

**REWRITING ALTERITY:
CHALLENGES OF CROSS-CULTURAL
TRANSLATIONS OF THE CLASSICS IN
1590s ENGLAND AND OF
SHAKESPEARE IN 1890s ROMANIA**

ANAMARIA DOMNINA GÎNJU

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**GENERAL INTRODUCTION:
CROSS-CULTURAL / CROSS-TEMPORAL /
CROSS-SPATIAL TRANSLATION IN 1590s
ELIZABETHAN ENGLAND AND IN 1890s ROMANIA**

This dissertation examines the cultural framework of translation as a dialogic, interdisciplinary, and continuous activity at the turn of the century by comparing translations of the classics, as well as those of geography and travel literature in 1590s England, with translations of Shakespeare as a Western theatre classic in 1890s Romania. I reinforce the importance of adopting a period-specific cultural-oriented approach that maintains the cultural context of the translated texts, including the historical, cultural, religious, geopolitical, and gender-based elements at work during the translation into the target culture. Therefore, the purposes of this study are multiple. Concerning the field of literary translation, this dissertation is one of the few works that discuss the cultural, religious, geopolitical, and gender-based challenges facing the translation of Shakespeare in late-nineteenth-century Romania. Romanian society in the 1890s was a conservative one; therefore, Shakespeare's plays, which encourage individuality and self-reliance, would appear eccentric to a traditional audience. Furthermore, religious challenges that shaped the translation of Shakespeare's works into Romanian existed, because Romanians were predominantly Christian Orthodox and notions of Protestant behaviour and ideology would seem peculiar to them. The geopolitical factors are the main challenges that influenced translations of Shakespeare into Romanian because, in the 1890s, the emergent modern nation was renewing its social, political, and cultural heritage according to Western standards. Gender-based challenges also exist, because nineteenth-century Romanian society was a male-dominated one and, therefore, any Western literary work that contested patriarchal force, either through presenting strong independent female characters or advocating women's rights, was less likely to be popular to Romanian translators and audiences. However, translations of Shakespeare's plays performed the cultural function of calibrating Romanian culture and linking Romanian theatrical practices to Western European models.

Using quantitative data of my survey and close-text analysis, as well as cross-disciplinary approaches in translation studies, cultural anthropology, cultural studies, cultural geography, geocritical literary studies, and comparative literature, this dissertation offers a systematic, empirical account of producing, promoting, and perceiving Shakespeare's image created by means of translations in 1890s Romania, as compared to the impact of translations of classical and geography literature in 1590s England. The survey of translations of Shakespeare in late-nineteenth-century Romania—represented in this dissertation by three groups of case studies—is indeed a story of cross-cultural interaction in a time of rapid commercialisation and globalisation of the arts of writing, reading, and the theatre. Romanian translators and people in the theatre world sought to legitimize the cultural parameters of an emerging national identity by aligning its values to the already accredited Shakespeare image. Conversely, as products of an age of exploration and innovation, Shakespeare's plays reflect influences from a treasure trove of multilingual sources in Latin, Italian, Spanish, and French. Therefore, Shakespeare was a great cross-cultural translator—in the sense of transforming multiple sources—and he was a talented synthesizer of different threads of narratives. Translations of classical and geography texts in the 1590s Elizabethan England were used as a means to incorporate the values of the past and the globalized view of a larger world.

Concerning the scholarly field of Shakespeare studies in Romania, my dissertation specifically adds to the research that is taking place in the study of translations of Shakespeare into Romanian—by using close-readings of translations of specific plays—to locate and address the cross-cultural challenges that faced literary translations of Shakespeare at a specific point in time and space (1890s Romania). The study of translations of Shakespeare in Romania has been undertaken by Oana-Alis Zaharia, finalized in a book entitled *Cultural Reworkings and Translations in/of Shakespeare's Plays* (2015). There have been recent studies on particular aspects of Romanian translations of Shakespeare's plays by Mădălina Nicolaescu, Pia Brînzeu, Monica Matei-Chesnoiu, George Volceanov (in the practice of translation), Camelia Bejan, and Aida Todi.¹ This dissertation addresses the subject in a comparative mode, using specific case studies of Elizabethan translations printed in the 1590s and Romanian translations of Shakespeare's plays produced in the 1890s, all the time building on the work of Romanian scholars. In the second half of the twentieth century,

¹ For a comprehensive discussion of recent Romanian scholarship concerning the translations of Shakespeare's plays, see Part Two of the present study.

studies by Leon Levițchi, Dan Duțescu, Alexandru Duțu, Aurel Curtui, and Andrei Bantaș have set the foundation of modern Romanian Shakespeare scholarship in the theory and practice of translation. Much of the current research on Shakespeare in Romania has focused on the political roles of Shakespeare's appropriation in performance, as evidenced in studies by Monica Matei-Chesnoiu, Nicoleta Cinpoieș, Mădălina Nicolaescu and Odette Blumenfeld. As an additional contribution to Romanian Shakespeare in translation studies, with a specific focus on the 1590s and 1890s periods, this dissertation fills a gap by connecting comparatively the 1590s Elizabethan practice of translation, and its role in fashioning the rising national language and cultural identity, with Romanian translations of Shakespeare in the 1890s, at a point of intellectual zenith for the emerging modern nation.

Traditionally, cross-cultural communication by means of translation is a form of bidirectional correspondence between source and target cultures. However, translation of and between cultures is no longer the central concept, but culture itself is now being conceptualized as a process of translation. As a result, the term "translation" can be defined as a dynamic concept of cultural encounter, as a negotiation of differences as well as a difficult process of transformation. Especially in periods of intense cultural exchange—as the 1590s in England and the 1890s in the Old Kingdom of Romania—such cross-cultural transformational processes are more visible. Discussing the political role of translation in certain contexts, Susan Bassnett notes: "In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in Europe, for example, the translation of literary texts such as the poems of Lord Byron or the plays of William Shakespeare had a huge impact on various revolutionary struggles for independence in the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman empires" ("The Translator as a Cross-Cultural Mediator" 99). In this respect, a critical survey of Romanian translations of Shakespeare's plays in the 1890s is a seismographic indicator for changing mentalities under the conditions of the early globalization of cultures. If the connectedness of language to everyday experience of its speakers is recognized, then translation will, indeed, be accepted as a cross-cultural transaction, influenced not only by national and linguistic factors, but also by social, political, religious, and international aspects. Among these, I suggest that the globalizing and modernizing tendencies prevalent in 1890s Romania—as in 1590s Elizabethan England—are adjuvant factors and promoters of cross-cultural communication via translations of Shakespeare in this period.

Globalization of culture in early modern England followed similar routes as the post-post-modern phenomenon of globalization in the

twenty-first century and it was mainly achieved by means of translations. As Michael Cronin notes, “Historically, translation in periods of proto-globalization has both shaped and been shaped by forces of global exchange” (“Translation and Globalization,” 492–493)—and he gives the example of Protestant translations of the Bible in the time of the Protestant Reformation. In a similar manner, translations of the classical and geography texts in Elizabethan England—mainly at the turn of the century (1590s)—were used to signal the new practices of internationalization of culture, arrived as a result of the new geographic exploration and the extension of Europe’s horizons. A similar process of internationalization of culture occurred in late nineteenth-century, with the consolidation of the national states and the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire in Eastern Europe. In José Lambert’s work on translation studies, the author writes about “a process of internationalizing world literature” through translations (67). Lambert observes that “The paradigm of national literature is the paradigm of the nineteenth century, and this is precisely why it is based on historical revisionism” (68). According to Lambert, “the exchange between national literatures is, as a rule, reduced to a small number of ‘special cases,’” and Shakespeare is the first among those mentioned (68). Indeed, the extensive propagation and popularity of Shakespeare’s plays by means of translations in nineteenth-century Europe is an accredited fact.² So are the reasons behind this popularity: re-evaluation of European cultural landmarks, nationalistic revivals, and the fashioning of cultural identities.

There is no simple answer to the questions whether translating Shakespeare empowers the culture and language into which the works are translated, as a sign of cultural prestige, or whether translating Shakespeare is a mark of cultural hegemony. Each culture has its own answers and, in late-nineteenth-century Romanian culture, the directions followed the moralizing tendencies prevalent in bowdlerizing Shakespeare in nineteenth-century Britain.³ In a study on “Shakespeare and Translation,” Alexander Huang states that “Literary translation is a love affair” (68) depending on the context and reflecting the global order of centre and periphery. Huang observes that “Shakespeare remains the most canonical of

² For studies on Shakespeare in nineteenth-century European cultures, see Part Two of the present dissertation.

³ See, for example, the most widely read and influential adaptation of Shakespeare’s plays, entitled *Tales from Shakespeare* by the Victorian author Charles Lamb and his sister Mary; the 1807 edition was designed “for young ladies” (vi) and the moralistic simplified prose rendition of Shakespeare’s tragedies and comedies was initially intended for women and children. Another example is Thomas Bowdler’s *The Family Shakespeare*—tales designed for the use of middle-class children by censoring the “obscenity” that would be offensive to early nineteenth-century sensibilities (377).

canonical authors in a language that is now the global lingua franca” (69). In this respect, Huang identifies three modes of translating Shakespeare: “intralingual rewriting,” “interlingual adaptation,” and “intersemiotic transformations,” such as the transformations of Shakespeare’s works from page to stage, film, and other media, including the use of topics from Shakespeare’s plays by Victorian painters (75). In *The Romantic Cult of Shakespeare*, Peter Dávidházi advocates the need for an interdisciplinary approach in reception studies of Shakespeare:

[...] the traditionally central problems of Shakespeare’s reception (aesthetic norms, translation, etc.) will be taken out of their usual context of literary criticism, linguistics, history of ideas, or translation studies, to be treated within an interdisciplinary framework constituted by the anthropology of literature (Dávidházi, *Romantic Cult of Shakespeare* 2).

As Shakespeare in nineteenth-century Europe was a medium of cultural exchange, I add the geographic factor in this dissertation and argue that translations of his works were used as a conduit for cross-cultural communication and an attempt at global positioning of the emergent Romanian cultural parameters in relation to world literature.

A quick look inside the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies* (1998), or *The Oxford Handbook of Translation Studies* (2011), or a Google search reveals the large number of existing approaches, theories or traditions in the field of translation studies. Rather than looking for one unifying theory to be applied to this comparative approach of early modern English and Romanian translations, I find it more productive to address the contradiction, which should be seen as a characteristic aspect of the translations to be discussed. David Bellos addresses this contradiction directly: “It’s a well-known fact that a translation is no substitute for the original. It’s also perfectly obvious that this is wrong. Translations *are* substitutes for original text. You use them in the place of a work written in a language you cannot read with ease” (37). Further in the book, Bellos continues presenting the practice of translation in terms of engaging contradictions when he suggests that “the practice of translation rests on two presuppositions. The first is that we are all different. ... The second is that we are all the same” (324). This contradiction is also succinctly formulated by David Bleich: “translation is sometimes accurate, sometimes not, never accurate, never not” (509). The argument of contradiction in translation is reflected throughout this dissertation in examples and discussions, by analysing what early modern translators state in their introductions regarding their translation work, in comparison and contrast to the actual Romanian translations of a corpus of six Shakespearean plays in the 1890s. I

defend the idea that the vitality of Romanian culture at the end of the nineteenth century can be significantly measured by the status Shakespeare has within it.

A new method of approach in translation theory, cultural studies, and spatial literary studies, therefore, would be to read relationally, not just between early modern English and Romanian literatures and translations, but to read the relationality inherent to translated literature itself—considering the 1590s English statements about translation, the English translations from the classics and geography texts, and the 1890s Romanian translations of Shakespeare’s plays. This is difficult to attain considering the volatility of language, especially at turning points—the 1590s in England and the 1890s in the Old Kingdom of Romania—in the renewal of literary, linguistic, and intellectual systems. One of the wittiest descriptions of the fluidity of language and the difficulties of containing it in any way can be found in Grossman’s *Why Translation Matters*. Grossman explains that “[t]he languages we speak and write are too sprawling and too unruly to be successfully contained. ... living languages will not be regulated ... they sneer at restriction and correction and the imposition of appropriate or tasteful usage ... they revel in local slang, ambiguous meaning, and faddish variation” (67). Indeed, one does not have to be a translation scholar to realize how slippery and unstable language can be. The social and cultural aspect of translation, the contextual complexity of any communication, the fluid, unstable nature of language are all underlying themes of this study that deals comparatively with 1590s and 1890s translations so distant in time and space. Therefore, I argue for the comparative and relational study of end-of-century translations, not only from the perspective of individual authors, but as a combination of national, linguistic, religious, cultural, economic, and geopolitical factors. Among these, globalization is prevalent for 1590s England and 1890s Romania.

Cross-cultural communication via translations is a means of expressing the modernizing movements in a language and the need to attune a culture to the globalization trend of the times. In *Translation and Globalization*, Michael Cronin investigates how economic globalization is both affecting and playing out through translation in our times, via examinations of the internet, machine translation, the “localization” industry, linguistic diversity, minority languages, and the radical remapping of world geography. Cronin’s intervention is to demonstrate, through theoretical scaffolding and case studies, how simultaneously neglected and fundamental the problem of translation has been to discussions of economic globalization. As Cronin says, “[I]t is by revealing, not disguising, their identity as translators that translators can make a legitimate bid to make

more central interventions in culture, society and politics... To do this involves, of course, changing purely restrictive and instrumental views of translation practice and educating wider society as to what translators both know and can do” (*Translation and Globalization* 67). Likewise, I argue, at turn-of-century periods in the two cultures discussed, translations are used to respond to the need of attuning the specific language and culture to the globalization trends of the age. The 1590s in England was a time of economic and cultural globalization, when the new geographic discoveries and overseas travels brought an innovative understanding of the Elizabethans’ place in a cosmopolitan society. Similarly, the 1890s in Romania was a time when, shortly after the country’s partial unification (1859), the democratic Constitution (1866) and the independence from Ottoman rule (1877), attempts at reconsidering national identity materialized through culturally-significant translations of Shakespeare as a classical figure of Western theatre.

Between Lawrence Venuti’s already popular concepts of “foreignizing” and “domesticizing” translations, which question and propagate the translator’s “invisibility” (*Translator’s Invisibility* 1; 20),⁴ contemporary theorists have developed new ways of interpreting translation practices. In *Translation and the Trials of the Foreign*, Antoine Berman, the French theorist of translation, formulates a “negative analytic of translation,” listing twelve deforming tendencies: rationalization, clarification, expansion, ennoblement, qualitative impoverishment, quantitative impoverishment, destruction of rhythms, destruction of underlying networks of signification, destruction of linguistic patterns, destruction of vernacular networks or their exoticization, destruction of expressions and idioms, and effacement of the superimposition of languages (288). In avoiding some of these tendencies, he explains, the translator enters into others, each translator according to his/her own skills and inclinations. Berman is particularly concerned about ethnocentric, appropriative translations, “where the play of deforming forces is freely exercised” (278). When Walter Benjamin declares, in “The Task of the Translator,” that “a translation participates in the ‘afterlife’ of the foreign text” and should “shine upon the

⁴ As regards the norms and characteristics of translation in the early modern period, Venuti states: “Fluency emerges in English-language translation in the early modern period, a feature of aristocratic literary culture in seventeenth-century England, and over the next two hundred years it is valued for diverse reasons, cultural and social, in accordance with the vicissitudes of the hegemonic classes” (*Translator’s Invisibility* 43). Indeed, the high-culture status of translations from the classics in early modern England corresponds to the position of eminence achieved by early translations of Shakespeare’s plays in nineteenth-century Romania.

original all the more fully” (21), he points, I believe, to the dialogical nature of translation. It is essential, therefore, to study the processes involved in cross-cultural dialogic translations at different points in time and in different spaces. This spatial study of translation is also important, especially as the cultural paradigms of these spaces are connected—and even dominated—by the Shakespeare figure.

The cultural space of appropriation for the artistic concept named “Shakespeare” has become particularly important in recent critical theory. As Frederic Jameson observes, the crisis in historicity dictates a return to the question of temporal organization “in the postmodern force field” and a return to “the problem of the form that time, temporality and the syntagmatic will be able to take in a culture increasingly dominated by space and spatial logic” (323). Indeed, the cultural space of reception and adaptation of Shakespeare has acquired new meanings in current critical practice. This cultural space can be interpreted in the light of poststructuralist theories, which acknowledge the tension between literature, the production of culture, and the politics of place and attribute cognitive significance to the culturally mediated spatial sensibilities. Jonathan Murdoch, for example, offers a review of poststructuralism and “relational space” in human geography (1–25). The interdisciplinary “spatial turn” in literary and cultural studies has been analysed by Michel Foucault and his heterotopias (“Of Other Spaces” 22–27; “Space, Power, Knowledge” 134–41); Deleuze and Guattari and the deterritorialization process (*A Thousand Plateaus* 111–48; 167–91); and the production-of-space notion by French Marxist philosopher and social critic Henri Lefebvre. Lefebvre, one of the foremost theorists of space, emphasizes the culturally constructed nature of spatial consciousness and notes that “every society ... produces a space, its own space” and that this space becomes a means of control and of power (*The Production of Space* 31; 26). In *The Practice of Everyday Life*, Michel de Certeau argues for a distinction between *lieu* and *espace*; *lieu* is a particular, specific place that can be seen in opposition to mobile and indeterminate “space” (117). Certeau emphasizes the primacy of space over place and introduces the concept of narratives as “spatial syntaxes” (115). In Certeau’s view, *lieux* are characteristically constructed by the strategies of dominant groups; they use techniques such as mapping, planning and inscription to stabilize the meanings of particular locations, asserting the primacy of place over time.

Perceptions and representations of space in literature, or the spatial dimension in cultural translation, therefore, can be interpreted in various ways, according to the particular culture that produced or translated the specific works. In showing how translations have shaped national

literatures, this dissertation adds to the field of geocritical literary studies. Geocriticism as a critical method that focuses on space, places, and geographic interaction in literature has been conceptualized by Bertrand Westphal and Robert T. Tally, Jr. In Westphal's view, "Geocriticism will work to map possible worlds, to create plural and paradoxical maps, because it embraces space in its mobile heterogeneity" (73). Robert T. Tally understands the notion of "spatiality" more broadly and includes "the poetics and production of space, along with the spatial analytics of power and the examination of gender and spatiality" (*Spatiality* 113). In the "Series Editor's Preface" to the Palgrave Macmillan series *Geocriticism and Spatial Literary Studies*, Robert T. Tally observes: "Spatial criticism examines literary representations not only of places themselves, but of the experience of place and of displacement, while exploring the interrelations between lived experience and a more abstract or unrepresentable spatial network that subtly or directly shapes it" (x). In a similar line of thought, Monica Matei-Chesnoiu discusses the representations of geographic features (rivers, sea-cities and islands) in Elizabethan and Jacobean drama as a new form of "geoparsing" literary discourse (*Geoparsing Early Modern English Drama* 7). In this dissertation, I argue that translation as a cultural endeavour is dependent on the time and space in which it is produced; in addition, the cultural work these translations perform—whether in 1590s England or 1890s Romania—is the refraction of a specific production of space, in accordance with social, economic, political, and intellectual specificities.

In the light of spatial critical theories, it is helpful to interpret comparatively the practices of translation of fictional and non-fictional texts in two different—and yet similar—spaces and time periods: sixteenth-to-seventeenth-century England and nineteenth-to-twentieth-century Romania. Recent literary theory has privileged space over time in analysis, as the editors of the volume emerging from the conference "Space in Literature: Questioning Space in Fiction" have observed (Heirman and Klooster 3). Heirman and Klooster have noted "the ideological role of space," based on how the experience of space is determined by dominant concepts (philosophical, political or religious) and how the description of spaces in literature is constructed to express these particular experiences (3). As shaped by the experience of a marginal South-Eastern European space, at the end of the nineteenth century, with the advent of modernity, Romanian culture adopted Shakespeare in a renewing mode, reshaping a cultural identity based on revitalized language and practices, according to the models of modernized Western theatre. This process is similar to the approach to translation of geography and travel literature and adaptations of the classics in the Elizabethan period, especially the 1590s, when the

expanding space of the newly discovered worlds shaped the experience of Shakespeare and his contemporaries. Echoes of these translated classical texts are found in Elizabethan and Jacobean theatre. These discourses are testimonies of translating culture into the practice of translation in different geographic spaces, three centuries apart.

The situation becomes complicated when discussing Romanian translations of Shakespeare's plays because of the volatility of the source texts and the iconicity of the "Shakespeare" figure. Moreover, especially in the case of nineteenth-century Romanian translations of Shakespeare, there are several French and German intermediaries, so it is difficult to speak of fidelity in translation practices. Robert Wechsler does question the fidelity in translation, in *Performing without a Stage*, when he asks, "Fidelity to what or to whom? To what aspects of the original? To what extent?" (60). Wechsler points out the way that primary artists are normally commended for infidelity to their antecedents, and how even secondary artists—theatrical directors, classical musicians, and others who work in relation to an original text or artistic object—are not judged based on supposed fidelity. Rather, it is understood that they are "first and foremost interpreters, and when they do a poor job, they are simply bad, incompetent interpreters" (Wechsler 58). Therefore, far from being judgmental in assessing the fidelity or quality of late-nineteenth-century Romanian translations of Shakespeare, this study highlights their relational and dialogic aspect involved in the production of translations in this space. I consider the way in which these literary translations into Romanian helped to reconsider the blurred regions between centre and periphery and to fashion cultural identity based on time-revered tradition.

Beyond expanding and invigorating reputable traditions, cross-cultural communication via translations of Shakespeare's plays in nineteenth-century Romania serves as a means of asserting an unrecognized literary practice in a space at the crossroads of empires. This is meant to elevate the status of the target culture by linking it to an Elizabethan author whose established standards of canonicity have been generally accepted. Nineteenth-century Romanian translators of Shakespeare prove that a marginalized target language is up to the challenge of an exalted work of world literature, such as Shakespeare was considered to be in the 1890s. André Lefevere cites the example of Julius Nyerere translating Shakespeare into Swahili "because he wished to prove that Swahili could do all the things Shakespeare could do in English, that Swahili was a worthy instrument waiting for a genius to play it" (124). Similarly, the nineteenth-century Romanian linguist Ion Heliade Rădulescu publishes Goethe's conversations with Eckerman in an 1836 Romanian literary

journal (in Cyrillic alphabet), entitled *Curier de ambe sexe* [*Currier for both Genders*]. Goethe describes the adaptations of Shakespeare's works in other languages and warns about imitating Shakespeare indiscriminately. "Shakspir," Goethe writes, "shows us golden apples wrapped in silver sequins. On studying his richness, we find out that we remain only with the silver sequins and have nothing else to put inside them but potatoes" (59, my translation). Indeed, as Goethe observes, in the Romanian translation of an excerpt of his work about Shakespeare, a different culture can deal with Shakespeare's language imperfectly, replacing the golden-rich Shakespearean metaphors with more humble material. The linguistic *replacement* versus spatial *emplacement*⁵ is relevant when it comes to developing a nation's cultural heritage through translations.

By comparison, early modern translations of the classics and geography texts from Latin and other European languages in Elizabethan England—especially in the 1590s—were seen as touchstones of literary stability. These texts aligned the developing English language to its peers on the European continent, as well as to the time-revered Latin predecessors, no less popular and appreciated. As Susan Bassnett observes in *Translation*, "up until Shakespeare's day, clear distinctions were not necessarily made between 'original' writing and translations" (11). Indeed, by closely reading the Elizabethan translations of the 1590s in the relational mode, it is possible to observe how connected translation was with other cultural and literary issues: literary relations between the Continent and England, the nature of the author and literary patronage, and changes in the English language. Moreover, the cultural, religious, and geopolitical conditions prevalent in Elizabethan society at the turn of the century left their imprint on the translation practices of the 1590s. In this respect, Massimiliano Morini places sixteenth-century translation practices "between two worlds": the medieval ideas and methods and new theories imported from the Continent (*Tudor Translation* 4). Since Elizabethan English authors—unlike their French and Italian contemporaries—did not write theoretical treatises on translation, this dissertation works empirically to deduce several cogent principles from the metaphors and figures of speech used by translators (in their introductions to the translated works). Moreover, research shows

⁵ The concept "emplacement" has been used in various areas, from geoscience and computer science to cultural anthropology and cultural geography. In geocriticism, Sten Pulz Moslund defines "topopoetics" as a form of cultural emplacement showing "the ways in which the physicality of place may give shape to or affect the language of the work and its cultural worldviews" (34). I am using this concept in the context of translation studies for the first time, in order to evaluate the relationship between the production of translations of Shakespeare's plays and the time and place in which they were produced.

similarities with statements by nineteenth-century Romanian translators of Shakespeare's plays; these similarities highlight the discrepancies between the statements contained in the prefaces and the translators' practice. Most Elizabethan translators declared their faithfulness to the originals, but a closer scrutiny reveals a variety of cultural approaches.

Cross-cultural communication via translations of Shakespeare's plays—as seen from the geocritical perspective—acknowledges that translation is by no means a neutral form of mediation, but rather one which alters the original in various ways, affecting not only grammatical structures but also the cultural assumptions underlying the language of a text existing in space and time. Translation that calls attention to these markers of national difference is, thus, an important vehicle of aesthetic education, a project at once literary, social, and political. Therefore, it is essential to highlight the importance of these features for current ideas in translation theory about the inseparability of literary works from their linguistic and cultural contexts. This topic has been debated by translation researchers such as Susan Bassnett, Itamar Even-Zohar, and André Lefevere—in what has been called “the cultural turn of the 1980s” in translation studies (Snell-Hornby 47). In the chapter on the “History of Translation Theory” (*Translation Studies* 50–87), Bassnett discusses Elizabethan translators of the classics, such as Thomas North's Plutarch (65) and Philemon Holland's Livy (66); regarding Elizabethan translation activity, Bassnett concludes: “Translation was by no means a secondary activity but a primary one, exerting a shaping force on the intellectual life of the age, and at times the figure of the translator appears almost as a revolutionary activist rather than the servant of an original author or text” (*Translation Studies* 67). Itamar Even-Zohar examines the position of translated literature within the literary “polysystem” (192). This revolutionary position of translators as promoters of specific cultural values enables us to extend the view of translation from merely Romanian-language versions of Shakespeare's plays to critical interpretations of his works or theatrical productions and their translations of Shakespeare in the language of the theatre.

To adequately understand the cultural impact of translations in the Elizabethan 1590s and in Romania in the 1890s, I am adopting what has been called the “cultural turn” to translation studies, represented by the landmark anthology, *Translation, History & Culture*, edited by Susan Bassnett and André Lefevere in 1992. As Bassnett and Lefevere observe in their General Editor's Preface, “The growth of Translation Studies as a separate discipline is a success story of the 1980s” (xi). Spurred in part by the onset of globalization, this approach analyses translations from a cultural studies angle. The cultural turn of translation studies, therefore, has made

the translator visible, “foregrounding the manipulative powers of the translator and a view of translation as bridge-building across the space between source and target” according to Susan Bassnett (*Translation Studies* 10). As Bassnett and Lefevere observe:

Translation is, of course, a rewriting of an original text. All rewritings, whatever their intention, reflect a certain ideology and a poetics and as such manipulate literature to function in a given society in a given way. Rewriting is manipulation, undertaken in the service of power, and its positive aspect can help in the evolution of a literature and a society. Rewritings can introduce new concepts, new genres, new devices and the history of translation is the history also of literary innovation, of the shaping power of one culture upon another (Bassnett and Lefevere xi).

To this concept of cultural “rewriting” through translation, in this dissertation I add the geocritical reformulation of the concept of cultural *emplacement* (Moslund 34), since the choices translators make, or the development of translation practices at a certain time, depend on the geopolitical factors and the spatial relations among the participants in the cultural exchange.

Based on these critical views, I use the perspective of the “spatial turn” in literary studies (Wharf and Arias 1) to demonstrate the impact of cultural space on the development and practice of translation in two different countries at end-of-century periods. As Wharf and Arias point out, “Recent works in the fields of literary and cultural studies, sociology, political science, anthropology, history, and art history have become increasingly spatial in their orientation” (1). Analyses of a corpus of English translations of the classics and travel and geography texts (from Latin, Spanish, Italian, Dutch, and French sources) existing in Shakespeare’s time reveal that Elizabethan authors in the 1590s used translations for similar purposes as Romanian translators did in the 1890s: renewing language and practices and keeping in touch with the new cultural frameworks. Their work was a form of resistance and conformity, at the same time, to the social, political, or religious pressures of the power establishment. While translators acknowledged the innovative aspect of their practice by aligning their work to the novelty trends in European culture (in the 1590s England and the 1890s Romania), their activity was also a form of resistance to the social and political pressures of the time. This aspect reveals the inevitability of translation study as the companion of cross-temporal, cross-spatial, and cross-cultural interpretations.

The cultural relevance of the research of this dissertation lies in the strong connection between translated literature, space, and collective

identity, which made literature an important scene for a multiplicity of political and historical perspectives on territory and a medium of spatial imagination. I emphasize translated literature's role in creating, disseminating and critically reflecting on spatiality (inside versus outside, place versus space, local versus global), territoriality (centre versus periphery, urban versus rural, national state versus empire), and spatial experiences (exile, border crossing, homecoming). The limitations of the current approach on spatiality, however, impose certain caveats. First, the lack of specific operators in geocriticism makes this critical theory rather vague. Despite its engagement with the geographical perspective, the use of space-related concepts remains metaphorical and, therefore, rather inappropriate for the intercultural and pragmatic study of translation. Secondly, social critics and cultural geographers who constructed theories of spatiality have traditionally refrained from including translated literature in their systems. However, translated literature, rather than being a mere reflection of the literary reality, is a workshop of alternative versions of the literary world and influences. Moreover, sometimes, translated literature creates spatial representations which shape the collective imaginary of a certain group or community. The third limitation is the lack of previous comparative approaches of translated literature in the 1590s in England and 1890s in Romania. The comparative approach is, indeed, the most appropriate for translations of Shakespeare into Romanian because this is a multinational space which, despite regional differences, shares a common history.

The translation strategies and cultural initiatives for the translated literature and theatre adopted in the late-nineteenth- and early twentieth-century in Romania concerning "Shakespeare" display similar characteristics to those produced in Shakespeare's time in relation to translations from the classics. Mentalities and translation practices evolve over time and, especially at turning points in specific cultures and in different spaces, translation practices fulfil an essential role in aligning the values of that culture with the globalizing and modernizing tendencies at work in that particular space. The turning point in the 1590s English culture was marked by the expansion of the world-view triggered by recent geographic discoveries and travels, which called for new voices to mirror those mentalities; Shakespeare was there to speak for the emerging English nation. Similarly, Romania—at the turn of the nineteenth century to the twentieth—was renewing its cultural voice in the light of a unified national language and the formation of the national state. Shakespeare was there as well to speak to the Romanians through the translators' voices. Romanian translations re-wrote the canonic author in a globalized and globalizing