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**Diálogos interculturales en las traducciones de los sonetos de
William Shakespeare al lituano por Sigitas Geda**

**(Cross-Cultural Dialogues in the Translations of William
Shakespeare's Sonnets into Lithuanian by Sigitas Geda)**

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Resumen: El ciclo de los sonetos de William Shakespeare fue traducido al lituano en diferentes períodos por cuatro poetas traductores: en la emigración (EE. UU.) por Alfonsas Šešplaukis-Tyruolis (1964), en la Lituania soviética por Aleksys Churginas (1965) y después de la restauración de la Independencia en Lituania, las traducciones realizadas por Sigitas Geda (2009) y Tautvyda Marcinkevičiūtė (2011) se agotaron. Este artículo se centra en las traducciones de sonetos realizadas por el poeta más famoso Geda (se ofrece un análisis en profundidad de los Sonetos 18, 72 y 116) y se concentra en los temas fundamentales de Shakespeare, las imágenes culturales populares y en la selección, transferencia, transformación y representación de elementos poéticos típicos. En sus traducciones de soneto, Geda generalmente conservaba su estructura, su núcleo sintáctico y semántico, principalmente mediante metáforas y antítesis extendidas; aunque se perciben algunos fallos en la representación de la poética del original y, en consecuencia, la consiguiente pérdida de significado. Sus traducciones demuestran una transmisión bastante improvisada e inconsistente de los signos culturales históricos. Puede ser que Geda no se sintiera obligado a conservar la imagen digna de los tiempos de Shakespeare y la era del Renacimiento en general, y obviamente favoreció su propia cultura. Al representar el contexto histórico de los sonetos, los hizo un tanto arcaicos, usando un lenguaje singular; haciendo que los sonetos suenen más locales y dándoles características folklóricas, enfatizando el registro inferior de su estilo contrastivo. De esta manera, no intentó competir con las traducciones hechas por

Churginas que dominaron en la época soviética y aún siguen siendo populares en la actualidad, sino que más bien trató de cerrar la brecha entre la cultura 'alta' del Renacimiento Inglés y el 'baja' cultura lituana.

Palabras clave: Diálogo intercultural. Traducción de poesía. Sonetos ingleses. William Shakespeare. Sigita Geda. Equivalencia. Metáfora. Antítesis.

Abstract: The whole cycle of William Shakespeare's sonnets was translated into Lithuanian at different periods by four poet-translators: in emigration (USA) by Alfonsas Šešplaukis-Tyruolis (1964), in Soviet Lithuania by Aleksys Churginas (1965), and after the restoration of Independence in Lithuania, translations done by Sigita Geda (2009) and Tautvyda Marcinkevičiūtė (2011) came out of print. This article focuses on the sonnet translations done by the most famous poet Geda (an in-depth analysis of Sonnets 18, 72 and 116 is offered) and it concentrates on the issues of Shakespearean realia, popular cultural images as well as on the selection, transfer, transformation and representation of typical poetic elements. In his sonnet translations, Geda generally retained their structure, their syntactic and semantic nucleus – mainly, by means of extended metaphor and antithesis; although some failure in rendering the poetics of the original and, consequently, loss of meaning are noticeable. His translations demonstrate a rather improvised and inconsistent conveyance of historic cultural signs. It might be the case that Geda did not feel obliged to retain the dignified image of Shakespearean times and the Renaissance era at large, and he obviously favoured his own culture. When rendering the historic context of sonnets, he made them somewhat archaic-like by using down-to-earth language; thus making the sonnets sound more local and giving them folk-like characteristics, by emphasizing the lower register of their contrastive style. In this way, he did not attempt at competing with the translations done by Churginas that were dominant in Soviet times and still remain popular in the present day but he rather tried to bridge the gap between the 'high' culture of English Renaissance and the 'low' Lithuanian culture.

Key words: Cross-cultural dialogue. Poetry translation. English sonnet. William Shakespeare. Sigita Geda. Translation equivalence. Extended metaphor. Antithesis.

1. Historical and Methodological Premises

The British theoretician in translation Theodore Horace Savory, in his book *The Art of Translation*, points out different translation approaches employed by different schools of translation and he distinguishes six pairs of contradictory translation principles of translation. One of them refers to the transferring of the cultural atmosphere of the given period: “A translation should read as a contemporary of the original” versus “A translation should read as a contemporary of the translator” (Savory, 1975: 50). The translator's choice depends on his or her personal choice, the understanding of the translator's mission and the professional training background. However, according to the Amsterdam-based American scholar James S. Holmes, a translation can never match the original. A translator can choose words or other elements to fulfil similar functions in the target language, but they are never truly equivalent (Holmes, 1988: 197). Finding equivalents in poetry translation is an extremely complex matter. The British poetry translator and researcher Francis R. Jones referred to poetry translation as the art of compromise. He states that the equivalence on all the levels of the text is impossible; therefore, the translator should constantly look for compromise, choosing one aspect and giving up another (Jones, 1989: 187).

The translation of Shakespeare's sonnets can cause some specific problems. A sonnet is considered to be one of the most stable, fixed-form poetry genres having a strenuous structure, the punishment for rhymers of the capricious god Phoebus (Boileau, 1978: 134). Translators of sonnets face many difficulties, like culturally distant realia, archaic words and cases of complicated linguistic expression (although in later times, Baroque poets considered Shakespeare's sonnets to be quite simple). Thus, the work of a translator may resemble that of a textual critic, as the translation process dwells on various additional resources: reference books, dictionaries, and commentaries. One of the problems of sonnet translation from English into Lithuanian lies in the difference of language systems, including grammatical structures and phonetics. Rhyming in English is based on consonants, while in Lithuanian it relies heavily on vowels. It results in the intonation discrepancy between the original and the translation, the different position of pauses between words, and, finally, the altered sounding of poems. A huge number of monosyllabic words in English as compared to Lithuanian is also an important factor. It is estimated that an English text of 1000 words is made up of 824 monosyllabic, 132 disyllabic, 30 three-syllable, 6 four-syllable, 1 five-syllable words;

and in the respective Lithuanian text this distribution looks like this: 269 monosyllabic, 358 disyllabic, 239 three-syllable, 103 four-syllable, 29 five-syllable, and 2 six-syllable words (Kasteckaitė, 2005: 22). Apparently, very specific amount of information is stored in different metric and rhyme units of separate languages. In the attempt of rendering all the details of the original and also retaining its meter, one should artificially subtract syntax, which results in the loss of a natural flow of language and its poetics. Thus, translation inevitably entails a loss of some linguistic features and necessitates focusing on the essential elements at the expense of the minor ones. The Russian scholar Mikhail Morozov, who analysed Shakespeare's sonnet translations done by Samuil Marshak, and which still enjoy popularity, states: "Ability to determine the importance of each detail is one of the most important elements of the poet translator's skill" (Морозов, 1985: 8).

Nevertheless, the history of the sonnet development shows that this genre is, in a way, doomed to translation and interpretation. Having originated from Provençal troubadours, the inventors of complicated stanza in the XII century (*sonet* in Old Provençal is a diminutive of "song"), the genre got formed in the Italian Pre-Renaissance culture in the XIII century (it. sonetto), and it was used alongside with other fixed-verse forms that were generally popular in the Medieval Europe (e.g. triolets, sestinas were composed in Italy and France). Having assumed its canonical form in Italy and following the second major translation movement after St. Jerome, the sonnet spread across many European countries and underwent transformations by getting adapted to local languages and indigenous poetics. It was a stimulus for the formation of standard languages and the source of inspiration for the poets of the following generations (it is especially true of French and English sonnets).

The history of the Lithuania sonnet begins at the end of the XIX century (Daujotyte, 1985: 11) alongside with a cultural and literary upheaval, following the national liberation movement from Czarist Russia. William Shakespeare's sonnets were first translated into Lithuanian in the third decade of the XX century. The available data show that six poets made translations of separate sonnets. Translations of the entire sonnet cycle were done by four poet translators: Alfonsas Šešplaukis-Tyruolis in emigration, in the USA (1964), Aleksys Churginas in Soviet Lithuania (1965), those translations were predominant for a long time and are still popular, they are repeatedly issued and included into school textbooks; and finally, after restoration of independence, the translations by Sigita Geda (2009) and

Tautvyda Marcinkevičiūtė (2011) were published.

Sigitas Geda (1943-2008) is considered to be the most prominent poet of all the Lithuanian poet-translators of the whole sonnet cycle. He was granted the Lithuanian National Prize – the highest award for achievements in culture and the arts in Lithuania. At least for a decade behind the scenes, he was considered to be a potential candidate for the Nobel Prize in Literature. Geda was a personality known for his independent thinking during the Soviet regime, also an active participant of the Socio-political Upheaval Movement in Lithuania (Sajudis), and he became an influential cultural activist after Lithuania regained its independence. But he was also notorious for his controversial opinions and conflicts with colleagues, and towards the end of his lifetime, he suffered from a serious illness and litigation in court over the bodily harm afflicted to his own daughter. A monograph impressively entitled *Tragiškasis meilės laukas* (The Tragic Love Field) by Viktorija Daujotytė is devoted to the study of personality and works of Geda. He started his career as a translator in 1972 and did translations from various languages (Latvian, Georgian, French, English, and Japanese), frequently using literal translations from the original. From the perspective of the history of Translation Studies, it should be considered as an anachronism, and, apparently, Geda took up those translations while totally relying on his own poetic talent. The abundance of his translations is proven by a variety of authors: Charles Baudelaire, Arthur Rimbaud, Joseph Brodsky, the Book of Psalms, and the Quran. Shakespeare's sonnets is his last huge translation, for which he started in a way preparing when translating Dante's poetic autobiography *The New Life* (among the total of 30 poems there are 25 sonnets in it) and even still earlier on, when he was translating the poetry of François Villon.

In 2009, the anthology of Shakespeare's sonnets entitled *William Shakespeare's Sonnets: For the First Time Globally Reprinted. A Quartercentenary Anthology 1609-2009* (Manfred Pfister and Jürgen Gutsch (eds.)) was published in Switzerland, and the anthology contains sonnet translations into Lithuanian done by twelve different authors, with two sonnet translations done by Geda also included among those twelve. In this anthology, the translation is understood in a very broad sense, and the work encompasses sonnet translations not only into 75 major and minor languages, but also into dialects, sign language or artificial languages such as Esperanto and Klingon. The enclosed DVD demonstrates the possibility of a multimedia-based dialogue with Shakespeare's texts containing multilingual audio and visual recordings of sonnet recitations, pieces of music, book covers, visions

(e.g. sonnets from matches or sushi sonnet). In the Introduction of the Anthology, one of the editors Pfister discusses the evolution of Shakespeare's sonnet translations and distinguishes three translation tendencies: 'aestheticisation', 'philologisation' and 'taking liberties' with the sonnets. The first tendency denotes an attempt to retain the aesthetic form of the original as close as possible, the second one emphasises the search for a more accurate wording based on the research of the original and the contextual analysis. The third tendency that has evolved during the recent five decades tends to view sonnet translations rather like the so-called re-writings as they are iconoclastic, parodic, humorous and topicalising (Pfister, 2009: 9-29).

How could the translation mode chosen by Geda be defined still remains an open question. Generally speaking, the research in Shakespeare's sonnet translations into Lithuania has not been extensive; moreover, it is mostly carried out on Churginas' translations, and the research generally covers only the aspects of versification, style and semantics (as well as the problem of the addressee). In the present day, we lack a study that would explore how Shakespeare's sonnet translations have been influenced by the Lithuanian poetry and, namely, the sonnet tradition or *vice versa* - how Shakespeare's sonnets and their translations influenced the evolution of the Lithuanian sonnet¹, and how the translations were affected by translations in the neighbouring countries (especially into Russian and Polish), and to what extent the translations retained the poetic voice characteristic of Shakespeare, the uniqueness of register and imagery; or, on the contrary, do they tend to unify and to generalize²?

This article aims at analysing Shakespeare's sonnet translations by Geda (at length – three of them) focusing on the problems of the cross-cultural dialogue and its general aspects: with special emphasis on the questions of Shakespearean realia,

¹ This question is touched upon in the Introduction to the Anthology *Lietuvių sonetas* (Lithuanian Sonnets) by Viktorija Daujotytė where she states that the Lithuanian sonnets were mostly influenced by Adam Mickiewicz and Shakespeare, and that the latter had the greatest impact on the sonnets by Vincas Mykolaitis-Putinas and Churginas (Daujotytė, 1985: 20).

² Foreign scholars seem to be far ahead with translation research. E.g., the Chinese scholar Zhang Cheng Zhi and the Malaysian scholar Goh Sang Seong discussed the issue of translating puns into Chinese (the article *The Significance of Translating the Puns in Shakespeare's Sonnets*, 2013). The Palestinian scholar Niven Aziz Muhammed Tinah defended a doctoral thesis where he discussed the issue of intertextual references in sonnet translation into Arabic (*Harmonization and Intertextuality in Translating Shakespeare's Sonnets into Metrical Arabic Poetry*, 2012).

popular cultural images, also on the selection, transfer, transformation and representation of typical poetic elements. To analyse a translation means to conduct a comparative study. Susan Bassnett speaks about 'the cultural turn' – when the text is no longer studied in isolation but inevitably involves source and target cultures (1998: 123). For the study of translations, we used the third edition of *Shakespeare's Sonnets* published by 'The Arden Shakespeare' and edited by Katherine Duncan-Jones (2012) that was prepared according to the first version of John Wright. This article is based on Bassnett's approach claiming that there is no universal canon to determine the value of texts, one can evaluate only the creative process and the function of a text in a certain context (2002: 20); we also adhere to David Connolly's opinion that the value of poetry translation is subjective, thus, it is worthwhile talking about translation strategies alone (2005: 172). In general, the authors of the article chose to avoid translation evaluation; although it must be admitted that certain questions remain topical, namely, are the translations by Geda equally valuable as his own poetry; can they be considered as the fact of national poetry or do they denote the recent tendency of 'taking liberties' with the sonnets?

2. Perspectives of the Cross-Cultural Dialogue

Unfortunately, we will no longer have a possibility of finding out whether Geda consciously had chosen to focus rather on his own or Shakespeare's era, whether he tried to deliberately combine the past with the present, and whether he sought matching the spirit of the English Renaissance with the Lithuania-specific context. Certain aspects of Geda's translations may lead to different conclusions, e.g. in his translations of *The New Life* by Dante and in the translations of François Villon's poetry that is stylistically close to his own works, Geda seemed to avoid reconstructing the spirit of the past although he did not totally ignore it. In the translations of Shakespeare's sonnets, one can notice 'bows to the past' so characteristic of Geda, however, similarly to his own poetry, he was reconstructing the Lithuanian mythological worldview in an abstract and ahistorical way. The most obvious 'bow to the past' is a linguistic one. Unable to use the Lithuanian Renaissance and Baroque Poetry (in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania it was created in Latin and Polish), Geda did not attempt to stylize the language, he rather appealed to the real-life Lithuanian culture and language and turned to the corpus of spoken Lithuanian, its dialects, folklore, and thus created the local spirit of the past by using idioms and archaisms. At this point, translations of Geda remarkably

differ from the translations done by Churginas, who tried to stylize the spirit of high Renaissance, to convey aristocratic sophistication and therefore could not avoid artificial aestheticism and pathos, but he conformed to the soviet ethical and aesthetic ideal *a priori* attributed to the classics³. Presumably, in some cases, Geda was taking great risks as his re-writings simplified Shakespeare's poetry, made it rustic, and its vocabulary, sometimes even within the same sonnet, contrasts with the intellectual language of philosophers and our-assumed high Renaissance culture. On the other hand, discordant language codes are an important stylistic feature of Shakespeare's sonnets, and the eclectic language of Geda could be understood as an attempt to reproduce the authentic style.

Another aspect of historicity is rendering the historical setting of Shakespeare's epoch and popular cultural imagery. Some translations by Geda suggest that he did not make an in-depth analysis of the sonnets. For example, he begins Sonnet 45, quite surprisingly, with a coordinating conjunction probably due to the obligatory number of syllables (“*O kitos stichijos – vanduo ir oras, / Kaip žinome, lengvesnės mūsų visatoj*”; where the back translation reads: And other elements – water and air / As we know, are lighter in our universe). This could only be accounted for by the continuation of the idea of the previous sonnet. (Geda mostly emphasises the thematic relationships of the sonnets, and it seems a reasonable choice; other researchers also seem to distinguish that type of connections (Edmonson & Wells, 2004: 28-35; АНИКСТ, 1984: 298). Furthermore, the preceding Sonnet 44 also depicts the four elements – air, earth, water and fire – that constitute the nature and the man. However, in these two Sonnets, Geda disregards the semantics of the four elements that form the meaning of the Sonnets and expresses the opposition between the higher love mediators capable of overcoming distances – air and fire, i.e. thought and spirit, and the lower elements – water and earth. At the beginning of the previously quoted Sonnet 45 fire is misleadingly replaced by water as a lighter

³ Churginas held a similar view when he translated dramas by Shakespeare and other classic Western authors. By the way, it has been observed that the Lithuanian dramaturgy, under the great influence of Shakespeare, until the restoration of independence in 1990, also tried to imitate ‘aristocracy’ that the Lithuanian peasant culture having regenerated from the philology of the XIX century (according to Czeslaw Miloszcz) was lacking (Reda Pabarčienė, *Kurianti priklausomybė: Lyginamieji lietuvių dramų klasikų tyrinėjimai / Building upon Creative Interdependence: Comparative Study of the Lithuanian Classical Drama*, 2010). The postmodern drama has overcome this tendency (Kostas Ostrauskas, etc.) by re-writing Shakespeare and by using the low style, and it chronologically (but not in essence) almost overlaps with sonnet translations by Geda.

element.

However, these examples could not be taken for granted since in other sonnet translations by Geda we can recognize much broader poetic imagery, characteristic of Shakespeare's epoch and particular historical or social allusions. For comparison, Churginas in his translation of Sonnet 66 put more emphasis on the moral aspect of evil, and it seems natural as under the soviet regime any suggestions of evil were risky due to the possible allusions to the reality of those days. Churginas created the morality play, resembling a magnificent theatre stage, where personified virtues and vices (Nothingness, Honour, Freedom, and Shame) encounter one another in a heroic battle and where the good is tragically defeated by the evil. The translation of Sonnet 66 offered by Geda substantially loses this tragic pathos, and the translator dismisses the details that manifest the conflict between the good and evil in each separate line. The relationship of the subject with the surrounding environment seems to be quite passive, although manifestations of social and political evil are retained, and even allusions to the experience of the 20th century human-being are made – as the hardly imaginable for the Renaissance epoch image of 'plastered mouth' is introduced that was borrowed from a poem of the well-known Lithuanian poet Albinas Žukauskas entitled 'Plastered Mouths'(the poem speaks about the Polish poet Andrzej Trzebiński who, with a group of other fighters, was being led along the street to be assassinated at the time of Warsaw Uprising; and they all had their mouths plastered to prevent them from shouting out loud).

The range of historic-cultural problems includes specific self-awareness of Shakespeare's lyrical subject as well as his relationship with the addressee, with their social and sexual representation conforming to the theatrical code and to the general theatricality so characteristic of the late Renaissance period and of Shakespeare-favoured role-playing masks. Stephen Greenblatt explains the tension between homosexuality and heterosexuality in Shakespeare's sonnets, by, on the one hand, as a consciously chosen poetic intention of the author, and, on the other hand, as the manifestation of his personality and expression as a dramatist, as his 'double existence', the 'compulsive habit of imaginative identification', and his capacity 'to assume all positions and to slip free of all constraints' (Greenblatt, 2007:

226-255)⁴.

In considering if Geda was able to render the ‘double existence’ of characters, the sequences of their ambiguous and changing feelings, it becomes obvious that in his sonnet translations there are apparently fewer theatrical scenes than in those done by Churginas (see the above-mentioned Sonnet 66), the role-play of characters is not that fascinating and the passion of relationship is dying out. Whiletreating the relationship between the lyrical subject and the addressee (in Sonnets 1-126 with a male addressee), Geda often follows the tradition of soviet period translations into Russian and Lithuanian (also - the translations by Churginas) – he specifies the gender of the addressee (usually female), introduces the addressee where it is absent or tries to stay neutral as much as possible. However, he seems to invert the (implied) pyramid of hierarchy in relationships between the subject and the addressee by reducing social supremacy of the addressee and emphasising the higher spiritual status of the poet. For example, in the translation of Sonnet 1 he characterizes the addressee as his own enemy (*Thy self thy foe, to thy sweet self too cruel*) – Geda uses a rustic epithet here (“*priešas neraliuotas*” – the bitter enemy) and almost denies the aristocratic descent of the addressee. The translation by Geda lacks both courtesan implications and a subtle balance between praise and preaching. In Sonnet 10, the poet is passionately convincing his friend to change his mind as he tries to outwit this absolute loner and to offer a solution to their problematic relationship. The underlying implication of the sonnet is suggestive of their complicated interpersonal relationships: the poet is accusing his friend of unrequited love, possible infidelity makes him feel jealous, he encourages his friend to get married to a woman and procreate, and this could lead to the restoration of relationship and a full-scale solution to the problem. (*O, change thy thought, that I may change my mind; / [...] Or to thyself at least kind-hearted prove.*) The translation by Geda loses the passion and dramatism of the relationship between the poet and the addressee, the homosexual implications disappear, and the addressee is desperately, and even melodramatically, requested to change (“*O būk kitoks, ir viską tau atleisiu!*” – Oh be different, and I’ll forgive you everything). The

⁴ Paul Edmondson and Stanley Wells noted that there are not too many clear references to the gender of the addressee in Shakespeare’s sonnets. Judging from the evidence of forms of address and pronouns, some ten sonnets in the first group obviously indicate a male being, and 7 sonnets in the second group – a female one. The addressee of other sonnets can be implied from the context or the subject matter (Edmondson & Wells: 28-31).

final couplet does not retain the pun and the paradox about the benefit of compromise (*Make thee another self, for love of me, / That beauty still may live in thine or thee* – “*Lai žavesys ne vien tik čia užtrunka, / Leisk ji kartot – ir sunų ir anuką*”). Moreover, the reference to the social class of the addressee is omitted from the translation: when Shakespeare speaks about his manners, he uses the adjective *gracious* generally used to characterise royalty and high nobility. Geda retains only the second adjective *kind*, without any social connotations present.

Sonnet 130 addresses the Dark Lady and its text balances between worshipping the lady and mocking her. Geda, likewise Shakespeare himself, creates a picture of an earthly woman and recreates her sensual character, retaining the most shocking comparison of her hair to wires that is opposed to the traditional beauty of weaving gold (*If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head*). Unfortunately, the translation by Geda, instead of depicting the lady as the object of affection or of the sinful passion, exposes a painful disappointment with this imperfection, apathy; some unsuccessfully selected details even add to her character some caricature-like traits (for example, comparison of her lips with thriving corals). Furthermore, the translation does not convey the mockery of the poetic tradition rendered in the original, the polemic tone of the poem is lost as well as the critical attitude towards the adoration of a woman so typical of the Renaissance sonnets that tends to misrepresent love and the nature of a woman in general.

3. Analysis of the Translations of Sonnets 18, 73 and 116

We are going to offer a detailed analysis of three sonnets that are characterised by historic and cultural allusions, specific rendering of poetic syntax and semantic figures as well as by the interpretation of the lyrical subject and addressee relationship. At the very start, we can state that we are convinced of Geda's poetic ability to retain the sonnet semantic nucleus – by the extended metaphor and the basic syntactic pattern as well by employing the antithesis that corresponds very well to the overall sonnet structure. However, Geda often denied the power of euphuism, a peculiarly mannered style of Shakespeare's epoch manifested by complicated comparisons, puns, oxymorons, petty exterior details, and he rather concentrated on the significantly important images and comparisons. As a matter of fact, one could hardly trace any signs of this style in other Lithuanian translations.

Sonnet 18 is based on the comparison between the summer day and the

beloved: the temporary beauty of the summer day that is also devastated by nature (stanzas 1 and 2) is opposed to the eternal beauty of the beloved that is preserved in the lines of the poet for ever (stanza 3). In this sonnet, there are no clear indications of the gender of the addressee of the sonnet; we can only infer it from ‘the summer day’ as referring to a person of young but fully mature age. The adjective *temperate* refers to both the beloved (moderate, self-restrained) and the weather of the summer day (mild). The translation by Geda combines both meanings (“*Tu santūri, mielesnė, malonesnė*” – You are modest, more sweet and nice) and he chooses a female addressee. It is worthwhile mentioning that the original version of the sonnet seems not only to glorify the beauty of the beloved but also the youth itself (in this case, in Lithuanian the word *youth* is of feminine gender) but the translation by Geda does not offer this kind of interpretation.

The sonnet begins with a rhetorical question and determines the code of reading: *Shall I compare thee to a summer's day? / Thou art more lovely and more temperate*. In the translation we can observe a shift when the question turns into a simple statement (“*Palyginčiau su vasaros diena*” – I would compare you to a summer's day) and thus loses the interactive dialogue-type character of the situation. Shakespeare creates inventive personifications of the sun and summer, while Geda simplifies the personification of the sun to “*ryški dangaus šviesa*” (the bright light of heaven), thus also losing the oxymoron of the second stanza *nature's changing course untrim'd*. The aims of the translator are minimal: to render the change, contrast of being, and to highlight the antithesis of lines 5 and 6 (“*Tai akina ryški dangaus šviesa / Tai darganos pavidalus užstoja*” – It is a bright light of heaven that dazzles / It is the raw that shades the shapes) that is even reinforced by expanding the anaphora of the original (lines 6 and 7 begin with conjunction *and*, while in Geda's translation lines 5-7 start with the linker *now*).

The themes of death and eternity penetrate the third stanza: the beloved is not only compared to the summer but she seems to surpass it. Eternity is expressed by using polysemous metaphors: *eternal summer, eternal lines of time*. The translation gains particularised time references (months, days); however, line 10, together with its pun, is absolutely eliminated (*Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st*). However, this translation loss is not as significant as compared to another one. In the original, there is an important personification of death that is implied by the shade of death or ‘the valley of the shadow of death’ mentioned in Psalm 23 and meaning ‘being mortal’ (*Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade / When in eternal lines to time thou*

grows). It seems that the addressee stands on the imaginable border between a perfect life and ceasing to exist, unable to choose between beauty and wisdom but the poet helps him to make the essential decision. Geda interprets the shadow as anxiety, worry, fear, and he reduces the dramatism of the sonnet and diminishes the dilemma of the addressee (“*šėšėlis tau neperbėgs anei vienas*” – no shadow will fall on your way).

The aim of the final couplet in Shakespeare’s sonnet is the effect of unexpectedness that is created by decoding the metaphor of eternity, also the subject-addressee relationship, and the solution to their drama when a new perspective is discovered and the balance between transience and eternity is established (*So long as men can breathe or eyes can see, / So long lives this and this gives life o thee*). The movement is made from the complicated relationship of two loving people – celebration of the beloved, uneasy craving for the responsive loving, inciting gratitude for getting his name immortalized – to the existential questions: the worth of poetry and interpersonal relationships and the importance of memory as it promotes the idea that we are alive until at least one person can confirm our existence and, in equal measure, poetry is read until there is at least one person in the world. It is interesting to note that four Russian translators (S. Marshak; N. Gerbel; S. Iljin; M. Tchaikovsky) conveyed differently understood the above-mentioned meanings of the couplet – as if acknowledging Holmes’ idea that several translation variants of the same poem can lead to more than a single interpretation in translation, by emphasising various aspects of the same poem (Holmes, 1988: 51). The final couplet can be read as the manifestation of the poet’s consciousness and his high self-esteem. The poet himself gets the last say and hints at the unstable and capricious addressee that he alone, even with all personal beauty, is incapable of anything significantly lasting, and only the poet’s talent can make them both immortal. In turn, the pathetic and shallow couplet by Geda does not allow reading between the lines the complex poet – addressee relationship or the highlighted life and death antithesis.

Sonnet 73 dwells on the themes of old age and approaching death alongside with the parallel theme of love present in the poet’s treatment, which highlights the intersection between truth and love, objective and subjective reality. The sonnet can also be explained as the metaphorical death of youth and passion.

The extended metaphor of old age constitutes the semantic basis of the sonnet and is elaborated through the imagery of decay (late autumn, winter, evening, night,

fading fire). An important syntactic figure of gradation determines the focus and direction. Time concept is presented in descending order: at first, the season, then time of the day and, finally, the very last minutes of one's lifetime. Thus the field of vision gradually narrows till it finally closes down, and the look moves downwards to the darkness of the grave. Visual imagery, especially colours, plays an important role in Shakespeare's sonnets, for example, yellow refers to passing time and senility (see also in Sonnets 17: 104). The yellow colour of leaves, sunset, glowing fire are gradually replaced by the black colour until finally they disappear as the day is followed by night, and life is replaced by death.

Repetition performs an important rhythmical and structural function in the Sonnet. Line 7 conveys a slow approach of night, which is the parallel of death: *Which by and by black night doth take away*. The phrase in the first stanza *in me behold* is repeated by a similar phrase at the beginning of stanzas 2 and 3 *In me thou seest* and not merely highlights the tripartite quatrain structure but also introduces the eye of the beholder.

With some insignificant exceptions, Geda mostly managed to render the prevailing metaphor of decay; some repetitions and other elements of poetic semantics and syntax are also in place. In the translation, one can retrace the gradation echoing time sequences – rhythmical descent, closing up, consecutive movement towards a 'sealed' coffin, towards a grave. The translator creates the impression of fading colours, although, as compared to the original, some colour nuances and their sharp contrast disappear. The translation retains the repetitive pattern showing the structure of the sonnet that reinforces the rhythm of the sonnet (*"Dabar matai many"*, *"Dabar many"*, *"Matai many"* – Now you see in me, Now in me, You see in me). However, here as elsewhere the translation abandons euphuistic elements, elaborately decorative details, inversion and the complex personification of fire in the original is simplified in the translation (*In me thou seest the glowing of such fire, / That on the ashes of his youth doth lie, / As the death bed, whereon it must expire* – *"Matai many atošvaitas ugnies, / Kurios dienu pelnuose rusena, / O tai kas buvo, gyvasčiu pleveno..."* – In me you see the sheen of fire, / Which smoulders in the ash of the day, / And that what was hovered as a life...). The translator had to deal with the complex metaphor of *ruin'd quiers* that evokes an immense vista of historical events: *Bare ruin'd quiers, where late the sweet birds sang*. The Dictionary of Allusions and other resources (Webber & Feinsilber, 1999: 42) link this metaphor to Henry's VIII reign, its religious settlement, and the separation of the Church of

England from the Roman Catholic Church when many monasteries were demolished and many monks who opposed to the politics of the sovereign were murdered. Historical connotations could be hardly traced in the translation by Geda, however a partial solution was found when combining images of nature and ruins that highlight the deprivation of the 'top'. ("*O švilpė paukščių chorai, o skambėjo! / [...] Jau atimtas ir kupolas dangaus*" – And the bird choirs whistled and sounded! [...] And the dome of the sky has already been deprived).

The final couplet paradoxically contradicts to what was said before (*This thou perceu'st, which makes thy love more strong, / To love that well, which thou must leave ere long*). The death, the forthcoming separation brings or *should* bring two loving hearts close together (if we interpret this sonnet as claiming for the addressee's compassion and attention). The poet follows a specific strategy of captivating our attention – as if withdrawing and viewing from a distance, and then stepping over the threshold of death. It is an interesting and powerful poetic manipulation if we take into consideration the fact that Shakespeare was at a relatively young age (he was not yet forty) when he was writing the sonnet. We can discern one more manipulation: the code of submissiveness chosen by the poet, the emphatic identification with the point of view of the beloved, undermining one's own image as if to distance oneself from it and to put forward other values to gain advantages over the beloved. The implied conclusion of the Sonnet is that love ignores (or should ignore) reality and common sense, declining vitality and beauty makes (or should make) it stronger, and the approaching death makes it deeper and more painful. In fact, this imperative appears in the translation by Boris Pasternak: "*II, это видя, помни: нет цены / Свиданьям, дни которых сочтены.*" The final couplet by Geda, out of many possible meanings, renders the semantics of opening – closing and distancing – approaching ("*Nēr nieko slapto, artuma mirties / Labiau prispaudžia širdį prie širdies*" – There is nothing secret, closeness of death / (It) Brings two hearts closer.)

Sonnet 116 is traditionally understood as a sonnet about a true love that bears betrayal, the old age, and becomes the only true support for a human being. The Sonnet is about a spiritual relationship, not about erotic love. It is one of the few impersonal sonnets where the addressee is removed. By contrast, in the translation by Geda, the addressee is introduced but is not identified with any gender ("*Kaip, sakyk, ištengtų / Sudrumsti meilės šviesą išdavystė?*" – Say how betrayal could perturb the light of love?). The usual interpretation of the Sonnet is extended by other

meanings. Douglas Trevor notes that the love object of Shakespeare's Sonnet could be not only the beloved but also poetry; the pronoun *it* (in line 5) allows to read the Sonnet as a celebration of poet's love of poetry and creativity (Trevor, 2006: 234). Lukas Erne indicates Christian implications, supposedly, the Sonnet is about love that comes from God, the transcendental one (Erne, 2000: 295).

The text is woven of antithesis and repetition: the first stanza states what kind of love is not love (*Love is not Love*), the second one, on the contrary, claims what love is (*it is*), and the third quatrain talks about how love stands against time (*Lou's not Times fool*). The third quatrain is, actually, based on the antithesis of temporary beauty and eternal love. The repetition of the word *Love* forms a musical rhythm enhanced by the scheme of the sonnet. Polypotons (when words derived from the same root are repeated) are used in line 3 (*Which alters when it alteration finds*) and line 4 (*remouer to remoue*). The repetitions emphasise the constant nature of love: if it alters with the change or departure of the love object, it is untrue.

The translation by Geda attempts to create tension by juxtaposing statements and negations; although the opposition is weaker, the repetition of the word *Love* (more often *it*) maintains the rhythm of the sonnet but the polypotonic repetition is not retained. Semantic figures of the original undergo transformations, sometimes conforming to, sometimes changing the very idea of the Sonnet. The synecdoche of the first quatrain *True mindes* refers to loving people: *Let me not to the marriage of true mindes / Admit impediments*. Many resources point out that the first two lines of the Sonnet recall the Anglican marriage ceremony from *the Book of Common Prayers*. Here *impediments* echo the words of the service: *If any of you know cause, or just impediment, why these two persons should not be joined together in holy Matrimony...* Shakespeare demonstrates his talent when he looks for the unity of the content and form by using the enjambment at the end of the first line. According to Vabalienė, "In poetry [...], in the syntactically unmotivated interruption in the flow of syntagma, lies a great potential of expression" (Vabalienė, 1980: 128). It is interesting to note that this reading interference is placed directly before the word *impediments* in the segment of the text about the marriage of true minds.

The translation by Geda retains synecdoche ("*dviejų širdžių*"), enjambment ("*As sandraugai dviejų širdžių nedrįsčiau / Pakišti kojos*" – I wouldn't dare tripping the commonwealth of two hearts) but it does not echo the marriage service. It is quite complicated to understand what kind of impediment it is: some inner impediment determined by the poet's way of thinking, attitude, e.g. towards betrayal, or some

external impediment – like love rival, ‘the third person’. Geda simplifies the situation and says that love does not know any ‘barriers’ and ‘thresholds’, i.e., that betrayal cannot blemish love.

In the second quatrain, seafaring metaphors are employed. Love is defined by using figures that express constancy: the trope *an euer fixed marke* is usually explained as a beacon, and the star is referred to as the steadfast North Star that guides every wandering bark. Erne, in turn, traces religious implications in the figure of *an euer fixed marke*, the echoes of disputes over religious doctrines in the period of Reformation. The Protestants denied the existence of an ever fixed mark, or, in theological terms, an indelible mark, that three sacraments (Christening, Confirmation and Holy Orders) imprint, however, Matrimony is not attributed to these. In the Sonnet, the religious doctrine is transformed: namely, spiritual ‘marriage of true minds’ that lasts until ‘the edge of doom’ imprints the indelible mark (Erne, 2000: 297-298). The translation by Geda retains seafaring metaphors, however, similarly to the first paragraph, the translation version loses its religious implications and it does not render the meaning of *an euer fixed marke* as an indelible mark (other translators also chose the traditional explanation: Šešplaukis-Tyruolis translated it as ‘the walls of the tower’, Churginas and Marcinkevičiūtė as ‘beacon’).

The literal translation of ‘Lou’s not Times foole’ in the third quatrain might be incomprehensible since the allegoric image of Father Time carrying a scythe does not function independently in the Lithuanian culture. In Russian and Lithuanian translations of this Sonnet (including the translation by Geda), Time is capitalized and usually interpreted outside the context as a philosophical category important to Shakespeare. Geda makes an inaccurate translation of the phrase ‘Lou’s not Times foole’, distorting the meaning of an allegorical image and still attempts to give some logics to it (“*Ji ne lėlė, kuria Laikai atėję / Kaip rožės spalvą veiduose išblukins*” – It’s not a doll, which passing Time / Will fade like the colour of the rose in cheeks).

The couplet of the Sonnet is a paradoxical negation-based statement: *If this be error and upon me proued, / I neuer writ, nor no man euer loued*. The sonnet was written, and there were definitely people who loved; thus, what was said about love is true. This segment of the Sonnet seems to be the best one in the translation by Geda: the paradox is expressed by a laconic phrase of eloquent wording: “*O jeigu aš netiesą čia kalbėjau, / Tai nerašiau, ir niekas nemylėjo*” – And if what here I said is untruth, / I didn’t write and nobody loved.

Final remarks

Within the context of the translation tendencies mentioned by Pfister – ‘aestheticisation’, ‘philologisation’ and ‘taking liberties’ with the sonnets – the latter seems to be the most characteristic of Geda; although it does not manifest itself in the most radical form. His translation retains the obligatory sonnet structure and the most important elements of Shakespearean poetic syntax and semantics – an extended metaphor and the antithetic combination of contrasting ideas and images in nearby rhythmic units. However, in his translations, the translator obviously chose to convey the historic and cultural signs of Shakespeare’s era in an improvised or inconsistent manner.

All in all, it should be admitted that the sonnet translations done by Geda do not match his own poetic talent. Assumptively, his translations were made without the in-depth study of Shakespeare’s works and their context, without prior analysis of commentaries; moreover, they were done from word-for-word translations and were greatly influenced by translations of the bridge language, like the translation into Russian by Marshak (the authors have done some research into this but it is not included in this article).

According to Yuri Lotman, a text passing from one context into another (as it generally happens with enduring works of art) acts as an informant transferred into a new communication situation – it actualizes previously hidden aspects of its coding system (Lotman, 2004: 138). No doubt, translation is a very effective instrument for deciphering the encoded messages. In an attempt at answering the question of what kind of task Geda took upon himself as the cross-cultural mediator in his translations, one can assume that he did not feel obliged to retain the dignified image of Shakespeare’s times and the Renaissance era, and he challenged the established cultural hierarchy – he rather tried to bridge the gap between the ‘high’ English Renaissance and the ‘low’ Lithuanian cultures, decisively taking the side of his own culture. He bravely localized Shakespeare’s sonnets, gave them folk-like sounding and character; thus emphasizing the lower register of their contrastive style (at the same time, somewhat turning down the sonnets philosophical thought, their paradox and emotional intensity). This attempt to bring Shakespeare closer to the Lithuanian culture seems to be pertinent within the context of postmodern culture although it still remains distant from the playful and parodying re-writings that are becoming increasingly popular elsewhere.

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