

## JAKOB KELEMINA ON SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS

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### **Abstract**

Among Slovene scholars in English and German studies Jakob Kelemina (19 July 1882 – 14 May 1957) has a very important place. Janez Stanonik justly places him among the founding fathers of the University of Ljubljana (Stanonik 1966: 332). From 1920 Kelemina was professor of Germanic philology and between 1920 and 1957 he was also the Chair of the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures at the Faculty of Arts of this university. The major part of Kelemina's research was devoted to German and Austrian literatures, German philology, German–Slovene cultural relations, and literary theory; his work in these fields has already been discussed by several Slovene scholars. However, in the first two decades of the twentieth century Kelemina also wrote several book reviews of Slovene and Croatian translations of Shakespeare's plays as well as three introductory essays to Slovene translations of Shakespeare's plays. They are considered as the first serious studies on Shakespeare in Slovenia (Moravec 1974: 437), and have not been analysed yet. Therefore this topic presents the core of my study, together with an evaluation of Kelemina's contribution to Slovene translations of Shakespeare's plays done by Oton Župančič (1878-1949) during the first half of the twentieth century. Župančič's translations became the criterion for all further translations of Shakespeare's dramatic works in Slovene. Župančič is still one of our most important poets and translators of this time and Kelemina's advice and criticism undoubtedly also helped him to achieve such a high standard in his translations. In the central part of my study I also include some new material (e.g. Kelemina's letters), which is relevant for our understanding of his co-operation with Oton Župančič and other Slovene authors and critics.

In order to put Kelemina's work into a historical perspective I present at the beginning of my study a brief survey of the development of drama and theatre in Slovenia, particularly as regards productions and early attempts of translating Shakespeare's plays into Slovene. This information, which may be particularly relevant for foreign readers, ends with the year 1922, when Kelemina's last writing about Shakespeare's plays appeared. In 2007 we commemorate the one hundred and twenty-fifth anniversary of Kelemina's birth and fiftieth anniversary of his death, which is another reason why his work on Shakespeare should be finally researched and evaluated. This study should also help expand our knowledge about Jakob Kelemina's contribution regarding translations of Shakespeare's plays for the Slovene theatre and for Slovene culture generally.

## INTRODUCTION

The theatre and dramatic art in Slovenia with special regard to the production of Shakespeare's plays.

Until 1919 Slovenia belonged to the Habsburg Empire and this was also the reason why cultural and theatrical life was in many ways similar to that of central Europe, particularly to regions which nowadays form parts of Austria, Germany and Italy. As in England the theatrical activities in continental Europe were carried out by professional itinerant players which represented an advanced stage of popular mummings at various, particularly religious festivals, or morris dancing. Dušan Ludvik mentions in his study on German theatre in Ljubljana that a record of such a travelling company which visited Ljubljana goes back to the year 1478 (Ludvik 1957: 17-9). Stanko Škerlj reports that Italian actors performed in Ljubljana a carnival play in 1531, but unfortunately little else is known about this performance (Škerlj 1973:16-9). Investigations carried out by France-Martin Dolinar and Nada Grošelj show that after the establishment of the Jesuit College in Ljubljana in May 1597 the students staged the first performance already in autumn of the same year (Grošelj 2004: 61-71). On the feast of Corpus Christi in 1603 the Jesuit students also performed a play based on the *History* of the Venerable Bede (673-735 A.D.), however, »the extent to which the original story was preserved in the adaptation for drama is .. a matter of speculation, since neither text nor synopsis is preserved (*ibid.* 63-7). Records of the Jesuit College in Ljubljana indicate that in 1686 its students also produced two plays dealing with the story of Mary Stuart and a declamation celebrating England's victory over "heresy". In 1698, at the concluding distribution of school prizes, they performed (in German) a version of the King Lear story. Unfortunately, there are not many details known about these performances, although in the case of King Lear, the synopsis, a twelve page quarto, offers the basic information about the Argument of the play, the scene by scene summary of the play, and a Latin list of roles and actors (*ibid.* 67-71). The activities of the Jesuit College in Ljubljana were important, because the Jesuits also used the vernacular, Slovene language, besides Latin and German. Although the above mentioned and other plays were not done by professional actors they undoubtedly contributed to cultural life in Slovenia at that time.

In 1653 the first German professional theatre group visited Ljubljana. In this group there were also two English actors (because the theatres were closed down in England in 1642 a number of English actors then left for the Netherlands and Germany), who performed in this theatre travelling company. Among the best known and influential theatre groups, which visited Ljubljana in the 17th century were the Innsbrurgerische Comödianten, from Innsbruck. This group performed among other plays also works by Christopher Marlowe and Thomas Kyd. In the eighteenth century such an important theatre group was the one led by Johann Emanuel Schikaneder, which visited Ljubljana several times in the 1770s and 1780s and which performed – among others – a number of Shakespeare's plays (e.g. *Hamlet*, *King Lear*, *Macbeth*, *Richard III*, *Romeo and Juliet*).<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Johann Emanuel Schikaneder (1751-1812), one of the best known leaders of the actors' companies in the German speaking world in the final decades of the 18th century. He was an actor, a singer, a director and a manager of the theatres in Regensburg and in Vienna. He also wrote musical comedies and is known as the author of the libretto for Mozart's opera *The Magic Flute* (1791).

As was customary in England and elsewhere in Europe at that time, Shakespeare's tragedies were adapted, many dialogues shortened, scenes shifted and (which is today hardly believable) the endings were rewritten with a happy ending! It is also worth noting that such professional companies performed in Ljubljana plays written by Marlowe, Molière, Corneille, Lessing, Schiller, Goethe, Goldoni etc. (Ludvik 1957: 160), so that young Slovene intellectuals who continued their studies at the University of Vienna, received some basic information about the European theatre while still in Ljubljana. It should also be noted that among plays performed in Ljubljana before the eighteenth century a large part of the programme included light comedies, burlesques, popular »folk plays«, briefly, works which had little artistic value and were solely aimed at providing entertainment and amusement. In some periods, for example during the rule of Empress Maria Theresa (1740-80) and that of her son, Joseph II (1780-90), in spite of the fact that their social reforms represent many positive social changes (this is the so-called period of Enlightenment), the centralization of administrative power of the monarchy brought about also a rather rigid form of censorship. The rulers saw in different social reforms, which they actually helped to bring to life, also a possible threat of national upsurge in countries where the mother tongue was not German and which then belonged to the Habsburg Empire. The rulers saw the possibility of formation and growth of new, democratic, liberal ideas and therefore they were afraid of works of art and artists who might help the advancement of such ideas. And one of them was also a "senseless and terrifying influence of Shakespeare" and his damaging impact on contemporary playwrights (Ludvik 1957: 31-4). Therefore several plays written by dramatists, who were then considered as "revolutionary" (e.g. Friedrich Schiller's *Die Räuber* or Beaumarchais's *La folle journée ou le mariage de Figaro*), were at first banned by the censor in Vienna due to their ideas.

However, during the final decade of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century the censorship was no longer as rigid and young Slovene intellectuals who studied in Vienna saw performances of the above mentioned as well as of Shakespeare's plays in the original version and not adaptations of his tragedies with a happy end. They were thrilled by these performances and wrote about them to their friends and acquaintances in Slovenia. The first one to report about excellent performances of Shakespeare's plays in Vienna and who sent back home such enthusiastic reports was Anton Tomaž Linhart (1756-1795). He hoped that he could tread "with boy's steps where Shakespeare had trodden" (Moravec 1974: 338), and he wrote his first play *Miss Jenny Love* under Shakespeare's influence. He also urged his friends to try their hand in dramatic art. Linhart refers to the Bard as »le sublime Shakespear« and he writes that he was »enchanted to madness« after having seen *Hamlet*, *King Lear* and *Macbeth* (*ibid.*). Linhart is also the author of the first two Slovene comedies, *Županova Micka* (1789) and *Ta veseli dan ali Matiček se ženi* (1790; this play was modelled on Beaumarchais's *Figaro*). Linhart is justly celebrated as the beginner of Slovene drama, even though the first play in Slovene language, which has been completely preserved, is *Škofjeloški pasijon* ("The Passion from Škofja Loka", a religious play dealing with the suffering and death of Jesus), which was written more than half a century before Linhart's time, in 1721.

By the turn of the 18th century German theatre groups still visited Ljubljana quite often. During these visits they performed plays by well-known European dramatists who have been already mentioned as well as plays written by Shakespeare, as e.g. *Macbeth*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Hamlet*, *Othello* (Ludvik 1957: 100). In this period several Slovene authors (as e.g. Jurij Japelj, Janez Damascen Dev) began to translate into Slovene librettos for operas, and dramas. Shakespeare was not *terra incognita* for Slovene intellectuals, and the greatest Slovene poet, France Prešeren (1800-1849), mentions Romeo and Juliet in one of his poems ("Nova pisarija"). Prešeren undoubtedly also knew other plays written by Shakespeare, as one of his closest friends, Matija Čop (1797-1835), had in his library thirteen Shakespeare's plays.

In the nineteenth century many Slovene writers and critics (e.g. Stanko Vraz, Janez Bleiweis, Fran Levstik, Josip Jurčič, Josip Stritar, Fran Šuklje, Josip Vošnjak etc.) praise Shakespeare's plays in their articles and studies. The three-hundredth anniversary of Shakespeare's birth, in 1864, stimulated several Slovene translators, for example, Ivan Vrban-Zadravski, Matija Valjavec, Janko Pajk, and some others to translate and publish individual scenes from Shakespeare's plays in various Slovene periodicals (Moravec 1974: 348-71). But serious attempts to translate Shakespeare's plays into Slovene only began at the close of the 19th century and the beginning of the twentieth century.

There are two translators of Shakespeare's plays into Slovene whose involvement in translating Shakespeare's plays was relatively great but whose efforts ended badly. The first one is Andrej Smrekar (d. 1913), a Slovene priest who lived in Collinwood near Cleveland, USA, and who – according to various reports - translated into Slovene many of Shakespeare's plays, but whose manuscripts are unfortunately lost. The second one is Karel Glaser (1845-1913), a literary historian and indologist, who translated into Slovene eleven plays written by Shakespeare but whose translations were constantly rejected by the Slovene publishing houses, on the grounds that the language he used was obsolete and that his translations were not poetic enough. It is no wonder that he was rather embittered by this fact and in order to prove his knowledge of Shakespeare he attacked in his articles the work done by other translators, as we shall see later.

With the establishment of the Dramatic Society (Dramatično društvo) in Ljubljana in 1867, and of the same kind of societies in other cities (Trieste / Trst, in 1902; Maribor, in 1909; Celje, in 1911), which all performed plays only in Slovene, the repertoire of these theatre groups became comparable to other important theatres in Europe. These were also the first professional Slovene theatre companies and theatrical life in Slovenia was thus greatly improved.<sup>2</sup> They all performed plays in Slovene and their performances became, generally speaking, quite professional. The Dramatic Society in Ljubljana was the fore-

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<sup>2</sup> The information regarding the programme of Slovene theatres since 1867 is available in *Repertoar slovenskih gledališč. 1867 – 1967* (A Repertoire of Slovenian Theatres. 1867 -1967, published by the Slovenski gledališki muzej, Ljubljana, 1967). The Slovene Theatre Museum also published subsequent bibliographical compilations of the repertoire, at first every five years, titled *Dokumenti slovenskega gledališkega muzeja* (Documents of the Slovene Theatre Museum), and since 1993 yearly, under the title *Slovenski gledališki letopis* (Slovene Theatre Annual). The latter publications are much more comprehensive than the earlier bibliographies and include also data on actors, the number of performances of plays and the number of theatre-goers, visits of different theatre companies in other theatres and abroad etc. In my study I use the English titles of these documents and of Slovene theatres, as they are given in these publications.

runner of the Slovene National Theatre in Ljubljana (Drama SNG v Ljubljani - SNG), and its founding represents the beginning of a continued activity of the professional theatre in Slovenia. Besides performing plays by well-known contemporary European and classical authors (e.g. Henrik Ibsen, Oscar Wilde, L. N. Tolstoy, N. V. Gogol, August Strindberg etc.), Drama also produced plays by a number of Slovene authors who have fallen by now into oblivion (e.g. Josip Ogrinec, Jakob Aleševac, Miroslav Vilhar, Anton Medved, Fran Govekar etc.). Govekar was also the first general manager of the Slovene National Theatre (1908-1912), and when Oton Župančič got this position he became a severe critic of Župančič's theatrical policy.<sup>3</sup> Govekar is also known for his adaptations of works written by European authors, which were – according to his taste – aimed at entertainment only. He believed that light comedies and burlesques would bring large audiences to the theatre, and he completely neglected the artistic value of plays which he chose for production.

Some Slovene authors used as plots of their plays novels and poems dealing with Slovene history or with folklore tradition (e.g. Fran Levstik, Josip Stritar, later on Franc S. Finžgar, and some other, minor authors) thus also trying to raise with their plays the level of Slovene national consciousness. The first Slovene playwright whose works could be compared with contemporary European drama was Ivan Cankar (1876-1918). His plays began to appear in Slovene theatres at the very beginning of the twentieth century (*Za narodov blagor*, 1901; *Kralj na Betajnovi*, 1904; *Pohujšanje v dolini šentflorjanski*, 1908; *Hlapci*, 1910). They present a real milestone in the development of Slovene drama, because his critical treatment of life in Slovenia, his use of everyday spoken Slovene enriched with symbolism and other poetic elements, gave his plays such a high aesthetic standard, which became very hard to reach and even harder to surpass by the next generations of Slovene dramatists.

At this moment of Slovene history it was really only a question of time when Slovene translations of Shakespeare's plays would appear in Slovene theatres and in print. The first play which was produced by a professional theatre company in Slovenia, was Shakespeare's *Othello* at the Slovene National Theatre. It was translated by Miroslav Malovrh and produced in Ljubljana on 3 March 1896.<sup>4</sup> In the following season two other Shakespeare's plays were produced by the same company. These were *The Merchant of Venice* (1 Oct. 1897, trans. by Anton Zima),<sup>5</sup> and *The Taming of the Shrew* (18 March 1898, trans. by Anton Funtek).<sup>6</sup> A year later, on 29 Dec. 1899, the first Slovene performance of *Hamlet* was staged by the same company. The play was originally translated

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<sup>3</sup> Fran Govekar (1871-1949), teacher, short story writer, novelist, critic, dramatist, translator, journalist. Govekar also dramatized for the Slovene National Theatre several prose works written by Slovene authors. In the theatre Govekar favoured a sentimental, romantic approach to reality, full of glitter and illusion. In his views on art he advocated light entertainment and therefore he was not highly regarded by Oton Župančič and by Ivan Cankar.

<sup>4</sup> Miroslav Malovrh (1861-1922), editor, translator, journalist. His translation of *Othello* was the first play written by Shakespeare which appeared on the stage in Slovene and which was performed by professional actors.

<sup>5</sup> Anton Zima is – together with Matija Valjevec, Ivan Vrban-Zadravski, Janko Pajk, Miroslav Malovrh and Sil. Domicelj – one of the early Slovene translators of Shakespeare's plays.

<sup>6</sup> Anton Funtek (1862-1932), wrote poems, translated European poetry and plays into Slovene. Besides *The Taming of the Shrew* he also translated into Slovene *King Lear*.

by Dragotin Šauperl,<sup>7</sup> but when it was produced only the name of Ivan Cankar, who adapted the play, appeared on the theatre-bill as the translator of *Hamlet*. This was probably due to his high reputation as a poet, prose writer and dramatist. However, the first important Slovene translator of Shakespeare's plays became Oton Župančič (1878-1949), who translated into Slovene eighteen plays written by Shakespeare in the period between 1905 and 1949, the year of his death.

Oton Župančič was not only a fine poet but also a man who loved the theatre and went to see theatre performances whenever and wherever he could. However, in the final period of his life he wished he did not have so many administrative duties so that he could devote his life only to translating and writing.<sup>8</sup> When he was a student he spent several years in Vienna and in Paris. Already in 1908 he proposed to the newly established publishing house and cultural centre, Slovenska matica, in Ljubljana, that he would translate some of Shakespeare's most important plays into Slovene. However, due to the First World War the project was postponed and the contract in which he obliged himself to translate about ten plays written by Shakespeare into Slovene was not signed until 11 Dec. 1919.<sup>9</sup> Župančič also agreed in the contract that each play would have Introduction, and that for the reimbursement of the author of the critical study he would provide a fee out of the payment he got from the publishing house.

Župančič often visited other countries where he saw productions of plays by some of the best theatre companies in Europe (e.g. besides performances in the Burgtheater and other theatres in Vienna he saw a number of performances at the Comédie Française in Paris, at the Narodni divadlo in Prague, at various theatres in Italy etc.). Later on, in the thirties, he also went to see performances of plays done by the theatres in Norway and in England, and when he saw *The Taming of the Shrew* at Stratford-upon-Avon, he realized that it was not only the German theatres, which could perform Shakespeare's plays well ("as it is made known by the Germans"), and the English theatre with its artistic perfection was a real revelation for him.<sup>10</sup> Oton Župančič was thus well-acquainted with the classical and contemporary European drama. In 1910, after his return from Vienna to Ljubljana, he began to write theatre reviews. Already at this time he was famous in Slovenia for his publications of lyric poetry and poetry written for children. In 1912-13 he became a "dramaturg" of the Slovene National Theatre (Drama) in Ljubljana, and in 1920 he resumed this post. From 1929 he was also the general manager of this theatre, and in this function he combined the administrative duties and duties of the artistic director. This position allowed him not only to choose the repertoire for this theatre but he was also influential in other aspects of theatrical productions.

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<sup>7</sup> Dragotin Šauperl (1840-1869), a priest, translator. In 1865 he translated *Hamlet* and soon afterwards also *King Lear*. His translation of *Hamlet* was so good that Ivan Cankar did not have to do any major alterations but only brought it closer to Slovene literary language.

<sup>8</sup> Oton Župančič's biographer and editor of his Collected letters, Joža Mahnič, believes that Župančič was tired of his official duties, which used up a lot of his time, particularly because he wished to translate Shakespeare's plays. (Joža Mahnič in Oton Župančič ZD 11: 640).

<sup>9</sup> Mahnič 1980: 10.

<sup>10</sup> Mahnič 2004: 95. – Oton Župančič translated into Slovene - besides Shakespeare - also a number of plays written by other famous European authors (e.g. Hofmannsthal, Calderon, Voltaire, Molière, Rostand, Schiller, Ibsen, G. B. Shaw, Galsworthy etc.).

Oton Župančič's poetic rendering of Shakespeare's plays into Slovene for the Slovene National Theatre in Ljubljana (in the period between the two wars several of his translations of Shakespeare's plays were also performed in Maribor), definitely marks a new era in the Slovene theatre. Throughout his life Župančič saw Shakespeare's plays as "an ever-fixed mark" in the art of the theatre. Shakespeare was for him an icon, an ideal which was worth admiring and which he also hoped to reach in his own plays. This thought can be traced not only in the repertoire he chose for the Slovene National Theatre but also in his theatre reviews, his notes and in his prefaces in theatre bills for performances of Shakespeare's plays in Slovenia as well as in his own dramatic attempts. He also considered as one of the main tasks of the Slovene National Theatre to perform plays written by Slovene playwrights and classical drama, particularly Shakespeare's works, which, in his view, so "perfectly expressed real life". Župančič also believed that a "beautiful" translation, like that of Cankar's *Hamlet*, was essential for a good performance. In his view translations which are prepared by "craftsmen" (like Glaser) do not have an artistic value, because they lack the suggestive poetic power of the Bard. Župančič also disapproved of the contemporary naturalistic tendencies on the stage, the wish to create on the stage an illusion of reality, because this very idea was for him "an illusion", a gross deception of the theatre audience. Župančič was not thrilled by modern presentations of *Hamlet* done in England (by Hamlet wearing a tail-coat, having a monocle and smoking cigarettes), but he did not oppose theatrical improvisations in plays like *The Taming of the Shrew*, in which Shakespeare's contemporary life is shown. For the *Comedy of Errors* he would even suggest the use of "passionless marionettes and their stylized movements", because they would not cheat the public with an appearance of reality. These "technicalities" linked with performing Shakespeare's plays in Slovene theatres, particularly in the Slovene National Theatre in Ljubljana, show Župančič as a rather moderate innovator in theatre productions. In Shakespeare's works he mainly saw the playwright's revelation of his ideas, his view of the world and his rediscovery of man's belief in his fellow-man, in secret higher powers that lead our lives with "celestial righteousness and grace", as he expressed himself in 1925 in his introduction in the playbill to *The Winter's Tale*.<sup>11</sup> Župančič believed that rationalistic probability was not quintessential for Shakespeare but that the dramatist wished to present in his plays real, complex world.<sup>12</sup> In an interview which Oton Župančič gave for the Slovene newspaper *Jutro* in 1927 he made his famous statement that "*Hamlet* is considered by the Slovenes as our best and most beloved popular (folk) play".<sup>13</sup> The theatre for Oton Župančič was not only a place where his own translations were staged, it was for him a vital part of his daily life. His criticism of naturalistic tendencies, which were then practiced in various European theatres, was expressed by Župančič in his writings already in the early 1920s.

<sup>11</sup> Župančič ZD 8: 104-5.

<sup>12</sup> These ideas are stressed in many of Župančič's introductory remarks written for playbills of productions of Shakespeare's plays performed by the Slovene National Theatre in Ljubljana already in the late 1910s and in the early 1920s, as for example, in "*Hamlet v Slovenskem narodnem gledališču*" (Župančič ZD 8: 67-8); "*Rokodelci v Snu kresne noči*" (Župančič ZD 8: 72-3); "*Shakespearev oder*" (Župančič ZD 8: 74-6); "*Hamlet in Trmoglavka v današnji obleki*" (Župančič ZD 8: 162-3); "*Komedija zmešnjav*" (Župančič ZD 8: 94-5); "*Zimska pravljica*" (Župančič ZD 8: 104-5).

<sup>13</sup> »Oton Župančič o Shakespearu«, *Jutro* 16 April 1927: 17.

Župančič's purpose when translating plays was "to capture the spirit of the play" even though in order to do this he occasionally had to "sacrifice" some less important thoughts which he did not consider as essential. He introduced into the Slovene language many neologisms, created new verbs, introduced in his translations contemporary jargon and he sometimes used words typical only of the region where he was born (Bela Krajina). In his translations of Shakespeare's plays Župančič paid special attention to the structure of the Slovene language (e.g. he avoided the use of nominal phrases and of the passive voice, which are not typical of Slovene syntax). He also invented many new rhyme patterns and was especially attentive to the rhythmic structure of the verse. Although more than one hundred years have passed since the appearance of his earliest translations of Shakespeare's plays into Slovene, Župančič's rich imagery and the rhythm of his translations are still close to modern Slovene so that his translations of Shakespeare's plays are still occasionally used by Slovene theatre directors even though new translations of Shakespeare's plays are now available.

Župančič's work as the translator of Shakespeare's plays was followed in the second half of the twentieth century by two other artists, who are also both poets and dramatists, Matej Bor (1913 -1993) and Milan Jesih (1950-). Minor linguistic changes in Župančič's translations were made by Janko Moder (1914-2006) for Matej Bor's edition of the first complete edition of Shakespeare's plays in Slovene translation, which appeared in 1974. Although Bor's and Jesih's translations are also often labelled as "poetic", these translators paid more attention than Župančič to everyday spoken Slovene, which lent the Slovene translations that linguistic quality which is typical of everyday speech, and which is best suited for dialogues in the theatre.

#### PRODUCTIONS OF SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS IN SLOVENE PROFESSIONAL THEATRES (1876-1922)

The following table shows performances of Shakespeare's plays at the Slovene National Theatre (Drama) in Ljubljana since its establishment in 1876 and 1922, when Jakob Kelemina stopped writing about Slovene translations of Shakespeare's plays. The table also includes productions of Shakespeare's plays during the above mentioned period by two other Slovene professional theatres, which were established at the beginning of the twentieth century. These are the Slovene Theatre in Trieste / Trst (Slovensko gledališče v Trstu), and the Slovene National Theatre in Maribor (Drama SNG v Mariboru). An important note should be made here regarding the activities of these theatres. The Slovene Dramatic Society in Trieste / Trst, where a large Slovene population lived, began its performances on 8 March 1902, when the city was still a part of the Austrian monarchy. The professional theatrical company called "Slovensko gledališče v Trstu" (SGT) regularly began to perform plays in Slovene on 6 October 1907 in a newly built Slovene National Home, in the centre of the city. With the beginning of the First World War, in 1914, theatrical life in Ljubljana, Trieste / Trst and Maribor was interrupted. The theatres were re-opened in 1918. However, already on 13 July 1920 the Fascists burnt down the building of the Slovene theatre in Trieste / Trst. Slovene was no longer to be spoken in public and the activities of this theatre were stopped for 25 years. Theatres



in Maribor and in Trieste / Trst were also closed during WWII, whereas the Slovene National Theatre in Ljubljana performed during the war only light comedies and plays for children. All three Slovene professional theatres began their activities again in 1945, but the Slovene theatre in Trieste / Trst was completely reactivated only in 1964, when a new Slovene cultural centre was built in this city, which belongs now to Italy but which still has a relatively large Slovene minority, particularly in its hinterland. This short historical sketch shows us what a great influence the European history of the twentieth century had on life and activities of the Slovene theatres.

---- *The Slovene National Theatre in Ljubljana:*

Date of first performance:	- in English:	Title of the play - in Slovene:	Translated by:
5 March 1896	<i>Othello</i>	<i>Othello</i>	Miroslav Malovrh
1 Oct. 1897	<i>The Merchant of Venice</i>	<i>Trgovec beneški / Beneški trgovec</i>	Anton Zima
18 Mar. 1898	<i>The Taming of the Shrew</i>	<i>Kako se krote ženske / Ukročena trmoglavka</i>	Anton Funtek
28 Dec. 1899	<i>Hamlet</i>	<i>Hamlet</i>	Dragotin Šauperl / Ivan Cankar
3 Jan. 1901	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	<i>Romeo in Julija</i>	S. Domicelj
28 Feb. 1903	<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	<i>Sen kresne noči</i>	Oton Župančič
19 Jan. 1905	<i>Hamlet</i>	<i>Hamlet</i>	Dragotin Šauperl / Ivan Cankar
29 Nov. 1906	<i>The Merchant of Venice</i>	<i>Beneški trgovec</i>	Oton Župančič
5 Mar. 1910	<i>Julius Caesar</i>	<i>Julij Cezar</i>	Oton Župančič
26 Dec. 1911	<i>The Merry Wives of Windsor</i>	<i>Vesele žene widsorske</i>	Fran Govekar
17 Dec 1912	<i>The Comedy of Errors</i>	<i>Komedija zmešnjav</i>	Oton Župančič
26 Dec. 1912	<i>The Merry Wives of Windsor</i>	<i>Vesele žene windsorske</i>	Fran Govekar
1 Nov. 1918	<i>Hamlet</i>	<i>Hamlet</i>	Dragotin Šauperl / Ivan Cankar
25 Feb. 1920	<i>The Merchant of Venice</i>	<i>Beneški trgovec</i>	Oton Župančič
29 Oct. 1920	<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	<i>Sen kresne noči</i>	Oton Župančič
2 Oct. 1921	<i>The Comedy of Errors</i>	<i>Komedija zmešnjav</i>	Oton Župančič
26 Jan. 1922	<i>Hamlet</i>	<i>Hamlet</i>	Dragotin Šauperl / Ivan Cankar

-----*The Slovene National Theatre in Maribor:*

23 Oct. 1920	<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	<i>Sen kresne noči</i>	Oton Župančič
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-----*The Slovene National Theatre in Trieste / Trst:*

5 Mar. 1911	<i>The Merchant of Venice</i>	<i>Beneški trgovec</i>	Oton Župančič
2 Nov. 1913	<i>Othello</i>	<i>Othello</i>	Miroslav Malovrh
1 Feb. 1914	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	<i>Romeo in Julija</i>	Ivan Cankar

In the period between 1922 and 1941 the Slovene National Theatre in Ljubljana produced twenty plays written by Shakespeare, which were – with the exception of two plays – all translated by Oton Župančič. The Slovene National Theatre in Maribor performed in this period twelve plays written by Shakespeare, which were likewise – with the exception of two plays – also all translated by Oton Župančič.

An important fact concerning theatrical life in Slovenia is the increase of professional theatrical companies in Slovenia in the second half of the twentieth century. In 2005 there were (besides the three above mentioned theatres) new professional theatre groups established also in the following cities: Celje, Nova Gorica, Kranj, Ptuj, Koper. Regular, professional theatres were also established in Ljubljana (Mestno gledališče ljubljansko - The Municipal Theatre of Ljubljana) and Slovensko mladinsko gledališče (The Youth Theatre) and the Eksperimentalno gledališče Glej (The Glej Experimental Theatre). In addition, there are also several ad hoc theatre groups and three professional puppet theatres, two in Ljubljana, one in Maribor. This richness of present day theatrical activities in Slovenia also explains the fact that in just one theatre season of 2005/2006 six plays (!) written by Shakespeare were staged in various Slovene theatres, and an adaptation of *Hamlet* was for the first time performed by the Puppet Theatre in Ljubljana. Such a vivid theatrical life also provides ample opportunity for a number of plays written by Shakespeare to be produced by Slovene theatres yearly.

#### SOME BIOGRAPHICAL AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DATA ABOUT JAKOB KELEMINA

The present study is concerned with Kelemina's writings on Shakespeare and his plays although the major part of Kelemina's articles and studies was devoted to his research on German language and literature. This field has been quite extensively dealt with in other critical appraisals written by Janez Stanonik, Anton Janko, France Bezlaj and Ivan Grafenauer, whereas Kelemina's articles and studies on Shakespeare's plays have so far been neglected. Kelemina was a literary historian and a critic who was very erudite and had profound linguistic knowledge. He has been described as an intelligent, honest man (some biographers say that in the worldly matters he was also rather naive), who accepted his success with humility and the occasional blows of fate with dignity. He was always willing to help other scholars and students. It seems that his difficult youth also helped him form his remarkable character.

Jakob Kelemina was born on 19 July 1882 in the small village Vinski vrh, near Ormož, in the Slovene part of the Styria region. His father had a small vineyard and Kelemina could continue his secondary schooling only with the help of his uncle, who was a priest. But when Kelemina declined his uncle's wish to become a priest, his uncle withdrew his help, and the young Kelemina had to start earn his living by tutoring. He moved to Pula (then still a part of Austria, mainly populated by the Croats and the Italians, now a part of Croatia), and in 1904 he finished there his secondary schooling with excellent marks. Then he began studying English and German at the University of Graz, and besides his mother tongue he also knew several other languages (German, English, Latin, Greek, Serbo-Croatian). Some of his university teachers (e.g. Karl Luick

and Anton Schönbach) had a world-wide reputation, and the latter awakened in Kelemina a vivid interest for the history of the Middle Ages. In 1910 Kelemina obtained his Ph.D. from the University in Graz and in 1911 he passed in Vienna exams which qualified him as a secondary school teacher. At that time he also published his first scholarly works in Leipzig and in Vienna. His first teaching position was at the secondary school in Novo mesto, Slovenia, and then in Ljubljana, but already in 1920 he was appointed as Assistant Professor at the newly established University of Ljubljana and as Chairman of the Department of Germanic languages and literatures, a position he held until his death. In 1924 Kelemina was promoted to the position of Associate Professor and in 1928 he became Professor of Germanic philology. That he was well-liked and thought highly of by his colleagues is also indicated by the fact that he was elected three times Dean of the Faculty of Arts of the University of Ljubljana and twice Vice-dean. He died on 14 May 1957 in Ljubljana.

Kelemina began to publish his scholarly works in German while he was still a student in Graz. He was particularly attracted by the rich medieval German literary tradition, by the *Tristansage*, which he – unlike some other researchers – did not connect with the French but with the Celtic tradition. Later on he also investigated the traces of the Gothic and the Langobard peoples in the Balkan area, although his academic research was mainly directed to philology, particularly to etymological studies, to studies of Slovene folklore and to its links with German culture. Kelemina also wrote the first book on the theory of literature in Slovene. Janez Stanonik, who succeeded Kelemina as chair of the department, in many ways enriched Kelemina's work in the field of English studies, and he helped build the departmental library, which was almost completely burnt down during the Second World War. Stanonik points out in his study that Kelemina mainly researched problems, which are also significant for the understanding of Slovene cultural history (Stanonik 1966: 334). Kelemina's philological research has been judged by France Bezlaj to be a significant contribution to the ethnological Slovene toponomastical studies (Bezlaj 1954: 227), whereas Anton Janko especially stresses Kelemina's work in German studies and Kelemina's importance for their development in Slovenia (Janko 1994: 407-15). Although all these authors briefly mention the fact that in the early phase of his scholarly career Kelemina also wrote articles, introductions and textual explanations of Shakespeare's plays, none of them has discussed Kelemina's contribution in this field in any detail. Therefore the analysis of this aspect of Kelemina's work, which has so far been neglected, will hopefully complete the picture of this important Slovene scholar.

#### JAKOB KELEMINA'S ARTICLES ON SLOVENE (AND ON SOME CROATIAN) TRANSLATIONS OF SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS

*The Merchant of Venice* (in Slovene translation by Oton Župančič)

In 1907 Jakob Kelemina published his first article on a Slovene translation of a play written by Shakespeare. This was a review of Oton Župančič's translation of Shakespeare's play *The Merchant of Venice*. The book was published by the Slovenska

matica publishing house already in 1905. The draft of the MS prepared by Župančič has been preserved in the National and University Library in Ljubljana and we can see that Župančič altered the text for publication mainly at the beginning and towards the end of the play.

In order to understand properly the importance of Jakob Kelemina's criticism of Oton Župančič's translation of Shakespeare's comedy *The Merchant of Venice* a brief presentation about earlier public responses of Slovene critics and editors regarding this translation is needed. A short, anonymous book review of the play appeared soon after the publication of the translation, already in 1906. It was published in the Slovene daily *Slovenski narod*, titled "Knjige Slovenske matice" (24 Jan. 1906). In it the critic derogatorily speaks about the translator and calls his translation "just sufficient". The critic's negative opinion is mainly based on his assumption that Župančič translated the play on the basis of a German translation and not from the English original. As evidence for his assertion the anonymous critic enumerates Župančič's repetitions of false translations which had appeared before in various German translations of this play. The review is written as a personal attack and therefore Župančič was justly offended by it. He replied to the critic in the same newspaper a week later ("Odgovor ocenjevalcu prevoda", 31 Jan. 1906), saying, that before the play was published he thoroughly checked his translation which was at first really prepared on a German translation but that he later compared his translation in detail with the original and that he thoroughly revised it.<sup>14</sup> Župančič states further on that his translation of the play for the published version was prepared "seriously and conscientiously" and that it was no "surrogate" (substitute) for the original version of the play. Therefore he demands from his critic "a serious kind of criticism, based on aesthetic criteria" and not "a senseless palaver". The anonymous critic replied to Župančič in the same issue of the newspaper, saying, that he did not criticize the poetic quality of the translation, however, he repeated his accusation that Župančič made the same kind of small, factual mistakes, which one could notice in German and in French translations of *The Merchant of Venice*. With this response of the critic the debate between him and the translator in this newspaper ended. Even if Župančič's earliest translations were not perfect, which he admits, we can see from his remarks that he was upset by the rude tone and professional incompetence of the critic. In a letter to his friend Berta Vajdič (18 Feb. 1906) Župančič adds that this arrogant critic was (most likely) Pustoslemšek, and that the critic should at first learn some manners before he begins criticizing other people's work.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Oton Župančič, letter to the reviewer (editor), »Beneški trgovec. Odgovor ocenjevalcu prevoda.« Vienna, 29 Jan. 1906. See: Župančič ZD 8: 8, 313-4.

<sup>15</sup> Župančič ZD 8: 314. - Rasto Pustoslemšek (1875-1960), journalist, editor. Franc Govekar's friend. Pustoslemšek is now completely forgotten. His arrogant review of Oton Župančič's translation of *The Merchant of Venice* was really directed at personam and not ad rem. The review was written in a rude, malicious tone, it was personally insulting and as regards the subject-matter, unprofessionally written. It may sound rather surprising that this kind of criticism connected with Shakespeare still exists in Slovenia even today. At the four-hundredth anniversary of *Hamlet* Meta Grosman (1936-) published a review of works written by Slovene literary historians and critics during the last decade, titled "Ob štiristoletnici Hamleta" (*Vestnik DTJ* 36 (2001): 375-84) in which she attacked the author of this study and his work on Shakespeare. Her article was later published in two other publications (!) in slightly shortened versions. Her review is full of personal and professional insults, misrepresentations, random conclusions. Let me only mention as an illustration some of her statements, which show her manner of writing and her expertise on Shakespeare.

In the same letter Župančič admits that his knowledge of English was not yet sufficient. Because he could not get a grant to go and learn English in Britain, he took English classes at the Berlitz school in Vienna, where he then lived, during the summer months of 1906. Župančič mentions this in a letter to Berta Vajdič (on 14 March 1905). In another letter to her written a year later (on 23 Jan. 1906) he points out that he had learnt English well enough to begin to prepare his new translation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* on the basis of the English original.<sup>16</sup> However, he was aware that his early translations of Shakespeare's plays were far from perfect, and this is also the opinion of Slovene critics and literary historians.<sup>17</sup> One of the proofs that this was so is also his alterations and revisions of his translations, either for a new publication of the play or for the theatre performance.

After the 1890s Shakespeare became one of the most favoured foreign dramatists in Slovenia, and, as I have already pointed out, several Slovene translators tried their hand at translating Shakespeare's plays, among them also Karel Glaser. He was a literary historian, translator and linguist. He studied classical and Slavic languages and literatures at the University of Vienna and then he was employed as a secondary school teacher, but he believed that his most important task in life were his translations of plays written by Shakespeare. However, all of his translations were rejected by publishing houses in Slovenia, because they were done in a Slovene which was far removed from everyday spoken language and not at all poetic. But as Glaser himself thought very highly of his own work and because his translations were constantly rejected he became embittered and as a revenge against other Slovene translators, he tried to point out in his reviews "the mistakes" made by them, particularly by Župančič. Glaser wrote a completely negative review of Župančič's translation of *The Merchant of Venice* and sent it to a prominent Slovene magazine, *Ljubljanski zvon*. But the editor, Fran Zbašnik, rejected it. In a letter to Župančič on 15 June 1906 Zbašnik mentions this event and adds his opinion that "the man (Glaser) is sick".<sup>18</sup> Glaser's critique was then published in *Slovan*.<sup>19</sup> In order to support his own opinion about the high quality of his translations Glaser included in

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So, for example, she defines my essays as "outdated", my understanding of dramatic art and Shakespeare as "weak, if not only superficial"; she decides that such articles (as mine) are "usually reprinted when the author is dead" etc. She fabricates her arguments and falsifies my views, as e.g. she asserts that I do not believe in the necessity of new readings of literature and as an argument she finds my explanation that in the second edition of my book (publ. in 1997), which followed the first edition of 1994 in three years' time, I did not change the text. She complains about the brevity of my remarks in the introduction to a new Slovene translation of *Hamlet* because "now whole books are published on translation". In Meta Grosman's opinion I do not "recognize the complexity of women's roles in Shakespeare's plays"; this assertion, of course, contradicts my opinion and my practical criticism as any reader of my articles may easily see. Besides, in her view opinions of critics whose approaches to Shakespeare I took into consideration (as e.g. T. S. Eliot, E. K. Chambers, L. C. Knights, Kenneth Muir, Jan Kott, Terry Eagleton, John Drakakis etc.) are "not modern enough", but "old, meaningless, and obsolete". Readers of my articles and essays and those who are familiar with Meta Grosman's criticism can easily see what kind of moral, aesthetic and professional arguments we use and can decide about their value. Therefore I conclude with this answer Meta Grosman's criticism of my interpretations of Shakespeare's plays.

<sup>16</sup> Župančič ZD 8: 313-4.

<sup>17</sup> See, e.g. Joža Mahnič's view (Župančič ZD 8: 279) and other views of Slovene critics and translators mentioned in this article.

<sup>18</sup> Župančič ZD 11: 617.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

his review passages from his own translation of this play. Among weaknesses which he attributed to Župančič he also attacked his poetic manner of translating Shakespeare and Župančič's occasional brief omissions of the original. This was for Glaser not only proof of the inaccuracy of Župančič's translation, but also perfect evidence that Župančič used for his translation the German (Schlegel's) translation and not the English original. Although Župančič was himself aware that his translation was not "perfect" Glaser was definitely wrong about the aesthetic value of Župančič's translations.

At the beginning of the twentieth century Slovene intellectuals - both translators and critics - believed that it was very important to get translations of plays written by Shakespeare and other European dramatists into the Slovene language as soon as possible, and, secondly, that these translations should be of the highest possible linguistic quality. At this point also Jakob Kelemina entered the literary scene. His first article on a play by Shakespeare was his book review of Oton Župančič's translation of *The Merchant of Venice*. It appeared in a monthly review *Dom in svet* in 1907.<sup>20</sup> The play was published under the title *Beneški trgovec* by the publishing house Slovenska matica in Ljubljana already in 1905. Kelemina originally sent his review to the newspaper *Slovenec*, but the editor thought that this relatively long and professionally written article would suit better a monthly magazine, so he forwarded it *Dom in svet*. The editor of this magazine, Evgen Lampe, was pleased to receive Kelemina's review and asked him to allow the magazine to publish it.<sup>21</sup>

The manuscript of Oton Župančič's translation has been preserved in the Oton Župančič's archive in the National and University Library in Ljubljana. If we compare the draft with the published version we can see that Župančič changed a number of words and even whole passages for publication. He also wrote a very short, two-page introduction together with his translation, in which he states that he had been tempted to present "an apology of this impenitent Jew, whose terrible suffering makes the reader rather sympathize with Shylock than with Antonio's friends who lack seriousness and depth" (Župančič 1905: 7). The above explanation shows Župančič's rather simplified understanding of the theme of this play, particularly if it is compared with Kelemina's much more profound and competent analysis of issues presented in his introduction to Župančič's translation published in 1921. In the above mentioned book review Kelemina concentrated on philological questions connected with the Slovene translation.

Kelemina begins his review of Župančič's translation of *The Merchant of Venice* by saying how important it is to obtain Slovene translations of the best works of world literature, because this would represent a step forward "towards independence" (Kelemina 1907: 179). The critic does not specify what he means by this, because -- at the time when Slovenia was still a part of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy - it could well have had, besides cultural, also a political meaning, implying the idea that a higher cultural level in Slovenia would also contribute to the struggle for Slovene political independence.

<sup>20</sup> J. Kelemina, »Beneški trgovec. Poslovenil Oton Župančič«. *Dom in svet* 19 (1907): 179-82.

<sup>21</sup> Evgen Lampe, a postcard to Jakob Kelemina, Ljubljana, 27 Feb. 1906. - The postcard is a part of Jakob Kelemina's biographical material owned by my former colleague Mrs Doris (Kelemina) Križaj, Professor Kelemina's daughter. Mrs Križaj was kind enough to allow me to use her father's archive and I wish to thank her most sincerely for her help. In my article I refer to this material as "Doris Križaj's archive". I also wish to use this opportunity to thank the librarians of the English and German Departments as well as of the Slovene and Slavic Departments of the Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana, for their kind help.

Kelemina mentions further on that one year after another new translations of foreign literature are published in Slovene and that Shakespeare is already present here with “a prominent number of his works” (*ibid.*). This praise is rather exaggerated, for only six of Shakespeare’s plays had been translated into Slovene by that time. Kelemina’s remark was possibly meant as an encouragement for further translations of important literary works, or it could have had ironical implications. He also briefly refers to the above mentioned dispute between Slovene critics and Oton Župančič as to “a short prologue” regarding the evaluation of Župančič’s translation, but he does not mention any details. Kelemina accepts Župančič’s statement that he had at first used as a source for his translation of the play the German translation of *The Merchant of Venice*,<sup>22</sup> and that when Župančič was preparing the play to be published in a book form he compared his translation with the English original. But Kelemina argues here that Župančič’s “adaptation (of the play) on the basis of the original” is not very accurate. He also complains that the translator did not pay enough attention to the English grammar: he states that Župančič did not use the dictionary often enough and that when translating this play Župančič relied too much on his “instinct and imagination”. The result is – in Kelemina’s view – that the thoughts in the translation are not concise, and that instead of a translation we have got “a paraphrase”, the work of “a dilettante” (179). Then Kelemina quotes some fifty examples, about which he thinks that they were not adequately translated into Slovene. These cases include mainly various semantic inaccuracies, inapt translations of puns, and tautologies. Kelemina also criticizes Župančič’s inappropriate level of language used for different characters in the play. One of his final remarks is addressed to Župančič’s short initial preface upon which he comments with a brief judgement: “This is not an aesthetically-critical introduction!” (182). Kelemina ends his review by saying that his only aim when reviewing this play was to make Slovene translators perform their job critically so that classical literary works would be rendered into Slovene in accordance with their artistic level.

Kelemina’s critique is written in a rather blunt, straightforward manner, and in certain points it is only partly justified, especially as regards his suggestions for new words and phrases which he believes Župančič should have used in his translation of this play. We face here a question whether the translation can ever be as “perfect” as the original (if it is “too good” it also lacks the semblance with the original). Differences in vocabulary as well as in the syntax between the source and the target language, differences which are the result of specific historical, cultural and social development in England and in other European countries are, of course, also reflected in translations. They require from the translator (as well as from the critic) a very thorough knowledge of various spheres of life in both languages. The critic should also make a distinction between factual “mistakes” made by a translator (and Župančič was aware of them and therefore he corrected his translations for publications and for theatre performances again and again) and between the translator’s choice to use such language, which would

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<sup>22</sup> The reference is to German translations of Shakespeare’s plays by August Wilhelm Schlegel (1767-1845). Schlegel was a poet and translator. He first earned for his living as a private teacher and later as professor in Jena. Nine volumes of his translations of Shakespeare’s plays appeared in Germany during 1797-1810 and they were still widely used in German speaking countries and elsewhere in Europe, also in Slovenia, at the beginning of the twentieth century.

suit the meaning and the artistic beauty of the original and make at the same time the translation also most functional and aesthetically perfect in the target language. But it is sometimes impossible to implement linguistic variants for poetic texts which are suggested by critics and which may be excellent if taken on their own merit, if the translator wishes to preserve the original verse form, its rhythmic structure, rhymes and other figures of speech, as well as the stanzaic pattern. The English language has many monosyllabic words compared with other languages (e.g. with Slovene) and this often makes it impossible for the translator to preserve in the translation the same number of words in a line as well as the meaning of the English original. Differences between the source and the target language are at times too big to bridge the linguistic gap between two languages, particularly in poetry or in poetic drama.

Even if Župančič was shocked by Kelemina's review of his translation, judging by his numerous corrections of the text which he incorporated in the translation of this play published as a book in 1921, he nevertheless accepted many critical suggestions made by Kelemina. This criticism must have also stimulated him to improve his translations, and to obtain translations of this play in other languages, e.g. in Czech,<sup>23</sup> and to improve also his other translations.<sup>24</sup> If we also take into account the metalinguistic as well as social and cultural differences between different countries and languages spoken then we realize that every translator has his own linguistic reach and his own poetic disposition, which may improve during the years; thus better translations of the same work of art done by the same translator are possible; however, even "good" translations will always differ from one another. Uroš Mozetič believes that nowadays the saying that "the translator of literary texts is born" is no longer valid and that translators of poetic texts can also learn how to master this skill and acquire the ability to translate poetry just as one can learn any other kind of a translating process (Mozetič 1997: 57). But, in my view, translating poetry (or poetic plays) is not the same as translating other literary genres; the translator who has a poetic gift has a great advantage in expressing himself in his mother tongue also in translations, particularly if such translations are compared with works of translators who do not have such a gift. In our case this becomes very obvious if we compare translations of Shakespeare's plays prepared by Glaser and Župančič. Generally speaking, it is more likely to expect that translations of poetry (or poetic plays like Shakespeare's) will achieve a higher degree of poetic semblance with the original than if the translator has no such gift, if he does not have an ear for music of poetry in his native language.

Oton Župančič undoubtedly had a great poetic talent, which he proved not only in his translations but also in his own poetry. Therefore he still ranks among the best Slovene poets and translators of the twentieth century. However, the poetic gift does not

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<sup>23</sup> In a letter written on 6 Jan. 1908 to Slovene literary historian, Ivan Prijatelj (1875-1937), who then lived in Vienna, Župančič asks Prijatelj to obtain for him J. V. Sladek's Czech translation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Župančič ZD 11: 169), which he could not get in Slovenia. From this and from Župančič's other requests to his friends about literature regarding Shakespeare, we see that even in this period he was still primarily interested in obtaining books on Shakespeare (and also his plays), which were published in German or in Slavic languages.

<sup>24</sup> Most of Oton Župančič's translations of Shakespeare's plays appeared first in individual translations published by various publishing houses. Considerable improvements in his translations can be seen, if these, early publications, are compared with later editions of Shakespeare's plays prepared by him.



qualify the translator as a “good translator” just *per se*. For example, if the translator does not know English well enough to understand Shakespeare’s language - including its connotations - then his translation will not correspond to the original or even be close to it. Suggestions made by Kelemina in his book review of Župančič’s translation of *The Merchant of Venice* undoubtedly helped Župančič in his future translations, particularly in the beginning period of his work as a translator; even though Župančič could not incorporate all of Kelemina’s suggestions into his new translation of the play. This was also due to various reasons regarding translations from English into Slovene, which have been indicated above.

### *Othello* (translated into Croatian by Milan Bogdanović)

The First World War stopped Kelemina from committing himself to critical writing on Shakespeare, which he continued only in 1919. In one of the main Slovene periodicals of that time, *Ljubljanski zvon*, Kelemina published a book review about Milan Bogdanović’s Croatian translation of *Othello*, which was published by Matica Hrvatska in Zagreb in 1919.<sup>25</sup> This book review is also important because Kelemina makes in it a number of references to the reception and translation of Shakespeare’s plays in Europe, including translations into Slovene.<sup>26</sup> Jože Glonar, editor of the review *Ljubljanski zvon*, who had friendly contacts both with Kelemina and Župančič, suggested to Kelemina already in 1917 “to get moving” and to write some articles for this review.<sup>27</sup> Glonar also mentions in his message to Kelemina that Župančič is “a kind editor and that he pays well”. Glonar repeated his wish that Kelemina should contribute critical essays to *Ljubljanski zvon* two years later, in another letter written to Kelemina in 1919.<sup>28</sup> We suppose that Kelemina must have mentioned to Glonar on some occasion that he was interested in writing a study about Heine, because Glonar expresses in this letter also his wish that Kelemina should write a review of *Othello*, because “Shakespeare is much more important to us than Heine” (*ibid.*). Kelemina accepted Glonar’s suggestion and wrote a review of this play, even though this translation was not published in Kelemina’s mother tongue, in Slovene, but in Croatian. We should not forget that Kelemina attended the secondary school in Pula, now in Croatia. There lived quite a numerous Slovene population, especially Slovene administrators, who served there while Pula was still a part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Therefore Croatian was definitely not a completely “foreign” language to Kelemina.

<sup>25</sup> Milan Bogdanović (1876-1942), Croatian translator of Shakespeare’s plays in the first half of the 20th century. He graduated in law at the University of Zagreb, and was employed most of his life as public administrator. He translated seventeen plays written by Shakespeare, among which fifteen were performed by various theatres in Croatia. Bogdanović also wrote articles and studies on Shakespeare and on other authors. (*Enciklopedija Jugoslavije* 2. Zagreb, Jugoslavanski leksikografski zavod M. Križže, 1985: 43)

<sup>26</sup> Jakob Kelemina, “Shakespeare William, Othello, metački crnac.” *Ljubljanski zvon* 39 (1919): 761-63.

<sup>27</sup> Jože Glonar (1885-1946), librarian (Graz, Ljubljana), historian, translator, lexicographer, editor. See Glonar’s postcard to Kelemina written from Graz on 28 Feb. 1917. (Doris Križaj’s archive.) Glonar was the editor of the review *Ljubljanski zvon* (1919-1921) and he was followed as editor of this review by Fran Albreht (1922-1932)..

<sup>28</sup> Jože Glonar, letter to Jakob Kelemina, Ljubljana, 3 June 1919. (Doris Križaj’s archive.)

Kelemina's review deals with two main topics: first, the contemporary criticism of Shakespeare's plays, and secondly, with the importance and the value of Croatian and Slovene translations of Shakespeare's plays. Kelemina points out that although Bogdanović used several critical works when he was preparing the introduction to the play (e.g. G. Brandes, F. T. Fischer, M. Nehajev), the translator's own contribution in the introduction is also valuable, because so little had so far been published on Shakespeare, either in Croatia or in Slovenia. Kelemina expressed his wish that Bogdanović would continue to work on this subject and maybe even prepare a monographic study on this great dramatist. This expectation also fills Kelemina with the hope that in the future Bogdanović may avoid such pitfalls as to call Shakespeare a "deterministic" writer (762). In Kelemina's view Shakespeare's multifaced distribution of his poetic power and the harmonious conclusion of the dramatist's work demands a clearer outline of Shakespeare's perception of life than that written by Bogdanović. He namely sees the Bard's views on life as a journey from his youthful joyfulness to mature pessimism, and to his "final resignation". Kelemina specifically mentions that *The Tempest* is not a good example of the dramatist's resignation, because we can definitely interpret the end of the play as "fairly optimistic". This idea undoubtedly refers to Prospero's forgiveness of the cruel deed of his brother, Antonio, and to their final reconciliation. If we bear in mind the total impression of actions and textual implications referring to life as shown in this play, and especially to its final scenes, we can definitely agree with Kelemina's conclusion (see also Jurak 1999: 135-161).

Further on Kelemina agrees with Bogdanović that criticism addressed to Shakespeare by such authors as G. B. Shaw and L. N. Tolstoy is hardly justified. He rejects their views that moral norms, social questions and philosophical ideas are not present in Shakespeare's work to a sufficient degree. Kelemina believes that their criticism is more indicative of their own views on literature than of those expressed in Shakespeare's plays. Kelemina also links such "reinterpretations" of Shakespeare with approaches made by some modern directors and editors (here Kelemina uses a pun, because Slovene word "izdajavci" may mean both editors and also "betrayers") who make Shakespeare's work suit their own taste. Shakespeare did not write his plays in order to use them as a "moral vehicle" or for "tendentious purposes", argues Kelemina (*ibid.*), because literature must have its own aim and purpose otherwise it is no longer art but didactic writing.

In Kelemina's view Shakespeare is and will remain for "our writers" (he obviously has in mind Slovene writers) an unreachable idol. He points out that the Croatian translators had already prepared twenty-five translations of Shakespeare's plays whereas Slovene translators lagged far behind. Kelemina sees one of the main reasons for this delay in Slovene translations of Shakespeare's plays in the fact that they only appear from time to time, occasionally, and, secondly, that so little has been generally done to critically introduce Shakespeare's work in Slovenia. Then Kelemina (rather unexpectedly) starts to defend Karel Glaser, whose translations of Shakespeare's plays were prepared on the basis of the English original and not with the help of German translations. Kelemina believes that criticism expressed by editors of the Slovenska matica publishing house about the low artistic quality of Glaser's translations, is not totally relevant, and that the publication of Glaser's corrected translations of Shakespeare's plays would certainly help future attempts to translate Shakespeare into Slovene. Kelemina's idea was in

complete opposition to the majority of views held then by Slovene writers and critics about Glaser's translations and his suggestions had no practical consequences.

An increase in Slovene dramatic production, states Kelemina in this book review, would also enrich the Slovene language. Among the difficulties when translating Shakespeare's works into Slovene Kelemina mentions the difference in the vocabulary of both languages which makes it often almost impossible to preserve the thought, which is delivered in one line in the original, also to express it in one line in the translation, especially if the translator wished to include its complete meaning. Kelemina argues that if the translator adds a number of new lines then the rhythmic equilibrium, the whole inner dynamics of the original, is lost. Therefore he is not in favour of such approaches, which can be observed in the Croatian translation of Shakespeare prepared by Bogdanović. Kelemina finally expresses his wish that in spite of various difficulties Bogdanović would also continue his work as a translator and that he would publish his own critical studies on Shakespeare.

Although we may disagree with some of the views expressed by Kelemina in this book-review, we can, on the other hand, accept many of his points, particularly about the importance of native drama for successful translations of foreign plays. Kelemina's view on differences in the syntax in English and in Slovene and consequently also about difficulties with which translators are faced, which can be compared with the original both as regards the aesthetic quality of the verse and the meaning, are still relevant today. Judgements based on comparisons which do not take into account these difficulties, which are the result of different lexical basis of both languages, are mainly unjustified and therefore unprofessional. If we take into consideration all the above mentioned aspects of Kelemina's criticism we can say that he undoubtedly brought into the existing Slovene criticism of Shakespeare and Slovene translations of Shakespeare's plays a number of important novelties and conclusions, which are still valid today.

*Julius Caesar* (in Slovene translation by Oton Župančič and in Croatian translation by Milan Bogdanović)

*Twelfth Night* (translated into Croatian by Milan Bogdanović)

*King Henry IV, Part One* (translated into Croatian by Milan Šenoa)

Kelemina's next piece of criticism dealt with four new translations of Shakespeare's plays. *Julius Caesar* was Oton Župančič's new translation into Slovene (publ. in 1922 by Nova založba); the same play was translated into Croatian by Milan Bogdanović (publ. in 1920), who also translated Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* (publ. in 1922). The fourth play which Kelemina discussed in this review was also published in 1922 by Matica Hrvatska in Zagreb. It was the first part *King Henry IV*, translated by Milan Šenoa.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Milan Šenoa (1859-1961), writer, translator; professor of geography at the University of Zagreb, Croatia.

Kelemina's review was published in 1922 in a prominent Slovene review *Ljubljanski zvon* in two installments and served him mainly as a source for comparison of the translators' knowledge about Shakespeare's works, and consequently also about the quality of the above mentioned translations.<sup>30</sup> At first Kelemina expresses his disappointment with a relatively slow process of introduction of foreign literatures into Slovene and Croatian. He finds the main reason for the delay regarding translations of Shakespeare's works in a small number of translators, because the work is done in Slovenia only by Oton Župančič, and mainly by Bogdanović and -- recently also by Šenoa -- in Croatia. Kelemina points out that as a civilized European nation Slovenes should have in translations all of Shakespeare's works and also a monographic study on Shakespeare. He sees another main reason for such a small number of Slovene translations of Shakespeare's plays in the lack of critical works available on this author, and particularly of specialised dictionaries. Kelemina suggests that such basic aids would be C. T. Onions's *A Shakespeare Glossary* (1911) and *The Oxford English Dictionary* (begun in 1914 and finished in 1933), which was at the time of Kelemina's critique still in the process of being published, as well as some other English dictionaries.<sup>31</sup> Kelemina concludes that textual criticism without such basic works is impossible. He also mentions in his review J. M. Robertson's work *The Shakespeare Canon* (1922).<sup>32</sup> This shows that he knew what kind of new lexical and literary sources would be needed to prepare adequate translations of Shakespeare's plays. Kelemina believed that new interpretations of Shakespeare's works would not only be helpful to translators, but would also serve writers of introductory essays and notes, which are needed in scholarly editions. He also points out that such introductions and notes are lacking in Župančič's and Šenoa's translations. However, he is pleased to observe that Župančič has started to translate Shakespeare's plays on the basis of the English original and that he uses Schlegel's translations only as an aid. In the central part of his book review Kelemina compares a number of passages taken from Shakespeare's plays in Župančič's translation and in Croatian translations with English original. It seems to him that Župančič's translations show a special lyrical quality, a particular "softness" of the language. But on the other hand, Župančič chooses a rather free rendering of the thought, of the meaning contained in Shakespeare's texts. Kelemina gives here as an example a passage from *Julius Caesar* in which Župančič leaves out some details of the original, whereas Bogdanović sticks precisely to the contents of a line but the number of lines is doubled or tripled in his translation. Kelemina concludes his argument with a statement that if the translator could adequately unite both demands, namely the linguistic aspect and the meaning of a verse, then he would have solved the problem which could be compared to the solution of "something like squaring the circle" (567). Kelemina vehemently praises Župančič's translation, which has become a model for future Slovene translations of Shakespeare's plays as regards the conciseness of meaning and the beauty of

<sup>30</sup> Jakob Kelemina, »Novi prevodi iz Shakespearja.« *Ljubljanski zvon* 42 (1922) 565-68, 628-29.

<sup>31</sup> Oton Župančič listened to Kelemina's advice and obtained this dictionary already by Sept. 1922. (See note 37.)

<sup>32</sup> John Mackinnon Robertson (1856-1933), journalist, MP. In 1922-32 he published the five volumes of *The Shakespeare Canon*. He is known for his analyses of Shakespeare's plays and poems in which he picked out "inferior passages" and attributed them to Shakespeare's contemporaries, particularly to dramatists Christopher Marlowe and George Chapman.

translation. But Kelemina also observes that Župančič's ellipses, i.e. omissions of words which are needed to complete the construction of the sentence, do not contribute to the clearness of the meaning (568). Kelemina's views are acceptable both with regard to Župančič's fine poetic translations and also as regards his occasional omissions of parts of sentences, which Župančič considered less important, because he wished to preserve the rhythm and the verse structure of the English original. In the final part of his review Kelemina also praises Bogdanovič's translation, although he says it lacks that poetic easiness, which is typical of Župančič. Bogdanovič's path was easier, points out Kelemina, because four previous Croatian translations of *Othello* had paved the way for the most recent Croatian translation of this play. In Milan Šenoa's work Kelemina sees Croatian continuity in translating Shakespeare, because this task had been begun by Milan Šenoa's father. Although Šenoa had tried to preserve Shakespeare's poetic beauty in his translation of the *Twelfth Night*, examples which are quoted by Kelemina indicate that the task was too difficult for him. Kelemina's conclusion in his review of four plays written by Shakespeare is accurate and noteworthy. One of his most important suggestions relates to his demand that the publishing houses should include in Slovene translations of Shakespeare's plays professionally written introductions prepared by qualified individuals who would thus take away some of the duties laid on translators. We may detect in this demand his readiness to contribute on the basis of his knowledge of Shakespeare's plays such interpretations. However, as we shall see, such close cooperation between Župančič and Kelemina, which was begun in 1918, unfortunately ended rather quickly. We shall try to provide some explanation why this was so.

Fran Albreht, who was then the editor of the review *Ljubljanski zvon*, wrote in summer 1922 a letter to Kelemina in which he informed him that "he tried to avoid printing" in Kelemina's review anything, which might have ironical connotations, "because Župančič's translation did not deserve this".<sup>33</sup> Besides, writes Albreht, Župančič would definitely "interpret this badly". Albreht had spoken about this matter with Župančič who disliked one of Kelemina's remarks, and so Albreht thought it was not worth "upsetting Župančič in this way, because you /i.e. Kelemina/, of course, did not think of using a derisive tone" (*ibid.*). It is likely that Kelemina did not wish to offend Župančič when he used an image that "Župančič's Muse wore the breeches", which Albreht had omitted in Kelemina's review. Albreht's explanation to Kelemina was definitely very polite, but it also seems that Albreht tried to persuade Kelemina about his intention ("you, of course, did not think of using a derisive tone"), and that Albreht had already omitted this image. In Doris Križaj's archive there is also a draft of Kelemina's reply to Albreht in which Kelemina accepts Albreht's suggestions, saying that "it is not worth

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<sup>33</sup> Fran Albreht, letter to Kelemina, Ljubljana, 22 August 1922. (Doris Križaj's archive.) - Fran Albreht (1889-1963), poet, prose writer, translator, critic and editor of the review *Ljubljanski zvon* between 1922 and 1932. - The Slovene text of Albreht's advice to Kelemina runs as follows: "Opozoriti Vas moram tudi na to, da sem mesto, kjer govorite o 'hlačni vlogi' Župančičeve muze, nekoliko omilil. Našel sem, da bi ta označba utegnila imeti nekak zasmehljiv prizvok, kakršnega prevod - po mojih mislih - ne zasluži. Iz ustnega pogovora z Žup(an)čičem sem opazil, da bi si on v resnici slabo tolmačil ta izraz in zato se mi vidi nepotrebno, razburjati ga, zlasti še ker Vi seveda niste mislili govoriti v zasmehljivem tonu. Zato menim, da ravnaj čisto po Vaših intencijah ako razdrem dotično figuro!" This intervention made by Fran Albreht is not probably only the result of his duties as an editor but also of his was a life-long friendship with Oton Župančič, who was his brother-in-law.

offending or to make angry the poet”, with his /i.e. Kelemina’s/ stylistic figure.<sup>34</sup> We can suppose that Kelemina’s reference to Župančič’s Muse, who “wears the breeches” refers to Kelemina’s opinion that Župančič considered it more important to find for his verse a suitable figure of speech (e.g. the rhyme), than to accurately include thoughts which are implied in the original, even if this meant to some extent a semantic deviation from the English original. But Kelemina’s remark is essentially valid as we can see not only from Kelemina’s criticism of Župančič’s translations, but also from observations of a number of other Slovene critics and translators of Župančič’s work. From Oton Župančič’s (private) letter to his wife, written in September 1922 (it was published only several decades after Župančič’s and Kelemina’s death), we can see that Župančič was rather angry with Kelemina’s review, because “he had expected Kelemina’s critique to be different”, probably more positive. In this letter Župančič also refers to Kelemina’s “clumsy awkwardness”. He mentions that Kelemina’s views gave him an idea to write an essay about the principles of translation, which were “placed into darkness” by Kelemina.<sup>35</sup> Župančič never wrote such an essay although he made many short observations about drama and the theatre in his notes and diaries. Further on Župančič states in this letter that he wishes to show “where Kelemina searches for Shakespeare and where I have found him” (Župančič *ZD* 11: 405-6). Župančič also expresses a completely negative reaction to Kelemina’s interpretation of Shakespeare’s aesthetic value of his plays, saying that “he” /i.e. Kelemina/ with his “boring mind” should leave this question to other people.<sup>36</sup> Župančič expressed this opinion – which is rather rude and haughty – in a private letter addressed to his wife. Taking everything into consideration we can conclude that Kelemina’s demand for linguistic accuracy and Župančič’s wish to make his translation of Shakespeare’s plays “sound as if Shakespeare had spoken the text in contemporary Slovene”, did not match. It seems that Župančič was aware of this duality, because even when he gave a speech at the English-Russian Literary Society in London, on 3 July 1928, he stressed that his translations were not “academic” but were prepared for the stage.<sup>37</sup> Župančič’s claim was true and although the occasional

<sup>34</sup> In the draft of Kelemina’s reply to Albreht (written in Kostonjeva, n. d.) Kelemina condescendingly agrees with Albreht about the omission of »Župančič’s Muse wearing the breeches«: »Ono stilistično cvetko – ‘hlačno vlogo’ – le izpustite; ni vredno, da bi Župančiča s tem vžalil ali vjezil.«

<sup>35</sup> Oton Župančič’s letter to his wife (Bled, 23 Sept. 1922). Župančič *ZD* 11: 405. Župančič uses here two words, which have a synonymous meaning, “motorogasta nerodnost” (a clumsy, awkward person), now denoted in the *SSKJ* (578) as “old fashioned”. The passage regarding Kelemina’s review runs as follows: “..Ni pravzaprav, kakor sem si ga predstavljal po vaših poročilih: glavna oznaka – motorogasta nerodnost. Napisal bom vendarle esej o principih prevajanja, ker je to tako važno vprašanje, da ne sme ostati v temi, v katero ga je postavil Kelemina. Pokazati hočem, kje išče on Shakespeara in kje sem ga jaz našel, in da je edino moj način tolmačenja pravi. Pust duh naj bi sploh pustil estetiko drugim glavam in / človek, ki je vseučiliški profesor, je dolžan svojemu lastnemu ugledu vzdržnost v stvarih, kjer se mora blamirati / ‘must’, but probably meant “more”, i.e. “where he can blame himself for something.” Župančič’s comment about Kelemina is not “playfully witty, teasingly ironical”, as his biographer, Joža Mahnič describes Župančič’s attitude to “his opponents” (Župančič *ZD* 8: 374). Besides, Kelemina was not Župančič’s “opponent” even though they had sometimes different views on translating of Shakespeare’s plays.

<sup>36</sup> Župančič *ZD*. 11: 405-6.

<sup>37</sup> Župančič *ZD* 8: 116-117. Župančič gave his talk in Slovene and it was translated into English by Janko Lavrin, professor of Russian literature at the University of Nottingham (*ibid.* 341). Lavrin was Župančič’s neighbour, they were both born in the Bela Krajina region, in Slovenia. In his speech in London Župančič said among other things: » .. pravi Shakespeare je samo eden, samo angleški, in kdor ga hče poznati, ga

discrepancy between the original text and Župančič's translation has been noticed – as we shall also see later – not only by Kelemina but also by other readers of Župančič's translations. However, this observation does not essentially diminish Župančič's role in bringing Shakespeare's plays to Slovene audiences and readers as masterly literary and theatrical creations.

Kelemina's review of Župančič's translation and Župančič's response to it show us that the co-operation between Kelemina and Župančič did not differ only from a professional perspective with regard to Župančič's practice of translating, but also that their personal relationship was not easy (probably right from the beginning of their co-operation), because of the different natures of their personalities. It should also be noted that Župančič does not mention either in his notes or in his letters help he got from Kelemina, his advice about the variety of possible explanations of meanings or about various sources he should use for his translations as well as about historical and linguistic explanations of Shakespeare's plays, which can be seen in Kelemina's contribution to the published versions of Shakespeare's plays.<sup>38</sup> Župančič's plea for help addressed to his friends living abroad, namely that they provide him books advised to him by Kelemina is seen from a number of his letters. The co-operation between Župančič and Kelemina was – at least at first – rather profitable and it resulted not only in Župančič's more accurate translations of Shakespeare's plays but also in Kelemina's introductions and notes to three of Shakespeare's plays in Oton Župančič's translations: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, which appeared in 1920, and *The Merchant of Venice* and *Macbeth*, which were both published in 1921. Kelemina's studies are justly referred to by Dušan Moravec as "the first serious studies on Shakespeare in Slovenia" (Moravec 1974: 437). Looking at the co-operation between Oton Župančič and Jakob Kelemina from the above mentioned perspective we can only regret that it ended so soon.

## KELEMINA'S INTRODUCTIONS TO SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS IN SLOVENE TRANSLATIONS BY OTON ŽUPANČIČ

### *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

Oton Župančič obviously realized in the late 1910s that some help regarding his translations of Shakespeare's plays's would be welcome. It was Joža Glonar, Kelemina's friend from Graz, the editor of the review *Ljubljanski zvon*, who suggested in a letter

mora čitati v originalu. ... Moji prevodi niso akademski; Shakespeare je delal za oder, in prav tako hočem jaz, da je pri vsi vestnosti – in moram reči, da mi je vsaka beseda sveta - moje vprašanje vedno: kako bi bil Shakespeare to povedal, če bi bil Slovenec? Jaz hočem, da je moj Shakespeare igralcu govorljiv in da gre poslušalcu naravnost v uho in do srca – zdi se mi, da sem, kakor kaže uspeh, to kolikor toliko dosegel.« (*ibid.* 116-117).

<sup>38</sup> In a letter (n.d.), probably written in 1922, Župančič asked his friend Alojz Kraigher (1877-1959), M.D. and writer, who lived in München in the early twenties, to send him Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night or What You Will* published by Tauchnitz in Students' Series for School, College and Home, because Župančič wished to check Kellner's commentary before giving his translation to the printer (Župančič *ZD* 11: 106-07). In September 1922 Župančič enthusiastically informed his wife, Ani (Kessler) Župančič, about his new acquisition, L. Kellner's dictionary, published by a well-known publishing house Tauchnitz in Leipzig. This book was also recommended in the above discussed book-review written by Kelemina (Župančič *ZD* 11: 661).

written to Oton Župančič in 1916 to contact Jakob Kelemina in Novo mesto.<sup>39</sup> From the above mentioned letter written by Oton Župančič to Jakob Kelemina in 1918 we know that this contact was established by April 1918 and that Kelemina had promised to Župančič to contribute an Introduction and Notes to his translations.

Although Oton Župančič completed his translation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* already in 1908 the play was first published by Tiskovna zadruga v Ljubljani in 1920. The reasons for this delay were twofold: first, Slovenska matica was rather hesitant in its decision about the publication of the play, even though the board of this society agreed to Župančič's suggestion about publishing the most important plays by Shakespeare in Slovene translation, including this play, already in March 1908. The actual preparation for the printing was begun only in 1914, and with the outbreak of the First World War the printing was again delayed. Joža Mahnič, one of the editors of Oton Župančič's collected works expresses his opinion that the delay was caused because Slovenska matica was not particularly thrilled by this plan,<sup>40</sup> but he does not provide any additional reason for it. In a letter to one of his friends, Anton Schwab, written in 1908, Župančič proudly announces that he is translating the play from the original, and that the president of Slovenska Matica, Fran Ilešič, accepted his proposal about the publication of the Slovene translations of Shakespeare's selected plays.<sup>41</sup> In some aspects this delay was even positive, because Župančič had enough time to check his translation and at the same time it assured Kelemina's co-operation with Župančič.

Kelemina contributed to this edition the Introduction (5-15) and Notes to the play (114-28). Kelemina's interest in the historical and ethnographic material on which the play is based is seen in his choice and in his treatment of main themes. Most closely related to them is the question about the origin of the play, its first performance and its publication. Kelemina lists various reasons for his assumption that Shakespeare wrote this play for a wedding, which took place in 1594, although most modern literary historians believe that the play was written a year or two later, but that it was definitely publicly performed before 1600. In the major part of his introduction Kelemina presents various myths which could have served Shakespeare as possible sources when he wrote the play. First of all Kelemina mentions often quoted sources like "The Knight's Tale" from Geoffrey Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, North's translation of Plutarch (1579), and the Spanish pastoral novel *Diana* written by Jorge de Montemayor (1559; Kelemina dates it in 1560). The critic takes a rather negative position regarding the idea expressed by some literary historians that the play was influenced by the thirteenth century French epic tale, *chanson de geste*, dealing with history and legend, entitled *Huon de Bordeaux*, which was translated into English in 1534 (rpt. in 1570). Kelemina does not find support for this thesis in Shakespeare's portrayal of Oberon (some modern English literary historians are in favour of this influence). Among the accepted explanations of Shakespeare's creation of Puck is that the figure is based on the influence of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (transl. into English in 1567), and Kelemina also mentions in this connection that Ovid was Shakespeare's favourite Latin poet. Kelemina relies in his interpretation of the play on a number of other contemporary investigations and he also refers to articles published

<sup>39</sup> Jože Glonar, letter to Oton Župančič, Graz, 18 Nov. 1916. (Župančič ZD 12: 306).

<sup>40</sup> Joža Mahnič in Župančič ZD 11: 565.

<sup>41</sup> Župančič ZD 11: 132-35.



in various German periodicals (e.g. *Shakespeare Jahrbuch, Deutsche Literaturzeitung*). The above mentioned sources and comparisons show that Kelemina's interest in the plot of the play and its sources was definitely that of a scholar, who tries to satisfy the curiosity of readers regarding the genesis of the play. Kelemina further on pays attention to the wedding of Theseus and Hippolyta, but he is especially intrigued by comparisons between fairies and German – Nordic mythical creatures of air and wind, especially in their popular counterparts in Germanic folk tales (Zwerge, Däumlinge, Kobolde), as well as in Italian, Spanish and French versions of these mythological creatures. In Kelemina's opinion the real and the mythical world are joined together in this play: everybody is happy and full of *joie de vivre*. There are, nevertheless, a life-like social order and man's purpose of life hidden in this world of fantasy, dreams and tales. The dream-based comedy reminds Kelemina of the world as shown in Calderón's play *La vida es sueño*, and of plays written by Franz Grillparzer (*Der Traum ein Leben*, 1840) and Gerhart Hauptmann (*Hanneles Himmelfahrt*, 1896), in which man's spiritual freedom triumphs over the fatalistic determination.

Kelemina points out in his explanation of the play that in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* Shakespeare finds similarities between human nature and abstract notions of man's passion, his desires and his true love. These features are combined in the play and limits between the real world and the world of fantasy are often blurred. Kelemina also states that the idea about art being just a copy of reality does not have a far reach. Many comic scenes in the play are not only the result of mad infatuation between Lysander and Hermia and Demetrius and Helena, or created by mischievous Puck, but there are also comic scenes from Shakespeare's daily life present in this play. Such scenes are enacted by Bottom and his fellows, the amateur group of players, who seem to function as Shakespeare's parody of those contemporary actors, amateurs, who lack the power of imagination which is essential for real art. According to Kelemina the play is also about men completely losing control over their actions, when love no longer reveals its sublime beauty, but becomes silly and comical. Such an interpretation provides for Kelemina adequate grounds to believe that by the time when Shakespeare wrote this play his views on the essence and nature of art were fully established.

Although Kelemina uses for his notes various English and German sources, he also enumerates some examples from Slovene folklore which are thematically linked with the English original. The mythological Puck, also named Goodfellow, who performs funny tricks, is – according to Kelemina – known in the Styria region in Slovenia as “Šetek” or “Šotek”.<sup>42</sup> In the dispute between Oberon and Titania, when she scolds Oberon for having disturbed “their sport”, “Where the nine men's morris is filled up with mud” (2.1.98), Kelemina observes that Župančič translated the name of this shepherd's game as “trojka”, a game which has its origin in the region of Bela Krajina, instead of the more widely known Slovene term “špana”. Shakespeare's “hymn or carol blest” (Župančič uses the word “koleda”) is in Slovenia still occasionally sung by village singers who visit people at Christmas time. Kelemina also provides extensive explanation for the Greek names of mythological beings which are mentioned in this play and he also

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<sup>42</sup> Kelemina's interest in Slovene folklore is seen in his book *Bajke in pripovedke slovenskega ljudstva* (Myths and Fairy Tales of the Slovene People), Celje, 1930 (404 pp.).

suggests movements of characters in various scenes. Kelemina also calls the reader's attention to the pantomime in which *dramatis personae* are presented and the story of the future action is indicated (in Act 5); this is a dramatic invention which is similar to the play within the play (The Dumb Show) in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (3.2) Kelemina also mentions the frequent use of Epilogue in Shakespeare's plays, which is in *Midsummer Night's Dream* appropriately spoken by Puck "that shrewd and knavish sprite Call'd Robin Goodfellow".

Kelemina also states in his introduction that Shakespeare used in this play a number of puns, which cannot be easily translated. So, for example, Demetrius uses a pun on Lysander's bond, which refers at the same time to "a written bond" and Hermia's "weak bond" on Lysander (3.2.261-270). Hermia keeps hold on Lysander, and then the exchange between Lysander and Demetrius follows:

Lysander: Demetrius, I will keep my word with thee.

Demetrius: I would I had your bond, for I perceive

A weak bond holds you. I'll not trust you word. (3.2.266-9)

Župančič tried to capture this pun in the following dialogue:

Lysander: Demetrij, jaz imam s teboj besedo.

Demetrij: Zaveži se mi; kajti kakor vidim,

Vez slaba te drži. (72)

A recent Slovene translation of this play prepared by Milan Jesih sounds more naturally than the option used by Župančič and it is also more easily understood:

Lysander: Demetrij, držal bom besedo dano.

Demetrij: Daj bolj veljavno potrdilo: vidim,

beseda tvoja nič kaj ne zaleže,

in jaz ji ne verjamem. (75)

Another difficult passage to translate in this play are the final two lines spoken by Pyramus, who tells the Moonshine to exit and then explains his fate: "Now die, die, die, die." (5.1.304):

Demetrius: No die, but an ace, for him—for he is but one.

Lysander: Less than an ace, man—for he is dead, he is nothing. (5.1.305-6).

These lines were translated by Župančič as follows:

Piram: Proč, mesca kras!

Smrt, smrt, zapri mi očesa. (Umre. – Mesečina odide.)

Demetrij: Ne očeš, oko: na kockah mu je palo eno samo oko.

Lysander: Še manj torej, nego eno oko: mrtev je, nič ni. (108)

And in Jesih's translation:

- Piram: Ti, jezik, mir,  
ti luna v dir –  
z menoj je pika, pika, pika. (Umre.) (Mesečina odide.)
- Demetrij: Ne pika pika pika, marveč samo pika, ena sama,  
tako je padla kocka.
- Lisander: Manj ko pika: mrtev je, on je nič. (120)

The verbal ambiguities of these lines as expressed by Shakespeare and in Slovene translations indicate that notes accompanying a published translation are really valuable. Kelemina's explanations helped readers to understand the comic situations, and particularly puns, much better than if the audience only heard them spoken in the theatre. From the above quoted passages we can see that new translations may improve the reader's understanding of the text and enlarge the reader's perception of meanings, particularly when they are expressed in such a condensed way as it is often the case in Shakespeare's plays.

### *The Merchant of Venice*

The Slovene translation of this play was prepared by Oton Župančič, and Jakob Kelemina wrote the Introduction (3-26) and Notes to the play (146-154). The book was edited by Nova založba in Ljubljana and published in 1921. From a letter written by Župančič to Kelemina already in 1918 we can see that Župančič urged Kelemina to keep to their agreement, obviously referring here to Kelemina's promise to co-operate in this project. In the same letter Župančič informs Kelemina that he has almost finished the translation.<sup>43</sup> He also proudly announces that he has prepared an almost completely new version of *The Merchant of Venice*, which, he hopes, is "much better than his /i.e. Župančič's/ previous translation". He adds that he meticulously insisted on the same number of lines as in Shakespeare's text, "but there are (still) two or three places where he could not do this" (*ibid.*). Župančič also mentions in this letter three authors (Delius, Riechelmann and Ost) whose works he consulted. He asks Kelemina, whether he is willing to write an introduction, and he also wants to know whether Kelemina wishes to see his translation first. This probably did not happen otherwise they would have unified the spelling of names of characters in the play. Župančič also remarks that he would be "thankful to Kelemina for any piece of advice" (*ibid.*) and he suggests that they might meet. Judging by the contents and the tone used by Župančič in this letter we can assume that Župančič then still relied very much on Kelemina's opinion about his translations and generally on Kelemina's help.

If we compare Kelemina's introduction to *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with that of *The Merchant of Venice* and *Macbeth* we can see that Kelemina made important progress in his critical approach in these essays: whereas in his book reviews published

<sup>43</sup> Oton Župančič, letter to Jakob Kelemina, Ljubljana, 18 April 1918. (Doris Križaj's archive.)

in magazines he mainly concentrated upon his observations on philological questions regarding translations of Shakespeare's plays in Slovene and in Croatian, he later turned his attention to the themes and ethical questions presented in Shakespeare's plays, and he dealt with linguistic questions only in his Notes. In this and in the following essay Kelemina discusses more thoroughly the origin and the possible sources for the plot of the play, its structural development, and main themes. Although it is understandable that particularly when dealing with historical facts Kelemina had to rely on other sources, we notice that even in these questions he preserves his own judgment when several options are possible. His desire for an independent evaluation of moral issues dealt with in the play is especially noticeable.

Kelemina thinks it is possible that Shakespeare wrote this play even earlier than it was (and still is) generally assumed, but he does not insist upon his estimation and suggests a wider time frame (between 1594 and 1598) than it is usually suggested. Further on he stresses that three tales dealt with in the play are skillfully woven together (a Persian and a Sanscrit tale), but he does not think that one of the possible sources for a tale was a ballad, which later appeared in Bishop Percy's collection *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*. In Kelemina's view the circumstances in these cases are rather different. He does agree though with the opinion which is generally accepted by literary historians, namely that Shakespeare relied in the Bond theme on Giovanni Fiorentino's *Il Pecorone* (The Simpleton) printed in 1558, but he does not mention the commonly accepted view that Shakespeare took the casket-choosing theme from the 66th story of Richard Robinson's version of the collection of tales, *Gesta Romanorum*. Kelemina retells Fiorentino's story in detail, and stresses his point that Shakespeare's Portia is a much more noble character than her supposed prototype, and that Jessica's love affair and the story about her father have at least two possible sources, a tale by Masuccio from Salerno (1470) and an even more recent source, Christopher Marlowe's play *The Jew of Malta* (performed about 1592).

Kelemina is particularly interested in Shakespeare's moral portrayal of Shylock and in the portrayal of Portia. He reaches here an interesting conclusion: the motivation of this fairy tale is not primarily based on real human characters, but on man's fate and on coincidences. In Shakespeare's time Venice was an exotic setting, often connected with immorality, and therefore such a bond between Shylock and Antonio was possible. But Shakespeare did not see Shylock as a tragic figure because of Shylock's race and religion; he saw Shylock as the playwright's portrayal of an individual, of an immoral, evil, cunning and greedy Jew, whose only value in life was money (which gave him power). And this is the reason why Shylock does not approve of Antonio's way of life and why Antonio's Christian love is unacceptable for Shylock. Shakespeare presents in Antonio a melancholic character, which cannot restrain his feelings, and not as a boasting and egocentric man, as some critics would like to see him.

Kelemina is especially intrigued by Portia's character, which represents for him an embodiment of the classical, Greek spirit, which was very close to man's ideals in the Renaissance. He considers her to be one of the most important and best drawn of Shakespeare's female characters, and can be easily compared to Juliet or to Cordelia.

Kelemina admires her education, her deep religious feelings and her self-denial. At the time when Kelemina wrote his essay the advancement of feminism was still often seen as a negative trend, but Kelemina draws a fine distinction between women's rights and the fact that Portia never gives »the impression of an emancipated woman« (17), because such a description would definitely imply (at least in Kelemina's opinion) a negative trait in Portia's character. If we use modern sociological terminology we can say that Kelemina was in favour of "equity feminism" and that he did not approve of extreme "gender feminism". Portia's character, which is based on the Christian law of mercy, is, according to Kelemina, a proper opposition to Shylock's greediness. When Shylock cannot be persuaded to give up his cruel demand, she beats him on the legal ground: he can have his pound of flesh but without shedding a drop of Antonio's blood. But this legal clause cannot be realized, and what is more, Shylock had already transgressed the laws of Venice when he attempted to seek the life of its citizen, an intention which is punished by law. Kelemina's point is that the implementation of Shylock's demand would result in injustice (Cicero's proverbial statement regarding such a situation is "summum ius, summa iniuria"). In the critic's view conflicts presented in the play (e.g. Shylock vs. Antonio and Bassanio, Shylock vs. Jessica, Portia vs. her father), if taken strictly from the legal point of view, are of secondary importance when compared with a "higher, natural law" (19). If a contract is immoral, it should not be valid. Such was also the explanation provided by several German scholars regarding this contract and their argument is also endorsed by Kelemina. Shylock's punishment, the loss of half of his fortune, is understandable, but Kelemina would rather see that Shylock was not forced to accept Christian religion, even though Kelemina accepts Antonio's explanation that it is "for his favour, / He presently become a Christian" (4.1.382-3). This verdict is such that Portia would approve of and it would be also accepted by the audience in Shakespeare's time, although nowadays it would most likely be interpreted as a result of "Christian vengeance" or as anti-Semitic. However, among various possible interpretations regarding the theme of this play Kelemina suggests in his introduction that Shylock is forgiven, but, on the other hand, we can also say that Shylock »fell in the pit he dug for others«, or, that man's quest for wealth (like that of Barrabas in Christopher Marlowe's play *The Jew of Malta*) does not bring him happiness. Kelemina's conclusion is that the beauty of Shakespeare's poetry is properly enriched by the wealth of the poet's thoughts, by the play's "inner, spiritual life" (26). These arguments can still be accepted today as a possible interpretation of this play.

The Slovene translation of the play is also accompanied by a number of Kelemina's notes. However, if we compare the translation and the notes we see that Župančič and Kelemina did not coordinate the translation and Kelemina's Introduction and Notes. This becomes obvious already if we examine the spelling of proper names. So, for example, Kelemina often writes "Šekspir" (4, 8, 10 26, 146 etc.) and also "Shakespeare" (3); "Jessika" (7, 19, 25, 149) and Jessica (20); "Porcija" (7, 9, 16 etc.) and "Porzia" (149, 150 etc.), "Šajlok" (8, 10, 11 etc.) and "Shylock" (151). Župančič spells in his translation these names as "Jessica, Porzia, Shylock", and he uses the usual spelling ("Shakespeare") on the title page. In the complete edition of Shakespeare's plays in Slovene translation, published in three volumes in 1978, Matej Bor preserved the spelling of names as used by Župančič. Explanations for Kelemina's inconsistent use of

spelling of proper nouns may vary: first, he could not make up his mind which variant he would use, or, secondly, he may have been influenced in his spellings of names by the Serbo-Croatian variant, or, thirdly, the most likely explanation is that differences in spelling were caused by the lack of co-ordination between Kelemina and Župančič or by Kelemina's haste in providing his manuscript for the publication of the play. In spite of these shortcomings Kelemina's contribution to the Slovene translation of *The Merchant of Venice* is important, because it is one of the few early scholarly interpretations of this play offered by a Slovene literary historian and critic.

### *Macbeth*

The plot and the theme of the play have attracted critics' attention to Shakespeare's presentation of the nature of evil and its embodiment in the central characters for centuries and therefore it is understandable that the central focus of Kelemina's criticism is oriented towards these questions. The play was published in 1921 in a Slovene translation prepared by Oton Župančič and edited by Tiskovna zadruga in Ljubljana. Kelemina wrote the Introduction (5-16) and Notes to the play (137-151), in which he mentions that most recent critical works were not available to him. He adds the glossary of pronunciation of proper names and names of places and regions mentioned in the play, which was a novelty in his writings on Shakespeare's plays, and particularly valuable at the time of the appearance of Slovene translation of the play when English was not yet *lingua franca* in Europe. Kelemina mentions that he used as a source for his notes works written by two German scholars (G. Kohlmann and O. Thiergen). His Notes are substantial enough and explain not only historical facts mentioned in the play but also connotations implied in the text. There is one minor slip which he made with regard to Malcolm and Donalbain: they are not King Duncan's grandsons, as mentioned in note 7 to Act 1 (*Macbeth* 139), but his sons.

Kelemina deals in his remarks with literary and theatrical aspects concerning the play. He points out that the first published version of *Macbeth*, which appeared in 1623, is an unsatisfactory text, because some of the relatively important scenes were cut and various new passages added, possibly by Shakespeare himself. He also mentions that the Hecate scenes were probably written by another playwright, Thomas Middleton (1580-1627). Kelemina accepts the suggestion often made by English literary historians, namely that Shakespeare probably wrote the play ten years before its publication, already in 1605-6. He does not mention though that it may have been performed in Edinburgh, to where Shakespeare had fled after the Essex rebellion. It is generally accepted that the first public performance of this play was in London's Globe Theatre on 20 April 1611. As the immediate source for the historical background which Shakespeare used for *Macbeth* Kelemina mentions Raphael Holinshed's *Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland* (1577), although Shakespeare probably used the second edition from 1587, which is more complete than the earlier one. Kelemina also mentions two other relevant sources both dealing with supernatural beings. These are Reginald Scot's famous work *The Discovery of Witchcraft* (1584) and *Daemonologie* (1597), written by James VI of Scotland, who succeeded to the English throne after the death of Queen Elizabeth I

in 1603, as James I. We can see that Kelemina was familiar with all relevant historical material, which is still valid today.

After making his statement that *Macbeth* “belongs to the most complete of Shakespeare’s creations” (5) Kelemina points out the differences which exist between the text in Holinshed’s *Chronicles* and Shakespeare’s treatment of characters. In *Chronicles* the main hero is presented from the very beginning as an arrogant, conceited and revengeful person, whereas Shakespeare depicts Macbeth at first as a proud, heroic character, who then develops into an evil man. In Holinshed’s history Lady Macbeth does not have such an important role as in Shakespeare’s play, so that the psychological development of both major characters can be wholly attributed to Shakespeare. Another major difference between the plot about Macbeth and his wife is the telescoped time scale in the play: Shakespeare condensed the events which are in the legendary (“historical”) account spread through twelve years of Macbeth’s reign, into a much shorter period, into a few important, selected scenes. Thus Shakespeare preserved the unity of composition and created a dramatic tension which is very significant for the play.

Kelemina sees the role of the witches and demons in agreement with people’s belief in such supernatural beings still common in Shakespeare’s time. These creatures symbolize, in the opinion of the critic, evil forces in nature and in man. The only person in the play who is independent and who does not allow evil forces abiding in man’s soul to dominate his mind, is Banquo. Kelemina believes that this indicates the playwright’s persuasion that witches (man’s evil nature) cannot absolutely prevail in life, although the outcome of such a decision is not necessarily positive for the hero (in this case for Banquo). Another explanation of the hero is that he is aware right from the beginning that his actions are criminal, but he is too weak to oppose decisions made by his wife. The portrait of Lady Macbeth is generally interpreted either as that of an ambitious, but loving wife, or as a brutal, egotistic person, whose negative energy exerts disastrous consequences on her husband’s heroic nature (13). This is the reason, in Kelemina’s view, that the reader may not completely lose his sympathy for this character. However, in this play the hero’s insult of God’s and nature’s order is suppressed. Macbeth’s tragedy is caused by the fact that he cannot decide between “man’s fate” as prophesied by the witches, and the trust in his own mind and in the ethical norms of society. It seems that Kelemina underestimates the complex nature of Lady Macbeth, who mentally (and also sexually) dominates her husband and whose role in Macbeth’s decision is generally viewed as more important than that in Kelemina’s interpretation.

In the introduction to the play Kelemina strongly advocates his belief that Shakespeare expresses in this tragedy the idea how “some higher justice” is finally victorious in life although lives of innocent people (like Banquo) may be sacrificed in this battle between good and evil. The decisions about man’s actions are left to each individual separately, depending on his character and his personal integrity, although social, political and other circumstances should also be taken into account when important decisions are at stake. It is obvious that Kelemina was particularly interested in the ethical implications of this play, and even if we may occasionally disagree with some points made in his interpretation, his essay is written in such a provocative manner that we are still intrigued by his thoughts, especially by his persuasion that the play will revive our belief “in higher justice, which cannot be deceived” (16). Kelemina compares the drama of

innocent victims, caused by the cruelty of man's nature and his soul to "an apocalyptic vision of a storm or a volcano", which have in this play been captured by the poet's imagination. In this connection Kelemina uses an image from nature according to which the idea of final justice is like "the star" showing the way to the future development of mankind. In spite of difficult tests which man has to endure in life Kelemina believes that mankind should be led into the future with the assurance of each new work of art expressing such positive ideals.

This optimism expressed in Kelemina's belief that one's life-course may depend on one's own endeavours to make life bearable as well as on one's Fate is reflected in his experiences in life. Although he was enrolled in the Austrian army at the time of the First World War, he was lucky enough not to be sent to the front line, to the Isonzo (Soča) battlefield, where so many young Slovene men died. Then, during the Second World War, he was already taken as a hostage by the German army in Kostanjevica, in Slovenia, but fortunately, he was not executed. And paradoxically enough, after the Second World War Kelemina was, as a suspected anglophile, sent to jail by the Yugoslav Communist regime, but after a few weeks of imprisonment he was released. It is also typical of Kelemina's character and his views on life that in spite of various trials he looked upon life stoically, occasionally with slightly embittered or ironic view, but essentially with positive feelings, what can also be seen from his interpretation of the above discussed macabre situations in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. One can accept the view expressed by Janez Stanonik in his article on Kelemina that "he was a restrained character but a very kind-hearted man ...whose feelings were deeply hurt by an offensive word to which he was sometimes exposed" (Stanonik 1966: 334). In spite of many difficulties with which he was faced in his boyhood and in his adult life Kelemina succeeded to preserve his optimistic view on life and his personal integrity.

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It seems that after what has been said above the question why Kelemina stopped writing book reviews and articles about Shakespeare in 1922 can be answered with some certainty. We can see from Kelemina's remarks regarding Oton Župančič's translations, from the correspondence between Kelemina and Župančič, and also from Kelemina's correspondence with Fran Albreht that Kelemina's and Župančič's views about Župančič's translations of Shakespeare's plays were at times different. Although Kelemina thought highly of Oton Župančič's lyrical gift, he stated in his reviews several times that Župančič did not always catch the complex meaning and connotations implied in Shakespeare's rich figurative language. Župančič's use of his local dialect from the region of Bela Krajina, where the poet was born and spent his youth, was occasionally in opposition to the standard Slovene language. Kelemina also made in his reviews various suggestions about words and passages used in Župančič's translation, which also indicates that Kelemina did not always agree with solutions offered by Župančič in his translations. However, this does not necessarily mean that Kelemina provided a better poetic solution. According to Kelemina the translation comes closest to its perfection if the translator succeeds not only in transferring from the source language to the target language the poetic form of the original text in all of its aspects (e.g. that there is the



same number of lines in the original and in the translation, the same kind of rhythm, figurative language, rhymes etc.), but when the translator also captures in the translation the greatest possible degree of the meaning expressed in the source language.<sup>44</sup> This is undoubtedly a demand which is still valid today. But as has already been indicated above translating from one language into another is a very complex and a difficult task, and sometimes it may even be impossible for a translator to perform this duty in the utmost degree due to different natures of both languages in question (e.g. the number of monosyllabic words in Slovene is much smaller than it is in English). Besides, translations do not depend only on the translator's knowledge of both languages, but also on the vocabulary and style of the language into which a text is translated as well as on the translator's linguistic ability to perform his task well. With regard to Župančič's translation of Shakespeare's plays several critics have observed that he did not adequately transmit various layers of the original text spoken by individual characters in English into the corresponding level of the Slovene. Besides, he did not always capture "the patina" of the original. Critics who have reviewed Župančič's translations, including Kelemina, praise Župančič's poetic gift, which is also seen in the poetic language and imagery which he used in his own poetry. On the other hand, we can also agree with Kelemina that in Slovene translations of Shakespeare's plays prepared by Župančič differences representing the social and cultural habitat of Shakespeare's characters do not always match the original. This feature can also be endorsed if we compare Župančič's translations of Shakespeare's plays and translations prepared in the following decades by Matej Bor and Milan Jesih. Their translations are -- regarding the meaning of the text -- closer to the original than Župančič's translations. Bor and Jesih also more frequently transplant into Slovene the colloquial type of language used by some of Shakespeare's characters than Župančič.

In 1926 Miss F. S. Copeland published in the magazine *Ljubljanski zvon* an article on Župančič's translations of Shakespeare's plays which had appeared until then in a book form and which I have discussed above.<sup>45</sup> The initial point, which Copeland makes in her critique, refers to "the hard-hearted purists" (she does not mention any names though) who defend the principle that any translation is a kind of a literary "monster", and at its best "the work of a craftsman" (Copeland 1926:161). She makes a basic distinction between translations which correspond to the original, and those, which do not, and she explains her statement by saying that the translator should bring into the translation the same type of language, which was used by the author and the author's temperament. This is only possible - argues Copeland - when the translator is "in a close spiritual contact with the author". She asserts that the translator is also "the maker", "the creator from heaven ..bless'd" (162), and according to her estimation, Shakespeare, as "a maker", stands far apart from other English poets. In her view Župančič has tried to reach this,

<sup>44</sup> Kelemina 1919: 567.

<sup>45</sup> F. S. Copeland, "O Župančičevih prevodih Shakespearja." *Ljubljanski zvon* 1926: 161-170. - Fanny S. Barkworth Copeland (1872-1970) was born in Ireland, and then her parents moved to Scotland, where she spent her youth. In 1921 she came to Slovenia where she spent the rest of her life. She used to refer to herself as a "Scot". Miss Copeland was an enthusiastic mountaineer and she wrote a number of stories about her climbing in the Slovenian Alps. For a number of years she was employed as a lecturer in English language at the University of Ljubljana, and she also earned her living as a private tutor. Fanny S. Copeland also translated several Slovene works of fiction into English.

the highest level of correspondence between the original and the translation, not with "servile accuracy", but as a poet who created a poetic body in which the English poet is reflected with "a rare truthfulness" (163). Shakespeare tremendously enriched the English language, continues Copeland, whereas the charm of the Slovene language lies in "its spontaneous growth, its originality and homogeneity", "its colourful language, its stress and its rhythm" (164). Copeland finds the stress on the final syllable of Slovene words quite natural and therefore one of the characteristics of Shakespeare's language can easily be preserved in Slovene too.

Copeland's impressionistic statements and her "praise" about the nature of the Slovene language are rather vague so that the reader is not quite sure whether they can always be understood wholly positively. One may agree with her conclusion about the formal qualities of the Slovene language (such as rhythm) which enable the translator to capture the original flow of the English language in Shakespeare's plays also in Slovene translations. Her praise of Župančič's translations is almost extreme, also when she quotes a passage from *Macbeth* (3.4.146-172), both in Slovene and in English. She also quotes his translations of passages from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and from *The Merchant of Venice*, which she believes are "wonderfully translated" (170). According to her view they are translated so well that the reader does not need to know English to enjoy Shakespeare, because the poetic charm of his language is "heard and felt" (*ibid.*) in Slovene translation too, and "the inner significance" of Shakespeare's plays is raised in Slovene translations from the level of cold ratio to the level of »intuitive sympathies« (whatever she may have meant by this). Copeland concludes her impressionistically written critique by praising Kelemina's interesting introductions and his extensive notes, although "she humbly suggests" that she would like to see in his criticism more frequent parallels between the translation and the original text.

However, in the central part of her article Copeland also mentions some "faults" in Župančič's translations. Among them she refers to the lack of the inner rhyme in Župančič's translation of *Macbeth*. So, for example, she quotes the following sentence spoken by Lady Macbeth:

Lany Macbeth: The Thane of Fife had a wife; where is she now? - (5.1.41),

which runs in Župančič's translation:

L. Macbethova: Fifeski tan je imel ženo: kje mu je zdaj? (117)

Let me also quote this line from the most recent Slovene translation of this play prepared by Milan Jesih:

Lady Macbeth: Fifski gospod je imel ženo - kje je zdaj? (129).

Neither of Slovene translators succeeded in finding the inner rhyme (Fife / wife), which provides in Shakespeare's play the heroine with the playfulness characteristic of her somnambulism.

On the other hand Copeland finds Župančič's translation referring to Lady Macbeth's recognition of her situation, as very good:

Lady Macbeth: Nought's had, all's spent,  
Where our desire is got without content: (3.2.4-5)

Župančič:

L. Macbethova: Ničesar ne držiš, vse se podira,  
Če vživaš, kar dosegel si, brez mira: (73)

Jesih:

Lady Macbeth: Ničesar ni pridobil, vse propade,  
kdor z željo spolnjeno miru ne najde. (71)

In Copeland's view the observation made by Lady Macbeth shows to some extent the uncertainty felt by the heroine with the means which she and her husband have used. She concludes her comparison by pointing out that in the Slovene translation the above mentioned observation made by Lady Macbeth "does not sound like a cold, firmly made, rational statement", as it does in English. Copeland undoubtedly has a point here, however, seeing that in Jesih's translation the tone of Lady Macbeth's speech remains the same, this "feminine" manner of expressing Lady Macbeth's observation seems to reflect more the very nature of the Slovene language than the translators' weakness.

After Župančič had read these remarks made by Copeland, he reacted to them in his notes and diaries nervously, even angrily, although Copeland's critique was mainly extremely flattering. He admits that he did notice "the power" of Lady Macbeth's language in the play, but of which "the Slovene language is not capable" (*ibid.*). He also complains in the same note that Kelemina should have called his attention to this feature, but he had not done this, because he had not felt this power of Lady Macbeth's language, and that it was Kelemina who should have noticed it and not the translator.<sup>46</sup> Župančič further asserts that he gave to the Slovene translation of Shakespeare such power, which the translation can get from the Slovene language today. It is obvious that Župančič jotted down his remark in haste and anger, because he also adds that he (i.e. Kelemina) should have learnt from Copeland also her "respectful tone". These remarks made by Župančič call for the reader's view about his fairness. First of all, Kelemina provided for Župančič's translations a relatively large number of notes, and his comment on the tone of Lady Macbeth could be a matter for discussion. Besides, if Župančič gave to his translation »all the power the Slovene language then could give«,

<sup>46</sup> Župančič writes: "Pri verzih gospe Macbethove sem dobro čutil, da je v njih sila, a je slovenski jezik žal ni zmogel. Čutil sem, in če bi bil jaz delal opazke, bi bil to opomnil. Zakaj ni Kelemina takrat tega opomnil? Ker ni čutil. Zdaj pa ga je ženska gospa Copelandovna opozorila na to.

Zakaj se ni naučil od gospe tudi spoštljivega tone, v katerem se piše o velikem in za Slovence tako važnem podjetju?

Vsak jezik ima svoj značaj, ki ga loči od drugih jezikov. Ima pa vsak jezik vso moč, samo po svoje. Kje je ta moč, bi moral kritik vedeti; jaz ne; jaz sem tvorec, in sem prepričan, da sem dal slovenskemu Shakespearu tisto moč in moškost, katero mu more dati slovenski jezik v svojem današnjem razvoju." (Župančič ZD 8: 248)

a remark made by Kelemina simply could not be used by the translator, it would even be superfluous. Of course, it is also possible that Kelemina did not notice this particular feature, a special tone used by Lady Macbeth, but would not it be proper for the translator to notice it, too? We see that Župančič wishes to lay the blame for his “inadequate translation” (is it really?) on Kelemina. In my view the main reason lies for this in the fact that Župančič’s pride as a translator was hurt and that the respectful tone, which he demands from Kelemina was still his anger because Kelemina pointed out the fact that in Župančič’s translations his “Muse was wearing breeches”, that the translator’s poetic impulse prevailed over the original text (see above: Kelemina 1922), although Kelemina’s image was never printed. It is also possible that Župančič still remembered Kelemina’s rather harsh critique of his translation of *The Merchant of Venice*, published by Kelemina in 1907. Besides, as we shall see, Kelemina’s review of Župančič’s play *Veronika Deseniška* was not fully positive regarding the dramatic qualities of the play so that this judgment may have also influenced Župančič’s rather negative attitude towards him.<sup>47</sup> All these details probably resulted in further disagreements between the translator and the critic, whose roles in bringing Shakespeare to Slovene readers were complementary, but not the same. It is also obvious that they both kept to their principles and that their characters were different. We can accept Župančič’s high opinion about his knowledge of the Slovene language and about the aesthetic quality of his translations regardless of some weaknesses which can be found in his translations. He sees himself as one of those few people in Slovenia who can “play on this delicate instrument of the Slovene language” (Župančič ZD 8: 248).<sup>48</sup> This image, which is based on Hamlet’s saying that Guildenstern cannot “play upon this pipe” (*Hamlet* 3.2.353-4), is true, but Župančič also admits that when “this instrument”, that is the Slovene language is “more vivacious” it will live to see better artists.

Our analysis of Kelemina’s writing on Shakespeare has shown that Kelemina was basically more interested in literary, historical, ethical, and linguistic explanations of the text than in the very process of translation. In his article on Anton Funtek’s, Oton Župančič’s and Matej Bor’s translations of *King Lear* Velimir Gjurin asserts that although Župančič corrected thirty mistakes in lexicology, grammar, idioms, made by Funtek, he committed a dozen of his own mistakes.<sup>49</sup> Gjurin considers the weakest point of Funtek’s and Župančič’s translations their lack of knowledge of Shakespearean vocabulary, a fact, which was also mentioned by Kelemina in several of his writings. The main differences between Župančič and Kelemina can be found in their different approach to the text: Župančič looked upon it as a poet and translator and Kelemina as a scholar. But there is no doubt that Župančič profited from Kelemina’s professional advice. Unfortunately, Župančič’s translations that followed the publication of the above mentioned plays by 1939 did not have either an introduction or notes to the play and were thus “robbed” of a useful cohabitation between the work of art and a critical judgment.

<sup>47</sup> Joža Mahnič also thinks that one of the reasons for Župančič’s embitterment expressed in his letter to his wife Ani in 1927 was also the critics’ reaction to this play (N.p., 19 August 1927. See: Župančič ZD 11: 638).

<sup>48</sup> “Jaz si domišljam, da sem med tistimi nekaj ljudmi, ki znajo svirati na delikatni inštrument slovenskega jezika in mu izvabiti tiste tone, ki so v njem. Kadar bo ta inštrument bolj razigran, bo dočakal boljših umetnikov.» (Župančič ZD 8: 248)

<sup>49</sup> Velimir Gjurin 1976: 83.

Two main Slovene translators of Shakespeare's plays, who continued Župančič's work, are Matej Bor and Milan Jesih. Some corrections of Župančič's translations were also made by Janko Moder, who modernized Župančič's spelling, corrected some of printers's errors, and also changed some of the archaic or dialectal words with contemporary vocabulary.<sup>50</sup> However, a lot of work was still left to Matej Bor, who translated into Slovene about half of Shakespeare's plays, which had not been translated earlier. An even more radical change was made by Milan Jesih, who has so far newly translated into Slovene one third of plays written by Shakespeare. By 1990, fifty years after Župančič had translated *Romeo and Juliet*, Jesih introduced in his translations of Shakespeare's plays many changes in vocabulary, style, semantics and poetic elements.<sup>51</sup> In Jesih's translation obsolete (archaic) words, which are no longer used in everyday speech are substituted with new, colloquial expressions and idioms. He also included parts of lines which were omitted by Župančič and corrected his mistranslations.

Matej Bor, who was also the first editor of complete Shakespeare's plays in Slovene translation, admits that he began reading Shakespeare's works in Slovene translations because he was thrilled by Oton Župančič's words "which were sometimes so glittering that they even disturbed /the playwright's/ view of the world".<sup>52</sup> Bor sees the advantage of the Slovene language, if compared with some other European languages, in the fact that Slovene vocabulary is rich enough to include words that bear the stress on different syllables, which makes it possible for Slovene translators to use all metrical forms, from hexameter to blank verse. One of the reasons why Bor enjoyed translating Shakespeare's plays was that this task gave him the possibility to move from his own world to a different world presented by Shakespeare. Similarly, the poet, translator and playwright Milan Jesih, sees the achievement of Oton Župančič's translations of Shakespeare's plays in his high, masterful standards of translating the English verse into Slovene, in Župančič's "effort, extending maybe even to exhibitionism, to make his language most lyrical and poetic."<sup>53</sup> Like other translators and critics Jesih admires Župančič as a master "who established the standards of translating verse" into Slovene.<sup>54</sup> Janez Menart, who translated Shakespeare's sonnets and other poems into Slovene, also joins Slovene translators in his praise of Župančič's translations of Shakespeare's plays.<sup>55</sup> However, among "weaknesses" which appear in Župančič's translations he mentions Župančič's use of Croatian words, his use of nonstandard Slovene words (corrupted variants), of archaic words and his lax neologisms. He also points out Župančič's occasional omissions of the original text. In Menart's view these features are mainly the result of the translator's wish to preserve in his translation the original rhythmic pattern and the

<sup>50</sup> Janko Moder (1914 -2006), translator, linguist, bibliographer, editor.

<sup>51</sup> Although this is not the theme of the present article let me only mention as an illustration some examples of changes in the two translations. The order in which the examples are listed, is the following: 1. Shakespeare's text, 2. Župančič's translation, and 3. Jesih's translation. E.g. nephew / bratič / nečak; Nurse / Dojka / Pestunja; John / John / Janez; Lawrence / Laurence / Lorenzo; servant / sluga / služabnik; East / iztok / vzhod; heads (of the two houses) / starešina / oče; Chorus / kor / zbor; poison / trovilo / strup; heartless kinds / šleve / bedni kmetavzi; purple fountains / (s) studenci rdečimi / (s) curki škrlatnimi; noble uncle / žlahtni ujec / plemeniti stric; lovely / dražestna / ljubka; etc. etc.

<sup>52</sup> Matej Bor 1988: 152.

<sup>53</sup> Milan Jesih 1991: 96.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.* 103.

<sup>55</sup> Janez Menart 1980: 88-91.

rhyme scheme. However, Menart states that Župančič's translations are an enormous contribution to Slovene translations of Shakespeare's plays in which the translator's impact is also visible in his own style.

All three Slovene translators of Shakespeare's plays mentioned above share Kelemina's view about Župančič's approach to translating Shakespeare's plays. In her critical observation regarding Župančič's use of language in his translation of *Hamlet*, Majda Stanovnik points out that in Shakespeare's works there is an extraordinary variety of the dramatist's use of language, so that the speech of his characters is richly differentiated, and this variety also throws light on Shakespeare's multi-layered society.<sup>56</sup> In Cankar's and Župančič's translations of Shakespeare's plays the language is brought close to »the polite literary language«, although Župančič adds to it elements of colloquial language. She also accepts the idea that a new translation of *Hamlet* is necessary due to the historical development of Slovene language, and new, different connotations, accompanying the fundamental lexical meaning of Slovene words. In one way or another all of these views support the theses expressed by Jakob Kelemina's articles on Oton Župančič's translations of Shakespeare's plays. Although Župančič did not accept some of Kelemina's suggestions connected with his explanations of the meaning of words or idioms, Kelemina definitely contributed to Župančič's increased awareness of the linguistic complexity of Shakespeare's plays. This is also a proof that Kelemina's contribution to the above discussed and indirectly also to other translations of Shakespeare's plays done by Župančič, was significant. Kelemina's studies also represent an important step in the development of Slovene criticism of Shakespeare's plays.

#### KELEMINA'S VIEWS ON SHAKESPEARE AS EXPRESSED IN SOME OF HIS OTHER WORKS

There are two other works written by Kelemina in which Shakespeare and his plays are dealt with, but only as subsidiary references to some other major theme. These works were both written after 1922, but they nevertheless contribute to our understanding of Kelemina's views on Shakespeare's treatment of historical themes and on his dramatic technique. However, they are thematically of lesser importance than Kelemina's introductory essays to Slovene translations of Shakespeare's plays which were published together with Župančič's Slovene translations. These works are Kelemina's review of Oton Župančič's play *Veronika Deseniška* and his introduction to the theory of literature, *Literarna veda*. Kelemina's review of *Veronika Deseniška* was published in 1926, and his book on the theory of literature in 1927.

Kelemina's references to Shakespeare in his review of Oton Župančič's play *Veronika Deseniška*

In 1924 Oton Župančič wrote the tragedy *Veronika Deseniška*, which was first performed by the Slovene National Theatre in Ljubljana on 1 Dec. 1924. The play was

<sup>56</sup> Majda Stanovnik 1991: 7, 18.

then discussed by a number of prominent Slovene critics, who started a vivid polemic about Župančič's treatment of this theme connected with Slovene history (e.g. Josip Vidmar, Fran Albreht, France Koblar etc.). Jakob Kelemina wrote a long study of the play and those parts of his article dealing with comparisons between Shakespeare's treatment of tragic themes and Župančič's vision of it will be briefly analysed here. Kelemina's study was published in 1926 in the well-known Slovene literary magazine *Ljubljanski zvon*.<sup>57</sup> Kelemina begins his essay by praising contemporary Slovene dramatists, and he believes that Župančič's choice of a tragic theme related to Slovene history is very appropriate. He thinks it is natural that Župančič found his inspiration for this tragedy in Shakespeare's "histories", which also left visible traces in this "poem" (as Kelemina refers to this text). Such are, for example, a multi-layered action, which demands a large number of characters and which makes the unity of time and place impossible; an introduction of a comic character as a "philosopher"; the inclusion of comic elements, etc. (496). According to Kelemina such a variety of dramatic components presented for Župančič a difficulty, when he attempted to unite them into a well-balanced whole.

The story of Župančič's play is based on a triangle between the count Friderik from Celje, his wife Jelisava and young Veronika, with whom Friderik has fallen in love. When Jelisava learns the truth about Friderik's love she accepts it and she forgives Veronika. But because she does not see a solution, she takes a deadly amount of sleeping potion, and dies. Friderik's father does not wish to accept Veronika as "a countess of Celje"; he accuses her of sorcery and throws his son and Veronika into prison, where Veronika, who is with Friderik's child, dies.

Kelemina mentions in his study about the play that Župančič obviously grasped in it the subject-matter, "which has waited to come into a magician's hands to be saved", because the play treats both a general theme close to mankind (a love triangle) and particular national problem, because Veronika, who is guilty of her illicit connection, also admits that it was also the result of her ambition to become a countess of Celje. In Kelemina's view Veronika's fate represents a tragedy based largely on her personal guilt, on her lust for power, a feature which has not been noticed by other Slovene critics (497-8). He also insists that Veronika's ethical guilt must be distinguished between Župančič's portrayal of this female character from Shakespeare's (morally positive) portrayals of tragic heroines -- like Cordelia, Desdemona, and Ophelia -- whose penitance is not based on their personal sins but on man's original sin. Kelemina also has some doubts concerning the structure and the technique of this play. He argues, for example, that the exposition is not properly developed, that the structure of the play is loose and that therefore the play lacks dynamism in the presentation of characters. As one of the major faults of *Veronika Deseniška* he finds the lack of causality in the plot of the play, which Župančič substituted with his use of symbolism; as a consequence of this approach the critic does not find Župančič's dialogues persuasive enough. Kelemina actually repeats here some of his observation, which he had made earlier with regard to Župančič's translations of Shakespeare's plays. They include Župančič's "God-like diction", and, on the other hand, his "forgetfulness" that dialogues should serve to

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<sup>57</sup> Jakob Kelemina, "O Veroniki Deseniški." *Ljubljanski zvon* 46. 7-8 (1926). 495-508.

present dramatic conflicts and should not be used without an aim or a purpose (507). Kelemina finally observes that although Župančič's characters are superb, they are not shown in dramatic struggle.

Even though Kelemina begins and ends his study on Oton Župančič's play *Veronika Deseniška* by praising its author, he also enumerates in the central part of his study its weaknesses. His final suggestion that Župančič will be able to use well a large variety of subjects, which are dealt with in this play in his "future creations" (508), seems to be more a consolation than an unreserved praise of the playwright's dramatic mastery.

The opinions of other Slovene critics who wrote about Župančič's *Veronika Deseniška* differed a lot and in the debate about the play and its criticism Kelemina's views were one-sidedly attacked by Vlado Premru as "politically shameful", and as "tendentious art of pro-Yugoslav orientation".<sup>58</sup> Joža Mahnič, Oton Župančič's biographer, remarks in his notes on Župančič that Kelemina's writing is mainly a discussion of basic views related to the play rather than its critique. According to him Kelemina sticks in his essay too much to the Aristotelian concept of tragedy and does not show enough understanding for the symbolism of the play (Župančič ZD 6: 417-8). But if we examine Župančič's views on drama as expressed in his writing we can assume that the playwright's intention was to treat the subject-matter of this play as a type of "a historical tragedy", which Župančič admired in Shakespeare's opus, and which he praised so frequently in his introductions, letters and diaries. If so, Kelemina was right in his explanation of *Veronika Deseniška*, because the play's symbolism should not hinder the development of its action and should not diminish the plausibility of its characters.

It is possible that criticism which appeared after the production of this play at the Slovene National Theatre in Ljubljana also influenced Župančič's rather hesitant reply when he was asked to allow the play to be performed by the Slovene National Theatre in Maribor. In his letter to the manager he suggests that the text of the play should be shortened and (dialogues, scenes?) rearranged. When he was asked to come and see the premiere in Maribor (on 16 Oct. 1926), he declined the invitation, saying, that he had already seen Osip Šest's production of the play in Ljubljana (Župančič ZD 6: 419). One of the proofs that Kelemina was basically right in his judgement is also the fact that Župančič's play has not been since frequently produced in Slovene theatres and that Župančič's other attempts in the dramatic genre have not been successful either.

### Kelemina on Shakespeare in his introduction to the theory of literature (*Literarna veda*)

The first Slovene manual on the theory of literature was Jakob Kelemina's book *Literarna veda* (Literary Sciences), which was published by Nova založba in Ljubljana

<sup>58</sup> Vlado Premru (1902-1949), a little known writer and translator. He attacked Župančič and Kelemina in his article "Slovenstvo in naši kulturni delavci" (*Mladina* 4-5, 1926-27: 94) in which he blames them from two, completely different points of view, as glorifiers of former German (Austrian) rulers and as admirers of Yugoslavia. (See: Župančič ZD 6: 420-21).



in 1927. The text deals with different aspects of literary theory, and also includes views of a number of literary theoreticians who were well known at that time (e.g. Walzel, Ermatinger, Dilthey). In this study only Kelemina's references to Shakespeare and his plays will be dealt with. Kelemina states that drama is particularly suited to present an abstract subject-matter, but which does not exclude "our aesthetic enjoyment". As an example he mentions Hamlet's monologue "To be or not to be ...," which has an influence on us like any other elevated thought or witty reflexion even though "it may not be covered with an exuberant form of clearness" (Kelemina 1927: 42). According to Kelemina every subject-matter contains the possibility of special stylistic treatment, but when the author falsifies the essential features of an original subject-matter, the effect may be quite the opposite. Among examples offered by Kelemina for this assertion he mentions the story about Pyramus and Thisby, which was originally presented by Ovid in his *Metamorphoses*, but which acquired a new interpretation in Shakespeare's play *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Kelemina points out that the story is not comical by itself, but that the manner in which it is enacted by Bottom and his fellows provides it with a funny, comical meaning. The form of a work of art depends on the will of its creator who gives it different functions and forms of fantasy. Kelemina particularly stresses that the attempts to turn a slight plot into a novel or a play have often proved unsuitable.

Another topic which Kelemina mentions briefly in this study is dramatic poetry. Actions in a play are directed to a special purpose and it is essential that the struggle to achieve a certain aim takes place in a play. The core conflict in the subject-matter should be presented by dramatic diction related to actuality, stresses Kelemina, the point which we often come across as one of the basic demands made on playwrights and critics in the first half of the twentieth century. The inner life of characters in the play is complemented by the external action of the play, and the play gains its momentum in dramatic dialogues. Kelemina also stresses that the poetic form and the structure of the play do not have their own purpose, but that they are used to enable the audience to enjoy properly the theme (the subject-matter) of the play (75). The critic also argues how very important it is to create the highest possible level of expressiveness in language into which of a work of art is translated ("the target language"). He mentions that in his criticism of translations of works written by Goethe, Shakespeare, Nietzsche, he has often pointed out the efforts of our translators to reach a high linguistic level. He repeats the argument, which he has often used, namely that it seems almost impossible to translate a play written by Shakespeare into a language, which does not have its own firmly established diction (97), the reference was clearly aimed at the then situation in dramatic art in Slovenia.

It is clear that the main concepts about drama, which are expressed by Kelemina in this survey also on the art of the theatre, are generally based on critical theories proclaimed in Aristotle's *Poetics*, in Lessing's *Hamburg Dramaturgy*, and to a lesser extent also in essays on tragedy written by F. Schiller, on Goethe's conversations with Eckermann, and on A. W. Schlegel's *Lectures on Dramatic Art and Literature*. Therefore it is understandable that Kelemina could not agree with Shaw's view that "Shakespeare is full of little lectures", and with Nietzsche's celebration of power and his derision of the slave morality, which Nietzsche associated with Christianity. On the other hand, in Kelemina's insistence that poetry in drama should not be used merely as decoration, an

embellishment, and which seems to refer mainly to Oton Župančič's manner of translating Shakespeare's plays, it sounds very much like demands which were later on so persuasively made by T. S. Eliot in his essay "Poetry and Drama" (1950). To conclude: even though Kelemina's main interest regarding translations of Shakespeare's plays into Slovene was linguistically, literary, ethically and historically orientated it is a pity that Kelemina stopped writing about drama so early in his academic career, because most of his observations and suggestions are still quite modern and acceptable, of course, when basic dramatic principles of the "traditional" type of drama are discussed.

## CONCLUSION

Theatrical life in Slovenia has a long history, which dates back to the Renaissance period, even though for a long time it mainly depended on visits of foreign theatre groups, which came to Ljubljana quite regularly and performed here Shakespeare's plays particularly in the eighteenth and nineteenth century. However, students of the Jesuit College in Ljubljana, had occasionally also produced plays; so, for example, they staged in Ljubljana a German version of King Lear story already in 1698. However, the first play written in Slovene was *Škofjeloški pasijon* (1721), a religious procession about the death of Jesus Christ. Slovene intellectuals who studied in Vienna during the past three centuries could see there from the end of the eighteenth century onward a number of (original, not adapted versions) of Shakespeare's plays. The beginner of Slovene drama, Anton Tomaž Linhart (1756-1795), who was thrilled by Shakespeare's plays which he saw in Vienna and he even wrote a play (*Miss Jenny Love*) under Shakespeare's influence. The greatest Slovene poet, France Prešeren (1800-1849), was also familiar with Shakespeare's plays, but his friends did not persuade him to write a play on a historical theme, like Shakespeare.

Throughout the nineteenth century many Slovene authors and critics mention Shakespeare and his works in their essays and in their criticism. This is also the period when the first Slovene translations of individual scenes from Shakespeare's plays appeared in Slovene periodicals. After 1876 a number of Slovene professional theatre groups contributed to a very vivid theatrical life in Ljubljana and later on also in some other cities (Maribor, Trieste / Trst). As we can see from the table of professional theatre productions in Slovenia between 1867 and 1922, productions of Shakespeare's plays increased yearly, not to mention an extremely rich theatrical development in the second half of the twentieth century.

Although in the 19th century several less known translators tried to make Slovene readers (and later on also audiences) acquainted with Shakespeare's plays, the most important contribution in this field was made by Oton Župančič (1878-1949), who translated eighteen of his plays. One of the main problems at the beginning of the twentieth century was the lack of knowledge of English in Slovenia so that the majority of translators, including Župančič's first translations of Shakespeare's plays, were prepared on the basis of the German translations. This also resulted in many linguistic errors, which appeared in early Slovene translations of Shakespeare's plays..

Jakob Kelemina (1882-1957) published his first book review of Župančič's translation of *The Merchant of Venice* in 1907. After the First World War he had already written two lengthy reviews of Župančič's translation of *Othello*, and of three Croatian translations of Shakespeare's plays. He pointed out in his reviews to a number of grammatical, lexical and syntactical mistakes also in Župančič's translation, and advised him and Croatian translators to use for their translations the English original. In 1920 Kelemina contributed an introductory essay and notes to Župančič's translations of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and in 1921 to *The Merchant of Venice* and to *Macbeth*. Kelemina's interpretations show his scholarly approach to Shakespeare's plays. In his introductions he discussed literary, historical, ethical, ethnographic and other aspects of Shakespeare's plays. In his meticulously prepared notes he offered abundant explanation of individual sintagms and passages in these play. This, no doubt, helped Župančič at his translations of Shakespeare's plays. But from Župančič's letters and notes we can see that Kelemina's approach to these plays, which was more philologically oriented, did not suit the translator, and it is most likely that differences in their characters did not help their cooperation either. It was stopped after 1922, when Kelemina wrote his last review of Slovene and Croatian translations of Shakespeare's plays prepared by Oton Župančič, Milan Bogdanović and Milan Šenoa. Kelemina especially pointed out in this review that Župančič's translations were more poetic than translations by the two above mentioned Croatian translators. It is not only the opinion of the author of this paper but also the opinion expressed by two most important translator's after Župančič, Matej Bor and Milan Jesih, that Župančič indulged himself in the beauty of his poetic translations to such an extent that he sometimes neglected to include in his translations the complexity of meaning expressed by Shakespeare in his plays, so rich in poetic elements. Bor's and Jesih's translations are thus much closer to everyday colloquial speech. Kelemina was the first Slovene critic whose writings about Oton Župančič's translations of Shakespeare's plays still have a scholarly value. Jakob Kelemina helped Župančič in his work as a translator with his practical suggestions regarding the possibilities of translating as well as indirectly, with his theoretical views on drama and with his suggestions for Župančič's use of literature on Shakespeare's plays, different interpretations and dictionaries to achieve a very high standard in his translations. Jakob Kelemina definitely also set the standards for future interpretation and evaluation of Shakespeare's plays in Slovenia.

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