Valentina-Monica BARBA[1]

ANALYSIS OF THE ROMANIAN TRANSLATION
OF A FEW CHIASMI IN SHAKESPEARE'S *MEASURE FOR MEASURE*

Abstract. This paper discusses the Romanian translation of a few chiasmi in *Measure for Measure*. It proposes an interpretation of Shakespeare's use of these chiastic structures in the play, and examines the form, the structure, and the effect of these chiastic structures after the translation. Since *Measure for Measure* inspires meditation through the idea of appeasing justice with mercy in the application of the law, but shows no limitation of the application of justice by mitigating it with mercy, the happy ending appears as an artifice of the Duke. This paper views the use of chiasmi as a means of enabling the audience to achieve a mental transfer from the worldly to the spiritual, in order enable it to understand the play in relation to the teachings of the Bible without mentioning such precepts as such, and discusses whether and to what extent the effect of this transfer is retained in translation.

Keywords: antanaclasis, antimetabole, eschatology, justice, mercy

1. Introduction

This paper discusses the Romanian translation of a few chiasmi in *Measure for Measure*. It proposes an interpretation of Shakespeare's use of these chiastic structures in the play, and examines the form, the structure, and the effect of these chiastic structures after the translation. A number of theories of translation have been used in analysing the translation of the chiasmi in the play. Adherence to one or another of such theories has

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[1]   University of Bucharest, valentina-monica.barba@s.unibuc.ro

been identified, and the pragmatic uses of such theories have been assessed by contrasting and comparing them with the English text.

In *Measure for Measure*, Shakespeare uses chiasmus on a wide scale. Whereas the motives of using this rhetorical device may spring from a desire to obtain economical, efficient, direct, mnemonic, pragmatic, rhetorical, or unforgettable expression, or from a need to ease memorability and dramatic performance, this paper sees certain chiasmi in the play capable of contributing to the elevation of thought from worldly matters to spiritual meditation, or even to religious precepts. *Measure for Measure* inspires meditation by the idea of tempering justice with mercy in the application of the law, but shows no limitation of the application of justice by mitigating it with mercy. Thus, the happy ending appears as an artifice of the Duke. This paper views the use of chiasmi as a means of enabling the audience to achieve a mental transfer from the worldly to the spiritual, in order to acquaint them with the teachings of the Bible, and discusses whether and to what extent the effect of this transfer is retained in the translation.

With the first half of the play unfolding a tragic-loaded plot only to get an embellishment of a formal happy ending in the second half, *Measure for Measure* distinguishes itself amongst the canon through a thorough capacity to inspire a propensity for thoughtful meditation. The text of the play includes a number of elements which nourish such post-play meditation, and chiasmus is definitely one of them, particularly when its deciphering lasts past the performance of the play.

Dupriez defines chiasmus as "[t]he placing in inverse order of the segments formed by two syntactically identical groups of words" (1991: 95). To the, perhaps, a little too concise definition of Ralf Norrman as "a structure... of bilateral symmetry" (1986: 276), Brad McCoy contributes a dynamic aspect, and defines chiasmus as "the use of inverted parallelism of form and/or content which moves toward and away from a strategic central component" (2003: 18–34). Nils W. Lund identifies several laws of the chiastic structures, but what mainly interests this paper is the fact that "[*t*]*he centre is always the turning point*" (1992: 40–41). A chiastic structure is also an antimetabole or "inverting the order of repeated words to sharpen their sense or to contrast the ideas they convey or both (AB:BA)" (Dupriez 1991: 47). For efficacy, an antimetabole may be contrasted with a metabole, which "uses different words to say the same thing", whereas an antimetabole

"uses the same words to say something else" (Dupriez 1991: 47). Dupriez distinguishes between chiasmus and antimetabole by restricting the latter to "a pair of words repeated (usually with some morphological change) in reverse order" (1991: 95). Another chiastic structure is antanaclasis or diaphora which occurs in a dialogue when a speaker "takes up the words of the interlocutor, or of the adversary, and changes their meaning to the speaker's own advantage" (Dupriez 1991: 43). Both antimetabole and antanaclasis appear in *Measure for Measure* when Shakespeare seems to have intended to induce an inflection point in the reader's, or the audience's, reception of the written text, or the performance of the play.

2. Chiasmus in relation to justice and mercy in *Measure for Measure*

A pregnant mark of *Measure for Measure*, which soars emblematically from most of the dialogues in the first half of the play, is the appeasing of justice with mercy in the application of the law. Nevertheless, it seems that from the text *per se* there springs no curbing of the application of hard justice by mitigating it with mercy. On the contrary, the happy ending appears as a contrivance of the Duke – with any resourceful means he finds in the second half of the play – in order to abate the evil accrued in the first part of the play. Or, this is no justice tamed by mercy. The play shows the triumph of good over evil by instilling in the audience some kind of mental transference from the mundane to the spiritual. In my view, Shakespeare has the knowledge, or inspiration, to use all the above chiastic structures to build a bridge exactly for this transference.

Ira Clark claims that chiasmus in *Measure for Measure* is a demanding figure of speech which correlates intimately with the contention between justice and mercy as they entangle within the play (2001: 659–660). Evaluating the definition of the chiasmus in relation to the play, Clark notes the difference between a mere inversion of the words (according to Puttenham) (2001: 659) and an inversion of the sentence (according to Peacham) (2001: 659–660), and finds that in this play chiasmus is closer to Peacham's rather than Puttenham's definition. He deems it important to "puzzle over definitions and relationships, to focus on difficulties" (2001: 660). Where the chiastic structures prove difficult to understand,

he concludes that they have been left as such by Shakespeare in order to function as an aporia and to compel us "to face their intractability" (2001: 660). Perhaps, this is the very bridge of passing from the ordinary to the extraordinary, from the mundane to the spiritual, or at least to a meditative frame of mind. Hence, I agree with Clark in his seeing chiasmus as a "scheme" rather than a "figure", and with his conclusion that "when we think about literature we need to consider the uses of schemes just as we consider the uses of tropes and images" (2001: 678). Schemes engage the mind in a thorough thought process which enables the understanding of literature, the enriching of life, and – last but not least – the passage through a process of catharsis.

3. Brief remarks on translation

In order to link the above to the analysis of chiasmus translation, I include below a few ideas about translation, starting with Dryden, who states that translation can be reduced to "three heads": metaphrase or "turning an author word by word, and line by line, from one language into another", paraphrase or "translation with latitude, where the author is kept in view by the translator, […], but his words are not so strictly followed as his sense", and imitation where the translator "assumes the liberty, not only to vary from the words and sense, but to forsake them both as he sees occasion; and taking only some general hints from the original, to run division on the groundwork, as he pleases" (1992: 17).

Francis George Steiner constructs a philosophical theory of translation – the hermeneutic motion – which intends to displace Dryden's triad, by including four moves: trust, penetration, embodiment, and restitution (1975: 487–497). They are stages in the translation endeavour respectively: tackling a work in a foreign language, understanding it by thoughtful appropriation, transference of comprehension into the words of the target language, and, finally, ethically and faithfully adjusting the resulting work so as to resemble as far as possible the original. Steiner rejects the threefold theory of translation because it lacks a "philosophical basis" (1975: 497).

It is here that Arthur Schopenhauer's philosophical tenet in "On Language and Words" makes a point in showing the word as being "the

most enduring substance of the human race" since it is able to "flourish anew in every sensitive reader" (1992: 32). Schopenhauer says that dictionaries offer several options, but the translator has to choose the word which "delineate[s] the boundaries within which the concept moves", and, with the concepts being covered rather differently in different languages, "[t]his causes unavoidable imperfection in all translations" (1992: 32). This might be true about choosing certain target language words in translating chiasmi in spite of the overall sense of the resulting chiasmus translation. Also here is worth mentioning Schopenhauer's remarks on the syntactics of translation:

> [T]he translation into Latin often requires a breakdown of a sentence into its most refined, elementary components (the pure thought content) from which the sentence is then regenerated in totally different forms. Thus it often happens that nouns in the text of one language can only be transplanted as verbs in another, or *vice versa*. (1992: 35) (Emphasis mine)

My emphasis above points at translating from English into Romanian – a Latin-related language –, and at the difficulties the translators must have encountered in translating, and particularly in keeping with the deep significance of, the chiasmi in the Shakespearean text.

Rephrasing a text from its form in thought and even the idea of words differing from language to language in signifying the same concept have also appeared in Friedrich Daniel Ernst Schleiermacher's "On the Different Methods of Translating", where paraphrase is viewed as being useful in rendering works which cannot be faithfully translated but "[whose value can be retained] by the addition of limiting or expanding definitions" (1992: 36–40). Paraphrase is even compared with plus-minus approximation in mathematics (1992: 40). With reference to imitation, Schleiermacher says that it should be employed only when a rather-difficult-to-transpose "work of art" can be conceived so as to lead to a work which, "taking into account the difference of language, morals, and education, is supposed to be, as much as possible, the same thing for its readers as the original was for its own readers" (1992: 40–41). As the translation of the chiasmi chosen for this paper shows – particularly in

relation to the significance of such chiasmi in the eschatological insights which the play may have (Barba 2023: 4–7) – Schleiermacher's view that the endeavour to recreate a work of art with the reader in mind "sacrifices the identity of the work" is rather accurate (1992: 41). This is also said about Ezra Pound, who conveys the poetic experience in a source language by making a language of his own – although being aware that a translation would only enrich a culture if only it were not over-naturalised (Apter 2006: 273).

Eugene A. Nida discusses translation on the levels of message, content, form, translator, receptor, medium of communication (1976: 47–91). He thinks that translation should observe the equivalence of genres and stylistic or rhetorical devices in literary texts, and he pinpoints the importance of rendering "the extralinguistic context of the utterance", such as "irony, hyperbole, and litotes" (1976: 75–76). However, he is rather certain that in practice translators combine these theories: "Most translators are highly eclectic in practice" (1976: 78).

With respect to the Shakespearean canon and since it is particularly related to the third millennium, Alessandro Serpieri's 2004 essay "Translating Shakespeare. A Brief Survey of some Problematic Areas" presents some scientific and orderly elaborated observations made during his work on translating Shakespeare into Italian. Of particular interest for the discussion on the rendition of Shakespeare's chiasmi into Romanian is his scheme of the energies involved in translating Shakespeare. Serpieri notes that "the translator must deal with the multi-leveled energy of his texts in order to make it sensed in another language and in another age by another public" (2004: 29–30).

Schopenhauer's and Schleiermacher's views on the semiotic choices a translator has to make are further honed by Serpieri into "discrete" options, where there is a definite number of options from which to choose, and "chromatic" options, where there are practically innumerable options, such as "at the rhythmic, metric, syntactic, stylistic and rhetorical levels of the linguistic area", particularly since "[a]t these levels the choice of a translator involves strategies which affect the whole text or parts of the text" (2004: 31–32). This is again so very true about chiasmus translation, where either the words could not be repeated in translation in order to

respect the chiastic schema, or, when or if repeated, they have by-passed a little the force of the chiasmus in English.

Many if not all of the ideas briefed above have been endorsed by many more writers, critics, or translators, who, in their turn, have coined diverse terms, or developed diverse concepts in relation to the work of translation, but the above illustrate well the challenges which the Romanian translators must have faced in translating Shakespearean chiasmi in *Measure for Measure*.

4. Romanian translators' views on translating *Measure for Measure*

Shakespearean texts hold a special position in the practice of translation. In this respect it might be worthwhile considering the views of three Romanian authors who endeavoured to provide vernacular versions of *Measure for Measure*. While they all share the respect for the original text, each one is preoccupied with emphasising different aspects.

Thus, speaking about his version „Măsură pentru măsură (După faptă și răsplată)", Leon D. Levițchi acknowledges that his first and foremost task was translation, a task to which he applied rigorous linguistic techniques including "complex text analysis"; keen knowledge of elements of prosody, rhythm, and musicality; bibliographic lists; and not least of all a very close comparison of the collocations and associations of words to be translated from one language into the other" (2018).

In her turn, in „Vorbeam și eu cum merge vorba", the Foreword to her translation *William Shakespeare – Măsură pentru măsură*, Ioana Ieronim confesses to be much indebted to Leon D. Levițchi's version. Although Ieronim admits to producing a version different from that of Levițchi's, she views the help she got from her professor's version as a dialogue with him "beyond the grave" (2013). Ieronim claims to have exploited the argot and the vernacular where the text required it, and to have found solutions to render the macabre tenor of the parts dealing with death. With respect to the multiple meanings which pervade the Shakespearean text, Ieronim claims to have sacrificed as little as she had to (2013).

Finally, George Volceanov's „Măsură pentru măsură" resorts to two English versions: Nigel Bawcutt's 1991 Oxford edition and Brian Gibbons' 2006 New Cambridge Shakespeare edition. Volceanov relies

primarily on the former for the translation, while using the latter for annotations for ambiguous passages (2014: 218). Referring to the Shakespeare texts he edited, Volceanov mentions that he uses notes of various kinds (2014: 207–208). In his opinion, the original Shakespearean text, which had undergone heavy censure, needed a Romanian rendering unified by notes explaining the English language on a case-by-case basis. To achieve his purpose, Volceanov claims to have used the Oxford, Arden, Cambridge, and Penguin editions, trying to include in his notes emendations which had rather different meanings (2014: 208).

5. Comparative analysis of a few chiasmi translated into Romanian

The chiasmus structure endows the text with focus, momentum, and mnemonics and when the relation of the words or phrases in a chiasmus is a stylistic one, the chiasmus becomes even more expressive. In order to see whether these features preserve their strength in the Romanian translations, I have selected to discuss and compare a few chiasmi from three Romanian versions of the play: Leon D. Levițchi's „Măsură pentru măsură (După faptă și răsplată)" (1987: 401–508) (named [Levițchi] here), Ioana Ieronim's *Măsură pentru măsură* de William Shakespeare (Penescu 2012: 3–222) (named [Ieronim]), and George Volceanov's „Măsură pentru măsură" (Shakespeare 2014: 215–333) (named [Volceanov]). The selected chiasmi come from Ira Clark's article on the chiasmi in *Measure for Measure* (2001: 667–678).

A straightforward chiasmus noted by Clark, which takes the particular form of antimetabole, appears in Angelo's monologue, when, enthralled by Isabella's charm, Angelo bends his thought upon himself and realises that he cannot pray with focus any longer:

> (1) *When I would pray and think, I think and pray/ To several subjects* (II.4.1–2)[2] (Clark 2001: 672).

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2   All *Measure for Measure* quotations are from J.W. Lever (ed.) (1987), *Measure for Measure. The Arden Edition of the Works of William Shakespeare*, p. 1–149, Routledge, London and New York.

The archaic meaning of would[3] – wished, desired – indicates that the action of praying is precisely what is desired. The first part of the antimetabole, "When I would pray and think", denotes a willingness to pray by striving to attain a simultaneous thinking action. This part of the antimetabole indicates that, when Angelo prays, he follows the prayer with his thought, and there is a priority of the prayer over the thought or a subservient follow-up of the words in the prayer by the thought. However, the second part of the antimetabole, "I think and pray/ To several subjects", reverses the desired order by showing precedence of the thought over the prayer, and mentioning the distraction of the thought thereupon. The antimetabole depicts a frame of mind which is hardly one accepted by Angelo. Shakespeare's wording, "I think and pray/ To several subjects", has a strong effect because of the association of the verb *pray* with *several subjects* in a preposterous contrast between the definition of *pray* as in "to address God or a god with adoration, confession, supplication, or thanksgiving"[4] and "pray to several subjects". It denotes an inability to pray because of a dilution of the attention to the words in the prayer. This antimetabole shows that Angelo cannot master himself entirely and is an introduction to his fall after seeing Isabella.

The renderings of the chiasmus are the following:

(2) a. *Mă rog și cuget, cuget și mă rog,/ Dar mintea-mi nu se poate aduna.* (Shakespeare 1987) [Levițchi]

   b. *Mă rog și cuget, cuget, mă rog, mintea gonește/ Printre rânduri.* (Shakespeare 2012) [Ieronim]

   c. *Când mă rog și cuget, mă trezesc/ Că mintea-mi zboară-aiurea.* (Shakespeare 2014) [Volceanov]

The antimetabole is retained in two translations: [Levițchi] and [Ieronim]. The last part of the text, in all three translations, although consisting of different wording, shows that the mind digresses towards a multitude of

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3 "Would", Merriam-Webster Dictionary, *Merriam-Webster.com*, *Dictionary*. https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/would. Accessed 17th June 2023.

4 "Pray", Merriam-Webster Dictionary, *Merriam-Webster.com*, *Dictionary*, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/pray. Accessed 17th June 2023.

things instead of focusing on the words of the prayer. However, there is no mention of Angelo's *desire* to pray and focus his mind on the prayer as in "When I *would* pray and think", and also no specific object of his thought when it takes precedence against the prayer. A possible rendition would be: „Când caut să mă rog cu mintea, cu mintea mă rog la multe lucruri". The chiastic structure is preserved, and this rendition maintains a lapidary expression of both the *will* to pray and the digression towards intervening thoughts.

According to Ira Clark, Act III is the richest in chiasmi concerning justice and mercy (2001: 667), and this chiastic richness indicates that this act "serves as a fulcrum of problems" (2001: 671). In one instance, Shakespeare uses the chiastic structure to stress Isabella's spiritual qualities. Disguised as a friar, the Duke tells her:

(3) *The goodness that is cheap in beauty makes beauty brief in goodness* (III.1.180–181) (Clark 2001: 672).

The word *goodness*[5] associated with *beauty* in this order suggests that goodness is truthful and endowed with heartfelt sincerity, whereas in the second part of the chiasmus *beauty* associated with *goodness* in this reversed order suggests physical beauty which lacks kindness or congeniality. The effect of the whole rhetorical device is to highlight memorably, mnemonically, and tersely Isabella's beauty as a maid, and her kindness as a human being. Having been set at the beginning of the acquaintance of the Duke with Isabella, it defines the register in which the Duke is going to hold her throughout the play, right until his last invitation addressed to her at the end of the play also in a chiastic fashion, when he says: "What's mine is yours and what's yours is mine" (Clark 2001: 669).

J.W. Lever annotates the verses in this chiasmus as: "The pleasing qualities that cost little effort when you are beautiful make beauty soon cease to be good", and specifies that "'Goodness' is first used for physical appeal ('good' O.E.D. 3e, also used by Shakespeare in *Pericles*, IV.2.51),

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[5] "Goodness", Merriam-Webster Dictionary, *Merriam-Webster.com, Dictionary*, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/goodness. Accessed 17th June 2023.

then in the moral sense" (1987: 77). However, according to the first known use of the word "goodness" in the 12th century, it means "the quality or state of being good"[6]. This choice of meaning draws its inspiration from the chiasmus scheme. With regard to this, there is further discussion below.

The Romanian renditions of the original chiastic scheme are the following:

(4) a. *Când cineva e frumos din naștere, însușirile plăcute care nu au nevoie de adaus împiedică frumusețea de a mai fi bună;* [Leviţchi]

b. *fiindcă bunătatea săracă în frumusețe va lipsi și frumusețea de bunătate.* [Ieronim]

c. *dacă o femeie frumoasă disprețuiește virtutea, se cheamă că-i o frumusețe ieftină și efemeră;* [Volceanov]

[Leviţchi] follows closely Lever's interpretation, whereas [Ieronim] and [Volceanov] manage to transfer the key message in the chiasmus, with [Ieronim] managing to also preserve the reverse order of the wording. However, this achievement spoils a considerable part of the covert content of the chiasmus, namely, that, in order to be thorough, virtue requires sincerity and that physical beauty proves void and barren unless it is endowed with sincere virtue. This is revealed faithfully in [Volceanov] but at the expense of the chiastic schema. [Leviţchi] opted to ignore the chiasmus and avoid the tension between the two senses of the word *beauty*, namely, *sincerity* and *physical beauty*. A possible rendition in keeping with the chiastic schema would be: „Bunătatea lipsită de frumusețea sincerității lipsește frumusețea de bunătate sinceră".

Another example of a chiastic scheme provided by Clark is in the conversation – thus making it an antanaclasis – between Elbow and the Duke disguised as a friar:

(5) Elbow: *'Bless you, good father friar',/ The Duke: 'And you, good brother father'* (III.2.11–12) (Clark 2001: 671).

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[6] "Goodness", Merriam-Webster Dictionary, *Merriam-Webster.com, Dictionary*, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/goodness. Accessed 17th June 2023.

In *good father friar*, *good father* occupies the place of the modifier clause; therefore, the address to the friar denotes reverence by using the phrase *good father*. In the reverse phrase, *good brother father*, again, *good brother* is the modifier clause and the Duke addresses Elbow in the way a friar addresses a layman, i.e., by using the appellative *father*. In Romanian, an old, experienced, and holy friar may respond to a layman by using the word *fiule*, in the same way a parent responds to his child with *tată*. The appellative is adorned with a parallel modifier with that used by Elbow so as to denote the due love a friar is expected to share with every person: *frate*. In line with these considerations, a possible translation may read as follows: „Fii binecuvântat, bunule frate și părinte./ Și tu la fel, bunule fiu și frate".

The Romanian renditions are the following:

(6) a. *Te aibă-n pază Cerul, bunule călugăr frate./ Și pe tine, bunule tată-frate.* [Levițchi]
   b. *Fii binecuvântat, părinte frate./ Și tu la fel, frate părinte.* [Ieronim]
   c. *Fii binecuvântat, bunule părinte frate./ Și tu, bunule, frate părinte.* [Volceanov]

[Levițchi] renders the noun *călugăr* by its contextual synonym *frate* and thus fails to signify the anointment of a friar as confessor, whose proper appellative in Romanian is *părinte*. The second part of the chiasmus, while being a literal translation in keeping with the relation noun–modifier, fails to acknowledge the pre-eminence of a clerical towards a layman and also to specify with precision to which noun the modifier *bunule* is attached. [Ieronim] should have *frate părinte* in the first part of the chiasmus since its placement in the second part is rather misleading as to who is the friar and who the layman. [Volceanov] reproduces [Ieronim] but for the use of the modifier *bunule* in both parts of the chiasmus. However, neither of its uses is in keeping with the tenor of the rather contemporary Romanian language employed by the translator in the text.

This chiasmus deserves a short digression by mentioning Lever's opinion that "[t]he Duke plays on Elbow's vulgarism ('friar' from Fr. *Frère*)"

(1987: 82) – where vulgarism is used by Lever most probably as "a word or expression originated or used chiefly by illiterate persons"[7]. Worthy of mention is that, in translation, Lever's interpretation requires an instance of cultural translation. Here, Alessandro Serpieri's remark that the translator "has to render in the target language the energy of the dramatic speech, which is virtual on the page, while showing all its pragmatic significance when combined with extralinguistic codes on the stage" (2004: 29–30) eases the problem of choice because the translator has to pair the written text and its connotations – which may not correspond in the source and the target language – with the dramatic function of the play and its specific set of characteristics. Therefore, leaving aside the author here and rendering the text closer to the reader or the actor seems preferable in this case.

The chiastic scheme –

(7) *If the devil have given thee proofs for sin,/ Thou wilt prove his* (III.2.29–30) (Clark 2001: 671)

epitomises the X form of a chiasmus by alternating the three elements in it: *devil/ his*, *proofs/ prove*, and *thee/ thou*. The chiasmus employs the present perfect in the conditional to show that Pompey *is* in the possession of the devil since he intends to "prove" (III.2.28) something in favour of a behaviour for which the Duke recommends "correction and instruction" (III.2.31) and spurs Pompey to repent: "Go mend, go mend" (III.2.26). Therefore, one who has accepted arguments for sinful conduct from Satan is bound to implement the sin *per se* and, in the process, to prove Satan's sinful essence. Its renditions in Romanian are as follows:

(8) a. *Ești de-al Satanei dacă el îți dă/ Dovezi în apărarea fărădelegii* [Levițchi]

   b. *dacă tu de la diavol ai întăriri pentru păcat,/ În numele lui vorbești.* [Ieronim]

   c. [(Pompei:) *sunt.../* (Ducele:) *Al dracului, de vrei să dovedești/ Că ești nevinovat păcătuind.* [Volceanov]

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[7] "Vulgarism", Merriam-Webster Dictionary, *Merriam-Webster.com, Dictionary*, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/vulgarism. Accessed 17th June 2023.

Of the three renditions, [Volceanov] is closer to the original content of the Shakespearean chiasmus, although he chose to drift from chiasmus proper to antanaclasis by rendering the dialogue between the Duke and Pompey pragmatically, and making it more vivid in relation to the Duke's resolution in urging Pompey to repent, and in asking the officer to imprison him. The other translations follow the original meaning since they imply a person's *a priori* acceptance of Satan's sinful proposition as the starting point for the sinful act. However, in contrast with [Volceanov], who takes a pragmatic view of the relation between the Duke and Pompey by employing an antanaclasis, [Leviţchi] and [Ieronim] retain an aphoristic, rather aloof, tenor.

Another chiastic structure noted by Clark in the form of antimetabole is –

(9) *That we were all, as some would seem to be,/ From our faults, as faults from seeming free!* (III.2.37–38) (Clark 2001: 677)

The antimetabole preserves terseness and clarity at the same time. The Shakespearean tenor suggests a desire to have a condition obtained in earnest for everyone as the condition appears to be attained only in some. Although the use of antimetabole makes the statement rather euphemistic in form, it lends it persuasiveness in impact and expectation.

The Romanian renditions are the following:

(10) a. *De-am fi toţi sfinţi, cum par să fie unii,/ Şi graiul crimei n-ar fi şi al minciunii!* [Leviţchi]
      b. *De n-ar umbla în lume păcatul mascat/ De am fi noi cu toţii străini de păcat!* [Ieronim]
      c. *De-am fi noi toţi cu-adevărat oneşti,/ N-am născoci tot felul de poveşti.* [Volceanov]

The Romanian versions lose the tenor gradually from [Leviţchi] to [Volceanov]. The tenor is strong in [Leviţchi], where the aporia in the original text is preserved, whereas in [Volceanov] the fact that there is a sort of answer in the second part of the chiasmus to the condition enunciated in the first part of the chiasmus changes the tenor entirely by

dissolving the aporia. [Ieronim] also sketches an answer to the condition by using the rendition "străini de păcat", and so it annuls the effect of the aporia in the original text. However, [Ieronim] preserves the antimetabole by repeating the word *păcatul/ păcat*. A rendition preserving the aporia would be: „De-am fi cu toții făr' de păcat cum unii par a fi!", which seems to be in accord with Lever's annotation: "'free' governs both clauses, meaning in the first, 'not subject to', in the second, 'dissociated from', 'Would that we were all as little subject to our faults, as faults are dissociated from seeming (i.e. for persons like Angelo)'" (1987: 83–84).

Another chiasmus selected by Clark, namely –

(11) *Love talks with better knowledge, and knowledge with dearer love* (III.2.146) (Clark 2001: 671),

uses parallelism, mirroring, the comparative degree of simile, and metonymy to suggest a visual image of the concepts of *love* and *knowledge* growing along a spiralling course towards acquiring greater meaning. Love presupposes knowledge and knowledge possesses love. Both are metonymies for friend or friendship and come as a response to Lucio's declaration concerning the Duke: "I know him, and I love him" (III.2.145). The Duke's chiastic answer is a form of pedagogy towards Lucio, who, in his limited sense of knowing, attributes infamous traits to the Duke without realising that it might be just a figment of his imagination reflecting his own base preoccupations – a projection of himself.

The chiasmus reflects the Duke's open mind and aspiration towards ever enhancing knowledge of what can be grasped with the mind, and ever revering love of what can be felt with the heart. Being enhanced by the chiastic structure and by the other rhetorical elements – mirroring, and the comparative forms of *good* and *dear* – *better* and *dearer* –, the Duke's statement reveals his grandeur, his compassion, and his proclivity towards lifting the *status quo* higher through education. He scarcely dodges Lucio when the latter slanders him. On the contrary, his response shows patience and a will to teach good sense.

The Romanian renditions are the following:

(12) a. *Dragostea vorbește cu o cunoaștere mai deplină și cunoașterea cu mai multă dragoste.* [Levițchi]
      b. *Iubirea ar vorbi cu mai multă știință, iar când știi mai mult, iubești mai mult.* [Ieronim]
      c. *Dacă l-ai iubi cu adevărat, l-ai cunoaște mai bine și, dacă l-ai cunoaște de-adevăratelea, l-ai iubi mai mult.* [Volceanov]

[Levițchi] renders faithfully the English chiastic structure *love/ better/ knowledge* and *knowledge/ dearer/ love* into *dragostea/ cunoaștere/ mai deplină* in the first part and *cunoașterea/ mai multă/ dragoste* in the second part. There is only an inversion of two terms in the second part but the mnemonic effect of the chiasmus is still there. [Ieronim] replaces the noun *knowledge* with the noun *știință* and then *knowledge* with the indicative of *a ști*, and *love* with the indicative of *a iubi*. As per Schopenhauer's view quoted in the beginning, sometimes renditions need replacement of nouns with verbs or *vice-versa*, but [Levițchi] shows a way to keep the morphology intact. However, by employing the conditional instead of the indicative mood in the first part of the chiasmus, [Ieronim] impinges upon the Duke a feeling of grudge towards his interlocutor, which fails the original. Also there seems to be a loss of sorts in the second part because of attributing the act of knowledge to an unspecified someone instead of using a translation of the term *knowledge*. The sentence loses a good deal of its aphoristic power, which, however, seems to be required by what the Duke professes. [Volceanov] goes even further by extending the conditional to both parts of the chiasmus. However, by maintaining the chiastic structure, the translation manages to maintain the mnemonics and the aphoristic power.

Another chiasmus mentioned by Clark defines Barnardine's condition:

(13) **Drunk** *many times a day, if not many days entirely* **drunk** (IV.2.147–148) (Clark 2001: 671).

The words *drunk many a day* translates as *drunk many days*. Mirroring the phrase tautologically suggests that Barnardine is twice hazy. When the Duke inquires about Barnardine's repentance and attitude in prison as a death convict, Provost describes Barnardine as being "careless, reckless, and fearless of what's past, present, or to come: insensible of mortality,

and desperately mortal" (IV.2.140–143). The oxymoronic construction "insensible of mortality, and desperately mortal" is a chiasmus which summarizes the condition of a person who, despite being a mortal, ignores any preoccupation with the ineluctable death. Along with the *drunk* chiasmus, the latter chiasmus elucidates the nature of Barnardine's haziness: he is at the same time inebriated physically and blindfolded spiritually. The latter chiasmus is a rather forceful eschatological signal in the play. *Ezekiel* 18:20–21 shows that a person's deeds decide their fate: "[20] [...] the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself. [21] But if the wicked will return from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, *and* shall not die". Verse 18:32 in *Ezekiel* says: "For I desire not the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God: cause therefore *one another* to return, and live ye"[8]. To this effect, referring to Barnardine's lack of preoccupation with his death, the Duke says that "He wants advice" (IV.2.144). This remark transcends the text of the play and may have an effect on the consciousness of the listeners or readers.

The renderings of the first chiasmus are the following:

(14) a. *Se îmbată de mai multe ori pe zi și uneori câteva zile în șir* [Levițchi]
b. *se îmbată de nu știu câte ori pe zi, ori zace beat zile în șir* [Ieronim]
c. *Se îmbată de mai multe ori pe zi și zile-n șir e beat criță* [Volceanov].

All three ignore the chiasmus structure, all use the indicative instead of the past participle, and all feature the collocation *zile în șir* for *many days entirely*. A possible variant would be: „beat de multe ori pe zi, și chiar multe zile de-a-binelea beat". Such a rendition preserves the words in the chiasmus (*beat/ beat*, *multe/ multe*, *zi/ zile*) as well as the structure. Moreover, the second part in the chiasmus is strengthened since the collocation *if not/ și chiar* is "used to introduce a more extreme term than the one first mentioned"[9]. With a slight inversion in the second part of

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[8] *The Geneva Bible* [GNV] (1599). *Ezekiel*. https://www.biblegateway.com/versions/1599-Geneva-Bible-GNV/. Accessed 18th June 2023.

[9] Found by using the Look up words on a MacBook Pro. https://support.apple.com/en-gb/guide/mac-help/mchl3983326c/mac. Accessed: 10th April 2022.

the chiasmus, the Romanian structure may sound even more natural: «beat de multe ori pe zi, „și chiar multe zile beat de-a-binelea".

In the chiasmus:

(15)   *insensible of mortality, and desperately mortal* (IV.2.143–144),

a close reading of the words in the scheme would give the following: *Mortality* in the 15th century is defined as "the quality or state of being mortal"[10] and *mortal* as either "subject to death"[11], if it is used as an adjective, or "a human being", if it is used as a noun. Then, in the 14th century, *insensible* is assigned the sense *imperceptible*[12] or "not perceptible by a sense or by the mind: extremely slight, gradual, or subtle" (15th century)[13], *desperately* around 1547 would mean "in a way that involves despair, extreme measures, or rashness: in a desperate manner"[14], where *desperate* in the 15th century would mean "having lost hope"[15], and *despair* "utter loss of hope"[16]. Accordingly, the first part of the chiasmus would mean that Barnardine perceives death neither *by a sense nor by the mind*. This is literally rendered in [Volceanov Gibbons]: „Este inconștient de faptul că-l paște moartea". According to the meaning of the words at the time, the second part of the chiasmus implies that Barnardine is *subject to death* (viz. mortal) *in a way that involves despair, extreme measures, or rashness: in a desperate manner* (viz. desperately), or that he is mortal like everyman but his death might be impending since there is no hope left. This rings true

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[10]   "Mortality", Merriam-Webster Dictionary, *Merriam-Webster.com*, *Dictionary*, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/mortality. Accessed 17th June 2023.

[11]   "Mortal", Merriam-Webster Dictionary, *Merriam-Webster.com*, *Dictionary*, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/mortal. Accessed 12th Apr. 2022.

[12]   "Insensible", Merriam-Webster Dictionary, *Merriam-Webster.com*, *Dictionary*, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/insensible. Accessed 17th June 2023.

[13]   "Imperceptible", Merriam-Webster Dictionary, *Merriam-Webster.com*, *Dictionary*, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/imperceptible. Accessed 17th June 2023.

[14]   "Desperately", Merriam-Webster Dictionary, *Merriam-Webster.com*, *Dictionary*, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/desperately. Accessed 17th June 2023.

[15]   "Desperate", Merriam-Webster Dictionary, *Merriam-Webster.com*, *Dictionary*, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/desperate. Accessed 17th June 2023.

[16]   "Despair", Merriam-Webster Dictionary, *Merriam-Webster.com*, *Dictionary*, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/despair. Accessed 17th June 2023.

in [Volceanov Bawcutt]: „și, în același timp, este, inevitabil, condamnat la moarte". Lever's note here goes even further and enriches the text with an eschatological interpretation: "Perhaps 'desperately mortal' means 'without hope of immortality'" (1987: 107).

The chiasmus has been translated as follows:

(16) a. *moartea nu-l tulbură și nu se gândește la cele veșnice.* [Levițchi]
      b. *moartea nu-l impresionează deloc, deși e condamnat.* [Ieronim]
      c. *Este inconștient de faptul că-l paște moartea și nici nu-și dă seama că deja-i un suflet mort.* [Volceanov Gibbons]
      d. *nu-l impresionează deloc ideea morții și, în același timp, este, inevitabil, condamnat la moarte.* [Volceanov Bawcutt]

The first part of the chiasmus in [Levițchi], [Ieronim], and [Volceanov Bawcutt] implies that Barnardine has a knowledge of death since they all suggest a lack of impression which requires the presence of a stimulus. Or, "insensible" presupposes a lack of any such stimulus or perception. Therefore, it suggests unconsciousness of death. The second part of the chiasmus is relatively matched in [Levițchi], since a rendering connoting a lack of preoccupation with death is closer to the English text, but [Ieronim] denotes another idea. While this part of the chiasmus evinces the perishable nature of man's life and its being threatened by an impending fact, or that a man is mortal and that he may die any day, [Ieronim] refers to Barnardine plainly as a convict. Although [Volceanov Bawcutt] employs *condamnat* in the same way as [Ieronim], it modifies it by *inevitabil* and *la moarte*, and thus it connotes the mortal character of man's life irrespective of a death verdict *per se*.

Finally, a most perplexing chiasmus uttered by the Duke in the end of the play is –

(17) *What's mine is yours, and what is yours is mine* (V.1.534) (Clark 2001: 669).

The chiasmus has an oxymoronic content betrayed by the contrast between the Duke's possessions as the representative of the government and those of a votary of St Clare, who, by the Roman Catholic Church

law, relinquishes all possessions[17]. The chiasmus opposes two concepts and repeats the words in an antimetabole fashion in order to maximise the impetus. Since an antimetabole places the stress on its second part, the exegesis should start with the second part of the chiasmus: "what is yours is mine". We are aware that Isabella's material possessions are nought because she pledges to enter a convent where she is bound to "profess the evangelical counsels of chastity, poverty, and obedience"[18]. What then is there that the Duke pretends she possesses other than precisely her vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience? Or, according to the Gospels[19], these are counsels for those who desire to become "perfect"[20].

    The Duke's statement seems to mean that Isabella's endowment is precisely what she is required to have in order to become perfect. Harking back to the text of the play referring to the Duke, we find that what he is precisely endowed with is what Escalus mentions: a propensity towards study and an earnest concern for people – more for the others than for himself. Besides, Barbara Baines writes that –

> Shakespeare's adherence to the conventions of comedy goes too far, according to many critics, in the proposal of marriage by the Duke to Isabella. This proposal is not only precipitous but contextually problematic, for it is spoken to one who has already chosen to be a bride of Christ and spoken within the Duke's display of absolute authority. The Duke's proposal is precipitous because the dramatist is trapped by the chastity essential to the characterization of the Duke. One whose 'complete bosom' is safe from 'the dribbling dart of love', whose chastity allows him to wear the robes of a holy friar, can hardly acknowledge that he has fallen in love. His proposal of marriage must, likewise, be couched not in terms of the fulfilment of his desire but as a benefit to Isabella: "I have a motion that imports your good" (V.1.535) (1990: 297).

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[17]   Code of Canon Law, canon 1192 §2. https://www.vatican.va/archive/cod-iuris-canon ici/eng/documents/cic_lib2-cann573-606_en.html#TITLE_I:. Accessed: 18th June 2023.

[18]   Ibid.

[19]   [GNV] (1599), *Matthew* 19:10–12, *Matthew* 19:16–22, *Mark* 10:17–22, *Luke* 18:18–23, and also *Mark* 10 and *Jesus and the rich young man*.

[20]   [GNV] (1599), *Matthew* 19:21.

Similar to Baines's opinion, it seems proper to say that the Duke's proposition towards Isabella in the end of the play is a commendation praising Isabella for her Christian ways. Isabella is introduced in the play as an aspirant to the secluded life in a convent in order to relinquish all kinds of passions and lead a spiritually enriched life. Shakespeare's choice of introducing Isabella as a novice to a convent is a condition which should remain as such throughout the play. Moreover, the way in which the Duke arranges the finale for Isabella seems to be a test for her ability to forgive the evil done to her. There is even a passage in which the Duke tempers Isabella's anger at the news of her brother's death: "Forbear it therefore; give your cause to heaven" (IV.3.124). Indeed, she forgives Angelo even when she thinks that her brother is dead at Angelo's behest. Isabella passes the test of Christian forgiveness. Forgiveness of Angelo and a serene attitude with regard to the death of her brother, who failed to obey the law, are in accord with the Christian ethics and sustain the caveats connected with eschatology in the play (Barba 2023: 4–7). Isabella's character qualifies her for the life of renunciation of worldly pleasures.

Neither the Duke, nor Isabella show any propensity towards married life, and nor is there any reason for them to be punished with marriage for sexually-laden acts as the rest of the couples are. Right from the beginning of the play, the Duke discloses his disentanglement of any preoccupation with love:

(18)   *No. Holy father, throw away that thought;*
       Believe not that the dribbling dart of love
       Can pierce a complete bosom. Why I desire thee
       To give me secret harbour hath a purpose
       More grave and wrinkled than the aims and ends
       Of burning youth. (I.3.1–6)

Then the Duke has a contradictory dialogue with Lucio on the subject of women. The Duke disguised as a friar responds to Lucio that the Duke has not given proofs of interest in women when Lucio insinuates that the Duke is accustomed to women with reference to birth illegitimacy:

(19) Lucio. [...] *He had some feeling of the sport; he knew the service;*
and that instructed him to mercy.
Duke. *I have never heard the absent Duke much detected for women;*
he was not inclined that way. (III.2.115–119)

When Lucio develops his calumny further, the Duke disguised as a friar
enjoins him to repeat his words in front of the Duke:

(20) *if ever the Duke return – as*
our prayers are he may – let me desire you to make
your answer before him. If it be honest you have
spoke, you have courage to maintain it. (III.2.150–153)

As far as Isabella is concerned, Shakespeare shows her to be knowledgeable
of life in the world, but not less of life in a convent. When Isabella is
spurred by Lucio to enhance her plea for Claudio's life, she develops her
pleading more and more up to the point when Angelo postpones their
dialogue. Being already incited, Isabella promises Angelo "gifts that
heaven shall share" (II.2.148) with him as she promises him prayers from
"fasting maids" (II.2.155). In that, she shows a profound knowledge of
the way prayers should be carried out:

(21) *true prayers,*
That shall be up at heaven and enter there
Ere sunrise: prayers from preserved souls,
From fasting maids, whose minds are dedicated
To nothing temporal. (II.2.152–156)

When she realises Angelo's proposition, Isabella exclaims:

(22) *Then, Isabel live chaste, and brother, die:*
More than our brother is our chastity. (II.4.183–184)

The above quotations are given in order to defend the hypothesis that
the play is a proponent of answering with Christian equanimity to life's
aggressions, of inciting to repentance, and, ultimately, of inducing the

idea that life on earth is temporal and the way it is led has repercussions. Further, whether these repercussions are perceived as related to the afterlife of the soul depends on a certain level of acquaintance with the Bible.

Shakespeare cuts a clear distinction between the inclination to married life and the propensity to lead a life devoted to God or "To nothing temporal" (II.2.156) in the case of Isabella, or to a more important end than love and marriage in the case of the Duke:

(23)   *a purpose*
        More grave and wrinkled than the aims and ends
        Of burning youth. (I.3.4b–6)

When the Duke says to Isabella that she is to be his when he shows her that her brother is alive although she thought him dead, his statement might be interpreted as his considering that Isabella is akin to him: that Isabella is a person with a propensity towards a life of study and contemplation. An unexpected further statement of the Duke is his postponing his own statement by adding: "but fitter time for that" (V.1.491). The Duke has a quasi-authoritative attitude towards Isabella. He fails to mind her answering him and, indeed, she has no answer. The repeated proposal in the last five lines is also postponed immediately after the chiasmus:

(24)   *Dear Isabel,*
        I have a motion much imports your good;
        Whereto if you'll a willing ear incline,
        What's mine is yours, and what is yours is mine.
        So bring us to our palace, where we'll show
        What's yet behind that's meet you all should know. (V.1.531–536)

The Duke's proposal followed shortly by summoning everybody to the palace sounds like a directorial indication for the actors in order to ensure the exit from the scene in a wedding fashion succession as a crowning of a finale of good augurs. Therefore, the chiasmus is better left as an aporia. For lack of emotional attitude on the part of the Duke and for the lack of answers from Isabella to the Duke, the chiasmus might perhaps stay clear of a wedding proposal.

On another note, though, the way in which the Duke frames his statement, namely, as an antimetabole, seems to be a thorough appreciation of Isabella. If the role of the Duke is viewed as a synecdoche for the Divine Providence (Barba 2023), then whoever has his characteristics is apt to belong to the good life: "What's mine is yours, and what is yours is mine" (V.1.534). Or, with her intention of entering a convent, Isabella has already professed to aspire to an improved life. Roy Battenhouse's religious interpretation of the play can be seen to be similar to these ideas. For Battenhouse, the Duke's proposal to Isabella in the end of the play is actually her admittance into the Heavenly Kingdom with all that should follow to such an admittance: "for Isabella, on the other hand, there are the words of welcome: 'Come thither, Isabel. Your friar is now your prince.' (Cf. *Matt*. 25:34. 'Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you... ')" (1946: 1034).

The renditions are the following:

(25) a. *[Scumpă Isabella,/ Fii într-un gând cu mine:] ce-i al meu/ E și al tău, și al meu e ce-i al tău.* [Levițchi]
      b. *[Iubită Isabella,/ Îți fac o propunere, iată, este de bine;/ Dacă tu bucuroasă mă vei asculta,/] Eu voi fi al tău și vei fi a mea.* [Ieronim]
      c. *[Eu, scumpă Isabella, ți-aș propune,/ Spre binele tău, să-mi devii soție:/] Tot ce-i – al meu, tot ce-am – al tău să fie.* [Volceanov]

While [Ieronim] and [Volceanov] connect the rendering to a wedding proposal, [Levițchi] preserves both the antimetabole and the aporia in Shakespeare's text.

6. Comments on rendering the chosen chiasmi in *Measure for Measure* into Romanian

Given the specificity of chiasmus both regarding its structure and its semantic content, its rendition into Romanian seems to have required – of all three translators considered – what George Steiner defined as the fourfold *hermeneia*, consisting of trust, penetration, embodiment, and restitution. Indeed, the hermeneutic motion describes best the effort of the three

translators. Each translator has tried to appropriate the meaning of the chiasmi to themselves and then to render them into Romanian as if they gave back to the readers what they had made of the text for themselves. This hypothesis springs from the fact that most often than not the chiasmi lost their original structure and word pairing as a most needed expense for normalising their content. According to As-Safi, normalisation of the translated texts involves a cultural shift (*Translation Theories*). However well may the words be documented according to the time, place, and culture of the source text, the target text bears the mark of the cultural background of the translator.

Rendering the analytic English into the synthetic Romanian has sometimes required the use of verbs instead of nouns or vice-versa as Arthur Schopenhauer says about rendering certain languages into English. Not least must all translations have required recourse to philological and sociolinguistic theories of translation as Eugene Nida states in his theory of translation. Also a philological analysis of every chiasmus must have been required for finding the best style in translation, and this must have been paired with a sociolinguistic analysis regarding the eventual extralinguistic content of the chiasmus. The extralinguistic rendition has been aided by the use of Romanian idioms, collocations, or phrases.

All in all, rendering English chiasmi into Romanian proves to be a very challenging work, and the quantum of content lost as a result of using substitutes for untranslatable constructions is precisely the quantum of indigenous sensitivity which has inevitably enriched the translations. The fact that the text of *Measure for Measure* relies heavily on chiastic structures – even where chiasmi scarcely project themselves out of the text, restricting themselves to mere embellishments, or expedient expression of the content – makes the translation of the play appear normalised and compensated (As-Safi *Translation Theories*: n. pg.) with various elements which enable full understanding of the original.

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Professor of British Literature in the Department of English, The Faculty of Languages and Literature, The University of Bucharest. I am gratefully indebted to Professor Gogeanu for her support, guidance, encouragement, and kindness throughout.

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All links were verified by the editors and found to be functioning before the publication of this text in 2024.

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