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JAN NEPOMUCEN KAMIŃSKI AND HIS ROMANTIC *HAMLET*

Jan Nepomucen Kamiński (1777–1855), playwright, translator, actor, director, and—first of all—for many years leader of theatrical troupes in Lwów, is now essentially forgotten, even though his dramatic output contributed to the emergence of the idiom of Polish theatre in the first half of the 19th century.¹

Even a cursory examination of Kamiński's repertoire would prove that its principal characteristic was aesthetic eclecticism, epitomised by an egalitarian coexistence of translations, adaptations and renditions of plays by Kotzebue, Scribe, Zschokke, Ducis, Pixérécourt, Corneille, Racine, Molière, Goldoni, Calderón, Schiller, Shakespeare, and others.² These may be supplemented with Kamiński's own dramas, and with plays by other Polish authors, including Aleksander Fredro, which his troupe produced. Aware that a stage deprived of a faithful and responsive audience was a dead stage, Kamiński often favoured the public's expectations over the demands of contemporary critics. Thus, he combined his concern with the artistic quality of his productions with his knowledge of the stringent laws of business. This, most probably, was why the repertoire of his company brought together neo-classical tragedy, melodrama and Pre-Romantic theatre, Kotzebue and Shakespeare. This aesthetic diversity compelled Kamiński and his troupe not only to develop new forms of theatrical expression, but also, and first of all, to create a wide assortment of productions corresponding to the scenic effects that the presented plays entailed.

Translations of dramatic pieces (some eighty titles) amount to less than half of Jan Nepomucen Kamiński's entire output.³ The translations of plays by Friedrich Schiller and William Shakespeare certainly make up an outstanding part of this collection. The juxtaposition and the order of the two playwrights' names are not a mere coincidence, given the context of the history of the Polish theatre.

For Polish writers at the turn of the 19th century, the *œuvre* of the author of *The Robbers* constituted a transient stage in the process of assimilating, imitating and interpreting Shakespeare's work.⁴

Schiller's approach to Shakespeare combined imitation and adaptation.

HAMLET

KROLEWICZ DUNSKI

TRAGEDYA W 5 AKTACH

w Angielskim Języku

przez

WIKOPOMNEGO SHAKESPEARA

napisana;

Niemieckiego zaś Polskiem piórem przez

Jana Nepomucena

Kamińskiego

PRZEŁOŻONA.

Co nam w przestrzeni czasu wyległo zdarzenie,

To i dowcip miśternie w skąpey stawia Scenie.

Frideryk Schiller.

W MINKOWCACH

Drukowano 1805. Ru.

One may suppose that this duality turned out to be creative, and produced an overwhelming desire to emulate the manner of the great original and to transform it. On the one hand, Schiller adapted Shakespeare's plays on the level of style (by imitation), and on the other, he adjusted plots, subjects and characters to the new current context, especially the political. Consequently, while evoking the memory of the great inspiration, he offered a different dramatic value and developed a new pattern of the theatrical-and-dramatic form which his contemporaries considered to be the national form.⁵

It is also important to remember that Schiller's idea of tragedy was based on the conflict between man's natural pursuit of happiness and the society's code of ethics, between freedom and duty—a conflict typical of many characters in Shakespeare. The author of *The Robbers* most certainly considered Shakespeare a moral writer. Schiller's view was that the main purpose of the anguish and defeat of the tragic hero was to prove that the moral aspect of human nature is superior to the sensual one.⁶

One can hardly wonder, then, that to his translation of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Jan Nepomucen Kamiński appended an epigraph taken from Schiller:

Co nam w przestrzeni czasu wylęgło zdarzenie,
To i dowcip misternie w skąpej stawia scenie.
[What event has bred in the expanse of time,
now wit cunningly represents on this meagre stage.]

Two layers of meaning may be distinguished in the epigraph: Kamiński both underscores the links between his artistic philosophy and the literary output of the author of *The Robbers*, and asserts his "Schillerian" fashion of construing Shakespeare's work. It should be noted that Kamiński translated and produced *The Robbers* in 1805, almost simultaneously with *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*. His translation of *Macbeth* was based on the immensely famous paraphrase that Schiller had written for the Weimar theatre in 1800 and published in 1801. Thus, Kamiński was making use of the most recent and undoubtedly the most valuable products of European theatre.⁷

The translation of *Hamlet* was his tenth or eleventh at least. He had already dealt with such authors as J. P. Richter, Kotzebue, Soden or Zschokke. Most probably we will never manage to establish which of Shakespeare's plays—*Hamlet* or *Macbeth*—he translated first. They are both dated 1805. Kamiński was twenty-seven years old then. Even if he had already tried creative writing, he had not displayed his gift yet.⁸

Kamiński "studied theatre" under none other than Bogusławski; the activities of the latter's Lwów troupe between the years 1795 and 1799 had a strong impact on Kamiński's subsequent artistic development. He translated

and adapted plays for the great thespian, and most probably appeared in his productions as an extra. Following Bogusławski's departure, Kamiński ran an amateur theatre at S. Wronowski's palace. After a few years the Austrian authorities forbade Kamiński's company to continue their theatrical activity. Late in 1803 or early in 1804, he and his small troupe arrived in Kamieniec Podolski. Since this town had no theatre building, they performed in private residences and toured nearby towns. It was only early in 1805 that they found a permanent stage in Kamieniec. "The wooden hall in the Armenian market square, by the ruined episcopal palace and near the Dominican church, was erected for the money contributed by the gentry and public servants, and entrusted to Erazm Rakowski, a deputy of the Principal Court."⁹ The first thing that Kamiński did in Kamieniec was, obviously, to develop a repertoire and to organise a more permanent troupe.

One of the small towns that they toured was Minkowice, the property of Ignacy Ścibor Marchocki. It was there that Kamiński published his translation of *Hamlet* at the printing house operated by the eccentric count. This was positively the first printed Polish translation of the play. Kamiński entitled the book: *Hamlet Królewicz Duński. Traiedya w 5 Aktach w Angielskim Języku przez Wiekopomnego Schakespearą napisana; z Niemieckiego zaœ Polskim Piórem przez Jana Nepomucena Kamińskiego Przełożona* [*Hamlet, Prince of Denmark. A Tragedy in 5 Acts, Written in the English Language by the Memorable Schakespear; and Translated from the German by the Polish Pen of Jan Nepomucen Kamiński*].¹⁰ Under the Schillerian epigraph, the title page gives the place and date of publication: "Minkowice. Drukowano 1805. Ru." ["Minkowice. Printed in 1805 A.D."].

"*Hrabia* [Count] *Redux*" Ignacy Ścibor Marchocki was a most interesting figure in the history of Polish culture. During his life he was considered an eccentric and "quite a character," due to both his radical social opinions and his resolute tendency to make his life more and more theatrical. His legendary biography provided substantial inspiration for 19th-century artists and diarists.¹¹ Marchocki's most famous venture concerned the festival of *Matka Boska Zielna* [Our Lady of the Meadows], a religious ceremony held on August 15th, which he organised between 1797 and 1827. Diarists' and participants' accounts confirm that "a modest harvest-home feast had turned into no less than a celebration of Ceres," which after some time stirred up antagonism between Marchocki and the local Catholic clergy. Each year Marchocki made the festival "more elaborate and theatrical. A detailed plan governed the course of the ceremony, there were costumes, theatrical properties and impressive *tableaux vivants*, sometimes even incidental structures were erected."¹² The diarist Franciszek Kowalski tells us that the festival con-

cluded in a specially designed building: "It was an enormous wooden auditorium holding several hundred people, without a ceiling, with a high roof from under which lamps hung [...]; lit so brightly with candles in brackets and chandeliers that one could well pick up pins from the floor."¹³ Kowalski's account suggests that theatrical performances could take place in Marchocki's auditorium. It might have been there that Jan Nepomucen Kamiński's troupe presented *Hamlet* to the Minkowice public. Extant source texts mention no other possible venue.

Kamiński most certainly saw the Polish premiere of *Hamlet* that Bogusławski put on in Lwów in 1797. When preparing the production of the same play on his stage, however, he did not use Bogusławski's Lwów script, based on the "amendment" by an anonymous author of a manuscript theatrical copy that combined two editions by Schröder:¹⁴ the source for Kamiński's translation was Schröder's so-called third rendition, from 1778. Curiously, this adaptation had never been very popular in Germany, either on the publishing market or on stage. "Theatres seldom used it, and the successive book editions (1780, 1782, 1789, and even Schröder's dramatic works in four volumes, edited by Von Bülow and Tieck, Berlin, 1831) adhered doggedly to the text from 1777,"¹⁵ i.e., Schröder's second, six-act rendition of *Hamlet*.

It is hard to establish today why Kamiński decided to use this text of Shakespeare's tragedy. Perhaps at that time he simply did not have another copy of *Hamlet* at his disposal. On the other hand, his choice might have resulted from creative disagreement with Bogusławski's production from 1798, disagreement arising from a different vision and understanding of the play. We may substantiate the latter assumption with an analysis of Kamiński's repertoire from the period 1803–1805, when he staged his productions in Kamieniec Podolski and the nearby towns. This proves that his stock of plays was in keeping with the latest currents in European theatre, comprising, e.g., Pre-Romantic pieces by Vulpius, de Soden, Zeigler and Kotzebue, as well as the "Romantic drama" after Lewis *Bratobójstwo czyli Osmond graf Cornvai* [*The Fratricide, or Osmond Count of Cornvai*]. As we have already mentioned at that time he translated and produced *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*, and *The Robbers* by Schiller.¹⁶ This list of titles leaves no doubt as to Kamiński's intentions: at that time, he was developing his repertoire in a very consistent manner resolutely crossing the confines of the various brands of 18th-century poetics.

The Pre-Romantic drama that he put on stage combined the Gothic with an aura of mystery and frenzy, heralding the new Romantic aesthetic consciousness, and provided a practical application of the postulate that theatre

should abandon a narrative account of the plot rendered through the characters' dialogues, in favour of presenting actual events. Its success in the theatre amounted first of all to a celebration of motion, nature and *the picturesque*. The latter concept was to become prominent in the theatre, supported by *the Romantic*, an adjective that the English had been using for some time to denote bleak, mysterious and formidable landscapes that inspire melancholy or horror in the beholder. The influence of the contemporary poets, landscape painters and illustrators is noticeable in the stage setting, which also [...] aimed to produce *states of mind*.¹⁷

Pre-Romantic drama postulated a new model of theatrical production, one that would focus on a maximum visual effect of the performance and emphasise a play's "mood" and the characters' emotions.

Forests were growing on all stages. There, one could see a series of castles, gloomy settings inspired by Anne de Radcliffe's and Lewis's black romances, underground passages, caves and mines, and factories that would have been a revelation to Hubert Robert, ruins *à la* Volney, Chateaubriand and Mme. de Staël, cloisters, tracts of wild landscape over which the elements raged, and all the mysterious paraphernalia of burial vaults, old abbeys and deserted chapels seen by twilight [...].¹⁸

Thus, the genre was a means of "preparing" the public for the reception of Shakespeare's dramas.¹⁹ The lists of Kamiński's repertoire that Barbara Lasocka and Jarosław Komorowski have drawn up, prove that the aesthetics of the Pre-Romantic drama was an indubitable influence on the director when he was active in Kamieniec.

The adaptation of *Hamlet* that Kamiński used was obviously founded on the aesthetics of 18th-century neo-classicism. Jerzy Got has already supplied us with a penetrating analysis of Schröder's paraphrases of the tragedy. Suffice it, then, to summarise the dominant characteristics of the text that provided a basis for Kamiński's translation and production:

While retaining the division of the play into five acts, it comprises a larger number of scenes. In order to achieve the unity of action, it skips the motif of Fortinbras, and the so-called graveyard scenes, which the 18th-century audience would probably consider too offensive. Neither does Hamlet leave for England. The scene of the formal farewell is also the final scene where Hamlet exacts his revenge. There is no duel with Laertes. The Queen drinks the cup of poisoned wine and, just before she dies, reveals the truth about the assassination of the legitimate monarch and Claudius's usurpation of the Danish throne. In this way she protects Hamlet from the courtiers' revenge. The young prince is reconciled with Laertes and succeeds to the throne which has rightfully been his due. The time of the action is shortened to less than

forty-eight hours, and the original gap of two and a half months between Act I and II disappears. Wishing to make the play's aura more Nordic, Schröder preserved Heufeld's alterations of the characters' names, whereby Polonius, Horatio, Bernardo, Marcellus and Francisco became, respectively, Oldenholm, Gustav, Bernfield, Ellrich and Frenzow.²⁰ Like Schröder's other adaptations, this one turned *Hamlet* into a revenge tragedy, all the protagonist's actions being motivated and governed by revenge. According to this scenario, Hamlet, as the son and heir to the throne, was under obligation to avenge the legitimate king's death, restoring in this manner the order of the world that the crime had disrupted.

Kamiński based his production on the adaptation that retained the division of the tragedy into five acts, although it comprised more scenes than either the original text or Bogusławski's copy.²¹ It was a distinguishing characteristic of this script that it moved "the King's prayer" in Act III, Scenes 13–14 (cf. III, iii, ll. 36–98 of Shakespeare's text) to a moment before the "play-within-the-play" has begun. This modification, which upsets the psychological logic of the action and for which no reason may be given, appears also in Schröder's second (1777) and fourth (1795) renditions of Shakespeare's tragedy. Another characteristic of this adaptation was that the character of Rosencrantz had disappeared, and his lines had either blended into Guildenstern's, or been omitted altogether.

An interesting innovation concerns Laertes, who remains in Denmark throughout the action of the play: He had to change his plans because adverse winds had prevented his ship from leaving the Danish port. Right after Claudius has ordered Guildenstern to seek Oldenholm's corpse, the courtier notifies the King of this surprising fact:

Właściem się dowiedział o pewnej okoliczności mój królu, która ci niebezpieczeństwem zagraża: młody i odważny Laertes, przeciwnymi wiatry zatrzymany znajduje się jeszcze dotąd w porcie. Jak łatwo może śmierć ojca jego tam zasięgnąć, — czyliż on zemstą uniesiony... [IV, 14, p. 112; cf. IV, iii of Shakespeare's text]

As regards the typography, the Minkowice edition of *Hamlet* was far from perfect. Ludwik Bernacki described it in the following way: "It is an octavo booklet (8° min.) of 69 leaves (138 pages) [...], hideously printed, with very inaccurate pagination, on a stuff resembling blotting paper, with many appalling misprints [...]." As to the linguistic aspect of the text, Bernacki wrote:

'the diction of the translation is revolting, abused so badly that not a word [...] of the Polish tongue may be found in it. The entire translation teems with the most horrid Germanisms [...]. There are many neologisms and solecisms

[...]. The order of words in a sentence is so wretched that the meaning often cannot be grasped. These monstrous errors of style and language are additionally compounded by the atrocious spelling and the even more atrocious quality of proof-reading.’²²

The text virtually teems with errors, for which both Kamiński himself and the publisher may be blamed. Even a most merciful reader could not approve of phrases like “piżkszydło boleści” or “szlachetnomyœlna miłość” with which the translator had “embellished” Hamlet’s lines. A flagrant error, which most probably the typesetter committed, is that the characters’ lines in Act IV, Scenes 2–3 have been combined and confused, so that Hamlet, in Oldenholm’s presence, asks Gustav to watch Claudius during the “play-with-in-the-play,” which is absolutely contrary to the logic of events in the action.

And yet Kamiński’s rendition was closer to the spirit of the original than Bogusławski’s was. Comparing Bogusławski’s and Kamiński’s translations, Władysław Tarnawski concluded that Kamiński,

‘less competent in matters of style, because he translated in haste and carelessly, was often more literal [...]. His language swarms with glaring errors, especially with Germanisms—still it renders Shakespeare’s phrases accurately enough wherever the Germans have not eradicated them.’²³

A linguistic study of the text would prove that Kamiński gradually rejected the then-universal practice of polishing Shakespeare’s dialogues according to the rules of rhetoric. The translator repeatedly attempted to individualise each character’s speech. Under the rough surface of the language, we often encounter a faultless rendition of Shakespeare’s irony.

Due to the bluntness and roughness of his style, Kamiński often managed to unearth the meaning of Shakespeare’s original even where Schröder had obscured it with a plethora of neo-classical precepts. Thus, when killing Oldenholm (who hides behind “a screen”) with his sword, Hamlet utters in Polish ‘indecorous’ words very close stylistically to the original “Dead, for a ducat, dead”:

For a practitioner of the theatre, such as Kamiński was, the dramatic text was a “raw material” of sorts, a script for the future spectacle that he and his company would perform insofar as the technical and organisational possibilities of the stage allowed it. There is no evidence preserved to prove that Kamiński actually produced *Hamlet* between 1803 and 1805. Still, even the most superficial acquaintance with the customs of the stage in that period justifies the assumption that Kamiński’s translation was followed by a production.. Because of his extremely difficult financial situation, Kamiński would not have translated anything that was not directly related to his theatrical activity. Thus, the basis for the Minkowice edition of *Hamlet* from 1805 was

most likely a text that had previously been used during a stage production. Another unknown factor is the place of the production. We cannot establish an exact itinerary of the tours on which Kamiński's troupe went in what was then designated as the region of Podole. A premiere of *Hamlet* might have celebrated the inauguration of the new theatre hall in Kamieniec Podolski early in 1805. Still, this is only a very daring hypothesis.

In order to reconstruct Kamiński's production of *Hamlet*, one certainly must examine his aesthetic and philosophical views, developed mainly under the impact of the foremost German thinkers—Schelling, Hegel and Kant. As Barbara Lasocka writes,

what turned out to appeal to Kamiński most irresistibly was contemporary German philosophy, which Kant called transcendental. This philosophy had a strong impact on the Romantics; it united the eternal spirit, the idea, Providence, God and the individual issues of humans, nations and societies in one system; and it stimulated the so-called national schools of Romanticism.²⁴

Kamiński showed the most profound respect for the work of Lessing, Goethe and Schiller, who had ultimately fashioned his views on the essence of the theatre. There can be no doubt that the German Romantics "discovered" Shakespeare's *œuvre* for him.

It is very likely that Kamiński "read" and construed Shakespeare's *Hamlet* through the lens of G. E. Lessing's *Hamburgische Dramaturgie*, which profoundly influenced both his translation and the final shape of the theatrical production.

Beim Shakespear [writes Lessing] ist es der einzige Hamlet, mit dem sich das Gespenst einläßt; in der Scene, wo die Mutter dabei ist, wird es von der Mutter weder gesehen noch gehört. Alle unsere Beobachtung geht also auf ihn, und je mehr Merkmale eines von Schauder und Schrecken zerrütteten Gemüths wir an ihm entdecken, desto bereitwilliger find wir, die Erscheinung, welche diese Zerrüttung in ihm verursacht, für eben Das zu halten, wofür er sie hält. *Das Gespenst wirkt auf uns mehr durch ihn, als durch sich selbst.* Der Eindruck, den es auf ihn macht, gehet in uns über, und die Wirkung ist zu augenscheinlich und zu stark, als daß wir an der außerordentlichen Ursache zweifeln sollten.²⁵

Kamiński considered the above passage from *Hamburgische Dramaturgie* to be specific theatrical guidelines. In his "Myśli o umnictwie dramatycznym" ["Thoughts on the Dramatic Art"], published in 1830, he wrote:

[...] and if Hamlet cannot see the Ghost of his Father too clearly, let the Mother see him better; and when he wrongly says, "Do you see nothing there?," let her, when she answers "Nothing at all," look as if she saw something dreadful; that is, *let the Queen replace Hamlet.*²⁶

This statement may be of the utmost importance for the production of *Hamlet* that this paper discusses. In view of the limited technical possibilities of the stages and halls which Kamiński used in the years 1803–1805, the Romantic nature of the spectacle most probably was noticeable in the totally novel manner of the players' representation of the characters, rather than in the physical scenery. Kamiński certainly regarded the Kamieniec theatre as a "repertoire laboratory" of sorts. Due to the lack of theatrical tradition no fashion or conventional techniques of production harnessed his imagination. The unsophisticated provincial audience responded spontaneously to the repertoire that he presented. It was in the Kamieniec period that Antoni Benza developed the style of his Romantic acting which the Lwów critics were to praise so highly a few years later.²⁷

The extant accounts of the Kamieniec playhouse disprove completely any suppositions that the performances of Kamiński's company at that time impressed the public with the splendour of their stage effects.²⁸ The theatre building, completed in 1805, was

small, Spartan, not heated in winter. The long and narrow floor could not hold more than three hundred spectators. [...] The stage consisted of 11 brick and 10 wooden posts, each 1.5 m high, and 10 fir-wood beams, covered with boards made of the same wood.²⁹

Kamiński, apparently influenced by the German Romantics' views and his own practical intuition of the theatre, "internalised" Hamlet's predicament and rejected the neo-classical approaches to Shakespeare's drama, even though he had based his translation on Schröder's paraphrase. Critics who have analysed his translation have noticed that the action develops at a slower rate than, e.g., in Bogusławski's version, and that the protagonist's personality is construed in a manner closer to the original.

Without attempting a detailed comparison of the two texts suffice it to say that in Kamiński's rendering the action develops much more slowly. The text is ampler than in Bogusławski's excessively condensed version. Consequently, despite the omissions that annoy us so much today, Kamiński's reading is somehow closer to Shakespeare's original tragedy.³⁰

These differences are obvious not only in the layer of the language, but on virtually all levels of the text's structure. Thus, Kamiński's Hamlet has regained his "philosophical indecision." There are more motives behind his deeds than mere revenge and succession to the throne; he has his moments of doubt and bitter meditation on the world, too. Crude language introduces a new notion of the Danish Prince's history, different from the one that prevailed in the 18th century. Thus, when commenting on young Fortinbras's actions, Hamlet states:

Affected by Lessing's and Schiller's writings, Kamiński often emphasised that it was each director's and actor's duty to respect the text.³¹ The stage, in turn, must fully express the idea of the piece which it represents, using all the available means that boost the power of theatrical illusion.

'Shakespears Gespenst [Lessing writes] kömmt wirklich aus jener Welt; so dünkt uns. Denn es kömmt zu der feierlichen Stunde, in der schauernden Stille der Nacht, in der wollen Begleitung aller der düstren geheimnisvollen Nebenbegriffe, wenn und mit welchen wir von der Umme an Gespenst zu erwarten und zu denken gewohnt find.'³²

To illustrate the fashion in which Kamiński implemented this philosophy in practice, let us consider his treatment of the scene where Hamlet talks to his Father's Ghost (II, 7; I, v of Shakespeare's text). Kamiński extensively modified the text of Schröder's adaptation, changing the place of action. In his version, this scene, which is of primary importance for the development of the entire plot, is set in a typically Romantic setting, precisely defined in stage directions: "A graveyard surrounded by a wall all around; a statue of the late King in the centre; tombs on both sides." The Ghost of the assassinated King speaks standing by the statue on its own tomb, and frightens Hamlet. After the conversation, the Ghost "disappears in the ground." Andrzej Źurowski, stressing the influence of the aesthetics of horror on this scene, notices Kamiński's linguistic alteration of the text:

'Kamiński visibly tries to make the terrified Prince's lines more dynamic: by using short, broken-off phrases, exclamations and ellipses, he wishes to accumulate literary devices that would enable the actor to express more fully the tension reigning during this supernatural incident.'³³

On the other hand, we must also look at Kamiński's treatment of the scene through the lens of the transformations and reorganisations of values that European art underwent at the turn of the 19th century. At that time, the subject of the graveyard was often juxtaposed with the general sentimental and romantic concern with death and transitoriness and vanity of earthly life. Jan Białostocki stresses the fact that the topic of the graveyard, which previously had appeared very seldom—e.g., in the work of Ruisdael, who under many respects heralded the Romanticism—became highly popular in that period. In fact, there were various approaches to it, and it developed various ideological types: thus, among those who painted graveyard landscapes there was Friedrich, and then, on the threshold of another period, Gerson.³⁴

When Kamiński made use of the motif of the graveyard, which obviously was a full-fledged subject matter of the Romantic culture, this certainly was not simply because the motif was theatrically appealing, or because the aesthetics of the Pre-Romantic "Gothic theatre" had made it fashionable. The

reason behind the director's choice was that he conceived of Hamlet's story in a different way than Bogusławski did. The Ghost who renders an account of the past affairs, does not merely turn the young Prince into a tool of the revenge meant to restore the original feudal order which the crime has disrupted. His appearance beside his own—indubitably very sumptuous—tombstone, reminds us about another, quite different order of events, and makes us meditate on the puniness and vanity of the human rule over the world. Through his modification of the text and by including a motif which was very familiar to the public at that time, Kamiński managed to impart a philosophical aspect to the tragedy, and renounced the 18th-century manner of constructing the Danish Prince's history. For Hamlet, the graveyard encounter with his Father's Ghost became an initiation of sorts, stimulating him to begin a quest for "a chance of repairing the wrecked form of reality."³⁵

A close analysis of the text of the Minkowice *Hamlet* allows for the conclusion that the crude language of the translation expresses the concept of the original version of the tragedy in a perfect manner. Kamiński often transcended the limits that Schröder had set. Paradoxically, through the paraphrase he "reached" Shakespeare's original work, understood it in terms of the theatrical and—first of all—as a ³⁶philosophical idea.

In his "Thoughts on the Dramatic Art," Kamiński advised those who devote themselves to the dramatic profession, to spend days and nights studying Shakespeare's pieces; in this deep well of assorted feelings and characters, in this gallery of sundry divine and human ideals, in this heart of live nature, they will find the immaculate and sterling gems of their art [...].³⁷

Modern scholars have good reasons to consider Kamiński the most outstanding theatrical interpreter of Shakespeare's dramas on the Polish stage before the November uprising. Kamiński regarded Shakespeare's *œuvre*, which unwaveringly accompanied his histrionic development, as a unique ideal to which all creative artists who are aware of their vocation, should aspire. Apparently, this was why he successfully continued to use his 1805 translation of *Hamlet* on many other occasions in the course of his thirty-three years of theatrical activity in Lwów.³⁸

[Translated by Przemysław Znaniecki]

NOTES:

1. Cf. "Kamiński Jan Nepomucen", in: *Słownik biograficzny teatru polskiego 1765–1965* [The Dictionary of the Polish Theater's Biography, 1765–1965] (Warszawa, 1973) pp. 278–280; B. Lasocka, *Jan Nepomucen Kamiński*, (Warszawa 1972); B. Lasocka, *Teatr lwowski w latach 1800–1842* [The Theater in Lwów, 1800–1842] (Warszawa, 1967).
2. B. Lasocka, "Dramatopisatrstwo Jana Nepomucena Kamińskiego" in: *Dramat i teatr poststa-*

nisławowski (Wrocław 1992). She writes: "The translations, adaptations and renderings were more than a mere symptom of his constantly frustrated literary aspirations. They also resulted from necessity, and it must be said in all fairness that necessity sometimes stimulated the writer and allowed him to assert himself" (p. 79).

³ B. Lasocka "Jan Nepomucen Kamiński" in *Bibliografia literatury polskiej "Nowy Korbut"*. Tom 5: *Oświecenie* [*The Bibliography of Polish Literature. Vol. 5: The Enlightenment*] (Warszawa, 1967) pp. 52–56.

⁴ M. Szykowski, *Schiller w Polsce. Studium historyczno-porównawcze* [*Schiller in Poland. A Historical-and-Comparative Study*] (Kraków, 1915).

⁵ D. Ratajczakowa, "Polski Hamlet, czyli *Bitwa nad Mozgawą*" ["The Polish Hamlet, or *The Battle on the River Mozgawa*"], [in:] *Od Shakespeare'a do Szekspira* [*From Shakespeare to Szekspir*] (Gdańsk, 1993) p. 121.

⁶ Cf. A. Żurowski, *Szekspiriady polskie* [*Polish Shakespeariads*] (Warszawa 1976) p. 119: [...] rather than in Shakespeare's characters, Schiller was interested in their crimes and their attitude to the moral law. Read in this fashion, Shakespeare indeed could exemplify, in Schiller's eyes, the latter's concept of the eternal contrast of the ideal and the real. This brand of Shakespearianism could, in turn, become an unexpectedly propitious factor promoting the Europe-wide acceptance of Schiller's moralism.

⁷ Cf. J. Komorowski, *Polskie życie teatralne na Podolu i Wołyniu do 1863 roku* [*Polish Theatrical Life in the Regions of Podole and Wołyń before the Year 1863*] (Wrocław 1985) pp. 16–20.

⁸ B. Lasocka, "Dramatopisarstwo Jana Nepomucena Kamińskiego", op.cit., p. 108.

⁹ Komorowski, op.cit., p. 15.

¹⁰ The copy available at the Biblioteka Jagiellońska, call No. 24944/I.

¹¹ Thus, e.g., Juliusz Słowacki based the character of Ferdynand Filip Ladawski, the protagonist of *Król Ladawy* [*The King of Ladawa*], on Marchocki (cf. J. Słowacki, *Król Ladawy*, [in:] J. Kleiner [ed.], *Dzieła wszystkie* [*Collected Works*], vol. 8. (Wrocław 1958) pp. 161–181).

On Ignacy Ścibor Marchocki, cf.: A. Jełowicki, *Moje wspomnienia 1804–1831–1838* [*My Memoirs, 1804–1831–1838*] (Lwów 1923); A. Przeździecki, *Podole. Wołyń. Ukraina*, vol. 2 (Warszawa, 1841); Dr Antoni J. (Rolle), "Hrabia Redux", [in:] *Wybór pism* [*Selected Writings*], vol. 2, *Gawędy historyczne* [*Historical Tales*] (Kraków 1966); M. Dubiecki, *Przymierze dziedzica z poddanymi rolnikami. Rzecz z dziejów ludu wiejskiego w Polsce* [*A Squire's Covenant with Serf Farmers. A Tale from the History of Polish Peasants*] (Kraków 1905).

¹² Komorowski, op. cit., p. 58.

¹³ F. Kowalski, *Wspomnienia. Pamiętniki* [*Reminiscences. Memoirs*], vol. 2 (Kijów 1859) p. 52. Jarosław Komorowski (op. cit., pp. 59–60) quotes extensive passages from Kowalski's account.

¹⁴ Cf. J. Got, *Na wyspie Guaxary. Wojciech Bogusławski i teatr lwowski 1789–1799* [*On the Island of Guaxary. Wojciech Bogusławski and the Theater in Lwów, 1789–1799*] (Kraków 1971) pp. 227–234.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 227.

¹⁶ Cf. Komorowski, op. cit., pp. 16–17; B. Lasocka, *Teatr lwowski w latach 1800–1842* [*The Theater in Lwów, 1800–1842*] (Warszawa 1967).

¹⁷ M. A. Allevy-Viala, *Inscenizacja romantyczna we Francji* [*The Romantic Theatrical Productions in France*] (Warszawa, 1947) p. 45.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 46.

¹⁹ Cf. A. Żurowski, *Szekspiriady polskie*, op.cit., (in this context, especially Chapter II, "W kręgu estetyki pozornych sprzeczności: sentymentalizm — gotycyzm — groza — frenezja" ["The Domain of the Aesthetics of Apparent Contradictions: the Sentimentalism, the Gothic, the Horror, Frenzy"], pp. 63–173).

²⁰ Cf. Got, op. cit., p. 225.

²¹ Cf. L. Bernacki, "Z dziejów Szekspira w Polsce. Przekład *Hamleta* J. N. Kamińskiego" ["From the History of Shakespeare in Poland: J. N. Kamiński's Translation of *Hamlet*"]. *Biblioteka Warszawska*, 1904, vol. 1, issue 1, p. 137. This scholar juxtaposed the original text of the play with Schröder's rendition.

22. Ibid., pp. 129 and 139.
23. W. Tarnawski, *O polskich przekładach dramatów Szekspira* [On Polish Translations of Shakespeare's Dramas] (Kraków 1914) pp. 29–30.
24. B. Lasocka, *Jan Nepomucen Kamiński*. op.cit., p. 10.
25. G. E. Lessing, *Hamburgische Dramaturgie*, [in:] Heinrich Kurz [ed.], *Lessings Werke*, vol. 3. (Leipzig n.d.), p. 52. The emphasis is mine, K. K.
26. J. N. Kamiński, "Myśli o umnictwie dramatycznym". *Haliczanin*, 1830, vol. 2, p. 252.
27. Cf. B. Lasocka, "Aktorzy w teatrze Kamińskiego" ["The Actors in Kamiński's Theater"]. *Pa-miżtnik Teatralny*, 1967, issue 1.
28. Cf. A. Prusiewicz, "Teatr polski w Kamieńcu Podolskim" ["The Polish Theater in Kamieniec Podolski"]. *Ruś*, 1911, issue 1.
29. Ibid., quoted after: Komorowski, op. cit., p. 42.
30. B. Lasocka, "Dramatopisarstwo Jana Nepomucena Kamińskiego", op.cit., pp. 111–112.
31. Kamiński maintained that
'a dramatic artist should be of poetic spirit, and fathom the secrets not only of thought and feeling, but also of the language that the author has transmitted to his characters; that he should discover the beauty of which the author himself has not been aware; that he must not harm the author in anything, but it is his foremost obligation to assist the author in all respects [...].' [op. cit., p. 246]
32. Lessing, op. cit., p. 51
33. Żurowski, op.cit., p. 249.
34. J. Białostocki, "Ikonomia romantyczna. Przegląd problemów badawczych" ["The Romantic Iconography. A Review of Research Issues"], [in:] *Romantyzm. Studia nad sztuką drugiej połowy wieku XVIII i wieku XIX. Materiały sesji Stowarzyszenia Historyków Sztuki* [The Romanticism. Studies in the Art of the Second Half of the 18th Century and of the 19th Century. The Proceedings of the Session of the Society of the Historians of the Arts] (Warszawa, 1963), p. 81. Cf. also: P. Krakowski, "Ruiny i groby w sztuce preromantyzmu i romantyzmu" ["Ruins and Tombs in the Pre-Romantic and Romantic Art"]. *Folia Historiae Artium*, 1978, vol. 14; J. Białostocki, "Romantyczna symbolika w sztuce C. D. Friedricha" ["Romantic Symbolism in C. D. Friedrich's Art"], [in:] *Symbole i obrazy w świecie sztuki* [Symbols and Images in the World of the Arts], vol. 1–2. (Warszawa 1982); G. Królikowska, *Terytorium ruin. Ruina jako obraz i temat romantyczny* [The Territory of the Ruins. The Ruins as a Romantic Image and Subject]. (Kraków 1993).
35. G. Królikowska, op. cit., p. 26.
36. J. N. Kamiński, op. cit., p. 253.
37. In the years 1812–1841, Kamiński put on eleven productions of *Hamlet* in Lwów: cf. B. Lasocka, *Teatr lwowski*, op. cit.