

**TO BE OR NOT TO BE POSTMODERN:  
ROMANIAN APPROPRIATIONS OF “SHAKESPEARE” AND THE IDEA OF  
POSTMODERNITY**

Domnina Gânju  
Ovidius University of Constanța, PhD Candidate

**Abstract.** *Drawing on postmodernist critical theory and geocritical literary studies, this paper challenges the suitability of studying Romanian translations of Shakespeare as cultural projects per se and asks for an integration of these aspects in the larger cultural frameworks of the periods in which they were produced and the geographic coordinates of the country that produced them. Considering Baudrillard’s concept of simulacrum, the “as-if” nature of reality—likened to theatricality— this study invites to a reconsideration of Shakespeare’s iconicity in the light of postmodern theories and practices. The study examines a corpus of Elizabethan translations of Ovid and Montaigne by Arthur Golding and John Florio to prove that translation practices in Shakespeare’s time fulfilled a functional purpose of attuning the emerging English national language and culture to classical and contemporary values. In the same manner, the Shakespeare icon was used by late-nineteenth-century Romanian translators to fashion an emerging cultural identity congruent with the system of European values. Just as Shakespeare could be interpreted as a postmodern author before postmodernism, translations of Shakespeare in nineteenth-century Romanian culture are landmarks that challenge pre-established notions of iconicity and rate the vitality of a particular culture.*

**Keywords:** *Romanian Shakespeare, Ovid, Montaigne, post-modernist critical theory, geocritical literary studies, translation studies*