не душевнобольные предмет его художественного анализа, а духовнобольные, идейнобольные» (Saraskina 1990: 134).

«Писатель использует целую иерархию снов, несколько ступеней особых психофизических состояний человека: забытье, бред, галлюцинация, сущность и назначение которых очень точно определено в «Преступлении и наказании»» (Kondratiev 2013: 100).

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«он не является составляющей простых реакций, как отмечал Достоевский в его «Дневнике», человек принадлежит обществу, но не весь» (Tiapugina 2014: 176).

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«герои Шекспира присваивают себе функции Провидения»; «Будучи внешне подвигаемы к действию низшими представителями иного мира (призраком, ведьмами), они на самом деле следуют своим, уже прежде сформировавшимся убеждениям и оценкам ближних» (Stepanyan 2016: 171).

«вступая в пространство трагедии в героико-романтическом ореоле», «принеся в угоду своим амбициям чужую жизнь» (Stepanian 2015).

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«ужас от такого поистине шекспировского, как будто из «Макбета», прорицания» (Tunimanov 2004: 331).

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«не как жалкое и дикое явление, а в трагическом виде, как искажение души, сопровождаемое жестоким страданием» (Strakhov 2000: 102).

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«Достоевский творил новую художественную реальность [...] выразившую шекспировский дух творчества русского писателя» (Zakharov 2006).

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«в каждом сердце еще есть добро – стоит только, чтобы люди увидели на пожаре ребенка в пламени, и все пожелают, чтобы он был спасен. Я это понял и исповедую и благодаря этому действительно находил теплые углы в холодных сердцах и освещал их» (Leskov 1956-1958: X. 451).

«хранительницу нравственности, мира дома и семьи» (Berezina 2016: 81).

«Искусство должно следовать за жизнью, непосредственно служить делу улучшения материальных условий жизни людей и совершенствования социальных отношений» (Tsimbaev 2010).

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«Вздор и роскошь даже сам Шекспир, потому что у этого даже ведьмы являются, а ведьмы — уже последняя степень ретроградства, и особенно вредны для русского юношества, которое и без Шекспира заражаются ведьмами» (Dostoyevsky 1972-1988: XX. 109).

«Дикий произвол» и «шаткий субъективизм» характеризуют русское просвещение, в нем «противоречиво соединяются отрицание абсолютных ценностей с только абсолютными ценностями обосновываемыми пафосом служения» (Chizhevsky 2007: 283).

«догматизм суждений»; «ищущего абсолютных и непререкаемых истин и простых решешний трудных жизненных вопросов» (Chernyshova 2015: 24).

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«скалить зубы перед мраморною статуею — занятие очень глупое, бесплодное и неблагодарное»; «печальная привычка к тунеядству и к сивухе» (Pisarev 2003: VI. 258; VII. 183).

«Духовное движение должно прекратиться! Ответ на необходимость ставить и решать новые вопросы все тот же — нечего думать, т. е. провозглашается духовная смерть!» (Chizhevsky 2011: 185).

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«чудище, которое уж совершенно со всякого толка сбивает; читаешь и не веришь глазам, просто зги не видно» (Zaitsev 1864: 48).



«единственное уподобление, какое можно сделать ему, это статьи немецких таинственных газет и журналов вроде «Baierischer Polizei Anzeiger» или «Deutsches Geheim Polizei Centralblatt»» (Zaitsev 1864: 47).

«На таких джентльменов, как гг. Писемский, Ключников и Стебницкий, все здравомыслящие люди смотрят как на людей отпетых» (Pisarev 1855-1856: III. 260).  
««Некуда» никогда не было литературным произведением»; «это вовсе и не роман, а просто сбор разных сплетен, следовательно, он и значения никакого иметь не может» (Saltykov-Shchedrin 1900-1911: VIII. 364-365).

«При моем появлении в обществе люди брали шапки и уходили вон; в ресторанах нарочно при мне ругали автора «Некуда»» (qtd. Faresov 1904: 60).

«цензура не душила ни одной книги с таким остервенением»; «марал беспощадно целыми главами»; «Я потерял голову и проклинал час, в который задумал писать это злосчастное сочинение» (Leskov 1956-1958: II. 711-712).

«он был дурак [...] нужных мыслей у него нет [...] он человек бесполезный и ничтожный» (Leskov 1989: II. 561-562).

«мнимые идеалы»; «грубое невежество» (Leskov 1988: 85, 88).

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«Арапов, бледный и растрепанный, с левою ладонью у сердца и с теплым пистолетом в правой руке выбежал из чулана. Он напоминал собою Макбета более, чем все современные актеры, терзающие Шекспира [...] тут он не «играл из себя комедии» [...] а действительно был объят страшным ужасом» (Leskov 1989: IV. 375).

«и, выронив пистолет, тяжело рухнулся на пол в сильном обмороке, закончившем его безумство. Барсук был убит наповал, и очнувшийся к вечеру Арапов сам не понимал, зачем он убил бедного зверя» (Leskov 1989: IV. 375).

«Барсук был облит кровью, а сам Арапов заставлял жалеть, что в течение этих трех или четырех часов его жизни не мог наблюдать хоть Розанов для своей психиатрической диссертации или великий драматический талант для типического создания героя современной комедии» (Leskov 1989: IV. 375).

«Я его признаю честнейшим делом моей жизни, но успех его отношу не к искусству моему, а к верности понятия времени и людей «комической эпохи»» (Leskov 1956-1958: X. 169).

«Разнохарактерное potpourri из пестрых воспоминаний полинявшего человека. Посвящается всем находящимся не на своих местах и не при своем деле» (Leskov 1871: 9).

«Сталкиваясь с калейдоскопической пестротой русской действительности, где смешное и нелепое образуют своеобразный анекдотизм русской жизни» (Pisarevsky 2004: 8).

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«тут эти несчастные люди гибнут, а мы, глядя на них, лишь восклицаем: «кровь их на нас»» (Leskov 1989: V. 130).

«Она, бедняга, даже ночью, как леди Макбет, по губернаторскому дому все ходила да стонала: «Кровь на нас, кровь! Иди прочь, Грегуар, на тебе кровь!»» (Leskov 1989: V. 136).

«Как Бирнамский лес с прутьями пойдем и всех перепорем, и славян освободим [...] и Парижскую губернию учредим» (Leskov 1989: V. 149).

«людей века, когда все рассыпается» (Golovko 2012: 123).

«Какой там Макбет? Нам не Макбеты нужны, а науки; но что же делать, когда здесь учиться невозможно» (Leskov 1989: I. 133).

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«Утешьтесь, друг любезный, все люди рождены своими матерями. Один Макдуф был вырезан из чрева, да и то для того, чтобы Макбета не победил – женой рожденный» (Leskov 1989: I. 133).

«Цели и все задние мысли грубых людей, вволивших это безнравственное учение, были... гоняться... за силою, за влиянием, за угождением своей плоти и своим страстям, без всякой нравственной борьбы и жертвований.» (Leskov 1956-1958: X. 36-37).

«страстная»; «на перепутье» (Starygina 2003: 204).

«перенесение шекспировского героя в российский уезд»; «в гуще народной жизни можно найти трагические коллизии шекспировских масштабов» (Levin 1988: 155).  
«общечеловеческий драматизм в сочинениях Шекспира» (Drugov 1957: 30-31).

«верное изображение действительности» (qtd. Leskov 1956-1958: I. 499).

«Грех есть не немощь какая-нибудь человеческая, не простое влечение чувственности, а сознательно-добровольное отторжение в сторону самолюбивой, гордостной самозаключенности и самообожествления» (Belyaev 1998: I. 223).

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«Страстью называют уже самый порок, от долгого времени вгнездившийся в душе и чрез навик сделавшийся как бы природным ее свойством, так что душа уже произвольно и сама собою к нему стремится» (John Climacus 1898: 115).

«героини живут активной внутренней жизнью, их душевные силы направлены на обнаружение в себе Божественного образа, что регулирует их поведение в семье и обществе» (Starygina 2003: 217).

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«Живое, болезненное ощущение силы зла, царящего в мире» (Trubetskoj 1989: 113).

«мы прежде все отвергали и тогда нас звали нигилистами, теперь [...] это все выходит какое-то поголовное шарлатанство: и безверием, и верой, и материей, и духом. Да что же такое мы сами? [...] Всякая сволочь имеет себе название, а мы... мы какие-то темные силы, из которых неведомо что выйдет» (Leskov 1989: IX. 127).

«Это что-то недоброе! – мелькнуло во взгляде Ларисы.» (Leskov 1989: VIII. 122).

«Хорошая натура всегда остается хорошей, во всякой среде и при всяком учении.» (Leskov 1989: VIII. 424).

«суетливого и суетного», пренебрегающего «спокойствием и счастьем ближних», способного «обречь на страдания многих» (Leskov 1989: VIII. 108, 216, 427).

«Необходимость быть причисленным к чему-нибудь новому, модному», «беспокойное воображение», которое «одолело ум и заменило чувства», «легкомысленное неуважение ко всему, к чему человеку внушается почтение самую его натурой» (Leskov 1989: VIII. 136, 216, 427).

«полное презрение к преданию» превращают Жозефа в человека страстного, «бурно пламенного» (Leskov 1989: VIII. 428).

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«Все преступления имеют почему-то свойство обнаруживаться.» (Leskov 1989: IX. 231).

«гордость, сатанински воспрявшая» (Leskov 1989: IX. 219).

«Мефистофель» (Leskov 1989: IX. 14).

«Горданов ей был страшен как демон [...] его черные глаза и смуглый облик [...] разгорался и делался сначала медным, потом красно-огненным и жег ее» (Leskov 1989: IX. 216).

«Это темный человек» (Leskov 1989: IX. 165).

«темный дух» (Leskov 1989: IX. 137).

«в комнатах стояла непрглядная темень» (Leskov 1989: VIII. 164).

«траурная Бордростина», «черная и коварная женщина» (Leskov 1989: IX. 104, 159, 401).

«В детстве ее любили и рядили, в юности выставляли как куклу»; Горданов «ею хотел орудовать как красавицей»; вышла замуж она «через красоту [...] прибрежена как человек» (Leskov 1989: VIII. 345).

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«живет озлобленным умом» (Starygina 2003: 222).

«Она [...] досадливо вглядывалась в ту страшную духовную нищету свою, которая грозила ей после осуществления ее плана обладать громадным вещественным богатством, и в эти минуты Глафира была человек, более чем все ее партнеры. Она видела и мысленно измеряла глубину своего падения и слала горькие пени и проклятия тому, кто оторвал ее от дающих опору преданий и опрокинул пред ней все идеалы простого добра и простого счастья» (Leskov 1989: IX, 146).

«Типу женщины «на перепутье», то есть находящейся в состоянии перехода от противоестественного к естественному состоянию [...] духовного возрождения и спасения героини» (Starygina 2003: 218).

«С ней и над ней загодя совершалась казнь отрицаний, неотразимая для всякого отрицателя, посягнувшего на все святое души, но не лишенного того, что

называется натурой. Она вкушала муки духовного нищенства, и в этом было ее преимущество пред Гордановым и братией, и в этом же заключалось и сугубое несчастье, ибо естественная природа зла, порождающая одно зло из другого, не пускала ее назад» (Leskov 1989: IX. 147).

«Совесьть» (Leskov 1989: IX. 19).

«Природа возмущается тому, что я делаю» (Leskov 1989: IX. 22).

«Да, да, да, есть... есть... его нет, но он есть, есть оно...» (Leskov 1989: IX. 21).

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## *Resumen en lengua castellana*

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Los eventos históricos del siglo XIX hicieron que *Macbeth* fuera realmente importante en Rusia. En la primera mitad del siglo, el aumento del nacionalismo ruso tras la victoria en la Guerra Patria de 1812 se vio frenado por la asunción del trono por Nicolás I y el fracaso de la revuelta decembrista de 1825, que dio lugar a décadas de un régimen militarista y burocrático más estricto, con una severa censura y supresión de las expresiones literarias y artísticas. La abolición de la servidumbre a mediados de siglo inauguró la traumática transición de la estructura patriarcal y el sistema de hogares a un capitalismo urbano que supuso el fin de innumerables comunidades rurales y condujo a un empobrecimiento generalizado y a la exacerbación de la desigualdad social, la creciente desespiritualización y el aumento de la delincuencia. Criados en el marco del cristianismo ortodoxo, los escritores rusos analizaron y trataron de encontrar soluciones a los problemas sociales y al creciente nihilismo desde la perspectiva de sus opiniones religiosas y valores morales. En un siglo de agitación, tanto los románticos como los realistas recurrieron a *Macbeth* para que les ayudara a articular su percepción de la época, de la naturaleza humana y del papel del individuo en la historia de la humanidad.

La tesis no sólo examina la recepción y apropiación de *Macbeth* en el siglo XIX, sino que también intenta explicar históricamente por qué la tragedia se convirtió en un texto fuente tan crucial. En el proceso, define las peculiaridades de las condiciones y problemas sociales y políticos de la Rusia del siglo XIX y su reflejo en la crítica, el drama y la ficción de los principales escritores de la época; identifica las características específicas del romanticismo y el realismo europeos y evalúa su impacto en el desarrollo de la literatura rusa; evalúa el lugar y el papel de Shakespeare en la historia literaria rusa y en la controversia social y política; analiza la contribución de *Macbeth* a la transformación de los conceptos políticos, religiosos y filosóficos, en las obras seleccionadas de los escritores y críticos románticos y realistas rusos; y explora el uso recurrente de las figuras de Macbeth y Lady Macbeth para problematizar las cuestiones del crimen y el castigo, el humanismo y la responsabilidad personal.

Las metas y objetivos de la investigación han determinado la aplicación de un enfoque comparativo sistémico, que suelen utilizar los estudiosos en el caso de la

apropiación de un texto de fuente extranjera en una literatura nacional porque no sólo los textos literarios entran en diálogo sino las culturas en sentido amplio, con sus propias costumbres y tradiciones, los acontecimientos históricos, las situaciones políticas, las condiciones económicas, los entornos sociales, las creencias religiosas y los valores morales que configuran las visiones del mundo propias de un autor determinado. La tesis está vertebrada por un conjunto interrelacionado de procedimientos metodológicos, cada uno con su propia base en la teoría. Asume la validez del “positivismo sociológico” al ofrecer un relato de cómo determinadas literaturas nacionales tienen características particulares; aplica el método cultural-histórico de percepción, análisis y evaluación de una obra literaria; los métodos de la poética teórica para determinar lo compositivo (tramas, motivos, símbolos e imágenes) y lo subjetivo (problemas y temas); el método hermenéutico para estudiar la recepción de la obra y su interpretación por los escritores rusos; y los métodos de análisis intertextual para determinar un conjunto de elementos intertextuales de la literatura rusa del siglo XIX que ponen de manifiesto la asimilación del *Macbeth* de Shakespeare (el tema del regicidio, los problemas de la tentación y el pecado, el destino y la voluntad; los motivos simbólicos y las imágenes de lo sobrenatural; los personajes de Macbeth y Lady Macbeth; las tramas del crimen y el castigo).

En su intento de definir el *Macbeth* ruso como el resultado de negociaciones políticas, sociales e ideológicas a lo largo del siglo XIX y de ampliar la noción del Shakespeare ruso en general, la tesis ofrece continuidades beneficiosas a lo largo del período investigado. En su Capítulo 1 introductorio se ofrece una breve visión del problema de la investigación, se establecen la finalidad y los objetivos, se esboza la metodología utilizada, se hace un repaso de la bibliografía relacionada con el tema y se muestra la estructura de la tesis.

En el Capítulo 2 se examina brevemente el estado crítico del arte ruso del siglo XVIII para rastrear las formas en que Shakespeare llegó al país y penetró en su cultura. La observación no deja dudas de que la apropiación de Shakespeare por parte de Rusia heredó, tras un considerable retraso, rasgos similares de otros países europeos. Mientras que para Gran Bretaña el siglo XVIII creó a Shakespeare como una exportación nacional y lo convirtió en el ejemplo supremo del genio nacional, para Rusia sólo preparó el terreno para un conocimiento general del dramaturgo y dejó abierta la cuestión de cómo tratar sus obras. Los prerrománticos apreciaron la originalidad del dramaturgo a la hora de transmitir los sentimientos, las emociones y los pensamientos humanos, un logro que se esforzaron por restaurar en su poesía y sus traducciones. Aunque Shakespeare estaba lejos



de convertirse en un fenómeno cultural y político en la Rusia del siglo XVIII, y más aún de convertirse en un modelo de nacionalismo ruso como lo había hecho en Alemania, la asimilación de Shakespeare en el país se había puesto en marcha. Y eso abriría el camino para que la literatura nacional se sincronizara con las tendencias literarias europeas y se integrara en el contexto cultural mundial.

El Capítulo 3 se centra en la recepción de *Macbeth* durante el romanticismo ruso estudiando los principales medios (adaptaciones y traducciones, ensayos críticos publicados en revistas populares y diarios y cartas personales de críticos y escritores) a través de los cuales se leyó y escribió sobre Shakespeare y *Macbeth* en particular. La gama de fuentes primarias disponibles demuestra el alcance de la omnipresencia de Shakespeare y la accesibilidad de sus palabras e ideas al público ruso. El análisis de los antecedentes históricos en su amplio contexto europeo muestra cómo las corrientes estéticas predominantes que conformaron la imagen del Shakespeare romántico en otros países influyeron en la construcción del Shakespeare romántico ruso que se convertiría en fundamental para el crecimiento de una nueva identidad nacional rusa. Debido al interés obsesivo de los románticos rusos por la cultura popular y a su preocupación por lo místico, las brujas de *Macbeth* autorizaron la aparición en el escenario ruso en el drama de Antón Delvig, Wilhelm Küchelbecker y Alexander Griboyedov de las creencias populares nacionales, mientras que el fantasma de Banquo como dispositivo literario introdujo y autorizó lo sobrenatural en la ficción de Mikhail Lermontov y Alexander Pushkin.

El Capítulo 4 está dedicado a la recepción de *Macbeth* durante el realismo ruso. Evalúa la transformación o complicación del culto a Shakespeare, como ídolo literario con un profundo conocimiento de la naturaleza humana que fue recalibrado como símbolo del arte de los idealistas y simultáneamente objeto de burla para los revolucionarios radicales. En la medida en que la crítica de personajes pasó a primer plano en la literatura crítica rusa, los escritores de ficción se propusieron crear tipos humanos realistas y presentar la vida social actual, refiriéndose al mismo tiempo a los personajes de Shakespeare por su universalidad y diversidad. *Macbeth* y *Lady Macbeth* encarnaron su protesta contra la autocracia zarista anárquica en *Boris Godunov* de Pushkin y el desprecio nihilista por los valores humanos intrínsecos en *Crimen y castigo* de Dostoievski y en la ficción de Leskov.

La tesis termina con conclusiones, referencias y un apéndice que incluye los textos originales de los pasajes citados del ruso. Se infiere que *Macbeth* fue una de las obras de

Shakespeare más regularmente representadas y evaluadas en Gran Bretaña y otros países europeos. Desde finales del siglo XVII los lectores y los aficionados al teatro conocían bien su trepidante trama y sus sorprendentes protagonistas, mientras que los críticos y adaptadores presentaban diversas interpretaciones de su abarcadora perspectiva de los valores y prácticas humanas. En Gran Bretaña, desde el período de la Restauración, *Macbeth* fue considerada una obra de orientación moral que enseñaba una lección sobre el peligro de la ambición: Macbeth era visto como un hombre noble corrompido por la ambición y Lady Macbeth como un malvado instrumento de esta corrupción. La perspectiva binaria del bien y el mal siguió siendo la tensión dominante en la recepción de la obra a lo largo de los siglos XVIII y XIX, con los románticos alemanes apretando a las brujas, los franceses a Macbeth. Los rusos se aferraron a ambas. La vigencia política de los temas del regicidio y la tiranía expuso la obra a una censura brutal. *Macbeth* nunca se representó durante el período romántico, aunque fue una de las primeras obras de Shakespeare en ser adaptada y, más tarde, traducida al ruso, aunque no fue hasta la década de 1830 que las revistas literarias rusas pudieron publicar *Macbeth*, siempre acompañada de largos comentarios preliminares que señalaban el carácter edificante de la obra y lo reivindicaban a los ojos de la censura. Debido al contenido “peligroso” de *Macbeth*, el número de ensayos críticos dedicados a la tragedia en sí era relativamente bajo. La mayoría de los críticos vendieron ideas sobre el uso del “hada” como el peculiar método de Shakespeare para dramatizar, popular en la crítica alemana. Estas ideas se reflejaron en la apropiación de la obra en el escenario. Las brujas de *Macbeth* se convirtieron en una inspiración para aquellos dramaturgos que se esforzaban por crear un drama nacional basado en antiguas creencias rusas. Su propósito de introducir a las brujas en la trama era sobre todo el entretenimiento, ya que sabían que los lectores y los espectadores se verían cautivados por el misterio de estos seres simultáneamente horribles y fascinantes. *Macbeth* sirvió como ejemplo de cómo dramatizar lo sobrenatural convirtiéndolo en un componente central de la fabulosa realidad de una obra y en la fuerza motriz de sus complicaciones. Al mismo tiempo, la apropiación del fantasma de Banquo enriqueció los poderes creativos de los escritores de prosa. El fantasma se utilizaba como un dispositivo literario para intensificar la tensión dramática y mostrar los profundos sentimientos de los héroes, en particular un miedo devastador con el que, al igual que Macbeth al ver el fantasma de Banquo, se sentían abrumados. Las alusiones a *Macbeth* demostraron ser un poderoso instrumento artístico que revelaba los recursos morales y psicológicos de los personajes y servía de piedra de toque para la evaluación moral de sus pasiones y

crímenes. Esta recepción de lo sobrenatural de la obra, aunque racionalizada, continuó en el “realismo fantástico” de la ficción realista rusa.

Sólo en 1849 la obra fue liberada de cualquier restricción de censura para su publicación y puesta en escena. En las producciones teatrales fue sometida a interpretaciones psicológicas, similares a su recepción victoriana británica. Fue traducida tanto en verso como en prosa y publicada por separado y en las primeras colecciones del drama de Shakespeare, que en Rusia fueron compuestas más tarde que en otros países europeos. A pesar del creciente número de traducciones, *Macbeth* siguió siendo un pájaro raro en la literatura crítica rusa. No obstante, las observaciones de los escritores sobre la obra revelaron los principales principios de la crítica nacional realista de Shakespeare, como un enfoque psicológico del análisis de sus personajes principales en el marco de la tipificación como modo principal de presentación de la realidad, así como una integración del dramaturgo como símbolo del arte en la controversia ideológica del decenio de 1860. Los mismos principios asimilados en el drama y la ficción rusos. Fue Pushkin quien se atrevió a centrarse en la figura de un matarreyes en su dramático experimento de actualizar la historia nacional. *Boris Godunov* se convirtió en la primera contribución al *Macbeth* ruso tipificado con tales rasgos, comúnmente atribuidos al héroe de Shakespeare, como la ambición que conduce a la usurpación del poder, la imaginación desenfrenada y la conciencia culpable que da lugar a alucinaciones; la plena comprensión por parte del héroe de la ilegalidad del hecho y el temor a su vanidad culminaron en el sufrimiento moral y la muerte como pena condigna. Los cambios sociales de la segunda mitad del siglo, que determinaron la difusión de las ideas materialistas nihilistas, ampliaron la brecha entre la condición inicial del héroe y su deseo de cumplir el destino “divino”, elevando así la cuestión de la usurpación del poder a un nuevo nivel ideológico. Raskolnikov conservó la misma naturaleza imaginativa que sirvió para despertar su conciencia hasta entonces confundida por una negación nihilista de los valores universales, como el valor de la vida humana. La penuria espiritual, que Dostoievski hizo experimentar a su protagonista, se convirtió tanto en una retribución como en un reflejo de la creencia del escritor en la humanidad y en las virtudes eternas que se conservan en cada individuo a pesar del entorno destructivo. La misma idea fue expresada por Leskov en su consideración de las pasiones humanas mediante el recuerdo de Lady Macbeth en dos tipos de sus heroínas (una mujer apasionada y una mujer en una encrucijada) que asesinaron por amor (Katerina Izmailova) o por riqueza (Glafira Bodrostina), reprimieron sus conciencias, manifestándose en forma de sueños/alucinaciones y enajenación mental,

y finalmente, obtuvieron el merecido castigo por sus crímenes. Las referencias a la obra de Shakespeare se convirtieron en un argumento artístico en la controversia moral de los escritores con el materialismo nihilista y su negación de los valores y convicciones cristianas.

Así pues, la recepción rusa de *Macbeth* demuestra ser el resultado de movimientos y factores estéticos e históricos mutuamente relacionados y cruzados. A lo largo del espinoso camino de su génesis cultural, el *Macbeth* ruso permaneció en la primera línea de la lucha política e ideológica del país. A medida que la nación progresaba lentamente, el *Macbeth* ruso pasó de ser un símbolo de protesta contra la tiranía sin ley zarista a una imagen antinihilista de un ruso que, al contrario que el “nuevo” pueblo, producto de una mentalidad moderna oportunista y sin escrúpulos, no había perdido todavía su humanidad en el sentido cristiano, que todavía sentía la gravedad de la vida ética y la virtud moral y que, por lo tanto, era capaz de recuperar esa rectitud humana que los escritores rusos creían que era un salvavidas para la humanidad. Aunque aspiraba, tardíamente, a la modernidad, la Rusia del siglo XIX seguía siendo presa de esa superstición y ese encanto que en otros lugares las iluminaciones europeas habían socavado. La obra de Shakespeare era particularmente adecuada para abrazar esta dicotomía, y el *Macbeth* ruso para actuar como un barómetro de las contradicciones, aspiraciones y obstáculos al desarrollo político, social y moral de Rusia en el siglo XIX.