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Manuel Tamayo y Baus's *Un Drama Nuevo* (1867) and the Reception of Hamlet in 19th-Century Spain

Summary

The present article discusses how Tamayo y Baus appropriates and refashions in *Un drama nuevo* (1867) the figures of Shakespeare and Yorick, as well as different elements of a number of tragedies by Shakespeare (*Hamlet*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Othello*), in order to render homage to Shakespearean drama by means of a play that, even if set at the beginning of 17th-century England, particularly addresses the tastes and concerns of 19th-century Spanish audiences. Additionally, this article considers the extent to which the contemporary audience of Tamayo y Baus was acquainted with Shakespeare and *Hamlet*, taking into account both the translations into Spanish of the play and its performances in Spain up until 1867. The purpose of such an analysis is to speculate on the reception and interpretation of *Un drama nuevo* at the time of its release, and on the role it had in raising or renewing interest in *Hamlet* within the Spanish-speaking world.

Key words: Shakespeare, reception of *Hamlet*, Manuel Tamayo y Baus, *Un drama nuevo*, 19th-century drama

Manuel Tamayo y Baus: *Un Drama Nuevo* (1867) ter sprejemanje Hamleta v Španiji v 19. stoletju

Povzetek

Članek ugotavlja, kako Tamayo y Baus v svojem delu *Un drama nuevo* (1867) prireja in preoblikuje Shakespearove osebe in lik Yoricka, poleg tega pa tudi številne druge prvine dramatikovih tragedij (*Hamleta*, *Romea in Julije*, *Othella*) kot poklon shakespearevski drami, ki kljub temu, da se odvija v angleškem 17. stoletju, še posebej naglašča okuse ter zanimanja španskega občinstva 19. stoletja. Poleg tega članek raziskuje, v kakšni meri je bilo občinstvo Tamaya y Bausa seznanjeno s Shakespearom in Hamletom, upoštevaje tako prevode v španščino kot njegove odrske postavitve v Španiji do leta 1867. Namen takšne razčlenbe je ugotavljanje sprejemanja in razlaganja dela *Un drama nuevo* v času njegove objave ter določanje vloge, ki jo je odigral pri ohranjanju oziroma poglobljanju zanimanja za Hamleta v špansko govorečem svetu.

Ključne besede: Shakespeare, sprejemanje *Hamleta*, Manuel Tamayo y Baus, *Un drama nuevo*, drama 19. stoletja

Manuel Tamayo y Baus's *Un Drama Nuevo* (1867) and the Reception of *Hamlet* in 19th-Century Spain

1. Introduction

To what extent were Spanish audiences acquainted with Shakespeare in general and with plays such as *Hamlet* in particular by the end of the 19th century? How many times had *Hamlet* been translated into Spanish, and how many times had it been performed in Spain by that time? Providing an answer to these three questions constitutes a central element in the present article's discussion around Manuel Tamayo y Baus's *Un drama nuevo* ("A New Play") (1867), a tragedy in three acts that revolves around the discovery of an adulterous relationship in the context of a company of actors that are preparing to perform a play referred to as "a new play" which centers on the discovery of an adulterous relationship in aristocratic circles. In this manner, the play is about the preparation of a play whose argument eventually matches the actual events of the personal lives of the three main characters that perform it: the husband, Yorick, who plays the role of Conde Octavio; the male lover, Edmundo, who plays Manfredo, and the adulterous wife Alicia, who plays the role of the unfaithful Beatriz. The adulterous situation complicates itself through the discovery that Yorick's wife Alicia is far younger than her husband and that her lover, Edmundo, is not only another actor who works side by side to Yorick, but, furthermore, his adopted son, whom Yorick has maintained and protected for years.

Un drama nuevo, undoubtedly Tamayo y Baus's most renowned play and "the critics' favourite" (Flynn 1973, 78),¹ contains numerous references to Shakespeare and to a number of his plays, chiefly, *Hamlet*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Macbeth*, and *Othello*, which makes 21st century readers wonder whether audiences contemporary to Tamayo y Baus were sufficiently acquainted with Shakespearean drama to, for instance, understand as meaningful the setting of the play: an early 17th-century London playhouse. Indeed, previous knowledge of Shakespeare and his dramas are not at all necessary to perfectly follow the storyline of *Un drama nuevo*, as the latter works independently from any work by Shakespeare (or by any other playwright whatsoever, for that matter). Still, such previous knowledge would enrich the appreciation of the play by the audience and indicate Tamayo y Baus's willingness to play with the audience's assumptions and expectations of drama and the storyline itself.

The present article opens with an introduction to Manuel Tamayo y Baus's production as a playwright, and a discussion on the manner in which *Un drama nuevo* is built upon other Shakespearean tragedies. Then, the history of the reception of Shakespeare in Spain up to the end of the 19th-century will be outlined, specifically focusing on the trajectory of *Hamlet* in Spain, as *Hamlet* was the first drama by Shakespeare performed in Spanish theatres and, as will be seen, one of the key pillars of the references to Shakespeare present in *Un drama nuevo*.

2. *Un drama nuevo*: Shakespeare and *Hamlet*

Manuel Tamayo y Baus (Madrid, 1829–1898) was a precocious actor and playwright who came from a family of actors and who released his first play, *El cinco de agosto* (1849), before even turning twenty. In 1858, before he was twenty nine, Tamayo y Baus was appointed member of the

¹ Esquer Torres analyses the enthusiastic reception of *Un drama nuevo* by the most renowned critics of the time (Esquer Torres 1965, 197–230).

Spanish Royal Academy of the Language, where a year later he read his academic discourse *La verdad considerada como fuente de belleza en la literatura dramática* (“Truth considered as source of beauty in dramatic literature”), which was in fact his manifesto for dramatic realism. From the time he entered the Academy, Tamayo stopped signing his dramatic creations with his own name and began using a series of pseudonyms instead, no doubt out of fear that failure on the stage would damage his reputation as an academic. After the release of *Los hombres de bien* (1870), Tamayo y Baus decided to stop writing for the theater, and during the rest of his life he dedicated himself to academic and intellectual activities different from literary creation. Finally, in 1884 he was appointed director of the National Library of Spain and Head of the Body of Archivists and Librarians.

Tamayo y Baus experimented with various types of dramatic genres, amongst them, tragedies (*Virginia*, 1853), historical dramas (*La ricahembra*, 1854; *Locura de amor*, 1855), moral comedies (*La bola de nieve*, 1856; *Lo positivo*, 1862), and problem plays (*Lances de honor*, 1863). Traditionally, Tamayo y Baus’s dramatic career is thought to evolve from Romanticism to, eventually, the realist comedy of manners. *Un drama nuevo* (1867) represents a transition stage between the Romantic and the Realist – even if, in the view of some critics, it can be read as one of the most representative plays of the Realist movement in 19th-century Spanish drama (Lassaletta 1974). In total, Tamayo y Baus wrote thirty four dramatic pieces; his early ones highly influenced by Romantic authors such as Schiller and Victor Hugo,² and his later ones, by others like Calderón de la Barca. Interestingly, Shakespeare’s dramatic influence, and the influence of English drama in general, seems to be exclusively felt in *Un drama nuevo* and therefore completely absent from any other play by Tamayo y Baus.³

Un drama nuevo’s relationship with Shakespeare and his dramatic production is first of all established by setting the play in England in 1605, and by making Shakespeare himself one of its eight characters. Shakespeare is depicted by Tamayo y Baus as the most famous and successful playwright of Elizabethan England, as a director of plays, a former actor, and the author of *Hamlet*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *Macbeth* (the three plays by Shakespeare explicitly mentioned in *Un drama Nuevo*).⁴ Shakespeare is moreover a man of moral authority, respected by all who know him, a friend to Yorick, Alicia, and Edmundo, and someone able to control and handle difficult situations. He is presented as a man of multiple virtues, as for instance he does not feel envious or jealous before the success of others. Indeed, the play performed in *Un drama nuevo* is not a play by Shakespeare but by a novel playwright who is praised on several occasions; Shakespeare, the director of the play, is the first to acknowledge the virtues of the novel author and to applaud his achievements and potential. To Yorick’s suggestion that the play has some flaws (“Téngola yo también por cosa excelente, aunque algunos defectillos le noto”, “I have it as an excellent thing too, although I find in it some small flaws”), Shakespeare replies the following: “Los envidiosos contarán los defectos; miremos nosotros únicamente las bellezas” (“The envious will count the flaws; let us only contemplate its beauties”). Yorick then states: “A ti sí que nunca te escoció la

2 As N.H. Tayler explains, from Schiller Tamayo “learned to appreciate and handle the philosophical play and to make use of the stage virtues and resources of the melodrama”; also, “Tamayo parts company with Hugo in that he steadily increases his didactic practices on the stage through his moralising and his application of religion to the affairs of daily life” (Tayler 1952, 397).

3 Tayler (1959) dedicates his book entirely to analyzing the sources and influences of Tamayo y Baus’s plays. Tayler discusses in independent chapters the influences of the German (Ch. 2), the Spanish (Ch. 3), the French (Ch. 4) and the English (Ch. 5) dramatic traditions upon Tamayo y Baus’s oeuvre, and he highlights that *Un drama nuevo* is the only play by Tamayo y Baus in which the influence of English drama is truly perceived. For a study that connects the work with the biography of Tamayo y Baus, see Sicars y Salvadó (1906).

4 Here there is a discrepancy with reality, as Tamayo y Baus’s play, set in 1605, includes references to the performance of *Macbeth* while this tragedy is known to have been completed after that year.

envidia en el pecho. Cierto que cuando nada se tiene que envidiar...” (“Never did envy irk your breast. True it is that when there is nothing one can envy...”) (Tamayo y Baus 2008, 62).⁵

Shakespeare behaves not only as the director of the play but also as a counselor, almost as a father-figure to the actors. He worries about them and tries to help and protect them the best he can. In contrast with Shakespeare, the actors (Alicia, Edmundo, Yorick, Walton) are troubled by diverse problems, prove emotionally unstable, under the rule of their passions, unsure of their decisions, and generally seek the help and advice of Shakespeare. Shakespeare eventually finds out about Alicia and Edmundo’s adulterous love, and offers to help them put an end to the morally reprehensible situation in which they are caught. Indeed, the two lovers are tormented by tremendous feelings of guilt and seek the advice of Shakespeare (a model of moral superiority) to stop loving each other:

EDMUNDO. – Sois noble y generoso.

ALICIA. – Tendréis lástima de dos infelices.

EDMUNDO. – No querréis aumentar nuestra desventura.

ALICIA. – Al contrario: nos protegeréis, nos defenderéis contra nosotros mismos.

SHAKESPEARE. – Vamos, hijos míos, serenidad.

ALICIA. – ¡Hijos nos llama! ¿Lo has oído?

EDMUNDO. – ¡Oh, besaremos vuestras plantas!

ALICIA. – Sí. (*Yendo a arrodillarse.*)

SHAKESPEARE. – No; en mis brazos estaréis mejor. (*Abriendo los brazos.*)

EDMUNDO. – ¡Guillermo! (*Deteniéndose con rubor.*)

ALICIA. – ¿Es posible? (*Con alegría.*)

SHAKESPEARE. – ¡Venid!

EDMUNDO. – ¡Salvadnos! (*Arrojándose en sus brazos.*)

ALICIA. – ¡Salvadnos, por piedad! (*Arrojándose también en los brazos de SHAKESPEARE.*)

SHAKESPEARE. – Sí; yo os salvaré con la ayuda de Dios. (*Pausa, durante la cual se oyen los sollozos de EDMUNDO y ALICIA.*) (Tamayo y Baus 2008, 83-4)

[EDMUNDO. – You are noble and generous.

ALICIA. – You will have pity of two poor devils.

EDMUNDO. – You will not want to make our misfortune greater.

ALICIA. – On the contrary: you will protect us, you will defend us from ourselves.

SHAKESPEARE. – Come on, my offspring, stay calm.

ALICIA. – Offspring, he calls us! Did you hear?

EDMUNDO. – Oh! We will kiss your soles!

ALICIA. – Yes. (*Beginning to kneel.*)

SHAKESPEARE. – No; in my arms you will be better. (*Opening his arms.*)

5 All the translations of *Un drama nuevo* into English, as well as all the translations into English of quotations from secondary sources in Spanish, are mine.

EDMUNDO. – William! (*Staring and blushing.*)

ALICIA. – Is it possible? (*With joy.*)

SHAKESPEARE. – Come to me!

EDMUNDO. – Save us! (*Throwing himself to his arms.*)

ALICIA. – Save us, have mercy! (*Throwing herself to SHAKESPEARE's arms too.*)

SHAKESPEARE. – Yes; I will save you with the help of God. (*Pause, during which EDMUNDO and ALICIA's sobs can be heard.*)

The melodramatic overtone typical of 19th-century Spanish drama appears evident in the above fragment; indeed, from the perspective of a 21st century reader it seems too exaggerated to be the means of expression of true and honest feelings. Shakespeare concludes that “[s]iesta buena obra pudiera yo hacer”, referring to putting an end to the adulterous affair, “reiríame de Otelo y Macbeth, y de todas esas tonterías” (“If I could do this good deed, I would laugh at Othello and Macbeth, and at all that nonsense”) (Tamayo y Baus 2008, 88).

Shakespeare in Tamayo y Baus's play works as a symbol, as he evokes the fruitful theatrical environment of Elizabethan England. Still, the fact that the play is set in 1605 does not by any means imply that Tamayo y Baus aimed at reproducing the atmosphere, the thought, or the stage of Renaissance England; certainly, *Un drama nuevo* does not have the slightest ambition to accurately recreate that particular historical period. Otherwise, it would have been a terrible mistake to make Alicia a professional actress in the company of actors directed by Shakespeare in which both Yorick and Edmundo also work.⁶ Ironically, it was precisely up on a stage, in a previous performance of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, that Alicia (/Juliet) and Edmundo (/Romeo) declared their mutual love through the loving words that Romeo and Juliet exchanged in the play. That is, Alicia and Edmundo's love declaration occurred through a Shakespearean dialogue; thus, fiction and reality, feigned and actual feelings, again merge in *Un drama nuevo*, as if real life developed through dramatic texts, or as if drama shaped and constructed reality.

The particular setting of 1605 England is therefore purely a framework selected to render tribute to Shakespeare as a playwright, and to a specific historical moment in which drama experienced a golden age. Indeed, the worries, concerns and general behaviour of characters are closer to those of 19th-century Spain than to 17th-century England, and hence, closer as well to the mentality of the audience that would go to see a play by Tamayo y Baus (Sánchez 1980).

Hamlet is the most direct allusion to a play by Shakespeare in Tamayo y Baus's *Un drama nuevo*. References to *Hamlet* in Tamayo y Baus's play appear in several ways. Firstly, through direct quotations from *Hamlet*: in Act I, Scene I, after Yorick tries to eloquently convince Shakespeare to give him the tragic leading role of Conde Octavio, Shakespeare praises Yorick's elaborated arguments, to which Yorick replies: “No, no creas que ahora encajaría bien aquello de ‘Palabras, palabras, palabras’ that Hamlet says” (“No, do not think that now those ‘Words, words, words’ that Hamlet says fit here”) (Tamayo y Baus 2008, 66). Another clear reference to *Hamlet* is established through the character of Yorick, who, from the mere skull of a buffoon in *Hamlet*, turns into a fully-fledged character in *Un drama nuevo*, where he becomes a double protagonist: the protagonist of the main plot of the tragedy, and the actor that plays the leading role of Conde Octavio in

⁶ As is well known, in the 16th century, all female roles onstage were performed by men dressed as women, and it would not be until the Restoration, in the second half of the 17th century, that women would appear onstage too.

the play within the play.⁷ Other connections appear through the device of the play-within-a-play, and also through references to incestuous relationships: Gertrude and Claudius in *Hamlet* as wife and husband's brother, and Alicia and Edmundo as, in a way, step-mother and stepson, even if of the same age. Additionally, *Un drama nuevo* blends fiction and reality as the events of real life merge with those of the play that the actors have to perform on the stage. In *Hamlet*, this happened with 'the Mousetrap', and in *Un drama nuevo*, apart from Alicia and Edmundo's declaration when rehearsing *Romeo and Juliet*, Yorick effectively ends up killing Edmundo while they are both performing the scene in which Conde Octavio kills Manfredo for having an affair with his wife. This bloody ending in which the main character gets his revenge is reminiscent of *Hamlet* (Hamlet kills Claudius, and Yorick, Edmundo); also, the final sword fight scene between Yorick and Edmundo reminds us of that between Hamlet and Laertes.

Un drama nuevo moreover suggests a number of other works by Shakespeare: both *Macbeth* and *Romeo and Juliet* are explicitly mentioned; the technique of a-play-within-a-play is also used, for instance, in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; the topic of jealousy within relationships inevitably reminds us of *Othello*, and Yorick's considerations to kill his own wife directly point at the previously mentioned play.⁸ The forbidden love between Alicia and Edmundo, the two young lovers, recalls that of Romeo and Juliet, and the character of envious Walton has been seen as "an incarnation of Iago" (Stern 1979, 70). Precisely the character of Walton, an actor of the same company jealous of Yorick's performing the leading role, finally becomes the means through which Yorick finds out about Alicia and Edmundo's relationship, as Walton, during the performance of the play, maliciously gives Yorick a letter in which Edmundo explains to Alicia his plans to run away with her. Again, reality and fiction meet, as, within the play, that letter disclosed to Conde Octavio the identity of the lover of his wife Beatriz.⁹ For having revealed the secret of the two young lovers, the play hints that Shakespeare finally murders Walton in the streets after a sword fight; still, to preserve Shakespeare's portrayal as a virtuous man, it is made explicit that Walton died with a thrust through his chest and his sword in his hand, hence suggesting that he died fighting face to face against his opponent, who had not killed him in cold blood but in the context of a proper and fair fight. Walter's murder definitely reminds readers of the violent death of Christopher Marlowe in London.

Surely, the sources of inspiration for Tamayo y Baus's *Un drama nuevo* are diverse and go well beyond Shakespeare too. They include Cervantes's *Pedro de Urdemalas*, Calderón de la Barca's *El gran teatro del mundo*, Corneille's *L'illusion comique*, Rotrou's *Saint Genest*, Lope de Vega's *Lo fingido verdadero* (House 1922) and *El castigo sin venganza* (Flynn 1973, 134),¹⁰ and Alexandre Dumas' *Kean ou Désordre et Génie*, adapted into Spanish by Tamayo y Baus himself with the title *Navegar a la aventura* (1856) (Rogers 1954, 115).¹¹ Additionally, Thomas Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy*

7 As Crocker remarks, "Yorick is appropriated as the symbolic jester, metamorphosed into a comic actor. He is used, not to betoken the transitoriness and ultimate uselessness of action, as in *Hamlet*, but to reflect the tragic quality of certain human interrelationships" (Crocker 1956, 412).

8 As Tayler remarks, "La única verdadera diferencia entre Otelio y Yorick es que éste no mata por cálculo y con sangre fría, sino en el fulgor cegador de sus pasiones sobreexcitadas" (Tayler 1959, 185). In English: "The only true difference between Othello and Yorick is that the latter does not kill in cold blood, but in the blinding fury of his overexcited passions".

9 Mazzeo (1968) provides a different reading of the play, and sustains that Yorick was in fact aware of Alicia and Edmundo's affair, and hence himself played the part of unaware husband: "To assume that Yorick, years older than his spouse, was ignorant of the relationship existing between Alicia and her young lover Edmundo [...] is entirely implausible" (Mazzeo 1968, 276).

10 Flynn (1973, 84-7, 135) discusses the way in which *Un drama nuevo* follows the precepts laid down by Lope de Vega in his *Arte nuevo de hacer comedias* (*The New Art of Writing Plays*) (1609).

11 Rogers (1954) particularly discusses the stratagem of the letter-substitution device in *Un drama nuevo*, which is also used in Benito Pérez Galdós *La corte de Carlos IV* (1873), within the series of his *Episodios Nacionales*. Rogers speculates that Galdós, a drama lover, might have seen Tamayo's play performed in Madrid and borrowed the strategy from him.

(staged in 1592) constitutes a remarkable source of influence: in Kyd's tragedy, an actor kills a colleague onstage to avenge himself for a past injury, thus also taking advantage of a murder-scene within the play he was performing and turning it to a real stabbing episode. Finally, *Un drama nuevo* has some similarities with other plays by Tamayo y Baus such as *Una apuesta*, *El castillo de Balsain*, or *Más vale maña que fuerza* (Checa 2002, 57), and the title "Un drama nuevo" itself constitutes a reference to *La comedia nueva o El café* (1792), a play that also discusses the world of actors and dramatic authors and that at the end includes a failed performance of a new drama.¹² Interestingly, *La comedia nueva o El café* was written by Leandro Fernández de Moratín, precisely the first to translate *Hamlet* into Spanish directly from the English original text.

3. *Hamlet* in Spain and the Reception of *Un drama nuevo*

In Spain Shakespeare was traditionally mainly known as an author of tragedies rather than comedies or historical dramas. The tragedies that stand out for the number of times historically mentioned or discussed are, first and foremost, *Hamlet*, followed by *Othello*, *Macbeth* and *King Lear* (Pujante and Campillo 2007, xxv).¹³ Ramón de la Cruz's adaptation of *Hamlet* was the first Shakespeare play to be performed in Spanish theatres. The version, entitled *Hamleto, rey de Dinamarca*, was performed in Madrid in 1772 (and only published in 1900 by the *Revista Contemporánea* by instalments) and was based on the free adaptation of the play by Jean-François Ducis released in France in 1769. Ducis had in his turn based his version on the translation by Pierre-Antoine de La Place (published in the eight volumes of his *Le théâtre anglois*, 1745-1748) and not upon the English original, as he did not speak English.¹⁴ Certainly, the French were the ones to introduce Shakespeare to non-English-speaking audiences, and it was Voltaire's "On tragedy", letter XVIII of his *Lettres philosophiques ou lettres anglaises* (written between 1726 and 1730), the result of his three-year exile in England, that truly introduced Shakespeare in continental Europe. In his letter, Voltaire mentioned Shakespeare's dramatic production with recognition of the English playwright's natural and sublime genius, as well as with criticism of his lack of good taste and respect for the dramatic rules. When Pierre Le Tourneur began translating all of Shakespeare's plays in 1776, Voltaire soon enough regretted mentioning Shakespeare and opening the door for the spread of his drama in France.

In addition to de la Cruz's adaptation, there are three other neoclassical Spanish versions of *Hamlet* also based on Ducis's work that remained in manuscript until 2010:¹⁵ an undated anonymous version preserved in the Menéndez y Pelayo library in Santander that cannot stem from much prior to 1793 nor much posterior to 1800; one by Antonio de Saviñón carried out at some point between 1809 and 1814; and another by José María de Carnerero that dates from 1825. These four neoclassical versions have in common that they are in verse and were devised as dramatic

12 Lassaletta (1974, 856) discusses the differences in meaning of the adjective 'new' in Leandro Fernández de Moratín's *La comedia nueva*, and Tamayo y Baus's *Un drama nuevo*. Flynn (1973, 87) dedicates a paragraph to Tamayo y Baus and Leandro Fernández de Moratín, and Checa (2002, 53-7) discusses the importance of the title of the play, referring to Leandro Fernández de Moratín and Lope de Vega. Additionally, Checa discusses the implications of the title *Yorick*, which Tamayo y Baus originally and provisionally gave to the play.

13 For a comprehensive story of Shakespeare's influence in Spanish literature and the history of early performances of plays by Shakespeare in Spain, see Par (1935, 1936).

14 Four other adaptations by Ducis of Shakespeare's plays also found their way to Spanish scenes: *Romeo and Juliet*, *Macbeth*, *King John* and *Othello* in the first half of the 19th century. In France, Ducis' neoclassical version of *Hamlet* got represented two hundred and three times in the Comédie Française from 1769 to 1851, and sixty-five between 1831 and 1840, already in the middle of the Romantic movement (Pujante and Campillo 2007, xxx).

15 Pujante and Gregor (2010) have edited these four neoclassical versions.

texts, not as works in prose simply meant to be read, although it is highly improbable that any of them got performed. At the end of the 18th century, the renowned playwright Leandro Fernández de Moratín translated Shakespeare's *Hamlet* directly from English into Spanish for the very first time. Published in 1798 in the Madridian Oficina de Villalpando under the pseudonym Inarco Celenio, and never taken to the stage, the translation has received considerable scholarly attention (Díaz García 1989; López Román 1989; Regalado Kerson 1989; Zaro 1998; Bobes Naves 2005). José María Blanco White, expatriated in England from 1810 to 1841, was the first after Moratín to translate directly from English into Spanish two fragments of *Hamlet*: Act II, Scene I, and Act III, Scene I, the renowned "to be or not to be" soliloquy. The chosen excerpts appeared in 1824 printed in the London newspaper *Varietades o Mensajero de Londres* under the title of "Shakespeare: Traducción poética de algunos pasajes de sus dramas". A few decades later, in 1856, Pablo AVECILLA corrected Moratín's version giving way to his own one. In spite of the new translations and versions that appeared after Ramón de la Cruz's 1772 staging, the next performance of an adaptation of *Hamlet* in Spain after Ramón de la Cruz's happened as late as 1866, this time with the peculiarity of it being in Italian. Indeed, it was the company of the Italian actor Ernesto Rossi that performed it. Rossi, who was part of the Spanish intellectual life of the time (a friend to Bécquer and other writers, for instance), dramatically failed in his first performance, and it was only in his second attempt two years later that he achieved great success (Berenguer 1989, 141). In addition to *Hamlet*, in the 1860s Ernesto Rossi staged in Spain *Othello*, *Macbeth* and *Romeo and Juliet*, in 1875 *The Merchant of Venice*, and in 1884 *King Lear* (Pujáis 1975, 19). Other Italian opera companies led by, for instance, Ristori, Giovanni, Virginia Reiter, Ermete Novelli and Olga Gianni popularized Shakespeare's works in Spain to the extent that, between 1772 and 1900, *Hamlet* was performed in Madrid by Italian companies six out of fourteen times, and in Barcelona twelve out of twenty six (Thomas 1949, 15; Berenguer 1989, 140-1).

Manuel Tamayo y Baus's *Un drama nuevo* opened at the Teatro de la Zarzuela in Madrid on 4 May 1867, with the role of Yorick played by Tamayo's brother Victorino. Thus, by the time that Manuel Tamayo y Baus's *Un drama nuevo* was performed for the first time in 1867, there had been very few performances of *Hamlet* upon Spanish stages, and only one of the productions that performed did so in Spanish. From this naturally follows that the majority of those who went to see Tamayo y Baus's *Un drama nuevo* had never seen any Shakespeare performed at all, and only a small group of them would have read translations of *Hamlet* into Spanish (either the 1798 version by Leandro Fernández de Moratín, or the 1856 version by Pablo AVECILLA). Thus, when Julio Checa speculates on the reasons why *Un drama nuevo* became a success on theatres in the 19th century, he unsurprisingly does not allude to Tamayo y Baus's interplay with Shakespeare's works:

Seguramente, la clave de su aplauso estaría en la presencia de elementos melodramáticos cuya vigencia obedecía a unas coordenadas muy concretas y a la comprensión de la obra desde una interpretación, desde un *horizonte de expectativas*, más concreto aún. Si tenemos en cuenta alguna de las críticas publicadas con motivo de su estreno, veremos claramente las razones de su éxito. No hace falta señalar que esta crítica en ningún momento valoraba el drama por su tratamiento de las relaciones entre la realidad y la ficción, ni siquiera por su habilidad técnica, y, sin embargo, lo hacía precisamente por aquello de lo que el propio Tamayo huyó: el planteamiento moral del problema del honor. (Checa 2002, 64-5)

[Surely, the key to their [19th-century audiences'] applause was the presence of melodramatic elements whose existence obeyed to very specific coordinates and to the understanding of the work from an even more specific interpretation and *horizon of expectations*. If we bear in mind

some of the critiques published after its opening, we will clearly see the reasons for the play's success. It is not necessary to remark that critics never appreciated the drama for its treatment of the relations between reality and fiction, nor even for its technical ability, and yet, they did so precisely for the aspects from which Tamayo himself fled: the moral problematic of honour.]

Un drama nuevo immediately became a successful performance and toured not only throughout Spain but also in several other countries.¹⁶ Interestingly, shortly after the opening of *Un drama nuevo* the number of translations of *Hamlet* into Spanish and the performances of this play in Spanish rapidly escalated, which allows for speculation on whether there was a cause-effect relationship between the success of Tamayo y Baus's play and an increase in the general interest in *Hamlet* on the part of translators, editors, theatre companies and audiences and readers – or simply a general realization that there were very few translations of the play available in Spanish and, similarly, few performances of it in Spain. Thus, in 1872, Carlos Coello's *El príncipe Hamlet* was performed in Madrid, experiencing a considerable success, as it was performed fifteen times in the capital, and the following year the show was taken to Barcelona. That same year of 1873, two new verse translations of *Hamlet* were put forward by two non-Spaniards: James Clark, who translated three tragedies and seven comedies by Shakespeare, and William Macpherson, who eventually translated twenty-two other plays by Shakespeare, and who, between 1885 and 1897, published them in eight volumes in a series of the *Biblioteca Clásica*. In the American continent, a translation of *Hamlet* by Mateo Martínez Artabeytia was published in Havana in 1872, and in 1886 one by Manuel Pérez Bibbins and Francisco López Carvajal appeared in México. In the 20th century, translations of *Hamlet* into Spanish flourish.¹⁷ Additionally, *Hamlet* was rendered into Catalan in the 19th century: dating from 1896, there is a translation into Catalan of Act V, Scene I by Celestino Barallat y Folguera, which was read in the Reial Academia de Bones Lletres of Barcelona; and in 1898 Arthur Masriera translated *Hamlet* into Catalan too. Indeed, *Hamlet* would end up becoming the most translated and adapted work by Shakespeare in Spain (Pujante and Gregor 2010, 41), to which success Manuel Tamayo y Baus contributed in the mid-19th century with his *Un drama nuevo*, no doubt partly accountable for a growth in interest in *Hamlet* on the part of Spanish-speaking translators, editors, readers and audiences.

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16 Among them, the United States: on 5 December 1874, *Un drama nuevo* was performed in New York at Daly's Fifth Avenue Theatre. The version in English was prepared by Augustin Daly, and the actor Louis James featured Yorick. As Charlotte Stern remarks, "According to Daly's brother Joseph, James rose to the occasion and gave a stellar performance, but the public boycotted the play, thereby forcing it to close one week later" (Stern 1979, 70). Apart from the translation by Daly, there was a second one by William Dean Howells, called *Yorick's Love*. As J.D. Fitz-Gerald explains, these two American versions were "adaptations that took many liberties with the original" (Fitz-Gerald 1924, 175). Both of them, however, are now lost, and the play is currently available in the English version of J.D. Fitz-Gerald and T.H. Guild (*A New Drama*, New York: The Hispanic Society of America, 1915), which does not take many liberties with the text.

17 For a complete list of Spanish translations and versions of *Hamlet* from the 18th century up until our days see Pujante and Gregor (2010, 513–6). Also, Juliá Martínez (1918, 255–61) includes a chronological index with all the translations and imitations of works by Shakespeare in Spain or in Spanish until 1918. He particularly discusses those derived from *Hamlet* on pages 115–36. Campillo Arnaiz (2005) analyzes in detail in the first chapter of her dissertation ("Las traducciones de Shakespeare en España") the translations of Shakespeare's works in Spain from 1772 until 2004.

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